

The Ages 1161

Chapter 1161 - Genius Beastmasters

"You're pretty decent, but do you think I'm afraid of you coming close?" Yun Feiyang wildly whipped his spear as he unleashed his constellation, the trump card of all constelliers. Different constellations had different abilities and they varied between beastmasters, totem users, and specters.

Three nimbus phantombeasts appeared as the constellation was being conjured. Then a flash of astral light could be seen forming into four points that surrounded an area, within which the nimbus phantombeasts reigned supreme. They blended in with the nebula of the constellation to form a prisoncloud. The three beasts and beastmaster were the wardens of the prisoncloud that spanned the entire battlefield, enveloping Tianming and the rest. Putting aside the starlight within, the cloudy mist was like a swamp that surrounded Tianming and all of his beasts, causing their speed to be affected. It achieved a similar effect to Feiling's Temporal Field.

This was Yun Feiyang in his peak fighting condition. His beasts executed a joint ability called Seacloud Titan, causing them to fuse into a single cloudy giant. Yun Feiyang stood on the shoulder of the titan and looked down on Tianming. "You've already shown your skills, so make way. Don't get in my way of dealing with Yu Ziqian."

"You haven't even started fighting yet. Do you think you've won just because you've shown off?" Tianming asked.

"You don't know what's good for you. Why are those of the Azuresoul Palace so foolish?"

"Hmph," Tianming smirked. On paper, his foe was powerful. But there was one thing Yun Feiyang had forgotten to account for: Xian Xian hadn't yet interfered with their battle over here, and that meant Tianming had been fighting on a completely different level up to now.

By then, Lingfeng had dealt with Yun Xiaolu and her nonachromatic cloud stags. She had collapsed on the ground, foaming at the mouth. The rest of the disciples were also easy prey for Lingfeng, given the current strength of their souls. A single Infernal Soul Curse was all that was needed to force them to kneel.

Xian Xian was finally free to answer Tianming's summons. It let all four of its flowers, the Radiant Daffodil, Scarlet Lily, Evernight Rose, and Fiendsong Mares, bloom. At the same time, Lan Huang propelled itself forward while Ying Huo stalked Yun Feiyang from behind. Meow Meow, on the other hand, shrank and began zipping around so quickly that eyes couldn't follow it! Some time back, Tianming had used totems more often and split them up into providence swords, but now he had returned to his roots and fought like a pure beastmaster.

"Go! Beat him up!" Ying Huo proudly cried, then vanished without a trace. It was a sneak attacker, after all, while Xian Xian and Lan Huang were the ones who fought from the front. With Xian Xian's help, Lan Huang was a completely savage monster. Tens of thousands of Radiant Vines came flying, working with the black roots to burrow into the body of the cloudy titan. Then Xian Xian used Evernight Curse, Bloodrain Swords, and Trisoul Fiendsong against them. Before the titan could break free from the vines and roots, it noticed that its abilities were weakening.

Faced with Xian Xian, fusing into one was a bad idea. Not to mention, the slowing ability of the constellation wasn't doing them many favors, especially with Xian Xian having taken the initiative to weaken its foes and Lan Huang crashing straight into the titan, knocking this two-thousand-meter-tall figure down. Xian Xian's roots had an even easier time pinning it down as a result. Then Lan Huang's two heads began biting at the throat and head of the titan while it used its sword-tail to pierce into its heart. Though, as the titan was a cloud, it was easily able to escape being pinned down, only for Meow Meow to come blasting down from above with its many fulgurous abilities. The lightning blasts were so relentless that the titan couldn't reform a solid body.

"Urgh!" Yun Feiyang threw his spear toward Lan Huang's eye. At that moment, Ying Huo appeared and slapped the spear away.

"Do you think I'd let you harm my brother?" At the same time, it used Death Inferno. Coupled with the powerful storms of the sun and Meow Meow's lightning, the storm of fire and lightning scattered the cloud titan even more. It then flew toward Yun Feiyang and used Hexapath Samsara Sword, engaging in a pincer attack with Tianming, who also used the same move. The reason he didn't use the stronger Moonnight Subdued Strike was that it was a move mainly designed for use with totems, not to mention it was created by the Eightmoon Swordsage, a famous historical figure in Orderia. Tianming didn't want any association to be drawn, as the fight was being broadcast across the whole world.

Tianming even helped Lingfeng change his appearance with Dreamdemon Arcana so the few celestial orderians that had seen him on the moon wouldn't recognize him. Though, even if they did, they would probably disbelieve their eyes. Nobody that had been exiled to the xenomemory space had ever made it back, after all.

Tianming now faced an obvious problem: his relatively weak battle arts. That was why he wanted to go to the wondersky realm, but Yun Feiyang's appearance had ruined his plans. Even so, he was confident that he could use the Hexapath Sword God's life's work to take him down with Ying Huo.

The two of them struck in tandem. His black sword used Hadean Reincarnation, forming a black vortex. The white sword used Empyrean Reincarnation, carrying with it the complex laws of all things. Though it was a simple sword strike, it contained high levels of insight and nobody in Orderia knew about it. His Octasaint Sky astralforce was unleashed in full force!

"Break!" Yun Feiyang thrust three of his spears toward Ying Huo and six of them toward Tianming. However, Ying Huo managed to use its wing and battle art to knock away his grade-four divine artifact. On the other hand, Tianming fused his sword and sent five of the spears flying. Meow Meow managed to use Cosmic Lance to strike the sixth away in an amazing show of teamwork.

Tianming managed to make it to the front of Yun Feiyang, who retrieved one of the spears and thrust it toward him. "Die!"

He seemed rather confident, at least until he suddenly saw red and cried out. Tianming's forcefulness had caused him to forget about Ying Huo! In combat, even a single extra lifebound beast opened up boundless possibilities. Ying Huo had come with full force.

"Do you think you can take my strike, boy?!" Ying Huo's laughter echoed in the air. While Yun Feiyang was crying out in pain, Tianming rapidly deflected the short spear and used another sword to pierce his

throat, sending blood flying. However, the sword was stopped a centimeter through the pierce by the imperial star formation. It worked like most protective formations, but when it registered a fatal strike and activated, Yun Feiyang had been eliminated from the competition. However, the rules here were slightly different in that lifebound beasts weren't afforded the protection of such a formation and could die without causing their beastmaster to be eliminated.

"You!" Yun Feiyang glared at Tianming with a shaking gaze. However, his lifebound beasts had been drawn back into his lifebound space by the power of the formation. Now that the formation was no longer protecting him, he was sent flying out of the Voidsky Flame Pillar by the flaming storms. "No! I just got here!"

He had chased after Yu Ziqian to expose him, only to be eliminated by some nameless fellow right away. None of his ambitions had been fulfilled! Yun Feiyang wasn't the only one feeling horribly disappointed about that, either.

After the battle, Tianming turned back. Even Yu Ziqian gulped nervously at the look of him before he smiled foolishly. "Senior Brother, I didn't think that a disciple of Supracloud Sanctuary would be so weak. If he couldn't beat me, then he's years away from beating you," Tianming said with a smile.

"Ah? Oh!" Slapping his chest to snap out of it, Yu Ziqian said, "That's right! He wasn't worth my energy, I already said as much. Just get used to it. Supracloud Sanctuary is filled with small fries like him."

Their conversation could be heard on the outside, as the skyward eye was still focused on them. When they left, the eye also vanished, meaning that what happened next wouldn't be visible to the spectators.

Tianming wrapped things up and said, "Let's go somewhere else." Had there been no skyward eye watching them, he would have tried stealing some caeli.

"Wait," Yu Ziqian said as he walked towards Yun Xiaolu. Though she wasn't doing too bad, she was shocked and terrified. "Junior Xiaolu, I already said that your senior brother is a weakling. Do you believe me now? If he couldn't even defeat my junior... sigh... there's no way he would be able to take me on. Now, I wonder if you'd be interested in coming with us?"

"Screw off!" Yun Xiaolu snapped with anger. "I can tell that you're fake! These two are the ones who're truly powerful. Just watch. Someone will expose you."

"Ah, the folly of youth. Just you wait, then."

Yun Xiaolu and the rest angrily left. Before they did, they didn't even dare to look closely at Tianming and Lingfeng—they were far too terrifying. Now, the Supracloud Sanctuary's morale had been shattered.

"You two are amazing! This battle was definitely watched by many on the Azurecloud Continent. You're going to be popular for sure! Yun Tianque and the rest must be vomiting blood after seeing that. Not only did they fail to expose me, they also lost one of their contestants!" Yu Ziqian was at the top of the world.

However, Tianming wasn't too pleased. Though he had managed to secure his place in the Azuresoul Palace, he had his eyes set on loftier goals. After fighting Yun Feiyang, he noticed that his current level of power was far from enough to face off against the top ten geniuses on the rankings.

"Cultivation is key. After that comes battle arts!" If he kept using battle arts from the Flameyellow Continent, he would be at a huge disadvantage. Not long after the fight, they departed. Tianming toyed with two eggs in his hand, both of them the 'fifth'. He wasn't too worried about accidentally crushing them, since there were more than a thousand such eggs in his lifebound space now. Being within the Voidsky Flame Pillar made the fifth egg really excited. It was like it was clamoring at Tianming about its imminent hatching.

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Outside the pillar, Yun Tianque remained frozen as the broadcast ended.

"Brother Yun, does the Supracloud Sanctuary have any information on that white-haired youth? That's a disciple of the Azuresoul Palace, so they shouldn't be too far off from your sect, right?" someone asked.

"We don't," Yun Tianque said.

"Gentlemen, that's my disciple. I've kept him hidden for two decades. They're interesting, aren't they, Sect Master Yun?" Jiang Qingliu said from behind in a teasing tone.

"That child is rather decent. However, that doesn't change the fact that Yu Ziqian is a weakling. Claiming that he'll rank in the top ten is an empty boast."

"Don't be too quick to judge, Sect Master Yun. Just keep watching. By the way, that son of yours should be flying out any time now. Better go console him. He isn't a child anymore, so it wouldn't look good if he burst out crying in front of everyone here," Jiang Qingliu chuckled.

Yun Tianque's expression darkened. "You will die."

"What's so surprising about that? Everyone dies one day. However, if I ever die, I'll be remembered by all as a magnificent teacher with such great disciples."

Yun Tianque gave him one last look before turning and leaving.

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When the projection near the vortex at the Supracloud Island ended, everyone fell silent. All the seniors and disciples couldn't forget the sight of the white-haired youth.

"Senior Brother Yun... was defeated by a nameless pawn..."

They were all in complete and utter shock.

Chapter 1162 - Challenging Ancient Idols Again

Given Tianming's age, he would be considered a top genius second only to Yu Ziqian for defeating Yun Feiyang. Thanks to the skyward eye, he had attracted quite a lot of attention for himself, especially as he was previously completely unknown. Naturally, his level of power wasn't enough for him to be the star of the Voidsky Realm; there would be many more previously unknown geniuses that would whip up a storm in the time to come.

Tianming and the others traveled at a casual pace, with powering up their main goal. For now, the imperial star ranking was empty, which only meant that it would be even more chaotic once it began

being filled. To the seniors, a fight between juniors was still insignificant, to some degree. Even so, there was something about the passionate struggle of youth that appealed to even some elders that were millennia old.

"Alright, this place will be it, then." Tianming and the rest found themselves walking along a deep mountain stream through which molten lava flowed. While it was mind-numbingly hot, there weren't any firestorms here, so it was relatively comfortable. They wouldn't have to weather the forces of the Voidsky Flame Pillar.

There were quite a few wildbeasts within the stream. They were known as ancient wildbeasts and were commonplace across Orderia. Such beasts, after absorbing lots of nova source for thousands of years, would be able to dominate many constelliers despite only being at the third level, thanks to the powers they had inherited from their bloodlines. They didn't have any intelligence, only survival instinct, so understanding the laws of the world was beyond them. As a result, their power was limited to their physical bodies and fundamental cosmic forces.

While the wildbeasts may fare badly against humanoids that possessed intelligence and divine will, they weren't to be looked down upon. Some of them managed to achieve the fifth or sixth level. If they went berserk, they would be able to eliminate entire cities and slaughter their populations. Mercy was an alien concept to them, after all. Everywhere, wildbeasts were only minor players in the grand scheme of things. However, the former Primordial Chaos Beasts themselves could be considered wildbeasts that didn't submit to humans, which showed that there was more to wildbeasts than what met the eyes.

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The ancient wildbeasts of the Voidsky Realm were really familiar with the surrounding terrain. Right as Tianming and the rest descended, a bunch of lava fiendsnakes burst out of a seam in a boulder and flew toward them, spitting scorching fire that could even decimate the walls of the mountains around them. Not wanting to be prey, Tianming had Xian Xian strike out and devour some of them as a snack, which sent the rest scurrying away.

"Let's keep a low profile for some time," Tianming said.

"Alright. I'll whip up a misdirection formation to cover our tracks," Yu Ziqian said. These were small, portable formations that could seal off an entire area, making it harder for those outside to detect what was within. Tianming didn't imagine that such a small formation would be on the divine level. It went to show that Orderian formationology was a rather mature field.

"Go ahead and enter the wondersky realm. I'll stay outside and keep an eye on him," Xiaoxiao said as he took out the heavenly locus formation. Yu Ziqian was still someone they couldn't fully trust. Not to mention, Xiaoxiao didn't think the Violetglory Pagoda would affect her cultivation much. With the Archaionfiend around, her breakthroughs were much simpler than Tianming and Lingfeng's.

"Alright." Tianming and Lingfeng entered the heavenly locus formation. To Yu Ziqian, they merely looked like they were meditating within a formation. "Tell me if a skyward eye appears," Tianming reminded her.

"Will do," Xiaoxiao said.

"Why do they look like they're sleeping?" Yu Ziqian asked.

"It's how they cultivate. Don't pry too much," Xiaoxiao answered.

"Got it!" Yu Ziqian winked and glanced at Xiaoxiao with his fan in hand. "Junior Sister Lin, since we have time to kill, why not talk about life?"

"Leave me alone."

"Got it!"

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Perplexity Island was where Tianming had met Lingfeng for the first time during the latter's captivity. Not to mention, Lingfeng was properly entering the wondersky realm using a formation this time around. It was like he had gained a completely new identity within.

"I recall that your caelum was about to scatter last time," Tianming said, looking at Lingfeng's recovered caelum.

"My caelum only began scattering because my vita was almost torn apart by that Di Yi guy. But after my vita recovered, and even improved, my caelum and terra have recovered as well," Lingfeng said. He knew better than anyone how hard it had been for him to leave the xenomemory space.

"I'll go challenge the ancient idols to get some battle arts. I've been severely lacking in those. Nowadays, our foes are even stronger, so we need every edge we can get."

"Alright. I'll also look for one that can draw the most power out of the Evil Suppression Pillar. Compared to your familiarity with the Grand-Orient Sword, I'm far too unfamiliar with my weapon." Lingfeng flipped his hand, causing the black staff to appear. The heavenly locus formation had slightly undervalued its performance.

The two of them lined up in front of the idols. Soon, it was their turn. After entering the hall, Tianming had a slightly hard time picking. "The first ten ancient idols basically all have first-realm divine arts, some second-realm ones at best. They're still inferior to the Moonnight Subdued Strike. Not to mention, the limitation of challenging them once every ten days is more troublesome for me than for others..."

The difficulty of the first fifty ancient idols wasn't related to his body's strength or power, but rather his talent and insight. Tianming could easily swiftly burst through many of them, but the rules prohibited that. He couldn't get any more powerful battle arts by directly challenging the idols higher up.

"The wondersky fairy said that third-level privileges will allow me to challenge idols as often as I want. Since I made it to the second level of the Violetglory Pagoda, I have second-level privileges, which allows me to access a hundred lands of legacy."

The Violetglory Star had a wondersky realm of its own, but Orderia didn't. In other words, Orderia was probably further from the center of the astralscape of order compared to the Violetglory Star.

While Tianming was a disciple of the Azuresoul Palace, he didn't have access to the legacies and guidance of the sect for now, so he needed everything he could get from the wondersky realm. That was the only way he could grow stronger during his time in the Voidsky Realm.

"Oh! Since I managed to defeat a first-level constellier, I might stand a chance in challenging for a spot on the third floor of the pagoda. Wouldn't I have third-level privileges then?"

Chapter 1163 - Violetglory Star Genius Lin Feng

The moment Tianming had level-three privileges, he would be able to challenge the ancient idols as many times as he wanted. It was said that the ancient idols were legacies left behind by the Violetglory Sovereign, someone that was at least as powerful as the sun emperor. As he thought of that, Tianming left Perplexity Island and immediately headed for the Violetglory Pagoda. "Can I directly challenge someone for the right to be on the third level now that I can defeat first-level constelliers?"

"As your records state that you've been on the second level, you're allowed to do so," the wondersky fairy said.

"As long as I get third-level privileges, I'll also be able to challenge the ancient idols as much as I want, right?" Tianming asked.

"You can."

"Great."

The cycle of the Violetglory Pagoda ran ten days, so Tianming only had one chance or he'd have to return again ten days later. His foes would be on the level of first-level constelliers, but if he was unlucky, he could get assigned to challenge a sixth-level constellier. The moment he stepped onto the battlefield, he would be able to change it to his liking by relying on Xian Xian and Lan Huang. As Ying Huo and Meow Meow were small in comparison, there wasn't much they could do to affect the flow of battle as a whole.

"Get ready. Your opponent, Chu Chuan, is entering the battlefield," said a voice.

After that, a black-haired youth appeared on the battlefield. Tianming gave his file a read. He was twenty-one years old, slightly younger than Tianming, and was a first-level constellier. He was a specter with much more potent physical abilities than Lingfeng and had more than four thousand stars in his eyes. He must have been quite reputable among others his age. Tianming also noticed a remark on his file: he was ranked nine thousand eight hundred and nineteen on the Violetglory ranking, something similar to the imperial star ranking.

"A twenty-three year old who isn't even a constellier is challenging for a spot on the third level?" Chu Chuan seemed rather puzzled.

As Tianming was in a rush, he didn't bother explaining and went all out with his four beasts and seven totems. His totems really did give him quite an edge, allowing him to fight even more powerfully here than he could in Orderia.

"A totem beastmaster? Which continent and sect are you from? Why haven't I heard of you before? There's too many people called Lin Feng, but none that I know of match your description." Chu Chuan squinted and intently looked at him.

"Don't talk so much. Just fight." Tianming didn't bother talking to someone who was billions of miles away. Who knew which corner of the vast universe this guy was from? They might not even meet another time in their lives anyway.

"Arrogant, aren't we?" Chu Chuan scoffed with dissatisfaction. As one of the top three geniuses of the Spectralia Sect, he had his own pride. That instant, he began morphing into a grey, simian beast that wielded a pair of war blades. Eight grey eyes filled his face, all of them coldly trained on Tianming.

"A six-eyed specter?" Tianming mused.

"I'm an eight-eyed royal, dimwit!"

Tianming didn't know how specter bloodlines were categorized, so he didn't know what having eight eyes meant. All he knew was that Ghoul King Di Zang had six eyes.

The battle began. Tianming found that Chu Chuan was somewhat stronger than Yun Feiyang and his physical endurance was impressive indeed, not to mention his explosive power. Even his battle arts, abilities, and constellation were top class. Too bad he was facing Tianming and had quite a hard time fighting off twelve units of fighters—seven totems, four beasts, and one beastmaster—coming from all directions and ended up defeated.

"You—" Before he could finish, Chu Chuan was eliminated. Though, he survived since it was only a virtual battle.

"Congratulations. From now on, you have level-three privileges and can cultivate on the third level of the pagoda! Additionally, you'll take Chu Chuan's place on the publicly available Violetglory ranking," said the wondersky fairy.

"I made it on the ranking?" Tianming didn't know how to react. He wasn't on the imperial star ranking yet, but had suddenly found himself on another one.

"The wondersky realm makes it so that the disciples on Violetglory Star can cultivate and compete far more conveniently. They'll be able to challenge each other in a safe environment and gain much experience from that. Orderia's really lacking in this department."

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Tianming went up to the pagoda's third level. The caeli here used to belong to constelliers and beyond. With his Trisoul Prime, Tianming was able to make rapid progress. However, he didn't last for more than two days there before being eliminated by a fourth-level constellier around the age of ninety. He had no way to compete. Right after that, he went to Perplexity Island.

"I can finally challenge ancient idols as often as I want! Let's see how far I can go."

There were a hundred levels of ancient idols, and so far, he had only challenged the sixth. He had already transcribed the battle arts he obtained from his previous challenges back on the Flameyellow Continent.

Lingfeng had gone to Violetglory Pagoda to cultivate when Tianming returned. Though he wanted to keep a low profile, he noticed that a lot of people were looking above his head. When he looked up, he saw a purple glow above him with a number that denoted his place on the ranking.

"It stands out too much. Can I turn it off?" Tianming asked.

"That isn't possible," said the wondersky fairy.

"Thankfully it isn't green..." [1]

"It can be green at your request. So green, you won't miss it."

"Don't!"

Now he had been labeled as a rare talent that stood out among many others.

"Big Brother, fancy a virtual relationship with me? It'll just be our caelis and won't affect our real-life relationships, you know... I'll show you a great time," someone said as they patted his back. Tianming turned back and was shocked to see a cute girl that looked to be in her teens, looking at him with large, hopeful eyes.

"Hahaha, forget it... I don't like women!" he said, noticing far too many girls looking at him.

"Don't worry. I'm actually male, Big Brother."

Tianming never would have guessed that. The person was so young that his Adam's apple wasn't easily seen when he spoke.

. "Wearing a green hat" is a reference to being cuckolded in China. So oftentimes, you see characters complain about anything green-colored being around or near their heads. ?

Chapter 1164 - The Imperial Descent

"Bloody hell! What kind of place is this? It's impossible to tell the men and women apart!" Virtual relationship? Despite a separation of great distances, true love will remain, even if by only a single rope, but the "beauty" was a bloke!

"My eyes!" Ying Huo moaned.

"Shut up."

This time, Tianming was so anxious to enter he had forgotten to alter the position of the tattoo that represented Ying Huo. The wondersky realm was a place that threw him into disorder.

"Senior Brother Lin Feng, you're so handsome."

"Do you have a girlfriend? If so, do you mind having an extra bed warmer? Violetglory Star has an aging population, so the sect encourages more births!"

"Senior Brother Lin Feng, do you want a boyfriend? I can be either!"

Tianming had a splitting headache. Who would have thought a bunch of people like this would appear as soon as he made the Violetglory ranking. Fortunately, it was his turn. Quickly entering the hall, he began challenging the ancient idols.

He made his way through the sixth, seventh, eighth idols, and so on. With no limitations on challenging idols, Tianming didn't bother strategizing. The current level of battle arts were of little use to him. He

fought them again and again. In fact, this was a learning process; the ancient idols would use battle arts that had been practiced thousands of times against Tianming. Under the circumstances of even strength, these ancient idols, which proved difficult for many Violetglory disciples, weren't a challenge for him, given his Trisoul Prime.

The fight continued without pause. This was a game of intelligence, talent, and patience. Tianming hastened to select a battle art suited for his powerful enemies in the Voidsky Realm. Every idol was different; some were swordsmen, some were beasts, and others had three heads and six arms, or spikes and tails. And every time he defeated an idol, he gained a divine-class battle art.

"In fact, the sects of Violetglory Star don't consider these battle arts special, but it's a whole other story in Orderia, which is just what I need." Completely focused on the matter at hand, Tianming was unconcerned with the outside world. In the face of the ancient idols, Tianming countered their moves over and over again. With his Trisoul Prime, he learned quickly. His lifesbane had given him extraordinary talent in terms of comprehension. And as far as battle arts were concerned, all totem users were a level above beastmasters and specters. Tianming's Aeonic Grandbane ensured he surpassed all others in this respect.

Tianming had challenged the sixteenth idol. Each idol took longer than the last. When he first began, it only took him an hour, but now he needed three. Throughout the entire process, his eyes were fixed on the idols' movements as he meticulously studied them.

"Allowing opponents to experience and practice the battle art is the best way to master it." Only by being attacked could he learn where the strengths of each technique lay.

The more he progressed, the more beatings he took. However, Tianming used an incredible method when challenging ancient idols, that is, employing the battle art he learned from the previous idol against the current one. The endless confrontation and tempering had a gratifying effect.

Four days passed in a blink of an eye. With single-minded devotion, Tianming arrived at the twenty-third idol. In fact, he could sense that he was approaching his limit after the twentieth one. From the twenty-first idol onward, the rewards were at least fourth-realm divine arts that all surpassed the Moonnight Subdued Strike. Tianming chose the Ninebolt Inferno so that Xiaoxiao could practice it. At the twenty-second idol, Tianming selected the Demon Suppression Staff, a powerful, overbearing technique. Since Lingfeng had yet to reach this level, Tianming would leave this battle art to him.

Tianming finally obtained a fourth-realm divine art that suited him at the twenty-third idol: Imperial Descent. This sword art was in harmony with Imperial Will, like the arrival of a God-Emperor that dominated the world. There were two parts to it. If he wanted to learn, taking a beating was the first step. The twenty-third idol was a golden-robed emperor with a divine sword in one hand, majestic and imposing. It almost seemed like there was a great army behind the lone idol. The momentum of this sword rivaled Tianming's. This time, it took him an entire day to defeat the idol. Having reached his limit, he was a little disoriented. Further comprehension of the Imperial Descent was required. Owing to the harmonious sword intent and Trisoul Prime, Tianming didn't think it would be difficult.

"I've worked my heart out over the past few days and finally found a suitable battle art." Despite his exhaustion, Tianming was thrilled. He couldn't wait to return to Orderia to experience the power of the Imperial Descent. Thus, he chose to suspend the challenge.

At that moment, a loud voice rumbled above him. "Congratulations to Violetglory disciple Lin Feng for defeating eighteen ancient idols in succession and breaking the wondersky realm record at the age of twenty-three. His achievement will go down in history!"

Tianming was stunned. As soon as he walked out of the hall, he was greeted by disciples on Perplexity Island. It seemed that everyone had heard the announcement.

"Eighteen idols!"

In that moment, silence enveloped Perplexity Island. Tianming suspected the voice had notified the entire wondersky realm.

"It's him!" someone yelled, and all eyes immediately looked toward Tianming.

"How is he so talented?" Many people were amazed.

"I've never seen this man before. Where is he from? Which faction does he belong to?"

"Does anyone know? The wondersky fairy says he isn't part of the sect?"

"He made the Violetglory ranking only a few days ago."

They all surrounded Tianming at once.

"Lin Feng!"

Someone squeezed out of the crowd. It was a girl with green hair tied up in a bun—Liu Wanwan. Incredulously staring at Tianming, she said, "I remember defeating you just two months ago. How'd you become a disciple with level-three privileges so quickly? Have you reached the Constellation stage?" If she hadn't witnessed it with her own eyes, she wouldn't believe it was true.

"It's all luck. I'm leaving now. Let's catch up next time!" At the sight of the crowd around him, Tianming wanted to slip away.

"Wait!" Standing in his way, Liu Wanwan earnestly said, "Hold on. Listen to what I have to say first."

"What is it?"

"You've caused a sensation. I'm guessing that after today, there'll be many people looking for you throughout Violetglory Star. Regardless of their intentions, it'll cause you quite a headache. You should stay hidden for the time being and wait for the storm to pass. If that doesn't work, you can look for me in the Mystgod Pavilion. You don't belong to the sect, but we're happy to help. The elders would love to cultivate you, and my parents have some influence."

"Me?" Tianming smiled. "Don't worry, they can look for a lifetime but they won't find me."

"So confident?" Liu Wanwan asked.

"I'm a real man. Of course I'm confident." He was in Orderia. Even if they turned this place upside down, it would have nothing to do with him.

"So will you come to the Mystgod Pavilion? We're not bad," said Liu Wanwan.

"I'll leave it up to fate. For now, I'm going to hide," Tianming replied.

Alright, goodbye then. I'll take you somewhere fun next time!" said Liu Wanwan.

"Bye."

With that, Tianming disappeared from Perplexity Island.

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After leaving the wondersky realm, Tianming was still in Yu Ziqian's misdirection formation.

"Brother, did you have a wet dream? You seem very formidable. Did you dream of countless beauties?" Yu Ziqian asked curiously.

"Fuck off." Yu Ziqian's words reminded Tianming of the "little girl." His hair stood on end!

"What's the situation now?" Walking out of the formation, Tianming looked up, but the imperial star ranking was still blank. However, the storm outside seemed more violent.

"It's only been a few days. Nothing's happened," said Yu Ziqian. In spite of everything, he had remained in one place for fear of losing a decisive opportunity. "In fact, there's many treasures and legacies in the Voidsky Realm," he added.

"Sure, I'll continue cultivating for a few more days." Returning to the formation, Tianming began practicing Imperial Descent.

"What a rare sword art!" Yu Ziqian gasped.

Tianming threw himself into cultivation.

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Three days later, they left the abyssal stream and headed further in. The fierce winds formed fiery tornados that swept across the land like giant beasts. Wherever they went, they left behind a mess of sand and mud. Tianming lost his sense of direction, but it didn't matter which way he went, as every direction seemed equally harsh. In this kind of environment, visibility was very low even when he used his Plundering Eye.

"How can there be no movement now that the Voidsky Realm has opened? It's strange." Yu Ziqian was puzzled.

At that moment, a figure came dashing towards them.

"Stop!" Yu Ziqian shouted. As the man approached, Yu Ziqian realized it was a disciple of the Azuresoul Palace.

"Senior Brother?" The man was just as surprised at his fortune of bumping into them. Weeping bitter tears, he cried, "Who would've thought I'd run into you?"

"Why're you in such a hurry?" Yu Ziqian asked.

"Senior Brother, a minorsky stele appeared over there. Hurry up, you should go now or someone else will snatch it!"

Chapter 1165 - Top Ten of the Ranking

"Minorsky stele? What's that?" Yu Ziqian asked. Anytime somebody else was around, he kept up the act of a serious chief disciple.

"It's a stele like the Skyward Stele, around a thousand meters tall. It might be a divine artifact of some sort, and it contains a lot of divine patterns within that can suck in people's caeli. The others said that it's part of the test of the Voidsky Realm and we'll be able to get on the imperial star rank if we deal with it," said the disciple.

"Lead the way!" Yu Ziqian instructed.

"Will do, Senior Brother." The disciples of the sect were all really worshipful of Yu Ziqian. With him around, they didn't even bat an eye at Tianming and the others.

"Juniors, it's time to go!" Yu Ziqian said, full of bravado. The location of the minorsky stele wasn't too far away. After a few moments, Tianming and the rest saw a huge stele surrounded by flaming winds. It did look like a smaller version of the Skyward Stele. When it appeared, Tianming noticed the Grand-Orient Sword shaking whenever it was pointed in the minorsky stele's direction.

"What's going on?" Tianming curiously approached the stele, careful not to let it show on his face. When they were nearby, he noticed that there were a few thousand others from the Myriad Solar Sects. They were all under the age of thirty, with most of them being samsarans, but there were quite a number of ascendants as well.

They had been cultivating with access to a nova source and precious legacies from the very beginning. Only a handful of people from the world below could possibly fend them off to climb to the very top. Nine out of ten disciples in the Voidsky Realm were samsarans, and most of them were only there to make up the numbers. They were more interested in gaining treasures from the ordeal than actually trying to rank high, so they were all excited when objects like the minorsky stele appeared. Too bad, they didn't actually dare to approach it, as disciples from the top sects had occupied the area.

Tianming's sight fell on the black stele. It looked rather rough on the surface, filled with peaks and pits as if it was a piece of divine ore that hadn't been properly refined yet. However, it looked like a divine artifact to him, given the many patterns inscribed on the surface. Light and shadow seemed to move about the stele, giving it a rather mystical appearance that almost seemed hypnotic and dazzling. As he approached, someone stretched out their hand and said, "Don't get close!"

"Why not?" Tianming asked.

"The disciples of Blueblood Starocean said that they've occupied this place. Anyone who gets within a thousand meters of the stele will have their legs cut off. A few disobedient ones already had their legs broken and were tossed out," said the guy who stopped him.

"My, they're arrogant, aren't they?"

"The Blueblood Starcean treats anyone outside the top ten of the myriad sect ranking like this. It's standard practice for them. Their sect occupies the entire Blueblood Continent, and even a huge part of the sea. They don't give a damn about the hundreds and thousands of smaller sects like ours."

The thought of the cruelty they had shown just now made the other disciples look rather downtrodden. Alas, this was the fact of the matter. Rank was absolute among the Myriad Solar Sects, and new sects always rose to replace the old. Only the truly strong would persist and survive.

"Thank you for the kind reminder, friend." Tianming stopped and turned to Yu Ziqian, only to find that he was gone.

Xiaoxiao shrugged helplessly and said, "When he saw the fellow in front of the stele, he immediately turned and ran."

"Where is he now?" Tianming asked, exasperated.

"Over there."

Walking back, they saw Yu Ziqian nervously sweating behind a boulder.

"What's up with you?" Tianming asked.

"Hush, quiet!"

"Are you chickening out?"

"Haha, how could I? I'm just not in the best condition. Forget it, I'll give it to you straight. Among the disciples from the Blueblood Starocean is Lan Xingyao. He came to the Azurecloud Continent to challenge me back then after hearing about my genius and I defeated him. Ever since that defeat, he felt humiliated and had never stopped wanting a rematch. My reputation is too strong. If I appear, he'll definitely come after me. Even though there's no skyward eye around, their cruelty has no boundary and I worry I'll be crippled." That was why he had immediately lost the fellow disciple who was guiding them; the disciple was still looking around for him even now.

"Lan Xingyao?" Tianming recalled the information he read about him. The Blueblood Starocean was a first-rate sect, ranked at tenth place. They had a history of eight million years of dominating their entire continent with cruelty and an iron fist. The 'bluebloods' of the Blueblood Continent were naturally fierce and cruel, and their sect was a manifestation of their people's will. They easily offended people, yet were able to reign supreme for millions of years as they were the only sect among the top ten that mainly had totem users.

It was said that the Blueblood Starocean was a branch of the celestial orderians. In other words, they used to be one of the branch families, so it wasn't a stretch to think that they had some support from the celestial orderians. Needless to say, they pledged their fealty to the celestial orderians, being the only faction in the top ten to do so. While that earned them scorn and isolation from the other sects, their place in the hierarchy was unshaken. In fact, they even rose little by little, making it so that most others didn't dare challenge them.

Lan Xingyao was a top disciple of their sect and a member of the blueblood royals. Based on the reports, he was a heptabane and around twenty years of age. He was someone who could shake the entire

continent; easily a level above the likes of Yun Feiyang. It was said that he had grown up among the celestial orderians before the age of fifteen as well.

"A totem user?"

Tianming hadn't met a single one since coming to Orderia. The only totem users he had seen were those of the divine moonrace. Had Lan Xingyao not shown up, he would have forgotten that totem users actually dominated Orderia.

Currently, Yu Ziqian was in his pill recession phase, so he was incredibly fearful of Lan Xingyao. Being humiliated by Yun Feiyang was one thing, but being half-killed by Lan Xingyao was a whole other story. While the imperial star formation could prevent one from being killed, it didn't stop someone from torturing or crippling others.

"Alright, just wait here. I'll go to take a look," Tianming said.

"Don't offend him if you don't have to. Blueblood Ocean disciples always pay people back for any slight a few times over. The slightest provocation will cause them to go on an uncontrolled rampage. Not to mention, the elder sister of Lan Xingyao is a complete monster that's securely in the top ten of the imperial star ranking. If you keep going, you'll have to face off against her as well."

"Her? Ah, okay." Tianming didn't really care too much. Competition was the only rule in Orderia. Anyone that wanted to triumph wouldn't be able to avoid offending people. Since there was no way of avoiding it, he wouldn't shirk away from it.

Tianming had Xiaoxiao stay there to protect Yu Ziqian while he and Lingfeng returned to the stele, stopping when they were almost in range. Not a single one of the thousands there recognized the two of them. There were only six people within the specified range around the stele, all of them young men and women with blue hair and eyes. Their skin even had a slight hint of ocean blue thanks to the color of the blood that flowed within them. Though they appeared calm and subdued, their gazes were fierce and savage.

As the people gathered, more and more tried to defy them and approach, which only intensified their scowls. The one standing at the very front was none other than Lan Xingyao, a man of slender build clad in dark blue full-body armor. His dark blue hair was bound in a ponytail and his eyes were like the stars and he sported a sharp, masculine nose. Those blue eyes of his looked like oceans of endless depth, or perhaps bright blue stars in the sky. He looked like a dragon among men, born to lord over the other billion disciples. Perhaps such prideful appearances were a signature of totem users. Did it come from the cultivation technique they considered to be superior to others?

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The thousands of people were growing rather antsy. Maybe they believed that they would be able to overwhelm Lan Xingyao with numbers. Some of them were already privately discussing whether they should rush over to the stele; there was no way the disciples of the Blueblood Starocean could break every one of their legs.

"On what grounds are they keeping it for themselves?"

"Everyone, the Voidsy Realm is filled with all kinds of boons. Everyone deserves a chance to gain something from the steles. Yet Lan Xingyao doesn't even let us take a closer look at it."

"It isn't fair!"

"Let's charge toward them all together!"

"I agree."

They spoke in low voices. Someone even asked Tianming. Naturally, he agreed. However, he had no issue with looking at the stele from a thousand meters away with his Plundering Eye. He had never planned on getting close to it to begin with. Lan Xingyao, on the other hand, was within arm's reach of the stele.

Chapter 1166 - Waves on Water

The whole place was rather chaotic, and battle could break out at any moment. However, Tianming calmed himself and focused his attention on the minorsky stele instead.

"I heard that it can absorb caeli..." There were two types of caeli, the living and the dead. Dead caeli contained only memories of life and cultivation, while a living caelum was tethered to a person's vita. It was only recently that he had come to understand that when he was drawn into the Grand-Orient Sword and saw the five gates, using their patterns to cultivate, he was actually in caelum form rather than vita form. If the vita left the body, anyone who wasn't Lingfeng would probably perish.

Wondersky realms only allowed caeli entry. The caelum, was in other words, the connection between the cultivator and the universe as a whole. Anything to do with insight and understanding was related to it. It was only because of that that Tianming's caelum was able to cultivate inside the wondersky realm.

When he turned to look at the minorsky stele, there was a light coming from it that turned into a vortex and sucked his caelum in the same way his sword did. In other words, it was also working like a wondersky realm, though Tianming remained conscious. Unlike the wondersky realm, his caelum wouldn't be able to fight and would only be able to observe. His vita would still have to do the thinking.

Standing far away, nobody noticed his caelum entering the stele. When it did, he had a new point of view from within the stele. His vita seemed to enter a sort of hibernation, causing his body to stop moving altogether. The common saying of one's soul being sucked away actually stemmed from someone losing their attention once their caelum was absent. The vita wasn't really affected at all, and it was more like a sleep state. When the body and vita were threatened, they would immediately be awakened and the caelum would spontaneously return to its original place. After all, it was still part of the tripartite soul.

The shimmering his caelum saw began to still. Soon, a whole wide world opened up before him. It was just like the sword formations of the Sword Insight Rock and the wondersky realm, made using intricate divine patterns. Looking at it another way, the five gates within the Grand-Orient Sword could be said to be a miniature wondersky realm, which probably served as the inspiration for the divine wondersky race.

He heard the sound of dripping water as the world before him began to clear. He found himself on a boundless lake with a calm surface. Though he could hear water droplets falling, he couldn't see any

ripples on the lake's surface at all. The same was the case when he set foot on the lake. The water seemed to be frozen in time.

"This is..." Shocked, he suddenly looked ahead and saw a wooden hut at the end of the mirror-like lake. It looked dilapidated to the point that a single breath would topple it.

"The Sky Palace?" According to what he had heard, the Sky Palace was a wooden hut on the surface of a lake. "It's within the minorsky stele?"

He didn't dare to believe that he had found the Sky Palace so easily. He hadn't even done anything yet. He decided to head toward it and wasn't surprised to see that it behaved just like the Skyward Stele on the outside. No matter how far he moved toward it, the distance between him and the building didn't seem to change. After some time, he gave up on approaching it, knowing this wasn't a problem that could be solved with brute force. Anyone could run; that was hardly a distinguishing characteristic of a true genius.

He decided to let his mind do the work. Stopping, he spun around and looked at the boundless world. When he looked up, he noticed that there was another lake and another him, looking 'down' on himself.

"The Voidsky Realm..." He finally knew the meaning behind the name. There wasn't a sky above, only the reflection of a lake—infinately many of them, for beneath him was another mirror-like surface. He saw the same thing when he looked down.

"This is where everyone gets stuck." Tianming looked at his own body, or rather, his caelum, and could see the text of his Aeonic Grandbane. This might be the part of him that allowed him to see through the illusions of the world that confused so many others.

"The lake is an endless mirror." Squatting down, he looked at his own reflection in the lake. The water still didn't move in the slightest.

"The surface of water should generate waves when disturbed... so why aren't there any? Is it simply the case that I can't see them? Why wouldn't I be able to see them? Maybe it's because I have tunnel vision."

He had always excelled at contemplation, part of it in thanks to his Lifesbane talent. Just like any person born in a supreme clan, his affinity with the laws of the universe was notably high. Most others would stupidly chase after the wooden hut or endlessly sink down into the infinite reflections, yet he was looking for waves on the surface of the lake.

"That's the only flaw this world has." It was a facet of the fundamental laws of the universe. Where there's a water surface, there must be waves. Like a child, he squatted on the surface and inspected it with a child's curiosity. His Caelum Prime also allowed him to remain calm and sound.

"Come out, come out, waves, wherever you are..." He kept prodding the surface of the lake as he simulated how the waves would spread in his mind, where they would start and end, and how the power of his pokes would affect the force of the waves. "Waves result from the laws of the universe. Similarly, divine patterns are also like countless waves gathering together and becoming a coherent whole."

Divine patterns were the most mystical things in this world. They were a physical manifestation of the universal laws, controlling everything from the fundamental cosmic forces to the birth of divine ores and hazards. In other words, they were the cornerstone of cultivation! Even heavenly and divine wills came from them. That was why he was able to cultivate using the patterns in the Grand-Orient Sword. Arcane knowledge was hidden within each fold of those patterns, each oscillation of every wave!

Gradually, his imagination was filled with a simulation of how the waves on the surface of the lake would behave. A single thought was all he needed to see waves appear beneath his finger when it touched the surface. It was as if he had found the key to unlock the lake. Soon after, waves began to appear and interfere with one another, either collapsing altogether or building each other up. The surface of the lake was filled with billions of such waves and began to change, intersecting to form a divine pattern.

"The nature of the universe truly escapes the human imagination." Tianming began floating upward. The reflection above him was no longer there. When he was high enough, he managed to get a good look at the entire lake area. Then the surface of the lake turned gold as it continued undulating from the waves. The golden waves began to form into a gold divine pattern that looked like it was burning. It looked like a golden vortex and an eye at the same time, which was oddly familiar to him.

"The Grand-Orient Vortex?" Wasn't this what he had seen behind the first gate in the sword? However, the entire vortex was simply a single divine pattern. "Don't tell me..." Suddenly turning around, he saw his physical body on the outside as well as his spatial ring, Skydragon, glowing and shaking. Something within it was strongly reacting, and it had to be the Grand-Orient Sword!

"This divine pattern of indeterminate grade might well be part of the divine pattern of the Grand-Orient Sword..."

The God-Emperor had said that the Grand-Orient Sword was the ultimate divine artifact. But now it was merely a part of the original whole. Tianming hadn't thought that he would come across one of the shards here.

Chapter 1167 - Grand-Orient Sword Shard

"I wonder how many more of these minorsky steles there are. Are they all shards of the Grand-Orient Sword?" Tianming felt rather passionate as he looked at the divine pattern. He had seen many of them of grade four and below, but this one was so complex it seemed completely foreign to him.

He felt like he had returned to the first days he cultivated with the patterns on the gates in the sword, using them to progress on his imperial path. However, the pattern now before him seemed even more like the origin of Imperial Will. The moment he focused on it, the pattern changed and showed him countless images in his mind. Each pattern was like a living thing in itself, intersecting with billions of others and coexisting with them as a combined will that represented the Human Emperor.

"The beginning of myriad paths, king of order."

He closed his eyes as he contemplated those words, the core of Imperial Will. Though it seemed abstract and formless, unlike heavenly or divine wills that came in the form of flames or lightning and could also be applied directly in battle arts, cultivating this divine will was far more like cultivating his actual intent and willpower. When he muttered those words, the divine pattern suddenly charged toward him from

the lake and spread out among his albi. Each Grand-Orient Sword within his countless albi absorbed the golden patterns and grew more powerful. By now, his mastery of Imperial Will was incredibly high. Though his Lifesbane Will was supposed to grow even faster, he hadn't thought he would be making so much progress with Imperial Will.

"The harder path does come with surprises, huh." Though it was difficult, whenever he improved his Imperial Will, the Grand-Orient Sword divine wills in him would grow much stronger. Not to mention, he was currently at the origin of the sun's nova source. There was more than enough fundamental cosmic force to go around, allowing him a chance for a sudden breakthrough. As he was only in caelum form, all of this happened in the real world. From the outside, streak after streak of golden divine patterns shot out of the stele, knocked Lan Xingyao away, and shot into a seated youth in the crowd who was absorbing nova source. Tianming had broken through using the stele.

"This is the Voidsky Realm's legacy!" many cried all of a sudden as they watched Tianming in flabbergastment. As they were standing quite far away, they didn't get to properly look at the stele. They were just about to swarm and challenge Lan Xingyao, only for a youth behind them to obtain the hidden gifts from the stele. Their plan had ended before it began.

"Who's that white-haired youth?"

"No idea. Our intelligence has no reports on him."

"Is he another hidden dark horse of some sect?"

"No matter what the case is, he's absorbing nova source to refill his astral force. That means his divine will has grown to the point where a breakthrough is possible."

"How in the world did he even get a close look from so far away? Even I couldn't get a good look, not to mention the folks from Blueblood Starocean who were standing right in front of the stele for quite some time without gaining anything from it."

Thousands looked at Tianming with shock. As there was no skyward eye present here, only those in the immediate vicinity knew about what just happened.

"If no skyward eye appeared, does that mean nobody predicted he would benefit from this?"

Even a genius would take a year or two to make a breakthrough in the Ascension stage, and that would already make them a target of envy. Before the others could react, the stele suddenly shook and shrank to the size of a handheld talisman. Lan Xingyao hurriedly snapped out of the shock of being struck away by the golden patterns and attempted to grab the stele. But right as he touched it, the stele suddenly rammed into his fingers. A snap sounded out and Lan Xingyao cried out in pain and let go of it. His pinky finger looked like it had been broken, given the unnatural angle it was at.

The stele appeared in front of Tianming, who kept it into his spatial ring immediately before continuing to absorb nova source, much to the shocked silence of others. They looked at Lan Xingyao and Tianming with expressions of confusion. Though they all yearned for the stele, they knew the one who had it the worst was Lan Xingyao. As expected, the blue-haired youth looked more than pissed. He coldly glared at Tianming as the other disciples of his sect immediately surrounded him from ten meters away on high.

"Isn't he a little too gutsy? Why isn't he stopping? If he continues cultivating, Lan Xingyao will kill him in a single blow."

"That's enough. Let's not cause trouble and just watch."

"Come to think of it, who is he?"

As the rest talked, Lan Xingyao stretched out his hand and glared at Tianming. "Return the minorsky stele to me. Hurry up."

Though he sounded calm, his voice contained a semblance of authority. Since he dared to occupy the stele with thousands of others around him, he wasn't afraid of Tianming either. Even though he knew there were many hidden disciples from other sects, from the intelligence gathered by his sect, he was completely certain of the number of people who were stronger than him, and Tianming definitely wasn't one of them. Not to mention, when Tianming broke through, his constellation didn't appear, which meant he was an ascendant.

Now, only Lingfeng stood beside Tianming, but neither of them reacted to Lan Xingyao's words, causing the tension to grow even thicker.

"I said. Bring. It. Out." His patience was running thin.

"Did you hear him? Don't force us to cut your fingers off!" another disciple fiercely chided. "Senior Brother, I think he's just pretending to be deaf. He hasn't met anyone that's really challenged him so far, so let's show him what the real world is like."

"He dares to take what belongs to Senior Brother Lan... he'll get off lightly if all he ends up with is a broken arm."

The other disciples were more than happy to stoke the flames. There wasn't a hint of de-escalation at all.

"Then what're you waiting for? Cut it off!" Lan Xingyao, seeing Tianming ignoring them, was delighted. "This fellow looked rather capable, but he isn't even bothering to open his eyes. Looks like he has no need for them, so we'll dig them out and toss them away for him." He turned to the thousands of onlookers. "What are you all looking at?! Scram!"

Quite a few onlookers were scared away by his shout.

"Blueblood Starocean disciples are the celestial orderians' dogs. They never bother to hold back."

"That's enough, friend. Keep it to yourself."

Many others could only sympathetically look at Tianming before leaving. By now, five disciples had approached Tianming, two of whom were first-level constelliers that were even stronger than Yun Feiyang. Yet they were but mere lackeys in their sect.

Lingfeng prepared himself to fight, but not even he could face so many powerful foes alone. Tianming was a step away from breaking through, and couldn't stop right now. At that moment, someone suddenly stood out to stop Lan Xingyao. "Halt!"

The rest turned to the relaxed youth that held a fan in his hand.

Meeting Lan Xingyao's gaze, Yu Ziqian said, "You already lost to me once. And now you want someone to hand over something you yourself failed to obtain? Lan Xingyao, your shamelessness knows no bounds. It's no wonder you haven't made any progress in the past few years!" Nobody noticed his cold sweat.

"Yu Ziqian!" Lan Xingyao's blue eyes grew bloodshot as he began to laugh maniacally. "Someone sent us information that you're actually a weakling."

"And you believed it? I'm amazed. To think the despair you felt from getting pummeled by me back then made you choose escapism instead. Do you want me to make you cry again? These two are my junior brothers. If you weren't even able to take it from my juniors, you don't have the right to fight me. It's better if you go back and get your senior sister to hang out with me, if you get my drift."

The others listened with shock.

"Yu Ziqian's savage..."

"A disciple of the Azuresoul Palace was able to force Lan Xingyao to such a point... He really is a role model for us."

"Not to mention, his background is relatively inferior, yet the Azuresoul Palace still managed to produce such a genius this generation. Impressive indeed."

They didn't know that Yu Ziqian was just trying to buy time, seeing that he didn't know what else he could do to spare Tianming from the danger. He couldn't just watch Tianming's hand be cut off.

Lan Xingyao furrowed his brow. Yu Ziqian's acting was so convincing that he began doubting the veracity of the information he received. After all, he had been defeated by him once before; it wasn't just hearsay, but personal experience.

"Now, screw off!" Yu Ziqian commanded. Little did he know that this would spur Lan Xingyao into action.

"Yu Ziqian won't dare to kill me—he's just acting tough! I'll know for sure when I fight him!" The minorsky stele was far too important for him to leave without even trying to fight for it. "Go!"

All of his allies acted at the same moment, much to Yu Ziqian's shock. "Damn, sh*t's getting real."

Chapter 1168 - Getting into the Ranking

The Supracloud Sanctuary had made sure to spread the news about Yu Ziqian far and wide to end him. Given that he barely fought and rarely showed his prowess, there were many that believed the news that was being spread about him. Even though Lan Xingyao had been defeated by Yu Ziqian before, he had to make sure, considering they were talking about an important artifact like the minorsky stele. He only needed a single move to see if Yu Ziqian was faking it or not. Even without a skyward eye around, the thousands of witnesses nearby would be enough to let the entire world know about Yu Ziqian.

"Go!" Lan Xingyao ordered. His fellow disciples acted immediately; they were from one of the top ten sects and not to be underestimated. The Blueblood Starocean had sent a hundred thousand disciples in total to the Voidsky Realm!

Yu Ziqian panicked, though he still feigned a tough look. Oh my... It'll be over for me!

Right as he thought that, the thousands of disciples near them cried out in shock.

"Everyone, look at the Skyward Stele!"

"There's a name on it!"

"Who managed to get on the imperial star ranking?"

The appearance of the first name on the stele shocked everyone in the Voidsky Realm. Most eyes in Orderia were struggling to make out the name. Though it was only the very beginning of the fight and the first one whose name was marked on the stele didn't mean they would stay on it throughout the entire event, it was still an honor nonetheless. There was something to be said about being the only name to feature on the gigantic stele that was temporarily regarded as the top rank.

"Who is that?"

"I haven't heard of him before."

Similar words echoed throughout Orderia. That name was foreign even to those from the top ten sects.

"Tianming... It can mean 'mission ordained by the heavens' or 'fate of the heavens'. What a domineering name to have."

"Indeed. No matter who the brat is, the name alone sounds impressive."

The first golden name to be inscribed on the stele was none other than 'Li Tianming'! It definitely had something to do with his procurement of the minorsky stele.

"Li Tianming!"

This was the first time Tianming's name had publicly echoed throughout the Myriad Solar Sects of Orderia. They all muttered the name at the same time and he felt the resonance. His divine will strongly pulsed as well. His road of cultivation yearned for this nova source world filled with powerful higher races. Tianming had shown up in the skyward eye once, and even defeated Yun Feiyang from Supracloud Sanctuary, so quite a few people had already seen him. However, they didn't know his name back then. Now that he was on the ranking, he would be a household name in Orderia soon enough, assuming he remained there.

"Some numbers appeared next to his name!"

There was another commotion which caused Lan Xingyao and the rest to stop moving. They looked at the Skyward Stele with envious eyes, thinking that Lan Xingyao would've been in the ranking had Tianming not been there.

"Three thousand?"

That was what the number next to his name read. The whole line read: First Place, Li Tianming (Azuresoul Palace), 3000. The sect that was ranked thirty-eighth now had everyone's attention.

"The Azuresoul Palace? Isn't that Yu Ziqian's sect?"

“That’s right.”

“Interesting. Even though it might be temporary, it’s already impressive that one of their disciples managed to get in the ranking before the first-rate sects.”

Most people were more concerned with the meaning of the number.

“Is that the number of enemies he’s defeated?”

“Will the Voidsky Skirmish rate participants by the number of enemies defeated this time?”

“Why’s there no skyward eye centered around Li Tianming? He’s ranked number one, so we should at least see what he looks like.”

Many people brought up similar requests. There had been quite a few battles up till now, but nobody had managed to make their way up the rankings. By now, a skyward eye finally zoomed in on Tianming, but too little too late. Nobody had seen how he had managed to deal with the minorsky stele.

“So that white-haired kid’s Li Tianming, right?”

“Yeah. I think he faced off against a disciple of Supracloud Sanctuary before.”

“So he’s also a disciple of the Defender of Azuresoul Tower, Jiang Qingliu.”

Quite a few people at Azuresoul Sword Peak, which was located in the distant Azurecloud Continent, were shocked to see a disciple whose name they didn’t recognize.

“Isn’t the other brat Yu Ziqian?”

“It is.”

“Looks like Jiang Qingliu is a man full of mysteries.”

“Aren’t those disciples from the Blueblood Starocean? Are they going to fight?”

“They already got into conflict. Looks like they’re trying to take something.”

While they didn’t get to see where the three thousand ‘points’ came from, due to the eye coming late, they did witness an interesting clash.

“I heard Yu Ziqian is actually a faker. This is his first time encountering disciples from the Blueblood Starocean.”

“We’ll find out whether he’s a useless mule or a horse after he starts running.”

“That kid looks like he’s always trying to hide. Looks like the rumors are true. Are those folks from the Azuresoul Palace making a comedy skit or something?”

“The Azuresoul Palace and Supracloud Sanctuary have been vying for supremacy this entire time. Having even one disciple ranking in the top ten will be enough to change the status quo of the Azurecloud Continent, so it’s of utmost importance. It won’t matter how amazing the other disciples perform. The Voidsky Skirmish is the ultimate confrontation of geniuses, and the disciples from the top ten sects usually dominate. Li Tianming should actually rank around two thousandth among the rest.”

“That’s already good enough.”

“Oh, looks like Yu Ziqian’s going to show his flaws.”

“The Azuresoul Palace will finally be embarrassing themselves.”

Everyone was looking at the youths after the skyward eye appeared. Lan Xingyao knew that this was his time to shine. Though he had stopped when the ranking changed, this was his chance to defeat Yu Ziqian and obtain the minorsky stele. He might even replace Tianming on the Skyward Stele if he did so! That was certainly an alluring prospect for a hot-blooded young man like him.

“It’s over for you, Yu Ziqian,” Lan Xingyao said as light gathered in both his hands. He had heard that Yu Ziqian actually ran for his life from a tenth-level ascendant. He sent the starlight flying toward Yu Ziqian. Though it looked like a simple application of astralforce, it was more than capable of exterminating a tenth-level ascendant in an instant. If Yu Ziqian was truly as weak as they said, there was no way he would be able to hide it anymore! “Show your true self!”

Yu Ziqian’s face paled as the light came, but he still fanned himself in a relaxed manner and smiled. “Show myself? I’m afraid your mind wouldn’t be able to process my true magnificence.”

The light was right in front of Tianming now. That instant, the white-haired youth flashed in front of him and easily shattered the light with his huge black and gold sword. Yu Ziqian’s buying time and the delay caused by the commotion with the Skyward Stele had given him enough time to distill the raging nova source he had absorbed into his albi, allowing his astral discs to grow much stronger until he finally broke through to the Nonahonor Sky level. Tianming was actually quite surprised that a coward like Yu Ziqian could force himself to keep calm and buy him the time he needed. Though they had met not too long ago, he already considered him a friend.

Dammit, why do I feel a sense of security when I look at his back? Is this what it feels to be spoiled and loved? The thought of that caused Yu Ziqian to shudder. Clearing his throat, he composed himself and turned to Lan Xingyao. “Sh*tty brat, do you think you’re my match with only that level of power? My junior brother is more than capable of dealing with you. Come to think of it, would you mind leaving me one of your sister’s transmission stones? I’m interested in exploring the various dimensions of love and intimacy with her.”

Yu Ziqian would never miss out on a chance to gloat. Lan Xingyao’s glare at Tianming and Yu Ziqian intensified even further. “I’ll be taking your hands and eyes, along with that fool’s tongue.” He directed that at Tianming, having concluded that Yu Ziqian currently wasn’t his match. He would have to swiftly take Tianming down to get the stele. Otherwise, other factions may come to fight him over it. There were already thousands gathering to watch the show, ready to pounce for the stele at any moment.

“Lan Xingyao, your sect is ranked tenth, right? Let’s see how powerful you are,” Tianming said. The others who had thought him to be rather meek didn’t expect his first words to be a provocation.

“Die!” Lan Xingyao struck with five other disciples following behind him.

Chapter 1169 - Nightmare of Totems

Tianming and Lingfeng charged toward their foes while Yu Ziqian laughed as he backed off with style. If it weren’t for the people around him, he would’ve hidden himself long ago.

“Don’t beat them up until they piss themselves. I wouldn’t want to dirty the Voidsky Realm with their filth, after all,” he said.

Before the fight started, Tianming asked, “Feng, can you take on five of them? Two of them are first-level constelliers.”

Currently, the strongest person Lingfeng had fought was a twelfth-level ascendant beastmaster.

“Totems are basically made of terra. Any terra is nothing more than trash before me. The only ones who can threaten me are the totem users themselves. As long as they manifest their totems, I can win,” Lingfeng replied in a hushed voice.

In other words, Lingfeng was the perfect counter to totems. At the very least, the totems of lower-level constelliers were harmless to him. Not only that, he could also consume them, making the totem users lose them for good! Though it wouldn’t be wise for him to do that, considering that the last time he did so, he was immediately banished to the xenomemory space.

Even so, that didn’t mean he was invincible against totem users. He still couldn’t mitigate the damage from their astralforce. In practice, it meant that the disciples who were all hexabanes were only weaker by a third when fighting him. Considering that many of their battle arts required coordination with their totems, they wouldn’t be able to unleash their full power against him.

Tianming knew what he should do now. When the five disciples manifested their totems, Lingfeng immediately used his Infernal Soul Curse, an ability from the Primordial Demonlord that did huge damage to the vita and terra. The former could weather the effects of Infernal Soul Curse to some degree, thanks to residing in the body and being protected by the sea of consciousness; however, the terra was brought out of the body in the form of totems, only for them to be ignited by the black flames. Like the claw of a fiend, the flames tore through the totems one after another, spreading throughout the totems of all five disciples.

The disciples didn’t mind the flames at first, as they felt nothing from it. In fact, Lingfeng had intentionally not triggered the effect to start inflicting damage. He waited for it to spread all over before dealing the fatal blow. The black flames instantly consumed the thirty totems belonging to those five before they could even act. They were nothing but fuel to the black flames.

Tianming had never seen such domination before. In truth, anyone that excelled at soul attacks would be able to deal substantial damage to totems, which made it a rather huge weak point. For instance, Xian Xian’s Trisoul Fiendsong could cause totems to fall asleep or enter a confused state. However, as Xian Xian had a first divine soul like Tianming’s, it only had a limited effect. The cultivation of the soul was harder than that of divine will, after all.

Lingfeng had a third regal soul, thanks to the souls of his kin fusing with his, as well as the techniques he had obtained from the Primordial Demonlord. His vita was much stronger than that of many in Orderia, so the Infernal Soul Curse was a bad match for most of them. However, it probably wouldn’t do much against a totem user who was a few centuries old.

As my Decapath Era Godswords are based on soul servants, they’re also tougher than normal totems based on terra. However, not even they would be able to do much against Feng’s attacks, Tianming thought. Lingfeng’s Infernal Soul Curse burned brighter and brighter with such an abundance of fuel. By

now, every totem was charred and burned; their cries of agony were hard to stomach. Those five disciples had never met anyone around their age that had a third regal soul, and didn't know what was going on. While the pain of their terrae burning didn't spread to their vitae, their vitae still felt the pain in tandem, causing them to scream in pain.

"It must be a soul attack! This person has a powerful soul! Demanifest your totems immediately!"

This was a disaster for totem users. Many beastmasters watching breathed sighs of relief that they didn't share the same weakness. Without their totems, the totem users were basically normal humans. While they still had astralforce, the flames from Infernal Soul Curse followed the totems back into their bane-rings and kept affecting them. At the same time, Lingfeng charged them with his Evil Suppression Pillar in hand.

Not long ago, when they were at the river of magma, Xian Xian had split some of the wildbeasts it had hunted for food with Lingfeng. It was the first time Lingfeng had consumed any wildbeasts to strengthen his body, and it'd had quite an effect. Coupled with the fourth-realm divine art Tianming had given him, he was much stronger now.

He activated the defensive formation within his staff, which could also coordinate with Tianming's Imperealm Sword Formation. The five disciples were already quite stunned from the heavy damage their totems had received. Now, they fought defensively, making sure to not underestimate Lingfeng's combat capabilities. Tianming knew that Lingfeng would be able to hold his ground now. "Feng's getting stronger."

It was something of a miracle that Lingfeng was able to keep up with Tianming despite his meteoric rise. Not to mention, his abilities complemented Tianming's well, too.

Lan Xingyao also had the same observations. "What're you afraid of? Keep going! He's probably a spiritual cultivator that specializes in countering totems! Just fight them with your actual bodies!"

As he gave that order, he manifested seven totems. While his talent wasn't that much higher than Sovereign Xi's, he was only in his twenties and was already a level above the sovereign when she was alive. That was probably the difference between a disciple of the top ten sects in the myriad sect rankings and the leader of an exiled branch family in a faraway outpost. Every time the sovereign came to orderia, she would be heartbroken to be reminded about this.

The main clan that led the Blueblood Starocean used to be known as the divine celestials, and they weren't too different from the divine moonrace. Though they used to wield some measure of power, the Eightmoon Swordsage's sudden rise to prominence caused them to gradually be forgotten.

Lan Xingyao's left arm had three pentagrams and his right arm had four, all of them shining blindingly with a different color, namely crimson, orange, yellow, green, azure, blue, and violet.

Seven gigantic totems emerged from the pentagrams, correspondingly colored. They stood tall far above Lan Xingyao's head like divine beings, further adding to the magnificent sight around him. It was so bright that people could go blind looking at him for too long. The totems were all humanoid and looked like endless star-filled galaxies. They each wielded a greatsword and had no mouths or noses, only a single pentagram-shaped eye. The eyes let out a blinding beam that could vaporize boulders and mountains. The totems were known as starocean greatfiends.

Chapter 1170 - Omnidirectional Cleaving

The reason celestial orderians had celestial in their name was because their totems were all heavenly being types. Lan Xingyao basked in the starocean greatfiends' radiance. He wielded a two-handed greatsword about the length of the Grand-Orient Sword. Its name was Lingering Astralight and it was forged using divine ores and divine hazards with grade four divine patterns, making it much stronger than other grade-four divine artifacts Tianming had encountered before.

Though Lan Xingyao looked impressive, his glory wouldn't last uninterrupted for more than a moment. The moment his totems appeared, Lingfeng's Infernal Soul Curse had already spread to them. Though it was only a small amount of black flames, they were like a toxin that continued to spread throughout. There was a limit to Lingfeng's power, so the flames didn't really burn too brightly. In fact, Lan Xingyao managed to react in time by having the totems cut off the flaming parts of their body, temporarily decreasing their fighting capability to mitigate the harm caused by the attack. Suffering a loss before the fight truly started, the short-tempered Lan Xingyao felt a seething urge to kill Tianming. "Are you courting death?"

First-rate sects really were different from second-rate sects. Apart from Yu Ziqian, no other disciple from a second-rate sect had dared to behave like this before him. Even if they were stronger than he was, they still lowered their heads.

Tianming's beasts emerged as he ignored Lan Xingyao. The Radix World Tree immediately spread its roots and vines to take over the battlefield, causing quite a commotion. Tianming's different beasts of different elemental types was quite a surprising sight and they looked more impactful than the homogenous starocean greatfiends.

Xian Xian began shaking as it used the whip battle art Tianming had taught her and rained down Bloodrain Swords toward the fiends. Lan Huang even dared to use Azure Oceanic Purgatory, flooding the entire area with seawater that looked red. The gigantic beast ignored Lan Xingyao and slammed into the starocean greatfiends as they attacked. No matter where Lan Huang was, it would always drag its enemies down for some underwater play.

The red sea began flooding the entire area and Lan Xingyao was forcefully submerged, thanks to Tianming. With Lan Huang ahead and Xian Xian harassing from behind, Tianming, Ying Huo, and Meow Meow struck in unison. Clouds of black lightning formed above and sent a lightning bolt hundreds of meters in diameter striking down on the water. A few fiends had barely poked their heads above the surface, only to be forced down once more.

"Both of Yu Ziqian's junior brothers are so fierce..."

"Are they really not constelliers?"

"Who knows? They aren't using any constellations. Are they going to keep them as a counter against other constellations?"

"With how ferocious those lifebound beasts are, that might not be necessary."

"Li Tianming is really showing them what beastmasters are made of. Totems are no big deal."

"Haha!"

An edge constelliers had over ascendants was their constellation. Aside from that, it would be hard to tell a constellier from an ascendant. The fight continued on with full force. Lan Xingyao was only affected by Infernal Soul Curse at the start, so he hadn't lost all ability to resist. He managed to last through Tianming's first wave of attacks. Now, he and his seven totems activated his skyfall constellation.

A formation-like domain immediately appeared. Thanks to their many totems, totem users had the most powerful constellations. Skyfall was capable of linking all seven totems and Lan Xingyao himself together via countless thumb-sized stars. They swirled around them like a galaxy, slowly picking up speed and colliding with Tianming and the rest nonstop, leaving quite a few bloody holes. It was troubling indeed.

"Guess no genius in Orderia is a pushover." Tianming hadn't looked down on his enemy at all. However, he was in a rather passive position without being able to use totems himself.

"Li Tianming, is that all you've got? You're gonna kneel after just this?" Lan Xingyao mocked as his starocean greatfiends charged out of the sea. They then used their totemic calamity, Heptastar Divine Ring. "Keep groveling, trash!"

The seven-colored fiends linked together and formed many rings that looked like Lan Huang's own Kilofold Rings. They were further boosted by the constellation, allowing it to suppress Tianming and his beasts immediately. The starlight from the rings was so bright that many couldn't look straight at it. Then Lan Xingyao raised his sword, an action mirrored by his totems, and used a battle art in unison with them. "Heavenly Starslash!"

This was a fourth-realm divine art; it was far more powerful than third-realm arts, as it incorporated the constellation's power in the move. The skyfall constellation's power made it even harder to block.

"It's over for you!" Lan Xingyao smiled as he and his totems slashed, their swords falling from the sky toward Tianming like meteors.

"What an annoying showoff." Tianming smirked, facing the huge pressure. He raised his sword and gathered Ying Huo and the rest near him. "Go!"

Their blood boiled when he roared as they charged forward. Ying Huo used Skyscorch Featherblast and Death Inferno, its strongest abilities, while Meow Meow turned into the Regal Chaosfiend and launched two Cosmic Lances. Lan Huang used the sword on its tail in a heavy slash that threatened to reshape landscapes and Xian Xian used all four of its abilities. As it was satiated, its countless Radiant Vines alone had made the entire battlefield a part of its body.

Between them all, Tianming gripped his sword with both hands, his eyes flashing with a blinding light. Now, his aura was domineering to behold. His stance changed as he executed Imperial Descent. As Tianming didn't have a constellation, there was only so much power he could unleash from the fourth-realm divine art. Still, it was stronger than Moonnight Subdued Strike. Not to mention, it was the move he had spent quite a lot of time picking that best suited his Imperial Will. The compatibility only increased the damage he could deal. With his beasts paving the way and neutralizing much of the incoming attack, Tianming had a clear path to Lan Xingyao.

"Feel divine wrath as my sword cleaves all directions!" The power of the Grand-Orient Sword was greater combined than split. Black and gold light gathered around Tianming when he struck with the

force of an army behind him. This was the ultimate will of a ruler radiating with the power of subjugation. A black and gold sword beam blasted out from the strike, vaporizing whatever it touched. Needless to say, the frontmost starocean greatfiend was cleaved in two at the waist by the move!

Then the greatswords collided, the power of stars and omnidirectional cleaving clashing. Lan Xingyao's totems didn't harm Tianming all that much, but Meow Meow's Soulchasing Hellthunder managed to rampage across Lan Xingyao's body. His heart began twitching, affecting his strike's power. The moves of Primordial Chaos Beasts were filled with surprises that could tip the scales of battle. Not to mention, one of Ying Huo's feathers pierced through Lan Xingyao's thighs, spilling much of his blue blood and inciting a cry of pain. He couldn't hold up against Tianming's most forceful strike as his totems were pushed back. Then the white-haired youth's strike connected.

First, Lingering Astralight was sent flying. The next slash took off Lan Xingyao's right arm that had four bane-rings. Now that he had lost control, his totems returned to the bane-rings of his severed arm. He shrieked in utter agony as he collapsed on the ground, scrambling to escape. His expression was one of utter defeat. "My arm..."

When he looked up, he saw Tianming thrust his sword into the ground, pick up the arm and remove the spatial ring. Then, he tossed the arm back to him. "Lan Xingyao, I'm only reciprocating the way you treated me. You're always welcome to come challenge me again, but make sure to make it worth my time." In other words, he was going to take his belongings as payment for humoring him in a duel.

"You!" Lan Xingyao caught his arm and pathetically spat out a mouthful of blood. He looked up at the skyward eye. The countless people watching him on the broadcast were definitely mocking him.