

## Starlit Path 531

Chapter 531: Using the Heavenly Dao to Battle the Heavenly Dao...

A terrifying explosion swept through all of Pingyang Heaven, tearing a massive hole through the chest of the Heavenly Dao incarnation.

The overwhelming aura raged like a gale, affecting countless small worlds. Fortunately, their world barriers protected them—though shaken, they were not destroyed.

No one had time to be shocked.

The apocalyptic shockwaves left everyone struggling to survive.

Lu, transformed into a demonic sovereign, had pierced the Dao incarnation with one arrow—nearly shredding it.

With this arrow, the battle grew even more chaotic.

Upper-realm Saints clashed with Micah's followers and the Five Phoenix Immortals.

The frenzied fighting shook the entire outer void battlefield.

In Pingyang Heaven,

Micah drew a deep breath and broke free of the rule chains. The Heavenly Dao will was powerful—even its incarnation was this difficult to handle.

If the true Heavenly Dao will descended, only an Emperor could survive.

Yet Micah was astonished by Lu's strength—far beyond his expectations.

“This is... a special physique.”

Micah inhaled deeply, gazing at the black demonic qi coiling around Lu, silver wings flapping behind him.

The overwhelming demonic aura, like a tidal wave engulfing the heavens, left Micah stunned.

Even as a Quasi-Emperor, his aura was not much stronger than Lu's at this moment.

“Incredible...”

“How long has this child been cultivating?”

Micah marveled.

The Holy Hall had once collected intelligence on the Five Phoenixes and Lu.

Their Saints had speculated that an Ancient Emperor stood behind Lu—explaining his rapid growth.

But now, with Micah's insight, he could tell: it was unlikely an Ancient Emperor supported Lu.

Even an Ancient Emperor would struggle to cultivate someone like Lu—comparable to a Quasi-Emperor—in such a short time.

Quasi-Emperor realm was not something even an Ancient Emperor could easily forge.

Having lived hundreds of thousands of years, Micah watched the demonic qi surge around Lu, his heart surging with emotion.

Could it be... Lu was not backed by a nine heavens powerhouse?

But by some mysterious entity beyond the nine heavens?

The thought made Micah draw a sharp breath. His eyes flickered. He felt even less regret for his decision.

Having broken free of the rule chains,

Lu and the Five Phoenix Xuan Immortals stood before the Five Phoenixes, blocking all terrifying power.

The Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao had been drawn out by the nine heavens' Dao and now floated above.

Dao essence surged across it like rivers and lakes.

Lu stood firm, Five Phoenix Bow in hand, expression cold. One arrow had pierced the Dao incarnation's chest, yet his heart remained calm.

He knew the Five Phoenix Bow was powerful, but destroying the incarnation required more.

It wasn't a matter of insufficient power—but of qualitative difference.

The Dao incarnation possessed some characteristics of the Heavenly Dao... nearly immortal and indestructible.

To destroy it, Lu needed another way.

Boom!

Lu put away the Five Phoenix Bow. His silver wings flared.

He no longer wished to waste time.

The mysterious Ancient Emperor still watched from the Void Heaven rift.

The longer he remained exposed, the more thoroughly they could study him.

Lu's figure streaked across the void, leaving countless afterimages.

His speed was so great that time seemed to freeze—each afterimage lingered in place.

From beyond the Five Phoenixes, he crossed directly into Pingyang Heaven.

Straight toward the Dao incarnation's colossal form.

The incarnation had slain many Saints, using the Dao aura from their deaths to turn the tide.

But Lu had his own methods.

Rumble!

Explosions continued to ring out.

The massive wound began to heal.

The huge hole in the incarnation's chest slowly closed, disappearing.

Like writhing flesh regenerating.

Micah shot forward, joining Lu to slay the incarnation.

He felt hope. Lu's current aura alone astonished him.

Two Quasi-Emperors—there was still a chance to destroy the incarnation.

As he passed, Lu glanced at Micah.

In truth, Lu did not care whether Micah acted or not.

He simply refused to drag this out any longer.

The Dao incarnation was indeed powerful.

If the current Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao collided with it directly, it would likely be crushed!

Buzz...

Lu appeared before the incarnation.

With a flip of his hand, a small tower appeared.

The Heaven-Stealing Tower.

Lu gripped it and smashed it down toward the incarnation's head.

The Five Phoenix Bow had broken the seal—the Heaven-Stealing Tower was Lu's true weapon.

Pfft!

The tower struck the incarnation's head.

Terrifying pressure erupted from the incarnation.

Unlike when the Five Phoenix Bow pierced its chest, this time... Lu felt as though he had struck something solid.

The Heaven-Stealing Tower was a system reward—an Innate Spirit Treasure.

Though usually unremarkable, the moment it struck the nine heavens' Dao, it erupted with terrifying radiance!

Seven-colored light flowed, making the tower increasingly divine.

Bang!

The incarnation's head exploded.

Lu's brows rose. His eyes gleamed. As expected—the Heaven-Stealing Tower was effective against the nine heavens' Dao incarnation.

He could feel a powerful suction force emanating from the tower.

It devoured the incarnation's energy relentlessly.

The incarnation roared continuously.

From within, it unleashed terrifying counterforce.

Yet Lu held the tower firmly, allowing it to continue devouring the incarnation's power.

Utterly savage. Utterly shameless.

Micah sensed the incarnation's anomaly and was startled.

His gaze shifted to the Heaven-Stealing Tower in Lu's hand.

His heart jolted. Was this a unique imperial weapon?

No—it felt even more profound than an imperial weapon.

What kind of weapon was this?!

The incarnation's aura steadily weakened.

Its colossal body shrank as the Heaven-Stealing Tower devoured it...

Micah hovered in the air. He felt no need to act further.

The incarnation... was finished.

Its struggles grew futile. In time, it would be completely drained.

In Void Heaven, the massive rift like an abyss stretched across the sky.

The enormous eyeball rolled within.

The entity inside seemed speechless.

Perhaps unsure what to say—or unable to speak at all.

The Ancient Emperor who had tried to take advantage of the chaos fell silent.

He had expected Lu to be crushed by the Dao incarnation.

Instead, the opposite occurred.

Even without their help, Lu had effortlessly suppressed the incarnation.

The opportunistic Ancient Emperor felt as though he had been slapped in the face.

A faint, sinister aura began to stir.

This dangerous aura seemed to catch Lu's attention.

Lu pressed the Heaven-Stealing Tower against the incarnation, then slightly turned his head toward the rift in Void Heaven.

Always some petty schemer trying to harm him.

Lu thought: was it the entity in that rift?

He exhaled slowly.

Once again lamenting the lack of trust between people.

This Ancient Emperor not only tried to rob him—but now even wanted to harm him.

He, Lu Ping'an, sought no conflict—yet this was the result?

Turning back, he looked at the shrinking incarnation. This thing too—he, Lu, had stayed quietly in the Five Phoenixes, cultivating peacefully, causing no trouble.

Yet this Dao incarnation had come knocking, intent on slaying him and destroying the Five Phoenixes.

Not seeking conflict—a simple goal—yet so hard to achieve?

Lu gave the rift one last deep look.

Then withdrew his gaze.

Cause today, consequence tomorrow.

Lu was now certain: the entity in the rift was one of the Ancient Emperors who vanished in the ancient war.

The voice had confirmed it—an Ancient Emperor.

Clearly, the Five Phoenixes had now entered the eyes of these Ancient Emperors.

Their earlier “protection” had merely been to make future plundering and control easier.

Lu shook his head.

It wasn't that he was petty—these Ancient Emperors coveted the Five Phoenixes, took advantage of chaos, and sought to seize it.

He, Lu, treated others with sincerity—yet they wanted to occupy the Five Phoenixes.

The kind are bullied.

Endless yielding was not always the answer.

One day, Lu felt he might personally enter that rift and reason with those Ancient Emperors.

Finally.

The uproar began to subside.

Soon... the Dao incarnation was completely drained by the Heaven-Stealing Tower.

A lifeless Saint's body fell from the void. The Heavenly Dao will that had possessed it vanished completely.

Lu held the Heaven-Stealing Tower. At this moment, its aura grew even more terrifying—as though it could crush the void itself.

Micah flew over. As Holy Hall Master, he looked at the tower in Lu's hand with some wariness.

Such a terrifying Dao incarnation—suppressed just like that?

“The Heaven-Stealing Tower didn't fully drain the nine heavens' Dao incarnation. The Dao will sensed something wrong and gave up resistance, scattering and fleeing...”

Lu narrowed his eyes and drew a deep breath.

The nine heavens' Dao indeed possessed intelligence. Glancing back at the Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao—still innocent and ignorant—the gap was clear.

If Heavenly Daos had ranks, the current Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao was likely the weakest.

Did Heavenly Daos have ranks?

Lu paused at the thought. Perhaps they truly did.

“The nine heavens’ Dao will has scattered... Young Master Lu, your methods are truly unfathomable. I am in awe.”

Micah looked at Lu and bowed.

Originally, he had harbored some arrogance toward Lu.

But in this battle, Lu had displayed strength comparable to his own Quasi-Emperor level.

He no longer underestimated him—he began to take Lu seriously.

With the Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao and now Quasi-Emperor combat power, the future... was impossible to predict.

Lu smiled. Though Micah helped the Five Phoenixes out of self-interest,

Lu had always treated others with sincerity. Since Micah had shed blood for the Five Phoenixes, Lu would not be ungrateful.

In the outer void battlefield,

The Five Phoenix Xuan Immortals clashed with many Saints. As the nine heavens' Dao slew Saints,

Many fell, granting the Five Phoenix Immortals vast fortune. Their cultivation advanced significantly.

This battle yielded great rewards.

Of course, the losses fell on the upper-realm holy clans—or rather, the Holy Hall Saints.

Many Holy Hall Saints died in this battle—not mostly at enemy hands, but slain by the nine heavens' Dao.

The Heavenly Dao was ruthless—they had experienced it fully.

With the matter settled, the Five Phoenix Immortals returned, still exhilarated.

Whoosh! Whoosh!

Sounds of fleeing echoed—the upper-realm holy clan Saints.

The moment the Dao incarnation vanished,

They no longer lingered. Why stay?

Micah had betrayed them. The Five Phoenixes had Lu—a Quasi-Emperor. Two Quasi-Emperors—if they wanted to kill them, escape would be impossible.

So the Saints fled in panic.

In the rift of Void Heaven,

The massive eyeball rolled.

The pupil seemed to reflect a mocking smile—as though watching a show.

“The Heavenly Dao is the most difficult to deal with. Did you think it would end so easily?”

“Emperors have fought the Heavenly Dao for millions of years. Did you think it would be so simple?”

“This Emperor said... hand over control of the Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao, and this Emperor will save you.”

A faint voice drifted from the rift.

Lu’s brows furrowed slightly.

Micah’s expression changed.

The Ancient Emperor’s will...

But what Micah cared about most was the meaning behind those words.

The Heavenly Dao is the most difficult to deal with?!

Micah drew a deep breath. He did not doubt the Ancient Emperor’s words.

After all, the nine heavens' Ancient Emperors had battled the Heavenly Dao will for millions of years. If anyone truly understood it, it was they.

"Young Master Lu... be careful!"

Micah said gravely.

The moment his words fell,

It was as though a storm approached—black clouds sweeping in from the horizon.

Terrifying pressure suffocated the air.

Several Saints who had fled to the edge of Yuan Magnetic Heaven—nearly entering the upper realms—suddenly stiffened.

Their eyes blazed with white light. Their bodies were seized by the Heavenly Dao will.

These were Saints who had lost composure in their escape.

Five in total.

Meaning—in this moment—five more Dao incarnations had appeared.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Like raging waves crashing down.

Micah's relaxed body tensed again.

"Five Dao incarnations at once?!"

The might of the Heavenly Dao was unimaginable.

Micah's pupils shrank.

Only after clashing could one understand how powerless and terrifying it was to fight the Heavenly Dao.

The Emperors of the nine heavens had struggled against it for so long without suppressing it—let alone them.

“Not just that... the true, complete Heavenly Dao will seem to be approaching!”

“It is an unparalleled terror!”

Micah said gravely.

The birth of the Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao had truly provoked the nine heavens' Dao.

Perhaps Quasi-Emperor births did not concern it—but a second Heavenly Dao within its domain... that was intolerable.

Even Gu Mangran felt it—a suffocating pressure, greater than any Ancient Emperor's!

Lu held the Heaven-Stealing Tower, staring at the five incarnations.

“I am heaven. Heaven's will—cannot be defied.”

“Heaven’s will—is everywhere.”

The five incarnations spoke in unison. Their voices shook heaven and earth.

Lu looked up toward the rift in Void Heaven—but the rift had already vanished, as though hiding.

Clearly, the true Heavenly Dao will was about to descend, causing the Ancient Emperor in the rift to retreat.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

The five incarnations’ bodies blazed with extreme light.

The light stacked. The five incarnations fused into one colossal figure of light.

Dazzling radiance—like a star burning at full power.

Utterly blinding.

The entire nine heavens seemed illuminated in this moment!

“Act now... it’s summoning the true Heavenly Dao will!”

Micah, having lived countless years, seemed to guess the incarnation’s intent. He roared.

Micah moved.

Transforming into a streak of light, he charged toward the fused Dao will.

But the colossal light figure slowly raised a palm.

Boom!

Micah—Quasi-Emperor—bled instantly, becoming a blood-soaked figure.

He was sent flying.

Unmatched pressure—nearly indistinguishable from true Emperor might.

Gu Mangran also charged. His coffin lid had shattered in earlier clashes.

This time, he swung the coffin itself...

Unfortunately, he fared even worse than Micah.

Upon clashing with the Dao will's palm, the coffin disintegrated into dust. His resting place—destroyed!

Blood-soaked, coughing blood, he fell.

Terrifying pressure surged like tidal waves.

Even Lu's expression grew grave in this moment.

The Five Phoenix Xuan Immortals and Immortals trembled faintly.

Such terrifying pressure!

True Emperor might!

Not from imperial weapons, Quasi-Emperors, or imperial blood.

But genuine Great Emperor pressure!

At this moment, the Heavenly Dao will possessed Great Emperor-level might!

“What does it want?”

Lu stared at the Dao will, gaze heavy.

“One strike didn’t kill me! It’s still missing that final step to true Emperor power! We still have a chance!”

Micah, blood-soaked, rose from the void. His eyes burned with madness.

He glared at the colossal light figure—unwilling to accept defeat.

The Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao was his only hope.

After hundreds of thousands of years stuck at the bottleneck, unable to break through—now, when hope finally appeared, the nine heavens' Dao sought to destroy it.

How unjust the Heavenly Dao was!

Micah roared.

He looked at Lu—at the Heaven-Stealing Tower in his hand.

The only hope was Lu's tower. Since it had shattered the first incarnation, it could shatter the second!

“Young Master Lu, I'll block its attacks. Use the tower... smash it!”

Micah coughed blood. His aura began to climb.

Gu Mangran also bled, but the bewilderment in his eyes had vanished.

He knew what he must do.

His feelings toward the Five Phoenixes were complex.

Having watched it grow from weak to strong, he refused to see it destroyed!

So...

The divine herb energy he had stored for so long surged within him.

In the void,

The colossal Dao incarnation seemed to sense their intentions.

It let out a human-like laugh.

“Heaven knows all.”

It seemed to know Micah and the others’ plans.

The next moment.

The massive light palm rose—then clenched.

Whoosh! Whoosh!

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Terrifying explosions rang out!

Blood Fiend Heaven, Yuan Magnetic Heaven, Pingyang Heaven—every world in Void Heaven had its essence, energy, and spirit transformed into rule chains, dragged out by the Dao incarnation.

Every high-martial world had one such chain.

These were the energy sources the Heavenly Dao had provided them.

Mid- and low-martial worlds were stripped of their world protection barriers—also transformed into Dao chains.

The massive fist tightened, seizing the chains of every world except the Five Phoenixes. All the Heavenly Dao's distributed energy gathered in the incarnation's palm.

Boom!

Countless energies converged. The Dao incarnation erased the final gap Micah had spoken of—fully stepping into Emperor realm.

Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang!

Explosions thundered.

The heavens and earth seemed utterly silent in this moment.

Worlds drained of their Dao chains shattered.

In the lower three heavens, every world—high-martial, mid-martial, low-martial—exploded into countless bloody fragments.

Countless lives were extinguished in this instant.

The nine heavens' Dao incarnation remained cold and ruthless, unmoved.

These ordinary, weak lives—once dead—would be reborn in time. It cared not.

What it cared about... was devouring the Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao!

A newborn Heavenly Dao—once devoured, the nine heavens' Dao might grow even stronger!

Micah despaired.

He stared in shock as continents shattered into bloody fragments. His hair stood on end.

He truly understood what the Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor had once said: the Heavenly Dao is heartless.

Boom!

The Dao incarnation that had stepped into Emperor realm blazed with boundless light.

Its massive light palm reached toward the only surviving world—the Five Phoenixes.

Seeking to seize the Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao.

The Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao stars trembled violently—as though quaking in fear.

This unmatched power.

Filled everyone on the Five Phoenix Continent with despair.

The time array ceased operating.

The Heaven-Covering Formation could form no barrier.

The light palm descended.

Suddenly.

Above the Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao stars,

Lu's figure appeared.

He slowly sat down. The thousand blades stacked into a wheelchair.

Watching the massive, sky-covering light palm descend.

His expression was calm. His white robes whipped in the wind.

His eyes reflected the scene. He exhaled.

His arms slowly spread.

Clang! Clang! Clang!

The phoenix plume sword burned like fire, hovering above Lu's head.

“Heavenly Dao... empower me.”

“With the Heavenly Dao... battle the Heavenly Dao...”

Chapter 532: I, Lu Ping'an, Am the Heavenly Dao

True Emperor might swept across all the lower four heavens.

This was an apocalyptic calamity for the lower four heavens.

The Heavenly Dao will had absorbed the Dao essence of every world, forging it into chains—allowing its incarnation to step fully into Emperor realm.

Deprived of stabilizing energy, the worlds' lands began to collapse. Mountains, rivers, lakes—all shattered into countless fragments.

This end-of-days scene weighed heavily on every powerhouse's heart.

True Immortal and Xuan Immortal ancestors from high-martial worlds unleashed their techniques, protecting the living beings within their realms.

They had no choice—cultivating the Great Luo Immortal Scripture tied their path of fortune to the people.

If all life perished, their cultivation would suffer immense damage.

Fortunately, with True Immortal and Xuan Immortal strength, safeguarding these lives was not difficult.

But everyone's hearts were heavy.

The Heavenly Dao was heartless—but no one had expected it to be this ruthless.

Now, all the pressure fell upon the Five Phoenixes.

Micah and Gu Mangran were drenched in blood. Though Micah was Quasi-Emperor, he knew full well: against a true Emperor, he had no chance of resisting.

The higher the realm, the vaster the gap.

Quasi-Emperor might bear the word “Emperor,” but it was still far from a true Great Emperor.

“What a pity...”

Micah’s ferocious expression gradually calmed.

Regret and loss filled his eyes.

Failure.

With the Dao incarnation fully in Emperor realm, unless an Ancient Emperor appeared, no one could stop it.

“In the end... failure.”

Micah sighed.

His heart slowly settled.

He looked toward the Five Phoenixes—toward Lu—with faint melancholy.

Such heaven-defying genius... to perish under the Heavenly Dao will...

Even though Lu had chosen to empower himself with the Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao,

The current Five Phoenix Dao was still too weak—too young. It could never rival the Heavenly Dao will.

Even with its power, it could not break the shackles the Dao had set—could not step into Emperor realm.

Without Emperor strength, how could it match this Emperor incarnation?

Boom!!!

Terrifying gales howled.

The Heavenly Dao stars began descending. In the Five Phoenix Origin Space, the Dao origin star pulsed with countless strands of Dao essence.

More than a million strands had been gathered—yet only about two hundred thousand had been refined.

Eighty-some thousand remained.

If given enough time to refine them, the Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao would surely grow stronger.

Boom!

Every gaze converged.

On the Five Phoenix Continent.

Now, in the void between Void Heaven, Pingyang Heaven, Blood Fiend Heaven, and Yuan Magnetic Heaven, perhaps only the Five Phoenixes remained as a true world.

No one had expected this battle to cause such devastation.

Yet judging by the Heavenly Dao will's momentum, even the Five Phoenixes might be utterly destroyed under its terrifying assault.

The Five Phoenix Xuan Immortals felt crushing pressure.

Before Emperor might, they dared not even breathe.

Now, the only hope rested on Young Master Lu—could he withstand the Heavenly Dao will's attack?

They watched intently.

Lu sat cross-legged on the Heavenly Dao star. His aura steadily rose.

The phoenix plume sword thrust forward.

It stabbed toward the massive light palm smashing down from the Dao incarnation.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Terrifying explosions seemed to annihilate everything between heaven and earth.

The living beings on the Five Phoenix Continent felt the world plunge into darkness—as though the apocalypse had arrived.

Ding!

The phoenix plume sword clashed with the light palm.

Two forces collided. The void shattered into countless cracks.

Micah stared at the scene.

After a long moment, he shook his head with faint desolation.

“No good... the Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao is still too weak...”

“It’s over.”

Emperor power—nothing short of an Emperor could resist it.

With a piercing sound, the phoenix plume sword shattered, scattering into nine streaks of red light that flew back, falling across the Five Phoenix lands.

Lu’s hair whipped wildly. Heavenly Dao power transformed into a true phoenix behind him, wings spread, crying out.

Boom!

The massive light palm slammed down, covering the Heavenly Dao star and completely engulfing Lu’s figure.

The Dao incarnation seemed to smirk.

In the nine heavens, only one will was permitted—the nine heavens' Dao will. Any other Heavenly Dao must be extinguished.

The world fell deathly silent.

Everyone stared blankly at Lu, swallowed by the light palm.

Was it over?

Even Young Master Lu could not save the situation?

Yet in reality, Lu had been engulfed by immense power—but his situation was far easier than Micah imagined.

The Eight Trigrams Platform emerged. The Eight Trigrams runes floated, forming an array.

Boom!

The massive palm crashed down—yet was blocked by the array. Terrifying shockwaves raged outward, but failed to shatter the Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao.

This was Lu's trump card: the power of the Eight Trigrams runes from the Transmission Platform to resist Emperor might.

It could hold—but breaking through was far from enough. Lu needed another way.

His gaze swept across.

He saw shattered worlds—fragments left after their Dao essence was drained.

Countless lives displaced.

To destroy the Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao, the Heavenly Dao will had revealed extreme coldness and ruthlessness.

But seeing these world fragments, Lu's gaze flickered.

With his mind split, he used the Eight Trigrams array to block the Dao will's assault.

Meanwhile, he sank into the Transmission Platform to deduce.

He needed a way to break the deadlock.

Lu did not underestimate Emperor realm strength. At Qi Refining Layer 9, facing an Emperor was still taxing.

That was why he had never intended to expose the Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao until he had sufficient power.

This time, its exposure had caught Lu somewhat off guard.

As though...

Someone had deliberately revealed it.

Lu had once speculated whether connecting the Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao to mid- and low-martial worlds had affected the world protection barriers.

But seeing how casually the nine heavens' Dao stripped those barriers, it likely wasn't the cause.

If not that, then only one possibility remained...

Someone had intentionally exposed the Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao.

Who could it be?

Lu looked up, gaze cold, as though trying to pierce through Void Heaven.

Very likely—one of the Ancient Emperors in the rift.

The possibility was high.

He withdrew his gaze. Even if he had deduced the reason for the exposure, now was not the time to dwell on it.

Some accounts could be settled later.

Right now, he needed to break the deadlock.

In the Transmission Platform, Lu's thoughts raced. Outside, he used the Eight Trigrams array to hold back the Dao will's assault. Inside, he deduced.

The Eight Trigrams array was defensively powerful—but Lu was only at Qi Refining Layer 9.

Prolonged defense might eventually be broken.

In Void Heaven,

Micah and the others hovered.

They had thought it was over. Under the Dao incarnation's full-power strike, the Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao would surely collapse.

Lu might even be erased.

After all, this was Emperor-level power.

Yet they were wrong...

The Dao incarnation and the Five Phoenixes had entered a stalemate.

Its relentless attacks were blocked by a mysterious force.

One day. Two days. Ten days. Half a year...

Time passed.

Under Micah's stunned gaze, the Five Phoenixes held for half a year.

In that time, the nine heavens' Dao incarnation attacked like a ferocious beast.

Yet it never broke through.

The scene... became somewhat bizarre.

Even more astonishing—the time array covering the Five Phoenixes began operating under Lu's will. Though it could no longer maintain the peak one thousand to one ratio, it stabilized at one hundred to one.

Compared to the destroyed worlds, the Five Phoenixes not only survived but regained peace. Mortals resumed life. True Immortals, Xuan Immortals, and others returned to cultivation—frantically improving their strength.

They wished to grow strong enough to aid Lu.

The Dao incarnation single-mindedly sought to devour or destroy the Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao.

Thus, under this desperate situation, the Five Phoenixes began cultivating in peace.

Of course—this peace existed only because Lu single-handedly blocked the Dao incarnation's assaults.

...

After the thousandth deduction, Lu opened his eyes.

He sat cross-legged on the Heavenly Dao star.

For half a year, he had deduced a thousand times—seeking a way to break through. Pure defense was not the solution.

Yet all thousand attempts failed. Not once could he slay the Emperor-realm Dao incarnation.

This gave Lu a clear understanding of Emperor strength.

Emperor realm was truly powerful.

Even if not a true Ancient Emperor—merely the Heavenly Dao will's incarnation—it still left him helpless.

He exhaled slowly.

Lu looked around—at the dead, silent worlds.

Once bustling with countless lives, the lower three heavens and Void Heaven now held only the Five Phoenixes as a living world.

This apocalyptic scene.

Yet as Lu gazed upon it, a meteor seemed to streak through his mind.

This sight reminded him of Tantai Xuan—destroying the world only to create anew.

He began deducing again. This time, inspiration struck. A clear path formed. He followed it, deducing continuously.

After a long while, Lu opened his eyes.

He had found the method.

But it was far from simple.

“Become one with the Heavenly Dao...”

Lu frowned slightly. The hardest part was merging his divine soul completely with the Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao.

Compared to before, this carried a massive drawback: Lu would lose the chance to start over.

If the Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao was destroyed, Lu himself would be severely damaged.

Before, even if the Five Phoenix Dao perished, Lu could detach and create a new world.

Thus, Lu was conflicted.

He sat silently on the Heavenly Dao star.

Vast Dao essence surged around him.

This was a difficult choice—once made, Lu would be forever fused with the Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao.

Lu slowly closed his eyes.

In his mind, countless scenes flashed rapidly.

He recalled his arrival in the Five Phoenixes—the bits and pieces along the way.

He created secret realms, distributed spiritual energy, forged the Dragon Gate, built legacies...

From a speck of dust—a low-martial continent—to today's top-tier high-martial world, teeming with Xuan Immortals and True Immortals.

Lu had once thought he could stand outside the world, coldly watching the flowers bloom and fall.

But now, he realized he could not.

The Five Phoenixes was not just his effort—it held people he cared about.

He suddenly smiled.

He thought of Tantai Xuan—willing to bear all sin to restore a radiant world.

That was the responsibility he once bore as Human Emperor.

Asking himself honestly: if forced to create another world, could he still pour his heart into it?

Perhaps not.

Once, Lu thought the Five Phoenixes was not unique.

But now, it seemed... in his heart, it truly was.

If it was unique, what was there to hesitate about?

On the silent Heavenly Dao star, Dao essence surged.

Lu smiled.

His heart made its decision.

...

Five Phoenix Continent.

Atop Buzhou Peak, Zhu Long's closed eyes trembled slightly. She lifted her serene face. Lu's voice reached her ears.

After a solemn nod, Zhu Long vanished instantly.

In an ancient tomb, Lu Changkong gazed worriedly at the sky. He saw the Dao incarnation relentlessly assaulting the Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao.

Now, the Five Phoenixes' stability rested entirely on Lu alone.

Suddenly, Lu Changkong's eyes flickered. Lu's voice reached him. He narrowed his eyes.

At the same time.

All the Five Phoenix Xuan Immortals received Lu's transmission.

One by one, they set forth, transforming into streaks of light and soaring beyond the heavens.

They did not ask what Lu intended—they trusted him.

At the boundary between Void Heaven and Pingyang Heaven.

The Five Phoenix Xuan Immortals appeared.

Micah and Gu Mangran arrived as well. They exchanged glances.

They did not know Lu's plan—but since Lu had transmitted to them, it was surely to break the current deadlock. They dared not delay.

In the upper realms.

The holy clan Saints watched cautiously.

Seeing the Five Phoenix Xuan Immortals take position at the end of Void Heaven—guarding the passage between Void Heaven and Pingyang Heaven—they sneered.

Did these Five Phoenix Xuan Immortals plan to resist the Emperor-realm Dao incarnation?

Mere mantis trying to stop a chariot. No number of Saints could block an Emperor.

Now, with an Emperor-level Dao incarnation present, they dared not easily enter the lower three heavens.

Who knew if they might be possessed by the Dao will and turned into energy supplements?

So no one dared venture down.

Thus, in their eyes, the Five Phoenix Immortals' actions were pointless. They would be better off gathering strength for a mass escape.

That might offer a slim chance.

...

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Lu sat cross-legged on the Heavenly Dao star, calmly watching the Dao incarnation.

Its overwhelming aura and pressure were bone-chilling.

Yet Lu smiled.

Others might be unable to merge with the Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao—even Zhu Long, who constantly refined it, would find it difficult.

But... Lu was different.

He was the world's master—having grown alongside the Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao. He was the most compatible with it.

His divine soul surged into the origin star. Chaos power erupted.

Lu closed his eyes.

In the vortex of his soul, the Dao monument that once anchored it vanished—replaced by the Heavenly Dao star.

“From this moment... I, Lu Ping’an... am the Heavenly Dao!”

Lu said softly.

Beyond the Five Phoenixes, the nine heavens’ Dao incarnation sensed something. It launched a furious assault.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Terrifying attacks tore open countless spatial rifts.

Yet Lu remained unmoved.

He slowly opened his eyes. Feeling his ascended soul, his expression was calm.

Before him, the Spirit-Pressure Chessboard appeared.

He rolled up his sleeve, picked up a piece, and placed it gently.

“Ten Thousand Immortals Formation—hold.”

Lu said.

His voice was cold and solemn.

But it resounded clearly in the ears of every Five Phoenix Xuan Immortal who stood ready.

With Lu’s words came the detailed formation plan—appearing in their minds.

Buzz...

The Xuan Immortals’ auras erupted. They unleashed their strongest techniques.

Overlord gripped his axe, roaring at the heavens.

Zhu Long opened her eyes—her Yin-Yang divine ability activated.

Tang Yimo opened seven meridians—his body like a giant demon.

Sima Qingshan splashed ink—unfurling his World-Ending Scroll.

In an instant.

Overwhelming auras surged.

The nine heavens' Dao incarnation—assaulting Lu above the Five Phoenixes—suddenly turned its head and roared in fury.

It raised a fist, smashing toward the Five Phoenix Xuan Immortals.

Lu sat calmly. His hair whipped. His gaze fixed on the Spirit-Pressure Chessboard. The board's layout was profound. Lu picked up a piece and placed it.

And on the board, the pieces remained—yet the player, Lu, vanished into thin air.

At the edge of Void Heaven.

Lu appeared behind the Five Phoenix Xuan Immortals. His black robes fluttered in the wind.

He raised his hand. Countless strands of Dao essence surged forth—the power of the Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao.

Now, Lu was the Heavenly Dao.

He could command these essences.

The countless strands formed a massive axe. Black-robed Lu gripped the giant axe and raised it high—as though to cleave the nine heavens in two.

Even Micah, who had lived hundreds of thousands of years, was stunned by Lu's audacity.

He instinctively wanted to refuse—but now, he had no retreat.

The Xuan Immortals erupted with energy. Their auras intertwined, forming the grand formation. A chessboard phantom appeared.

The nine heavens' Dao incarnation descended. Its terrifying fist smashed down—yet failed to shatter the Ten Thousand Immortals Formation!

Black-robed Lu seized the moment. He raised the axe high.

One swing—like splitting the heavens!

The axe light blazed brilliantly.

As though chopping a great tree!

The nine heavens were cleaved in two. Endless void poured from the rift.

Void Heaven was completely severed from the nine heavens!

Independent—outside the nine heavens!

The Dao incarnation roared in fury—but the Five Phoenix Xuan Immortals, desperately powering the Ten Thousand Immortals Formation, held it back. Even as blood soaked their robes, they refused to retreat.

Thus, the Dao incarnation could only watch helplessly as Lu split the heavens.

Vast Dao essence surged from Lu, occupying every corner of Void Heaven.

From this moment, Void Heaven no longer belonged to the nine heavens.

And Lu—the Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao—became the sole ruler of Void Heaven!

The Heavenly Dao will, once separated from its domain, lost its ruling power—even its independent existence.

**Boom! Boom! Boom!**

The connection between the Dao incarnation and the nine heavens' Dao will was violently severed.

Deprived of the Dao will's support, the incarnation began to collapse!

The upper-realm holy clans and Five Phoenix Xuan Immortals were all stunned.

No one had expected this.

Lu had become one with the Heavenly Dao—making such a decisive move.

One axe split the nine heavens—creating an independent realm!

A desperate reversal!

Chapter 533: Father Found You a Stable Job

Boom!

The colossal Dao incarnation crumbled—like a shattered clay statue, collapsing bit by bit.

The terrifying Emperor-realm aura that had blanketed the heavens rapidly faded.

Everyone was stunned.

Only shock remained.

This was the most intense shock they had ever felt—even greater than when the imperial blood incarnation was slain!

After all, the imperial blood incarnation had only reached the level of an ordinary Quasi-Emperor.

But this Dao incarnation had absorbed the Dao essence of every world in the lower three heavens and Void Heaven—except the Five Phoenixes—and fully stepped into true Emperor realm.

A power that only an Ancient Emperor could resist.

Even Holy Hall Master Micah had despaired and given up.

No one believed the Five Phoenixes could turn the tables in such a situation. Even though Lu had used special means to withstand the Dao incarnation's assaults and prevented the Five Phoenixes' destruction,

To the onlookers, it was merely a desperate struggle.

The Five Phoenixes' fall was inevitable—just a matter of time.

Yet now...

The Five Phoenixes... had reversed the situation!

Watching the Dao incarnation collapse, no one knew what to say.

This was a true comeback from the brink!

Rumble!

A massive rift appeared between Pingyang Heaven and Void Heaven.

Endless darkness surged from the gap, pushing the two realms further apart.

The Heavenly Dao's aura steadily weakened—seemingly on the verge of vanishing.

The cultivators of Pingyang Heaven, Blood Fiend Heaven, and Yuan Magnetic Heaven were utterly dumbfounded.

Ancestors of high-martial worlds felt their scalps go numb.

Before this miracle, they were frozen.

Soon they reacted. Looking at the rapidly receding, blurring Void Heaven and Five Phoenixes,

The high-martial ancestors understood: the time had come for them to make a choice.

Stay in the nine heavens... or join the Five Phoenixes.

The Great Venerable of the Little Thunder Sound Buddha Realm did not hesitate. He enveloped all life in his realm and transformed into a streak of light, leaping across the dark rift carved by the terrifying axe—rushing toward the Five Phoenixes.

That was the heavenly barrier!

The barrier between two realms with independent Heavenly Daos!

Not just the Great Venerable—powerhouses from countless high-martial worlds brought their realm's inhabitants and charged toward the Five Phoenixes.

Though they had lived in the nine heavens for countless years,

The nine heavens' Dao had destroyed their worlds without mercy—cold and ruthless.

It left a profound impact.

They felt no attachment to the nine heavens.

So as the two realms separated, more and more powerhouses crossed the barrier, entering the Five Phoenixes.

Rumble...

Finally, when the dark rift grew vast—stretching between the Five Phoenixes and Void Heaven—

The powerhouses of both sides could no longer sense each other's auras.

For example, the upper-realm powerhouses completely lost contact with Void Heaven.

Lu, clad in black robes, stood with hands behind his back.

His black hair whipped in the wind.

He gazed at the fading Dao incarnation—its aura completely extinguished—expression calm and emotionless.

His attention was mostly on the rift between Void Heaven and the nine heavens.

On the other side.

The Five Phoenix Xuan Immortals and True Immortals gradually calmed their excitement.

Lu's act was akin to splitting the heavens—separating the Five Phoenixes from the nine heavens.

Gu Mangran was relatively composed—he had grown accustomed to such shocks.

But Micah was utterly dumbfounded. He stared blankly at the vanished Dao incarnation.

He experienced the bizarre sensation of being pulled from the abyss straight to the heavens.

What a strange feeling.

“Is this even possible?”

Micah drew a deep breath.

Even an Ancient Emperor was stunned.

His emotions were complex—but after the complexity came a spark of hope growing deep within.

Perhaps... he still had a chance!

“To separate the Five Phoenixes from the nine heavens, splitting the sky and earth, creating an independent realm... what audacity!”

Light gradually returned to Micah’s eyes.

Only a Young Master Lu with such boldness could lead the Five Phoenixes to their current heights.

Micah gazed at the ever-widening rift.

His eyes flickered. In the end, he abandoned any thought of returning to the nine heavens.

Return for what?

To die?

Since he had chosen Lu's side—chosen to gamble—he had no path back.

Not only would the Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor never forgive him—the nine heavens' Dao would not either.

Behind him, the Holy Hall Saints who followed him also fell silent.

They too had no retreat.

Rumble...

Everything between heaven and earth fell quiet.

Soon.

The dark rift—seemingly capable of devouring all—stretched across the horizon.

Though the nine heavens remained faintly visible in the distance... it gradually felt unfamiliar.

Cheers soon erupted from the Five Phoenix Immortals.

Many ancestors who had fled from the lower three heavens into the Five Phoenixes also cheered.

They had survived...

The Five Phoenixes had survived the assault of an Emperor-realm Dao incarnation.

A truly remarkable feat.

Everyone was overjoyed.

The high-martial ancestors from the lower three heavens wept with joy.

When their worlds were destroyed, they had despaired—prepared to wander the void as refugees.

Yet the Five Phoenixes had given them hope.

In the void.

The Five Phoenix Xuan Immortals—exhausted from powering the Ten Thousand Immortals Formation against Emperor-level assaults—returned to the Five Phoenix Continent.

Their auras were weak.

The Ten Thousand Immortals Formation was a grand array created by Young Master Lu. As a supreme array master, his formations were unparalleled.

Lu Changkong smiled, hands behind his back. With his top-tier special physique, he had not fared too badly—the physique had shielded him from the Dao incarnation's attacks.

He looked at Lu's back and smiled.

As expected—nothing escaped his expectations.

One by one, the Five Phoenix Immortals returned to the continent.

The air was thick with scattered Dao essence—the remnants of the nine heavens' Dao incarnation's collapse.

Lu ceased operating the time array, giving the world time to recover.

All inhabitants of Void Heaven descended into the Five Phoenixes to continue cultivation and life.

Buzz...

Lu returned, transforming into a streak of light and appearing in the Origin Space.

He sat cross-legged on the Heavenly Dao star.

Lu's eyes shone. His divine soul had fused completely with the Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao—simply put, Lu Ping'an was now the Heavenly Dao.

In truth, Lu had always been the Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao—just in a different form before.

Now, he was fully integrated—one glory, one ruin with the Five Phoenixes.

Lu did not mind. Though fusing his divine soul with the Heavenly Dao carried the risk of perishing should it fall,

Since that was the case, he would raise the Five Phoenixes to the absolute peak.

Become an immortal martial world—or even... a super-fantasy world!

In fact, fusing with the Heavenly Dao had little impact on Lu.

It was not much different from before—his goal had always been to strengthen the Five Phoenixes and, through it, strengthen himself.

Now, he simply bore greater responsibility.

“Time to wrap things up.”

“The current Five Phoenixes is already the embryonic form of an immortal martial world...”

Lu's eyes gleamed.

"First, elevate the Five Phoenixes to First-Derivation high-martial."

Lu thought.

Fusing with the Heavenly Dao had another benefit: refining Dao essence became far easier—about ten times faster.

And now, there were enough Dao essence strands. What the Five Phoenixes lacked was only time to refine them.

"But before that... there's one more thing to handle."

Lu's gaze sharpened.

His eyes fell on the Spirit-Pressure Chessboard. It reflected the entire Void Heaven—every corner under his control.

Looking at the shattered worlds in Void Heaven,

Lu drew a deep breath.

He rolled up his sleeve and picked up a piece.

When the first piece landed on the board,

Dao essence began flowing through Void Heaven.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

The next moment, a terrifying storm swept through Void Heaven. The fragments of worlds—drained of Dao essence and shattered by the Dao incarnation—were drawn together by the essence.

World fragments collided and piled up, forming spheres of varying sizes.

In Void Heaven, countless spheres floated.

Like newborn stars.

Lu sat on the Heavenly Dao star.

He looked up, gazing at the sight.

A magnificent starry sky.

Lu's lips curved into a smile.

Now, Void Heaven was a brand-new, independent world.

The worlds of the nine heavens existed as continental planes.

But Lu, controlling the Heavenly Dao, transformed the worlds within the Five Phoenixes into stellar forms.

Each star received a share of the Five Phoenixes' fortune.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh...

The ancestors who had fled from the lower three heavens into the Five Phoenixes, guided by Lu's transmission, left the Five Phoenixes.

They brought the living beings of their worlds and settled on these life-bearing stars, rebuilding their homes.

Dead, silent stars began to pulse with vibrant life.

Many ancestors gained fortune and broke through in cultivation. Their fortune also helped refine a great deal of the Five Phoenixes' Dao essence.

As for the original low- and mid-martial worlds in the Five Phoenixes—they too recovered in stellar form.

These stars were far more stable than continental structures.

Unless Saints clashed, worlds would no longer be easily destroyed.

Vagrant lives scattered throughout the void settled on these stars.

All of Void Heaven once again brimmed with boundless vitality.

Looking at the starry expanse of Void Heaven reflected on the Spirit-Pressure Chessboard, Lu smiled.

As for the Five Phoenixes, Lu had no intention of transforming it into stellar form. He let it develop freely—preserving its continental concept and making the Five Phoenix Continent the ascension destination for powerhouses from the many life-bearing stars in Void Heaven.

Whether low-martial, mid-martial, or high-martial stars—

Once a world reached its limit, it could shatter its barriers and ascend to the Five Phoenix Continent, continue cultivating, and eventually ascend through the Heavenly Gate.

Having arranged everything,

Lu felt the pressure on his shoulders lighten slightly.

Next was refining Dao essence.

Looking at the dense strands of Dao essence, Lu felt a slight headache.

Even with tenfold refining speed, so many strands would still take time.

Lu had no interest in refining Dao essence.

Moreover, such a menial, technical-less task... Lu felt it shouldn't waste his precious time.

A job this idle... should naturally be left to the idlest.

...

Five Phoenix Continent.

With the disaster over, the continent returned to its original peace and harmony.

The newborn humans developed vigorously. The Five Phoenix Immortals cultivated diligently.

This ordeal had taught them how essential raw power was.

Powerful hidden auras permeated the Five Phoenix Continent.

Xuan Immortals secluded themselves in blessed lands and major sects.

Origin Lake, Origin Island.

Ning Zhao, Ni Yu, and Yi Yue had returned.

They had ended their cultivation. Ni Yu had broken through to Xuan Immortal, while Ning Zhao remained at Half-Step Xuan Immortal.

The three gazed quietly at the waves on the island.

Suddenly.

A refreshing breeze swept over them.

Ni Yu looked up in delight and saw Lu seated in his thousand-blade chair.

“Young Master!”

Ni Yu cried joyfully.

This journey had taught her: only Young Master's thigh was truly reliable and safe.

Ning Zhao and Yi Yue were also overjoyed.

Little Yinglong, perched on Ni Yu's head, raised its head with teary eyes, flapping its fleshy wings.

Lu smiled gently, white robes pristine.

The three maidservants gathered before him.

They bounced happily—just like old times.

Lu smiled and shifted his gaze to Little Yinglong on Ni Yu's head.

The little dragon had gotten even rounder on this trip.

Looking at the plump little dragon, Lu's smile widened.

He raised a hand and beckoned.

Little Yinglong was instantly lifted by the scruff.

“Look how round you’ve gotten. Since you love being a salted fish, Father found you a stable job.”

“Idle work should naturally be done by the idlest.”

Lu laughed.

This smile made Little Yinglong realize belatedly. Its scales tightened as it struggled desperately.

No...

But no matter how it struggled, it could not escape Lu’s grasp.

Under the dumbfounded gazes of Ni Yu, Ning Zhao, and Yi Yue,

Lu vanished with Little Yinglong.

In the Origin Space, on the Heavenly Dao star,

Little Yinglong was set down by Lu.

Strands of Dao essence surged like small serpents.

“Work hard. Refine all the Dao essence on the Heavenly Dao star, and you’ll be free.”

Lu sat in his thousand-blade chair and smiled.

Little Yinglong raised its head, forcing a smile uglier than crying.

Could it refuse?

But Lu ignored it and vanished as a streak of light.

The space fell silent.

Little Yinglong looked around—only surging Dao essence for company.

No food. No play...

How tragic.

At first, Little Yinglong lazily sprawled on the star and slept.

But soon, its stomach growled. Not hunger—just craving something to taste.

For food, it reluctantly crawled up and began refining Dao essence half-heartedly.

Lu had taught it exactly how to do so.

Little Yinglong refined while crying.

It just wanted to finish quickly and taste freedom.

Rumble...

Suddenly.

Zhu Long appeared in the Origin Space.

She floated before the Heavenly Dao star, serene as an autumn leaf.

Little Yinglong was shocked. Its face lit up.

It opened its mouth and let out a miserable roar toward Zhu Long.

As though crying: Big Sis, save me!

Zhu Long paused. She had not expected Little Yinglong to be here.

The little dragon on the Heavenly Dao star looked utterly miserable.

It put on a pitiful, helpless act.

It even mimicked Ni Yu—thumping its chest and wailing.

Yet Zhu Long remained unmoved.

After swallowing some of the Heavenly Dao star's essence, she closed her eyes, lashes trembling.

With an air of "I see nothing," she vanished.

Leaving Little Yinglong alone and desolate on the Heavenly Dao star.

Little Yinglong felt the darkness of dragon life deepen.

...

After tossing the eternally idle Little Yinglong onto the Heavenly Dao star to refine Dao essence,

Lu returned to Origin Lake, Origin Island.

He reclined lazily in his chair.

Ning Zhao and Yi Yue once again attended to him. Such decadent, idle days were wonderfully dull.

He restarted the time array covering all of Void Heaven.

Though Lu had severed Void Heaven from the nine heavens, making it independent,

He knew the nine heavens' Dao will would not give up so easily.

Moreover—not just the nine heavens' Dao will.

The Ancient Emperors in the Void Heaven rift were entities Lu had to remain vigilant against.

Having clashed with the Dao incarnation, Lu understood the terror of Emperor realm.

Emperor realm—according to the Great Luo Immortal Scripture—was Golden Immortal level.

With fortune like a sea, they could break free from the Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao's restraints.

Lu naturally feared such existences.

Thus, he could not relax. The Five Phoenixes possessed an immortal martial foundation—those Ancient Emperors must have noticed and would not give up easily.

Unlike the mature nine heavens' Dao, the Five Phoenixes had limitless potential.

In the future, it might even completely surpass the nine heavens' Dao.

“Where exactly are those Ancient Emperors?”

“What caused their disappearance?”

Lu pondered.

As he contemplated these questions,

Micah ascended the island alone—without his Holy Hall Saints.

Seeing Lu, he was slightly surprised.

He had not expected Lu to still be on Origin Island—so leisurely.

After becoming one with the Heavenly Dao, shouldn't he be extremely busy?

After all, he had to refine the Dao and manage the entire world.

Could it be... Lu had not truly become the Heavenly Dao?

Though Micah was puzzled, he did not show it.

Upon meeting Lu, he expressed his admiration, then spoke gravely.

"Young Master Lu... I have now completely severed ties with the nine heavens and joined the Five Phoenixes..."

"I have come today with two requests."

Micah said.

He no longer dared underestimate Lu.

Leaving aside Lu's strength comparable to his own, the fact that Lu controlled the Heavenly Dao alone demanded his respect.

"Speak."

Lu smiled and took a sip of Heavenly Immortal Wine.

"After all, I am the Holy Hall Master. Many Saints followed me here. I hope you can grant them a place to cultivate in the Five Phoenixes."

Micah said.

Lu nodded slightly. He had always treated others with sincerity. Since these Saints had fought for him, he would not be ungrateful.

In truth, Micah's request was merely a formality.

"The Five Phoenix Continent is vast. Unclaimed famous mountains, rivers, and blessed lands—choose freely."

Lu waved a hand and laughed.

Micah bowed deeply in thanks.

He looked up, expression solemn, and gazed at Lu.

“There is one more matter.”

“Speak.”

“I wish to enter the Ascension Land and view the complete Great Luo Immortal Scripture. I beg Young Master Lu’s permission...”

Micah bowed.

Lu raised a brow slightly.

“Your cultivation has reached Quasi-Emperor. You have walked your own path. Even if you cultivate the Great Luo Immortal Scripture, progress will not be obvious.”

Lu said.

Micah smiled. He knew all this.

At Quasi-Emperor realm, one had forged their own path with a clear goal of becoming Emperor.

But what came after Emperor?

The Ancient Emperors of the nine heavens had never taken that step.

Yet the Great Luo Immortal Scripture of the Five Phoenixes clearly recorded the realm beyond Emperor:  
Great Luo Immortal!

That was what Micah sought.

Looking at Lu, Micah drew a deep breath. After long hesitation, he made his decision.

“Please grant me permission, Young Master Lu.”

“I am willing to sever my cultivation and restart from the beginning—cultivating the Immortal Scripture once more and walking the path of immortality!”

## Chapter 534: Cutting Flesh to Create the Witch Clan

On Origin Island, a gentle breeze blew.

The air carried a quiet, cool serenity.

Micah stood by the lakeside, speaking earnestly with a resolute, unwavering determination.

Ning Zhao, Ni Yu, and Yi Yue all instinctively looked up, their gazes drawn to him.

Severing his own cultivation? Restarting his path with the Immortal Scripture?

Was this truly something a Quasi-Emperor would say?

Micah was a Quasi-Emperor—hundreds of thousands of years of cultivation. Was he really willing to discard it all?

Even Lu was slightly surprised.

Ruthless.

This Micah was indeed a ruthless man.

What kind of audacity did it take to make such a decision—willingly severing his cultivation to walk the path anew?

But upon reflection, Lu realized Micah was precisely that kind of person.

From the moment he first sensed the birth of the Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao, he had staked his future on it.

All for the sake of breaking through—to prove that, given sufficient resources, he was no less than any Ancient Emperor.

Compared to Gu Mangran, Micah was sharper, more stubborn.

Perhaps it was precisely this stubbornness that gave birth to such genius.

Lu smiled.

“Very well.”

He did not refuse—nor had he any intention to.

Severing cultivation and restarting the path was, for Lu, a good thing.

With Micah's talent, he would likely break through rapidly once more.

And when he did, Lu would receive massive spiritual energy contributions.

How could he refuse such a benefit?

Micah stared at Lu, his eyes blazing with vitality and excitement.

Originally, his gaze had been dim—worn down by endless years.

But now, having glimpsed hope in the Five Phoenixes, the darkness had lifted. He had found his opportunity—his chance.

He would pursue it with everything he had.

Under the normal cultivation system of the nine heavens, even if he transcended the Heavenly Dao and reached Emperor realm, the path forward remained shrouded in darkness.

After Emperor... there was nothing.

The reason for the ancient war was unknown to Micah, but that cataclysm that engulfed the nine heavens—likely tied to transcending the Emperor realm—had been a tragedy.

And Micah, though a heaven-defying genius, had been born in that tragic era and could not access its deeper secrets.

But now, he had encountered the Five Phoenixes.

He had heard of the Great Luo Immortal Scripture—a truly profound immortal technique.

In Micah's eyes, it was a genuine immortal scripture.

Cultivation through the accumulation of fortune, using the entire world as the foundation of practice.

Golden Immortal equaled Ancient Emperor—and the scripture described a realm beyond: the carefree, unbound Great Luo Immortal.

That was what Micah yearned for.

“Thank you, Young Master Lu.”

Micah bowed deeply.

His gratitude toward Lu was sincere.

Though Lu was younger, to someone who had tasted true despair, even a sliver of hope was equivalent to being given the entire world.

Lu nodded slightly. Then, lazily, he picked up a chess piece and placed it on the board.

Boom!

The Heavenly Gate appeared.

After thanking Lu, Micah and the Saints who followed him stepped forward one by one and ascended the gate.

Beyond the Heavenly Gate lay the Ascension Land.

Upon entering, Micah immediately sensed an ancient, distant aura.

He looked around—seeing forbidden zones and the backs of Ancient Emperors.

Though as a Quasi-Emperor he knew many secrets, he was still profoundly shaken.

Perhaps... the Ascension Land truly was a contingency left by the Ancient Emperors?

Behind Micah, the many Saints also hovered.

They were all awestruck.

They had heard of the Ascension Land and Underworld in the Five Phoenixes—but this was their first time seeing them.

“This place may be a relic from a previous era. The Ancient Emperors once came here—perhaps they discovered something extraordinary.”

Micah said.

The many Holy Hall Saints sighed in admiration.

Saints lived for hundreds of thousands of years—many of them ancient beings.

Naturally, they were knowledgeable.

“Even Ancient Emperors face the end of their lifespan. How many Great Emperors have been born in the nine heavens since ancient times? No one knows.”

“But every era ends with the fall of Ancient Emperors.”

“Perhaps in the ancient era of the nine heavens, there existed beings who transcended Emperor realm—and thus left behind the Great Luo Immortal Scripture, guiding cultivators onto the correct path.”

Micah sighed.

With so many Saints entering the Ascension Land,

Lu Jiulian naturally sensed them.

A green lotus bloomed. He appeared before Micah and the others.

Upon learning Micah had come to view the Great Luo Immortal Scripture, Lu Jiulian did not refuse.

He instructed Tang Guo to lead Micah and the others to the site where the Great Luo Immortal Scripture had been unearthed.

This was the original location of the scripture—the most complete record.

Micah and the Saints following him breathed heavily, staring intently.

They were captivated by the magnificent descriptions in the Great Luo Immortal Scripture.

“Great Luo Immortal—carefree and unbound, transcending heaven and earth, untouched by rules...”

“This is a realm beyond Ancient Emperor!”

Micah's body trembled faintly.

Within the Ascension Land, many Immortals watched them.

Lu Jiulian sat upon his green lotus platform, expression calm.

The Great Luo Immortal Scripture was never meant to be a secret. Let them see—it mattered not.

Moreover, Micah and his Saints had helped the Five Phoenixes in the previous battle.

Lu Jiulian had even less reason to refuse.

However, cultivating the Great Luo Immortal Scripture required cultivation not to be too high. Below Xuan Immortal, there was still a chance to switch paths.

Once one reached Xuan Immortal, their Dao was fixed.

Cultivating the Great Luo Immortal Scripture at that point would yield little benefit.

As expected.

After sitting for a month,

The many Saints shook their heads regretfully. They rose and dispersed—either wandering the Ascension Land or seeking blessed lands to cultivate.

They did not return to the Five Phoenixes. The Ascension Land's environment resembled the upper realms more closely and suited their cultivation better.

Though they coveted the Great Luo Immortal Scripture, the fact remained: having already reached Saint realm, they could not cultivate it.

Unless they severed their cultivation—but after hundreds of thousands of years to reach Saint...

Who would be willing?

Moreover, severing cultivation meant starting over. Whether they could even reach Xuan Immortal again with the Great Luo Immortal Scripture was uncertain.

The risk was too great.

The many Saints dared not choose.

Soon, only Micah remained seated.

He gazed outward for a long time, then drew a deep breath.

He committed the entire Great Luo Immortal Scripture to memory—deeply engraving it in his mind.

After bidding farewell to his former subordinates, he left the Ascension Land and returned to the Five Phoenixes.

He sought out the Nine Hells Secret Realm.

Legend said the Nine Hells connected to the Underworld—the destination of the dead. The first Human Emperor had transformed into the Underworld King, ruling the Underworld.

Micah ventured deep into the Nine Hells.

Soon, he came upon a massive rift exuding endless deathly aura.

A terrifying Saint-realm ferocious beast guarded the entrance.

It was the Hell Hound—protector of the Underworld Gate.

The Hell Hound roared. Micah tried to enter, but it blocked him.

Thus, Micah clashed with the Hell Hound. With Quasi-Emperor strength, he gave it a thorough beating.

But Micah had come seeking the Dao—he did not kill the Hell Hound.

The nine lords of the Underworld cities emerged.

Micah explained his purpose and stated he had Lu's permission. The nine lords stepped aside.

Finally, Micah entered the Underworld.

With his Quasi-Emperor body, he stepped into the Yellow Springs. Enduring the corrosion of the Springs, he drifted downward until he reached the Underworld's land.

This was a vast realm—ten cities suppressing the directions.

Upon entering the Underworld, Micah sensed an overwhelming aura.

He looked toward the Yellow Springs. Deep within, a powerful presence was brewing.

“Quasi-Emperor?”

Micah’s eyes narrowed.

He had not expected the Five Phoenixes to hide such a powerhouse.

This person... was likely the King of the Underworld?

“Not quite Quasi-Emperor... but only half a step away.”

Micah drew a deep breath.

The more he learned, the more mysterious the Five Phoenixes seemed.

Perhaps the future of the Five Phoenixes would not be inferior to the nine heavens.

Moreover, now independent from the nine heavens with its own Heavenly Dao, the Five Phoenixes would only grow stronger.

Micah kept a low profile as he walked through the Underworld.

Observing and understanding.

He came to the abyss, gazing at the massive Buddha statue and the figure seated in its palm.

He drew a deep breath—another Ancient Emperor's back.

Entering the abyss, he saw the stone murals and discovered the Six Paths Reincarnation Visualization Method. He was shocked.

So the cultivation of the Underworld differed from the Ascension Land.

It seemed a technique comparable to the Great Luo Immortal Scripture!

Micah's scalp tingled as he devoured the method with his eyes.

Though he could not cultivate it, his heart was satisfied. Two cultivation methods—like twin beacons—illuminated his path forward.

After wandering the Underworld a while longer,

Micah chose to leave.

He returned to the Five Phoenixes.

He found a blessed land and sat cross-legged.

The current Five Phoenix Continent was vast and sparsely populated—filled with blessed lands, yet few true inhabitants.

Deep into the night, stars filled the sky.

Micah looked up, somewhat entranced by the starry expanse.

Countless stars radiated vibrant life force, hanging high above.

In hundreds of thousands of years, he had never seen such a magnificent sight.

“Young Master Lu calls this ‘starry sky’—truly breathtaking.”

Micah knew every star in this sky had been formed from the low-, mid-, and high-martial worlds.

They existed in different forms but were far more stable than in the nine heavens.

Even for him, destroying a high-martial star would be extremely difficult.

Each star received the blessing of the Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao and bore fortune.

Under such operation, the entire world became harmonious.

In the nine heavens, the destruction of worlds and the death of lives were commonplace.

But in the Five Phoenixes, everything had changed.

“Every Heavenly Dao has its own way of operating. This is the way of the Five Phoenixes.”

Micah pondered deeply.

Just as cultivation was the Dao of humanity, humanity was also the Dao of cultivation.

The Heavenly Dao had its rules—humans could only transcend by walking their own path.

With this realization,

Micah understood: the time had come for him to decide.

Reflecting on his long path of cultivation,

He felt a surge of emotion.

From his youth—full of ambition and brilliance—rising step by step, breaking into Saint realm with dazzling speed.

Becoming the youngest Saint, hailed as the one with the greatest hope of becoming the next Emperor.

Yet hundreds of thousands of years had passed.

From ambition to twilight.

Stuck at a bottleneck for hundreds of thousands of years—because the world offered no new slot for Emperor.

In the nine heavens, there could be only nine Emperors.

Unless he outlived the current era and waited for an Emperor to perish, there would be no place for him.

Outliving an Emperor—whose lifespan was several times that of a Saint—how could he?

So reality was despair.

But now, Micah had found hope.

Deep in the night, atop the peak of his blessed land.

He smiled.

Making this decision was not so difficult after all.

He laughed freely.

The next moment.

His eyes blazed!

That night, the entire Five Phoenix Continent was illuminated.

A colossal energy blade appeared between heaven and earth.

Countless cultivators were startled awake.

Overlord, Tang Yimo, and other Xuan Immortals looked toward one direction.

There, a dazzling blade light slashed down.

Three slashes.

After three cuts, it was as though heaven and earth bled.

Countless energy collapsed like an avalanche, sweeping across every corner of the Five Phoenix Continent.

“Self-severing three blades—shattering all cultivation... who is it? Such audacity?”

“A Quasi-Emperor crippling himself? Has he gone mad?”

In an ancient tomb.

Gu Mangran stared blankly at the night sky—now returned to calm after that burst of extreme light.

His heart still trembled with incomparable shock.

“Holy Hall Master Micah... actually chose to sever his cultivation?”

“That’s Quasi-Emperor cultivation... half a step from true Emperor realm!”

Gu Mangran was shaken by Micah’s resolve.

Micah had once sought him out and spoken of this. Gu Mangran had not believed it then—but now, he did.

Because Micah had not hesitated.

When he said “sever,” he severed.

Above White Jade Capital pavilion.

Lu watched the fleeting brilliance and was slightly astonished.

He really did it.

This Micah was ruthless.

Restarting the path of cultivation—unknown risks. Such resolve—even Lu admired it.

Most importantly, the risk.

Micah's lifespan was nearly exhausted. Whether he could break through before his time ran out was the key.

“Since ancient times, the path of cultivation is littered with bones.”

Lu suddenly felt curious.

“I wonder... who will be the first in the Five Phoenix Continent to step onto the path of Emperor?”

He withdrew his thoughts.

His divine sense sank into the Origin Space.

He wanted to check on Little Yinglong's work.

Had this salted fish dragon been slacking?

But upon looking...

Lu was utterly astonished.

The Dao essence surrounding the Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao star had already been refined in large amounts.

This speed... was even faster than if Lu himself refined it.

He saw Little Yinglong transformed into a massive winged dragon. Its wings blotted out the sky as it swallowed countless strands of Dao essence.

Like an evil dragon roaring through heaven and earth.

This was how it accelerated refinement.

Lu was stunned.

He looked at Little Yinglong. Perhaps because it was working so hard to refine Dao essence, it had forgotten time—forgotten everything.

Its eyes held only longing for freedom.

Father said: refine all this Dao essence, and you'll be free.

Then he could return to Ni Yu, eat pills, munch spirit fruits, and live as a carefree salted fish dragon!

Freedom!

He wanted freedom!

“As expected... you really do have potential when pushed.”

Lu laughed.

Seeing that nearly five hundred thousand strands of Dao essence had already been refined, he felt even more satisfied with his decision.

And during this process, Little Yinglong's cultivation was steadily rising.

It swallowed and refined Dao essence—its body even beginning to fuse with countless strands.

Looking at Little Yinglong working so hard, Lu felt a touch of sympathy.

Those eyes filled with longing for freedom. That dragon roar was a cry against fate.

And that back bent by life.

Truly pitiful.

Lu withdrew his divine sense.

After thinking for a moment, he transmitted the hundreds of thousands of Dao essence strands devoured from the Dao incarnation by the Heaven-Stealing Tower into the Heavenly Dao star.

“Only through bitter suffering can one become a dragon among dragons!”

Lu silently blessed Little Yinglong.

Then he sat back in his thousand-blade chair, leaned against the railing, listened to the wind, drank Heavenly Immortal Wine, and played chess.

Gazing at the flickering lights on the Spirit-Pressure Chessboard, Lu paused mid-sip.

His brows furrowed slightly.

He murmured softly.

“The Five Phoenix Continent has humans and demons... but overall, the numbers are still too few.”

Lu raised his hand, fingers brushing the chessboard.

“The demon race was created by me. However, their cultivation speed is slow, and the spiritual energy they contribute is not much... Perhaps I can create another race—a more perfect and powerful one.”

Lu’s gaze shifted to the vast, untouched Western Continent.

Though creating a race required immense effort,

Lu no longer minded such things.

Since the idea had formed, he would prepare.

Now, he was still a short distance from Qi Refining Layer 10.

But he needed to plan for what came after.

How would he acquire more spiritual energy then?

Breakthroughs for top-tier powerhouses were difficult. Lu could not rely solely on them.

This was why he had decided to create another race.

With a thought, his mind sank into the Transmission Platform.

Creating an ordinary race would be simple for the current Lu.

But this time, Lu aimed to accelerate his spiritual energy contributions—to lay the foundation for the Five Phoenixes becoming an immortal martial era.

So he wanted to create a powerful race—born for cultivation.

Lu sat in the Transmission Platform.

His eyes were like paintings—glorious scenes flowing within.

“This race shall possess powerful flesh, innate divine abilities, innate divine souls, no cultivation bottlenecks...”

“But heaven must be fair. Though this is only for contributions and to establish the immortal martial foundation, the more powerful the race, the more restrictions it should have.”

Lu rubbed his chin.

An idea gradually formed in his mind.

He raised his hand. The flesh on his fingertip was suddenly sliced away. Countless blood cells scattered and floated within the Transmission Platform.

“This perfect and powerful race—born from my flesh and blood.”

“Shall be called... the Witch Clan.”

Chapter 535: What He’s Swallowing Isn’t Pills—It’s Longing

One night passed.

When the morning star appeared on the horizon, Micah, seated atop the mountain peak, slowly opened his eyes.

A cold wind blew past him. For the first time in ages, he actually felt... chilly.

Cold?

He had forgotten how many years it had been since he last experienced cold.

With a Quasi-Emperor’s flesh, even plunging into absolute zero would not faze him. Yet now, he truly felt a chill.

Sunlight pierced through thick clouds, falling like a heavy veil upon his body.

As though draping him in a robe.

Rising from the peak, Micah lifted his hand. His flesh felt heavy. The cultivation that had accompanied him for hundreds of thousands of years had been severed last night—three slashes, completely eradicated.

Now, even his divine soul felt somewhat muddled.

“Restarting the path of cultivation...”

Micah smiled. No reluctance. No regret.

He was that kind of person. Once a decision was made, there would be no second-guessing.

He slowly descended the mountain.

When ascending, he had flown directly.

Now, descending, he felt the strain.

He had scattered all his cultivation. Yet his Quasi-Emperor flesh—tempered over countless years—was not so easily diminished.

Thus, he was far from a true mortal.

As he walked down, tigers, leopards, and wild beasts roamed the mountain.

Micah felt no fear.

Though his cultivation was gone, the lingering pressure deep in his soul remained.

The beasts dared not approach.

At the mountain's base, Micah did not head toward the Great Xuan Divine Dynasty—though that direction teemed with people.

“To cultivate the Great Luo Immortal Scripture, one must walk their own path...”

Micah's eyes gleamed.

“Only then can one gather vast fortune when transmitting the Dao.”

He thought.

A surge of excitement rose within him—something he had not felt in a long time.

It was as though he had regained the exhilaration of his early cultivation days.

He traveled across mountains and rivers, starting anew.

The spiritual energy of heaven and earth was abundant. He began with the Five Emperors Scripture.

Step by step—methodical.

Combined with his vast experience from previous cultivation,

His progress was astonishing.

In one month, he crossed from Qi Core to Body Concealment realms. If not for wanting to perfectly temper his Body Concealment, he could have broken through to Heavenly Lock long ago.

Besides cultivating the basic scripture, Micah contemplated his own path.

He altered his appearance and began visiting various cultivation sects—studying their methods for insight.

He visited countless sects.

Some welcomed him courteously.

Others ignored him completely.

A few hot-tempered cultivators attacked him on sight.

With no cultivation left, Micah started from scratch.

Against peers, he had no fear. Against higher realms, his experience allowed him to dominate.

But without cultivation, he still suffered heavy injuries at times.

He fled, battered and bruised.

Yet through this process, his cultivation rose steadily. His foundation grew increasingly solid.

In truth, he could have rapidly recovered his strength—having once reached Quasi-Emperor.

But he was in no hurry. He even slowed down, savoring every realm's changes.

He had never realized how many secrets each realm held.

In his youth, he had advanced too quickly—hailed as possessing Ancient Emperor potential.

Back then, he had been proud and complacent—never truly immersing himself in each realm.

Now, starting over, he discovered the depth of every stage.

His cultivation path resembled Lu Julian's—pushing each realm to its absolute limit.

“Let us call this... ‘Extreme Realm Cultivation.’”

Micah opened his eyes and spoke softly.

Each extreme realm seemed to stir the Heavenly Dao.

In truth, this was not merely a cultivation method—it was an entire system.

It was as though he had carved out an additional realm within the existing path.

Extreme Realm—the pinnacle of every stage.

Micah felt anticipation.

If he could reach the end of the path through Extreme Realms, could he achieve ultimate transcendence?

Qi Core had no Extreme Realm—or rather, its Extreme Realm was talent itself.

Body Concealment tempered the five viscera and six bowels.

Micah not only completed the tempering but linked the qi of his organs, allowing spiritual energy to circulate in a minor cycle.

This was his Body Concealment Extreme Realm.

Heavenly Lock, Nascent Soul...

Micah plunged into frenzied research of cultivation.

He sensed... this might be his path.

Breaking through each realm at its extreme—forging an ultimate cultivation path!

This could become the foundation for gathering vast heavenly fortune in the future!

...

Even Lu admired Micah's audacity in starting over.

If possible, Lu would happily sip Heavenly Immortal Wine and watch Micah's journey from scratch.

But Lu was too busy—so he did not pay attention to Micah's path.

His divine sense sank into the Transmission Platform.

He intended to create a powerful, perfect race—the Witch Clan.

He sliced open the flesh of his fingertip. Blood cells scattered and floated within the platform.

Lu's blood contained terrifying power.

Under the infusion of boundless energy, the cells rapidly divided and transformed.

Energy within the cells swelled and surged.

Lu raised his hand. His palm—white as jade, veiled in faint light.

He continuously struck the massive cluster of energy cells, infusing it with immense power.

Lu did not fix a form—letting the energy evolve freely.

Withdrawing his hand, Lu began deducing.

Besides his own flesh and blood, Lu infused vast chaos power.

**Boom!**

The immense energy poured in—like flooding a pond with raging river water.

The cluster of chaotic energy cells expanded to an enormous size.

Lu sat calmly. Heavenly Dao essence surged around him, faintly drawing down the Heavenly Dao star's reflection.

The chaotic energy cluster continued to transform.

Faintly, Lu seemed to see a blurry embryonic figure within the cells.

This was a being born from countless perfect energies.

“The first Witch between heaven and earth.”

Lu smiled.

As time passed and deductions continued,

The figure in the embryo gradually awakened. It opened its eyes—possessing an incredibly powerful body, faint divine soul fluctuations, and even blessed by the Heavenly Dao with innate divine abilities.

What a perfect existence.

Lu gazed at the figure and slowly lifted it.

“The Heavenly Dao is fair. Such a perfect being naturally requires restrictions...”

Lu pondered.

Soon, he raised his hand and grasped at the void. Heavenly Dao power surged, forming a Heavenly Dao seal.

He imprinted this seal into the massive energy embryo.

“Though the race is perfect, it carries a restriction: unable to transcend the Heavenly Dao. Even at the peak of cultivation, they remain beneath the Dao. Their upper limit is sealed.”

The Heavenly Dao seal Lu implanted vanished into the embryo.

Boom!

It seemed to resonate with the Heavenly Dao star.

Having done this, Lu exhaled slowly.

This was perhaps the Witch Clan's greatest restriction—unable to transcend the Heavenly Dao. Compared to humanity, who could cultivate freely, this was the ultimate limitation.

Boom!

Exiting the Transmission Platform.

Lu returned to White Jade Capital pavilion.

Ning Zhao was brewing plum wine in the distance. Seeing Lu open his eyes, she smiled gently.

“Go cultivate.”

“I may need to leave for a while.”

Lu waved lazily.

Ning Zhao paused.

“You three—stay on the island and cultivate. Ni Yu has already reached Xuan Immortal. Don't slack off.”

Lu said.

Ning Zhao and Yi Yue—who had been about to follow—immediately fell silent.

Unknowingly, Ni Yu had surpassed them.

The two pursed their lips, bowed to Lu, and departed to focus on cultivation.

Lu smiled.

He swept his gaze across Origin Island.

He wanted to see what Ni Yu was doing.

He found her—now a Xuan Immortal—lying listlessly on a haystack, black pot on her back.

In her palm, she held several pills, eyes teary.

“One hundred and eighty-ninth day without Little Yellow. Miss him.”

With that, she popped a pill into her mouth.

As though swallowing not pills—but longing.

Lu was speechless.

Was becoming a Xuan Immortal... this boring?

Lu shook his head and raised a hand.

The thousand-blade chair soared into the air, carrying Lu away.

...

Western Continent, Five Phoenixes.

The current Five Phoenixes was vast—encompassing all of Void Heaven.

Though Void Heaven had begun expanding since becoming independent, the Five Phoenixes expanded no slower.

Thus, the continent remained sparsely populated.

Humans and demons lived in the Eastern Continent. The West was largely untouched wilderness and primal forest.

Boom!

Silver light exploded.

Lu tore through the void and appeared.

Seated in his thousand-blade chair, white robes fluttering.

He raised a hand.

Soon, a mass of flesh enveloped in boundless energy appeared.

“From my flesh and blood... shall be born the Witch Clan.”

Lu tossed it gently.

The mass plummeted toward the vast primal forest of the Western Continent.

Boom!

In an instant, the energy flesh expanded—growing into a mountain-sized entity that towered into the sky.

Lu did not interfere with its evolution.

Within, a figure struggled to break free from the flesh and energy.

But it was too difficult.

The chaotic energy clouded its vision, leaving it unable to see.

It roared—but could not tear through the barrier.

Lu watched with some concern.

After a long while,

The figure seemed exhausted. Realizing brute force would not work,

It raised its hand and began gathering energy within its body.

Bit by bit, energy condensed—forming a giant axe.

Pfft!

The axe struck the flesh-energy barrier.

It sounded like chopping solid material.

And the figure saw hope—because it noticed a tiny crack in the barrier.

Then came endless chopping.

The figure swung the axe again and again, hacking at the barrier.

Slowly, it carved out a large fissure.

In the blink of an eye, three years passed.

Finally, with one mighty swing, the figure cleaved open the barrier.

Boom!

Vast energy surged outward.

The flesh-energy barrier began to collapse.

The figure stumbled out. Terrifying aura shook the primal forest of the Western Continent. Even the Heavenly Dao faintly stirred.

Forest creatures and beasts trembled under the pressure.

The figure staggered forward.

Breaking free of the barrier had drained it completely.

Boom!

It knelt—then collapsed.

Lu—hovering in the sky—was stunned. He had not expected the figure to collapse from exhaustion the moment it emerged.

It might even die from fatigue.

Lu's lips twitched. He felt faintly slapped in the face.

He had painstakingly created what he called a perfect race.

Yet the moment the first member was born, it nearly died from exhaustion. His beloved Witch Clan might go extinct like this.

Lu shook his head.

Of course he could not allow the Witch Clan to perish.

Raising his hand, he flicked a strand of pure energy into the exhausted figure.

Buzz...

The figure revived as though on the verge of death.

The next moment, the flesh began to transform.

The colossal figure vanished. The flesh split into twelve crying newborn infants.

As they cried, more light clusters burst forth—forming more crying infants.

Of course, most infants looked ordinary.

But the first twelve born were distinctly different.

One infant burned with flames.

One was born wreathed in toxic water.

One was cradled by ten thousand trees.

One had wings sprouting from its back, skin purple and green.

Lu flicked his finger again.

The infants fell to the ground—yet stood upright and ran immediately.

Starving beasts sensed the infants and pounced to devour them.

But the immensely strong infants beat the beasts to death.

The scene... was utterly brutal.

Lu imprinted the concept of “Witch” into their memories—along with the actions of the first Witch upon its birth.

These young Witch Clan children grew peacefully in the Western Continent.

They hunted beasts when hungry, drank from mountain springs when thirsty.

Their physiques were incredibly strong—free from sickness or disaster.

Lu hovered in the nine heavens, watching the children.

The Witch Clan grew quickly.

They absorbed spiritual energy from heaven and earth to temper their bodies and strengthen themselves.

They lived carefree lives—yet learned many things. They wove ramie into clothing to cover themselves, learning shame and propriety.

The Witch Clan was warlike.

The children often fought. Among them, the twelve strangely formed children grew exceptionally powerful.

They possessed strength unmatched by ordinary Witches.

They each established tribes—and became the kings of those Witch tribes.

With the time array running, ten years passed in a flash.

The Witch Clan tribes took root in the Western Continent.

They multiplied and grew incredibly strong.

The twelve tribes—each led by their king.

Every tribe worshipped the “Heavenly Witch”—the figure in their memories who had split chaos and transformed into myriad forms.

Every Witch was a born fighter. They did not cultivate divine souls—yet their divine souls were incredibly strong, granting them innate divine abilities. Their flesh was invincible.

Life for the Witch Clan was simple.

Sleep. Hunt. Fight.

Day after day—repeating.

In their constant battles, their strength grew ever greater.

...

Lu returned to Origin Island.

Through the Spirit-Pressure Chessboard, he observed the Witch Clan.

Because the Witch Clan's cultivation system differed from humanity's, there was no direct comparison.

Moreover, due to the Heavenly Dao seal, the Witch Clan did not draw upon heavenly fortune—so their strength could not be judged by fortune levels.

Leaning back in his thousand-blade chair, Lu smiled.

His purpose in creating the Witch Clan was to accelerate spiritual energy contributions. Now that the clan had been born, he needed them to grow stronger.

Watching the twelve tribes constantly fighting—yet unable to overpower each other due to their kings' similar strength—

Lu pondered giving them some pressure.

As for where to apply that pressure...

Lu suddenly had an idea.

Overlord had established the Body Refining lineage in the Western Domain, hadn't he?

The Witch Clan also possessed powerful flesh. This was perfect—throw Overlord into the Witch Clan and let him bring some pressure to their powerhouses.

As for who would beat whom... time would tell.

Chapter 536: The Romantic Clash Between Overlord and the Twelve Witch Kings

Arranging for Overlord to collide with the twelve Witch Kings?

The idea genuinely intrigued Lu.

In truth, the Witch Clan—as a race—could hardly unlock their full potential relying solely on the beasts and spirit beasts of the Western Continent.

Due to their bloodline, they possessed overwhelming suppression over ordinary beasts. As children, they could still be threatened by wild animals and ferocious beasts.

But once they matured and awakened their innate talents and divine abilities, ordinary beasts and spirit beasts were no match at all.

Leaning back in his thousand-blade chair, Lu tapped his fingers lightly.

“Demons, Witches, humans...”

Lu murmured softly.

On the current Five Phoenix Continent, demons and humans were the most prosperous races. Yet humans still dominated in overall strength. Though Tantai Xuan had destroyed and recreated the world,

Most cultivators remained human, while the demon race still lacked truly powerful figures capable of anchoring their position.

For the demon race, Lu felt he should make some arrangements as well.

The demons' growth required vast time and patience. Compared to humans, their development lagged behind. He needed to find ways to strengthen them.

Pulling his thoughts back, Lu began planning Overlord's contact with the Witch Clan.

How to arrange it—this was something Lu excelled at.

He entered the Transmission Platform and began deducing.

It wasn't difficult. Soon, Lu had a plan.

...

Recently, Wu Qi had been troubled.

Vaguely, his eyelids kept twitching—as though something ominous was about to happen.

Stepping out of his cave, he stood atop the highest peak in the region.

From here, he could overlook his entire tribe—seeing the simple wooden huts and shelters.

This was his tribal kingdom.

He was its king.

As dawn broke, the spiritual energy between heaven and earth grew thick. Another busy day began.

Wu Qi felt his robust muscles stir. Excitement rose within him.

His legs coiled. With a powerful leap, he roared toward the northeast.

His roar thundered across the mountains.

From the opposite peak came an answering roar.

As though a signal, roars echoed one after another—like a... symphony?

That was the response from the kings of the other eleven tribes.

Wu Qi laughed heartily. Standing atop the peak, he hugged a towering ancient tree and uprooted it.

Boom!

The tree came out roots and all. He chopped off the roots and planted the trunk upright.

Releasing his grip, he stepped back lightning-fast.

The tree toppled straight down.

Wu Qi's eyes lit up. Following the direction of the falling crown, he charged forward with wild, howling energy.

Today's opponent was the king in that direction.

Boom!

Terrifying flames erupted. That was the Witch King of the Fire Tribe—crimson all over, sharp-eyed, ten feet tall, and ferocious in appearance.

Compared to him, Wu Qi looked far more human.

Of course—aside from his purple-green skin.

Across the region, countless Witch Clan members cheered excitedly. The people of Wu Qi's tribe and the Fire Tribe began dancing wildly around the "Heavenly Witch" statue.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

In the sky above, terrifying energy exploded. Two Witch Kings grappled and crashed into the great marsh, rolling in mud. Massive waves of sludge erupted—the marsh itself seemed on the verge of being torn apart.

The earth quaked. Mountains trembled. Yet the Witch Clan people felt no fear—only greater excitement.

For the Witch Clan in this land, there was little else to do but fight. So such battles were nothing surprising.

This was routine.

The fight lasted three days and three nights.

Finally, Wu Qi—covered in mud—emerged from the marsh. His face was bruised and swollen. The moment he stepped out, he paid no mind to his battered appearance and roared triumphantly, fists clenched.

The warriors of Wu Qi's tribe erupted in cheers.

Shouting their king's name.

The Witch King of the Fire Tribe, Zhu Yan, crawled out of the marsh, gasping. He was carried away.

But there was no need to worry—he would recover in a few days and come challenging Wu Qi again.

As for Wu Qi, after resting, he would seek out another Witch King for battle.

The life of a Witch King was dull yet joyful. Either fighting or on the way to fight.

The defeated Fire Tribe had to surrender most of their fruits and hunted game.

Though Zhu Yan's tribe felt unwilling, the rules were absolute.

Wu Qi laughed heartily, wiping blood and mud from his face.

He patted the equally bruised Zhu Yan. During battle, they fought to the death. After battle, the twelve Witch Kings still got along well.

Suddenly.

Wu Qi froze. He looked into the distance.

There... a great warrior from his tribe was sprinting toward him.

Great warriors were the top fighters in the tribe—strong, though not as strong as Witch Kings.

This great warrior moved at lightning speed—but Wu Qi saw it instantly.

Sweat poured down the warrior's face. Terror filled his eyes.

He pointed urgently into the distance.

Wu Qi paused, then motioned for the warrior to lead the way.

Soon, they arrived at the spot the great warrior had discovered.

Here lay the corpse of a wild beast—clearly the warrior’s hunting ground.

But the prey lay untouched. Behind the corpse was a massive vortex!

A pure energy vortex.

“What is this?”

Wu Qi sensed the strange energy and felt astonishment.

He ordered the great warrior to retreat. Then—young and fearless—he charged straight into the vortex.

...

Origin Lake, Origin Island.

Lu smiled.

His eyes reflected the scene. Seeing Wu Qi—one of the twelve Witch Kings—crash into the spatial passage he had arranged, Lu's lips curved upward.

He rolled up his sleeve and placed a piece on the Spirit-Pressure Chessboard.

The board's interesting game officially began.

...

Western Domain.

East Yan River, Cloud Mulberry City.

Boom!

Suddenly, the raging waters of the East Yan River exploded. A figure shot out like a cannonball from beneath the surface.

“Huh?”

Wu Qi opened his eyes in confusion. This unfamiliar sensation was entirely new to him.

Where was this?

He looked around—seeing a wide, turbulent river. The current was swift. For Wu Qi, it was perfect for washing off the mud.

Wrapped in beast hides, his purple-green skin gleamed under the rushing water.

He sniffed the air, catching a unique scent.

Floating upward, he walked across the water. On the riverbank, he saw houses—exquisite structures that left Wu Qi stunned.

Compared to these buildings, the wooden huts of his tribe were unbearable to look at.

While Wu Qi curiously observed,

In a simple wooden house by the East Yan River,

Overlord—who had been chatting idly with Luo Mingsang—suddenly turned his head.

After reassuring Luo Mingsang,

Overlord vanished from his spot.

“This aura... strange. Not human.”

“A demon?”

“Daring to cause trouble in Cloud Mulberry City?”

Overlord’s faint voice lingered.

Meanwhile, Wu Qi—hovering above the river—felt he had discovered something incredible.

Perhaps he could return and brag to his eleven brothers.

Having something like this to boast about was far more interesting than who could piss farther.

Boom!

Suddenly.

Wu Qi trembled. He sensed a terrifying aura.

This aura made his muscles tense instinctively. Overwhelming pressure caused his body to quiver faintly.

“So... strong!”

Wu Qi drew a deep breath.

He looked over and saw a figure walking slowly across the river surface—carrying an axe and shield.

A lean figure—at least in Wu Qi's eyes.

Overlord's body was robust for a human, but compared to Wu Qi—two and a half meters tall with bulging muscles—it seemed frail.

Yet Overlord's aura was overwhelming!

As the two released their presence, the rushing East Yan River stilled. The water surface became a mirror.

Overlord looked at Wu Qi—purple-green skin, massive build... demon?

Not quite.

“Who are you?”

Overlord asked calmly.

Most importantly, Overlord could not see through Wu Qi's cultivation. True Immortal? Xuan Immortal?

He could not tell. Wu Qi bore no fortune aura at all.

This was unbelievable. In the current Five Phoenix Continent, both humans and demons possessed fortune.

The stronger one was, the greater the fortune.

No living being existed without it.

Without fortune... unless the being came from outside the Five Phoenixes!

To Overlord's question, Wu Qi understood. At their level, divine souls could communicate intent.

But Wu Qi did not want to answer.

His blood boiled. The desire to fight flooded his mind.

"Arghhh!"

Wu Qi roared and charged!

River water surged backward. His fist tore through the air with such force it seemed ready to shatter space.

Fighting without a word?

Overlord frowned.

Hands behind his back, he stood still—unwilling to dodge, too lazy to dodge.

In terms of fighting, when had Overlord ever feared anyone?

His path to Xuan Immortal had been paved with battles.

Perfect timing. Overlord wanted to test this purple-green figure's strength.

Boom!

Wu Qi's fist smashed into Overlord's body. Overlord stood unmoved. The river beneath exploded like a downpour.

Wu Qi was stunned. His eyes widened in disbelief.

He had punched his eleven brothers—each time leaving them howling.

Yet now... it failed!

“So... hard!”

Wu Qi exclaimed.

“Amazing!”

The next moment—battle intent exploded!

He unleashed a barrage of fists. Each punch rumbled like thunder.

Overlord’s body trembled. Xuan Immortal aura erupted.

One palm struck out. The river parted in a massive trench.

Wu Qi was blasted backward like a ball—crashing into the earth.

“Roughly Half-Step Xuan Immortal strength...”

Overlord patted himself clean and said calmly.

With his realm, he could crush Wu Qi easily. But Overlord was curious—where had this being come from?

Boom!

Wu Qi flipped up from the ground. He felt no fear—only greater excitement.

So strong!

Stronger than any of his eleven brothers!

Wu Qi charged again. Overlord drew his axe and shield, slamming them down. Wu Qi was dazed.

He was smashed into the river. Water exploded.

Overlord grew interested. This being's flesh was incredibly strong!

It was not inferior to his own Xuan Immortal body. Overlord had created the Body Refining lineage and gained vast fortune.

If he could study this being and advance his Body Refining path further, perhaps he could step onto the Golden Immortal path!

Overlord landed on the bank and planted his axe and shield into the ground.

Stepping across the river waves, he charged toward Wu Qi.

Wu Qi roared and met him fearlessly.

River water surged. Earth cracked.

Such earth-shaking momentum should have drawn attention.

But Lu had placed a piece—masking the aura. No cultivator appeared.

The two fought hand-to-hand from morning till night.

Wu Qi grew more excited with every clash. Of course... he was already bruised and swollen, blood streaming from his nose and mouth.

He could not win against Overlord—but he was unafraid.

The Witch Clan never retreated!

In the relentless battle, Wu Qi felt his strength growing—as though his bloodline was awakening.

This made Overlord increasingly astonished.

Finally, Wu Qi—bruised and battered—was about to flee into the spatial passage again.

Before leaving, he extended a middle finger.

After so many days of fighting, Wu Qi believed Overlord dared not cross the passage.

So he taunted fearlessly.

But this time, Overlord could no longer hold back.

Taking up axe and shield, he stepped through the spatial passage.

When Overlord emerged on the other side,

Wu Qi—who had been lying on the ground gasping and whimpering—froze in shock.

Overlord grinned: “So you feel pain too.”

The great warrior attending Wu Qi was also stunned.

Overlord’s terrifying aura left the warrior without even the courage to fight.

“You actually dared come!”

Wu Qi said incredulously.

The next moment—he grew excited.

With a furious roar,

Terrifying fluctuations exploded.

His roar echoed across the land.

In Overlord's surprise, eleven answering roars rang out.

Then, eleven figures sped in from all directions—each bizarre in appearance.

Wu Qi's brothers had arrived—wild with excitement.

Battle erupted.

Twelve Witch Kings versus Overlord.

Earth quaked. Mountains shook. The entire region trembled.

For the first time, Overlord felt pressure.

The twelve Witch Kings' combined strength multiplied—their power surpassing ordinary Xuan Immortals!

Pfft!

Wu Qi's fist smashed into Overlord's cheek. For the first time, Overlord's face swelled.

Wu Qi roared in excitement.

They fought fiercely—pure hand-to-hand combat.

Five days and five nights.

Fists met flesh. This was the romance between Overlord and the twelve Witch Kings.

Finally, the group of brutes grew exhausted and collapsed.

Overlord—bruised and swollen—sat cross-legged, absorbing spiritual energy to recover.

The twelve Witch Kings lay sprawled—also bruised and swollen.

This pure brawl ended in a draw.

As dawn broke,

“Hm?”

Overlord instinctively opened his eyes.

He saw...

The twelve Witch Kings already standing, lively and unharmed. Yesterday’s injuries had fully healed.

While Overlord... had only recovered less than a third.

Wu Qi's eyes blazed.

"Come on! Fight!"

Wu Qi shouted. Then the eleven other Witch Kings roared in unison.

Overlord's lips twitched.

The next moment, he stood, aura surging.

Gaze cold, he swept across the twelve wildly excited, bouncing Witch Kings.

Rubbing his still-swollen cheek,

He sneered coldly.

"A bunch of idiots."

Then his body shot forth—disappearing into the spatial passage.

Though Overlord's path had been forged through taking beatings,

He knew: if he stayed, he would just get pummeled for nothing. So—recover first, then return for another round!

This wasn't cowardice.

It was strategic withdrawal!

Watching Overlord vanish,

Wu Qi burst into laughter.

He pointed at the spatial passage. He believed Overlord would return.

This was the tacit understanding he and Overlord had developed over these days of fighting.

Then Wu Qi turned, slung arms around his eleven Witch King brothers, and left—planning to eat, drink, and replenish energy.

After days of fighting, they were starving.

Only when full could they fight Overlord properly.

Chapter 537: The Fate of the Demon Race

On Origin Island, the chessboard was already densely covered with pieces.

Each piece seemed like a pre-programmed segment, reflecting the friction between Overlord and the Witch Clan.

Tossing a few pieces in his hand, Lu leaned back in his thousand-blade chair and stretched lazily.

Because the grand array covering the Five Phoenixes maintained a time flow of one thousand to one,

Compared to the nine heavens, the Five Phoenixes had not passed much time at all.

Now, though the Five Phoenixes had become independent from the nine heavens and formed its own realm,

The nine heavens' Heavenly Dao could no longer exert significant influence on the Five Phoenixes... but that did not mean the crises facing the Five Phoenixes had completely vanished.

For example—the Ancient Emperors beyond the rift.

Their existence still gave Lu a sense of danger.

Moreover, there was the Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor of the Heavenly Spirit Clan—the only Ancient Emperor still present in the nine heavens.

Micah, the Holy Hall Master of the Heavenly Spirit Clan, had now chosen to join the Five Phoenixes. Though it was to walk his own path, for the Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor, this was undoubtedly betrayal.

Thus, if the Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor still existed, he might descend because of Micah's actions.

When that time came, conflict would be inevitable.

It would bring a certain degree of crisis to the Five Phoenixes.

Lu closed his eyes. His divine sense began to stir.

He no longer paid attention to the Witch Clan.

Since Overlord had already encountered the Witch Clan under his arrangement, a Xuan Immortal would surely stimulate the many Witch Kings.

Their hand-to-hand, flesh-against-flesh combat style even allowed mutual improvement in cultivation and strength.

As the Witch Kings grew stronger, Lu naturally gained strength as well.

This was the original purpose of creating the Witch Clan.

“Forget the Witch Clan for now. Next, it’s time to upgrade the demon race.”

Lu pondered.

With a thought, his gaze fell upon the Demon Court.

Lu did not know much about the Demon Court. It was a force established by the demon kings—originally due to Tantai He’s actions.

Now, the Demon Court had already become one of the top powers on the Five Phoenix Continent.

Having survived humanity's dark era, the Demon Court's development had already surpassed that of current humanity.

It had even become a driving force for human growth.

The existence of the Demon Court forced human nations to strive harder to resist the demons.

Yet in reality, the demon race's top-tier powerhouses were far weaker than humanity's.

The demon race had no Xuan Immortal-level experts.

Their only powerhouse—the Demon Monkey King—was merely at Half-Step Xuan Immortal.

Though many top demon kings had been born in recent years—reaching Half-Step Xuan Immortal—

Without a Xuan Immortal, the Demon Court's position remained unstable.

“So... how should I upgrade the demon race?”

Lu thought.

When he first created the demon race, his strength had not been particularly outstanding. Thus, the design of the demon race lacked thorough consideration.

Leaning back in his thousand-blade chair, Lu tapped his fingers.

His divine sense sank into the Transmission Platform.

Seated on the Eight Trigrams array platform, he began deducing—planning to elevate the demon race according to his ideas.

“The demon race needs a leader—a monstrously talented leader.”

“The demon race possesses such vast fortune—yet cannot produce a Xuan Immortal... truly a pity.”

Lu formed hand seals, continuously channeling array runes into the void of the Transmission Platform.

Soon, he fell silent.

The corners of his mouth curved upward.

His loose robes fluttered.

“What matters most for the demon race is bloodline. They cultivate demon crystals. With powerful bloodlines, their demon crystals can be exceptionally strong from birth.”

“Demon crystals are like spiritual roots—representing talent.”

Lu’s eyes gleamed.

“It’s been a long time since I last used the Transmission Platform. Perhaps... I can give the demon race an opportunity.”

...

After hundreds of years of development, the demon race had established kingdoms and greatly increased its population.

Demons were born from spirit beasts gaining sentience. Initially, demon race members existed in beast form. Only upon reaching six-sided crystal level could they shed their beast bodies.

The Demon Court was located in the western part of the Great Xuan Divine Dynasty—near the Western Continent, between the Western and Eastern Continents. Amid endless yellow sands lay a vast oasis called the Demon Continent.

Once a small place, the Demon Continent had grown immense—nurturing the top-tier force that was the Demon Court.

Yet though the Demon Court was strong, it still dared not launch a large-scale invasion into human territory.

Why?

Because they feared human cultivators and Immortals.

Though the demon race now had many demon kings—and even the Half-Step Xuan Immortal Demon Monkey King—

If a full-scale war erupted between humans and demons, human Xuan Immortals would intervene. The demons would be no match.

This was also why the Demon Monkey King remained deeply worried.

He could not understand—why, despite possessing such vast fortune, the demon race could not produce a Xuan Immortal-level Demon Saint?

The Demon Monkey King had once desperately searched for the Demon Lord—because only the Demon Lord could stand against humanity.

Yet he found nothing. The Demon Lord had vanished as though evaporated.

This left the Demon Monkey King in constant anxiety.

He feared that human Immortals would attack.

Thus—even when he learned humanity had faced world-ending and world-recreating crises, an era's transition—the Demon Monkey King still did not dispatch demons to seize human lands.

He dared not. He feared such actions would cause the demon race's fortune to collapse—becoming an excuse for human Xuan Immortals to act.

So the Demon Monkey King lived under heavy pressure.

He wanted to break through—become the demon race’s first Xuan Immortal-level Demon Saint.

But the more anxious he became, the harder it was to break through.

Even in every crusade, he charged at the forefront.

Yet he still fell short.

The fiery sunset stretched across the sky.

The Demon Monkey King sat on a bluestone, gazing into the distance with a sigh.

“Where... is the hope of the demon race?”

The Demon Monkey King felt lost, even his back slightly hunched as he looked far away.

Night fell.

While in deep meditation, the Demon Monkey King suddenly opened his eyes.

He looked up at the sky.

He saw the demon race's fortune surging—a great shift!

Not just the Demon Monkey King.

On Heavenly Mechanism Peak in the Great Xuan Divine Dynasty,

Lü Mu Dui and Mo Tianyu also gazed upward. After calculating with their fingers, their expressions changed slightly.

“The demon race's stagnant fortune is undergoing a massive change. Within the next century, the demon race may give birth to a heaven-defying genius!”

Lü Mu Dui drew a deep breath.

“This... doesn't make sense. The demon race's cultivation is far harder than humanity's. They cultivate demon crystals—but refining them requires endless years of accumulation. Even a monstrous genius like the Demon Monkey King has been stuck at Half-Step Xuan Immortal for hundreds of years...”

“Could our divination be wrong?”

Lü Mu Dui said doubtfully.

Mo Tianyu—chest bared—narrowed his eyes.

“No... human fortune has stabilized. It’s indeed the demon race’s turn for a shift... This is a grand opportunity. Whoever seizes it first will gain vast fortune.”

“The Demon Court is about to get lively.”

Mo Tianyu laughed.

Not just Heavenly Mechanism Peak.

Many Five Phoenix Xuan Immortals looked up.

Tang Yimo of the Southern Domain, Sima Qingshan of the Painting Sect, Bai Qingniao of Nine Phoenix Academy—all the Xuan Immortals saw the shift in worldly fortune.

Overlord—bruised and swollen—emerged from the spatial passage and also sensed the change.

This made him narrow his eyes.

He thought of the Witch Clan—the twelve Witch Kings. When united, even he—a Xuan Immortal—would struggle.

Could the demon race's fortune shift be related to the Witch Clan?

With this thought, Overlord focused on studying the Witch Clan.

Mainly because—through his clashes with the Witch Clan—he had discovered better ways to advance his Body Refining lineage.

...

Origin Lake, Origin Island.

Lu held a cup of Heavenly Immortal Wine.

He smiled.

With a thought—

“Activate the Transmission Platform.”

“Lock target area: Demon Court.”

“Now randomly select ten demons to enter the Transmission Platform.”

Lu said calmly.

Buzz...

The system panel appeared before him.

Soon, changes occurred between heaven and earth.

An invisible, mighty force enveloped the Demon Court region.

Within the Transmission Platform—

“Little Demon Snake under Qingyun Mountain (ordinary little demon) has entered the Transmission Platform.”

“Little Demon Bird atop Thunder Peak (seventh son of the Thunder Eagle King) has entered the Transmission Platform.”

“Little Demon Ox beneath Pill Cloud Marsh (ordinary little demon) has entered the Transmission Platform.”

...

Voices echoed continuously in the Transmission Platform.

Lu smiled. This familiar feeling was somewhat nostalgic.

In truth, it had indeed been a long time since he last activated the Transmission Platform.

Ten voices rang out.

Lu sat in the Transmission Platform—radiant light shining.

His gaze swept downward.

After the light faded, ten figures appeared.

Ten trembling exotic beasts—pure demons without any impurity.

A snake, an ox, a little bird...

It looked somewhat like a scene from the animal world.

Yet they were indeed demons—faint demonic qi wafting from their bodies.

Compared to humans, demons feared the unknown far more intensely.

The ten little demons trembled. They dared not speak, dared not ask.

Pulled into this Transmission Platform, they felt only terror.

Because the terrifying pressure emanating from Lu horrified them.

Lu thought for a moment—perhaps his aura had frightened them.

With a thought,

The terrifying immortal qi instantly transformed into overwhelming demonic qi.

It was as though the Demon Lord himself had descended.

Yet when changed to demonic qi, the ten little demons suddenly felt much closer to him.

“Is this the Demon Lord? Such powerful demonic qi... even the Demon Monkey King is far inferior.”

The little demon bird’s heart shook.

His father was the Thunder Eagle King—a newly ascended demon king with immense strength. Yet compared to this existence, his father’s demonic qi was like the little demon bird facing the Thunder Eagle King—the gap was too vast.

But soon, the little demons realized—they had encountered a grand opportunity.

Lu observed the ten little demons.

Truly random selection—almost all were ordinary little demons.

Except for the seventh son of the Thunder Eagle King—the little demon bird—and the golden-furred little demon monkey (descendant of the Demon Monkey King)—the rest were unremarkable.

“Hm... very well. Let’s start from the beginning.”

“The demon race values bloodline. Since that is the case... let us begin by transforming their bloodline.”

Lu raised his hand and waved lightly.

Seven-colored light orbs floated out.

“You have one chance to change your destiny. Choose a light orb. Within it lies your opportunity—good or bad, all part of fate.”

Lu said.

The ten little demons trembled.

They looked up at the densely packed seven-colored light orbs enveloping them.

They hesitated.

Soon, the ten little demons acted.

“Pop!”

“Pop pop!”

Light orbs burst open.

Ten streaks of light surged into their bodies.

The little demon bird's body shook. As the light poured in, it felt as though it had become a ball of flame. Its original four-sided crystal shattered—transforming into a perfectly round golden demon core.

Its feathers turned golden. Endless flames burned.

“Golden Crow bloodline. At its peak, it can transform into the ancient Golden Crow—burning heaven and earth.”

The ten little demons each received their opportunity—enough to change the demon race's destiny.

Of course—provided they survived.

“Go.”

Lu waved his hand.

Under the ten little demons' bewildered gazes, he sent them out of the Transmission Platform.

...

Demon Court.

Night was as dark as ink.

Tonight's starry sky was shrouded in thick clouds.

Yet the Demon Monkey King gripped his iron staff, standing firm, gazing at the heavens.

Suddenly!

He saw ten meteors streak across the sky—plunging into the demon race's fortune, causing it to surge!

"The future of the demon race?!"

The Demon Monkey King's body trembled faintly.

He knew—the turning point of the Demon Court's destiny was coming.

Whether fortune or disaster—only fate would decide.

...

Qingyun Mountain.

A remote mountain in the Demon Court.

When the little demon snake opened its eyes, it felt as though it had dreamed.

Habitually, it flicked its tongue—yet was stunned to find it had flicked not a snake’s tongue, but a delicate human girl’s tongue.

The little demon snake was dumbfounded. It touched its cheeks.

“I... I’ve transformed?”

The little demon snake was shocked. As it flicked its tongue, it probed its demon crystal—only to discover its original four-sided crystal had now become a perfectly round bead. Endless powerful energy surged within.

It felt as though it had been reborn.

Moreover, its mind was filled with strange new chapters—a unique bloodline cultivation method.

“So... meeting the Demon Lord yesterday was real! Not a dream! The Demon Lord granted me an opportunity—changed my bloodline!”

The little snake demon was overjoyed.

Anxious, it flicked its tongue even faster.

“I-I-I... a completely ordinary little snake demon—how am I worthy?!”

“Thank you, Demon Lord! Demon Lord above—please accept this little demon’s bow!”

The little snake demon prostrated itself, kowtowing devoutly.

Suddenly.

The little snake demon’s heart jolted. Its demon core trembled—it sensed powerful auras rapidly approaching.

“The great demons of Qingyun Mountain!”

The little snake demon was terrified. It curled into a ball on the ground.

Qingyun Mountain was filled with demons—many of them great demons with immense strength.

It was just a little demon—how could it resist?

Most importantly—so many great demons appearing at once—what terror!

The little snake demon raised its head—only to see black clouds rolling over Qingyun Mountain. Ferocious great demons stared greedily at it.

They charged madly.

The little snake demon felt its heart nearly stop. Its tongue could no longer retract.

It... was going to die.

It had just received an opportunity—and now it would die.

How tragic!

Suddenly.

A streak of red light flashed past.

The great demons of Qingyun Mountain pouncing toward it were sent flying like balls.

A charming voice rang out.

“You gained a grand opportunity yet didn’t find a place to hide and cultivate properly—instead flaunting your aura so blatantly?”

“You little foolish demon.”

Laughter echoed.

The little snake demon opened its eyes—to see billowing red robes. A stunningly beautiful woman appeared before it.

Ni Chunchiu looked curiously at the little snake demon.

“One of those who received fortune... is you, little demon...”

The little snake demon’s tongue flicked uncontrollably in terror.

“Human?! A human?!”

“It’s over, it’s over...”

“Great demons in front, humans behind—I’m dead.”

“Humans are brutal—they’ll kill snakes, extract cores, cruel and merciless. I’m done for.”

The little snake demon was so scared its tears nearly fell.

In the distance, the great demons that had been sent flying roared ferociously.

They charged again—driven by the aura emanating from the little snake demon.

An incomparably tempting aura.

“Scram!”

“I promised the little monkey not to kill demons. Don’t force my hand.”

Ni Chunchiu glanced coldly.

Half-Step Xuan Immortal aura erupted.

The great demons immediately turned tail and fled.

The aura of a top-tier human Immortal was enough to scare their souls away.

The demon race was a strength-worshipping race.

After the great demons fled, Empress Ni Chunchiu smiled and pinched the little snake demon's neck—lifting it.

Her beautiful face drew close to the little snake demon's. Her eyes flickered slightly.

"I need fortune. I need to grow stronger to keep up with Brother Lu... so I can only come to you."

"Your existence will affect the demon race's fortune. Forgive me."

"From now on—you'll follow me."

Chapter 538: All Forces Under Heaven—White Jade Capital Reigns Supreme

The fortune of the demon race surged dramatically overnight.

Human Immortals descended upon the Demon Court one after another, vying for the great opportunity of worldly fortune.

This was a grand turning point. Countless Immortals competed fiercely.

The Demon Monkey King stood atop the mountain peak, his gaze filled with melancholy. This was clearly an opportunity meant for the demon race—yet the demons were powerless to protect it.

Fortunately, this opportunity would not slip away from the demon race entirely. It was closely tied to their fortune.

Mainly because the ten recipients of the opportunity were all demon race beings. This gave the demon race hope.

He sought out the Thunder Eagle King and met his seventh son.

At first glance—even the mighty Demon Monkey King felt a faint tremor in his bloodline.

It was a suppression of bloodline.

Clearly, the Thunder Eagle King's seventh son had undergone a bloodline transformation due to the opportunity.

The Demon Monkey King was delighted. He took the seventh son as his disciple and began teaching him cultivation—placing great hope in him.

After learning the details, the Demon Monkey King discovered the little demon bird's bloodline.

“Golden Crow bloodline?”

The Demon Monkey King was astonished.

In all his years ruling the demon race, he had never heard of a Golden Crow bloodline.

When the little demon bird displayed the power of his bloodline, the Demon Monkey King was utterly shocked.

The bloodline transformation not only elevated the little demon bird's cultivation but had even formed a demon core within him.

Moreover, the scorching nobility of the Golden Crow bloodline left the Demon Monkey King in awe.

“From now on, you shall be known to the world as Golden Crow.”

The Demon Monkey King declared.

From that day forward, the Demon Monkey King's first disciple became known as Golden Crow.

Meanwhile, the other little demons selected by the Transmission Platform had also undergone bloodline transformations—carrying the faint potential to alter the demon race's fortune.

Most of them were taken as disciples by human Immortals.

...

Time flew by. Decades passed in the blink of an eye.

Western Continent.

The Witch Clan tribes grew ever more prosperous. Their population multiplied rapidly. Witch Clan children were born with powerful physiques—capable of wrestling ferocious beasts even as infants.

The twelve Witch Kings fought less frequently. They grew increasingly united and harmonious.

Every day, they would head to the valley containing the spatial vortex—which they had named “Overlord Valley” as a small token of respect for Overlord.

At first, when Overlord fought the twelve Witch Kings, he was often beaten black and blue. This was mainly because he had not used demonic qi—relying solely on his physical body and Body Refining techniques.

As a result, he frequently ended up bruised and swollen.

Yet Overlord was not angry. Instead, he felt enlightened.

He had rediscovered that feeling.

Thick armor. Heavy blows!

This was how he had grown stronger in the past.

His Body Refining technique grew ever more perfect. His recovery speed from injuries also increased significantly.

Though still far slower than the twelve Witch Kings' own recovery,

It at least represented progress.

As the twelve Witch Kings grew stronger, Overlord finally began to feel real pressure.

One day,

Overlord could no longer hold back.

He unleashed his full Xuan Immortal cultivation and combat power. No longer relying on his physical body alone, he fought the twelve Witch Kings—and fought to a draw.

Overlord was shocked. The twelve Witch Kings were also growing stronger. Their potential had yet to be fully tapped.

Overlord began to learn about the Witch Clan. He had originally thought they were a race from beyond the Five Phoenixes—only to discover they had been born in the Western Continent.

They worshipped the “Heavenly Witch.” In Overlord’s view, the Heavenly Witch must have been an ancient powerhouse—far surpassing Xuan Immortal level.

Overlord and the Witch Clan had fought until they earned mutual respect.

Though they still fought every day, both sides were growing stronger together.

Finally, one day, Overlord clashed with Wu Qi again. Unleashing demonic qi and fortune power, Overlord completely dominated. Wu Qi was beaten until he howled in pain. Yet in this battle—under Overlord’s relentless assault—Wu Qi comprehended his innate divine ability: spatial traversal.

That speed of spatial movement far exceeded what his flesh could endure.

Overlord took a beating.

While Wu Qi laughed wildly, Overlord pummeled him mercilessly.

In the end, Overlord gradually realized one person might not be enough to handle the twelve Witch Kings.

Especially Wu Qi, who had comprehended spatial divine ability.

Overlord had no counter.

One day, as the sun set in crimson glory,

Overlord cursed and retreated from the Western Continent.

The twelve Witch Kings laughed heartily, shoulder to shoulder, feasting on meat and drinking wine.

The wine had been brought by Overlord—and soon spread wildly among the Witch Clan.

Everyone—from Witch Kings and great warriors to ordinary Witches and children—became obsessed with it.

They learned to brew wine. They ate meat, drank, danced, and celebrated.

Overlord—bruised and swollen—returned to the Eastern Continent.

After much thought, he felt aggrieved. He decided to find help. One person against twelve was too unfair.

So he went to the Southern Domain, entered the Body Sect, and found Tang Yimo.

The next day,

With Tang Yimo in tow, Overlord charged back into the Western Continent.

Another grand battle erupted!

With Tang Yimo's help, Overlord fought like a god. His Body Refining technique reached its peak—unleashing heaven-shaking power.

Tang Yimo was also thrilled. His blood boiled.

The twelve Witch Kings were powerful. Tang Yimo opened six meridians—growing fiercer with every clash.

His body grew massive. His skin turned purple.

The twelve Witch Kings thought one of their own had arrived.

Tang Yimo was irritable and lightning-fast. Some Witch Kings were beaten until they roared in fury.

Then—in the midst of this brutal beating and battle—they comprehended divine abilities!

Their power surged dramatically.

Even Overlord and Tang Yimo together struggled.

Though only at the initial comprehension of divine abilities, each of the twelve Witch Kings now matched Xuan Immortal strength!

This left Overlord and Tang Yimo stunned.

They finally realized the true terror of the Witch Clan!

Twelve Xuan Immortals—even without any top-tier Xuan Immortals or Quasi-Emperor figures—

Were still not to be underestimated.

Fortunately, the twelve Witch Kings were somewhat simple-minded and straightforward.

Overlord and Tang Yimo fought until they earned their friendship.

From time to time, they would visit the Witch Clan tribes for feasts.

...

While the Witch Clan developed rapidly, the demon race was also undergoing dramatic changes.

The demon race's fortune surged wildly.

In just a few decades, ten heaven-defying geniuses were born among the demons.

They possessed supreme bloodlines—innately forming demon cores that only demon kings could possess.

Moreover, their bloodlines could continue to evolve.

Among them, the Demon Monkey King's first disciple—Golden Crow—was the most famous and dazzling.

Not only because he himself shone brightly—but because of his strength.

In mere decades, his bloodline had evolved to the extreme.

His combat power now rivaled True Immortal experts.

Thus, Golden Crow was arrogant—arrogant because of his bloodline, and because he bore the demon race's fortune.

Countless great demons followed him—becoming his followers.

One day,

Golden Crow radiated dazzling light—like the sun itself.

His wings spread, fanning terrifying flames that seemed capable of incinerating the world.

This was the flame born from his Golden Crow bloodline—he called it “Solar Divine Fire.”

He was arrogant beyond measure. He soared over the Demon Court—patrolling its lands.

Wings spread, he gazed down upon the vast Demon Court. His eyes gleamed brilliantly.

He had ambition. He wanted to become the ruler of the Demon Court!

Born as the Thunder Eagle King’s son, he had always been lofty. Now, with Golden Crow bloodline, his siblings followed him unquestioningly. Even his father treated him like a treasure.

Unlike ordinary demons—who cultivated slowly, accumulating power over endless years—Golden Crow’s strength grew rapidly!

With his demon core and bloodline, his cultivation speed far surpassed that of ordinary demons.

His ambition swelled.

Every day, he patrolled the Demon Court like a blazing sun.

Overlooking all.

Finally, one day, Golden Crow could no longer hold back. He sought the Demon Monkey King and declared:

“Master, I wish to become the ruler of the Demon Court!”

The Demon Monkey King opened his eyes and looked at him in surprise:

“The current Demon Court is governed by demon kings. Six demon kings with True Immortal-level combat power rule together.”

“If you wish to become the ruler of the Demon Court, your master will offer you no assistance. You must prove yourself with your own strength.”

“In the demon race, strength reigns supreme. If you are strong enough—you are king.”

From that day forward, for this goal, Golden Crow cultivated with even greater fervor.

Meanwhile, the other demons who received opportunities also displayed astonishing talent.

For example, a one-legged ox from the great marsh—whose aura was only slightly inferior to Golden Crow’s.

And a nine-tailed fox—fierce and terrifying, its roars shaking mountains.

Yet behind each of these top demons stood a human True Immortal—nurturing and guiding them as their protectors.

Curiously—

The human Xuan Immortals seemed to have no interest in this matter.

Logically, with such dramatic shifts in demon fortune, Xuan Immortals should have sensed it more keenly.

Yet none of the Xuan Immortal powerhouses appeared.

Overlord, Tang Yimo, Nie Changqing, and the other Xuan Immortals seemed uninterested in this surge of demon fortune.

Or perhaps... they sensed something.

These demon geniuses became the brightest stars in the Demon Court.

With monstrous talent and supreme bloodlines, they were instantly revered as the center of the demon race.

Some were arrogant. Some kept a low profile.

The little snake demon—who followed the Empress in cultivation—was very low-key.

Now, the little snake demon had become a Heaven-Swallowing Python. Ni Chunchiu taught her cultivation like a sister—never burdening her with heavy tasks.

This was different from the other protectors.

Ni Chunchiu named the little snake demon Bai Su.

The two secluded themselves in Qingyun Mountain—living like carefree hermits.

Ni Chunchiu was very lazy. Decades had left no trace on her stunning face.

She often reclined on a couch, chin propped on her hand, idly playing chess.

Bai Su occasionally played with her—but her chess skills were terrible. She was often scolded by Empress Ni Chunchiu.

Of course, sometimes Ni Chunchiu would tell Bai Su stories of the outside world.

Stories of the past.

Like the old Five Phoenixes and Tianyuan.

And tales of White Jade Capital.

“Teacher... is White Jade Capital very powerful? Stronger than the Demon Court?”

Bai Su asked curiously, tongue flicking.

Ni Chunchiu smiled: “In all the world, White Jade Capital reigns supreme. If White Jade Capital claims second—no one dares claim first...”

“Let alone the Demon Court—even the Heavenly Court above the Heavenly Gate, the human divine dynasties, or the Ten Halls of the Underworld combined—none can compare to White Jade Capital!”

The Empress smiled radiantly, placing a chess piece while casually praising White Jade Capital.

Bai Su was shocked.

White Jade Capital... so powerful?

Why had she never heard of it when she was just a little demon?

“Why? Does White Jade Capital have Xuan Immortals?”

Bai Su asked, tongue still flicking.

“Xuan Immortals? Hah... not even enough to withstand one chess piece from the master of White Jade Capital.”

“Do you know—even the idle, gluttonous maidservant in White Jade Capital is a Xuan Immortal?”

“As for the master of White Jade Capital... he is above Xuan Immortal—a carefree Golden Immortal!”

The Empress smiled, eyes distant.

Bai Su’s heart raced. A maidservant was already a Xuan Immortal?

White Jade Capital... incredible.

...

Great Xuan Divine Dynasty.

Micah traveled famous mountains and rivers. Now, he had reached Human Immortal realm.

Restarting his path, he still possessed his Quasi-Emperor foundation.

Upon entering Human Immortal, Micah did not establish a sect. He spread his “Extreme Realm Cultivation Method.” Many cultivators who learned it were astonished.

Most importantly—countless cultivators stuck at bottlenecks for hundreds of years found a brand-new path.

They began squeezing their potential—walking the Extreme Realm!

This allowed them to gain combat power far beyond their realm—even achieving breakthroughs.

Thus, through this cultivation method, Micah gained a grand opportunity.

And this was when his “Extreme Realm Cultivation Method” was still incomplete.

Atop a vast mountain,

Micah sat cross-legged.

He breathed in the spiritual energy of heaven and earth. Distorted vortexes swirled around his body.

Every movement twisted spiritual energy.

This was Extreme Realm Cultivation.

His tempered Extreme Realm flesh also released immense power.

Suddenly.

Micah's eyelids twitched.

He narrowed his eyes—as though sensing something—and looked beyond the Five Phoenixes toward the vast starry sky.

“It seems... time is running out.”

Micah drew a deep breath.

With one step, he transformed into a streak of light and soared away.

He needed to hasten his cultivation.

Though he trusted Young Master Lu, he could not entrust his life entirely to him.

He needed the power to protect himself before the irresistible force arrived.

...

Origin Lake, Origin Island.

Decades had passed.

Lu sat in his thousand-blade chair. Through the Spirit-Pressure Chessboard, he had witnessed the vicissitudes of the world.

Of course, he mainly observed the changes among the three races.

The Witch Clan had changed the most. The strength improvements of the twelve Witch Kings and their tribesmen provided Lu with massive spiritual energy contributions.

In fact, when Wu Qi comprehended his divine ability and reached Xuan Immortal level, Lu's total spiritual energy had already met the requirement for advancing to Qi Refining Layer 10.

But Lu did not rush to break through. He suppressed his cultivation—waiting for the right moment.

Waiting for Little Yinglong to fully refine all the Dao essence for the Heavenly Dao.

He wanted to ascend together with the Five Phoenixes—attempting to break into immortal martial realm in one leap.

As for humanity—there was little change. No new Xuan Immortals had been born in all these years.

The demon race's changes were no less dramatic than the Witch Clan's. Though no Xuan Immortal had yet appeared, in Lu's view, it was only a matter of time.

Lu rolled up his sleeve and placed a piece on the chessboard.

Moreover—

Lu occasionally looked up. He vaguely sensed that beyond the Five Phoenixes—in the vast starry void—there were powerhouses spying on the Five Phoenixes.

And the faint aura they leaked made even Lu feel solemn and serious.

“Ancient Emperors?”

Lu smiled, eyes gleaming.

Only those who had transcended the Heavenly Dao’s restraints—true Emperor realm—could spy on the independent Five Phoenixes and its starry void.

But Lu was unafraid.

Even without advancing to Qi Refining Layer 10—simply holding the trump card of controlling the Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao was enough to make him fearless.

Now, under Little Yinglong’s desperate efforts for freedom, the Heavenly Dao had refined nine hundred and fifty thousand Dao essence strands.

Soon, it would complete the full million.

The current Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao was no longer weak.

Holding the bronze wine cup, Heavenly Immortal Wine entered his throat. Lu smiled.

Though the Five Phoenixes was weak today—even if Ancient Emperors came tomorrow, Lu would ensure they never left.

Draining the cup,

He rolled up his sleeve and placed another piece.

Lines appeared in his eyes.

The Witch Clan and demon race were developing too slowly. He needed to... add fuel to the fire.

...

Between heaven and earth, the faint sound of chess pieces landing echoed.

In an instant, the worldly fortune surged.

Demon Court.

On this day, Golden Crow set forth fully prepared. His gaze blazed like torches.

He was ready!

Years of bitter cultivation—all for this day!

With one step, he spread his wings.

In an instant—dazzling golden light filled the sky.

The Demon Monkey King had said: if he wished to become ruler of the Demon Court, he must prove it with strength.

And today—he would rewrite the history of the Demon Court!

Golden Crow's ambition burned high. Yet toward the other nine demons with similarly supreme bloodlines, he showed great respect.

He believed these demons—sharing his noble bloodline—were heaven-blessed.

He wanted to subdue them—make them his left and right arms.

Of course—all of this could only come after he became the sole ruler of the Demon Court.

With wings spread,

Golden Crow patrolled. But this time, his patrol carried an air of aggression.

Golden Crow entered deep into the Demon Court and challenged an old demon king who governed the court.

He battled this demon king in the vast marsh for three days and three nights.

The old demon king was defeated. Golden Crow returned in blazing golden light. Instantly—the entire Demon Court erupted!

Rumble...

The moment the old demon king fell to Golden Crow, the demon race's fortune surged.

Human Immortals' eyes gleamed.

They had waited for this!

There were many demon kings governing the Demon Court.

Golden Crow feared none. He challenged them one by one—with arrogance.

Every battle—he won. He grew fiercer with each victory!

The Demon Court boiled.

Yet when Golden Crow defeated all the governing demon kings and prepared to ascend to the peak of the Demon Court—becoming its sole ruler—

His momentum suffered an unprecedented blow.

He stared in disbelief—nearly collapsing in shock.

Because these two demon kings were not ordinary demon kings.

They were his father—the Thunder Eagle King.

And... the Demon Monkey King—iron staff in hand.

Chapter 539: Golden Crow Proves the Dao—The Five Phoenixes Ascends to First-Derivation

Demon Court.

The world fell silent.

Two demon kings stood in the void. Terrifying demonic qi spread, changing the colors of heaven and earth.

Golden Crow blazed brilliantly—like a blazing sun hanging in the sky.

The three-way standoff felt strangely tense.

The Thunder Eagle King was Golden Crow's father. The Demon Monkey King was his master.

Even Golden Crow himself had never imagined that the ones standing in his way would be his father and master.

His conviction wavered slightly. He did not know whether to fight or not.

The Thunder Eagle King's feathers crackled with lightning. He looked majestic, his gaze sharp—filled with appreciation.

As his offspring, Golden Crow had inherited his pride. Now, with his bloodline elevated, it was the pride of the Thunder Eagle lineage.

When the Demon Monkey King first invited him to fight, the Thunder Eagle King had refused.

But in the end, he was persuaded.

“Child, you are the future hope of the demon race... If you wish to stand at the absolute peak, you must overcome all obstacles—clear every hindrance in your heart.”

“Only with a clear mind can you lead our demon race to the summit of the Five Phoenixes.”

The Thunder Eagle King said.

“Come—fight me!”

“If you defeat me, you will have the right to rule the demon race!”

With that, the Thunder Eagle King transformed into lightning and charged at Golden Crow.

Father and son battled in the void.

This was a true fight. Hidden human Immortals watched solemnly.

It was not a performance—it was genuine slaughter.

Every strike from the Thunder Eagle King was lethal—full force.

At first, Golden Crow was completely suppressed—his wavering conviction affecting him.

“To rule the demon race, strength alone is not enough. You must remain undisturbed by external things.”

“Not only must your strength grow—you must become stronger in heart. You are strong—but there will always be stronger enemies! You must forge unyielding conviction!”

The Thunder Eagle King roared.

Each attack collapsed the void.

Golden Crow was cornered—only able to defend.

But as they fought, the Thunder Eagle King’s words hammered into Golden Crow’s mind.

His blood boiled.

The next moment, his demon core erupted with terrifying power.

Solar Divine Fire surged.

The sky burned crimson.

The battle grew fiercer.

Finally...

The Thunder Eagle King was defeated.

His feathers burned away. He fell to the earth.

Golden Crow blazed with golden light—more majestic than ever.

Though arrogant, Golden Crow's arrogance depended on whom he faced. Toward his father, how could he be arrogant?

Seeing his father defeated—yet with that final trace of relief in his smile—Golden Crow fell into deep thought.

Boom!

But while he pondered,

The Demon Monkey King swept his staff.

When Golden Crow snapped back to reality, he was struck by overwhelming pressure—like a mountain crashing down—spitting blood.

He erupted with power, barely blocking the blow.

Boom!

Golden Crow was sent flying.

His arms nearly shattered—bones cracking.

“Master!”

Golden Crow stared in shock and disbelief. He shouted at the Demon Monkey King.

The Demon Monkey King stood in battle armor, iron staff in hand—gaze cold.

“To rule the demon race—this alone is not enough...”

“The enemies you will face are far stronger than your master!”

The Demon Monkey King said coldly.

He charged again. His staff rose—like a thousand-ton weight crashing down.

Earth split. Mountains crumbled. Space collapsed.

The Demon Monkey King was stronger than the Thunder Eagle King.

Golden Crow bled continuously—but a fire burned within him.

Solar Divine Fire erupted—his bloodline awakening.

Like a blazing sun, Golden Crow wielded a spear of Solar Divine Fire.

He clashed fiercely with the Demon Monkey King.

Flames flew. The sky burned red!

“Is this all?”

The Demon Monkey King smashed down. Golden Crow blocked desperately—coughing blood, gritting his teeth, trying to hold.

Golden Crow’s heart trembled faintly.

He had never imagined his father and master would become obstacles on his path to ruling the demon race.

This was something he had never considered.

He thought himself invincible. His master had raised him since childhood—imprinting an unbeatable image in his heart.

How could he defeat his master?

The Demon Monkey King seemed to see through him.

Strike after strike landed on Golden Crow—causing him to roar in fury.

Solar Divine Fire surged—forming a vortex of flame.

Finally, he counterattacked—shifting from defense to offense. His spear stabbed like a dragon.

Boom!

The void exploded. Endless energy surged.

Iron staff and spear clashed—one east, one west—threatening to collide.

Golden Crow's eyes flashed with ferocity.

The Demon Monkey King's gaze remained cold.

But just as they were about to clash—

The iron staff suddenly shrank into a needle.

Golden Crow's spear pierced through the Demon Monkey King's shoulder—passing straight through.

Golden Crow froze.

The world fell silent.

The Demon Monkey King hovered in the void. Blood dripped from his armor.

Yet a smile appeared on his face.

“Not bad. You've graduated.”

The Demon Monkey King said.

The words were simple—but they struck Golden Crow’s heart like thunder.

Around them, everyone was stunned.

No one had expected this outcome.

Golden Crow looked into the Demon Monkey King’s eyes. Gradually, he understood:

Ruling the demon race was not easy.

What he would bear and carry would be heavy.

In this moment, Golden Crow seemed to comprehend something.

His eyes shone with firm resolve—like a vow.

The battle ended.

A new demon king was born in the Demon Court—Golden Crow King.

The demon race's fortune surged. The moment the Demon Monkey King acknowledged him, vast fortune poured down—causing Golden Crow's demon core to evolve.

Though he had not yet reached Demon Saint level, with fortune blessing him, he was now only half a step away.

From this day forward, the Demon Court entered the era of Golden Crow King's rule.

The hope of the demon race now rested entirely on Golden Crow King.

Half a year passed in the blink of an eye.

Under Golden Crow King's rule, the demon race flourished.

Yet Golden Crow harbored an idea: he wanted to find the other nine demons with special bloodlines.

He wanted them as his left and right arms.

Action followed thought. Golden Crow patrolled—standing on his war chariot, radiating blazing sunlight across the Demon Court.

He arrived at the great marsh and met the one-legged ox demon. Its terrifying aura even made Golden Crow feel solemn.

Golden Crow was arrogant. He stated his purpose.

He wanted the ox demon to follow him—to build the strongest Demon Court together.

Yet the ox demon refused.

The two hot-tempered demons clashed in the great marsh. The waters surged. Mountains shook.

The ox demon was beaten bloody. After transformation, Golden Crow was stronger.

Yet just as Golden Crow was about to take the ox demon away—

Golden Crow felt a terrifying aura. A powerful blade intent locked onto him.

Standing on his chariot, Golden Crow looked over.

On the marsh waters, a one-armed human blade master walked slowly.

The wind carried terrifying blade intent—slicing Golden Crow’s cheek.

Pfft!

A blade mark appeared on Golden Crow’s face.

“Human True Immortal.”

Golden Crow murmured.

He seemed to understand why the ox demon refused to follow him.

Ye Shoudao looked calmly at Golden Crow. He found this new demon king quite impressive.

The ox demon returned to stand respectfully behind Ye Shoudao.

“If you want the ox demon to follow you—defeat me first.”

Ye Shoudao said calmly.

Clang!

Suddenly.

Blade light appeared—one became two, two became three, three became ten thousand.

Golden Crow felt pressure.

Vaguely, he sensed the gap between himself and Ye Shoudao.

“Very well.”

Yet Golden Crow’s temper was fiery. He did not retreat.

As the new demon king, if he wished to rule the demon race—why retreat?

“Then... I’ll crush you!”

Golden Crow erupted with Solar Divine Fire—eyes blazing.

Ye Shoudao smiled faintly: “Big words...”

“Go back. You just fought the ox demon. Come again when you’re at your peak.”

“In your current state—you will lose.”

“Otherwise, the little monkey will accuse me of bullying the young.”

With that, Ye Shoudao sheathed his ten thousand blades.

Golden Crow paused. He had heard of Ye Shoudao.

But he did feel his condition was not optimal. The ox demon was no weakling. Suppressing it had slightly drained him.

Thus, Golden Crow turned and left.

Golden Crow arrived at a mountain. Atop it stood a giant bear—immensely strong.

Yet after Golden Crow stated his purpose, he was refused again.

Because behind the giant bear stood another human True Immortal.

Golden Crow visited one place after another.

Finally, he reached Qingyun Mountain.

But before approaching, he sensed the terrifying aura of Empress Ni Chunchiu.

Golden Crow understood—with the Empress present, he could not take the little snake demon.

“Another human True Immortal...”

“This must be the problem Master spoke of—the obstacle to the demon race’s rise.”

Golden Crow drew a deep breath.

“One day—I, Golden Crow, will make these human True Immortals return whence they came!”

Human True Immortals meddling—this was perhaps the greatest obstacle to the demon race’s rise!

But Golden Crow understood: changing this was difficult.

These were merely human True Immortals—yet Golden Crow already felt pressure.

Rumors said humanity had multiple Xuan Immortal-level powerhouses!

Xuan Immortals—equivalent to Demon Saints.

The demon race had never produced a Demon Saint—only the Demon Lord.

As the new leader of the demon race, Golden Crow finally felt the weight of responsibility.

...

Origin Lake, Origin Island.

Lu withdrew his gaze from the demon race.

He naturally sensed Golden Crow's predicament.

Du Longyang, Ye Shoudao, and other Half-Step Xuan Immortal powerhouses—each was no weaker than the Demon Monkey King.

Golden Crow's pressure must be immense.

But immense pressure was good. Without sufficient pressure—how could he become the demon race's leader?

“To rule the demon race—shouting slogans is not enough...”

Lu smiled.

He did not place another piece—quietly watching events unfold.

The fuse had been lit. Next came the turning of fortune.

Just as Lu prepared to enjoy the show—

His heart stirred.

His brows lifted slightly.

The next moment, his divine sense appeared in the Origin Space.

On the vast Heavenly Dao star,

Little Yinglong had finally completed refining the millionth Dao essence strand.

Rumble!

Brilliant light rose. The entire Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao star seemed to upgrade—radiating dazzling radiance.

If the original Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao had been a weak, toddling infant—now it was a young man.

Possessing the power to swing fists.

“One million Dao essence strands—the Five Phoenixes has finally reached First-Derivation high-martial.”

Lu smiled.

Zhu Long appeared in the space as well.

Seeing Lu, her face bloomed with adorable dimples.

Lu appeared on the star.

He picked up Little Yinglong—whose aura had grown even more profound.

“Well done. You get a vacation.”

Lu patted Little Yinglong’s head and brought him back to Origin Island.

Zhu Long did not leave. With the Heavenly Dao having just refined a million Dao essence strands and undergone transformation—this was her best cultivation period.

Little Yinglong returned to Origin Island—and instantly perked up.

He dove into Origin Lake—splashing wildly.

Ni Yu sensed Little Yinglong's return. Her black pot exploded—the pills she was refining turned to sludge.

Little Yinglong flew over joyfully—landing on Ni Yu's head.

With one gulp, he swallowed all the waste—converting it into energy. He even burped.

Ni Yu ran wildly across the island with Little Yinglong.

But after a few days of play, Ni Yu returned to her alchemy room. Little Yinglong lazed about—finding it boring.

On the Heavenly Dao star, Little Yinglong had struggled day and night for freedom—refining Dao essence.

Now, with Dao essence fully refined—he had returned. Yet he had lost his pure, innocent joy of play.

Little Yinglong felt changed.

He felt ashamed of his salted-fish self.

He actually thought refining Dao essence might be more interesting.

Little Yinglong clutched his chest.

It was over. He might be addicted.

...

Golden Crow returned to the Demon Court.

The more he thought—the more oppressed he felt.

In the current Five Phoenixes—the Demon Court seemed dominant. But that was only compared to ordinary humans.

Compared to human cultivation circles—human top-tier cultivators and Immortals...

The Demon Court lagged far behind.

Even now—human hands had reached into the demon race’s surging fortune.

“Why should human Immortals divide our demon race’s fortune?!”

In the Demon Court palace,

Golden Crow—clad in golden armor, wielding a spear of Solar Divine Fire—roared in fury.

From birth until now, Golden Crow had never tasted defeat. Perhaps—he could defeat every human True Immortal!

He left the palace alone—charging toward the great marsh.

Ye Shoudao had said: if he wanted the ox demon to follow him—he must defeat him first.

Thus, Golden Crow came!

This battle caused immense commotion.

The Demon Monkey King and Thunder Eagle King both arrived—watching the fight, supporting Golden Crow.

Human powerhouses also gathered.

The battle erupted.

The entire great marsh was scorched dry by Golden Crow's Solar Divine Fire.

Yet in this battle—Ye Shoudao only drew three blades.

The fight ended.

The first blade seemed to split the sky in two.

The second blade split the great marsh in two.

The third blade nearly split Golden Crow in two. Only because Ye Shoudao stopped at the last moment was Golden Crow spared.

Golden Crow—tasting defeat for the first time—stood dazed.

The Demon Monkey King sighed. Thanking Ye Shoudao, he knew Ye Shoudao had spared Golden Crow's life out of respect for their past alliance.

Golden Crow was still too young.

But the Demon Monkey King narrowed his eyes. This defeat might not be bad for Golden Crow.

His path had been too smooth.

“The ox demon—from now on, follow Golden Crow.”

Ye Shoudao defeated Golden Crow and spoke to the ox demon behind him.

The ox demon was stunned—not understanding why his master, having won, wanted him to follow Golden Crow.

Ye Shoudao's hair whipped in the wind. He glanced at the sky.

Seeming to see the demon race's vast fortune.

He smiled: "After all these years—still unable to gain fortune. Keeping you by my side would only hold you back."

"You have your own path."

Ye Shoudao said.

"Today—our master-disciple bond ends."

With that,

Ye Shoudao drew his blade with one arm—as though splitting the sea in two.

As the ox demon kowtowed, Ye Shoudao departed on his blade.

The demon race's fortune—Ye Shoudao no longer clung to it. What was meant to be would come. What wasn't—clinging was useless.

Ye Shoudao's action seemed to inspire many human True Immortals.

They had wasted time in the Demon Court—neglecting cultivation.

Ye Shoudao left.

But Golden Crow—having tasted defeat for the first time—stood dazed, staring at the split marsh.

With Ye Shoudao's departure, many human True Immortals also seemed to give up on gaining demon fortune.

Du Longyang and the Empress also withdrew—returning to Tianyuan Domain.

Of course, some human True Immortals did not give up—like Heavenly Void Young Master.

He still hoped to seize demon fortune.

On Qingyun Mountain,

The Empress bid farewell to the little snake demon Bai Su.

“Go. Join the Demon Court. Perhaps... this is your path.”

“You should gain experience too. Don’t stay so innocent.”

The Empress smiled.

She ruffled Bai Su’s head. After bidding farewell, she transformed into red light and vanished from Qingyun Mountain.

Bai Su stood stunned. Tears welled in her large eyes.

She had a feeling—from today onward—she might lose her teacher.

The Empress left decisively. Bai Su waited on Qingyun Mountain for a long time—but the Empress never returned. Clearly—she had truly left.

Bai Su felt lost. She wailed on the mountain for days.

Her tears formed a silver waterfall—hanging on Qingyun Mountain, becoming a scenic wonder.

After crying herself out, Bai Su packed her things and headed toward the Demon Court—following her teacher's words.

Golden Crow was brought back to the palace by the Thunder Eagle King and Demon Monkey King.

The two demon kings did not console him—they simply watched quietly.

This was a hurdle.

If Golden Crow could not overcome it—he would never bear the responsibility of reviving the demon race.

Golden Crow brooded for half a month.

Finally—he understood.

On this day, flames soared in the Demon Court palace—Solar Divine Fire turning night into day!

Golden Crow emerged renewed—sweeping away dejection, breaking through his barrier.

He had turned defeat into motivation!

Defeat was not scary. What was scary was collapsing after defeat.

Boom!

Golden Crow stood in the night sky.

The ox demon soared. White pythons slithered...

Many heaven-defying demons appeared—joining the Demon Court.

With these monstrous geniuses joining the Demon Court,

The demon race's fortune surged wildly.

Fortune pillars rose into the sky.

As these geniuses joined, demon fortune shifted—pouring down.

Golden Crow spat out his demon core. It hovered in the air.

The next moment—fortune like rivers coiled around his demon core. Having overcome failure—he broke through once more—stepping into Xuan Immortal realm, becoming the demon race's first Demon Saint.

Golden Crow's bloodline boiled completely—like a blazing sun illuminating the night—becoming the brightest star in the sky.

...

The moment Golden Crow became a Demon Saint,

Rumble!

Profound auras spread.

The entire Five Phoenix Continent underwent transformation.

With one million Dao essence strands fully refined—the Five Phoenixes officially entered First-Derivation high-martial. Endless rays of light filled heaven and earth.

Combined with Golden Crow becoming a Demon Saint—and many Transmission Platform-selected demons joining the Demon Court—

The demon race's vast fortune surged.

The demon race's fortune erupted massively.

In Tianyuan Domain,

Du Longyang, Ye Shoudao, and the Empress all opened their eyes.

They looked up in slight surprise.

Fortune surged toward them.

Demon race fortune poured into their bodies—causing their fortune pillars to shatter like bursting dams—transforming into roaring rivers of fortune.

Thus, the three successively proved the Xuan Immortal realm.

Of course—at this moment, all three were slightly dazed and bewildered.

Then—their emotions became extremely complex.

Having given up on demon fortune—they unexpectedly received it.

Unintentional planting yields shade.

Chapter 540: Qi Refining Layer Ten—The Ancient Emperor Returns Carrying the Coffin

The world changed dramatically. The entire Five Phoenixes seemed to undergo a complete transformation in this moment.

Boom!

Vast energy surged.

The landmasses of the Five Phoenix Continent began expanding once more.

Countless life-bearing stars—transformed from various worlds—orbited the Five Phoenixes in profound patterns.

Overflowing energy from the Five Phoenixes poured into these stars.

The ancestors of high-martial worlds who had migrated from Pingyang Heaven, Blood Fiend Heaven, and Yuan Magnetic Heaven to the Five Phoenixes—all had bright eyes in this moment.

They sensed something.

The scent of opportunity.

“The Five Phoenixes is transforming! It’s ascending to First-Derivation!”

“Seize this chance—perhaps our stars can also gain great fortune!”

“Borrow the Five Phoenixes’ Dao essence to achieve the Dao! This is the opportunity!”

One by one, the high-martial ancestors and Immortals began guiding their stars to orbit the Five Phoenixes—receiving the blessing of the Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao.

Endless fortune surged, making the entire starry sky dazzlingly magnificent.

On the Five Phoenix Continent,

Cultivators naturally sensed it. How could they not know?

The Five Phoenix Continent’s transformation was not the first time. From a low-martial continent to today’s First-Derivation high-martial—the Five Phoenixes had transformed many times.

It had endured countless hardships.

Yet without exception, every transformation was the best opportunity for growth.

The Five Phoenix Xuan Immortals sighed deeply. But while sighing, they all sat cross-legged—communing with the Heavenly Dao, seeking its power and insights.

Micah stood atop a mountain peak, hands behind his back.

Watching the heavens and earth shift, his eyes gleamed.

The Five Phoenixes' transformation stirred excitement in his once-calm heart.

He sat cross-legged, sensing the world.

The twelve Witch Kings temporarily ceased fighting with Overlord and Tang Yimo.

They gathered around the Heavenly Witch statue—dancing the sacrificial dance. To them, the world's transformation was likely the Heavenly Witch manifesting.

They felt their own strength changing with the world.

Growing stronger, more powerful. Even Witch Kings who had not yet comprehended divine abilities broke through their bottlenecks in this moment—gaining divine abilities.

This was the Heavenly Witch's blessing!

The Witch Clan tribes erupted in frenzy—plunged into celebration.

Demon Court.

At this moment, the Demon Court was completely boiling.

Because...

A Demon Saint had been born!

Golden Crow proved the Dao. In this moment, he washed away inner confusion—breaking through his shackles, achieving the level equivalent to human Xuan Immortal: Demon Saint!

Moreover—due to the demon race's innate talent—Demon Saints were stronger than ordinary Xuan Immortals!

The entire demon race's fortune surged—pouring down endlessly.

Many great demons received fortune's blessing—achieving great breakthroughs.

The Demon Monkey King looked at the blazing Golden Crow.

He burst into laughter.

Demon race fortune poured down. The Demon Monkey King—also in this moment—successfully stepped into Demon Saint realm!

The Thunder Eagle King also broke through—receiving the demon race’s fortune blessing.

It was as though the demon race’s fortune acknowledged the demon kings’ years of governance.

One by one, the demon kings achieved varying degrees of improvement.

The entire demon race boiled—like a grand celebration sweeping the Demon Court.

The ox demon, nine-tailed fox, snake demon Bai Su, and other great demons also received fortune—breaking through.

Meanwhile, the human True Immortals staying in the Demon Court were stunned.

Heavenly Void Young Master looked dazed.

Golden Crow proving the Dao as Demon Saint already shocked him. The surging demon fortune delighted him.

But as the demon fortune gradually calmed from its boiling state—

Heavenly Void Young Master's heart turned from shock to terror.

Where was the promised fortune?

Why had he received none?

He had clearly found the one who could influence demon fortune—and subtly influenced him.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Suddenly.

Heavenly Void Young Master turned his head—looking toward the Eastern Sea.

He sensed three breakthrough auras rising in Tianyuan Domain.

In that instant—Heavenly Void understood.

He slapped himself hard.

Cursing himself.

What had he been greedy for!

Why hadn't he let go when he should have...

Ye Shoudao, Du Longyang, Ni Chunchiu—they had let go—and unexpectedly received the longed-for demon fortune.

Achieving breakthroughs.

While he, Heavenly Void Young Master...

Because he clung too tightly—received nothing.

This... was fate!

He, Heavenly Void... had fallen behind again!

Others felt destiny's kiss—while he suffered destiny's ruthless punches.

Heavenly Void Young Master beat his chest and wailed.

So difficult.

Compared to the demon race's surging fortune,

Human fortune changed little.

The spiritual energy density of heaven and earth increased again—accelerating the birth of cultivators.

This was the benefit of the world's level rising.

Human fortune had already gone through its ups and downs.

Human Immortals had already divided what fortune they could.

The effect naturally could not compare to the demon race's fortune surge led by the newly born Demon Saint Golden Crow.

...

While the Five Phoenixes underwent massive transformation,

The nine heavens seemed to sense it as well.

Many Saints soared into the air—gazing toward the starry sky of Void Heaven, isolated by the void abyss.

They could see the Five Phoenix Continent within.

Originally, the Five Phoenixes had been expanding—its area growing larger.

Once, Void Heaven had been the smallest of the nine heavens—even smaller than Pingyang Heaven.

But now, Void Heaven's area rivaled the combined size of the lower three heavens.

Looking at the magnificent stars revolving,

The holy clan Saints of the nine heavens breathed heavily. Some even revealed envy.

At all times, overwhelming pressure surged within the nine heavens.

Oppressive. Stifling. Dead silent...

This was the current state of the nine heavens.

The various races of the upper realms could only tremble day by day—fearing destruction at any moment.

Such a nine heavens—compared to the vibrant Void Heaven—filled them with disgust.

With the loss and destruction of imperial weapons, the original ten great holy clans had fallen completely silent.

But the Heavenly Spirit Clan could no longer sit still.

The Heavenly Spirit Clan—always aloof from the holy clans, residing in the first heaven—dispatched vast armies.

Within the Heavenly Spirit Clan, there was a Heavenly Dao incarnation.

Under the banner of “Heavenly Dao crusade,” the Heavenly Spirit Holy Hall began conquering the various holy clans of the nine heavens.

Though they had lost Micah—the powerful Holy Hall Master—

The Heavenly Spirit Clan remained the strongest of the ten great holy clans.

In a short time, they launched war—sweeping across every region of the upper realms.

The remaining five holy clans naturally refused to be swallowed by the Heavenly Spirit Clan.

After all, each holy clan carried glory—having endured millions of years.

But the Heavenly Spirit Clan was too powerful.

Even united, the five holy clans were steadily defeated under the Heavenly Spirit Clan's strength.

Many Saints in the holy clans despaired.

They sensed the Heavenly Spirit Clan's determination—to unify the nine heavens.

Though the nine heavens were now incomplete—unifying them would still be a monumental feat.

After all—in millions of years—the nine heavens had never been unified.

Now—taking advantage of the ten great holy clans' emptiness—the Heavenly Spirit Clan struck like thunder.

Without imperial weapons, Saints were the strongest force.

But the Heavenly Spirit Clan was too strong. Their number of Saints was too great.

Even united, the remaining five holy clans struggled to resist.

War erupted in the nine heavens.

Battles raged endlessly.

The holy clans huddled together for warmth—barely clinging to a sliver of survival.

In despair, many holy clan Saints turned their gaze toward Void Heaven—the vast starry sky beyond the void abyss.

They felt ironic.

Once proud as nine heavens holy clans—now they had no place in the nine heavens.

“If this continues—the Heavenly Spirit Clan’s dominance will destroy us. The holy clans’ inheritance will vanish forever.”

“Our only hope... is to flee into Void Heaven.”

“That Lu Ping’an of the Five Phoenixes may be petty and bad-tempered—but he will not devour us or destroy us like the Heavenly Spirit Clan...”

“Perhaps... we can still find a sliver of survival in the Five Phoenixes!”

The Saints of the five holy clans said.

The nine heavens offered no place.

Then... to Void Heaven!

Thus, all the holy clan Saints gathered their strength—constructing a massive warship.

This warship combined the essence of Ancient Emperor Hao and all array runes.

Using this warship—they would cross the void abyss and enter Void Heaven.

This act was equivalent to traveling from one heaven to another—immensely difficult.

After all—the Five Phoenix Heavenly Dao and the nine heavens' Heavenly Dao were incompatible.

Facing the aggressive, merciless Heavenly Spirit Clan—the upper-realm holy clans had no choice.

They were gambling—betting that Lu Ping'an would, for the sake of the imperial weapons they once provided—leave them a path to survival.

If they stayed in the nine heavens—the Heavenly Spirit Clan would give them no mercy.

Since ancient times, holy clans devoured by others met the fate of extermination.

The holy clans knew their own ruthlessness.

Finally, the holy clan alliance began their plan.

The warship carried the elite members of the five holy clans—one hundred thousand people.

All with the purest holy clan bloodlines.

This was all they could bring.

The massive warship began crossing the void abyss.

They were filled with hope.

As the Five Phoenixes began transforming—they sought to cross the void abyss and enter Void Heaven.

However—

Just as they began this act,

In the first heaven—the Heavenly Spirit Clan.

In the endless void,

Footsteps gradually echoed.

The aged Quasi-Emperor stationed in the Heavenly Spirit Clan suddenly opened his eyes.

Looking toward the end of the sky.

At that distant end—brilliant light flickered.

A golden-haired burly man returned.

Carrying a blood-dripping red coffin on his back.

With every step—void trembled.

This golden-haired man's aura was too strong—even compared to Quasi-Emperors, the gap was vast.

When he appeared—he became the sole focus between heaven and earth.

Even the Heavenly Dao could not affect him in the slightest.

His flesh contained boundless energy—faintly capable of shaking off rule power.

The aged Quasi-Emperor of the Heavenly Spirit Clan was shocked.

Transforming into light, he bowed respectfully—trembling.

“It’s the Emperor!”

“Heavenly Spirit Emperor has returned!”

The Quasi-Emperor prostrated himself.

At the same time—all living beings of the Heavenly Spirit Clan erupted in cheers.

At the end of the nine heavens,

The Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor stood cold and solemn. The coffin on his back was immensely heavy—containing terrifying power that made hearts palpitate!

“Emperor!”

Quasi-Emperors knelt. The Holy Hall Saints also knelt.

The Heavenly Spirit Clan—and all living beings of the nine heavens—prostrated devoutly.

The Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor gazed coldly—carrying the blood-dripping coffin, barbaric aura flowing around him.

Step by step—he returned from the end of heaven and earth.

Carrying the power to destroy all.

Invincible through the ages.

This was an Emperor.

The entire Heavenly Spirit Clan seemed illuminated in glory—dazzling and blinding.

Rumble!

Accompanying his return was not only the Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor—but also vast Heavenly Dao.

The true nine heavens' Heavenly Dao.

Like thick clouds—it swept from the end of heaven and earth—forming a massive human face.

Complementing the Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor carrying the coffin.

“Emperor...”

The aged Heavenly Spirit Clan Quasi-Emperor prostrated—eyes filled with reverence and tears.

“The former Holy Hall Master Micah betrayed our clan—betrayed the Emperor. He joined the Five Phoenixes—becoming a sinful traitor.”

“Micah even took many Holy Hall Saints—our clan's shame!”

This old Quasi-Emperor was even older than Micah.

He and Micah had guarded the Heavenly Spirit Clan together. In truth—the Emperor had left him to balance Micah.

In an era without Emperors—Quasi-Emperors were the strongest.

The Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor carried the blood-dripping coffin.

Quietly listening to the old Quasi-Emperor's weeping accusations.

“Micah betrayed?”

The Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor murmured.

The next moment—terrifying light surged in his eyes—as though time was reversing.

He saw everything clearly—everything that had happened in the nine heavens.

The destruction of imperial weapons, the fall of holy clans, Micah's betrayal, and the descent of the Emperor-realm Dao incarnation.

When he saw the Dao incarnation descend—the Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor was slightly surprised.

After all—in an era without Emperors—who could resist the Heavenly Dao will?

Continuing to watch—he discovered someone had become one with the Heavenly Dao—severing Void Heaven—separating it from the nine heavens.

Making it impossible for the Heavenly Dao will to interfere.

“Interesting.”

The Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor smiled.

His gaze lifted—as though piercing through everything...

Seeming to see the massive rift—and the familiar faces within it.

Suddenly.

The Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor’s gaze swept.

Falling upon the vast void abyss beyond Pingyang Heaven—seeing the massive warship floating in the abyss.

“The other holy clans?”

“Also betraying the nine heavens?”

The Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor said calmly.

“Traitors shall not be forgiven.”

With that,

The blood-dripping coffin on the Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor’s back smashed into the void.

Boom!

The entire first heaven seemed ready to explode.

The Quasi-Emperor's heart clenched. Glancing at the coffin—the suffocating sensation made his body tremble.

It was a suppression on the level of life itself.

What was in this coffin...

What exactly was sealed inside?

Whoosh! Whoosh!

The moment the Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor set down the coffin—the Heavenly Dao manifested. Endless Heavenly Dao power transformed into rule chains—wrapping tightly around the coffin.

Locking the blood-dripping coffin firmly.

The Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor glanced back—smiling faintly.

The next moment—

He stepped forward.

Heaven and earth collapsed. In an instant—he crossed several heavens—appearing beyond Pingyang Heaven.

In the void abyss Lu had cleaved.

The holy clan Saints on the warship—about to exit the abyss—had just breathed a sigh of relief. They wondered why the Heavenly Spirit Clan had not sent pursuers.

But the moment they relaxed—

Boom!

They turned back in disbelief.

They saw the golden-haired man—who seemed the sole focus of heaven and earth—slowly walking toward them.

Thud! Thud!

The holy clan Saints knelt under the terrifying pressure.

They despaired...

An Emperor?!

The Heavenly Spirit Emperor?!

They were just smuggling themselves—did it require the Heavenly Spirit Emperor to appear personally?!

Was it still possible to turn back now?

...

Origin Lake, Origin Island.

Lu sat in his thousand-blade chair. The system panel appeared before him.

\*Host:\* Lu

\*Title:\* Qi Refiner (Permanent)

\*Qi Refining Level:\* 9 (↑)

\*Spiritual Energy Reserve:\* 100/100 (billion) strands

\*Divine Soul Power:\* 100000 (yuan)

\*Chaos Power:\* 1000000 (he)

\*World Rating:\* Five Phoenixes Minor World [High-Martial (Immortal Martial Foundation)]

Lu's eyes gleamed.

In truth—his spiritual energy reserve had long met the requirement for advancement. But Lu had not chosen to break through.

He had been waiting for the right moment.

Waiting for Little Yinglong to fully refine one million Dao essence strands—ascending with the Five Phoenixes to First-Derivation high-martial—then breaking through to see if the Five Phoenixes could impact immortal martial realm.

Though... Lu felt it was somewhat unlikely.

But how would he know without trying?

Finally—the Five Phoenixes began upgrading to First-Derivation...

Lu felt the constantly transforming world—his lips curving upward.

First-Derivation was the pinnacle of high-martial.

Perhaps only in this way could they hope to impact immortal martial.

“A ten-thousand-zhang tower starts from the ground. Congratulations, Host—spiritual energy reserve accumulation complete. Meets Qi Refining advancement conditions. Advance?”

Lu sat in his thousand-blade chair—one hand propping his chin, the other lightly tapping the armrest.

The familiar system prompt appeared before him.

This prompt had appeared many times.

But before—Lu had always refused. This time—Lu did not refuse.

“Yes.”

Lu said.

With his confirmation—the text faded.

Boom!

Lu felt his internal spiritual energy surge wildly. Essence, energy, and spirit seemed to undergo massive transformation in this moment.

This was... Qi Refining... Layer Ten!

In Lu's eyes—it seemed to contain the vast heavens and earth. Everything was laid bare.

His divine soul instantly broke through the bottleneck.

Divine sense wandered freely!

In an instant—it seemed to transcend the constraints of heaven, earth, and all things.

Independent of the world.

Suddenly.

Above Origin Lake—Lu's divine soul fluctuated faintly.

He slowly raised his head—looking into the distance.

Toward the void abyss connecting Void Heaven and Pingyang Heaven.

In that abyss—a pair of eyes projected their gaze—as though piercing through the barriers of time and space.

Colliding with Lu's gaze!