

Starlit Path 351

Chapter 351: This Guy... Seems to Have Cursed at Me

The burly man felt a chill crawl up his spine under the giant's stare.

When it came to a strong body, only he qualified.

His cultivation was the Indestructible Golden Body; at Spirit Severing realm, his flesh was practically immortal.

Carrying the "Lin" Array Word into the world to destroy the array eye was perfectly reasonable—he was the ideal candidate.

But he didn't want to.

He wasn't stupid. This formation was terrifyingly profound. What if the "Lin" word failed?

Even with his golden body, he could slowly be ground to dust inside.

He might not die, but the outcome would be miserable.

So the burly man—Tulang—refused.

The giant was mildly surprised.

He hadn't expected the brute to have some brains.

A late-stage Spirit Severing cultivator, actually afraid.

Of course, the giant understood. Tulang feared the mysterious formation—possibly ground-tier.

Monk Wuxing said nothing to persuade him.

He had no right to push someone into death.

They weren't even friends.

“Tulang, there is no other way to break the formation,” Wuxing said, frowning.

“Then we grind it down slowly! The formation has cracks. In a hundred, a thousand years, those cracks will allow Spirit Severing to enter. We can break it then.”

Tulang waved dismissively.

He was not going in.

The world was too strange. Fu Tianluo had entered first and vanished without a ripple—likely in deep trouble.

If even Fu Tianluo was in danger, Tulang wasn't stepping into the same trap.

Silence fell.

After a long moment, the giant spoke.

The "Lin" Array Word spun in his palm.

"Here's the deal. I'll protect your three spiritual souls and seven mortal forms with my array. If your body falls, your souls will return. You'll be weakened for a time, but the Liujia Array Sect will personally forge you a new body. How's that?"

He had to succeed.

He represented the Liujia Array Sect, had promised the Venerable One of the High-Tier Buddhist Realm and his own master.

Repeated failures had worn his patience thin.

Tulang wavered.

Guaranteed survival, plus a new body forged by the Liujia Array Sect—rumored to rival High-Tier Martial powers.

It might even surpass his current golden body.

A tempting offer.

He hesitated for a long time.

Finally—

“Fine!”

“I’ll carry the Array Word in, find the array eye, destroy it, and break the formation fast!”

“Excellent,” the giant nodded.

Wuxing smiled faintly. Indeed, everything in the world boiled down to profit.

Wasn’t their invasion also for profit?

The giant began forming seals.

Light from his third eye enveloped Tulang.

The “Lin” Array Word appeared above Tulang’s head.

Power surged through him—he felt two, three times stronger, on the verge of shattering his own shackles.

This was the might of a Liujia Array Word!

Tulang took a deep breath.

If all nine words empowered him... he could probably punch a High-Tier Martial expert.

“You have three days,” the giant warned gravely.

“Your body is strong, but even with the Array Word, you cannot withstand the world’s protective force and the formation’s resistance for long.”

“Three days. If you cannot find and destroy the eye, leave immediately—or your body will truly collapse.”

“With your strength and the Array Word, you are invincible in that world. But time is your greatest enemy. Three days.”

Tulang laughed, blood vitality roaring.

“No problem.”

“I’ll find the eye and smash it!”

He stepped into the void, the “Lin” word blazing above him, radiating divine might.

“The Array Word will guide you. Don’t waste time.”

The giant turned away, resuming his bombardment with the eighteen stone slabs.

Tulang shot forward like a golden meteor, plunging into the swirling mist.

...

Blood-colored battlefield.

Outside the blood-soaked earthen walls, war raged.

Jiang Li charged at the forefront in silver armor, spear on his back, leading formations against endless bronze warships.

Xuanwu Guards fell in droves, corpses piling high.

Li Sansui sat atop the wall, molding blood-soaked clay into bricks, building defensive arrays.

Her formations allowed the defenders to hold against superior foes.

Suddenly—her hand trembled.

The battlefield fell eerily silent.

Everyone looked up.

The sky tore open.

A golden figure descended, radiating terrifying pressure.

BOOM!

The earth quaked. Soil crumbled under the pressure.

Li Sansui coughed blood, staring in disbelief.

“So strong... Someone actually broke through Young Master Lu’s formation?!”

Despair gripped every Five Phoenixes cultivator.

How could they fight this?

Nascent Soul?

No—this aura felt apocalyptic.

Stronger than even the overlords of Tianyuan’s four holy lands!

Tulang landed.

The blood-colored ground rippled like waves beneath his feet.

He released his full Spirit Severing presence, tearing the air.

He glanced at the despairing natives and sneered.

He had seen that look countless times on worlds he destroyed.

That helpless terror before annihilation—it thrilled him.

Tulang knew he wasn't a good person.

He was the Venerable One's blade, sent to destroy worlds that defied the Buddhist faith.

No point pretending like that bald donkey Wuxing.

“Just ants.”

He looked at the wall with contempt.

Then the blood-colored earth writhed and swallowed him whole.

He had no time to waste on insects.

The invading Foundation Establishment cultivators were endless—they would grind these ants to dust.

His priority: the array eye.

The battlefield fell deathly quiet.

...

Origin Lake, Lake Heart Island.

Lu watched Tulang vanish into the earth.

“He can pass through the Heaven Covering Formation...”

Interesting. The “Lin” word did have merit.

But Lu was curious—why was this man bold enough to enter carrying it?

“Wait... didn’t this guy curse at me?”

Lu rubbed his chin.

Normally, he'd just cut the fellow down.

But he had grown kinder, more forgiving.

Take Fu Tianluo—arrogant, even tried to harm Little Zhu Long.

Yet Lu had been merciful, built him a nice little ice tower for fun and games.

What a perfect plan: use the “Lin” word to locate the array eye, destroy it, collapse the formation.

Lu tapped his armrest thoughtfully.

After a long moment, he sighed.

Mercy shone in his eyes.

...

BOOM!

The sky turned blood-red, as though a great terror had awakened.

Outside the ice pagoda.

Zhu Long, cultivating atop the red dragon, looked up.

Du Longyang, consolidating his realm, opened his eyes—sharp light slicing the sea.

“Such terrifying presence... stronger than the one Young Master Lu imprisoned!”

Ye Shoudao inhaled deeply.

“Another Yin Spirit realm expert!”

Inside the pagoda, Fu Tianluo’s gloomy face lit up.

“That aura... Tulang! He’s gotten so much stronger! You’re all dead!”

Hope surged.

He slammed against the ice walls, roaring for rescue.

A mental transmission rang in Du Longyang and the others’ ears.

“Young Master Lu!”

Their eyes blazed brighter.

“A new... tool?”

Their expressions turned strange.

Fu Tianluo froze mid-collision.

Hope snuffed out.

With that white-clothed monster—possibly Soul Projection—still around, why was he getting excited?

Soon, Zhu Long, Du Longyang, and the others left per Lu's orders.

The ice pagoda sank into the Boundless Sea.

...

BOOM!

Above Dongyang Commandery, the sky ripped open.

A towering figure stepped out, the "Lin" word trembling above his head, pointing the way.

Tulang hovered, laughing thunderously.

All of Dongyang Commandery fell into panic.

Nascent Soul ancestors from the four holy lands shot into the sky.

“So weak...”

Tulang sneered coldly.

So few Nascent Souls.

His gaze swept over them.

Every ancestor felt their souls freeze—suffocating despair.

Too strong!

Even City Lord Du Longyang of Martial Emperor City couldn't compare!

Tulang slowly lowered his hands.

BOOM!

Invisible pressure exploded outward.

Nascent Souls crashed to their knees, coughing blood.

Every cultivator in Dongyang stared in horror.

“This is how ants should look at a god.”

Tulang laughed, then followed the “Lin” word’s guidance toward the Boundless Sea.

He had no time to waste on trash.

Three days to find and destroy the eye.

Any delay was unacceptable.

BOOM!

He strode into the sea, parting the waters with sheer physical force.

Huge waves exploded in his wake.

He sensed faint traces of Fu Tianluo's aura.

"Where's that guy...?"

But finding the array eye was more urgent.

Unseen beneath the waves, Fu Tianluo desperately headbutted the ice walls, screaming Tulang's name.

Useless.

He could only watch in despair as Tulang flew away, confused.

Heart-wrenching.

Tulang soared on.

The "Lin" word trembled harder.

An island appeared.

He crashed down, nearly shattering it.

Two figures shot up—the Empress and Young Master Tianxu.

The Empress in crimson robes, red silk ribbons dancing.

Tianxu surrounded by floating metal swords.

“So this is the sparring partner Brother Lu prepared?”

They exchanged grave looks.

Insanely strong.

Yet their blood boiled.

BOOM!

Behind them, the island exploded.

The pristine Heaven Covering Sword—the array eye—hovered.

“Found it!”

“No need for three days—haha!”

Tulang’s eyes blazed.

He charged.

The island shattered beneath him.

The Empress and Tianxu attacked.

“Scram!”

Two half-step Spirit Severing ants.

BOOM!

Their attacks shattered against Tulang's casual palm.

They coughed blood and flew back.

Tulang ignored them, reaching for the sword.

"Stop him!"

The Empress sent red silk flying.

Tulang's aura shredded them.

Tianxu's swords became a sky-blotting blade—sparks flew off Tulang's skin.

Useless.

They gave everything, yet couldn't slow him.

Tulang stepped closer.

Suddenly—the Empress roared.

She had learned inscriptions from battling Fu Tianluo in the ice pagoda.

Inscriptions fused with silk and Dao Intent—massive power.

BOOM!

A strike drew blood on Tulang's body.

He paused, eyes narrowing.

“Inscriptions?”

“So Fu Tianluo fought you lot?”

But the Empress was stunned—she had touched the Yin Spirit barrier!

“Tianxu—run!”

Tianxu fled into the sea like a fish.

The Empress followed.

Tulang roared in fury.

Hit and run?!

Again?!

He wanted to chase—but the Heaven Covering Sword shot away.

Chase the ants or the eye?

He chose the eye.

The ants could wait until the formation fell.

He blasted after the sword.

Hundreds of li later.

Ye Shoudao stood on a reef, blade drawn.

A stunning slash carrying heartless blade intent tore the sky.

“Dao Intent?!”

Tulang punched.

Dao Intent meant nothing—he crushed with raw power.

Ye Shoudao’s eyes burned. He fought furiously, blade intent and strength rising.

One glorious slash opened a gash on Tulang's chest.

In return, Tulang nearly punched through his.

Ye Shoudao fled.

Tulang roared—again?!

The sword escaped while he was distracted.

He gave chase, nearly vomiting blood.

Played again!

More pursuit.

Du Longyang appeared, spear ready.

They clashed.

Early Yin Spirit + Dao Intent held against Tulang briefly.

One full-power thrust drew a tiny drop of blood.

Then Du Longyang was blasted away and fled.

Tulang clutched the insignificant wound, roaring in mental anguish.

What kind of people were these?!

The Array Word guided on.

An island.

A quiet girl with closed eyes seemed to be waiting.

“Another one?!”

Tulang exploded.

He punched—air twisted, black cracks forming.

Zhu Long opened her eyes.

Divine ability: Black-White Millstones.

BOOM!

The sea evaporated.

When the light faded, Tulang stared at his mangled fist.

He looked up.

The girl was already sneaking onto the red dragon and fleeing.

The sword shot away.

Tulang punched the island into dust.

“When I break this formation, I’ll slaughter every last one of you!”

He chased again.

Not far—

A giant whale carried an island.

On the island, a white-clothed youth leaned against the railing, playing chess, sipping wine.

The Heaven Covering Sword hovered calmly above his head, casting gentle light.

“Again?!”

“Have you damned natives had enough?!”

Tulang's killing intent boiled.

His golden body blazed, blood vitality sealing the area.

"Come on! Run again!"

He roared at the whale island.

The youth seemed startled by the shout.

His fingers holding a chess piece froze mid-air.

He looked up slowly.

"Why are you yelling..."

The youth said.

Then he slammed the piece down.

Tulang, mid-step in the sky,

was suddenly struck by colossal force.

BOOM!

He plummeted, smashing a bottomless crater into the sea!

Chapter 352: Being Too Kind Always Gets You Bullied

The Qinling Mountains.

The training ground.

Thick rolling mist drifted across the field, carrying the faint, metallic tang of blood.

Outside the training ground stood Tantai Xuan, the many generals of Great Xuan, Mo Beike, Mo Ju, and others, all staring intently into the churning fog.

Eight jade talismans hovered in the air, sustaining the formation.

The sharp clank of armor rang out as a squad of Xuanwu Guards marched forward in perfect formation, fully armed.

From within the array, a figure emerged, dragging bloodstained shrouds behind him. Each wrapped corpse left long streaks of red across the ground.

The breathing of those watching from outside grew heavier in an instant.

Tantai Xuan clenched his fists tightly.

Mo Ju let out a soft sigh, while the heavy bags under Mo Beike's eyes trembled faintly.

It was Jiang Li.

He looked utterly exhausted. His silver armor was dented and scarred, with a massive gash torn across one shoulder.

He had personally dragged the shrouds, bringing out the bodies of the Xuanwu Guards who had fallen in the blood-colored battlefield.

"Your Majesty..."

Jiang Li's face was smeared with blood and grime. He looked at Tantai Xuan and spoke in a hoarse voice.

His heart was heavy. He had felt the overwhelming power of the enemy—that towering man fused into the blood-colored battlefield, so terrifying that it crushed any thought of resistance.

What kind of monster was that?

For a fleeting moment, Jiang Li had almost lost all hope.

But as the commander, he quickly steadied himself, rallied his troops, and reignited their morale.

Still, the appearance of that giant had dealt a heavy blow to the Xuanwu Guards' spirits.

Casualties had risen sharply.

Jiang Li brought the bodies out but said nothing more. He turned to the fresh squad of Xuanwu Guards, his eyes glinting with sharp determination.

“Are you afraid of death?”

The guards looked at the shrouded remains of their fallen comrades. Their faces paled for a moment, but soon their eyes burned with fierce resolve.

“No fear!”

One by one, they roared.

In the distance, students from the Great Xuan Academy also stepped forward, requesting to join the fight. For those at the Body Concealment Realm, entering the battlefield and being baptized in blood might bring unexpected breakthroughs.

Jiang Li did not refuse. Leading the new squad, he stepped into the formation once more.

The mist surged, swallowing Jiang Li and the group of Xuanwu Guards marching toward almost certain death.

Tantai Xuan’s lips trembled faintly.

Watching the shrouds wrapped around his guards, an inexplicable tremor ran through his heart.

“Your Majesty...”

Mo Beike glanced at Tantai Xuan and sighed.

“I know,” Tantai Xuan said quietly. “War always claims lives.”

“But now... I truly understand just how weak we still are.”

He let out a long breath.

“Time. We need time. If we had enough time to grow and strengthen ourselves, we wouldn’t be struggling this badly.”

His words weighed heavily on everyone gathered around the training ground.

The collapse of the ancient cultivation civilization had filled them all with unparalleled dread.

If they failed to withstand the pressure, the tragedy of the ancients might repeat itself on them.

...

On the Xiliang side, the atmosphere was equally grim.

The Overlord watched as body after body was carried out, demonic energy roiling around him.

Yet the Xiang Clan Army showed no fear. They charged fearlessly into the passage once more, throwing themselves into the slaughter of the blood-colored battlefield.

Xu Chu's eyes were bloodshot as he watched his soldiers die one after another.

The shrouds were soaked through with dried blood.

The Overlord left. He entered the Nine Hells Secret Realm, carrying a chest full of rage, determined to break through his limits.

He wanted to become stronger—strong enough to turn the tide of this war.

Xie Yunling returned to Heavenly Swing Mountain.

He had learned that Li Three Years had entered the blood-colored battlefield—Li Three Thoughts had told him personally.

In that moment, Xie Yunling's body shuddered as if he might faint.

To him, Li Three Years was like a daughter.

Entering such a deadly place, a nine-deaths-and-one-life situation, filled Xie Yunling with terror.

He regretted his decision to replicate Lu Shaozhu's jade talisman.

He had personally sent Li Three Years into a battlefield of death.

In Xiliang, Xie Yunling had watched as one Xiang soldier after another was dragged out wrapped in shrouds.

He was truly afraid that one day he would see Li Three Years' body among them.

Xie Yunling returned to Heavenly Swing Mountain and sat dazed on Stargazing Peak for an entire day.

Gazing at the starry sky, he had to admit—he was old.

All he hoped was that Li Three Years, Li Three Thoughts, and the other children could grow up safe and sound.

But one day later.

More white hairs appeared on his head. He returned to the bamboo tower and began replicating the jade talisman array once more.

In Nanjun.

Tang Xiansheng, back bent with age, personally climbed Heavenly Swing Mountain.

He arrived at the door of Xie Yunling's bamboo tower.

The white-haired Xie Yunling, who seemed to have aged ten years, stepped out. The two old men looked at each other in silence.

Tang Xiansheng had come to request the array.

This was a calamity for the entire world—Nanjun could not afford to stand aside.

Xie Yunling did not refuse. He handed over one set of the jade talisman array and summoned every Body Concealment Realm disciple of the Dao Pavilion.

He ordered them to follow Tang Xiansheng into the blood-colored battlefield.

When Tang Xiansheng heard the order, he was stunned.

Xie Yunling's decision was bold to the extreme.

If all the Dao Pavilion disciples died in the blood-colored battlefield, the Dao Pavilion would be finished!

Yet Xie Yunling merely waved his hand and said nothing.

"The chaos of the age has begun. No one can remain untouched."

"If they cannot grow stronger, in the future they will only face death. Rather than waiting slowly for the end, it is better to fight for that slim chance of survival. If they can break through on the battlefield, their odds of living grow greater."

Tang Xiansheng cupped his hands in respect, then took the array and departed.

The Dao Pavilion disciples bid farewell to Xie Yunling and descended the mountain.

In an instant, Heavenly Swing Mountain felt empty and desolate.

On Stargazing Peak, the first light of dawn bathed the white-haired Xie Yunling.

He sat silently atop the peak, watching his disciples descend.

Quietly awaiting their return.

The other set of jade talisman arrays was sent to Dongyang Commandery.

The Nascent Soul Realm elders of the Four Great Sacred Grounds received it.

Having survived the apocalyptic calamity, they did not hesitate. They activated the array and sent their Foundation Establishment disciples into it.

Outside the Nine Hells Secret Realm.

Bai Qingniao arrived, holding her five little chicks, her expression serious and resolute as she stepped through the prison gate.

She had learned Jiang Li entered the blood-colored battlefield and had rushed to the Qinling Mountains, just in time to see him walk out covered in blood, dragging shrouds behind him.

The sight struck her heart like a hammer.

She wanted to enter the battlefield, but she could not. Though her personal combat strength was not strong, she had reached the Third Transformation of the Nine Phoenix Change and did not qualify.

So she chose to enter the Nine Hells Secret Realm to become stronger.

Third Prison Gate: Song Emperor City.

Kong Nanfei finally reached this city. His Confucian robe was disheveled, and beside him, Mo Tianyu lounged with his chest bared, a faint smile on his face.

“You’re really going?”

Mo Tianyu held three copper coins in his hand and glanced at Kong Nanfei.

Kong Nanfei took a swig from his gourd. His stubble was even stained with wine.

“That kid Haoran entered the blood-colored battlefield. His life or death is unknown. As his master, I failed him—I couldn’t give him a safe place to cultivate.”

“So I have to become stronger.”

Kong Nanfei drank again. The stench of alcohol clung to him.

Mo Tianyu chuckled. “Everyone wants to be stronger, but you... you’re a little crazy.”

“Crazy? How else do you get stronger? The Master dared to resist Body Concealment with a mortal body—why shouldn’t I, Kong Nanfei, challenge the lord of the undead city with my Golden Core cultivation?”

Kong Nanfei laughed freely.

He sighed. “The world is changing too fast. A blade hangs over our heads from beyond the sky, ready to fall and cut us to pieces at any moment. The time left for us to grow stronger is running out.”

Mo Tianyu fell silent.

He knew all too well about the three continents beyond the sky and the evil beings watching them hungrily.

“Old Mo, I’m going.”

Kong Nanfei took a deep swig, tucked the gourd at his waist, and rose, his Confucian robe fluttering, full of heroic spirit.

After a long moment, he turned back, brows furrowed.

“Old Mo, give me a divination anyway—so I have some peace of mind.”

Mo Tianyu laughed helplessly.

In the end, Kong Nanfei threw his head back and roared with laughter. With the auspicious hexagram Mo Tianyu gave him and righteous qi surging, he charged toward Song Emperor City.

On the city tower, the Yin Messenger erupted with aura.

Kong Nanfei recited poetry and classics aloud. Righteous qi rolled across the sky.

His Golden Core Seven Revolutions cultivation was fully revealed.

He cursed loudly, hurling insults at the lord of the undead city—the Song Emperor.

His voice echoed through the entire city.

Many cultivators turned to look.

Feng Yilou, Xiao Yue'er, and other cultivators from the Tianyuan Domain stared in astonishment at the mad Kong Nanfei.

Nie Changqing, Jing Yue, and others opened their eyes, frowning as they watched Kong Nanfei wrapped in righteous qi, laughing and cursing atop the city wall.

BOOM!

A terrifying pressure descended.

Within Song Emperor City.

A throne hung high. A colossal figure emerged, wrapped in an aura of dread—the lord of the undead city, the Song Emperor.

Kong Nanfei roared. Righteous qi surged, condensing into a righteous sword that slashed toward the Song Emperor.

He was provoking himself, breaking his limits.

The Song Emperor watched coldly. Then he let out an angry shout.

Kong Nanfei's righteous sword shattered instantly.

The terrifying pressure seemed intent on crushing him to death.

Blood streamed from his seven orifices, yet Kong Nanfei laughed wildly. Enduring the pressure, his Golden Core advanced another revolution—to Eight Revolutions.

Outside the city.

Mo Tianyu's hair floated like dandelion seeds. His face was pale.

Using Reverse Fate Intent, he forcibly pulled Kong Nanfei from the Song Emperor's grasp—at great cost.

Mo Tianyu shot forward, grabbed Kong Nanfei as he flew backward out of the city, and ran.

Kong Nanfei's act of challenging the undead city lord and breaking through seemed to open a new door for many cultivators.

The next day.

Song Emperor City.

The Overlord swung Qi Axe furiously, challenging the Song Emperor.

The result was, of course, disastrous. The Overlord nearly died, but with Unyielding Intent protecting him, not only did he survive—his cultivation even advanced slightly.

Afterward.

Nie Changqing, Feng Yilou, and others followed suit, each challenging the Song Emperor in turn.

The Nine Hells Secret Realm descended into chaos.

The atmosphere of cultivation grew increasingly tense.

And it wasn't just the Nine Hells—across the entire world, the tension was rising. Everyone was desperately pushing themselves to break through.

It was as if a great wheel had begun to turn, grinding forward with deafening noise, forcing everyone to grow stronger, to keep moving forward.

...

BOOM!

With the sound of a piece landing on the board, a massive wave exploded outward, as if a tsunami had swept across the sky.

The sea sank inward, as though pressed down by an invisible giant bowl.

Moments later, the surrounding water rushed back in with furious force, sending towering white waves crashing.

Lu sat atop the White Jade Pavilion, white robes fluttering.

The Spirit Pressure Chessboard floated before him, glowing softly.

Leaning against the Thousand Blade Chair, Lu wore a faint, almost mocking smile.

A thunderous sound.

Tu Lang's figure shot out from the depths of the vast sea. Blood boiled across his body, distorting the air around him.

"You..."

Tu Lang was somewhat stunned.

The irritation he felt from being repeatedly provoked by Du Longyang, Zhu Long, and others had gradually faded.

He looked at Lu—this white-robed youth in a wheelchair, with the Covering Heaven Sword hovering beside him, looking calm and serene.

He seemed different from those natives who struck once and fled.

All around, golden beams of qi and blood pierced the void, sealing the surroundings.

This time, Tu Lang had struck with full force, expecting the youth to flee like the others after landing a hit.

But now... it seemed the youth had no intention of running.

Tu Lang hovered in the air. His burly body erupted with powerful energy.

Above his head, the “Lin” (Proximity) Formation Word radiated strange fluctuations.

Tu Lang cracked his neck. The earlier attacks from Du Longyang and the others hadn’t really affected him.

But this youth had actually driven him into the depths of the sea.

“It must have been because I underestimated him.”

Tu Lang thought to himself.

Hum...

His divine sense surged outward in a radial wave, sweeping over Lu’s body.

The next moment, Tu Lang froze.

His divine sense felt as though it had brushed across nothingness and chaos.

“Qi Condensation Realm?”

Tu Lang almost thought he had sensed wrong.

Qi Condensation?

This white-robed youth was only at Qi Condensation?

But Tu Lang remained wary. He refused to believe it.

Who had ever seen a Qi Condensation cultivator remain so calm and composed in front of a Spirit Severing Realm expert? Who could leisurely roll up their sleeves and play chess with such ease?

He narrowed his eyes at Lu.

Suddenly, Tu Lang laughed.

On second thought—this was only a newly ascended top-tier medium martial world. What kind of powerhouse could it possibly produce?

Du Longyang and the others at early Spirit Severing had already surprised him.

This youth couldn't possibly be too strong.

“Trying to act mysterious!”

“Hand over that sword, and I'll spare your life!”

Tu Lang barked.

He took a step forward.

The raging sea instantly calmed. His Golden Body activated. Golden light blazed for ten thousand feet. He looked like an ancient god or demon, his aura growing ever more imposing.

“ROAR!”

Tu Lang opened his mouth and bellowed.

The roar turned into a shockwave, triggering a colossal tsunami. Walls of water dozens of meters high surged toward the island carried by the giant whale.

On the White Jade Pavilion, the Origin Lake hovered calmly.

Lu frowned.

His slender fingers held a chess piece.

“You’re still yelling?”

Lu placed the piece on the board—stacking it atop another.

The spirit pressure doubled instantly.

BOOM!

The giant wave exploded into mist.

Tu Lang, with his Golden Body active, suddenly felt an overwhelming force slam into him again—as if an entire continent had smashed into his face.

Blood burst from his sturdy golden cheeks. Shattered teeth flew.

BANG!

Even his Golden Body was beginning to falter. Qi and blood churned violently beneath his skin. Golden veins bulged.

He stood on the sea surface, legs bent, blood streaming down his face, as though he were shouldering the sky.

What terrifying power!

Tu Lang's heart jolted.

"I remember you insulted me before."

Suddenly.

The calm voice of the white-robed youth rang in Tu Lang's ear.

Tu Lang's pupils shrank.

He turned his head—and saw the youth, somehow already beside him in his wheelchair, silent as a ghost.

Lu looked at Tu Lang and spoke earnestly.

“Everyone who insulted me in the past is dead. They died very peacefully.”

“Don’t be afraid. I’ve grown more magnanimous now. I forgive you. You don’t have to die.”

Lu continued.

“I’ll build you an ice tower, find you a companion, and you can live happily and peacefully inside.”

Tu Lang was completely dumbfounded.

Happy and peaceful, my ass!

With a furious roar, Tu Lang’s Golden Body swelled. His Spirit Severing aura erupted to its peak.

He transformed into a streak of golden light, flashing past and launching three punches from below.

Each punch carried unmatched force.

They arrived before Lu.

“To hell with your ice tower—keep it as your own tomb!”

Tu Lang roared.

Terrifying fist light smashed toward Lu’s face.

The punch seemed to shatter the air itself, black cracks spreading outward.

At this moment, Tu Lang understood: to obtain the Covering Heaven Sword, he had to kill this white-robed youth.

BOOM!

A deafening sound.

Tu Lang’s heart lurched.

His full-power punch with ten-tenths Golden Body strength... had been blocked.

Eight Phoenix Plume Swords stacked in front of Lu, forming a shield.

Tu Lang's punch landed on them without raising even a ripple.

Behind the Phoenix Plume Swords.

Lu's white robes fluttered. Leaning against the Thousand Blade Chair, he gently rubbed his thumb ring.

His gaze fell on Tu Lang, growing colder and colder.

Tu Lang took a deep breath.

This youth... was unfathomable!

He was Spirit Severing Realm. Even suppressed by the world's protective force, a full-strength punch from his Golden Body should be enough to crush any ordinary Spirit Severing cultivator.

Yet the youth blocked it effortlessly, completely unharmed...

Could the youth be above Spirit Severing?

Above Spirit Severing? Impossible!

How could a newly ascended top-tier medium martial world possibly produce an Out-of-Body Realm monster above Spirit Severing?

Suddenly.

Tu Lang thought of Fu Tianluo.

Fu Tianluo's strength was considerable, yet there had been no word from him.

Could he have met disaster?

Suppressed by this youth?

This world was indeed strange!

A chill suddenly crept up from Tu Lang's feet.

He began to regret stepping into this world.

Fortunately, even if he died, his three souls and seven spirits could return, and the Six Jia Array Sect would forge him a new body.

Lu looked at Tu Lang.

His gaze was cold.

“Don’t bully me just because I have a good temper.”

As the words fell.

Lu flicked his finger on the wheelchair armrest.

The Phoenix Plume Swords stacked and merged into one. Eight swords became one, as if a fire phoenix cried out, its screech tearing through the void.

A single sword struck.

Tu Lang felt his whole body turn ice-cold.

“Sacred-grade artifact?!”

Shock and fear filled Tu Lang’s cry.

This youth actually possessed a Sacred-grade artifact!

No wonder he could block the attacks!

What the hell kind of place was this!

Tu Lang pushed his Golden Body to the limit. He lacked a half-sacred artifact like Fu Tianluo, but his own flesh was his strongest weapon.

He raised both arms to block.

But—

SHHHK!

A crisp sound.

The Phoenix Plume Sword slashed down.

Tu Lang felt his proud Golden Body... cleaved cleanly in two.

Pale golden blood sprayed across the sky.

He felt his body collapsing. His eyes widened, staring at Lu.

Lu's white robes were pristine. On his cold face was a trace of stubbornness and grievance.

Being too kind always gets you bullied.

"Indeed... it's much more comfortable to just cut them down."

Lu murmured.

The moment Tu Lang's Golden Body shattered.

The "Lin" Formation Word above his head began to tremble violently, emitting a wail.

Carrying Tu Lang's three souls and seven spirits, it shot toward the sky at extreme speed.

...

Outside the Five Phoenix Continent.

Mist shrouded everything.

Wu Xing and the Giant sat cross-legged in the void.

The Giant formed hand seals, manipulating eighteen stone tablets to form an array that continuously ground away at the Covering Heaven Formation.

Suddenly.

The Giant opened his eyes.

“It’s back.”

Wu Xing opened his eyes as well, sharp light flashing within them.

Below.

The mist enveloping the Five Phoenix Continent parted to either side.

A streak of golden light burst forth.

The “Lin” Formation Word transformed into a golden bolt of lightning, streaking out, carrying a blurry soul.

The Giant and Wu Xing froze.

“Save me!!!”

Suddenly.

A shrill, desperate scream erupted from the soul carried by the “Lin” Formation Word.

But the scream had barely sounded.

The vast mist of the Covering Heaven Formation surged, forming a gigantic hand.

It reached out abruptly.

Seizing both the soul and the “Lin” Formation Word in an iron grip.

And dragged them back inside.

Wu Xing felt his scalp go numb. He stood up, pupils contracting.

On the other side.

After a moment of stunned silence, the Giant’s face twisted in rage.

“Damn it!”

“Thief! Return my ‘Lin’ Formation Word!”

Chapter 353: Spirit Severing Falls, Soul Rain Descends

In the Boundless Sea,

an ice pagoda floated silently.

Countless fish circled it in fear and reverence, as though greedily absorbing something.

Inside, Fu Tianluo remained sealed. Despite his Spirit Severing strength, he could not escape.

He felt powerless, hopeless.

Yet when he sensed Tulang’s aura, a spark of hope ignited.

He slammed against the walls, desperate to catch Tulang’s attention.

Tulang’s presence burned like a sun.

Soon, massive shockwaves rocked the sea, battering the pagoda.

Tulang had found the white-clothed youth in the wheelchair.

They were fighting.

Could Tulang win?

Fu Tianluo clung to hope.

Tulang was far stronger than he remembered, and unlike Fu Tianluo—who had lost his semi-holy compass—Tulang needed no artifact.

His golden body was his greatest weapon.

Fu Tianluo prayed Tulang would win. Victory meant the three continents could crush Five Phoenixes.

And he would be freed—even at a price.

BOOM!

The sea transmitted energy perfectly.

He felt every clash—ripples slamming the pagoda.

Then—silence.

Fu Tianluo pressed his ear to the wall, heart pounding with expectation.

“SAVE ME!!!”

A scream exploded beside him.

Fu Tianluo’s face went white.

His heart felt punched.

He staggered back, crashing into the opposite wall.

“Tulang... is dead?!”

His body trembled, disbelief flooding his eyes.

The pagoda fell deathly quiet—only his ragged breathing remained.

He looked up through the tower’s peak.

Darkness and despair swallowed him whole.

He was never getting out.

...

The Boundless Sea churned with hurricanes.

Tulang’s golden body—shattered.

One slash from Lu's fused Phoenix Feather Swords had cleaved him in two.

The "Lin" Array Word, as though sentient, sensed danger.

It wrapped Tulang's soul and shot toward the heavens.

Tulang's soul trembled with lingering fear and relief.

Thank the heavens—the Liujia giant could retrieve his souls.

That frail-looking youth in the wheelchair was a monster!

He wielded a holy-tier artifact!

Its power had instantly crushed Tulang's golden body.

The terror of a holy-tier weapon!

Tulang was strong—a supreme Mid-Tier Martial Spirit Severing expert.

But he had no holy-tier artifact. Such treasures were monopolized by High-Tier Martial worlds.

Even favored by the Venerable One, he had never been granted one.

His body destroyed, but as Spirit Severing, his soul could survive independently.

The “Lin” Array Word—true treasure of the Liujia Array Sect—was carrying him home!

Above the sea,

Lu watched the golden light streak skyward.

He raised an eyebrow.

“Running?”

“Something that entered my pocket... thinks it can leave?”

He had coveted the Array Word from the start.

He never expected the giant to attach it to Tulang and send it straight in.

A gift?

How could Lu refuse such generosity?

A rune so similar to those on the Preaching Platform's Eight Trigrams Array—he would not let it go.

With a thought, he flicked his finger.

The world's origin shifted.

The Heaven Covering Sword floated into his hand, seven-colored light flowing across its blade.

Rumble!

The grand formation activated.

A colossal misty hand formed and lunged for the golden rune.

Lu wanted the “Lin” word.

Tulang’s soul was just an afterthought.

...

Blood-colored battlefield.

The war continued.

After discovering the formation’s flaw, Wuxing and Tulang had poured endless Foundation Establishment cultivators through.

They wanted the passage.

Wuxing tested if Foundation Establishment cultivators could enter the world proper.

If so, sheer numbers could overwhelm it.

Once the interior fell, the formation would collapse.

Of course, he knew the odds were low.

Even countless Foundation Establishment cultivators were ants before Golden Core or Nascent Soul.

So the real goal remained breaking the formation.

The blood-colored battlefield was merely psychological warfare.

Then—

The earth cracked.

Foundation Establishment invaders from bronze warships were swallowed by fissures, dying instantly.

Jiang Li frantically ordered retreat behind the walls.

Everyone huddled, afraid to move.

In the distance, the ground split.

A golden rune shot upward.

A twisted soul screamed within.

“SAVE ME!!!”

The cry echoed across the crimson plain.

“It’s that invincible monster from before!”

Jiang Li’s breath caught.

Li Sansui leaped atop the wall, robes whipping in the wind.

“That monster... is dead!”

She covered her mouth, eyes wide with shock—and wild joy.

It had to be Young Master Lu!

Only Young Master Lu could stop, could kill such a being!

Young Master Lu is awesome!

Above the battlefield,

every Body Storage cultivator stared skyward.

A colossal misty hand blotted out the heavens.

It chased the golden rune and screaming soul.

BOOM!

The rune tried to flee.

But the hand was faster.

It seized the rune.

The impact cracked the battlefield.

The giant hand clenched.

The massive “Lin” character blazed, struggling like a living thing.

Yet from the palm emerged mysterious runes:

Qian, Dui, Li, Zhen, Xun, Kan, Gen, Kun, Zhong...

Eight ancient runes suppressed the “Lin” word, its light dimming.

Slowly, inexorably, it was dragged beneath the earth.

BOOM!

A sudden explosion.

The hand ripped Tulang's soul free from the rune.

"Spare me!"

Tulang's soul knelt in the sky.

"I surrender! I will serve!"

His soul wept blood, voice breaking with despair.

He didn't want to die.

Late-stage Spirit Severing—he was on the cusp of ascending to a High-Tier Martial world.

He couldn't die meaninglessly here!

“You cursed at me.”

A calm voice boomed from the giant hand, echoing across the entire battlefield.

Everyone exchanged stunned glances.

Then—

the hand transformed into an enormous millstone.

It ground down.

Tulang’s soul was slowly pulverized into ash.

BOOM!!!!!!

A cataclysmic explosion—like a star detonating.

Specks of light rained down.

“Plink... plink...”

A rain of soul fragments.

Tulang’s Spirit Severing soul—shattered and scattered.

Like blood rain across the battlefield.

Li Sansui spread her arms, robes billowing.

Bathed in soul rain, her mind and spirit were cleansed, clarity flooding in.

A shell cracked within her.

Divine sense was born!

She was breaking into Heavenly Lock!

Not just her.

Meng Haoran, blood-soaked scholar's robes, broken spear dripping red, laughed in ecstasy.

The soul rain birthed divine sense in him too.

Jiang Li and countless Body Storage cultivators underwent qualitative leaps.

Many who hadn't perfected Body Storage rocketed to completion in an instant.

"Fortune! Heaven-sent fortune!"

Laughter and tears mingled.

The endless invaders had crushed their spirits.

They had expected death at any moment.

Yet now—an enemy titan's fall scattered soul rain that propelled them forward.

Joy and hope surged.

Outside Five Phoenixes.

Wuxing's face twisted in horror.

The giant roared in anguish.

Wuxing was shaken—Tulang, late-stage Spirit Severing, golden body supreme, had been erased before his eyes!

Even Wuxing, without artifacts, might not have beaten Tulang.

Yet he was dead.

A supreme Mid-Tier Martial plane lord—fallen!

The giant clutched his head, nearly hyperventilating.

His connection to the “Lin” Array Word—severed!

BOOM!

He grabbed Wuxing by the collar.

Wuxing’s body glowed with protective golden light.

“What is the meaning of this?!”

Wuxing stared coldly.

“You are the array master—why ask me? I only knew the formation was peerless, so the Venerable One summoned you.”

“Why take your anger out on me?”

He could not afford to offend the Liujia Array Sect.

“Get lost!”

The giant flung him away.

He stood, eyes bloodshot, staring at the formation below.

“Break for me!”

Eighteen stone slabs spun around him like blazing suns.

He stepped forward.

He would force his way in!

“Madman...”

Wuxing shook his head, robes fluttering, a cold smile on his lips.

He knew how deadly this formation was.

He had once tried to break it and nearly died.

Fortunately, it was defensive—never attacked first.

Otherwise, they would have perished long ago.

BOOM!

On the blood-colored battlefield,

panic spread.

Foundation Establishment invaders on bronze warships were crushed like ants beneath the giant's descending foot.

The warships exploded.

The giant stepped onto the crimson earth.

“Thief! Return my Array Word!”

His foot sank, shattering the ground.

Jiang Li, Li Sansui, and the others fled—they could not withstand even the aura leaking from his pores.

...

Five Phoenixes Continent.

The entire sky changed.

Everyone looked up in terror.

A colossal giant's silhouette appeared, as though struggling through mud.

He roared and screamed.

World protection force and the Heaven Covering Formation's retaliation tore his body apart.

Blood poured from him, turning the sky into a storm of crimson rain!

On an island,

Du Longyang and the others, recovering from their fight with Tulang, looked up.

They saw the giant trying to force his descent.

Utter madness!

Utter rage!

What had driven him to such insanity?

They could not guess.

Origin Lake, Lake Heart Island.

Lu raised a hand.

White robes snapped in the wind.

Golden light flew to him.

The misty palm glowed with Eight Trigrams runes—unshakable.

It firmly held the struggling “Lin” Array Word.

Strange fluctuations emanated from it.

“What a peculiar rune.”

Lu studied it, eyes bright with curiosity.

Up close, the tiny “Lin” word was even more mysterious.

He looked up at the raging giant.

Then flicked his finger.

The Array Word tried to burn his hand.

Divine sense surged.

Eight Trigrams runes suppressed it again.

“System, what is this?”

The system responded promptly.

[Nine Array Words — “Lin” Array Word (inactive). Created by the ancient Great Emperor ‘Hao’. Possesses terrifying might. Passed down through endless ages. Now belongs to the Liujia Array Sect — their sect-suppressing treasure.]

“Inactive?”

Lu caught the key word.

The system offered no further explanation.

He guessed the Liujia Array Sect possessed the Nine Array Words but had not fully mastered them.

After all, they were created by an ancient Great Emperor.

Lu didn't know what realm that was.

But it sounded badass.

"So... how do I activate it?"

He pondered.

Then glanced at the giant still struggling to descend.

"Little Huang."

Whoosh!

Little Yinglong flapped over, eyes sparkling with anticipation.

Lu pointed at the sky.

“Mess him up.”

Little Yinglong sensed chaos incoming.

He shot upward as a golden streak.

With the Heaven Covering Formation and world protection blocking the giant, descent was impossible.

The eighteen slabs barely kept him from being ejected.

But the camel’s back only needed one more straw.

Little Yinglong was that straw.

Lu ignored the rest, focusing on the Array Word.

His intuition told him activating it would bring unimaginable benefits.

With a thought—

his vision blurred with lines.

He pulled the “Lin” Array Word into the Preaching Platform.

...

Little Yinglong flapped furiously.

He became a golden arrow shooting skyward.

Soon, tiny Little Yinglong hovered before the giant’s face projected across the heavens.

The giant roared.

Little Yinglong stared.

Pfft!

He spat water in the giant's face.

No reaction.

The giant's eyes shifted, ignoring the dragon—he still sensed Lu on the sea and harbored ill intent.

Little Yinglong flapped harder.

Being ignored?

And plotting against Dad?!

He was pissed.

Wings spread.

His body ballooned to mountain size.

He spun like a top.

His yellow-scaled tail whipped.

The giant saw the tail coming.

Eyes narrowed.

“Filthy beast!”

SLAP!

Dragon tail met face.

The giant—already struggling against the formation’s backlash—screamed.

Twelve slabs shuddered.

The formation flung him out.

He shot backward through the mist, crashing onto the dead continent.

...

Rumble!

Within the Preaching Platform.

Lu sat cross-legged on the Eight Trigrams Array.

The “Lin” Array Word radiated boundless power.

Lu looked up in surprise.

The spinning Eight Trigrams runes fired beams of light onto the “Lin” word.

The entire platform quaked as though the earth itself shook.

After a long time,

the tremors ceased.

The “Lin” Array Word suddenly blazed with brilliant light, completely enveloping Lu’s mind and soul.

...

On the dead continent,

the blood-soaked, ejected giant clutched his head and howled into the void.

A massive emptiness tore through his soul.

At that moment, he understood.

The “Lin” Array Word...

was gone forever!

Chapter 354: The Ancient Emperor Gazes, Time Slays the Giant

Outside Five Phoenixes Continent.

Monk Wuxing hovered in the void, expression stunned.

The Liujia Array Sect giant—who had tried to force his way through the formation—had been flung back like a rag doll.

He crashed onto the dead continent he arrived on, clutching his head, roaring in anguish and rage.

His voice was wretched, almost soulless—like a man who had lost his most precious treasure.

Wuxing's heart jolted. He wasn't stupid.

Something catastrophic had happened to the giant.

"The Nine Array Word... was taken?"

He sucked in a cold breath.

Tulang was dead—his indestructible golden body shattered, his soul ground into soul rain.

And that was only the beginning.

“There is a hidden expert in this world!”

Wuxing’s mind reeled.

That expert had to be the array master the giant mentioned.

Only that could explain why Fu Tianluo—first to enter—had vanished without a ripple.

By all rights, a late-stage Spirit Severing like Fu Tianluo should have been invincible. The formation should have crumbled from within long ago.

Yet nothing.

Fu Tianluo had simply disappeared.

Wuxing glanced at Tianluo Continent—no collapse, no violent origin fluctuations.

Then he looked at Golden Body Continent.

Its massive origin began to manifest, rumbling ominously.

Tulang's death had finally shaken it.

Wuxing inhaled deeply.

A strange excitement stirred within him.

He pressed his palms together and murmured,

“Amitabha. A plane lord has fallen. Heaven's Dao will collapse, and all beings will suffer. This monk must ferry the myriad souls from the sea of bitterness.”

Compassion filled his face.

He chanted softly.

Then his figure flashed—shooting toward Golden Body Continent.

Tulang was dead.

Golden Body Continent was now a fat, defenseless piece of meat laid before him.

Neither Tulang nor Wuxing had ever imagined they could fall.

...

The giant roared.

A crushing sense of loss consumed him—his bond with the “Lin” Array Word severed forever.

His soul quaked; his realm nearly dropped.

“Thief! THIEF!”

Blood seeped from wounds inflicted by the formation's backlash. He looked wretched.

He formed seals again, driving his eighteen stone slabs into another frenzied assault.

On the blood-colored battlefield, explosions thundered.

Everyone stared in stunned silence at the bleeding giant madly smashing the earth.

His blood steamed. Powerful array runes crisscrossed the sky.

Li Sansui's robes whipped in the gale, but her eyes blazed with fervor.

She absorbed every array rune like a sponge.

The giant, lost in madness, never noticed her.

She happily studied—this was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

Bathed in soul rain, Body Storage cultivators on the battlefield had all improved dramatically.

Many were on the verge of condensing Golden Cores and breaking into Heavenly Lock.

...

At that moment,

across all of Five Phoenixes,

only deafening roars and explosions echoed from beyond the heavens.

Little Yinglong shrank back to normal size and landed on the sea.

His tail slap had barely hurt the giant,

but it was the final straw—the formation ejected the giant like a cannonball.

Du Longyang, Ye Shoudao, and the others sat on their islands, entering cultivation to digest their battles with Tulang.

They felt the urgency.

Tulang had been stronger than Fu Tianluo.

How many more like him existed?

Young Master Lu held the line,

but if too many came... could even he hold?

They cultivated with desperate focus.

Origin Lake, Lake Heart Island.

Green grass swayed. Morning-glory chrysanthemums and biluo peaches rustled.

Ni Yu paced anxiously with her black pot on her back.

Ning Zhao stood halfway up the mountain, white dress fluttering, gazing at the mist-shrouded White Jade Capital pavilion—ever more ethereal.

“Ni Yu, cultivating well is the greatest help we can give Young Master.”

She pulled Ni Yu to sit before the Dao Stele and resume practice.

White Jade Capital pavilion.

Within the Preaching Platform.

For the first time, Lu felt dazed.

As though plunged into a spinning vortex deep in the sea.

Rumble!

Inside the platform,

Eight Trigrams runes hovered.

They resonated with the “Lin” Array Word.

Soon, Lu saw his soul vortex—massive, with the Dao Stele standing at its heart, ancient and immovable, anchoring his soul.

The “Lin” Array Word seemed to embed itself within the vortex.

Rumble!

Lu frowned, forming seals rapidly.

Eight Trigrams runes flared.

The entire platform’s dense spiritual energy churned like an ocean.

White robes and hair whipping, Lu sat like a true immortal amidst the spiritual tide.

The “Lin” word grew larger,

nearly filling his soul space,

threatening to crush it.

Lu steadied his soul, resisting the pressure,

threading wisps of soul power into the rune.

Rumble!

The once-dim rune suddenly blazed with blinding light.

Countless visions flashed before Lu's eyes.

His soul drifted free, soaring through heaven and earth.

A great river plunged from the darkness—like a galaxy falling from the Ninth Heaven.

His soul was swept into its current.

Every splash carried fragments of time...

A River of Time!

Lu's soul shone brightly, white robes fluttering.

The scenes sharpened.

He saw a being of unimaginable power seated in endless darkness.

With a gesture, stars were plucked; worlds shattered.

A presence that inspired utter despair.

An Ancient Emperor!

Lu's mind trembled.

So this was the realm of an Ancient Emperor?

Then he watched the Emperor, reflected in the River of Time, forge runes.

The Emperor severed pieces of his own soul and primal spirit,

using them as the foundation,

painting in the void with bare hands.

Nine great characters took form:

“Lin, Bing, Dou, Zhe...”

Lu inhaled sharply.

The Nine Array Words!

The Emperor before him was the Ancient Emperor “Hao”?

The River of Time surged on.

The nine words formed an array.

Each character crushed the void, severing eternity.

The formation complete,

the Emperor drifted away.

Eons passed in an instant to Lu.

The Emperor returned.

Hair white, body hunched, vitality fading.

He walked like a man half-buried already.

Lu's heart shook—even an Ancient Emperor faced mortality?

Then he understood—the Emperor was gravely wounded.

Terrifying killing intent shattered the void.

Darkness itself collapsed.

Incredibly powerful enemies descended.

Just their leaked killing intent annihilated countless worlds.

The Ancient Emperor sat in the void and laughed softly.

Then his primal spirit ignited.

His dying body regained vigor—vitality blazing.

Rumble!

The nine-word array came alive.

It ground the void.

Invaders bled; the strongest were obliterated.

Lu watched in awe.

What a feat!

The Emperor had spent eons forging the array,

then in his final moments dragged his enemies down with him.

He sat at the array's heart.

Time eroded his glory.

His eyes were ancient, weathered.

Yet he gazed into the void as though seeing through eternity.

His turbid eyes carried a transcendent light across ages.

Lu's heart jolted.

In that instant...

he felt the Ancient Emperor had seen him.

Even smiled faintly at him.

BOOM!

His soul shuddered.

Lu snapped awake.

He sat on the Eight Trigrams Array Platform.

In his palm hovered the “Lin” Array Word, now glowing soft milky white.

[Nine Array Words — “Lin” Array Word (Activated). Heaven-and-Earth Supreme Treasure. Possesses the power to manipulate time.]

The system text flashed before his eyes.

Lu savored the words and inhaled sharply.

Activated vs. inactive—two completely different things.

The system called the activated version a Heaven-and-Earth Supreme Treasure!

He had truly struck gold.

That giant was the greatest philanthropist in existence.

Gifting him such a supreme treasure.

“Manipulate time... terrifying.”

Lu’s breath trembled.

With a thought, the “Lin” word entered his soul vortex, orbiting beside the Dao Stele.

He exited the Preaching Platform.

Leaning back in his Thousand Blades Chair,

though his raw strength hadn’t skyrocketed,

he had undeniably transformed.

His soul alone was now far stronger.

With the Dao Stele and now the “Lin” word,

if he wished,

his soul could instantly evolve into a true primordial spirit.

White Jade Capital pavilion.

Origin Lake flowed gently.

Lu gazed at the rippling sea, calm.

He heard the giant's roars.

But ignored them.

His heart still trembled from the visions in the River of Time.

The Ancient Emperor's power had filled him with awe—and a trace of despair.

His fingers tapped the armrest.

“Ancient Emperor... what Qi Refining layer is that?”

“Tenth layer? Or... hundredth?”

Lu murmured.

Suddenly—

he looked up.

Specks of soul rain seeped through the blood-colored battlefield,

falling across Five Phoenixes.

“It’s raining.”

“Soul rain.”

Above the sea,

Du Longyang opened his eyes, robes snapping in the wind.

A drop landed on his palm and vanished.

“Yin Spirit realm fallen, soul ground into rain...”

“Sacrificing self to save the world.”

The entire continent seemed to transform under the soul rain.

As though heaven and earth were reborn.

Many mortals awakened spiritual energy in their dantian.

Qi Condensation cultivators broke into Body Storage.

Body Storage cultivators seized the chance to form Golden Cores and shatter Heavenly Locks.

The cultivation level of all Five Phoenixes rose dramatically.

A cultivation frenzy swept the land.

...

Lu felt the total spiritual energy soaring and raised an eyebrow.

He quickly understood—Tulang's soul fragments had triggered the change.

Suddenly—

his mind stirred.

Roars echoed in his ears.

“Thief!”

“Damned thief, return my Array Word!”

The giant's furious cries thundered across the heavens.

Lu frowned.

After a long moment,

he sighed deeply.

He flicked his fingers across the Phoenix Feather armrest.

The Phoenix Feather Swords shot skyward.

Hum...

A sword light that stunned the world tore open the heavens.

A massive rift appeared,

leading straight to the giant's feet.

The giant froze, staring at the gaping wound in the blood-colored battlefield.

After roaring nonstop,

he actually hesitated.

He understood the provocation:

You can't break my formation, so I'll open the door myself.

So...

Should he enter?

Hesitation flickered across the giant's face.

But thinking of the consequences of losing the "Lin" word,

immense pressure crushed his fear.

He stepped through.

“RETURN MY ARRAY WORD!”

The giant strode out of the rift.

The Boundless Sea churned.

His colossal body radiated crushing pressure.

Eighteen stone slabs orbited him.

He locked onto the white-robed youth calmly seated in the wheelchair.

“I am the Ninth Disciple of the Liujia Array Sect. Do you understand the consequences of stealing our Array Word?!”

The giant’s voice boomed.

Lu's robes fluttered.

He smiled.

"Don't slander me."

"When did this Young Master ever steal from you?"

"I, Lu Ping'an, am a reasonable man."

"You say I stole—where is your proof?"

His tone was mild.

The giant nearly exploded with rage.

What?!

He was going to play dumb?!

The giant had watched Lu personally seize the “Lin” word.

Now he demanded proof?

Lu’s lips curved. He raised a hand.

Hum...

The “Lin” Array Word floated above his palm, radiating profound fluctuations.

“Besides, what proof do you have that this rune is yours?”

Lu asked lightly.

Arrogant!

Utterly shameless!

The giant had never met someone so brazen!

But then—he laughed.

“Proof?”

“The Array Word is bound to my soul. That is undeniable fact!”

“Good.”

Lu nodded.

“I, Lu Ping’an, am the most reasonable person.”

“I’ll give you one chance to prove it belongs to you.”

He gently raised his palm.

The “Lin” word rose into the air, warping space as though crushing the void.

The giant's eyes blazed.

Though the soul link was severed,

he had once been bound to it.

This arrogant youth dared let him try?

He lunged.

His mountain-like body strode across the sea, raising tsunamis.

His massive hand reached for the rune.

Soon—it closed around the “Lin” word.

Joy flashed across his face.

But it lasted only an instant.

Horror exploded.

“This isn’t my Array Word!”

He roared in terror.

He had wielded the “Lin” word for centuries—he knew it intimately.

Yet now it felt utterly foreign.

BOOM!

The rune trembled, unleashing terrifying fluctuations.

It blasted the giant backward.

Lu was unsurprised.

Activated and inactive—two different existences.

The giant refused to believe.

Even as blood poured from his arm, he lunged again.

“You see? You can’t prove it’s yours.”

Lu propped his chin, smiling faintly.

He beckoned.

The “Lin” word flew obediently toward him.

The giant’s eyes turned blood-red.

BOOM!

He charged, crossing the sky in one step.

He would try again.

But the rune quivered.

Space twisted.

A terrifying domain unfurled.

Hum...

The giant was enveloped.

Shock turned to horror.

He screamed.

His face aged rapidly.

Skin withered.

His body hunched and decayed.

Yet he clung to the rune.

Lu frowned.

The power of time.

Even a Spirit Severing giant couldn't withstand it.

Decay spread.

In Lu's gaze,

the giant's vitality was severed by time itself.

His turbid eyes still clung to desperate hope,

gripping the “Lin” word as life faded completely.

Thud!

His ancient corpse crashed into the sea, raising towering waves.

He sank,

sea water slowly covering his lifeless, withered eyes.

Hum...

Lu beckoned.

The “Lin” word returned—now radiating dangerous, terrifying power.

Even Lu treated it with grave caution.

The brief activation had drained over half his spiritual energy.

Suddenly—

his mind stirred.

He stored the rune.

Lines danced in his eyes.

The mist parted.

He saw Golden Body Continent beyond Five Phoenixes—its origin in chaos!

Lu's brows furrowed in anger.

“Too far!”

“Daring to pick the peach I planted?”

Chapter 355: Sir, Shall We Split It 50–50?

The Boundless Sea rose and fell.

The giant was dead.

Driven by desperate longing for his Array Word, he had tried to seize it back, only to be slain by the temporal power unleashed by the activated “Lin” Array Word. His vitality withered, his flesh decayed, his soul dried up. He was literally aged to death.

His colossal corpse crashed into the sea, raising towering waves.

Yet the cold, merciless waters swallowed him whole, burying him forever.

The sea churned, the wind wailed, as though singing a dirge for the fallen giant.

His statue-like remains sank deeper and deeper.

Even in death, his terrifying aura frightened schools of fish and sea beasts.

Some beasts fled in panic.

Others, sensing opportunity, swam against the current, hoping to claim fortune from his corpse.

A Spirit Severing expert of extraordinary bloodline—even dead, his body rivaled heavenly treasures.

But the freshly slain giant still radiated deadly pressure.

Foundation Establishment–level beasts that drew near were instantly shredded by lingering energy.

The world was in uproar.

Far away,

Du Longyang, Ye Shoudao, and the others inhaled sharply.

The giant had simply... died.

No earth-shattering battle.

He just quietly turned into a corpse and sank to the seabed.

Young Master Lu... was too terrifying!

That giant's pressure had been immense, and the array formed by his eighteen stone slabs could have ended worlds.

Yet such a being hadn't even touched a hair on Young Master Lu's head before dying mysteriously.

Their reverence for Lu grew deeper.

Zhu Long stood atop the red dragon, long lashes trembling.

She seemed to sense the power of time.

It resonated faintly with her innate divine ability.

Lu stored the Array Word.

Without the giant's divine sense, the eighteen stone slabs lost their terrifying might and began to sink.

Lu raised an eyebrow.

With a thought and a wave of his hand,

the slabs floated up.

“Each slab bears an array rune capable of nurturing at least a Nascent Soul–level array master.”

He considered.

Then smiled.

In the dao of arrays, he surpassed the giant.

He had no personal need for the slabs.

“Let them scatter across the world as opportunities...”

He pushed forward.

BOOM!

Terrifying force erupted.

With a tremendous roar, the eighteen slabs became streaks of light, shooting toward every corner of Five Phoenixes.

Suddenly,

Lu's gaze shifted to the giant's corpse on the seabed.

With a thought,

the giant's belt floated up before him.

Massive—nine enormous gems the size of millstones embedded in it.

What interested Lu was the spatial fluctuations they emitted.

Nine spatial gems!

He pried them free.

To the giant, the eighteen slabs had been more precious.

But for Five Phoenixes, spatial gems were priceless.

They heralded the age of spatial storage artifacts.

Of course, with his Dark Profound Ring, Lu had little personal need.

He sent his divine sense inside,

erased the old restrictions, and examined the contents:

array dao manuals, pills, formation tools—decent, but nothing that excited him.

He flicked the Phoenix Feather armrest.

The swords sang and shot skyward.

Slash!

The nine millstone-sized gems were sliced into many pieces.

With a wave, the fragments became streams of light scattering across the continent.

Though smaller, each fragment retained an independent space—a unique property of spatial gems.

With slight refinement, they would become elegant storage jewelry.

Five Phoenixes would soon see its first spatial storage treasures.

Done,

Lu vanished.

He did not return to White Jade Capital on Lake Heart Island.

In a flash of teleportation,

he appeared on the blood-colored battlefield.

The fighting had calmed.

Jiang Li, Li Sansui, and others were cleaning up.

The corpses of Golden Body and Prajna cultivators yielded rich spoils:

flying bronze warships, flying kasayas, armor, weapons...

All treasures that could advance Five Phoenixes further.

Especially the bronze warships—if their principles could be reverse-engineered, transportation across the continent would be revolutionized. Short distances might no longer require Dragon Gates.

Lu remained unseen.

When he wished to stay hidden, no one could detect him.

He surveyed the battlefield.

Thanks to Tulang's soul rain and the fierce battles, many were on the verge of breakthrough.

Lu smiled.

The tempering was effective.

Perhaps it was time to open the battlefield to Golden Core and Heavenly Lock cultivators as well.

Hum...

He raised a hand, drawing runes in the air.

Space rippled.

Light converged.

Tulang's massive corpse floated before him.

Only a phantom linked to Golden Body Continent's origin—his true soul was already pulverized.

The link would soon fade completely.

Lu flicked a finger.

The phantom exploded into starlight.

His eyes shifted.

His mind crossed vast distance in an instant.

Golden Body Continent's origin was in chaos after Tulang's death—temporarily ownerless.

That origin was what Lu coveted to push Five Phoenixes into High-Tier Martial.

Yet now,

while he dealt with the Liujia giant,

someone was shamelessly trying to steal it.

How could Lu's temper tolerate that?

...

Golden Body Continent.

Rumble!

The origin roared, shocking every expert.

Nascent Soul and above could commune with the origin—every powerful cultivator sensed the disturbance.

As a supreme Mid-Tier Martial world, Golden Body was mighty.

Four or five Spirit Severing experts existed—one mid-stage elder, the rest early-stage.

Tulang, late-stage, had ruled unchallenged.

Vajra Temple—Tulang's faction—was the continent's supreme power.

Its two vice-lords were early-stage Spirit Severing.

In the main hall,

a colossal golden statue of Tulang loomed.

The two vice-lords sat beneath it, circulating blood and tempering flesh.

Suddenly—

they opened their eyes.

Crack... crack...

The statue split apart.

Both vice-lords paled.

“The lord’s golden body has shattered! Something has happened to him!”

They exchanged horrified glances.

Tulang—late-stage Spirit Severing, golden body nearing semi-holy—had met misfortune.

The origin churned wildly.

Every Nascent Soul on the continent felt it.

Experts rushed to Vajra Temple.

“Vice-lords... what is happening?”

Panic spread.

“Reports from every branch—the lord’s statues have all exploded...”

“Has the lord... met with disaster?”

The vice-lords grew grave.

Tulang’s death would plunge the continent into chaos.

They chose to conceal it.

“The lord is undergoing a golden body rebirth, shedding the old to form the new. That is why every statue shattered.”

One vice-lord declared.

The other inwardly marveled— who said they were all brawn and no brain?

The Nascent Souls below seemed convinced.

It was the only explanation that made sense.

No one could imagine the invincible Tulang dead.

Suddenly—

the sky trembled.

World protection force surged violently.

As long as a world remained Mid-Tier Martial, that force persisted. Golden Body Continent, though supreme among its tier, had not yet escaped it.

Only ascension to High-Tier Martial removed it.

Rumble!

Every Infant Transformation and Nascent Soul looked up.

The vice-lords shot into the sky, blood vitality roaring, golden bodies blazing.

Then—

golden light flooded the heavens.

A colossal golden Buddha manifested.

Buddhism was not foreign here—Golden Body Continent belonged to the Venerable One.

But this Buddha was not theirs.

World protection force repelled it.

Sanskrit chants echoed.

Seven-colored light cascaded.

Within the golden Buddha,

a monk in blood-bright kasaya pressed palms together.

Lotuses bloomed with every step as he descended from beyond the sky.

“Who are you?!”

The vice-lords roared, blood vitality weaving a net to block him.

“Amitabha. Tulang has fallen. Heaven’s Dao collapses. This world will sink into darkness and death. The sea of suffering will devour countless beings. You need my Buddha’s salvation to escape it.”

Wuxing’s face was pure compassion, his shaven head glowing like a true Buddha.

“Nonsense!”

“Our lord is merely reforming his golden body! How dare you spread lies, bald donkey!”

One vice-lord bellowed.

He had to defend the lie, tears and all.

Wuxing looked upon the two early-stage Spirit Severing vice-lords with pity.

He sighed.

Chanted softly.

Yet inwardly—he sensed it.

The mysterious array master who killed Tulang was coming.

He had to claim enough of the origin before that being arrived!

He needed to seize this world fast.

“Amitabha. This monk shall deliver you...”

His fingers brushed the prayer beads at his neck—a spatial artifact.

A golden monk's staff appeared, adorned with ninety-nine large rings that jingled.

Clang!

Wuxing attacked.

Compassion vanished from his eyes.

Only slaughter remained.

The Buddha's teaching: one thought paradise, one thought hell.

He would use the crudest method to claim the origin quickly.

His gaze turned ice-cold.

Staff in one hand, he strode through the void.

Though Golden Body Continent belonged to the Venerable One,

what did it matter?

Wuxing sought to break free of Mid-Tier Martial shackles, ascend to the High-Tier Buddhist Realm, and reach Soul Projection.

Ruthlessness was required.

Supreme Mid-Tier Martial worlds were rivals by nature.

The continent's experts reacted, rising to fight.

BOOM!

The staff swept—golden light flashed.

The two vice-lords, powerful as they were, melted into blood.

Screams filled Vajra Temple, the holy land founded by Tulang.

An elder with floating golden body and thundering blood vitality descended.

An old Buddhist monk of Golden Body Continent.

Wuxing faced him with sorrowful pity, staff in hand, walking through oceans of blood and mountains of corpses.

He was no Buddha—he was a demon.

They pressed palms together in greeting.

Then Wuxing swung.

The old monk's body shattered.

The staff turned blood-red, greedily drinking blood.

The old monk's soul radiated compassion,

chanting as it formed a golden barrier.

Wuxing was unmoved.

Every Nascent Soul in Vajra Temple became blood mist.

The holy land became a domain of death.

“The semi-holy artifact bestowed by the Venerable One... I have refined it into a true holy-tier weapon. You cannot stop it.”

Clang!

The old monk’s soul sighed and was erased.

The staff spun, emitting profound fluctuations.

It swept across Golden Body Continent.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Mortals exploded into blood mist.

Rivers of blood, mountains of corpses—horror beyond words.

Yet Wuxing was accustomed.

Clearly, this was not his first genocide.

The staff absorbed endless blood qi, wreathed in black-red karmic flames.

Sinful karma fire.

Wuxing gazed at it almost drunkenly.

The flames only made the staff stronger.

“Time to claim the origin.”

He let the staff harvest lives across the sky.

Pressing palms together, kasaya fluttering, he became the compassionate monk once more.

He stepped into the origin space.

The massive origin shone like a star.

Far larger than Tianyuan's—befitting a supreme Mid-Tier Martial world.

Wuxing caressed it lovingly, though it was cold to the touch.

But his heart burned.

Origin was a world's foundation.

The stronger the world, the more precious.

It was the only energy they could touch that reached High-Tier Martial level.

This was why Tulang, Wuxing, and others loved destroying worlds—each granted power from the origin.

Wuxing inhaled deeply, savoring it like fine cuisine.

He spread his arms, blood-red kasaya falling away.

With reverence and hunger, he dove toward the origin—like a swimmer entering water.

He would bathe within, like the Bitter Disciple once did in Tianyuan, and absorb its power.

Suddenly—

just as he was about to enter,

immense energy coalesced.

A giant spiritual-energy palm materialized.

SLAP!

Wuxing—halfway inside—was slapped away.

Terrifying force sent him tumbling through the void.

“You thief.”

“Do you understand first come, first served?”

“I, Lu Ping’an, hate it most when others try to take advantage of me.”

White robes fluttering,

a white-clothed youth in a silver-bladed wheelchair appeared in the origin space.

He glanced sideways at the monk he had just slapped flying.

Far away,

Wuxing climbed to his feet, dusting his robes.

He pressed palms together.

No anger, no killing intent.

Only a gentle smile.

“You must be the mysterious array master who used that profound formation to kill Tulang.”

“Tulang died by your hand, so you deserve a share of the origin. But I have eliminated the other Spirit Severing threats on this continent.”

“Such a massive origin—you cannot consume it all alone. Why not...”

“Shall we split it 50–50?”

Wuxing smiled warmly.

He felt 50–50 was perfectly fair.

Yet...

Lu glanced at him.

“Shameless...”

“Get lost!”

His words thundered like judgment.

Wuxing’s smile froze,

then slowly vanished.

Chapter 356: Venerable One, Save Me!

Origin space of Golden Body Continent.

The atmosphere turned deathly awkward and heavy.

Wuxing had never imagined Lu would refuse, let alone so decisively.

This was the origin of a supreme Mid-Tier Martial world.

How could anyone turn down a 50–50 split?

Yet Lu had not only refused,

he had called him shameless.

Wuxing's cheek twitched. The serene smile vanished from his face.

He could no longer stay calm. Anger rose.

“Donor, greed is a sin. You killed Tulang, that is a grave offense. Tulang was the Venerable One's blade. By breaking it, do you think the Venerable One will forgive you?”

The wind moaned, fluttering his monk robes.

His voice carried cold menace.

“The Venerable One?”

Lu leaned back in his Thousand Blades Chair, basking like spring sunshine.

He looked at Wuxing.

“When I destroyed the Buddha Seed, it also said the Venerable One would never let me go. What is the point of repeating that now?”

“You came from afar. Why?”

“To annihilate Five Phoenixes, no?”

Lu’s words hung in the air.

Silence fell.

Wuxing had nothing to say.

The white-clothed youth had thoroughly offended the Venerable One,

yet showed no fear whatsoever.

Wuxing pressed his palms together, eyes narrowing.

“Is it because of the High-Tier Martial power backing you?”

Lu raised an eyebrow and smiled, neither confirming nor denying.

“Then this monk has no choice but to offend.”

Wuxing stepped forward.

His distant blood-red kasaya shot over, spinning rapidly until it blotted out the sky.

It was no ordinary kasaya, comparable to a semi-holy artifact.

BOOM!

The kasaya unfurled into a blood-colored sea of suffering.

Skeletons churned within,冤 souls wailed.

Wuxing, in pristine white robes, stood atop the sea, starkly out of place.

He chanted sutras.

The sea transformed into a heaven-covering blood palm that slammed toward Lu.

Wuxing had never been kind.

Since words failed, he would kill.

Tulang's death was his opportunity.

This origin could let him break through Spirit Severing and earn ascension to the High-Tier Buddhist Realm.

He would not let it slip.

The blood palm roared like a crimson beast.

The origin space's ground shattered.

Wuxing was cautious, he dared not underestimate Lu.

Tulang was dead.

Fu Tianluo missing.

This youth was too strange.

And possibly backed by a High-Tier Martial expert.

Wuxing attacked with everything.

Lu sat unmoving, robes fluttering, lips curved as he watched the blood sea roll in.

Same late-stage Spirit Severing realm,

Wuxing was no weaker than Tulang or Fu Tianluo,

perhaps even stronger, he had hidden many trump cards.

He knew this was his only chance to kill Lu.

Tulang and Fu Tianluo had died after entering that world, Lu's home ground, protected by an array even the Lijia giant couldn't break.

Here in Golden Body Continent's origin space,

Lu's formation could not be used.

Wuxing sat within the blood sea, eyes cold.

He chanted.

The giant palm descended, blood swirling into countless Buddha shadows.

The sea became a crimson shrine.

Lu flicked a Phoenix Feather Sword.

Fire blazed.

Countless silver blades shot out, dense as a meteor storm, radiant and magnificent, like ten thousand swords returning to the sect.

Lu remained seated, but his wheelchair dissolved into the blades.

Sharp sword qi swirled around him.

BOOM!

Sword light formed a starry river, crashing into the blood sea.

Like a waterfall of blades, it tore the sea apart.

Buddha shadows shattered one by one.

Wuxing's eyes widened in rage, like an angry Buddha.

He formed seals, chanting faster.

A golden alms bowl appeared, growing until it became an abyssal maw that swallowed sword after sword.

Clang! Clang! Clang!

Wuxing tensed, not daring to relax.

Though Lu appeared only Qi Condensation,

who would take that at face value?

The bowl's suction devoured every blade.

Wuxing's heart eased, he had disarmed Lu.

But the next instant, his face changed.

Lu sat in the void, two fingers forming a sword seal.

He drew a line in the air.

Crack!

A fissure appeared on the golden bowl.

A phoenix cry resounded.

The crimson Phoenix Feather Sword burst free.

Silver blades swirled like galaxies around it.

BOOM!

The bowl exploded.

Wuxing's heart jolted!

A semi-holy artifact, shattered by raw force!

“Holy-tier artifact?!”

Terror seized him.

Now he understood how Tulang died.

The youth possessed a holy-tier weapon!

A treasure only High-Tier Martial worlds could produce, nearly invincible in Mid-Tier Martial realms!

Even in supreme High-Tier Martial worlds, only the most favored wielded holy-tier artifacts.

Wuxing's composure finally cracked.

Blood-colored Buddhist light exploded around him.

His kasaya flew to shield him.

But the Phoenix Feather Sword spread its wings, becoming a crimson streak.

Eight swords merged, power overwhelming.

Slash!

The blood sea parted.

One sword cleaved the ocean.

The sea vanished, the shrine exploded, leaving only the kasaya torn in half.

Wuxing's heart bled.

Two semi-holy artifacts destroyed in one exchange!

They were his future in the High-Tier world!

Yet the kasaya bought him time.

He retreated, robes snapping, face twisted.

His serene facade shattered, revealing a vicious bald monk.

No wonder the youth refused the split.

No wonder he was so aggressive.

He had a holy-tier trump card!

“Donor, you are not the only one with a holy-tier artifact!”

Wuxing roared.

Seals complete, he reached into the void.

“Staff, come!”

Golden Body Continent.

The blood-colored staff spun, ninety-nine rings jingling with asura chimes.

Where the sound passed, experts burst into dust.

Suddenly, it stopped.

As though summoned.

The staff vanished.

Across the continent, survivors stared in horror and sorrow at the blood-soaked hell.

Some stood amid corpse mountains and blood seas, wailing.

Cities of cultivators, wiped clean.

Cities of mortals, silent rivers of blood.

Despair and dread blanketed the land.

A sudden great calamity.

Origin space.

The staff arrived, wreathed in blood-black karmic flames.

Wuxing gripped it.

Blood climbed his body, soon covering him entirely.

Karmic flames burned his flesh.

Yet he felt only comfort.

This staff was holy-tier, it could match Lu's Phoenix Feather Sword.

He was safe.

“Oh?”

“A ground-tier spirit artifact?”

Lu eyed the staff, surprised.

But it reeked of slaughter and endless blood qi.

A mutated holy-tier artifact.

Lu felt instinctive disgust, as though seeing oceans of corpses.

And the karmic flames made him frown.

“Buddhist?”

“Laughable.”

He plucked the jade-white sword from his topknot.

Forged from 1 Haos of Chaos energy, the Heaven Covering Sword glowed like warm milk.

Far away,

Wuxing swung the staff.

Phoenix Feather Sword soared like a fiery phoenix.

Staff and phoenix collided, karmic flames meeting phoenix fire.

Ninety-nine rings shot out, stacking densely in the void.

Clang!

Phoenix Feather Sword held.

A sword mark appeared on the staff.

Wuxing's face fell.

His holy-tier staff, scarred!

How was this sword so strong?

Hum...

Eight Phoenix Feather Swords orbited Lu.

Silver blades reformed the Thousand Blades Chair.

Lu sat, watching the karmic flames cling to the Phoenix Feather Sword like maggots.

The sword seemed to wail.

Lu inhaled.

Pale-white Bone Nether Flame danced on his palm.

It touched the karmic fire and devoured it.

Far away,

Wuxing's body went ice-cold seeing the Bone Nether Flame.

“Heavenly mystic fire?!”

This youth, was he the beloved son of a High-Tier Martial expert?

Holy-tier artifacts, heavenly mystic fire...

A top-tier Mid-Tier Martial plane lord with so many treasures!

A monster!

Wuxing lost all will to fight.

Let the youth have the origin.

If he continued, even his only holy-tier artifact would be destroyed.

He could not bear that loss!

BOOM!

He smashed the staff into the void, blood light exploding.

He fled the origin space.

Above Golden Body Continent,

Wuxing, half his body gone, rained blood.

He hovered, laughing wretchedly at the hellscape below.

Greed had invited disaster!

What a loss!

All semi-holy artifacts gone.

Even his holy-tier staff abandoned to survive!

He never imagined the prey would become the hunter.

High-Tier Martial games were truly deadly.

Tulang dead.

Fu Tianluo missing.

And now he was ruined.

Run!

Only one thought remained.

That white-clothed youth was too terrifying, two holy-tier artifacts, unfathomable cultivation.

No chance!

He fled, half-bodied and bleeding, back to Prajna Continent.

He had to contact the Venerable One!

...

Wuxing escaped,

sacrificing his staff.

Lu did not pursue.

The Heaven Covering Sword returned, shrinking into a hairpin.

Tattered kasaya, shattered golden bowl, broken staff burning with karmic fire.

Lu stored them in his Dark Profound Ring.

They could be reforged into decent spirit artifacts.

Then he turned to the origin.

He froze.

Crimson liquid, like blood, flowed across it.

He touched it.

Visions flooded his mind.

The staff spinning, asura chimes ringing.

Where the sound passed, experts and mortals alike melted into blood.

Countless lives lost, shaking the origin.

“This bald donkey... dares call himself Buddhist.”

Lu shook his head.

The deaths had filled the origin with rejection.

Unless he killed Wuxing and severed the karma, it would never calm.

An agitated origin could not be fused.

Hum...

Lu vanished.

Silver blades gleamed.

He appeared above Golden Body Continent.

The sky was blood-red.

The land a sea of corpses.

Survivors wailed.

Hell on earth.

The stench of blood choked the air.

Lu's divine sense swept, few lived.

This was true world annihilation...

So cruel.

He did not linger.

He appeared in the void,

gazing at Prajna Continent's serene Buddhist aura.

Now it only seemed mocking.

One hand on his chin, the other tapping the Phoenix Feather armrest,

his Thousand Blades Chair carried him through the void toward Prajna Continent.

...

BOOM!

Half-bodied, bleeding Wuxing crashed into Prajna Continent.

He landed in the great city's temple.

Monks were roused.

Spirit Severing elders emerged, horrified at his state.

Wuxing coughed blood, face twisted.

“Form the array! Summon the Venerable One!”

He roared, spewing organ fragments.

The elders paled.

Dong! Dong! Dong!

The great bell tolled, resounding across the continent.

Nobles and merchants praying in the temple panicked.

Wuxing collapsed like a blood 𠄎.

Monks began striking wooden fish.

Dong... dong... dong...

Sanskrit chants filled heaven and earth.

Silver light exploded.

World protection force surged.

Lu in white robes on his Thousand Blades Chair appeared above Prajna Continent.

Atop the sacred mountain,

the temple blazed with golden light, wooden fish and holy chants filling the air.

Lu's face was calm, but the sanctity now seemed deeply ironic.

Inside the temple,

blood-soaked, half-bodied Wuxing sensed Lu's arrival.

His face changed.

He had been hunted!

"Stop him!"

He roared with divine sense.

BOOM!

Four Infant Transformation monk warriors shot skyward, blocking Lu.

Lu raised a hand.

The Spirit Pressure Chessboard appeared.

He picked up a piece.

Placed it slowly.

Clack.

Spirit pressure erupted.

BOOM!

The four monks were smashed into the ground, unable even to lift their heads.

Wuxing's divine sense trembled.

“Everyone attack! Hold him back!”

He screamed madly.

He needed time, time to summon the Venerable One!

Only the Venerable One could save him now!

Whoosh!

Across Prajna Continent, countless cultivators’ eyes grew glazed.

Despite the crushing spirit pressure, they charged skyward.

Lu’s hair danced.

He glanced at Wuxing.

Placed another piece.

Clack...

Spirit pressure surged again.

Cultivators were flung back like cannonballs, cratering the earth.

Some were pinned flat, unable to move.

Even the magnificent temple collapsed under the pressure.

Cracks spiderwebbed across the giant golden Buddha statue.

Clack... clack...

Old monks' wooden fish shattered.

Finally,

when golden light poured from the clouds and a colossal Buddha silhouette appeared,

blood-drenched Wuxing laughed maniacally.

He had succeeded!

He had summoned the Venerable One!

“Venerable One, save me!”

He screamed toward the Buddha.

But the next instant,

his scream died.

A milky-white greatsword tore across the sky.

The freshly manifested Buddha silhouette,

was instantly decapitated.

Chapter 357: You Know Too Much

Five Phoenixes Continent.

The entire world fell eerily silent.

Every head turned skyward, a suffocating pressure bearing down, turning every face pale.

Nie Changqing, Jing Yue, and the others emerged from the Nine Prisons Secret Realm, staring upward.

The clouds had parted, revealing darkness and void.

Three colossal continents hung there, radiating crushing oppression.

One had turned blood-red, as though bleeding, swelling like it might explode.

The sea lay windless.

Zhu Long stood upon the water, red dragon coiled around her, heat rolling off them.

She looked up, long lashes trembling, powerful energy surging around her as though she were undergoing metamorphosis.

Du Longyang and Ye Shoudao, newly advanced Yin Spirit experts, stood similarly, gazing at the heavens.

Their divine sense, amplified dozens of times, reached far.

They clearly felt the turmoil in Golden Body Continent.

“That continent... it’s about to collapse.”

Du Longyang’s face was grim.

“Like Tianyuan once did.”

Ye Shoudao nodded solemnly.

“Young Master Lu is nowhere to be seen. If it falls, it’s not good news for Five Phoenixes.”

“Young Master Lu’s power is unfathomable. He must have a plan.”

Du Longyang sighed.

Deep beneath the sea,

inside the ice pagoda,

Fu Tianluo pressed against the wall, staring desperately upward as though he could see through it to the three continents.

“The Venerable One’s aura!”

“The Venerable One from the High-Tier Buddhist Realm... has descended!”

Mad joy surged in Fu Tianluo’s heart.

The Venerable One was a High-Tier Martial powerhouse, with a divine soul, one thought could slay Spirit Severing experts. He could definitely free him!

“Venerable One! Save me!”

Fu Tianluo roared, pounding the ice with all his might.

He didn't care if the Venerable One could hear, this was his last cry for freedom!

...

Prajna Continent.

Monk Wuxing, drenched in blood, stared blankly at the sky as though witnessing the impossible.

His half-destroyed body trembled.

Not just him,

every soul on Prajna Continent was stunned.

Lu had placed a chess piece. Spirit pressure crushed the world. Every expert was forced to their knees, unable to move.

Some prostrated fully, faces filled with terror.

Nobles and merchants who had seen the Buddha silhouette in the clouds had been ecstatic,

their devout faith manifested.

Many knelt and prayed.

Yet,

before all eyes,

a milky-white greatsword cleaved the head from their object of worship!

The Buddha silhouette, decapitated!

In the temple,

old monks coughed blood as their wooden fish shattered.

Trembling, they pointed at Lu.

“Blasphemy! Blasphemy!”

Their faces flushed with mad fury.

Wuxing stared, then jolted awake.

“Impossible...”

“The Venerable One cannot be defeated! How could a High-Tier Buddhist expert lose?!”

He inhaled deeply.

He had thought Lu was merely an array master, weakened outside his formation.

He never imagined Lu wielded two holy-tier artifacts, nearly killing him.

Now back on Prajna Continent, he had spent immense resources to summon the Venerable One.

Only for the Venerable One's projection to be instantly beheaded!

Was there anything more soul-shattering?

As a frequent world-destroyer,

Wuxing felt Lu was the true hunter, methodically breaking prey's spirits until only despair remained.

BOOM!

The golden Buddha shattered, collapsing completely.

Lu sat calmly in his Thousand Blades Chair.

Just a projection dared to suppress him?

When the Bitter Disciple died in Tianyuan, this Venerable One had attacked across vast distance.

Lu had emerged unscathed then.

Now far stronger, beheading a projection stirred no ripple in his heart.

He felt no goodwill toward this ancient Buddhist Venerable One.

The one who orchestrated Tianyuan's fall.

The one who allowed Wuxing to slaughter billions.

Most importantly,

the one who wanted Five Phoenixes destroyed,

and Lu dead.

Constantly provoking his patience.

Rumble!

As though heaven itself collapsed, terrifying roars shook Prajna Continent's cultivators into trembling prostration.

Lu's white robes fluttered as he gazed indifferently at the crumbling Buddha.

The milky-white Heaven Covering Sword returned to his side.

Forged from Chaos energy, it cut all things.

Leaning back, Heaven Covering Sword and Phoenix Feather Swords orbited him.

Sword light wove curtains of rain around him.

Lu ignored the collapsing Buddha.

His gaze shifted to Wuxing below.

"Every cause has its effect."

“You slaughtered countless lives on Golden Body Continent, binding yourself to its origin with karma. The origin rages. Only your death can appease it.”

His words rang in Wuxing’s ears.

Half-bodied Wuxing froze, then hurriedly explained,

“Donor, we cannot take the origin away. To gain great benefit, we must agitate it and be baptized by its power. I helped lighten your sin. Is that not good?”

He spoke truth.

World destruction was for the origin’s power,

to elevate themselves.

Their strength came not only from eons of cultivation,

but from devouring fallen worlds’ origins.

Lu's lips curled.

"So I should thank you?"

Wuxing faltered.

"Is your goal not to use the origin's power?"

His eyes flashed.

Lu had entered Golden Body's origin space, but if not to destroy and claim it... what was his purpose?

Wuxing could not guess.

He had never seen anyone fuse origins.

Golden Body Continent was supreme Mid-Tier Martial.

Five Phoenixes only newly top-tier.

Quality-wise, Golden Body's origin was far superior.

Weak fusing strong, that was suicide!

Lu offered no explanation.

He was too lazy to explain to Wuxing.

He had hunted him only to sever the karma with Golden Body's origin.

Lu said nothing.

Seated in his Thousand Blades Chair, he raised a palm toward Wuxing.

Immense spiritual energy coalesced into a solid palm strike.

It crossed the sky.

Oppressive aura made breathing impossible for many.

BOOM!

The lavish temple where Wuxing sat collapsed under the palm.

Around the mountaintop,

old monks trembled.

Even early-stage Spirit Severing monks lacked the courage to resist.

Their faith had been beheaded.

How could they muster will to aid Wuxing?

The heaven-descended palm radiated terrifying might.

Wuxing's blood-soaked robes fluttered.

He sat on the ground, eyelids struggling to stay open under the pressure.

Flesh on his face quivered.

BOOM!

The ground beneath him sank into a giant palm print.

Spirit Severing?

No!

Soul Projection!

This pressure was beyond Spirit Severing!

Wuxing despaired.

He had been too careless.

A mere top-tier Mid-Tier Martial world shouldn't have experts.

Even knowing Lu was an array master, he hadn't worried.

Lu's proudest formation protected Five Phoenixes, outside it, Lu should be weaker.

Yet he was wrong again.

Not only an array master, two holy-tier artifacts.

When he thought that was Lu's limit, he discovered, in despair, he was wrong once more!

Lu was Soul Projection!

Why torment him like this?!

Wuxing trembled with resentment.

He hated the High-Tier Buddhist Venerable One.

It was the Buddha Seed's lotus light that lured him, at the Venerable One's command, to siege Five Phoenixes.

Only to bury himself.

He could have ascended to the High-Tier Buddhist Realm, become a revered monk.

Now,

he was going to die.

In the temple ruins,

the lion demon king Wuxing had taken from Tianyuan's demon domain stared dumbly at Lu.

His mane pressed flat, he could barely breathe.

It was that human!

The one who re-sealed him in the Demon Lock Tower.

When he emerged, the outer continent was gone.

Now he saw the human again.

Joy or sorrow, he knew not.

Struggling against the pressure, the lion king roared.

Above,

Lu paused.

He saw the pitiful lion king cowering in the corner.

“Oh?”

“Old acquaintance?”

Lu chuckled.

With a thought,

the roaring lion king choked, mouth suddenly full of seawater.

His body shifted, appearing beside Lu.

The lion king was wise.

He prostrated, fawning.

Lu ignored him.

The terrifying palm continued descending.

Wuxing’s face filled with despair.

Suddenly,

despair vanished from his eyes.

Darkness swallowed his consciousness.

BOOM!

A deafening collision shook heaven and earth.

The mountaintop exploded.

Countless stones formed a giant palm, rising to meet Lu's.

CLANG!

Shockwaves swept outward.

Cultivators around the peak fled, yet were still blasted away, some reduced to blood mist.

When dust cleared,

Wuxing stood, radiating golden light, a golden wheel behind him.

Holy, serene, majestic aura poured from him.

“Daring to destroy my intention golden body... blasphemous against Buddha, you shall burn in karmic fire for a hundred lifetimes!”

Wuxing looked up, eyes pure gold, golden energy streaming from his pupils.

“Possession?”

Lu stared, then his expression turned strange.

“So you’re the Venerable One from the High-Tier Buddhist Realm? As expected, no good bird. You planted a seed in this bald donkey’s soul, ready to possess him at a thought.”

“Buddhist reincarnation, this must be your prepared vessel for rebirth.”

Lu laughed, voice dripping disdain.

“You dare judge High-Tier Martial cultivation...”

Wuxing’s golden eyes locked on Lu.

He slowly rose.

Terrifying power rippled space like water.

Lu grew solemn.

After possession, the Venerable One could affect space.

“Primordial Spirit Unity realm?”

Lu narrowed his eyes.

Only at Primordial Spirit Unity, condensing a true primordial spirit, transforming divine sense into divine soul, could one disturb space.

This Venerable One was at least Primordial Spirit Unity!

A true formidable enemy.

The strongest Lu had ever faced.

On Prajna Continent,

cultivators around the ruined peak looked at Wuxing with fanatical reverence.

The Venerable One had reincarnated through him?!

The supreme Venerable One's will had descended!

Despite Lu's terror,

their fanaticism for the Venerable One could not be suppressed.

“A mere ant from a Mid-Tier Martial world dares defy me...”

“Your world cannot escape annihilation!”

Wuxing rose higher, golden light blazing.

He chanted.

Buddhist sound shattered space inch by inch,

like countless blades slashing toward Lu.

Lu’s mind stirred.

Phoenix Feather Swords stacked before him.

Shattered space struck the swords, ringing like steel on steel.

Lu grew serious.

Against a true Primordial Spirit Unity expert, he had to be.

His first truly solemn battle.

High-Tier Martial,

the realm Lu yearned for,

the level Five Phoenixes must reach.

From Low Martial to Mid-Tier Martial, Lu had led the way.

Next, he would guide Five Phoenixes to High-Tier Martial!

His eyes blazed as he stared at Wuxing, golden primordial spirit power pouring from his eyes.

Rumble!

Lu pressed both hands on the armrests and slowly rose.

He rarely stood.

Standing unleashed his demonic qi, transforming him into the demonic lord wreathed in darkness.

Seated, an immortal; standing, a demon.

As Lu rose,

his white robes turned black.

Hair lashed wildly, as though whipping space apart.

Demonic qi surged.

Thousands of silver blades turned black, orbiting behind him.

Demonic qi fused with sword qi, ravaging the surroundings.

The milky-white Heaven Covering Sword gained a thin layer of demonic qi.

Phoenix Feather Swords became black-red, wreathed in demonic flames.

Demon Lord Lu fully awakened.

“Demon?”

“No wonder you dare blaspheme Buddha!”

Wuxing’s golden eyes flared.

Across Prajna Continent,

every cultivator paled at the sight of Lu’s towering demonic qi, then roared in righteous fury.

“Kill him!”

“Slay the demon!”

“Venerable One, subdue this great devil!”

Cultivators bellowed.

Prajna Continent was ruled by Buddhism, demons were their mortal enemy.

Demon Lord Lu gazed calmly.

Beside him, the lion demon king trembled.

Wuxing pressed palms together, sitting in the void, chanting sutras.

Primordial spirit surged.

Myriad Buddhist lights bloomed, golden lotuses opening around him.

Faith energy gathered, Buddhist radiance intensifying, bathing Wuxing in solemn majesty.

Endless Buddhist light surged,

as though to purify Demon Lord Lu.

Demonic qi around Lu began to dissipate, purified bit by bit.

“Amitabha. Donor, you possess wisdom roots. Convert to Buddhism, cleanse your sins.”

Wuxing intoned.

Hum...

Dao Intent rippled.

Across the continent, cultivators became devoutly calm under the Buddhist light.

Even Demon Lord Lu’s eyes seemed to glaze, as though about to be purified.

Yet,

soon he clenched his fist and punched toward Wuxing's solemn face, aiming to smash his teeth.

“You think you're worthy to convert me?”

Demon Lord Lu's hair whipped wildly, voice icy with arrogance.

BOOM!

His fist shook the heavens, demonic qi rolling.

Wuxing formed a Buddhist seal.

A golden arhat stepped from the void, clashing with Demon Lord Lu.

Demon Lord Lu's eyes narrowed.

Next instant,

Phoenix Feather Swords, Heaven Covering Sword, and thousands of silver blades formed a sword array, all unleashed!

He flipped his hand.

Above his head,

the “Lin” Array Word appeared, cascading light.

Hmm?

Wuxing, possessed by the Venerable One, stared at the “Lin” word, eyes flashing with shock.

“Why do you possess the Liujia Array Sect’s Nine Array Word?!”

Demon Lord Lu was utterly cautious.

He gave no answer.

Against such a foe, he showed respect, full strength.

Hum...

The Dao Stele in his soul blazed.

Third-Grade Sequence Dao Intent, Annihilation Dao Intent surged!

BOOM!

Demonic qi towered.

Thousands of sword lights merged into one.

He slashed at Wuxing.

Space tore.

This was Lu's strongest strike,

Dao Intent, Heaven Covering Sword, "Lin" Array Word, everything unleashed without reservation.

Countless Buddhist lights were annihilated.

Wuxing's face changed.

He chanted Sanskrit.

Yet where Demon Lord Lu's sword passed, all was destroyed.

"Dao Intent? Third-Grade Sequence?!"

"Who are you?!"

The Venerable One possessing Wuxing roared in shock.

He felt danger.

Wuxing formed seals.

A strange Buddhist seal appeared in the void.

Terrifying suction erupted.

Living beings around it instantly melted into skeletons.

They screamed in horror, fleeing madly.

Yet the seal absorbed endless power from their bodies.

Finally, it became a blood Buddha.

The blood Buddha stood tall, hands raised to catch the demonic blade!

Slash!

Demon Lord Lu's gaze was cold.

One sweeping strike,

beheaded.

Wuxing's head flew, golden light scattering from his eyes.

The blood Buddha was similarly decapitated, crashing as a sea of blood.

A wisp of the High-Tier Buddhist Venerable One's primordial spirit twisted and shot upward.

Demon Lord Lu frowned, body flickering, instantly grabbing it.

The primordial spirit writhed.

"Dare destroy my reincarnation body! I will annihilate your world!"

The Venerable One's primordial spirit roared.

Demon Lord Lu's face was expressionless.

He crushed it without a word.

“Weak.”

He said flatly.

He felt his full-power strike...

had been overkill.

This guy wasn't worth it.

Suddenly,

Demon Lord Lu looked toward Five Phoenixes.

In that instant,

a terrifying aura exploded from the continent.

...

Beneath the Boundless Sea,

ice pagoda.

Fu Tianluo leaned against the wall,

covering his face, wailing miserably.

His soul felt scorched.

A Buddha lotus mark appeared on his forehead.

“Possession?!”

“That damned Venerable One?! You want to possess me?!”

“You won’t save me... you want my body?!”

“Why am I so miserable?!”

Fu Tianluo’s eyes glowed gold, yet he laughed bitterly.

So he was just a pawn...

a disposable vessel for the Venerable One.

BOOM!

Fu Tianluo’s aura changed.

Golden light rushed skyward.

The ice pagoda shattered, the sea inverted.

Terrifying presence blanketed Five Phoenixes.

“I will slaughter your world for destroying my reincarnation body!”

Fu Tianluo’s hair fell out, leaving a bald head, eyes blazing gold.

The sea parted before his aura.

Islands exploded!

Cultivators across Five Phoenixes gasped, feeling apocalyptic pressure.

Even Du Longyang and Ye Shoudao trembled.

Zhu Long’s lashes quivered, shock on her face, so strong!

Yet just when despair gripped all,

in the northern wilderness of Five Phoenixes,

monstrous demonic qi erupted.

A monkey silhouette wielding an iron staff stood in the void.

Behind it, a colossal shadow blotted out the sun, radiating terrifying power.

Demon Sovereign Lu!

Shrouded in demonic qi,

he snatched the staff from the monkey.

Looking at the madly laughing bald Fu Tianluo, he curled his lip.

“You know too much.”

With those words,

Demon Sovereign Lu swung the staff.

It grew endlessly long, stretching from central Five Phoenixes across vast distance,

and smashed straight into Fu Tianluo's stomach.

Chapter 358: High-Tier Martial Is Only the Beginning

Central Five Phoenixes, the endless desert, sand and stone rolling.

A demon monkey stood roaring at the heavens.

Monstrous demonic qi surged, shaking the world.

Behind the monkey, a colossal shadow loomed, holding up the sky.

Demon Sovereign?!

Everyone was stunned.

They had been crushed by the terrifying aura of the Venerable One possessing Fu Tianluo.

Yet now, an existence of such terrifying power appeared on Five Phoenixes!

“It’s the monkey from the Human List!”

“Demon Monkey King! Is that him?”

“Is this the Demon Monkey King’s might? Terrifying...”

“No, the monkey isn’t the strong one. It’s the terrifying being behind the monkey, the Demon Sovereign!”

The world erupted in commotion.

Waves of shock crashed through every heart.

Wind rose on the sea.

Waves churned.

Du Longyang and Ye Shoudao, newly advanced Yin Spirit experts, stood on the water, chilled to the bone.

They exchanged glances, horror in their eyes.

An unknown terror had emerged.

“Who is that?”

“Besides Young Master Lu, there is such a powerhouse in this world?”

“I heard Five Phoenixes has many hidden experts. Overlord inherited the Demon Lord’s legacy, demonic qi towering to the heavens. Now a Demon Sovereign appears!”

“I heard there are also unfathomable ‘immortals’ who left legacies many have received!”

Ye Shoudao said.

Du Longyang shook his head. “There are no true immortals. Even if there were, they’d just be powerful cultivators.”

“But at least we can relax now.”

With the Demon Sovereign acting, they no longer needed to fear the possessed Fu Tianluo's explosive power.

A staff swept across the sky, shattering space.

It smashed into Fu Tianluo's abdomen.

BOOM!

Fu Tianluo was blasted into the sea, water inverting.

The iron staff plunged in, stirring the sea into a massive vortex!

What overwhelming might!

On the sea, Du Longyang and the others felt their hearts tremble.

This staff play... was too flashy!

Just what kind of existence was this Demon Sovereign?!

Could even Young Master Lu handle him?

After stirring for a while, the Boundless Sea calmed.

Outside Five Phoenixes,

silver light flashed, stacking into the Thousand Blades Chair.

Lu returned from Demon Sovereign state to normal, seated calmly.

Beside him lay a docile lion.

With a carefree, ethereal air, he descended rapidly.

The terrifying Demon Sovereign aura from the desert vanished.

The Demon Monkey King disappeared from mortal sight.

To the world, the Demon Sovereign's appearance had merely bought Young Master Lu time.

"Young Master Lu!"

"Young Master!"

"Brother Lu, you're back!"

...

Du Longyang, Ye Shoudao, Empress Ni Chunqiu, and the others exhaled in relief.

Lu nodded slightly.

They looked at Lu, robes unstained by blood, faces twitching slightly.

Young Master Lu grew ever more unfathomable.

And...

Demon Lord, Demon Sovereign, mysterious immortals, and the enigmatic Young Master Lu.

They had thought Five Phoenixes was just an ordinary Mid-Tier Martial world.

Now they realized its waters ran far deeper than imagined.

The sea parted.

Fu Tianluo, eyes blazing gold, palms pressed together, walked step by step from the depths as though ascending stairs.

His abdomen bore a massive hole, blood gushing.

Yet he radiated solemn golden light, oppressive and heavy.

Lu leaned back in his Thousand Blades Chair, gazing indifferently at Fu Tianluo.

After a long moment, he sighed.

This one could no longer be a tool.

“Your ambition is too great.”

“To forge this world into a High-Tier Martial realm...”

Fu Tianluo’s golden eyes fixed on Lu, laughing with suppressed emotion.

As a High-Tier Martial expert, the Venerable One knew many secrets.

After possessing Fu Tianluo, he instantly glimpsed the world’s hidden truth.

He never imagined anyone would be so bold.

Even High-Tier Martial experts would be shocked by Lu’s methods.

“You defy heaven. You violate the rules of the Nihility Heaven. Those who break the rules meet no good end!”

“A new High-Tier Martial world would shatter the balance!”

“The rules will not allow your success!”

“Many will not allow it either!”

The Venerable One possessing Fu Tianluo smiled.

Lu frowned.

The words struck him.

But soon his expression grew solemn.

With a thought,

the Heaven Covering Sword shot out.

BOOM!

The grand formation activated.

Terrifying array power shifted the colors of the sky.

The colossal sword made the world tremble.

Everyone stared, breathing halted.

“If the rules forbid it, I will shatter the rules.”

“If many forbid it, I will kill until they allow it.”

Lu said calmly.

He looked at Fu Tianluo seated on the sea, eyes flashing.

“High-Tier Martial is only the beginning.”

With those words,

the greatsword descended.

Fu Tianluo's golden eyes narrowed.

Hearing Lu's words, he laughed as though hearing the world's greatest joke.

He mocked, he sneered.

He felt no unwillingness at his reincarnation body's impending destruction.

He looked at Lu, body blazing with golden light, a golden lotus blooming, solemn and majestic, radiating the urge to convert.

Yet his words were anything but serene.

"Even if you succeed, what then?"

"Once this world becomes High-Tier Martial, world protection force vanishes!"

“A High-Tier Martial world without protection becomes the most exquisite prey for wanderers in the Nihility Heaven, and for many High-Tier Martial worlds.”

“Then, High-Tier Martial experts will descend like clouds. My true body will come. Great powers annihilate worlds, enslave beings!”

“Can you stop them?”

“A Mid-Tier Martial world becoming High-Tier requires vast resources and energy accumulated over eons. That is heaven’s rule!”

“Forcing it... you must plunder energy and resources. There is only so much in heaven and earth. They will not tolerate you!”

“You court death! Death!”

“The day this world becomes High-Tier Martial is the day I come to take your life!”

“Hahaha...”

Fu Tianluo’s golden eyes blazed, his laughter thundering across heaven and earth.

Du Longyang and the others paled.

Lu's face was cold.

The Heaven Covering Sword slashed down.

Fu Tianluo's laughter died abruptly.

BOOM!

Dazzling light rushed skyward.

The sword light seemed to cleave the heavens in two.

The Boundless Sea was split.

Fu Tianluo's body was annihilated.

A massive chasm appeared, parting the sea like cascading waterfalls, roaring and thundering!

“If heaven forbids it, I will defy heaven.”

Lu’s calm voice echoed as he gazed at the chasm and roaring waterfalls.

The world fell silent.

Another reincarnation body of a High-Tier Martial expert, slain.

Hum...

Specks of light rippled.

Fu Tianluo’s soul rose, twisted with unwillingness.

He was too pitiful...

He hated.

Even as Lu's tool in the ice pagoda, living in a daze, he had not hated this much.

Because in the pagoda he could live, only losing freedom.

But the Venerable One he had devoutly served had possessed him, erased his will and soul, stolen his body, destroyed his life.

How could he not hate?

His hatred became dense resentment, lingering between heaven and earth.

Lu gazed at the resentment.

A Spirit Severing soul, nearly forming a primordial spirit,

could still affect the surroundings even in death.

"No need to waste this resentment..."

Lu said.

He formed seals.

The resentment began to surge.

Nine Prisons Secret Realm.

Boundless Spirit Severing resentment poured down, terrifying aura churning.

Hum...

Cultivators outside the prison gates paled.

Even Nie Changqing and the others felt discomfort.

The intense resentment and grudge chilled their bodies!

The nine prison gates opened, devouring the resentment.

Behind them,

nine Cities of the Dead faintly appeared.

Nine majestic figures divided the resentment,

bowing slightly toward Lu.

The gates closed, the cities vanished.

Peace returned.

Lu sighed.

Fu Tianluo was a pitiful man.

He had only wanted to be a carefree tool.

But the High-Tier Buddhist expert had possessed him, ruined everything.

So...

Lu let Fu Tianluo, in his final moment, fulfill his destiny as a tool once more.

The Boundless Sea calmed.

Ye Shoudao, Du Longyang, Empress Ni Chunqiu, and Young Master Tianxu rushed over.

The Empress's face was flushed, powerful aura brewing, she was on the verge of Yin Spirit.

"Young Master Lu."

Ye Shoudao and the others grew ever more reverent.

They had thought entering Yin Spirit realm would close the gap with Lu.

Reality showed the gap only widened.

“You all heard his words?”

Lu looked at them.

“I will bear all the pressure. Your only duty is to grow stronger...”

Lu said calmly.

Du Longyang and Ye Shoudao flushed, speechless.

Young Master Lu... what righteousness!

“Brother Lu, must we become High-Tier Martial?”

Young Master Tianxu asked, face troubled.

The Venerable One’s dying words had shaken them.

High-Tier Martial experts descending like clouds, what catastrophe would that be?

High-Tier Martial, a realm of longing.

The Bitter Disciple had destroyed Tianyuan for it.

Du Longyang said nothing, shaking his head at Tianxu.

The Empress glared angrily.

Everything Brother Lu did was right!

Ye Shoudao's single arm fluttered in the wind.

He had guessed something.

The fusion of Tianyuan and Five Phoenixes origins had pushed Five Phoenixes from early to top-tier Mid-Tier Martial.

That was likely Lu's method to forge High-Tier Martial.

Ye Shoudao looked up at the three continents beyond the sky.

They seemed to be collapsing.

“Now... Young Master Lu has no choice.”

Ye Shoudao said.

His words stunned Lu, then he sighed, following his gaze upward.

“Actually, your foundations are still too shallow.”

“But someone is rushing to deliver resources. The situation... is beyond control.”

Lu lamented, face filled with difficulty and worry.

His acting was flawless.

Tianxu, Du Longyang, the Empress, and others looked up.

Their pupils shrank.

Yes.

The situation was forcing Five Phoenixes toward High-Tier Martial.

“When the sky falls, this Young Master will hold it.”

“Grow stronger quickly. You don’t have much time left.”

Lu said.

With that, he became a bolt of lightning and vanished.

The Empress’s face trembled, watching Lu disappear, heartache on her beautiful features.

“Brother Lu... suffers too much.”

“His pressure, we cannot imagine.”

She inhaled deeply.

Red robes swirling, she turned and left.

She would break through.

She would grow strong, strong enough to share that man's burden.

Du Longyang, Ye Shoudao, and the others left in silence.

They returned to Dongyang Commandery to calm the world.

Many matters needed handling.

Afterward, they would cultivate desperately.

Five Phoenixes charging toward High-Tier Martial, the pressure was unimaginable.

The day it succeeded would bring great calamity.

Against that calamity,

all they could do was grow stronger, strong enough to ease Young Master Lu's burden.

Above the Boundless Sea,

Zhu Long sat on the red dragon, stroking its horns, long lashes trembling over closed eyes.

Splash.

The red dragon turned, carrying Zhu Long away.

In the setting sun,

their reflections shattered across the shimmering sea.

...

In the endless void,

on a dead continent,

a withered, emaciated elder sat covered in dust, like a sealed corpse.

Suddenly,

his body trembled, dust falling away.

The elder opened his eyes.

The darkness seemed to brighten.

His eyes were deep vortices, swallowing all.

“A-Jiu is dead.”

The elder said calmly.

“The ‘Lin’ Array Word... was taken?”

His voice remained calm, but powerful emotions erupted.

Clearly, in his heart, the “Lin” word was more important than A-Jiu’s life.

“Besides my Liujia Array Sect, who can wield the Nine Array Words?”

He inhaled and exhaled.

The void trembled with each breath.

After a long moment,

he moved, raising withered, branch-like hands to form seals.

Profound fluctuations spread.

But soon his eyes dimmed again.

“The Array Word is gone. I cannot summon it.”

“Could it be a descendant with Emperor Hao’s bloodline?”

He pondered.

“Very well. I’ll give you a chance to join my Liujia Array Sect.”

His withered fingers formed seals, sending strange fluctuations into the void.

Then he closed his eyes again,

becoming once more an unmoving stone,

sitting eternally on the drifting dead continent.

...

Origin Lake, Lake Heart Island.

Gentle breeze.

Grass swayed, chrysanthemums and peach blossoms rustled.

Lu sat in his Thousand Blades Chair atop the pavilion, sipping plum wine.

His brows furrowed in thought.

Forging Five Phoenixes into a High-Tier Martial world was not as simple as he had imagined.

And the High-Tier Buddhist Venerable One's final words had been a warning.

Once Five Phoenixes became High-Tier Martial, it would face terrifying crises.

Lu had to face this seriously.

Moreover, Five Phoenixes was too weak. No true pillar existed among its cultivators.

In this state, ascending to High-Tier Martial lacked competitiveness.

While fusing the three continents' origins,

he needed to rapidly strengthen Five Phoenixes' cultivators.

But Lu frowned again.

True experts could not be cultivated overnight.

They required time and battle.

Time, Lu lacked time.

But suddenly, his brow raised.

Thinking of time, he remembered the newly acquired "Lin" Array Word.

Created by an Ancient Emperor, possessing great might.

It seemed to involve time...

Perhaps he could gain inspiration from it.

With a thought,

the “Lin” Array Word appeared before him.

The instant he summoned it,

strange fluctuations spread from the rune.

Chapter 359: The Ancient Emperor Imparts the Dao, Lu Gains Enlightenment

The “Lin” Array Word radiated strange fluctuations.

Lu’s brow arched slightly.

He was genuinely surprised. The rune’s reaction made him think.

“Is this the work of that giant’s Liujia Array Sect?”

Lu mused inwardly.

He watched the rune calmly, curious what tricks the Liujia Array Sect had.

Though the sect was mysterious and powerful,

Lu felt no great fear.

Five Phoenixes had not yet ascended to High-Tier Martial; world protection force still shielded it.

Even if a High-Tier Martial expert descended, Lu could fight, and with the Heaven Covering Formation, he could make them cry.

Of course, only within Five Phoenixes and the formation’s range.

The rune flickered faintly.

Soon, energy fluctuations spread,

forming sound waves,

as though transmitting a voice across vast distance.

“I am the Sect Master of the Liujia Array Sect. You obtained and refined my sect’s Array Word, proving fate binds us.”

“The Ninth Disciple’s death is tied to you, his living sin unavoidable. Yet since you share fate with the Array Word, join my sect, and the sin is forgiven.”

“Today, I give you one chance.”

“Will you enter my Liujia Array Sect?”

The fluctuations carried an arrogant, supreme pressure,

as though spoken from on high.

Lu was speechless.

Was this human speech?

He had expected some profound mechanism from the rune.

Instead, the Liuja Array Sect's master was... recruiting him?

Lu felt a twinge of regret.

If they wanted to recruit him, they should at least send a disciple with another Array Word.

That would show sincerity!

Then he could refuse, and keep the word.

Lu shook his head.

A blunt rejection didn't suit his style.

BOOM!

His divine sense surged, crushing the wisp of intent.

Like hanging up on a scam call, without hesitation.

Then he resumed studying the rune.

The “Lin” Array Word involved time.

Time was what Lu lacked most now.

If he could gain insight from it, it might greatly benefit all of Five Phoenixes.

He sipped his plum wine.

Fingers tapped the armrest.

A gentle breeze brought comfort.

He had earned a rare moment of leisure.

He had just slain the High-Tier Buddhist Venerable One's reincarnation body and secured the right to fuse three continental origins, a major task completed.

But he was in no rush to fuse.

Before that, he needed to strengthen Five Phoenixes' cultivators.

Insufficient overall power would make fusion more harm than good.

"How to rapidly increase strength?"

Lu drank, pondering.

"Pills? Spirit fruits? Immortal legacies?"

He murmured.

All ordinary methods.

His gaze fell on the “Lin” Array Word, eyes flickering.

“If I could create a formation or treasure that accelerates time for cultivation... that would be the most direct way to boost strength.”

The Nine Prisons Secret Realm was excellent for Golden Core and Heavenly Lock cultivation.

But far from enough.

Once Lu chose to push Five Phoenixes toward High-Tier Martial,

Golden Core, even Nascent Soul, would be insufficient.

At minimum,

he needed to produce Yang Spirit or Primordial Spirit Unity experts.

Yin Spirit realm was still too weak.

Lu checked the system, hoping for aid.

But the system remained silent, no missions.

As his strength grew, missions had dwindled.

Their original purpose had been guidance.

He had finally left the tutorial phase.

Now he faced a problem.

How to elevate Five Phoenixes' cultivators quickly.

After some thought, with no clear solution,

he downed his plum wine, entered the Preaching Platform with the "Lin" word, and resumed deducing a time array.

Combining work and rest yielded surprising results.

Lu's hair and robes whipped.

Divine sense surged.

Runes crashed through the void, constantly probing the "Lin" word.

This was his most serious array deduction yet.

...

Above Five Phoenixes,

the oppressive mist returned.

The suffocating pressure vanished.

The crisis had passed!

The world erupted in cheers.

Young Master Lu is invincible!

Many roared.

At this moment, reverence for White Jade Capital reached fanatic heights.

Though hidden, its fame shook the world.

The four holy lands of Tianyuan were nothing before it.

Outside the Nine Prisons Secret Realm,

Nie Changqing withdrew his gaze from the sky.

He exhaled.

At Eight Extreme Heavenly Lock, he felt pressure for the first time.

Was it over?

With divine sense, he faintly sensed it was not.

As terrifying enemies appeared one after another,

Nie Changqing felt powerless.

Not just him, even Overlord, number one on the Human List, felt the same.

Heavenly Lock realm was no longer enough.

They had to grow stronger, fast.

The only aid was the Nine Prisons Secret Realm.

But to them, it was too slow.

They had no choice.

They re-entered the secret realm.

This time, every cultivator felt a change.

The Nine Prisons seemed more vivid, more real.

Like a true underworld.

“Will the Nine Prisons... truly become the actual Netherworld?”

Mo Tianyu muttered as he ventured inside.

He felt the souls of the dead being drawn into the Nine Prisons.

With his divination skills,

he sensed great terror within.

Outside,

the world knew nothing of Five Phoenixes' push for High-Tier Martial.

Only Yin Spirit experts like Du Longyang knew such secrets.

If revealed, a few might be excited, but most would panic.

High-Tier Martial experts descending, countless terrifying wanderers coveting them,

disaster.

Northern Commandery, Tai Ridge.

Tantai Xuan stood in the martial arena, mist swirling.

Suddenly,

his eyes flickered.

Figures emerged from the array.

Xuanwu Guards and Great Xuan Academy students returning from the blood-colored battlefield.

Jiang Li's silver armor was nearly blood armor, exhausted yet excited and awed.

He could not help it.

What he witnessed on the battlefield made his blood boil.

Tulang, so powerful, had bled and died, his soul annihilated.

The giant had roared to tear the earth and descend.

Those scenes were etched forever in Jiang Li's mind.

They also showed him the value of strength.

But Jiang Li knew his talent was ordinary.

Though soul rain gave him a chance at Golden Core Heavenly Lock,

further great breakthroughs were nearly impossible.

Unlike Bai Qingniao, favored by immortals,

or Li Sansui, an array genius.

Though a war god, in cultivation he was ordinary.

Perhaps his brilliance required his own unique path.

“Alive is good enough.”

Tantai Xuan smiled at the dazed Jiang Li, giving him a bear hug.

Jiang Li snapped back.

He and the Xuanwu Guards revealed everything from the battlefield.

Mo Beike, Mo Ju, and others listened intently.

Academy students below gaped as though hearing myths.

“A ten-zhang giant roaring to tear the earth?”

“A fallen expert’s soul rain instantly boosting cultivation?”

Tantai Xuan’s breath caught.

Mo Beike’s heavy eyelids twitched.

“The experts from those three continents... are that strong?”

Mo Beike’s voice was hoarse.

Unparalleled crisis loomed.

Without Young Master Lu holding it back,

could human waves stop such beings?

Impossible...

Everyone felt oppressed.

Growth became every heart's urgent desire.

The world surged like steel about to be forged by a thousand hammers.

...

Three days.

Lu spent them deducing arrays.

In the Preaching Platform, he attempted hundreds, thousands of formations.

All failed.

Time was too profound.

He exited, pinching his brow to relax.

Ni Yu finished daily cultivation, hugging the All-Seeing Mirror to watch battles in the Nine Prisons.

Only combat interested her.

Little Yinglong lay on her head,

dragon and girl crunching sugar-coated Body Tempering Pills.

Good stuff.

Ni Yu had eaten so many, though immune to effects, her body had undergone immeasurable changes.

Lu saw it at a glance.

Ni Yu did not.

Too many pills had stunted her growth.

Her figure was set for life.

Ning Zhao still comprehended at the Dao Stele.

Fourth-Grade Sequence Ice Frost Dao Intent, quite good.

If Five Phoenixes had any capital for High-Tier Martial,

early Dao Intent comprehension was the greatest advantage.

Ni Yu and Ning Zhao had improved much,

but to Lu, still too slow.

He looked skyward.

“Time to collect the three continents’ origins. And see... if there’s anything to rapidly boost strength.”

Lu murmured.

Next moment, he became a thunder arc and vanished.

Golden Body Continent.

Lu appeared in a corner, seated in his Thousand Blades Chair.

The continent was nearly dead silent, blood dried, corpses everywhere.

Wuxing’s slaughter had wounded its vitality.

Cultivators nearly extinct.

Golden Body revered Buddhism, though they tempered flesh.

Their faith was Buddha,

for Tulang had been the Venerable One's blade.

They had destroyed many worlds.

Now they reaped karma.

Lu sped across the continent.

As a supreme Mid-Tier Martial world, treasures abounded.

In a collapsed ancient temple,

a Buddha niche shot golden light, trying to sway Lu's mind.

High-Tier Buddhist faith energy.

Lu's divine sense crushed it.

A spiritual palm materialized, smashing the niche.

Beneath the ruins, blood flowed, an ancient tree grew.

"Ancient tree bearing Golden Body Fruit, a heavenly spirit fruit of Golden Body Continent, extremely rare."

Lu flipped through an ancient record of the continent.

"Consuming Golden Body Fruit forges a golden body constitution."

"Not bad. Mystic-grade spirit fruit."

Lu said.

The fruit was small, pale gold, faintly fragrant.

Dry and bitter.

Lu ate one, no desire for a second.

Little effect on him.

“Spirit fruit... gives me an idea.”

Lu pondered.

He uprooted the tree, storing it in his Dark Profound Ring for research.

He roamed Golden Body Continent three more days.

Found no other rapid-strength treasures.

He stabilized the nearly collapsing origin and left.

Tianluo Continent.

Fu Tianluo dead, the continent in chaos.

Compared to Golden Body's genocide, Tianluo was thriving.

Experts alive and well.

Origin fluctuations sparked conflicts.

Lu traveled, taking spirit fruits, heavenly materials, ore veins.

Uninvolved in karma.

He stabilized Tianluo's origin, then Prajna Continent.

Same, wandering like an immortal, observing life, collecting treasures and fruits.

Wuxing's death had shaken Prajna's origin.

Chaos erupted.

Lu stabilized it and left.

Laden with gains, he returned to the whale-borne Lake Heart Island.

Half a month away.

Relaxed, Lu re-entered the Preaching Platform to deduce the time array.

Work and rest balanced, results were remarkable.

Lu's hair and robes whipped.

Divine sense surged.

Runes crashed through the void, probing the "Lin" word.

This was his most promising attempt.

Excitement shone in his eyes.

Yet,

the formation collapsed again.

Lu frowned, baffled.

As he puzzled,

the “Lin” word trembled.

The scene before him changed.

He sat in the starry sky.

Across from him, a majestic man with loose hair sat, back turned.

Lu froze.

The back felt familiar.

The Ancient Emperor who created the Nine Array Words... Hao?

“Watch closely... I will demonstrate only once.”

The man’s calm voice rang like thunder in Lu’s ears.

Huh?

Was he... speaking to him?!

Lu’s hair stood on end.

But soon he relaxed.

Behind the man were countless radiant worlds.

On them sat experts capable of shattering heavens.

They responded reverently.

The Ancient Emperor was teaching.

The man began deducing.

Heaven and earth trembled.

The massive “Lin” word blotted out the sky.

A River of Time cascaded down.

Lu instantly fell into enlightenment, entranced by the rune entwined with the River of Time.

A transmission across eternity.

Silence filled heaven and earth.

The demonstration complete,

the majestic man slightly turned.

His peripheral glance seemed to catch Lu.

His lips curved in a meaningful smile.

Chapter 360: The World Must Grow Strong on Its Own!

In the dark void,

on a drifting dead continent,

the elder who had sat like an eternal stone for ten thousand years slowly opened his eyes.

He discovered his primordial spirit message had been ignored.

Dust fell from his body.

He stood.

His withered frame gradually filled with life; sagging skin grew taut.

“Ignored? Refused?”

The elder murmured, eyes flickering.

“Some backbone. Worthy of one bearing Emperor Hao’s bloodline.”

He actually laughed.

Suddenly,

the entire dead continent rumbled as though pulled by colossal force, crushing the void as it hurtled toward Five Phoenixes.

“Refining the ‘Lin’ Array Word has bound you to my Liujia Array Sect’s karma. You cannot escape it.”

As the continent sped onward,

his ancient voice echoed through the heavens, fading into the distance.

...

Origin Lake, Lake Heart Island.

Wind rose without warning.

An invisible gale rippled across the entire lake.

Morning-glory chrysanthemums, biluo peaches, and other spiritual plants swayed joyfully.

Ni Yu, hugging the All-Seeing Mirror, felt oppressive pressure.

She and Little Yinglong on her head looked toward White Jade Capital pavilion.

Lu, shrouded in dense mist, radiated overwhelming presence.

Ning Zhao drifted over from the Dao Stele.

“Ning-jie.”

Ni Yu called.

Ning Zhao nodded gravely, staring at the pavilion.

“Young Master... must have created something extraordinary again.”

Ning Zhao said.

They could not guess what.

The stronger she grew, the more despairing the gap between her and Young Master became.

Awe-inspiring distance.

Rumble!

Spiritual energy churned above the island, forming a massive vortex.

Atop White Jade Capital pavilion,

Lu sat in his Thousand Blades Chair, bronze wine cup in one hand, idly spinning his Dark Profound Ring with the other.

He was motionless.

Wind whipped his hair and white robes.

Profound fluctuations surged around him.

After a long time,

his brow twitched.

He slowly opened his eyes.

They seemed deeper, as though a light flashed in endless darkness.

He had traversed eons, listening to the Ancient Emperor's lecture, touching the power of time...

Ancient Emperor.

Lu inhaled deeply.

Mysterious, invincible.

Even in the River of Time, the Emperor's image had been towering and majestic.

Lu felt tempered, his soul baptized.

The Emperor's realm, Lu could not yet fathom.

The wine in his cup had gone cold.

He set it down, gazing into the distance, thoughtful.

Fingers tapped the armrest.

The Ancient Emperor's final glance, Lu had not missed.

Was the Emperor watching him?

Lu frowned.

Was that existence truly dead?

When he struggled with the time array, the Emperor's lecture activated.

Coincidence?

Lu doubted it.

Any event involving an Ancient Emperor deserved deep consideration.

But he found no answer.

He let it go, exhaling long.

The Emperor's lecture had not only tempered him, it was as though he had walked the River of Time.

Most importantly,

through the "Lin" word, Lu now had confidence to build a time array.

His lips curved.

With a thought, he entered the Preaching Platform.

There,

he sat calmly.

Though he had failed thousands of times,

this time, certainty filled him.

He raised a hand.

Spiritual energy churned.

Terrifying rumbles.

The “Lin” word spun above his head, radiating grand fluctuations.

Lu closed his eyes.

Eight Trigrams runes orbited, arranging in profound patterns, each pulsing with mystery.

When he opened his eyes,

everything changed.

The array platform beneath him became a massive sundial.

Markings appeared.

The “Lin” word above became a blazing sun.

The sundial’s shadow began to move under the light.

Tick... tick...

The clear sound of time flowing.

Lu raised a hand, robes fluttering.

He formed seals, embedding them into the sundial.

Eight Trigrams runes locked in, stabilizing it.

Rumble!

After a long time,

a gray river surged forth.

Where it passed, all decayed.

“The River of Time.”

Lu murmured.

He guided it to coil around the sundial.

The array was essentially complete.

The sundial was vast.

Lu walked upon it as though stepping through time.

An extraordinary sensation.

With a thought,

using the platform's properties, he created a kitten.

As the sundial turned, the kitten visibly aged, from kitten to adult, then old, vitality fading.

In Lu's divine sense,

its growth had accelerated manyfold.

"Time flow ratio... about 1:10, and controllable."

"The stronger my divine sense, the higher the ratio..."

"But the consumption is massive. Too much pressure on my divine sense."

"In short, the array grows stronger as I do."

Lu pondered.

The old cat finally decayed into ash.

Lu opened his eyes.

Exited the platform.

“A time array exists. How to use it?”

“How to strengthen Five Phoenixes’ cultivators?”

Lu considered.

Initially, he had a bold idea, cover the entire continent.

Then Five Phoenixes’ time would differ from the outside, giving cultivators enough time.

Possible, and if achieved, the effect would be tremendous.

But to run a continent-wide time array would drain Lu dry.

Too massive.

With his current strength, impossible.

So he chose the next best option.

Besides the time array, he had many treasures to boost strength.

Like the Golden Body Fruits from Golden Body Continent, and other heavenly materials.

Golden Body Fruit greatly accelerated Heavenly Lock cultivation.

Next,

instead of immediately building the array,

Lu refined the Golden Body Fruits.

Mystic-grade spirit fruit, good but not exceptional.

Lu attempted to evolve them into earth-grade.

In the Preaching Platform, he fused origin energy and used time acceleration.

Finally, he created a new fruit.

“Golden Body Fortune Fruit.”

Just two extra words, but a completely different tier.

Golden Body Fruit, mystic-grade.

Golden Body Fortune Fruit, earth-grade!

Consuming it not only forged an extremely strong body, but baptized one in origin energy, granting massive breakthroughs at Nascent Soul.

Of course, many treasures could boost strength.

But Lu's headache was distribution.

Just hand them out?

Lu shook his head, that wasn't his style.

He thought.

Both time array and Golden Body Fortune Fruits should be placed in a trial.

Let the world enter and earn them.

He rubbed his chin.

His lips curved.

Looked like he needed to build another secret realm.

But this one would be grander,

more eye-catching than any before.

...

Time passed.

Five Phoenixes was not calm.

Or rather, its cultivation world was not.

Though the blood-colored battlefield and three continents had united Five Phoenixes and Tianyuan against a common enemy,

competition remained.

Recently, Tianyuan cultivators in the Nine Prisons Secret Realm made frequent breakthroughs.

Qiannu Palace's genius Golden Core, Xiao Yue'er, broke through.

She reached the fifth prison gate before breaking into Nascent Soul.

Entering at Eight-Turn Golden Core, she reached minor accomplishment Nascent Soul, extremely strong.

Tianyuan gained another Nascent Soul.

Exciting for them.

Discouraging for Five Phoenixes.

But Xiao Yue'er felt no joy.

After Nascent Soul, she lost qualification to cultivate further in the Nine Prisons.

She regretted not going deeper, only reaching the fifth gate before breaking through.

Three days after Xiao Yue'er,

Human List top ten genius Feng Yilou shattered his Golden Core, entering Nascent Soul.

He reached the sixth prison gate.

Witnesses saw extreme unwillingness as he broke through.

“Golden Core foundation is insufficient! Compared to Heavenly Lock, it’s lacking!”

Feng Yilou hated himself.

With Nine-Turn Golden Core, he entered Nascent Soul at minor accomplishment limit, peerless combat power.

Yet he despised himself.

On Feng Yilou’s breakthrough day,

former Tianyuan genius Zhong Nan rushed over.

Xiao Yue'er, Zhong Nan, Feng Yilou, three former Tianyuan prodigies stood outside the Nine Prisons, gazing at the prison gates, backs desolate.

Lu Julian had entered the Nine Prisons, his realm soaring, Heavenly Lock nearly perfected.

About thirty days after Tianyuan's breakthroughs,

Five Phoenixes finally produced a public Nascent Soul.

Kong Nanfei, Nine-Turn Golden Core, shattered his shackles, entering Nascent Soul.

Five Phoenixes erupted.

The continent's first open Nascent Soul was born!

Kong Nanfei had reached the seventh prison gate.

Witnesses saw righteous qi surging like a river across the sky on his breakthrough day.

...

Beyond Wolong Ridge.

Tianji Peak, Tianji Pavilion.

Lü Mudui sat on a withered stone, spiritual energy slowly circulating.

Bright moon hung high, the peak silent.

Insects chirped, leaves rustled.

Suddenly, Lü Mudui sensed something.

He opened his eyes.

Under the cold moonlight, a figure appeared.

Silver blades reflected moonlight, white robes fluttering.

“L-Lord Lu Ping’an?!”

Lü Mudui’s face twitched, nearly dropping his bamboo staff.

Lu glanced at him, nodding slightly.

The old fisherman by the lake now carried some style.

“I did not know Lord Lu would visit, this old man is at fault.”

Lü Mudui rose trembling, bowing.

Lu smiled.

They chatted briefly.

Then Lu asked Lü Mudui to spread messages to the world.

Lü Mudui listened, growing more shocked.

“Today, crisis looms. The common people must grow strong quickly.”

On the wheelchair, Lu gazed at the moon, voice tinged with faint melancholy.

“This Young Master does not know how long he can hold.”

“The world must grow strong on its own.”

Lu sighed deeply.

With that, he vanished.

On Tianji Peak, only Lü Mudui remained, trembling.

He looked at Lu’s departing back, face sorrowful.

He felt the immense pressure in Lu’s sigh.

“Young Master... suffers too much.”

Lü Mudui sighed.

His eyes held reminiscence, recalling his first meeting with Young Master Lu.

That day, Young Master Lu floated on Beiluo Lake, facing hundreds of Confucian scholars' scorn, smiling freely, that carefree spirit when the world misunderstood him had deeply shocked Lü Mudui.

Inhaling deeply, Lü Mudui calmed his excitement.

In the distance,

the beautiful woman and the round-faced girl rushed over.

“Old Lü, what happened?”

The woman asked.

Lü Mudui waved a hand, stood with hands behind back, gazing at the moon, sighing.

He stood on the peak like a withered tree.

Wind moaned.

He looked east, toward the Boundless Sea, eyes deep.

One hand held a brush, the other yellow paper, as though waiting.

When the eastern sky showed fish-belly white,

beyond Dongyang Commandery, in the vast sea,

BOOM!

A tremendous explosion.

Essence qi rushed skyward, brilliant light illuminating the dawn.

Like a mirage, a void city appeared.

A divine tree's shadow bore dazzling golden fruits!

Lü Mudui saw it, body trembling.

“Young Master truly foresaw it! An immortal relic!”

“How can all the pressure fall on Young Master?!”

“The world... must grow strong!”

Lü Mudui laughed, showing his gapped teeth.

He danced like a madman.

The woman and girl stared, dumbfounded.

Pfft!

Lü Mudui punched his chest, coughing a mouthful of blood.

Brush dipped in blood, he wrote on the yellow paper, characters shocking and vivid!

Yet Lü Mudui was overjoyed.

An immortal relic emerged, worth writing in blood!

How could cheap pig blood suffice?!

...

The instant the mirage appeared,

experts with divine sense felt it, many jolted awake.

Overlord emerged from his tent, staring at the mirage and divine tree with golden fruits, eyes blazing.

The scene felt familiar.

Like the original Wolong Ridge secret realm, Nine Prisons...

“A new secret realm? I hope it makes me stronger!”

Dongyang Commandery.

Four holy lands.

Nascent Soul ancestors shot skyward, gazing east toward the churning sea.

Divine tree’s shadow, golden fruits, left them stunned.

Empress Ni Chunqiu shot out, Qiannu Palace Nascent Souls bowing.

Martial Emperor City.

Du Longyang stood atop the city wall, robes fluttering.

“Is this Young Master Lu’s doing?”

But soon they rejected the idea.

Du Longyang looked up.

With Yin Spirit divine sense, he saw through the heavens.

Saw the blood-colored battlefield.

In its depths,

Lu sat with his back to the world, in his Thousand Blades Chair, suppressing three slowly collapsing continents.

Holding up the sky for the world!

So this phenomenon was not Lu's work.

Du Longyang, Ye Shoudao, and others quickly gathered.

They exchanged glances, remembering the Demon Sovereign aura from the desert, and rumors of mysterious immortals.

“Five Phoenixes Continent is extraordinary... perhaps a true immortal relic! Great fortune, great opportunity!”

Then,

they shot toward the Boundless Sea.

Soon they saw,

the churning sea parted.

A vast island slowly rose from the depths, bathed in myriad rays, dazzling and magnificent.

Even Du Longyang and the others only dared watch from afar.

On the island, a divine tree blazed with light, heavy with golden fruits.

Life-filled spring water tinkled.

Spiritual energy misted, spiritual herbs danced in the wind!

Even Du Longyang and the others gasped.

An immortal relic had emerged!