

Resonance 991

Chapter 0991: Myriad Beasts Devil God Body

Bang!

The black runic arrow seemed to struggle ferociously whilst it was strung on the bow, much like an irate thunder dragon that was keen to let loose. Li Luo was now at full strength and ready to strike.

The resonant power within his body flowed out without reserve, suppressing the raging thunder coming from the arrow.

"Nine Scales Sanctified Dragon's Body, Nine Dragon's Might! Four Sonic Pulses!" Li Luo shouted in his heart as the sigil on his forehead spilled out copious amounts of radiant light. His heart crackled with lightning as the Sonic Pulses elevated his body to the highest limit he could handle.

Four Sonic Pulses thumped rhythmically within his body, each one causing his flesh and blood to tremble before reaching its strongest state.

The Underworld Thunder Runic Arrow was a fifth-grade Royal Engraving, so it possessed frightening strength. Normal bows could not contain its power, but Li Luo's Heavenly Dragon's Sunchaser Bow was different. It was unafraid of the wild erosion from the lightning, and the seemingly fragile bowstring was like a lock that could seal even dragons, perfectly capable of containing the Underworld Thunder Runic Arrow's power.

Li Luo did not plan to hold back in any way against Zhao Shenjiang—his intention was to kill with this shot.

He released the bowstring without hesitation. A thunder dragon capable of absolute devastation pierced through the sky with incomprehensible speed.

The sight caused the eyes of the four-pearls who were watching the fight to widen. The dragon simply moved so fast that there was no place to hide.

Even though they were a distance away, it was almost as if they could feel the raw power that was hidden within the runic arrow.

How could Zhao Shenjiang block this?

Before the crowd's surprised eyes, Zhao Shenjiang's expression had turned solemn as well. He could only see a trace of the bolt of lightning arcing through the skies as he felt a sharpness on his forehead before the arrow had even landed. He was sure that with his strength alone, he would die if he was struck.

However, if Li Luo had the Underworld Thunder Runic Arrow, how could he, as the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Zhao's prodigy, not have his own life-saving methods?

Zhao Shenjiang used the tip of the spear to slice a line through his palm, causing him to bleed. However, a mote of light flew out of the wound, transforming into a jade tablet.

When the jade tablet appeared, numerous ancient runes could be seen on it, which then began to absorb blood essence from Zhao Shenjiang himself. Its color gradually became crimson.

As the jade tablet soared in the air, countless runes were projected out of it and took the shape of a shield. It was floating between him and the arrow.

Bang!

The runic arrow whizzed through the skies and struck the jade tablet's shield.

Bang!

That momentary collision released an ear-rending boom, and berserk energy undulations washed over the battlefield. The eyes of everyone watching shrunk, and even some of the five-pearl cultivators felt their minds go blank. The result was unimaginable considering that this was a battle between a Fiend Finisher and a two-pearl.

Li Luo frowned as he observed the point of the collision, where energy continued to rage. He had seen Zhao Shenjiang activate the jade tablet, which seemed to contain a Royal Engraving as well. This should have been his trump card to save his life.

"All within expectations, I suppose," Li Luo mumbled to himself. Although he had wished to use the slaughtering prowess of the Underworld Thunder Runic Arrow to get rid of Zhao Shenjiang, he expected a chosen one from the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Zhao to have a method to protect his own life.

This attack could not have been said to be useless. At the very least, Zhao Shenjiang had been forced to activate one of his protective measures.

Li Luo waved his hand, and the runic arrow returned to him, landing in his grasp.

After using the Underworld Thunder Runic Arrow once, the runes had dimmed significantly. This was a fifth-grade Royal Engraving and was considered a consumable item. Based on Li Luo's expectations, just a few more uses would completely exhaust all of its stored power.

He put the Underworld Thunder Runic Arrow away as after each usage, the thunder resonant power had to be replenished before he could summon its explosive abilities yet again.

Then he lifted his head and glanced at Zhao Shenjiang, who now looked incomparably gloomy. His jade tablet had turned dim, and even a fine crack could be seen in it.

"Damn it!" Seeing the crack on the tablet was like feeling his heart crack the same way. Zhao Shenjiang's gaze was flooded with murderous killing intent as he had received the jade tablet from an elder. It had to be nurtured with his blood essence and was capable of protecting him in times of danger. However, Li Luo's savage blow had damaged the foundation of the jade tablet, so it would not be usable for a long time.

"Die for me, Li Luo!" Zhao Shenjiang bellowed as he waved his Heavy Mountain Spear once more. Spear manifestations appeared, transforming into nine gigantic mountains that pressed down upon Li Luo yet again.

Li Luo remained calm, wielding the Heavenly Dragon's Sunchaser Bow. He drew the bowstring, and nine arrows of light were formed, each one shining with all the splendor of a rainbow.

They swished through the air when he released them and punctured each of the nine manifestations.

With a triple violet-eye treasured artifact in hand, Li Luo possessed immense strength in battle, and each arrow of light was equivalent to the full strength strike of a two-pearl.

After boring through each of the nine mountain manifestations, Li Luo shot even more arrows, each one puncturing through the void like a zooming meteor, shooting right at Zhao Shenjiang with the intention to harm.

Zhao Shenjiang grasped his Heavy Mountain Spear, adeptly smashing every arrow that came towards him so quickly that afterimages were left in his wake.

However, every arrow that was smashed brought about an incisive pain to his body. He could only frown darkly in response. Li Luo's bow was simply of a higher grade compared to his Heavy Mountain Spear, so he had to pay a price to defend himself.

"That bow isn't bad. Once I kill you, it'll be mine!" A hint of greed could be seen in his eyes that were previously only full of killing intent. At the same time, he understood from the previous exchanges that Li Luo was even more of a prickly opponent than he had ever expected. Although he was only a Fiend Finisher, he was no weaker than some of the most prodigious one-pearls due to the aid of his triple resonances.

"It's no wonder how you managed to defeat Li Qingfeng and become the Dragon's Head of this generation. Regardless, I am not a weakling like him. You will grovel beneath my feet very soon. The Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Zhao will always be ahead of your pathetic bloodline." Zhao Shenjiang took a step forward and let go of the Heavy Mountain Spear. He then clasped his hands together and formed a series of hand seals.

With each hand seal, worldly natural energy rumbled and a torrent of energy visible to the naked eye converged upon Zhao Shenjiang's body without end.

With the infusion of worldly natural energy, Zhao Shenjiang's body then began to expand at a monstrous rate, and the flesh on his right arm seemed to squirm. The next moment, the entire limb had transformed into an azure dragon's claw. His left arm had turned into a white tiger's paw. A moment later, the rest of his body also began to contort and warp, turning into the body parts of different beasts. Zhao Shenjiang was now emanating a savage and fiendish aura. He had become an abomination stitched together from a myriad of beasts.

Not far away, Jiang Wanyu, who was watching Zhao Shenjiang transform, had a heavy expression on her face. Information about Zhao Shenjiang flashed through her mind.

"This is the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Zhao's Soul Ascension-grade Duke Art: Myriad Beasts Devil God Body. I can't believe Zhao Shenjiang managed to cultivate it successfully. I heard that it requires one to fuse with a hundred beasts' blood and souls. The art condenses a monstrous amount of evil energy within the user's heart, and one's mind might be eroded and destroyed by it if they are not careful. In the past, numerous geniuses from the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Zhao coveted the power of this

Duke Art but were corrupted by the evil energy, turning them into mindless beasts. Some were even irreversibly paralyzed. It seems that Zhao Shenjiang has treated himself very viciously."

Some of the juniors from the Heavenly Origin Ancient College heard her words, and their gazes flashed with fear. Despite how far they were from him, they could sense the savage and devilish aura he gave off.

It was possible that he was stronger than the average four-pearl rogue cultivator. This was the advantage that being from a Heavenly Emperor power provided—the ability to battle above one's cultivation level.

"Now that Zhao Shenjiang has pulled out all the stops, does that mean that Li Luo can't hold on any longer?" a female junior asked.

Jiang Wanyu shook her head. "That might not be the case."

Her gaze was now firmly fixed upon Li Luo. At this moment, she could feel a sense of sharpness coming from Li Luo's body, one that made her heart palpitate in fear.

This mysterious undulation seemed to give off a sense of threat that surpassed even Zhao Shenjiang's Myriad Beasts Devil God Body.

Li Luo immediately activated his energy wings and soared into the sky, closely observing the fiendish Zhao Shenjiang. He had a strange look in his eyes as he assessed his opponent. "This fellow might be arrogant, but he is truly strong. Stronger than Li Qingfeng to boot."

"Sigh. If it wasn't for me, this generation would have been firmly suppressed by the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Zhao. What a pity..." Li Luo mumbled to himself as he activated the resonant power within his body yet again. With the mottled ancient blade in hand, he sliced open the void and created a crack in space. A moment later, rushing sounds of water could be heard as a black dragon that surfed along frigid, dark waters appeared, ferociously baring its claws and fangs as it attempted to attack Zhao Shenjiang.

"The Underworld River's Black Dragon Banner again?" Jiang Wanyu frowned when she saw Li Luo activating the same Duke Art as before. How could a Communion-grade Duke Art threaten Zhao Shenjiang? Could it be that the sense of danger she felt from Li Luo was a misunderstanding?

"Haha! Li Luo! You really are a peasant from the outer divine continent. You seem to wholeheartedly rely on a single Communion-grade Duke Art." Zhao Shenjiang cackled as he formed a fist with the azure dragon's claw, striking in retaliation. Roar!

That simple attack seemed to blast the void to pieces with a single motion. Space seemed to collapse as a terrifying force struck the black dragon directly.

Bang!

The black dragon's gargantuan body instantly began to shatter, turning into motes of light.

It was as Jiang Wanyu expected. The Underworld River's Black Dragon Banner was unable to threaten the current Zhao Shenjiang.

However, Li Luo seemed strangely calm, the corner of his lips lightly lifted into a callous smirk as he formed a hand seal with a single hand. With that, the dissipating black dragon suddenly opened its maw, and a stream of black dragonbreath shot towards Zhao Shenjiang.

Zhao Shenjiang smiled coldly. He had originally planned to disregard this feeble counterattack, but his body began blaring with warning signs, bursting forth with a piercing pain that seemed to signal his impending death.

Cold sweat erupted from his pores as his gaze reflected the incoming dragonbreath. At this moment, he could feel that the seemingly weak dragonbreath was hiding a metaphorical dagger in the dark. It was concealing absolutely frightening undulations of power.

It was something even his Myriad Beasts Devil God Body was unable to resist.

Li Luo, that scammer! He had used the cover of a Communion-grade Duke Art to obfuscate his true killing move! Zhao Shenjiang howled as all of the beasts he had fused with came to life, all similarly roaring in tandem. A series of sound waves that looked to have taken physical form spread out from his body.

The sound waves were able to dissolve the dragonbreath, finally revealing the true ace that was hidden beneath. It was a slightly curved, light-blue sword manifestation resembling a dragon's fang.

The sword manifestation tore through the void silently, but every location it passed through was cut cleanly, leaving behind dark traces. It was like a hot knife cutting through butter.

Nothing was capable of stopping it.

When Zhao Shenjiang finally noticed the Dragon Fang Sword, Jiang Wanyu similarly discovered it as well. Her usual, cold expression had turned into one full of surprise as she observed it.

The sword manifestation gave one an indescribable sense of purity when they laid their eyes upon it.

At this moment, her heart knew that the light-blue Dragon Fang Sword was Li Luo's hidden ace. Perhaps this was how Li Luo had managed to triumph over Li Qingfeng and obtain the position of Dragon's Head.

Chapter 0992: The Ruthless Cousin

As Jiang Wanyu was taken aback at Li Luo's Dragon Fang Sword manifestation, the one who was being attacked, Zhao Shenjiang, felt his heart fill with turmoil and his expression turned into one of shock.

He could similarly feel the sword energy the Dragon Fang Sword was emitting. It was incomparably pure and had reached a level that ordinary Duke Arts could never hope to achieve.

In fact, the grade of this Duke Art didn't seem to be below the grade of the Myriad Beasts Devil God Body.

"How's that possible?! Li Luo is only at the Fiend Finisher Tier! How could he cultivate such terrifying Duke Art!?" Zhao Shenjiang felt like a bomb had gone off in his head. He had specifically only focused on learning the Myriad Beasts Devil God Body, almost passing through death's door multiple times. He had been met with countless failures in the process. It was only through immense sacrifice that he had succeeded. How had Li Luo cultivated such a Duke Art?

However, this was not the time to think such thoughts. The light-blue Dragon Fang Sword had pierced through the void and the sword energy it possessed was infinitely sharp with indescribable cutting power. It was as though it could cleave through anything the world could throw at it.

His life-saving jade tablet had already been wasted by the Underworld Thunder Runic Arrow, so he was now short of a life-saving method.

“Roar!”

Zhao Shenjiang roared explosively, and the blood within his body started to boil, rushing towards the parts that had been transformed into beasts.

“Myriad Beasts Devil God Body: Blood Beast Art!” Blood light spilled from his body, and the souls of numerous savage beasts could be seen within it. All of them roared as they began to quickly fuse together. An instant later, blood light burst apart, revealing a titanic creature that was hundreds of feet tall.

The titanic creature’s body was blood-red in color and it continuously dripped fresh blood. Its appearance was simply chimaeric. It had a dragon’s head, a tiger’s body, and the tail of a python. At the same time, the body contained traces of other spirit beasts and radiated an air of savagery. Its presence seemed to have dyed the skies red.

The gigantic blood beast immediately rushed forward. With every step, the void trembled and cracked.

It collided directly with the unparalleled Water Dragon Fang Sword.

When the two attacks clashed, there was no cataclysmic explosion or boom. Instead, the Dragon Fang Sword easily sliced through the blood beast’s humongous body, leaving behind a cut as smooth as glass.

The imposing demeanor of the berserk beast seemed to have been split into two, and copious amounts of fresh blood sprayed in every direction. It was almost akin to a waterfall of blood that attempted to smother the brightness of the sword’s energy, but it was instantly wiped out without a trace.

The sword continued to noiselessly pierce the air, headed towards the now pale Zhao Shenjiang.

Zhao Shenjiang tightly grasped his Heavy Mountain Spear and spat out a mouthful of blood essence onto it. The spear seemed to have gained a life of its own, and blood-colored runes formed all over it.

With an angry snarl, he hurled the Heavy Mountain Spear outwards. It turned into a stream of crimson light that shook the void, directly clashing with the light blue Dragon Fang Sword.

Clang!

A metallic ringing reverberated crisply throughout the skies.

The next instant, Zhao Shenjiang retreated miserably as the Heavy Mountain Spear began to emit shrill cries when it returned to him. The Dragon Fang Sword seemed to have transformed into waves of water that washed over the spear. Wherever the waves moved past, the blood runes were forcibly erased.

However, the water waves did not stop there and soon poured over Zhao Shenjiang’s arm.

“Argh!”

Zhao Shenjiang's pitiful cry rang out as his arm was chopped off at its root, fresh blood flooding the ground.

Li Luo had severed his arm, but he did not stop there. The Dragon Fang Sword, which had been weakened significantly, flickered and directly slashed towards his head like a bolt of lightning.

Now that he had taken action, he did not plan to spare his enemy's life.

When Zhao Shenjiang saw this, he finally understood that Li Luo was out to kill, so he retreated in a mad rush.

However, the Dragon Fang Sword was even faster. Just as it was about to decapitate Zhao Shenjiang, another figure appeared before him like a ghost.

Six Heavenly Pearls appeared behind this newcomer and began to absorb huge amounts of worldly natural energy.

It was an expert from the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Zhao, and when he saw that Zhao Shenjiang was in mortal danger, he immediately stepped into help.

"Brother Zhao Song!" Zhao Shenjiang cried out in pain as his remaining arm grasped at the now severed stump in an attempt to reduce the blood loss he was experiencing.

The one named Zhao Song nodded and glanced at the Water Dragon Fang Sword. He immediately struck out with a palm, and boundless amounts of resonant power swept forth like a celestial river, colliding with it.

Bang!

This direct confrontation caused the Water Dragon Fang Sword to shake. Uncountable motes of water splashed in every direction, directly resisting the majestic resonant power that had pressed down upon it.

About half of the energy of the Water Dragon Fang Sword had been consumed already. Facing Zhao Song's superior six-pearl strength, it was difficult to come out on top.

That single strike had shattered the Water Dragon Fang Sword, but it was not as easy as expected. Zhao Song lowered his head to look at his palm, and he noticed that he had been cut, fresh blood flowing down in rivulets.

His gaze turned gloomy. Li Luo's strange Duke Art had drawn blood from a six-pearl? The Dragon Fang Sword was truly amazing.

Killing intent surged in Zhao Song's eyes. Even he felt a hint of apprehension when faced with Li Luo's demonstrated strength.

Li Luo was only at the Fiend Finisher Tier. If he reached the three or four-pearl tier one day, wouldn't he be an actual threat to him as well? "I can't leave you alive!" Zhao Song's eyes blazed with fury. Just as he spoke, an aquamarine staff manifestation that was shrouded with tremendous amounts of poisonous energy descended from the sky, heavily striking towards his head.

The staff manifestation contained power that induced fear in everyone who saw it, him included.

He quickly sent Zhao Shenjiang flying away with a strike of his palm and immediately opened his mouth, spitting out a mottled tortoise shell. A mystical light shone outwards as the shell acted like a shield, attempting to resist the descent of the aquamarine staff manifestation.

However, at the moment of collision, Zhao Song's face showed horror as he realized that the single violet-eye treasured artifact tortoise shell had cracked almost instantly.

The aquamarine light that surrounded the staff seemed to be all-pervasive, melting the tortoise shell without delay.

A chill arose in his heart. Whoever was taking action was truly a ruthless character.

At the same time, Zhao Yan's voice could be heard from a distance. "Zhao Song! Hurry and run!"

Zhao Song's face was already pale, and he turned tail and ran without hesitation. He finally understood that the one who had taken action was the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Li's Li Lingjing. She was an eight-pearl, someone he could not face.

As he retreated, Zhao Song continued to activate hand seals, directly causing the turtle shield to detonate. At the moment it exploded, a single bone needle that was concealed within shot out towards Li Lingjing.

His plan was simple. He wanted to delay Li Lingjing, which would give him the opportunity to attack. With Zhao Yan's support, they could obstruct this malignant star.

However, despite all his well laid plans, Li Lingjing's cold gaze had turned even gloomier.

"It looks like the one who can't be left alive should be you!" Her tone was icy and flat. With one hand, she smashed her staff downwards whilst she stretched out her other hand to catch the bone needle.

The bone needle pierced into her flesh and even partially penetrated her bone.

However, she was unfazed by this, as though she had not even felt it. The staff manifestation shuttled past like a poisonous python and, to Zhao Song's horror, struck him straight on his head.

A dull crack?could be heard as Zhao Song's head turned into a watermelon that had been dropped from a great height. It was a grisly scene.

The world seemed to have paused momentarily as countless frightened gazes shot towards them. No one had expected Li Lingjing to be so ruthless that she was willing to sustain an injury just to kill her opponent.

And her opponent was a six-pearl expert from the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Zhao!

Yet he had been smashed to death as easily as a chicken. Silence reigned for a few moments as Zhao Yan's eyes turned bloodshot. He stared venomously at Li Lingjing before he pounced towards her and bellowed, "Li Lingjing, DIE FOR ME!"

Chapter 0993: Three Thrones

When faced with the all-consuming killing intent coming from Zhao Yan, Li Lingjing's gorgeous face did not show any reaction. She raised her aquamarine staff, and a massive Abyssal Serpent manifested behind her, swallowing up worldly natural energy.

"You're no King. You want me to die? Why would I follow your orders?" Li Lingjing coolly replied. Her tone was almost emotionless, but the words contained a mocking note to them.

She ascended into the air and rushed directly at Zhao Yan, slamming her poison-imbued staff right at his head.

Zhao Yan bellowed as his golden sword energy came into being. In the short span of a couple of seconds, he had engaged in several hundred exchanges with Li Lingjing.

The more they fought, the more shocked Zhao Yan became. Li Lingjing's offensive was unimaginably ferocious. Every single strike of her staff was as heavy as a mountain, and the poisonous light that surrounded the staff was no farce either. It was incredibly tyrannical, and if he was not careful and allowed it to come into contact with his body, it would invade his inner organs and blood.

"It's that damned staff!" Zhao Yan glanced at the Aquamarine Bamboo Python Staff in Li Lingjing's hand before he noticed the three violet eye marks that were flickering on its body.

"It's a triple violet-eye treasured artifact!" Greed clouded Zhao Yan's gaze. When the two of them fought earlier, she had not obtained this wondrous treasure. It looked like her luck had been excellent to find it in the Spiritual Resonance Cave.

"I'm afraid Li Lingjing is stronger than Li Wuyuan." Zhao Yan's gaze turned gloomy. Now wasn't the time to engage in a decisive battle with her, and his side had yet to obtain a golden lotus throne. If he was bogged down by the opponent here, even relying on the rest of the people from the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Zhao would not guarantee their success.

"Forget it. The golden lotus thrones are more important. I'm already at the eight-pearl tier, and if I borrow the aid of the Golden Dew Platform, I might be able to enter the nine-pearl tier. If I fail, there won't be any other chances left and I can break into the Lesser Heavenly Resonance Tier instead. Although my foundation may be a little weaker, there's not much choice," Zhao Yan thought to himself. Based on the rules of the Spiritual Resonance Cave, if one were to make a breakthrough on the Golden Dew Platform, the suppression of being at a higher cultivation level would be lessened, and this would allow him to demonstrate the power of the Lesser Heavenly Resonance Tier at the very least. At that point in time, he could find an opportunity to deal with both Li Luo and Li Lingjing. With this in mind, he quickly retreated and no longer entangled himself with Li Lingjing.

Li Lingjing did not give chase. The situation was chaotic and everyone else was like a tiger eyeing weakened prey. If she was held down by Zhao Yan, someone could take the opportunity to harm Li Luo, and that would be problematic as well.

Zhao Yan appeared beside Zhao Shenjiang, who was still holding on to his now detached arm, his expression forlorn.

"Elder Brother." Zhao Jingyu came over as well. He stared at Zhao Jingyu's chopped off limb and his expression turned ugly. At the same time, there was a hint of surprise as this result was out of his expectations.

In his eyes, Zhao Shenjiang was the strongest in his generation. He had a lower ninth-grade strength resonance and was also a two-pearl. He seemed to be superior to Li Luo in every way, but the result was unimaginable. Li Luo had taken Zhao Shenjiang's arm instead.

"Li Luo, that damned bastard. Is he some sort of limb-severing fiend?"

"The Duke Art Li Luo used has an extremely high grade. It's at the very least at the Soul Ascension-grade. You only lost this time because you were careless. Don't worry about it," Zhao Yan consoled.

"The good thing is that the severed arm was not destroyed. I have some spirit medicines here that can help you reattach it. You won't be affected as much as a result."

Zhao Shenjiang gloomily accepted the medication from Zhao Yan. Clearly, his heart was full of dissatisfaction and fury. Losing to Li Luo had turned him into a stepping stone. In the future, word would spread that the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Li had triumphed over the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Zhao in this generation. He had lost the first battle.

"Forget about it. Ignore their provocations and don't bother with them. Let us focus on obtaining more thrones," Zhao Yan continued as he rushed into the area surrounding the Golden Dew Platform yet again. Battles continually raged like wildfire as people struggled to obtain their fated opportunities.

As the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Zhao retreated to focus on their next battle, Li Lingjing leisurely returned to Li Luo's side.

"Not bad. You actually managed to beat Zhao Shenjiang." Li Lingjing beamed happily.

Li Luo's face was a little pale. The previous battle had consumed quite a lot of his stamina and resonant power, so he took the Blackwood Feather Fan out and gave it a swish, creating two white lights that quickly restored his reserves.

"Cousin Lingjing, you are even more merciless than me. You killed the chicken to scare the monkey! It looks like the rogue cultivators will probably be too afraid to provoke me any longer." Li Luo hefted a thumbs up at her.

Li Lingjing's methods were brutal, and a prodigy from the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Zhao had been beaten to death viciously. Everyone who caught sight of it felt a chill down their spine.

Her peal of laughter rang out as she fiddled with the staff in her hand. It seemed almost impossible to reconcile the image of this beauty as a ravenous killer.

Li Luo smiled and exchanged a few more words before he sent the golden lotus throne towards Li Jingtao's defensive perimeter.

"Third Brother, do you want me to give you a hand?" Li Jingtao asked worriedly. He had watched the entire fight.

Li Luo smiled. "No matter. The most important task now is to protect these seats. If we were to divide our forces, it would be hard to prevent people from coveting our goods." He inspected the group who had formed a defensive line with numerous treasured artifacts floating in the air, creating even more layers of defense. Even an eight-pearl would not be able to cut through the defenses in a short period of time.

Li Luo then escorted the golden lotus throne to the middle of the protective encirclement. At this point in time, Li Fuling and Li Guan had also returned, each with a jade praying mat beneath them.

"Cousin Li Luo, you've performed beautifully. Zhao Shenjiang is this generation's most outstanding individual in the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Zhao. Your victory has brought about great fame to our bloodline." Li Fuling's gaze held a hint of elation. She previously harbored doubts over Li Luo's position as the Dragon's Head as he was only at the Fiend Finisher Tier. However, the battle just now had cleanly set all her concerns to rest.

Zhao Shenjiang had demonstrated shocking power. Even Li Qingfeng might very well have been at a disadvantage against him. But Li Luo had chopped his arm off, which proved his superiority.

Li Luo waved his hand. "I still have to rely on you to seize more of these higher grade seats, Cousin Fuling. I'm only lending a hand."

Although he had beaten Zhao Shenjiang, there were still countless stronger cultivators around. This was especially so when it came to those who were protecting the seats they had obtained. There were numerous five, six, and even seven-pearl individuals here. Even with the Myriad Resonances Dragon Fang Sword Formation, Li Luo couldn't pose a threat to enemies of that level.

Unless he mobilized the Three-tailed Heavenly Wolf's power, of course. "If we want to seize more golden lotus thrones, we would have to rely on Li Lingjing." Li Fuling's gaze was complicated as she glanced at her. Her performance had stunned the crowd.

Li Lingjing pointed at the sole golden lotus throne within the protective encirclement. "This is for Cousin Li Luo."

"Alright, alright, we know. No one will fight him for it," Li Fuling replied.

This golden lotus throne was obtained by Li Lingjing, and Li Luo had staved off Zhao Shenjiang in an epic fight to protect it. Thus, no one would disagree if she wanted Li Luo to have it.

Li Lingjing did not speak further with Li Luo. She merely turned around and flew off quickly like a beam of light. It seemed that she was planning to obtain yet another golden lotus throne.

Li Fuling and Li Guan hurried behind her.

Li Luo, on the other hand, sat cross-legged and began to restore his resonant power. After a while, he left with Lu Qingmei and headed towards the location of the jade praying mats to seize more for their side. Chaotic battles continued to rage around the Golden Dew Platform.

For the sake of obtaining a seat, everyone's eyes had turned red with avarice and bloodlust. The blood of cultivators stained the mountain as many perished.

However, the place where the most intense battles took place was naturally the area with the golden lotus thrones. Every single throne was contested until someone died.

Li Lingjing was the most eye-catching individual as she was once again riding a golden lotus throne. The Aquamarine Bamboo Python Staff created a torrent of poisonous light that forced anyone who coveted the throne beneath her to retreat in panic and misery. Anyone who was caught would have their flesh and blood melted away, leaving behind only ivory bone.

When she struck, it was relentless and ruthless. Whoever dared approach would have to bear the brunt of a blow meant to reap their lives.

In the process, even the Heavenly Origin Ancient College's Zong Sha had accidentally come too close and was struck in the face by a ray of poisonous light, giving him a gigantic shock.

Zong Sha was speechless at this development. When they had journeyed together with Li Luo, she was all smiles and they seemed to have gotten along just fine. However, it was only now that he understood that this lady was just faking it—her merciless personality was who she truly was.

Zong Sha then glanced at the unlucky fellow who had just been smitten to death by a strike of her staff, his blood and brains strewn over the sky. He couldn't help but swallow a mouthful of saliva as he muttered to himself, "Forget it, she's crazy. No way I'm going to provoke her."

Li Lingjing's methods were too ferocious, and even hardened rogue cultivators who lived by the sword dared not approach her, all clearly frightened by her murderous aura.

Zong Sha similarly pulled apart the distance between him and the cold, killing goddess who might not even spare her relatives. He finally understood that getting close to her would solely depend on the toughness of his skull.

As time went on, the battle on the Golden Dew Platform gradually came to an end as the stench of blood covered the skies. The ground was covered with corpses and flowing with fresh blood.

Those who had survived to the end were shrouded with killing intent.

At this point, all of the thrones, praying mats, and mats had found an owner.

Li Luo gingerly released the bowstring in his hand. His fingers were still dripping with blood and lightly trembling. The intense battle had forced him to kill countless enemies.

When he turned his head, he took stock of the seats that had been protected by his fellow teammates. The most eye-catching sights were three golden lotus thrones.

Chapter 0994: Gift of Golden Smoke

The three golden lotus thrones seemed to possess a sentience of their own as they zoomed around like little fishes. As they wandered around the defensive encirclement, numerous blazing gazes were focused upon them.

Only two of the powers present had obtained three golden lotus thrones.

One was Li Luo's side, and the other was the Heavenly Origin Ancient College. Zong Sha had managed to gather quite a few of his fellow students, and they were the strongest group present. Thus, after a series of battles, they had managed to obtain three. Zhao Yan's side had only managed to secure two golden lotus thrones.

Other than the golden lotus thrones, Li Luo's side had secured many jade praying mats, which were second only to the prized thrones. Many rogue cultivators had attempted to obtain even one.

Li Fuling's gaze retracted from the three golden lotus thrones as she turned towards the crowd. "Everyone, the battle has come to an end, so we should decide how we should divide the spoils. Two of the three thrones were obtained by Li Lingjing, so she can decide how she wants to distribute them. She mentioned that Li Luo would get one, and so these two will belong to both her and Li Luo."

No one opposed these words as Li Lingjing had indeed contributed the most. It was precisely her merciless slaughter that had deterred many rogue cultivators from setting their sights on these seats.

"I've taken advantage of Cousin Lingjing here." Li Luo smiled.

Li Lingjing's slender hands were wrapped around the aquamarine staff, which looked as though it was made of jasper. The sight was exquisite and seemed to have a sense of grace to it. However, all who had seen her rampage knew that an uncountable number of individuals had been smashed to death by the seemingly soft girl.

She laughed gaily. "Cousin Li Luo, you defeated Zhao Shenjiang, so your contribution isn't minor either."

Li Luo modestly replied, "I'm not comparable to you! Even Zhao Yan was scared away."

The last golden lotus throne was obtained with Li Fuling and Li Guan's cooperation. Thus, the two drew lots to determine who would obtain it. Ultimately, Li Fuling was more fortunate and received it.

Li Guan's expression was unimaginably sorrowful, but he accepted the decision.

There was also a good number of jade praying mats, and thus, Li Guan, Li Jingtao, Li Fengyi, Lu Qingmei, and the rest all obtained one. This result was satisfying to all of them.

After all the seats were distributed, Li Luo flashed forward and appeared atop one of the golden lotus thrones. He sat down cross-legged, and he could instantly feel a cooling energy circulate within his body, causing the injuries from the previous battle to heal.

Most importantly, he could feel his three resonant palaces being stirred up and his resonance affinities becoming more active.

His heart trembled slightly. It seemed as though the upcoming baptism of the Golden Dew Platform would have a strong chance of raising his resonance grade. The only question was how much.

"I hope my woodearth and Thunder Dragon resonances can both raise a grade," Li Luo said in his heart.

"Oh yes, there's also the thing that the lantern bearer mentioned. He said I could do it on the Golden Dew Platform, but I'm not really sure where to start..." At this point, Li Luo frowned. The Sacred Void Resonance Sect no longer existed, and there was no information on how to cultivate their methods. Thus, things weren't so simple.

"Forget about it. I'll take things as they come." Li Luo didn't have any better plans, so he could only console himself.

At this point in time, numerous people had already sat cross-legged on their seats atop the Golden Dew Platform. The different types of seats were radiating colors of light, basking the platform in a beautiful glow.

Outside the platform were quite a few figures who stared at the scene in dismay. They had fought but failed, unable to obtain even the greenstone mats. Life was just so cruel, and not everything went along with their own wishes.

All of the seats had an owner, and it was at this point in time that the worldly natural energy above the platform began to emanate fluctuations. A moment later, vast amounts of energy poured downwards onto the Golden Dew Platform itself.

Scintillating golden light was released by the platform, making it look like the sun for an instant.

All of the Resonant Talismans in everyone's hands began to float on their own accord into the skies above.

After which, the Golden Dew Platform began to emit the crisp sound of flowing water. When one looked at the source of the sounds, they could see that the worldly natural energy had condensed into a golden stream.

Every droplet of water in the golden stream contained immense amounts of purified energy.

Everyone could feel their resonance affinities start to boil, thirsting for the golden stream of energy.

The golden stream gushed out and began to split into numerous smaller streams, each one slightly differentiated as they fell upon the individuals who were seated.

They varied in size, and those that fell upon the golden lotus thrones were the most majestic and full of purest energy. Clearly, the higher the grade of the seat, the stronger the baptism.

When the golden stream of energy descended onto Li Luo, whose eyes were full of anticipation, it entered the Resonant Talisman first. After a period of refinement, the energy dripped off it in the form of golden beads.

When the golden beads fell upon Li Luo's head, they turned into puffs of golden smoke, entering his body. The entire scene looked mysterious to everyone.

With the golden smoke entering his body, Li Luo's expression changed as his three resonances seemed to have lost all control, constantly shifting within the resonant palaces.

Within the waterlight resonant palace, the waterlight resonance which took the form of a pristine lake began to kick up humongous waves whilst flashing with radiant light.

In the woodearth resonant palace, the towering tree that was rooted in the earth began to shake as green motes of light started to flit around its branches gaily.

The Thunder Dragon resonant palace was no different. Thunder clouds blanketed the skies and a dragon's silhouette zoomed around, belching bolts of lightning.

The golden smoke was as attractive to the resonances as eighth-grade spirit liquids and purifying lights. In fact, the smoke acted in a much more direct fashion.

Li Luo examined the golden smoke within his body and lightly sighed as he started to distribute it amongst his resonant palaces.

Fifty percent entered the woodearth resonant palace, forty percent to the Thunder Dragon resonant palace, and the last bit was given to the waterlight resonant palace. The waterlight resonance was already at the eighth-grade, so the requirements for further advancement were much higher. Upgrading the other two was a better option than focusing on it.

As the golden smoke permeated the resonant palaces, they greedily sucked it in, and its effects were shocking to Li Luo.

The effects were most obvious on the two weaker resonances.

In the woodearth resonant palace, the gigantic tree that covered the skies began to grow at a speed visible to the naked eye. Its branches and leaves increased in size and density, creating a lush appearance. Every branch and leaf was swaying gently, filled with endless amounts of vitality, and the brown soil underneath was also expanding in size.

The earth resonance's purpose was to support the wood resonance and allow it to grow even higher and more stably.

Endless thunder clouds began to materialize inside the Thunder Dragon resonant palace, and the dragon inside them seemed to be gradually transforming. Its body increased in size prodigiously, and lifelike apparitions would emerge from the dense thunderclouds, with a majesty to behold.

Li Luo was elated as he could feel his resonances strengthening. Both were rapidly approaching a critical point of evolution.

"What wondrous effects. It's equivalent to tempering each resonance with a large number of seventh-grade spirit liquids." Li Luo sighed. Spirit liquids and purifying lights were very expensive, and the time required for one to be utilized was not short. But all of this was accelerated by the golden smoke.

"The golden smoke created by the Golden Dew Platform is not simple. There should be a limit to how much can be created," Li Luo thought to himself. The effect of it was so amazing that it was bordering on perverseness! If the Golden Dew Platform could create this golden smoke on a whim, the Sacred Void Resonance Sect would have been truly frightening, possessing power beyond comprehension.

However, Li Luo didn't continue to think about such things. As more and more golden smoke surged in his direction, his body was shrouded in such a thick layer that all sounds from the outside world faded away.

The only thing he could hear was the pounding of the waves, the rustling and swaying of the tree, as well as the roars of the Thunder Dragon.

Golden smoke continued to wrap around the seats on the Golden Dew Platform, and everything fell silent. Everyone was quietly enjoying the gifts bestowed upon them.

Chapter 0995: Strength Boosted

As the golden smoke circulated around the Golden Dew Platform, things turned so silent that one could hear a pin drop.

Those fortunate enough to obtain a seat quietly absorbed the golden smoke as they experienced their resonances improving.

In the blink of an eye, half a day had gone by.

The ones who awoke first were those on the greenstone mats. The amount of golden smoke they had received was also the least and thus they finished it the most quickly.

But the resonant power fluctuations coming from them had undergone a transformation that allowed them to shed their original resonance grades.

However, none of them had high-grade resonances in the first place—the majority only had sixth or seventh-grades. Perhaps most of them were already at the cusp of evolving their resonances, and thus the Golden Dew Platform was the last push required to cross that chasm, allowing their grades to rise.

The difficulty of taking that last step was not to be underestimated, however. Without a fateful opportunity, evolving or transforming one's resonances required a large amount of both spirit liquids and purifying lights, and time. Only with all of those ingredients could one succeed.

The surrounding gazes turned towards them, all filled with envy. That being said, the first group were not disappointed at their gains, including those that had not evolved their resonances. They could feel that the baptism had allowed them to save half a year's worth of tempering their resonances. It was not only time saved, but also the sheer cost of procuring spirit liquids and purifying lights. It was not a sum to be scoffed at. To rogue cultivators and even those from large powers, this could not be ignored.

Even Li Luo from the Dragon's Fang Lineage was struggling to find enough resources to support his eighth-grade spirit liquids and purifying lights expenditure! Whilst others could only absorb these goods in a controlled manner for fear of impurities, Li Luo had a special constitution. He could gorge himself silly on tempering items, but that also made him a true skygold-swallowing beast.

Even thousands of violet-eye treasured artifacts were just a couple of days of spending on his endless consumption of spirit liquids and purifying lights.

When the baptism of the greenstone mats ended, Li Luo could feel one of his resonances evolving.

It was the lower seventh-grade Thunder Dragon resonance.

After obtaining his third resonance, he had invested a lot of time and effort into improving it. As a result, it was no surprise that it was the quickest to evolve. With the opportunity provided by the Golden Dew Platform, it brought forward the time needed.

Li Luo's mental state was submerged into the third resonant palace, and he could see the thunderclouds continuously expand and cover the skies, lightning flashing within. In the middle of all this he could see a

lone dragon with an aura that was gradually increasing in intensity and grandeur. Occasionally, it let out a roar in tandem with the booming thunder, which combined to form an awe-inspiring but wild sight.

This happened for quite some time before the berserk thunderclaps began to recede. Li Luo could see that the dragon in the clouds had expanded in size. It had grown from a hundred feet long to over three hundred feet. All of its scales were flowing with lightning currents, making it look mystical.

Thunder Dragon resonance, Upper seventh-grade.

A sense of joy arose within Li Luo's heart. Although it was just a small upgrade from the lower to the upper tier, he felt incomparable happiness.

More importantly, the baptism had not concluded.

After this, he wanted to borrow the aid of the Golden Dew Platform to boost his upper seventh-grade Woodearth resonance to the eighth-grade! This was his most important aim as once that was accomplished, he would have two eighth-grade resonances.

However, there was a qualitative gap between the upper seventh-grade and the lower eighth-grade. The difficulty was far greater than raising a resonance from the lower seventh-grade to the upper seventh-grade by countless times. Thus, Li Luo was not sure if the Golden Dew Platform would be able to assist him with this. Even if it couldn't, he would at least make significant progress.

With this in mind, Li Luo focused all of the remaining golden smoke into the Woodearth resonance.

Time continued to pass, and the golden smoke began to recede.

An hour after the greenstone mats' baptism had ended, the jade praying mats' time came to a stop.

Those who were able to evolve their resonance to the next grade were few as most of the people who had obtained a jade praying mat were elites amongst the large powers. Their resonance grades were not low and thus it was difficult to increase them.

Li Fengyi, Li Jingtao, Lu Qingmei, Deng Fengxian, and the rest were all unable to achieve any breakthroughs. However, they gained other benefits, which was that their own cultivation levels had improved.

Li Fengyi and Deng Fengxian were originally at the late stage of the Fiend Finisher Tier. Their Fiend Dipper Energy had already reached their limit, and even though it wasn't at nine hundred and ninety feet, they had built strong foundations for themselves.

After the Golden Dew Platform's baptism, their resonances had become more pure and their resonant power had taken a leap forward.

A single radiant Heavenly Pearl formed behind each of them, demonstrating their ascent into the next stage. Li Jingtao was already at the pseudo-Heavenly Pearl Tier before the Battle of the Dragon's Head, so he had made that breakthrough long ago. With the aid of the baptism, his strength increased and he was now a two-pearl.

Lu Qingmei was originally a one-pearl and similarly rose to the two-pearl tier as well. Looking at how brilliant her second Heavenly Pearl was, she had already caught up to Zhao Shenjiang before he had undergone his own baptism.

All of those in the second group were exuberant. Their resonances had not evolved, but a rise in their resonant power was worth celebrating as well. This opportunity had been hard to obtain, and it had saved them half a year's worth of bitter cultivation.

As they cheered, the crowd then turned towards the innermost area with the lotus thrones. Their gazes were full of curiosity and envy. If the jade praying mats could provide such great benefits, how much better were the golden lotus thrones?

Under everyone's curious looks, the thick, golden smoke curled around each and every individual in the innermost area. As time passed, they began to open their eyes, demonstrating that their baptism had come to an end.

Those who had just awoken could sense the resonant power within their bodies rise steadily, and the degree of improvement was greater than those who had used jade praying mats.

Jiang Wanyu and Zhao Shenjiang were the two with the most prominent gains.

They were both at the two-pearl tier before and had directly stepped into the four-pearl tier after the baptism. Of course, their resonances were already of a high grade, especially Zhao Shenjiang, with his lower ninth-grade strength resonance. Advancing a step higher was unimaginably difficult. He would literally require a sea of spirit liquids and purifying lights to temper the resonance, which was simply impractical even with the Golden Dew Platform. However, his resonance had become more pure, which was still an excellent outcome.

This was something the two had already expected and thus neither was disappointed. On the contrary, they were elated at the increase in Heavenly Pearls.

Zhao Shenjiang had reattached his arm with the aid of the spirit medicines, and although his combat power had been slightly affected, it was still a better result compared to Zhao Jingyu. He immediately turned towards Li Luo with a dark and brooding expression.

At this point in time, he was itching for a fight and wanted to find an opportunity to reverse the previous outcome. Li Luo, on the other hand, had no time to bother with Zhao Shenjiang. He was gradually approaching the end of his baptism, and to his disappointment, even directing all of the remaining golden smoke into his woodearth resonance would not be sufficient to elevate it to the lower eighth-grade. He needed a bit more fuel for the fire. He was not satisfied with this result, but the golden smoke was already receding, so what else could he do?

It was then that he remembered the words from the Lantern Bearer.

"Golden Dew Platform's ritual..."

Li Luo's heart trembled. At this point, he had not even encountered even a hint of this so-called ritual. Could it be that he had missed out on something?

As he bitterly thought over it, what could he possibly be lacking to prove his identity as a disciple of the Sacred Void Resonance Sect?

A few moments later, his eyes flickered.

He was lacking proof of his identity. So how could he gain acknowledgement in this regard?

It wasn't too hard to guess what he had to do. With a thought, the Acquired Resonance Godly Forging Art was circulated within his body.

Chapter 0996: The Difficulty of Nine Pearls

A huge change took place at the exact moment Li Luo activated the Acquired Resonance Godly Forging Art.

The Golden Dew Platform on the mountain peak suddenly rippled with a mystical, golden light and started to tremble. For a moment, everyone thought that they were hallucinating.

However, more and more streaks of golden light shot into the sky and formed a gigantic ward before their eyes.

The ward was filled with an ancient atmosphere, and a golden eye with an almighty presence of authority floated in the center of it.

Burnished rays shot out from the eye as it quietly scanned the people on the Golden Dew Platform.

Those who had a higher sense of awareness immediately caught onto the fact that the golden ray contained a similar feeling as the golden smoke. In fact, it was much stronger than the smoke.

"Is this an additional gift from the Golden Dew Platform?!" some of the people exclaimed in surprise. Their voices were filled with greed and anticipation. Some of them were even drooling over this newfound surprise! All of those who had experienced the mysterious, golden smoke understood how alluring and valuable it was. Who knew how big of a commotion the smoke could spark if it could be brought outside? Nonetheless, it could not be an easy substance to create. It had only appeared in such small quantities even on the platform. As such, it was no wonder everyone craved the benefits that this golden ray, which seemed even stronger than the golden smoke, would bring.

In fact, some had already tried to make a move to acquire it by force. However, their attacks disappeared without a trace as soon as they got into contact with the golden light. In the end, there was nothing else that they could do except sit down and wait quietly. They watched the golden ray sweep across their surroundings repeatedly with great anticipation, hoping that this boon would ultimately land upon them.

After a few moments, the countless golden rays scanning the surroundings all congregated on the same spot, on a golden lotus throne.

There was a figure sitting cross-legged on it.

Countless eyes of fury looked over. Who was the lucky fellow that had stolen such a heavenly opportunity from them?!

"Li Luo?!" Zhao Shenjiang's face turned dark as soon as he saw who was sitting on the golden lotus throne.

"How is this possible?! How is he worthy of it?" Zhao Jingyu shouted in anger from the side too. His eyes were full of jealousy and he was about to burst with rage.

In the distance, where the Heavenly Origin Ancient College students had gathered, Jiang Wanyu was also shocked to see the golden rays ending up on Li Luo.

"What a lucky guy. To have obtained such an opportunity!" Jiang Wanyu muttered.

"However, there are too many people over here. If he's the only one to get such an opportunity, he'll definitely draw the ire of others."

Many harbored ill intentions, especially in such a situation. Everyone wanted what he was getting, so there would surely be a group of dissatisfied individuals ready to pounce.

"What should we do, Sister Jiang? Do you think more golden smoke will appear if we break through the golden rays?" one of the students whispered to her just as she was pondering about it.

This was probably what many were thinking about as well. However, Jiang Wanyu simply gave the student a light stare.

"A relationship exists between Li Luo and the Heavenly Origin Ancient College. You have all witnessed the Underworld River's Black Dragon Banner he used earlier as well. Although this does not warrant us rendering aid to him in this situation, there is no need for us to add insult to injury," Jiang Wanyu explained calmly.

"Li Luo possesses triple resonances and is exceptionally talented. There is really no need to make an enemy out of him. After all, golden smoke may not come out even if we really break this opportunity apart."

Hearing these words from Jiang Wanyu, the student nodded in agreement.

At the same moment, the members of the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Li sensed the hostility in the field towards Li Luo.

Li Fuling, Li Fengyi, Li Jingtao, and the rest rushed over to help out. As they stood on all four sides around Li Luo's golden lotus throne, their resonant power surged up. They stared coldly at all the gazes filled with avarice as they stood guard around Li Luo.

"Everyone, do not be mistaken. This opportunity has been decided by fate. If any of you dare to take a step forward, the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Li will not sit idly," Li Fuling warned them coldly.

There were some whispers around the field at this moment. After all, the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Li was a truly strong Heavenly Emperor power. It would not be a wise choice to make enemies with them.

When Zhao Shenjiang noticed the change in the surroundings, he laughed coldly to himself. Zhao Jingyu asked, "Big Brother, should we do something to encourage the others to contest for Li Luo's opportunity?"

"There's no hurry. Let's wait for Brother Zhao Yan to finish his ceremony first. He's been prepared for this breakthrough for a really long time. If he succeeds, he can reach the nine-pearl tier. Even if he fails, he'll still break into the Heavenly Resonance Tier. We can think about going after Li Luo afterwards," Zhao Shenjiang replied.

As they talked about it, they looked over to a golden lotus throne not too far away. Zhao Yan was sitting cross-legged on it, and enormous resonant power shockwaves were pulsing from his body.

On his back were eight radiant Heavenly Pearls that absorbed worldly natural energy from the surroundings.

Amidst the eight pearls was a fine and tiny glow of light that was gradually condensing.

The light seemed pretty dim, but the energy pulsing from it was immense; it was many times stronger than any of the other eight pearls.

Many others were also watching this scene in anticipation. This was the preparation required to form the ninth pearl.

As many of them were at the Heavenly Pearl Tier themselves, they could understand just how challenging the cultivation of the ninth pearl was. It required one to accumulate a strong foundation. This was something that most of the rogue cultivators would not even think about.

In fact, this wasn't something one would expect to see even from the talents of the Heavenly Emperor powers.

The ninth Pearl was the mark of one's foundation and potential.

It was said that those who could cultivate to the nine-pearl tier had a much higher chance to reach the Duke Stage than those who couldn't. In other words, the appearance of nine Heavenly Pearls would bestow one with the title of Duke seedling. The Duke Stage was a significant breakthrough in the realm of cultivation. If one could achieve it, they would be considered exceptional. They would be well respected regardless of where they went, even amongst the Heavenly Emperor powers.

As a result, many watched Zhao Yan's ninth pearl formation with a hint of envy.

However, his energy waves began to change whilst they were watching in awe. All of a sudden, there were some signs of stagnation, as if he had encountered a bottleneck.

Zhao Yan's expression fell. He took out some pills from his pocket sphere in a hurry and swallowed them before he attempted to continue his cultivation.

The pills stabilized his energy waves once again. Yet the ninth pearl continued to struggle in the air, unable to condense completely.

At this point, some of the people started to sigh to themselves. Zhao Yan was a truly talented individual, but it seemed like he would fall short when it came to condensing the ninth pearl.

What a pity.

Watching this scene from a distance, Jiang Wanyu shook her head. "The nine-pearl tier is truly challenging. It is much harder than reaching the limit of the Fiend Finisher Tier, something that even Senior Zong Sha and Zhao Yan didn't manage to pull off."

When she finished speaking, she looked over at Zong Sha. He initially had the same plan as Zhao Yan, to make full use of this opportunity and break into the nine-pearl tier. However, he was ultimately lacking and it eluded him.

Their dreams of getting the ninth pearl had come to an end.

"Brother Zhao Yan has failed to reach the nine-pearl tier, it seems," Zhao Shenjiang said with a serious tone at this point.

Zhao Jingyu replied with a hint of disappointment, "It seems like you have the highest hope of obtaining the ninth pearl now, Big Brother."

Zhao Shenjiang did not disagree with him. As the owner of a lower ninth-grade resonance, his foundation and potential were indeed higher than Zhao Yan's.

"It's fine even if Brother Zhao Yan fails. He has the Resonance Forming Pill prepared in advance. He just needs to make good use of this chance and break into the Heavenly Resonance Tier directly. Although there are restrictions in the Spiritual Resonance Cave, he will end up becoming stronger than every Heavenly Pearl cultivator here. When that time comes, we can finish off all those people from the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Li." When he finished speaking, a deadly and vicious look appeared in his eyes. Zhao Yan continued to keep his eyes closed with a serious expression. At this point, he could sense that the resonant power within his body had reached its maximum capacity.

The nine-pearl tier was too much of a challenge after all.

At this moment, Zhao Yan's eyes lit up and he unclenched his palm. Another jade bottle appeared in his hand, from which he took out a dim, silver pill.

The pill seemed magical, with a faint and enchanting mist surrounding it.

It was a really expensive item known as the Resonance Forming Pill. He had paid a high price for it, all just to prepare for this day.

Even though he had failed to reach the nine-pearl tier, he could still use this pill to reach the Heavenly Resonance Tier.

With that, he would get a huge boost to his strength and he could finish off the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Li. This would be considered a huge achievement for him. When he returned to his bloodline, he would surely be rewarded handsomely.

Nonetheless, a shocking resonant power shockwave erupted from the distance just as he was thinking about this.

Zhao Yan looked over in surprise, and his face changed immediately.

There was a golden lotus throne in that direction. Li Lingjing was sitting cross-legged on it. Worldly natural energy had condensed in the sky above her, pouring down like a waterfall.

The eight pearls behind her were spinning rapidly. At this moment, another Heavenly Pearl appeared behind them. Amazingly, it was slowly condensing from an illusory state into reality.

Shouts and screams broke out on the Golden Dew Platform all of a sudden.

Everyone looked over towards Li Lingjing in shock.

Zhao Yan and Zong Sha had failed, but this Li Lingjing... she had succeeded and broken into the nine-pearl tier!

Chapter 0997: Enigmatic Auric Halo

When Li Lingjing formed her ninth Heavenly Pearl, it caused the crowd on the Golden Dew Platform to kick up a fuss. Everyone watched her with both surprised and complicated looks in their eyes. Obtaining nine Heavenly Pearls was the ultimate achievement of the Heavenly Pearl Tier. Only those with a sturdy foundation, potential, and a hint of luck could achieve success. Zhao Yan from the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Zhao and Zong Sha from the Heavenly Origin Ancient College had both failed. These were dragons amongst men, yet they had failed by a single step. It was like an insurmountable mountain.

It was precisely because those had failed that Li Lingjing was now shining.

Even Jiang Wanyu was focused upon her as she softly said, "We have almost no information on Li Lingjing. When did the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Li produce such a genius? It seems like she's even better than Li Wuyuan."

"She is strong indeed. I'm afraid that only those in the Four Star Hall who have obtained the right to enter the Heavenly Star Hall can compare," one of her fellow students said.

Li Fuling and the rest were full of joy when they saw her breakthrough.

"Cousin Lingjing is amazing. No one in the Dragon's Fang Lineage has reached the nine-pearl tier in the last two generations." Li Fengyi sighed.

Li Jingtao nodded. "It's a pity that Cousin Lingjing suffered from that mishap all those years ago. Otherwise, the previous generation's Dragon's Head would have belonged to us."

Li Fuling's gaze remained complicated. She was of the same generation as Li Lingjing, though based on her memory, Lingjing was impressive but not as frightening as she was now. The tragedy that struck her had honed her potential.

All she could say was that blessings and calamities came in pairs.

Lu Qingmei also looked towards Li Lingjing with yearning in her eyes. She always strove for strength and sought constant improvement. Seeing herself in Li Lingjing, who was now in the spotlight, stimulated her own fighting spirit.

Although Li Lingjing was surnamed Li, she was from a branch bloodline, the Western Region's Li family. They might be considered almighty in the Western Region, but when it was compared to the main lineage, the difference was as stark as night and day. Thus, Li Lingjing's achievement was also an inspiration for her, as both of them were not directly related to the main bloodline. Deng Fengxian, on the other hand, was observing the surroundings, especially when the others started coveting Li Luo's

opportunity. When Li Lingjing condensed her ninth Heavenly Pearl, some of them had lost their nerve and began to doubt themselves, lessening the pressure on them.

Clearly, they had to consider the consequences of ruining Li Luo's opportunity. It would undoubtedly arouse the wrath of a nine-pearl expert.

Meanwhile, as Li Fengyi and the rest were celebrating, the people of the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Zhao had dark expressions.

"Damn it. Li Lingjing is from the Western Region's Li family? It's just a small branch. How is she so talented?" Zhao Jingyu fumed.

Zhao Shenjiang frowned as he spoke in a deep voice, "It's not that surprising. She has a lower ninth-grade Abyssal Serpent resonance and her foundation is not any worse than mine. Although she has spent many years in isolation, it may have been an intentional ploy by the Dragon's Fang Lineage to prevent her from being noticed. It's also a good thing. She might have entered the nine-pearl tier, but Elder Brother Zhao Yan should be able to suppress her so long as he advances to the Heavenly Resonance Tier."

Those at the nine-pearl tier were reputed for being Duke seedlings, but they were far weaker than cultivators at the Heavenly Resonance Tier.

At this point, his gaze turned towards Zhao Yan, who was gloomily glaring at Li Lingjing. In the end, he stuffed the Resonance Forming Pill into his mouth and swallowed it in a single gulp. He then took the opportunity to immediately refine the pill and make a breakthrough.

Worldly natural energy billowed like a tempest on the Golden Dew Platform. More individuals completed their baptism, and there were only three individuals remaining.

They were Li Luo, Li Lingjing, and Zhao Yan.

Li Lingjing and Zhao Yan were the topic of many discussions. Compared to them, Li Luo was relatively quiet as the golden light illuminated his body and golden smoke endlessly poured into him.

Other than some resonant power fluctuations rolling off him, he remained unperturbed.

Only he knew how much of a change his resonant palaces were undergoing.

Chiefly, his woodearth resonance. Stupendous amounts of golden smoke was being funneled into it, resulting in the giant tree that represented the resonance growing at a frightening pace.

The tree trunk gradually expanded in diameter and turned sturdier, becoming a sky-supporting pillar. The tree bark was starting to show signs of ancientness yet was filled with vitality and life.

The soil continued to spread beneath the tree. Dense earth resonant power supported the growth of the wood resonance, ensuring that the tree remained stable and upright.

With the resonance affinities complementing each other, it led to a wonderfully beneficial outcome.

The gigantic tree began to sway gently as numerous motes of green light began to rise from the earth. It transformed into the purest of resonant power, and the resonant palace began to shake.

At this point, every single branch and leaf had shallow runic patterns present on them. They were formed naturally, as though the heavens had wished it, forming a mystical sight.

The tree stopped swaying at this point in time.

The branches and leaves began to become ever more green, like shining emeralds that contained boundless amounts of life energy, causing the entire resonant palace to be filled with vitality.

Li Luo's own resonant power also began to increase.

The upper seventh-grade woodearth resonance had completed its evolution and had firmly stepped into the eighth-grade.

However, before Li Luo could fully experience the changes in purity of the eighth-grade woodearth resonance, he noticed that his body had changed in another way.

He could feel that as the golden smoke entered his body, a wisp of Acquired Resonance Flame had risen up. When the smoke was burned by the flame, it transformed into a mystical, golden strand that bordered between illusion and reality.

The strand started to extend in all directions and steadily took the form of some esoteric shape.

It was an incomplete circle, and the traces within exuded an indescribable, archaic air and inscrutable aura. Li Luo tried to call to mind the image of it, but he instantly felt a sharp pain stabbing through his head. It seemed that just trying to imagine the concept of this object would erode his will.

He felt a little shocked. Just what was this thing?

Regardless, the gold strand continued to spread until a point where it stopped. At this moment, an object that reminded one of a halo of light took shape within Li Luo's body.

This auric halo was not complete, and it seemed to be full of gaps. However, at the three corners of the halo were three different spots of light that were slowly taking shape.

There was one with scintillating water flowing within, another had the silhouette of a swaying tree, whilst the last was a coiled-up dragon.

Wasn't this the representation of his three resonances?

The resonances were each illuminating an empty space within the auric halo. It seemed like they had filled up the gaps perfectly.

Li Luo fell into a daze as he felt slightly overwhelmed. The enigmatic halo seemed to have adapted to fit his resonances perfectly.

Was this coincidence? Or perhaps was it that disciples of the Sacred Void Resonance Sect would undergo a change that suited them after the ritual?

Additionally, there were still gaps in the halo that had not been filled up, so it seemed as though he needed even more resonances to complete it.

He felt puzzled at what was going on. However, this was not the time to think about it. With the woodearth resonance's evolution, Li Luo's resonant power had soared and strengthened immensely yet again.

His resonant power was about to break through, and with that, he would reach a whole new cultivation level.

Thus, he retracted his mental state and flicked his hand, sending the Nine Orifices Dipper Smelting Pill flying into his mouth.

Pristine and violent medicinal power burst in his body like a volcano. With a thought, he fused the medicine with his rising resonant power, finally preparing himself for his long-awaited breakthrough.

Chapter 0998: Three Heavenly Pearls

On the Golden Dew Platform, everyone's attention was focused upon the last three who had yet to complete the baptism.

The first one to show signs of movement was Li Lingjing. As the worldly natural energy continued to roil, they could see the nine Heavenly Pearls behind her glowing with utmost intensity, giving off terrifying fluctuations of power.

Everyone understood that Li Lingjing had successfully obtained nine Heavenly Pearls.

This sight caused some to sigh. The only ones capable of this feat were geniuses that were rarely found even in the Heavenly Origin Divine Continent.

Regardless, once the Spiritual Resonance Cave expedition ended, Li Lingjing's reputation would soar into the skies, and perhaps the Golden Dragon Bank's Empyrean Chronicle might record her name as well.

Li Lingjing suddenly let loose boundless amounts of energy, which then wildly converged upon the ninth Heavenly Pearl.

A moment later, the torrent of energy subsided as a radiant Heavenly Pearl quietly manifested behind her, seemingly even more outstanding than the other nine.

Li Lingjing's eyes opened at this point, showing pupils full of calmness, almost indifferent to her success.

The moment she stood up, an astonishing wave of pressure rolled off her as a result of the sheer energy she possessed. This caused the countless gazes that were fixated upon her to show looks of fear. She undoubtedly gave off an even more oppressive presence than before.

The most important fact was that she had acted ruthlessly and mercilessly. No one knew just how many people had their heads smashed by her staff.

Perhaps the Empyrean Chronicle might even add a comment about her. "Enjoys smashing skulls."

However, as soon as Li Lingjing completed her breakthrough, another earth-shaking transformation that caused worldly natural energy to boil over occurred on the other side.

Eyes turned towards that direction, where they saw Zhao Yan bellowing. Behind him was a one hundred foot manifestation of a giant beast.

It was a humongous crocodile wrapped in a suit of gilded armor. It radiated a sense of savagery and brutality, possessing a mouth that could seemingly devour the world. This was Zhao Yan's resonance, an upper eighth-grade Golden Armored Crocodile resonance. As Zhao Yan howled, the eight Heavenly Pearls behind him split apart, forming an outburst of energy that was then gulped down by the Golden Armored Crocodile with a single bite.

All of the energy caused the manifestation's body to increase prodigiously in size, like a mountain that could cover the skies. The surrounding worldly natural energy was also affected by this change, rhythmically pulsing and further pouring into the crocodile's mouth as it breathed in and out.

Terrifying waves of pressure radiated from it, causing everyone to turn pale.

"The resonance is fusing with the world! This is the Heavenly Resonance Tier! Zhao Yan has successfully broken through!" someone shouted.

When one reached the Heavenly Resonance Tier, their resonance would form an intimate connection with the world and would thus transform. With worldly natural energy at its beck and call, it would become a force akin to a natural disaster, one to be reckoned with.

Zhao Yan floated into the sky. Entering the Heavenly Resonance Tier allowed him to soar through the skies and the void, giving him much more mobility when compared to the stage before. He could feel the explosive power within his body, which was almost intoxicating. Although he was only at the Lesser Heavenly Resonance Tier, he was countless times stronger than before.

After which, his gaze turned towards Li Luo, who had yet to finish his breakthrough. Based on his close connection with the world around him, he could naturally sense the exact state of his situation.

He smirked coldly, and with a thought, the Golden Armored Crocodile above let out a thunderous cry. It opened its mouth, and a one hundred foot ray of light that could shatter the sky blasted towards Li Luo.

Those around Li Luo such as Li Fuling, Li Fengyi, and the rest frowned upon seeing this. Zhao Yan's current state was something they could not defend against.

However, just as the ray of light was about to strike, a figure wielding an aquamarine staff appeared before it. With a single wave, boundless amounts of aquamarine poisonous light surged forth, colliding with the ray of light.

Bang!

Chaotic energy undulations swept across the field at the moment of collision, forcing countless people back.

Li Lingjing stood before Li Luo, shielding him from the fluctuations of the battle. She sullenly observed Zhao Yan, her eyes now clouded with killing intent.

Zhao Yan smiled coldly. "I've always wondered who was stronger, a nine-pearl or someone at the Lesser Heavenly Resonance Tier."

He continued to stare at the nine Heavenly Pearls that were floating behind Li Lingjing with a hint of jealousy in his gaze. After all, that was the peak of strength in the previous stage, something he would never ever be able to attain. It meant Li Lingjing would have a higher chance of entering the Duke Stage

in the future than him and would only continue to advance at a pace superior to his. How could he remain calm in the face of that?

"You're courting death. It won't be so easy," Li Lingjing coldly retorted as she remained seemingly indifferent to his words. The nine Heavenly Pearls began to rotate quickly, and when they reached a critical threshold, they had transformed into a complete halo of light that floated behind her.

The halo simply looked divine, and some complicated ancient runes took form on its outer layer. At the same time, it was like a black hole, sucking in horrifying amounts of worldly natural energy endlessly.

Li Lingjing's resonant power undulations started to amplify massively as a result.

All eyes were on the radiant transformation of the nine pearls behind Li Lingjing's back, and a commotion broke out.

"That is the symbol of the nine-pearl tier, the Nine Pearls Divine Halo!"

"It's said that the Nine Pearls Divine Halo gives one the ability to absorb tremendous amounts of worldly natural energy and convert it into resonant power to support the user, greatly bolstering their strength."

"With the aid of the Nine Pearls Divine Halo, it feels like she isn't any weaker than the Lesser Heavenly Resonance Zhao Yan!"

"Wow, as expected of the peak of the Heavenly Pearl Tier!"

Zhao Yan's gaze was gloomy. The mysterious divine halo that had condensed behind his opponent caused him to feel a sense of pressure. It looked like the ninth pearl wasn't just a simple increase in one's resonant power—it unlocked a new capability.

Just as Zhao Yan planned to continue probing Li Lingjing's strength, a disturbance kicked up where Li Luo was sitting.

The crowd's gazes turned once again, but this time to Li Luo. Fiend Dipper Energy was shooting into the skies from the top of his head, and it seemed to possess a sharpness that sliced even the clouds apart.

This sight caused an uproar to break out amongst the crowd.

It was because they realized that the Fiend Dipper Energy above Li Luo had reached a height of nine hundred and ninety feet.

This was the absolute peak of the Fiend Finisher Tier!

Similar to Li Lingjing reaching the nine-pearl tier, the nine hundred and ninety feet of Fiend Dipper Energy was also a watershed for cultivators! Under everyone's curious gazes, the Fiend Dipper Energy continued to suck in energy before quickly being compressed.

A few moments later, it transformed into a mass of light that contained copious amounts of energy. It was then instantly compressed, releasing alarming undulations of power.

Then, in front of everyone's eyes, the large mass of compressed Fiend Dipper Energy quickly split into three smaller balls of light.

Each ball of light quickly condensed further, blinding rays of light spilling forth from each one. Three resplendent orbs of light then gradually took their place behind Li Luo.

His tightly shut eyes were now open, and a previously unseen sharpness was now present in his gaze.

The resonant power undulations coming from his body also experienced an unbelievable surge as well.

Three Heavenly Pearls rotated behind him, ravenously absorbing worldly natural energy like starving beasts.

This sight left everyone on the Golden Dew Platform in a daze.

Had he just refined three Heavenly Pearls in one go upon entering the Heavenly Pearl Tier?

Just how much of a foundation had he built before he entered it?

Chapter 0999: Grand Perfection

Li Luo was currently standing atop a golden lotus throne in the skies above the Golden Dew Platform. His three Heavenly Pearls were giving off scintillating light, looking as dazzling as stars.

He had undoubtedly become the most handsome sight on the platform. Half the crowd was dazed, whilst the others were astonished. They had never seen anyone directly reaching the three-pearl tier upon breaking through. This only occurred once in a blue moon.

Li Luo's expression was calm as he inspected the dense resonant power flowing within his body. Then a hint of satisfaction could be seen in his eyes.

This breakthrough had met his expectations.

Others might have felt shocked, but he took it as a matter of fact. He had borrowed the aid of the Golden Dew Platform's baptism, consumed a Nine Orifices Dipper Smelting Pill, and, most importantly, had built a sturdy foundation over a long period of time.

He had made sure to reach the extreme end of every step before he progressed. In terms of potential and foundation, he was not inferior to anyone. If not for the fact that he was afraid of increasing his cultivation level too quickly, he could have even easily entered the four-pearl tier by now. Not only that, it wasn't only his resonant power that had taken a leap forward.

When he inspected his body, all three of his resonant palaces were shining with a brilliant radiance.

Lower eighth-grade waterlight resonance, lower eighth-grade woodearth resonance, and upper seventh-grade Thunder Dragon resonance.

Mighty and majestic resonant power flowed within each resonant palace, and it was countless times stronger than before his breakthrough.

Additionally, his body now contained the Enigmatic Auric Halo.

Li Luo could feel the presence of the Auric Halo whenever he swept his senses through his body, proving that it was not an illusion of the mind. Although he didn't know where this thing had come from, it brought him many benefits. Namely, this was the merging of the Acquired Resonance Flame with his

resonant power. The Acquired Resonance Flame was alight in the middle of the Auric Halo. It had become a little different from the past, as it would only appear when he activated the Acquired Resonance Godly Forging Art.

However, it looked like the flame had been born from the Auric Halo itself, entrenched in the middle and slowly swaying.

Whenever Li Luo activated his resonant power, the small ball of Acquired Resonance Flame would generate countless small motes of flame that would fuse with his resonant power and ignite it.

This gave it the effect of burning up other resonant power when they came into contact.

This special effect would give his future opponents a huge headache. At the very least, it would increase the rate at which his opponents consumed their resonant power.

Li Luo remembered that Jiang Qing'e's light resonant power possessed a purification power. Whenever they fought, he had to take precautions over his own resonant power being purified, increasing the rate at which it was consumed, making it tricky to deal with her.

He then attempted to activate the Auric Halo within his body, but to no avail. He temporarily shelved this matter and would spend more time researching it in the future.

"It looks like there is some golden smoke left over."

As he continued to inspect his body, he noticed that there were left over bits of golden smoke. It was helpful in evolving his resonances, but after the baptism was complete, it seemed as though his resonances had developed a resistance towards it and there would be little effect in doing so.

Thus, he raised his head and turned towards Li Jingtao and Li Fengyi. With a deep sigh, he flicked his finger, and the remaining tendrils of golden smoke were drawn out of his body and directed towards Li Fengyi.

Li Jingtao and Deng Fengxian had upper eighth-grade resonances, and the difficulty of elevating them any further was massive. The gap to the ninth-grade was a chasm few could cross. Li Fengyi, on the other hand, only had a lower eighth-grade resonance, so the remnant golden smoke might be helpful in pushing her over the edge after the baptism.

At the same time he smiled and reminded her, "Second Sister, receive it."

Li Fengyi looked at the golden smoke that was funneled towards her and fell into a daze. Hearing Li Luo's voice caused her eyes to light up, then she inhaled deeply and absorbed the smoke.

With the golden smoke entering her, Li Fengyi could feel her own resonance coming to life and clamoring for it. She was unable to evolve her resonance during the baptism, but it had definitely reached a climactic point. With the additional golden smoke from Li Luo coming to assist her, she could feel her resonance breaking through that final barrier.

Crimson light fluctuated behind her body, where a meandering manifestation of a dragon appeared, coiled up and ready to strike.

Upper eighth-grade Scarlet Dragon resonance.

Li Luo smiled. "That last bit of golden smoke was perfect in assisting her with stepping through the door completely."

This was meant for Li Jingtao to hear.

Li Jingtao, on the other hand, put on a genial smile and waved his hand, demonstrating that he didn't mind. He understood that his own resonance grade was high enough and that bringing it to the next stage would require more than another round of the Golden Dew Platform's baptism.

Li Fuling and the rest felt envious upon seeing this. However, they understood the relationship between Li Fengyi and Li Luo. They were extremely close and thus, no one could not feel dissatisfied over it.

After giving away that prized opportunity, Li Luo arrived by Li Lingjing's side and glanced over at the gloomy-looking individuals from the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Zhao with a grin. "You guys don't look very happy."

When faced with his mocking gaze, they reciprocated with coldness. Li Luo might have been in the process of undergoing a breakthrough, but he could sense that Zhao Yan and the rest were out to disrupt his fated opportunity. If not for Li Lingjing's advancement to the nine-pearl tier and her protection, he would have been ruined by these bastards.

Zhao Yan broodingly stared at Li Luo as he indifferently said, "You are an uncommon prodigy. Be wary of your smarts leading you to a premature death."

"I don't know when I will die, but I feel that you geniuses from the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Zhao need to leave something for me before you go." Li Luo smirked as a trace of killing intent surfaced within his eyes.

The Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Zhao had constantly targeted them with one deadly scheme after another, and now that he had finally leaped ahead in strength, entering the three-pearl tier, he naturally felt the need to avenge those enmities.

They couldn't let the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Zhao keep flaunting their power before them. It would eventually damage their own prestige and curb their sides' spirit.

"Cousin Lingjing, can you block this fellow for me?" Li Luo asked.

The nine pearls of light behind Li Lingjing immediately began to revolve at a high speed, causing a wave of resonant power to be released from her body.

"Leave him to me." She didn't say more, directly taking a step forward as her body transformed into a beam of brilliant light, shooting towards Zhao Yan. With her staff in hand, she waved it and caused sky-covering amounts of poisonous light to appear around it before smashing downwards onto him.

"Hmph! Do you actually think I'm afraid of you?" Zhao Yan coldly snorted.

The gigantic, coiled-up Golden Armored Crocodile in the sky transformed into a beam of glittering light that descended upon Zhao Yan's body. It transformed into a suit of impenetrable golden armor, and a giant crocodile mouth could be seen protruding out of the chest piece.

The appearance of the Golden Crocodile Suit caused terrifying fluctuations of resonant power to roll off Zhao Yan's body. His every motion seemed to stimulate the worldly natural energy around him.

He then barreled towards Li Lingjing as gratuitous amounts of energy undulations bombarded the Golden Dew Platform with every clash.

The moment the two started exchanging blows, Li Luo rushed towards Zhao Shenjiang.

Zhao Shenjiang malevolently glared at Li Luo as he grasped the heavy spear in his hand tightly. Behind him, his four Heavenly Pearls began to spin rapidly, sucking in worldly natural energy.

"Li Luo, don't think you're the only one who has experienced a major boost in strength."

Li Luo completely ignored his provocations, only slicing apart the void with the ancient blade in his hand. The void was rent apart, and a draconic cry coupled with the sound of rushing water could be heard.

Zhao Shenjiang smirked. "Li Luo, do you really think that the three-pearl tier is that amazing? That a mere Communion-grade Duke Art can deal with me? You think too highly of yourself."

As the void split apart, a gigantic, black dragon emerged with an ebony river trailing right behind, radiating a chilliness that could freeze even the air around it.

The only issue was that the black dragon did not rush towards Zhao Shenjiang. Instead, it opened its maw and inhaled deeply, sucking up all of the water around it.

After the river was consumed, it let out another deafening roar. Its originally inky scales gave off a dusky, mysterious glow that condensed into special runes.

At the same time, the black dragon grew in size, and its fangs and claws glinted with an indescribable sharpness.

A simple movement from it would tear a dark rift through the void.

The black dragon's might had increased exponentially.

Not too far away, Jiang Wanyu let out a shocked gasp and her eyes turned round.

"This is... the dragon and water fusing as one. The Underworld River's Black Dragon Banner has reached the realm of Grand Perfection!"

Chapter 1000: Glamor of Corrosion

The draconic roars of the enormous, black dragon reverberated through the air. Terrifying energy surged up within its body as its claws sliced the void apart.

Everyone could tell that Li Luo's Underworld River's Black Dragon Banner was much stronger than ever before.

This was not solely due to his breaking through into a new stage. It was also because the black dragon had undergone a metamorphosis. Looking at the energy flowing through it, it was as if it had a newfound special ability.

The smell of corrosion permeated the air.

At this moment, the crowd heard the surprised gasp from Jiang Wanyu and shifted their attention over. Grand Perfection!

This had to be why the black dragon seemed so lifelike right now. It held a special charm that was only achievable with a Grand Perfection Duke Art.

Everyone knew that there were three different grades to a Duke Art: Lesser Completion, Greater Completion, Grand Perfection.

Grand Perfection was the pinnacle of all Duke Arts. Every Duke Art that managed to reach this grade would gain a unique glamor. For the black dragon, it seemed like it was some sort of corrosive ability. Without a doubt, this glamor of corrosion had greatly strengthened the destructive capabilities of this Duke Art.

It was not at all surprising to see Grand Perfection Duke Arts in the hands of a Duke, who had years of experience and expertise with various Duke Arts. However, what made it shocking was that Li Luo, someone who had just broken into the Heavenly Pearl Tier, was the one who had unleashed it.

Just how talented was he at comprehending resonance arts?

Everyone present was undeniably gifted amongst their peers; even the rogue cultivators were a cut above the rest. Yet only a handful of their Duke Arts had managed to reach Greater Completion, let alone Grand Perfection.

As everyone looked at Li Luo in the middle of the sky, they could not help but recall a stunning figure of the Heavenly Origin Divine Continent—Li Taixuan. He was someone who had left behind a series of spectacular achievements back in his younger days. It was said that he had cultivated more than one Duke Art into the Grand Perfection realm.

And Li Luo seemed to be as talented as his father.

Under their complicated gazes, the enormous, black dragon completely overshadowed Zhao Shenjiang, whose expression had changed completely. It raised its claws that were wrapped with stygian liquid, slashing directly at him. Emitting a keen, ebony light, the claws were enhanced with the glamor of corrosion.

"Myriad Beasts Devil God Body!"

Zhao Shenjiang did not dare to hesitate here. The four Heavenly Pearls radiated brightly behind his back as they sucked in all the worldly natural energy from the surroundings. He had chosen to activate his strongest skill right off the bat.

Roar!

Numerous cries from vicious beasts could be heard immediately as Zhao Shenjiang's body expanded. After a few moments, he transformed into a giant man that was over a hundred feet tall, with each part of his body taking the form of the body parts of different beasts.

This transformation was much more vicious than before. From afar, it seemed like he was garbed in a hundred different beasts as his armor.

At this moment, he tightly gripped his Heavy Mountain Spear and his ninth-grade strength resonance appeared behind him like a mirage. It turned into a ninth-grade spirit avatar and boosted the power of his resonance art tremendously.

"Myriad Beasts Spirit Armor!"

As Zhao Shenjiang shouted, the beastly parts of his body quickly took on the color of steel, radiating a sense of invincibility.

"Bring it on! I'm not afraid of a Grand Perfection art. It's ultimately just a pathetic Communion-grade Duke Art!"

Zing!

The sharp dragon claws that were overflowing with the glamor of corrosion sliced apart the void and slashed down viciously onto Zhao Shenjiang. A stunning energy shockwave erupted coupled with an ear-piercing explosion.

However, Zhao Shenjiang's face was extremely gloomy during this clash. He could see with his very own eyes that the dragon's claws were slowly leaving marks on his Myriad Beasts Armor.

Even though it was just a Communion-grade Duke Art, its destructive strength in the Grand Perfection realm was stunning. With the help of the glamor of corrosion, it was ripping through his Myriad Beasts Spirit Armor's defense!

He could also sense a strange energy coming from the dragon's claws during the clash. This energy was able to burn up his resonant power every time they came into contact. In fact, the burning spread like wildfire.

He could not help but feel worried about this strange development.

During the short instant where he was distracted, the keen claws of the dragon slashed down with dazzling light. It viciously smashed against the Myriad Beasts Spirit Armor, trying to break through his defenses and go for the kill.

Zhao Shenjiang's expression began to change as he sensed the repeatedly frigid air emanating from it. In the end, a series of sharp sonic booms could be heard as multiple afterimages were left in his wake in his hurried retreat.

Clearly, he had given up on a head-on confrontation.

The black dragon raised its claws once again and slashed down repeatedly as it chased after him for the kill.

Zhao Shenjiang raised the Heavy Mountain Spear and waved it fiercely in the air. In the next moment, a stream of domineering light came out of the spear and collided with the strikes of the dragon. A deep echo sounded off as the two opposing energies clashed violently. This confrontation lasted for quite some time, but just as Zhao Shenjiang swung his spear to defend against the final blow, he heard a painful scream come from behind him.

He quickly turned around to see what had happened. Zhao Jingyu, despite hiding in the back, had been hit by two of the claw attacks. Coincidentally, both of his arms had been sliced off. Zhao Jingyu screamed out in agony.

He had never expected to get caught up in this fight after sequestering himself far away.

Li Luo must have done it on purpose. That bastard just wanted to go after his arms! "Li Luo!" Zhao Shenjiang's gaze turned vicious as he tightened his grip on the Heavy Mountain Spear. He glared at Li Luo with eyes full of murderous intent.

However, he did not appear as intimidating as before. His Myriad Beasts Spirit Armor was sullied with countless parts ripped out of it by the dragon's feverish attacks. In a way, it seemed as though the entire thing was about to fall apart.

Zhao Shenjiang was boiling with anger, but he did not retaliate. He formed hand seals with a single hand, then a jade tablet appeared from the flesh of his palm.

Li Luo's Grand Perfection Underworld River's Black Dragon Banner was devastating even though it was only a Communion-grade Duke Art. It was comparable to a Soul Ascension-grade Duke Art.

However, it was not possible to kill Zhao Shenjiang with just this art alone. The main thing that Zhao Shenjiang had to defend against was Li Luo's other Duke Art, the Dragon Fang Sword.

Ultimately, that was Li Luo's mightiest killer move.

He had initially planned to draw out the Dragon Fang Sword before using the jade tablet and its recovery power. Once he had successfully blocked it, he could then counterattack without a second thought. However, he had not expected Li Luo to force him into such a pathetic state already!

He could not help but admit that Li Luo had caught up in terms of resonant power after his breakthrough.

At present, the so-called bumpkin did not seem to be lagging behind at all.

As Zhao Shenjiang raged furiously in his mind, Li Luo simply grinned and glanced at Zhao Jingyu. He said empathetically, "What an unlucky child. Perhaps we should just leave your arms like this? You know, just in case they get severed again. It'll save you the trouble of reattaching them."

As Li Luo mocked him, Li Fuling, Li Guan, and the others from the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Li swiftly caught up and surrounded them. Their resonant power surged up as they fixed their eyes fiercely on those from the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Zhao.

It was clear that they were prepared for a decisive fight between the two sides.

The teams from the other major powers retreated immediately as they did not want to be caught up.

The people from the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Zhao similarly made their own preparations as they observed the situation. Resonant power surged up on their side as well.

Bang!

Amidst the tense atmosphere while everyone was primed to fight, a sudden explosion of noise erupted from the back of the Golden Dew Platform. Everyone's attention was turned towards it, and they were shocked to see that the cloud wall that originally blanketed the skies and the land had begun to slowly open up.

In the small opening, they could faintly see a magical pavilion that stood amongst the clouds.

The crowd on the Golden Dew Platform exclaimed excitedly as they looked desirously into the depths. They all knew that the deepest parts of the Spiritual Resonance Cave lay behind the Golden Dew Platform.

"Let's go!" someone shouted immediately. Figures flew into the sky one after another, shooting towards the opening in the cloud wall like meteors in the sky.

At the same moment, Li Lingjing and Zhao Yan, who had been fighting in the sky above, returned to their respective camps.

"Let's go! Into the cloud wall!"

Zhao Yan's face was exceptionally dark at this point. He had noticed the grave situation at Zhao Shenjiang's side earlier. Despite breaking into the four-pearl tier, he was clearly at a disadvantage in the fight against Li Luo.

However, he did not talk about it at this moment. There were more important things to do.

It was clear that Li Lingjing and Li Luo were able to hold their ground now. His only option was to meet up with the others from the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Zhao and decide how to end this later.

Hearing this, Zhao Shenjiang also kept his anger in check as he supported Zhao Jingyu, who was screaming in pain. They followed the rest of their bloodline and flew into the sky, towards the opening of the cloud wall.

On the other side, Li Luo looked into the cloud wall in the distance and made his decision. "Let's follow them."

Naturally, he felt curious and had high hopes towards the deepest part of the Spiritual Resonance Cave.

The others, even Li Fuling, had no objections to his orders now. His performance all this while had clearly shown that he was worthy of being their leader.

As such, they also flew into the sky.

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As Li Luo and the rest were making their way towards the cloud wall from their Golden Dew Platform, the second Golden Dew Platform that was a distance away was also bustling with activity. Many figures flew into the air.

On that Golden Dew Platform, a girl with a delicate body and a silk cloth covering her face was staring at a group of people, looking into the depths of the cloud wall. The robes of her group all had the emblem of the Golden Dragon Bank on them. Although her face was hidden by the silk, the faint outline still

looked extremely beautiful. At the same time, there was an extremely pure, icy aura around her, causing the air to continuously turn into frost.

Her eyes scanned the surroundings before landing on the people from the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Li. She did not find the person she was looking for amongst them.

As such, she turned back towards the cloud wall, looking at the pavilion deep within. That place was the main reason for her visit to the Spiritual Resonance Cave.

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On the third Golden Dew Platform.

This place was deathly silent compared to the other two Golden Dew Platforms.

It was a scene filled with fresh blood flowing on the ground. There were thousands of twisted corpses lying around. Their faces were all filled with extreme fear and fright.

It seemed like a terrifying and bloody battle had taken place, and there was not a single survivor. The smell of blood filled the air.

Kacha!

All of a sudden, a strange noise broke the silence.

If one's eyes followed the sound, they would discover that there was a figure sitting on the highest point on the now sanguine Golden Dew Platform.

It was a bald young man wearing a white monk's robe. The young man looked extremely handsome with bright, red lips and pure-white teeth. At this time, he was holding onto a severed arm which he then stuffed into his mouth, slowly chewing it. On his smooth head were lines of blood squirming like slow-moving worms, resembling a blood-red lotus.

Fresh blood spurted out of the corner of his mouth. There was an indescribable eerie and chilling atmosphere around him.

In the end, the young man patted his stomach and said satisfactorily, "I'm finally full."

Then he lazily stood up from his spot while he rubbed his tummy. He looked over to the cloud wall at the back of the Golden Dew Platform. A creepy smile appeared on his face as he softly murmured, "Number Two has been finished off?"

"Hehe, what a useless thing. Oh well, at least this gives me a good reason to eat all of you."