

Starlit Path 571

Chapter 571: Bullying My Poison Emperor's Granddaughter...

BOOM!

The terrifying explosion continued, brilliant like fireworks blooming in the night.

Thick blood stench spread—the scent of shattered Divine Demon flesh scattering everywhere.

Savage, ruthless—this was the rule of the Innate Divine Demon race.

No one knew exactly how many Divine Demons existed in the Primordial Starry Sky.

Even the ancient Great Emperors deep within the Ninth Heaven's void rift had only shallow understanding of it.

Their exploration of the Primordial Starry Sky was like groping in the dark. But one thing was undeniable: the power of the Divine Demon race was beyond question.

The self-detonations of early-tier Divine Demons—each comparable to early Emperor Realm—continued to bombard the spatial passage.

Terrifying, vicious gales howled out from the passage entrance, sending chills down spines.

Each early-tier Divine Demon's explosion unleashed devastating destructive force.

Even the incomparably sturdy passage entrance began to show terrifying cracks under such bombardment.

Array runes surged, struggling to maintain the passage's integrity.

But the ancient Great Emperors of the Ninth Heaven made no effort to reinforce the array. Perhaps, for them, allowing more early-tier Divine Demons to be expended here was rather satisfying.

Beyond the passage entrance, that massive eyeball gleamed with eerie light—a black beam that seemed to pierce straight into the soul.

Even Tantai Xuan and the others felt their hearts palpitate under its gaze.

Early-tier Divine Demons poured through the passage like mad.

They were divided into two groups.

One group charged toward the Five Phoenix army.

The other was controlled by immense power and forced to self-destruct at the passage entrance.

The atmosphere and situation grew increasingly dire.

With each explosion widening the passage entrance, more early-tier Divine Demons could enter the Five Phoenixes simultaneously.

Tantai Xuan, Lu Jiulian, and Micah—the three Third-Revolution Golden Immortals—unleashed everything they had to suppress these early-tier Divine Demons.

Micah shook with power. His Extreme Realm Emperor Fist swept outward, shattering the void.

Many early-tier Divine Demons were blasted back, bloodied and reeling.

But these Divine Demons were not fools. They seemed to be under unified command.

Soon, they began spewing countless flesh fragments that writhed and transformed into avatars.

Countless avatars surged like a tide toward the outside of the abyss, desperate to escape into the Five Phoenixes.

At this moment, the cultivators of the Five Phoenixes showed their worth.

Netherworld Yin Soldiers stood firm, armor clanging.

Hell Hounds roared, infernal flames blazing, incinerating wave after wave of Divine Demon flesh avatars.

The chaotic battle erupted.

These flesh avatars possessed limited combat power—most at the Heavenly Human realm—but their sheer numbers were overwhelming.

Fortunately, the Five Phoenix cultivators were also numerous.

Thus, a grand war unfolded in the abyss.

During the battle, countless Divine Demon flesh avatars burst into blood flowers, lost their will, and fell into the abyss.

It was as though a rain of flesh poured down.

Tantai Xuan withdrew his gaze.

The Five Phoenix cultivators gave him an unshakable sense of security. This was the Five Phoenixes—united against external enemies.

“Everyone is so outstanding—we can’t fall behind.”

Tantai Xuan chuckled lightly.

On the other side, Sima Qingshan, Bai Qingniao, and Nie Changqing—the three newly ascended Golden Immortals—also displayed their prowess, living up to their Golden Immortal titles.

Sima Qingshan waved his brush. Ink-wash scrolls unfurled in the void.

Mountains and rivers shifted, crushing Divine Demon avatars.

His scrolls became prisons, sealing early-tier Divine Demons within.

Nie Changqing, Dragon-Slaying Blade at his waist, eyes cold, stepped into Sima Qingshan's scroll. His blade danced, slaying the Divine Demons drawn inside.

As a new Golden Immortal facing early-tier Divine Demons, with Sima Qingshan's support,

Nie Changqing's blade light grew ever sharper, quickly beheading them.

Bai Qingniao, meanwhile, was ferocious.

Nine fire phoenixes coiled around her, forming a sea-of-flames domain. The nine phoenixes spiraled upward—one against one, no early-tier Divine Demon could withstand her.

The Hegemon roared, demonic qi surging.

Fearless, at quasi-Emperor realm, he hungered for breakthrough. In battle... he feared no one.

He charged straight at an early-tier Divine Demon, fighting Emperor Realm with quasi-Emperor power.

Though the gap was vast, the Hegemon endured blow after blow, blood spraying. Yet he withstood every strike.

Taking hits—he was a professional.

Tang Yimo opened six meridians. He seemed even more demonic than the demons.

Charging wildly, he clashed in close combat with Divine Demons.

Each collision, each strike, made his blood tremble violently.

He needed an ultimate sublimation to elevate his power.

The twelve Witch Kings transformed into the Heavenly Witch, their combat power exploding. They suppressed an early-tier Divine Demon and tore it apart with raw violence!

Blood drenched the twelve Witch Kings.

The abyss had become the most terrifying battlefield.

Because the Divine Demon flesh avatars' goal was to escape the abyss, they focused not on killing but on fleeing. Thus, casualties among the Five Phoenixes remained relatively low.

But... no one felt optimistic.

This was only the beginning of the war.

The Divine Demons attacking the passage entrance showed no sign of stopping. Once the entrance fully shattered, terrifying Divine Demons would descend!

BANG! BANG! BANG!

Suddenly,

ten consecutive early-tier Divine Demons detonated. Blood and flesh exploded, unleashing terrifying energy waves that turned millions of miles into pitch-black annihilation.

Cracking sounds rang out, striking at everyone's souls.

BANG!

Abruptly,

a massive head forced its way through from beyond the passage.

An earth-shaking roar exploded like rolling thunder.

This was a high-tier Divine Demon!

Under the relentless self-detonations of early-tier Divine Demons, the passage entrance had finally widened enough to allow high-tier Divine Demons entry!

“Kill!”

Lu Jiulian’s gaze turned icy. His domain instantly expanded.

Azure lotuses bloomed everywhere.

With a thought, he vanished—reappearing wherever an azure lotus bloomed.

The moment the high-tier Divine Demon emerged from the passage, Lu Jiulian engaged it.

Under his domain’s coverage, he shifted positions rapidly, closing in.

His hands clasped together.

A seven-colored Wrath Lotus—formed by exhausting all his power—took shape and was hurled forth, carrying apocalyptic momentum. It swelled with every breath.

The high-tier Divine Demon had barely emerged before being struck by the seven-colored Wrath Lotus.

Terrifying explosive energy tore through its defenses. Countless streams of blood sprayed.

Lu Jiulian's face was pale. He shifted back, sat cross-legged, and began recovering energy.

The terrifying explosion slowly subsided. As the energy dissipated,

the ferocious high-tier Divine Demon's armor shattered, flesh mangled. The pain only made it more savage.

Zhu Long suddenly opened her eyes. Her divine ability manifested.

Innate Yin-Yang qi surged forth.

The high-tier Divine Demon—already gravely wounded by Lu Jiulian—was instantly engulfed in endless light.

Da-da-da-da-da-da...

Terrifying explosions erupted. Each burst of flesh sprayed blood.

But a high-tier Divine Demon was Great Emperor level after all.

Even so, it had not yet perished.

Zhu Long's eyes opened—left black, right white.

She swung the massive grinding disc far larger than her body. She shifted through the air and hovered above the high-tier Divine Demon.

The disc smashed down violently. Each blow sprayed blood.

In this moment, the quiet beauty of Zhu Long—like an autumn leaf—truly transformed into... a witch.

The Witch of Mount Buzhou—well-deserved.

BOOM!

This high-tier Divine Demon died in utter frustration.

From the moment it emerged from the passage, it had no chance to display the might of a high-tier Divine Demon.

It was swiftly and decisively killed by Lu Jiulian and Zhu Long.

Lu Jiulian's expression remained cold.

Zhu Long's eyes shone.

As the high-tier Divine Demon perished, the destiny fortress enveloping it—like breaching on a fried delicacy—frantically dispersed, surging into Zhu Long and Lu Jiulian's bodies.

Their auras surged wildly in this moment!

It felt as though slaying one more high-tier Divine Demon would allow them to reach Sixth-Revolution Golden Immortal and achieve a great breakthrough.

However...

The fall of a high-tier Divine Demon drew the attention of the massive-eyed Divine Demon beyond the passage.

From across the distant boundary, it roared in fury.

Its roar became apocalyptic waves, surging forth.

That bloodshot eyeball rolled—finally locking onto Zhu Long.

Though Ning Zhao and the others had joined the battle wielding Innate Spiritual Treasures, easing the pressure,

the Five Phoenix Golden Immortals still faced overwhelming numbers.

Tantai Xuan, Micah, Lu Jiulian, and Zhu Long battled the incoming high-tier Divine Demons.

Each high-tier Divine Demon was equivalent to Great Emperor level.

Third-Revolution Golden Immortals could barely contend.

To truly fight—or slay—one, they needed Sixth-Revolution Golden Immortal.

Even Lu Jiulian, unleashing his strongest seven-colored Wrath Lotus, could only heavily wound a high-tier Divine Demon if he caught it off guard—not kill it.

However, Zhu Long's divine ability was exceptionally effective against Divine Demons.

She had the potential to slay high-tier Divine Demons.

The Yin-Yang Grinding Disc crushed down. Countless attacks erupted.

Another high-tier Divine Demon was brutally smashed to death by Zhu Long's disc. Blood drenched her, turning the quiet beauty into a blood-soaked figure—fierce and terrifying.

Vast destiny surged.

Zhu Long's sea of destiny began to boil.

"You break through to Sixth-Revolution Golden Immortal. I'll protect you."

Lu Jiulian flew over, standing before Zhu Long.

At this moment, adding another Sixth-Revolution Golden Immortal—especially one with Zhu Long's extraordinary divine ability—could shift the battle.

"No—you kill enemies."

Zhu Long closed her eyes and shook her head, refusing Lu Jiulian.

Instead, she closed her eyes and looked toward the little Yinglong.

"Little Yellow, protect Big Sister."

The little Yinglong roared and flew over swiftly. Its massive body spanned the abyss.

Seeing this, Lu Jiulian did not insist. He shifted positions with azure lotuses, two five-colored Wrath Lotuses forming in his palms as he charged back into battle.

BOOM!

While Zhu Long prepared to break through,

the Hegemon—covered in blood after enduring countless beatings—unleashed his unyielding dao intent and counter-killed his foe.

Vast destiny poured in. He charged toward Golden Immortal!

Tang Yimo, aided by Ni Yu's pills, forcibly opened seven meridians.

Blood sprayed from every pore.

His combat power instantly soared to the extreme, crossing the barrier and slaying the early-tier Divine Demon.

Destiny feedback combined with the pills pushed him toward Golden Immortal.

Tribulation clouds gathered like rain.

The Hegemon spread his arms wide, letting the tribulation lightning strike him. He was used to taking hits. His wild laughter echoed.

“Wait till I, the Hegemon, become a Golden Immortal!”

“I’ll make you Divine Demons cry for your daddies!”

Tang Yimo swallowed pills and barely withstood the endless tribulation lightning.

The feedback from crossing the tribulation became healing medicine. His wounds healed instantly, his state reaching peak condition as he rejoined the battle.

Seeming to sense Zhu Long’s impending breakthrough,

the massive-eyed Divine Demon beyond the passage grew agitated.

In the next moment...

an extreme pressure descended.

BOOM!!!

The passage entrance seemed to explode. Then, that Divine Demon's arm forcibly extended through the passage.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

Space around the passage entrance shattered.

Blood sprayed from the arm as it bled profusely.

"Immortal-tier!"

The Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor in black robes paled.

This aura... was too terrifying!

Even just an arm—it was not something the present powerhouses could resist!

The oppressive explosion caused nearby early-tier Divine Demons to cough blood.

Zhu Long's closed eyelashes trembled slightly.

She could sense the terrifying pressure approaching.

But she could not panic now. If she faltered, her momentum would collapse, and she would lose the chance to reach Sixth-Revolution Golden Immortal.

This moment was a race against time.

Lu Jiulian, Tantai Xuan, Micah, and the others wanted to rush to her aid but were entangled by high-tier Divine Demons.

Roar!

Yet the little Yinglong guarding Zhu Long did not retreat!

Its dark golden eyes surged. Golden light burst from every scale, illuminating the abyss like a sun.

Having swallowed Dao Rhyme for so long, the little Yinglong's body now erupted with powerful Heavenly Dao aura.

BANG!

Its dragon claw slammed down, clashing with the arm.

Its fleshy wings flapped, unleashing terrifying gales.

It forcibly stopped the Immortal-tier Divine Demon's arm from crossing the spatial passage.

...

In the Origin Space,

the Origin Space now resembled shattered glass—covered in cracks. A single misstep could cause total collapse.

Terrifying annihilation power swept through every corner.

The Immortal Origin within the Heavenly Dao star stirred restlessly, on the verge of breaking free.

Lu sat amid countless chaotic currents. The Origin Space was filled with destruction and annihilation.

Even he, if careless, might lose his primordial spirit forever in this space.

But Lu still paid attention to the battle in the abyss.

Perhaps because he had gradually merged with the Five Phoenixes, Lu cared more and more about the battle's progress.

When Ning Zhao, Ni Yu, and the others joined with his Innate Spiritual Treasures, Lu had breathed a sigh of relief.

However, when the Immortal-tier Divine Demon disregarded the passage's limits and launched an attack targeting his cherished little cotton-padded jacket Zhu Long, his heart tightened.

Rage burned within him.

He had thoroughly remembered this Immortal-tier Divine Demon.

Once the Five Phoenixes achieved Immortal-Martial, he would slaughter this Immortal-tier Divine Demon.

To celebrate the Five Phoenixes' ascension!

When the little Yinglong blocked the arm, Lu was surprised. He had not expected the lazy little Yinglong to step up in a critical moment.

Lu withdrew his attention.

He could no longer afford distraction. Even worrying about the Five Phoenixes was useless now.

His only way to help was to complete the Immortal-Martial ascension as quickly as possible.

...

Pfft!

Blood sprayed from the little Yinglong's mouth.

It could not hold on.

Blood seeped from every scale, forming rivers that dripped from its mountain-like body.

Clearly, blocking an Immortal-tier Divine Demon's arm was too much for the little Yinglong.

Ni Yu carried her black pot. Panic filled her big eyes as she hurriedly pulled out bottle after bottle of pills.

She prepared to restore the little Yinglong's condition.

But as she rushed forward,

someone moved faster.

A gentle breeze seemed to blow past...

Ni Yu's mouth fell open as she saw the figure in farmer's clothes appear before her.

Old... Old Master?!

Lu Changkong stood with hands behind his back, strolling casually. He landed beside the little Yinglong.

Casually, he took out a chrysanthemum divine herb and stuffed it into the little Yinglong's mouth.

The herb's power restored some of the little Yinglong's condition. Dark golden light flickered in its eyes.

Zhu Long's eyelashes trembled.

Lu Changkong chuckled and waved his hand.

"Little girl, you call Fan'er 'Father'—that makes you my, Lu Changkong's, granddaughter..."

"You focus on breaking through. Leave this to me."

Lu Changkong's wrinkled face squinted as he stared at the Immortal-tier Divine Demon's arm crossing the passage.

“Bullying my Poison Emperor’s granddaughter... that hand can go.”

Lu Changkong said.

As his words fell,

his calloused hand turned emerald green. Slowly, he placed it on the Immortal-tier Divine Demon’s arm...

Hiss hiss hiss...

Green smoke rose.

In the next moment,

where Lu Changkong’s hand touched, the Immortal-tier Divine Demon’s arm began to corrode and melt at visible speed!

Chapter 572: Poison Emperor’s Fury – Ascending to Immortal Martial in a Blink

Sizzle! Sizzle! Sizzle!

The corrosive power slithered like venomous snakes, rapidly spreading across the massive arm that had pierced through the spatial tunnel.

With a gentle pat, the corrosion erupted like a bursting dam, flooding out uncontrollably.

It rotted!

Bit by bit, it decayed!

Lu Changkong's hand, as smooth and green as jade, lightly tapped the arm of this immortal-level god-demon from the ancient starry sky, causing the flesh on the arm to corrode and melt away at an alarming speed!

Little Yinglong suddenly felt the pressure lift; the terrifying oppression from the arm vanished in an instant.

He collapsed into the void, his mountain-like body shrinking rapidly until he was no bigger than a small ball.

Blood seeped from every scale on his body as he panted heavily.

Ni Yu rushed over, grabbing a handful of pills and stuffing them roughly into Little Yinglong's mouth.

Originally, the chrysanthemum divine herb that Lu Changkong had given him earlier was already working its magic, swiftly aiding his recovery.

So, at this moment, Little Yinglong only looked battered on the surface.

His actual injuries weren't that severe.

But Little Yinglong kept quiet about it, savoring the pills Ni Yu was feeding him—after all, the medicine couldn't stop now.

Everyone around was stunned.

No one could have imagined such a dramatic turnaround.

Who was this farmer-like old man?!

In truth, very few in the world truly knew Lu Changkong; he was an extremely low-key cultivator.

But the cultivators from Five Phoenixes, who had grown with it from low martial to now, erupted in joyful exclamations.

"City Lord Lu..."

"Hahaha... Young Master Lu's own father!"

"Poison Emperor? When did City Lord Lu become the Poison Emperor? Isn't he the Divine Farmer, the supreme alchemist who specializes in nurturing divine herbs?"

The crowd burst into laughter.

Zhu Long seized the opportunity to focus her mind on breaking through to the sixth turn of Golden Immortal. A vast surge of fate enveloped her body, making her appear increasingly ethereal.

Lu Changkong chuckled lightly.

The massive immortal-level god-demon arm trembled violently.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

As if scalded by boiling water, it retracted at lightning speed.

The intense burning sensation made even this immortal-level god-demon from the ancient starry sky feel the corrosion deeply.

If it continued, even the bones would likely dissolve.

Thud! Thud! Thud!

The arm pulled back with enormous force.

The void seemed on the verge of exploding from the motion.

Fierce winds howled, and finally, the gigantic immortal-level god-demon arm withdrew from the spatial tunnel.

As it retreated,

The arm had been corroded down to bare white bones.

The onlookers' laughter faded.

So... so toxic!

Damn, that's insanely poisonous!

This old farmer looked so plain and unassuming—how could he harbor such deadly poison?!

The flesh of an immortal-level god-demon was incredibly tough, comparable to divine weapons, yet it had been reduced to bare bones in mere moments.

Now, not just the god-demons, but even the cultivators felt a chill run down their spines.

If Old Man Lu gently patted someone's head, that person... would probably vanish in an instant.

In the distance,

Gu Mangran's mouth twitched.

Mr. Lu...

He had actually emerged from the ancient tomb?

Moreover, Gu Mangran could sense that Lu Changkong's cultivation had reached the Golden Immortal level, comparable to a novice emperor.

At the novice emperor realm, his poison was already this terrifying.

But Gu Mangran wasn't surprised; even when Lu Changkong's cultivation was weak, his toxicity was extreme. Now, having stepped into Golden Immortal, his supreme poison body had likely reached its pinnacle.

Besides, Lu Changkong was Young Master Lu's father—it wouldn't be hard for the young master to acquire deadly poisons to enhance his father's constitution.

With one move,

He corroded the flesh of an immortal-level god-demon.

Worthy of Mr. Lu, worthy of Old Man Lu.

From today onward, tales of the Poison Emperor Old Man Lu would spread throughout Five Phoenixes.

Roar!

A terrifying bellow echoed from beyond the tunnel.

The high-tier god-demons battling Lu Jiulian and the others seemed provoked.

Their fighting spirit grew even more frenzied.

One high-tier god-demon even charged madly toward Lu Changkong.

Clearly under the control of the immortal-level god-demon's will from outside the tunnel.

Lu Changkong narrowed his eyes.

What he truly excelled at was his poison alone.

If it came to actual combat, he might not be able to defeat a high-tier god-demon with his novice emperor strength.

"My son is Lu Ping'an. Think carefully before you act."

Lu Changkong clasped his hands behind his back and said calmly.

His face didn't flush, his heart didn't race—not a hint of panic.

The high-tier god-demon transformed into a bolt of lightning, ignoring Lu Changkong's words entirely.

Who was Lu Ping'an?

This god-demon didn't know him!

Surging energy erupted from its body, and in the instant Lu Changkong's words fell, it struck with deadly speed.

Whoosh!

A blue lotus bloomed.

Lu Jiulian's figure blocked the path in front of Lu Changkong.

She hurled an angry lotus, which exploded suddenly. The terrifying blast sent the high-tier god-demon flying sideways.

But after the dust settled,

The high-tier god-demon charged back again.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

At the tunnel entrance, the self-detonations of novice-tier god-demons intensified, tearing the opening wider and wider.

Faintly, an even more terrifying aura seemed to be closing in.

The abyss had long turned into a horrific battlefield, with powerful fluctuations exploding everywhere.

"Not bad."

Looking at Lu Jiulian shielding him,

Lu Changkong nodded slightly with his hands behind his back.

He appeared calm and composed, though the back of his coarse cloth shirt was already soaked with sweat.

With a casual toss,

A chrysanthemum divine herb flew toward Lu Jiulian.

She caught it.

Meanwhile, Lu Changkong stepped forward unhurriedly.

He raised his hand, revealing a crossbow in the other.

It was the exquisite crossbow he had commissioned from Gongshu Yu long ago.

Lu Changkong smiled, loaded an arrow onto it.

"Jiulian, keep him occupied."

Lu Changkong said.

Lu Jiulian paused, then nodded slightly.

In the next moment, energy surged wildly from her body, her domain enveloping the area.

Lotus flowers bloomed one after another, allowing Lu Jiulian to teleport and shift positions constantly across space.

She held the high-tier god-demon at bay.

Lu Changkong raised the crossbow leisurely, bit his finger with one upright digit.

Spurt.

Crimson blood beaded from the wound on his fingertip.

He smeared the blood on the crossbow arrow, then sucked his finger clean. On the other side, he aimed the crossbow at the high-tier god-demon and pulled the trigger.

Whoosh!

The crossbow bolt shot out.

It turned into a black streak, hurtling toward the high-tier god-demon.

The speed... wasn't particularly fast.

In the time Lu Jiulian teleported, she could have crushed such a bolt hundreds of times over.

Moreover, the bolt's penetrating power wouldn't even pierce a novice-tier god-demon's flesh and defenses, let alone a high-tier one.

Little Yinglong and Ni Yu stood behind Lu Changkong, watching in utter confusion.

Everyone else was fighting with earth-shattering moves.

Every attack and technique could destroy heavens and earth.

Yet the old man was using this flimsy little arrow... it was like a breath of fresh air in this cataclysmic battle.

Just like the young master—unconventional in every way.

Utterly out of sync with the world.

After firing the bolt, Lu Changkong seemed quite relaxed.

He turned his head to glance at Little Yinglong with a kindly smile, pulled out another chrysanthemum divine herb, and handed it over.

Little Yinglong opened his mouth wide and chomped down.

The taste of the divine herb... was amazing!

Even better than Ni Yu's pills.

Crunch, crunch... like biting into a crisp radish.

On the other side,

The bolt wobbled its way toward the high-tier god-demon.

The high-tier god-demon, entangled by Lu Jiulian, was furious beyond measure—how could it not be?

In its eyes, Lu Jiulian's strength wasn't impressive, but... she was incredibly tricky to deal with.

It naturally sensed the incoming bolt from Lu Changkong.

But...

Did it care?

Was this even an attack?

This thing wouldn't even qualify as a toothpick for it.

Boom!

The high-tier god-demon opened its massive maw and let out a heaven-shaking roar. Terrifying shockwaves blasted from its mouth.

Aiming to blow the bolt away.

However...

To everyone's surprise, the bolt withstood the fierce winds and lightly pierced the roof of the high-tier god-demon's open mouth.

Huh?

Lu Jiulian was stunned.

Because she noticed the high-tier god-demon's movements had frozen.

Around them, many powerhouses shifted their gazes over, curiosity flickering in their eyes.

Sizzle... sizzle... sizzle...

Steam suddenly rose from the high-tier god-demon's body.

Everyone's pupils constricted as they watched its form twist, melting from the inside out...

Its formidable scales and flesh offered no resistance.

After twisting, it dissolved into a pool of black, viscous liquid on the ground.

In the void, only bare white bones remained.

The high-tier god-demon's prized body had been poisoned away by a single bolt...

Hiss! Hiss! Hiss!

In the abyss,

All the powerhouses gasped in shock. This Poison Emperor... was too terrifying?!

The greatest emperor of all time—poison anyone, and they die!

Lu Jiulian's expression stiffened slightly.

But her assault didn't weaken.

With one strike, she shattered the high-tier god-demon's bare bones into nothingness.

A high-tier god-demon... had fallen.

Under the surge of fate, it flowed into both Lu Jiulian and Lu Changkong's bodies.

Yet Lu Jiulian's face grew even stiffer.

She glanced at the chrysanthemum divine herb in her hand.

Suddenly, it felt a bit too hot to hold.

Little Yinglong, who had been chewing the herb like a white radish, gradually stopped...

He looked at the high-tier god-demon reduced to a puddle of unknown liquid.

His nostrils flared slightly, and inexplicably, he felt a burning sensation inside.

This chrysanthemum divine herb...

Suddenly didn't seem so appealing.

"Ugh..."

Little Yinglong's eyes nearly teared up.

In the distance,

Gu Mangran felt a chill too. He was lucky to have survived eating so many of Old Man Lu's divine herbs.

The key was, he never thought about paying them back.

What if one day Lu Changkong got upset...

Wouldn't Gu Mangran die without even knowing how?

A streak of light darted into the abyss battlefield.

It was Bu Nanxing, who had been hiding like a pro. He finally stepped out from Five Phoenixes, cheering for Old Man Lu at this moment.

"Old Man Lu is invincible! Poison Emperor is mighty!"

Bu Nanxing's shout shook the heavens, his neck flushed red from the effort.

This was Old Man Lu—his ultimate backer!

The surrounding crowd snapped out of it.

In the next moment, many subconsciously joined the cheers.

Lu Changkong smiled and waved it off.

"Nothing special."

"My son Lu Ping'an is the truly strong one."

In the abyss,

With the bizarre fall of a high-tier god-demon,

The innate god-demons' momentum took a heavy hit, even causing a brief lull in the bombardments at the tunnel entrance.

Behind the tunnel entrance, enormous eyeballs rolled, their gaze shifting sharply to lock onto Lu Changkong.

A furious roar exploded.

Cutting off the crowd's congratulations.

Reminding everyone that celebrations were premature.

Lu Changkong narrowed his eyes, wrinkles crinkling at the corners. With hands behind his back, he floated in the void, staring at the massive eyeballs beyond the tunnel entrance.

The black beams projected from the eyeballs were soul-seizing.

But Lu Changkong remained unfazed.

"Not convinced?"

As the words fell, the corners of Lu Changkong's mouth curled up.

One hand behind his back, the other extended slowly.

He beckoned toward the tunnel entrance with a curl of his fingers.

"Come at me, then?!"

Roar!

Sensing Lu Changkong's provocation, the immortal-level god-demon beyond the tunnel flew into a rage. A heaven-shaking roar erupted.

Swarms of novice-tier god-demons, under its deadly command, self-detonated madly, ripping the tunnel entrance wider.

Buzz...

Behind Lu Changkong,

Zhu Long completed her breakthrough. The sea of fate churned, turning six times, her aura achieving a massive leap.

Her innate yin-yang energies grew even more solid.

Zhu Long stood up, as serene as an autumn leaf. She released a terrifying, oppressive aura.

With the yin-yang millstone above her head, eyes closed, she transformed into a streak of light and shot forward.

Tantai Xuan and Micah were bloodied from battling high-tier god-demons, but as mere third-turn Golden Immortals, they struggled against them.

And now, Zhu Long arrived.

The moment she opened her eyes, her black-and-white pupils unleashed an extreme divine ability.

Even at third-turn Golden Immortal, Zhu Long's divine ability had immense suppressive power.

Let alone now, at sixth-turn Golden Immortal.

"Da da da da da da..."

The world lost all other colors, shifting between black and white with each blink of Zhu Long's eyes.

Explosive cracks erupted from the two high-tier god-demons' bodies. The terrifying blasts drained all color from heaven and earth.

When everything cleared,

Tantai Xuan and Micah's opponents

Had been blown into endless chunks of flesh, devoid of life.

"So strong!"

Tantai Xuan and Micah drew deep breaths.

Their eyes sparkled with awe.

Zhu Long swung the millstone single-handedly, stepping forward with her slender frame. Soon, she alone blocked the tunnel entrance.

High-tier god-demons tried to force their way through, but Zhu Long suppressed them all back single-handedly.

The battles in the abyss were gradually quelled by the Five Phoenixes cultivators.

Many were breaking through, their auras climbing steadily.

The Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor, wrapped in black robes, took a deep breath. He hadn't expected Five Phoenixes to actually turn the tide.

Even with an immortal-level god-demon intervening, they held on—and even counterattacked.

Watching the slender girl sitting withered before the tunnel,

The Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor was suddenly overcome with emotion, recalling his own past circumstances.

But behind the slender Zhu Long, figures began to appear one by one, unknowingly.

Lu Changkong with hands behind his back, the unassuming Lu Jiulian, Micah and Tantai Xuan grinning widely, Sima Qingshan, Bai Qingniao, the Overlord, Tang Yimo...

One figure after another emerged behind Zhu Long.

She wasn't alone.

The Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor sighed softly.

This was completely different from his own situation back then.

Not the same—we're not the same.

Suddenly, the reminiscing Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor's expression changed slightly.

A familiar aura made his scalp tingle.

He turned to look, spotting an unremarkable corner of the abyss with no fluctuations—a wisp of flame shot out like a meteor.

The moment he saw the flame, his gaze sharpened.

...

The Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor watched the battle in the void abyss in speechless astonishment.

When the immortal-level god-demon's arm pierced through the tunnel, he thought Five Phoenixes was doomed.

All the Five Phoenixes cultivators in this abyss battlefield would die.

However, what he hadn't anticipated...

Was the sudden appearance of Lu Changkong.

This self-proclaimed Poison Emperor of Five Phoenixes gently stroked the immortal-level god-demon's arm, causing its incredibly powerful immortal flesh to corrode and slough off...

Was this poison?!

Of course, that alone didn't worry the Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor too much. After all, the tunnel wasn't fully open, and the immortal-level god-demon's arm, probing in, faced immense pressure from spatial forces.

Thus, much of its power was dissipated, making the retreat unsurprising.

But next, Lu Changkong's bolt striking a high-tier god-demon and melting its flesh made the Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor, who had planned a dramatic entrance to suppress Five Phoenixes, shudder in horror.

If that bolt pierced him,

Could he withstand it?

His body was weaker than a high-tier god-demon's. Even they were reduced to bones—if it hit him, he probably wouldn't last seconds.

Five Phoenixes... truly hid experts!

"Like father, like son..."

"Lu Ping'an is cunning and treacherous, and his father... is even more venomously insidious!"

The Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor's expression grew grave.

Forcing his way into the abyss would likely leave him without a corpse.

After all, Zhu Long, now at sixth-turn Golden Immortal and able to easily suppress high-tier god-demons, matched him in raw power. If he charged in, even with the Ninth Heaven Heavenly Dao empowering him, pushing his strength near extreme emperor level.

But...

His goal in entering Five Phoenixes wasn't to tangle with these cultivators.

His objective was... the transforming Heavenly Dao of Five Phoenixes!

The Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor's eyes flickered.

He consulted the Ninth Heaven Heavenly Dao for a plan.

"The Five Phoenixes Heavenly Dao is currently in transformation, its sensory abilities essentially null."

The Ninth Heaven Heavenly Dao relayed.

Then, the Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor's eyes gleamed. Under the Heavenly Dao's cover, he transformed into a wisp of flame, tore through the abyss rift, and slipped inside.

...

In the origin space.

At this moment, Lu had no mind to spare for the situation in the abyss battlefield.

His entire focus was on the chessboard before him.

The push toward Immortal Martial had reached a critical juncture.

The game had become profoundly intricate. Before Lu's eyes, it seemed as if endless immortal qi steamed up, as if boundless forces assaulted his mind.

The once vast heaven and earth before him transformed into chaos.

And he was playing chess within that chaos.

His opponent was unknown.

In the chaos, a hand condensed, picking up pieces and placing them down relentlessly.

Lu sat upright on the Thousand Blades Chair, his white robes flowing, facing off against this abrupt hand.

The game was perilously tight; this hand seemed like the hand of heaven, omniscient, treating all beings as pieces.

Each move against it felt like walking the edge of collapse.

But Lu soon grew calm, his placements becoming more orderly.

His five senses seemed stripped away, leaving only the floating chessboard.

Tap, tap...

The crisp sound of pieces landing on the board echoed, as if contending with mighty forces for dominance.

The Heavenly Dao star shone brilliantly, its cries resounding.

The phoenix within spread its wings repeatedly, charging at the star barrier time and again, intent on shattering it.

As if breaking free from a cage to soar the nine heavens.

Immortals are unbound, and Immortal Martial... should be unbound as well.

Dao reserves continuously released from the phoenix. The Five Phoenixes Heavenly Dao could now generate them autonomously.

Each dao reserve turned into a shockwave.

Causing spiderweb cracks to spread across the star barrier.

The origin space had long shattered.

Utterly destroyed.

Like a great cataclysm had swept through in utter devastation.

Between placements, beams of light shot skyward.

As Lu steadied his heart, withdrawing his attention from the void abyss battlefield and focusing entirely on the game against the blurry hand, the momentum shifted from near collapse to gradual balance.

Lu's mind grew even steadier.

He had faith in Five Phoenixes.

Looking back, from low martial, growing through mid martial, high martial...

To now Immortal Martial.

What hardships hadn't they faced? Five Phoenixes wasn't born with a silver spoon; it had clawed its way to this point step by step.

So, Lu believed the immortal source phoenix within the Five Phoenixes Heavenly Dao would surely break free, soar the nine heavens, and escape the heavenly cage.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Finally,

As Lu placed another piece,

Cracks suddenly covered the chessboard's surface.

Crack!

In the next moment, a massive shatter—the board fragmented, countless pieces exploding upward like detonating stars.

And in that instant,

Lu's five senses returned.

He lifted his head.

He seemed to merge with the phoenix in the Heavenly Dao star.

Surrounded by the hazy star barrier, riddled with cracks.

The phoenix spread its wings, radiance dazzling.

Launching the final charge.

Crack!

The origin space fell abruptly silent.

As the first fragment fell from the Heavenly Dao star, it was like shattering glass, breaking free from restraints.

The collapse continued without end.

Like a massive boulder smashing into a calm pond, sending water splashing sky-high.

Lu's eyes shone brightly. In white robes flowing, he sat atop the phoenix's back, bursting free!

A powerful fluctuation spread, shattering the star barrier into pieces.

The heavenly cage seemed utterly broken in this moment.

Like a colossal whale leaping from beneath the sea.

The sea is vast for the fish to leap, the sky high for the bird to fly!

Boom!

Suddenly, above the firmament, clouds churned and rain poured.

Abruptly, a purple giant hand slapped down from above the origin space.

Like the hand of heaven, intent on obliterating everything.

Lu rode the phoenix—this was Five Phoenixes' immortal source.

Facing this descending palm,

The silver blades beneath Lu clanged and stacked instantly. He stood tall, his body turning golden.

Indestructible Golden Demon Body!

Thud!

The heavenly hand descended.

Lu raised both arms, propping up this piece of heaven.

The phoenix cried out, flapping its wings madly.

Golden lightning arced across Lu's body, his power erupting to the limit.

Yet, inch by inch, he was pressed down by the purple hand.

If this continued,

The Five Phoenixes immortal source, just escaped from the heavenly cage, would be slapped back.

The Immortal Martial breakthrough would inevitably fail!

Lu gritted his teeth, energy surging within him. He pulled out a fishing rod—the innate spiritual treasure he had just acquired.

Whipping it repeatedly at the heavenly hand.

But it still fell short.

He needed just a little boost, even a tiny bit...

If only the Heaven-Stealing Tower were here, but... he had lent it to aid the Five Phoenixes masses.

Recalling it now would be too late.

"Just a little..."

Suddenly, Lu remembered something.

Boom!

Spiritual qi shackles around him shattered one after another.

The strand of innate purple qi gifted by the Daoist in the Immortal Martial world memory fragment had been sealed with spiritual qi shackles all this time.

Now was the perfect moment to use it.

As if fated by destiny.

Boom!

A wisp of purple qi coiled around the golden Lu like a divine dragon.

Gold and purple intertwined.

Lu suddenly felt boundless strength!

Inch by inch, he pushed back the descending heavenly hand!

Thud!

Finally, the purple heavenly hand crumbled, dissolving into rolling waves of energy.

The immortal source phoenix soared into the clouds, bathing in the purple energy.

Lu sat cross-legged on the phoenix's back.

His indestructible demon body dissipated, and the innate purple qi vanished abruptly.

In white robes fluttering, his black hair vigorous.

Gazing at the shattered origin space, his eyes gleamed.

Destruction leads to rebirth.

The destruction was done; now for the rebirth.

Lu opened his eyes, raised his hand, and pointed distantly.

The phoenix spread its wings suddenly. Hazy purple qi surged forth, sweeping every corner of the origin space.

In an instant, the origin space reformed, countless stars twinkling like a vast universe.

From the once barren and narrow origin space to this boundless cosmic expanse now.

Lu couldn't help but chuckle softly.

With a mere gesture, in a single thought, Five Phoenixes ascends to Immortal Martial!

Chapter 573: I Heard... You Want to Mess with Me?

In the Ninth Heaven,

within the void rift,

the atmosphere was grave. Ancient Great Emperors stood, their immense auras crisscrossing like dragons rising from the vast sea.

But deeper within the rift, an even more powerful primordial spirit fluctuation spread.

“What lies beyond high-martial...?”

“Can Lu Ping’an truly succeed? If he does, wouldn’t that set a precedent? The Five Phoenixes could surpass the Ninth Heaven in a short time.”

“Lu Ping’an is too mysterious. Who exactly is he? His strength itself is shrouded in enigma... The Five Phoenixes was supposedly just a low-martial world, a mere speck of dust that we could annihilate with a sneeze. Yet such a weak world has grown into the colossal existence it is today.”

Primordial spirit fluctuations intertwined as the ancient Great Emperors discussed.

Of course, they were also monitoring Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor’s situation.

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor, bolstered by the Ninth Heaven’s Heavenly Dao, had gone to the Five Phoenixes. The Five Phoenixes was currently attempting ascension to a higher realm. If the Ninth Heaven could successfully devour it, perhaps... the Ninth Heaven could advance even further in the future.

This thought made the ancient Great Emperors’ hearts race with excitement.

They too might have a chance to surpass Emperor Realm.

But whether it would succeed was uncertain.

After a while of discussion, the atmosphere gradually quieted.

Perhaps it was too serious—too solemn for words.

The success of the Five Phoenixes would change everything.

Deep within the rift, a pair of profound eyes gleamed with deep light, staring at the Abyss of Nothingness, at the transforming Five Phoenixes, as though brewing something.

...

The Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor narrowed his eyes.

His black-robed figure trembled slightly before suddenly streaking forward.

“That flame... is it Fire Spirit?”

The Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor squinted.

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor—the supreme ruler of the Fire Clan in the upper realm, an ancient Great Emperor whose lifespan was no shorter than his own.

In peaceful times, Fire Spirit and he had been acquaintances.

But in the end, they became enemies.

Within the void rift, the Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor could not recall what happened deep inside—but he remembered clearly that Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor had once attacked him.

“The Five Phoenix cultivators are fully focused on the Divine Demons from the Primordial Starry Sky. At this moment... Fire Clan Ancient Emperor sneaks into the Five Phoenixes. His purpose is obvious.”

The Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor drew a deep breath. Light flickered in his eyes.

In truth, he shouldn't interfere.

Helping the Five Phoenixes against the Divine Demons was already a significant favor.

“At this point, I should turn and leave, pretending nothing happened.”

The Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor adjusted his black robe's hood.

His hooded gaze turned toward the passage entrance, seeing the Five Phoenix cultivators standing firm, refusing to retreat.

His expression wavered slightly.

Then he sighed softly.

“My actions are absolutely not a compromise with that bastard Lu Ping’an...”

“I’m doing this for the little princess.”

“And for revenge.”

The Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor said.

Then his body transformed into a streak of light, chasing after the flame.

His departure drew the attention of Gu Mangran, who had long suspected his identity.

Gu Mangran narrowed his eyes. After arranging the Sea Clan, he too streaked through the chaos.

...

At the passage entrance,

Zhu Long stood quietly, grinding disc in hand—like an unshakable mountain blocking the way.

Any enemy wishing to enter the Five Phoenixes must first overcome her.

BOOM BOOM BOOM!

The bombardment at the passage entrance continued. In this short time, at least twenty early-tier Divine Demons had detonated themselves. The strength of the Primordial Starry Sky was evident.

Early-tier Divine Demons were early Emperor Realm—true Emperor-level existences.

Their explosions could annihilate worlds below derivative second-tier high-martial.

All life would perish.

But because the Primordial Starry Sky's energy was too stable, even Emperor-level explosions struggled to tear the passage wide open.

Moreover, for the Divine Demons of the Primordial Starry Sky, such actions were costly.

If not for the urgency, the Immortal-tier Divine Demon would not have resorted to this.

He could simply wait for time to pass, for the passage to widen naturally. In a thousand or ten thousand years, it would allow Immortal-tier Divine Demons to enter.

By then, the Five Phoenixes would still be doomed.

A thousand or ten thousand years meant nothing to Divine Demons with near-immortal lifespans.

But they couldn't wait.

Why?

Because the Five Phoenixes was transforming—ascending toward Immortal-Martial.

The allure of the Five Phoenixes' Immortal Origin was irresistible to these Divine Demons—like the scent of instant noodles to someone starved for days.

They had no resistance. Thus, the Divine Demons descended into madness.

BOOM!

When the passage entrance exploded again,

the Immortal-tier Divine Demon's two hands reached in, gripping both sides of the entrance, intent on tearing it wide open.

But shaking space-time with raw force was still taxing.

Naturally, the Five Phoenix cultivators would not let him succeed so easily.

Lu Changkong's expression turned cold.

He bit his finger, smeared blood on the crossbow bolt, and fired lightly. The bolt struck the two hands.

Corrosive power erupted.

The Immortal-tier Divine Demon beyond the passage roared in fury.

That was the sound of a mind exploding.

Lu Changkong merely smiled.

Compared to Lu, his talent for messing with minds was still lacking.

But such poisoned bolts couldn't be fired too often. They drew from the foundation of his poison body. Excessive use would damage his foundation, and recovery would be troublesome.

The battle in the Abyss of Nothingness had temporarily reached a stalemate.

While Divine Demon flesh scattered, the top powerhouses paid them no mind.

The Five Phoenix army and cultivators would encircle and destroy them.

With the Five Phoenixes undergoing its great transformation, they absolutely could not allow these remnants to enter and affect it.

During this time,

Tantai Xuan, Micah, Lu Jiulian, and the other Golden Immortals sat cross-legged in the void, recovering their energy.

...

A silent flame streaked through the void.

A top-tier powerhouse intent on concealment was nearly impossible to detect.

Especially when everyone's attention was drawn to the great enemy.

Zhu Long, Tantai Xuan, Micah, and the others were fully focused on the Immortal-tier Divine Demon from the Primordial Starry Sky. They had no spare attention for other directions.

Moreover, Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor moved as a tiny flame—unless one swept the area with primordial spirit, detection was nearly impossible.

Outside the Abyss of Nothingness,

an army stood guard. Of course, these soldiers were not particularly strong—most below Heavenly Human Realm, at Immortal Dweller level or lower.

But their numbers were vast, completely sealing the Abyss of Nothingness.

Their role was to prevent any fish from slipping through.

And they succeeded.

Many Divine Demon flesh avatars tried to escape the abyss but were surrounded and annihilated by the army's combined attacks.

A tiny flame darted out of the abyss.

Some cultivators sensed something amiss and glanced over—but saw nothing.

A single flame was far too inconspicuous.

After all, even Heavenly Human Realm fire cultivators could summon vast seas of flame with a wave of their hand.

Who would notice a mere wisp of fire?

Perhaps it was just stray energy from the battle in the abyss.

The cultivators soon withdrew their gazes.

The flame transformed into a streak of light, passing through the army and speeding toward the Five Phoenix Continent.

In the void,

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor finally revealed his form.

He gazed at the void starry sky, astonishment in his eyes.

“It resembles the Primordial Starry Sky... Perhaps this is the essence of surpassing high-martial!”

“The Ninth Heaven exists as continental plates—such a structure is too unstable to sustain anything beyond high-martial.”

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor murmured.

As a Great Emperor, his insight was profound.

The Ninth Heaven’s Heavenly Dao attached to him seemed thoughtful as well.

But their purpose here was not admiration.

“The Origin Space... the transformation must occur in the Origin Space.”

The Ninth Heaven’s Heavenly Dao fluctuated.

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor’s expression changed slightly. Then he raised his hand. A terrifying flame serpent shot forth.

It was deep purple flame—twisted with fear.

On the Five Phoenix Continent, he could easily locate the Five Phoenixes' Origin Space.

However, Lu had prepared in advance—setting up arrays to obscure the Origin Space's position so it could not be easily found.

Even Five Phoenix cultivators found it difficult to locate—because Lu did not allow them to perceive it.

Only the little Yinglong and Zhu Long could sense it—because Lu had granted them permission.

“Damn it... Lu Ping'an set up arrays!”

“He concealed the Origin Space's coordinates!”

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor's expression turned cold.

His powerful primordial spirit swept the area but found nothing. Every world had an Origin Space—this was common knowledge for Emperor Realm existences.

If he couldn't find the Five Phoenixes' Origin Space, there was only one explanation—someone had hidden its coordinates.

And in the Five Phoenixes, the only one capable of such a feat was the mysterious Lu Ping'an.

"This bastard—even absent, he still messes with my mind!"

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor snorted coldly and stomped lightly.

A blazing ring of fire exploded outward. Terrifying burning power turned the entire ancient forest into ruins.

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor sat cross-legged and, with the assistance of the Ninth Heaven's Heavenly Dao, began searching for the Origin Space.

High above,

the Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor in black robes coldly watched Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor below.

Then he slowly drew the sword from his back.

With a gentle flick,

the sword shot forth.

It transformed into a streak of light, descending from the heavens.

Clang!

The sword light suddenly expanded to ten thousand zhang!

Like a massive divine sword falling from the sky!

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor, sitting cross-legged, suddenly opened his eyes. Terrifying flames erupted from his body.

Above his head, a sea of fire formed.

The sword light plunged into the sea of fire but could not advance an inch.

“My tracks... were discovered?”

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor looked up at the black-robed figure. In an instant, his expression changed.

“This aura...”

“Heavenly Spirit?!”

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor exclaimed in shock.

Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor was alive?

Impossible...

He had personally witnessed Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor self-destruct his body. How could he still be alive?

Moreover, he had just attacked him with a sword.

He quickly recalled that Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor’s soul fragments had been taken by Lu Ping’an.

Could Lu Ping'an have revived Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor?

Impossible...

Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor's hatred for Lu Ping'an was no less than theirs.

So Lu Ping'an would not revive him and create another enemy.

"Shut your mouth."

"You are not worthy to speak my name."

The Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor spoke coldly and mercilessly.

Then, high in the sky, he opened his hand—as though parting a curtain of beads.

The sword suddenly split into countless beams of sword light—like a rain of swords pouring down madly.

BANG BANG BANG!

The entire area exploded. The ground cracked. Mountains were flattened.

But the sea of fire surged, forming a giant flame serpent coiled around Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor.

All the sword rain was blocked.

“Combat power below early Emperor... even if you are truly Heavenly Spirit, self-destruction severely damaged your strength. In such a short time, you can't return to Great Emperor realm.”

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor sneered.

He looked up, his red hair flying, staring coldly at the black-robed Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor.

“With this level of strength, you dare block me?”

“Besides, me destroying the Five Phoenixes benefits you. Why interfere?”

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor said.

The black robe blew open, revealing the reborn body of the Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor.

Plain and unremarkable—not particularly handsome, not ugly—just an ordinary man’s appearance.

But his eyes shone with star-like brilliance.

He looked at Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor.

“I don’t care if you kill Lu Ping’an. But destroying the Five Phoenixes... I won’t allow it. My little princess still needs to live there.”

The Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor said.

“Your little princess? Pfft hahaha...”

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor was stunned.

Then he burst into laughter—tears nearly streaming down his face.

“The great Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor has become someone’s servant?”

“Where is your dignity as a Great Emperor?!”

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor’s eyes were full of contempt.

“You thousand-year-old virgin— what do you know?” The Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor glanced at Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor below and sneered.

Sword light filled the sky.

The Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor’s body vanished like teleportation. Sword qi swept across thirty thousand miles.

Fortunately, with the Five Phoenixes’ transformation, the world had grown far more stable.

Even Emperor-level clashes could no longer shatter heaven and earth—though this region’s terrain was completely altered.

What was once an ancient forest had become a land of crisscrossing gullies and barren yellow earth under the clash of sword qi.

Gu Mangran appeared in the Five Phoenixes.

He naturally noticed the terrifying battle below.

His expression changed drastically.

“An ancient Great Emperor of the Ninth Heaven?!”

As expected... these ancient Great Emperors would not miss such a perfect opportunity. While the Five Phoenixes underwent transformation—even attracting Immortal-tier Divine Demons from the Primordial Starry Sky—how could these scheming ancient Great Emperors remain idle?

He had wondered why they hadn't acted.

It turned out they had sneaked into the Five Phoenixes, preparing to strike!

“Flame domain... Heaven-Burning Fire—this is the Fire Clan's ancient Great Emperor!”

Gu Mangran's gaze shifted to the black-robed sword cultivator.

Regardless of who this sword cultivator was,

since he fought to protect the Five Phoenixes, he was an ally.

“A堂堂 ancient Great Emperor resorting to such despicable sneak attacks—truly disappointing, truly disgusting!”

Gu Mangran spoke.

BANG!

A massive explosion rang out.

The ground was plowed into gullies. The Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor stood panting at the end of one, back covered in a mountain of earth.

The sword in his hand had nearly melted from the flames.

His strength had not yet returned to Great Emperor level. Now only early Golden Immortal—and without a proper weapon—he was no match for Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor.

If not for his familiarity with Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor's techniques,

he would already be dead.

But the Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor did not retreat. His eyes grew even more resolute.

"This land has a magic that makes people want to protect it... Perhaps because there are people worth protecting here—people I care about. I won't let them perish due to someone's greed."

The broken sword rested on the ground. The Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor panted heavily and straightened.

His black robe had been burned away, revealing his lean, powerful body.

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor looked at Gu Mangran.

"Blood-Clad General?"

"As Hao's loyal follower, you actually betrayed him..."

“Do you know why I came this time?”

“Because Hao sent me. As your former faith, why not help me... When you return to the Ninth Heaven, Hao will surely welcome you with open arms.”

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor smiled, gazing oddly at Gu Mangran.

In the distance, the Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor also glanced at Gu Mangran.

As an ancient Great Emperor, he knew well Gu Mangran’s former devotion to Hao.

It was a worship engraved into his very bones—like an Immortal-tier Divine Demon commanding an early-tier one to die, and the early-tier obeying without hesitation.

Thus, the Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor was unsure whether Gu Mangran would help Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor.

Gu Mangran fell silent.

Then he laughed.

“Beyond the rift, my grudge with Emperor Hao was severed with a single blade... He shattered my faith. Now... I live for the Five Phoenixes.”

Gu Mangran raised his head.

“As for helping you...”

“Hah...”

“In Young Master Lu’s words—that’s just you daydreaming.”

Gu Mangran’s gaze suddenly blazed.

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor’s body was coiled by mountain-sized flame serpents. The serpents raised their heads, roaring toward Gu Mangran. A pillar of flame annihilated the void as it surged forth.

“Then die.”

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor said coldly.

“A mere non-Emperor ant dares block me.”

The Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor’s gaze sharpened. The sword in his hand rose.

A vast sword qi swept across the earth, as though intending to cleave the entire ground in half. But his strength had not returned to Great Emperor level.

This sword was easily crushed by Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor’s flame palm—Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor was no weakling among Great Emperors.

“Fire Spirit! I’ve located the Origin Space coordinates!”

“Tear it open!”

Just as Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor prepared to finish the Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor, the Ninth Heaven’s Heavenly Dao suddenly resounded.

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor narrowed his eyes. Business first.

His hand slashed. A flame Emperor Weapon appeared. Following the coordinates given by the Ninth Heaven's Heavenly Dao, he raised the weapon and struck toward a point in the void.

High above,

the Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor coldly watched Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor below.

Then he slowly drew the sword from his back.

With a gentle flick,

the sword shot forth.

It transformed into a streak of light, descending from the heavens.

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“As Hao’s loyal follower, you actually betrayed him...”

“Do you know why I came this time?”

“Because Hao sent me. As your former faith, why not help me... When you return to the Ninth Heaven, Hao will surely welcome you with open arms.”

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor smiled, gazing oddly at Gu Mangran.

In the distance, the Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor also glanced at Gu Mangran.

As an ancient Great Emperor, he knew well Gu Mangran’s former devotion to Hao.

It was a worship engraved into his very bones—like an Immortal-tier Divine Demon commanding an early-tier one to die, and the early-tier obeying without hesitation.

Thus, the Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor was unsure whether Gu Mangran would help Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor.

Gu Mangran fell silent.

Then he laughed.

“Beyond the rift, my grudge with Emperor Hao was severed with a single blade... He shattered my faith. Now... I live for the Five Phoenixes.”

Gu Mangran raised his head.

“As for helping you...”

“Hah...”

“In Young Master Lu’s words—that’s just you daydreaming.”

Gu Mangran’s gaze suddenly blazed.

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor's body was coiled by mountain-sized flame serpents. The serpents raised their heads, roaring toward Gu Mangran. A pillar of flame annihilated the void as it surged forth.

Chapter 574: One Punch Explodes a Great Emperor

The Five Phoenixes had finally achieved Immortal-Martial.

In the instant the vast purple qi unfurled, the entire Origin Space underwent a world-shaking transformation. The once narrow space instantly expanded into a boundless universe.

Stars hung within the Origin Cosmos.

Lu hovered amid the cosmos, feeling his mind and spirit undergo sublimation.

In this moment, he seemed an absolute, supreme deity.

He spoke, and endless light surged into existence between heaven and earth.

Perhaps this was the power of controlling rules.

However, this control was limited to the Origin Cosmos. To wield such power in the real Five Phoenixes would still take time.

Perhaps this was the cultivation path of an Immortal-Martial Lord.

Buzz...

After breaking and rebuilding, the shattered Spirit-Pressure Chessboard reformed. Each piece on its surface shimmered with light.

The Spirit-Pressure Chessboard had become even more divine—its rank among Innate Spiritual Treasures had clearly risen.

Lu stored the North 冥 Fishing Rod. This Innate Spiritual Treasure had provided immense help during this ordeal.

But what truly drew his attention was that wisp of purple qi.

“Planting good karma yields good cause?”

Lu’s mouth curved slightly upward, recalling the scene he had witnessed through the memory fragments of the Immortal-Martial world.

That old Daoist who had bestowed the purple qi seemed to have done so merely to plant good karma.

The powerhouses of the Immortal-Martial world were truly unfathomable. At least, in Lu's view, even with his current realm, he still could not compare to that old Daoist.

“That old Daoist... is probably a Great Luo Immortal-level powerhouse.”

Lu pondered.

He withdrew his thoughts.

The Origin Cosmos was still slowly transforming—a process that would take time.

But this transformation no longer required Lu's guidance.

One thing was certain: the Five Phoenixes had completely broken through the shackles of high-martial and achieved Immortal-Martial.

Watching the phoenix soaring freely through the Origin Cosmos,

unbound, its wings spanning billions of miles with a single flap.

Freed from the Origin Stars' constraints, the phoenix had evolved from Dao Origin into Immortal Origin.

It was now the energy source of the Immortal-Martial Five Phoenixes.

As it soared, purple qi seemed to be born beneath its wings.

That was Innate Purple Qi.

With this Innate Purple Qi, the current Five Phoenixes now had the potential to birth Ninth-Revolution Golden Immortals—or even Great Luo Immortals.

Lu withdrew his focus.

He exhaled slowly.

As for the still-transforming Origin Cosmos affecting the real Five Phoenixes, Lu no longer interfered.

All he needed to do was wait quietly for the transformation to complete.

Perhaps after this, every star in the Origin Cosmos would correspond to the origin of each life star in the void starry sky.

This might be the greatest difference from the previous high-martial Five Phoenixes.

Before, in the Origin Space, Lu could only sense the Five Phoenixes' own origin.

But now, in the Immortal-Martial Origin Cosmos, the Five Phoenixes' origin had evolved into Immortal Origin, while the origins of other life stars had appeared here as well.

“Transformation... After this, the Immortal-Martial Five Phoenixes will give birth to its own unified Five Phoenixes Cosmos.”

Lu's mouth curved upward, deeply satisfied.

Of course, the current Five Phoenixes Cosmos was still fragile—far inferior to the Primordial Starry Sky.

But at least... it had broken free of high-martial's shackles.

It was already far better off than the Ninth Heaven, which could find no path forward.

“Time to settle some things.”

Silver blades stacked behind him, forming the Thousand-Blade Chair once more.

Lu’s hand rested on the armrest, tapping lightly.

He looked up, sensing a powerful force tearing open a corner of the Origin Space, ripping open a rift.

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor’s excited figure appeared before Lu’s eyes.

Lu’s mouth curved into a meaningful smile.

...

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor felt a chill run down his spine. Looking at the figure gripping his flame Emperor Weapon, an inexplicable pressure made his body stiffen.

Lu gazed calmly at Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor.

The wheels of the Thousand-Blade Chair turned slowly, pushing him out of the Origin Space.

“Lu... Lu Ping’an?!”

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor’s pupils contracted.

But in the next moment, endless killing intent surged in his eyes.

“Finally found you!”

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor’s mouth curved into an icy smile.

BOOM!

As a Great Emperor-level powerhouse, his aura erupted madly from his body.

Lu was strong—Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor dared not relax even slightly.

Just as Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor unleashed his overwhelming aura,

behind him, a figure of light transformed into a streak and shot toward the Origin Space.

“Hm?”

Lu raised an eyebrow, slightly surprised.

“The Ninth Heaven’s Heavenly Dao?”

Lu raised his hand to stop it but paused, as though thinking of something.

His blocking motion slowed.

Then, the Ninth Heaven’s Heavenly Dao slipped through the Origin Space like an eel...

Seeing the Ninth Heaven’s Heavenly Dao enter the Origin Space, Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor revealed wild joy.

“Lu Ping’an... you were careless!”

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor said.

Then, his entire body erupted with endless flames—an extreme heat that transformed him into a flame giant.

He stood in the Five Phoenixes, towering ten thousand zhang.

His terrifying aura spread, causing the temperature across the entire Five Phoenix Continent to skyrocket.

The Ninth Heaven's Heavenly Dao had entered the Five Phoenixes' Origin Space.

Now, Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor's task was simply to hold Lu back!

As long as the Ninth Heaven's Heavenly Dao devoured the Five Phoenixes' Heavenly Dao, his mission would be perfectly accomplished.

The Ninth Heaven would also have the chance for a massive leap forward.

As for stopping Lu Ping'an—Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor was confident.

After all...

Even if Lu unleashed that special physique, he was only at the extreme of Great Emperor—not yet at Peak Emperor.

Unless he received the Five Phoenixes Heavenly Dao's blessing—but now, the Five Phoenixes Heavenly Dao was threatened by the Ninth Heaven's Heavenly Dao.

There was no opportunity for Lu to receive its blessing.

Thus, Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor believed he could go five-and-five with Lu Ping'an.

As long as he didn't lose, that was enough. His goal wasn't to defeat Lu Ping'an—but to stall him.

BANG!

A massive flame hand slammed down. The void's heat distorted space.

The earth seemed to crack and burn.

Lu's white robes fluttered. He sat calmly in the Thousand-Blade Chair, black hair flowing.

He paid little attention to Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor's strike.

“Stalling me to buy time for the Ninth Heaven's Heavenly Dao?”

Lu instantly understood Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor's intention.

But the corners of Lu's mouth curved into a meaningful arc.

Since that was the case... he would oblige.

In the distance,

Gu Mangran and the Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor saw Lu Ping'an appear and both breathed sighs of relief.

They understood—the crisis facing the Five Phoenixes had been temporarily resolved.

Though Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor was powerful, he might not gain any advantage against Young Master Lu.

The Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor's sword had completely shattered.

He straightened, preparing to leave.

He did not want Lu Ping'an to discover his reborn identity.

Thus, he had to go.

If he stayed, with Lu Ping'an's strength, his identity would surely be exposed.

When Gu Mangran turned back, he found the Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor had vanished. Gu Mangran did not know his identity—only that the Five Phoenixes was truly filled with hidden experts.

He never expected someone capable of surviving Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor's attacks.

If not for this person delaying Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor, the consequences would have been unimaginable.

The Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor's departure went unnoticed by Lu.

Since the Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor wished to remain hidden, Lu was happy to continue the act with him.

With a flick of his finger on the armrest,

silver light shot into the sky.

BANG!

The flame pillar slammed down. Sparks flew. Each stray spark became a world-destroying fireball, burning massive craters into the earth.

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor's strike was blocked, yet he felt no surprise.

The flame serpent lunged toward Lu.

Lu flicked his finger again. Silver blades shot forth, weaving into a vast net.

“Is it Emperor Hao who sent you?”

“Do you know what I, Lu Ping’an, hate most?”

“What I hate most are peach-pickers—especially those who try to pick my peaches.”

Lu said calmly.

In the next moment, he shook his hand. The Innate Spiritual Treasure North 冥 Fishing Rod appeared.

Before him, the Spirit-Pressure Chessboard unfurled.

Buzz...

One hand held the fishing rod; the other picked up a chess piece and placed it on the board.

A crisp sound rang out.

Spirit-Pressure beams descended like heavenly pillars, smashing into Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor.

Terrifying power rippled outward.

The entire Five Phoenixes Continent trembled.

The ten-thousand-zhang flame giant staggered under the Spirit-Pressure beams.

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor roared, bearing the Spirit-Pressure as though carrying heaven and earth on his back.

Flames that could burn rules blazed in his eyes.

He withstood the Spirit-Pressure beams.

Provocatively, he stared at Lu. His goal was to buy time—he was happy to let Lu entangle him like this.

The Spirit-Pressure beams pinned Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor.

Lu propped his chin on one hand, holding the fishing rod in the other.

“This thing was meant for fishing Divine Demons... but for now, I’ll use it to whip people.”

“Pretty much the same thing.”

In the next moment, he swung the North冥 Fishing Rod.

Snap!

The void shattered beneath the strike, as though endless darkness surged from the cracks.

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor’s eyes narrowed.

Whipping? Smacking?

Then, he let out an earth-shaking roar of fury.

“Lu Ping’an... you dare humiliate me?!”

Lu’s greatest offensive techniques were the Phoenix Plume Sword and Heaven-Stealing Tower.

And that extremely powerful special physique!

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor had watched Lu from the rift and knew this well.

Yet now, facing him, Lu used an ordinary fishing rod?

And wielded it like an elder disciplining a child!

What did this mean?

Looking down on him, Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor?!

His Fire Spirit Divine Body was also a top-tier special physique—its power rivaled high-tier Divine Demons, with extremely strong defenses.

He paid no mind to Lu's whip.

If Lu had unleashed his special physique directly, Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor would have been wary.

But since Lu dared underestimate him like this, Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor felt both rage and secret delight.

Underestimate him? Fine.

The longer Lu entangled him, the more time he bought.

Pfft!

Yet when the North冥 Fishing Rod struck Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor,

his eyes nearly popped out.

The resentment in his heart seemed to vanish with that single whip.

Because this lash... nearly killed him!

His ten-thousand-zhang body was instantly shortened by the whip—reduced to only a thousand zhang.

Burning pain transmitted from his flesh to his soul.

Lu Ping'an's attack was terrifying!

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor's eyes filled with disbelief. When had this kid gained such a technique?!

“Hm?”

Lu's eyes lit up. He hadn't expected the North冥 Fishing Rod to produce such excellent results.

Its power was quite impressive.

So Lu raised his hand and whipped twice more.

Snap! Snap!

Two lashes struck Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor.

Magma-like blood sprayed like a breached flood, smashing into the earth and incinerating everything.

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor let out a scream of agony.

But his thousand-zhang body shrank again—now only a hundred zhang.

He began fleeing madly.

Yet he soon discovered that escape was impossible before Lu Ping'an.

A chess piece landed on the Spirit-Pressure Chessboard.

Lu Ping'an's most infuriating Spirit-Pressure beams smashed down again, slamming the staggering Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor to the ground.

Snap!

Another lash fell.

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor's body shuddered violently on the earth. Blood gushed. His divinity seemed to drain away.

“So painful!”

He had been tricked. Lu Ping’an truly had techniques they didn’t know about—and he had used them now.

“I must endure! I must endure! As long as the Heavenly Dao devours the Five Phoenixes Heavenly Dao... that will be Lu Ping’an’s death!”

“Then... I’ll kill this bastard!”

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor was covered in whip marks.

He gritted his teeth, claws digging into the Five Phoenixes’ earth, plowing massive trenches.

Snap!

Lu Ping’an sat calmly in the Thousand-Blade Chair, whipping relentlessly.

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor sprayed scorching breath. Tears of humiliation welled in his eyes.

In the distance,

Gu Mangran stared in shock.

He had thought the clash between Lu and Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor would be evenly matched.

Yet who could have expected... such a father-beating-son style of battle? He was caught completely off guard.

The fleeing Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor was equally dumbfounded, watching Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor groan helplessly under Lu Ping'an's whip.

The Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor drew a deep breath.

“Time to go. I absolutely cannot let Lu Ping'an discover my identity...”

Meanwhile, in the Origin Space,

the Ninth Heaven's Heavenly Dao had entered and transformed into a figure of light.

In an instant, it erupted with blinding radiance, intending to envelop every corner of the Origin Cosmos.

However...

the Ninth Heaven's Heavenly Dao soon felt the difficulty.

It discovered the Five Phoenixes' Origin Space was unimaginably vast—like an endless expanse.

The concept of an Origin Cosmos surpassed the Ninth Heaven's Heavenly Dao's understanding.

Still, it quickly began searching for the Five Phoenixes' origin.

Its goal was to devour it.

The Five Phoenixes Heavenly Dao, in the midst of ascension, would be extremely weakened—even if successful, it would be at its most vulnerable moment...

Surely it could be devoured easily!

BOOM!

The Ninth Heaven's Heavenly Dao spread its aura.

Soon, it locked onto the Five Phoenixes' origin and looked toward a direction in the Origin Cosmos.

There, a flash of purple suddenly appeared.

In the next moment, a phoenix spread its wings and soared, purple qi billowing beneath them.

The figure of light shot skyward.

It transformed into a streak and charged toward the phoenix.

The phoenix's eyes gleamed with delight—great nourishment!

Then, they collided.

Pfft!

Under the purple qi's impact,

the figure of light was sent flying like a broken kite. Its body shattered.

The Ninth Heaven's Heavenly Dao instantly felt the pressure of a superior origin—the oppression of a higher-grade origin over a lower one!

“Immortal... Immortal Origin!”

The Ninth Heaven's Heavenly Dao's will flickered intermittently.

The Five Phoenixes' origin had already successfully evolved into Immortal Origin! And with that purple qi entwining it... the Ninth Heaven's Heavenly Dao was no match!

Devour... devour my ass!

Run!

The survival instinct of an origin's will erupted to its limit in this moment.

The Heavenly Dao's will was very pragmatic.

Devouring each other—or being devoured...

was the most primal rule of survival.

Originally, the Ninth Heaven's Heavenly Dao had been stronger than the Five Phoenixes'. That was why it had been so eager to devour it.

But now, within the Five Phoenixes' Origin Cosmos...

the Ninth Heaven's Heavenly Dao discovered that the once-weak Heavenly Dao could no longer be touched.

It could even be devoured in return!

Thus, the Ninth Heaven's Heavenly Dao very pragmatically began to flee.

...

On the Five Phoenix Continent,

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor was still enduring. He had been whipped again and again...

His spirit had suffered immense humiliation.

Yet Lu restrained him with Spirit-Pressure beams while whipping him with the rod.

He was desperate, yet also secretly delighted.

In the short term, Lu couldn't kill him!

The longer he stalled, the greater the chance the Ninth Heaven's Heavenly Dao had to devour the Five Phoenixes' Heavenly Dao.

Then, with the Ninth Heaven's Heavenly Dao transformed and possessing him, he could unleash Peak Emperor power and kill Lu Ping'an...

Gradually, Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor sensed Lu's whipping rhythm growing erratic.

Lu's mind was in chaos!

He was anxious!

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor's heart filled with wild joy. His guess had been correct!

Suddenly,

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor looked up.

A massive rift appeared across the sky...

Beyond the rift was the Five Phoenixes' Origin Cosmos.

"Hm... you actually know how to run?"

Lu's surprised voice rang out.

In the next moment, he flicked his finger. The "Jie" character array rune formed a sealing formation, covering the rift's exit.

BOOM!

The Ninth Heaven's Heavenly Dao slammed into it, bouncing back like a ball against glass.

It couldn't escape.

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor's expression gradually froze.

Watching the figure of light frantically pounding the sealing array, its desperation and plea for help...
Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor realized something was very wrong.

The Ninth Heaven's Heavenly Dao... was terrified?!

This wasn't how it was supposed to be!

A resounding phoenix cry echoed. Purple qi surged. In the next moment, the phoenix descended, tearing at the figure of light from behind. Strands of Dao Origin scattered.

Under Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor's stunned gaze, the Ninth Heaven's Heavenly Dao was carried away by the phoenix...

Along with Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor's lifelong conviction.

Snap!

Another lash fell.

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor let out a scream of ultimate agony.

This time... it hurt body and soul.

“Lu Ping'an... you did this on purpose?!”

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor's eyes blazed red. He rose furiously, staring at Lu.

“You were stalling on purpose?!”

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor nearly spat blood, glaring at Lu. Lu Ping'an had known all along that the Five Phoenixes' Heavenly Dao could devour the Ninth Heaven's Heavenly Dao. He had deliberately acted, luring them into a trap, buying time for the Five Phoenixes' Heavenly Dao to devour it!

Otherwise, if they had noticed something wrong, Emperor Hao in the rift would have rescued the Ninth Heaven's Heavenly Dao.

Lu leaned back in the Thousand-Blade Chair, swinging the fishing rod, smiling faintly: "Yes, what a coincidence."

Acting—Lu Ping'an was a professional.

Pfft!

Coincidence my ass!

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor spat blood.

His mentality completely shattered.

All those whips... had been for nothing?

He had let Lu Ping'an whip him like a son all this time?

BOOM!

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor erupted with terrifying aura. Flame pillars shot into the sky. He soared upward, intent on escape.

He didn't want to die!

“Escape?”

Lu's eyes gradually turned cold.

During the Five Phoenixes' Immortal-Martial ascension, all who offended it must pay the price.

He clapped his palms lightly.

In the next moment, he rose slowly from the Thousand-Blade Chair.

Golden light burst forth. Lu transformed into a golden figure.

A wisp of purple qi coiled around him.

He moved at the speed of light.

Before Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor's fleeing figure, Lu appeared—unleashing his Indestructible Golden Body.

“No...”

Sensing the terrifying aura erupting from Lu,

a deathly feeling enveloped him.

He would die!

Lu Ping'an truly intended to kill him!

“Hao! Save me!”

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor roared!

Become an immortal, stand as a demon.

Lu's golden hair flew. On his Indestructible Demon Body, purple-gold light flowed, growing ever more divine.

Facing the fleeing Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor,

he threw a punch!

This punch shattered the void inch by inch, like a mirror breaking. Endless darkness spread around his fist.

Above the Five Phoenix Continent,

everyone instinctively looked up, feeling an astonishing power erupting in the sky.

The Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor stood atop a mountain peak, his gaze deep and grave...

“This aura... comparable to Peak Emperor?!”

Who exactly was this Lu Ping’an?

His growth... was truly too fast!

Back when the Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor fought Lu, Lu had only barely reached Emperor Realm.

High above,

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor’s eyes filled with terror as Lu’s fist grew larger in his vision.

Death enveloped him.

He didn’t want to die!

Beside him,

a massive “Xing” character array rune suddenly appeared. Space tore open.

Then, a voice filled with cold fury resounded.

“Stop!”

An arm reached out from the spatial rift, blocking Lu’s punch.

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor revealed wild joy.

However...

that joy lasted only an instant before transforming into shock and terror!

Because Emperor Hao’s palm, before Lu’s fist, was like paper!

It formed no resistance at all!

Meanwhile, at the Origin Cosmos rift,

the array Lu had set was shattered by overwhelming force.

The heavily damaged figure of the Ninth Heaven's Heavenly Dao was forcibly pulled through the spatial rift and taken away.

“Lu Ping’an...”

From beyond the rift, cold eyes glanced at Lu. Then the rift closed, and they departed without hesitation.

Even Lu was momentarily stunned.

A Great Emperor-level powerhouse—discarded just like that?

But Lu's fist did not stop.

It smashed toward Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor's head!

In an instant!

High above,

it seemed as though extreme light and heat erupted.

Like a sun being shattered!

Brilliant radiance illuminated the Five Phoenixes' sky.

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor...

was exploded with a single punch!

Chapter 575: This Is the Spirit of the Five Phoenixes' People

BOOM!

Brilliant light erupted like a shattered blazing sun—dazzling and blinding. Extreme radiance and heat bloomed above the Five Phoenixes.

All eyes were drawn upward. Countless beings felt suffocation—as though their throats were gripped, unable to breathe.

That oppressive force came from the light in the sky.

Under Lu's single punch, Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor could not withstand it. He exploded completely.

Like fireworks scattering in all directions.

A Great Emperor perished on the spot.

When the cascading energy finally subsided—like a waterfall reaching its end—the fluctuations dispersed.

Lu saw a flame hovering before him.

This flame contained immense power.

It was the essence of Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor's life—the crystallization of his energy. Even Lu couldn't help but be astonished.

"This flame could be considered an excellent Innate Spiritual Treasure."

"Far nobler than the Heavenly Profound Flame I once encountered."

Lu raised his hand.

With a flick of his finger, the flame split into five portions.

Then, with a wave of his hand, these flames shot toward various corners of heaven and earth.

“This flame has been divided. Each portion can nurture an outstanding cultivator, contributing to the Five Phoenixes’ construction.”

Lu said.

Though Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor was dead, his legacy would live on in a unique way across the Five Phoenix Continent.

Perhaps one day, on the stage of the Five Phoenixes, some prodigious cultivator would display Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor’s inheritance in an extraordinary manner.

But toward Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor himself, Lu felt no mercy.

The other had come to destroy the Five Phoenixes. Lu was no saint—if he killed, then he killed.

Originally, he had planned to keep him as a tool, but he never expected Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor to be sold out so thoroughly.

Lu hadn't even held back that punch—Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor was directly obliterated.

If Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor knew Lu had intended to keep him as a tool, he would probably spit blood in rage—his mentality shattering once again on top of its previous shattering.

After dispersing Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor's flame across the Five Phoenixes, silver blades stacked behind Lu, reforming the Thousand-Blade Chair.

Seated upon it, Lu's gaze shifted toward the Abyss of Nothingness.

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor had been only one part of this crisis.

The true threat still lay in the Primordial Divine Demons within the abyss.

“Immortal-tier Divine Demon...”

Lu twisted his neck. His eyes gradually turned cold.

Raising his hand, space tore open. Controlling the Thousand-Blade Chair, he stepped inside.

“Bullying my little cotton-padded jacket, bullying my own father...”

“I, Lu Ping’an, have remembered you well.”

After Lu vanished,

Gu Mangran rose into the air. Clutching his chest, with the divine herb’s help, his injuries were gradually recovering.

He had wanted to follow and see if he could assist Lu.

But looking up at the Golden Immortal tribulation clouds gathering above him, he could only focus fully on facing the tribulation.

As for the situation in the Abyss of Nothingness—Gu Mangran wasn’t too worried.

He believed...

With Lu going there, the crisis should not be too difficult.

Young Master Lu could now erupt with Peak Emperor-level combat power. Against an Immortal-tier Divine Demon... it should be quite easy, right?

BOOM!

Thunder brewed.

Gu Mangran could no longer afford distraction. He concentrated fully on facing the tribulation.

...

In the Ninth Heaven,

within the void rift,

deathly silence reigned.

A cold, solemn atmosphere pervaded, yet within that solemnity was something strange.

BOOM!

Powerful spatial energy surged. With it came overwhelming auras crisscrossing.

Then, the heavily damaged Ninth Heaven Heavenly Dao was forcibly pulled out from the spatial rift.

The ancient Great Emperors—shrouded in haze—drew deep breaths.

Looking at the Ninth Heaven Heavenly Dao's miserable state, they didn't know what to say.

They had thought this would be a perfect hunt for the Ninth Heaven Heavenly Dao.

Yet the situation had developed in such an unexpected way.

The Ninth Heaven Heavenly Dao had nearly been devoured by the Five Phoenixes Heavenly Dao.

If not for Ancient Emperor Hao's timely intervention, the Ninth Heaven Heavenly Dao might have been completely consumed...

"The Five Phoenixes Heavenly Dao has already formed great momentum!"

"By common sense, it should not be able to contend with the Ninth Heaven Heavenly Dao. Could the Five Phoenixes Heavenly Dao truly have transcended?"

"Beyond high-martial Heavenly Dao... is Immortal-Martial Heavenly Dao?!"

The ancient Great Emperors' auras intertwined as they focused entirely on the Ninth Heaven Heavenly Dao's wretched condition.

Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor's death caused no emotional fluctuation among them.

If Lu were here, he would surely find it strange.

After all, Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor was a Great Emperor of the Ninth Heaven—discarded so casually by Ancient Emperor Hao. Shouldn't these ancient Great Emperors feel some sense of shared fate?

Yet no such emotion appeared.

Powerful spiritual fluctuations spread from deep within the rift.

“The Five Phoenixes... has exceeded our expectations.”

“But the Five Phoenixes has also given us a rare opportunity...”

A cold voice echoed from the rift’s depths.

The ancient Great Emperors’ hazy gazes turned toward the depths.

BOOM!

In the next moment, terrifying aura surged from the rift.

Gradually, vast energy gathered and intertwined within the depths—like an embryo evolving... finally taking the form of a human figure.

Flames danced and spread. A familiar face reappeared.

His aura was slightly weakened, but his appearance was unmistakably that of Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor—whom Lu had punched into oblivion, body and soul destroyed.

“The Divine Demons of the Primordial Starry Sky have torn open the passage. Next, the Five Phoenixes will face the terrifying assault of the Immortal-tier Divine Demon ‘Evil Eye’... When both sides are exhausted, we strike and seize the Five Phoenixes’ Immortal-Martial Heavenly Dao!”

The cold voice resounded from the depths.

In the next moment, the ancient Great Emperors’ primordial spirits collided—cold and grave.

Then their gazes turned profoundly toward the Five Phoenixes, watching the battle between the Innate Divine Demons and the Five Phoenix cultivators.

...

In the Abyss of Nothingness,

the passage entrance was completely blocked.

A massive foot stepped through. Terrifying Immortal-tier aura spread like a powerful energy storm—chilling to the bone.

Tantai Xuan, Micah, Lu Jiulian, and Zhu Long all grew solemn.

They had wanted to return and deal with the internal situation in the Five Phoenixes, but with this Immortal-tier Divine Demon entering, they had no chance to leave.

Immortal-tier... equivalent to Peak Emperor.

The pressure it brought was overwhelming!

Even Zhu Long—who had reached Sixth-Revolution Golden Immortal—felt oppressed.

“Why was the passage torn open so quickly?”

“It shouldn’t be this fast—even with early-tier Divine Demons self-detonating to widen it, it should take much longer.”

“It’s that array—the array forming the passage was tampered with to accelerate its collapse...”

“Those ancient Great Emperors of the Ninth Heaven are secretly sabotaging us! They’re helping these Divine Demons tear open the passage!”

Tantai Xuan and the others exchanged rapid thoughts.

Their expressions were extremely grave.

“We must act before this Immortal-tier Divine Demon fully enters...”

Micah said seriously.

In the next moment, the Five Phoenixes' Golden Immortals erupted with aura, transforming into streaks of light, charging toward the passage entrance.

Their target was naturally the Immortal-tier Divine Demon whose entire foot had already stepped through.

Zhu Long swung her Yin-Yang Grinding Disc. Innate Yin-Yang qi flowed. The pressure this opponent gave her was immense.

Unless Father acted, she truly had little confidence in stopping him.

Lu Jiulian was somewhat dazed.

He sensed the sudden surge of vast energy within his body. A trace of bewilderment appeared on his face.

How had he become stronger again?

Unknowingly, he had grown stronger in ways he himself couldn't understand.

But it was good. Becoming stronger now might influence the battle.

Raising his hand, energy surged madly from his arms. Between them formed a basin-sized rotating seven-colored Wrath Lotus.

Surging energy rose and fell within the lotus. Once detonated, it seemed capable of annihilating heaven and earth.

BANG!

A terrifying collision erupted.

The rift at the passage entrance grew larger. A massive eyeball appeared beyond it.

With the Immortal-tier Divine Demon's arrival, the surrounding high-tier and early-tier Divine Demons seemed to sense the descent of a supreme existence. They knelt in the void.

BOOM!

The passage entrance shattered completely.

A massive arm—wrapped in spatial barrier fragments—slammed forth.

It was the Immortal-tier Divine Demon's arm. The flesh corroded by Lu Changkong was slowly regenerating.

But even so, the power erupting from this arm was astonishing.

Lu Jiulian's expression turned icy.

He hurled the basin-sized seven-colored Wrath Lotus. It transformed into a streak of light, crashing toward the massive arm.

BOOM BOOM BOOM!

Energy capable of annihilating derivative second-tier high-martial worlds erupted.

Dark rifts spread. Terrifying explosive waves completely engulfed the arm.

Lu Jiulian stared fixedly at the explosion site. But as the smoke cleared, the massive arm paused—then slammed down with terrifying speed.

BANG BANG BANG!

Space itself seemed unable to withstand the palm's speed, shattering continuously.

Zhu Long opened her eyes.

Left black, right white.

Black and white cycled. Her divine ability activated.

Her divine ability clashed with the palm.

Sixth-Revolution Golden Immortal Zhu Long possessed immense combat power and special suppression against Innate Divine Demons.

Yet against this Immortal-tier Divine Demon, that suppression became negligible—almost ineffective.

Divine ability and palm collided, erupting in a heaven-shaking explosion.

But ultimately, it stopped the palm's advance.

And the passage entrance was completely torn open.

The ancient, powerful aura of the Primordial Starry Sky surged madly inward.

The Immortal-tier Divine Demon's full appearance was finally revealed to the world.

It was an enormous Divine Demon—its body mountain-sized yet grotesquely proportioned. Its head was massively oversized. At its center was a gigantic eyeball radiating endless eeriness—as though a single glance could seize one's mind and strip away control.

Below that enormous eerie eyeball was a maw lined with razor-sharp teeth.

Further down was a shrunken humanoid torso.

Though “shrunken,” it was still gigantic—merely proportionate to the head, giving it a deformed appearance.

The humanoid torso was covered in dark cyan scales. Blood vessels throbbed beneath the flesh.

Its powerful heartbeat contained a unique magic.

It seemed to draw everyone’s heartbeat into its rhythm—making hearts beat in sync with its own.

“This is... Immortal-tier?”

Tantai Xuan stared at the colossal being. Its terrifying aura spread like a storm.

Micah clenched his fists. His gaze grew even sharper.

He walked the path of the Extreme Realm—he could not afford fear.

Fight then!

Besides, they were the strongest Golden Immortals of the Five Phoenixes. If they retreated, the Five Phoenixes behind them would be exposed—becoming food for these savage Primordial Starry Sky Divine Demons.

ROAR!

The Evil-Eyed Divine Demon roared.

Its massive eyeball rolled. Its pupils focused.

It locked onto the Five Phoenixes Golden Immortals before it.

The Hegemon, Tang Yimo, Sima Qingshan, and others stared fixedly at this Immortal-tier Divine Demon.

Their bodies trembled slightly—the pressure of an Immortal-tier existence made their flesh quiver uncontrollably.

Yet the newly ascended Golden Immortals—the Hegemon and Tang Yimo—felt little fear.

When facing peerless ferocious beasts before, they had felt the same. They had overcome it.

The Hegemon twisted his neck, gripping his axe and shield. His gaze was razor-sharp.

Behind him was the Five Phoenixes—the land he had lived in for countless years, his home. How could he easily surrender it?

Tang Yimo spun the bandages around his hands.

He glanced at the Hegemon. The two seemed to reach an unspoken understanding.

“Looks like we have to go all out this time.”

Tang Yimo said.

The Hegemon’s eyes flickered. He looked complicatedly at Tang Yimo, then nodded solemnly.

Just going all out.

At worst—he’d die!

The massive Evil Eye moved—like a gigantic black hole growing in the cosmos—slowly stepping toward the Five Phoenixes.

Its eyeball locked onto Zhu Long.

Zhu Long's black-and-white eyes met its gaze fearlessly.

BOOM!

Black-and-white beams shot forth, forming an impact wave.

The Evil Eye's pupil also unleashed an eerie impact wave.

The two collided.

Zhu Long's delicate body trembled. Then she was sent flying backward through the void.

“Charge!”

The Five Phoenixes Golden Immortals overcame their inner fear. Flames seemed to burn within them. With their tiny bodies, they charged madly toward the colossal Evil-Eyed Divine Demon.

Divine Demons possessed intelligence. This Evil Eye naturally had it too.

Its massive maw split open. Razor-sharp teeth gleamed coldly—as though mocking the Five Phoenixes cultivators' overconfidence.

A massive arm swept out.

Its powerful flesh suppressed the void, shattering it inch by inch.

This sweep treated the Five Phoenixes cultivators like mere flies.

Lu Jiulian's expression was icy.

His arms intertwined. Gritting his teeth, he prepared to form an eight-colored Wrath Lotus.

Above Tantai Xuan, the Life-and-Death Register hovered. He chanted. Life-and-death qi transformed into divine dragons, coiling around the arm.

Micah was fearless. Hair flying, he unleashed his Extreme Dao Emperor Fist.

But the moment they clashed, blood sprayed from every pore.

On the other side,

Tang Yimo instantly opened seven meridians. Hair stood on end. Terrifying energy currents surged around him.

His body swelled. Skin turned cyan-purple.

Life energy surged and roared!

BOOM!

A terrifying muffled sound exploded.

The Evil-Eyed Divine Demon's weakened strike was blocked by the Hegemon raising his axe and shield.

At the moment of impact, blood sprayed from the Hegemon's body. But his eyes were filled with excitement and sharpness!

Come! Come!

Hit me with everything!

Stack the thickest armor to take the heaviest beating!

Tang Yimo became a black streak, landing on the massive Evil-Eyed Divine Demon's arm.

His arms moved like windmills as he sprinted upward.

Along the Divine Demon's arm, he ran toward the Evil Eye's enormous eyeball.

The eye—surely its weakest point.

Bai Qingniao's waist-length fiery red hair flew upward.

She spread her arms, seeming to chant softly.

Then, nine fire phoenixes spiraled upward, forming a flame whirlwind that charged toward the Evil-Eyed Divine Demon.

Sima Qingshan splashed ink—mountains and rivers forming a prison of ink that enveloped the Evil-Eyed Divine Demon.

Nie Changqing drew Dragon-Slaying Blade. Blade light obscured the sky as it slashed toward the Evil-Eyed Divine Demon.

Their attacks covered and supported Tang Yimo.

The Evil-Eyed Divine Demon raised its other arm, blocking the onslaught.

Its massive eyeball rolled—seeming to notice Tang Yimo's movement.

But at that moment, Zhu Long's Yin-Yang Grinding Disc hovered above her head. Her eyes opened. Black-and-white light waves shot toward the Evil Eye.

Zhu Long's attack posed a tremendous threat to the Evil Eye.

Thus, its eyeball lifted, locking onto Zhu Long, unleashing its own impact wave.

The two clashed again!

Zhu Long's delicate body trembled.

But this time she was not sent flying—because the little Yinglong flapped its fleshy wings, gritting its teeth and supporting her from behind.

The two impact waves collided in the abyss, drawing the Evil Eye's attention.

Tang Yimo's speed grew faster and faster.

So fast he became a wisp of cyan smoke.

Finally,

Zhu Long's clash with the Evil Eye's impact wave ended. In the instant it ended,

Lu Jiulian's arms bled.

He hurled an eight-colored Wrath Lotus formed by draining all his energy. The lotus hovered above the Evil Eye's head.

It detonated instantly.

Transforming into a massive eight-colored lotus that enveloped the Evil Eye, causing its eyeball to daze momentarily.

Lu Jiulian panted heavily. Watching the explosion envelop the Evil Eye, a faint smile appeared on his cold face.

Though the explosion's power was insufficient to harm an Immortal-tier Divine Demon...

that wasn't his goal.

It was to provide final cover for Tang Yimo.

Whoosh!

In the instant the eight-colored Wrath Lotus's aftermath dissipated,

Tang Yimo reached the end of the arm. He leaped upward. His body swelled, hovering directly before the Evil Eye's massive eyeball.

The pupil in the Evil Eye suddenly contracted—focusing on Tang Yimo.

Even the Evil Eye hadn't expected that the main attacker among the Five Phoenixes Golden Immortals would be Tang Yimo.

Even the ancient Great Emperors of the Ninth Heaven watching from the rift were stunned.

The cooperation displayed by this group of Golden Immortals against a Peak Emperor-level Immortal-tier Divine Demon astonished them.

This group of Golden Immortals... would surely become terrifying opponents in the future.

Tang Yimo's hair stood on end.

His eyes turned completely blood-red.

Flashes of the Five Phoenixes appeared in his vision.

Tang Guo, Southern Commandery, the Great Xuan Divine Dynasty... such beautiful people and world—
how could they be destroyed before such an ugly being!

“Eighth Meridian!”

“Open!”

BOOM!

Tang Yimo roared lowly.

His skin seemed to melt instantly. Terrifying energy shockwaves erupted from his body, piercing through
the entire void starry sky!

In this moment, even the Evil Eye felt an unparalleled threat!

This tiny existence—only early-tier Divine Demon level—brought him unimaginable danger!

BOOM BOOM BOOM BOOM BOOM!

Tang Yimo transformed into a blood-colored figure of light. In an instant, he unleashed nearly ten thousand punches toward the Evil Eye's massive eyeball.

Each punch represented his faith.

Represented his will to protect!

This was the spirit of the Five Phoenixes' people!

Protecting what they wished to protect!

For the Five Phoenixes...

They fought!

Fearless of death!

The Five Phoenixes Golden Immortals panted heavily, watching this scene.

Seeing Tang Yimo erupt with astonishing power, they fell silent.

When Lu tore open space and appeared, what he saw was this deeply moving scene.

Looking at every Five Phoenix Golden Immortal, Lu could feel their resolve—their will to protect.

They loved the Five Phoenixes deeply.

For a moment, Lu felt a touch of emotion.

And wasn't he the same?

They felt a strong sense of belonging to the Five Phoenixes—unwilling to see it destroyed.

And so did Lu—even more so. Lu had personally guided the Five Phoenixes step by step from a weak low-martial world to the mighty Immortal-Martial it was today.

Lu's feelings for the Five Phoenixes were deeper than anyone else's.

Perhaps this was also why Lu had subconsciously—and urgently—sought to strengthen the Five Phoenixes, pursuing Qi Refining.

He wanted the Five Phoenixes to become strong—strong enough that no external force could destroy it!

BOOM!!!!

A terrifying energy storm erupted from the Evil Eye's eyeball.

The hazy waves of energy spread and expanded, stirring up dust throughout the abyss.

This terrifying energy storm was like a massive black hole—making the starry sky tremble.

In the explosion,

Tang Yimo's blood-soaked body was sent flying backward like a broken kite.

His arms were mangled, bones shattered.

The Five Phoenixes Golden Immortals' pupils contracted. They swiftly flew forward to catch Tang Yimo's body.

Many felt their hearts tremble.

They remembered Tang Yimo saying that opening the eighth meridian would surely kill him.

But it would also grant him heaven-defying power!

This time...

they had witnessed it.

Tang Yimo had struck the Evil Eye's eyeball with a single blow.

Truly astonishing to all.

Even Zhu Long's attack might not have achieved such an effect.

But just as everyone prepared to catch Tang Yimo,

a white robe fluttered.

Lu raised his hand, supporting Tang Yimo's bloodied back.

Everyone stared at Lu in shock.

In the next moment...

wild joy surged!

Seeing Tang Yimo's life force rapidly fading, Lu raised his hand and waved lightly.

A beam of light descended from the sky, enveloping Tang Yimo.

Instantly, rich vitality filled Tang Yimo's body—restoring him to peak condition.

Even in his unconscious state, Tang Yimo's body shuddered, a groan escaping his nose.

Sweeping his gaze across the Five Phoenixes cultivators,

Lu picked up a piece and slowly placed it.

The piece landed on the chessboard.

Instantly, countless beams of light enveloped the Five Phoenixes cultivators—fully healing all their injuries and restoring them to peak condition!

When it came to support—Lu... was a professional.

In the distance!

BOOM!

A terrifying explosion rang out.

The Evil-Eyed Divine Demon's colossal body was finally forced back—crashing into the massive torn passage entrance.

The passage trembled.

The Evil-Eyed Divine Demon let out a roar of pain and fury.

Its eyeball was covered in cracks. Murky green blood sprayed from it.

“Kill!”

“Slaughter them all!”

The Evil Eye’s furious will spread.

Then, the originally reverent early-tier and high-tier Divine Demons received the Evil Eye’s command and went berserk—surging forth with murderous intent, intent on killing everything.

They transformed into streaks of light, erupting with Emperor Realm might, charging toward the Five Phoenixes cultivators.

The Five Phoenixes cultivators tensed. Immense pressure descended.

But Lu merely smiled.

He waved his hand, signaling everyone to relax.

He sat calmly in the Thousand-Blade Chair, white robes fluttering.

Alone, he blocked the path of the countless early-tier Divine Demons and ferocious high-tier Divine Demons.

The corners of his mouth curved upward.

Title [Divine Demon Hunter] activated.

Buzz...

Lu leaned back in the Thousand-Blade Chair, white robes fluttering.

His calm gaze carried a unique power as he looked directly at the Divine Demon legion.

Then, the countless ferocious, savage early-tier and high-tier Divine Demons charging toward him...

froze in midair.

An indescribable fear... spread among them.

Chapter 576: The Cleaned-Up Gods and Demons Must Not Be Wasted

All eyes converged on the figure seated calmly in the heart of the abyss, enthroned upon the Thousand-Blade Chair as though it were a divine seat.

Dressed in flowing white, his gaze was cold and detached, betraying no excess of emotion.

Before him hovered ranks of terrifying primordial gods and demons—low-tier and high-tier alike.

Each one represented an Emperor-realm powerhouse.

Low-tier gods and demons were comparable to early Emperors; high-tier ones were equivalent to Great Emperors.

Such a lineup would have struck terror even into the Nine Heavens.

Yet the atmosphere was strangely subdued.

All these gods and demons hung motionless in the air like statues, not daring to twitch, as though they had been locked in the gaze of an incomprehensibly ferocious beast—one wrong move and they would be torn apart.

Lu hovered there in serene calm. He had activated his title: *God and Demon Hunter*.

A reward granted by the system after completing a special mission.

At first, Lu had paid it no mind at all. To him, it seemed no more meaningful than the title “Qi Refiner” — just a fancy label.

But now... he realized it was far more than that.

Lu’s brow lifted slightly.

Under the weight of his presence, these gods and demons were reacting as if they had glimpsed something utterly horrifying.

The effect of the *God and Demon Hunter* title was astonishingly potent.

It pressed down on every divine being in the sky, freezing them in place like prey caught in a hunter's sights.

Everyone around was stunned.

The sight was simply too overwhelming.

These were low-tier and high-tier gods and demons—Emperor-realm experts in their own right.

If they all attacked at once, even Young Master Lu might have been forced to pay a heavy price.

Yet the reality was the opposite.

Young Master Lu suffered no harm. Instead, he had single-handedly cowed this entire army of gods and demons.

The scene was engraved into every mind like an epic tableau.

“As expected of Young Master Lu... Lord of White Jade Capital, suppressor of gods and demons!”

“So powerful... so terrifying... just one glance and they don’t dare move forward!”

“How is this even possible? I swear I can see pure fear in their eyes!”

The eyes of every Five Phoenix cultivator shone with fervor.

The Overlord stood drenched in blood, yet his face was alight with exhilaration.

He had withstood a blow from an Immortal-tier god and demon—and not only survived, but felt himself ascending to a higher level.

Sure enough, only through taking beatings could he find the sensation of breakthrough.

Zhu Long closed her eyes, long lashes trembling slightly, two adorable dimples appearing on her cheeks.

Dad was finally here. It seemed everything had been taken care of.

As long as Dad was present, no problem was truly a problem!

She let out a long breath.

Turning, she looked at the panting little Yinglong behind her and reached out to ruffle his head.

As expected of the little brother Big Sis favored most!

Lu Changkong broke into a wide smile. Seeing Lu appear, the heavy stone in his chest finally lifted.

He had witnessed too many miracles. From its humble beginnings to its current might, Five Phoenixes had grown under Lu's shadow. Lu Changkong was certain that this Immortal-tier god and demon was about to meet a truly miserable end.

In the Nine Heavens, vast rifts tore through the void.

Ancient Great Emperors radiated waves of disbelief.

Through the reflection in the abyss, they watched an army of gods and demons—beings notorious for their savagery—being held at bay by a single human.

Even peak Emperors would not inspire fear in these creatures; they would charge fearlessly under the command of an Immortal-tier god and demon.

Yet now, both low-tier and high-tier gods and demons were paralyzed before Lu Ping'an!

How could one human be this terrifying?

What gave him such power over them?

"There must be some secret on Lu Ping'an that we are unaware of..."

"Five Phoenixes' rise to this level is absolutely tied to whatever secret he carries."

"Could it be connected to the Primordial Starry Sky? Otherwise, why would these gods and demons fear him? Is Lu Ping'an perhaps the reincarnation of an Immortal-tier—or even higher—god and demon?"

The divine souls of the ancient Emperors surged and clashed in furious debate.

Yet none could reach a clear conclusion.

Even the figure deep within the rift seemed unable to guess.

One thing was certain: Lu Ping'an carried a monumental secret.

...

While the Five Phoenixes side felt a wave of relief, the Immortal-tier god and demon known as Evil Eye—whose eye had nearly been blasted apart by Tang Yimo’s eight-meridian eruption—was consumed by towering rage.

When he sensed that the low-tier and high-tier gods and demons had halted their assault, his fury only grew more violent.

“KILL!”

Strange fluctuations pulsed from Evil Eye, like invisible psychic waves commanding the gods and demons to resume slaughter.

It seemed his roar had some effect.

The absolute rank suppression of an Immortal-tier being over lower gods and demons finally overcame the indescribable dread Lu’s presence instilled.

Sometimes, hierarchy was the most terrifying force of all.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!

The low-tier gods and demons surged forward once more.

But their momentum was feeble, nothing like the ferocious tide that had earlier crashed upon Five Phoenixes.

Lu sat upon the Thousand-Blade Chair, one hand resting lightly on the armrest, fingers tapping rhythmically.

The world seemed to fall deathly silent.

He watched calmly as the gods and demons rushed toward him.

With a mere thought, the *God and Demon Hunter* title flared again.

An invisible wave of murderous intent erupted from his body.

In the eyes of the gods and demons, Lu became increasingly bizarre, increasingly incomprehensible, as though drenched in the blood of their kind.

One low-tier god and demon that had rushed close suddenly froze, eyes filled with raw terror.

It was a fear born from the depths of its soul.

A shrill, panicked scream tore from its throat before it turned and fled in blind panic.

It was as if its mental defenses had shattered completely.

And that was only the beginning.

The first one's fear spread like contagion to the second, then the third...

Soon, low-tier gods and demons were retreating in droves.

The title's effect was weaker on high-tier gods and demons, however.

Three of them pressed forward regardless, though their ferocity was noticeably diminished. Deep down, they still feared Lu.

Three high-tier gods and demons—equivalent to three Great Emperors.

For the first time, Lu's gaze sharpened.

The North Sea Fishing Rod appeared in his hand.

Gripping it, he lashed out toward the three.

Crack!

One god and demon's armor offered no protection. The North Sea Fishing Rod had been forged specifically to subdue elemental gods and demons—it carried overwhelming suppressive power against their kind.

It was even easier than when he had fought Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor.

One lash.

Blood sprayed.

A high-tier god and demon split open.

Its soul was directly shattered by the strike.

In the void abyss, it exploded into a brilliant, gruesome bloom of blood.

Under the crushing weight of Lu's title, the remaining high-tier gods and demons lost all will to fight.

Just like the low-tier ones, they scrambled backward in terror.

Evil Eye clearly hadn't anticipated this outcome.

So many gods and demons... unable to overcome one human.

Blood still dripped from his eye, though his Immortal-tier regeneration was already repairing the damage at incredible speed.

His rage was incandescent.

To be wounded by an ant he hadn't even taken seriously—this was unbearable humiliation!

With a roar, he opened his eye once more.

But the strange black beam that had always dominated lower gods and demons failed completely.

It was as though the human's pressure was even more terrifying.

How could this be?!

Evil Eye was momentarily stunned.

For the first time, he truly looked at Lu.

And in that instant, his pupils shrank to pinpoints.

From Lu emanated a faint, indescribable aura of oppression—one that sent primal fear crawling up from the depths of his being.

A fear without name, without origin.

A god and demon... afraid of a mere human?

This was utterly incomprehensible!

Lu raised an eyebrow in mild surprise.

He could sense that while the title still affected an Immortal-tier being, its power was negligible.

Behind Evil Eye, the passage from the Primordial Starry Sky to Five Phoenixes raged with wild winds.

Gods and demons were desperately trying to flee through it.

But each one carried immense destiny—enough to allow a Half-step Golden Immortal of Five Phoenixes to break through, enough to nurture one or even several Golden Immortals.

How could Lu possibly let such treasures escape?

He raised a hand.

The Eight Trigrams formation surged.

The passage mouth was sealed shut by overwhelming force.

Gods and demons crashed against it like flies against a wall, unable to break through.

Their escape route... had been cut off.

“Since you’ve come, you might as well stay.”

“Leave something behind, at least.”

Lu spoke calmly.

Then his gaze shifted to Evil Eye.

“Bullying my Five Phoenixes comes at a price... People like you in the past? Their graves are already three feet high with grass... Wait, no, most of them don’t even have graves—just scattered bones.”

Lu paused, realizing the metaphor didn’t quite fit, then corrected himself.

He wasted no more words.

The fishing rod lashed out once more!

Crack!

Space shattered inch by inch.

Evil Eye's gaze flared with murderous light.

There was something uncanny about this human.

But Evil Eye felt no fear—because Lu's aura had not reached Immortal-tier.

A non-Immortal-tier dared to provoke him?

Being wounded by the ant Tang Yimo was already shameful enough.

He would not suffer a second humiliation!

One massive arm swept out, aiming to seize the North Sea Fishing Rod.

Crack!

The rod struck his arm.

A searing pain exploded through him, forcing Evil Eye's eye to contract sharply. His fanged maw twitched uncontrollably.

Reflexively, his arm jerked back.

He looked exactly like a naughty student whipped by a teacher's rod.

The North Sea Fishing Rod carried a unique power that suppressed gods and demons.

Crack! Crack! Crack!

Lu lashed out again and again.

Each strike tore open space.

Evil Eye's colossal body split and bled.

An Immortal-tier god and demon was utterly unable to resist.

His strength, comparable to a peak Emperor, could barely manifest the power of a high-tier god and demon in Lu's presence.

Whip marks crisscrossed his body.

His appearance was wretched beyond description.

And that massive Evil Eye?

Lu had lashed a giant "x" across it.

The eye that had just regenerated was blasted open again!

Blood sprayed through the abyss.

Roar!

Evil Eye let out a howl of pain and unwillingness.

This world... was nothing like he had imagined!

Why did this human possess a treasure specifically designed to counter gods and demons?!

Who was he?

Who the hell was he?!

Evil Eye unleashed a full-powered psychic shockwave from his eye.

This was his all-out attack. He understood that against this human, he might very well perish—so he staked everything on this one blow.

The shockwave ripped space apart, tearing a pitch-black rift across the void.

Yet it failed to touch Lu's body.

Lu's form shimmered like an illusion in the emptiness, flickering through countless afterimages before reappearing inches from Evil Eye's enormous pupil.

He put away the North Sea Fishing Rod.

Slowly, he brought his palms together.

His legs straightened.

His body rose gently from the Thousand-Blade Chair.

White robes turned black.

Black robes turned gold.

The Golden-Element Immortal Demon Body erupted.

Like a blazing sun undergoing violent transformation!

Blindingly radiant!

“Is this where you were hurt?”

Golden-haired Lu spoke softly, pointing at the massive eye.

The spot Tang Yimo had nearly shattered with his eight-meridian strike—though healed, it was still fragile.

Lu smiled.

He would strike exactly where it hurt.

Evil Eye locked onto him.

A chill enveloped his entire being.

He kept retreating.

As though facing an endless nightmare.

Lu was unhurried.

Evil Eye retreated; Lu drifted forward, slow and steady.

Boom!

Evil Eye's back slammed into the sealed passage.

No more retreat!

The surrounding gods and demons scattered in terror, fleeing the clash of their auras.

Evil Eye desperately tried to force his way through the passage.

This world... was abnormal!

Or rather, this human was abnormal.

Though the Heavenly Dao of this realm was irresistibly attractive, he wasn't stupid.

Only by surviving could he have the last laugh.

Lu slowly raised his hand.

The power of the Golden-Element Immortal Demon Body surged.

His gaze gradually emptied of all emotion.

Just as Tang Yimo and the others had burned their lives to protect Five Phoenixes—because Five Phoenixes was their home, the place where their dreams began—so too would Lu guard it with everything he had.

Perhaps the old Lu had only come to this world for amusement.

But watching Five Phoenixes rise from weak low-martial to the current immortal-martial era, he realized it had been etched into his very soul.

It had become something sacred, untouchable.

And if anyone dared invade it—they would be crushed!

Boom!

Lu threw a punch.

It struck Evil Eye's pupil dead-center.

After being tempered by purple qi in the Origin Space, Lu's strength was absolutely comparable to a peak Emperor.

This punch was unstoppable.

Evil Eye's eye exploded in a cataclysmic blast!

This strike was even stronger than Tang Yimo's eight-meridian eruption!

Boom!

Terrifying energy waves surged through the abyss like a tsunami.

Brilliant light pierced heaven and earth.

The fist's momentum tore through the sealed passage, blasting out from the back of Evil Eye's head, shattering the connection to the Primordial Starry Sky and sending shockwaves rippling far into the distance.

When the dust finally settled and the light faded,

Lu had returned to the Thousand-Blade Chair, calmly regarding the ruined corpse of Evil Eye—his eye now pierced by a gaping hole.

Evil Eye had fallen.

Lu's punch had obliterated his soul.

An Immortal-tier god and demon had been reduced to a lifeless husk, slumped helplessly at the passage mouth.

His overwhelming aura dissipated completely.

The surrounding gods and demons trembled in abject fear.

More than a dozen low-tier and several high-tier gods and demons stared at Lu with eyes full of dread.

“Don’t be afraid. You still have some use.”

Lu glanced at them and spoke lightly.

Yet his words only made them feel colder.

Some gods and demons even began to think death might be preferable.

With Evil Eye dealt with,

Lu waved a hand, collecting the colossal corpse of the Immortal-tier god and demon.

He cast another formation, sealing the passage once more.

For the time being, no more powerful gods and demons would be able to invade.

Behind him, the Five Phoenixes cultivators erupted in ecstatic cheers.

It was over!

The life-or-death crisis that had weighed on every heart had finally ended!

Lu glanced at the crowd and gave a faint smile.

“This is not the end. It is only the beginning.”

His words caused Tantai Xuan, Mi Jia, Lu Jiulian, and the others to stiffen.

They seemed to realize something and turned their gazes toward the direction of the Nine Heavens.

Invisibly, it felt as though the ancient Emperors beyond the rift were also watching Five Phoenixes.

The gazes of Five Phoenixes Golden Immortals and Nine Heavens ancient Emperors collided across the void, sparking invisible thunder.

“Indeed... everything is only just beginning.”

“This passage was opened by the ancient Emperors of the Nine Heavens. This grudge... we will never forget.”

Tantai Xuan gripped the Book of Life and Death, his gaze icy.

The gods and demons who had brought Five Phoenixes to the brink of destruction deserved death.

But the true masterminds hiding in the shadows, orchestrating this invasion—they too would pay!

Debts must be settled clearly.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!

Powerful divine senses swept out.

In an instant, all Five Phoenixes cultivators were teleported out of the void abyss.

Lu raised his hand and laid down formations.

The Eight Trigrams platform flashed and suppressed the abyss, completely sealing it.

Roar!

Within the abyss, gods and demons howled in fury, eyes blood-red.

Thunder chains descended from the Eight Trigrams formation, binding and imprisoning them.

The abyss had become a prison.

Lu treated them like tools.

His movements were eerily practiced—as though he had done this before, back when he sealed saintly sons and daughters in the ice tower.

Only this time, the prisoners were far more powerful gods and demons.

“There aren’t many of them, but each one represents an invasion of Five Phoenixes, carrying immense destiny. So these cleaned-up gods and demons must not be wasted. If any Half-step Golden Immortal wishes to break through, come to the abyss in groups. Slay one low-tier god and demon, and you’ll have enough destiny to advance...”

“For those seeking Sixth Revolution Golden Immortal, seek out high-tier gods and demons.”

“These are gifts the ancient Emperors of the Nine Heavens have personally delivered to us.”

Lu’s voice spread, instantly energizing the Five Phoenixes cultivators.

Many Profound Immortals even shivered with excitement.

As expected of Young Master Lu—his mastery of turning enemies into tools was truly unparalleled!

Meanwhile, the imprisoned gods and demons roared in outrage...

Lu’s words sent chills down their spines while simultaneously fueling their fury.

Sure enough...

The ancient Emperors of the Nine Heavens were in league with this devil!

They had been betrayed!

Lu didn't particularly care what the gods and demons thought. He was just having a little fun messing with their minds. After all... it cost him nothing.

Having finished his instructions,

Lu settled back onto the Thousand-Blade Chair, lifted his head, and gazed toward the Nine Heavens.

As though sensing the invisible stares upon him, the corners of his mouth curved slightly. His fingers tapped lightly on the armrest.

"No rush. Once Five Phoenixes completes its transformation into the Immortal-Martial Era..."

"Then we'll settle the accounts."

At that moment,

A system prompt finally appeared before Lu's eyes, slowly emerging after the threat of Evil Eye had been eliminated.

Chapter 577: The Voice of the Quasi-Saint

When the system prompt finally appeared before Lu's eyes, he wasn't particularly surprised.

Given the system's usual habits, even though Lu had already helped Five Phoenixes' Heavenly Dao Origin evolve into an Immortal-Martial Immortal Origin, the system would typically wait until the situation stabilized before announcing the world's upgrade completion.

In the past, advancing from mid-martial to high-martial had come with a formal world-upgrade trial. Later ones lacked that formality, but this unusual method was essentially a trial in disguise.

For Five Phoenixes, the greatest crisis had always been the gods and demons emerging from the Primordial Starry Sky. Even Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor, when he appeared in Five Phoenixes, didn't count as one of them.

Of course, if Ancient Emperor Hao himself had come in person, the danger level would have been entirely different.

That figure—Ancient Emperor Hao—was shrouded in mystery. Even now, from Lu's perspective, he remained profoundly enigmatic.

Like a venomous snake lurking in the dark, his true cards were completely unknown to Lu.

Still, Lu didn't particularly care.

This time, Five Phoenixes' transformation into the Immortal-Martial realm would bring a qualitative leap.

Moreover, the breakthroughs of so many powerful cultivators would help elevate Lu's own Qi Refining level.

Without saying anything to the others,

After finishing his arrangements in the abyss,

Lu tore open space and vanished.

He returned to the island at the heart of the lake on Five Phoenixes Continent.

He needed a quiet place to settle the rewards from this battle.

Tantai Xuan, Lu Changkong, and the others had wanted to speak with him, but Lu's abrupt departure left them stunned.

A chill ran through their hearts. Could there be an even more serious crisis within Five Phoenixes that Lu had sensed and rushed off to handle?

It wasn't impossible.

Perhaps Lu had sensed their peril and emerged early to save them.

For a moment, the group fell silent again.

Gazing at the abyss and the gods and demons roaring within their sealed prison, the eyes of every Five Phoenixes cultivator gleamed with determination.

Young Master Lu had already created the opportunity for them.

If they failed to grow stronger now, they would truly let down his painstaking efforts.

After Lu left,

An immense surge of destiny began to gather in this place.

Lu Jiulian, Tantai Xuan, Sima Qingshan, and everyone who had fought in the battle against Evil Eye received vast waves of destiny washing over them.

Their cultivation bases rose once more.

Tantai Xuan and Mi Jia even achieved a second inversion of their destiny seas.

They were now half a step into the Sixth Revolution of the Golden Immortal realm.

Tang Yimo, who had fallen unconscious, finally awoke.

He had thought he was going to die. After opening all eight meridians, his channels had shattered, and his soul felt as if it were burning.

The agony had convinced him his end was certain.

But when he learned it was Young Master Lu who saved him, he wasn't surprised at all.

If anyone in the world could save him, it was only Lu.

Tang Yimo too received an immense share of destiny.

After all, that life-burning punch had severely wounded Evil Eye and delayed the Immortal-tier god and demon's assault. He was undeniably the greatest contributor.

Thus, he received an especially large portion.

Even so, Evil Eye had been an Immortal-tier being, carrying an extraordinarily vast amount of destiny.

After the division, everyone's strength had risen noticeably.

Of course, the real growth came from the battle itself.

Tang Yimo's cultivation had been pushed to the very edge of the Third Revolution.

The Overlord was in a similar position.

Sima Qingshan, Bai Qingniao, and others gained slightly less, but still reaped substantial rewards.

This battle had been a bountiful harvest for all.

A true cause for celebration.

But...

The joy was only temporary.

As Lu had said, this was not the end—it was only the beginning.

Five Phoenixes' true enemies were not merely the gods and demons, but the Nine Heavens—the ones who had orchestrated everything from the shadows.

Even with their current strength, facing the ancient Great Emperors of the Nine Heavens, victory was far from guaranteed.

Yet at least they were no longer powerless, forced to rely entirely on Young Master Lu.

...

On Five Phoenixes Continent, the roaring finally subsided.

The Golden Immortal tribulation slowly drew to a close.

Gu Mangran had successfully transcended his tribulation, surviving by the skin of his teeth.

Before the tribulation began, he had suffered a devastating blow from Fire Spirit Ancient Emperor. Without the divine medicine in his mouth, he would likely have perished long ago.

Thus, he had faced the tribulation while already gravely wounded.

The process had been perilous, but fortunately, he succeeded.

The feedback from transcending the tribulation completely healed his injuries. He had become a Golden Immortal, his destiny vast as the sea. At last, he had stepped into the realm he had once only dreamed of.

At that moment, he also sensed that the battle beyond Five Phoenixes had concluded.

The terrifying aura of gods and demons had vanished.

A smile spread across Gu Mangran's face.

Five Phoenixes had won.

Young Master Lu had once again performed a miracle.

"Everything has returned to normal. How wonderful."

Gu Mangran smiled broadly.

With great strides, he soared into the sky to greet the returning warriors of Five Phoenixes.

In a corner of the continent, Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor looked up, his eyes gleaming.

"They won?"

He exhaled slowly.

Even an Immortal-tier god and demon had been slain by Lu Ping'an.

It seemed he would have to reassess Lu Ping'an's strength.

At the very least, until his own power was sufficient, if Lu Ping'an discovered his identity, he would likely meet disaster.

Lu Ping'an was ruthless, loved toying with people's minds—Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor had truly come to fear him.

Turning, he leaped down the slope and vanished swiftly into the great rivers.

...

Origin Lake, Heart Island.

Lu had returned.

Seated once more on the Thousand-Blade Chair.

Beneath him, the colossal whale let out a heaven-shaking cry, as though sensing Lu's return.

Or perhaps sensing the increasingly terrifying pressure emanating from Lu, realizing its hope of outliving this human had grown even slimmer, prompting an unwilling roar.

Lu ignored the whale's little thoughts.

Before his eyes, the system prompt appeared.

“Dao Origin evolves into Immortal Origin, Immortal-Martial foundation births purple qi. Congratulations, Host, for your unremitting efforts: Five Phoenixes Continent has broken through the shackles of high-martial and ascended to Immortal-Martial. On the path to leading Five Phoenixes into the super-fantasy realm, another step forward! A cause for celebration—the world rejoices!”

Lu sat quietly on the Thousand-Blade Chair.

For some reason, seeing the prompt filled him with a deep calm.

Of course, there was joy as well.

But more than anything, there was a sense of感慨—how difficult it had been.

For Five Phoenixes to reach this point had not been easy.

At least for Lu, the effort he had poured in was immense.

Yet only with effort comes reward.

Every world upgrade for Five Phoenixes had been fraught with hardship and danger.

Forget the constant external threats; even the crises brought by ascending to a higher level felt like dancing on a blade's edge.

This time, transforming into Immortal-Martial, helping the Dao Origin shatter the stellar barrier and become an Immortal Origin, had been a nine-deaths-and-one-life ordeal.

They had nearly failed.

The earlier jump from mid-martial to high-martial had also faced immense suppression and rule rejection.

Lu had broken those rules as well.

The difficulties were many, but once overcome, the taste of the harvest was extraordinarily sweet.

With a thought, the system panel opened.

Host: Lu

Title: Qi Refiner (Permanent)

Special Title: God and Demon Hunter

Qi Refining Layer: 10

Spiritual Qi Reserve: 921/1000 (hundred million) strands

Primordial Spirit Power: 1,000,000 (units)

Chaos Power: ??? (↑)

Current World Rating: Five Phoenixes Great World [Immortal-Martial]

Lu studied the panel and immediately noticed the changes.

First, the addition of the God and Demon Hunter title—its benefits needed no explanation. Though its suppression on Immortal-tier gods and demons was weak, Lu believed that as his strength grew, it would eventually pressure even them.

By then, even against the unfathomable Primordial Starry Sky, he might possess the power to resist.

As for his Qi Refining layer, it remained at ten. His spiritual qi reserve was very close to the breakthrough.

In Lu's estimation, once the Immortal-Martial feedback finished and Five Phoenixes produced a few more Golden Immortals, his reserve would likely surpass the 1,000 hundred-million mark, giving him the chance to reach the eleventh layer.

“Hm?”

“This Chaos Power...”

Lu's gaze fell on the Chaos Power entry.

With a thought, it upgraded.

The Chaos Power column transformed... into Innate Purple Qi.

【Innate Purple Qi: 10 strands】

An upgraded version of Chaos Power?

Lu had personally experienced the might of Innate Purple Qi.

During the high-martial to Immortal-martial transition, without that single strand, it would have been uncertain whether he could have helped Five Phoenixes' Dao Origin break through and become an Immortal Origin.

Now, he himself possessed Innate Purple Qi.

Though only ten strands, for Lu, this represented a qualitative leap.

At least, it was a fundamental change.

“Congratulations on Five Phoenixes achieving Immortal-Martial. Reward obtained: Voice of the Quasi-Saint.”

Suddenly, another system prompt appeared before him.

This time, it was the reward.

Lu had been prepared to receive a bounty of rewards. Ascending from high-martial to Immortal-martial was a massive qualitative leap—its significance was terrifying.

Even Lu felt this breakthrough had carried an element of luck.

But at least it had succeeded.

The rewards for reaching Immortal-Martial should be plentiful, right?

At first, Lu had been quite expectant.

Yet... when the reward actually appeared, his expectations were ruthlessly shattered.

There was only one reward.

And... it wasn't even a tangible one.

“That’s it?”

Lu was speechless.

He was now certain: as time went on, the system’s rewards were becoming increasingly meager.

Still, he wasn’t surprised. As the world’s level rose, the system seemed to be gradually running out of steam.

“Perhaps... the origin of the system will be revealed soon.”

Lu narrowed his eyes.

His fingers tapped lightly on the armrest.

He was genuinely curious about the system's source.

He vaguely sensed that it might be the creation of some extraordinarily powerful being.

At the very least, stronger than the old Daoist he had encountered during his last dream-wandering in the Immortal-Martial realm.

“What exactly is the Voice of the Quasi-Saint?”

Setting aside thoughts of the system, Lu began to examine the reward.

The system's explanation quickly appeared.

“This Voice of the Quasi-Saint can envelop the entire Five Phoenixes Great World, allowing all cultivators across the world to hear it and accelerate the completion of the world's transformation.”

Lu's brow lifted slightly.

This reward...

It was quite unusual—unusual enough that even with the system’s explanation, he couldn’t fully grasp its implications.

“What level is this ‘Quasi-Saint’?”

Lu pondered.

Could it be the Quasi-Saint realm of the Nine Heavens?

If so, Lu could probably kill a bunch of them with just his little finger.

Clearly, then, this “Quasi-Saint” was not the same as the Nine Heavens’ Quasi-Saint realm.

“Could it be... above the Daluo Immortal?”

Lu’s eyes suddenly brightened.

If that were the case, this reward might bring him an unexpected surprise.

He had originally planned to carefully assess this reward. Though there was only one, it seemed to hold immense potential.

Thus, Lu couldn't tell whether he felt disappointed or delighted.

“Still... accelerating the world's transformation isn't bad at all.”

Lu smiled.

Now that Five Phoenixes' Heavenly Dao Origin had become an Immortal Origin, the entire world was undergoing changes.

The Origin Space was evolving into the Five Phoenixes Origin Universe.

And Five Phoenixes Continent itself seemed to be undergoing some kind of transformation. If successful, it might become something akin to the Five Phoenixes Universe.

But this process appeared lengthy—thousands of years at the shortest, tens of thousands or even hundreds of thousands at the longest.

For Emperor-realm cultivators, especially peak Emperors, such a span was negligible.

But for Lu... it was already far too long.

“Perhaps I should enter the Sermon Platform first and simulate what this ‘Voice of the Quasi-Saint’ really is.”

With a thought, Lu entered the Sermon Platform.

The Eight Trigrams platform shimmered with light.

Lu sat cross-legged, white robes fluttering, eyes gleaming.

He began using the formation words to deduce the “Voice of the Quasi-Saint” reward.

Yet, to his astonishment, he couldn’t simulate it.

Every time he came close to success, an unseen, incredibly powerful force seemed to playfully interrupt his deduction.

Lu immediately grew alert.

The Quasi-Saint...

Perhaps it was a realm capable of perceiving many profound mysteries.

Had his deduction attracted the attention of such a being?

Lu immediately ceased the simulation.

Still, the attempt hadn't been entirely fruitless.

“This Voice of the Quasi-Saint... at least it won't harm Five Phoenixes.”

Lu mused.

Perhaps it was time to put this reward to use.

“The Voice of the Quasi-Saint requires a medium—a medium for preaching the Dao...”

Lu thought.

Glancing around the Sermon Platform, he suddenly smiled, an idea forming in his mind.

Perhaps it was time for the long-dormant Six Paths Immortal to make an appearance.

The Six Paths Immortal wasn't exactly a secret in Five Phoenixes. After all, Lu had opened the Sermon Platform many times.

The Overlord, Tang Yimo, and others had seen the Six Paths Immortal.

But now that Five Phoenixes had achieved Immortal-Martial, and Tang Yimo, the Overlord, and others had reached the Golden Immortal Emperor realm, the Six Paths Immortal's rare appearances might raise some questions.

Thus, using the Six Paths Immortal this time to stir things up—not only to refresh its presence but also to enhance the Sermon Platform's mystique—seemed perfect.

“Back then, I used the Sermon Platform to preach... Now, I'll preach to the entire great world!”

The corners of Lu's mouth curved upward with a trace of anticipation.

...

In the Nine Heavens, within the void rift,

The atmosphere was oppressively heavy.

The divine souls of the ancient Emperors intertwined, each suppressing the other with terrifying force.

The Immortal-tier god and demon Evil Eye from the Primordial Starry Sky had been slain by Lu Ping'an with a single punch.

That was an Immortal-tier being—comparable to a peak Emperor.

Though gods and demons might fall slightly short in certain aspects of combat power, the fall of such a powerhouse dealt a massive psychological blow.

Because Five Phoenixes was now the enemy of the Nine Heavens, and the stronger Five Phoenixes grew, the greater the nightmare it became for them.

Moreover, there was no longer any possibility of reconciliation between the Nine Heavens and Five Phoenixes.

After all, the Heavenly Dao of the Nine Heavens had invaded Five Phoenixes' Origin Space, attempting to devour its Dao Origin.

That was like stabbing someone straight in the heart—how could they ever shake hands?

Though the Nine Heavens' Heavenly Dao had ultimately been devoured in return, the enmity had been completely and irreparably ignited.

“Five Phoenixes grows stronger by the day. Should we guide more Immortal-tier gods and demons to attack?”

One ancient Emperor's will surged, making the suggestion.

If one Immortal-tier Evil Eye wasn't enough, then bring several.

From deep within the rift came a powerful fluctuation of divine sense.

“Lu Ping'an must have some connection to the Primordial Starry Sky. That girl with special divine abilities who calls him 'Dad' seems to come from the Primordial Starry Sky as well...”

“Moreover, Lu Ping’an possesses special means to suppress gods and demons. If those means spread to the Primordial Starry Sky, it will surely cause a huge uproar among the god and demon race...”

The voice from the depths of the rift spoke calmly, seemingly pondering how to counter Five Phoenixes.

“Therefore, if we wish to incite the gods and demons to act, we must have absolute certainty. At the very least... the number of Immortal-tier gods and demons we unite must be overwhelming—enough to make Lu Ping’an despair.”

The ancient Emperors in the rift nodded in agreement.

“Lu Ping’an grows stronger by the day. Moreover, our actions this time have made the living beings of Five Phoenixes deeply hostile toward the Nine Heavens. Sooner or later, they will invade the Nine Heavens.”

“Five Phoenixes has achieved Immortal-Martial transformation and will only grow stronger, while the Nine Heavens, having failed to devour its Dao Origin, will only grow weaker.”

“Thus... the plan must proceed.”

“But we still have ample time. I estimate that Five Phoenixes will need at least ten thousand years to fully complete its Immortal-Martial transformation. That is enough time for us to negotiate cooperation with the Immortal-tier gods and demons of the Primordial Starry Sky.”

The voice gradually fell silent.

The eyes of the ancient Emperors gleamed.

The Five Phoenixes they had once ignored had now grown into a true threat.

However... the secret of Lu Ping'an's connection to the gods and demons of the Primordial Starry Sky might very well become the spark that accelerates Five Phoenixes' destruction.

...

Lu naturally had no knowledge of the Nine Heavens ancient Emperors' plans.

After all, in his view, simply opening a passage between Five Phoenixes and the Primordial Starry Sky was already going too far.

It was impossible they would go so mad as to cooperate with the gods and demons of the Primordial Starry Sky.

From Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor's memories, Lu knew that the ancient Emperors of the Nine Heavens and the gods and demons of the Primordial Starry Sky shared a blood feud.

An irreconcilable, life-or-death enmity.

Back when the Primordial Starry Sky passage appeared in the Nine Heavens, countless Great Emperors and peak Emperors had sacrificed themselves on the frontier to protect the splendor of the Nine Heavens.

It had even damaged the foundation of the Nine Heavens' potential ascension to Immortal-Martial.

That was a grudge that could never be erased.

This was also why Lu believed the Nine Heavens' ancient Emperors would never ally with the gods and demons of the Primordial Starry Sky.

Moreover...

Even if they did ally, so what?

Once Five Phoenixes completed its transformation and Lu upgraded his Qi Refining, the suppressive power of his title would grow even stronger...

At that point, Five Phoenixes would simply gain more tool gods and demons.

For now, Lu was fully focused on preparing for the “Voice of the Quasi-Saint.”

He felt that the benefits this Voice would bring might exceed his expectations.

Taking out the Spiritual Pressure Chessboard,

Lu propped his chin on one hand while gazing at the projection of Five Phoenixes that appeared on the board.

This time, the projection encompassed not only Five Phoenixes but also the void starry sky.

After this battle, every living being within the Five Phoenixes Great World had earned acknowledgment—even those upper-realm saint clans that had once been enemies. At the very least, when Five Phoenixes faced a life-or-death crisis, they had stood up and fought. That was enough.

A breeze blew, carrying peach petals.

Lu rolled up his sleeve and placed a piece on the Spiritual Pressure Chessboard.

Buzz!

Outside Five Phoenixes Continent, the grand time formation that had enveloped the world abruptly stopped.

All the protective formations were withdrawn.

In an instant, every Golden Immortal and Profound Immortal of Five Phoenixes felt the change.

Tantai Xuan, Lu Jiulian, Mi Jia, and others stationed outside the abyss looked on in confusion.

Though Lu's formations suppressed the gods and demons,

The gods and demons still posed an extremely dangerous threat.

The Golden Immortals of Five Phoenixes were basically all stationed here, guarding against any sudden breakout.

Better safe than sorry...

“What’s happening?”

Tantai Xuan frowned.

Why had the time formation outside Five Phoenixes stopped?

Suddenly,

Everyone’s expressions shifted slightly.

Because they sensed an aura emanating from Five Phoenixes Continent—one that made even Golden Immortals like them feel their hearts tremble.

It was an utterly unfamiliar aura, one many had never encountered.

Did Five Phoenixes still have such a powerful being?

Meanwhile, Nie Changqing, Tang Yimo, the Overlord, Sima Qingshan, and other Golden Immortals who had once entered the Sermon Platform all paled dramatically!

This aura...

So familiar!

It was engraved deep in their souls—the aura that had made their souls tremble back when they were weak!

It was the secret buried in their memories!

But now... that secret...

Seemed to have reappeared in the world!

Nie Changqing and the others sensed the changes in each other's auras and exchanged glances.

It seemed everyone had their own stories.

In truth, they all now knew that the ones they had encountered in the Sermon Platform back then were each other.

“It’s him!”

The Overlord, Tang Yimo, and the others spoke in unison.

The “him” they referred to was clearly the same person.

Of course, some were utterly confused.

Tantai Xuan, for example, had been famously “immune to immortal destiny” back then. The Sermon Platform had been completely beyond his reach.

Yet now, the aura emerging from Five Phoenixes caused even him to change color.

From the void starry sky, they turned their gazes toward Five Phoenixes Continent.

Suddenly, everyone’s expressions changed drastically.

Because...

They discovered that above Five Phoenixes Continent, a colossal figure was slowly coalescing—seated in a meditative posture upon a formation platform, wreathed in immortal qi.

The figure slowly opened its mouth.

A unique Dao sound—causing their pores to tighten and knees to weaken—spread across the world!

Chapter 578: Lu Ping'an Is Just a Pawn!

Lu placed a piece on the chessboard.

It was as if a butterfly had flapped its wings, setting off a cataclysmic storm across all of Five Phoenixes Continent.

A suffocating pressure, like the prelude to an avalanche or a tsunami, descended without warning upon the entire world.

Lu made no preparations. He simply unleashed the “Voice of the Quasi-Saint,” using the Six Paths Immortal as its vessel, revealing it directly to the eyes of the world.

Just as when the Sermon Platform first appeared, it drew in those with affinity without any prior sign.

This was an opportunity. Those who understood recognized it; those who didn't were simply not fated.

Boom!

In that instant, Five Phoenixes Continent underwent an earth-shaking transformation.

Even ordinary mortals instinctively looked up, for above the firmament, a colossal figure had appeared—like a deity descending from the heavens.

Towering, divine, blotting out the sky.

As if a single palm could cover the sun, moon, and stars.

As if a single breath could shatter the primal chaos of heaven and earth!

What kind of existence was this?

The oppressive aura radiating from it filled everyone with terror and a chill down the spine.

The figure's face was indistinct, yet an ethereal presence permeated the world, making hearts race and bodies tremble.

“This... this is a supreme immortal!”

The common folk could only cry out in awe.

In their eyes, such power could only belong to lofty immortals, beings of boundless divine ability.

For cultivators, however, it was sheer dread.

This power... this aura...

Even Profound Immortals couldn't achieve something like this, could they?

Which Golden Immortal overlord had manifested in the world?

Yet for ordinary cultivators below the Human Immortal realm, a Profound Immortal was already an untouchable existence.

On Five Phoenixes Continent, however,

Gu Mangran, who had only just become a Golden Immortal, stared with an expression of utter disbelief.

“Golden Immortal?”

He himself was a Golden Immortal—freshly ascended, hot off the tribulation.

Yet before this figure, even a Golden Immortal felt like a child, without the courage to even raise a fist, as if he might kneel at any moment.

What kind of terrifying existence still hid within Five Phoenixes?

How many more secrets did Five Phoenixes conceal?!

Gu Mangran’s heart erupted like a volcano.

Even a peak Emperor might only reach this level!

Meanwhile, Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor, who had only just returned to the Yu King’s Manor, looked up in stunned silence.

He had reincarnated into Five Phoenixes, confident he could see through everything.

The strongest in Five Phoenixes was that enigmatic White Jade Capital's Lu Ping'an—the man who loved toying with his psyche.

Beyond him, the number of Golden Immortals and Profound Immortals was slowly growing. That was the extent of Five Phoenixes' power—enough to rival the Nine Heavens, but surpassing them would be difficult.

In the void rifts of the Nine Heavens, numerous ancient Great Emperors gathered, each equivalent to a Sixth Revolution Golden Immortal.

Thus...

There was still a gap between Five Phoenixes and the Nine Heavens.

Especially in top-tier combat power.

Moreover, did Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor truly believe the Nine Heavens had only one peak Emperor—Ancient Emperor Hao?

The Nine Heavens had once been glorious. If not for the brutal invasion of gods and demons from the Primordial Starry Sky, they might have achieved a qualitative transcendence.

In that era, the Nine Heavens had many peak Emperors.

Each one had dominated their age.

In those days, countless peerless peak Emperors had fought bloody battles against the gods and demons of the Primordial Starry Sky, forging a defensive line with their flesh and blood, preserving a golden age for the Nine Heavens.

Yet some peerless peak Emperors had ventured far into the Primordial Starry Sky.

Others might even still be hiding deep within the rifts.

Thus, Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor had always judged the Nine Heavens to be stronger than it appeared.

But now, with the emergence of this figure, he realized his understanding of Five Phoenixes had been gravely mistaken.

Had Five Phoenixes truly risen this far on its own?

Or was this the limit of Five Phoenixes?

Was Lu Ping'an's peerless elegance, his world-shaking charisma, truly all his own doing?

Perhaps behind Lu Ping'an—behind Five Phoenixes—stood an even more terrifying existence.

And now, that existence had revealed itself!

“This person has surpassed even peak Emperors!”

Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor's body trembled.

He was supposed to be teaching the little princess swordplay, yet his sword-holding hand shook uncontrollably.

For a supreme sword cultivator, this was unthinkable—proof of how violently this shook his heart.

He hurriedly restrained his aura, not daring to leak even a trace.

If such a colossal being discovered he was an ancient Great Emperor of the Nine Heavens, it might descend with overwhelming might and obliterate him.

In an instant, Five Phoenixes once again became shrouded in a thick, mysterious veil for Heavenly Spirit Ancient Emperor.

...

Origin Lake, Heart Island.

Lu was quite pleased with the world's shock.

The Six Paths Immortal making its grand appearance this way fit perfectly with the mystique it had carried in the Sermon Platform.

Nowadays, many in Five Phoenixes knew of the Sermon Platform. Seeing the Six Paths Immortal step from the platform world into reality would surely deliver a powerful psychological blow.

A gentle breeze blew.

In the purple bamboo grove, leaves rustled softly.

A peach petal drifted over, spun in the wind, and finally settled on the chessboard.

In the distance, the sky-facing chrysanthemums bloomed brilliantly, swaying in the breeze.

Lu smiled faintly, held a piece, and slowly placed it.

The Voice of the Quasi-Saint—unleashed.

Buzz buzz buzz...

...

When the colossal figure opened its mouth, it seemed to chant sacred verses, immortal melodies swirling, as though the ultimate truths of heaven and earth were being expounded, the Great Dao roaring!

A resounding phoenix cry echoed.

In that moment, the Origin Universe suddenly manifested, overlapping with the entire starry sky of Five Phoenixes.

Every living being felt as though they had been placed within the Origin Universe.

They glimpsed the profound truths of heaven and earth, beheld the essence of the origin!

In that instant, everyone felt their pores tighten!

“What... what is this?”

“What is this sound? Why do I feel like I’m about to have an enlightenment?”

“Is this a heavenly deity?!”

Mortals cried out in astonishment; cultivators knelt upon the ground.

Even Profound Immortals and Golden Immortals suffered immense impact on their hearts.

In the void abyss,

Tantai Xuan, Mi Jia, Lu Jiulian, and others paled dramatically upon hearing the profound truths.

“This chanting contains the ultimate principles of heaven and earth! It can help one break through realms, achieve enlightenment, attain sudden insight!”

“This is a supreme opportunity!”

“This voice... covers the entire Five Phoenixes Continent!”

Tang Yimo, the Overlord, Bai Qingniao, and others who had once entered the Sermon Platform showed expressions of disbelief.

Yet they accepted the scene more readily than those who were unaware.

“This is fortune!”

Whoosh whoosh whoosh!

Figures shot outward, as if piercing through space.

They wanted to rush back to Five Phoenixes.

But it was too late.

The moment they reached the outskirts of Five Phoenixes Continent, the Voice of the Quasi-Saint resounded. They hurriedly sat cross-legged in the starry sky.

They began to listen to the Voice of the Quasi-Saint, to that sound that reached straight into the depths of their souls.

Even Zhu Long sat cross-legged, her lashes trembling slightly, listening to the mysterious existence's chanting.

Though she vaguely felt the figure resembled her dad a little.

...

The earth bloomed. Tender green shoots of life broke through the soil, swaying as they grew, filled with longing for the world.

Farmers tilling the fields looked up at the sky. A profound sound enveloped heaven and earth.

In an instant, the ailments in their bodies melted away like ice under the chanting.

Mountain woodcutters, axe in hand, paused mid-swing. Listening to the Voice of the Quasi-Saint, they knelt piously, and naturally, qi cyclones formed within their bodies—they could now cultivate.

In that moment, all of Five Phoenixes was enveloped in the Voice of the Quasi-Saint, undergoing an indescribable transformation.

Wild beasts running through the forests halted, ears twitching, listening to the Voice and the truths of heaven and earth.

They received a baptism of life, gaining spiritual wisdom.

In waterfalls and mountain groves, spirit creatures wept, gaining a thousand years of cultivation from a single sound.

Cultivators received even greater benefits.

Many fell into sudden enlightenment. Long-standing confusions and doubts were instantly resolved.

It was a rare state, as though every person had become a peerless genius, granted the chance for sudden insight.

And Five Phoenixes itself was transforming.

Immortal qi rose in great waves. Dangerous and divine places revealed their splendor. The land expanded; towering peaks grew higher; the fabric of space became more stable.

The high-martial Five Phoenixes had already been extraordinary.

But now, under the Voice of the Quasi-Saint, Five Phoenixes took another step forward.

The Origin Universe and reality gradually merged.

The Immortal Origin Phoenix spread its wings.

It soared freely through heaven and earth, like a spirit.

Innate purple qi drifted down.

The sky was covered in purple glow.

Some Human Immortals, in a flash of insight, became True Immortals with a single thought, their destiny pillars soaring into the nine heavens.

Some top-tier Half-step Profound Immortals advanced by leaps and bounds, drawing vast oceans of destiny, triggering Profound Immortal tribulations.

Almost every powerhouse in Five Phoenixes achieved a breakthrough in cultivation.

Even Tantai Xuan, Mi Jia, and the others sitting in the starry sky underwent a transformation of will.

Tantai Xuan opened his eyes. His destiny sea inverted once more. The Book of Life and Death above his head bloomed with endless radiance.

Infinite karma surged into the book. In that moment, Tantai Xuan became a Sixth Revolution Golden Immortal—a peerless powerhouse of Five Phoenixes!

This immortal fortune bathed everyone equally—even Tantai Xuan received its blessing.

And not just him.

Lu Jiulian, Tang Yimo, the Overlord, and others all experienced something akin to sudden enlightenment—a rarity at their level.

The entire world was in enlightenment.

Everything between heaven and earth seemed to fall still.

Only high above, the mysterious Six Paths Immortal continued chanting quietly, bestowing the Voice of the Quasi-Saint.

...

Lu leaned back in the Thousand-Blade Chair, fingers tapping lightly on the armrest.

He sensed one beam of light after another rising from Five Phoenixes Continent, sensed wave after wave of tribulation thunder gathering.

The corners of his mouth curved upward. He was quite satisfied with the effect of the Voice of the Quasi-Saint.

Though there was only one reward, and it didn't seem targeted at Lu himself,

He still felt joy in his heart.

Because this reward seemed prepared for the people of Five Phoenixes—for the entire world.

The whole world had leaped forward in this moment.

Five Phoenixes' growth brought Lu greater happiness than his own strength increasing.

As the Origin Universe and reality gradually merged,

The process of Immortal-Martial transformation accelerated dramatically.

What might have taken ten thousand or even a hundred thousand years was now rapidly shortening.

It felt as though in just a few more years, the transformation would be complete.

Lu raised his hand and snapped his fingers.

The crisp sound echoed faintly across Five Phoenixes.

Yet all the tribulation clouds that had gathered due to breakthroughs—clouds that had been frozen in time—now halted mid-descent, suspended in the air.

Lu did not wish for tribulations to interrupt the world's enlightenment.

Though he should not interfere with tribulations,

This time, he would make an exception.

And as the world's cultivation rose, Lu could clearly feel the spiritual qi he could draw in surging wildly.

White lines danced in his eyes.

He looked up.

He could see strands of spiritual qi rising from every person, forming torrents that converged toward Heart Island like ten thousand swords returning to their origin, like fish entering the vast sea.

They gathered above his head.

Lu's gaze was deep. In that moment, a brilliant smile bloomed on his lips.

This was the reward.

The strengthening of Five Phoenixes was his own strengthening.

In the system panel,

The spiritual qi reserve finally broke through the 1,000 hundred-million mark!

In that instant, Lu felt his soul undergo a sublimation.

The Innate Purple Qi within him surged uncontrollably, swirling and coiling around his body.

His essence, energy, and spirit soared without limit.

...

In the Nine Heavens, within the void rift—

Boom!

The rift that had fallen silent erupted once more with storms and tempests.

The dormant ancient Great Emperors opened their eyes, sharp light flashing within.

It was as though countless eyes stared out from the rift, fixed upon Five Phoenixes.

Like wolf eyes glowing green in the dark forest.

From deep within the rift came Ancient Emperor Hao's powerful divine fluctuation—an aura that inspired awe, the mental pressure of a peak Emperor.

Yet in the eyes of these ancient Great Emperors, Five Phoenixes now appeared like a girl holding an oil-paper umbrella in misty rain—blurred, indistinct, yet stirring an intense desire to peer closer.

In their perception, Five Phoenixes seemed shrouded by a terrifying power!

“What’s happening? What’s going on with Five Phoenixes?”

“Why do I suddenly feel a heart-palpating aura, as though something extremely terrifying has been born within Five Phoenixes!”

“Why can’t we sense anything inside Five Phoenixes anymore? With our divine sense power, even across the void abyss, we should be able to see something!”

The ancient Great Emperors cried out in alarm.

They felt their divine senses being suppressed by an overwhelming force.

This restriction filled them with dread.

Yet alongside the fear was confusion.

Compared to the ancient Great Emperors’ bewilderment, however, Ancient Emperor Hao’s breathing had become rapid.

Vaguely, his powerful divine sense transformed into a sharp sword, tearing through the barrier.

He caught a fleeting glimpse of the scene in Five Phoenixes!

A figure that blotted out the sky, high above, enveloped in endless radiance.

It chanted—a sound that seemed to be the manifestation of the Great Dao, analyzing and expounding the essence of heaven and earth.

This was the sound of the Great Dao—a sound even Ancient Emperor Hao found unbelievable!

“This aura...”

Ancient Emperor Hao’s hair stood on end.

In the Origin Lake,

Lu seemed to sense Ancient Emperor Hao’s spying.

While drawing spiritual qi from the world, he smiled faintly.

Seated on the Thousand-Blade Chair, his white robes fluttered in the wind.

He picked up a chess piece and slowly placed it.

Boom!

The hazy Six Paths Immortal seemed to lift its head and glance unintentionally toward Ancient Emperor Hao.

That single glance made Ancient Emperor Hao feel as though his soul had frozen!

“Above peak Emperor! A being that transcends the Emperor realm!”

“This is Five Phoenixes’ greatest secret—the true secret of Five Phoenixes!”

Ancient Emperor Hao’s breathing stopped.

He felt he had uncovered Five Phoenixes’ greatest secret.

That peerless, world-shaking Lu Ping’an was nothing but a pawn pushed to the forefront by a mysterious existence.

Just a pawn!

Behind Five Phoenixes' rise stood a being that transcended the Emperor realm, engaged in an astonishing game!

No wonder Five Phoenixes had risen so rapidly in such a short time.

So that was it...

But Ancient Emperor Hao was no weakling. Suppressing the tremor in his soul, he stared at that fleeting glance from the Six Paths Immortal.

It was like staring into a storm.

Yet he could faintly sense that this existence was merely a projection descending here!

This figure would soon vanish!

"Perhaps... when Five Phoenixes broke through the high-martial shackles, it drew this existence to bestow a heavenly opportunity, projecting across the heavens to preach the Dao!"

Boom!

His essence, energy, and spirit seemed to traverse space and time.

Ancient Emperor Hao's mind returned to the depths of the rift, back to the Nine Heavens.

Everything fell silent.

Yet gradually, heavy breathing echoed from deep within the rift.

"Five Phoenixes..."

Originally, Ancient Emperor Hao should have been filled with dread.

But inexplicably, a low, deep laugh emerged from the rift.

The laughter sent chills through the ancient Great Emperors, as though it stirred long-buried, unpleasant memories.

“Behind Five Phoenixes stands a mysterious powerhouse, the true mastermind concealing everything...”

“But when the gods and demons of the Primordial Starry Sky invaded, this mysterious existence did not intervene. Perhaps this being will not personally take action. Thus, the Nine Heavens still has a chance to replace it—to swap the prince for the civet cat!”

“Before, Five Phoenixes used the Nine Heavens as a stepping stone... Now, let the Nine Heavens use Five Phoenixes as its stepping stone!”

The cold voice carried a trace of madness.

And faintly, suppressed excitement!

While the ancient Great Emperors in the rift were still discussing the anomaly in Five Phoenixes,

The powerful divine fluctuation from deep within soon silenced the heated debate.

Ancient Emperor Hao displayed the scene he had witnessed to every ancient Great Emperor.

In the next moment, all of them sucked in cold breaths. Compared to Ancient Emperor Hao’s excitement, they felt far more fear and disbelief.

“This... how is this possible?”

“There really is such a terrifying existence in Five Phoenixes?”

“So Five Phoenixes... has never truly shown its full power? We’ve been contending against such a being all this time?”

“My mentality... is collapsing!”

...

Heart Island remained as tranquil as ever.

Above Lu’s head, the spiritual qi vortex expanded madly. Now it had grown to a diameter of millions of miles, and beyond it, countless invisible streams of spiritual qi poured in at high speed.

This was only the beginning.

“Ancient Emperor Hao should now know the current situation in Five Phoenixes. The appearance of the Six Paths Immortal must have shocked him.”

Lu smiled.

He, Lu Ping'an, didn't deliberately toy with people's minds.

But the Six Paths Immortal had been unexpectedly discovered—there was nothing he could do. The ancient Great Emperors of the Nine Heavens had brought this upon themselves.

Moreover, once the Voice of the Quasi-Saint ended, the ancient Great Emperors would surely receive another surprise.

They would discover, to their astonishment, that Five Phoenixes' long Immortal-Martial transformation period... seemed to be ending very soon!

Lu could already imagine their expressions.

They would surely be spectacular and delightful.

Buzz buzz buzz...

The Voice of the Quasi-Saint continued.

For seven full days.

The entire void starry sky, all of Five Phoenixes Continent, and every life-bearing star within the starry sky were enveloped by the Voice.

All were immersed in enlightenment, undergoing transformation.

The stellar origins of the Origin Universe gradually overlapped with those of the void starry sky.

Every life-bearing star was transforming, attempting to condense its own Dao Origin and give birth to a secondary stellar Heavenly Dao!

Many dead, lifeless stars were sprinkled with the seeds of life, beginning to birth civilizations.

The entire void starry sky seemed on the verge of transforming into the Five Phoenixes Universe!

Becoming the true Immortal-Martial Great World of Five Phoenixes!

The seventh day finally arrived.

The Voice of the Quasi-Saint gradually faded.

The figure of the Six Paths Immortal also melted away like ice and snow.

Everyone came back to their senses.

Tantai Xuan, Lu Jiulian, the Overlord, Tang Yimo, and other powerhouses shrank their pupils.

They shot forward at high speed, wanting to catch a glimpse of the Six Paths Immortal's true face.

Yet before they could approach, they felt the terrifying aura radiating from the Six Paths Immortal—a leap in life level.

“Above Ninth Revolution Golden Immortal! This Six Paths Immortal must be the Daluo Immortal described in the Great Luo Immortal Scripture—above Golden Immortal!”

Everyone sucked in cold breaths.

The Six Paths Immortal's fleeting glance carried overwhelming pressure, freezing their bodies.

Vaguely, they sensed the Six Paths Immortal giving them a faint smile.

After that smile,

The Six Paths Immortal sat in meditation. Immortal qi rose from beneath it, transforming into cranes, dragons, and true phoenixes...

It rode the wind and departed.

Carefree and at ease, transcending all things between heaven and earth!

Everyone felt a sense of loss.

They slowly exhaled the breath they had been holding.

Their gazes shifted to Five Phoenixes Continent.

Above it, thick tribulation clouds surged. The tribulations that had been frozen in time now began to pour down madly.

Those who had broken through under the Voice of the Quasi-Saint were now facing their tribulations!

This would be a brilliant and colorful era!

The meaning of “Immortal” in Immortal-Martial might be precisely the pursuit of becoming a carefree, transcendent Daluo Immortal!

Everyone seemed to sense something.

Their gazes fell on the eastern coast of Five Phoenixes Continent, where a massive million-mile spiritual qi vortex swirled downward. A powerful aura was brewing within.

“It’s the Young Master!”

Ni Yu, carrying her black pot, was overjoyed.

Ning Zhao and Yi Yue exchanged glances, grave looks flashing in their eyes. In the next moment, the three maids soared into the sky.

The Young Master was breaking through. The Young Master needed them to stand guard!

Meanwhile, Tantai Xuan, the Overlord, Tang Yimo, and the others were dazed.

Young Master Lu... had also achieved enlightenment and broken through under the Great Dao sound of the Six Paths Immortal?

“We thought the Six Paths Immortal was Young Master Lu... Now it seems we were wrong!”

They looked at each other, a trace of regret in their eyes.

But soon, they seemed to realize something. Their gazes sharpened.

Wait...

What exactly were they regretting?

Young Master Lu, who could already fight peak Emperors!

If he broke through again now... wouldn't he defy the heavens?!

Chapter 579: An Utterly Ordinary Eleventh Layer of Qi Refining

Lu was indeed about to break through.

The million-mile-wide spiritual qi vortex was deliberately manifested by him.

Not to show off, of course—just to gauge how much spiritual qi he could harvest from this wave.

From the looks of it, the number of cultivators who achieved breakthroughs under the Voice of the Quasi-Saint far exceeded Lu's expectations.

Even Sixth Revolution Golden Immortals had gained substantial insight from it. Under such profound comprehension, their strength surged forward, delivering an enormous harvest of spiritual qi to Lu.

The vast sea rose and fell. The spiritual qi vortex swept through, causing the ocean waters to churn violently.

Countless sea creatures prostrated themselves, overwhelmed by a primal fear and unease born deep in their souls.

Two vortices—one in the sky, one in the sea—swirled in harmony, creating a striking visual spectacle.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!

Three streaks of light shot toward him at high speed.

It was Ni Yu, Yi Yue, and Ning Zhao. Their white skirts fluttered wildly in the storm, hair whipping in the wind.

“Young Master’s breakthrough this time is truly grand. He used to be so low-key before.”

Ni Yu muttered while carrying her black pot.

Ning Zhao said nothing, but worry flickered in her beautiful eyes. In the past, Young Master’s breakthroughs had always been quiet, like a gentle breeze. This time, the spectacle was enormous. She couldn’t help wondering if he had encountered some difficulty, or if this breakthrough was especially challenging.

The three did not set foot on the island. They floated in the swirling sea vortex outside the island, each taking one of the three directions, facing outward, guarding Heart Island.

The three maids performed their duties diligently.

Lu sensed their presence but said nothing.

The breakthrough was nearly complete. Once it finished, they would naturally come ashore.

Lu still wasn't used to such a high-profile breakthrough. After all... it was only advancing one layer in Qi Refining.

And it wasn't just Ning Zhao and the others.

Tantai Xuan, Lu Jiulian, Zhu Long, and other Golden Immortals of Five Phoenixes also descended swiftly.

They were all stopped outside Heart Island by Ning Zhao and the others.

Though Ning Zhao's strength was inferior to theirs, she showed no fear whatsoever.

Of course, Tantai Xuan and the others weren't foolish enough to offend the three maids and force their way onto the island.

After all, reputation mattered.

As Young Master Lu's personal maids, even if their strength was lower, the man behind them was Lu Ping'an!

With Young Master Lu's notoriously petty streak, if they dared mistreat the maids, they'd likely be planted upside-down on the island like scallions.

The spiritual qi vortex began spiraling like a tornado.

Like a dragon drinking water, it quickly poured into the island.

The thick spiritual qi clouds that had blotted out the sky soon vanished.

The world cleared, and the momentum of the breakthrough quickly subsided.

Everything returned to calm.

"From a tall building built on flat ground—congratulations, Host, for completing spiritual qi accumulation and meeting the conditions for Qi Refining advancement. Proceed with promotion?"

Finally, when everything had settled, the system prompt appeared before Lu's eyes.

Lu leaned back in the Thousand-Blade Chair, white robes pristine, expression calm.

His gaze seemed distant, as though lost in thought.

“Promote.”

Lu didn’t hesitate or choose to hoard more power.

When it was time to break through, it was best to do so. Holding back too long wasn’t healthy.

The moment Lu agreed, the system prompt dimmed.

Boom!

It was as though a thunderclap exploded in his mind, like a lightning pillar smashing down onto an endless plain.

In that instant, Lu’s essence, energy, and spirit underwent transformation. A faint purple sheen seemed to veil his eyes.

From the peak of the tenth layer to the eleventh layer of Qi Refining...

Lu was curious just how much this step would elevate his strength.

With a thought, he opened the system panel.

Host: Lu

Title: Qi Refiner (Permanent)

Special Title: God and Demon Hunter

Qi Refining Layer: 11 (↑)

Spiritual Qi Reserve: 2200/10000 (hundred million)

Primordial Spirit Power: 1000 (ten thousand units)

Innate Purple Qi: 100 strands

Current World Rating: Five Phoenixes Great World [Immortal-Martial]

This was the updated panel. Lu could feel the spiritual qi vortex pouring entirely into his body.

The Innate Purple Qi had coalesced within his cells, subtly strengthening his flesh.

In battle, with a thought, he could draw it forth from his cells, unleashing world-destroying power.

The original ten strands had increased to one hundred.

The upper limit of his spiritual qi reserve had also reached ten trillion for the first time.

His Primordial Spirit Power had transformed as well.

Now, Lu's divine sense was immensely powerful. A single sweep could easily cover the entire Five Phoenixes starry sky.

It was a mysterious and profound force.

Lu closed his eyes, savoring the changes in his power.

But soon, he frowned.

The breakthrough to the eleventh layer had not reached the Daluo Immortal level.

At the peak of the tenth layer, he already possessed Great Emperor combat power.

With the Golden-Element Immortal Demon Body and Innate Purple Qi, he could fight peak Emperors.

Now, even without any amplification, the eleventh layer granted him peak Emperor combat power.

Of course, it was only at the early stage of peak Emperor—after all, he had only just stepped into the eleventh layer.

Lu had hoped this breakthrough would bring Daluo Immortal-level combat power. The disappointment was palpable.

The higher the expectation, the greater the letdown.

“I got too full of myself... It’s just one layer of Qi Refining, after all.”

Lu shook his head, suppressing the regret.

In a high-martial world, even advancing one level of high-martial didn't qualify one to pursue the Daluo Immortal realm.

Only by entering the Immortal-Martial level could one have the qualifications to chase after Daluo Immortals.

Now that Five Phoenixes had achieved Immortal-Martial, Lu believed reaching Daluo Immortal combat power was not far off.

"If I erupt with the Golden-Element Immortal Demon Body, could I break the barrier and gain Daluo Immortal combat power?"

Lu pondered.

But instinct told him it would be difficult.

He might get infinitely close, but truly reaching Daluo Immortal level was basically impossible.

“Above Daluo Immortal lies the Quasi-Saint realm. A single Voice of the Quasi-Saint brought such transformation to Five Phoenixes, with unfathomable power...”

Lu took a deep breath, suddenly feeling a spark of anticipation.

“Congratulations, Host, on completing the promotion to the eleventh layer of Qi Refining. You are walking further and further on the path of becoming an outstanding Qi Refiner.”

“Reward obtained: Immortal Demon Body (Fire-Origin Source), Materials: Gold-Origin Insect Corpse ×3, Immortal Herb Seed ×1.”

Just as Lu was contemplating the limits of his strength, another system prompt appeared.

This time, it was the reward for the breakthrough.

Lu’s slightly dazed eyes refocused.

“Reward issued? This time it didn’t drag on.”

Lu smiled and began examining the reward.

The moment he did, his eyes narrowed.

“Hm? Immortal Demon Body (Fire-Origin Source)! Another attribute of the Immortal Demon Body?”

Though he had guessed it might happen, seeing a new attribute still surprised him.

Perhaps once all five elemental origins were gathered, the Immortal Demon Body would reach true perfection.

At that point, its unleashed power might easily erase peak Emperors.

“In that case, let me see just how powerful the Fire-Origin is.”

Anticipation flickered in Lu’s eyes.

The Golden-Element Immortal Demon Body had given him immense help, allowing him to contend with peak Emperors.

Now another attribute had appeared. He was genuinely looking forward to it.

“Host, confirm fusion?”

The system prompt appeared again.

As before, fusing the Immortal Demon Body carried significant risk.

After a brief hesitation, Lu smiled and chose to proceed.

Buzz...

Vaguely, Lu seemed to see a special flame burning before his eyes.

A terrifying heat threatened to incinerate him into ash.

Pain clawed at his nerves, dragging him toward the abyss of death.

“Fusion failed... One fusion attempt remaining.”

The system prompt appeared.

Lu opened his eyes. At some point, fine beads of sweat had formed on his forehead.

He exhaled slowly. Just now, he had truly felt he was about to be burned to death.

The failed fusion had snapped his mind back into his body.

“Failed...”

Lu fell silent.

This was the first time he had ever failed.

In the past, fusing the Immortal Demon Body had always been painful, but... it had never failed.

It had always succeeded on the first try.

Even the previous Golden-Element fusion had been the same.

But this time... it failed.

“Why did it fail?”

The pain had overwhelmed him earlier, but now Lu was curious about the reason.

He didn't even bother checking the other two rewards.

With a thought, he entered the Sermon Platform.

Buzz...

The Eight Trigrams formation words floated. Lu began simulating the fusion process of the Fire-Origin Immortal Demon Body.

This time, the simulation was not interrupted.

He saw the consequences of forcing the fusion.

His entire body turned to charred ash, life extinguished. The spiritual qi within him became the most ferocious fuel, instantly turning heaven and earth into a sea of fire.

During the simulation, Lu also discovered the main reason for failure: his physical body wasn't strong enough, or rather, the unstable Gold-Origin clashed with the even more unstable Fire-Origin.

The result of that collision was mutual destruction.

"The Gold-Origin isn't stable enough..."

Lu suddenly understood.

If he wanted to fuse the Fire-Origin, he first had to resolve the instability of the Gold-Origin.

"If I can stabilize it, fusing Gold and Fire—two elemental origins—might allow me to touch Daluo Immortal-level power?"

Lu's eyes gleamed with eagerness.

He exited the Sermon Platform. With one fusion attempt remaining, he didn't want to waste it.

With his current physical strength and the unstable Gold-Origin, even trying again would end in failure.

“How can I stabilize the Gold-Origin?”

Lu frowned, but no ideas came to mind.

Asking the system yielded no answer either.

He withdrew his thoughts and turned to the other two rewards.

“Gold-Origin Insect Corpse?”

With a thought, a golden radiance appeared above the pavilion—so brilliant it was like a blazing sun descending.

Lu narrowed his eyes and reached into the golden light, soon grasping the source of the glow.

It was the corpse of an insect—long and narrow, with six legs. It was hard to tell which end was the head. It was plump, and the golden light emanated from within its body.

A unique, strange fragrance wafted from the corpse.

“So... what exactly is this thing for?”

Lu was puzzled.

“Gold-Origin Insect Corpse: A type of food.”

Lu: “...”

So... this thing is edible?

Holding the corpse, Lu considered braising or steaming it, but in the end, he couldn't bring himself to do it and simply stored it in the Nether Profound Ring.

The last reward was an immortal herb.

“Immortal Mandala: An immortal herb of extreme toxicity (Immortal Mandala Flower—below Daluo Immortal, all can be poisoned).”

Reading the system's explanation, Lu's pupils shrank.

He hurriedly stored the immortal herb seed.

An immortal herb seed?

This was clearly a demonic herb seed!

Such terrifying toxicity—and it was still called an immortal herb?

He suspected the system was trying to mess with him by giving him a poison seed.

“Even Daluo Immortals can’t withstand it. I wonder if Dad’s physique can handle it?”

Lu’s eyes flickered.

“With Dad’s talent for cultivating poisons, perhaps he can breed a version with diluted toxicity and turn it into a true immortal herb.”

Lu nodded slightly, an idea forming.

Leaning back in the Thousand-Blade Chair,

A breeze blew past. Lu suddenly felt a little dazed.

This time, none of the breakthrough rewards seemed immediately useful!

The Fire-Origin couldn't be fused.

The Gold-Origin Insect Corpse... he couldn't bring himself to eat it.

The immortal herb seed was a poison seed...

In other words, this breakthrough was... utterly underwhelming!

His spiritual sense spread outward.

Soon, Ni Yu, Yi Yue, and Ning Zhao outside Heart Island perked up and hurried toward the island.

"Young Master!"

Upon reaching the island, they saw Lu strolling through the peach blossom grove. Petals danced around him, lending him an air of refined elegance.

Tantai Xuan, the Overlord, Tang Yimo, and the others also stepped onto the island.

“We thank Young Master Lu for saving our lives.”

Tang Yimo clasped his hands and bowed deeply.

Without Lu, after opening all eight meridians, he might have become a cold corpse.

Lu smiled and waved it off.

He would have saved anyone who fought with all their might for Five Phoenixes—how could he stand by and watch them die?

The Overlord’s breathing was slightly hurried.

“Young Master Lu, how did the breakthrough go?”

The Overlord asked curiously.

He wasn't the only one—Tantai Xuan, Tang Yimo, Mi Jia, and the other powerhouses were all extremely curious.

Lu shook his head.

“Just advanced one layer in Qi Refining.”

Tantai Xuan, the Overlord, and the others clearly didn't believe him.

Seeing their disbelief, Lu felt helpless. Why wouldn't they believe him when he was telling the truth?

“My strength didn't increase much. Basically standing still.”

“Utterly ordinary. Quite disappointing.”

Lu was genuinely disappointed. This eleventh layer of Qi Refining had been utterly ordinary.

His combat power hadn't risen significantly.

After all, before the breakthrough, he already possessed peak Emperor combat power. After it, he still hadn't surpassed that level. It was essentially standing still.

This time, everyone believed him—because Lu's expression and tone were filled with genuine disappointment.

Of course, they didn't dare disbelieve him again. Disbelieving once was fine, but continuing to do so would surely be remembered by Young Master Lu with his petty streak.

Being remembered by Young Master Lu meant sleepless nights.

Tantai Xuan, the Overlord, and the others also understood that cultivation grew harder the further one progressed.

Even with the Six Paths Immortal's preaching, most people were still stuck at bottlenecks.

Seeing Lu was stable, they bid farewell and departed.

When Lu Changkong was about to leave, Lu hesitated and called out to him.

“Dad, hold on.”

Lu Changkong, dressed like an old farmer, was preparing to return to the ancient tomb to continue his divine herb research.

Lu thought for a moment, then raised his hand. Spiritual qi carried a single immortal herb seed into the air.

“Father, this is an immortal herb seed surpassing even divine herbs. But it is extremely toxic—even with a poison physique, you must be careful! Extremely careful! This seed is called Immortal Mandala. Once it blooms, its poison is lethal to all below Daluo Immortal.”

Lu spoke very seriously.

Lu Changkong froze—bewildered, puzzled—then his eyes suddenly shone brighter than the brightest star in the night sky.

“An immortal herb seed?! Something above divine herbs?!”

“Oh ho! What a treasure!”

Lu Changkong's excitement was something Lu couldn't comprehend.

He completely ignored Lu's grave warning about the seed's terrifying toxicity.

Having obtained the immortal herb seed, Lu Changkong eagerly left Heart Island and hurried back to the ancient tomb.

He couldn't wait to crossbreed it with his top-tier divine herbs!

He had thought his path of the Hundred Herbs had reached its end, yet Lu had brought him an immortal herb seed!

Watching Lu Changkong leave like a child with a new toy, Lu suddenly wondered if he had made the right decision.

...

With the Voice of the Quasi-Saint dissipated,

The impact and changes it brought to Five Phoenixes were immense.

Many cultivators achieved enlightenment and broke through under its influence. Countless mortals gained clarity in a single moment and stepped into the path of cultivation.

Most importantly, it greatly accelerated Five Phoenixes' Immortal-Martial transformation.

As the Voice faded, the Origin Universe once again concealed itself.

But now, in the Five Phoenixes starry sky, every life-bearing star shone brightly, nurturing secondary Heavenly Daos under the Immortal Origin's governance...

Many ancestors on those life stars achieved minor breakthroughs and extended their lifespans.

After transforming into Immortal-Martial, Five Phoenixes could be divided into two regions:

One was Five Phoenixes Continent, shrouded in immortal qi.

The other was the many life stars scattered throughout the Five Phoenixes Universe outside the continent.

For the powerhouses on those life stars, Five Phoenixes Continent had become an immortal land.

It possessed an irresistible pull. For cultivators on the life stars, the ultimate goal was to be summoned to Five Phoenixes Continent.

It was akin to ascending to immortality!

Five Phoenixes' Immortal-Martial transformation was gradually maturing!

Chaotic regions began to stabilize. Some areas even expanded their territories, starting to encroach on the Nine Heavens' domain.

...

In the Nine Heavens, within the void rift,

Because of the Six Paths Immortal, the ancient Emperors hadn't dared probe Five Phoenixes further. They had been filled with unease.

But soon, as the Voice of the Quasi-Saint faded,

The ancient Emperors finally regained their senses and began investigating Five Phoenixes once more.

Yet this time, the results left all the ancient Emperors in the rift utterly dumbfounded.

From deep within the rift, Ancient Emperor Hao erupted with wildly fluctuating emotions—his mentality seemed on the verge of collapse.

Their plan to ally with the gods and demons of the Primordial Starry Sky hadn't even begun...

How could Five Phoenixes' Immortal-Martial transformation... be nearly complete?!

Chapter 580: Young Master Lu Fishing the Starry Sky

The ancient Emperors of the Nine Heavens had truly never anticipated that Five Phoenixes was on the verge of completing its Immortal-Martial transformation.

How did they know?

They were all Emperor-level powerhouses, and deep within the rift lurked even a peak Emperor.

Their divine senses were immensely powerful, capable of probing Five Phoenixes' condition.

Moreover, the Nine Heavens had once qualified to attempt the Immortal-Martial ascension, so they were intimately familiar with the current state of Five Phoenixes.

Most importantly, they could clearly observe the changes in the living beings and the world of Five Phoenixes.

Every life-bearing star that had given birth to a secondary Heavenly Dao signaled that Five Phoenixes was about to complete its Immortal-Martial transformation.

“Was it because of that mysterious existence? That strange immortal sound accelerated Five Phoenixes’ Immortal-Martial transformation?”

Ancient Emperor Hao’s eyes flickered uncertainly from deep within the rift.

He had originally thought they had tens of thousands of years to slowly prepare their “swap the prince for the civet cat” plan. Now it seemed time was running out for the Nine Heavens.

Once Five Phoenixes fully completed its Immortal-Martial transformation, it would become far more difficult for the Nine Heavens’ Heavenly Dao to devour its Immortal Origin.

After all, the Nine Heavens’ Heavenly Dao had already passed its peak and was in decline.

Buzz...

A terrifying storm of divine sense swept through the rift.

Every ancient Emperor turned their heads toward the depths.

Their eyes gleamed with sharp light.

It was as though a long table had been set up in the rift, where the ancient Emperors conducted a fair and open discussion about who should step forward.

After fierce debate, the decision fell on the Water Tribe Ancient Emperor.

She would traverse the Nine Heavens, venture into the Primordial Starry Sky, and ally with numerous innate gods and demons.

It was an arduous task.

The Water Tribe Ancient Emperor had been thrust into the role at a critical moment. Originally, they had wanted to plan carefully—allying with gods and demons was no simple matter; it was walking a tightrope over an abyss.

But the accelerated transformation of Five Phoenixes was an unexpected development, forcing their plans to change.

Boom!

From within the rift,

A torrent of water surged forth. In the next moment, it coalesced into the form of a stunningly beautiful woman—noble, graceful, with ribbons of water swirling around her like silks.

Her deep blue hair floated gracefully, carrying a mature, enchanting charm.

She glanced back at the rift, her red lips curving slightly.

“Hao, wait for my good news.”

Her voice was gentle, like a soft stream flowing through the heart.

Then, she transformed into a streak of deep blue light and stepped into the Nine Heavens.

Tearing through space, she sped toward the outer reaches of the Nine Heavens.

...

Lu paid no particular attention to the actions of the Nine Heavens' ancient Emperors.

At this moment, he was quietly consolidating his power on Heart Island.

After handing the highly toxic immortal herb "Immortal Mandala" to his father, Lu Changkong, Lu no longer concerned himself with it.

With his father's extreme poison physique, there shouldn't be any major problems.

The eleventh layer of Qi Refining had been an utterly ordinary breakthrough.

For Lu, it hadn't brought much increase in combat power.

After stabilizing his cultivation,

Lu shifted his gaze toward Five Phoenixes Continent.

Compared to Lu himself, Five Phoenixes' transformation was truly massive. The number of cultivators had increased dramatically.

Thanks to the Voice of the Quasi-Saint, even many mortals who had previously been unable to cultivate had suddenly gained the ability to do so, as if they had awakened in a single moment of insight.

Moreover, Five Phoenixes Continent now held a supreme position across the entire Five Phoenixes Universe—much like how the Nine Heavens had once been the upper realm.

The goal of cultivators on the many life-bearing stars was to ascend to Five Phoenixes.

On Five Phoenixes Continent, they could access superior cultivation conditions and environments.

Lu was quite satisfied with this. The entire world of Five Phoenixes was brimming with boundless vitality. Countless cultivators were advancing rapidly under the assistance of the Immortal Origin.

Of course, an Immortal-Martial world required powerhouses to support it.

After the battle in the void abyss, Zhu Long had returned to Buzhou Peak and entered seclusion.

It seemed that under the pressure of the Immortal-tier god and demon Evil Eye, combined with the insights from the Voice of the Quasi-Saint, she had found the opportunity for breakthrough.

She was preparing to charge straight toward the Ninth Revolution Golden Immortal realm.

A Ninth Revolution Golden Immortal possessed peak Emperor combat power!

Besides Zhu Long, Lu Jiulian, Mi Jia, and others had completed their Third Revolution Golden Immortal tempering and were now advancing toward the Sixth Revolution.

Destiny cultivation had completely linked every Golden Immortal with Five Phoenixes, making them inseparable.

After all, the billions upon billions of living beings on Five Phoenixes Continent were the source of their destiny.

Their fates were intertwined with destiny. Thus, besides cultivation, every cultivator focused heavily on preaching and educating others to gain more destiny.

Tang Yimo, the Overlord, Sima Qingshan, Bai Qingniao, and other newly ascended Golden Immortals had not returned to Five Phoenixes Continent.

They had their eyes on the gods and demons sealed in the abyss by Lu.

These gods and demons were the best training partners.

The Overlord entered the abyss almost every day to battle gods and demons.

And he didn't seek out low-tier ones—he went straight for high-tier gods and demons.

After each brutal fight, he would emerge battered and bruised, teetering on the brink of death, only to be dragged out.

The high-tier gods and demons roared in fury, but bound by the formation and blocked by Mi Jia and the others, they couldn't kill him.

The very next day, the Overlord would be back—full of vigor—seeking out another high-tier god and demon.

Tang Yimo, Sima Qingshan, and the others were much the same, focusing entirely on battles with gods and demons.

Through combat, they continuously consolidated and strengthened their power and realms.

The Twelve Witch Kings seemed to have been inspired by the Overlord. They hadn't returned to the Western Continent.

The conflict between the Witch Tribe and the Demon Tribe had temporarily subsided. Though minor skirmishes still occurred, they were harmless.

Friction between races was inevitable.

Humans and demons had coexisted for countless years—from mid-martial to high-martial and now into Immortal-Martial—yet small clashes between them never ceased.

The Twelve Witch Kings were warlike by nature. Alone, they lacked Golden Immortal combat power and would be in mortal danger against even a low-tier god and demon.

But they were unafraid.

The Witch Tribe thrived on battle. When the twelve united into the Heavenly Witch, they entered the abyss to challenge low-tier gods and demons.

Their fate was similar to the Overlord's—each time they were carried out bruised and battered.

Yet through these battles, the Twelve Witch Kings were growing stronger.

Unlike humans, demons, and sea clans who cultivated destiny,

The Witch Tribe stimulated their bloodline potential through combat. While others fought to master their power, they fought purely to grow stronger.

Gu Mangran led the Sea Tribe. As the weakest of Five Phoenixes' four major races, he was undeterred.

The abyss battlefield was no longer suitable for the Sea Tribe now that the god and demon invasion had ended.

Gu Mangran led his people back to the vast ocean.

He continued to spread cultivation techniques. With his Golden Immortal strength, he acted like a lighthouse in the sea, guiding the Sea Tribe forward.

He selected talented individuals from the Sea Tribe and brought them to the continent, letting them join the cultivation sects in the blessed lands of heaven and earth to learn human cultivation methods.

The Sea Tribe was gradually growing stronger. They possessed an insatiable thirst for knowledge.

In the process of leading them, Gu Mangran discovered that the Sea Tribe's greatest asset was the ocean itself.

The countless sea beasts within the ocean were like a treasure trove in his eyes.

He began researching methods for the Sea Tribe to control sea beasts.

Unexpectedly, this unlocked the bloodline potential of Sea Tribe cultivators.

The Witch Tribe, Demon Tribe, and Sea Tribe all had powerful bloodline potential. In comparison, humans were weaker, lacking innate bloodline power.

By tapping into their bloodline potential, the Sea Tribe grew stronger.

Gu Mangran even developed and refined unique Sea Tribe cultivation methods that allowed control of giant sea beasts.

These giant beasts became tremendous assets. Many Sea Tribe cultivators formed contracts with them, becoming perfectly synchronized combat partners.

Because of this, Gu Mangran received vast destiny blessings. The Sea Tribe did not disappoint him—many geniuses emerged, possessing exceptional cultivation talent and becoming the treasures of the Sea Tribe's rise.

The Witch Tribe of the Western Continent, the Demon Tribe under the Demon King's Court, the human Great Xuan Divine Dynasty, and the Sea Tribe of the boundless ocean—

Five Phoenixes Continent was gradually forming a four-way balance of power.

...

The Grand Time Formation spun, accelerating the flow of time in Five Phoenixes.

The only pity was that the Immortal-Martial transformation itself was unaffected by the time acceleration.

But that was fine. With the boost from the Voice of the Quasi-Saint, the Immortal-Martial transformation was essentially in its final stage.

Once Five Phoenixes completed the transformation and the Immortal Origin fully matured, the Five Phoenixes Universe would take shape.

Leaning back in the Thousand-Blade Chair, Lu's white robes fluttered gently.

The island was peaceful and harmonious.

Ni Yu was refining pills. Nowadays, her alchemy skills surpassed anyone in Five Phoenixes. Yet she was never satisfied and continued tirelessly researching and crafting new elixirs.

Ning Zhao was practicing swordsmanship. Her cultivation had gradually fallen behind Nie Changqing, Tang Yimo, and the others, which filled her with a sense of crisis.

As Young Master's maid, she couldn't afford to be so weak.

It would disgrace him!

So she trained alongside Yi Yue.

They watched Ni Yu fail again and again at pill refining.

The atmosphere on the island was perfectly harmonious.

After a few relaxed days observing Five Phoenixes' progress, Lu took out the Gold-Origin Insect Corpse that radiated thousands of golden rays.

“The system said it’s food...”

Lu frowned.

Looking at the insect corpse in his hand, he pressed his thumb and forefinger together. Sticky fluid oozed from the corpse, carrying a strange fragrance.

Yet visually, it was utterly unappetizing.

Could this thing really be eaten?

After some thought, Lu carried the corpse to where Ni Yu was refining pills.

“Ni Yu.”

He called out.

Boom!

The black pot exploded. A soot-covered little Yinglong, yawning atop Ni Yu's head, crawled out with a blackened face.

"Young Master, what's up?"

Ni Yu wiped her soot-covered face, looking utterly miserable.

Lu smiled and held up the corpse for her to see.

"Eww! So gross..."

Ni Yu recoiled at the sight of the dripping Gold-Origin Insect Corpse, clearly disgusted.

"It's a type of food."

Lu said seriously.

Ni Yu's big eyes widened. She looked at the corpse, then at Lu, and instantly understood.

Her mouth trembled.

“I never thought you were that kind of Young Master...”

Ni Yu flopped onto her side, dramatically clutching her flat chest.

Seeing her add her own drama, Lu was speechless.

“Young Master, are you planning to feed this bug to Ni Yu?”

“Is this even something humans eat?”

Ni Yu pounded her chest and stomped her feet.

Lu froze. Her words struck him like a thunderbolt.

Human food?

His eyes grew brighter and brighter!

Exactly! The system said it was food—but it never specified that it was food for humans!

“If it’s not food for humans... then who is it for?”

Lu stored the corpse away.

He glanced at the still-thumping Ni Yu.

His faint gaze made her instantly realize Young Master’s petty streak might activate. She quickly stood up obediently.

“Young Master, I’ll eat it.”

Ni Yu said meekly, terrified of being remembered by his petty side.

Lu rolled his eyes and lightly knocked her on the head.

“Eat my ass.”

“Alchemy isn’t done in isolation. You need good materials. Take this god and demon corpse and practice.”

With a wave of his hand, the massive corpse of Evil Eye appeared before Ni Yu.

Ni Yu’s eyes immediately lit up!

Meanwhile, looking at Evil Eye’s corpse, Lu fell into deep thought once more.

He took out the innate spiritual treasure North Sea Fishing Rod and held the insect corpse again.

His eyes grew even brighter!

He seemed to have discovered the correct use for the Gold-Origin Insect Corpse.

If it wasn’t food for humans... could it be food for... gods and demons?

A bait to lure gods and demons?

He had been using the North Sea Fishing Rod to whip people for so long that he had almost forgotten—it was actually a fishing rod, meant to fish gods and demons from the Primordial Starry Sky.

What does fishing require?

A rod, bait, and... fish.

Fishing gods and demons was the same: a rod, god and demon bait, and gods and demons.

A smile slowly curved across his lips.

Lu suddenly understood.

Beside him, Ni Yu felt a sudden chill. Seeing Young Master holding the rod he used to whip people in one hand and the insect corpse in the other, smiling strangely at her, she felt a shiver run down her spine.

After sending Ni Yu away, Lu's mind stirred. Silver light flashed, spatial laws surged, and space tore open.

He stepped through.

Soon, he arrived at the abyss.

Tantai Xuan had returned to the Netherworld to handle the vast and complex matters of the Six Paths of Reincarnation.

Mi Jia had chosen to remain stationed here.

She occasionally entered the abyss to train.

When Lu appeared, Mi Jia was stunned. She hadn't expected Young Master Lu to suddenly show up.

The Overlord and the Twelve Witch Kings were being carried out of the abyss by Tang Yimo, bruised and battered.

They all spotted Lu.

"Young Master Lu?"

Everyone was puzzled.

Could Young Master Lu be feeling itchy for a fight and come to beat up some gods and demons to warm up?

“You all continue. I’m just passing by.”

Lu smiled.

Then he began preparing.

With a thought,

The Thousand-Blade Chair beneath him rapidly transformed.

Clang clang clang.

Silver blades shifted and reshaped, soon forming a silver boat.

Lu sat atop the silver boat, condensing a bamboo hat from spiritual qi. His white robes fluttered gracefully.

He shouldered the North Sea Fishing Rod.

The silver boat slowly parted the waves in the air and sailed steadily into the depths of the abyss.

Mi Jia and the others were dumbfounded.

They couldn't help but exclaim,

“As expected of Young Master Lu—even beating up gods and demons is so ceremonial.”

The bruised Overlord climbed to his feet and watched Lu's departing figure, taking a deep breath.

“Doesn't feel like it. Young Master Lu looks like he's going fishing.”

Fishing?

Everyone was confused.

Then their gazes shifted, all landing on Lu who had entered the abyss.

Within the abyss, formations hovered overhead. Lightning-like chains bound the gods and demons.

The originally ferocious and roaring gods and demons instantly restrained their auras the moment Lu arrived on his silver boat. They didn't dare breathe loudly.

Lu had broken through, and the suppressive power of his God and Demon Hunter title had grown even more terrifying.

They dared roar and threaten the Overlord, Mi Jia, and the others.

But against Lu, they didn't dare fart.

Lu smiled.

He took out the Gold-Origin Insect Corpse. The plump corpse glowed like a miniature sun, radiating golden light.

He wanted to see how the gods and demons would react.

Sure enough, the moment he produced the corpse, every god and demon in the abyss trembled and fixed their gazes upon it.

They inhaled deeply. Then saliva poured from their mouths like cascading waterfalls.

So fragrant!

An absolutely supreme delicacy!

Even Lu's terrifying pressure couldn't suppress their craving for the delicacy.

Splash splash splash!

High-tier gods and demons struggled against their chains, eyes wide, saliva gushing uncontrollably...

Like stray dogs starved for days staring at a freshly roasted, dripping chicken leg.

The gods and demons' reactions confirmed Lu's suspicion.

"Oh ho..."

Lu's lips curved higher. This was getting interesting.

He remembered that in the original description of the North Sea Fishing Rod, there was a line: it could fish elemental gods and demons.

These ordinary gods and demons were beneath his notice.

Lu smiled.

He raised his hand and lightly traced in the air. A slender spiritual qi thread appeared. With a thought, a segment of the Phoenix Feather Sword detached and formed a sharp hook bound to the spiritual qi thread.

He baited the hook with the insect corpse. The other end of the thread was connected to the North Sea Fishing Rod.

And so, seated on the silver boat, Lu slowly advanced through the abyss under the stunned gazes of countless gods and demons and Five Phoenixes Golden Immortals.

He arrived at the passage between the Primordial Starry Sky and Five Phoenixes.

With a flick of his finger,

The passage mouth was torn open, the seal shattered.

The ancient, terrifying aura of the Primordial Starry Sky immediately surged in.

“Young Master Lu is doing what?”

“He opened the passage? What if he attracts gods and demons?”

“I have a feeling Young Master Lu is about to do something huge!”

The Five Phoenixes Golden Immortals stared wide-eyed, speechless.

Holding the fishing rod with bait attached... was he planning to... fish?

In the Primordial Starry Sky?

Young Master Lu’s tricks just kept getting wilder and wilder!

The imprisoned gods and demons were equally dumbfounded.

Lu ignored them all. Under everyone's watchful eyes,

He took a deep breath.

Then swung the spiritual qi thread and hook.

Whoosh!

The hook, carrying the Gold-Origin Insect Corpse, turned into a streak of light and vanished into the Primordial Starry Sky.

Lu sat there, bamboo hat on his head, white robes fluttering, exuding an immortal aura as he held the fishing rod.

Fishing the starry sky.

Fishing gods and demons!

...

In the Primordial Starry Sky,

On a primordial star shrouded in ancient aura, the star had become a hellscape. Magma erupted in searing bursts.

A colossal being crouched upon this primordial star. With every breath it took, its overwhelming aura turned into terrifying annihilation winds!

A streak of deep blue light arrived.

It dispersed, revealing the graceful figure of the Water Tribe Ancient Emperor.

Her deep blue hair danced. She stared at the massive beast dominating the primordial star, sensing its oppressive aura. A trace of gravity flickered in her beautiful blue eyes.

But mingled with the gravity was disgust.

Boom boom boom!

With her arrival, the gods and demons on this primordial star seemed to awaken.

Low-tier gods and demons stood on the star, high-tier ones soared into the air, releasing ferocious auras and fixing their gazes on the Water Tribe Ancient Emperor.

The colossal beast opened its eyes. Its sharp gaze carried coldness and confusion.

“An ancient Emperor of the Nine Heavens?”

Boom!

In an instant, a terrifying aura erupted.

A massive palm tore through space, appearing above the Water Tribe Ancient Emperor in the blink of an eye.

The oppressive pressure caused explosive sounds in the void.

The Water Tribe Ancient Emperor’s robes and hair whipped wildly.

“Why aren’t you running? Did you come here to die on purpose?”

The colossal beast spoke.

The Water Tribe Ancient Emperor’s expression was cold and solemn. She slowly spoke.

“Evil Eye is dead.”

“A newly born Immortal-Martial world is about to emerge...”

The colossal beast leaned down. Its aura of terror and destruction caused space to shatter inch by inch.

“A newborn Immortal-Martial world?”

“What the hell does that have to do with me?!”

The colossal beast grinned. Then its killing intent exploded.

The palm suspended above the Water Tribe Ancient Emperor accelerated.

Boom!

The Water Tribe Ancient Emperor was struck head-on. Terrifying shockwaves erupted in the void, rippling outward in circles.

Her body instantly exploded into a spray of water.

But soon, the colossal beast's eyes showed surprise.

It withdrew its palm. The water spray continuously reformed into a graceful figure. The Water Tribe Ancient Emperor reappeared, but her eyes had changed from deep blue to pitch black—profound and unfathomable, as if she were a different person.

“Hao...”

The colossal beast narrowed its eyes, then grinned. “Now that’s sincerity.”

In the boundless Primordial Starry Sky, on the star, powerful divine fluctuations roared and clashed.

Two figures slowly conversed.

...

Buzz...

The “Travel” character formation word appeared in the void, forming a spatial passage that tore open.

A massive spatial gate opened.

On the primordial star closest to the passage between Five Phoenixes and the Primordial Starry Sky,

The Water Tribe Ancient Emperor floated out, followed by the colossal beast and the many low-tier and high-tier gods and demons under its command.

The beast’s aura was terrifying—on par with Evil Eye, an Immortal-tier existence.

“That’s the entrance to the newborn Immortal-Martial world’s passage... but it’s been sealed by the powerhouse of that world.”

The Water Tribe Ancient Emperor had returned to her original form. She raised her hand, her slender finger pointing toward the distant direction.

But soon, her expression froze.

“Where’s the seal? This Venerable can already smell the overwhelmingly soul-shaking fragrance wafting out from the passage mouth!”

The colossal beast closed its eyes, face full of enjoyment. Terrifying arcs of fire danced across its massive body.

The Water Tribe Ancient Emperor’s blue eyes were filled with disbelief.

“That’s... Lu Ping’an?!”

She could clearly see, at the passage mouth,

A white-robed figure wearing a bamboo hat, seated on a silver boat formed from stacked silver blades.

He held a fishing rod, completely motionless.

As if fishing leisurely in the blue waves where sky met sea.

“What... is this kid doing?”

The Water Tribe Ancient Emperor was utterly baffled.

Meanwhile, the excited colossal beast Kui Si stared at the creature on the fishing rod... and suddenly sucked in a cold breath.

“That... that’s an elemental god and demon!”

When he saw the white-robed youth drag the elemental god and demon onto the silver boat and start beating it savagely,

His excitement drained away like receding tide.