

Prodigies 2981

Chapter 2981 Lin Fan's Changes

Fangchun Ruins.

When Lin Xun first arrived in the Return Dominion in his youth, he had received the daoist verse left by his master, the Lord of Fangchun Mountain. It was also here that he fought a group of experts and in the end obtained the Sacred Combat Art left by his Eldest Senior Brother.

Later, when he entered this place for the second time, he made a wager with his fourth senior brother, Ling Xuanzi, defeated him, won the bet, and took him from a suppression that had lasted thousands of years.

This was Lin Xun's third time returning to the Fangchun Ruins. However, it had become unrecognizable.

The collapsed mountain gate, the desolate devastation, the traces of ruin...all of it was long gone. In its place, billions of divine rays and auspicious light bathed the land, suffusing it with a sacred, solemn aura. Every blade of grass and every tree seemed to radiate a distinct dao presence. Simply walking among them felt as though one were strolling through the dwelling of gods.

This place had clearly been rebuilt. The mountain path was now broad and open, lined with verdant bamboo and ancient pines on either side. Precious medicinal herbs had taken root, breathing out wisps of auspicious mist, while celestial blossoms bloomed everywhere, vying with one another in brilliance. From time to time, white deer carrying spirit fungi passed by, and monkeys clutching peaches leapt playfully among the branches, all of them moving with an unhurried, tranquil grace.

Mist and clouds shrouded the mountains. Waterfalls cascaded down cliffs, and clear springs flowed unceasingly. Wherever one looked, a subtle, mystic radiance of the dao permeated the air, gently calming the heart and stilling the mind.

Long ago, the Lord of Fangchun Mountain had imparted the great dao here, and all the disciples of Fangchun Mountain had cultivated in this very place. The golden cicada had once lingered outside these mountains as well, listening to the dao for thirty years.

Although Lin Xun had never witnessed any of this with his own eyes, simply imagining it now stirred a deep, inexplicable longing in his heart.

Of the fifty grand daos, only forty-nine are derived from the heavens while one escaped.

And he was the fiftieth successor of Fangchun Mountain.

“Husband, Fan’er is cultivating there.” Zhao Jingxuan said softly.

By the edge of the cliff, she pointed down into the canyon below. There, a perfectly circular lotus pond lay nestled at the base of the ravine, formed from fifty-four petals, half pure and half turbid. From its surface, a dense, primordial aura of chaos rose continuously, as though recreating the scene at the beginning of creation itself.

A figure sat cross-legged atop the lotus. With every breath he took, the surrounding dao energy undulated in response, sending deep, rolling sounds like distant thunder echoing through the void.

His figure was tall and perfectly straight, slender yet dignified. His eyes were gently closed, and his aura and qi resonated in harmony with the great dao, giving rise to astonishing visions, such as a boundless abyss swallowing the heavens, a true dragon roaming the firmament, the sun and moon revolving, and the stars rising and falling.

It was a breathtaking sight.

Upon closer inspection, he was a handsome young man with sharply defined features and a tall, well-proportioned figure. While he cultivated, his bearing was solemn and composed, and his temperament was like a bright moon hanging over a mountain stream, clear, refined and untouched by the mortal world.

In an instant, Lin Xun’s gaze was locked onto him, his heart stirring violently. In the blink of an eye, so many years had passed. That mischievous little boy had already grown into such a composed and extraordinary young man, perfectly balanced between motion and stillness, like a breeze beneath the pines, yet possessing his own unique character.

“Good...very good...” Lin Xun murmured, a surge of joy and guilt tangling in his chest.

There was no denying that he had been an utterly unworthy father. He had never accompanied his son’s growth, never watched him walk along the path of the dao, and never given him guidance, protection or even the smallest comfort...

Zhao Jingxuan smiled gently. “When Fan’er was little, he was unbearably unruly. His temper was like a wild, unbridled horse, and he caused endless chaos in the clan. Even the elders were bullied by him and could do nothing. He was nothing but a little demon king. But as he grew up, he changed. He learned how to consider his mother’s feelings. He learned to shoulder responsibility and to devote himself to the clan. He is now an entirely different person.”

Her voice was gentle, yet laced with unmistakable pride and deep satisfaction.

Lin Xun smiled, taking her soft hand in his. “You’ve had a hard time these past years.”

Zhao Jingxuan’s limpid eyes shimmered. “Compared to the dangers and hardships you’ve endured...these are nothing.” As she spoke, she gently withdrew her hand and lowered her voice. “Xia Zhi is still here. Watch yourself.”

Lin Xun froze for a moment, then let out a helpless, amused laugh. Xia Zhi, seemingly oblivious to the subtle change in the atmosphere, remained quiet and composed. Her gaze was fixed on Lin Fan below the cliff, lost in her own thoughts.

“Husband, I’m a little worried about Fan’er.” Zhao Jingxuan suddenly said. “His talent is truly too frightening. At only fifteen, he already stepped into the Supreme Emperor Stage. His speed of cultivation is far beyond what you achieved back then.

“Back then, I was afraid that his progress was too fast and that his foundation would become unstable, so I deliberately suppressed his cultivation, hoping to give him time to stabilize. Yet even so, he would break through every few years. I simply couldn’t hold him back...”

As she spoke, a faint crease formed between her brows. If it had been anyone else, they would have been overjoyed to have such a peerless prodigy as a child.

However, for Zhao Jingxuan, Lin Fan's cultivation path had always left her with a faint, constant dread.

Too much could be as dangerous as too little. Advancing too rapidly was not necessarily a blessing at all!

Hearing this, Lin Xun's brows knit slightly. With his current cultivation and insight, he naturally understood that advancing too slowly was a problem, but advancing too quickly was just as dangerous.

Take his fourth senior brother Ling Xuanzi for example. He was a talent that defied heavens, unparalleled throughout the ages, so extraordinary that even their master, the Lord of Fangchun Mountain had personally suppressed him for countless years.

However, Lin Fan was in no way inferior to Ling Xuanzi, and perhaps even surpassed him!

When one's cultivation soared too quickly, an unstable foundation and a warped state of mind could easily arise. Because on the path of the great dao, every realm demanded a matching state of mind and sufficient tempering. Only in this way could an incomparably solid dao foundation be forged.

The tragic fates of Martial Uncle Kong Jue and Pavilion Master Yan Ji of the Origin Sky Pavilion were proof enough of how terrible the consequences could be when one's state of mind faltered. Admittedly, Lin Fan's dao path showed no obvious flaws at present, but the higher his cultivation climbed, the more vulnerable his state of mind would become in the face of great tribulations.

"Leave this to me." After a moment of contemplation, Lin Xun made a decision.

"Alright." Only then did Zhao Jingxuan feel the tension inside her ease.

In the years since Lin Xun left, she had poured all her heart and effort into their son, Lin Fan. Parents who truly loved their children always planned for their future. How could she possibly stand by and watch her own son walk into danger on the path of the great dao?

"That's not right." Suddenly, Lin Xun raised an eyebrow. "Jingxuan, if Fan'er is in closed-door cultivation here, could he be preparing to break through to the Immortal Stage?"

Zhao Jingxuan froze. "Impossible. Ten years ago, he was only at the eighth realm Supreme Emperor Stage. Now he has only just reached the Supreme Emperor Ancestor Stage. How could he possibly..."

Lin Xun interrupted, "He has already reached the pinnacle of the Supreme Emperor Ancestor Stage, and right now he is clearly attempting to strike at the threshold of the Immortal Path."

With his vision, how could he possibly fail to see Lin Fan's current state? His expression turned solemn.

Zhao Jingxuan's heart tightened at once. "How could this child be so reckless? I warned him long ago that he was not allowed to attempt a breakthrough to immortality for a hundred years! Why is he in such a hurry?"

"Don't panic. Nothing has happened yet," Lin Xun reassured her gently.

As he spoke, his gaze settled on Lin Fan, who was seated cross-legged in the lotus pond below. In that instant, Lin Fan's body shuddered and the qi around him surged violently. He suddenly snapped his eyes open and instinctively looked up.

There, he saw a familiar figure, one that had only existed in his childhood memories. For a moment, he went utterly still.

"Father?" He stood there, stunned, disbelief written across his handsome features.

"Fan'er, don't just stand there. Come and pay your respects to your father." Zhao Jingxuan urged softly.

Shua! Lin Fan leapt into the air and landed on the cliff, staring at Lin Xun with eyes full of shock and joy. "Father...it really is you!"

"Fan'er, you've truly grown up." Lin Xun nodded with a faint smile. Strangely, the moment he faced his own child, the turbulent emotions in his heart quietly settled. Fatherly love was like a mountain, silent, steadfast, and unspoken.

Perhaps every father felt the same. Now, Lin Xun finally understood that feeling.

Lin Fan grinned, revealing a row of snow-white teeth. "Father, I haven't just grown up, I'm already a supreme Emperor Ancestor. Do you remember? When you left, you weren't nearly as powerful as I am now. And all these years, I remembered what you said. I never made Mother upset...right, Mother?"

As he spoke, he shot Zhao Jingxuan a mischievous wink.

Zhao Jingxuan said coldly, "If you really didn't want to upset me, then why are you trying to break through to the Immortal Stage now? Do you have any idea how dangerous that is?"

Lin Fan let out an awkward grunt and fell silent.

Lin Xun said gently, "Fan'er, you know better than anyone how fast your cultivation has already advanced. And you know the consequences of forcing a breakthrough onto the Immortal Path now. Tell me...why are you in such a hurry?"

Lin Fan was silent for a long moment. Then he said quietly, "In recent years, more and more enemies have appeared outside the Return Dominion. Even though I've been in closed-door cultivation, how could I not know what's happening outside? Father, you weren't here. All this time, Mother has been handling everything alone, bearing pressure no one should have to endure. I just...I wanted to help her. If I can't even protect my own mother...then what is the point of cultivating the dao at all?"

Zhao Jingxuan, who had been furious only moments before, froze. Her eyes suddenly reddened, slowly filling with tears. It was as if something had struck her soft heart, her emotions surging out of control. Only then did she realize that Lin Fan's urgency to break through to the Immortal Path was simply because he wished to share her burden, because he could not bear to see her suffer...

Lin Xun was also deeply moved, his gaze settling once more on his son. The youth stood clad in white, brows sharp and eyes bright. He was exceptionally handsome, and his well-proportioned, slender figure already towered a head above his mother.

His temperament was like a mountain breeze, clear as a moon reflected on still water, and his every movement radiated a natural, otherworldly grace.

After a long silence, Lin Xun let out a deep sigh. "I'm the one to blame. If I had come back sooner, none of this would have happened..."

His voice was heavy with guilt.

"How could this possibly be your fault?" Zhao Jingxuan said softly, steadying herself. "You always take everything onto your shoulders. You were like that back then, and you're still the same now. Don't do that again."

Lin Fan added earnestly, "Mother is right. I've grown up now and I can stand on my own. Father, please don't blame yourself."

Hearing this, a tide of emotion surged within Lin Xun. There was so much he wanted to say, yet no words came. Everything seemed to lodge in his throat.

Just then, a clear, ethereal voice suddenly broke the moment, "Lin Xun, I'm hungry."

Xia Zhi, who had stood silently to the side like an outsider all this time, shattered the atmosphere with a single sentence. Lin Xun and Zhao Jingxuan exchanged a glance, then broke into helpless, amused laughter.

Chapter 2982 Answering the Call

A bonfire blazed, crackling in the still night. Lin Xun sat beside it, personally turning the roasting meat over the flames. The rich, mouthwatering aroma drifted through the Fangchun Ruins. Xia Zhi, Zhao Jingxuan, and Lin Fan sat nearby, enjoying the simple meal together.

From time to time, Lin Fan's gaze drifted toward Xia Zhi. He had known of her since he was a child and understood that this 'Aunt Xia Zhi' had accompanied his father from a very young age and the two had long been inseparable.

He felt no hostility toward her, but he couldn't help but worry for his mother, Zhao Jingxuan. Xia Zhi was breathtakingly beautiful. She possessed an otherworldly, flawless beauty beyond compare. Before her, all other women seemed to fade into dullness.

"Mother, aren't you worried?" Lin Fan sent his voice through transmission.

Zhao Jingxuan shot him a glance, her expression unmoved. "Do you think children can interfere in adults' matters? Behave, if you cause trouble, I'll be the first to discipline you."

Lin Fan shrugged and wisely dropped the subject. In the world of cultivation, taking multiple wives and concubines was nothing out of the ordinary. Even ancient cultivators still married countless beautiful concubines. Such things were considered perfectly normal.

After all, cultivators could preserve their youth and command unfathomable power. Concepts like age and worldly restraint meant nothing to them.

"Fan'er." Lin Xun said as he sat down beside him. "When I returned today, I captured all the experts of the seven great forces at the entrance of the Return Dominion. Many of them are supreme Emperor Ancestors. In the coming days, you'll use them as sparring partners to temper yourself."

Lin Fan blinked in surprise, then laughed, "Father, among those of the same cultivation stage, no one can match me anymore."

His words were casual, yet filled with unshakable confidence. In Zhao Jingxuan's eyes, that expression and tone were exactly like Lin Xun's in his youth.

"You might be able to defeat them one by one, but what if you face ten at the same time?" Lin Xun asked.

"If I go all out, that shouldn't be a problem." Lin Fan answered without hesitation.

"And what if it's one against a hundred?"

Lin Fan paused for the first time. "I've never fought in such a large group battle before. I won't claim I'd definitely win...but I don't think I'd lose easily either."

Zhao Jingxuan let out a soft laugh. "Your father never loses to anyone in the same realm. Numbers mean nothing to him."

Lin Fan's eyes widened as he turned to Lin Xun, "Is that still true?"

He already knew that his father now stood at the pinnacle of the Transcendence Realm, a being of heaven-defying power.

Lin Xun nodded. Before his son, there was no need for false modesty.

Lin Fan fell silent for a moment, then said, "Father, I know you're worried about how fast I cultivate...but honestly, tests like this won't mean much to me anymore. They'll be finished in no time."

Lin Xun nodded. "I know. Combat is only one aspect. What I truly want to temper is your mind."

Lin Fan's eyes lit up with curiosity. "Father, then what kind of training will that be?"

Lin Xun smiled. "You'll find out."

A grin spread across Lin Fan's face. "Then I'll look forward to it."

Lin Xun reached out and placed a hand on Lin Fan's shoulder. In that instant, Lin Fan felt his cultivation seal shut. No matter how he cultivated, no further progress could be made.

"That restriction will remain until I am satisfied," Lin Xun said quietly.

Lin Fan gave a wry smile. "Father...is that really necessary?"

Lin Xun blinked and said, "I'm worried you won't be able to restrain yourself. So I'll do it for you."

Zhao Jingxuan pursed her lips and smiled. With Lin Xun beside her once more, her heart finally felt at ease.

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The next day, Xuan Jiuyin departed the Return Dominion together with Jintian Xuanyue, heading back toward the Xuan Clan.

Lin Xun had originally intended to accompany them, but Xuan Jiuyin declined. Equipped with numerous killing weapons given to him by Xuan Feiling, he was confident that he could contend with not only those of the same realm, but even perfect Transcendence Stage experts.

For the time being, Lin Xun remained within the Fangchun Ruins, staying by Zhao Jingxuan and Lin Fan's side. He dragged out the supreme Emperor Ancestors he had captured from the seven great forces and declared that whoever could defeat his son, Lin Fan, would be spared and allowed to leave alive.

Although being treated as whetstone was a crushing humiliation for these supreme Emperor Ancestors, the possibility of survival ignited a desperate fighting spirit within them. Thus, battles unfolded within Fangchun Ruins every single day.

Unfortunately for them, every one of the supreme Emperor Ancestors was defeated. They stood no chance against Lin Fan. One-on-one was useless, and ten against one was no better.

Only when all thirty experts were mobilized together could they barely manage to withstand Lin Fan's onslaught. When forty of them joined forces at once, only then did Lin Fan begin to feel real pressure.

Throughout the process, Lin Xun observed every subtle detail of Lin Fan's performance. He knew that, for now, sheer numbers at the same cultivation level could still restrain his son. But judging by this momentum, it would not be long before Lin Fan became truly invincible in this cultivation level, able to even disregard the number of his opponents entirely.

“With the Grand Abyss Heaven Devourer and the True Dragon bloodline, this child’s talent truly defies the heavens...” Lin Xun murmured in awe. However, this only strengthened his resolve to temper and refine Lin Fan’s state of mind.

Half a month passed in the blink of an eye. During those fifteen days, Lin Xun learned of everything that had happened within the New Genesis Sect through Zhao Jingxuan. His understanding of the upheaval within the Return Dominion also grew deeper and clearer.

The outside world believed that this disturbance originating from the Return Dominion had only begun ten years ago. However, according to Zhao Jingxuan, signs of the change had already started to appear as early as twenty years ago.

Back then, violent spatial fluctuations would often erupt deep within the Return Dominion, rumbling like muffled thunder. Soon after, a boundless surge of vitality would burst forth like a colossal tide. Among that surge of vitality were countless rare and precious divine herbs and treasures, as though they had been cast up from the very depths of the world itself.

If the Return Dominion were likened to a vast ocean, then that surging vitality was its tide, and the treasures carried within it were like fish, shrimp, and shells washed up on the shore. It was during that time that Toady and A’lu, who had already stepped onto the Immortal Path, personally ventured into the depths of the Return Dominion to investigate. However, they were forced to turn back halfway.

The upheaval in the depths of the Return Dominion was far too terrifying. The surging vitality erupted out of control, and the sheer power it unleashed was simply beyond what they could withstand.

Even so, the Fangchun Secret Realm within the Return Dominion still reaped unimaginable benefits. Not only did the laws and order of heaven and earth undergo transformation, but the great dao aura within the realm also surged at a staggering pace. This was, naturally, a heavenly blessing for the New Genesis Sect that resided there, and every cultivator within it reaped extraordinary benefits.

Ten years ago, the depths of the Return Dominion erupted in a tremendous explosion of vitality, sending a shockwave through the entire lower world and even across the Ancient Nebula Road! It was then that a dao sword imbued with an Eternal aura burst forth from the depths of the Return Dominion, shaking the world and drawing the attention of countless forces in the Great Thousand Worlds.

By now, innumerable external forces had gathered in the Ancient Nebula Road, all drawn there by the upheaval in the Return Dominion. Anyone with keen insight could see that the Ancient Nebula Road was no longer the same as before. Whoever managed to claim this place would be blessed by heavens and reap immeasurable fortune from this great upheaval.

Naturally, all of this ignited endless turmoil and bloodshed. In less than a decade, war swept across the Ancient Nebula Road, stirring up countless storms of slaughter and despair. The worst of it unfolded around the Return Dominion!

The dao sword imbued with an Eternal aura was seized by A'lu and ultimately fell into Zhao Jingxuan's hands. As she spoke of these events, she took out the sword and handed it to Lin Xun for examination.

The blade was just over two feet long and four fingers wide. Its surface was a dull bluish-gray, and on the corroded hilt, the two characters 'Dark Absolute' could barely be made out. The sword was clearly in terrible condition, with its edge chipped and its body laced with cracks.

However, an astonishing aura of eternity still emanated from it. There was no doubt that this was once the weapon of an Eternal figure, lost in the depths of the Return Dominion for countless ages, only to reemerge now due to the upheaval in the Return Dominion.

This discovery only deepened Lin Xun's curiosity. What exactly would cause the Return Dominion, a place whose origin power was said to have long since dried up, undergo such an upheaval?

Originally, Lin Xun had planned to depart with everyone of the New Genesis Sect and return to the Eternal True Realm. In the end, however, he decided to remain a while longer.

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That day, Lin Zhong arrived at the Fangchun Ruins and reported, "Young Master, there are people waiting outside the Return Dominion, seeking an audience."

"Who are they?" Lin Xun asked

Lin Zhong's expression turned strange. "There are many of them...cultivators from various factions in the Ancient Nebula Road. They have come to beg you to take action, Young Master, to quell the chaos and bloodshed sweeping the world, and return peace and clarity to all under heaven."

Lin Xun was taken aback for a moment. "They really think highly of me."

Lin Zhong said in a low voice, "Young Master, in these past years, it is not only the worlds across the starry heavens that have fallen into chaos, but even the Spirit Burial Sea near the Return Dominion has also been soaked in blood. Slaughter is everywhere and if nothing is done, the number of innocent lives lost will only continue to rise."

Lin Xun fell silent for a moment, then asked, "Uncle Zhong, do you want me to help them?"

Lin Zhong quickly shook his head. "That is for you to decide, Young Master. I only know that the millions of ordinary people across the world are innocent, yet they are being swept into an unimaginable calamity. When cultivators wage war, a single clash can erase a city, even an entire region. Over these past ten years, who knows how many lives have already vanished..."

A heavy sorrow lingered in his voice. He then gave a self-mocking smile, "Originally, none of this had anything to do with me. I just thought...if no one cared about the fate of the common people, how unbearably tragic that would be..."

Lin Xun said, "Uncle Zhong, leave this matter to me."

As he spoke, he rose and walked out of Fangchun Secret Realm.

He thought of the ancient great sages, such as Sword Emperor Taixuan, Battle Emperor Mo Yang, and Dragon Elephant Battle Emperor. Each of them possessed a spirit vast enough to embrace the world and a courage beyond measure. They were all figures truly worthy of reverence and admiration.

He also thought of the peerless heroes who had guarded the Great Emperor Pass year after year, willing to stake their lives to defend it against enemies of the Eight Domains!

“When my dao was proven, I realized the suffering of all beings.” Unconsciously, Lin Xun recalled the words of Saint Buddha Xingjia, so filled with compassion and boundless mercy.

He also remembered the grand vow once made by the golden cicada: May all beings in the world become Saints one day!

At that moment, Lin Xun sensed a subtle yet profound transformation taking place within his state of mind.

Chapter 2983 Bring Order to the World

Outside the Return Dominion many cultivators stood in silence, scarcely daring to breathe, their hearts heavy with tension and unease. Their joint petition to persuade Lin Xun to step forward and quell the chaos would undoubtedly offend the external forces gathered on the outskirts. Unfortunately, they had no other choice.

If the turmoil continued, it would not only bring suffering to all living beings, but disaster would also continue to descend upon their clans and sects one after another. When catastrophe engulfed the world, no one could remain uninvolved.

“Everyone, with Emperor Daoyuan’s magnanimity, courage, and spirit, he will not sit idly by now that he has returned. Perhaps some of us have come for our own sake, and others for the sake of their clans, but in the end, we are all speaking for the sake of all living beings. Whether we succeed or fail, as long as we have done our utmost, we will have no regrets.” The gray-robed elder at the front said in a deep, resonant voice.

The crowd around him nodded in agreement, though their faces were filled with anxiety. No one knew whether Lin Xun would respond.

“Everyone, have you noticed? There are quite a few cultivators from external forces watching us from afar,” someone said in a low voice. “They probably hate us to the bone.”

Those words caused many expressions to change.

“What does it matter if they hate us? If we old ones won’t step forward, who will? Even if I die here today, I will have no regrets!” another person bellowed.

“Haha...is that so? Then let’s see whether this so-called Emperor Daoyuan will actually help a group of people who have neither ties nor relations with him.” A mocking laugh drifted over from the distance.

Another chilling voice followed, filled with menace. “You dare ask Lin Daoyuan to deal with us? Aren’t you afraid your entire clans will be hunted down and exterminated?”

“This world is vast. Do you really think Lin Daoyuan alone decides its fate? Even with his heaven-defying power, can he really stop all the great forces of the Great Thousand Worlds?”

Their words, laced with contempt, threat, and murderous intent, echoed across the void. The gray-robed elder and others stiffened, their expressions turning solemn. They all understood that if they returned empty-handed, destruction would surely follow!

“Do you regret it now?” someone asked bitterly.

“We have already come this far. How could we possibly turn back?” the gray-robed elder replied without hesitation.

Then suddenly, he froze. A tall, imposing figure had appeared in the sky above them, his gaze sweeping over the crowd.

“I am Zhang Zaiheng,” the gray-robed elder said, bowing deeply. “Together with my fellow cultivators, we pay our respects to you, Senior!”

The others quickly followed suit, their hearts surging with excitement. Emperor Daoyuan had appeared! To them, it was like a miracle.

“I have heard what you were saying. I know why you have come.” Lin Xun nodded faintly.

Meanwhile, in the distance, the external cultivators felt their scalps turn numb. Not daring to say another word, they instinctively began to retreat. The scene of Lin Xun sweeping away seven great forces with a flick of his sleeve half a month ago was still being discussed across the world.

Just then, Lin Xun's gaze shifted toward them. In that instant, terror seized their hearts. It was as though they were being stared at by the ruler of heaven itself, cold creeping up their spines. They immediately turned and fled.

"I made it clear long ago that no force is permitted to come within a thousand miles of the Return Dominion. Yet you dared to violate it knowingly. Do you really think I am someone you can offend so lightly?"

His indifferent voice reverberated through heaven and earth, and the moment the words fell, the cultivators of the external forces were frozen in midair, unable to move even an inch.

"Lin Daoyuan, do you really believe you alone can stand against all the powers of the Great Thousand Worlds by yourself?" One of them shrieked in panic. "I'm not afraid to tell you this...the Emperor Clans of the major planes have already united to eliminate you! If you have any sense at all, leave the Return Dominion at once, or disaster will soon descend upon you!"

Boom!

Before the words had even finished echoing through the air, the speaker and every other outsider cultivator nearby exploded into a cloud of blood mist. Not a single one was spared

"Ants that overestimate their own strength." Lin Xun said coldly as his gaze shifted back to Zhang Zaiheng and the others. "Whether you came here for personal reasons, or to speak on behalf of all living beings, it no longer matters. As for this matter...I will not stand idly by. Go back and wait for news."

With a flick of his sleeve, a beam of radiant light descended from the heavens, enveloping Zhang Zaiheng and the others. In the blink of an eye, their figures vanished without a trace. If he had allowed them to leave on their own, they likely would not have made it out of the Spirit Burial Sea alive!

"I alone cannot traverse the vast starry sky in so short a time..." A thought flashed through Lin Xun's mind.

Swoosh! Accompanied by a cascade of shimmering light, a delicate and pure maiden appeared before him. It was Wushuang.

"Wushuang, how about you go forth and bring order to this world on my behalf?" Lin Xun said calmly.

Wushuang lowered her head slightly. "Shuang'er will obey Master's command."

"Go, from this day onward, any force that brings calamity upon the world...you are to suppress it without mercy." With that, Lin Xun turned and stepped back into the Return Dominion.

Only after Lin Xun had vanished did Wushuang let out a slow breath, her voice soft and solemn. "This is the first task Master has ever given me...I absolutely cannot fail..."

A mysterious and unfathomable law power surged within her limpid eyes as she raised her gaze toward the distant heavens.

Shua!

In the next instant, her figure blurred, becoming ethereal, until transformed into countless streaks of sacred, rainbows-colored law light, shooting into the sky and spreading outward at an astonishing speed.

Within only a few breaths, an invisible and obscure law power came to envelop the skies above Spirit Burial Sea. It was formless, intangible, and completely undetectable to ordinary cultivators.

Those who had reached the Emperor Stage or above sensed it instantly. A terrifying fluctuation of law swept across the world, vast as the heavens themselves and exuding an indescribable aura of supreme authority and majesty.

In one region of the Spirit Burial Sea, two external factions were locked in a fierce battle over control of the waters. Both sides had mobilized hundreds of supreme Emperor Ancestors, their powers colliding and tearing apart the sea and sky.

Just then, a tribulation light blazed down from the heavens, dazzling and blinding, illuminating the space between sea and sky with an apocalyptic brilliance.

Boom!

As the tribulation light descended, every single figure from both sides was annihilated, erased as though they had never existed. At the same moment, all living beings scattered throughout the Spirit Burial Sea, regardless of their cultivation, whether outsiders or natives, felt a thought released by a supreme, unparalleled will.

“By order of my Master, Lin Xun, I hereby declare that from this day forth, all who bring calamity upon the common people shall be killed without mercy!”

Those words, devoid of any emotion, struck straight into the hearts of all who heard them, draining the color from countless faces.

“It’s Lin Daoyuan’s law power! It...it possesses its own will. This is a legendary Law Spirit, something only a rare ninth grade Heaven Rank Law can give birth to!” An Immortal from an external faction gasped, his face ashen with terror. Such a law power could annihilate a Heavenly Longevity cultivator like him with ease!

“Is this a warning to the world that whoever stirs up calamity will be erased from existence?”

At that moment, countless cultivators from the external factions felt an icy chill creep down their spines. Only then did they realize how dire the situation had become.

“Lin Daoyuan has finally taken action!”

“At last, we won’t be slaughtered at will by those external factions anymore!”

Countless native cultivators erupted into excited shouts and cheers. This news was nothing short of astonishing. It required no transmission at all, yet it resonated simultaneously in the hearts and minds of every cultivator.

“Thank goodness, as long as the innocent are not harmed, then everything will be fine. That means there’s still room to maneuver....” a seasoned veteran murmured, having grasped the deeper meaning behind Wushuang’s words

In other words, one might fight, one might kill, but the innocent must never be harmed or implicated. The only uncertainty lay in what exactly constituted ‘the innocent.’ And who would be the judge of that?

It was shrouded in ambiguity. Precisely because of that uncertainty, no one dared act recklessly any longer. Once a battle erupted, no one could be sure whether their actions would cross that invisible boundary and invite annihilation.

“Rise!”

High in the heavens, Wushuang’s power continued to spread, surging like a tide, reaching the Ziyao Empire, the Ancient Wasteland Domain, and the Nine Great Star Fields of the Ancient Nebula Road...

Ziyao Empire, New Genesis Dao Mountain.

This sacred mountain had once been the stronghold of the New Genesis Sect. However, after the sect migrated to the Return Dominion many years ago, it was left abandoned and unclaimed.

Although countless cultivation forces resided across the Ziyao Empire, the lingering might and prestige of the New Genesis Sect had long deterred any from attempting to occupy this place.

However, that changed when the upheaval in the Return Dominion began. The New Genesis Dao Mountain soon became a land of turmoil, as outside forces swarmed in to contend for it, stirring up endless bloodshed.

Today, another earth-shattering battle had just ended. Corpses were strewn across the mountain and blood soaked into the broken earth. It was a scene of absolute carnage.

“From this day forth, this place shall belong to my Celestial Water Grotto Heaven!”

Among the victors, an Immortal raised his head and laughed, intoxicated with pride.

Boom!

However, in the very next instant, a torrent of tribulation light poured down from the heavens like a celestial waterfall. The Immortal didn’t even have time to scream before he was reduced to ashes. His subordinates perished alongside him, their souls shattered and erased without a trace.

The Ancient Wasteland Domain.

The upheaval in the Return Dominion had transformed this vast world into a sacred land overflowing with vitality. Naturally, countless external factions had surged in, eager to seize its fortune.

Then, on this very day, in the minds of every cultivator across the Ancient Wasteland Domain, an emotionless voice resounded, “Today, on behalf of my Master, Lin Xun, I bring order to the world. All who bring calamity upon living beings shall be slain without mercy!”

In an instant, an enormous uproar swept through the world. Similar scenes unfolded across the various star fields of the Ancient Nebula Road. The invading forces from various planes of the Great Thousand Worlds felt an oppressive, suffocating pressure descend upon them, filling them with shock, fury, and unshakable fear.

Some refused to believe it at all. One cultivator lifted his gaze to the heavens and sneered, “I’d like to see what kind of law power dares touch me!” His voice rang with overbearing arrogance.

However, in the next instant, before the horrified eyes of the crowd, that supreme Emperor Ancestor let out a piercing scream as his cultivation was reduced to drifting ashes under the tribulation light.

For a time, such scenes repeated again and again. Cultivators had long walked a path that defied the heavens, how could they surrender so easily to a decree? Despite that, every attempt to challenge it ended the same way. Without exception, they were annihilated by the tribulation light.

Only then did the cultivators across the starry heavens truly begin to comprehend the terror of the law that now blanketed the firmament!

Chapter 2984 Sing Praise of His Name

Ancient Nebula Underworld.

Qing Ying, dressed in flowing azure, lifted her gaze toward the sky. Moments ago, Wushuang's voice echoed in her mind. While awe stirred in her heart, a faint smile curved her lips.

Just as in the past, she radiated an irresistible beauty. A blood-red umbrella rested in her hand, her translucent skin was like fine jade, and her features were delicate and refined. Her long, snow-white neck was slender and graceful. Even standing there casually, she exuded a charm capable of bewitching all living beings.

"Big Yellow, where are you going?" She asked, noticing the dog already charging toward the heavens, barely able to contain its excitement.

"To find that kid Lin Xun. He must have seen Master. If I find him, I'll find out what's happened to him." Big Yellow shouted.

"Wait, I'm coming too." With that, Qing Ying leaped into the air, chasing after Big Yellow.

.....

On the outer edge of Ancient Nebula Road, a group of cultivators, like a surging tide, had gathered in a region of the starry heavens. These were experts from various planes of the Great Thousand Worlds, united into an army vast enough to sweep the heavens.

More than thirty Immortals stood among them alone.

Half a month earlier, Lin Xun had returned and, in a single overwhelming sweep, annihilated the seven great forces outside the Return Dominion. The moment this news spread, the entire Great Thousand Worlds was thrown into an uproar, waves of shock rippling in every direction.

This vast army of cultivators had come for one purpose alone: to deal with Lin Xun! However, at this very moment, they all came to a halt. Their expressions shifted uneasily, and an oppressive tension settled over the area like a suffocating mist.

Earlier, Wushuang's emotionless voice had echoed in every one of their minds, making them aware that something was terribly wrong.

"From this moment onward, suppress your auras. None of you are to initiate battle without authorization. And if conflict cannot be avoided, you must not harm the innocent!" The order came from a black-robed man at the front. He drew a deep breath before speaking. His words left the crowd both shaken and stifled, an indescribable frustration welling up within them.

Originally, in the eyes of these external forces, the Ancient Nebula Road was nothing more than a fat lamb to be butchered at will and taken as they pleased. However, with Lin Xun's return and the unfathomable, heaven-shaking law power spreading across the firmament, they had no choice but to rein themselves and bow their heads!

"Fellow Daoist, is that law power truly impossible to oppose?" an elder couldn't help but ask.

"You all heard that voice just now, didn't you? Only a law spirit can possess such power. It is far more terrifying than a ninth grade Heaven Rank law!" The black-robed man said in a low, fearful voice. "Forget the Great Thousand Worlds, even in the Eternal True Realm, only the Immortal Giants of the Eighth Heaven Domain could wield such divine power."

"Immortal Giants?" Many people's hearts trembled as they sucked in cold breaths.

"We might dominate and run rampant in the Great Thousand Worlds, but in the Eternal True Realm, we are nothing. Before those Immortal Giants, we are no different from ants." The black robed man said, his voice slow and heavy, "Now that Lin Daoyuan has returned with a law spirit in hand, it is no exaggeration to say that he alone could effortlessly suppress any plane of the Great Thousand Worlds."

These words sent the allied forces' hearts sinking into despair, cold terror crawling along their spines.

Lin Daoyuan! He has reached such a terrifying level?

"Fellow Daoist, if that's the case, isn't our trip to the Return Dominion no different from marching to our deaths?" someone couldn't help but ask.

"Not necessarily." The black-robed man's eyes flashed. "The law spirit made it very clear that it will not tolerate harm to innocent lives, but it never said it would stop us external forces from setting foot into the Ancient Nebula Road."

At these words, many elder's eyes brightened, beginning to understand what he truly meant.

"As long as we cooperate and do not offend the law spirit, we may still be able to take root in this Ancient Nebula Road." The black-robed man said in a low voice, "Everyone, you must look further ahead. The upheaval in the Return Dominion is bound to trigger earth-shattering changes across the entire Ancient Nebula Road. Even if we are ultimately unable to set foot in the Return Dominion, as long as we can establish ourselves here, we will surely reap unimaginable benefits in the future!"

Upon hearing his words, many who had been dispirited just moments before began to show signs of renewed spirit.

Some even looked on with anticipation. "That's right. A terrifying existence like Lin Daoyuan cannot possibly remain in the Ancient Nebula Road forever. When the time comes...who can say who will truly call the shots in this world?"

.....

In just a few short days, as Wushuang's law power spread across the Ancient Nebula Road, the turmoil and slaughter that had engulfed the world gradually subsided. Even bitter rivals swallowed their hatred and stood down, no longer daring to shed blood recklessly.

For a time, the entire world entered an unprecedented state of peace and quiet, unlike anything in the past. This astounding transformation was sensed by countless living beings, and voices of joy and relief rose from every corner of the world.

“Throughout history, who has ever quelled global chaos and restored peace with a single hand, as Emperor Daoyuan has done?”

“All beings of the Ancient Nebula Road should bow in gratitude to Emperor Daoyuan!”

“If not for Emperor Daoyuan, the Ancient Nebula Road would already have fallen into absolute ruin, and no one would have escaped this catastrophe!”

Across the vast starry expanse, one name echoed again and again: Lin Xun! In the entire history of the Ancient Nebula Road, there had never been another like Lin Xun. Relying on his own strength alone, he brought order to the world and cleansed the heavens of chaos.

Not even the most legendary figures of the past had ever compelled the forces of every great plane of the Great Thousand Worlds to bow in submission as he had!

Ancient Wasteland Domain, Divine Apparatus Pavilion.

The Divine Apparatus Pavilion was known as the Penmen of the Cultivation World History. It wielded two supreme treasures, the Spring Autumn Brush and the Annals of History, to record the rise and fall of ages and the turning of heaven and earth. Anyone whose name was inscribed within its pages would be remembered for eternity.

Long ago, when Lin Xun roamed the Ancient Wasteland Domain as a youth, many of his astonishing deeds had been recorded by Mister Miaoxuan of the Divine Apparatus Pavilion. Today, Mister Miaoxuan once again took out the Spring Autumn Brush and the Annals of History, and began to write in solemn silence.

“After many years, Lin Daoyuan returned to the Ancient Nebula Road, wielding unparalleled power. He swept away the calamity that engulfed the Return Dominion and reestablished order across heaven and earth. None dared oppose him...”

“All living beings sing praise of his name and revere him as the master of the heavens. No one dares treat him with anything but awe...

“Searching the annals of past and present, I can find none worthy to stand in comparison!”

.....

The Return Dominion. Fangchun Secret Realm.

“Miss Qing Ying, you’ve come at the perfect time. Once I finish investigating the upheaval in the Return Dominion, you can come with us to the Eternal True Realm.”

Inside the grand hall of the New Genesis Sect, Lin Xun smiled as he spoke. Qing Ying and Big Yellow had arrived together today, and their appearance put him in a good mood.

Before Qing Ying could reply, Big Yellow cut in impatiently, “Whether we go to the Eternal True Realm can wait. What I want to know right now is how is my Master now?”

Lin Xun reached out and rubbed Big Yellow’s head. “Good boy. Don’t be so anxious.”

Big Yellow flew into a rage, baring its fangs and lunging to bite at Lin Xun’s thigh, but Lin Xun casually stepped aside.

“You brat! Just because your cultivation is higher than mine now, you think you can do whatever you want?!” Big Yellow roared and pounced again.

Lin Xun laughed and waved his hand, “Alright, alright, I’ll tell you.”

Only then did Big Yellow stop, squatting down on the floor with a disgruntled huff. Lin Xun concealed nothing. He told them everything about the Eternal True Realm, and about encountering his second senior brother, Zhong Qiu.

The moment he finished, Big Yellow sprang upright. "I'm going to the Kunlun Dominion!"

Lin Xun's expression turned grave. "That place has now become a true deathtrap, swarming with Eternal Stage experts! If you really wish to see my second senior brother, then stay by my side instead."

Big Yellow's expression clouded over. Qing Ying spoke softly from the side, "Big Yellow, you should listen to him."

Big Yellow said dejectedly, "Am I becoming more and more useless? I don't even have the ability to help my master anymore..."

Lin Xun said firmly, "You're wrong to think that way. Your master is my second senior brother, and I'm even more concerned about his safety than you are. If you truly wish to help him, then what you must do is cultivate diligently and grow stronger."

After a moment of silence, Big Yellow finally nodded. Only then did Lin Xun and Qing Ying truly relax. They had both been genuinely worried that he would rush to the Kunlun Dominion on his own and court disaster.

"Miss Qing Ying, Mister Lu is also in the Eternal True Realm. When the time comes, you and Big Yellow can come with me." Lin Xun looked at Qing Ying.

"Alright," Qing Ying agreed without hesitation.

That very day, Lin Xun settled Qing Ying and Big Yellow within the Fangchun Secret Realm. On that same day, Xuan Jiuyin and Jintian Xuanyue returned, accompanied by all the members of the Xuan Clan.

That evening, Lin Xun held a grand banquet, personally welcoming Patriarch Xuan Shangchen and the key figures of the Xuan Clan. Back then, if Xuan Shangchen had not sent a message in advance, allowing the Lin Clan to move into the territory of the Return Dominion, the Lin Clan would likely have been destroyed by the forces dispatched by Fu Wenli and the others!

This was a debt of life and blood. Lin Xun would never forget it. He arranged for the entire Xuan Clan to settle in as well, planning to take them with him when he eventually departed for the Eternal True Realm.

.....

“Husband, I plan to make a trip to the True Dragon Clan.” Later that day, Zhao Jingxuan sought Lin Xun out and shared her decision in a low voice.

Her parents, Zhao Yuanji and Ao Xingtang, were both in the True Dragon Clan. After learning that Lin Xun would be leaving with everyone in the Fangchun Secret Realm after investigating the mysteries of the Return Dominion, she wished to bring her parents away as well.

“I’ll go with you,” Lin Xun said after a moment’s thought.

The core reason Lin Xun had returned to the Ancient Nebula Road was to gather his family and loved ones together. Now that they had been reunited, he didn’t mind staying a while longer.

Truth be told, the upheaval in the Return Dominion had also aroused his curiosity. If not for the many matters demanding his attention over the past period of time, he would have already gone to the Return Dominion to investigate it himself.

Zhao Jingxuan pursed her lips in a smile. “You’re already busy enough. You should stay here. Xia Zhi has agreed to go with me.”

Lin Xun couldn’t help but glance at Xia Zhi with surprise and appreciation. This was the first time he had ever seen her volunteer for something like this.

“I can’t just turn a blind eye to Sister Jingxuan’s affairs,” Xia Zhi said, her voice clear and melodious.

Lin Xun felt a deep sense of relief and comfort. Given Xia Zhi’s temperament, such a change was truly not easy. After all, in the past, Xia Zhi had never cared about anyone in this world except him.

Chapter 2985 Fangchun Mountain’s Nine Great Inheritances

Zhao Jingxuan and Xia Zhi departed together. With Xia Zhi at her side, Lin Xun felt no real concern. After all, with Xia Zhi's strength, she could even slay cultivators at the pinnacle of the Transcendence Stage. Moreover, she possessed Mortal Calamity, a forbidden art linked to the Dao of Fate itself. In the Great Thousand Worlds, there was now no one who could rival her.

"Father." Lin Fan arrived in a hurry, moments after Lin Xun had finished seeing them off.

"What is it? Have you become invincible in this realm already?" Lin Xun asked with a faint smile.

Over the past few days, Lin Fan had followed Lin Xun's arrangement, battling the supreme Emperor Ancestors of the seven great forces to hone himself. His progress had been astonishing.

"Almost." Lin Fan said, grinning. "But I didn't come to see you this time for you to test my cultivation. There is another matter I must speak to you about."

His temperament was as calm as a breeze beneath pine branches, as clear as moonlight over a mountain stream. His appearance was handsome and refined. Even in his father's presence, he carried himself with an open and composed grace.

"What is it?"

"Come with me, Father." With that, he turned and shot off in the direction of the Fangchun Ruins.

Halfway there, a graceful figure flew toward them from afar. Before she had even arrived, her sweet and melodious voice rang out, "Brother Fan, I finally found you."

She had come for Lin Fan.

Lin Xun recognized her at once. She was Shi Yu's daughter, Shi Linlang. She was a bright and beautiful maiden.

"Uh...what is it?" Lin Fan paused awkwardly.

Shi Linlang did not answer him directly. Instead, she turned to Lin Xun and greeted him with a soft smile, "Uncle Lin."

Lin Xun's gaze shifted between the two of them. Guessing the situation at once, he let out a light chuckle. "You two talk. I'll step aside for a moment."

With his hands clasped behind his back, he continued walking, leaving them some distance and privacy.

Fan'er is already old enough to think of marriage... Lin Xun thought to himself. Shi Linlang is Shi Yu's daughter, and they have been good friends since a young age. If the two of them are truly compatible, that would be a fine match.

Of course, such matters were for Lin Fan himself to decide.

Before long, Lin Fan caught up to Lin Xun and said with a smile, "Father, let's go."

Lin Xun glanced at Shi Linlang's departing silhouette, then turned away without asking another word. This was a matter that should be decided by Lin Fan himself.

Fangchun Ruins.

Led by Lin Fan, they soon reached the depths of an underground cavern. It was clear that this place had lain abandoned for countless years, but now, an astonishing aura of the great dao filled the air, and faint echoes of dao sounds reverberated.

"Did this appear recently?" Lin Xun asked.

"Just yesterday," Lin Fan replied. "It's most likely due to the upheaval inside the Return Dominion. I have already entered and explored the cave, and I have reason to believe this place is connected to the Lord of Fangchun Mountain."

Lin Xun's expression sharpened. He immediately quickened his pace. Soon, they reached the end of the cavern. There, within a vast, empty space, lay only a single prayer mat and nothing else. In that instant, Lin Xun's gaze locked onto it.

"Father, that prayer mat is extremely mysterious. With my current cultivation, I can't draw near to it, can't touch it and can't even probe it with my divine sense," Lin Fan said in a low voice.

Lin Xun released his divine sense toward it and immediately sensed something profoundly abnormal. An unfathomable, obscure power of restriction surrounded the prayer mat, forming a terrifying invisible barrier. Even for him, drawing closer was unexpectedly difficult.

However, that restriction power was strangely familiar. A thought flashed through his mind. Without hesitation, he activated the power of his Sacred Combat Art and reached toward the prayer mat.

Swoosh!

The mat suddenly burst into radiant brilliance, unleashing a cascading rain of divine dao light. At the same time, a torrent of realizations flooded into Lin Xun's mind. This underground cavern had been carved out by the Lord of Fangchun Mountain himself, and his fourth senior brother, Ling Xuanzi, had once been suppressed here.

Moreover, upon that prayer mat, the Lord of Fangchun Mountain had sealed the imprints of Fangchun Mountain's nine great inheritances. Of course, he left them for Ling Xuanzi.

Unfortunately, at that time, Ling Xuanzi was consumed by resentment and failed to understand the true intent behind the Lord of Fangchun Mountain's suppression. Throughout the countless years of his confinement, he never attempted to comprehend the profound mysteries of those nine great inheritances.

Having learned all this, Lin Xun couldn't help but feel a surge of emotion in his heart.

Fortunately, Fourth Senior Brother has now turned over a new leaf. Otherwise, with his abilities, if he had chosen to bring calamity upon the world, the consequences would have been utterly unimaginable.

“Father, what secret lies within that prayer mat?” Lin Fan asked, his curiosity evident.

“Wait here for a moment.” Lin Xun replied. He stepped forward and sat cross-legged upon the mat. With a single thought, the nine inheritances sealed within it flooded into his mind.

In the past, he had often heard his senior brothers and sisters speak of these inheritances, but aside from the Sacred Combat Art, he had never truly grasped their mysteries. Now, however, the mysteries of these inheritances now revealed themselves to him one by one.

They were the Sacred Combat Art, Great Genesis Heart Sutra, Fangchun Prison, Wandering Sutra, Boundless Nearness, Transformation Freedom, Unfettered Roaming, Unbounded Walker and the Sutra of Perfected Knowledge.

Each of Fangchun Mountain’s nine great inheritances had been personally created by the Lord of Fangchun Mountain, and each possessed power beyond measure. Even Ninth Senior Brother Ge Yuping’s Grand Dao Yellow Court Classic had been derived from the Transformation Freedom inheritance!

When cultivated to its peak, one could assume the form of all things in existence, heaven and earth, the sun and moon, mountains and seas, and even all living beings. It was a technique that seemed to steal the secrets of creation itself.

As for the Sutra of Perfected Knowledge, its essence lay in the principle of ‘investigating all things to attain true understanding,’ to discern the workings of creation and perceive its hidden mysteries. Senior Brother Pu Zhen’s All-Inclusive Plant Index was derived from this very sutra.

Only after a long while did Lin Xun finally open his eyes, the profound mysteries of the nine great inheritances now fully etched into his mind.

“Although these are Fangchun Mountain’s nine great inheritances, their mysteries can only be cultivated up to the Emperor Realm. Master did this out of concern that his successors might become bound by his path and be unable to walk their own...”

Lin Xun understood this well. Only after stepping into the Emperor Stage could one truly begin to walk one's own dao path. His master, the Lord of the Fangchun Mountain, had acted with profound foresight and care.

As the saying went: the master leads you to the gate, but the cultivation is up to the individual.

Before reaching the Emperor Stage, one could still rely on the teachings of one's sect. However, once one stepped into the Emperor Realm, only the self could seek the great dao. To go further along this path, one had to create one's own Emperor scripture!

Just as Lin Xun himself had forged the Great Dao Furnace Art when he reached the Emperor Stage.

"Fan'er, this prayer mat contains the Fangchun Mountain's nine great inheritances. You may remain here and study them." Lin Xun said as he stood up.

Lin Fan fell silent in thought. Then he gave a faint smile and shook his head. "Forget it. I understand the principle of drawing inferences from one example, but my Emperor Path has already reached its limit. No inheritance under heaven holds any meaning for me now."

Lin Xun's brows lifted slightly. "Since you're so confident in your dao, shall we have a spar, father and son?"

Lin Fan froze. "Father, isn't that a bit unfair?"

Lin Xun said calmly, "Relax. I will only use the power of the Supreme Emperor Ancestor Stage against you."

Lin Fan's fighting spirit instantly ignited, his eyes blazing. "Father, I've long heard your dao is said to be unmatched in all ages, unrivalled under heaven. I've long wished to see it with my own eyes."

Lin Xun cast him a glance and said no more, "Let's go."

Moments later, above the Fangchun Ruins, the father and son stood facing one another in mid-air.

“Father, please!”

Lin Fan took a deep breath. A trace of pride and sharp confidence flashed across his handsome face as the aura around him shifted. In an instant, his presence transformed, radiating an overwhelming dominance, as if he stood above all under heaven.

“Come.” Lin Xun replied, suppressing his cultivation to the level of the Supreme Emperor Ancestor Stage.

“I won’t go easy on you, Father.” Lin Fan let out a low chuckle, his eyes burning with fighting spirit as he shot forward like a streak of light. At his current level of cultivation, he no longer paid any mind to those of the same realm. In this world, there were few who could truly ignite his fighting spirit.

However, when facing his father, everything was different. Since his childhood, his father had stood in his heart like an unreachable mountain, and even now, Lin Fan’s respect and admiration for him remained as deep as ever.

Of note, within that admiration burned a quiet, unyielding ambition: one day, he would catch up. He would stand shoulder to shoulder with his father on the path of the dao...and eventually, surpass him.

At this moment, Lin Fan was absolutely confident that even if he could not defeat his father, at the very least, he would not be defeated at the Supreme Emperor Ancestor Stage!

Unfortunately, reality was cruel. In a single exchange, a simple punch from Lin Xun sent Lin Fan flying through the air. His body twisted violently, his feet skidding as he barely managed to steady himself. His face was filled with astonishment.

Meanwhile, Lin Xun hovered in the distance, utterly relaxed.

“Should we continue...or?” Lin Xun asked.

Those words seemed to say: You're still far from enough.

"Again."

Lin Fan's expression grew calm and deadly serious, and an undercurrent of extreme, explosive power began to seethe around him.

Bang! Before long, a palm strike slammed him down into the ground. When he rose again, his handsome face was streaked with dust and his appearance was utterly disheveled.

He stared up in disbelief, "Is this really the kind of power a supreme Emperor Ancestor can wield?"

Lin Xun smiled. "I wouldn't stoop to using Immortal-level power against you."

The corner of Lin Fan's lips twitched. His jaw tightened. "Again!"

Bang!

Bang!

Bang!

What followed was defeat after defeat for Lin Fan. Each time he ended up in a miserable state, yet he never suffered serious injury. Lin Xun simply could not bear to truly harm his own son. All he wished was to wear away the boy's arrogance and temper his state of mind.

After a long while, Lin Fan stood there, panting heavily, his body coated in dust, his hair a mess and his expression constantly shifting.

"Not going again?" Lin Xun asked.

Lin Fan gave a wry smile. "Father, I'm not some masochist. If I already know something is impossible and still choose to do it, that would truly be foolish."

"Fan'er, your strength and combat techniques do have some flaws, but they are only minor. The real issue is that your cultivation has never been tempered by true life-and-death experience. You lack the kind of fierce bearing that can only be tempered in blood ..."

Lin Xun stepped forward and handed him a wine gourd. Then, in a patient tone, he said, "Only one who has faced life and death can fully draw out their true potential and break their own limits. This is the ultimate secret to tempering oneself. No guidance and teachings in the world is more powerful than personal experience."

He paused for a moment, then added, "In the end, it all comes down to one thing."

Lin Fan blurted out. "What ?"

"You need to be humbled." Those light spoken words struck harder than any blow, like an indestructible sword piercing straight through Lin Fan's pride.

Chapter 2986 Refining Eternal Law

Throughout his entire cultivation journey, Lin Fan had never once encountered a true rival at the same level. This had quietly fostered a trace of arrogance within him. He had never even noticed until today's crushing defeat shattered it. Only now did his state of mind shift as though he had just awakened from a long and hazy dream.

After standing in silence for a long time, Lin Fan finally bowed deeply, shame written across his face. "Thank you, Father, for this wake-up call...I finally see the truth."

Lin Xun looked at him for a moment, then asked, "Fan'er, are you willing to undergo a cycle of reincarnation and cultivate again from the beginning?"

Lin Fan froze. "Father...what do you mean?"

Lin Xun proceeded to recount in detail how he himself had once entered the Reincarnation World within the Nirvana of Transcendence to temper his dao anew.

When he finished, Lin Fan's eyes lit up with excitement. "There's actually something like that in this world?"

Lin Xun smiled faintly. "If you're willing, you can enter it right now."

He possessed the Nirvana Order, and within it lay the Reincarnation World. He could send Lin Fan in at any moment.

"I am willing." Lin Fan replied without slightest hesitation.

Without delay, Lin Xun invoked the Nirvana Order and sent Lin Fan into the Reincarnation World.

.....

"It's time to make a trip to the depths of the Return Dominion." As he walked through the Fangchun Secret Realm, Lin Xun made his decision.

He soon found Xuan Jiuyin, Jintian Xuanyue, Toady, A'lu and the others, informing them of his intent and instructing them to guard the Fangchun Secret Realm in his absence. That very day, he departed.

.....

The Return Dominion was one of the four great dao dominions. Legend had it that every river in the myriad worlds, and even the celestial rivers flowing through the depths of the cosmos, ultimately converged in the mysterious, primordial Return Dominion.

In his youth, Lin Xun had heard that, in the earliest ages, five sacred mountains once encircled the Return Dominion: Yingzhou, Penglai, Fanghu, Daiyu, and Yuanjiao.

Each sacred mountain spanned thirty thousand miles and was separated by seventy thousand feet, linking the starry seas above and the nine hells below. They were each majestic, mysterious and unfathomable.

However, Lin Xun now understood that when the origin power of the Return Dominion dried up in the beginning of the primeval era, everything there had changed as well. At least, those five legendary mountains had long since disappeared.

The Return Dominion was not composed solely of the Fangchun Secret Realm. Within it lay countless other secret realms, many of which Lin Xun never explored. Over the years, as upheaval erupted in its depths, the Return Dominion had been flooded with violent, chaotic surges of vitality, so fierce that no one had been able to draw near.

However, the more dangerous it became, the more curious Lin Xun grew. Even now, the divine sword that exuded an Eternal aura and its hilt engraved with the words Dark Absolute, was etched deep in his memory.

It was unmistakably a sword belonging to an Eternal being, a true Eternal weapon. Even though it had been heavily damaged, it still remained an undying trace of Eternal aura. Furthermore, that very sword was cast out from the depths of the Return Dominion!

Shua!

Lin Xun's figure blurred and shot forward, heading straight into the depths of the Return Dominion. Along the way, monstrous tides of vitality surged forth like crashing ocean waves, exuding a primal, ancient aura that was utterly astonishing.

It was this vitality that reshaped the laws and order of the entire Ancient Nebula Road, giving rise to an unprecedented great dao presence! However, walking amidst these surging torrents and enduring their impact was unimaginably dangerous.

It was no wonder that Toady and A'lu had been forced to retreat. Such surges of vitality were enough to crush even Emperors, and the deeper one ventured, the more violent and dangerous they became. Before long, even Lin Xun had no choice but to fully circulate his cultivation to resist and disperse it.

Along the way, he came across many secret realms and entered them to explore and investigate. However, aside from divine herbs and divine materials, nothing there truly caught his attention.

In truth, at his current level of cultivation, anything below the Immortal tier had long since lost its appeal to him. He pressed on for the time it takes for a stick of incense to burn.

Boom!

From within the raging torrent of vitality, a ghastly pale skeletal hand suddenly thrust forth. Its five bare fingers were as smooth as polished jade, each knuckle pulsing with a chilling aura of eternity.

The skeletal hand shot forward, erupting with a ferocious and sinister aura as it lunged for Lin Xun. In that instant, Lin Xun was chilled to the bone and he instinctively unleashed all his might to meet the attack head-on. It was impossible to dodge it.

Bang! He was blasted backward as if struck by a divine hammer, staggering through the air as shock and disbelief twisted his features. At his current level, he could suppress even an Eternal Will Dharma Form, yet now he had been driven back by nothing more than a single hand radiating an aura of eternity!

Shua!

Before he could even steady himself, the five fingers of the skeletal hand abruptly flew open, transforming into five peerless, razor-sharp divine swords. A tide of black Eternal sword qi rushed toward him.

This strike was even more terrifying than the first. Lin Xun dodged with everything he had, not daring to hesitate for even an instant.

Rumble! The surrounding void shattered into chaos. The pitch-black sword intent was too powerful. Although Lin Xun managed to avoid a direct hit, the residual power still caught him.

Chi!

His near indestructible immortal body was marred by ghastly sword wounds and blood sprayed everywhere.

“How can it be this powerful? Could the owner of this hand be a true Eternal being?” For the first time in many years, a real sense of danger gripped Lin Xun.

Over the years, he had rarely suffered injury, and even more rarely had he encountered a truly worthy opponent. Now, he had been wounded by nothing more than a single hand. It felt so unreal it almost seemed like a nightmare.

Shua!

The deathly pale skeletal hand continued to swirl with an aura of eternity. With every strike, a sword intent as dark and devouring as an endless night erupted forth, savage and overbearing, as though the eternal darkness itself had descended to swallow all things.

Even as Lin Xun evaded with all his strength, danger closed in step by step. The sword wounds on his body continued to multiply. None of them were fatal, but together they left him looking utterly battered and tragic.

“I can’t afford to drag this out any longer...”

A grim light flashed through his eyes. When the skeletal hand came crashing down again, he wasted no time. With a decisive thought, he activated the power of the Gate of Exile.

Boom! In the blink of an eye, the skeletal hand, together with the black Eternal sword intent it unleashed, vanished into the Gate of Exile. Surprisingly, it went smoothly.

“That’s right, the skeletal hand has no intelligence. Although its power is boundlessly terrifying, it knows nothing of the mysteries of the Gate of Exile. It walked straight into the trap.”

Lin Xun let out a long, heavy breath, then realized how wasteful that move was. He had expended nearly thirty percent of his power to use the Gate of Exile, yet it had only remained active for a few breaths.

“Since it’s here, I might as well take a closer look at what it really is.”

With a thought, he compressed the Gate of Exile into a wisp of light, allowing it to maintain its form for an entire hour. Then his figure plunged straight into the Realm of Exile. The familiar gray world unfolded before him once more. His figure flickered through it, and in moments, he arrived at the region where the Corpse Severing Millstones lay.

Rumble—

Two enormous, millstone-like divine discs, one black and one white, ground against one another, grinding and rotating with a deep, thunderous rumble that seemed to echo through heaven and earth.

Lin Xun came to a halt, his eyes narrowing. Between the opposing divine millstones, the pale skeletal hand was being crushed inch by inch. Like grains cast into a mill, a faint clattering rang out as it was ground apart.

Under Lin Xun’s gaze, the hand was completely pulverized and erased from existence, but a wisp of black dao power remained behind, deep, silent and as still as eternal night. Lin Xun’s heart stirred in astonishment.

The Corpse Severing Millstones were born from the Principle of Annihilation, one of the fundamental principles of heaven and earth, capable of completely erasing the power of any cultivator without leaving a trace. This was the first time Lin Xun had encountered a power that could not be fully obliterated by it.

Lin Xun immediately grasped the black dao power across the void. After a brief examination, his expression visibly changed. It was an incomparably pure and terrifying Eternal law, containing an overwhelming sword intent. Though it was only a fragment, it radiated a power so great that even Lin Xun felt a deep sense of danger.

“An Eternal law is no different from the true principles of heaven and earth. The reason this fragment wasn’t annihilated is because its level is equal to the Principle of Annihilation itself...” Understanding dawned on Lin Xun.

Once the principles of heaven and earth were grasped and refined by an Eternal being, they transformed into their own Eternal law. It was akin to Divine Rank law, both possessing power comparable to the power of fundamental principles and belonging to the same tier.

“The skeletal hand was so terrifying precisely because of this black Eternal law. I wonder what would happen if I refined it completely...” Lin Xun murmured in thought.

For any other cultivator, such a thought would be unthinkable. However, for Lin Xun, it was not a difficult matter.

His Immortal law had already surpassed that of his peers, and after absorbing ninety percent of the power of the Nirvana Order, it was already on par with Divine Rank law. In that sense, it was fully capable of contending with the power of principles.

After a brief pause, a resolute glint flashed in his eyes. Drawing in a deep breath, he sat cross-legged in the void and began to circulate his cultivation, guiding his Immortal law to refine the black Eternal law.

Boom!

Violent fluctuations erupted from the black Eternal law, but they were swiftly suppressed and enveloped by Lin Xun’s Immortal law. Without any unforeseen disturbance, the black Eternal law began to be refined, little by little...

In less than a quarter of an hour the black Eternal law was completely refined. At the same time, Lin Xun keenly sensed a subtle transformation within his Immortal law. Though the change was almost imperceptible, it shook him to the core.

During his time in the Origin Sect, he had refined many rare ninth grade Heaven Rank laws, and he had even refined the Nirvana law to ninety percent. He had truly believed that his own Immortal law had already been tempered to its absolute limit.

Now, new changes had emerged once again, completely beyond anything he had expected.

After calming himself, a realization slowly surfaced. "Eternal law is nothing other than the power of the world's principles, and Divine Rank laws likewise contain that same power. By refining this black Eternal law, it is no different from refining a Divine Rank law..."

"Does this mean that, although all Heaven Rank laws are now meaningless to me, as long as I can absorb and refine Divine Rank laws, my own Immortal law can continue to evolve?"

This realization left Lin Xun stunned for a moment. If that was true, then even at the perfect Transcendence Realm, had his Immortal law still not reached true perfection?

If that was the case, what right did he have to even speak of attaining eternity?

"Fortunately, I never rushed to break into the Eternal Stage...Otherwise, the flaws in my Immortal law alone would have been enough to bring utter disaster upon me while attempting breakthrough..."

Lin Xun quietly breathed a sigh of relief.

Chapter 2987 Mysterious Gateway

Before this, Lin Xun had never once thought of refining a Divine Rank law. Such power was unimaginably precious and rare, possessed only by the twelve Eternal Divine Clans of the Ninth Heaven Domain in the Eternal True Realm.

Though he himself now possessed the Divine Rank law Absolute Beginning, he had never considered refining it. He had simply never imagined that his own Immortal law would undergo such subtle yet profound changes through the refinement of Divine Rank law power.

The black Eternal law he had just refined, though left behind by a true Eternal being, could still be considered a Divine Rank law. Of course, it was a fragment that had been severely damaged.

"The upheaval in the depths of the Return Dominion...clearly involves more than one treasure tied to the power of the Eternal Realm. If I can gather enough Eternal law on this trip, it may be enough to refine my Immortal law to an unprecedented height. At that point, breaking through to the Eternal Stage would no longer carry any flaws.

“Though this is dangerous, as long as I have the Gate of Exile, gathering them should not be difficult...”

With these thoughts in mind, Lin Xun rose to his feet and hastened toward the exit of the Realm of Exile.

Shua!

Moments later, his figure reappeared within the Return Dominion. Glancing at the Gate of Exile, he saw that it still retained enough power to persist for a time. With a casual thought, the Gate of Exile that was like a wisp of light expanded, transforming into a three-foot-high gate that hovered before him.

Then he charged deeper into the Return Dominion. The surging, violent currents of vitality were terrifying. Even Lin Xun was forced to unleash his true strength just to continue forward.

However, with the Gate of Exile before him, the raging waves of energy were swallowed up without a trace. Lin Xun immediately felt a sense of ease, and his speed increased dramatically.

It was as if a bottomless abyss had opened in front of him. No matter how violently the currents of vitality surged toward him, they were all devoured the instant they touched the gate. With the path cleared, how could his advance possibly be slow?

“Kill!”

Before long, a deafening war cry tore through the raging storm of vitality, sending a violent tremor through Lin Xun’s mind. From the depths of the churning, sea-like torrent, an incomplete, mangled corpse burst forth.

Its lower body was gone and its head was missing. Only half of a torso and two arms remained, dripping with dark, congealed blood. Despite that, it radiated a boundlessly terrifying Eternal dao light, dense with murderous intent.

That aura alone was enough to annihilate any being beneath the Eternal Realm, including Immortals. In fact, the moment Lin Xun's gaze fell upon it, a fatal sense of danger seized him. He had no doubt that, if he tried to face that thing head-on, death would be inevitable.

But now...

His eyes flickered toward the Gate of Exile hovering in front of him. Gritting his teeth, he charged straight toward the grotesque corpse.

"Kill!"

The blood-soaked remnant lunged forward, its arms swinging as the heavens seemed to collapse and the earth split apart. The void shattered and azure divine flames erupted and condensed into colossal wheels of destruction, roaring toward Lin Xun.

His spirit and mind trembled violently, and his skin burned as if pierced by countless needles. The overwhelming sense of danger nearly crushed his breath from his lungs. It was far too powerful! Compared with this, even the Will Dharma Forms of Eternal beings were not worth mentioning.

Boom!

Despite that, he did not retreat. Instead, he stepped forward with the Gate of Exile. With a deafening roar, the azure divine flames and the bloodstained corpse itself were completely swallowed by the gate.

Almost at the same moment, the Gate of Exile, battered by the impact, exploded as well, bursting apart into a rain of radiant light. The backlash smashed into Lin Xun, making him stumble as his blood and qi roiled violently within him. Pain surged through his chest, and he nearly coughed up blood.

He raised his head, shock written across his eyes. "This corpse has been dead for countless ages, stripped of mind and awareness, yet it can still release such terrifying power. Is this the true power that belongs only to the Eternal Realm?"

He had, of course, seen Eternal existences before, and had even witnessed their splendor in battle. However, he had never once crossed blades with one himself. Now, having personally faced the pale, skeletal hand and blood-soaked corpse, he at last understood just how unfathomably powerful the Eternal Stage truly was.

No matter how heaven-defying his own strength was, he stood no chance against them! Fortunately, he had the Gate of Exile. Otherwise, he would have long been forced to turn back and retreat from the perilous depths of the Return Dominion.

Hu—Lin Xun let out a long, turbid breath, then clenched his teeth and activated the Gate of Exile once more.

This time, he did not immediately enter the Realm of Exile to investigate the Eternal law left behind after the bloodstained corpse was obliterated. Instead, he pressed on deeper into the Return Dominion. Once he had gathered enough ‘prey,’ he would refine them all at once.

As Lin Xun ventured farther, he encountered increasingly bizarre and horrifying remnants, such as broken fragments of Eternal weapons, blood-soaked and tattered garments, and shattered armor riddled with holes and cracks...

All of them exuded a lingering, ancient aura of eternity. Unfortunately, these objects had been lost for countless ages, their spirituality had long since vanished, and their damage was so severe that they practically had no use. In addition to these, Lin Xun also came across severed limbs that clearly belonged to figures of the Eternal Stage.

There was a skull with a hole pierced cleanly between the eyebrow, its flesh rotted and corroded, its features twisted into something ferocious and grotesque. There were also eyeballs stained and mottled with filth, and skulls whose crowns had been worn down almost to nothing.

Not a single one of them was intact. Lin Xun could not help but feel that, long ago, a cataclysmic battle between Eternal beings had erupted beneath the Return Dominion, leaving behind countless severed limbs and shattered remains.

Just the thought of it sent a chill crawling down his spine. Even so, he collected every fragment, every broken piece of bone and flesh that came from an Eternal existence, drawing them all into the Gate of Exile.

When the power of the Gate of Exile finally ran dry and dissipated once more, Lin Xun had gathered nine such pieces of 'prey.'

"Can't go any farther for now...I must recover first."

He came to a halt. Barely thirty percent of his cultivation remained. If he unleashed the Gate of Exile again, he would be completely drained. This time, he activated the Seal of Temporal Restriction, condensing a restriction barrier amid the violent, surging tides of vitality.

Then, he sat down cross-legged, took out several precious elixirs, and began to recover.

Rumble!

Vast, tumultuous waves of vitality surged up unceasingly from the depths, battering the array and making the Seal of Temporal Restriction tremble repeatedly. Under normal circumstances, the seal could last for half a month.

Here, it would probably only hold for three days at most. However, this was more than enough. Lin Xun possessed boundless stores of rare medicines and divine elixirs. In barely half a day, his cultivation had been completely restored.

"It's a pity that two innate divine powers can't be activated at the same time, or else they would clash..." Lin Xun sighed.

If that was possible, he could use the Gate of Exile to continuously draw in the remains, collect the Eternal law left behind after they were refined by the Corpse Severing Millstones, and then refine that power himself while sheltered within the Seal of Temporal Restriction.

Unfortunately, this was clearly impossible. Left with no other choice, he withdrew the power of the Seal of Temporal Restriction, and once again summoned the Gate of Exile. He decided to press on until he had gathered enough 'prey' and then refine the Eternal laws left behind by them.

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Following that, he advanced. Whenever the power of the Gate of Exile neared depletion, he immediately stopped and activated the Seal of Temporal Restriction to restore his strength... It became a cycle, repeating itself again and again.

Along the way, he encountered more and more shattered objects that still exuded the aura of eternity, but he ignored them all. He focused solely on gathering the severed remains left behind by Eternal beings.

Even so, the harvest was far from small. In a single day, dozens of such 'prey' were swallowed by the Gate of Exile. Of course, this also meant the constant depletion of Lin Xun's strength, and the continuous consumption of elixirs to restore it.

"By now, I've already traveled at least a hundred miles...so why haven't I reached the end?"

After a long while, Lin Xun's brow furrowed in a frown. He had come to the depths of the Return Dominion to investigate the source of the upheaval, but even now, the path ahead was still drowned in surging ocean-like waves of turbulent vitality, with no end in sight.

"Oh well...I'll just treat this as a trip to 'collect corpses'..." he muttered, shaking his head as he pressed on.

Half a day later, just as Lin Xun had fully restored his strength and was about to withdraw the Seal of Temporal Restriction, his expression suddenly changed. In the far distance, a colossal outline flickered into view, like an immense door spanning between heaven and earth, but it was quickly drowned within the endless white tides of vitality, making it impossible to see clearly.

Even so, Lin Xun's heart lurched violently. Without hesitation, he withdrew the Seal of Temporal Restriction, unleashed the Gate of Exile and shot toward it.

As he drew closer, a colossal gateway came into view, towering into the sky and spanning the horizon itself. It was so vast it defied imagination. It was just like the legendary Gate of Heaven!

From that enormous gateway, boundless white tides of vitality surged forth, spreading across heaven and earth. The spectacle was both awe-inspiring and terrifying.

“So that’s it...The power that brought upheaval to the Return Dominion clearly originates from this enormous, mysterious gateway...” Lin Xun murmured, his eyes gleaming.

At the same time, he noticed that as vast ocean-like waves of vitality poured out, countless fragments were also swept out from within the enormous gateway. Shattered divine fragments, broken artifacts, severed limbs, torn arms, and scattered remnants of corpses... Every single one of them exuded an unmistakable, chilling aura of eternity.

It was as though beyond that sky-piercing gateway lay a world of tombs, a vast burial ground for countless Eternal beings. This was undeniably eerie and unsettling. Because the vast, surging vitality that had caused the upheaval in the Return Dominion also originated from that very same gateway.

On one side surged boundless vitality and on the other lay the remnants of death. Both were issued from the same source, forming a stark and unsettling contrast that would make anyone’s heart tremble with unease.

At this moment, even Lin Xun hesitated. Should he enter that mysterious, colossal gateway and see what lay beyond?

Chapter 2988 Five Sacred Mountains

Lin Xun fell into deep contemplation. Before him lay two paths. The first was to remain here, where he could continue gathering ‘prey’ from what seemed to be an inexhaustible source.

However, this option had a clear drawback. Constantly activating the two forbidden innate powers, the Gate of Exile and the Seal of Temporal Restriction, would drain his strength at an alarming rate. In the end, recovery would become the critical limiting factor.

Although his wealth was immense and he carried large quantities of divine elixirs capable of restoring his strength, at his current rate of expenditure, he would be able to hold out for no more than three months.

The second option was to press on and charge straight into that mysterious gateway. This course of action was undeniably perilous. After all, no one knew what kind of terrifying dangers lurked beyond it.

However, by entering it, he might be able to truly uncover the real cause of the upheaval in the Return Dominion.

“What should I do...?” He hesitated.

His five dao bodies and the Limitless Abyss Sword Cauldron had both been left in the Origin Sect. At present, he could only rely on his true body. If anything went wrong, it could even jeopardize his plan to lead everyone from the Fangchun Secret Realm to the Eternal True Realm.

“Fine, I’ll stay here and observe for now.” Drawing in a deep breath, he made his decision. He was never one to waver. The moment his decision was made, he swept straight into the Gate of Exile, determined to spend the coming days refining the Eternal laws left behind by the ‘prey.’

Buzz—Two colossal Corpse Severing Millstones, one black and one white, rotated slowly in the void, each exuding the terrifying fluctuations of the Principle of Annihilation.

Nearby, dozens of spheres of lights of varying sizes hovered silently in the air, red, azure, white, black, purple. It was a dazzling and resplendent display. Each one emanated a distinct and profound aura of Eternal law.

“Thirty-nine...and several of them clearly share the same aura.” Lin Xun quickly realized that these Eternal laws had come from nine different Eternal beings. One thing was certain now: those nine beings had perished long ago beyond the towering, mysterious gateway in the depths of the Return Dominion.

Without wasting another moment, Lin Xun flicked his sleeve. Carrying the Eternal laws, he stepped out of the Realm of Exile.

Shua!

As he withdrew the Gate of Exile, he once again activated the power of the Seal of Temporal Restriction. A forbidden formation took shape around him as he sat down cross-legged within it to meditate.

“I wonder how far my Immortal law will evolve after refining all these Eternal laws...”

Next, he cast aside all distracting thoughts and quietly focussed on recovering his strength.

Rumble—In the far distance, the enormous, mysterious gateway trembled as vast torrents of vitality burst forth like a celestial ocean, rolling outward with thunderous force. That surge of power could effortlessly annihilate even those at the Immortal Stage.

Even Lin Xun had to rely on his innate divine abilities to resist and neutralize it. Otherwise, despite his perfect Transcendence cultivation, he would have been left grievously wounded. Under such pressure, even the Seal of Temporal Restriction was shaking violently. At most, it could endure for a day.

Fortunately, one day was more than enough. Six hours later, Lin Xun’s nearly exhausted strength had been fully restored.

Then, over the next twelve hours, he began refining all thirty-nine strands of Eternal law. Having been refined by the Principle of Annihilation within the Corpse Severing Millstones, these Eternal laws were pure beyond compare, utterly free of impurities and therefore remarkably easy to refine.

In the past, he had gathered fragments of Divine Rank law in the Ten Directions Demon Realm. Compared to what he held now, they were nothing more than dewdrops before a roaring river. The difference was like heaven and earth.

After refining the thirty-nine strands of Eternal laws, Lin Xun could clearly feel the might of his Immortal law surging to new heights! This change left him momentarily unsettled.

When he returned to the Ancient Nebula Road, the power of his Immortal law was already comparable to that of a Divine Rank law. The only reason he could not refine the final tenth of the Nirvana law's core power lay in the limits of his own cultivation.

Now, his Immortal law that was already on par with Divine Rank law, was undergoing another transformation. It completely exceeded his expectations. If this continued, could it actually surpass a Divine Rank law?

For the first time, Lin Xun felt that there was something abnormal about his own Immortal Law. After pondering for a long time, he finally dared to conclude that it had to be connected to the ninety percent of the Nirvana law he had refined!

Suppressing those distracting thoughts, he raised his gaze toward the colossal, mysterious gateway in the far distance. He withdrew the Seal of Temporal Restriction and unleashed the Gate of Exile, like a seasoned fisherman casting out a great net.

Boundless tides of vitality poured out without end, bringing with them countless fragments steeped in an aura of eternity. From time to time, severed limbs and broken remnants of Eternal beings surfaced within the torrent. These were the 'prey' Lin Xun sought.

Over the next three days he stayed in this area. On average, he collected roughly thirty strands of Eternal laws each day. After refining these Eternal laws, his Immortal law continued to undergo subtle yet profound changes.

By now, he could even feel that the might of his Immortal law had ascended to what could only be called Super Divine Rank! However, as the days passed and he continued refining these Eternal laws, he began to notice the pace of this transformation beginning to slow.

It was as though the Eternal law contained in those fragments of 'prey' was no longer sufficient to bring about any dramatic improvement to his Immortal law. On the fourth day, his gaze lingered on the immense, mysterious gateway in the distance. At last, he made the decision to step into it.

"If there's fatal danger, I'll retreat immediately..."

Drawing in a deep breath, he once again unleashed the Gate of Exile and pressed forward. The closer he drew to the enormous gateway, the more terrifying the pressure became. It was enough to crush even Immortals into dust. Even with the Gate of Exile beside him, he advanced with extreme difficulty.

After a long half a quarter of an hour, his figure finally plunged into the enormous gateway, swallowed by the surging white tides of vitality.

Boom!

The moment he entered the mysterious gateway, the crushing pressure disappeared, as though ten thousand mountains had been lifted from his shoulders. In that same moment, he finally saw the world within the mysterious gateway.

Heaven and earth were shrouded in gloom, and the sky hung like a vast iron curtain, dark and lightless. Peaks rolled across the land in every direction, vast and desolate. Wisps of primal chaos mist drifted through the void, draping the world in a veil of mystery.

Behind Lin Xun stood a space-time gateway barely ten feet wide. It was clearly the passage he had come through, but compared to that incomparably vast 'entrance' outside, this 'exit' looked absurdly small.

Rumble—On the ground, a river like primal chaos surged and roared through the mountains, its current a boundless torrent of vitality. It thundered forward, racing unceasingly toward the 'exit.'

"I understand now..."

Realization struck Lin Xun like a thunderbolt. The violent fluctuations that had thrown the Return Dominion into turmoil came from this very river of primal chaos! This also meant that, so long as he traveled upstream, he would inevitably reach its source.

Without hesitation, he shot forward. An oppressive, suffocating presence had filled this world. Lin Xun keenly sensed that if an Eternal Realm expert were to battle here, their power would struggle to shake the fundamental principles governing this place.

In other words, this place was capable of withstanding the full might of the Eternal Stage itself! In addition, as Lin Xun followed the river's course, waves of surging primal vitality washed over. They were terrifyingly pure and faintly tinged with the aura of eternity.

"Cultivating here would be of immeasurable benefit for attaining eternity!" Lin Xun breathed in awe.

Along the way, fragments of shattered corpses, broken treasures and ruined artifacts occasionally surfaced within the churning current of the primal chaos river. Unfortunately, the river's power was far too violent. When Lin Xun once attempted to draw near, the result left him stunned. Even the power of the Gate of Exile was obliterated in an instant!

Alarm surged through him, and from that moment on, he advanced with greater caution. After pressing forward for a full six hours, and covering what he felt to be no less than a hundred thousand miles, five majestic mountains finally appeared in the mist-shrouded, gray world ahead.

Each mountain was utterly distinct. One blazed like a living inferno, its entire body bathed in a dim crimson glow. Another was dark as divine iron, stripped of all vegetation, its jagged rocks bristling with a chilling, murderous aura. And another...

Each of the five mountains was unimaginably vast. Before them, even the sun, moon, and stars seemed as insignificant as grains of sand. They did not feel like mountains at all, but instead were like five vast world-planes, incomparably magnificent and majestic!

From those five divine mountains poured the primal chaos river, winding around their bases before surging outward in the direction Lin Xun had come from. It eventually rushed toward the exit of this world...

"So the source of the upheaval lies within these five mountains!" Lin Xun gasped in shock.

Even from such an immense distance, their forms were still perfectly clear, simply because they were far too vast. They were like five colossal pillars propping up this world, with boundless vitality cascading from them like celestial waterfalls, eventually forming the primal chaos river that coiled through hundreds of thousands of miles before bursting out into the outside world.

In doing so, it had brought about earth-shaking changes across the Ancient Nebula Road for ten years! In an instant, countless questions flooded Lin Xun's mind.

Is this place still part of the Return Dominion? What is the origin of those five sacred mountains? Why would there be so many corpses and broken treasures belonging to Eternal beings? Had an unimaginable war between Eternal existences once taken place here, turning these mountains into a burial ground of the Eternal Realm?

Lin Xun's expression constantly shifted.

Chapter 2989 Meeting Senior Brother, Speaking of Alpha Origin

After a moment of silence, Lin Xun made his decision and moved to investigate.

Swoosh!

With a flicker of his figure, he approached the towering mountain that seemed to burn like a living inferno. Its entire body was bathed in a crimson glow as if wrapped in blazing flames.

As he drew nearer, he could see clearly that the crimson radiance did not come from fire. It was the color of blood. Countless ancient bloodstains covered the mountain's surface, like scattered plum blossoms, each faintly releasing the eerie aura of the Eternal Realm.

"Hmm?" Lin Xun's heart suddenly jolted.

Within the blood-red mountain, shadowy, illusory figures drifted in and out of the mist, indistinct and flickering like wandering spirits. Even at this distance, a chill crept down his spine and an overwhelming sense of danger seized him.

He had not even stepped onto the mountain. He was only observing it from afar, yet the threat he felt was already bone-deep.

"What in the world are those things?" Lin Xun came to an abrupt halt, his expression tense and uncertain.

Swoosh! Suddenly, a streak of blood colored light tore through the void. A phantom burst forth from the mountain and lunged at him with terrifying speed.

In that instant, Lin Xun's scalp tingled violently. Acting on instinct, he was about to summon the Gate of Exile.

Just then, a streak of pure white light shot through the air. Bang!

The phantom let out a piercing shriek as it was struck. In the next heartbeat, it dissolved into the white radiance, vanishing without a trace. Only then did Lin Xun recognize the source of the light. It was a pagoda, gleaming as if forged from divine gold, radiant and flawless, overflowing with a sacred and boundless brilliance.

"Dao Endless Pagoda?!" he cried out in astonishment the moment he recognized it. He knew that treasure all too well.

A voice rang out urgently, "Don't shout, or you'll alert the Blood Soul Wraiths on this mountain!"

The next moment, a familiar figure appeared beside him. Dressed in a daoist robe, his features as refined and youthful as ever, eyes and brows sharp with intelligence, he emanated a calm, elegant presence. It was none other than his fourth senior brother, Ling Xuanzi!

"Fourth Senior Brother! What are you doing here?" Lin Xun stared at him in shock. He had never imagined he would encounter Ling Xuanzi in such a place.

"Little Junior Brother, that's what I should be asking you," Ling Xuanzi replied, withdrawing the Dao Endless Pagoda, equally bewildered.

Lin Xun quickly explained his return to the Ancient Nebula Road and everything that had led him here. Realization dawned on Ling Xuanzi, and a faint smile crept onto his face. "So that's how it is... No wonder you were able to find this place."

"Then what about you, Fourth Senior Brother?" Lin Xun asked.

Ling Xuanzi glanced around, his expression turning serious once more. "This place is far too strange and far too dangerous. Let's find somewhere safer to speak."

As he spoke, he led Lin Xun away. They traveled some distance before finally stopping within a secluded canyon. To Lin Xun's surprise, a cave dwelling had been carved into its walls. Inside were a prayer mat, table, a bed, and even an alchemy furnace. They were all neatly arranged.

At a single glance, Lin Xun could tell that Ling Xuanzi had been living and cultivating here for quite some time.

"Little Junior Brother, make yourself at home."

Once they entered the cavern, Ling Xuanzi finally let his guard down. He dropped onto the ground with a lazy sprawl, rolling his shoulders as if shaking off a heavy burden, then pulled out a wine jar and took a deep swig.

"Junior Brother...it's a long story. Back then, near the Ruins of the Gods outside Chaotian City, after I sent you away, Master's Will Dharma Form appeared and rescued me, taking me to the Seventh Heaven Domain."

He passed the wine jar over to Lin Xun. "At that time, Master gave me two choices. The first was to stay by Third Senior Sister's side and obey her every command. The second was to infiltrate the Zen Sect and investigate its founder, Shi. According to Master, that old fox had an extremely high chance of being connected to the mastermind behind the epochal calamities."

Lin Xun's heart jolted. In an instant, the memories of that earthshaking battle surged back. Back then, the Shaman Sect and Zen Sect joined forces to attack the Origin Sect. At the time, even the Will Dharma Forms of the founders of the four ancestral courts emerged.

Of note, the Will Dharma Form of Xu Yin, founder of the Spirit Sect, had stated bluntly that since the epochal calamity would descend within a thousand years, there was only one possible reason the two ancestral sects of the Shaman and Zen Sects would join forces to attack the Origin Sect. There was a hidden mastermind pulling the strings!

In other words, the entire situation was like a game of chess: the Shaman and Zen Sects were just pieces on the board, while the one moving them was the hidden mastermind. Furthermore, the true target of that chess game was Lin Xun, the one who possessed the potential of Eternal Supremacy and who controlled the Nirvana law power!

Now, after hearing his fourth senior brother's words, Lin Xun felt as though a final piece of the puzzle had snapped into place. If someone had been orchestrating everything from behind the scenes, then the Zen Sect's founder, Shi, was without question deeply entangled in it.

"I chose to infiltrate the Zen Sect." Ling Xuanzi continued, "With my abilities, becoming a successor of the Zen Sect wasn't difficult. I stayed there for eighteen long years...and during that time, I managed to uncover something crucial."

"What?" Lin Xun asked curiously.

"When Shi left the Zen Sect and departed for the All-Wonder Dominion, he left behind three things. The first was his Will Dharma Form. The second was a secret treasure used to control the Zen Sect's Divine Rank law. And the third was a stone statue."

"Stone statue?" Lin Xun repeated, eyes narrowing.

"Yes, unfortunately, that statue has always been guarded by Fan'an, an Eternal expert of the Zen Sect, and I have never once managed to even catch a glimpse of it." Ling Xuanzi pursed his lips.

"Senior Brother, you think that statue is related to the hidden mastermind behind everything?"

"Without a doubt." Ling Xuanzi replied without hesitation. "Although I never saw the statue with my own eyes, I investigated it from many angles. In the Zen Sect's scripture pavilion, I found a text left behind by one of their sages. Within it were records related to that statue...after reading it, I became certain that Shi and that hidden mastermind were connected!"

Lin Xun's curiosity deepened. "So what exactly is the secret of that statue?"

Ling Xuanzi said, "According to it, before Shi left, he issued a decree to his disciple Fan'an. He said that if the stone statue ever displayed the slightest abnormal movement, he must immediately summon the Will Dharma Form he left behind."

Lin Xun's pupils shrank. Back at the Origin Sect's Thousand Stars Sea, he had personally witnessed the manifestation of the Zen Sect founder Shi's Will Dharma Form. That could only mean one thing.

Before the Zen Sect joined forces with the Shaman Sect to attack the Origin Sect...had the stone statue Shi left within the Zen Sect shown signs of change, thereby alarming the Will Dharma Form he had left behind?

Could the disturbance in the statue have been a message transmitted by the hidden mastermind? Was it that very signal that made the Zen Sect join hands with the Shaman Sect and launch their assault on the Origin Sect....all to eliminate Lin Xun?

With these thoughts in mind, Lin Xun shared all of his suspicions and deductions with Ling Xuanzi.

After listening, Ling Xuanzi slapped his thigh and exclaimed excitedly, "That must be it! That stone statue is a conduit to the hidden mastermind! And it's clear that Shi already knew its true purpose when he left. That's why he deliberately left both the statue and his Will Dharma Form behind."

Lin Xun's heart roiled, unable to settle. The Zen Sect's founder, Shi, was an unrivaled being who had walked through many cycles of the ages. To think that such an existence could be connected to the hidden mastermind was almost unimaginable.

"Moreover," Ling Xuanzi continued. "I also discovered that two mysterious dao inscriptions were engraved on the base of that stone statue, Alpha Origin. These two words are regarded as taboo. Simply looking at them is like facing a supreme being, one cannot give rise to any thought of blasphemy or resistance."

Ling Xuanzi stroked his chin, a strange light blazing in his eyes. "Just two words, yet they carry such overwhelming authority. I suspect that this could very well be the true name of the mastermind behind everything."

Lin Xun was completely stunned.

Alpha Origin!

Back in the Fortune Dominion, Thirteen, a general under the Eternal Night Divine Emperor, had once mentioned that his lord had been struck by the Great Silence Unlife Calamity on the way to the Fortune Divine City. During that calamity, a dao bell suffused with primal chaos aura had descended upon the world. It was called the Alpha Origin Bell!

Now, engraved upon the base of this stone statue were the exact same two words, Alpha Origin. How could this possibly be a coincidence?

At this point, Lin Xun dared to conclude that the Zen Sect's founder Shi was undeniably linked to the hidden mastermind, and the two words, Alpha Origin, referred to none other than the hidden mastermind!

His thoughts turned to Chen Linkong and Chen Linkong's grandfather, Chen Xi. Had they also already uncovered these secrets? After a while, Lin Xun shook his head, forcing these thoughts aside

"What happened after that?" he asked.

Ling Xuanzi continued, "While I was investigating further, I was accidentally discovered. Those old baldies from the Zen Sect nearly caught me. After escaping, I originally planned to find Third Senior Sister Ruo Su, but instead, I ran into Second Senior Brother, Zhong Qiu."

Lin Xun's expression shifted oddly. He was well aware that Zhong Qiu had once hated Ling Xuanzi because he suspected him of leaking his inheritance to Heavenly Emperor Shi. Back in the Kunlun Dominion, Zhong Qiu had even ordered Lin Xun to kill his fourth senior brother as a traitor.

"What's with that look?" Ling Xuanzi snapped, clearly annoyed. "That misunderstanding was resolved long ago. When Second Senior Brother saw me, he was downright affectionate."

“Really?” Lin Xun replied, suspicious.

Ling Xuanzi’s cheek twitched. “We’re senior and junior brothers, do you really think I’d lie to you?”

Even so, Lin Xun couldn’t shake the feeling that Ling Xuanzi was hiding something. However, he chose not to ask further.

Unwilling to linger on the topic, Ling Xuanzi changed the subject, “In any case, after meeting Second Senior Brother, and under the arrangement of Master’s Will Dharma Form, I left the Eternal True Realm and came here to this Dao Burial Ground in the depths of the Return Dominion. Master told me that as long as I continued cultivating in this place, I would one day step onto my Eternal Dao Path... Counting the days, it’s been almost a hundred years since I arrived...”

By the end, his expression was laden with emotion.

Dao Burial Ground! Only now did Lin Xun finally understand why his fourth senior brother had appeared here; it had all been arranged by their master.

That's right. Long ago, Master established the Fangchun Mountain Sect within the Return Dominion. How could he not know that in its deepest reaches, there lay a world known as the Dao Burial Ground? Lin Xun thought to himself.

Chapter 2990 Five Principle Laws of the Return Dominion

Dao Burial Ground. It was an unimaginable mysterious world.

According to Ling Xuanzi, in ages past this place had been barren and desolate, no different from a wasteland. Not a trace of life had existed here, but as the end of the epoch drew near, the Dao Burial Ground underwent earth-shattering changes.

The present upheaval within the Return Dominion had been born of the violent vitality fluctuations spilling out from this very place.

“So the changes here really are connected to the approaching epoch-ending calamity...” Lin Xun finally murmured in realization.

However, even as understanding dawned, countless questions flooded his mind, such as the origin of those shattered corpses and broken treasures he had seen along the way, and the terrifying mystery of the five sacred mountains...

Next, he asked Ling Xuanzi about everything he could think of. Ling Xuanzi, of course, held nothing back.

Before the end of every epoch, Eternal Stage experts from all corners of the world would gather in the Kunlun Dominion to evade the onslaught of the Great Silence Unlife Calamity. There, they would fight to cross over, hoping to seize the faintest chance of entering the All-Wonder Dominion.

Just like now, the Kunlun Dominion had already gathered many Eternal Realm experts. Taixuan, Yan Ji, and You Beihai from the Origin Sect were there. So were Eternal figures from the Shaman Sect, the Zen Sect, and the Ninth Heaven Domain.

However, not all Eternal Realm beings could evade the Great Silence Unlife Calamity, and even fewer had the chance to cross over into the All-Wonder Dominion. Whenever an epoch came to an end, all living beings in the world were unable to escape the slaughter of the Five Dao Decays.

Likewise, many Eternal Realm figures would be struck down by the Great Silence Unlife Calamity and perish in the Kunlun Dominion. Only a small fraction would survive the destruction of the epoch.

In addition, the corpses and treasures of those Eternal beings who fell in the Kunlun Dominion during the epochal calamity were all left behind within this Dao Burial Ground!

As for the five sacred mountains within the Dao Burial Ground, they were the birthplace of the Return Dominion's core origin. They were known as Yingzhou, Penglai, Fanghu, Daiyu, and Yuanjiao. Each mountain was governed by an origin principle law.

For example, Yingzhou Mountain spanned thirty thousand miles, and its origin principles could transform the blood and qi of any living being into origin dao vitality. As for Penglai Mountain, which stretched for ninety-nine thousand miles, it could refine the flesh and body of all living beings into the purest origin dao vitality.

The origin principles of Fanghu, Daiyu, and Yuanjiao Mountain meanwhile governed the refinement of spirit and soul, cultivation, and external objects, respectively. In the end, all things would be reduced into the purest origin dao vitality.

These origin principles of the five sacred mountains were known as the Five Principle Laws of the Return Dominion.

With each epoch's end, these five sacred mountains would refine all the power left behind by fallen Eternal beings, dissolving it into origin dao vitality that would nourish heaven and earth. After an epoch was extinguished, the Eternal beings who had perished in the Kunlun Dominion would be gathered by the Dao Burial Ground.

It was like a cycle.

Hearing this, an icy chill crept into Lin Xun's bones. "So all of the vitality pouring out into the world came from the Eternal Realm figures who died in the destruction of the past epoch?"

Ling Xuanzi gave a quiet nod. "It's like fallen leaves returning to their roots. They decay and become nourishment for the earth... accumulating power for the birth of the next epoch."

"Then...could all of this also be connected to the hidden mastermind?" Lin Xun couldn't help but ask.

Ling Xuanzi shook his head. "Throughout the heavens, there is no place untouched by that hidden mastermind, except for the Four Dao Dominions. Even the Fortune Dominion has merely been turned into a prison, but its origin power still remains intact."

Lin Xun nodded in understanding. The Fortune Origin lay within the Fortune Divine City. He was perhaps the one who knew best about this.

"In the same way, although the origin power of the Return Dominion has been greatly depleted, as long as these five sacred mountains still stand, it is impossible for that hidden mastermind to touch it."

Ling Xuanzi continued, "The Kunlun Dominion is no exception. It too contained origin power and its origin power is linked to the All-Wonder Dominion. That is precisely why Eternal figures there have the hope of entering the All-Wonder Dominion."

Lin Xun exclaimed in surprise, "So the four dao dominions are not isolated from one another at all, but they are actually interconnected?"

The Eternals who perished in the Kunlun Dominion were ultimately found in the Return Dominion's Dao Burial Ground. Those who successfully crossed over in the Kunlun Dominion would gain the opportunity to reach the All-Wonder Dominion!

This made Lin Xun suspect that the Fortune Dominion must also be tied to the other three dao dominions in some unknown ways.

Sure enough, Ling Xuanzi nodded.

"These four dao dominions...they are truly unfathomable. The more you learn of them, the more they overturn your understanding of the world." Lin Xun sighed.

Ling Xuanzi laughed softly. "Now, Junior Brother, is there anything else you wish to know?"

Lin Xun suddenly remembered and asked, "Senior Brother, why is the Dao Endless Pagoda in your possession?"

Ling Xuanzi's smile stiffened, and his guard instantly went up. "Junior Brother, this treasure was personally bestowed upon me by Master, so that I have the means to seize opportunities in this Dao Burial Ground. You mustn't try to take it from me."

He was well aware that Lin Xun had received great help from the Dao Endless Pagoda in his youth and that he held deep feelings toward it.

Lin Xun gave a nod and said, "Why are you so tense? I'm not trying to take it. I was just curious about the phantom it suppressed just now."

Only then did Ling Xuanzi let out a sigh of relief and relax. “That was a Blood Soul Wraith of Yingzhou Mountain. It is formed from the blood and qi of a fallen Eternal Realm expert. Its strength is brutally abnormal, ten or even a hundred times greater than an Eternal Will Dharma Form. Over the past years, if it weren’t for the Dao Endless Pagoda, I would have stood no chance against such fierce creatures.”

“Blood Soul Wraith?” Lin Xun was taken aback. “Didn’t you say that the blood and qi left behind by fallen Eternal beings would be refined by Yingzhou Mountain’s origin principle and transformed into origin dao vitality?”

Ling Xuanzi laughed. “Junior Brother, this upheaval has only lasted a little over twenty years ago. How could such immense power left behind by Eternal beings have already been completely refined? If you had arrived a few decades later, you wouldn’t see a single Blood Soul Wraith left in this place.”

His eyes gleamed as he continued, “And right now, our opportunities are not just the Blood Soul Wraiths of Yingzhou Mountain. On Penglai Mountain lie Eternal Fiend Corpses, on Fanghu Mountain are Undying Fierce Souls, on Daiyu Mountain are Dao Spirit Monsters and on Yuanjiao Mountain, Eternal Demonic Armaments... Every single one of them is a supreme fortune!”

“What do you mean by that?” Lin Xun asked.

“Because once subdued and refined they become power of the Eternal level!”

As he spoke, he summoned the Dao Endless Pagoda. With a thought, its light flared and a translucent, blood-red, gem-like object no larger than a pebble floated out. It shone brilliantly, pulsing with an unmistakable aura of eternity.

Ling Xuanzi said proudly, “Junior Brother, take a look! This is the Blood Spirit Wraith that was just subdued by the Dao Endless Pagoda. It is the purest manifestation of Eternal origin power. Its benefits to cultivation are immeasurable. A treasure like this cannot be found even in the Eternal True Realm!”

Lin Xun reached out and accepted it. After a brief examination, his expression changed. The Eternal aura contained within it was not vast in quantity, but it was astonishingly pure and dense.

“This is an Eternal Bloodstone and it has immeasurable benefits for tempering the blood and qi at the Eternal level.”

Ling Xuanzi nodded eagerly, “And it’s not just this, Eternal Fiend Corpses, Undying Fierce Souls, Dao Spirits Monsters, and Eternal Demonic Armaments can all be refined into supreme treasures: Eternal law, Eternal Soul Crystals, Eternal Dao Stones, and Eternal Divine Materials. Each has its own miraculous uses. Even Eternal beings would turn green with envy at the sight of such treasures!”

As he spoke, Ling Xuanzi draped an arm over Lin Xun’s shoulder, eyes shining with excitement. “And now, these fortunes belong to the two of us. With resources like these, how could we fail to attain eternity?”

Lin Xun’s heart stirred. There was no doubt this truly was an earth-shattering stroke of fortune.

But...

He studied Ling Xuanzi for a moment and said, “Senior Brother, you’ve been here for so many years. You must have obtained no small amount of fortune...yet why are you still stuck at the perfect Transcendence Stage?”

Ling Xuanzi hesitated before replying in a serious tone, “Junior Brother, no matter how great the fortune, it can only assist one’s path. To truly attain eternity, one’s cultivation must be unshakable and one’s mind flawless. That is the real key to breaking through.”

Lin Xun laughed heartily. “Senior Brother, you couldn't be more right.”

Ling Xuanzi’s face twitched, half embarrassed and half amused. “Enough talk, just tell me if you are joining me in hunting for more.”

Lin Xun replied without hesitation, “Of course.”

“Then come. I’ll take you to see Yingzhou Mountain.” Ling Xuanzi quickly got up and led the way out of the cavern.

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They soon stood before Yingzhou Mountain. Ling Xuanzi came to a stop and transmitted his voice, "Junior Brother, look closely. The entire mountain is shrouded in mist, and blood-red light rises from its depths. The faint phantoms you see are Blood Soul Wraiths. We must not make too much noise, otherwise they will swarm us in droves."

After a pause, he added, "In the past, I'd camp right here at the foot of Yingzhou Mountain, just like fishing. I'd release a trace of my aura to lure a Blood Soul Wraith out. Once one emerged from the mountain, I'd suppress it immediately with the Dao Endless Pagoda. This way, it's simple, safe, and effortless, and with no danger at all."

He cast a sidelong glance at Lin Xun, clearly waiting for praise.

Instead Lin Xun frowned. "But what if the Blood Soul Wraith doesn't take the bait?"

Ling Xuanzi replied, "Then you wait. Sooner or later, one will."

Lin Xun shook his head. "That's far too slow and a waste of time."

Ling Xuanzi snapped irritably, "Those are Blood Soul Wraiths! They're formed from the blood and qi of an Eternal Realm existence. They could kill people like us with ease. If we don't do it this way, do you plan to charge straight up the Yingzhou Mountain?"

To his surprise, Lin Xun nodded calmly. "If that lets us subdue more Blood Soul Wraiths, why shouldn't we storm the mountain?"

Ling Xuanzi's eyes went wide, and he looked as though he no longer recognized the person before him. "Junior Brother, when did you start talking even bigger than me?"

Lin Xun smiled faintly. "Senior Brother, let me ask...do these Blood Soul Wraiths possess intelligence?"

Ling Xuanzi shook his head. "None at all. They're nothing but condensed blood and qi. Though fierce, they are driven purely by a savage killing instinct and have no true intelligence."

Lin Xun's smile deepened. "Then it's settled. Come on, let's head up the mountain and take a look."

With that, he strode forward.