

## Starlit Path 371

Chapter 371: This Young Master Has Never Seen Any “Proximity” Array Word

Atop the mountain peak, the wind howled.

White robes fluttered.

Lu Fan sat leisurely in the Thousand-Bladed Chair, one hand propping his chin, the other lightly tapping the armrest.

Beside him, the clay-figure avatar of Qi Liujia—containing a wisp of primordial spirit—stared in horror.

Though only a clone, it still carried primordial spirit power and was no weakling. Yet Lu’s mere presence nearly shattered it.

“You’ve been waiting for me a long time?”

Lu glanced at the old man.

At this moment, the elder felt an unimaginable pressure beneath Lu Fan’s calm exterior.

Even his wisp of primordial spirit felt like it might explode, unable to maintain the clay body's form.

How could this youth be so terrifying?!

It was as if he faced a raging storm at sea—his heart trembled uncontrollably.

Was the boy deliberately targeting him?

No... the youth wasn't releasing any pressure on purpose.

This was simply the spiritual sense leaking from him.

Just the leakage of spiritual sense was enough to suffocate his primordial spirit?

How monstrous was this spiritual sense?!

"No..."

The old man finally spoke.

He had finally met Lu Fan as he wished.

He had intended to invite the youth to join the Six Armor Array Sect—perhaps even take him as a disciple.

He had seen great potential in Lu Fan, believing he carried the bloodline of an ancient emperor.

But now... he couldn't bring himself to speak the words. They stuck in his throat.

“Oh.”

Lu Fan nodded slightly.

“Then... while this Young Master was in seclusion, you knocked on my door repeatedly... Were you trying to make me deviate and succumb to qi deviation?”

Lu Fan tilted his head.

The old man's mouth twitched.

When had he knocked?

He had been blocked outside by Lu Fan's own arrays—he couldn't even enter the origin space!

The great sect leader of the Six Armor Array Sect... blocked at the door by formations.

How humiliating.

Lu Fan narrowed his eyes. Danger flickered within.

He had a good temper.

But a good temper didn't mean people could do whatever they wanted in front of him.

Anyone who tried to make him deviate... well, a good temper wouldn't save them.

Sensing the dangerous shift in Lu Fan's aura, the clay avatar grew solemn.

"This seat is the Sect Leader of the Six Armor Array Sect..."

Qi Liuja didn't hide his identity.

He had to treat Lu Fan as an equal.

This youth was terrifying—not only capable of fusing weaker origins into stronger ones, but he had even activated the ancient emperor's "Proximity" array word.

A rare talent indeed.

"Oh? Six Armor Array Sect?"

Lu Fan raised a brow.

The sect behind that giant?

Here to cause trouble?

Lu Fan narrowed his eyes again, danger flashing.

The giant had acted first—trying to break the Overturning Sky Array and endanger the Five Phoenixes.

He had brought it on himself.

“I, Lu Ping’an, do not start trouble... but I am not afraid of it.”

Lu Fan said calmly.

The words fell.

Thousands of silver blades bloomed around him, turning him into a radiant silver wheel.

The clay avatar could no longer endure—cracks spiderwebbed across it and it exploded.

A wisp of primordial spirit floated free, taking humanoid form.

The old man smiled bitterly.

He had underestimated Lu Fan’s strength, assuming he was merely Spirit Severing.

Now he was paying for it.

“Your disciple bullied me, humiliated me, and tried to destroy my world. He reaped what he sowed.”

Lu Fan said calmly.

The old man nodded slightly.

“That was this old man’s failure to teach properly...”

Lu Fan narrowed his eyes.

“According to your disciple, you sent him.”

Qi Liujia did not deny it.

“This old man has karmic ties with the Buddha of the High Martial Buddhist World. This was merely settling a debt.”

Clearly, he and the Buddhist monk were not on good terms.

Lu Fan nodded.

So the relationship between the giant and the old man... wasn't as harmonious as he had assumed.

Silence fell between them.

After a long while, Lu Fan spoke again.

“You just said high martial worlds are strictly ranked—even more so than mid-martial worlds?”

Qi Liujia was briefly stunned, then nodded.

“Yes. High martial worlds are ranked from Ninth Derivative to First Derivative. Strength is determined by the origin.”

He continued, “The origin reflects the power of a world's beings. But at the high martial level, strength is measured by the number of Great Daos derived...”

Lu Fan, reclining in his chair, raised a brow.

“The number of Great Daos derived?”

He was both puzzled and intrigued.

Qi Liuji’s primordial spirit smiled, pleased by Lu Fan’s curiosity.

He floated cross-legged in the air and explained,

“Mid-martial worlds focus on accumulation. Over millions or tens of millions of years, countless experts strengthen the origin until it reaches supreme mid-martial level.”

“That is accumulation.”

“But high martial is different. It is not just accumulation—it requires deriving Great Daos.”

“You know of Sequence Dao Intents, yes?”

“Sequence Dao Intents are embryonic forms of Great Daos.”

“There are three thousand Great Daos... High martial worlds are ranked from Ninth to First Derivative based on how many they derive.”

Qi Liujia spoke with deep knowledge.

He clearly intended to educate Lu Fan.

He looked at Lu Fan with profound eyes.

“You are mad. Insanely bold. Trying to forge a high martial world by fusing weaker origins into stronger ones... and now, it seems you are on the verge of success.”

Lu Fan neither confirmed nor denied.

In truth, he had already succeeded.

By fusing three supreme mid-martial origins, the Five Phoenixes now qualified to ascend.

It was like a rocket—only needing ignition to break through the atmosphere.

All it needed was Lu Fan's final push to spin the origin vortex.

“But do not celebrate yet...”

“Ascending from mid to high martial defies heaven itself. Not only will the laws of the world resist, but high martial experts will covet the newborn origin—especially one born in the Nihility. It is a supreme fortune.”

“And once it becomes high martial, the world's protection vanishes. High martial overlords can descend freely to seize the fortune. That is the true calamity.”

Qi Liujia warned.

Lu Fan nodded slightly.

This explained much about high martial worlds.

Ascending carried significant risks.

The Buddhist monk from the High Martial Buddhist World had threatened him before.

Lu Fan frowned. He needed to take this seriously.

“So you came just to warn this Young Master?”

Qi Liujia’s primordial spirit froze.

Then, with an odd expression, he bowed.

“The array word you obtained from this seat’s disciple is a treasure of our sect. Might this one ask for its return...”

Before he could finish,

Lu Fan’s face turned stern.

“Nonsense. This Young Master has never seen any ‘Proximity’ array word.”

Qi Liujia: “...”

He hadn't even said which word it was.

So this was outright refusal?

Qi Liujia wasn't surprised.

He had sensed that Lu Fan had activated the array word.

Something even he couldn't do.

“Young Master, no rush. Since you have activated the array word and do not intend to return it... this old one has a humble request. Would Young Master consider joining the Six Armor Array Sect... as an elder?”

Qi Liujia forced a smile.

He had originally come to take Lu Fan as a disciple.

But now... elder was the best he could hope for.

Lu Fan didn't answer.

He just looked at Qi Liujia strangely.

The primordial spirit trembled under his gaze.

"You... don't tell me you're eyeing this old one's sect leader position?"

Qi Liujia asked incredulously.

Lu Fan rolled his eyes.

"Sect leader? Elder? No interest."

"If there's nothing else, you may leave."

Qi Liujia fell silent.

Rejected so cleanly.

Yet he still stared intently.

“Young Master... might this old one be allowed to see the activated ‘Proximity’ array word?”

He asked hopefully.

Lu Fan hesitated.

“You’re talking nonsense again... This Young Master has never seen any ‘Proximity’ array word.”

Qi Liuja: “...”

Enough already.

He wasn’t even trying to get it back.

Sensing the old man’s gaze, Lu Fan thought for a moment and decided not to refuse.

The old man couldn't beat him anyway.

Let him look.

Who made Lu Ping'an such a nice guy?

If the old man tried to steal it... well, Lu Fan wouldn't mind killing him.

Buzz...

Lu Fan's mind stirred.

Terrifying spiritual sense rippled outward, tinting the sky.

In his palm,

The "Proximity" array word emerged.

Qi Liuja's primordial spirit stared, trembling.

In his eyes, the word blazed with divine light!

BOOM!

Mountains and rivers inverted, stars shifted, seas turned to mulberry fields.

Time flowed like a river.

Qi Liujia felt himself standing in the void behind Lu Fan, beholding a seated figure.

A towering, majestic figure that seemed to sit at the center of heaven and earth.

Its gaze was an endless abyss that swallowed his mind.

“Ancient... Ancient Emperor?!”

Qi Liujia’s primordial spirit wisp exploded.

BOOM!

Atop the Golden Body Continent's peak, silence returned.

Lu Fan dispersed the array word and leaned back in his chair, admiring the view.

Quite the "standing at the pinnacle, overlooking all mountains" feeling.

He ignored Qi Liujia.

The old man's intentions were unclear—neither clearly good nor evil.

He had even set up arrays to block many wanderers.

So Lu Fan didn't bother with his motives.

His attention now turned to the grand arrivals—the holy sons and maidens of high martial worlds.

The dead Heavenly Dragon Holy Son?

Lu Fan barely cared.

A Spirit Severing who hadn't even comprehended Dao Intent...

His death was no surprise.

Many in the Immortal Relic had trained for ten years—most had grasped Dao Intent.

Even Lu Fan's own Dao Intent was nearing third-tier.

These new arrivals?

Perfect pressure for the Five Phoenixes cultivators.

In Lu Fan's words—they could be pure tool people, just like the Tian Luo Continent.

...

In the void.

On a cold, dead continent,

The withered corpse-like Qi Liujia suddenly shuddered, dust falling from his form.

He raised his head, empty eyes filled with shock as he stared toward the Golden Body Continent.

Then, tears seemed to well up.

“This old one... seems to have glimpsed eternity...”

“It truly activated the array word.”

“The destiny of the Nihility... has come!”

The old man wept with emotion.

After a long while, his deep eyes grew resolute.

Perhaps this world... or rather, Lu Fan...

He had to protect.

Even if it meant war with high martial overlords.

He would not hesitate.

...

On the Bloody Battlefield,

Nie Changqing sat cross-legged.

Cold, desolate wind blew.

In the distance, great terror approached from the edge of the void.

“The Heavenly Dragon Holy Son was merely from a Ninth Derivative high martial world...”

“I don’t know how strong that is, but without a doubt—these arriving holy sons and maidens are far stronger!”

Nie Changqing drew a deep breath.

The pressure was immense.

No wonder the prosperous ancient cultivation era had been destroyed.

So this was the power of the demons beyond the heavens.

But why target the Five Phoenixes?

From their words, these holy sons and maidens had overlords backing them.

Perhaps those overlords’ pressure... was borne by the Young Master.

No wonder the Young Master was always so tired.

War intent blazed in Nie Changqing's eyes.

He rose from the blood-soaked ground.

Dragon Slayer floated up, gripped firmly as he pointed it toward the distant warships and ferocious beasts.

His face was full of provocation and battle intent.

The Young Master held back the overlords.

Then these lackeys?

Leave them to us!

...

"Hm? The Heavenly Dragon Holy Son is dead?"

"Slain by that native?"

Amid flowing radiance, light footsteps sounded on a bronze warship.

Several figures stood aboard.

A youth in golden robes, hands clasped behind his back, crowned with gold, eyes brilliant as suns.

“The Nine Dragons Minor World is only Ninth Derivative—barely high martial thanks to diluted ancient dragon blood. Though he was a holy son, he never grasped Dao Intent. He only bullied wanderers. Losing here is no surprise.”

“In the Nihilicity, a world capable of ascending to high martial must birth monsters.”

The youth smiled.

His powerful attendants laughed and flattered him.

In the distance, a black-and-white immortal crane soared—mid-stage Spirit Severing, stronger than most wanderers.

A boy and girl sat atop it, resembling golden boy and jade girl—twins, perhaps.

Elsewhere, a ferocious bird of prey spread wings hundreds of li wide.

Three people sat upon it—one a bronze-skinned giant of a man, eyes closed in meditation.

And many more—each radiating terrifying presence.

These were the summoned holy sons and maidens of high martial worlds.

The surrounding wanderers barely dared breathe.

They could not afford to offend high martial holy sons and maidens.

Behind each stood an entire high martial world.

Many wanderers clicked their tongues in awe.

As expected—a newborn high martial origin was supreme fortune.

So many had come.

Truly incredible.

Though the native had slain the dragon and killed the Heavenly Dragon Holy Son...

That was merely the beginning of the calamity!

Against so many holy sons and maidens...

This world was doomed!

Many wanderers sighed in sorrow.

With so many here, they wouldn't even get scraps.

They could only watch the fortune be taken.

Such was the life of a wanderer.

“That native... is pointing his blade at us?”

“Is he provoking us?”

The golden-robed youth’s eyes flashed with sharp light.

Many meditating holy sons and maidens opened their eyes.

Terrifying pressure erupted.

The darkness seemed to blaze like daylight under their gazes.

“He killed the Heavenly Dragon. As a holy son, it’s natural he’s riding high.”

The twin boy and girl spoke in perfect unison from the crane.

“Be careful. This place is riddled with arrays.”

From a spirit boat radiating mysterious light, another holy son spoke coldly.

BOOM!

Someone couldn't tolerate Nie Changqing's provocation.

They crossed the void—

And triggered Qi Liujia's killing array.

Terrifying killing intent crisscrossed the emptiness.

"It's Qi Liujia of the Six Armor Array Sect!"

A holy son retreated in embarrassment—but unharmed.

Far superior to the wanderers.

Many looked toward the spirit boat.

A figure in cyan battle armor stood within.

The spirit boat charged straight into the killing array.

Countless array runes shot skyward.

The cyan-armored figure slowly raised a hand—slender, jade-like, almost feminine.

That jade hand grasped the entwining runes.

The ferocious killing array—halted.

Collapsed.

Qi Liujiā's withered form appeared before the holy sons and maidens.

The cyan-armored figure smiled lightly.

“The Six Armor Array Sect's formations... are nothing special.”

The next moment,

The holy sons and maidens crossed the void, closing in on the Five Phoenixes.

Qi Liuja sat motionless on his dead continent, head bowed.

They did not provoke him—wary of his power.

**BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!**

As they drew near,

The terrifying auras clashing outside the Five Phoenixes...

Made Nie Changqing on the Bloody Battlefield narrow his eyes.

This pressure...

Was a bit much.

...

On the Golden Body Continent,

Lu Fan watched the cyan-armored figure pluck array runes like strings and shatter the formation with ease.

His eyes lit up.

“Special physique?”

Lu Fan grew thoughtful.

An idea began to form.

The Spirit Pressure Chessboard floated before him.

“Hmm... ten years of seclusion in the relic. Time for them to come out and stretch.”

Lu Fan smiled.

He picked up a warm chess piece between two fingers.

Pa.

It fell on the board.

Five Phoenixes Continent.

Boundless Sea.

The cascading Origin Waterfall—abruptly stopped.

The next instant...

**BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!**

Terrifying rings of energy exploded across the sea.

As though ancient beasts long asleep...

Had awakened.

Chapter 372: Outnumbered? Bullying the Few with the Many?

Ten years passed like the flick of a shuttle.

Yet for those inside the Immortal Relic, a decade slipped by almost unnoticed; their minds had been wholly consumed by the pursuit of power.

**BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!**

Waves surged across the vast sea, ripples spreading in every direction.

The Origin Waterfall ceased its endless cascade; the deafening roar that had thundered for a decade finally fell silent.

Seven-colored rainbow light blossomed where the waterfall once fell—auspicious, yet ominous.

Outside the relic, countless seated cultivators felt their hearts tremble.

They rose as one, staring toward the waterfall.

“The Origin Waterfall has stopped! They’re coming out!”

A Martial Emperor City Nascent Soul elder cried out, voice shaking with excitement and sorrow.

The tragic death of Elder Zhao Qian on the Bloody Battlefield had reached the holy land; many still mourned.

An Infant Transformation survivor of the Tian Yuan Cataclysm—close to Du Longyang and the others—slain so brutally.

BOOM!

Inside the relic, a beam of light flared.

A figure stepped forth unhurriedly, purple robes fluttering, long hair unbound and flowing freely.

“Feng Yilou!”

The Martial Emperor City elder's eyes lit up.

The once-young genius had entered the relic to seek fortune; now he emerged.

Feng Yilou raised a hand to shield his eyes from the sudden glare, hair cascading through his fingers.

“Coming out is coming out—what's with the dramatic pose?”

Beside him, Xiao Yue'er in her crimson dress rolled her eyes.

Not some delicate maiden—shielding the sun and letting hair fall through his fingers on purpose?

Feng Yilou glanced at her and said nothing.

This woman had grown even more sharp-tongued.

Zhong Nan strode out next.

After his defeat to Overlord, he had reflected deeply in seclusion. Ten years had transformed him—his arrogance tempered, his presence steadier.

A black blade rested on his back, its hilt wrapped in red cloth.

“Demons from beyond the heavens have invaded. We emerge to fight. Stop bickering.”

“You’ve argued for ten years—isn’t that enough?”

Zhong Nan said sternly.

Feng Yilou chuckled. The three shot skyward as streaks of light.

The Martial Emperor City elder greeted them.

The trio felt dazed—ten years inside, yet only one year outside.

“Yilou... Elder Zhao Qian has fallen.”

The elder’s voice was heavy with grief.

Feng Yilou froze. Elder Zhao had been close to him. He had reached Infant Transformation—how could he die?

The situation on the Bloody Battlefield was explained.

Elder Zhao had been obliterated—body and soul—by an invader.

Killing intent exploded from Feng Yilou.

Demons from beyond the heavens?

Xiao Yue'er and Zhong Nan exchanged glances, eyes sharpening.

BOOM!

The three unleashed terrifying auras.

Lotuses of spiritual energy bloomed across the sea.

They tore through the clouds, vanishing into the Bloody Battlefield.

The onlookers stood stunned, gasping.

“Yin Spirit Realm!”

All three prodigies had stepped into the Yin Spirit Realm!

The former Human List geniuses were now Heavenly List prodigies!

The silent waterfall grew lively.

Someone sauntered out humming a tune, swaggering with splayed legs.

That unrestrained gait reminded many of a certain person.

“Mo Tianyu! That poisonous fortune-teller!”

Gasps rang out.

Next came a sword-browed youth with a sword on his back.

Another with bandaged arms, striding like a god or demon, evaporating seawater with each step.

Another cloaked in black, trailing vines.

A daoist nun, each step blooming with lotuses.

All radiated auras that crushed the Nascent Soul onlookers.

They spared little time for greetings.

They looked toward the Bloody Battlefield, eyes burning with eagerness.

Then shot skyward, afraid of missing even the dregs of battle.

...

Inside the relic, silence reigned once more.

DONG... DONG... DONG...

An ancient bell tolled, sound waves rippling through the air.

In the long-quiet dao field,

Three figures opened their eyes.

Empress Ni Chunqiu withdrew the bell fragment, exhaling slowly.

Her spiritual energy surged—her entire being transformed.

Du Longyang and Ye Shoudao opened their eyes too.

They exchanged smiles.

“This immortal bell is extraordinary. Every fragment contains profound immortal arts.”

Du Longyang marveled.

The relic truly was a land of great fortune.

Ten years of cultivation using immortal arts had allowed all three to complete their Yin Spirit Dao Lotus and take the first step into the Yang God Nine Transformations.

Only the first step, but still.

“The relic is rich with origin qi and heavenly spiritual energy—a perfect place for secluded cultivation.”

They rose, terrifying auras rumbling around them.

“But who awakened us? Without that, we could have cultivated indefinitely...”

“Those arts were too profound.”

Du Longyang said.

“It must be Brother Lu.”

Ni Chunqiu’s eyes gleamed, licking her red lips as she scanned around.

“Only Brother Lu could wake us.”

Ye Shoudao nodded.

“But don’t forget—the crisis hanging over our heads. Perhaps... Young Master Lu can no longer hold it alone.”

The mood darkened.

They exchanged glances, then shot out of the plaza, bell fragments in hand.

Hm?

They paused.

An old acquaintance leaned against a pillar, waiting with a resentful gaze that gave them goosebumps.

“Tianxu?”

“Young Master Tianxu...”

It was indeed Young Master Tianxu, face full of grievance.

“We agreed to struggle together like dogs—yet you all secretly soared ahead...”

He sounded like a resentful wife.

Ten years in the relic—he had barely reached Yin Spirit Realm.

Yet sensing the overwhelming auras from Du Longyang and the others...

He knew he had been left behind again.

Young Master Tianxu pursed his lips, on the verge of tears.

He... was so pitiful悔.

Why was heaven so unfair?

The three could only console him.

Tianxu hadn't slacked either—he had reached late-stage Yin Spirit.

Not bad.

The four emerged from the relic.

The Holy Lords' emergence sent shockwaves across the sea.

But Du Longyang and the others wasted no time on pleasantries.

Faces grim, they looked skyward.

At Yang God Realm, they sensed it—

Terrifying auras clashing beyond the heavens!

“Enemies!”

Their auras exploded.

BOOM!

The sea split as they shot into the Bloody Battlefield.

...

Immortal Palace.

The great array hummed quietly.

The golden lion yawned.

Ten years as guardian—ten years of watching little humans cultivate.

Boring beyond words.

Though the past few days had been interesting.

Many had tried to break out and challenge him.

He didn't stop them maliciously—anyone who lasted ten moves against him, he let go.

Hm?

Suddenly, the lion looked up.

Golden mane flared.

Heavy footsteps echoed from within the array.

A towering figure emerged, axe and shield on his back.

Each step shook the formation.

Overlord calmly faced the lion.

He raised a hand—and removed his own head.

The lion's fur stood on end.

Malice!

Pure malice!

...

Golden Body Continent.

Atop the majestic peak,

Lu Fan sat in white, smiling brightly.

Watching figures emerge one after another from the relic, he felt a fatherly pride.

His little chicks had grown up.

“Ten years of training—let these holy sons and maidens be your whetstones.”

Lu Fan smiled.

He rolled up his sleeves, picked up a piece, and placed it on the board.

The yin-yang chess game neared completion.

With each piece, his spiritual sense grew stronger.

The Five Phoenixes origin—fused with three supreme mid-martial origins—was on the verge of high martial.

One push to spin the vortex into a stellar spiral...

And the Five Phoenixes would leap into high martial.

Then...

The greatest transformation in history would begin.

From mid to high martial—the leap would dwarf all before.

As the ancients said: when one ascends, even chickens and dogs rise.

When the Five Phoenixes became high martial, everyone would undergo a qualitative leap.

The accumulated energy of three supreme origins would feed back into every being.

Lu Fan continued placing pieces.

Unhurried.

...

“A mere native dares point his blade at us holy sons and maidens?”

“Once Holy Son Qingling breaks the array, I will personally end him!”

“He has reason to be arrogant—he killed the Heavenly Dragon Holy Son. But he picked the wrong opponents.”

Voices rang out.

Qi Liuji’s array did not stop them.

Nor did they provoke him.

On the verdant spirit boat, Holy Son Qingling smiled faintly.

He sailed straight into the Overturning Sky Array.

His special physique was born to break formations—he could twist and seize array runes.

Mist swirled.

Outside, the holy sons and maidens smiled relaxedly.

They waited for the array to fall, then to storm the Bloody Battlefield and kill the arrogant native.

Yet...

Time passed.

Someone frowned.

“Why hasn’t Holy Son Qingling broken it yet?”

Just as the words left their mouth—

A muffled groan.

A streak of green shot backward from the mist.

Holy Son Qingling coughed blood, his spirit boat dimmed.

“This array is strange. I cannot find the core runes. It cannot be broken easily!”

He still felt lingering fear.

Thankfully it was only defensive—if it had been a killing array, he would be dead.

The others were shocked.

Even Qingling failed?

“Of course, you may enter with treasures to protect your minds and descend to the Bloody Battlefield.”

“But... this array is odd. Be careful.”

Qingling warned.

He, for one, would not try again.

Many recalled the Heavenly Dragon Holy Son's cold corpse.

They hesitated.

On the Bloody Battlefield, Nie Changqing—blade raised to the heavens—laughed in disdain.

“What holy sons and maidens? Just a bunch of cowards.”

His laughter echoed into the void, ringing in every ear.

“Arrogant!”

Killing intent flared.

“If you have guts, come in!”

Nie Changqing stepped on the Heavenly Dragon Holy Son's corpse.

On the battlefield,

Xuanwu Guards, Southern Prefecture troops—all roared with excitement.

Jiang Li, wounds healed, gazed at the heavens in blood-stained silver armor.

Tantai Xuan clapped and laughed.

“What high martial holy sons and maidens...”

“Just a pack of rats!”

His arrogance further enraged them.

“A mere mortal dares act so bold!”

The golden boy and jade girl on the immortal crane said coldly.

BOOM!

But before they finished—

Nie Changqing moved.

Lotuses of blade qi bloomed beneath his feet.

“King of Northern Xuan is right—you’re all just rats!”

“If you won’t come in, I’ll come out!”

Nie Changqing charged out of the Overturning Sky Array, blade at his waist.

“Who dares fight me?!”

“Think killing the Heavenly Dragon makes you invincible?”

A holy son sneered.

Seeing Nie Changqing emerge, killing intent surged.

They feared the array.

But outside it?

BOOM!

A holy son wreathed in crimson flames stepped forward, punching toward Nie Changqing.

A fist of sky-blotting fire!

On the bronze warship, the golden-robed youth smiled.

Nie Changqing was decent—but not worth his effort.

Among those vying for the high martial origin, only the twins on the immortal crane, the bronze-skinned giant on the ferocious bird, and Qingling truly concerned him.

They came from Seventh Derivative high martial worlds—far beyond the likes of the Heavenly Dragon Holy Son.

Nie Changqing's blood boiled.

This was crisis—and opportunity!

Pressure was there, but turning pressure into power was his path.

He believed the all-knowing Young Master watched from every corner.

The Young Master did not act because he wanted Nie Changqing to temper himself against these foes.

“KILL!”

Nie Changqing strode forward.

Unsheathe stance.

“Unsheathe Dao Intent!”

“Dragon Slayer!”

“Dao Intent?!”

“I have it too!”

The flaming holy son’s eyes blazed.

His own Dao Intent erupted.

Twin flaming fists pushed forward, incinerating the void!

Blade met flame—sparks exploded.

The holy son staggered back in the void.

“What power! What tier is that Dao Intent?!”

He was horrified.

His Dao Intent-enhanced strike had been cleaved apart—deep, bone-revealing gashes across his body!

“Fourth-tier Sequence Dao Intent!”

The golden-robed youth’s eyes flashed.

“What a pity... you stand alone. One man cannot save this world.”

Many were shaken by Nie Changqing’s dominance.

But most sneered.

He was alone—and only early-stage Spirit Severing.

Three holy sons attacked simultaneously.

Three Spirit Severing strikes!

Nie Changqing’s hairs stood on end.

He popped a pill into his mouth.

Power surged endlessly.

He charged fearlessly, blade flashing.

“Hahaha... outnumbering me?”

“What kind of trash holy sons and maidens bully the few with the many?”

Laughter exploded from the Bloody Battlefield.

Three streaks of light shot out.

Feng Yilou in purple robes.

Zhong Nan with sharp eyes.

Xiao Yue'er solemn.

Three Yin Spirit Realm auras made the holy sons and maidens narrow their eyes.

But the terrifying presences that followed...

Sent shock through the void.

On the barren continent, Qi Liujia opened his eyes in surprise.

The bronze-skinned giant on the ferocious bird opened his eyes for the first time.

The twins on the immortal crane showed emotion.

**BOOM!**

A sky-blotting palm descended.

The flaming holy son who had clashed with Nie Changqing looked up in horror.

His desperate strike was useless.

Pfft!

The palm passed.

The holy son didn't even have time to activate his saint-tier treasure.

His body exploded into blood mist.

Only his treasure-wrapped soul fled.

The holy sons and maidens paled.

This world... was not as simple as they thought?

Nie Changqing was not the strongest!

The palm dispersed.

The Empress stood in flowing red robes, long white legs flashing beneath.

Her peerless face tilted upward, lips curled in cold arrogance.

“Anyone who bullies Brother Lu’s disciple bullies me, Ni Chunqiu!”

“Kill them all!”

Her domineering declaration echoed through the void.

Her unrestrained aura made the holy sons and maidens on the warship, crane, ferocious bird, and spirit boat—all tense.

“This world... has a Soul Projection expert?!”

Chapter 373: Overlord Rides the Lion

This world actually has a Soul Projection expert?!

One holy son had his body obliterated, only his soul fleeing protected by a saint-tier treasure.

“Damn it! How is there a Soul Projection expert?!”

The holy son whose body was crushed roared in fury.

He didn't truly fear Soul Projection experts; in their high martial worlds, they weren't rare.

His body had been destroyed only because he hadn't reacted in time.

With saint-tier treasures, even a Soul Projection strike wouldn't necessarily kill him.

The Empress was breathtakingly beautiful—advancing to Yang God had added an otherworldly charm, a touch of seductive allure.

But the moment she spoke, all that charm shattered.

On his dead continent, Qi Liuja's withered body trembled, a smile tugging at his lips.

He exhaled in relief.

This continent was far stronger than he had imagined.

Yet when he recalled the white-robed youth whose mere presence had nearly crushed his clay avatar, it no longer surprised him.

On the Bloody Battlefield,

Tantai Xuan clenched his fists, face flushed with excitement.

Counterattack!

The time for counterattack had come!

Kill these bastards!

The Empress crushing a holy son with one palm sent waves of satisfaction through everyone.

The Qian Female Palace cultivators nearly screamed in excitement.

This was their Holy Lord, their Empress!

“Empress, you’re too impatient.”

A lazy laugh echoed across the battlefield.

Everyone turned.

On the vast crimson plain, a black-robed figure strolled forward, dragging a long spear single-handedly.

BOOM!

With each step, he rose into the air.

Blinding aura erupted like a blazing sun.

Martial Emperor City Lord—Du Longyang, Yang God Realm!

“Another Soul Projection expert!”

The holy sons and maidens' pupils contracted.

Far away, the watching wanderers felt ice in their veins.

This wasn't a mid-martial world—this was a wolf in sheep's clothing!

Without these holy sons and maidens, any wanderer who attacked would have been crushed by these sudden Soul Projection experts.

“Why does a mid-martial world have Soul Projection experts?!”

Some wanderers screamed.

“This is a quasi-high martial world on the verge of ascension—why wouldn't it?!”

“We should run! We won't even get soup this time!”

Yet no one left.

They wanted to witness this battle that shook the Nihility.

Even with Soul Projection experts, they didn't believe the holy sons and maidens would lose.

BOOM!

Ye Shoudao's single sleeve fluttered.

He stood on the battlefield, eyes sharp as a wolf's.

"Three Soul Projection experts..."

The holy sons and maidens inhaled sharply.

Feng Yilou, Zhong Nan, and Xiao Yue'er also unleashed powerful auras.

Clap, clap, clap.

On the bronze warship, the golden-robed youth applauded.

“Three Soul Projection experts—this is a quasi-high martial world...”

He smiled.

“But only three.”

The bronze-skinned giant on the ferocious bird closed his eyes again.

Uninterested.

Only the evolving high martial origin could catch his attention.

“Indeed unexpected.”

The golden boy and jade girl on the immortal crane spoke in unison, smiling coldly.

The Empress frowned.

She looked into the distance.

Figures in armor had appeared in the void.

Each radiated aura that merged with the emptiness.

“Those are the protectors of the Seventh Derivative holy sons and maidens!”

Wanderers gasped.

Using Soul Projection experts as bodyguards—only Seventh Derivative worlds could afford such arrogance.

The armored figures appeared behind their charges.

On the bronze warship, the golden-robed youth smiled.

“Soul Projection experts are indeed a surprise...”

“But the outcome remains unchanged. A world bold enough to challenge high martial in the Nihility must hide intoxicating secrets.”

His words spread.

Many holy sons and maidens breathed faster, exchanging glances filled with greed.

This world... truly hid great secrets?

“Attack. Kill without mercy.”

The golden-robed youth commanded.

“Yes.”

In the void,

The armored experts bowed, voices ringing like iron.

They stepped forward, armor clanking.

Terrifying auras made the void boom.

“So domineering, holy sons and maidens.”

Du Longyang said coldly, black hair dancing.

“This one’s mine.”

But before he finished—

Ye Shoudao moved.

His body launched like a spring, blade drawn.

A sky-blotting slash cleaved toward an armored expert.

Du Longyang froze, furious.

“Ye Shoudao, you’re stealing my opponent?!”

But Ye Shoudao was already gone.

On the bronze warship, the golden-robed youth's face darkened.

These natives dared treat his protector like a prize?

Humiliation!

The immortal crane spread its wings; the twins laughed mockingly.

“Steal what?”

They signaled their own protector.

Another Soul Projection expert attacked.

Du Longyang wasted no words—battle erupted instantly in the void!

Since tool-man Fu Tianluo's death, they hadn't had a proper fight!

Holy Son Qingling on the spirit boat ordered his protector forward.

The Empress cursed and charged.

Energy storms divided the void into battlefields.

Nie Changqing stood with Dragon Slayer at his waist, face grim.

He watched Du Longyang and the others.

The fights were not going as smoothly as expected.

These high martial experts were no weaklings.

Du Longyang, Ye Shoudao, and the Empress were being pushed back!

With the Soul Projection experts occupied,

The holy sons and maidens turned to Nie Changqing and the others.

“Without Soul Projection protection... what are you?”

The golden-robed youth smiled.

Dozens attacked.

Without the pressure of Soul Projection experts, they could finally act freely.

“They’re coming!”

Nie Changqing said.

Beside him, Feng Yilou, Xiao Yue’er, and Zhong Nan grinned.

“Perfect. Ten years without a real fight—finally a good one.”

Zhong Nan spoke—he was a battle maniac.

He charged, blade flashing.

After his loss to Overlord, ten years of reflection had honed him sharper than ever.

Feng Yilou's purple robes fluttered.

His Holy Lord was fighting—he would not embarrass him.

His idol had always been Du Longyang.

Fighting alongside him now set his blood ablaze.

“KILL!”

His purple spear shot like lightning.

He engaged a holy son in a storm of spear strikes.

Xiao Yue'er smiled.

She rarely fought, but this time she needed battle to temper herself.

She glanced at Feng Yilou and Zhong Nan.

“Don’t die, you two.”

From afar, their laughter echoed: “You don’t die!”

The three Tian Yuan prodigies bloomed with brilliance.

Xiao Yue’er clashed with a holy maiden—two women, no less fierce than men.

Everyone on the Bloody Battlefield watched tensely.

Each fight felt like life or death for the world.

Buzz...

Suddenly,

Wind rose on the battlefield.

A corner tore open.

Righteous qi surged skyward.

Kong Nanfei in scholar robes, wine gourd in hand, laughed loudly.

“Heaven and earth possess righteous qi, bestowed in myriad forms!”

He recited poetry.

Righteous qi swirled around him.

In the distance, wanderers paled.

“Another Spirit Severing?!”

They were horrified.

They had thought Nie Changqing was the limit.

Then Feng Yilou, Xiao Yue'er, and Zhong Nan appeared.

But with Soul Projection experts, more Spirit Severing made sense.

They only thanked their luck they hadn't attacked—otherwise, death without knowing how.

These were Spirit Severing experts who could fight holy sons and maidens!

...

Behind the Origin Waterfall,

A figure emerged.

Nie Zha in snow-white robes, long neck graceful, black hair cascading like a waterfall.

Ten years of seclusion had made her more mature, more stunning.

“Everyone’s out... seems they all went to the Bloody Battlefield.”

A sweet voice sounded behind her.

Ni Yu stepped out, black pot on her back, Little Yinglong—now much fatter—atop her head.

Nie Zha smiled gently.

“No... wait. Overlord isn’t out yet. He’s trying to tame that golden lion as a mount. Not sure if he’ll succeed.”

Ni Yu crunched a pill, sweet flavor making her smile happily.

“The golden lion is late-stage Yin Spirit—strong. Taming it won’t be easy.”

Nie Zha said.

She tilted her graceful neck, gazing at the blood-red sky heavy with pressure.

“Young Master awakened us... he needs us.”

“Young Master probably wants us to use them as training dummies.”

Ni Yu said seriously.

Nie Zha blinked—suddenly it made sense.

“With Young Master’s temper, if they weren’t qualified tool people, he’d have killed them already.”

“Young Master is so strong—ten years for us, he must be even stronger!”

Ni Yu had blind faith in Young Master.

Then she grew sad, pounding her flat chest.

“Ten years! Sister Nie... ten years and I still haven’t grown!”

She wailed.

She had hoped ten years would make her tall and curvy—so Young Master might go easy when she caused trouble.

But nothing changed.

Nie Zha could only pat her head in comfort.

“Let’s go. The Bloody Battlefield awaits.”

Nie Zha said.

She tapped the ground lightly.

Whoosh...

Ice crystals spread, forming lotus-shaped platforms across the sea.

Ni Yu and Nie Zha vanished into the ice.

Shortly after they left,

A cyan streak flashed behind the waterfall.

A youth in cyan robes appeared—handsome, aloof.

He glanced back.

“Big Sister is one step away...”

“I’ll check the battlefield first. If it gets bad, I’ll call her.”

It was the Azure Dragon.

Maintaining his cool demeanor, he shot into the clouds.

...

“I am Bu Nanxing, a holy son from a Ninth Derivative high martial world.”

“I never wanted to be a holy son, but I was born one—so I decided to be a low-key one.”

“I just wanted to cultivate quietly in my holy land, avoid trouble, live peacefully, and seek immortality.”

“But my Holy Lord received a message from the so-called High Martial Buddhist bald donkey—said a mid-martial world in the Nihility was ascending, its origin a great fortune. So I got kicked out.”

“Thankfully I’m smart—joined this holy son team, hid my trump cards, played it safe like an old dog.”

“But now... this team doesn’t seem safe either.”

“Shit! This mid-martial world has Soul Projection monsters! One holy son already got his body crushed!”

“The sacred records were right—the Nihility once buried Ancient Emperors. Too dangerous!”

“I need to hide!”

Among the holy sons and maidens,

An utterly ordinary-looking youth in plain clothes muttered under his breath.

Seeing the others charge in fury,

He shook his head—"Idiots"—and quietly retreated.

The bronze-skinned giant on the ferocious bird glanced at him.

Bu Nanxing offered a polite, awkward smile.

Then vanished in a streak toward the Golden Body Continent.

From years of survival experience, it was the safest—thinnest spiritual energy, fewest experts, barely any living people.

The giant paid him no mind.

A mid-stage Spirit Severing from an Eighth Derivative world wasn't worth his attention.

He closed his eyes again.

...

The battle turned white-hot.

The arrogant holy sons and maidens grew grim.

They could feel their opponents growing stronger mid-fight.

“Insolence!”

“Daring to use us as whetstones?!”

The holy son fighting Zhong Nan roared.

BOOM!

He unleashed his Dao Intent, merging it into a world-shaking strike.

Zhong Nan's face hardened.

"Dao Intent..."

The holy son sneered coldly.

"Today, you die!"

Dao Intent was their trump card—once drawn, blood must flow!

Zhong Nan retreated a step.

Then—rivers surged behind him!

Crashing waves upon waves!

"Fifth-tier Sequence Dao Intent—Overlapping Waves!"

Zhong Nan roared.

Gripping his blade with both hands, he slashed.

The Dao Intent-infused strike made his blade tremble.

Pfft!

One slash.

The holy son was cleaved in two, blood raining from the sky.

At the same time,

Feng Yilou and Xiao Yue'er unleashed their Dao Intent.

“What?!”

The holy sons and maidens were stunned.

Nie Changqing having Dao Intent was one thing—a heaven-defying genius.

But all of them?!

A mid-martial world not yet high martial—how could it birth so many Dao Intent prodigies rarer than phoenix feathers in high martial worlds?!

On the bronze warship, the golden-robed youth's eyes gleamed.

He recalled legends of the Nihility.

“Legend says the Nihility buried Ancient Emperors... Could this world be connected to one?!”

His aura surged.

He could wait no longer.

He stepped forward.

Terrifying presence exploded.

The bronze warship thundered forth.

BOOM!

In an instant, it loomed over Xiao Yue'er.

The moment it moved,

Watching wanderers cried out.

y.

“He’s attacking! Beigong Feng is making his move!”

“A Seventh Derivative holy son—this will end the invasion decisively!”

BOOM!

The warship seemed to collapse the void.

Xiao Yue'er's heart sank.

Shadow engulfed her.

From afar,

Feng Yilou and Zhong Nan shouted, "Careful!"

Too late.

On the warship, Holy Son Beigong Feng smiled contemptuously.

"Mere ants."

He threw a punch.

Energy coalesced into a colossal fist.

Xiao Yue'er struck desperately with her Dao Intent.

But against that fist, she felt like an ant shaking a mountain.

Pfft!

Her body exploded!

Only her soul fled.

Holy Son Beigong stood proud.

His attack needed to intimidate.

"Think you can escape?"

"DIE!"

The fist blazed with divine light, crushing down again.

Xiao Yue'er's soul screamed in terror.

Zhong Nan charged, slashing desperately.

The fist flashed.

His blade shattered inch by inch!

Zhong Nan grabbed Xiao Yue'er's soul and was sent flying back into the Bloody Battlefield.

**BOOM!**

An explosion rocked the earth.

Dust and blood storms raged.

Long after,

Zhong Nan staggered from a massive crater.

His blade broken, chest caved in, coughing blood mixed with organ fragments.

One punch—near death!

“Still alive? Lucky native.”

Beigong Feng said coldly.

Fury hidden in his eyes.

He had failed to kill.

His punch rivaled Soul Projection.

His sharp gaze swept the battlefield, tyrannical aura erupting.

Late-stage Spirit Severing, from a Seventh Derivative world—he was nearly invincible, able to fight Soul Projection experts.

“Everyone, it’s time.”

“End these ants quickly. Then we can focus on this world’s origin. It may hold secrets of the Ancient Emperors... perhaps even the location of an Emperor’s tomb.”

Beigong Feng stood proudly on his warship.

He turned to the bronze-skinned giant, the twins, and the silent Qingling.

At his words,

The giant opened his eyes.

The twins smiled, urging their crane forward, pressure mounting.

Qingling smiled gently, his arm turning jade-like again.

The next instant,

Four overwhelming auras—no weaker than Beigong Feng’s—clashed outside the Five Phoenixes.

Feng Yilou’s face was ice.

Nie Changqing’s hair danced, expression grave.

Kong Nanfei, suppressing a holy son, grew serious.

Nie Zha, who had just arrived, frowned.

The Azure Dragon, now in teenage form, narrowed his eyes.

But just as they prepared to fight...

A heaven-shaking roar froze them.

Their faces turned strange.

BOOM!

The Bloody Battlefield exploded.

Demonic qi surged like a storm.

Thud! Thud! Thud!

The ground trembled as if a titan approached.

Everyone stared.

Dust cleared.

Brilliant golden light blazed.

A majestic golden lion strode forth, roaring with feral might.

And on its back...

A figure sat cross-legged, axe and shield on his back.

Overwhelming aura shot skyward without restraint.

Overlord had come riding the lion.

Chapter 374: Holy Son, Dyed in Blood

Brilliant golden radiance burst forth, blinding and magnificent.

Like sudden fire in the darkness, it seized every gaze.

Like a freshly polished blade ripping through silk!

On the Bloody Battlefield, every heart jolted.

But shock quickly turned to boiling excitement.

Especially from Western Liang!

“King of Western Liang! It’s the Overlord!”

“Overlord has emerged!”

“Hahaha! First on the Human List—the Overlord of our era!”

Cultivators roared with ecstatic laughter at the sight of Overlord riding the golden lion, aura vast as the heavens.

They were beyond thrilled.

Back in the Golden Core Heaven Lock realm, Overlord had been invincible, capable of fighting Nascent Soul experts across realms.

After ten years—what realm had he reached?

Even without knowing, one glance at the golden lion beneath him was answer enough.

“ROAR!”

The golden lion roared in aggrieved fury, the sound shattering the ground in waves.

He was furious!

He was not a mount!

He and this headless freak had a partnership!

The lion roared again.

Few understood.

When Overlord challenged him in the array, they had fought for ages—neither gaining the upper hand.

Finally, using Unyielding Dao Intent, Overlord unleashed a heaven-shaking strike and knocked out one of the lion's fangs.

This lion was truly ferocious!

Immense strength, terrifying killing intent.

Especially its roar—it could shake the soul.

Overlord had suffered greatly, but he endured every attack, delivering the final devastating blow.

Zhong Nan, coughing blood, stared dazedly at Overlord atop the lion.

A bitter smile touched his lips.

He had once rivaled Overlord.

Now... Overlord had completely surpassed him.

Yet joy followed.

Overlord fought for the Five Phoenixes—and so did he.

“Help me... kill him.”

Zhong Nan said to Overlord.

Then he collapsed, coughing blood, and began to heal.

Beigong Feng's punch had nearly destroyed his life force.

Overlord nodded slightly.

He sat atop the lion, coldly staring at the enemies beyond the mist.

Beigong Feng on the bronze warship.

The golden boy and jade girl on the immortal crane.

Qingling on the spirit boat.

The auras of three Seventh Derivative holy sons and maidens were like three blazing suns, blotting out the sky.

Overlord's presence grew heavier.

“Demons from beyond the heavens...”

He said slowly.

He felt no goodwill toward them.

“The prosperity of the Five Phoenixes cultivation world... has finally drawn you greedy demons.”

Overlord shook his head, rising slowly.

Demonic qi surged like a storm.

The tragic fall of the ancient cultivation era.

Now disaster returned.

This time, the new era had to face it themselves.

“Fight!”

BOOM!

Axe in one hand, shield in the other—Overlord roared.

His roar merged with the lion’s.

BOOM!

Golden light flared as Overlord and lion charged out of the Overturning Sky Array.

Beigong Feng’s robes snapped in the wind, eyes narrowing.

“This world...”

“Is too strange!”

Genius after genius—it unsettled him.

He inhaled deeply.

Then punched toward Overlord!

BOOM!

A terrifying fist blasted across the heavens.

Even stronger than the one that crushed Xiao Yue'er.

Overlord charged like a god-demon, black axe sweeping out.

Demonic qi erupted into restless power!

Axe met fist—explosion rocked the void!

Beigong Feng stood unmoving on his warship.

Overlord remained steady atop the lion, killing intent blazing.

Far away,

The bronze-skinned giant on the ferocious bird opened his eyes.

Like a hunter scenting prey.

He stared at Overlord, excitement flickering.

Overlord's strength had roused him.

Yet he did not move.

He disdained ganging up with Beigong Feng.

“What a golden lion—Spirit Severing demon beast!”

Beigong Feng's eyes gleamed at the lion.

“Perfect. Kill you, and this lion becomes my mount!”

He laughed, confident.

His robes whipped as he unleashed twin fists.

The bronze warship thundered forward, threatening to collapse the void.

“A mere mid-martial native dares fight me?”

“An ant.”

Countless fists rained down, darkening the sky.

Overlord raised his shield, axe cleaving.

The golden lion roared in fury.

He was not a mount!

He and the headless freak were partners!

BOOM!

The lion pounced, slamming the warship sideways, nearly crashing it.

Clang! Clang! Clang!

Overlord and Beigong Feng clashed in the void, energy raging.

Beigong Feng, who had crushed Xiao Yue'er instantly, found no easy advantage against Overlord.

Dozens of exchanges—deadlocked.

“Heh heh heh...”

“Beigong, you’ve grown weak.”

The twins on the crane laughed.

Beigong Feng's face darkened.

But their laughter stopped.

They shot forward, targeting Feng Yilou.

Feng Yilou's purple robes flared, spear raised.

The crane's talons became sword light.

Pfft!

Blood sprayed from Feng Yilou's shoulder.

He was sent flying.

"Too weak..."

The twins laughed softly.

“Imagine if that claw had aimed for your neck—you’d be dead.”

Feng Yilou felt cold.

The gap in strength chilled him.

Buzz...

Suddenly,

Mist tore apart.

A sword light flashed, trailing blooming ice crystals.

Nie Zha in white skirts charged coldly, her sword incomparably sharp.

“Hm?”

The twins grew solemn.

“Dao Intent?”

They leaped from the crane.

It transformed into black-and-white sword light, slashing down.

Nie Zha’s hair danced, her cicada-wing sword rising gently.

A blizzard erupted.

A massive ice blade descended, threatening to bisect the crane!

The twins scattered, throwing golden rings that screamed through the air.

Saint-tier treasures!

These holy sons and maidens were rich—nearly all carried saint-tier weapons for both defense and attack.

Nie Zha cleaved the rings, but the crane struck again.

She fell to a slight disadvantage.

On the Bloody Battlefield, the Azure Dragon teen did not stand idle.

With aloof arrogance, he shot skyward with a piercing cry, charging Qingling on the spirit boat.

The battlefield descended into chaos.

Far-off wanderers felt their blood run cold.

What kind of world was this?

This wasn't mid-martial!

So many monsters who could fight holy sons and maidens—it was terrifying.

Of all battles, the most eye-catching was Overlord on the golden lion against Beigong Feng.

Beigong Feng unleashed thousands of fists, finally erupting with his own Dao Intent.

Seventh Derivative holy sons were no joke—monstrous talent, unshakable foundations, profound techniques, peerless combat power.

Energy raged endlessly.

Suddenly!

Beigong Feng found an opening.

His eyes flashed.

He appeared behind Overlord, feet stomping on the broad, armored back.

“It’s over.”

Contempt and coldness filled his gaze.

Buzz...

A glass-like sword appeared in his hand—another saint-tier weapon!

It slashed down.

Pfft!

A massive head flew skyward.

Beigong Feng laughed.

No difficulty—he had decapitated the native.

Natives were fools!

He stood on Overlord's body, laughing arrogantly.

Hm?

Something felt wrong.

The natives on the Bloody Battlefield showed no despair.

Instead...

They cheered with wild excitement?!

Why cheer?!

Had they submitted to his might?

No... something was off!

Beigong Feng was no fool.

The severed head fell.

A huge hand caught it steadily.

The headless body had caught its own head!

Beigong Feng froze!

Chill crawled up his spine.

Like an icy serpent coiling around him.

**BOOM!**

Terrifying blood qi, raging demonic qi, void-shaking energy!

Even more horrifying—Overlord's head vanished into a storage treasure.

Headless Overlord seemed even more terrifying.

His hand seized Beigong Feng's ankle.

Immense strength made Beigong Feng's heart pound!

"Why... doesn't decapitation kill him?!"

"His soul didn't even leave the body?!"

This bizarre scene baffled him.

**BOOM!**

Headless Overlord's combat power seemed to skyrocket.

**Roar!**

A demonic bellow shook the void.

Far away, the golden lion's expression shifted.

Here it comes... that feeling!

The berserk headless freak!

“DIE!”

Beigong Feng didn't panic.

His sword slashed, radiant light aimed to sever the arm.

Demonic qi surged.

Overlord swung Beigong Feng like a flail.

Compared to the fragile head, Overlord's body was truly unbreakable!

Even a saint-tier sword couldn't cut the arm.

It sank in, energy raging—yet headless Overlord said nothing.

He simply whipped Beigong Feng around.

Clang! Clang! Clang!

The void trembled endlessly.

“Release me!”

Beigong Feng was losing it.

One hand gripped the sword, the other punched wildly.

Even Soul Projection experts would bleed from such blows.

Overlord bled too.

His body seemed on the verge of bursting.

The twins fighting Nie Zha were stunned.

The bronze-skinned giant opened his eyes in shock.

Qingling and Azure Dragon paused their fight to watch.

Other battles slowed—everyone stared.

The scene was brutally bloody.

Beigong Feng's fine robes were torn, ankle bones shattered.

Overlord was covered in sword wounds, fist marks... bite marks.

Beigong Feng was furious!

He was a toy being swung around!

His pride—trampled into the dirt!

He, Beigong Feng, cared about face.

Yet now he had lost all of it before so many high martial holy sons and maidens.

He had always looked down on the Ninth and Eighth Derivative ones.

Only the twins, the giant, and Qingling were his peers.

He had come for the great fortune.

Yet now—no fortune, only the most humiliating beating of his life.

Being used as a human club!

BOOM!

The void seemed to collapse.

Demonic qi raged like a storm.

Beigong Feng unleashed his Dao Intent.

Sixth-tier Sequence!

He roared!

Dao Intent fists rained down!

BOOM!

His ankle exploded.

He was flung away, tumbling through the void.

But he rose with a savage grin.

He had broken free!

He had escaped those demonic hands!

The massive fists formed an energy storm, hammering the headless Overlord relentlessly.

Beigong Feng laughed maniacally, hair wild.

“Forcing me to use Dao Intent... not bad.”

He flicked his hair, smiling coldly.

But no one else laughed.

On the Bloody Battlefield, the natives grew more excited—something was coming...

The giant grew solemn.

The twins summoned their saint-tier treasures.

When Beigong Feng sensed something wrong—

Demonic qi exploded!

BOOM!

The fists shattered.

Overwhelming Dao Intent descended.

What terrifying Dao Intent—suppressing Beigong Feng's own!

High-tier crushing low-tier...

“Dao Intent... Unyielding!”

Roar!

A hoarse, demonic bellow shook the void.

Energy climbed... climbed...

Beigong Feng paled.

This power—it was the sum of all the attacks Overlord had endured!

Demonic runes coiled around the headless body.

Then it moved.

Demonic qi collapsed the void.

In an instant, it was beside Beigong Feng.

Axe and shield stacked—slamming down.

Beigong Feng blocked!

Clang!

His glass sword flew away.

The force shattered both his arms!

Behind the axe-shield, a massive fist swung sideways.

It smashed into Beigong Feng's face!

Buzz...

The world turned to bloody pulp.

Only the sound of endless bones breaking.

Pfft!

Blood sprayed.

Beigong Feng flew like a broken kite, crashing through his own bronze warship.

But that was just the beginning.

Unyielding Dao Intent erupted.

Every attack Overlord had taken now returned tenfold.

He leaped like a beast onto the warship.

Axe-shield raised—smashed down.

Beigong Feng's face caved in.

He screamed in terror.

Clang! Clang! Clang!

The warship shuddered.

Headless Overlord roared to the heavens.

He swung the axe-shield down again and again.

Beigong Feng couldn't even draw his treasures.

He was beaten into a bloody pulp.

**BOOM!**

With a final crash,

Beigong Feng—robes soaked in blood, blood raining from the sky—became a bloody man.

He shot through the bottom of his ruined warship.

Crashing into the Bloody Battlefield.

**BOOM!**

The earth quaked.

Cracks spiderwebbed.

Shockwaves spread in rings.

Hurricanes rose.

Zhong Nan stared in shock at the once-arrogant Beigong Feng, crushed and fallen.

A sonic boom.

The ruined bronze warship plummeted, smashing precisely into the massive crater Beigong Feng had made.

Clang...

As the broken hull crashed down...

The entire world...

Fell silent.

Chapter 375: Yin Soldiers Seize the Soul, the Situation Turns!

\*Golden Body Continent\*

After being slaughtered by Wu Xing, the world had suffered devastating losses and fallen into utter silence.

The blood soaking the earth had not dried even after a year.

Only a few scattered cultivators wandered the land, kneeling to gather fragments of shattered golden statues, hoping to regain the aid of faith.

BOOM!

Light faded.

A figure in utterly ordinary clothes with an ordinary topknot appeared—no special aura at all.

Bu Nanxing was extremely cautious.

The moment he landed, his spiritual sense spread in every direction, sweeping the continent for any threat.

“Blood-soaked earth that never dries, bones littering the ground, broken golden statues wrapped in weeping souls...”

“Sigh... the world is too dangerous.”

Bu Nanxing sighed deeply, scanning the ruined land.

His wariness grew.

Cultivation was dangerous.

To seek immortality, one had to survive—no matter how strong you were.

What could you do against someone stronger?

Spirit Severing against Soul Projection? Run—if you're lucky.

Soul Projection against a passing overlord? You might not even escape.

Even if you reached overlord realm—there were always greater horrors above.

This was a world where the weak were prey.

To live, one had to endure.

Endure until the end of time, until worlds collapsed.

“I've been a holy son for eighty-nine years. Eighty-nine years of surviving. Eleven more, and I'll have to find a new place to hide... The holy land is no longer safe. The old man keeps trying to throw me into danger—like the Nihility. Even a forsaken place that buried Ancient Emperors isn't safe!”

“Never seen a father who pushes his own son into fire pits.”

Bu Nanxing shook his head.

His spiritual sense returned.

Relief washed over his face.

“Good... this ruined world is safe. No real threats.”

His eyes lit up.

Most cultivators here were below Nascent Soul.

He exhaled in relief.

He looked toward the void.

He could sense the raging battle outside.

The thunderous booms reached even here.

“See? They capsized. Seventh Derivative holy sons or not—still capsized.”

“I told them—the Nihility is dangerous!”

Bu Nanxing shook his head again.

Beigong Feng’s aura was fading.

His caution deepened.

He scanned for a spot to watch the battle without drawing attention.

His gaze settled on the highest peak—a collapsed palace at the summit.

BOOM!

He shot forward at an utterly average speed, landing inconspicuously.

Hm?

He froze.

Before the ruined palace sat a white-robed youth in a wheelchair, harmless-looking, pondering a chessboard.

Spiritual sense sweep.

“Qi Condensation realm?”

Bu Nanxing narrowed his eyes.

“Just a Qi Condensation kid... chase him off—no, that might expose me. Too risky.”

He frowned, thinking.

“Then trap him in an array. Qi Condensation lifespan is less than five hundred years. Trap him for five centuries—until he dies.”

Decision made.

Bu Nanxing approached slowly, wearing his habitual warm, sincere smile.

He was cautious with everyone—even a Qi Condensation cultivator deserved a heartfelt smile.

Because he believed: a smiling face was hard to strike.

If he smiled sincerely enough, even a butcher raising the knife would hesitate one second.

That second... was his lifeline.

“This young sir, the mountain wind is strong. Why not go down?”

Bu Nanxing smiled warmly.

The white-robed youth seemed to snap out of thought, glancing at him oddly.

Then ignored him, returning to the chessboard.

No reaction.

Bu Nanxing sighed.

He reached into his sleeve.

Several jade talismans flew out.

Buzz...

They expanded mid-air, forming a profound array that enveloped Lu Fan.

“Go stay in the array. A few centuries of peace—no worries.”

Bu Nanxing said.

Soon, the white-robed youth’s figure blurred within the formation.

Pa.

Just as Bu Nanxing relaxed—

A chess piece fell on the board.

Like thunder in his mind!

Shit!

Bu Nanxing's soul trembled.

He turned and ran without looking back!

BOOM!

He unleashed everything—no more hiding!

His aura exploded from early-stage Spirit Severing to late-stage!

No weaker than Beigong Feng.

Countless treasures glowed—mostly defensive saint-tier artifacts.

He flung out bottles and jars.

“Senior, my mistake! I was just passing by!”

The jars exploded mid-air.

Colorful poisons filled the sky—venom that could kill Soul Projection experts in moments.

Arrays activated, becoming deadly killing formations to trap Lu Fan.

Lu Fan was mildly surprised.

He had misjudged.

This ordinary-looking guy... was stronger than Beigong Feng!

In a real life-or-death fight, Beigong Feng would die without knowing how.

Lu Fan waved lightly.

All poisons evaporated.

Arrays shattered.

This casual display made Bu Nanxing's heart sink.

Done for.

This white-robed youth was a master of disguise—an old monster!

BOOM!

Lu Fan opened his hand.

Energy surged, forming a sky-blotting palm that descended on Bu Nanxing.

“Senior, mercy!”

Bu Nanxing cried.

“Don’t worry. Reaching here is fate. This Young Master has a good temper—I won’t kill you yet. Come play chess.”

BOOM!

Bu Nanxing unleashed his full late-stage Spirit Severing power, shining like a diamond in the sun.

But...

Lu Fan’s palm pressed down.

Pfft!

The brilliance extinguished.

Bu Nanxing was slammed face-down, unable to move.

The palm withdrew, dragging him along.

His fingers carved ten furrows in the stone.

...

The entire world fell silent.

Holy sons and maidens, distant wanderers—all frozen in shock.

What did they just witness?

Beigong Feng... defeated?

Smashed from the void into the Bloody Battlefield?

A Seventh Derivative holy son...

Monstrous talent, raised in a top sacred ground, peerless in combat.

Yet beaten by a cultivator from a mid-martial world!

The golden boy and jade girl on the immortal crane exchanged glances—something was wrong.

Beigong Feng's defeat was beyond expectation.

“End it quickly!”

They spoke in unison.

Battle erupted anew in the heavens.

The crane screeched, becoming sword light that slashed toward Nie Zha!

The sky tore open.

Nie Zha grew solemn.

Her Dao Intent might not match Overlord's third-tier Unyielding, but it was still powerful.

Her cicada-wing sword danced—snow fell.

Ice walls formed one after another.

The crane shattered them all.

Annoying—entangling her like a flying sword.

On the Bloody Battlefield,

Giggles rang out.

“Sister Nie, let Little Feng help!”

At a corner of the battlefield stood several figures.

A gentle scholar with a book box.

A graceful woman with an oil-paper umbrella.

And a farm girl who raised chickens—Ni Yu.

“Cluck!”

A chick was thrown skyward.

It shot toward the heavens.

The twins were baffled.

Their immortal crane was a powerful spirit beast!

Throwing a chick at it?

But—

A piercing phoenix cry!

The chick transformed mid-air, flames erupting.

Nine Phoenix Transformations—Fifth Stage!

A resplendent fire phoenix spread wings of flame, turning the void into a sea of fire!

BOOM!

Phoenix and crane collided!

The crane wailed, black-and-white feathers scattering.

Nie Zha felt the pressure lift.

Her sword flashed toward the twins.

They flung their golden rings.

Clang!

Battle turned deadly.

On the Bloody Battlefield, after long silence, the crowd erupted.

“King of Western Liang won!”

“Overlord is invincible!”

“Those who offend the Five Phoenixes—die!”

Western Liang warriors roared, veins bulging, faces red with excitement.

Overlord’s victory ignited their morale.

Dust cleared.

Overlord landed, axe and shield on his back, walking toward the massive crater and the ruined bronze warship.

BOOM!

One punch sent the warship flying.

He dragged the pulped Beigong Feng from the pit.

Beigong Feng was a bloody mess—face shattered, robes soaked crimson.

Just as Overlord lifted him—

BOOM!

Terrifying aura exploded in the heavens!

“How dare you!”

Energy rippled like a tsunami.

A muffled groan.

Du Longyang was blasted back.

The armored Soul Projection expert abandoned him, shooting forth!

“Release the Holy Son!”

His thunderous roar changed the weather.

He charged, aura crushing friend and foe alike—many holy sons and maidens retreated in shock.

**BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!**

Like rolling thunder.

Headless Overlord dropped Beigong Feng like trash.

Demonic qi erupted.

He shot skyward, axe-shield raised, meeting the Soul Projection strike!

Explosion!

Overlord's body smashed back into the Bloody Battlefield, legs buried in the earth.

He had taken the blow head-on.

The small flag flew back.

Du Longyang, spear in hand, Yang God emerged, bell fragment above his head.

He charged again!

The armored expert's face changed.

The situation was slipping from their control.

On the Bloody Battlefield,

Beigong Feng staggered to his feet.

While Overlord was buried, he dragged his broken body, desperate to escape the battlefield.

The world's protection suppressed him.

Injured, he couldn't fight at full power!

He had to escape—recover under protection—then fight again!

He had to live—to uncover this world's secrets!

Overlord did not move.

Perhaps recovering.

No one stopped Beigong Feng.

Joy flickered on his bloodied face.

He could live!

Suddenly—

He froze.

A chill crawled up his spine.

Unnoticed...

A figure clung silently to his back.

Killing intent like a venomous snake seeped into his pores.

“You...”

Horror.

A whoosh of silver shears cutting air.

The figure behind him gripped silver scissors.

And sliced across Beigong Feng's neck.

Pfft!

Blood sprayed skyward.

Just as he nearly escaped the Bloody Battlefield—head and body separated.

“NO!!!!”

In the void,

The armored Soul Projection expert paled!

The Holy Son... decapitated?!

On the Bloody Battlefield, many stared in shock.

Overlord's body trembled slightly.

A lean figure floated in the air, cloaked as an assassin...

Blood dripped from silver shears.

Then—like smoke in the wind—dissolved.

Mo Liuqi of the Ink Tower!

The cultivators of the Five Phoenixes gasped!

The overlooked Mo Liuqi had assassinated a holy son!

The remaining holy sons and maidens felt chills.

How many bizarre monsters did this world hide?!

Beigong Feng's body fell.

But as a Spirit Severing expert, he wasn't dead yet.

His soul condensed, still trying to flee.

But—

A yin wind blew.

His soul froze.

Before him, Yin soldiers with rusted halberds and cold spears appeared in formation.

Yin Soldiers on the march—stepping in perfect, soul-shaking unison.

In the distance, a cold city of wandering spirits exerted irresistible pull.

His soul drifted uncontrollably toward the Bloody Battlefield.

Cold chains descended.

A massive shadow sat on a throne, dropping chains that bound Beigong Feng's soul.

Then vanished.

“One of the Ghost King City Lords from the Nine Hells Secret Realm!”

Nie Changqing, Jing Yue, and others recognized it.

The armored Soul Projection expert fighting Du Longyang froze.

He pulled out a jade pendant—cracked, Beigong Feng's aura... gone!

A Seventh Derivative holy son—truly dead!

The first holy son to completely fall!

“You... are all dead!”

The expert’s face was ice, body trembling.

He blasted Du Longyang back.

Scanning the void,

He spoke through gritted teeth.

“Keep hiding! The Holy Son is dead! If Holy Lord Beigong blames us, all you Soul Projection experts who hid and did nothing will pay!”

“You could have saved him!”

His furious roar shook the heavens!

The void rippled.

Figures emerged—terrifying auras erupting.

The protectors of Eighth Derivative holy sons and maidens—all Soul Projection experts!

Their auras wove into a net.

Ninth Derivative worlds couldn't afford such luxury.

Nie Changqing and the others paled.

“Retreat!”

They disengaged instantly, shooting toward the Overturning Sky Array.

“Stay. With the Holy Son dead... your lives will pay the debt.”

The Soul Projection experts sighed.

Using native lives to appease a Holy Lord's wrath was worth it.

They attacked Nie Changqing and the others—to atone by capture or death.

The sudden shift stunned Du Longyang and the others.

The three rang the bell fragments, trying to block.

But they couldn't stop so many!

On the dead continent,

Qi Liujia sighed.

He raised a withered hand—array runes swirling.

It seemed... his turn had come.

Hm?

But—

He paused.

His murky eyes turned toward the Five Phoenixes.

Roar!

The teenage Azure Dragon fighting Qingling suddenly transformed into a colossal dragon.

A Soul Projection elder's palm struck—dragon blood sprayed across the void.

Azure Dragon fled toward the Overturning Sky Array, trailing blood.

Pathetic and tragic.

Suddenly—

On the battlefield,

A cyan lotus bloomed silently.

Made of qi.

On the lotus sat two figures.

One a youth in cyan lotus robes.

The other a serene, closed-eyed maiden.

The dragon-form Azure Dragon's eyes lit up!

He stopped fleeing!

He was a Heavenly Dragon created by Father!

The word "flee" did not exist in his dictionary!

With a sorrowful roar, he turned and slashed with a claw.

The elder was stunned.

Pfft!

Azure Dragon expertly spat a mouthful of dragon blood.

Scales fell like rain.

With a heaven-shaking wail, his massive body crashed back into the Bloody Battlefield.

Chapter 376: This Woman... Is She the Lord of the Plane?

Dragon blood rained from the heavens.

Shredded azure scales scattered through the sky, accompanied by a heaven-shaking, heart-wrenching dragon roar.

Grief settled over every heart present.

Heaven and earth mourned together; sun and moon lost their light.

On the blood-colored battlefield, every cultivator felt a lump in their throat. The Azure Dragon's colossal body bled profusely as it was sent hurtling back from the void, scales shattering one after another.

How tragic it looked!

Yet the Azure Dragon refused to yield!

With every ounce of strength, it thrust out a claw. As a heavenly dragon, it had its pride.

It... fought back!

Come on!

Hit me!

The Azure Dragon seemed to roar in defiance.

Then, under the furious and sorrowful gazes of countless cultivators on the blood-colored battlefield, the fearless dragon let out a mournful cry and was flung backward once more.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Its massive body swayed violently, bursting into clouds of blood mist.

Nie Changqing and the others paled, tension written across their faces.

The little dragon perched atop Ni Yu's head—who had grown noticeably plumper—lifted its head. Its big eyes spun as it watched the wailing Azure Dragon shedding scales as though its tendons were being ripped out.

It snorted once, then flopped back down.

Clever as ever, it had already seen through the act.

The blood-colored battlefield seemed to weep a rain of blood.

Dantai Xuan stared in stunned silence at the dragon that appeared to make heaven and earth grieve with it.

Ten years had passed in the immortal legacy ruins.

Not only had the Azure Dragon grown stronger—its acting had reached perfection.

The spraying blood, the shattering scales...

Everything was perfectly measured.

Holy Son Qingling, seated calmly in his spirit vessel, was utterly baffled.

That didn't make sense. Earlier, when he and the Azure Dragon had been holding back in their "fight," he'd sensed the dragon wasn't this weak.

That Out-of-Body cultivator was strong, but wounding the Azure Dragon this badly in one blow? Impossible.

What on earth had happened?

A strange look crossed Holy Son Qingling's face as realization dawned.

Could it be... the Azure Dragon was deliberately playing pathetic to gain sympathy and avoid the rest of the fight?

Tsk tsk. Holy Son Qingling nodded to himself. Lesson learned.

The other holy sons and maidens, however, grew excited.

The death of Holy Son Beigong had weighed heavily on them.

But now an Out-of-Body expert had bloodied the Azure Dragon in a single strike—this restored their morale.

Of course, none of them knew that the Out-of-Body cultivator who had “struck” was currently speechless.

The Azure Dragon was far from weak. As a heavenly dragon, its physical defense surpassed most Spirit Severing cultivators.

To shatter its scales and gravely wound it in one blow would require his full power.

Yet... he hadn't even touched it.

“Could it be... this old man has grown that strong?”

The Out-of-Body cultivator glanced at his hand, his mind drifting.

The next instant, the corner of his mouth twitched.

“No!”

“I never landed a hit!”

The dragon’s bloody state was pure theater!

Furious, the expert shot forward through the void in pursuit.

The Heaven-Covering Formation churned like misty Jiangnan rain. The Azure Dragon’s body crashed into it, sending shockwaves rippling outward.

Protected by the mysterious formation, even the enraged pursuer dared not press deeper.

The sudden reversal turned the atmosphere in the void deathly heavy.

In the distance, the wanderers trembled.

So many Out-of-Body cultivators...

Only high-martial worlds could produce them—yet so many had appeared at once.

The wanderers barely dared to breathe, terrified of drawing attention and being erased.

But what truly made their blood run cold was Holy Son Beigong's death.

A holy son from a Yan Seventh-grade high-martial world...

Dead in a world that hadn't even stepped into high-martial status.

This would shake the heavens!

Like a noble's heir murdered in some backward village—the village would face annihilation.

The wrath of a Yan Seventh-grade world's mighty beings and holy lord would burn everything to ash.

Those wanderers who had hoped to scavenge scraps lost all courage. Many turned and fled.

So many Out-of-Body experts... this world was truly finished!

Though the Five Phoenixes had repeatedly shattered their expectations, producing genius after genius capable of fighting holy sons and maidens...

It was, after all, only a newborn high-martial world.

On the blood-colored battlefield, a lotus formed of vast energy bloomed—untouched by the filth around it, like a cyan lotus rising from mud.

The young woman's eyes were closed, her lashes trembling slightly.

She raised a pale hand. A warm drop of dragon blood fell into her palm.

In her ears echoed the Azure Dragon's mournful wail.

So tragic...

As if it were being flayed alive.

Zhulong's brows furrowed faintly. No emotion showed on her beautiful face.

Lu Jiulian raised his hand and caught a drop of dragon blood.

He sighed softly, complexity in his gaze.

"It's the Demon Lady of Buzhou Peak!"

Cultivators from the Tian Yuan domain recognized the newcomer—Zhulong.

After ten years in the immortal ruins, she seemed unchanged—still the gentle-looking maiden.

But the Tian Yuan cultivators knew the terror hidden beneath that gentleness.

This was a great demoness who killed without blinking!

As for Lu Jiulian, few recognized him.

He was, after all, merely a talented student from the Great Xuan Academy.

Many not knowing him was normal.

“That’s Jiulian?”

Dantai Xuan recognized him and froze.

How could he not know the most outstanding student of the Great Xuan Academy? After one year outside and ten inside the ruins, who knew how far the greatest genius in history had progressed?

The Overlord reattached his head, sharp light flashing in his eyes.

He stepped out from the ruins.

The sprinkling dragon blood made the killing intent in the air grow colder.

A tough battle was coming.

Nie Changqing, Feng Yilou, and the others descended one by one.

Nie Changqing's white skirt fluttered. After the fierce battle, she seemed unruffled.

Ni Yu, carrying her black pot, sneaked over and quietly handed Nie Changqing a pill.

Cultivators of the Five Phoenixes continent gathered one by one.

Sima Qingshan carried his book box on his back, ever more refined.

Beside him, his disciple An Miaoyu held a paper umbrella, like a noble lady in Jiangnan mist.

Mo Tianyu bared his belly, fiddling with his copper coins, half-smiling.

Kong Nanfei, disheveled in his scholar's robe, gulped wine.

Outside the heavens.

One Out-of-Body cultivator after another hovered.

Terrifying auras crisscrossed, as if the entire Five Phoenixes were enveloped.

Three streaks of light flashed.

The Empress, Ye Shoudao, and Du Longyang stepped out with their yang gods, ancient bell fragments hovering above their heads. They blocked the way, faces grave.

There were too many yang god enemies.

Immense pressure weighed on them.

Blood rain fell.

The Azure Dragon landed and transformed into a pale-faced youth, lips purple, body trembling.

He clutched his chest, green robes soaked in blood, staggering with every step.

A flash of light.

Zhulong vanished like teleportation and reappeared beside the youth.

Feeling the Azure Dragon's weakened aura...

Her little brother...

Had been bullied again.

The terrifying pressure radiating from Zhulong grew ever more horrifying.

In the silent void, on a withered continent.

Qi Liujia sat cross-legged, his withered body trembling slightly. His deep, abyss-like eyes flickered as they landed on Zhulong.

His primordial spirit quivered.

After a long moment, Qi Liujia suppressed his shock and fell silent once more.

It seemed...

It was not yet time for him to act.

His profound gaze turned to the Five Phoenixes. The continent's origin was nearly complete—on the verge of stepping into high-martial.

The old man exhaled slowly, staring into the boundless void.

These Out-of-Body cultivators were just a warm-up. The true terror had yet to arrive.

He did not relax. Snake-like formation runes coiled endlessly around him.

...

“Kill!”

The armored Out-of-Body cultivator's eyes were ice-cold.

Small flags floated around him as he roared.

Boom!

Holy Son Beigong's death filled him with despair. If he returned like this, the Holy Lord Beigong would never forgive him.

His only choice was to destroy this world and redeem himself through slaughter!

The surrounding Out-of-Body cultivators did not refuse. They attacked.

The fury of a Yan Seventh-grade high-martial world was not something they could withstand. If they showed no loyalty, they might be caught in the fallout.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Piercing rainbows tore through the heavens.

In an instant, myriad lights flowed. The dark void became dazzlingly bright—like night turning to day.

Du Longyang, Ye Shoudao, and the Empress roared.

Their yang gods seated on dao lotuses stepped forward.

Behind each rose a colossal phantom striking the ancient bell. Bell waves rippled outward.

The combined assault of so many Out-of-Body cultivators swallowed them whole.

Dong! Dong! Dong!

The Heaven-Covering Formation activated. Mysterious runes rapidly intertwined.

The oppressive might released by the attackers threatened to erase everyone on the blood-colored battlefield.

Yet...

The Heaven-Covering Formation held!

As the light faded, the hovering Out-of-Body cultivators wore shocked expressions.

Du Longyang, the Empress, and Ye Shoudao crashed back onto the battlefield, clothes stained with blood, auras weakened.

They had nearly been annihilated resisting the onslaught.

Fortunately...

The formation had held!

“This array...”

The Empress wiped the blood from her crimson lips, her beautiful eyes shining.

“As expected of Brother Lu! Brother Lu’s formation... is invincible!”

Admiration filled her voice.

She truly admired Lu more and more!

To block the combined attack of so many Out-of-Body cultivators—this defensive array was monstrous!

Du Longyang and Ye Shoudao also exhaled in relief.

They had thought the crisis insurmountable.

Who would have imagined...

Young Master Lu's formation would be this strong.

But hiding behind it wasn't a solution. With so many Out-of-Body experts, they would surely find a way to break it.

Once the formation fell...

The consequences would be unthinkable.

The armored man's expression shifted when he saw the combined assault blocked.

"A earth-tier defensive formation!"

He sucked in a cold breath.

Many Out-of-Body cultivators looked equally stunned.

Then the armored man turned toward the withered old man on the desolate continent.

“Qi Liujia!”

“Break the formation!”

“Otherwise, the wrath of Beigong Holy Land will fall upon you!”

His voice was low and cold.

Among them, the only master array expert was Qi Liujia, sect leader of the Liujia Array Sect.

Qi Liujia hung his head, aura feeble, looking like a desiccated corpse.

He ignored the armored man.

“Qi Liujia!”

The armored man’s face grew darker.

“Cough cough cough...”

“This old man cannot break this formation.”

“If you don’t believe me, come here. I’ll explain it to you properly...”

Qi Liujia’s hoarse voice echoed.

He seemed to invite the armored man onto the desolate continent.

The armored man froze, his expression turning even colder.

“This old man’s flesh is withered, his primordial spirit weak... no need to fear.”

Qi Liujia added.

The armored man's face turned livid, yet he dared not step onto the continent. This old fox was treacherous!

Buzz...

Suddenly, shocked exclamations rang through the void.

The armored man turned and stared.

The misty rain of the Heaven-Covering Formation surged. Then—a figure stepped out from behind it.

Someone from that world actually dared to show themselves?!

On the blood-colored battlefield, every face changed.

Zhulong moved.

She walked forward unhurriedly, step by step, toward the outer heavens.

Beside her walked Lu Jiulian in his green lotus robes.

Together they ascended through the air.

“Don’t go! Come back!”

Empress Ni Chunqiu’s expression shifted as she shouted.

There were too many yang god experts out there!

Zhulong was Brother Lu’s precious little darling—she couldn’t come to harm.

Moreover, the aura Zhulong revealed was only Spirit Severing.

Du Longyang and Ye Shoudao’s faces also changed.

Yet neither Zhulong nor Lu Jiulian halted.

The Heaven-Covering Formation swirled.

They stepped out into the void.

“They actually came out?”

“Looking to die?”

“Are the Spirit Severing cultivators of this world this arrogant?”

In the distance, the holy sons and maidens sneered.

Yet the burly man seated on his ferocious bird felt chills for the first time.

The Out-of-Body expert who had “passively” wounded the Azure Dragon frowned.

Though Zhulong’s eyes were closed, he could feel her aura locked onto him—filled with killing intent.

Boom!

Suddenly, the void trembled.

Zhulong moved.

Her figure became a streak of white, still as a virgin, swift as a startled hare.

In an instant, she appeared before the Out-of-Body cultivator who had bullied the Azure Dragon.

“He’s my little brother.”

Her crimson lips parted. Her cold voice rang like plucked strings.

The expert understood—she had come to settle the score for the dragon.

“Just you?”

A mere Spirit Severing...

He laughed.

Killing intent exploded. His spiritual sense blazed like a sun, bursting from his body. Terrifying pressure wove together, making the void groan.

“Die!”

He struck with his full power, a palm that shook the void like thunder.

Zhulong’s eyes remained closed, black hair dancing. Strands brushed her flawless skin.

Then—fearlessly—she pointed a jade-like finger toward the incoming palm.

A strand of milky-white thread coiled around her fingertip.

Pfft!

Under countless gazes...

The young woman’s single finger shattered the palm, then pierced straight through the expert’s forehead as if nothing stood in her way.

Bang!

His head exploded like a watermelon beneath a boulder, bursting apart.

Until the moment it burst, a cold smile still lingered on his face.

What?!

Every Out-of-Body cultivator who had been watching for fun froze.

“What just happened?!”

“What kind of power was that? Unstoppable!”

“Who... is this woman?!”

Coming back to their senses, they all sucked in cold breaths.

The watching holy sons and maidens felt their hair stand on end.

This world was poisoned!

A Spirit Severing girl instantly killing an Out-of-Body cultivator?

“Is she the lord of this plane?”

Suddenly, one holy son spoke in shock and uncertainty.

Everyone paused. Right—who was this world’s plane lord?

Could it be this overwhelmingly powerful girl?

The armored protector of Holy Son Beigong paled. He hadn’t expected her to be this strong!

Was this woman the plane lord?

The mysterious lord of this world... had finally appeared!

“Stop her!”

The armored man barked coldly.

The surrounding experts snapped out of their daze. Some hesitated, some attacked.

The expert whose head Zhulong had exploded—his spiritual sense emerged, face twisted.

He hadn’t even understood how he lost!

Panic gripped him, but Out-of-Body cultivators were hard to kill; their spiritual sense could flee.

He tried to escape.

The others closed in.

Lu Jiulian moved.

Lotuses bloomed. Alone, he stood before the many attackers.

The lotuses spun silently.

Every ounce of power was perfectly controlled—not a single strand wasted.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Several strikes landed on the green lotuses, sending ripples outward.

The attackers stood unmoved.

Lu Julian retreated half a step, one hand behind his back, the other brushing his sleeve.

It looked as though he had slightly lost, yet the attackers stared in horror.

“What kind of monster is he? Perfect control of power—no waste at all?”

The experts exchanged glances, eyes filled with dread.

Elsewhere...

Two Out-of-Body cultivators closed in on Zhulong, unleashing terrifying slaughter.

The sky flashed blindingly bright—like two blazing suns!

On the blood-colored battlefield...

A black-robed figure stirred, ready to soar upward.

He had finally found a chance to help her.

Yet before he could act...

In the void...

Zhulong's lashes trembled. Slowly, she opened her eyes.

Left eye black, right eye white.

The blazing sunlight dimmed. The fleeing spiritual sense let out a wail.

Pfft—it was tyrannically extinguished!

A massive black-and-white millstone descended.

The two attackers were enveloped. Their bodies erupted in rapid cracking sounds—da-da-da-da.

The next instant, bloodied and mangled, they were sent flying.

The young woman opened her eyes—peerless grace in that moment, becoming the center of the universe.

As her hair danced...

She revealed an aura of invincibility.

Heaven and earth fell silent.

After a long time, the burly man atop his bird finally swallowed hard and murmured in utter shock.

“Divine... ability?!”

...

Blood-colored battlefield.

The black-robed figure trembled. The withered vines hanging from him limply retracted.

It seemed...

She still didn't need me.

In the end, it was because I'm not strong enough.

Beneath the black robe came a soft sigh.

The sigh carried only loneliness.

...

Golden Body Continent.

Bu Nanxing sat obediently across the chessboard, face bitter.

He had noticed the young woman displaying invincible might in the void.

He too had once guessed she was the plane lord.

But now, gazing at the terrifying vortex of origin appearing on the chessboard...

A sudden clarity struck him, as if he alone were sober while the world was drunk.

Everyone had guessed wrong!

Bu Nanxing's obedient body shook uncontrollably.

The true lord of the plane...

Was right here!

Chapter 377: Stirring the Origin, Young Master Lu's Chessboard

Black and white pieces lay distinctly across the board like a vast starry sky, each one containing boundless mysteries.

Bu Nanxing sat obediently, staring at the game.

For a moment he was lost, his mind sucked into an endless vortex, spinning helplessly.

Clack.

The sound of a piece hitting the board shattered the illusion. Bu Nanxing jolted awake, cold sweat pouring down his forehead.

This game... was too strange.

The overwhelming aura of origin, plus the images of the origin space that kept surfacing on the board, made one thing crystal clear: the true lord of this plane was the white-robed youth sitting across from him.

Low-key, otherworldly, peerless.

Those were the words that flashed through Bu Nanxing's mind.

A bitter taste filled his mouth.

He really was the most pitiful man alive.

Why was the outside world so terrifying? He should never have listened to that dead old holy lord and come to this deadly Nihilism Heaven.

He had survived cautiously for countless years, yet the moment he arrived, he ran straight into the greatest crisis of his life.

In truth, his original plan had been flawless.

Hide on the Golden Body Continent, keep his head down, watch the tigers fight from the mountain, then wait for a high-martial origin to be born.

Snatch it if possible; run if not.

Perfect logic.

But who could have foreseen that his ultimate hiding spot would place him right in front of the most horrifying plane lord imaginable?

After seeing Du Longyang, the Empress, and the rest step into Out-of-Body realm, he finally understood just how terrifying this world's master truly was.

Damn it!

Bu Nanxing kept his obedient smile plastered on his face while cursing himself viciously inside, mentally slapping himself hard.

This was, without a doubt, the worst hiding attempt of his entire life.

“Your move.”

The white-robed youth propped his chin on one hand, calm as ever, and spoke.

“Right away, senior...”

Bu Nanxing hurriedly picked up a piece.

To survive, he was putting every ounce of effort into this game.

“A holy son from a high-martial world?”

Lu Ping’an asked casually as they played.

“I wouldn’t dare call myself a holy son. I’m just an ordinary seeker on the long road to immortality.”

Bu Nanxing chose his words carefully.

His personal “Guide to Survival” had a clear rule: never show off in front of the strong.

“You’re not from the Nihility Heaven?”

Lu Ping’an continued.

Bu Nanxing gave a light cough. “The Nihility Heaven is a wonderful place—beautiful mountains, clear waters, outstanding people...”

Huh?

Lu Ping'an frowned at the nonsense.

Seeing the shift in expression, Bu Nanxing immediately changed tack. "Senior truly sees through everything. Indeed, I am not from the Nihilism Heaven. I come from the Southern Mountain Little World—a humble Yan-Nine high-martial world."

Lu Ping'an nodded slightly. Qi Liujia had once explained the grading system of high-martial worlds to him.

"Tell me about the Nihilism Heaven."

Lu Ping'an said.

He was curious. It was rare to meet someone so terrified of dying; a little pressure and the man would spill everything he wanted to know.

His fingers gently stroked the guard of the Phoenix Feather Sword.

Bu Nanxing, sitting ever so obediently, felt his pupils contract.

That gleam on the Phoenix Feather Sword...

A semi-saint-tier artifact!

And there were many such gleams...

Weapons with identical auras could clearly combine.

Once combined, it would surely become an extraordinary saint-tier artifact!

Terrifying!

“In the records of the Southern Mountain Holy Land,” Bu Nanxing began, “the Nihility Heaven once saw a war between Ancient Emperors. The battle shattered its rules and even buried Ancient Emperors. It is a forbidden land.”

“A forbidden land?”

Lu Ping'an raised a brow.

"The ancient Nihility Heaven was enormous—truly vast. But after the Emperor war, it shrank many times over. Now it is the smallest of the Nine Heavens."

"Because the heavenly laws are tangled and broken, primordial spirits are restricted, and mighty beings cannot enter. Birthing a high-martial world has become nearly impossible."

"Countless worlds exist within the Nihility Heaven, but most are mid or low-martial. The only one with a real chance of ascending to high-martial is the world you control, senior... You are simply too strong."

As he spoke, Bu Nanxing's survival instincts kicked in, and he began openly flattering.

Lu Ping'an's expression remained unchanged, but he caught a key phrase.

"Nine Heavens?"

Bu Nanxing blinked, surprised that even this was unknown.

"I don't know the exact details of the Nine Heavens, but according to the Southern Mountain Holy Land's ancient records, legend says nine supreme experts created them. The exact ranking rules are unclear."

“However, there is no doubt that the Nihility Heaven ranks dead last—because it has no high-martial worlds and cannot birth any.”

“Once, someone in the Nihility Heaven tried to construct a high-martial world and nearly succeeded... but it ultimately collapsed, and the high-martial origin was carved up and taken by others as fortune.”

“That person, senior, you should know. He is currently outside your world—Qi Liujia.”

“Qi Liujia?”

A flicker passed through Lu Ping’an’s eyes.

No wonder Qi Liujia always insisted success was impossible.

He had failed once before.

“Do you think a high-martial world can truly be created?”

Lu Ping’an dropped a piece and looked at Bu Nanxing.

Bu Nanxing took a deep breath and met Lu Ping'an's gaze solemnly. As an extremely cautious old survivor, he sensed something extraordinary in this youth.

Could it succeed?

"I dare say, senior, you have the greatest chance of anyone..."

Bu Nanxing answered.

"But the odds are still very low. The chance of failure is enormous. Qi Liujia took a different path—he first left the Nihilism Heaven, achieved mighty being status in another heaven, then returned to build a high-martial world."

"He failed in the end, was exiled into the void, his flesh and primordial spirit severed."

"Yet... I believe senior may succeed precisely because you never left the Nihilism Heaven. Instead, you achieved mighty being status within it!"

"That is the biggest difference."

Bu Nanxing flattered first, truth second.

Lu Ping'an glanced at him in mild surprise. The man actually had some insight.

Still, even Bu Nanxing remained pessimistic about the Five Phoenixes.

Clearly, ascending to high-martial was fraught with difficulty.

"You're right. Becoming high-martial is no easy feat, and far too many wolves are circling outside, waiting to steal the peach."

Lu Ping'an smiled.

"Everyone wants to pluck the fruit I've grown."

"And I, Lu Ping'an, hate it most when people try to steal my peaches."

He finished speaking, then lifted his head.

Seated upon the Thousand Blade Chair, white robes fluttering, hair dancing in the wind.

He gazed into the distance and smiled.

“It’s about time...”

Leaning back against the chair, he slowly closed his eyes.

The wind rose.

A cold wind swept across the mountain peak, moaning like mourning souls.

Bu Nanxing maintained his obedient posture, not daring to breathe loudly.

After a long while, he glanced at Lu Ping’an.

Seeing the youth’s eyes closed and aura completely vanished, hesitation and temptation stirred within him.

Should he make a run for it?

He seems asleep... This is my chance!

His mind warred endlessly.

Then he took a deep breath, chest rising, and slowly, carefully began to stand.

Suddenly—

The closed-eyed Lu Ping'an opened his eyes.

Sharp as white lightning slicing through darkness!

Dong!

Bu Nanxing's legs buckled instantly. He dropped straight back down, kneeling solidly.

Lu Ping'an paid him no attention.

In those deep eyes, countless lines danced, intertwining like principles and dao.

He raised his hand.

Beneath the white sleeve, his palm turned warm jade.

Slowly, he brought it down toward the chessboard.

BOOM!

Bu Nanxing, still kneeling, looked up—the sky above the Golden Body Continent had changed.

Terrifying pressure swept in...

Heavenly might. A tribulation seemed imminent!

A thought struck Bu Nanxing, and his pupils shrank.

Could it be...

They were about to attempt ascension to high-martial?!

Above the spiritual pressure chessboard...

An image of the origin appeared.

Atop the swirling origin vortex floated three origin stars—one smaller star nestled among them, maintaining a strange balance and stillness.

BOOM!

Lu Ping'an's outstretched hand was like the hand of an immortal descending into the vortex.

As though he intended to stir it into motion!

Bu Nanxing's face turned the color of a black pot's bottom.

Forcing the origin to spin, pushing a mid-martial origin toward high-martial...

Could we not drag him into something this thrilling and deadly?!

He just wanted to live a quiet, ordinary life and survive forever!

...

The entire firmament fell deathly silent.

The maiden was a living painting—peerless elegance, one eye black, one eye white.

The massive yin-yang millstone ground down; two Out-of-Body experts were instantly crippled, their bodies shattered!

What overwhelming might!

On the blood-colored battlefield, the Five Phoenixes cultivators sucked in sharp breaths.

The next moment, earth-shaking cheers erupted!

Morale soared to the heavens!

Too strong!

Too domineering!

Back then on Buzhou Peak, Zhulong had slaughtered countless Infant Transformation experts. Now, after ten years of training in the immortal ruins, the former infant-slayer... was she about to become a yang-god slayer?

With cultivation now widespread, everyone knew of the Three God Realms above Infant Transformation.

Even cultivators from the Tian Yuan domain had adopted this system.

Every Out-of-Body expert present was shaken to the core!

“That’s a divine ability!”

“Damn it... a monster who comprehended a divine ability actually appeared in the Nihility Heaven?!”

“How is this possible? The heavenly laws should never allow it!”

The previously confident Out-of-Body experts were stunned.

Divine ability!

Those two words alone inspired dread.

Even the holy sons and maidens of their sacred lands had never touched anything related to divine abilities.

Only the top Yan-One or Yan-Two high-martial worlds could possibly produce such a monster!

In the distance, the holy sons and maidens of various sacred lands stood frozen like statues.

The moment the divine ability appeared, they were utterly lost.

The golden boy and jade girl riding the immortal crane shrieked, "Impossible! How can a mid-martial world birth a monster with a divine ability?!"

Many grew mad with envy.

“Where are the rules? Where are the heavenly laws?!”

Holy Son Qingling’s expression was complicated as he turned toward the Five Phoenixes shrouded in the Heaven-Covering Formation.

This was truly a miraculous world.

The burly man atop his ferocious bird inhaled deeply.

The wanderers who had come only to watch the show fell into stunned silence.

Staring at the girl with one black eye and one white, the colossal yin-yang millstone grinding the void, their bodies began trembling uncontrollably.

Even the wanderer clad in flaming armor and the snake-tongued beauty were left with nothing but terror.

Suddenly they felt almost grateful toward Qi Liujia.

If not for his deadly killing formations, they wanderers would probably all be dead by now—without even a chance to flee.

“She truly comprehended a divine ability... This woman must be the plane lord!”

After recovering, the armored man spoke icily.

“Capture her!”

Mad fervor colored his voice.

He had found his path to survival!

A genius who grasped a divine ability—if captured and brought back to the holy land, it would more than redeem his sins.

If the Holy Lord Beigong could strip her divine ability, not only would he escape punishment, he might even be rewarded!

Compared to a divine ability, Holy Son Beigong’s death suddenly seemed insignificant!

Behind the burly man on the ferocious bird, a powerful aura erupted.

A figure emerged from the darkness.

“You...”

The holy son turned, stunned that his protector—who had only been watching—was finally acting.

Because of the divine ability?

BOOM!

Without explanation, the powerful Out-of-Body expert strode forward.

Terrifying aura surged; lightning arcs crackled around him.

The armored man’s expression shifted at the sight.

Even the protectors of Holy Son Qingling and the golden boy and jade girl—who had been holding back—now moved.

Their goal was the same as the armored man's: capture Zhulong!

A monster with a divine ability—even if they couldn't subdue her, delivering her to a holy lord to strip the ability would be a supreme merit!

Every single Out-of-Body expert sprang into action.

If earlier they had attacked under threat, this time they moved willingly!

One after another, spiritual senses burst from their heads like blazing suns, weaving a terrifying net of pressure.

The armored man struck as well!

On the blood-colored battlefield, the cheers died abruptly.

No one had expected the situation to reverse so dramatically—Zhulong crushing two yang-god experts had instead provoked an even fiercer response.

The Azure Dragon, still coughing blood, paled.

Even the lazy little dragon perched on Ni Yu's head straightened, no longer idle.

They both sensed Big Sister was in danger!

ROAR!

The Azure Dragon bellowed in fury, transforming into his true dragon body and soaring skyward.

Big Sister had always shielded him from the wind and rain—but when she couldn't hold any longer, how could he hide behind her?!

The little dragon shot forward with a mighty roar.

His body swelled to mountain size, dark-gold wings flapped, and his scales radiated crushing pressure.

“Damn it! Bullying Brother Lu's little darling!”

The Empress raged.

Red robes flared, the ancient bell fragment hovering above her head. Ignoring her wounds, she charged!

Du Longyang and Ye Shoudao followed without hesitation.

This battle—they would not retreat!

Even Young Master Tianxu laughed wildly.

At the peak of Yin God realm, watching the three charge out ignited his heroic spirit.

He shattered his wooden sword box; countless small swords swirled around him.

He too rushed into the outer battlefield, clashing against an Out-of-Body expert. In an instant he was drenched in blood, yet he refused to yield!

The energy around him swelled dramatically!

Today—he would step into Yang God realm!

**BOOM!**

It was as if the heavens themselves were being torn apart!

Dozens of Out-of-Body experts blazed like suns, dazzling and blinding.

Each unleashed the supreme techniques of their worlds, shaking the void.

Lu Jiulian grew solemn under the immense pressure.

He exhaled sharply; bones cracked like firecrackers. His spine arched like a dragon forged of gold.

Lotuses bloomed around him; above his head, a radiant yang god emerged.

“Fight!”

He clenched his fists and pushed forward, single-handedly blocking five Out-of-Body experts charging at Zhulong.

**BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!**

Each lotus was condensed from ultimate energy, power utilized to near perfection.

His strikes were devastating.

Shockingly, the five experts could not overwhelm him and were held at bay.

They stared in horror. This man was also a heaven-defying genius, yet compared to Zhulong who wielded a divine ability, he fell short. Their true prize was the girl.

The protector from the Yan-Seven high-martial world—the one seated on the ferocious bird—was extraordinarily strong. Lightning writhed around him.

He charged straight at Zhulong, throwing a punch woven from terrifying energy.

Many gasped—at least a sixth or seventh-layer Out-of-Body expert!

Far stronger than the armored man or the other Yan-Seven protectors!

Those lightning arcs looked capable of shattering anything!

Zhulong stood in the void, peerless and magnificent, hair dancing, yin-yang eyes swirling.

Her gaze swept across.

The black-and-white millstone descended.

It instantly engulfed the lightning-clad expert.

Da-da-da-da!

Explosions rang endlessly.

Yet the lightning formed armor. Though blood trickled from his mouth, he withstood the divine ability!

A hunter's grin spread across his face.

Like thunder itself, he closed in on Zhulong.

Her hair flew wildly.

Her yin-yang eyes blazed brighter.

BOOM!

The next instant—she transformed into her Candle Dragon form!

Her terrifying tail whipped out!

CRACK!

The lightning armor shattered. The expert's body nearly exploded as he was hurled backward!

“A heavenly dragon species?!”

Uproar exploded through the void.

No one had expected the girl with the divine ability to be a sacred beast!

This only inflamed their greed further!

If she was a sacred beast, capturing her would serve even more purposes!

ROAR!

The little dragon and Azure Dragon charged together.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

Attacks detonated!

This time the Azure Dragon truly bled across the sky, scales shattering.

Yet to his shock, the usually lazy little glutton was holding his own!

Roaring, he unleashed sonic waves of terrifying power.

Origin energy surged through him; his entire body became an indestructible weapon. He fought an Out-of-Body expert to a standstill!

The Azure Dragon was dumbfounded!

The little dragon who spent all day lounging in the origin lake was this strong?

He could grow stronger just by lying around?!

Still, many Out-of-Body experts broke through the defenses and closed in on Zhulong.

In an instant she was surrounded by over a dozen of them—including high-layer experts like the armored man and the lightning warrior.

The yin-yang millstone ground relentlessly.

Even Zhulong began to struggle.

On the blood-colored battlefield...

Li Sansi, wrapped in black robes, stirred. Vines whipped out around him.

Roars of fury seemed to echo.

Finally—it was his turn. Finally he could protect her.

But just as he prepared to move...

BOOM...

An overwhelming, suffocating pressure swept over everything.

His body froze.

He looked up.

In the void...

Unnoticed until now, a colossal chessboard had descended from the heavens.

Its lines formed a starry map; black and white pieces embodied yin and yang!

Every cultivator on the Five Phoenixes side trembled.

The next instant—boundless ecstasy surged through them!

This was...

Young Master Lu's chessboard!

Chapter 378: Heaven as the Board, Stars as the Pieces

Silence swallowed the heavens and earth.

A colossal chessboard had appeared out of nowhere, its intersecting lines stretching like a vast net across the starry void.

Black and white pieces sat upon it, embodying the dance of yin and yang.

Wuuuu...

A mournful wind moaned through the emptiness, raising goosebumps on every soul.

On the withered continent, Qi Liujia—his flesh desiccated and cracked like ancient bark—lifted his head. A brilliant light shone in his eyes as he gazed at the interlaced chessboard suspended among the stars, as though a game were being played.

“So he finally makes his move.”

A faint tremor ran through Qi Liujia’s withered skin, dust drifting from the cracks.

He seemed to smile, anticipation written across his face.

“Before attempting the leap to high-martial, the trash does need to be cleared away.”

He murmured, then settled back on the barren land, quietly watching what would unfold.

In truth, he was deeply curious how the white-robed youth would handle this. Present were holy sons and maidens from numerous high-martial sacred lands, along with their Out-of-Body protectors.

What would the youth do?

Kill them all? That would enrage the high-martial holy lands.

Once the Five Phoenixes ascended, they would face an unimaginable calamity.

Qi Lijia chuckled. No matter the choice, the real show was about to begin.

In the void, terrifying explosions thundered.

Every Out-of-Body expert unleashed their full might, blazing like suns that lit the endless darkness.

Zhulong had reverted to her Candle Dragon form—human head, serpentine body. Her yin-yang eyes spun; the massive black-and-white millstone ground the void itself, erupting with dreadful power.

Surrounded by so many enemies, she struggled, yet still held her ground.

The Azure Dragon bled rivers; the little dragon fought like a mad beast.

But the moment the colossal chessboard appeared across the void...

Joy flashed across the little dragon's face.

Even the Azure Dragon, locked in bitter combat, jolted with excitement.

ROAR!

A deafening dragon roar shook the heavens. Steam seemed to burst from every scale as they flared upward.

It was as if he bellowed, “Come on! Fight me!”

BOOM!

He charged fearlessly at his opponent.

The Out-of-Body expert, aura blazing like a sun, sneered and threw a punch.

Yet he quickly froze.

Because before his fist even fully extended, the Azure Dragon was already hurtling backward—scales exploding, blood painting the sky, looking as though he had suffered endless torment.

A wretched, heart-rending wail echoed.

On the other side, the mountain-sized little dragon—fierce and menacing—saw the Azure Dragon’s plight and his eyes lit up.

Instantly shrinking back to his tiny form, wings flapping, he shot toward the enemy like a streak of light.

“Kyaaaaa!”

The expert faltered, baffled why a dragon that had been dominating suddenly reverted to this harmless size.

BOOM!

Still, remembering the threat, he struck seriously.

A blazing sun of fire crossed the void.

Pfft!

The tiny dragon was sent flying.

Neck stiff, head lolling, he spat a jet of blood mixed with... drool?

Wailing pitifully, he tumbled through the void like a ball.

The Azure Dragon's eyes nearly popped out.

Could you be any more shameless?!

Have some dignity!

You're not losing—you're winning!

The expert who struck the little dragon blinked, equally stunned that a single blow had drawn blood.

That dragon's defense had been monstrous—those dark-gold scales and origin-infused attacks had given him endless headaches. Yet now... one hit had done this?

For some reason, though, no joy stirred in his heart.

Clack.

The crisp sound of a piece falling on a board rang through the void.

It was the clear note of a game being played beneath an old pine.

It echoed in every ear.

Hearing it, the Azure Dragon and little dragon spat blood with even greater enthusiasm.

Pfft! Pfft!

Their two opponents suddenly felt an overwhelming crisis.

As if two invisible pieces had dropped right above their heads.

**BOOM! BOOM!**

Before they could even flee, both Out-of-Body experts detonated into bloody mist.

Flesh and bone obliterated.

Shrieks of agony rang out as their souls fled in terror.

“What?!”

The experts surrounding Zhulong paled.

They hadn't even seen what happened—two of their own were simply gone!

A suffocating pressure settled over their hearts, as though something utterly terrifying had locked onto them.

On the blood-colored battlefield, every cultivator—Five Phoenixes or Tian Yuan alike—erupted into cheers.

Heaven as the board, stars as the pieces!

This was Young Master Lu's chessboard!

The Lord of White Jade Capital, Lu Ping'an, had appeared!

The Five Phoenixes were saved!

Dantai Xuan clenched his fists, face flushed with uncontrollable excitement.

The Overlord drew a deep breath, tightening his grip on axe and shield.

Nie Changqing, Nie Changqing, and the others all wore looks of eager anticipation.

Ni Yu, trembling with joy, popped three more sugar-coated body-tempering pills into her mouth.

"Young Master... is coming!"

Her eyes sparkled.

Ten years apart in the immortal ruins—she had missed him terribly.

Finally, she would see him again!

Even Nie Changqing felt a flutter of expectation.

BOOM!

A terrifying tremor shook the void.

“Who are you?!”

The lightning-wreathed expert roared, thunder exploding from his eyes.

The two soul-only experts fled desperately.

Clank, clank...

Suddenly, the rhythmic march of boots echoed in perfect unison.

Above the Five Phoenixes, mist churned into dense yin energy. From it emerged a chilling army.

Rusted armor, deathly faces, corroded halberds, tattered banners.

They marched in perfect squares, yin energy rolling like black tides.

The Yin Soldiers had descended!

This was the very scene Holy Son Beigong had witnessed before death—the soldiers that had dragged his soul away.

The armored man's face twisted; every Out-of-Body expert felt a chill crawl up their spines.

Zhulong reverted to human form, eyes closed, long lashes trembling.

She coughed blood that stained her robes crimson, standing quietly in the void like an untouched maiden.

“Those are... the ghost soldiers from the Ninth Nether's hidden domain!”

Many Five Phoenixes cultivators had trained in the Ninth Nether and recognized them instantly.

Clank!

Cold chains whipped through the void.

Faintly, a ghostly city materialized. Atop it, a colossal shadowy figure flung out hooked sickles.

Ding-ling-ling...

The sickles streaked across the emptiness and instantly snared the two fleeing souls.

The experts, already panicked birds with bent bows, had no idea how their bodies had been destroyed.

Now the ghost city's reappearance shattered their minds.

The armored man's pupils shrank.

The ghost city again—the same one that had taken Holy Son Beigong's soul!

No matter how the two souls struggled, the sickles were made for reaping spirits. They tore gaping wounds, soul fragments raining like blood.

The scene was gruesomely chilling.

Atop the ghost city, a yin registrar wrote with sweeping strokes, granting passage to the soldiers.

Soon both souls were dragged inside.

This time...

The ghost city did not vanish as it had after taking Holy Son Beigong.

It hovered silently, waiting for more.

**BOOM!**

The entire void exploded into chaos!

“Who the hell is doing this?!”

The eerie spectacle sent shivers to the marrow.

Suddenly every Out-of-Body expert looked around—they were standing on a chessboard.

“Playing tricks!”

The armored man bellowed.

Demonic aura erupted from him as he thrust his spear skyward, trying to tear the board apart.

Then every heart jolted.

A figure appeared in their vision—a titanic being that blotted out the heavens, seated upon a throne of stacked silver blades.

White robes, transcendent, ethereal.

Seeing that heaven-blocking silhouette, every Five Phoenixes cultivator went wild with joy.

A gentleman unmatched beneath the heavens!

He had come!

The Lord of White Jade Capital—Lu Ping'an!

“Young Master... is huge!”

Ni Yu, black pot on her back, chubby cheeks quivering, stared in awe at the colossal figure spanning the void.

Lu sat beyond the chessboard like a banished immortal.

Li Sansi trembled beneath his black robes, letting out a heavy sigh as his withered vines slowly retracted.

He knew...

Once again, she did not need him.

He stood rooted, loneliness radiating from him.

The Empress's pretty face flushed scarlet, words tumbling out in excitement.

"Brother Lu! It's Brother Lu!"

Du Longyang, Ye Shoudao, and the newly advanced Young Master Tianxu all stared with shining eyes.

"Who are you?!"

The armored man roared, his aura blazing like the sun as he thrust his spear.

The titanic Lu gazed down calmly, eyes undisturbed, watching the man like an insect hopping on the board.

Slowly he raised a hand, rolled up his sleeve, and pinched a jade-like piece between two fingers.

The piece fell like a star.

Straight toward the armored man's head.

A desperate roar tore through the void.

Sixth-layer Out-of-Body—the equivalent of a six-step Yang God—the armored man suddenly felt boundless pressure crushing him.

He watched helplessly as the piece descended.

His flesh and blood disintegrated into ash beneath its weight.

Terror filled his eyes!

“Mercy!”

Clack.

The piece settled.

The armored man’s body exploded completely into drifting ash.

His soul shot out.

But the moment it emerged, sickles from the ghost city lashed out like fishing lines across the stars, piercing his soul and dragging it back amid a rain of spiritual fragments.

His soul wailed in despair.

“Mercy!”

He had never imagined that as a sixth-layer Out-of-Body expert, he would perish in the Nihilicity Heaven.

“Who are you?!”

His soul screamed.

Who was this person?!

What kind of world was this?!

A girl with a divine ability, multiple Out-of-Body guardians despite not yet being high-martial...

Geniuses who could suppress holy sons and maidens.

This world was too strange!

And now—a being who filled him with utter despair.

Yet Lu didn't even bother answering.

The armored man despaired completely.

Did he not even deserve to know the man's name?

Wait...

Suddenly a thought struck him.

Could it be...

The girl wasn't the plane lord at all—the one acting now was?!

He opened his mouth to speak.

But the sickle had already yanked his soul into the ghost city.

Dead silence blanketed heaven and earth.

Then—

Like boiling water, everything erupted!

The armored man had not been weak.

A sixth-layer Out-of-Body from Beigong Holy Land—among the strongest present—yet he had been crushed like an ant on a chessboard!

The experts surrounding Zhulong panicked.

Not just them—the watching wanderers and holy sons and maidens felt their hearts hammer.

Who... was this person?!

“Run!”

The armored man’s death shocked them into action.

Without hesitation, Out-of-Body experts scattered in all directions like fleeing suns.

Their speed was blinding.

Yet when they reached the edge of the chessboard, invisible walls blocked them—they could not escape!

“An array?!”

One expert roared in horror.

The seventh-layer lightning-wreathed expert inhaled deeply.

Lightning converged as he punched the barrier.

BOOM!

Thunder serpents writhed through the void, but the wall held.

“We can’t escape!”

“If we can’t run, then fight! Together—kill him!”

The lightning expert bellowed.

The armored man’s death had chilled him to the bone—he was barely stronger.

Yes—if escape was impossible, they would fight to the death!

The others snapped out of their daze.

They glared at the colossal seated figure.

He was the player; they were pieces he intended to crush.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

No longer holding back, every Out-of-Body expert unleashed heaven-shaking power!

The lightning expert charged like a thunder god, over a dozen others close behind.

The void twisted; heaven and earth trembled—they would shatter this board!

The titanic Lu gave a warm, gentle smile—like the kind boy next door.

Warm as jade, his smile felt like spring breeze.

One hand rolled his sleeve, the other held a piece.

With that same simple motion—he dropped it.

Overwhelming spiritual pressure erupted like a storm!

The lightning expert felt his hair stand on end!

“Mighty being?!”

Disbelief filled his face as the words burst from his lips.

The holy sons and maidens cried out in shock.

The distant wanderers looked as if they'd seen ghosts.

A mighty being?!

A true mighty being with a primordial spirit?!

How could the Nihility Heaven birth a mighty being?!

Impossible!

The strongest the Nihility Heaven allowed was Out-of-Body!

Anything beyond would be suppressed by the tangled laws!

Even mighty beings from other high-martial worlds could not easily descend, fearing their primordial spirits would be ground to dust.

Yet one had appeared here?!

Holy Son Qingling paled; the burly holy son atop his bird went ice-cold.

The golden boy and jade girl on their crane screamed in terror.

A mighty being?!

In the Nihility Heaven?!

In a mid-martial world?!

Steal fortune? What fortune was there to steal?!

“That bald donkey from the High-Martial Buddhist World lied to us!”

“He sent us here to die!”

“Damn that monk—he ruined us!”

Holy sons and maidens cursed aloud, no longer caring about decorum.

Ignoring their protectors, they turned and fled toward the edge of the Nihilicity Heaven.

On the withered continent, Qi Liujia watched the sudden reversal and sneered.

People from high-martial worlds were still just people.

Still mortals who feared death.

The united Out-of-Body experts trembled.

“A mighty being with a primordial spirit?!”

“Impossible... the laws of the Nihility Heaven forbid it!”

“He must be fake! He has to be!”

They roared in denial.

They refused to believe—or rather, they trusted the heavenly laws more.

The laws declared no mighty being could exist here.

Therefore, none could!

Lu’s expression remained calm as still water.

Another piece fell.

Ripples spread across the board like a pebble dropped into a mirror-calm lake.

BOOM!

A thunderous explosion.

Every attacking Out-of-Body expert burst into clouds of blood!

Even the lightning-wreathed seventh-layer expert bled from eyes, ears, nose, and mouth!

Too strong!

This power... was undeniably that of a mighty being!

All their lingering hope collapsed.

Zhulong stood quietly, chin raised, eyes closed, lashes trembling, but a satisfied curve touched her lips.

Serves you right for bullying me.

The lightning expert said nothing, but his eyes were bloodshot with despair.

He looked at Zhulong—ruthlessness flashing.

To survive, perhaps one chance remained!

The others seemed to realize the same.

**BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!**

Madness took them. They burned every ounce of power, erupting in blinding light.

They shot toward Zhulong.

A girl with a divine ability—she was surely this world's greatest heaven-defying genius. Her life must be priceless!

Take her hostage, and maybe—just maybe—they could bargain for their lives!

As long as they escaped the Nihility Heaven, they could live!

Zhulong froze.

She hadn't expected every single one to charge at her.

The titanic Lu also paused.

Then the warm smile slowly faded from his face.

"I had intended to spare you, let you contribute to the Five Phoenixes' growth... Yet you dare take advantage of my good temper?"

His voice boomed across the heavens.

Then came a whistling roar.

A streak of silver light blazed—like a galaxy cascading from the Ninth Heaven.

The first silver gleam shot from beyond the board.

Then countless more followed—dense as a starry river shifting!

They poured down in a torrent!

Sword qi swirled protectively around Zhulong.

The Thousand Blade Sword!

It was as if ten thousand swords returned to their sect—the entire void became an ocean of sword energy.

Pfft! Pfft!

Agonized screams filled the air.

Every Out-of-Body expert was sliced apart, beheaded, then exploded into bloody mist.

Even the seventh-layer lightning expert was no exception. His lightning shattered; a silver blade pierced his skull, bursting it into red and white fireworks.

Clank, clank...

From the ghost city, sickles whipped out in eerie frenzy, piercing soul after soul, dragging them back inside.

“Uncle Lei!”

The burly holy son atop his bird cried out in horror.

His shout drew Lu’s attention.

The titanic white-robed youth glanced at him.

The ferocious bird beneath the holy son wailed and trembled in terror.

Lu did not kill the holy sons and maidens.

With a flick of his finger, an ice tower materialized.

Crystalline and radiant.

Du Longyang, Ye Shoudao, and the others felt a pang of familiar warmth—and sorrow.

The tower remained, but Fu Tianluo was gone.

**BOOM!**

The holy sons and maidens fled frantically.

Yet none escaped the tower's reach. One by one, they were sealed within.

The bloody mist cleared.

All that remained were broken corpses drifting in the void—those once-mighty Out-of-Body experts reduced to wreckage.

The myriad silver blades receded like a fading storm—coming quietly, leaving quietly.

Silence returned.

Every soul stood stunned.

“The ones who deserved death are dead. Now... let us begin.”

Lu’s calm voice thundered across heaven and earth.

On the withered continent, Qi Liujia’s eyes blazed with light.

It was starting!

In the void, the white-robed Lu smiled lightly.

He swept a hand across the board—all pieces vanished.

Then he picked up one final piece and slowly placed it.

Right on the central heavenly origin point.

Clack!

The piece fell, and storms raged!

The roar of the origin shook every world in the Nihility Heaven!

Far away, the wanderers—already frozen in fear and cold sweat—stood utterly dumbfounded.

Because they understood.

At this very moment...

Under the hand of this white-robed mighty being...

The Five Phoenixes...

Were ascending to high-martial!

Chapter 379: Heavenly Tribulation, Assault on High-Martial

Five Phoenixes Continent.

Compared to the blood-soaked carnage on the battlefield, the heartland of the continent remained eerily peaceful.

Though the sky stayed overcast, reflecting a crimson glow as though a sea of blood churned within, it was still far gentler than the battlefield where blood rained and soul fragments drifted like snow.

Thanks to the Great Xuan Academy, news of the enemy invasion had long spread across the realm. Both cultivators and mortals knew exactly what was happening.

Students of the academy burned with righteous fury, yet the King of North Xuan never summoned them to fight.

Not only because their strength was too weak, but because these young talents were the future seeds of the Five Phoenixes.

Should the battlefield suffer catastrophic losses, it would fall to them to carry the continent forward.

Thus, despite their burning desire to charge into battle and spill their blood, the King ignored their pleas.

Immortal Legacy Ruins.

The Origin Waterfall had frozen in place, its dense origin energy forming a canopy across the heavens.

Within the ruins, among towering pavilions and palaces wreathed in immortal mist, a figure in coarse hemp robes emerged, hoe slung over his shoulder.

Wiping sweat from his brow, Lu Changkong sat cross-legged on the ground.

He uncorked a teapot; instantly, rich spiritual energy billowed out.

This was tea brewed from rare spiritual herbs.

One sip made his spiritual energy boil, his mind clear, his spiritual sense crystalline.

The farmer-clad man was none other than Lu Changkong, who had spent the past decade tending his medicinal fields in the ruins.

Ten years had passed, yet he looked much the same—only now his body glowed faintly from years of tasting hundreds of herbs.

He, too, had heard of the bloodshed on the battlefield.

BOOM!

The entire world began to quake violently.

Lu Changkong looked up, a brilliant light flashing in his eyes.

“Hm?”

He had felt this sensation before.

“The world is transforming again...”

“It begins.”

He murmured, taking another sip of spirit-medicine tea, fragrant mist escaping his lips with every word.

Rising with his hoe, he strolled leisurely back to his fields—like a scholar gathering chrysanthemums beneath the eastern fence.

In his medicinal garden, rows of crystalline spirit herbs sparkled like works of art.

He entered his little wooden hut and soon emerged carrying two large buckets filled with fertilizer—origin energy mixed with rare mineral dust.

Scooping with a gourd ladle, he walked the rows, pouring shimmering fertilizer over the plants.

The herbs seemed to come alive, greedily absorbing the energy, swaying and glowing brighter.

Lu Changkong's eyes curved into happy crescents.

After one full round, he returned to the hut.

This time he brought out top-grade spirit stones and arranged them into a formation around the garden.

Then he sat cross-legged once more, waiting quietly.

BOOM...

Heaven and earth roared as though ancient demons howled.

Every cultivator felt the change clearly.

“It has begun...”

Lu Changkong drew a deep breath, anticipation on his face.

He was not alone—nearly every cultivator sensed it.

They had experienced many world transformations, each one a leap forward for cultivation.

And now, another had come.

This one meant countless cultivators could seize the chance to breakthrough dramatically.

The Vast Ocean churned.

Waves towered.

A colossal whale breached the surface, its cry shattering the water.

On its back rested an immense immortal island.

All manner of spiritual beasts surged from the depths.

A long, dragon-like sea beast shot into the sky, lightning crackling around it, attempting to evolve.

An ancient turtle surfaced, gulping and expelling seawater in great torrents.

A mountain-sized octopus stirred whirlpools that threatened to swallow the heavens.

Not just the ocean—on land, every spiritual creature welcomed the transformation.

In dense jungles, a titanic python burst from its burrow, crushing ancient trees.

A jade-green willow whipped its branches, lashing the void.

The entire world celebrated in silent reverence.

All beings waited.

After a long, long time...

The transformation truly began.

Four massive stars appeared in the firmament, slowly spinning within a colossal vortex.

**BOOM!**

The earth quaked; mountains rose and fell; stones danced.

Many looked up.

The blood-red sky vanished, replaced by a dazzling seven-colored canopy.

Rainbow clouds piled higher and higher, the atmosphere growing oppressively heavy.

Then...

A single drop of rainbow rain fell.

Spiritual energy rain—condensed to the extreme!

Crash!

Every cultivator rushed out to bathe in it.

The rain poured into their bodies, triggering massive transformations. Joy and exhilaration filled them—they could feel the world itself ascending!

A qualitative leap in the plane's level!

The cultivators of the Five Phoenixes continent were the most ecstatic.

They had lived through the low-martial era—when no spiritual energy existed.

Then mid-martial—when spiritual energy first appeared, but cultivation was still sparse.

Now cultivation flourished, and the dense spiritual energy painted the world in vibrant color.

They had witnessed a world rise from weakness to strength.

What greater honor was there?

Eastern Yang River.

Luo Mingsang stepped out of her tent.

The river roared; fish leapt high.

A mirage dragon soared, bellowing at the sky.

Rainbow rain fell.

Luo Mingsang stood dazed beneath it, feeling both body and soul transform.

...

Origin Space.

All was silent.

Only Lu Ping'an floated alone, white robes pristine, hair lashing his cheeks in the void.

The vortex rose and fell like his own soul—powerful and strange.

Four origin stars—Golden Body, Tian Luo, Prajñā, and Tian Yuan—maintained a delicate balance.

They pulled at one another like a miniature star system.

Lu Ping'an gazed calmly.

The origins had fused. This was the moment of world transformation—the chance for the Five Phoenixes to step from mid-martial into high-martial.

He exhaled slowly.

Truthfully, the pressure was immense.

From Qi Liuja and Bu Nanxing, he had learned the secrets of the Nihility Heaven. Creating a high-martial world here was nearly impossible.

Not only did the heavenly laws resist, but countless predators coveted the newborn high-martial origin.

Lu understood perfectly: a high-martial origin born under such restrictive laws would be an unimaginable treasure.

To the mighty beings outside, it was supreme fortune.

Once he pushed the Five Phoenixes into high-martial, its origin would become the sweetest bait—every expert would hunger for it.

Yet would he cower just because wolves circled?

His dream was to forge the Five Phoenixes into an ultra-fantasy great world.

If he shrank back now, when would he ever reach that goal?

Leaning against the Thousand Blade Chair, he gazed at the serene origin.

The origin space held its own unique beauty—the root of a world’s evolution.

Each spin of the origin stars seemed to record the rise and fall of a realm.

He exhaled again.

“High-martial...”

A faint smile tugged at his lips, excitement flickering.

Finally, the Five Phoenixes could attempt the leap.

He was truly curious—what was a high-martial world like?

What defined high-martial?

It was a broad concept with no strict boundary.

At its simplest: cultivators could split mountains with a palm, sever rivers with a kick.

At its strongest: a glare could shatter landscapes; a roar could crush stars.

A realm with nearly limitless ceiling.

“Hence the grading—Yān-Nine to Yān-One...”

Lu Ping’an tapped the Phoenix Feather Sword guard, deep in thought.

He had no idea how strong a Yān-One high-martial world truly was.

Even Bu Nanxing couldn’t explain.

According to him, every Yān-Nine already possessed mighty beings beyond Out-of-Body. “Mighty being” was a loose term—anything above Out-of-Body qualified, including holy lords.

The gap between mighty beings was vast. Some were merely Body-Spirit Unity (the stage above Out-of-Body), others far beyond.

What lay above Unity, Bu Nanxing didn't know—perhaps only when his Southern Mountain world reached Yān-Eight would the answer appear.

So yes, Lu felt pressure.

That mighty being from the High-Martial Buddhist World had threatened that once the Five Phoenixes became high-martial, he would personally descend to “convert” all beings.

In Lu's eyes, “convert” clearly meant slaughter—like what Monk Wuxing had done to the Golden Body Continent.

With Lu's current strength, a mere Unity-realm expert held no fear—even if slightly weaker than true Primordial Spirit Unity, he could still crush them.

If that bald donkey was only Unity realm, Lu would beat his skull open the moment he arrived.

But if that monk had surpassed Unity...

Then things might get tricky.

“Whatever.”

Lu shook his head, banishing the thoughts.

The more he dwelled, the more anxious he’d become.

Screw it—just do it.

**BOOM!**

The Thousand Blade Chair flashed, carrying Lu into the origin space.

He raised a hand and pressed it against the Tian Yuan origin star.

Slowly, he pushed.

Terrifying power surged from his body.

The origin vortex thundered deafeningly.

The next instant, energy exploded in blinding radiance.

Dong! Dong! Dong!

Under Lu's force, the four origin stars began to turn in unison.

His spiritual sense spread, watching every detail.

He was nervous—more nervous than ever before.

One mistake, one broken balance, and the four stars would collapse, the vortex detonating.

The Five Phoenixes' origin would shatter.

High-martial ascension would become a pipe dream.

BOOM!

Lu's hand glowed like sacred jade.

It was the hand of a god, gently plucking the string of world evolution.

At first the rotation was slow.

Pushing felt like moving an entire world.

Even Lu found it exhausting.

His white robes flapped wildly.

He frowned.

After a long while, the rotation stabilized. Lu released his hand—the origin now spun on its own, maintaining a strange new equilibrium.

Lines danced in his eyes.

He looked up.

BOOM!

Within the origin space, a terrifying presence rapidly approached.

Lu understood.

This great horror...

Was surely the heavenly law tribulation Qi Liuji and Bu Nanxing had warned about—the disaster that forbade high-martial birth in the Nihilicity Heaven.

...

Blood-Colored Battlefield.

Seven-colored spiritual energy rain poured from the heavens.

Everyone stood stunned.

Then brilliant light ignited in every eye.

“The world... is transforming!”

Breathing grew ragged.

All sat cross-legged, bathing in the rain.

Being close to the clouds, they absorbed origin power far denser than usual.

Their transformations were astonishing.

BOOM!

The ice tower imprisoning the holy sons and maidens crashed onto the battlefield.

The rainbow rain fell—but the tower blocked every drop.

Crack!

On the thick ice walls, the golden boy and jade girl pressed their faces, eyes bloodshot, staring greedily at the rain outside.

“That’s... fortune!”

The siblings were mad with envy.

Not just them—every captive holy son and maiden beat their chests, eyes blazing.

Outside, fortune rained down.

Inside, they were trapped in cold ice.

The blow to their pride was devastating.

“Can’t we break this damned cage?!”

One holy son roared.

BOOM!

Someone immediately attacked.

Terrifying energy exploded against the walls.

Ripples of force rocked the tower.

“Stop...”

The burly holy son atop his bird said coldly.

“Are we just going to watch these natives steal this fortune?!”

A Yān-Nine holy son snarled.

“You’re so bold—why don’t you break it?!”

The confined space drove one holy son mad; he roared like a beast.

“Shut up!”

BOOM!

The burly man’s aura erupted—terrifying.

The roaring holy son’s head exploded instantly, blood filling the air.

Silence fell.

The burly man’s aura revealed he had just stepped into Out-of-Body realm.

Among the captives, he was the strongest.

Unfortunately, Out-of-Body meant nothing in this catastrophe.

Outside, blood still rained—the blood of their protectors.

“This cage was set by a mighty being. Only another mighty being can break it!”

“If your reckless attacks trigger a backlash and kill us all...”

His vicious gaze swept the tower, chilling every heart.

“Calm yourself, Holy Son Tuoba...”

Holy Son Qingling spoke.

The others fell silent, not daring to breathe loudly.

An Out-of-Body expert held absolute authority here.

The burly man said no more. He pressed his face to the ice, staring outside.

Now their only hope was for this world to become high-martial...

And either be destroyed by heavenly laws, or rescued by other mighty beings.

Otherwise, escape was impossible.

...

The world transformation continued; spiritual rain fell endlessly.

Everyone returned to the battlefield, quietly absorbing the fortune.

The Overlord, Nie Changqing, and the others cultivated madly.

Every world transformation was critical—miss this chance and you'd fall behind forever.

Young Master Tianxu, freshly advanced to Yang God, along with the Empress, Du Longyang, and the other Yang Gods, landed on the battlefield.

They had no time to marvel at Lu annihilating dozens of Out-of-Body experts in an instant.

Before true fortune, composure was impossible.

Even Zhulong returned, standing quietly, feeling the changes in heaven and earth.

Everyone shared the same powerful intuition.

This transformation was the greatest in history.

Perhaps...

The entire world would be reborn!

The whole planet fell silent.

Only the soft patter of spiritual rain remained.

Of course, there was one exception.

Dantai Xuan stood up from the battlefield, speechless.

Around him, Jiang Li, Xie Yunling, and others bathed in the rain, auras soaring, breaking shackle after shackle.

He rose expressionlessly.

The rain fell cold on his skin.

Yet unlike everyone else, he felt no spiritual energy entering his body.

Others skyrocketed in realm; he gained a little strength, but...

Far too slow.

Dantai Xuan pressed a hand to his chest.

Immortal fortune...

The whole world bathed in it; only he repelled it.

This must be...

The loneliness of being the only one sober while the world is drunk.

Dantai Xuan's gaze deepened. Hands behind his back, he closed his eyes, letting the cool rain slap his face, pores opening in simple pleasure.

Fine, fine...

Just treat it as the most luxurious shower ever.

...

In the void.

The wanderers were utterly shaken—then burning with greed!

This world was assaulting high-martial!

The high-martial origin—their ultimate fortune—was about to be born!

Those who had wanted to flee stopped.

No more running!

With the Out-of-Body experts dead and the holy sons imprisoned...

Perhaps this fortune was truly within reach!

Greed blinded them; they chose to gamble their lives.

Suddenly every wanderer felt terror.

The Nihility Heaven itself seemed enraged.

A terrifying rumble shook the void.

On the withered continent.

Qi Liujia—flesh dried like a corpse—looked up, complexity in his deep eyes.

“The heavenly laws will not allow it...”

“This is the first great tribulation of high-martial ascension. Can you withstand it?”

He murmured slowly.

He had failed once—his world torn apart, flesh and primordial spirit severed, utterly miserable.

Now he seemed to see Lu walking the same doomed path.

Yet still, he held a sliver of hope.

Suddenly his gaze pierced the distance.

Within the vortex-shaped origin space, the white-robed youth sat upon the Thousand Blade Chair.

White as snow, peerless grace, head raised against apocalyptic pressure.

The pressure grew heavier, heavier...

Until above the youth's head, a vast thunder sea formed!

Qi Liujia looked away, heart stirring.

His profound gaze turned outward.

Beyond the Nihility Heaven, colossal auras gathered, making the void tremble.

Primordial spirit power wove into a giant net, locking onto everything within.

Some mighty beings even laughed lightly, casually discussing how to divide the newborn high-martial origin.

Arrogant fools, Qi Liujia thought.

He glanced back at the white-robed youth facing the heaven-destroying thunder sea.

A smile spread across his face—full of stubborn faith and hope.

Then his corpse-like body shuddered.

BOOM!

Countless array runes intertwined.

He rose from the withered continent, dust cascading from him like a millennium's grave.

One step.

He left the dead land behind.

Chapter 380: If the Rules Forbid It, Then Shatter the Rules!

“He’s really undergoing tribulation! This is the great calamity birthed by the Nihilism Heaven’s laws!”

“For a mid-martial world to assault high-martial—this has never happened since antiquity. Can he succeed?”

“It will be difficult! Yet there is no denying it: this plane’s lord is a heaven-defying genius!”

The wanderers standing on the icy dead land exclaimed in awe.

The oppressive might filling the Nihility Heaven made their bodies tremble uncontrollably. It was primal terror—the power of the heavenly laws themselves.

Even without seeing inside the origin space, they could now perceive the terrifying thunder sea gathering outside the Five Phoenixes.

A thunder pool formed of pure lightning, gestating an apocalyptic tribulation.

Laws and principles intertwined had always been the most terrifying slaughter.

Countless proud sons of heaven had turned to ash beneath tribulation lightning.

The ascension tribulation of an entire world was infinitely more dreadful.

Most crucially, ascending to high-martial required an astronomical amount of energy and resources accumulated over eons.

This world clearly lacked such deep foundations.

That was its greatest weakness.

Of course, the true fatal obstacle was that the Nihility Heaven's laws forbade the birth of high-martial worlds!

BOOM!

A muffled explosion rang out, like cloth being torn apart inside every heart.

The thunder pool churned; roars of strange beasts echoed within.

The world's transformation had truly begun.

Seven-colored spiritual rain fell—this was great fortune. Bathing in it granted metamorphosis.

It was the redistribution of energy and resources.

Yet whether the Five Phoenixes could actually evolve from mid to high-martial depended entirely on the tribulation brewing inside the origin space.

...

Origin Space.

Lu Ping'an's expression was grave as he gazed up at the thunder pool forming above.

A stifling wind seemed to rise, whipping his white robes.

A line of small text flashed across his vision—long-absent system prompt.

[World Ascension Trial Commencing...]

Lu's face remained calm; he had expected this.

Compared to the low-to-mid-martial trial, this one was far deadlier and more complex.

A tribulation manifested by the laws themselves—nothing like before.

He was not surprised. Mid and high-martial were completely different tiers.

Mid-martial had a ceiling; high-martial opened limitless possibilities.

Lu exhaled slowly.

This tribulation—he had to face it alone. No one could share the burden.

Only he existed in the origin space.

Yet he felt no great fear.

The spiritual pressure chessboard hovered before him. Leaning back in the Thousand Blade Chair, he showed no trace of panic or despair despite the looming apocalypse.

He even propped his chin on one hand and began casually setting up a game.

**BOOM!**

The thunder pool roared.

The next instant—heavenly punishment descended.

The sky collapsed, the earth cracked, rivers ran dry...

Apocalyptic phenomena appeared above the origin space and even in the Nihility Heaven itself, visible to many wanderers.

Everyone's hair stood on end.

These visions were too shocking!

This tribulation was too terrifying!

The rivers running dry were not ordinary water—they were thunder rivers formed from the breached thunder pool, cascading lightning.

This was heavenly thunder tribulation!

Yet no one in the Nihility Heaven could see Lu.

They saw the tribulation but not the one enduring it.

Because the entire world was undergoing tribulation; Lu was merely bearing it on its behalf.

If he could not withstand it, he could choose to give up—no danger to his life, but the world might collapse.

BOOM!

Lightning poured from the thunder pool like scattered glass beads, leaping through the void.

Their terrifying sharpness made souls shudder.

The once-dark Nihility Heaven now blazed like daylight.

Countless low and mid-martial worlds within felt suffocating pressure.

Their plane lords quaked in fear, believing some great calamity had come.

They could not see the source—only endless, despair-inducing oppression.

Inside the origin space.

Lu's white robes flapped wildly.

He rolled up his sleeve, picked up a piece, and placed it on the board.

Grid lines intersected; star positions glowed; yin and yang played out across the board.

Heaven as the board, stars as pieces.

Lu gazed calmly as the law-manifested thunder pool unleashed its horrors.

Countless lightning bolts crashed down.

The origin space itself trembled as though the earth quaked and mountains collapsed.

Yet Lu's expression remained serene, a confident smile playing on his lips as his hair danced.

"Thunder as war drums, lightning as banners—who dares strike them?"

His words fell as another piece dropped.

Dong!

Terrifying aura exploded from his body like the pounding of blood-boiling war drums, clashing against the myriad lightning and shaking the heavens.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

The origin vortex spun violently; the four origin stars bathed in the thunder sea.

With every impact, impurities were burned away; the stars grew purer and stronger.

The Five Phoenixes vortex expanded.

It absorbed the thunder pool's power, growing larger, spinning faster and smoother.

The evolution toward high-martial became ever more certain.

In the Nihility Heaven.

The wanderers cried out in shock.

“The first wave... he survived!”

Someone gasped in disbelief.

So casually!

Perhaps this world truly could become the first high-martial world in the Nihility Heaven in countless millennia!

Dong!

Yet the moment that thought arose—

Lightning within the thunder pool wove together into an ancient bronze bell covered in verdigris!

Terrible runes crawled across its surface—manifestations of laws and principles!

The wanderers were stunned.

They did not recognize it, but outside the Nihility Heaven, watching mighty beings gasped.

“That’s the weapon of a supreme expert who once fought an Ancient Emperor?!”

Many were horrified.

A weapon that had clashed with an Ancient Emperor?

The tribulation actually manifested such a thing?

Any being capable of battling an Ancient Emperor was unimaginably terrifying.

Even these mighty beings felt dread—followed instantly by uncontrollable excitement.

What did this vision mean?

It meant the Nihility Heaven might truly contain relics of an Ancient Emperor—or even the entrance to his tomb!

“Could it be... only a high-martial world born in the Nihility Heaven can reveal clues to an Ancient Emperor’s tomb?”

One mighty being speculated.

Though only a guess, it sent the others into raptures.

Dong! Dong! Dong!

The verdigris bronze bell tolled.

Mighty tolls spread outward; thunder waves rose like overlapping tsunamis, crashing forth.

Lu’s eyes narrowed—he felt the danger.

He brushed a hand across the Thousand Blade Chair’s armrest.

Clang! Clang! Clang!

Silver blades howled out, blooming around him like a cascading galaxy.

They formed a sword array.

The crimson Phoenix Feather Sword led the formation against the enemy.

Dong!

Bell waves and thunder sea slammed into the sword array.

Screeeeech—

A grating screech stabbed eardrums and set teeth on edge.

The Thousand Blade Array and Phoenix Feather Sword churned.

A fire phoenix cried shrilly, resisting the tribulation lightning.

It held!

Outside the Nihilty Heaven, wanderers and watching mighty beings were dumbfounded.

He blocked a tribulation manifestation of a weapon that once fought an Ancient Emperor!

Every heart trembled in disbelief.

Could he really succeed?

A tribulation they believed impossible to survive—had been survived.

“Once this world succeeds, it may directly reach Yān-Eight or even Yān-Seven high-martial!”

One mighty being exclaimed.

“Hah... so what? It will be a fleeting flower. Once the world’s protective veil lifts, we descend and it dies like a mayfly.”

Another sneered coldly.

Soon silence returned.

The tribulation grew deeper, more terrifying—law-empowered lightning that shook souls.

Many mighty beings fell silent. Even they would pay a terrible price against such punishment.

Inside the origin space.

Sword light scattered like waterfalls, embedding into the surroundings.

The Five Phoenixes origin vortex had grown enormous—far beyond mid-martial limits.

Every time it withstood the baptism, it absorbed vast energy and tribulation resources, growing stronger.

**BOOM!**

Yet the great tribulation was not over.

From the thunder pool emerged a living creature—a thunder dragon!

Though not truly alive, its mere appearance exerted boundless pressure.

“That is the mount of one of the supreme experts who besieged the Ancient Emperor!”

Another mighty being roared.

“An Ancestral Dragon!”

Hiss after hiss rang out.

What kind of tribulation was this?

Was ascending to high-martial truly this hard?

But remembering the Nihility Heaven’s restrictions and legends, they fell silent.

“Once this world births high-martial, I dare guarantee it will be inextricably linked to the Ancient Emperor who died here! The entrance to his tomb will surely appear within!”

One voice rang out, each word resounding.

Yet to their astonishment—

The Ancestral Dragon was torn apart alive.

Thunder scattered everywhere.

Inside the origin space.

Lu had transformed into the Demon Lord, stepping through the void bathed in lightning like a god-demon, ripping the dragon asunder.

It was not a true Ancestral Dragon—only a sliver of its aura.

A real one would have been invincible to him.

Demon Lord Lu was cold and merciless.

His Indestructible Demon Body wreathed in demonic qi stood equal to the lightning.

From the torn dragon, he seized a thunder dragon pearl pulsing with ancestral dragon aura.

“Ancestral dragon qi—perfect for evolving my little heavenly dragons.”

Demon Lord Lu’s narrow, sharp eyes glinted as he pocketed the pearl into his Spatial Ring.

Demonic qi roared; more thunder beasts formed and charged.

This was a unique, lonely war.

If anyone could witness Demon Lord Lu’s supreme bearing, they would be stunned.

But no one could.

The tribulation was too dreadful.

Even the Indestructible Demon Body bled divine-demon blood that threatened to collapse the void.

Yet the thunder pool was nearly dry—the law tribulation was ending.

But it still held one final, most terrifying strike.

All remaining tribulation power condensed into a single palm.

Substantial, every line and fingerprint visible, wreathed in seven-colored light—like a supreme expert slapping across the river of time, laws gathered upon it.

In the Nihility Heaven.

Every watching mighty being trembled.

Even Qi Liuja, who had left the dead continent, stared intently.

**BOOM!**

This strike was truly horrifying.

Even Demon Lord Lu's indestructible body cracked at the brow—as though about to be erased from existence.

The Thousand Blades turned demonic; Phoenix Feather Sword wrapped in thunderflame shot skyward.

Around Demon Lord Lu formed a terrifying sword-qi vortex.

BOOM!

“If the rules forbid it, then I will shatter the rules!”

The oath Lu once swore now rang true.

He was breaking the rules!

The cracking brow bloomed like a gorgeous flower.

The sign of primordial spirit condensation.

Anyone who saw would be shocked—

A being who could withstand such supreme tribulation had not even formed a primordial spirit!

Pfft!

The palm was pierced clean through.

Demon Lord Lu stood drenched in blood, as though fished from a crimson sea.

Dong!

The thunder pool exploded and vanished utterly.

Countless arcs of lightning scattered and faded between heaven and earth.

The origin space fell silent once more—deathly silent.

The Five Phoenixes origin vortex had become unimaginably vast.

Like an expanding starry sky, the four origin stars orbited peacefully within.

The law tribulation—had been shattered by Lu!

Just as his grand ambition declared:

If the rules forbid it, then shatter the damn rules!

...

Five Phoenixes Continent!

Everyone bathing in the spiritual rain felt their souls quake.

The entire continent underwent terrifying change.

The earth split open; vast energy surged upward like pillars holding up the sky.

The world was expanding—at a frenzied pace.

But mere expansion was not what shocked them.

Across the continent, miraculous phenomena appeared.

Northern County.

In the far north where snow fell endlessly, auroras danced in the sky.

Atop a snowy peak, a radiant snow lotus bloomed.

It released spiritual energy so dense it formed mist, flowing with prismatic light.

A supreme spiritual herb—if consumed, it could trigger massive metamorphosis.

This was fortune born of the world's transformation.

Southern County.

The expanding land birthed a colossal lake; water gushed from underground.

Immense spiritual energy and strange power surged.

A spiritual beast excitedly leapt in—only to emerge as bleached bones moments later.

A lake of both crisis and opportunity.

Such phenomena occurred everywhere across the Five Phoenixes.

People were stunned—this transformation far exceeded imagination.

Powerful new spiritual beasts appeared as though born from nothing, bearing terrifying bloodlines capable of uprooting mountains.

Yet even these were not the most shocking.

The true marvel was the transformation of cultivators.

The spiritual rain intensified; seven-colored radiance bathed the world.

The Five Phoenixes became a realm of immortals.

In every city, cultivators broke through in droves.

Ordinary folk bathed in the rain and with a single thought formed Qi Cores—some even reached perfected Qi Core in an instant, bodies strong enough to shatter millstones with a punch.

Qi Core cultivators instantly stepped into Body Storage.

Bottlenecks shattered; realms soared.

Body Storage to Heavenly Lock, Heavenly Lock to Nascent Soul.

Many Nascent Soul cultivators even broke into Infant Transformation.

On the blood-colored battlefield, those closest to the rain experienced the most dramatic metamorphoses.

Almost everyone advanced at least one realm.

The Body Storage armies all broke into Heavenly Lock.

Heavenly Lock cultivators entered Nascent Soul.

Many veteran Nascent Soul cultivators stepped into the Yin God realm of the Three God Realms.

“This is supreme fortune!”

The Overlord’s eyes blazed—he too had broken through, bathed in the rain, stepping into Yang God realm.

Nie Changqing, Kong Nanfei, and the others all advanced significantly.

Those who had comprehended Dao Intent improved the most dramatically.

Du Longyang, Ye Shoudao, the Empress, and others made massive leaps within Yang God realm—half a foot already into Primordial Spirit Unity!

Everyone was stunned.

...

Light laughter rang out like sudden thunder in the darkness.

It was joyous, unrestrained laughter.

The wanderers stared in horror at the withered figure walking out from the dead continent.

“Qi Liujia?!”

“He actually came out?! What is he planning?”

“Isn’t he afraid the laws will kill him?!”

They gaped in disbelief.

Even the snake-tongued beauty and the flame-armored expert were shocked.

As top wanderers, they knew why Qi Liujia had remained on that continent.

He was terrifyingly strong—invincible among wanderers.

If ranked, Qi Liujia was undoubtedly the strongest, because he was a true mighty being!

He had left the Nihility Heaven, achieved mighty being status, then returned.

Once, Qi Liujia had been brilliant—a radiant sun in the Nihility Heaven.

With his Liujia Array Sect, he had nearly birthed a high-martial world.

Every wanderer had been dazzled by his glory.

He had represented an entire era.

With the help of the Nine-Word Array Symbols, he had come within a hair's breadth of success.

Yet in the end—the laws struck him down.

His world collapsed, its origin carved up by outsiders.

His flesh and primordial spirit were severed.

He could only wither away on the dead continent, half-buried already.

Many wanderers had watched the once-peerless genius decay into a dried corpse.

It was the death of an era.

Even his Nine-Word Array Symbols had been mostly stolen by other high-martial mighty beings under the guise of apprenticeship.

“What is he doing?!”

The wanderers cried.

**BOOM!**

Around the dead continent, chains of law coiled like order itself, trying to bind him.

Qi Liujia's withered face wore deep, profound eyes.

He smiled.

The Five Phoenixes had succeeded—he felt boundless joy.

It gave him the determination to do what he now intended.

He raised a hand and struck out array runes.

The runes wove together, severing his aura, deceiving the laws.

The dead continent remained, countless runes churning in the surrounding void.

Qi Liujia, hunched and ancient, walked forth.

Though he still looked old, his flesh seemed to regain vitality, his spirit surging.

He lifted his head—weather-beaten face wearing a faint smile as he gazed at the distant figures stepping across the void, wreathed in flame.

Step by step, he advanced.

He would buy Lu some time.

He would not allow greedy wolves to destroy the Nihilism Heaven's—and his own—final hope.

...

Nihilism Heaven.

Silence.

Only ragged breathing and heavy sighs remained.

“It actually... succeeded.”

“The first true high-martial origin in the Nihility Heaven—unprecedented in history...”

“Unbelievable. This is supreme fortune.”

A mighty being spoke.

“This world’s origin has successfully crossed from mid to high-martial...”

“Newborn high-martial origin—fellow daoists, let us claim our shares by skill.”

A calm voice rang out.

The next instant.

Outside the Nihility Heaven.

Blurred silhouettes emerged.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

They stepped across the boundary.

Each one's aura threatened to collapse the void.

The Nihility Heaven's laws were terrifying, but these experts came prepared.

Saint-tier artifacts hovered above their heads, concealing their presence from heaven.

They strode in.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Screams exploded as wanderers caught in their auras detonated—continents shattered, flesh turned to mist.

The instant the Five Phoenixes became high-martial—

The mighty beings moved!

The Nihility Heaven was their orchard.

The Five Phoenixes origin was the ripening fruit.

They had come to pluck it!

Suddenly, every expert halted.

They looked up—the saint-tier artifacts above their heads trembled under oppressive auras.

Confusion filled their eyes.

Before them...

A hunched old man stood quietly, hands hanging at his sides.

He smiled at them.

And within that smile lay boundless killing intent.