

The Gate 841

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Chapter 841: Butterfly Mountain's Existence

The next instant, a middle-aged man wearing a blue-coloured Confucian robe appeared in front of everyone. But despite his middle-aged appearance, it wouldn't distract one from his handsome temperament.

"Butterfly Mountain's Duan Wenbai greets Sect Master Ning. My Butterfly Mountain's disciples offended you before, so I want to apologise to Sect Master Ning on behalf of Butterfly Mountain and also ask Sect Master Ning to not bother with these juniors." The middle-aged man's behaviour was a stark contrast to Duan Qian and Yin Xiushan and spoke to Ning Cheng using polite words. He even had a comforting tone to his words.

Duan Wenbai, after greeting Ning Cheng, also greeted Cang Caihe with the same, if not more, polite words and cupped fists. "You must be the premier Pill Emperor of this starry sky, Cang Caihe. It's a great honour for me to personally witness the great style of the premier Pill Emperor today."

No matter how much arrogance Duan Qian and Yin Xiushan had, they would never dare to talk any nonsense in front of Duan Wenbai. Therefore, when the two heard Duan Wenbai speak so politely to Ning Cheng, and even mention them as 'juniors' in front of Ning Cheng, they immediately felt shocked. Although they had never wandered the starry skies before, they both were still experts at the middle-stage Eternal Realm. Therefore, addressing two Eternal cultivators as Ning Cheng's juniors, wasn't this Ning Cheng a bit too scary?

But then the two of them immediately thought back to how Ning Cheng's domain had easily crushed their superimposed domains and felt even more confused. From the looks of it, Uncle Master Wenbai truly spoke correctly, that Ning Cheng might just be more powerful than the two of them.

Ning Cheng also cupped his fists and spoke, "How could I dare? I'm just a Mysterious Yellow Sect's Sect Master, Ning Cheng."

Ning Cheng couldn't help but sigh in secret. These three people from Butterfly Mountain all had handsome or pretty appearances. That Duan Gantai also came from Butterfly Mountain, so why was he so ugly? Moreover, Duan Wenbai also had high cultivation and didn't feel any weaker than Wu Yuankong, who recently died at Ning Cheng's hands.

Duan Wenbai saw that Ning Cheng had still not invited him into Stately River Star. From this, he understood that Ning Cheng held no affection for Butterfly Mountain and had to speak up directly. "I heard that Duan Gantai has a friendship with Sect Master Ning, is that true?"

After pausing a bit, he added, "I understand that it's a bit presumptuous to ask this, so I hope that Sect Master Ning wouldn't mind it. I only ask because Duan Gantai is also a disciple from my Butterfly Mountain."

Ning Cheng nodded, "It's true. In the beginning, I did work with Duan Gantai for a while. But the only reason we worked together was due to a Starry Sky Radish Grass he obtained in the Devil Domain. Plus, I

could turn that Starry Sky Radish Grass into Eternal Emperor Continuance Pills. I haven't seen him since that time."

"So that was the case." Duan Wenbai spoke up. However, he didn't feel too sure about Ning Cheng's words.

Duan Qian and Yin Xiushan sighed with relief. This Sect Master Ning also needed Eternal Emperor Continuance Pills, which meant that he wasn't as terrifying as they thought. Seventh Elder Taoist must have spoken those words to scare them into not acting.

Ning Cheng had no affection for Duan Gantai, which meant that he naturally wouldn't help Duan Gantai in hiding his whereabouts. He took out the Connecting Spirit Silk and handed it to Duan Wenbai with the words, "Duan Gantai had given me this Connecting Spirit Silk for the short-lived cooperation. But the cooperation has already ended. If Duan Gantai wants to find me, he will open the Connecting Spirit Silk. You can keep it if you want. I hope that Brother Duan can find your Butterfly Mountain's disciple soon."

Ning Cheng didn't mind throwing some shade in Duan Gantai's direction. In any case, this Connecting Spirit Silk no longer had any uses for him. Therefore, if Duan Gantai dared to use it to find trouble with him, he would have to wait after Duan Wenbai dealt with him. As for those two straw bags, Duan Qian and Yin Xiushan, even if they caught up with Duan Gantai, they wouldn't be of any match against him.

Ning Cheng even took out the Connecting Spirit Silk. Seeing this, Duan Wenbai felt overjoyed and quickly collected it. "Many thanks, Sect Master Ning. Butterfly Mountain will always welcome Sect Master Ning as an honoured guest at any time. If someday Sect Master Ning wants to leave this side of the starry sky, you must remember to stop by my Butterfly Mountain."

Ning Cheng was taken aback for a moment on hearing those words. Whether he left this part of the starry sky or not, what did it have to do with Butterfly Mountain?

Duan Wenbai could sense Ning Cheng's doubts and quickly replied, "There is a starry sky boundary point near my Butterfly Mountain. It leads directly to a high-grade interface. Those people from Grand Essence Realm also came from there."

Ning Cheng looked at Duan Wenbai and asked, "Brother Duan. The people from Grand Essence Realm who went to the Mysterious Yellow Starland, your Butterfly Mountain knew about them?"

Duan Wenbai showed a slight smile, "It's only natural. My Butterfly Mountain has been guarding this boundary point since the start. How can we not know about people moving through this boundary point? It's just that our ancestor had not come out from secluded cultivation, so my Butterfly Mountain had to tolerate a few injustices. But thanks to Sect Master Ning, all those outsiders have already fled this part of the starry sky."

After speaking, Duan Wenbai even bowed to Ning Cheng with cupped fists.

Ning Cheng seemed calm on the surface but sneered in his heart. Did Butterfly Mountain truly exist to guard the boundary point? It looks like they didn't have any sense of shame. Just because someone hadn't come out of seclusion, these bastards didn't even bother or even bat an eye when those outsiders erased billions of cultivators from Mysterious Yellow Starland. How could such people dare to speak about being guardians of the boundary point?

When he, Chuan Xinlou and the others went to the Mysterious Yellow Starland, they didn't see even half a shadow of Butterfly Mountain anywhere. Even people like Chuan Xinlou understood that Ninth Prince's group wouldn't stop messing around after taking over the Mysterious Yellow Starland. It had forced those people to take action, even if it was for selfish purposes. As the so-called guardian, how could Butterfly Mountain dare use such an excuse that their ancestor hadn't come out of seclusion?

From the looks of it, Butterfly Mountain had long since known about the existence of the five grand realms. But since they stayed home, it had nothing to do with being a guardian at all. Rather, they most likely were seeking a chance to leave this part of the starry sky.

Although Ning Cheng felt nothing but disdain, he still gave a calm reply, "I can't kill those people from the Grand Essence Realm. They started fighting amongst each other and ended up hurting each other. It allowed me to escape Mysterious Yellow Starland. Otherwise, I would have already fallen in that place."

"Sect Master is too modest. Against that Ninth Prince, even my Butterfly Mountain's ancestor might not have the ability to stop him. Yet, Sect Master Ning easily managed to injure him severely. It's because of this that my Butterfly Mountain's ancestor especially asked me to come to Stately River Star and invite Sect Master Ning to the Butterfly Mountain as an honoured guest." Duan Wenbai spoke with full seriousness.

Ning Cheng showed a slight frown, "During the battle in Moyi City, there didn't seem to be anyone from Butterfly Mountain there. Yet, it feels like Brother Duan had personally witnessed that fight."

Only Shen Mengyan had seen him severely injure that Ninth Prince Man Jiuren. Moreover, Shen Mengyan and Pan Qian had already left this side of the starry sky. They would never inform anyone else about him.

Duan Wenbai's face suddenly filled with admiration. "Just before Levelled Heart Heavenly Emperor and the others were about to leave from the boundary point, I invited them to Butterfly Mountain. The four of them came to my Butterfly Mountain as honoured guests and even held a treasure exchange meeting within my Butterfly Mountain. Because of this, I finally got to hear about the thrilling battles you had in Moyi City. Sect Master Ning, one could say that you single-handedly turned the tides of the battle. It's a shame that apart from showing admiration, my Butterfly Mountain couldn't do anything else."

So, it was Chuan Xinlou who revealed it, huh. Ning Cheng nodded. But in his heart, he couldn't help but curse at them. With the shamelessness of Butterfly Mountain, they still dared to talk about shame; it just felt disgusting to him.

After a while, Ning Cheng asked, "Brother Duan, I seem to recall that Nine Phoenix Heavenly Emperor didn't leave with Chuan Xinlou, or am I misremembering things? How could it be four?"

Duan Wenbai chuckled. "It seems that Levelled Heart Heavenly Emperor returned a Breaking Boundary Talisman to Nine Phoenix Heavenly Emperor. As such, Nine Phoenix Heavenly Emperor didn't go with Levelled Heart Heavenly Emperor. Instead, she returned to Spirit Heaven Grand Starry Sky. As for whether she has already left this part of the starry sky, I do not know. But I'm sure that she hadn't come to the boundary point again."

Ning Cheng cupped his fists and said, "Many thanks, Brother Duan, for telling me this. If I come to the boundary point in the future, I will make sure to visit Butterfly Mountain."

“Okay, then I’m looking forward to meeting Sect Master Ning.” After saying that, he took out a jade strip and handed it to Ning Cheng. “Sect Master Ning, this is a Butterfly Mountain’s star chart. When Sect Master Ning decides to come, just follow the instructions on the jade strip, and you can reach my Butterfly Mountain in no time.”

After giving the jade strip to Ning Cheng, Duan Wenbai took Duan Qian and Yin Xiushan and left. Ning Cheng also didn’t invite Duan Wenbai to Stately River Star. Instead, he returned to Mysterious Yellow Sect with Cang Caihe and the others.

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“Seventh Elder Taoist, why were you so respectful and polite to that man surnamed Ning?” After leaving Stately River Star, Duan Qian muttered with some unwillingness.

Ning Cheng had dared to tell her to fuck off, if not for Seventh Elder Taoist’s intervention, she would have taught that Ning Cheng a good lesson. So what if he could crush the two superimposed domains? How could her Butterfly Mountain’s methods compare to that of a small sect’s sect master? Moreover, since Ning Cheng also looked for the Eternal Emperor Continuance Pills not too long ago, then presumably his cultivation wasn’t that great. If that was the case, then what could he have done with the strength of his domain alone?

Duan Wenbai gave a cold snort, “If you want to die then die by yourself. Don’t pull my Butterfly Mountain into your mess. Didn’t I tell you before going out that just because you’re from Butterfly Mountain, you shouldn’t flaunt your arrogance? If I hadn’t reached in time, you two would have already died. Moreover, it would have also created a formidable enemy for my Butterfly Mountain.”

Seeing the two upset on hearing his words, Duan Wenbai continued with a harsh voice, “Ning Cheng’s cultivation doesn’t lose out to our old ancestor. You two wouldn’t have survived even a slap from him.....”

“Ah....” Duan Qian and Yin Xiushan now felt truly shocked. They naturally knew about the frightening strength of their Butterfly Mountain’s old ancestor. Yet, Ning Cheng, a cultivator who looked so ordinary, how could he be compared on the same level as their ancestor?

Duan Wenbai’s tone remained harsh. “If he didn’t have at least this much ability, he would have already died at the hands of that Ninth Prince in Mysterious Yellow Starland. The reason why ancestor didn’t stop that Ninth Prince, apart from Ninth Prince’s background, was that he feared losing to Ninth Prince. Yet, this Sect Master Ning could severely injure Ninth Prince and return to Stately River Star unharmed. Tell me how strong he is now? Maybe you have no familiarity with Ninth Prince, but you should know about the Traceless Immortal Pond, right?”

“I know that when we came out, master had specifically told me to not go to the Traceless Immortal Pond. In particular, the cultivation of Sect Master Wu Yuankong of Traceless Immortal Pond didn’t lose out to the Elder Taoists[1] of my Butterfly Mountain.” Duan Qian replied.

Duan Wenbai sighed, “That was when you first came out. Now, Traceless Immortal Pond is just a dead name amongst the starry skies. Two years ago, Traceless Immortal Pond’s Sect Master Wu Yuankong and several Eternal elders of Traceless Immortal Pond died under Sect Master Ning’s hands.”

“What?” Duan Qian and Yin Xiushan cried out in shock. At the same time, cold sweat drenched the back of both of them.

Since Ning Cheng had so much power, if the Seventh Elder Taoist hadn’t stopped them in time, they would have truly turned into ghosts haunting Stately River Star.

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Sitting within Ning Cheng’s cave inside Covered Snow City, were Ning Cheng, Ning Ruolan, Ji Luofei and Ning Ruoqing.

“I will leave Stately River Star for a while soon, but I don’t know when I will return.....”

“Brother, are you leaving for good?” Before Ning Cheng finished speaking, Ning Ruolan asked immediately. She had a strong resentment in her eyes and truly didn’t want to be separated from her big brother again.

Ji Luofei also looked equally reluctant. She naturally didn’t want to separate from Ning Cheng again.

Ning Cheng smiled, “I plan to take you with me this time, I still have a True Spirit World...”

“Then, can Dai, Zhiyan, Li Lingfan, Zhang Qian and the others come with us?” Ning Ruolan quickly asked.

Although she and Helian Dai weren’t blood-related sisters, they weren’t any different from true sisters. If she left Helian Dai here alone, she wouldn’t truly feel at ease. But if Helian Dai came with them, it would also mean that they would need to take Li Lingfan, Luo Ziyang, Zhang Qian and the others with them. No matter who stayed, it wouldn’t feel right to either party.

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Chapter 842: The Powerful World

Ning Cheng hesitated and said, “I’m afraid this won’t work. I don’t know where I would end up, and I want to find Yan Ji.”

The True Spirit World was not the Mysterious Yellow Bead. Moreover, the laws inside it were even worse than the Stately River Star. Ning Cheng suspected that his destination most likely was a high-grade positional place. What if something happened that caused the True Spirit World to collapse? If it were just Ruolan and Luofei, he could still bring them into the Mysterious Yellow Bead.

But if he took many people, and once something went wrong, don’t say whether he could bring others into the Mysterious Yellow Bead. Even if he had this ability, just the knowledge of the Mysterious Yellow Bead would cause untold risk to others, even if it were people closest to him.

Besides, even he had no idea how long he would be away. Li Lingfan, Luo Ziyang and the others could stay in Stately River Star and cultivate, which would be a much better option than following him. At least they could roam the starry sky here to gain experience rather than just wander around with him. Besides, unless he had enough power to protect him and them simultaneously, they would have no choice but to stay inside the True Spirit World.

“Brother, my cultivation is still low. But the Stately River Star is as stable as a mountain on this side of the starry sky. Therefore, I think that staying here and cultivating would help me progress faster than following you. Maybe, you and sister-in-law can go first.”

Ruolan hesitated for a while before speaking up. She understood her big brother’s meaning. Most likely, the place he was heading this time was a bit too dangerous even for him. Therefore, following her big brother with her cultivation would only hold him back. It’s better to stay here and cultivate and wait until her strength improves.

Ji Luofei, who hadn’t spoken till now, also took the initiative to speak up. “I will soon reach Heaven Seated Realm, so you don’t have to worry about Ruolan staying here alone. With everyone staying in Stately River Star, it would be for the better.”

Ning Cheng felt a tug at his heartstrings. He wanted to find Yan Ji and then return immediately. He also had two similar Breaking Boundary Talismans and knew that the teleportation array would take him somewhere far away. Theoretically, it should be possible to return with the Breaking Boundary Talisman. He could bring Ruolan and Luofei safely with him, but it would become a lot more dangerous if he had any more people.

Moreover, it wouldn’t be of much help to them in cultivation. Ning Cheng had many cultivation resources in the True Spirit World. But the laws of the True Spirit World couldn’t even compare to the laws of ordinary planets and stars of this part of the starry skies.

As an Eternal-level expert, Ning Cheng had started to gain an understanding of the Laws of Heaven and Earth. From this, he also understood that these laws determined the height a cultivator could reach.

“I will also stay in Stately River Star. I will continue with my seclusion since I still can’t remember many things. But if anyone dares to come here and cause trouble, even if it’s that Luo-whatever, I will strike him down.” Ning Ruqing spoke with full seriousness. Compared to the time when she first came to Stately River Star with Ning Cheng, her thinking had grown a lot clearer.

“Okay. Then, I’ll return as quickly as possible. Ruolan and Luofei, since you haven’t reached Heaven Seated Realm yet, don’t leave Stately River Star casually.” Ning Cheng then took out three rings after speaking. He had already prepared enough cultivation resources for the people here.

After the three of them put away the rings, Ning Cheng took out a white band and a jade box before handing it to Ning Ruolan.

“What’s this?” Ning Ruolan took the two things in confusion.

Ning Cheng pointed to the white band and said with some caution, “This weapon is called the Serene Water Nine Pattern Loop, and is quite a high-grade weapon. Since Luofei has the glaze scroll, I’m giving this to you. As for that jade box, it contains an Origin Dragon Soul. Wait till your cultivation reaches a higher level before refining the dragon soul. But even then, use it only as a means for self-protection and nothing else.”

The glaze scroll was also of a very high level. Since Ning Cheng gave it to Luofei, it meant that it also had a self-protection component to it. As for Ruolan, he hadn’t given her any good weapon till now.

Therefore, this time, Ning Cheng left both these things to Ruolan, as her cultivation was the lowest of the group.

Ning Cheng had taken this Serene Water Nine Pattern Loop from Wu Yuankong and had also experienced its power. Therefore, he felt it appropriate to leave it with Ruolan. As for the Origin Dragon Soul, after Ning Cheng obtained it, Ning Cheng hadn't refined it even once. Since he didn't need such a powerful assistant right now, he decided to give it to Ruolan.

Ning Ruqing's cultivation exceeded him. Therefore, most of what Ning Cheng left for Ning Ruqing were some star veins, space crystals, time stones and other law-related materials.

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After Ning Ruolan and others once again went into secluded cultivation, Ning Cheng and Cang Caihe began to re-strengthen the defensive array around Stately River Star. Advancing to the rank of Array Dao Master, plus with the materials with him, Ning Cheng would naturally go all out to upgrade the defensive array of Stately River Star before leaving.

Two months later, Ning Cheng left the Stately River Star once again.

Before leaving, however, Ning Cheng also gave a part of his cultivation resources to Cang Caihe, and at the same time, repaired Sifting Orchid in Stately River Star. Sifting Orchid had returned to its original five-star battle disc's appearance in just one day. Moreover, since Ning Cheng fixed it himself, he now knew everything about it.

With Ning Cheng's current cultivation, he didn't need Sifting Orchid for travel. As such, Ning Cheng only repaired it out of nostalgia. Plus, Sifting Orchid had saved his life on many occasions.

As for the unfinished top-grade Starry Sky Battleship, Ning Cheng had no time for it right now and left it untouched within the True Spirit World.

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Ning Cheng was awakened by the seawater lapping over his face and drank a few mouthfuls of the salty seawater unconsciously before coughing it out. He had never thought that he would pass out during teleportation with his current cultivation. However, he did pass out.

The moment when the teleportation array below Thorn Tooth Lake had activated, it had thrown him into a void that underwent countless spacial transformations with every breath. Under the effects of such insane spacial conversions, even Ning Cheng couldn't hold on. Moreover, if not for being a body-forging cultivator with a late-stage Starry Sky Body, he would have turned into dust while passing through those terrifying spacial transformations.

After waking up, Ning Cheng quickly spat out the seawater still in his mouth and couldn't help but feel a little afraid. Such a thing had happened most likely because he failed to understand the complexities of that array formation. A real expert in the Dao of Arrays wouldn't let the teleporting person pass out midway through the spacial transformations.

From this, Ning Cheng understood that even with the help of that array pattern, he hadn't completed the full layout of the teleportation array.

But those weren't the issues Ning Cheng had to consider right now. As his spiritual consciousness swept out, he found him floating in a sea with nothing else but seawater all around him. Regardless of the direction, he only saw a boundless ocean, and even his spiritual consciousness couldn't sweep to the edge.

But what shocked Ning Cheng, even more, was that this area didn't even contain a scrap of Starry Sky Spirit Qi. No, rather, there seemed to be a light but different aura permeating the world, which appeared to be of a higher grade than the Starry Sky Spirit Qi. However, this kind of aura couldn't help him in cultivation. It was like the Spiritual Qi present on Earth. The level of Spiritual Qi was almost equivalent to nothing and wasn't very helpful to cultivation.

Ning Cheng then immediately looked at his body. Because of the incorrect activation of the teleportation array, his body looked full of void scratches. But what made Ning Cheng a little happy was that he didn't lose his cultivation.

But just when Ning Cheng decided to rush out of the seawater, a terrifying scream came from somewhere in the sky above him.

Following that, white shadow smashed onto the surface of the sea hundreds of miles away from Ning Cheng. The loud 'Boom' almost ruptured Ning Cheng's eardrums. Fortunately, Ning Cheng had quickly stretched out his domain to protect himself. He understood that this loud boom was a remnant of energy fluctuations from a battle.

A moment later, a terrifyingly huge wave parted the sea, as if someone had forcibly torn the sea with two hands. The power contained within it was so high that the surface of the sea couldn't recover for a long while.

This scene left a truly long-lasting impression in Ning Cheng's mind. The two waves, tens of thousands of feet high, looked like a recently opened ravine. But then a moment later, Ning Cheng's spiritual consciousness spotted a red-haired figure quickly passing over this chasm.

The next moment, one of the huge waves swept over Ning Cheng and shattered Ning Cheng's domain in an instant.

"Bang....." The violent wave then blasted onto Ning Cheng's body. Ning Cheng, who still had a lot of scars covering his body, got tossed into the air just like some of the nearby fishes and flew out like a broken kite.

Ning Cheng spurt out mouthful after mouthful of blood and couldn't even resist at all.

As the waves finally started to calm down, Ning Cheng's body followed the waves and fell into the seawater once again. Fortunately, he didn't have to face another one of those terrifying waves. Ning Cheng wiped off the blood from the corner of his mouth but didn't rush out of the sea and stayed still amongst the scattered debris and dead fish around him.

Eventually, the seawater returned to the original state once again, and it felt as if the previous incident had never happened. Ning Cheng clenched his fists. Although he was only at the early-stage Eternal

Realm, he was fully capable of sweeping through the starry skies' positional plane. However, in this place, just the aftermath of someone's fight had almost killed him.

Small, he was still too tiny. What the hell was this place where the Starry Sky Essence Qi was so thin, yet cultivation so perverted? Just that red-haired figure's passage had created such a formidable threat to him.

"Gu-Gu" Ning Cheng's stomach gurgled, and immediately a feeling of hunger washed over him.

Even if Ning Cheng remained still in the seawater, he felt taken aback by this sensation. How could he feel hungry? After reaching the Essence Building Realm, the feeling of hunger had disappeared from his body. Rather, it got supplemented with Starry Sky Spirit Qi. He rarely ate any food and only did so on special occasions or to taste some rare delicacy.

But now he felt hungry in this place. What the hell was going on?

Ning Cheng quickly took out an airship-type dao artefact he had refined previously and threw it onto the surface of the sea before finally flying out and landing on it. After cleaning himself up, Ning Cheng immediately focussed on healing his injuries. But the recovery speed of his wounds in this place wasn't as fast as it was in the four grand starry skies.

Not just that, when he absorbed Permanent Essence Pills, he felt a little less hungry, but his cultivation remained unchanged.

Ning Cheng felt a bit confused because of it. However, after some time, he vaguely realised that this should be because of the laws of heaven and earth here. From the looks of it, the worldly laws in this place were much more robust than those in four grand starry skies' positional plane. Which also meant that cultivating with Permanent Essence Pills would produce a much weaker result.

Perhaps cultivating in this place needed a higher-grade Essence Qi source. Ning Cheng immediately thought of the crystal given to him by Yi Jiufeng before she left. He quickly took out that crystal and tried to absorb it. In just a few breaths, the crystal turned into ash in Ning Cheng's hands.

Ning Cheng sighed and threw away the ash in his hand. He finally understood what was going on. After absorbing the crystal, Ning Cheng did feel a lot less hungry, and his cultivation also improved by a slight bit. Moreover, he even felt his celestial essence starting to change. It felt as if it was transforming into another type of Essence Qi, one stronger than celestial essence.

"No wonder that red-haired fellow was so powerful. He wasn't using even a bit of celestial essence, but a higher-grade power." Ning Cheng murmured to himself.

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Chapter 843: Boundary Essence Spirit Sea City

As Ning Cheng sat quietly wondering what to do, a shadow appeared below Ning Cheng. Ning Cheng sensed danger, but the space around him immediately solidified under a powerful force. He could break through these shackles, but it would take him some time.

Without even thinking, Ning Cheng activated the Everlasting Blue Thunder Fort.

"Boom....." A powerful force came crashing down and slammed onto the Everlasting Blue Thunder Fort.

Bombarded with such a force, the Everlasting Blue Thunder Fort erupted with bursts of clicking-like noises. A moment later, thunder rays splashed over the sea. But the powerful force formed a huge depression in the seawater around Ning Cheng. The explosive power also swept away Ning Cheng, forcing him to spit out another mouthful of blood.

Fortunately, he had managed to bring out the Everlasting Blue Thunder City in time. Otherwise, even with a Starry Sky Body, he couldn't have survived it.

As soon as the restraints around him eased a little, Ning Cheng saw a bloody mouth opening up right underneath him. Ning Cheng didn't even see what kind of demonic beast it was before pushing the Twin Wings of Heavenly Clouds to its limits.

Ning Cheng understood that he couldn't fight against this demonic beast. Facing such a powerful demonic beast, he had no other option but to escape with all his might.

The Twin Wings of the Heaven Clouds brought up a weak shimmering light before instantly moving Ning Cheng away from that spot. The moment Ning Cheng seemingly teleported away; the huge mouth closed on his afterimage.

Ning Cheng, who still was in the air, saw this scene and hurriedly brought out the Starry Sky Wheel and left.

The sea demon that attacked Ning Cheng didn't seem to possess any flight abilities. Therefore, after seeing Ning Cheng escape, it didn't try to pursue him.

However, Ning Cheng broke out into cold sweats out of fear. He had initially thought that this area was a safe zone with only a few powerhouses. He never expected that a demonic beast would almost end his life.

Thinking back to how he had remained unconscious in the seawater for an unknown amount of time, he felt even more afraid. If he hadn't regained consciousness and got attacked by that demonic beast, he couldn't have escaped death. From the looks of it, he couldn't stay in this place and heal. Even if he wanted to heal, he first needed to find a safer place.

At this point, Ning Cheng had no sense of direction at all and randomly picked one for the Starry Sky Wheel. Fortunately, the Starry Sky Wheel still possessed domineering speed. Therefore, even though this sea contained some powerful sea demons, these sea demons couldn't keep up with Starry Sky Wheel's pace.

Controlling the Starry Sky Wheel for a few days, Ning Cheng's spiritual consciousness finally picked up a few flight-type weapons in the distance. Ning Cheng immediately stopped and replaced the Starry Sky Wheel with an ordinary high-rank flight-type dao artefact.

Amongst the four grand starry skies, Ning Cheng didn't have any fear of other people knowing about the Starry Sky Wheel. But in this place, once someone recognised a treasure like the Starry Sky Wheel, it would no longer belong to him.

Ning Cheng motioned a flight-type weapon to stop. But what made him puzzled was that the cultivator controlling the flight-type weapon only had a Life and Death cultivation.

The Life and Death cultivator couldn't see Ning Cheng's cultivation. But because he still wanted to live here, he tried not to offend people as much as possible. Moreover, Ning Cheng, standing on his flight-type weapon, didn't show any malice towards him. Therefore, seeing Ning Cheng making a gesture to stop, he decided to comply instead of being chased and then forced to stop by Ning Cheng.

"What troubles this dao friend?" The Life and Death cultivator asked with cupped fists and a relatively respectful and polite tone before Ning Cheng could speak.

Ning Cheng also returned the gesture, "I encountered a beast tide sometime back and ended up losing my map of this sea area. I wonder if this friend could carve a jade strip for me?"

Even if he wanted to ask a few questions, Ning Cheng knew that he had to remain careful with his words. He could see that this cultivator also seemed to use celestial essence, and it hadn't transformed into a more potent force. But even so, he still didn't want anyone to know that he was not from this place.

"Naturally." The Life and Death cultivator didn't hesitate to take out a jade strip before throwing it to Ning Cheng. Then, controlling his flight-type weapon, he left immediately. He didn't ask any payment from Ning Cheng, which made Ning Cheng breathe a sigh of relief. If the other party wanted some compensation for it, Ning Cheng only had Permanent Essence Pills, which he didn't know would work here or not.

Ning Cheng's spiritual consciousness swept into the jade strip and after a few breaths, Ning Cheng then put it away.

He now understood that this place was somewhere at the extreme edge of the Grand Essence Sea. From this, Ning Cheng also understood that people considered this place as the least valuable corner of the Grand Essence Sea. Moreover, not too far from his current location, Ning Cheng also came to know about a sea city, called the Boundary Essence Spirit Sea City.

The jade strip only contained some simple instructions without any introductions or anything. It just pointed out the critical directional pointers to the Boundary Essence Spirit Sea City.

But with this jade strip, Ning Cheng also confirmed that this place was within the Grand Essence Realm. That silver-haired lady had mentioned that the Grand Essence Sea was within the Grand Essence Realm.

Moreover, the father of that Ninth Prince, whose corporeal body Ning Cheng had destroyed previously, seemed to be a powerhouse of this Grand Essence Sea.

Ning Cheng thought back to the terrifying sea demon he had encountered a few days ago in the Grand Essence Sea and started to feel a strong sense of crisis in his heart. Those sea demons, most likely, were the lowest-level existences in this place, yet just one of them had almost wiped the floor with him. Since that Ninth Prince's old man could dominate the entire Grand Essence Sea, just what level of strength had he reached?

But Ning Cheng quickly put these thoughts aside. Let alone whether that Ninth Prince Man Jiuren could return to the Grand Essence Realm or not. Even if he could return, he had to first recreate his body before even thinking of taking revenge. The only thing that Ning Cheng felt slightly worried about was if

Man Jiuren's old man would help him get revenge. If Man Jiuren's father went to Culmination Grand Starry Sky, it wouldn't be a good thing.

He also understood that if Man Jiuren's father did go to Culmination Grand Starry Sky, he wouldn't be able to do anything.

With too many threats looming over him, Ning Cheng quickly put all his thoughts aside and controlled the flight-type weapon towards the Boundary Essence Spirit Sea City.

Understanding that this place was just the edge of the Grand Essence Realm, Ning Cheng felt even more shocked at the teleportation array under the Thorn Tooth Lake. Reaching this place, he finally understood that it was a teleportation array capable of breaking through positional planes. Therefore, Ning Cheng no longer felt upset that he couldn't fully complete it with his strength. That teleportation array was almost equivalent to an Opening Heaven Talisman's child talisman.

However, Ning Cheng also felt a little regret at this time. He hadn't even thought of investigating where Liang Yi had obtained that array pattern. That single array pattern had allowed him to activate the teleportation array. It meant that the array pattern wasn't any lower in value than the Opening Heaven Talisman's child talisman.

.....

A few days later, Ning Cheng stood outside a mottled but sprawling city. He also saw several mottled characters floating above the entrance, Boundary Essence Spirit Sea City.

But beyond that, this city looked too ordinary. Not to mention that it couldn't compare to a city like Eternal Heaven Starry Sky City. It couldn't even compare to Ocean Gambling City Ning Cheng had entered after stepping into the starry skies.

But as soon as Ning Cheng walked to the gate of the city, he felt an aura more intense than the one he felt at sea. From this, he also understood that the Boundary Essence Spirit Sea City had richer cultivation source.

As cultivators continuously streamed in and out of the city gates, Ning Cheng carefully looked at everyone's cultivation in secret. After observing for a while, he noticed no one below the Celestial Scryer Realm. But at the same time, Ning Cheng also saw many cultivators in the Eternal Realm in this place.

Fortunately, he only saw a few cultivators on the same level as Hong Lun and Ninth Prince, which made Ning Cheng a little relieved. At least in this place, he was still near the top when it came to strength. As for that red-haired expert he saw in the Grand Essence Sea a few days ago, it must have been an accidental encounter.

Looking at these cultivators entering and leaving through the city gate, Ning Cheng also observed that they would usually take out a jade card. However, a few cultivators also took out high-grade starry sky crystals to enter through the city gate. As for Permanent Essence Pills, Ning Cheng didn't see anyone taking them out.

Ning Cheng took out a hundred high-rank starry sky crystals and handed them to the guard before following the crowd into the city.

The Boundary Essence Spirit Sea City truly had a more decadent aura. But it still wasn't nearly enough to sustain cultivation.

But Ning Cheng also noticed a few differences from other cities. After entering the city gate, he didn't see the main street, but a huge public square.

As Ning Cheng's spiritual consciousness casually swept out, he noticed a lot more people on the public square. At the same time, apart from a huge makeshift market on the public square, he also saw many displays with information about teams and other random stuff.

On the edge of this public square, he saw two arc-shaped wide roads, which surrounded the public square and extended into the city behind it.

Ning Cheng walked into a shop within the makeshift market on the public square and squeezed through the various restrictions and array formation to reach the counter. He then said to the store assistant, "Bring me a jade strip with a proper introduction to the Grand Essence Sea and the nearby areas. By the way, do you also have any good cultivation method jade strips?"

The store assistant quickly put aside the cultivator he was attending and came to Ning Cheng with a smile. "What grade of cultivation method does this friend want? Are there any spiritual root attribute requirements? My cultivation method jade strips are much better than other places. If you want to purchase cultivation method jade strips, then coming to me is the right thing to do."

Ning Cheng naturally didn't want to buy cultivation method jade strips to change cultivation methods. He, however, wanted to understand the depths of cultivation in this place. It was just like the time Ning Cheng first stepped into the starry skies and had no understanding about the level of cultivation in the starry skies. It wasn't until he asked Lan Ya did he get a general sense of it.

"I don't care about spiritual root attributes, but to what extent can your highest-level cultivation method take one's cultivation?" Ning Cheng hesitated a bit before asking.

Hearing that Ning Cheng wanted the highest-grade cultivation method, but didn't care about attribute, the store assistant's eyes shone before he switched to a more polite tone. "I have a Dao Sculpting Cultivation Method called Broken Jade Record. This cultivation method can increase the probability of successfully reaching Dao Sculpting Realm....."

While speaking, the store assistant took out a jade box and two jade strips, "These two jade strips come with it."

"Stop blowing steam, who would dare cultivate the Broken Jade Record? Cultivating it would mean setting yourself on the path of death....." Someone in the crowd whispered with disdain, but Ning Cheng heard it.

Ning Cheng had heard the words 'Dao Sculpting' in the past. When Chuan Xinlou had said that he successfully reached Dao Confirming Realm, Ning Ruoqing had ridiculed him as just reaching Dao Sculpting Realm. No, not even a person who reached Dao Sculpting Realm.

From this, Ning Cheng understood that this Dao Sculpting cultivation method most likely wasn't the highest-grade of cultivation method in this place. However, he still asked, "What's the price of this Broken Jade Record?"

“110,000 Spirit Crystals.” the store assistant gave an immediate reply.

Spirit Crystals? Ning Cheng suddenly thought how his Celestial River Flame had now become a Spirit Flame, and immediately thought of the word ‘spirit’[1]. Maybe it had something to do with this place.

“I don’t have spirit crystals; can I use this instead?” Ning Cheng said and took out a starry sky crystal. He had more than tens of millions of these things but had no particular use of them. However, he truly wanted to buy the two jade strips that came with it.

When the store assistant saw the crystal that Ning Cheng took out, his expressions immediately turned ugly and spoke with a cold voice. “Do you really want this buy a cultivation method with this?”

“Yes.” Ning Cheng hesitated but eventually nodded. He originally wanted to take out Permanent Essence Pills. But after mulling over it for some time, Ning Cheng decided against it. At the very least, he wouldn’t take out Permanent Essence Pills before seeing others using it.

The store assistant put away the jade box with the cultivation method as quickly as possible and coldly said to Ning Cheng. “Sorry, we don’t accept such low-level items.”

“Hahaha.....” Bursts of laughter broke out in the store as everyone realised that someone wanted to use low-level crystals to buy the highest-grade cultivation method in this place.

[The Gate Of Good Fortune](#)

Chapter 844: See you later Nalan

“Give me a map of the Grand Essence Ruins.” A thick voice came over, immediately crushing the laughter in the store.

Only after this did Ning Cheng hear the footsteps, “pata, pata.....” as a person walked into the store.

It was a big man with messy hair wearing a ragged hemp robe. He had a gourd hanging from his waist and a huge iron rod on his back. One of the iron rod’s ends looked a bit dark, exuding a strong murderous aura and stench of blood. One could easily imagine the number of souls who died under this iron rod. But what felt even stranger was that this person didn’t wear any shoes and was completely barefoot.

Other people barely would create any sound while walking barefoot. But this person’s footsteps were not only loud but also heavy despite being barefoot.

As Ning Cheng looked at this strong man over two meters in height, the first thought that came to his mind was of Pan Qian. Of course, compared to Pan Qian, this big fellow was nothing at all. But Ning Cheng couldn’t see his cultivation at all. Instead, he seemed to have a different kind of power within him that had nothing to do with celestial essence or spiritual consciousness.

“Okay, one hundred low-rank spirit crystals. It’s the latest map of Grand Essence Ruins in our store. We can guarantee that it’s much more complete than the maps sold elsewhere, and our price is also the cheapest around these parts.” The shop assistant seemed very afraid of this big fellow and quickly took out a jade strip before giving it to him. Even if it was a business of a spirit crystal, the store assistant still had a smile over his face.

The big man nodded, dropped off a crystal, picked up the jade strip, and walked out again with heavy footsteps.

Ning Cheng saw that the crystal the big man dropped off was similar to the one he had used. From this, Ning Cheng speculated that it most likely was a high-rank crystal, which also let him know that one high-rank spirit crystal equalled one hundred low-rank spirit crystals.

After the big man walked out, someone in the shop whispered, "Isn't he Mo? The one who killed an early-stage Eternal martial cultivator[1] with a slap?"

"Of course, it's him. But unlike how he looks, Mo is a pleasant person to talk with, and I don't think he likes to cause trouble. Moreover, he's also a very righteous person. Back then, that person relied on his cultivation to deceive others, but ended up dead under Mo's hand." Someone explained from the side.

"He just brought a map for Grand Essence Ruins. Is he planning to explore it? But he is only a martial cultivator ah."

"What's wrong with being a martial cultivator? He's not the only martial cultivator going to the Grand Essence Ruins. Being a martial cultivator or not isn't important to go to that place. What matters is luck. If you have bad luck, even if you were a second-step Dao Perfection expert, so what? You'll only meet death."

"Haha, stop joking. Why would a Dao Perfection expert go to the Grand Essence Ruins?"

"I'm not joking. Such a thing had truly happened in the past."

.....

Ning Cheng didn't stay in the shop to listen to other people's comments and quickly walked out. Looking around, he quickly found that martial cultivator named Mo and followed him.

Ning Cheng saw Mo walk to the corner of the public square and also walked over. Immediately, he saw Mo take out a pile of spirit crystals and put it on a table. The cultivator sitting at the table put away the spirit crystals and gave Mo a jade card. Mo grabbed the jade card, walked to the side and sat down amongst many other cultivators.

When Mo took out those spirit crystals, Ning Cheng had quickly counted all of it and realised that Mo had taken out ten thousand spirit crystals.

After Mo sat down, a few more people came over to pay spirit crystals and then sat down beside Mo.

Ning Cheng's gaze then fell on a giant screen beside the table. After scanning the contents of the screen, he understood what those actions meant.

All those people had paid spirit crystals here to use a teleportation array. Using the teleportation array, you can then go to either the Grand Essence Ruins or leave the Boundary Essence Sea. Ning Cheng had no idea about the Grand Essence Ruins, but even if he did, he had no spirit crystals.

Not to say ten thousand spirit crystals, Ning Cheng didn't have even one spirit crystal.

After wandering around the public square for a long time and conducting a few inquiries from random cultivators, Ning Cheng gradually started to have a better understanding of this place. This place was the edge of the Grand Essence Realm, and the cultivators here usually ventured into the Grand Essence Sea to search for treasures or hunt demonic beasts.

Because the competition here wasn't too fierce, cultivators enjoyed a bit more security and safety compared to other places. As such, many low-levelled cultivators made this place their home to gain experience.

But the real treasures appeared in Grand Essence Ruins. The Grand Essence Ruins was the most famous ancient ruins within the Grand Essence Realm. This place simply had no end to it, and no one knew if the Grand Essence Ruins truly had a limit to its size. It's because entering the Grand Essence Ruins would put a shackle on one's spiritual consciousness.

But what were these so-called treasures in the Grand Essence Ruins? Ning Cheng asked a few more cultivators, and they could only mention high-grade spirit artefacts, ancient rings, and so on.

As for how to leave Boundary Essence Spirit Sea City, Ning Cheng also asked about it in a veiled manner to several cultivators. The answer he eventually obtained was that one couldn't leave the Boundary Essence Spirit Sea City without a position-tracking jade strip. Moreover, even if you wanted to venture into the Grand Essence Sea, you shouldn't go too far away from it. Otherwise, even with a position-tracking jade strip, you might not be able to find your way back. Once lost in the Grand Essence Sea, you would have no choice but to wait for death.

But if cultivators wanted to leave Boundary Essence Spirit Sea City to other cities, they also had another method. That is, if you had enough spirit crystals, you could take specific airships to your destinations.

Ning Cheng sighed. From the looks of it, he would have to slowly save up and accumulate spirit crystals if he wanted to leave this place. Moreover, the routes out most likely had some forces guarding them; meaning, unless he paid the required spirit crystals, he couldn't leave. It was just like the time Ning Cheng had arrived in Rootless Black City for the first time and had come to know about the different factions controlling the trade routes. It looks like he truly had luck at his side to have met a cultivator who directed him to the Boundary Essence Spirit Sea City.

But unlike others, if he wanted to earn spirit crystals, he didn't need to venture into the Grand Essence Sea. He could just help people refine weapons and artefacts here. As long as he set up a stall on the Boundary Essence Spirit Sea City's public square, he could rake in spirit crystals without much effort.

However, Ning Cheng took things for granted. He had just put up an artefact-crafting stall on a corner of the public square when two cultivators immediately stopped him.

"My friend, you should have just arrived here, right? Otherwise, you should have known that setting up stalls is not allowed here. I'll only remind you now since it's your first time, but if someone else's finds you the second time, they might just take you away." An early-stage Life and Death cultivator pointed to the stall and spoke to Ning Cheng.

"Why?" Ning Cheng asked in doubt. Were there truly restrictions on setting up stalls here?

The cultivator looked at Ning Cheng before speaking with a helpless tone, "You should first go and buy a Boundary Essence Spirit Sea City's guide. Forget it. It doesn't look like you have any spirit crystals. I'll give you one."

After the cultivator finished speaking, he took out a jade strip and handed it to Ning Cheng.

Ning Cheng's spiritual consciousness swept through it and instantly understood many things. To set up an artefact-crafting or alchemy stall within Boundary Essence Spirit Sea City, one needed specific qualification certificates. But these were things only issued by Boundary Essence Spirit Sea City's Artefact-crafting and Alchemy Trade Unions. Moreover, these qualification certificates had a clear hierarchy that showed your artefact-crafting or alchemy proficiency.

But to go to the trade unions and assess one's artefact-crafting or alchemy qualifications would also require large sums of spirit crystals.

"I understand now." Ning Cheng immediately put away his artefact-crafting stall. He wanted to sell a Space Crystal in exchange for spirit crystals, but reason told him that he couldn't do so with his current strength.

"Ning Cheng?" At this moment, a shocked voice came from nearby.

Ning Cheng looked up and saw a pretty and unparalleled face, but gave out a slightly unexpected response, "Nalan Ruxue, why are you here?"

He then saw two men and another woman beside Nalan Ruxue. From the looks of it, the four of them most likely were a group.

"It truly is you." After Nalan Ruxue made sure that it was Ning Cheng, she felt even more surprised. She didn't seem to have heard the plainness in Ning Cheng's tone. However, she also couldn't hide the joy of meeting someone from her home.

"Junior Apprentice Sister Ruxue, who is this person?" A brown-robed man standing next to Nalan Ruxue frowned and asked.

"He's an acquaintance of mine. Senior Apprentice Brother Tao, Senior Apprentice Brother You, Senior Apprentice Sister Siyan, you should go to the merchant house first. I'll join you later after catching up Senior Apprentice Brother Ning." Nalan Ruxue quickly spoke up. She couldn't hide the joy in her eyes.

The brown-robed man showed a slight frown, but he soon replaced it with a smile. "Junior Apprentice Sister Ruxue, that's out of the question. Your friend is our friend too. Let's go to a restaurant together. You can invite your friend too. This time, I will be the host."

Nalan Ruxue saw the stall Ning Cheng had just put away and understood that Ning Cheng might not have many spirit crystals on him. Therefore, after hearing those words, she quickly looked at Ning Cheng and asked, "Senior Apprentice Brother Ning Cheng, why don't you come and sit with us? Senior Apprentice Brother Tao Xing, Senior Apprentice Brother You Cheng and Senior Apprentice Sister Li Siyan are all my friends. If you want, you can also decide to join us. That way, everyone can take care of each other."

“No need. You can go with them; I’m leaving anyway.” Ning Cheng put the things into his ring, turned around and started to walk away. Nalan Ruxue had made a ‘special’ trip to the Rainbowfall Sword Sect to apologise to him. Although he didn’t care about the past, he never thought of becoming friends with people like Nalan Ruxue either.

Nalan Ruxue had a late-stage Heaven’s Mandate cultivation. But Tao Xing and Yue Cheng were at middle and late-stage Heaven Seated Realm. Even Li Siyan was an early-stage Heaven Seated cultivator. But even if Ning Cheng had Heaven’s Mandate cultivation, he would never team up with these three cultivators who had much higher cultivation than him.

Seeing Ning Cheng turn around to leave, Nalan Ruxue’s eyes flashed with sadness. But she still called out, “Senior Apprentice Brother Ning, do you know that Senior Apprentice Sister Yan Ji is still looking for you?”

“Yan Ji?” Ning Cheng suddenly stopped and asked with joy, “Did you meet with Yan Ji? Where is she?”

Seeing Ning Cheng’s rapid change in expression, Nalan Ruxue felt even sadder. She hesitated a bit before speaking, “I’ll tell you about it later, if....”

Ning Cheng immediately understood that Nalan Ruxue wanted to speak to him alone. He was just about to ask Nalan Ruxue to leave with him when that brown-robed cultivator standing next to her spoke up again. “Junior Apprentice Sister Ruxue, why don’t we all go to Essence Sea Restaurant together?”

Nalan Ruxue looked at Ning Cheng with a little embarrassment. Her gaze indicated her intent to invite Ning Cheng over.

Ning Cheng felt it a little strange. One could say that he knew a bit about Nalan Ruxue’s character and temperament. She didn’t like to do anything with male cultivators. Yet, he didn’t expect her to care about the words of this male cultivator called Tao Xing to such an extent.

But Ning Cheng also wanted to know where Yan Ji went and didn’t hesitate, “Okay, then let’s sit down for a bit.”

Hearing Ning Cheng agreeing, Nalan Ruxue felt overjoyed. Tao Xing also spoke to Ning Cheng, “Junior Apprentice Brother Ning, you don’t have to act restrained around us. Don’t worry. You’ll get used to things once you start living here. Let’s create a team together and take care of each other.”

Ning Cheng didn’t answer this brown-robed cultivator’s words. It was just an intuition, but he didn’t trust this Tao Xing.

[The Gate Of Good Fortune](#)

Chapter 845: Going to Grand Essence Ruins

Walking into the Essence Sea Restaurant, Ning Cheng almost wanted to stay here and cultivate. Since coming to this place, the surrounding Essence Qi remained very thin, almost non-existent. But stepping into this restaurant, he could immediately feel a slightly richer Essence Qi.

As the fragrance wafted through the restaurant, Ning Cheng’s gaze immediately moved towards the other cultivators feasting inside and once again started to feel hungry. Plates of steaming and fragrant meats from various sea demons, as well as spiritual fruits and grasses cooked with multiple herbs, made

people want to eat plate after plate after just looking at it. From this, one could tell that the chefs in this restaurant knew what they were doing and were also very skilled at their craft.

Ning Cheng rubbed his nose out of helplessness. Even he had forgotten how long ago he went to a restaurant for dinner. But as he thought about coming to a restaurant, Ning Cheng also couldn't help but think of Tian Muwan.

If anyone had accompanied him to a restaurant, it was Tian Muwan. But at that time, his wallet wasn't loaded, which meant that he could only take Tian Muwan to cheap, fly-infested eateries. Thinking of all those things, Ning Cheng once again lamented how a small misunderstanding had completely changed Tian Muwan. Because of that misunderstanding, Tian Muwan, who willingly came with him to those fly-infested eateries, decided to sever all ties with him.

As soon as the five people entered the restaurant, the restaurant's waiter greeted them, "Several guests, would you like a booth, or do you want to....."

Without waiting for the waiter to finish, Li Siyan waved her hand and said, "We just came to eat a few things, no need for a booth."

Seeing that Tao Xing did not comment, Ning Cheng understood that this fellow most likely didn't have too much money.

After the five sat down, the waiter then brought over the menu. Ning Cheng's spiritual consciousness scanned the menu and felt surprised that this place had quite a high price for each dish. Even the least expensive items had a dozen spirit crystals as the listed price. The slightly better plates cost hundreds of spirit crystals. He even saw a few items priced at several thousand spirit crystals. Ning Cheng also found that these prices were all in high-rank spirit crystals.

"Spirit-fired Ground Eagle's tongue, roasted Starless Flower Rabbit's paw, stewed Phoenix Ferry Buds....."

Tao Xing ordered more than ten dishes before passing the menu to Nalan Ruxue. "Junior Apprentice Sister Ruxue, you can also order a few."

Nalan Ruxue hurriedly waved her hand and said, "That's alright. I'm already very grateful for Senior Apprentice Brother Tao helping me out and even inviting us here to eat. Besides, I've never thought to come to this place, let alone come here to eat."

Nalan Ruxue didn't say anything false. The prices of Essence Sea Restaurant went beyond her pocket. Even in the past, she and Yan Ji only ate in small and cheap restaurants, and would never come to such a place.

Tao Xing, seeing Nalan Ruxue decline, passed the menu to Ning Cheng with the same polite words. Ning Cheng already knew that Tao Xing had seen him go through the menu before and understood that he wanted to put up an act of politeness.

"No need. I don't care much about food." Ning Cheng gave a flat-out refusal.

Tao Xing's eyes flashed with a hint of unhappiness. In his opinion, since Ning Cheng and Nalan Ruxue were friends, it meant that his cultivation would also not be too high. But now, Ning Cheng showed no respect to him, and even spoke with an ordinary tone.

After taking a few more orders from Yue Cheng and Li Siyan, the waiter then took away the menus.

Ning Cheng noticed that the dishes Tao Xing ordered were relatively average in price. Even the most expensive one was just a bit over a hundred spirit crystals. All the plates didn't add up to more than 1,000 spirit crystals.

The server brought the dishes quickly, and they truly looked delicious with the rich Essence Qi oozing out of it. One would immediately realise that eating those dishes would not only fill your stomach but also improve your cultivation.

"Senior Apprentice Brother Ning, have a bite." Nalan Ruxue didn't forget about Ning Cheng and immediately spoke up.

Tao Xing also smiled and said, "Yes, Junior Apprentice Brother Ning, you're welcome to help yourself. Say, have you come to this place before? It's hard for rogue cultivators like us to come here for a meal. The prices here are not something many people can afford. Sure, the roasted Starless Flower Rabbit's paw is the most expensive dish here. But it's more suited to Junior Apprentice Sister Ruxue and Junior Apprentice Sister Siyan's taste. Let them have it. We'll eat something else."

Ning Cheng was going to fork a piece of Starless Flower Rabbit's paw, but when he heard Tao Xing's words, he suddenly felt irritated. His words indirectly implied that Ning Cheng came here to scrounge off them. From the looks of it, he should have already seen Ning Cheng reaching for the Starless Flower Rabbit and spoke those words purposefully.

"Waiter, come here." Ning Cheng put down the fork in his hand and called the server.

"Pardon the intrusion, can you let me know what else you need?" The server immediately came up.

Ning Cheng took out a pot of wine and handed it to the server and said, "Go and show it to your boss and let me know how many spirit crystals he will give me in exchange for this pot."

"Yes." The server quickly picked up the pot and walked away.

Seeing Ning Cheng not eating anything, Nalan Ruxue also felt a little embarrassed. She couldn't decide whether to start eating or not.

"Junior Apprentice Sister Ruxue, you don't have to be so polite. Please ask your friend to dive in and eat." Tao Xing and the others had already started.

But in just the next moment, the server brought an eager-looking middle-aged male cultivator to their table.

"This Dao Friend, please excuse my intrusion, but is that pot of wine yours?" The middle-aged male cultivator came up to Ning Cheng and spoke with cupped fists. Even his tone was of a very polite one.

Ning Cheng nodded, "Yes, it's mine. I got that pot from a friend. I've kept it with me for many years but wasn't willing to drink it. I just happened to have an eye on a few of your restaurant's dishes today and wanted to taste them, which is why I took it out."

Hearing what Ning Cheng just said, the middle-aged male cultivator immediately felt disappointed. Ning Cheng's words implied that he only had that one pot. Regardless, he still took out a storage bag and handed it to Ning Cheng. "This contained 10,000 high-grade spirit crystals, and we will also give this dao friend a pick of five of our dishes, as long as it doesn't exceed 10,000 spirit crystals in value...."

Ning Cheng understood from the look on this male cultivator's face that he had no plans of returning the pot of None-to-depend-on Wine. In any case, since Ning Cheng had taken it out, he didn't plan on taking it back. It was just a pot of the real top-rank None-to-depend-on Wine; he still had more than half a barrel of it in his ring.

"Sure. Help me add a few dishes to the table, then ground-fire stewed golden ox-tail, spirit spring stripped Rain Pomegranate....."

Ning Cheng ordered five dishes in one go. Even the cheapest of those five costs more than a thousand spirit crystals. The five plates, however, roughly totalled 10,000 spirit crystals.

Seeing Tao Xing's disbelieving stare, Nalan Ruxue pursed her mouth. Ning Cheng was still the same Ning Cheng, even after so many years, nothing had changed within him.

The waiter quickly brought the five dishes, and Ning Cheng grabbed his fork once again and said, "Now we can eat."

Biting down on a piece of spirit spring-skinned Rain Pomegranate, Ning Cheng could acutely feel the concentrated Spiritual Qi dissolving into his mouth. Ning Cheng sighed while refining it. No wonder so many people willingly came here to eat. These dishes not only filled one's stomach but also helped in improving one's cultivation. Moreover, Ning Cheng had a vague feeling that after going through this course, he might even advance to the middle-stage Eternal Realm.

Tao Xing, seeing Ning Cheng order several dishes that were more than ten times the price of his, didn't continue with his antics. Even though he felt upset, he couldn't just look for even rarer and more expensive dishes to eat when he couldn't even afford it.

Although these people also wanted to have a taste of those dishes that cost several thousand spirit crystals, Ning Cheng hadn't even bothered to ask Tao Xing and the others. At the same time, Tao Xing and the others also felt quite embarrassed to ask for a bite out of the dishes ordered by Ning Cheng.

As for Nalan Ruxue, just a few spoonfuls of spirit spring-stripped Rain Pomegranates had saturated her to the limit, and she couldn't even look at the other dishes. Tao Xing wanted Nalan Ruxue to have a taste of his dishes. But unfortunately, the dishes he ordered couldn't even compare to that of Ning Cheng.

It wasn't until everyone finished their dishes that Tao Xing finally breathed a sigh of relief.

After eating those dishes, Ning Cheng started to feel even more clearly that he was about to break through to the middle-stage Eternal Realm. Therefore, after talking with Nalan Ruxue, he decided to look for a place to break through immediately.

“Junior Apprentice Brother Ning, what kind of wine was in your pot? How was it worth 20,000 spirit crystals?” After the server took away the dirty plates, You Cheng, who was a late-stage Heaven Seated cultivator, couldn’t help but ask.

“It was given to me by a friend, but I didn’t think it would be so valuable.” After Ning Cheng answered the question, he stood up and looked at Nalan Ruxue.

But before Nalan Ruxue stood up, Tao Xing quickly said. “Junior Apprentice Brother Ning, three days from now, we plan on forming a team to explore the Scarlet Branch Island. I heard that someone found Wood Origin Crystals there....”

Ning Cheng initially had no interest in teaming up with these people. But when heard the words ‘Wood Origin Crystals’, it immediately caught his interest. Wood Origin Crystals were a good thing for him. Moreover, Wood Origin Crystals were also the best treasure for evolving the Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan.

Nalan Ruxue thought that Ning Cheng would refuse without hesitation. But then she heard Ning Cheng’s reply, “Okay, after these three days, I will team up with you to go to Scarlet Branch Island. I’ll be leaving now.....”

“Senior Apprentice Brother Tao, Senior Apprentice Brother You, Senior Apprentice Sister Siyan. Me and Senior Apprentice Brother Ning have some catching up to do. I will come to look for you when it’s time.” When Nalan Ruxue saw Ning Cheng walk away, she also stood up and walked out of the restaurant after saying those words.

Tao Xing looked at Ning Cheng’s back and murmured to himself, “This person can take out a pot of wine worth 20,000 spirit crystals, and even squander it like this. It seems he’s not someone simple.”

You Cheng showed a slight smile, “Simple or not; we’ll find out in a few days.”

.....

Nalan Ruxue guided Ning Cheng around the public square and entered the Boundary Essence Spirit Sea City. The two walked for more than an hour before they arrived at a simple residential area.

“This is the place where Senior Apprentice Sister Yan Ji and I live. Since Senior Apprentice Sister Yan Ji left, I live here alone.” Nalan Ruxue led Ning Cheng to a cave on the outskirts before taking out a jade card to open the cave’s defensive restrictions.

After walking into the cave, Ning Cheng immediately understood why Nalan Ruxue had to go out and team up with others. The Essence Qi in this place couldn’t even compare to the Boundary Essence Restaurant. Cultivating in this place would only produce slightly better results than the street outside. However, the biggest gain wasn’t in cultivation, but in having a place to live.

The cave couldn’t be any simpler. The entrance of the cave only had an open space about three feet in radius, with only a few weeds and grasses growing around the area.

Walking into the cave, he saw only two chambers.

After bringing Ning Cheng into her room and sitting down, Nalan Ruxue spoke up. “Yan Ji and I have been cultivating here since we reached this place from Thorn Tooth Lake’s teleportation array....”

“Wait-Wait.....” Ning Cheng interrupted Nalan Ruxue, “You said you and Yan Ji came here from the teleportation array under the Thorn Tooth Lake?”

When Nalan Ruxue heard Ning Cheng’s words, she understood that Ning Cheng also knew about the teleportation array. She quickly spoke about everything that had happened since then. From her words, Ning Cheng also understood that Yan Ji had broken through the shackles of Heaven’s Mandate Realm and advanced to the Heaven Seated Realm. Later, she went to explore the Grand Essence Ruins.

After hearing Nalan Ruxue’s words, Ning Cheng frowned and asked. “Since Yan Ji advanced to the Heaven Seated Realm, why didn’t she go back using the original teleportation formation, and instead go to the Grand Essence Ruins?”

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Chapter 846: Dao Confirming’s Three Steps

“When we reached this place, we immediately removed some of the teleportation array’s components. However, we couldn’t put it back together. Even when we forced those components into place, we couldn’t activate the teleportation array.” Nalan Ruxue spoke with a low voice.

Ning Cheng shook his head in secret. The grade of that teleportation array was just outrageous. Without that heaven-defying array pattern, even he couldn’t have activated the teleportation array under Thorn Tooth Lake. Moreover, even after he used the array pattern, the one-way activation of the teleportation array wasn’t a perfect one. It was also the main reason why he barely survived the teleportation. Replaced by anyone else, those infinite spacial transformations would have ripped their bodies apart.

But now he understood that it most likely happened because Yan Ji had removed some of the components of the teleportation array. Not to mention that Nalan Ruxue and Yan Ji couldn’t reinstall it. Even with his proficiency in array formations, Ning Cheng would have also found it next to impossible to install them right away. Dismantling those components most likely broke the Laws of Space links binding the teleportation array. As long as one’s proficiency in the Dao of Arrays hasn’t reached a prerequisite level, re-integration of those components would remain an impossible endeavour.

It would remain non-functional unless the components that Yan Ji removed had no relation to the Laws of Space links. However, such a scenario wasn’t possible at all. If the parts that Yan Ji removed had nothing to do with the Laws of Space links, then she and Nalan Ruxue would have teleported away from here a long time ago.

“We realised that we couldn’t restore the teleportation array. Understanding that, Senior Apprentice Sister Yan Ji speculated that our attainments in the Dao of Arrays were just too bad. We tried to push ourselves to learn the Dao of Arrays, but how could it be easy to learn the Dao of Arrays? Moreover, high-grade teleportation arrays also involved understanding the Laws of Space. Therefore, to comprehend these high-grade laws, Senior Apprentice Sister Yan Ji decided to go to the Grand Essence Ruins. We heard that one could find countless law-related spirit techniques and treasures within Grand Essence Ruins, and it’s also the best place for cultivating around here.” Nalan Ruxue sighed.

“Then, why didn’t you go?” Ning Cheng, hearing Yan Ji’s reasoning for going to the Grand Essence Ruins, understood that it was still in line with her stubborn character. Yan Ji truly had a determined heart and

tenacious personality. But people like her usually relied on themselves for everything and didn't like asking for help.

Nalan Ruxue lowered her head, "It takes nearly 100,000 spirit crystals to reach the Grand Essence Ruins. Yan Ji and I had to venture through the surrounding areas for many years before we barely managed to save 200,000 spirit crystals. It was only because of a lucky encounter where we obtained a high-level[1] divine grass[2], the Asura Heavenly Ginseng. It fetched a high price on the market...."

Ning Cheng finally understood. From the looks of it, Yan Ji and Nalan Ruxue jointly gathered the travel expenses to let Yan Ji go to the Grand Essence Ruins. But he asked with some doubts, "I observed the people waiting on the public square for the airships that would take them to Grand Essence Ruins. But it seems that they only had to pay 10,000 high-grade spirit crystals."

Nalan Ruxue shook her head and said, "Those airships won't take you to the Grand Essence Ruins, but to a location with many teleportation arrays. The cultivators who get off the airships would have to use the teleportation array to reach the Grand Essence Ruins. They can also teleport to other places. For reaching the Grand Essence Ruins, it would require somewhere around 80,000 high-rank spirit crystals. Without enough spirit crystals, you'll neither be able to move forward or backwards from that place."

After a slight pause, Nalan Ruxue continued, "My cultivation is a little lower, not yet reaching Heaven Seated Realm. Therefore, I decided to stay here, as it's a little safer. I usually team up with some people to look for some resources near the Boundary Essence Spirit Sea City. But the speed of collecting spirit crystals is just too slow."

"Half a month ago, when my teammates and I hunted for sea demons, Senior Apprentice Brother Tao's group of three passed by and helped us once. After returning to Boundary Essence Spirit Sea City, Senior Apprentice Brother Tao Xing and the others invited me to join their team. They explained that they usually explored areas farther away in the sea and that it would also translate into a larger share. So, I agreed. We were about to head into the sea in a few days when I met you today."

When Ning Cheng heard about all this, he understood that Nalan Ruxue had truly changed a lot. Before this change, even if someone tried to help her, she would have only thanked them at best but would never agree to team up with others.

Seeing Ning Cheng show a slight frown, and not speaking for a long time, Nalan Ruxue called out with some uneasiness, "Senior Apprentice Brother Ning...."

"Yeah." Ning Cheng thought about it for a while before asking, "Nalan, you only have Heaven's Mandate cultivation, so why do you want to team up with three Heaven Seated experts?"

Hearing Ning Cheng call out to her by her surname Nalan, Nalan Ruxue felt a little sad. But after listening to Ning Cheng's words, she suddenly raised her head and asked in confusion. "Senior Apprentice Brother Tao Xing and others have Heaven's Mandate cultivation, why do you say that they are in the Heaven Seated Realm?"

Were they all in Heaven's Mandate Realm? Ning Cheng froze for a moment before realising something. He was an Eternal-level expert, which meant that Tao Xing's trio naturally couldn't hide their cultivation from his eyes. But Nalan Ruxue had Heaven's Mandate cultivation. With those three having cultivation much higher than her, in Heaven Seated Realm, it was just too simple to hide it from her.

It was just like how Tao Xing's trio couldn't see his cultivation at all, which was the truth.

Ning Cheng said, "I'm not wrong. Tao Xing, You Cheng, and Li Siyan all have Heaven Seated cultivation. Anyone can kill you in an instant."

Nalan Ruxue's expressions changed drastically. It took some time for her to return to senses before she bowed to Ning Cheng and said, "Many thanks, Senior Apprentice Brother Ning. I now understand what's going on."

As a team of three Heaven Seated cultivators, why would they try to team up with her, who was just a cultivator in Heaven's Mandate Realm? When a team goes out to hunt for treasures, it's usually a dangerous affair. Therefore, people would usually seek out individuals of similar strength to create their teams. Nalan Ruxue was only a cultivator in Heaven's Mandate Realm. Teaming up with three other Heaven Seated cultivators, what help could she provide them? Since she couldn't help her teammates, it meant that they had brought her on-board for a different reason.

"Nalan....." Ning Cheng noticed the lonely look on Nalan Ruxue's face and wanted to comfort her a bit.

But Nalan Ruxue suddenly interrupted Ning Cheng's words, "Senior Apprentice Brother Ning, Nalan sounds a bit awkward, just call me Ruxue. I was born in a big sect and grew up in it. But despite having outstanding qualifications, I developed an arrogant personality and looked down on everyone. But all these years of fighting and struggling on the outside made me understand the bitter truth. Senior Apprentice Brother Ning looks down on me, I understand it too....."

"Junior Apprentice Sister Ruxue, do you still have the components you took from the teleportation array?" Ning Cheng could see that Nalan Ruxue had started to venture into an aggrieved and self-loathing state and quickly changed the topic. He truly didn't look down on Nalan Ruxue. It's just that he didn't want to be friends with people like Nalan.

If he didn't happen to have a talisman back then, Nalan Ruxue's master would have already killed him. Even when he got stuck in Law's Way, Nalan Ruxue still used him behind his back. Even if Ning Cheng no longer cared about such things, he didn't want to have too much involvement with people like Nalan Ruxue.

If Nalan Ruxue's temperament hadn't significantly changed from before, then even if Ning Cheng wanted to know about Yan Ji's whereabouts, he wouldn't want to talk to her.

"Yes." Nalan Ruxue quickly took out a storage bag and handed it to Ning Cheng. "It also has a jade strip with directions leading to the teleportation array."

Ning Cheng's spiritual consciousness fell on the storage bag. As an Array Dao Master, he quickly understood with a sweep of his spiritual consciousness that the components inside the storage bag were truly the main parts of the teleportation array. Moreover, after experiencing the array in Thorn Tooth Lake, Ning Cheng understood that without the help of that high-grade array pattern, he couldn't restore this side's array with these things.

Seeing Ning Cheng wishing to return these things to her, Nalan Ruxue quickly spoke up, "Senior Apprentice Brother Ning. It would be better to keep those components with you. I'm not familiar with array formations anyway."

“Okay.” Ning Cheng didn’t refuse. With these things on him, it would simplify things a lot when he wants to return in the future. He couldn’t re-integrate these teleportation array components right now, but that didn’t mean that he couldn’t install them in the future.

Seeing Ning Cheng put away the components of the teleportation array, Nalan Ruxue’s mood immediately improved by a bit. “Senior Apprentice Brother Ning, Tao Xing and the others want us to go to Scarlet Branch Island. Why don’t we find an excuse to not go with them?”

“Does this Scarlet Branch Island truly have Wood Origin Crystals?” Ning Cheng asked.

Nalan Ruxue nodded, “Many people already know about it. However, only a very few cultivators have managed to find Wood Origin Crystals in Scarlet Branch Island.”

“Then, why wouldn’t we go?” Ning Cheng spoke with certainty. As long as that place had even a single Wood Origin Crystal, he would naturally make a trip to that place. As for those three Heaven Seated cultivators, they were just ants in his eyes.

“Ah...” Nalan Ruxue looked at Ning Cheng suspiciously. Knowing that Tao Xing’s trio were all Heaven Seated experts, why would he still want to team up with them? Did Ning Cheng also advance to the Heaven Seated Realm? But it’s not like it’s an impossible matter either. Ning Cheng’s talent in cultivation didn’t lose out to Yan Ji, and since Yan Ji had reached Heaven Seated Realm why couldn’t Ning Cheng not reach Heaven Seated Realm?

Ning Cheng didn’t explain the reason but instead asked. “Junior Apprentice Sister Ruxue, I already know that the Grand Essence Realm is a higher grade positional plane than our four grand starry skies. Do you know what the highest level of cultivation is in this place?”

After asking, Ning Cheng looked at Nalan Ruxue with a slightly manic look. After seeing that red-haired powerhouse in the Grand Essence Sea, he understood that his strength wasn’t worth much in this place. But he still wanted to know where he stood.

Nalan Ruxue spoke with some caution, “Previously, I used to think that reaching the full-circle of Eternal Realm was the peak. But after coming here, I understood that even reaching the full-circle of the Eternal Realm didn’t mean anything, not even opening the door to true cultivation.”

Ning Cheng had already prepared himself for it, but after hearing this, he still felt a bit depressed. He had cultivated till now, yet he still hadn’t even opened the door of cultivation.

Nalan Ruxue took a deep breath, “I heard that in the Grand Essence Realm, only cultivators who reached the Dao Confirming Realm could barely count as powerhouses.”

“Dao Confirming? Is it a Dao Sculpting Powerhouse?” Ning Cheng asked with a quiet voice.

Nalan Ruxue shook her head, “No. Dao Sculpting just means that you just entered the first step of Dao Confirming Realm. I heard that Dao Confirming had three steps.”

“What three steps?” Ning Cheng asked with an eager tone.

Standing opposite to him, Nalan Ruxue could feel Ning Cheng’s eagerness. It felt as if she had become invisible, yet the most important thing to him. When she had learned about the Dao Confirming’s three steps, she wasn’t this eager to know about it, was she?

“The first step of Dao Confirming consists of Dao Sculpting, Dao Raising and Dao Transformation....”

Before Nalan Ruxue finished speaking, Ning Cheng interrupted her again, “So, Dao Sculpting is just the initial level in the first step of Dao Confirming?”

Nalan Ruxue made an ‘en’ sound, “Yes, a Dao Raising expert had once visited Boundary Essence Spirit Sea City, and I managed to get a look from a distance.”

“What about the second step?” When Ning Cheng heard about Dao Confirming’s three steps, he felt even more excited in his heart. He had the Mysterious Yellow Bead. But even without it, he believed that one day, he would reach the peak of the third step.

“I heard that only after transforming your dao into essence can you successfully move onto the second step. The second step of Dao Confirming consists of Dao Essence, Dao Fusion and Dao Perfection.....”

Upon hearing this, Ning Cheng suddenly recalled what he had heard in that store before. Something about a Dao Perfection powerhouse who went to the Grand Essence Ruins. If even a Dao Perfection powerhouse was only the second step, just how strong was the third step?

Seeing Ning Cheng’s intense gaze, Nalan Ruxue’s heart trembled, and she quickly sobered up. She understood that Ning Cheng’s look wasn’t for her, but for the third step of Dao Confirming Realm.

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Chapter 847: Nalan’s Advancemen

Seeing that Nalan Ruxue hadn’t spoken in a long time, Ning Cheng couldn’t help but ask again. “Junior Apprentice Sister Ruxue, what is the third step in Dao Confirming?”

Nalan Ruxue tried to calm him down and even eased her tone before speaking, “I have heard of two sayings. First, there is no third step. Second, the laws of Grand Essence Realm are incomplete. As such, the highest level of cultivation here is Dao Perfection, which also means that no one knows about the specific level within the third step of Dao Confirming Realm.”

Ning Cheng stood up, “I see, thank you for telling me all this. It looks like we truly are ants.”

Ning Cheng didn’t know what step of Dao Confirming’s three steps that red-haired cultivator had reached. However, Ning Cheng felt sure that he couldn’t survive a single move from that guy even if he went all out.

“Senior Apprentice Brother Ning those Dao Confirming powerhouses wouldn’t usually come out. Moreover, they all live in the most stable parts of Grand Essence Realm, where the laws are more complete. In a remote corner like Boundary Essence Spirit Sea City, you would rarely, if ever, find such people. Moreover, the Boundary Essence Spirit Sea City prohibits fighting within its borders. Therefore, as long as we stay here in seclusion, we would remain safe. Even Tao Xing wouldn’t dare find trouble with us inside the city.” Nalan Ruxue saw Ning Cheng standing up and immediately thought that Ning Cheng wanted to leave. Therefore, she quickly explained a few more things.

Stay here in seclusion? Even if Tao Xing didn’t come, the Spiritual Qi in this place was just too thin. *What would be the point of it?*

“How long have you been in Heaven’s Mandate Realm?” Ning Cheng suddenly asked.

Hearing Ning Cheng asking about her cultivation, Nalan Ruxue's face turned a bit red. But thinking about how she was just a hair away from the Heaven Seated Realm, it immediately made her more excited.

"It's been more than a year. But I've been saving up spirit crystals. As long as I accumulate roughly 100,000 spirit crystals, I can then purchase medicinal pills to advance to the Heaven Seated Realm. Once I advance to the Heaven Seated Realm, I would then have access to more places to explore in the sea, and would be able to gather 100,000 spirit crystals even faster."

"Is it so easy to advance to Heaven Seated Realm here?" Ning Cheng asked suspiciously. One had to know that in Culmination Grand Starry Sky, an Accordance Heavenly Pill wasn't something cheap. However, it was also not something impossible to buy.

Nalan Ruxue gave an 'en' sound, "This place is a lot better than where we come from, you can buy any type of medicinal pills, as long as you have enough spirit crystals. Last time, Senior Apprentice Sister Yan Ji and I found an Asura Heavenly Ginseng and sold it for 160,000 spirit crystals. It allowed us to purchase an Accordance Heavenly Pill for Senior Apprentice Sister Yan Ji."

"I see. You're coming with me now." Ning Cheng decided to help Nalan Ruxue advance to the Heaven Seated Realm out of gratitude.

"Where are we going?" Nalan Ruxue, for some reason, held absolute trust in Ning Cheng. However, she also knew that Ning Cheng should have just arrived here, and wasn't too familiar with the place yet.

"To find a place for you to advance to the Heaven Seated Realm."

"Ah...."

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After Ning Cheng left Boundary Essence Spirit Sea City with Nalan Ruxue, they immediately headed deep into the Grand Essence Sea. It wasn't before they were at least ten thousand miles away from the Boundary Essence Spirit Sea City that they finally stopped on a reef.

"Senior Apprentice Brother Ning, is this place suitable to advance to the Heaven Seated Realm?" Nalan Ruxue looked at Ning Cheng in doubt. She still felt a bit dazed from the time Ning Cheng spoke about her advancement to the Heaven Seated Realm.

Ning Cheng took out a jade bottle and handed it to Nalan Ruxue. "That's right. There are two Accordance Heavenly Pills in it. I will arrange a Spiritual Gathering Array for you now, and then you can attempt to advance to the Heaven Seated Realm."

Just in case, Ning Cheng had specifically given two Accordance Heavenly Pills to Nalan Ruxue. To him, things like Accordance Heavenly Pills simply had no use at all. Meaning, even if Nalan Ruxue didn't need it, he would have still taken out the bottles with Accordance Heavenly Pills to sell. That way, he could raise enough spirit crystals required to go to the Grand Essence Ruins and then go to the Grand Essence Ruins.

Nalan Ruxue took the jade bottle with trembling hands. As her spiritual consciousness swept into it, she saw two Accordance Heavenly Pills. Not only were they Accordance Heavenly Pills, but both of those pills were of top-quality.

Seeing Ning Cheng starting to set up the Spiritual Gathering Array, Nalan Ruxue didn't question Ning Cheng. She now began to have a better understanding of Ning Cheng. Regardless of the place or time, Ning Cheng seemed to be an expert in every field.

When she and a group of geniuses first arrived at Tian Continent, they had heard of how Ning Cheng had already set up his prestige in the Tian Continent. Moreover, he later even became the Sect Master of Rainbowfall Sword Sect, one of the top ten forces of the Tian Continent. Now Ning Cheng had given her two top-quality Accordance Heavenly Pills. Feats that appeared incredible and extraordinary for the general populace now felt quite ordinary when it came to Ning Cheng.

Nalan Ruxue had already reached the full-circle of Heaven's Mandate Realm a long time ago. It's just that the lack of resources had held her back. Now, with the help of Ning Cheng's Spiritual Gathering Array and the Permanent Essence Pills and Accordance Heavenly Pills, she quickly attracted the thunder tribulation.

Ning Cheng noticed that Nalan Ruxue's Heaven Seated Thunder Tribulation was a lot weaker than his Heaven Seated Thunder Tribulation. But even so, after facing five waves of thunder tribulation arcs, Nalan Ruxue's robes had already disintegrated.

Ning Cheng didn't continue to watch Nalan Ruxue surmount her tribulation. In any case, Nalan Ruxue should be able to pass the Heaven Seated Thunder Tribulation safely.

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Nalan Ruxue had never had such fun during cultivation. Even when she was at Thoughtless Academy, she had never experienced such joy. Endless Essence Qi from the Permanent Essence Pills in front gathered around her continuously before pouring into her.

She suddenly felt the crazy influx of celestial essence in her body and also the near-infinite expansion of her spiritual consciousness. From this, Nalan Ruxue understood that she had successfully advanced to the Heaven Seated Realm.

When the thunder tribulation finally dissipated, Nalan Ruxue quickly washed her body and put on a set of clean clothes. Only then did she have the chance to see what Ning Cheng was doing.

Seeing that Ning Cheng had gone into a secluded retreat in a temporary cave at one side, Nalan Ruxue didn't bother him and continued to stabilise her cultivation. She still had too many Permanent Essence Pills here, which meant that stabilising her cultivation was the most suitable choice right now.

Ning Cheng already knew about Nalan Ruxue successfully surmounting the thunder tribulation and reaching the Heaven Seated Realm. However, Ning Cheng didn't come out. Before coming here, he already was at the full-circle of the early-stage Eternal Realm. But after eating that meal in Essence Sea Restaurant, Ning Cheng had reached the tipping point of a breakthrough to the middle-stage Eternal Realm. Plus, he also had 10,000 spirit crystals with him, along with the Spiritual Gathering Array he arranged along with a vast stash of Permanent Essence Pills. Therefore, advancing to the middle-stage Eternal Realm was just a matter of time.

Feeling the surging celestial essence and his Sea of Consciousness expanding to another level, Ning Cheng felt delighted. The higher his cultivation rose, even a minor advancement would make a big

difference to him. Moreover, his celestial essence has not yet transformed into spirit essence. Once converted, his cultivation would become twice as powerful as now.

However, Ning Cheng didn't intend to force the transformation right now. He currently had only a few thousand spirit crystals, which most likely weren't enough. Moreover, his cultivation required an insane amount of resources. Therefore, if he wanted to transform his celestial essence into spirit essence fully, he would need a large supply of spirit crystals. Moreover, it would best if he prepared all the resources beforehand, then initiate and complete the transformation in one go.

Seeing Ning Cheng coming out and putting away the temporary came, Nalan Ruxue also quickly stood up.

"Congratulations on your successful promotion to the Heaven Seated Realm." Ning Cheng saw Nalan Ruxue coming over and said with a smile.

Nalan Ruxue didn't inquire about Ning Cheng's cultivation. She felt sure that Ning Cheng's cultivation had already exceeded hers by a large margin.

"Many thanks, Senior Apprentice Brother Ning. Otherwise, even if I wanted to advance to the Heaven Seated Realm, it would have taken some time." Nalan Ruxue understood that the only reason she could advance to the Heaven Seated Realm was due to Ning Cheng's blessing.

"Take the Permanent Essence Pills here and keep it for future cultivation. We've been here for almost three days. I think Tao Xing and his group might be turning a little impatient." Ning Cheng nodded and said. Nalan Ruxue's talents and qualifications were indeed quite high. Although he was faster at cultivation compared to Nalan, it was only because the Mysterious Yellow Bead continuously scoured his spiritual roots. As for Nalan Ruxue, she was born with a strong aptitude to cultivation and innate talents.

Nalan Ruxue also didn't act in politeness. She had just advanced to the Heaven Seated Realm, and Permanent Essence Pills were currently the best-suited cultivation resource for her. Ning Cheng had arranged the Spiritual Gathering Array with the help of Permanent Essence Pills. But she had only managed to use a portion of them, while most of it remained untouched, adding up to nearly ten million. So many Permanent Essence Pills were more than enough for her for the time being.

"Oh, one more thing. Do the cultivators here all cultivate using spirit essence?" Ning Cheng had pondered over transforming his celestial essence into spirit essence during the retreat and decided to ask about it.

Nalan Ruxue froze for a moment before shaking her head. "No, I heard that only cultivators who reached Dao Confirming Realm could slowly start converting celestial essence and transform it into spirit essence."

Can only convert it after reaching Dao Confirming? Ning Cheng felt puzzled. If he had enough spirit crystals, he felt sure that he could finish the transformation to spirit essence right now. But he was still far from reaching Dao Confirming.

"Let's go. It's time to head back to Boundary Essence Spirit Sea City." Ning Cheng realised that his problem wasn't something that Nalan Ruxue could solve. He can try to find out about it later.

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Ning Cheng and Nalan Ruxue had just arrived at Boundary Essence Spirit Sea City when they met Tao Xing's anxious group of three.

When Tao Xing saw Ning Cheng and Nalan Ruxue, the anxiety on his face disappeared instantly. He even greeted them with an eager smile, "Junior Apprentice Sister Ruxue, Junior Apprentice Brother Ning, I was looking for you two."

"Is it time to head to Scarlet Branch Island?" Ning Cheng asked with a smile.

"Yes, we're leaving immediately. A lot of cultivators have gone to Scarlet Branch Island these days, so we can't fall behind." Tao Xing rubbed his hands. It seems that as long as he went there, he would find a Scarlet Branch Island full of Wood Origin Crystals.

Ning Cheng nodded and said, "Then, let's go."

Seeing that Ning Cheng showed no objection, Tao Xing naturally felt happier. He took the initiative and brought out an airship. After inviting everyone on board the airship, he quickly rushed out of the Boundary Essence Spirit Sea City.

Boundary Essence Spirit Sea City was, in truth, built over an island that looked somewhat similar to the Mirage Gazing Island. However, compared to the Mirage Gazing Island, the Boundary Essence Spirit Sea City was akin to a continent.

Since meeting Tao Xing and the others again, Nalan Ruxue hadn't said anything. Moreover, after she advanced to the Heaven Seated Realm, she saw that Tao Xing's trio truly were cultivators in the Heaven Seated Realm.

"Huh, Junior Apprentice Sister Ruxue, did you advance to the Heaven Seated Realm?" After the airship flew out of the Boundary Essence Spirit Sea City, Ning Cheng finally realised that Nalan Ruxue's cultivation had improved. It had reached the early-stage Heaven Seated Realm.

Nalan Ruxue showed a reluctant smile. "Yes, I also didn't expect Senior Apprentice Brother Ning Cheng, Senior Apprentice Brother Tao Xing and Senior Apprentice Sister Siyan were all in the Heaven Seated Realm."

Tao Xing spoke with an awkward tone. "Yes, we were afraid that it would put undue pressure on you, so we didn't talk about our specific cultivation levels. But it's good now, everyone here is in the Heaven Seated Realm...."

Reaching this point, Tao Xing seemed to have thought of something and subconsciously shifted his gaze to Ning Cheng. Nalan Ruxue had always been at the late-stage Heaven's Mandate Realm since the moment they met her, *how come she advanced to Heaven Seated Realm just after meeting Ning Cheng? Could it be that Ning Cheng's cultivation had exceeded all of them, but they couldn't see?*

Thinking that Ning Cheng's cultivation had exceeded theirs, Tao Xing's heart immediately started to beat faster. He now wasn't too sure about Ning Cheng's cultivation.

"Senior Apprentice Brother Ning must also be at the Heaven Seated Realm, right?" Li Siyan also had the same thoughts as Tao Xing, and immediately changed the form of address she used for Ning Cheng to 'Senior Apprentice Brother'.

Ning Cheng chuckled, "I'm not in the Heaven Seated Realm."

When Ning Cheng said that he wasn't in the Heaven Seated Realm, Tao Xing's trio immediately felt relieved. Even if Ning Cheng were a Heaven Seated cultivator, they wouldn't feel afraid of him. However, it would truly complicate matters for them.

The Gate Of Good Fortune

Chapter 848: Nothing but a fart

Tao Xing's airship was of a good grade; but in the end, it was still a pseudo-top-grade dao artefact.

Therefore, Ning Cheng stayed in his cabin from the moment he boarded the airship and didn't come out. It seemed as if he didn't care about where this airship went.

Nalan Ruxue had advanced to the Heaven Seated Realm, which meant that her strength had also improved significantly. However, facing Tao Xing's trio of veteran Heaven Seated cultivators with a higher level of power, she still felt her heart race. But when she thought of Ning Cheng, she quickly calmed down. Ning Cheng already knew that Tao Xing trio's cultivation had exceeded her the moment he met them. Moreover, they had also accepted Ning Cheng's proposal, which meant that Ning Cheng should also have some idea of the danger.

Therefore, when Ning Cheng secluded himself in his cabin, she also decided to stay in her room and continue to stabilise her cultivation.

Since Ning Cheng and Nalan Ruxue didn't come out to ask questions, Tao Xing and the others also didn't take the initiative to explain things to either of them.

"That Ning Cheng is a little strange. Don't look at his reply of not being in the Heaven Seated Realm. I'm sure that his cultivation doesn't lose out to Brother Tao." On the airship's deck, You Cheng glanced in the direction of the cabins and spoke to Tao Xing and Li Siyan with a solemn tone.

Tao Xing showed a cold sneer, "Ning Cheng and Nalan Ruxue are friends. Therefore, his cultivation wouldn't be much higher than Nalan Ruxue. Even if he lied, and is a Heaven Seated cultivator, the three of us don't have to fear him. As long as Nalan Ruxue opens that array formation, so what if the three of us can't beat him up one on one? As long as we work together, I don't believe he would last long against us. Brother You, you don't have to worry about it too much."

You Cheng and Li Siyan nodded. Tao Xing was right. Even if Ning Cheng was a late-stage Heaven Seated cultivator, the three of them working together did not need to fear him. As for the possibility of Ning Cheng being a Life and Death cultivator, they never even thought about it. Was entering the Life and Death Realm so easy? Besides Ning Cheng didn't even have any spirit crystals on him and had to exchange a pot of top-grade wine for it. Even if Ning Cheng had some spirit crystals, Ning Cheng didn't look like someone who lived a long life, which meant that he couldn't be a Life and Death cultivator.

Li Siyan gave out a sigh, "But I still think that we need to change to a different person."

You Cheng replied with a calm voice, "It wouldn't do us much good to change people at this point. We've been looking for someone with a water-attributed spiritual root for over two years. Nalan Ruxue's evolved-but-pure ice spiritual root, on the other hand, is a much better option than a water-

attributed spiritual root. Moreover, she's still a virgin. If any of the big sects in the Grand Essence Domain met her, they would have already forced her into becoming their sect's disciple."

Tao Xing snorted, he was just about to say that only female cultivators who had no self-respect, would work willingly with their team. But thinking about Li Siyan, he abruptly swallowed the sentence.

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The airship swiftly traversed the sea, but because it skirted around the edge, it didn't encounter any powerful sea demons blocking its way.

However, half-a-month later, Nalan Ruxue couldn't hold it anymore. She walked up to the deck and asked, "Senior Apprentice Sister Siyan, I feel that this is not the path for the Scarlet Branch Island. Moreover, Scarlet Branch Island isn't this far away."

Not waiting for Li Siyan to answer, Tao Xing walked over and said, "Junior Apprentice Sister Ruxue, I can tell you the truth now. We're not going to Scarlet Branch Island, but to another island; or rather, a reef. It contains a lot of Wood Origin Crystals. The reason we told you about the Scarlet Branch Island is only that we were afraid of attracting too much attention. We didn't want the news about the other island to spread out. Junior Apprentice Sister Ruxue, don't worry. Once we obtain anything there, we'll split it equally in four ways..... No, it's five, one portion for each."

Nalan Ruxue nodded, "I see. I'll go and inform Senior Apprentice Brother Ning about it."

She now finally understood. If Ning Cheng hadn't suddenly appeared in Boundary Essence Spirit Sea City, she would have already 'sold' herself to them. She would have even had to help them count the money she fetched.

Nalan Ruxue stood outside Ning Cheng's cabin for a while but didn't bother Ning Cheng. Instead, she went back to her room.

A few days passed by, and the airship's hull shook before stopping on a huge reef island.

"Junior Apprentice Brother Ning, compared to you, the few of us are just too lazy." Seeing Ning Cheng coming out, Tao Xing laughed.

Ning Cheng, however, didn't answer Tao Xing's words. His spiritual consciousness had already swept out and found this reef deficient in spiritual qi. It also didn't have a single blade of grass. If this place contained even one Wood Origin Crystal, Ning Cheng would have a hard time believing it.

"Senior Apprentice Brother Tao, it seems that the essence qi here is very scarce. Why would Wood Origin Crystals form here?" Nalan Ruxue asked.

"Those Wood Origin Crystals are hidden quite deep. Otherwise, people would have already discovered them. When we first arrived here, we had the same thoughts as you. Just follow me, and I'll take you to the place. You won't regret it." Tao Xing finished speaking, put away his airship, and walked into the depths of this reef first.

Ning Cheng's spiritual consciousness scanned this reef a few times but found no abnormalities. He didn't understand why Tao Xing would bring Nalan Ruxue to this place. Since he didn't understand it yet, he could only follow Tao Xing's trio for now.

After an incense stick worth of time, Tao Xing stopped at a crack in the reef.

One would find countless such crevices on any reef island. It was just a regular occurrence with nothing inconspicuous. When Ning Cheng's spiritual consciousness scanned the reef island a few times, he also scanned this place but didn't find any abnormality.

Tao Xing pointed to this crevice in the reef island and said, "It's here. Let's go inside."

After speaking, Tao Xing took the lead and dived inside, followed by You Cheng and Li Siyan.

Ning Cheng turned his head and said to Nalan Ruxue, "Stay close to me." After saying that, Ning Cheng also went inside.

After diving into the crevice on the reef, Ning Cheng's spiritual consciousness suddenly opened up, and he saw all the things he could never have seen from the outside before.

A neat stone-paved road appeared in front of him that went into the depths and then further down. Even his spiritual consciousness couldn't sweep to the end.

Ning Cheng took a deep breath and secretly sighed; this place had quite a powerful concealment formation. Even though his spiritual consciousness had a strong penetrating power, he couldn't see the inside of the crevice despite sweeping through it. Moreover, after entering, this place had even restricted his spiritual consciousness to a limited range.

Nalan Ruxue also saw the surrounding area and followed Ning Cheng with a little nervousness.

After half an hour, Ning Cheng's spiritual consciousness eventually opened up, and a huge defensive array appeared in front of him. But what surprised Ning Cheng was that there were other people here already.

Two middle-stage Eternal cultivators stood in front of the defensive array. At the same time, they also saw a fully naked female cultivator sprawled across the top of the defensive array. This female cultivator looked truly angry but had an ashen face. Moreover, blood kept flowing out of her orifices and into the defensive array.

"Huh, a few more ants came....." One of the Eternal cultivators wearing a weird hat noticed Ning Cheng's group of five.

Tao Xing, You Cheng and the others also noticed that someone had come here before them and their faces immediately turned pale. Judging by the level of suppression they felt from these two people, they understood that those two were Eternal cultivators.

"You.... How did you learn about this place?" Tao Xing asked with a dry voice.

The Eternal cultivator wearing a weird hat only glanced at Tao Xing with a cold gaze before turning his eye towards Nalan Ruxue behind Ning Cheng. Suddenly, he burst into laughter. Then, he spoke to the short cultivator beside him, "Brother Mu, it's going to take a long time like this. The woman we found for the sacrificial array has poor spiritual roots. Even if we sacrifice her to the array, it would still take some time before we can open the defensive array. But it's better now. From the looks of it, these ants took the initiative. They brought us such a beautiful woman to help us with the sacrificial array."

When the short winter-melon faced Eternal cultivator saw Nalan Ruxue, his eyes immediately flashed red with lust. It took a while before he calmed himself and licked his lips. "Okay, okay, this woman truly is beautiful. After finishing with the sacrificial array, we should do our best to keep her alive. No matter how beautiful a girl, I'll lose interest if she dies."

Nalan Ruxue's face turned pale. She finally understood why Tao Xing and the others wanted to form a team with her. Those bastards wanted to use her virgin blood for a sacrificial array and then use that sacrificial array to open the defensive array.

"Senior. We'll give this woman to" Tao Xing spoke with a quivering voice. At this moment, he only had regret in his heart. He didn't expect that other people would also discover this place.

"Fuck off....." The short winter-melon faced man slapped the air.

"Slap" With that slap, Tao Xing went flying to the edge of the reef. His bones suddenly softened strangely, and he crumpled to the ground like a pool of mercury. His gaze only contained horror, but he hadn't died just yet.

"Cotton Bones Spirit Technique, you... you're Senior Gu Hui...." You Cheng stammered. One could tell from the stammer in his voice, that he truly feared this person.

Ning Cheng secretly felt funny at this. Cotton Bones Spirit Technique, scary? What use was this spirit technique? That slap only turned the bones soft. It's not like it turned that fellow into a eunuch, did it?

"Slap....." With another slap, You Cheng also turned into a pool of boneless flesh and collapsed beside Tao Xing.

"Come here." The short winter-melon faced cultivator then set his sights on Li Siyan.

Li Siyan, who followed You Cheng, felt even more scared than him. Therefore, seeing the short winter-melon faced man looking at her, she struggled a bit before walking over, "Senior Gu, I can serve you"

While speaking, she quickly stripped off her clothes. In the face of death, shame and self-esteem weren't worth a single coin. Since she heard that this short winter-melon faced man liked women, she felt that it was the only lifeline available to her.

"A broken shoe dares to seek my favour, fuck off....." This time, the short melon-faced cultivator didn't act like before. Instead, he kicked Li Siyan, forcing her to shoot out a blood arrow as she arced towards the defensive array and died on the spot.

"It's your turn." The melon-faced man then cast his gaze on Ning Cheng.

Ning Cheng didn't go over, but looked at Tao Xing on the ground, who still hadn't died yet, and asked, "How did you learn about this place?"

How could Tao Xing even care to answer Ning Cheng's words? He was no different from being dead anyway. Ning Cheng, not receiving a response, simply raised his hand and grasped at the void, and a moment later, Tao Xing's ring fell into his hand. Soon he found a map within Tao Xing's ring that pointed to this place. It even had somewhat detailed instructions on where they could harvest Wood Origin Crystals inside this place.

Seeing Ning Cheng not even bothering to look at him, and even started working on Tao Xing's ring, the melon-faced cultivator's expressions immediately changed. But before he could speak, Ning Cheng walked over, "Shorty, show me your map too."

"Looking for death....." The short melon-faced cultivator had just said three words when an overwhelming imposing manner suppressed him. The short melon-faced cultivator's domain couldn't even block it for a moment before it melted away and disappeared in just an instant.

The other Eternal cultivator wearing the strange hat wanted to help. But Ning Cheng's domain also had suppressed him to the point that he couldn't even move a finger.

In the next moment, a fist filled with boundless dao charm came crashing down.

"Bang....." The killing intent within the punch struck that short melon-faced cultivator's dantian, and he flew out immediately. With a 'click', he landed beside Tao Xing and You Cheng. Just like Tao Xing, when the short melon-faced cultivator fell beside him, he had also turned into a lump of paralysed flesh without bones. The punch had shattered the melon-faced cultivator's bones, leaving behind only a lump of flesh and organs.

A ring fell into Ning Cheng's hand, and the short melon-faced cultivator heard Ning Cheng's words, "Cotton bones, nothing but a fart. I don't know what this 'cotton bones' of yours is, but I can also 'soften' your bones with one punch."

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Chapter 849: The powerhouse on the edge of the defensive array

Tao Xing and You Cheng, who still hadn't died, looked at Ning Cheng and how he wiped out the powerful Gui Hui with just one move and went into shock. Under the eyes of such an expert, they wanted to gang up on him after bringing him to the sacrificial array here. From this, they understood that even if they hadn't met the two Eternal cultivators here, they would have never left this place alive.

Nalan Ruxue already knew that Ning Cheng's cultivation exceeded hers. But even she didn't expect Ning Cheng to be so powerful. He killed an Eternal cultivator with just a simple move of his hand. It only indicated that Ning Cheng was also, at the very least, an Eternal cultivator.

"Senior...." The other middle-stage Eternal male cultivator, who wore a weird hat, spoke with clattering teeth. He always killed others without blinking an eye, but he never found himself in such a situation.

Ning Cheng had no thoughts about sparing this fellow at all and once again blasted out with an axe fist. Suppressed under Ning Cheng's domain, the axe intent made short work of the middle-stage Eternal cultivator who just begged for mercy.

Ning Cheng raised his hand and threw out a few fireballs. After just a few breaths, he and Nalan Ruxue were the only ones left in front of the defensive array. The rest of the cultivators, whether they died or not, also turned into nothingness under Ning Cheng's fireballs.

"Senior Apprentice Brother Ning....." Nalan Ruxue spoke up with surprise. Ning Cheng hadn't disappointed her; he truly was a powerhouse wherever he went.

"I'm going to start breaking the array now. I will need your help with it." Ning Cheng told Nalan Ruxue.

Nalan Ruxue nodded, "Okay, I will do my best to help."

Ning Cheng pointed to the defensive array in front of him, "For this array formation, I will first set up an attack-focussed formation. Once the attack formation breaks open a little gap, you can then help me in breaking the array. This defensive array is an attribute-infused defensive array. Well, more specifically, it's a fire-attributed defensive array. Therefore, when I start breaking the array, I will need your essence blood....."

Nalan Ruxue shuddered. She thought back to the naked female cultivator from before, and her blood that kept dripping into the formation.

She didn't understand array formations at all. But she knew that using essence blood to break an array would change it into a sacrificial array. Just like for what Tai Xing and others had brought her here, and what she saw with her own eyes. She would have to take off her clothes and lie on the defensive array so that the defensive array could absorb her essence blood from her orifices.

Once she did that, she would no longer have the chance to get off the defensive array. That is, not until it had its fill of essence blood.

She looked at Ning Cheng blankly in disbelief. Ning Cheng seemed to have become a stranger. It was utterly different from the Ning Cheng in her memory. At any rate, she and Ning Cheng were people who were at least familiar with each other. Why would he treat her in such a manner?

Ning Cheng didn't seem to care about Nalan Ruxue's changing emotions at all. After he finished talking, he began to take out array flags and threw them down one after another.

"Senior Apprentice Brother Ning, will I have to take off my clothes and use my essence blood for the sacrificial array like that woman....." Nalan Ruxue couldn't help but ask with a quivering voice.

Ning Cheng didn't even turn his head and said in a flat tone, "Yes, you can rest assured that I will not let you fall. After finishing with this, I will give you a lot of cultivation resources. If there are any Wood Origin Crystals here, it would truly help me a lot. I hope you can help me with it."

While talking, he continued to put down array flags.

Nalan Ruxue's heart seemed to have died, and she spoke up with a slightly-hoarse tone, "I'll help you. As for whether I will fall or not, Senior Apprentice Brother Ning doesn't need to worry about it. Since I still owe you from back then, I will pay you back for it today."

Ning Cheng threw down the last array flags and said with joy in his eyes, "Many thanks, Junior Apprentice Sister Ruxue. Just go to this place and start undressing. I will attack from the side and forcibly power the sacrificial array....."

Ning Cheng also brought out the Celestial Purgatory Spear after speaking and pointed it one direction.

Nalan Ruxue walked to the place pointed by Ning Cheng in a daze and slowly took off her outer robe.

But just when Nalan Ruxue took off her first piece of clothing, Ning Cheng suddenly dropped an array flag and stepped out. The Celestial Rainbow Purgatory Spear in his hand brought forth endless void spear intents and blasted towards a particular location near the defensive array.

“Swish-Swish....” Hidden killing arrays around Ning Cheng suddenly surged with endless spacial killing lights, which then quickly formed into a killing pattern. Then, following the direction of Ning Cheng’s Celestial Rainbow Purgatory Spear, they instantly broke through the spacial distance and blasted onto the adjacent reef wall.

“Boom-Boom-Boom.....” Terrifying Essence Qi erupted, and empty black holes seemed to form one after another. Moreover, these black holes contained endless killing intent.

The killing intent within these black holes clashed with the killing array rolled up by Ning Cheng and filled with the entire chamber with killing intent.

The sluggish Nalan Ruxue stared at Ning Cheng who seemed to have gone mad. She couldn’t understand what Ning Cheng was doing anymore. However, she understood that her location was safe and that the killing arrays did not pose any threat to her.

“Bang.....” With a muffled explosion, Ning Cheng’s body suddenly went flying upside down, and he even spat out a mouthful of blood.

“What a cunning bastard. Setting up killing arrays within the entrapment array to divert this old man’s attention.....” With this voice, a black-skinned, almost naked man appeared within Ning Cheng’s killing array. The knife lights and flames within the entrapment and killing array rained down but didn’t seem to hurt him at all.

However, Ning Cheng’s Celestial Rainbow Purgatory Spear had nailed itself to this man’s throat, with black blood slowly sliding down the spear shaft.

“Die for me.....” The man raised his hand and grabbed at Ning Cheng.

As soon as that person made the grabbing motion, every inch of space around Ning Cheng seemed to have solidified. Ning Cheng, however, managed to free himself forcibly before retreating after grabbing Nalan Ruxue.

But Ning Cheng quickly discovered that no matter how far he withdrew, no matter how fast he retreated, he would still stay locked in place with the space frozen around him.

“Rip.....” With a strange ripping sound, the robed covering Ning Cheng’s upper body got pulled off by the grasp. But at the same time, five deep and bloody mouths opened up on his chest.

A latent concussion then hit Ning Cheng’s chest, and he couldn’t help but spit out a mouthful of blood. Feeling horrified, Ning Cheng frantically condensed and blasted out with as many Time Wheels as he could in such a situation.

“Huh.....” Not only was this person a formidable body-forging cultivator, but he can also use a Laws of Time-related spirit technique?

“Bang-Bang-Bang.....” The Time Wheels blasted onto the man and immediately caused bursts of bloody mists. However, man’s vitality didn’t seem to weaken even by a bit.

With another bang, Ning Cheng immediately felt the surrounding repressive power dissipating. He could now finally retreat but ended up smashing into the opposite reef. Only after the reef turned into debris, did his body stop.

Ning Cheng wiped the blood from the corner of his mouth and put down Nalan Ruxue. He finally got a good look at the black-skinned man standing opposite to him. Two chains had bound him to a stone wall that connected to the array formation. It meant that there was no way for him to rush up and continue to deal with Ning Cheng.

The bloody mouths created by the Time Wheels and the Celestial Rainbow Purgatory Spear in his throat painted a bleak picture. But Ning Cheng knew it well that this person was still much stronger than him.

“Senior Apprentice Brother Ning.....” Nalan Ruxue finally understood that Ning Cheng had already realised that there was a powerhouse hiding here. He asked her to enter the sacrificial array just to keep her safe from the killing array he arranged. She suddenly felt ashamed. A few moments ago, she had doubted Ning Cheng’s intentions once again.

“Put your clothes on. This fellow is powerful.” Ning Cheng’s gaze remained fixed to this man. Even if chains bound this person to the array formation, he might have to use the Five-coloured Star Splitter Arrow to kill him. Besides, Ning Cheng also understood that if he hadn’t attacked this fellow first, this fellow would have already captured him.

The man raised his hand and pulled out the Celestial Rainbow Purgatory Spear. The moment he took it out and squeezed, the Celestial Rainbow Purgatory Spear, which Ning Cheng couldn’t retrieve in time, broke.

“You might have a cunning mind, but you wouldn’t survive for long. Tell me, how did you find me? I’m sure that even if Dao Sculpting experts came here, they wouldn’t be able to find me.” The man stared at Ning Cheng and asked with a cold voice. He didn’t even try to stop the bleeding from his throat.

He truly felt puzzled by this. Ning Cheng was just an Eternal cultivator. How could he find his hiding spot?

“You should also answer one of my questions. Who locked you in here?” Ning Cheng’s spiritual consciousness immediately connected with the Five-coloured Star Splitter Arrow and asked with a calm voice.

He was also worried that there might be another cultivator stronger than this fellow spying on them from the side. Even if he managed to kill this fellow, others might sweep in to reap the benefits.

The man seemed to know what Ning Cheng felt worried about, and spoke with a disdainful tone, “Apart from myself, who can lock me here? But even if I sealed myself here, I can still kill an ant like you. Besides, you even brought such a useful woman for the sacrificial array. As for you, I can always search your soul if you don’t want to answer my questions.....”

After the man finished speaking, the chains locking his body fell off, and at the same time, the surrounding space trembled again. Ning Cheng didn’t even think of anything else and brought out the Five-coloured Star Splitter Arrow.

The majestic and boundless killing intent burst out abruptly, and even the killing power condensing around the man got swept away by a black-coloured arrow that appeared out of thin air.

As monstrous killing intent permeated through the surrounding space, one could only see a grey-coloured death aura everywhere. Moreover, this deathly aura kept condensing before eventually condensing into one point.

The entire space seemed to have disappeared at this moment, replaced by a single arrow, a dark, almost jet-black, arrow. As the killing intent around it grew thicker, the deathly aura coming from it also grew heavier. In just a short moment, a five-coloured bow appeared around the black-coloured arrow.

Ning Cheng's face paled, and even his body trembled. However, his eyes remained calm. Even after ascending to the middle-stage Eternal Realm, the Five-coloured Star Splitter Arrow's suction power remained horrific.

"Five-coloured Star Splitter....." The man's eyes flashed with a trace of despair. If not for Ning Cheng stalling for time, he could have escaped in time before the Five-coloured Star Splitter Arrow's imposing aura swept everything away. But now, locked under this violent killing intent, he could only wait for the arrow to arrive.

Before today, he had never felt as desperate as now. He had attracted many female cultivators with water-attributed spiritual root to this place. But he didn't expect that today, he would end up attracting a cultivator with the Five-coloured Star Splitter Arrow.

If he knew about it beforehand, he would have rather spent thousands of years more on this by himself than take such a risk.

Space continued to compress, while he burned every available drop of essence blood in his body. However, the Five-coloured Star Splitter Arrow's killing intent continued to condense. Except for the despair in the eyes of this man, only silence remained within this area.

It's not that he didn't want to beg for mercy. He knew that with the Five-coloured Star Splitter Arrow to such an extent, the cultivator would no longer be able to control it.

Even Nalan Ruxue, who hid behind Ning Cheng, could feel everything tremble around her. The grey-coloured deathly aura terrified her even more. She watched Ning Cheng's hair gradually turn grey, but she couldn't do anything to help him even if she pushed herself to the limits.

"Shoo....." The black-coloured arrow finally tore through the void, taking along the endless grey-coloured deathly aura with it. The man seemed to have given up and closed his eyes, letting the terrifying deathly repression over him finally come to an end.

The Gate Of Good Fortune

Chapter 850: Going to the Grand Essence Ruins

"Bang" With a dull explosion, the Five-coloured Star Splitter Arrow tore through the naked man, while Ning Cheng's array formations killed off his essence spirit.

The Five-coloured Star Splitter Arrow once again disappeared into Ning Cheng's wrist, and Ning Cheng immediately caught a ring. Without waiting for Ning Cheng to crack the restrictions on the naked man's ring, the restrictions shattered inch by inch. Ning Cheng then quickly threw the contents into his ring. Just when he finished transferring the contents of the ring, it collapsed into ashes that drifted into the wind.

Ning Cheng breathed a sigh of relief. Compared to the time he killed Hong Lun; he was in a much better condition.

Nalan Ruxue finally reacted at this time, and quickly stepped forward to support the stumbling Ning Cheng, "Senior Apprentice Brother Ning, are you okay?"

Ning Cheng waved his hand and said with a weak voice, "This is not the place to stay for a long time, hurry into the array...."

Only then did Nalan Ruxue discover something about the defensive array. It previously required a sacrificial array to break it open. But it now had cracks opening up under the penetrating power of Ning Cheng's arrow.

As the rich Wood Origin Aura escaped through the cracks, Nalan Ruxue quickly helped Ning Cheng into the defensive array.

Ning Cheng weakly threw out some array flags, sealing any aura from leaking out of the defensive array, which also hid them from outside view temporarily.

"What a dense Wood Origin Aura." Nalan Ruxue exclaimed. Unfortunately, she did not have a wood-attributed spiritual root. If she had a wood-attributed spiritual root, cultivating in this place would have produced an effect at least dozens of times better than outside.

Ning Cheng also felt surprised by the dense Wood Origin Aura all around him. More accurately, this place was a reef shoal. These reefs all had Wood Origin Crystals embedded in them. Rocks, by themselves, wouldn't produce such Wood Origin Crystals, which meant that the origin crystals here had evolved over countless years.

The Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan King on Ning Cheng's wrist trembled. Sensing it, Ning Cheng slightly shook his hand and said, "Go and devour those Wood Origin Crystals, and remember to collect all of them for me."

After speaking, Ning Cheng called out Chasing Bull once again, "You also go and collect those Wood Origin Crystals. I want to heal my wounds."

Seeing a thick rattan vine stretch out and quickly absorb the Wood Origin Crystals, Nalan Ruxue immediately understood that it was Ning Cheng's companion beast. Moreover, she knew about this rattan, which resembled an Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan, she had once read about it in the past.

As for Chasing Bull, she didn't care much about it. The value of an Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan far exceeded that of an ordinary demonic bull.

Ning Cheng took his hand down from Nalan Ruxue's shoulder. "Junior Apprentice Sister Ruxue, you can also go collect those Wood Origin Crystals. I'm going to heal my wounds."

With Wood Origin Aura permeating the surrounding, it was the best place to heal one's wounds.

Feeling that Ning Cheng might have taken some severe injuries, Nalan Ruxue didn't refuse either. Putting Ning Cheng in a location rich in Wood Origin Crystals, she began to dig out the Wood Origin Crystals from the reef shoal.

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A month later, Ning Cheng stood up and gave out a long sigh of relief. His injuries had fully healed. Although his hair still looked greyish-white, it would gradually recover as he continued cultivating. For such an inconsequential matter, Ning Cheng naturally wouldn't use the First Glimmer of Dawn Ice Essence.

"Master, all the Wood Origin Crystals are inside." As soon as Ning Cheng stood up, Chasing Bull immediately trotted over to Ning Cheng and handed him a ring.

Ning Cheng's spiritual consciousness swept in and found thousands of Wood Origin Crystals inside.

Without waiting for Ning Cheng to ask, Chasing Bull quickly spoke up, "Little Wood Rattan[1] and the little girl's Wood Origin Crystals are also inside. Little Wood Rattan is currently outside surmounting its tribulation. The little girl said that she would help it as a Dharma Protector, but I guess she just wants to watch the fun. However, as the master's loyal servant, I dared not take a step outside without permission."

Ning Cheng had already discovered that the Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan and Nalan Ruxue weren't here. As for the Wood Origin Crystals around him, they were almost entirely depleted, with barely anything left.

Ning Cheng ignored the Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan for now. Hearing bursts of thunder coming from the outside, Ning Cheng had already understood that the Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan truly was surmounting its tribulation.

He didn't go out immediately. Instead, he used this opportunity to sort through all the rings. Excluding the low-grade and middle-grade spirit crystals, Ning Cheng had raked in more than 10 million high-grade spirit crystals. But most of these high-grade spirit crystals came from that black-skinned naked male cultivator.

By the time Ning Cheng walked out of the reef crevice with Chasing Bull, the Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan King had successfully surmounted its tribulation. It had now become a Starry Sky Grade 8 Demonic Vine. As long as the Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan King had enough Wood Origin Crystals, it would only be a matter of time before it advanced to Grade 9.

"Senior Apprentice Brother Ning, have you finished healing?" Nalan Ruxue saw Ning Cheng coming out and walked over with a hint of excitement. She naturally knew about the value of Wood Origin Crystals, and she had obtained more than a hundred of them from below. Although she gave most of them to Chasing Bull, she still kept around forty to fifty of them.

Ning Cheng took out a ring and handed it to Nalan Ruxue, "There are some Wood Origin Crystals inside, you should keep some."

Nalan Ruxue hurriedly declined, "Senior Apprentice Brother Ning, I still have a few dozens of these crystals with me. Even if you give me more of them, it would be of little use to me."

Ning Cheng, hearing that Nalan Ruxue had already kept some Wood Origin Crystals, didn't remain polite anymore. Wood Origin Crystals were something essential for him, not just for alchemy, but also for the promotion of Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan King.

After taking out the Wood Origin Crystals from the ring, he handed the ring to Nalan Ruxue. "There are 3 million spirit crystals in it, along with some weapons and medicinal pills. I've already received a bountiful harvest; I will leave these to you."

Upon hearing Ning Cheng's words, Nalan Ruxue didn't continue to refuse and put away the ring.

After the advancement, the Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan King turned into a black light and disappeared on Ning Cheng's wrist. Since the Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan King had just advanced, it needed some more time to stabilise its cultivation.

Seeing Ning Cheng bringing out a flight-type weapon, Chasing Bull pitifully cried out, "Master, let me help you drive this weapon."

Ning Cheng understood that this bull didn't want to stay in the True Spirit World at all, and simply handed the control of the airship to Chasing Bull.

"Senior Apprentice Brother Ning, did you know about the person hiding on the side since the beginning?" Nalan Ruxue finally couldn't help but ask after the airship took off.

Ning Cheng shook his head. "No, but I saw that the map Tao Xing had was the same as the map with Gu Hui. So, I guessed that someone had laid out a deliberate trap. The person who made such arrangements wasn't looking for cultivators like Tao Xing. Rather, a virgin female cultivator with a water-attributed spiritual root."

"This person released the map and indirectly looked for female cultivators for the sacrificial arrays. It meant that he had to pay particular attention to that fire-attributed defensive array at all times. Staying here and keeping a look-out over the status of the defensive array would make it much more difficult to be discovered by others and also easier than using spiritual consciousness to keep an eye on everything. Moreover, it would also make things easier for him in controlling temporary and unexpected situations."

"My spiritual consciousness swept through everything in the area but didn't find anything suspicious. From this, I understood that someone had concealed himself or herself here. Moreover, this person's cultivation also should have exceeded mine. Therefore, I had to take action through surprise, which is why I asked you to enter the sacrificial array. It was to let that fellow shift focus to you and also to help me arrange an Entrapment and Killing Array. I'm sorry."

"No, Senior Apprentice Brother Ning, I should be the one apologising here. I thought that you truly wanted to use me for the sacrificial array, and felt very disappointed. But, Senior Apprentice Brother Ning, how did you figure out that person's hiding spot?" Nalan Ruxue felt truly excited after going through this experience. She also thought that the misunderstanding between Ning Cheng and her had also dissipated by a lot.

Ning Cheng gave out a sigh, "I truly didn't know about it. I was betting on my hunch. I thought about the location where I would have hidden if I was in that person's place. This position should not only have the best visual coverage of the area but also should be a place from where he could control everything at any time. Based on those things, only one location stood out. I guessed that if someone truly concealed themselves here, this person would have also chosen the same place as me. It's just that I didn't expect that fellow would be so powerful. If it weren't for my trump card, he would have almost killed me instantly."

When Nalan Ruxue heard this, she immediately felt a little afraid. In case Ning Cheng made a mistake in his judgement, then she wouldn't have escaped her fate of being used for the sacrificial array.

Thinking of this, Nalan Ruxue suddenly felt startled. When Ning Cheng wanted to use her as a part of the sacrificial array, she only felt disappointment and sadness at that time, but not fear. But thinking back to how that fellow wanted to use her as a part of a sacrificial array, she truly felt scared.

Ning Cheng didn't say anything more. The only thing he wondered was why that naked male cultivator had sealed himself up in this place. Was it for cultivating a cultivation method, or was it for some other reasons?

.....

After the airship returned to Boundary Essence Spirit Sea City, Ning Cheng and Nalan Ruxue didn't go to the residential area. Instead, they directly went and paid 20,000 spirit crystals on the public square, and waited for the airship to take them to the teleportation point.

As for Chasing Bull, Ning Cheng sent into the True Spirit World again. According to the rules set for the airships plying to and from the city and the teleportation array, one didn't need to pay spirit crystals for companion beasts. But only as long as one doesn't bring them out.

However, you can't put people into special spaces and carry them with you. Once found, not only would they force you to bring them out and scatter their cultivations, but the authorities would even confiscate everything. In any case, once someone erased one's cultivation, it was equivalent to losing one's life. At that point, it didn't matter if you had anything to offer or not.

Ning Cheng and Nalan Ruxue had just sat down when two people came over. The one in front was a middle-aged male cultivator, and the one behind him was a handsome-looking tall young man. However, the young man in the back had higher cultivation compared to the middle-aged male cultivator in the front. This person was already at the late-stage Eternal Realm.

Seeing the middle-aged male cultivator walking in front, Ning Cheng frowned slightly. He vaguely understood why this person came to him. This middle-aged male cultivator was the owner of the Essence Sea Restaurant. Ning Cheng had sold him a pot of None-to-depend-on Wine at the Essence Sea Restaurant, and now this person came to him.

"Hello, my friend, we meet again." The middle-aged restaurant owner bowed to Ning Cheng and spoke with enthusiasm.

"Brother Hong, is this the friend you talked about?" The young man walking behind the middle-aged restaurant owner asked with a smile.

The middle-aged restaurant owner quickly spoke up, "That's right, Little Min, this friend sold it to me."

The young man nodded and said, "Many thanks, Brother Hong."

The middle-aged restaurant owner spoke up, "Little Min, I still have a few things to attend to at the restaurant. I'll be taking my leave first." After speaking, he nodded to Ning Cheng before turning around and leaving quickly.

The young man gave Ning Cheng a courtesy bow and said with a graceful voice, "My name is Chi Zimin, and I come from the Grand Essence Domain."

"Ning Cheng, rogue cultivator. If Brother Chi came to me to ask about the wine, then I'm afraid that I would have to disappoint Brother Chi. It was given to me by a friend of mine, and I only had one pot." Ning Cheng blocked Chi Zimin's words as soon as he introduced himself.

"It's not just about the wine. I happen to be heading to the Grand Essence Domain, which happens to be on the same road as Brother Ning." Chi Zimin finished speaking and took the initiative to pay 10,000 spirit crystals and bought a jade talisman for the airship.