

# Beyond the Timescape

## Chapter 1251: Becoming Famous

### Chapter 1251: Becoming Famous

When Xu Qing tightened his fingers, a crisp cracking sound rang out.

Goddess Starryyeyes' graceful neck turned purple. The bones inside shattered, and god blood even oozed out of hēr mouth. The light in hēr eyes faded, and hēr aura disappeared as if it had been destroyed. Shē passed out.

However, Starryyeyes was a goddess, and whether it was because of hēr incredible bloodline or hēr amazing cultivation base, shē wouldn't perish so easily. Besides, a living goddess would be much more useful to Xu Qing.

After hēr neck was broken, the sealing power that had already been covering hēr rushed inside through hēr broken neck, filling all of hēr flesh and bones. The underworld around hēr, and the terrifying underworld palace, disappeared.

With them gone, Xu Qing's immortal embryo was no longer cut away. As it returned to him, he sent its power into the sealing marks on the goddess. As a result, the sealing grew even stronger. Having accomplished these things, Xu Qing was finally able to relax a bit.

That was when Starfire's sultry voice spoke into his mind. *"Aiya, this is a goddess. Shē's a goddess with a broken neck, but shē's still a goddess. Young Lord, you have to admit that I've let you give in to your basest desires on this journey, so... could you give this goddess to me and let me teach hēr a thing or two?"*

Starfire was clearly very excited by the prospect of dealing with Starryyeyes. Little Shadow let loose some eager emotional fluctuations. It was hungry....

Xu Qing ignored the two of them. And then his hand, which was still latched onto hēr neck, erupted with a gravitational force. He was extracting hēr ringsource while shē was alive!

The unconscious goddess shivered from head to toe as hēr ringsource was sucked out through hēr neck and into Xu Qing's hand. It was incomparably pure ringsource, and even more amazing considering it contained the aura of a god emperor's bloodline. Starryyeyes had previously been a True God. And that meant that shē was like an extremely precious spirit stone. So, of course he would drain some ringsource before turning hēr in.

At the same time, he flicked his sleeve to drag over the unconscious Sir Star Ring, and delivered some of the ringsource to him. As a result, Sir Star Ring's injuries stabilized. At that point, Xu Qing turned and vanished.

\*\*\*

A few days later, a handful of rumors struck the eastern theater in the Fifth Star Ring, spreading like a tempest through all of the various armies.

Ads by PubRev

The goddess had been captured! The captors were in a Corpsedrainer squadron attached to the Longscale Regiment. Their leader was Xu Qing! The squadron was under the protection of the Longscale Regiment, who was delivering the goddess to the red giant, where the lieutenant general's headquarters was located.

The news was explosive. If it had been a Lower Immortal who captured the goddess, or some other high-ranking army leader, then the cultivators in the eastern theater wouldn't have been so shocked. But... the captors were Corpsedrainers! It was really astonishing news.

After all, the Corpsedrainers didn't have a very good reputation on the front lines, and they were far below the army cultivators in terms of importance. But now they had accomplished a great deed. It was puzzling and almost inconceivable.

Thus, the front-line cultivators started digging for information about these Corpsedrainers. When the Longscale Regiment started answering some of the questions, it led to an even bigger stir. The most update novels are published on [novel◇fire.net](http://novel.fire.net)

"The squadron is full of ascendees?"

"Down to the last one? And they're the only squadron that made it through the staging area with their ringsource?"

"A lot of them died along the way. They started out with a hundred members, but now they're down to only twelve?"

"They captured a peak Altar God?"

"After coming to the front lines, they became Corpsedrainers? And they went onto the battlefield and killed gods to drain them?"

"They're even more accomplished killers than us army cultivators?"

"Some people started calling them the Undertakers?"

As the stories spread, people began to realize how terrifying this squadron was. And when it became public knowledge that all of them had been seriously injured on the latest mission, and that seven of them had died, the army cultivators began to revere them.

And yet, there was still more news that spread.

“According to what I heard from Zhou Zhengli, who’s a member of the squadron, in the process of capturing the goddess, they were hit by the self-detonation of a True God!”

“Their captain, Xu Qing, got incredibly angry when he saw how they all got so badly hurt. Apparently, they consider all members of their squadron to be comrades-in-arms who will risk their lives for each other!”

“Captain Xu Qing was visibly murderous due to their injuries, and vowed to get revenge for them, regardless of whether they got the reward or not!”

“Now that is what you call righteousness! That’s what it means to take responsibility!”

“Despite being injured himself, Xu Qing held nothing back to track down the goddess and capture hēr. Tears streaming down his face, he captured hēr to give meaning and value to those who laid down their lives!”

“There’s more! That Zhou Zhengli also revealed some things about Captain Xu Qing’s very shocking past....”

“This Xu Qing is supremely talented, extremely imposing, and deeply understands the dao of immortals. He’s nothing short of majestic! He was also the 1st place ascendee from the Immortal Capital! Everybody approves of him!”

“Also, he earned the approval of the Aurora Immortal Palace, which has been silent for countless years!”

“Furthermore, when he was working as an Acquisitioner, he quelled a prison riot as a mere Quasi-Immortal, and even defeated a True God that was in the middle of returning!”

“All of his military accomplishments are spectacular. He treats enemies ruthlessly, but treats teammates with kindness and compassion!”

Those were even more shocking revelations to everyone. And thus, the buzz got even more intense. It didn’t take very long at all for literally everyone on the front lines of the eastern theater to know about the squadron and Captain Xu Qing.

Cultivators used their own means of verifying the rumors, and as people came to find out they were true, people started saying the same thing.

“This Xu Qing really deserves to get the title of true monarch!”

At the moment, a large number of cultivators had gathered at a universal teleportation portal that was on the route leading to the red giant. They were hoping to catch a glimpse of the goddess, as well as the squadron everyone was talking about.

The portal looked like a magnificent immortal hall hovering in the interstellar darkness, propped up by numerous mysterious and glowing crystal pillars. At the moment, it was rumbling loudly.

The gathered cultivators' eyes were glittering. The Longscale Regiment was on the way.

As the rumbling grew louder, spatial ripples began to flow out from the portal, like waves on a lake when a rock was thrown into it. Beams of light then shot forth from the surroundings, like shooting stars. They intersected on the portal itself, fusing together to create a gigantic vortex of immortal energy. Electricity crackled within the vortex as the rumbling sounds reached a deafening level.

When the sounds had filled that entire universe, and the light in the portal was dazzling, figures began to materialize. There were tens of thousands of them! It was the entire Longscale Regiment. Solemn expressions covered their faces as they quickly fanned out and secured the area.

Then, people wearing the daoist robes of the Corpsedrainers materialized. All eyes were locked onto them! They numbered twelve! They looked pale and weak, yet every single one of them looked like they had veins of steel, and baleful auras that pulsed around them at all times.

There was one among them who attracted the most attention... and it was their leader! He was a young man who stood tall and straight, with long, flowing hair, and extremely beautiful facial features. In fact, he was so good-looking that many of the female cultivators swooned. That said, he looked cold, with a gaze that was downright terrifying.

Gripped tight in his hands was a god, struggling to breathe. Shē looked like a beautiful human woman, but there was something gruish and unique about hēr. Despite hēr beauty, hēr skin looked somewhat anemic, and hēr expression was dull. Shē looked almost like shē had been drained out.... Shē was none other than Goddess Starryeyes!

Endless ringsource fluctuations rolled off hēr, flowing into the hand that was latched around hēr neck. The process caused the unconscious goddess to constantly twitch and spasm as if in pain.

As the cultivators who had gathered around the teleportation portal saw this, they were astounded.

“That’s Xu Qing?”

“He’s... extracting ringsource?”

“From the look of it... he’s been extracting it this entire time? How ruthless!”

“Well... that’s just what I would expect of a Corpsedrainer squadron!”

Quizzical expressions could be seen on the faces of many cultivators. It went without saying that this was a scene that they would never forget.

“This is not the kind of guy you want to trifle with!”

“No wonder their squadron is so amazing!”

Zhou Zhengli, who was standing behind Xu Qing, could sense the reaction of the crowd. He had no eyes, but with his portion of the ringsource extracted from the goddess, he had rebuilt his canon. In a case of *profiting from disaster*, he was actually pushing his canon to a higher level.

After sensing the crowd, Zhou Zhengli grinned.

*It looks like the news I spread is having the intended effect. Nobody will dare try to take credit for what we did. Also, the Young Lord's reputation is skyrocketing. The rewards from the higher-ups are going to be significant. In fact, they might even give more than they originally intended....*

*After all, armies need good examples. And the Young Lord is the perfect example to give them!*

Zhou Zhengli looked at Xu Qing and the goddess.

*There's no doubt about it. The Young Lord is incredibly cunning.... Extracting the ringsource publicly, right in front of all these people, makes it clear to everyone that this is his captive and his alone.*

*That's only going to add momentum to the rumors I started. If I weren't worried about pushing things too far, I could have mentioned how the Immortal Lords like him so much, and how even the Immortal Paragon values him....*

## Chapter 1252: Twelve Dao Seeds Deliver a Goddess

### Chapter 1252: Twelve Dao Seeds Deliver a Goddess

Countless people were looking at the scene on the teleportation portal. Conversation swelled.

And while Zhou Zhengli was feeling deep reverence for Xu Qing... the goddess Starryeyes was feeling a profound and raging hatred. Shē was gasping for breath, and had lost hēr previous spirit and vigor. And hēr skin really was pallid. But shē wasn't actually unconscious.

That was because Xu Qing wouldn't allow it. Given his experience extracting ringsource from gods, he knew that keeping their soul fluctuations vigorous was the way to get the best results.

Goddess Starryeyes had been awake the entire time. Whenever shē passed out, he would force hēr to wake up. It was an endless cycle.... To hēr, the journey had been one of unspeakable pain. Considering shē had such a majestic bloodline, shē had never experienced anything like this. And thus, shē felt extreme hatred and rage toward Xu Qing. Despite being so emptied and weak, as the crowd looked on, shē opened her eyes and glared at Xu Qing.

Xu Qing had grown accustomed to that look already. Face completely expressionless, he simply gripped hēr neck even tighter and extracted the ringsource with more force.

Starryeyes trembled from head to toe, as if a current of electricity were flowing through hēr. It felt like hēr soul was being ripped out of hēr, and led to hēr being even more weak than before. Shē looked like shē wanted to moan in pain, but hēr throat was clamped shut, making it impossible to make a sound. In that state of madness, the hatred in hēr eyes became like the vilest of curses inside

*If I manage to survive this tribulation, then I'll spend the rest of my life making sure this guy and everyone he cares about live lives worse than death!!!*

Xu Qing ignored hēr. From his perspective, the most important thing right now was to reach the Lower Immortal level and then get back to the Revered Ancient mainland.

*I need to get my reward for capturing this goddess.... This goddess has a unique constitution.... The longer I can keep my hands on hēr, the faster I'll reach mid Quasi-Immortal!*

Xu Qing kept a tight grip on Starryeyes as the Longscale Regiment escorted them off of the teleportation portal and into the distance.

The gathered cultivators watched them go.

“They’re dao seeds, all of them. They’ve been sharpened on the grindstone and have performed amazing services. They’re definitely going to fly to the highest heights!”

Ads by PubRev

“That’s especially true of that Xu Qing. It won’t be long before his name is known throughout the entire Fifth Star Ring!”

People felt all sorts of emotions, from admiration to jealousy.

As for Xu Qing, he put it all behind him with the flick of a sleeve.

In that manner, time passed. Half a month later, the Longscale Regiment had escorted Xu Qing and the ascendees through the sea of stars to the front lines headquarters of the eastern theater! It was the gigantic crimson star that hung in the starry sky! From a distance, it almost looked like the bloody eye of a god, looking down on the universe.

Even though Xu Qing had been here before, it was still shocking to look at. It was simply enormous, like a gigantic ball of fire burning in the middle of the universe, letting off scalding waves of light. Its glow could penetrate endless darkness and gloom, making it the most eye-catching thing in the starry sky.

The Longscale Regiment only escorted them so far. When it came time for Xu Qing and the ascendees to part, the Longscale cultivators solemnly bowed to Xu Qing.

Xu Qing returned the salute. The mission was over, and it was time to make their report. Turning, he shot into motion toward the red giant, followed by Sir Star Ring and the others. As they approached, they saw the roiling sea of flames, and the intense heat that caused clouds to seethe around it.

In the past, Xu Qing’s cultivation base and perceptions had been very different. So this time he sensed something he had not sensed before. It was a heartbeat that existed on the level of canon! It sounded like ancient drums thumping within the sea of flames!

Thump thump. Thump thump!

It was as if the star was a living thing! At any moment, it could unleash a raging blood-red tide that could sweep over an entire star domain and turn it into dust.

Stunned, Xu Qing stopped in place. Behind him, the ascendees' hearts were pounding.

At the same time, an extremely ancient voice spoke, as if it were brought by a wind from the ancient past.

“You did well....”

As the voice spoke, a solar flare erupted in front of Xu Qing and the ascendees, becoming a brilliant light that illuminated everything in the area. It was like a blazing fire in the middle of the universe.

Within the sea of light, 100,000 silver eyes with vertical pupils opened up. Astonishingly, each of those pupils contained a reflection of the violent clash between the ascendees and the goddess. It was like an overview of the entire event.

Several breaths of time passed, and then the images faded. The 100,000 eyes focused on Xu Qing and the ascendees. Then they looked at Goddess Starryyeyes, gripped in Xu Qing's hand.

A majestic force then locked onto the goddess. Xu Qing released his grip, and Starryyeyes was dragged into the sea of light, where shē vanished.

Xu Qing couldn't help but feel a twinge of regret in his heart. He hadn't finished extracting all the ringsource. Though it had seemed like the process was going quickly, he had actually been trying to draw the journey out to have more time. The goddess' ringsource really was different from that of other gods. Though it wasn't literally endless, it would begin to renew itself each time it seemed like it was about to run out. Though the overall quantity was smaller each time it happened, it was still incomparably pure.

*If I could have absorbed it for a bit longer, I could probably break through.*

Though he was sighing inside, he also knew that Immortal Lord Deepgloom needed the goddess a lot more than he did. So he suppressed his disappointment.

Thinking about the reward for accomplishing the mission, he bowed deeply. The other ascendees did the same.

A moment later, the ancient voice spoke again. “The reward for finding clues leading to the capture of the goddess was 1,000,000 military credits and 10 portions of ringsource. The reward for capturing the goddess was 10,000,000 military credits and 100 portions of ringsource. You people not only found clues, you also captured the goddess. It can be considered an amazing service!”

Everyone was starting to get excited.

“Xu Qing!” the voice said.

Xu Qing solemnly took a step forward. 100,000 eyes looked at him from within the sea of light.

“In short order, when I deliver this goddess to Immortal Lord Deepgloom, I will submit your official application for the daoist title of true monarch, as well as... your dao weapon! Do you have any requirements for the dao weapon?”

Xu Qing thought about it for a moment, his eyes glittering. Then he clasped hands. “Your humble servant would like to request a dao weapon designed for slaughter!”

“It can be done. I’ll deliver it personally. The reward will be delivered within seven days. You can wait in the flame pagodas here. This star naturally accumulates ringsource, so make good use of it while you can.” The voice faded away.

The 100,000 silver eyes closed, and moments later, the sea of light disappeared. At the same time, twelve pagodas made of lava rose up in the area. The flame pagodas emitted constant pulses of ringsource that caused the canon of Xu Qing and the ascendees to ripple.

Sir Star Ring, Zhou Zhengli, and all the others were visibly moved.

“According to what I heard recently,” Zhou Zhengli said, “this red giant was made using the skulls and god blood of a number of True Gods that Immortal Lord Deepgloom slaughtered years ago! He also put some of his own canon into it. Even a Lower Immortal who practices cultivation here would benefit greatly. Because the star is unstable... no one is permitted to stay here except by invitation!”

Xu Qing nodded. He looked at the ascendees, and it was plain to see how difficult this mission had been for all of them.

With a serious expression on his face, he bowed to them. “I can’t share the title of true monarch, but I can share all the other rewards, including the ringsource and the military credits! As for the Immortal Lord’s dao weapon, though it’s being given to me, it can be our communal property!”

Zhou Zhengli looked back at him solemnly. Sir Star Ring said nothing. Li Mengtu grinned, and Sir Vilespirit cleared his throat. Yuanshan Su looked down. The others reacted similarly. They all bowed back. Hordeslayer and Rampart seemed somewhat excited, as if having Xu Qing bow to them was a reward in and of itself.

After that, Xu Qing turned and entered his flame pagoda. Everyone else entered their own respective pagodas to start working on cultivation. And that was how the days passed.

As they waited for their reward, and as the goddess was delivered to Immortal Lord Deepgloom, the black and white color that was superimposed over the battlefield of the Fourth and Fifth Star Rings constantly shifted. It was clear... that the white color that represented the immortals was advancing, while the black mutagen was falling back.

The change affected the front lines in all the theaters of war. Clearly, the cultivators had gained the upper hand. The deadlock between God Emperor Death Departure and Immortal Lord Deepgloom had been broken.

Two majestic figures within the black and the white were looking at each other.

And then... a voice spoke. “Deepgloom, you should know that if I lose control of the front lines, then this war will reach another level. It will be a battle between a God Paragon and an Immortal Paragon. Are you people ready for that...?”

\*\*\*

In the middle of the Fourth Star Ring, far from the battlefield, the mutagen levels were very high. On the edge of the starry sky there, a god flew along, with an ancient aura and a physical frame as large as an asteroid. Hē was panting for breath, and had nearly passed out. Hē seemed almost to be moving forward on instinct alone. Hē was moving in a very specific direction, as if hē was being drawn there. Perhaps hē was returning there.

Inside of that god, where the heart had once been, there was an empty cavity in which two people sat cross-legged. One was a man, the other was a woman. At a certain point, the woman opened her eyes, cast her senses outside, and then spoke in a soft voice.

“We’re almost there, husband....”

The man opened his eyes and nodded. “The lantern on the front lines really did attract a lot of attention. Unfortunately... we need to stay even more hidden going forward.” For more chapters visit [novel▀fire.net](#)

Were Xu Qing present, he would recognize these two people instantly. They were Young Lord Aurora and his daoist partner, Immortal Fairy Spirit Phoenix!

## Chapter 1253: True Monarch Green Aurora

### Chapter 1253: True Monarch Green Aurora

Six days flew by in a flash. As the day the lieutenant general had mentioned approached, Xu Qing and the ascendees worked on their cultivation in their respective flame pagodas. The ringsource gathered by the red giant wasn’t as pure as that from the goddess, but was still very beneficial as they healed from their injuries. In the six days that passed, most of them ended up recovering fully.

Xu Qing was particularly benefited. The ringsource from the red giant was of great help in pushing his immortal embryo toward completion. It formed a great complement to the ringsource he had collected from the goddess, making it easier to absorb. The advancement of his immortal embryo put him on the very cusp of mid Quasi-Immortal.

*As it turns out, cultivation on the battlefield really is more efficient.*

Inside the flame pagoda, Xu Qing opened his eyes. They glowed as if heavenly bodies swirled within them, making him seem extraordinarily refined. Combined with his extraordinary good looks, he really embodied the spirit of what it meant to be an immortal.

*Sadly... this ringsource is too placid. If I didn’t have the purer kind from the goddess to balance it out, it wouldn’t be as good for healing purposes.*

Xu Qing still regretted not being able to make better use of the goddess. It wasn't that he had never harvested ringsource from a True God before. In fact, he currently had a True God in his heaven beyond heaven, and he would occasionally extract ringsource from it. But Starryeyes' ringsource was just much more pure.

*The daughter of a god emperor. The blood of a God Lord.... They're really extraordinary.*

Just thinking about extracting ringsource from that goddess caused Xu Qing to lick his lips. That pure level of ringsource was really perfect for him! It could even be called incomparable.

Unfortunately, he had already turned the goddess in for the mission, so all he could do was suppress his disappointment and settle down to work on his cultivation. But right then...

A solar flare erupted on the red giant! Intense rumbling sounds echoed out as the boundless sea of light swept out to cover the entire star, sending out infinite glowing light. That light swept over Xu Qing's flame pagoda, and after it was gone, so was the pagoda.

A boundless power swept through the sea of light, causing a huge silver eye to appear right in front of Xu Qing. The eye opened!

Trembling, Xu Qing stood, his expression solemn as he bowed to the silver eye. "Well met, Lieutenant General!"

Ads by PubRev

The silver eye regarded Xu Qing for a moment, and then that most ancient voice echoed within the sea of light.

"Here is your reward."

As the voice drifted out, ten pieces of glittering jade drifted out, rectangular in shape and glowing with light. There was also a medallion with military credits in it. The ten pieces of jade pulsed with ringsource, and their swirling light made them look like jewels. The military credit medallion looked ordinary in nature, but its contents were astonishing.

"This is the reward for providing clues leading to the capture of the goddess. Ten portions of ringsource and 1,000,000 military credits!"

Next came 100 pieces of jade and ten military credit medallions. The contrast between the first reward and the second was clear, and the latter simply pulsed with dazzling, multicolored light. If these items were displayed in public, they would cause countless cultivators to go crazy with longing.

"This is the reward for capturing the goddess alive!"

Xu Qing looked at it all, his eyes glittering. Forcing himself to remain calm, he stood there quietly.

"As for the title of true monarch...." The silver eye suddenly seemed to become more solemn.

"There are some things you need to understand. Apprentices of Immortal Lords are true monarchs.

Here in the Fifth Star Ring, the dao of immortals was established by the Immortal Paragon. By refining countless gods into spirit lineaments and natural law, destiny aura was formed.

“The Immortal Paragon enjoys fifty percent of the destiny aura, while the eleven Immortal Lords have forty percent and the true monarchs get the remaining ten percent! Those who use destiny aura are blessed by the destiny aura, and receive the protection of the star ring.”

Xu Qing’s gaze sharpened. He had known about true monarchs being the apprentices of Immortal Lords. But he didn’t know very much about destiny aura, so this new information was intriguing.

The ancient voice spoke again, and this time it boomed like thunder.

“Xu Qing! This crystal has been provided to you by Immortal Lord Deepgloom. It was formed from the destiny aura of the Fifth Star Ring. Imprint it with divine will, and the star ring itself will bless you with a name!”

Golden threads emerged, combining in front of Xu Qing to form a finger-nail sized golden crystal! It looked similar to the godhood of True Gods that Xu Qing had seen, but there were some differences.

Xu Qing instinctively looked at it, and the moment he did, he felt like he could see the entire Fifth Star Ring spinning. He saw infinite universes, boundless starry skies, and numerous heavens beyond heaven. He was just about to put his mark on the crystal... when all of a sudden, within the Fifth Star Ring inside the crystal, next to the eleven active heavens beyond heaven, light glittered brightly. It came from what had once been the Aurora heaven beyond heaven.

The word ‘Green’ was forming there. Green light erupted from it, sweeping across universes.

The silver eye uttered an expression of surprise. “Is the issue of Aurora Heaven’s title being settled now?”

Xu Qing looked dazed. When he finally cleared his head, he saw that there was an additional word on the crystal.

Green!

Upon seeing that word... it was as if countless species had joined voices to speak a title that echoed in Xu Qing’s ears.

True Monarch Green Aurora!

It was closely linked to Xu Qing’s providence! At that moment, Xu Qing felt a close connection to the Fifth Star Ring appear within himself. He was now more closely linked to the Fifth Star Ring than ever before. Now, wherever he went, he knew that he would be able to sense the Fifth Star Ring calling to him.

*This is destiny aura....* Xu Qing thought.

At the same time, his cultivation base received an augmentation from the destiny aura of the Fifth Star Ring, causing him to instantly achieve a breakthrough! Rumbling sounds filled him as his

immortal embryo appeared behind him, towering over the red giant. Instantly, a tempestuous vortex formed, as an immortal will glittered into the starry sky. Just like the tempest, his cultivation base raged to new heights.

He instantly broke past the limits of early Quasi-Immortal and entered... mid Quasi-Immortal! The moment he entered mid Quasi-Immortal, he could sense immortal energy as vast as a sea roiling within him. His hair whipped about, and the pressure he radiated vastly surpassed anything from before.

Just barely, he could sense an immortal reserve within him. That immortal reserve was the foundation upon which to control his own fate. As of that moment, Xu Qing's eyes started shining with silver light! That was one of the hallmarks of immortals!

After Xu Qing was bolstered by the destiny aura, achieving a cultivation base breakthrough, it became possible to see a figure clad in a daoist robe, standing in the huge silver eye in front of him. It was a middle-aged cultivator who seemed threatening without being angry. His daoist robe was blue, he pulsed with an immortal energy, and his eyes seemed to contain universes and star domains.

He was the lieutenant general of the eastern theater. He stepped out into the open and stood in front of Xu Qing, looking at him with glittering eyes.

Xu Qing took a deep breath to calm himself, then prepared to bow.

The lieutenant general shook his head and sent out a gentle force that prevented Xu Qing from bowing.

"You have the title true monarch. If you were a Lower Immortal, I would need to bow to you. And even though you're not a Lower Immortal yet, we have equal status, so there's no need for you to bow. When you eventually leave this battlefield, you will be able to select an Immortal Lord as your Master!"

Xu Qing knew that he should follow the rules of the Fifth Star Ring, so he made no further attempt to bow. However, he still made a sincere expression of gratitude. "Many thanks for your support and guidance, Lieutenant General. I, Xu Qing, will never forget it."

The lieutenant general nodded approvingly. "You earned it and deserve it. Now we come to the final reward for capturing the goddess. The Immortal Lord's dao weapon!"

Xu Qing's eyes glittered. This... was what he had been waiting for this entire time! The ringsource and the military credits would be useful. But things like that could be acquired by other means. Even the title of true monarch was really just a change in status. What Xu Qing cared the most about right now was battle prowess! And the dao weapon of an Immortal Lord would definitely improve his battle prowess and make him more lethal! Follow current novels on [novel-fire.net](http://novel-fire.net)

When the lieutenant general saw how focused Xu Qing was on the dao weapon, he smiled faintly. With the wave of his hand, he sent a host of silver streams of light flying out of his sleeve and up into the void overhead.

Xu Qing's pupils constricted as he looked up. The silver threads entered the sea of light above. A brief rumbling sound echoed out, and then some red dots appeared above. The red dots seemed to blossom, turning into a host of red flowers. Finally, they combined, seemingly filling the entire sea of light, until the dome of heaven was the color of blood.

Immense pressure seemed to form above, and then rifts began to open up. Gradually, the rifts connected and combined, creating a huge, irregularly shaped opening! It snaked through the canopy of heaven for over 3,000,000 meters. Blood-red mist poured down from it like a waterfall.

Within that turbid wave of mist was a blade of bone, ghastly white and pulsing with fiendishness. It looked like an inverted crescent moon, shining like blood! It was covered with countless inscriptions that seemed natural, but at the same time, the work of craftsmanship. Maybe they were both.[1]

As the blade descended, the sea of light in the area shrank down and formed into a vortex.

What was especially bizarre was that the spatial rifts that had opened up, upon being filled with the bright red light of the blade, seemed to transform into thousands upon thousands of writhing karma threads. Their interactions became restraining magical law that controlled the blade light, making it a deadly arc that could sever reincarnation itself.

"This blade was used by Immortal Lord Deepgloom after he and other Immortal Lords joined forces to slaughter the last God Lord in the Fifth Star Ring. It's a precious treasure made from the fingernail of that God Lord! That God Lord's godhood was that of slaughter, and thus, this blade... can unleash astonishing levels of slaughter!"

It seemed like the blade could hear his words; as it descended, it vibrated and released a thrumming sound. That mere thrumming sent all starlight tumbling away from it. The sound summoned countless discarnate souls that the blade had destroyed, and they materialized around it like an army of demonic monsters. However, they didn't dare to wail or howl; they turned into a mottled fog of blood that surrounded the blade.

The edge of the blade sliced space as it passed, leaving behind wounds like those inflicted by a ravenous animal. This was the dao weapon of an Immortal Lord!

Xu Qing was astonished. Acting on instinct, he reached out to grab the blade! The moment his hand closed around the hilt, he felt like he could hear gods howling in the starry sky, a sound which could pierce through all universes. All of a sudden, Xu Qing's view of the world became the color of rust. A terrifying aura spread out that caused his scalp to go numb.

"You have been given all of your rewards. Half a month from now, an important event will take place. According to the treaty that has been agreed upon between God Lord Death Departure of the Fourth Star Ring and Immortal Lord Deepgloom, there will be a hostage exchange!

"Since you were the one to capture the goddess, the Immortal Lord has decreed... that you will be the one to hand her over, Xu Qing! It will happen on the front lines of the eastern theater. And my entire army will be there to keep you safe!"

1. The characters used to describe this blade are often rendered as machete or scimitar. They literally just mean curved blade, although they could also be rendered in other ways, such as

crooked blade or even bent blade. Considering the description of it being like an inverted crescent moon, I feel like it's supposed to be something akin to a sickle or falx as opposed to a straight-bladed weapon. Here are some examples of what I mean. There is never a super clear description, though, so in the end, it's up to your imagination. That said... (minor spoilers): later descriptions indicate that the blade is only about 5 inches long, so using something like "scimitar" or "machete" doesn't seem appropriate. Because of that, I'm going to render it as blade, or occasionally curved blade as a reminder of its shape. ٧٤

## Chapter 1254: The Nightmare Before the Storm

### Chapter 1254: The Nightmare Before the Storm

God Emperor Death Departure and Immortal Lord Deepgloom had agreed to a hostage exchange treaty.... That was not something Xu Qing had anticipated would happen, much less that the Immortal Lord would assign him to be the escort. Read full story at [novel•fire.net](#)

As the lieutenant general explained things, a thoughtful look appeared in Xu Qing's eyes. Previously, he had come to the conclusion that the goddess was important because of the blood of the imperial clan that ran in her veins, and how it contained the godhood power of her father, God Emperor Death Departure. Capturing her could give the Immortal Lord a much deeper understanding of how to deal with Death Departure's godhood. By extension, that would enable him to gain an advantage in the war. But now... the goddess was being returned.

Xu Qing's eyes narrowed. He gripped the blade as he listened to the lieutenant general. When it was appropriate for him to speak, he said, "Lieutenant General, is there any chance you know why the exalted Immortal Lord has agreed to a hostage exchange with the god emperor?"

The lieutenant general glanced out at the starry sky briefly. "Because God Emperor Death Departure made a few concessions that we Fifth Star Ring cultivators simply couldn't reject!"

Xu Qing was instantly curious about what sort of concessions could have been offered that were impossible to reject, and would even prompt the Immortal Lord to give back Goddess Starryeyes.

"To begin with," continued the lieutenant general, "God Emperor Death Departure offered to return five Lower Immortals who were captured by the Fourth Star Ring but not killed. That was the first concession.

"Of those five Lower Immortals, one was Immortal Lord Deepgloom's last apprentice, who had patrolled the border with him for 10,000 years. He performed astounding services on the battlefield, and specialized in assassinations. Several years ago, the gods laid a cunning trap that resulted in his capture. All attempts to rescue him failed, and he suffered years of torture.

"The other four aren't as important, but have still performed amazing services for the Fifth Star Ring. All of them were doomed to be tortured to death, but now we have a chance to get them back. So that's the first concession offered by God Emperor Death Departure.

“But there’s a second concession, and as I said, the Fifth Star Ring simply couldn’t reject it. Even the Immortal Lord fully approved.... It’s a roaming universe!” The lieutenant general’s eyes gleamed as he looked at Xu Qing. “You’re an ascende, so though you know a bit about history, your understanding is not comprehensive.

“Countless years ago here in the Fifth Star Ring, during the war between cultivators and local gods, the fighting was intense. The slaughter that was carried out shook the heavens and toppled the earth. In the end, the Immortal Paragon and the God Paragon fought each other, and it nearly destroyed the Fifth Star Ring. Many starry skies were ripped out of place and turned into roaming universes that left the Fifth Star Ring.

“Years later, the Immortal Lords were given a mission to go out, find the roaming universes, and bring them back. The ultimate goal was... to make the Fifth Star Ring whole again! If the Fifth Star Ring were whole, then the natural and magical laws, as well as the destiny aura, would reach the ultimate peak.

“Over the years, most of the roaming universes have been found and brought back. But the biggest of them all has been missing the entire time. Because of that, the Fifth Star Ring has never truly been complete.

Ads by PubRev

“God Emperor Death Departure’s second concession is to return that final roaming universe! If we get it, then the Fifth Star Ring will finally be whole. The natural and magical laws will be complete, and the destiny aura will flourish. It will benefit all living beings. Now, do you really think we could reject an offer like that?”

The lieutenant general looked at Xu Qing.

Xu Qing was visibly moved. And then a seemingly outrageous thought occurred to him. “Don’t tell me that... the Immortal Lord knew all along that God Emperor Death Departure had the roaming universe, and that’s why he captured Goddess Starryeyes?”

The lieutenant general’s eyes glittered with profound light, but he didn’t answer the question. Instead, he lifted his hand to reveal a silver jade stone. It radiated scintillating light, as well as a robust immortal energy. Just barely visible within the jade stone was some sort of mysterious bubble.

When Xu Qing laid eyes on the bubble, he shivered from head to toe. He felt his canon stirring, as well as his immortal embryo. It was as if... that bubble contained the boundless will of the entire Fifth Star Ring. The destiny aura he had acquired seemed to thrum in resonance with it.

“Is that...?” Xu Qing whispered.

“This is a Fifth Ring Immortal Pill! Because it’s so closely linked to destiny aura, only true monarchs can be given them. If an ordinary cultivator consumed it, they would die. But a true monarch can use it to increase their chances of successfully breaking through to Lower Immortal! The Immortal Lord will give this pill to you as a reward after you successfully escort Goddess Starryeyes to the handover!”

Xu Qing looked at the jade stone and struggled to control his breathing. He could feel the destiny aura within him resonating, and felt his immortal embryo trembling. All of that made it very obvious that this pill... would be very useful to him! The lieutenant general was still talking, and his voice seemed to be tinged with a bit of regret.

“Xu Qing, Immortal Lord Deepgloom... cares a lot about you. The army will be present during the handover, and the Immortal Lord will be closely observing. So you shouldn’t be in much danger. In fact, for all intents and purposes, the hostage exchange could be handled by anybody.

“What’s more, regardless of who does it, they’ll receive the gratitude of the five Lower Immortals who we’re getting back. Having good relationships like that will vastly improve the reputation of anyone, and will make that person the envy of the entire army. After this matter, you will have the qualifications and experience necessary to lead an entire army!”

The lieutenant general waved his hand, sending the jade stone flying over to Xu Qing. It stopped in front of him and hovered there.

Xu Qing looked at it, then took a deep breath and said, “The Immortal Lord’s orders are understood and will be followed!”

The lieutenant general nodded, and without another word, he turned and walked into the silver eye. The eye glittered, and the sea of light vanished. Everything went back to normal. Xu Qing was back inside the flame pagoda, as if nothing at all had just happened. The eye vanished.

However, the silver jade stone remained behind, glittering brightly in front of him, pulsing with ringsource and a strong immortal energy. Xu Qing just stood there for a moment analyzing the pros and cons.

*This... is not something that happened in the illusion created by the god of pain.... The hostage exchange seems reasonable, but....*

He got the feeling things weren’t so simple. Whether it was the Immortal Lord’s scheme, or the deal to return the roaming universe, or everything that led up to the moment.... Everything just seemed to have gone too smoothly.

*In fact, it’s going so smoothly... that it almost seems like God Lord Death Departure is taking the initiative to cooperate.*

That possibility caused Xu Qing’s pupils to constrict.

*Considering this is a God Lord, I could see hīm being in a passive position occasionally. But for hīm to constantly be in the passive position seems very unusual!*

Xu Qing frowned. That said, someone with an Immortal Lord cultivation base would see and know things that he himself couldn’t comprehend. When he thought back to the momentum of the war, and considered what an Immortal Lord could do, he had to admit there was the possibility he was overlooking something.

*So if both sides are in on this thing, what is the ultimate point?*

Even after thinking about it for a while, Xu Qing couldn't come up with a good theory. He looked at his reward items, then settled his thoughts and sent a message via divine will to Sir Star Ring and the others. Before long, the various dao seeds opened their eyes and emerged from their flame pagodas. Full of anticipation, they proceeded to Xu Qing's flame pagoda. Upon entering, they saw the reward items.

Sir Star Ring and Zhou Zhengli were the most experienced and knowledgeable, and they looked dazed.

"This is the ringsource and the military credits delivered by the lieutenant general," Xu Qing said.

They had already agreed how to split up the rewards. Because Xu Qing had led the search and been the one to actually capture Goddess Starryeyes, he got forty percent. Sir Star Ring had participated in the final fight, so he got ten percent. The remainder was split between the other ten ascendees! That was the arrangement for both ringsource and military credits.

After the rewards were distributed, everyone left, their hearts filled with excitement. Nobody had any misgivings about Xu Qing getting the biggest share. Having worked so closely with him for so long, they knew that it was only his battle prowess that had brought them to this point.

Xu Qing also felt that the split was fair. Without the help of the other ascendees, it would have been impossible for him to defeat the True God and capture Goddess Starryeyes.

After they were done splitting the rewards, Xu Qing told them about the hostage exchange. He also explained his suspicions and speculations. Everyone else listened with various thoughtful expressions on their faces. This was their custom. When they ran into an issue, they would confer and analyze the situation from different perspectives.

"What Xu Qing says makes a lot of sense. The hostage exchange probably won't be very dangerous. In terms of the larger picture, my guess is that the Immortal Lord doesn't want the war getting even worse!"

"If the war expanded, or shifted too much in our favor, the other side might get more God Lords involved. The opposite would be true. And who knows, it's even possible the Immortal Paragon would have to step in...."

"That would be the final battle!"

"This whole thing is a game being played between an Immortal Lord and a God Lord. And it's all about momentum...."

"Yes, but there's something strange going on here. What exactly is Immortal Lord Deepgloom trying to accomplish?"

"Who cares what he's planning? We should just do it. We two brothers can conquer any obstacle!"

Everyone had their say. Xu Qing listened to all the opinions and considered how they related to his own analysis. Eventually, he looked at Zhou Zhengli. During their time together, Xu Qing had come to trust Zhou Zhengli's judgement.

Zhou Zhengli frowned as he looked back at Xu Qing. After some hesitation, he kneaded the bridge of his nose. “Young Lord, and all you other Fellow Daoists, there’s one possibility none of you mentioned.... What if the hostage exchange is actually part of the ‘lantern’ that’s been lit?”

Xu Qing’s eyes glittered. “If that’s the case, then it would mean the lantern in the eastern theater isn’t shining brightly enough. If the hostage exchange is meant to brighten the lantern, then... there must still be hidden forces at work on the battlefield. And those forces... are in the Fourth Star Ring!”

Xu Qing’s words struck all of them like a tempest.

\*\*\*

Time passed, and the day of the hostage exchange approached.

Xu Qing and the others had agreed to stay vigilant. Xu Qing was ready. He had taken a few days to get familiar with the new dao weapon. And he had used the ringsource from the red giant to stabilize his place within mid Quasi-Immortal. He was at his peak.

The atmosphere had changed recently. Every few days, army cultivators would cross the starry sky and set up camp around the red giant. More and more cultivators came. Things were getting increasingly tense.

Although Xu Qing and the ascendees couldn’t see what was happening on the front lines, the same thing was happening there. Both cultivators and gods were gathering into larger groups. They were consolidating their battle prowess.

The white and black in the eastern theater continued to intertwine. A storm was coming!

One day, when it was only about two hours before the hostage exchange was to occur, the bleak sound of a horn echoed outside of the red giant. It pierced through the starry sky, reaching the ears of countless cultivators.

Xu Qing opened his eyes. A sea of light glittered in front of him, whereupon a familiar figure appeared, bound tightly with fetters.

It was Goddess Starryeyes! Shē had been treated well in hēr time away from Xu Qing. Hēr ringsource had been largely replenished, and hēr skin was lustrous again. Considering what the Immortal Lord was planning, there had been no need to torment hēr. In fact... hēr perfume was stronger than ever.

Xu Qing looked at hēr. Eyes glittering, he licked his lips.

Goddess Starryeyes looked back at him, her legs trembling. In fact, shē was shaking from head to toe, as if shē were looking at... a nightmare.

## Chapter 1255: The Time Has Come

## Chapter 1255: The Time Has Come

In a flame pagoda by the red giant, an immortal and a god were apparently linked by predestination. UPDATE FROM novelfire.net

Xu Qing's eyes glittered. Starryeyes' expression was one of despair. Shē had assumed that this human shē hated so much would actually say something to hēr. So shē wanted to say something first.

“You—”

Shē had no chance to finish what shē was going to say. Xu Qing was not a fan of wasting time, so before shē could finish, he reached toward

It was as if a gravitational force latched onto Starryeyes and dragged hēr toward Xu Qing. When shē arrived, his hand latched onto a very familiar location. Hēr throat!

The moment his hand clamped down, shē felt terror explode within hēr. Acting with instinctive speed, Xu Qing began to drain hēr ringsource. As the ringsource flowed out, shē felt that same sensation, like hēr soul was being extracted.

The ringsource flowed into Xu Qing's hand to nourish his immortal embryo, his soul, and everything else about him. A sensation he had not experienced in some time filled him, and his mood immediately improved. It was a flavor he had sighed about many times in the past few days. Now that he could experience it again, his cultivation base rotated rapidly, and the silver light in his eyes glittered.

Pain once again struck Starryeyes, filling hēr body and soul. Shē was in a nightmare again, and the mental stability shē had worked so hard to recover was once again upturned. Venomous hatred appeared in hēr again, and this time, it was dozens of times stronger than before.

Xu Qing recognized the look in hēr eyes. He ignored it and continued to extract the ringsource. It lasted for about an hour.

At that point, Starryeyes' skin was no longer lustrous. It was anemic again. All the ringsource shē had built back up was gone. Shē was extremely listless.

Xu Qing was satisfied. He released his hand, whereupon the limp Starryeyes sagged in front of him. Shē was weak physically, but the hatred in hēr heart was extremely intense, and shē glared murderously at him. But only a moment later, shē took a deep breath and closed hēr eyes. When shē opened them again, the venom was gone, having been replaced with bitterness.

“I met your Immortal Lord,” shē said. “You people got what you want. With the exchange at hand, I can understand why you're not willing to give up. I can't stop you from extracting my ringsource. After all, gods and immortals are polar opposites. When one of you immortals falls into our hands, they can't avoid torment. I understand all that. From an objective perspective, there is no enmity between the two of us. In the final analysis, the reason you captured me is that my god magic wasn't pure enough!”

Hēr voice was hoarse and a bit self-deprecating. During hēr recent days in captivity, shē had thought through many things.

This was the first time Xu Qing had ever seen Starryeyes behave like this. He looked at the goddess. Shē looked back at him calmly.

“Before, you couldn’t hide your hatred,” he said suddenly. “That was because you were in despair and thought you were going to die. Now you’re masking it because you have hope. You don’t want to take any risks. But you’re also worried you might anger me, and that I’ll kill you, transforming your hope back into despair.”

Starryeye’s pupils constricted.

“The exchange is upon us,” he said calmly. “You and I both know that I can’t kill you. In other words, you can stop trying so hard to seem weak. I can tell how much you hate me. And there’s no need for you to explain what you plan to do after you get back. You’re not going to forget this or let it go. That said, I’m glad you reminded me of something....”

Eyes narrowing, Xu Qing extended his right hand, and the power of extreme metal glittered, turning into golden threads. Next, the power of wood bolstered it. After that came water, fire, and earth. The five extremes turned into a cage! Time made the seal, and space was the justification, making the cage even more profound. And finally... Xu Qing’s space-time descended. It made the lock for the cage!

Rumbling sounds surrounded Starryeyes as shē was imprisoned in the illusory cage.

Yet Xu Qing didn’t think that was enough. He extended his hand, and the weight of heaven’s principle caused the cage to materialize.

Then Starryeyes’ expression flickered as Xu Qing performed a double-handed incantation gesture and then touched his forehead. His immortal embryo unleashed majestic immortal energy as it exhaled the Aurora Immortal Palace.

The cage overlapped! Rumbling sounds echoed out, and Starryeyes’ face fell. And yet, things weren’t over yet.

After the cage was made with the eight extremes, Xu Qing’s ninth extreme appeared, the canon of parallelism. As the overlaps appeared, the power of numerous space-times became chains that could restrain gods. They shot out of nowhere toward Starryeyes.

A shrill scream echoed out as dozens of chains flowed from different space-times to pierce into the goddess’ scapulas! Starryeyes wanted to struggle, but hēr every attempt just caused the chains to glitter with immortal inscriptions. A profoundly irritating sensation swept through hēr like a storm, wiping away the veneer of weakness. Boundless, unending hatred suddenly erupted again within

“I’m going to kill you, Xu Qing! And not just you. All your loved ones! All your relatives! All your friends! They’ll all die miserably because of you!!”

Xu Qing looked at the goddess expressionlessly, all while assessing hēr ringsource. He soon realized that, thanks to the stimulation of the cage and chains, more ringsource had appeared within hēr. Nodding in satisfaction, he reached out to extract it.

Now Starryeyes realized that he had been doing it all on purpose to provoke hēr into producing more ringsource. All of a sudden, shē thought back to the terrifying memories of hēr original journey with him.

“You’re a nightmare!” shē screamed shrilly. “You’re not an immortal! You’re a devil!!”

When shē finally took a breath, Xu Qing spoke. “I’m very curious,” he said calmly, “about why you continuously produce ringsource after being drained.”

He sliced his fingernail across hēr pale forehead and, eyes glittering, sent some divine will into hēr. It passed through the blood, flesh, and bones, all the way into the godhood in hēr god soul.... He had tried something similar in the past, but had failed due to his low cultivation base.

Now his cultivation base had reached a higher level. What was more, Xu Qing was convinced that the Immortal Lord must have left traces behind of his own search for information. He wanted to see if he could find such clues, and learn more about Starryeyes’ secrets. This time... things were working a lot more smoothly. And so, it didn’t take long after he sent his divine will into hēr god soul, he found the clues.

Xu Qing’s previous probing was too weak to do anything. But now he saw the damage that had been done by the Immortal Lord! As a result, Xu Qing’s divine will was able to enter easily.

As he went deeper, he sensed that there was something ahead that wasn’t illusory. It was material. It was something... crystalized! It looked like it was something made of destiny aura, but at the same time, wasn’t. There was something mysterious swirling in it. At the same time, it was covered with cracks....

It looked like it was on the verge of collapsing. But at the same time, it gave Xu Qing the sensation he was looking at the entire Fourth Star Ring. Terrifying pressure radiated out of it.

Xu Qing was initially stunned, but after a bit of hesitation, he decisively sent his divine will inside! The crystal suddenly started rumbling, and a majestic, indescribable force swept outward, eradicating everything in its path.

Xu Qing’s divine will collapsed, and his fingers were shoved away from her neck. At the same time, the provocation caused new power to surge within Starryeyes, who looked up at him, hēr pupils transformed into a vortex of stars.

“You actually tried to take the godly authority my father gave to me!” shē roared in a voice like thunder. It wasn’t actually hēr original voice, but rather, a chaotic combination of countless voices that became a godly voice.

Suddenly, nine bolts of golden lightning appeared around hēr, which shot toward Xu Qing. However, just as they touched him, they were shattered by some ancient will coming from the goddess. Starryeyes sagged listlessly, all while gasping for breath.

Xu Qing instantly identified the mysterious will. It contained boundless immortal energy that surpassed that of a Lower Immortal.

*It's a sealing mark left inside of hēr by the Immortal Lord!*

Xu Qing looked thoughtfully at the tip of his index finger. There was a black spot there that was fading away. Looking at it closely, it was clear that the spot was made up of countless intricate golden designs. Looking at it seemed like looking at the destruction and rebirth of countless planets.

Xu Qing's eyes glittered. *This is the secret of hēr never-ending ringsource.*

\*\*\*

In the outside world, the hostage exchange was about to happen, and the lieutenant general was speaking into the minds of all cultivators.

*"The time has come! Men, move out!"*

A rumbling sound emerged from the red giant that could shake starry skies! It... was about to leave! And the entire massive army camped in the area was going with it.

The sight of it was astonishing. The starry sky trembled, universes shook, and star regions distorted. A massive teleportation the size of an entire star region... was beginning.

The incredibly important hostage exchange was taking place in the eastern theater between the Fourth and Fifth Star Rings, in a place filled with innumerable asteroids. There was also dust that formed stellar storms which covered everything.

There was black and white roiling in all parts. Within the black part, there were unending gods, all of them pulsing with so much black mutagen that it was corporeal. There were so many gods that the starry sky almost couldn't take it, and rifts were starting to break open.

Within the white color were numerous cultivator armies, all of them brimming with somber auras and immortal energy. Each and every cultivator in the massive group was an accomplished killer.

There weren't just troops gathered from the front lines of the eastern theater. All of the armies were there, united. That included Immortal Monarch Silent Dao and the newly returned Spirit Jade.... Everyone was there!

Above the armies was the chaotic mixture of black and white, wherein thunder boomed. Up there, it was just possible to see two blurry figures who emanated pressure onto everyone else. As the two sides faced off, the starry sky on the cultivator side rippled as... the red giant and the armies that had camped around it appeared!

Its arrival attracted the attention of all the immortals and gods!

Inside the giant red star, Xu Qing sat cross-legged in his fire pagoda.

“Xu Qing, bring out the captive goddess!”

Upon hearing that, Xu Qing calmly stood. Grabbing the chains of canon, he dragged the cage... out of the fire pagoda.

## Chapter 1256: One Side Violates the Treaty

### Chapter 1256: One Side Violates the Treaty

The moment Xu Qing emerged from the flame pagoda, the black mutagen of the host of gods fluctuated so violently the starry sky shook. All eyes were fixed on him there by the red giant, including those of both gods and immortals. And then, all gazes shifted from Xu Qing to the cage he was dragging behind him.

Gazes could have weight, especially those of the gods. It was weight that could crush down on the body and suppress the soul. In an instant, Xu Qing felt like his soul was about to be shredded. The gazes of the immortals opposed that. So as the pressure from the gods built, the immortals looked over and dispelled the pressure.

Xu Qing proceeded, surrounded by loud rumbling sounds as the void rippled, shook, became clear, and then collapsed, over and over again. His face was completely expressionless as he continued to drag the cage forward. Soon he was beyond the borders of the red star, where he stopped and looked around coldly.

This spot was in between the Fourth and Fifth Star Rings, and had once been a battlefield. Because of the blue stellar clouds in the area, it was known as... the Blue Wastes!

Black and white filled the sky, while blue clouds swirled everywhere. The shattered remains of the planets that stretched out endlessly looked like the hulking spines of huge beasts. The surfaces of shattered planets had strange markings crawling across them that looked like bulging veins. The faceoff between the gods and immortals made the markings pulse, which in turn caused the shattered planets to glitter with rippling blood-red light.

Beauty and majesty coexisted! That was the backdrop for the scene!

Framed against that backdrop was an army of cultivators organized in ranks that seemed to conform to the overall structure of the entire Fifth Star Ring. It was so majestic and massive that the army seemed to never end. Seen from afar, it looked like dots organized neatly on a chart, but closer examination would reveal that each dot was made of 10,000 troops!

In the middle of it all was an enormous war drum covered with designs of gobblewocks and heaveneaters. When Xu Qing stopped moving forward, the drum echoed out with a thunderous roar.

On the other side of the same backdrop was the army of gods with their mutagen. They had numerous planets, shrunk down and covered with flesh, that spat out endless mutagen. Atop each of those planets were hosts of gods. Their forces also seemed to go on without end.

Behind that were enormous conglomerations of mutated flesh and blood that looked like bows made of space rock, with strings made of starry rivers. They were taut... and thrummed with a sound that made the atmosphere very tense.

What was more, there were golden shooting stars that flew back and forth on the side of the gods, following mysterious orbital paths that formed a defensive barrier. Whenever the sound of the cultivators' drums threatened to invade the territory of the gods, black holes would appear on that barrier, and would swallow up the sound and the light that tried to pass them.

It was a dramatic and majestic sight. What was even shocking to the immortals and gods was the vast area overhead. That... was where a scroll painting and a godly river were at odds.

On the side of the scroll painting was the majestic figure of Immortal Lord Deepgloom, who commanded everything around him. Stretching out behind him was the scroll painting that covered half of a star region, its gilded designs featuring magical laws of heaven and earth.

Opposite of him in the black river of the gods was God Lord Death Departure, seated in a throne forged from the shattered remnants of countless universes. As the sharp tips of his fingernails pointed down, the water of the river froze.

Few people could see the two of them clearly. But the pressure they exuded was clearly sensed by all living beings. They were both looking at the same spot! It was the location in the very middle of this ancient battlefield, where the exchange was to take place.

There, the clouds swirled to reveal an enormous, majestic altar!

The altar was made from 360 coffins and 360 huge trees. The coffins were made from devil copper, and were covered with peeling rust, beneath which were symbols scrawled in blood. Whenever the stellar wind blew, the coffins would leak black mist that caused terrifying grisly figures to appear.

The trees were made from immortal crystal. Silver immortal symbols flowed across their surfaces, all of which pulsed with an incomparable and boundless power of life force. Whenever black mist would pulse out of the coffins, the immortal trees would produce the spirits of heroic immortals to wage war against it.

This jointly built altar was the spot where the hostage exchange would take place!

Even after all of the wars Xu Qing had participated in, this scene was still shocking, and he had to stop and take it in for a moment before continuing on his way. He left the red giant and entered the starry sky. The cage he dragged behind him left a dark red streak in the starry sky as he approached the altar.

On the side of the gods, the golden barrier shimmered, and as countless cultivators looked on, a god emerged. The god actually resembled a middle-aged human, except with a vastly larger fleshly body, being around 20-25 meters tall.

His facial features were beautiful, and he had long violet hair that swayed around him. He wore a golden suit of armor that perfectly accentuated his perfect physique. In terms of level... that had been determined by the nature of the exchange.

Hē was a peak Altar God. Hē came out with five emaciated old men with dull facial expressions, who were bound like captive dogs. All five of the old men were crisscrossed with cuts and bruises. They were wan and sallow, their life force faded and dull. Obviously, they had suffered torment in their years of captivity. These were the human cultivators who had performed meritorious deeds in the service of the Fifth Star Ring.

When the cultivators saw them, their emotions swelled, and the sound of the war drum became louder.

The pretty god sensed that, and with cold, apathetic eyes, hē jerked the rope binding the necks of the five captive cultivators. The five old men trembled, the pain obviously severe as the rope seemed about to break their necks. Hē looked at Xu Qing.

The atmosphere instantly grew even more tense.

Xu Qing's eyes glittered with coldness. Though he didn't know these five Lower Immortals, based on what the lieutenant general had told him, he knew that they had performed great services. What was more, he could tell that this pretty god was trying to provoke him.

Lifting his hand, he opened the cage of canon, then transformed it into a chain that bound Starryyes' arms and legs. Next, he dragged hēr out into the open and clasped his hand down onto hēr neck. As all the gods and even the god emperor watched, he started extracting ringsource!

Starryeyes shivered, and was instantly dragged out of unconsciousness by the pain.

The gods erupted into anger. Killing intent surged. To the gods, seeing Xu Qing extract ringsource from their goddess, right in front of them, was an unspeakable insult!

The pretty god looked at Xu Qing, then expressionlessly loosened the rope binding the five humans. Xu Qing also relaxed his hand and stopped the extraction process. Pulling on the chain, he placed Starryyes in front of him.

Both sides proceeded toward the altar.

Every step Xu Qing took caused brilliant lotuses of light to spread out beneath his feet. His cultivation base stirred to its absolute peak.

As Starryyes proceeded, the void around hēr contracted. God blood dripped out, but didn't dissipate. Instead, it floated behind her like a path of bloody planets born in the void. Shē grew weaker with each step shē took, until walking forward became difficult. The chains around hēr feet tightened more and more, causing pain to stab through hēr. The clank of the chains were like cold winds blowing through the Nine Serenities, and made hēr think back to the pain shē had experienced. Perhaps because of all that animosity, hēr hair began to crumble and fall down like stardust.

Behind hēr, Xu Qing looked calm, but the truth was that his guard was up, and he was ready for something unexpected to happen. He actually felt uneasy.

Although he could sense the protection offered by countless gazes, as well as the pounding of the drum, after his discussion with his squadron, he felt that there had to be another reason why he

had been selected for this assignment. And there was one distinct possibility that he kept thinking about....

*If Starryyeyes was aware this exchange was going to happen, then considering how much shē hates me... wouldn't shē make additional demands?*

He looked at the staggering goddess in front of him, and his eyes narrowed.

The moments ticked by as Xu Qing prodded Starryyeyes forward. Soon, both he and the pretty god entered the asteroid belt on the way to the altar. Eventually... they were in the middle of the asteroid belt, only about 30,000 meters away from the altar.

Starryeyes suddenly spun in place. Because of the mutagen in the area, hēr eyes had regained some of the golden fire that had been extinguished before. “Every bit of ringsource you take from me will be a star that pierces your life force and turns into the biggest curse you can imagine, something that you’ll regret for the rest of your life!”

Xu Qing didn’t reply. He jerked the chain, causing immortal symbols to appear on it and release the power to extract ringsource. Starryyeyes grunted as ringsource flowed out of hēr wounds. Shē staggered over a small asteroid. The black surface of the asteroid wriggled, causing the rust-colored stains covering hēr robes to grow more prominent.

Xu Qing’s daoist robe swirled despite there being no wind, as a vortex of stellar clouds began to spin around him counter-clockwise. [Follow current NOVELS on NoveI-Fire.net](#)

The ringsource coming out of Starryyeye’s wounds flowed into the vortex, becoming specks of brightness like moonlight.

Then Xu Qing quietly said, “Keep your mouth shut.”

Starryeyes glared at Xu Qing, then gritted hēr teeth and tried to hurry onward. Xu Qing tugged back on the chains.

In that manner, Xu Qing controlled how quickly they covered the 3,000-meter distance to the altar. Upon arriving, he was able to get a closer look at the pretty god and the five cultivators.

He suddenly felt even more uneasy than before. Eyes flashing, he reached out and grabbed Starryyeyes. Ignoring hēr struggles, he once again clamped his hand onto hēr throat.

Then he viciously extracted hēr ringsource. This time, he exerted far more force than before. After draining hēr, he eased up. But this time, the ringsource didn’t start coming back. It stopped. It was as if shē was about to become a corpse, so there was no need to continue.

The process was more painful to Starryyeyes than anything from before, to the point where hēr mind was on the verge of breaking.

The gods seethed. Countless roars echoed out, and immense pressure weighed down. The pretty god’s face hardened, and hē rushed forward. The cultivators also stirred due to Xu Qing’s sudden action. It looked like something big was about to happen between the two sides.

Meanwhile, Starryyeyes was struggling violently. Perhaps because of the mutagen, or perhaps because of secret assistance from somewhere, shē suddenly unleashed a terrifying power, as well as a scream that caused Xu Qing’s hand to shake.

All of a sudden, the chains binding hēr shattered. Shē was free! The weakened goddess had no time to think rationally. Shē just raced away, becoming a stream of light that disappeared behind the pretty god. Shē was returning to the camp of the gods!

Xu Qing scowled at hēr retreating figure and suddenly said, “You can run, but we’ll meet again!”

Starryeyes looked over hēr shoulder on the way back to the gods. Glaring at Xu Qing with the golden color of god blood in hēr eyes, shē forced herself to simply grind hēr teeth.

“You’re right, we’ll meet again soon! I’ve hated you this entire time, Xu Qing. Did you really think you were in control? What a joke! Don’t you realize that *you* are the point of this exchange? You’re the point of the treaty between my father and your Immortal Lord. And it was my idea!”

Because of the current situation, Xu Qing was able to tell how much of what shē was saying was true. All of the emotion on his face suddenly vanished.

“So that’s how it is.” Xu Qing waved his hand, and everything Starryyeyes could see vanished like a popping bubble.

Shē was back at his side, with his hand clamped around hēr throat, still 3,000 meters away from the altar! Hēr jaw dropped as waves of fury battered hēr heart. Pupils constricting, shē incredulously said, “A True God’s illusory region? How could you have a True God’s illusory region??”

Xu Qing didn’t answer. Quickly sealing Starryyeyes, he turned and sped in the opposite direction.

In the depths of the voice, an exclamation of surprise echoed out, and then the god river which had been frozen by God Emperor Death Departure’s fingernail suddenly turned into a host of icy chunks that flew up into the starry sky. Someone who could surpass space-time would see those chunks of ice turn into the eyes of a god, looking down on everything.

“Your side violated the treaty, Deepgloom.”

## Chapter 1257: Everything Flips Around

### Chapter 1257: Everything Flips Around

The voice surpassed any heavenly sound, any type of dao will, and exceeded all natural and magical laws. It was like the chanting of infinite gods, with mightiness that shattered starry skies, enveloped all living beings, eradicated all manner of things, and even shattered universes. Endless black flesh and blood emerged from the shattered fragments, then proliferated like mad, turning the entire world into something gruish.

The person who spoke was none other than... God Emperor Death Departure! Hē sat on an imperial throne made of countless universes, and hīs eyes were currently open, with hīs divine will filling every block of shattered ice so that it seemed like many heavens were looking down.

All cultivators shivered in their hearts and minds, and the flames of their life force flickered as if they might go out. The actual immortals were not spared!

The countless chunks of rubble that filled the ancient battlefield began vibrating. Countless eyes from corpses that had been there for endless years floated up, transformed by the will of the God Lord into a huge river. All of a sudden, the lids of the 360 coffins in the central altar opened. Black energy poured out of them, creating space-time ripples that could rip apart the souls of gods.

All of that happened because of one thing said by a God Lord!

Xu Qing was hit particularly hard since he was right at the edge of the altar. His mind went blank, and he suddenly lost all ability to sense anything. It was as if... he had become a piece of dust. Compared to a God Lord, right now... he really was like nothing more than dust.

As dramatic things seemed about to unfold, a cold voice suddenly spread out from the scroll painting that opposed the God Lord.

“So what if the treaty was violated?”

That voice caused more dramatic things to happen in the starry sky. The shattered ice, the crystals that had formed, the godly might and mutagen, and even the infinite and grisly proliferations of flesh, all went still. They became a boundless black mist that shot toward the painting, converging on the index finger of the Immortal Lord who sat cross-legged within it.

It vanished. A mere afterglow remained on the fingertip, which turned into a ring of black ice.

The Immortal Lord flicked his finger. The black ice melted, becoming a white flame that danced about, leaving faint burn marks like stardust.

Just like that, the battlefield changed again. The coffins’ lids shut, and the space-time ripples were erased. The crystal river tumbled back and became a sea of flames that spread out, filled with immortal energy. The cultivators’ minds cleared, and they unhesitatingly beat their war drums. The sound of it filled the starry sky.

Xu Qing regained his senses, and didn’t hesitate for a moment to flee. He wouldn’t be so quick to believe the Fifth Star Ring had sold him out. For one thing, he didn’t believe that he was important enough to be sold out. After everything that had happened, it still seemed to him like there was some other secret at play during this exchange. It seemed more likely that his presence had simply been to ensure that the exchange started off smoothly....

Even as that thought coalesced in his mind, the godly river in the starry sky seethed. Within it, God Lord Death Departure slowly rose, reaching such a great height it seemed like the starry sky couldn’t accommodate hīm.

A mountain-toppling, sea-draining godly might filled hīs voice as hē said, “You violated the treaty for the sake of a Quasi-Immortal?”

The person to answer him wasn't Immortal Lord Deepgloom. Rather, it was Immortal Monarch Silent Dao, who strode out of the crowd of cultivators.

Standing in front of the army, he looked at the godly river and said, "God Emperor Death Departure, given your level, there's no need to continue with the facade. This isn't about a Quasi-Immortal. You just added a stipulation to the agreement because you wanted my Master to believe your story. Since my Master is here, you've achieved your goal.

"What you really want to do is pin down my Master here so that you can fully open the rift that you've been secretly preparing in the western theater. You see... my Master long since realized what was happening over there, and has made arrangements. Given your godly omniscience, you surely know about all that."

In response to these words, the God Lord said nothing and didn't even react. New NOVEL chapters are published on NoveI~Fire.net

"On the other hand, we have a different goal. We wanted you over here, God Lord, so that we would have a chance... to send you back to where you came from! After we kill you, the war will reach a new level.... Thus, in some ways, you're correct. However, after we kill you, there will be balance between the two sides. So who cares if the fighting kicks back in full force?

"That's why my Master agreed to your concessions. It was because, at that time, he wasn't completely sure he could deal with your godhood. But now he knows he can control it, and therefore, this entire exchange was set up... to kill you!"

As his words echoed out, the cultivators' war drums pounded even more loudly, stirring the spirits of all the warriors. The gods, meanwhile, sank into silence.

In the godly river, the God Lord stared at Immortal Lord Deepgloom in the scroll painting. "Deepgloom, it seems you really do know the secrets of my godhood. That's why you had your apprentice explain all that, instead of doing so yourself. Unfortunately, you came to this realization too late. You cultivators believe yourselves to be infallible. You make all sorts of plans and schemes, but did you really think I wouldn't find out about them?"

The godly river seethed as the god emperor's godly might spread out in all directions. "I knew all about your secret 'lantern' in the eastern theater. I also know how you assassinated my officer here. I saw right through your plan to kidnap my daughter. And, of course, I was aware of how you covet my godhood!"

As he spoke those words, he strode out of the godly river and toward the scroll painting. Every step he took caused the starry sky to crack, filled the battlefield with rumbling sounds, and shook universes.

"That's why I just went along with what you wanted. I pretended to not know. I let you bring my daughter here, using her to make sure I could get to you. You were plotting against me, Deepgloom, but I was also plotting against you! You thought you could use my daughter to probe my godly authority. But the reality is that I was using her to probe your canon.

"That is why I offered the roaming universe as a concession. I knew you couldn't refuse that. All I had to do was see her and speak a word to her. In that manner, I could confirm everything about

hēr, and that includes all of the results of my plot. Now, you know about my godhood, and I know about your canon. Deepgloom... how do you think you can beat me now?"

As the god emperor's voice shook universes, he unleashed the canon of cultivators, causing an ever-changing mask to appear between his fingers. The mask shifted back and forth between faces that were men and women, old people and youngsters. It displayed different ages and cultivation bases, but all of them were smiling with joy.

The God Lord looked at the mask and sighed in admiration. "Immortal canon really is extraordinary. To imitate godhood... and then use that to carve a new path, a second route to ringsource! As for you, Deepgloom, your canon... is unexpected. It's not about slaughter, but about hope. You gather the hope of all living things to defend, to cherish, and to remember. You turn all that into a safeguard, by means of war and killing!"

Though there was admiration in the God Lord's eyes, an instant later, hē smiled and flicked his finger. Black energy proliferated, filling the mask and causing the joy on all the living beings' faces to change. Instead of smiling, they were wailing in despair! The sound of howling rose up.

Astonishingly, hē was infecting Immortal Lord Deepgloom's canon! Boundless blackness erupted from beneath his feet, rumbling out to fill the area with mutagen. The entire battlefield was infected.

Then God Emperor Death Departure took another step forward and entered Immortal Lord Deepgloom's scroll painting.

"Now we'll see if you kill me or if I cut you down!"

White and black inverted. The scroll painting blurred. A battle started raging that could not be perceived.

Fighting instantly broke out between the two armies! The array of dots that were the cultivators became like a wave of fire. Countless magical treasures were unleashed, resulting in a dazzling, multicolored display.

The red giant stirred into motion, transforming into a burning ball of true fire and instantly covered any nearby gods and mutagen.

Battle flags flapped and war drums shook the soul! The sound could shatter planets as dust swept out and turned everything into a gauzy blur.

On the gods' side, bowstrings twanged as countless streams of destructive and infectious godlight headed toward the cultivators like shooting stars. Their defensive barrier rippled, releasing ravenous vortexes. Countless roving stars on the side of the Fifth Star Ring were thrown off of their orbital tracks. An infinitude of gods rushed forth.

In an instant, the battlefield turned into a grindstone of flesh and blood that sent blood spurting everywhere. Extra bits of might would occasionally shoot out from the scroll painting. Those from the Immortal Lord were like ink stains. Every single one turned into a massive stream of sword will that headed toward the gods. Whatever gods it encountered would simply explode. But the

gory chunks would then be frozen by the God Lord's godly might, then turned into millions upon millions of immortal-slaying spears that would shoot into the army of cultivators.

Blood flew everywhere. Black and white no longer intersected, but rather, were physical things that clashed violently. Space-time fractured, rifts spread out, and universes were born and destroyed.

It was the same on the central altar, where the devil copper and the immortal trees were separating from each other! One coffin of devil copper after another collapsed, becoming black mist that would turn into the faces of huge gods that devoured everything in the area. As for the huge immortal trees, when they shattered, they would turn into karma threads that swept across the battlefield and destroyed any god they touched.

The battlefield instantly devolved into chaos! Space was shaken, time was influenced, and space-time seemed like it might shatter.

As that moment of crisis built, Xu Qing fled at top speed! He was doing everything in his power to make his way off into the distance.

But then, the pretty god behind him who had been the one supposedly handling the hostage transfer, looked at him with golden light in his eyes, and inhaled deeply.... The five human cultivators around him suddenly shivered, and then the color drained out of them as their true features were revealed. They were five corpses that had been turned into gods!

They had long since died. As of now, they were simply god puppets! But when the pretty god inhaled, they collapsed into dust, and all of the ringsource in them was sucked right into the pretty god.

As a result, the pretty god's cultivation level rose into the level of True God! Then he shot right toward Xu Qing! He was to rescue Starryeyes and also kill Xu Qing! Earlier, he had been very close to accomplishing that. But just before he did, Xu Qing realized what was going on and fled. Then the fighting broke out, and he realized he was in danger of failing to accomplish his mission. Now was the time for him to turn things around!

## Chapter 1258: Crescent Moon Dao Weapon

### Chapter 1258: Crescent Moon Dao Weapon

Above the chaotic battlefield was a rippling, distorted scroll painting that wasn't possible to see clearly. Within it, the colors black and white twisted back and forth. Occasionally, boundless might from within it swept down to the battlefield, killing anyone it touched.

The armies of the cultivators and gods were like grains of sand, flowing back and forth as they clashed. Blood spread. Corpses fell. It was extremely ghastly!

The starry sky was ripped apart. Space-time shattered. That only added chaos and danger to the battlefield. This universe couldn't take it much longer!

Within all that chaos was an enchantingly beautiful True God clad in golden armor, with violet hair that swirled around him as he strode forward.

“Your name’s Xu Qing, right?” he said, his godly voice echoing forth to reach the fleeing Xu Qing. As it did, it slashed open a huge furrow in the starry sky in front of Xu Qing.

Xu Qing’s gaze sharpened, revealing an aggressive light. He quickly performed an incantation gesture with his left hand, causing his immortal embryo to tower over him. The power of metal, wood, water, fire, earth, time, and space surged, becoming like shooting stars that streamed around the immortal embryo. Overlapping projections of himself appeared, which was the unleashing of the canons of space-time and parallelism.

When all of that combined, he lunged forward. A deafening rumbling sound echoed out. By lunging forward, he ended up shooting right into the furrow that had opened up in front of him. Then his canon flared before dimming. He shot through the furrow.

When he was an early Quasi-Immortal, he could fight a peak Altar God. Now that he was a mid Quasi-Immortal, his battle prowess wasn’t sufficient enough to truly bridge the gap between himself and a True God, although he could at least defend himself.

Upon emerging from the other side, his face was pale, but he still accelerated.

*This battle is already chaotic. Even if I make it back to the cultivator forces, I’ll still be in the middle of the fighting. Therefore... to get away from the battlefield, I first need to leave the entire area.* [READ LATEST CHAPTERS AT NOVELFIRE.NET](#)

He had made his decisions, and yet... despite accelerating after making it through the furrow, the pretty True God was right on his tail.

Upon closing in, the True God waved his hand, causing a second furrow to open up in front of Xu Qing, blocking his path. Then came a third, fourth, and a fifth furrow.... In total, ninety-nine of them appeared, surrounding Xu Qing and cutting him off from everything else.

Ads by PubRev

It was very obvious how incredibly mighty a True God was. Next, the pretty True God clenched his right hand into a fist. The ninety-nine furrows suddenly seem to come alive, splitting out from the backdrop of the starry sky and turning into threads.

Then those threads all began to converge on Xu Qing! They thrummed with sealing power as well as mighty cutting force. What was more, they pulsed with the explosive power of a True God. They sped toward Xu Qing!

As the crisis mounted, Xu Qing’s pupils constricted. In another place and situation, he could take the time to fight this opponent. But there was too much happening on the battlefield, making it very unsuitable for sustained fighting.

In terms of trump cards, he did have the dao weapon of an Immortal Lord. But that dao weapon was *too* powerful. Even if he did use his destiny aura to unleash it, he would be significantly

weakened as a result. Unless he had absolutely no other options, he didn't want to use it here on this chaotic battlefield.

Therefore, as the danger mounted, his eyes glittered, and he thrust out his right hand to reveal the unconscious Goddess Starryeyes. He used hēr to block the first of the slicing furrows.

The pretty True God's eyes hardened. With the wave of a right hand, hē stopped moving. The slicing furrows also lurched to a halt.

Taking advantage of that split-second interruption, Xu Qing shot forward with a burst of speed. The overlapping sensation around him became more pronounced, as a host of different space-times formed around him. By shattering some of them, he managed to break free from the area.

After, he zipped back and forth through the battlefield, seemingly at random.

Behind him, the pretty True God's face flashed with golden light as hē made a decision. If Starryeyes died, shē could be resurrected. If hē kept worrying about hēr safety, then this opponent would be able to constantly keep hīm in a passive position.

"Ah, whatever!" the True God murmured. Hē took a step forward, spanning the battlefield, all while speaking in a voice that echoed around Xu Qing. "Do you know why I was selected for this little exchange? It's because the more chaotic this battlefield is, the better my godhood works."

Xu Qing heard the words, and his expression darkened visibly. There was no reason for this god to be talking so much, and yet hē seemed to be constantly saying something. The words hē spoke were chosen deliberately.

*Is it related to hīs godly authority?*

Even as that thought occurred to Xu Qing, an intense sensation of danger struck him.

The pretty True God was clearly quite a distance away, yet hīs words swirled in the area, and even caused golden threads to appear. It was a similar effect to the slicing furrows from before, yet at the same time, was somewhat different.

Xu Qing's pupils constricted as the golden threads suddenly spread out behind him. As it turned out, their target wasn't him. It was... the corpses of the gods and cultivators floating in the area. Every single golden thread connected to one of the mangled corpses, until there were thousands of such connections.

Then... every single corpse twitched and opened its eyes. Those eyes glowed with golden light! It was exactly the same thing the pretty True God had done to the five human cultivators from earlier. Xu Qing's face fell as he realized that they were god puppets!

*So this is hīs godly authority! Hē turns hīs will into threads, then connects the threads to corpses. It doesn't matter if they're gods or cultivators. They all turn into puppets!*

Xu Qing frowned. It was definitely true that a godhood power like this would be particularly effective on a battlefield.

As soon as the corpses awakened, they all flew up into the air and then bore down on Xu Qing. Though their cultivation bases were only partially intact, given how many there were, they formed an astonishingly deadly force.

Xu Qing fell back urgently, all while waving his hand to unleash a space-time tempest to block the corpses. At the same time, he landed on a head-shaped asteroid. Unfortunately, the moment he landed, golden striations appeared on the asteroid, which wriggled into the shape of facial features, as if the thing was alive.

The asteroid had been turned into a puppet! It opened its mouth and spewed a curse mist.

Just before impact, Xu Qing borrowed Starfire's power, unleashing a god curse that negated the incoming curse. Without a sound, the asteroid crumbled in on itself and collapsed into dust. Unfortunately, that short delay gave the corpses time to get a lot closer. Off in the distance, the pretty True God was now visible.

Xu Qing scowled at the realization of how powerful the enemy's curse was. That said, he now knew how gruish this godly authority was.

*It can turn anything into a puppet?*

Xu Qing waved his hand, and the iron skewer appeared, shooting forth with aggressive power. At the same time, the chime of a bell echoed out, and all the corpses stopped, allowing the skewer to hit many of them.

Of course, Xu Qing didn't stop like the corpses. He used a secret magic to shoot away even faster than before. His clothes were already in tatters as he flew along. As he passed, the remains of heavenly bodies and numerous corpses would glitter with golden light as they awakened.

Puppets were charging toward him from in front and behind.

*"STARFIRE!"* Xu Qing howled inwardly. In response, Starfire again opened herself up, becoming the medium for Xu Qing to transpose between immortal and god. Xu Qing then let loose an audible shout.

That sound became a godly voice. It was a god magic! Sound seizing!

The battlefield was a suitable face for this pretty True God, but... it was also very suitable for Xu Qing's sound-seizing god magic. Instantly, Xu Qing's sound erupted out, and the godly voice became an ancient curse that emerged from every sound on the battlefield.

The booms became godly voices. The sound of slaughter became godly voices. The screams of death became godly voices. The godly voices turned into mysterious admonitions that entangled the puppets as well as the approaching True God.

This was not something the pretty True God had considered might happen, and it caused his eyes to shine.

*"You can use god magic?"*

He waved his hand, and more golden threads appeared out of nowhere, piercing into the admonitions of Xu Qing's godly voice, and... turned them into puppets as well! Then they spun back and raced toward Xu Qing.

However, there were just too many unexpected things that could happen on a battlefield. Whether it was the clash of the armies or the shock waves from the God Lord and Immortal Lord, there were many factors that could affect the chase between Xu Qing and the True God.

At the moment, a stray flow of power from the God Lord hit Xu Qing, and blood sprayed out of his mouth. Even the pretty True God was forced to take evasive action.

And thus, Xu Qing and the True God flew across the battlefield. As Xu Qing sped along, he launched attacks to destroy some of the remnants of heavenly bodies and the corpses of gods and cultivators, turning them into stellar rubble. What he couldn't destroy were latched onto by the pretty True God, who turned them into puppets that attacked Xu Qing.

As the chase continued, the distance between them decreased.

Then something happened that caused Xu Qing's heart to sink. Off in the distance, another True God started heading toward him. Thankfully, a Lower Immortal moved to block the god.

However, it still left Xu Qing with a sense of mounting crisis. Looking around, he identified a location that he needed to reach. But then, his eyes glittered coldly, and he made a decision. Stopping in place, he turned. He would not flee any more. Settling his energy and clearing his mind, he put his hand on his forehead. Soul fluctuations turned into a dao will.

"Crescent Moon!"

Astonishingly, the image of a moon floated off Xu Qing's forehead. He had used the destiny aura of a true monarch to call out to the dao weapon of an Immortal Lord! At the same time, within the parallel space-times around him, all the other versions of himself did exactly the same thing. They spoke exactly the same words.

"Crescent Moon!!"

As the sound echoed out in all the space-times, the moon projection on the forehead of the real Xu Qing revealed a curved, blood-colored blade, something that could pierce planets and slash the sky. It slowly emerged from his forehead.

It looked like the sliver of a fingernail ripped off of a corpse's finger, covered with millions upon millions of blood vessel striations. Each striation seemed to flow with starlight from a different time period. Some of the light was like the marrow of stars, pale violet, which had existed for countless years. Other light was like the rubble of planets that had been immersed in the Primeval Sea for countless years. And in the middle was a pulsing artery that seemed to form an image of the entire Fifth Star Ring!

It was extremely ghastly! Gruish scarlet light spread out that represented death and blood.

All planets in the vicinity collapsed. Asteroids and corpses melted.... It was like flowing tears of blood.

Off in the distance, the pretty True God saw what was happening, and for the very first time... hē was completely taken aback.

## Chapter 1259: Gruish Dao Weapon!

### Chapter 1259: Gruish Dao Weapon!

“A God Lord’s dao weapon!” The sight of the curved blood-colored blade coming out of Xu Qing’s forehead caused the pretty True God to reel! The full mightiness of a God Lord became a crushing will that made it a struggle for hīm to breathe. An intense sensation of deadly crisis covered the heavens and moons of hīs god kingdom.[1]

*He has a God Lord’s dao weapon!! No, wait. That can’t be. A Quasi-Immortal shouldn’t be able to use a dao weapon like that.... What’s more, my omniscience couldn’t sense it.... Someone made it so that this person’s information can’t be accessed via omniscience!!*

The pretty True God was shaken to the core. As of this moment, the scarlet blade coming out of Xu Qing’s forehead hadn’t even emerged by half. Yet even that small portion caused his face to distort. His fleshly body felt like it was being ripped apart, and his soul was writhing. It seemed like he was just on the verge of being killed in body and soul.

This dao weapon was just too powerful. Despite being a true monarch and the destiny aura of the Fifth Star Ring, there was no way he could unleash it in its entirety.

And yet, Xu Qing’s eyes flashed with immense determination. Using the destiny aura, he continued to activate the crescent moon blade!

It emerged from his forehead by another inch. The scarlet glow expanded, causing fights on both sides of the conflict to look over in astonishment and back away. Eventually... a strange grating noise filled the depths of the starry sky.

It sounded like some entity scraping bone with a fingernail. The sound caused all the nearby asteroids to start vibrating. Countless corpses and the rubble of planets also vibrated. At the same time, vein networks appeared on them similar to what covered the blade. Anyone in range to hear, be they cultivators or gods, were visibly astonished.

The pretty True God’s pupils constricted as the shock in hīs heart escalated. Hē quickly started falling back.

Unfortunately, just as hē started moving, Xu Qing, his eyes bloodshot, shouted something in a voice that hardly sounded human.

“Come forth, Crescent Moon!”

Xu Qing shook violently as the flesh of his forehead split and blood spilled down, soaking him. That was the price he paid to pull the blood-red blade one more inch out of his forehead!

Now, more than half of the blade was visible. What was immeasurably grisly was the fact that a host of tiny black holes covered the surface of the blood-colored blade. From within them emerged the distorted voices of souls.

*“The fingernail brings tribulation to the gods; when the tribulation ends, the fingernail is born again.”*

The voice split the void, causing numerous rifts to open in the starry sky. Out from those rifts poured a rain as thick as blood. It looked extremely ghastly.

All hearts were shaken by the voice, but the effects were especially pronounced on the gods. Out on the battlefield, an Altar God accidentally ran into one of the rifts. The god suddenly screamed with madness, reached up, and clawed his eyeballs out of their eye sockets.

Hē threw them to the side. But then the eyes transformed into twitching projections of blades that seemed to possess a life of their own as they cackled and started flying about on their own.

All cultivators in the area felt themselves drawn to the destiny aura of the Fifth Star Ring. However, because the item had been forged by Immortal Lord Deepgloom, the effect wasn't very strong. Despite being shaken, they took advantage of the moment to attack.

As for the pretty True God, hē was too close, and suffered a huge effect from the attack. God blood sprayed out of hīm as hīs golden armor started cracking. Then a boom could be heard as the armor exploded, turning into a host of fragments that shot in front of hīm to form a barrier.

That just managed to spare hīm from the attack, and hē fled backward even more quickly, all while drawing on the full power of hīs godhood. Countless golden threads spun out in all directions, forming something like a defensive cocoon around hīm.

However, the scarlet light just kept coming. As soon as it hit the cocoon, the light caused the golden cocoon to rust. The effects of the rust were bizarre! If you looked closely, you would see that the golden surface had spiral designs, almost like the fingerprint of a curse.

Deep red light shone from the designs, within which concealed millions upon millions of distorted faces. Altogether, they made a design that started to break open the cocoon to devour its contents.

The pretty True God's godhood was trembling. At that moment of crisis, hē wasn't thinking at all about hīs mission. Hīs instincts were telling hīm to get as far away as possible.

Unfortunately, the battlefield was shattered. Space-time was in chaos, and since hīs godhood related to space-time, it meant that hē couldn't easily escape. Hē couldn't teleport away. The only chance hē had was to find a spatial nexus. Unfortunately, just because hē wanted to find one didn't mean hē would be able to right now.

Even as hē went all out to defend hīmself, all while fleeing, and also while using divine will to search for a spatial nexus... Xu Qing was soaked in blood and looked more ferocious than ever. With his left hand, he held nothing back to drain Starryyes of ringsource.

And with his right hand, he reached up... grabbed the blade protruding from his forehead and he ripped it out! Intense rumbling sounds echoed out from his head. He... dragged the blade out into the open!

It was fully out in the starry sky! Crimson light shone everywhere. Within that light was the five-inch blade that resembled a crescent moon, with its tip pointed in the direction of the pretty god.

Then he flicked his wrist, and the blade shot out of his hand toward the fleeing True God.

Looking at the scene from a distance, the way the blade sliced through the starry sky made it seem like it was cutting open skin. Blade light surged as the blade slashed into the golden cocoon.

The cocoon vibrated briefly before collapsing into fragments. The countless faces in the rust joined the blade as it slashed toward the True God.

The True God was stunned. However, hē quickly unleashed a secret magic, which hē used to rip open hīs chest, rip out hīs heart, and stuff it into hīs mouth. Hē devoured it! That was the origin of hīs god kingdom and hīs godhood.

Upon swallowing it, hīs destroyed god kingdom turned into pure god power. By using hīs godhood to devour the flame of hīs true name, hē achieved a huge boost in battle prowess.

Hīs energy surged, and it blocked the blade! Intense rumbling sounds echoed out as the blade stopped in place. By losing hīs heart, the pretty True God was able to mount a brief defense and fall back. But then the veins covering the blade erupted.

What came out wasn't blood. It was a sound pressure that could exterminate universes. The result was that the god power formed when the True God devoured hīs god kingdom began to crumble. Then, the mouth-like black holes on the surface of the blade opened and exerted a sucking force. To hīs shock and horror, the True God's god power began to stream toward the black holes. Those 'mouths' began to devour all of it!

Then the surface of the blade began to wriggle gruishly as a host of fleshy tendrils spread out from it. In the middle of the writhing tendrils, a host of blood-red eyes appeared. It made it seem like the crescent moon was smiling!

The pretty True God was struck senseless by the sight of it. Then the crescent moon shone with dazzling light as it slashed toward hīm. From a distance, it looked like a long, red river flowing up from the Nine Serenities underworld!

It swept past the True God's head. God blood sprayed everywhere!

The pretty True God spasmed and staggered backward. Hē could sense the grievous injury to hīs head, and could sense hīs life force flowing out of hīm. Acting on instinct, hē reached up to push hīs hand down onto the head wound.

Yet as hē did, he realized that there was a host of bizarre green fingernails burrowing out between hīs fingers. In a daze, hē looked down to find that there were gruish fingernails growing out of hīs skin all over.

As a result, hīs entire body looked like it was covered with demonic scales.[2]

And then... the scales all flipped around and burrowed directly into hīm toward hīs soul. Indescribable torment filled every part of the True God, starting in hīs soul and exploding outward from here.

An anguished, grating scream escaped hīs mouth. It was the sound of life force being cut away. God blood then spurted out of all the wounds. But the flow of blood quickly dried up, and then what came out wasn't god blood, but coldly shimmering fingernails!

The blade that had slashed through hīs neck then appeared behind hīm in its full form. The blood vessels that covered it had spread outward, surrounding it to form a wheel of life.

It looked like a gear, and on every gear tooth was sealed the life force that had been devoured by the blade. And deep on the wheel, it was possible to see blood-colored inscriptions that looked like they had been scratched there by a fingernail. For more chapters visit [novel\[f\]ire.net](http://novel[f]ire.net)

*“When you look at this blade, the reflection you see will be of nine reincarnations, growing in your fingernails, that are not your own. And thus, whoever returns will not be you. The work of Deepgloom.”*

As the pretty True God looked at the blade, it was reflected in hīs eyes. Those eyes could not sustain the effort, and exploded. The blade remained. Those eyes had already been drawn into the crescent moon, and were now part of the dao weapon!

The skin of hīs face began to collapse, as if it were being peeled off by fingernails. Revealed beneath was blood and bone and flesh. Then the wound on hīs neck opened wide, and hīs head fell off.

Taking the pain in hīs eyes with hīm... hē collapsed into ashes. Hē had been destroyed in body and soul.

The blade turned into blood-red moonlight that returned to Xu Qing, entered his forehead, and was seen no more. Everything was quiet for a moment. Then the sound of slaughter and battle returned.

Xu Qing coughed up a huge mouthful of blood. He had been severely weakened, and his heart was pounding.

This was his first time using the dao weapon, and the sensation had been bizarre! It felt like his own fingernails were itching, as if life were forming within them. Scalp tingling, he burst into motion and headed toward the spot he had identified earlier.

It was a spatial nexus. Xu Qing had space-time canon. While the space-time in this location was in chaos, Xu Qing was actually much better at identifying spatial nexuses than the pretty True God. That was why he had chosen to make his stand against the True God in that spot. If he wanted to leave the battlefield, he could attempt a teleportation at a spatial nexus.

He had no idea where the nexus led. But given his weakened state, anywhere but this battlefield would be good. Without any hesitation, he raced toward it.

Along the way, he noticed that, though he was still extracting ringsource from Starryyes, and the goddess was trembling, shē was peaceful, as if shē wasn't cursed like before.

Xu Qing looked over. Starryyes immediately closed hēr eyes, not daring to make eye contact with him. Shē feared him. Before, shē had not feared him. Shē had hated him. It was a very deep-seated hatred. But after what shē had just witnessed, especially that gruish dao weapon, hēr heart was filled with terror.

Dying in that way, and especially in the way described in the inscription, which was the same as not returning at all, turned hēr hatred of Xu Qing into dread. Add in what had occurred with Spirit Jade, and shē now believed that the Fifth Star Ring really was a place that had figured out the secrets of the gods' ability to return from death!

Xu Qing noted hēr reaction thoughtfully, then focused on reaching the hidden spatial nexus. He had no time to pay close attention to Starryyes. Upon reaching the nexus, he didn't hesitate to activate his canon and send it into the nexus.

At the same time, a golden stream of light appeared off in the distance as a three-headed six-armed True God suddenly started racing toward Xu Qing. Clearly, hē believed that Xu Qing couldn't use the curved blade again, and considering how weak he was, it would be easy to kill him.

Xu Qing looked down. Not pausing for a moment, he continued to activate his canon and open the spatial nexus. Then... it erupted! Rumbling sounds echoed out as space collapsed, destroying everything.

Xu Qing was no longer visible on the battlefield!

1. This is the third time in the novel that god kingdoms have been mentioned. The previous times were in [1196](#) and [1243](#), however neither of those chapters defined them or explained exactly how they work. Starting at this point, we will learn more about them, but it's all by 'observation.' The author never outright explains them in the narrative. ￼

2. Visually, this works fine in English, as you can imagine fingernails looking like scales. But there is an additional level of wordplay in Chinese, as the words for fingernail and scale (of a fish, the type of armor, etc.) contain a shared character. ￼

## Chapter 1260: A Foreign Star Ring

### Chapter 1260: A Foreign Star Ring

The sky looked like a dark, hazy curtain as far as the eye could see. There was no sun or moon. It seemed like this location existed in perpetual night. However, there were 360 emerald-colored halos above, almost like a gigantic bracelet, that shone with a soft light.

This was a planet in an unknown universe. It had a sea, land, mountains, and islands. The sea was a phosphorescent ocean, the land was made from stellar rubble, and the mountains were made from some mutant amethyst.[1]

As for the islands, they weren't in the sea. They were actually islands that floated near the cliffs of the amethyst mountains, suspended in the air by means of light-consuming vines. The vines were semitransparent, and their roots dug into the air itself, making it hard to tell where they got nutrients from. And it also made it seem like the islands were suspended from nothing at all.

A person had just appeared above one of those islands. He wore a tattered daoist robe, his hair was disheveled, and his face was splattered with blood. His aura was weak, and he hardly seemed conscious as he dropped down onto the island. When he landed, a space-time breeze seemed to float out from him, causing the vine-covered island to tremble and wither visibly.

The island couldn't hold the figure that had just fallen onto it. A hole crumbled open, and the figure fell down through the entire island. Down he fell, ultimately landing in the vast forest at the base of the cliffs.

For some reason, even though he didn't land with much force, all of the trees for 300 meters in all directions collapsed, turning into a dust of starlight that rose into the air and obscured the area. Visible within that glittering dust wasn't just that one person. He... was holding another person by the throat.

That second person was unconscious, yet the first person maintained a vice-like grip, despite the fact that he was also unconscious.

It didn't take long for things to become silent again. The dust slowly settled, turning back into trees so that the forest was whole again.

The vegetation in this forest wasn't actually true and real. It was made from dust! It consumed starlight that drifted in from the surrounding universe. Apparently, the dust operated according to some ancient magical law; it would extract memories from the starlight and display them as moving images within the forest.

Time passed.

Soon it started to rain. However, the rain wasn't made of water, nor did it behave like ordinary rain. It came in the form of millions upon millions of phosphorescent flying objects in the thin atmosphere of the planet, which would slowly drop down from sky.

From a distance, it almost looked like the result of a god out in the void, ripping up sutra books and tossing the pages down. The ripped pages would eventually catch fire and emit both a bright light and a sound like a godly voice chanting.

"Glorious illumination... glorious illumination...."

As the chanting drifted out, blurry projections appeared in the light cast by the burning sutra pages. Gradually, those projections grew clearer. All of them looked exactly the same. They had bodies made of woven light, and were neither male nor female. What was more, each one had twelve wings of light protruding from their backs, which produced iridescent vortexes as they flapped.

Thēy formed in the sky and then spread in all directions, chanting. Thēir passage caused the dust on the ground to rise up and become a whimpering wind. The amethyst mountain ranges shook, and a sound like the ancient song of a flute greeted

In the phosphorescent ocean, glowing pillars of light rose up, turning into a staircase that thēy could dance upon. The vines suspending the islands began to exude golden sap, which congealed to form hexagonal crystals that conformed to the magical laws of this universe, which then floated up like sacrificial offerings. Down below, the forest beneath the islands was crumbling and turning into a dust storm that swept up to offer worship to

The only thing left behind after that were the two people who lay there unmoving.

However, it didn't take long... before the young woman whose throat was being held slowly opened hēr eyes. Shē first looked around in astonishment, and then hēr eyes lit up with joy. Next, shē looked over at the person lying next to hēr, and shē seemed to fill with hesitation and fear.

Shē didn't act rashly. Instead, shē looked up at the glowing figures above, and opened hēr mouth as if to speak in a godly voice. Shē had been sealed, and could not project divine will. But if shē could speak in a godly voice, shē was convinced that the spirit gods above would hear

Yet just as shē was about to speak... the hand on hēr throat clamped down with much more force than before, making it impossible for hēr to produce even a bit of sound.

Starryeyes trembled and looked over at Xu Qing. His eyes were open now. Shē didn't dare to do anything, not even move. Xu Qing didn't move either, nor did his facial expression change in any way.

Eventually, the glowing figures overhead disappeared into the distance, and everything went back to normal. Only at that point did he look over at Starryeyes and start extracting some ringsource from

Starryeyes despaired as the terrifying force wreaked havoc and dragged hēr ringsource out of hēr. Shē had only just formed some more, and now it was gone. When the process was over, shē felt weak and limp.

Afterward, Xu Qing sealed hēr voice again, strengthened all the other seals on hēr, and then trussed her up with chains and put hēr away. Having accomplished that, he carefully sent his divine will out to scan the area. Gradually, his expression turned grim. A moment passed.

"Thank you," he said softly.

"There's no need to thank me, Young Lord. Have things become *that* awkward between us now?" Starfire sounded a bit weak, but was just as flirtatious as ever. Shē knew why Xu Qing was thanking hēr. Upon arriving at this planet, shē had noticed the unusual surroundings, and had taken the initiative to cover Xu Qing with hēr godly aura to protect him. Shē had also noticed Starryeyes acting suspicious, so shē had used hēr godsource to wake up Xu Qing.

"Going forward," he said softly, "you don't need to keep bolstering me."

Sitting up, he closed his eyes to meditate and heal. He had some speculations about his current location, but whether it was to simply confirm those speculations or leave, he needed his cultivation base in good shape.

Thus, the most important thing to do now was heal his cultivation base. Whether it was the price he paid to use the dao weapon or the danger of the chaotic spatial flows he had just endured, he was now in an extremely weak state.

Thankfully... he had a nice ringsource stockpile. His reward from capturing Starryyeyes was enough to restore his cultivation base, and that wasn't to mention that he had the god imprisoned in the Aurora Immortal Palace to harvest from. Plus... he still had Starryyeyes as well. Considering that shē didn't seem capable of completely running out of ringsource, shē was like a precious treasure to him.

In that manner, time passed. Half a month went by.

During that time, Starfire kept Xu Qing hidden in the forest of dust trees. Xu Qing continuously absorbed ringsource and used it to heal. There were additional instances in which ancient scenes played out in the forest, and that same rain occurred.

Xu Qing could sense something god-like in those twelve-winged figures of light. However, they seemed very different from other gods that he had seen before. That said, he had no intention of deeper study and analysis until he was completely healed.

Ten more days passed.

As Xu Qing sat there cross-legged, he opened his eyes, and they glittered brightly. His cultivation base... had recovered by seventy percent. The reason he hadn't fully recovered was because of the lingering effects of the dao weapon. It would simply take time. However, Xu Qing could tell that once he had fully recovered, the tempering his soul had gone through would make it purer than before.

*Well, I suppose I should look around and determine where I am!*

He looked up, his eyes glittering. Next, Starfire's godly aura swept out, covering Xu Qung, then the entire planet, and then spreading out into the starry sky. Mutagen levels were high, and godly fluctuations filled the area.

There was no way he was in the Fifth Star Ring. Though he had suspected as much when he woke up, after getting a good sense of his surroundings, he sighed. This was a completely unfamiliar starry sky. Given how happy Starryyeyes had seemed earlier, Xu Qing could only come to the conclusion that this was the Fourth Star Ring.

As for the specific planet.... Xu Qing's divine will was telling him that the planet was located on the very edge of a nebula. The planet was emerald-green, and as it slowly rotated, it was possible to hear something that resembled the sound of a subterranean meridian slowly breathing.

On one part of the planet was a crystalline plain inhabited by scaled oxen with wings. Their scales were very special, as it allowed them to form a resonance with the land around them. And when

they flapped their wings, they would send out delicate motes of light. Even more strange was that these oxen were apparently intelligent. They actually had formed a civilization. A kingdom.

They also had a temple in which they offered sacrifices to their god. That god looked like a glowing butterfly. It was not a True God, just an Altar God.

As Xu Qing observed, he noticed one of the scaled oxen approach a temple. It was dying, and as it prostrated in front of the temple, it gradually transformed into a similar type of glowing butterfly before entering the temple.

That wasn't the only place where gods could be found.

In a location far, far away from the scaled oxen was a vast field of fluorescent mushrooms! As they chanted into the wind, their roots linked together to form a massive kingdom. When the fire of rain fell from the sky, their bodies would burn and turn into a blue mist that rose into the air. Within that mist was an ethereal mayfly that consumed sound waves. Inside the transparent belly of that mayfly was the god of their species.

The planet also had a humanoid species. They lived in the southwestern part of the planet, where magnetic storms were frequent. They built their homes in roving crystalline forests. The trees in the forests devoured lightning to survive, and the sparks they shed when they broke open were believed by the humanoid species to be a punishment from the gods. Maybe it really was a punishment. After all, Xu Qing's divine will made it clear that the lightning contained the aura of a god.

What caught Xu Qing's attention the most were the 360 emerald-green halos in the dome of heaven. That was where the twelve-winged figures of light came from... and it was also where an extremely ancient temple existed. However, it seemed mostly dark.

*There is no True God here.... It should be a good place to hide out.* This text is hosted at [novlfire.net](http://novlfire.net)

Xu Qing retracted his divine will and thought for a time. In the end, he decided to wait here until his cultivation base was fully recovered. Only then would he consider leaving.

Blurring into motion, he vanished from the forest of dust. When he reappeared, he was in the distant amethyst mountains. There, he hewed out a mansion grotto and sat down cross-legged inside.

Time passed. The planet rotated. Fire from heaven occasionally fell.

The scaled oxen offered sacrifices thirty times. Their god became increasingly glorious. The chanting of the mushrooms became a requiem to calm the soul as the fire fell, and the mist danced wildly.

The forest of dust continued to take the memories of starlight and weave them together. For some reason, the starlight that it had been absorbing lately contained images of some unknown human civilization.

Within those images was a cultivator with white hair holding his dead wife. His sorrow turned into rage, and he threw his head back and cursed heaven. Eventually, he stepped up into heaven and

waged war against the heavenly daos! There was no sound in the image. But the madness of it caused the entire forest of dust to turn as red as blood.

A month passed in which Xu Qing's cultivation base reached a state of ninety percent recovery. He immersed himself in cultivation. And then one day, when he was just on the verge of complete recovery....

Within the sound of breathing that came from the planet's subterranean meridians, an unfamiliar voice spoke.

*"God Emperor Death Departure has issued an imperial order. A human cultivator has fled into one of the millions upon millions of universes here in the Fourth Star Ring. He has taken Goddess Starryeyes captive. All gods will hunt for him. Anyone who provides clues leading to his capture will be given 100 portions of ringsource. Anyone who captures him will be given the dao weapon of a God Lord!"*

As soon as the voice rang out, a terrifying stream of divine will swept out of the starry sky and over the entire planet.

1. The literal characters for 'amethyst' are violet+crystal. However, this combination is different from the 'violet crystal' inside Xu Qing. To be specific, the characters for the one inside Xu Qing are 'violet+colored+water+crystal' while here is simply 'violet+crystal.' The combination of water+crystal is the common word for crystal (my understanding being that ancient people thought there was a connection between water and crystals). In any case, I'm just rendering these mountains as amethyst because there is not a connection to the violet crystal in Xu Qing. ☹️

2. The author transposes the characters that I normally translate as 'god,' seemingly to imply that the glowing creatures are not the same species as 'the gods,' yet are somehow godly. He did use the divine pronoun for them. This term has never come up before, nor does it come up again, at least not in the chapters I had access to as of translating this chapter. ☹️

## Chapter 1261: The Goddess and the Clay Fox

### Chapter 1261: The Goddess and the Clay Fox

It was True God will!

Inside the amethyst mountains, Xu Qing's face fell, and his heart filled with intense fear. His heart started pounding, and the hair on his neck stood on end.

*It's not a single True God. It's seven True Gods!*

His pupils constricted as the entire planet seemed to distort, and all the living beings on it writhed. The emerald-green halos dimmed and lost their color. The encroaching will turned them into black clouds that covered the sky. The combined divine will of so many True Gods was like a huge wave that turned the starry sky into a sea, and made all the planets like islands about to be covered over.

Xu Qing's fear intensified. It looked like the divine will was about to reach his hiding spot.

At that moment of crisis, Xu Qing wiped out all of the immortal energy he had been using and had Little Shadow spread out to cover him. Starfire didn't need any prompting; she quickly appeared in the open next to Xu Qing and unleashed a godly aura to further conceal him.

That combination, coupled with the fact that Xu Qing was inherently different from other cultivators, ensured that the mutagen in the area was very strong. But all of that still wasn't enough.

At the critical moment, Xu Qing's eyes glittered and he pulled Goddess Starryeyes out of his bag of holding and tossed her to Starfire. Starfire immediately understood what Xu Qing wanted. Starfire grabbed the goddess by the throat and covered her eyes.

Xu Qing immediately shrank himself down until he was as small as a speck of dust, and then shot toward one of her scapula wounds. Then Xu Qing entered her flesh and used every invisibility technique he could think of!

He was making a gamble! It seemed likely to him that this divine will inspection by the True Gods had a dual purpose.

The first was to look for immortal energy in order to locate him. The other was to look for bloodline evidence or unique ringsource fluctuations to find Goddess Starryeyes.

Although they knew Xu Qing and Starryeyes were together, it made sense to carry out a dual search. However, that method had an inherent flaw. And that flaw was that it overlooked *other* gods!

Ads by PubRev

Inside and out, Starfire was a god! Even with multiple True Gods combining their divine will, that flaw still remained.

There was always the chance Xu Qing was wrong in his assessment. But there was nothing he could do about that. There was no way he could feel comfortable just leaving Starryeyes on her own. There were too many things that could go wrong. So he needed Starfire outside as well, to keep Starryeyes in check. It didn't matter that Starryeyes was actually unconscious. Xu Qing could not give her any opportunity to raise an alarm.

The entire point was to be able to effectively hide inside her. As for whether or not hiding would work.... Xu Qing wasn't completely sure it would work. But he was confident, and that confidence came because... of the power of the seal put into her by the Immortal Lord!

*Back when I fought that pretty god, he was obviously taken by surprise when I pulled out the dao weapon. The fact that he didn't bring out some treasure specifically designed to counter it shows that he wasn't aware that I had the dao weapon.*

*All the cultivators on the front lines knew, but he didn't.... It seems likely that the information about me was concealed by the Immortal Lord, so that the gods didn't find out. He concealed the information about me and also gave me a dao weapon.... And he left a sealing mark inside the goddess....*

As that information flitted through Xu Qing's mind, the terrifying stream of divine will swept over the area, completely covering the amethyst mountains. Xu Qing stayed alert, his eyes flashing coldly as he prepared for something unexpected to happen. His space-time canon was ready.

But then, an ancient will suddenly erupted from inside Starryeyes. As it spread out, it covered all traces of hēr. Xu Qing's eyes narrowed. In the end, the divine will didn't notice anything in the amethyst mountains. It quickly swept over the entire planet, then left to inspect other parts of the starry sky.

Xu Qing remained motionless for about two hours until, sure enough, the streams of divine will suddenly returned and checked the entire nebula, including all of the planets in it. After finding nothing, they finally left.

Even then, Xu Qing didn't do anything. He waited. About four hours later, a third wave of divine will returned to the nebula. These streams of divine will were from different gods. Over the next few days, the same type of thing happened repeatedly. Streams of divine will would suddenly show up, then leave, then come back. Days passed....

Eventually it seemed the event was over.

Xu Qing waited nervously for three more days to make sure the coast was really clear. Only then did he fly out of Starryeyes' wound and return to his normal form. He looked grimly outside, then turned to Starfire. Starfire had been equally nervous over the past few days, and was only now calming down. Glancing at Starryeyes, shē chose not to speak out loud, and instead transmitted some words to Xu Qing.

*"Young Lord, the divine will of those True Gods paid no attention to me after noticing my god altar. It seems to me that thēy were mostly looking for immortal energy. Now that it's over, my sense is that if you hadn't hidden in the goddess, my concealment efforts wouldn't have been enough to keep you safe."*

Xu Qing didn't say anything. He had come to a similar conclusion as Starfire. The key to avoiding detection had really been the sealing mark left behind by the Immortal Lord.

*Did he predict that something like this would happen? Did he leave that sealing mark behind as a life-saving magic?*

Xu Qing thought about it for a moment. *Well... even if he did predict it, things can't be going totally as expected. The seal... is not going to last forever in the mutagen-rich environment of the Fourth Star Ring.*

Because the sealing mark had activated so many times over the past few days, Xu Qing had been able to sense that it was weakening.

*Every time it activated, it got worn down a bit. It seems to me it will only last a few more times before it goes away for good. And when that happens....*

He was feeling very uneasy.

*Of course, all of the inspections were done by True Gods. And the God Lord sent down orders, but didn't come personally. And that seems to indicate that the war is still going on, and the God Lord can't leave the battlefield! I still have time! I need my cultivation base to recover as quickly as possible. Then I'll find a star chart and figure out how to get back to the Fifth Star Ring!*

Xu Qing's eyes shone with determination. *As for this specific location... considering how many times they inspected it, I should be safe here, at least temporarily.*

Even as Xu Qing was thinking those things... the divine will of a god appeared again, rumbling through the amethyst mountains. Face falling, Xu Qing once again transformed into a piece of dust that flew into the goddess' wound.

Moments later, a puzzled look appeared in his eyes. The reason was that the divine will wasn't very strong. It was not from a True God, but rather, a peak Altar God. It passed quickly through the amethyst mountains before focusing on the dust forest where Xu Qing had originally landed.

As long as it wasn't True God will, Xu Qing was confident that hiding inside Starryeyes would be sufficient.

After the divine will passed, he emerged again from Starryeyes' wound. Looking very grim, he grabbed the goddess and slapped her across the side of the face.

A thump rang out, and the goddess's face started to swell up. Opening her eyes, she glared sullenly at him. She knew exactly why he had just slapped her. He clearly thought that she had somehow left clues about her presence when they teleported to this location. Of course, she knew that she hadn't.... It wasn't that she hadn't wanted to do such a thing, it was just that she never had time to do it. Xu Qing had woken up before she could.

The feeling of being wronged caused the hatred within her to yet again swell to immense heights.

And she decided to throw caution to the wind! Before, she had feared the dao weapon. And the truth was that she had actually regained consciousness days before, but had been hesitant to call for help because of Starfire. There was no way the damnable Xu Qing was going to let her go. Nor would he kill her, as he needed her to stay hidden. In that case, there didn't seem any reason to stay scared.

Bubbling with hatred, she glared murderously at Xu Qing. "If you've got what it takes, kill me! I dare you!"

Xu Qing looked back at her coldly. "Your father ordered that I be captured, not killed." Content originally comes from novel—fire.net

Her face stiffened, and she prepared to talk back to him. He didn't give her the chance. His hand latched onto her neck, and he sucked ringsource out of her viciously. Inside, his immortal embryo surged, and his soul injuries healed even faster.

Starryeyes wilted, but the hatred in her eyes became an unspoken curse. But then, his canon stabbed into her scapula and spread through her. The pain caused her to tremble, but at the same time... it caused ringsource to start building up in her again.

Xu Qing continued with the extraction.

In that manner, time passed. A few days later... Xu Qing was very close to reaching complete recovery. As for Starrryeyes, shē was hardly more than skin and bones.

That was when something happened that caused Xu Qing to frown. After having been drained out over and over again, the goddess had reached a state that was similar to death. The ringsource produced had slowed to a crawl. It was as if shē had grown used to the provocation.

No further pain would cause hēr to produce any ringsource. And if he pushed things any further, it was entirely possible it could kill hēr .

When Starrryeyes realized that, it no longer became possible for hēr to contain hēr hatred and rage.

“Now what are you going to do, Xu Qing??” shē screamed. “So, you’ve tormented me as much as you can? I dare you to kill me! You’ve got nothing left that you can do. I thought you were better than this!

“But guess what? There are *infinite* things I can do to you. One of these days, you’ll fall into *my* hands, and then I’ll make sure that you experience ten thousand times as much suffering as I have!”

Xu Qing looked coldly at the hysterical goddess. His eyes narrowed. He was about to return hēr to his bag of holding when he heard Starfire laugh.

“Young Lord, I’ve been watching all this time, and probably should have said something earlier. Your extraction technique isn’t very efficient.” The bewitchingly charming Starfire approached Starrryeyes. Licking hēr lips, and hēr eyes glittering excitedly, shē lifted the goddess’ chin with hēr finger. “Let me give you a suggestion....”

Starryeyes had no choice but to look up at Starfire, and hēr eyes were filled with fear. Shē was suddenly feeling very uneasy.

## Chapter 1262: A God Descends to the Human World

### Chapter 1262: A God Descends to the Human World

Starfire licked hēr lips and looked Starrryeyes up and down. Smiling, shē said, “Young Lord, you’ve been using a very crude method. Haven’t you heard about the concept of *showing pity and tender love for women?*”

Xu Qing frowned.

“The kind of stimulation you’ve been using is surface-level, and easy to acclimate to. Oh, you! You still just don’t understand gods, and you especially don’t understand female gods....” Smiling, Starfire reached out and slowly ran hēr finger down Starrryeyes’ skin.

Starryeyes felt more vigilant than ever. Stiffening, shē glared at Starfire and shouted, “What incredible gall!”

Hēr voice was backed with the personhood of hēr bloodline, which made it especially mighty to other gods. Starfire’s finger stopped moving.

But then, Starfire’s eyes lit up, as if the more Starryeyes acted like this, the more exciting it was.

“That’s the feeling I’m going for!” Heart racing, Starfire leaned over and whispered into the goddess’ ear. “Oh, lil’ sis, don’t you know I’ve been thinking about you for so long now? Make sure to keep acting like this going forward.”

Starryeyes shivered from head to toe, and all of a sudden, the fear rising within hēr made hēr want to flee. That uneasy feeling felt more intense than ever. But shē knew that if shē showed any fear whatsoever, it would completely undermine the facade shē was putting up. With great effort, shē suppressed the fear and glared coldly at Starfire with all the nobility of hēr bloodline.

Starfire chuckled and waved hēr hand. The air rippled, and in the blink of an eye, a white jade altar appeared in the chamber. Starfire shackled Starryeyes to the altar.

Starryeyes’ dilapidated garments then shimmered and flowed as they transformed into a pink, muslin gown.

To improve the experience, Starfire didn’t hold back from imbuing Starryeyes with some ringsource. As a result, the white jade made the ideal background, and the flowing pink muslin accentuated Starryeyes perfectly. Thanks to the ringsource, Starryeyes’ skin was lustrous again. In fact, it was as smooth as flawless white jade. Hēr eyes twinkled like stars in the night sky, while at the same time being filled with the same nobility and coldness as before.

“You puny lesser god!” shē snapped angrily. “You’re despicable! What are you trying to do here??”

Ads by PubRev

“Oh, calm down, lil’ sis. I still need to add some props.” Starfire’s eyes glittered with excitement as shē lifted hēr hand to produce a little red bottle. Shē popped open the bottle, and a fragrant, green oil flew out.

“I made this oil from a gruish plant that grows in god domains. After refining it for a hundred years, I fermented it for a thousand years along with other precious materials. The end result is this truly precious oil. In fact, I wouldn’t even think of using it were it not for your blood being so noble, lil’ sis. I can form this oil into a wax, and then all I’ll be missing is a wick.”

Starfire reached out to Starryeyes’ long hair and plucked away a few strands, which she coiled into a wick. Finally, she combined the oil and the hair to make a green candle!

Starryeyes frowned as shē looked at the candle. Shē wasn’t completely sure what this lesser god was planning to do, but shē was already starting to get an idea.

“You think you can bewitch me?” shē said coolly. “You obviously don’t know anything about superior gods!”

Starfire laughed softly. Then shē snapped her fingers, and the candle lit up. As the flame danced, an incense-like smoke began to fill the chamber and surrounded Starryyeyes.

Starryeyes wanted to keep it away, but as the incense smoke reached hēr, it entered hēr through hēr skin. Shē immediately started breathing raggedly. Then hēr pupils constricted as shē realized that there was something very wrong with this incense smoke. All of a sudden, shē was feeling emotions besides the basic instinct to stay alive and avoid death. It was a very foreign feeling to

Speaking in an airy voice, Starfire said, “The plant I made the oil from only blooms once every 3,000 years. When it blooms, the surrounding 500,000-kilometer area is covered with a dense fog. That fog can degenerate the soul, and produce unimaginable emotions. It does to the gods what the poppy flower can do to mortals.”[1]

Starryeyes shivered in the depths of hēr heart, then used hēr bloodline power to suppress the unfamiliar emotions.

But then Starfire approached the altar with the candle. Tilting the candle forward, shē let a drop of oil splash down... onto the skin of Starryyeyes’ neck!

Starryeyes’ suddenly craned hēr neck as golden striations appeared on the snow-white skin of hēr neck. Hēr eyes glittered as powerful emotions went wild within hēr. However, shē quickly used hēr bloodline power to suppress them.

That only seemed to make Starfire more excited, though. Shē tilted the candle again, and started dripping oil on specific spots on the goddess’ body. Every drop was like a tempest striking with heaven-rending, earth-crushing force.

They stabbed through Starryyeyes’ defenses and suppression abilities! And they provoked innumerable emotional fluctuations! Starryyeyes’ insides were in chaos, but shē refused to surrender. Glaring at Starfire, shē revealed no terror, only calmness.

“You despicable lesser god!”

Starfire’s eyebrows shot up.

As for Xu Qing, a strange expression could be seen on his face as he finally stood up. “I’m going to head out for a bit.”

With that, he turned to leave.

Starfire sighed regretfully. Shē had wanted Xu Qing to watch the entire process, but since he wasn’t inclined, shē wouldn’t try to force him. “Don’t worry, Young Lord, everything will be settled by the time you return.”

Xu Qing said nothing. He disappeared.

With Xu Qing gone, Starfire put the candle down, stretched at the waist, and then smiled down at the stubborn Starryyeyes.

“It’s fine that he’s gone. Certain things will be more convenient that way.”

Starfire waved hēr hand, and a number of things appeared. There was a rope, some tongs, a whip, some bottles, a gag, and a very large copper mirror....

Starryeyes wasn't sure how those things were to be used, but hēr heart started pounding nonetheless.

Starfire, meanwhile, licked hēr lips. Cheeks flush with excitement, shē laughed softly. "The fun has just started."

\*\*\*

Xu Qing was up in the dome of heaven. By drawing on the local mutagen, and also having Little Shadow cover him, he was confident he wouldn't be noticed by anything but a True God.

He had come out here because he had no interest in watching Starfire work. More importantly, he needed to get a star chart so that he could start planning a way to leave.

He had already identified the best place to do that. And that was the butterfly god in the temple of the scaled oxen! His previous investigation had indicated that the butterfly was an Altar God, and an early Altar God at that.

Given his current battle prowess, he could deal with such gods easily. His main concerns were acting quickly and staying out of sight. He didn't want this god to have any clue what was about to happen.

And thus, he stayed invisible as he sped along so fast that he wasn't visible to the naked eye. In fact, not even someone using divine will would be able to detect him. He eventually appeared on the crystalline plane, in the kingdom of the scaled oxen. Without pausing, he sped undetected into the dark green temple, and shot right toward the forehead of the butterfly statue.

The statue trembled as he pierced into it. It struggled only briefly, then went still. Shortly after, golden blood flowed down the statue, only for it to retract a moment later as if nothing had happened. In fact, there were still followers outside making offerings.

The butterfly's eyes opened.[2]

Xu Qing did not kill the butterfly god. Rather, he erased the god's mind, turning it into an empty shell that he could wear almost like clothing. It was similar to the way he would use Starfire's aura, and it also gave him access to everything the god knew.

He was currently studying a star chart that the butterfly's memories contained.

*So, we're over 10,000 universes away from the Fifth Star Ring.... It turns out the gods in the Fourth Star Ring are fairly similar to those in the Revered Ancient mainland. Most of thēm have personal territory with species there that offer worship. And thēy guard thēir borders jealously....* Google search NovelFire.net

*The gods on this planet are no exception. And of course, there are higher level gods that rule over thēm. The Godfolk who rule this planet inhabit the 360 emerald halos. In the past... they produced a True God!*

*The reason this place was investigated so thoroughly is that the ruling gods discovered some spatial evidence of my passage.... Nothing like that had ever happened on this planet before. Given how big the Fourth Star Ring is, they apparently didn't believe it could be a coincidence.*

After some thought, he flew out of the temple in the form of the butterfly. Countless scaled oxen groveled. Ignoring them, Xu Qing flapped the butterfly wings and disappeared into the sky as he shot back toward the amethyst mountains.

*I wonder if Starfire has unlocked any of the goddess' ringsource.*

\*\*\*

In the dark mansion grotto in the amethyst mountains, candlelight flickered. A gentle aura filled the chamber.

Atop the white altar, Starryyes' skin was scarlet, and shē was trembling. Shē still wore the pink gown, but shē was tied up with a rope, in a very skillful manner with special knots. In fact, every single knot was tied in a way that made it into a special sealing symbol. Not only did it force hēr into a specific pose, but also, it created a type of tension between hēr soul and body, and if shē struggled, it got tighter.

The rope was made from special materials that glittered with five-colored light that was like a flowing dream. Clearly, it was a material that could plunge someone into an endless illusion. A sense of unease constantly stabbed through Starryyes, causing hēr to twitch uncontrollably. Shē tried to free hērself from the constant stimulation, but the rope made it impossible to move.

Even more shocking than all of that was the copper mirror hanging above hēr. Whenever shē opened hēr eyes, shē would see hērself reflected in the mirror.

The mental humiliation and the physical discomfort combined, and they were pushing hēr to the brink. And then, Starfire started dropping oil on hēr again.

Starryyes' mind spun. All attempts at resistance crumbled, and millions upon millions of streams of fire appeared in hēr pupils. The grandiose look in hēr eyes faded away, crumbling into nothing but dust in the wind.

Love. Hate. Passion. Animosity. The seven emotions and six sensory pleasures erupted. All things from hēr past suddenly meant something completely different. Everything was more colorful. More meaningful. Hēr mind began to collapse, until finally, shē heard someone speaking.

“Welcome to the human world,” Starfire whispered into hēr ear.

1. I feel like I don't need to put this footnote here, but who knows, maybe some younger readers don't know that opium and heroin are made from poppies. If you didn't know before, now you do. [More info here.](#) 📖

2. I know that many of you are probably thinking, ‘Hey, don't butterflies have compound eyes that don't really open or close?’ Well, you are clearly unaware of the reality of magical xianxia butterflies. Besides, [here is evidence](#) that butterflies *can* open and close their eyes. 📖

# Chapter 1263: True Gods Close the Net

## Chapter 1263: True Gods Close the Net

By the time Xu Qing got back, everything in the chamber was back to normal. The gentle aura was gone, and a very strange scene met his eyes.

Goddess Starryeeyes was sitting there, eyes closed, motionless. Starfire stood behind hēr, combing hēr hair with a wooden comb.

A strange expression could be seen on Xu Qing's face as he studied the scene. However, he quickly realized that the goddess' ringsource was no longer overdrawn and locked down. It was thrumming vibrantly. A lot had already built up.

He couldn't help but look at Starfire. Shē chuckled.

"Young Lord, in the future, don't treat lil' sis Starryeeyes so crudely. Shē's agreed to cooperate going forward. Isn't that right, lil' sis Starryeeyes?" Starfire leaned down and exhaled softly into Starryeeyes' ear.

Starryeyes shivered, then opened hēr eyes and looked at Xu Qing. Somehow, the hatred in those eyes had significantly diminished. No longer did shē think of Xu Qing as being a nightmare. He had been extracting hēr ringsource to use in cultivation. That was all. The standing between the two of them had long since been established.

The real nightmare was the god behind hēr. Starfire was fiendish, even abyssal. Shē was a vile devil that would forever lurk in Starryeeyes' heart.

Considering Starryeeyes had the blood of a God Lord in hēr, it meant hēr ringsource was unusually pure. Being a noble, no one had ever treated hēr badly growing up. Therefore, when shē was flooded with emotions and had a mental breakdown... shē realized that she was no longer pure. Hēr mind was filled with the seven emotions and six sensory pleasures. Countless unfamiliar emotions had assailed her. Shē had descended from being a god.

Thus, after looking at Xu Qing, shē lifted hēr hand. Ringsource pulsed into hēr palm, which she sent directly to Xu Qing. It entered his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth, flowing through him so that his cultivation base stirred.

Xu Qing's expression became even more shocked. The ringsource was very different when she gave it to him as opposed to him taking it. For example, he didn't need to remove hēr will from it. It was far more pure.

"How'd you do it?" he asked Starfire. He wasn't asking about what shē had done after pulling out that candle. Instead, he wanted to know the logic and reasoning involved.

Chuckling, Starfire continued to comb Starryeeyes' hair. "Normally speaking, it would have been very difficult for me to tug at lil' sis Starryeeyes' heartstrings. That's especially true considering that shē was once a True God. But the sealing mark on hēr cut off all of that and made it impossible

for hēr to fight back. Of course, you provided a lot of assistance, Young Lord. The way you extracted all of hēr ringsource really put hēr on the brink of collapse.

Ads by PubRev

“All I did was apply a little bit of a push at the right time.... And thus, lil’ sis Starryyeyes came to the human world. And the lock became unlocked, all on its own.” Starfire blinked a few times and then looked at Xu Qing. “By the way, Young Lord, did things go well just now?”

Xu Qing looked at Starfire, then Starryyeyes, and then decided not to ask for any more details.

“We can leave now. I’ve identified a better place to hide out. As for hēr... I’ll have you look after hēr from now on. You’re confident you can avoid any slip ups?”

Starfire’s eyes lit up. “Don’t worry, Young Lord. I never make mistakes.”

Starfire flicked hēr sleeve to collect up Starryyeyes, and then turned into a stream of light that shot into Xu Qing’s palm. There, shē turned into a special symbol.

Xu Qing walked outside and erased all traces of the mansion grotto’s existence. Then he flew up into the sky over the amethyst mountains, where he turned back into the multicolored butterfly. He flapped his wings, and seven-colored light swirled as he flew away.

The location he had mentioned to Starfire was the temple in the kingdom of the scaled oxen. The scaled oxen were all prostrated as Xu Qing returned in butterfly form. Flying back into the temple, he transformed back into a statue. Godly might pulsed from the statue, spreading from the temple to fill the entire kingdom.

Upon sensing it, the scaled oxen folded up their wings and prostrated piously. The priests among them emitted excited hooting sounds, which was their language, in which they described the miracles of the gods.

Xu Qing looked out at the scene calmly. In the following days, he was *the turtledove occupying the magpie’s nest*. He wore the butterfly god like a second skin, and essentially became that god! It kept him even better concealed than before.

He had made a new decision about leaving this planet. He hadn’t just used the butterfly’s memories to check how far away he was from the war. He had also identified a nearby teleportation portal. It belonged to the Godfolk who had once produced a True God on this planet.

According to the butterfly god’s memories, there was no True God among them anymore. It was a peak Altar God. That said, even if an Altar God did show up, he had a plan. If he tried to force his way to the portal, and everything went smoothly, then of course that would be great. But if the slightest thing went wrong, he would be exposed. And if he was exposed, resulting in a True God showing up, then it could endanger his chances of teleporting away. After considering the situation, he decided to avoid doing anything rash.

And that was because... soon enough, an opportunity would present itself. According to the butterfly’s memories, it was only a few months before that the ruling gods on this planet had sent

out a recruitment announcement. They were enlisting local gods to enter their special pocket realm.

And that pocket realm was located in the very depths of the planet! That, combined with what Xu Qing had noticed with his own divine will, led him to the conclusion that it was the same place where he had heard the sounds of breathing as if from subterranean meridians.

*The best time for me to leave will be when they're going into that pocket realm! That's two months from now....*

He already had an idea of how to make sure this butterfly form wasn't forced to participate in the pocket realm event.

*I'd rather not use the butterfly form to travel the long way through the sea of stars, all the while trying to avoid other gods. The teleportation portal is definitely the safest option. That will be the fastest way to make the journey to the edge of the Fourth Star Ring. Now, as for breaking through the star ring barriers....*

Xu Qing's eyes glittered. He had the star ring hemp as well as his Sageheaven Pagoda. So he was fairly certain he could break through the star ring barriers to get back home. With that thought in mind, he closed his eyes. Remaining in the butterfly statue form, he absorbed the ringsource willingly given by Starryyeyes, and worked on his cultivation.

Time passed.

Because gods were independent entities with personal territory, no one had any idea that he had possessed the butterfly god. Another reason was that many of the gods had already responded to the recruitment message by the ruling gods, and had traveled to the emerald halos to prepare for the coming event. It also helped that he was already familiar with how gods operated, and also had the help of Starfire.

Given all those factors, he had no trouble staying hidden. That said, he still had no way to truly avoid the divine will of True Gods.

A few days later, the divine will of True Gods once again appeared in the starry sky. By means of the Immortal Lord's sealing mark in Starryyeyes, he was able to avoid detection.

But... there were still several days left until the pocket realm event. Perhaps it was because the True Gods had not yet found what God Emperor Death Departure was looking for... that their search continued. This time, they were being very meticulous. And most importantly, they were not making the same mistake they had made before. The True Gods weren't just looking for evidence of Starryyeyes and immortal energy. They were also checking ordinary gods! They were closing the net, and were being very careful to fish out anything suspicious.

The experience left Xu Qing with a sinking feeling. The problem wasn't just that Starfire could be detected. The fact that he had possessed another god was also a danger. Otherwise, he and Starfire could just hide inside Starryyeyes. But despite how cooperative the goddess had been, Xu Qing still didn't want to give her a chance to betray him. He was facing quite a quandary.

*Just now the divine will of two True Gods very nearly noticed me.... Is it possible they got some new information? Do they know that I'm working with a god? Or do they possibly know that I have a way to possess gods?*

Xu Qing frowned. Of course, *when it rains, it pours*. Not only were the True Gods being much more thorough in searching, but also, the Immortal Lord's sealing mark in Starryyes was on the verge of disappearing.

*It'll last for another seven days at the most....* Xu Qing was really starting to feel uneasy. *I can't keep gambling that only two True Gods will be looking for me at the same time!*

He was just about to make a decision about what to do when Starfire suddenly spoke up.

"Young Lord, I have a secret magic.... Actually, it's the first part of a special god magic that allows me to fuse my godly aura with the outside world, and then boost the range of other god magics. If the outside world has no other godly auras, then using the technique will attract attention. But if there are other godly auras present, then I can mix my aura with them... and become a part of the chaos."

The truth was that Starfire was also starting to get anxious. Shē knew full well that if Xu Qing was captured, and it came to light what shē had done to Starryyes, then hēr fate would be exponentially worse than Xu Qing's. After all, the God Lord had ordered that Xu Qing be captured alive.... Therefore, shē was wracking hēr brains to try to come up with an idea.

Xu Qing's eyes glittered in response to hēr suggestion. "Are you saying that, since we can't stay hidden for much longer, we might as well go somewhere crowded?"

"Exactly," Starfire said. "Young Lord, it will achieve the same result of keeping us hidden. At the very least... we can buy some time and increase our chances of success!"

"How confident are you that it will work?" he asked.

"Fifty percent..." shē replied hesitantly.

He thought about it, then nodded. "Teach me the technique. We can use it together!"

Shē quickly used divine will to transmit the technique to him. It wasn't difficult. After studying it briefly, he mastered it. After that, he showed no further hesitation.

"If we're looking for a place with a lot of auras, there's one obvious choice."

With that, he disappeared from within the temple, and reappeared in the dome of heaven. From there, he shot... toward the 360 emerald-green halos.

## Chapter 1264: Slipping Through the Net

### Chapter 1264: Slipping Through the Net

The species of ruling gods on this planet were called the True Radiants. According to the rules in the Fourth Star Ring, only species that had produced a True God could be honored by adding “True” to their name.

The memories of the butterfly god indicated that the True Radiants didn’t just rule this one planet. They actually controlled the entire nebula, as well as a few nearby universes. Originally speaking, that should have lasted forever. After all, a True God that died could come back. So unless another True God came along to disrupt the balance, nothing would change.

But something unexpected ended up happening to the species. Their True God had perished some years earlier and had never returned.... The consequences of that situation slowly manifested as the True Radiants lacked the power to control all the species in the area they controlled. Gradually, their territory shrank, until only a dozen or so planets would heed their recruitment calls.

It wasn’t very common for True Gods to fail to return, but it also wasn’t unheard of. Normally speaking, it meant that they had suffered from some sort of targeted attack during their return.

Xu Qing himself had participated in things like that. The first time it happened, he had been the bait.... That was the time that Yu Liuchen wanted to hook a returning True God.[1]

*So, the secret of how True Gods return isn’t some ironclad situation. Over the ages, both gods and cultivators have studied it.... Some glories only exist in the past.*

Xu Qing in butterfly form got closer and closer to the 360 emerald-green halos. He could already sense that there were a lot of gods gathered there. This was enlistment headquarters for the now-shrunk territories controlled by the True Radiants. And it was the crowded location that Xu Qing felt was most suitable to use Starfire’s secret technique.

*Hopefully it works!*

Of course, he already had contingency plans ready in case it failed. So with a final burst of speed, he appeared right in front of the 360 halos. Emerald light spread out, along with godly might. Without pausing for a moment, Xu Qing flapped his wings and entered.

Everything was emerald-colored as far as the eye could see. Even the air itself seemed to be that color. It was like a giant painting unfurled in front of him. It was a painting full of exquisite detail, with countless lines forming a larger outline of something. The larger outline was somewhat abstract, making it difficult to identify it at first glance. It looked mostly like a conglomeration of random shapes.

Xu Qing narrowed his eyes suspiciously as he studied it. It didn’t take long for him to realize that there was something very strange going on.

*That image....*

Ads by PubRev

The image wasn’t really abstract. That was just the word someone would use to describe it if they didn’t understand it. In truth, because of Xu Qing’s mental acuity and cultivation base, what he saw was an image of heaven and earth. It was a world.

It was just... the three-dimensional world of living beings and inanimate objects, painted with a brush onto a canvas. Given that, a single look revealed something bizarre, distorted, and abstract.

*There's no way an Altar God could make something like this. It's definitely on the level of a True God. Don't tell me that what's visible on the inside... is what causes the surroundings to be distorted by godly might?*

More curious than ever, Xu Qing approached the painting. However, that was when numerous streams of divine will emerged from the world in the painting. At the same time, numerous gods could be seen in the fragmented painting, who were the source of the divine will. There were well over a hundred, ranging from gods with true flame to Flawless Gods. There were even some Altar Gods.

A few were very eye-catching to Xu Qing.

One bore the form of an evil bronze eye covered with rust. Astonishingly, the pupil of the eye was a bronze bell. Outside of the pupil was flowing stardust, as well as a host of tentacles with suction pads on the ends. As this god breathed, the pupil expanded and contracted, and the bell would chime in a godly voice.

Another god was even more bizarre. That god looked like a wizened old woman, completely naked, with hēr skin covered with strange bumps. The bumps were actually a total of 36,000 planets with human faces, flowing beneath hēr skin. The dried-up hair that flowed behind hēr was connected to 10,000,000 ancient corpses that floated along, each of them reciting funeral sutras from different past epochs.

Another of the gods embodied the polar opposites of withering and growth. Half of hīs body was covered in flowering crab-apples that offered glimpses of past lives, while the other half looked like a charred tree with chunks of it falling off. Floating within hīs chest cavity were nine bronze soul lamps, within the flames of which were drowning god souls. Hīs legs were rooted in chaotic space-time, with hīs left foot stepping on an ice age, and hīs right foot stepping on a scorching planetary core. [2]

That last god was the most eye-catching to Xu Qing, as he could sense upon hīm a godly authority similar to his own canon.

What was more, Xu Qing could tell that most of these gods were not local to his planet. That was why thēy appeared in their godly forms. It was also their method of establishing thēir standing among each other, similar to how cultivators would use a dao will to do the same.

*This is a great opportunity....*

Starfire could tell what Xu Qing was thinking. Working together, the two of them could use the butterfly's godly form and the secret magic to blend into the outside world.

Xu Qing seemed to vibrate as the butterfly began to transform.

The wings spread out, and they looked like millstones of reincarnation. Each wing was woven from the skin of unknown living beings, and were filled with glowing crimson light that could absorb the void. Astonishingly, the front wings each had 9,600 compound eyes that wept blood, with pupils

full of lightning. And each flap of the wings would cause a sound to echo out like souls wailing in the underworld. They seemed to be responding to the divine will of the host of gods.

Even more gruish was that the butterfly's antennae encircled a crimson river. The antennae had bifurcated ends, upon which hung rust-colored netherworld lamps. The flapping of the butterfly's wings seemed to conform to a specific cadence. Within the left wing was a tide of nirvanic extermination, while the right wing contained the sweet dew of extreme beginnings. And the dust scattered by the flapping of the wings contained millions upon millions of scaled oxen, all prostrated in worship. This was the godly form of the butterfly Xu Qing had possessed.

The gods that had sent the divine will over seemed respectful now. Those that had stood out to Xu Qing seemed to rein in their auras a bit. They allowed Xu Qing to enter the painting, and take an empty spot there.

At the same time, a godly voice echoed out.

"Everdoom Netherfly! I haven't seen you for a hundred years! Looks like you're not far from a breakthrough."

As the words were spoken, a huge black lotus rose up within the painting. Inside the black lotus was a dwarf seated cross-legged. The dwarf was pitch black and surrounded by 360 ancient corpses, each of which pulsed with extraordinary power.

Visible on the dwarf's forehead was a golden stud that was an accumulation of the blood of a True God. Emerald halos flickered in his pupils, and he was fiddling with a scale that emitted a sound that shook the entire painting, and caused all the gods therein to bow their heads.

This was the True Radiant god who was in charge of the planet. From the memories of the butterfly god, Xu Qing knew that this god was the one who had issued the recruitment message.

Xu Qing bowed his head in a show of respect.

The dwarf nodded and said nothing further. Closing his eyes, he went back to meditating atop the black lotus.

Everything went quiet. The gods were all waiting.

Xu Qing went from the godly form back to the normal form. However, with the help of Starfire's secret magic, he made sure that his aura was mixed in with all the other auras present. He stayed in that state as time passed.

Three days went by fairly quickly. The appointed day was approaching. During the three days that passed, a few dozen additional gods arrived. Most were from other planets, but a few were like the butterfly god and came from this planet. They included the lightning worshiped by the humanoids and the god of the mushroom people.

The divine will of True Gods scanned the area a number of times. On one occasion, it was the combined divine will of three True Gods. Xu Qing kept his guard up, but Starfire's technique worked well. They never noticed Xu Qing. The other gods had become used to the inspections, and didn't resist in any way.

*As long as there isn't an inspection by five True Gods, then this secret magic should keep me hidden. Only two more days... and then when these gods leave, I can make my escape!*

Those last two days seemed to crawl by. Thankfully, everything went smoothly, and the True Gods never noticed Xu Qing.

At long last, the day came. All of the gods released their auras, and the dwarf on the black lotus opened his eyes and waved his hand. A host of black stones flew out and came to hover in front of each of the gods. When Xu Qing took the stone in front of him, he realized that it was a seal made by the godhood of a True God. The stone wouldn't be of much use to him, but it could be very helpful to a god seeking to achieve a breakthrough.

“Ladies and gentlemen, these are the true god stones mentioned in the agreement. True god stones have also been prepared for after we explore the pocket realm. And now... let's be off!”

The drop of golden blood on the dwarf's forehead became a beam of golden light. The beam turned into an emerald-colored halo, within which, the outside world was visible. Teleportation ripples began to spread out. Gods were already moving toward the halos and disappearing.

As the gods began to depart, Xu Qing prepared to implement the escape method he had prepared. Unfortunately, just before he did, an extremely dangerous development occurred.

The majestic will of some True Gods appeared in the starry sky. The combined divine will swept through all the planets in the nebula. And this time, there were ten True Gods!

Xu Qing's pupils constricted, and his heart started pounding. He knew that if the divine will swept over him, he would be exposed. As the crisis mounted, he unhesitatingly abandoned his plan and shot toward the halo and jumped inside.

He vanished.

1. Xu Qing and Erniu being bait for Yu Liuchen to catch a returning True God started in [chapter 998](#). ❹

2. The plant mentioned here is [Malus spectabilis](#), also known as the Chinese flowering crab-apple. As far as I know, it doesn't have any sort of religious or mythological significance, although it does appear a lot in art and poetry. ❹

## Chapter 1265: The True Radiants' True God

### Chapter 1265: The True Radiants' True God

It was a gloomy world. A thick, pitch-black substance like bitumen surrounded the world, creating something like an exterior shell around it. Inside the world, the sky was full of dark red striations that spread out almost like a spider web. Drops of blood oozed out of the striations, falling down onto lands riddled with holes. It was like rain.

In the middle of the striations that leaked the rain of blood, high in the canopy of heaven, there was an astonishing sight. It was a massive tumor! It looked like a dead sun high overhead, or perhaps some misshapen god that had parasitized this world, creating an incomparably grisly and eerie sensation.

Xu Qing and all the other gods who had disappeared into the halo... were now materializing into that rain. This was where they had been teleported to.

Upon appearing in the grisly blood rain, the gods instinctively scanned the area. Clearly... this was the first time any of them had been to this place.

Xu Qing was there, and he surveyed the surroundings more thoroughly. He didn't just scan the world, he also scanned the area outside of it. Thankfully, he was now isolated from the danger he had sensed earlier, thanks to the unique properties of this place. The divine will in the starry sky could not come here. That realization caused Xu Qing to breathe a sigh of relief. At the same time, he was now a lot more curious about this strange world.

*So this place isn't the location of that earth meridian I sensed?*

Xu Qing looked up at the dome of heaven. Upon noting the blood-red striations and the grisly ball of flesh, his pupils constricted. Just looking at the tumor gave him an idea of what might be going on here.

He looked down at the ground. The lands were black, and when the blood rain fell, it created a sludge that looked like a festering scar. Countless blood-red imps came to life when the blood rain fell. They had no facial features, and they just numbly went about doing specific forms of hard labor. Off in the distance were successive mountain ranges that looked like the flayed bones of enormous beasts.

The valleys in between the mountains were full of thick fog. Within that fog were withered trees, monstrous and distorted in appearance. Their bark was a pale, sickly color, and their roots looked like fractured vertebrates strung together. They had long, thin branches that reached up into the sky like hands trying to grasp the canopy of heaven! But when the blood rain fell on them, it corroded them, causing them to leak black sap that converged and grew into umbrella-like mushrooms that could block the rain. The mushroom umbrellas came in all sizes. From what Xu Qing could tell, the big ones were in locations where there were many withered trees, and they were the size of cities.

Beneath the umbrellas grew numerous pustules that almost resembled grapes. Atop the mushrooms were delicate crystals that emitted a glimmering light that contained both illusion and reality.

It was the light that caught Xu Qing's attention. Apparently, the glimmering light contained a vast minor world! The world seemed to be hiding something as it flickered in and out of view within the angular surfaces of the crystals.

Xu Qing felt even more curious than ever. *It's almost like heaven and earth are at war here!*

He came to that conclusion after noting the specific type of work the imps in the blood rain were doing. They had axes that they would use to hack at the withered trees. Each blow of an ax would

leave a scar on the trunk of a tree. In other areas, the axes hacked against the rocks on the mountains, causing sparks to fly, along with what appeared to be fragments of teeth and nails.

Apparently, the trees and mountains in this place were living things! Furthermore, there was danger in the work being done by the imps!

As Xu Qing observed, he saw an area in one of the mountain ranges where the imps were at work with their axes. All of a sudden, the withered trees there spasmed. An instant later, a host of mushroom umbrellas sprang out of those trees, covering the grape-like pustules and causing them to explode!

Innumerable streams of sap then swept out like threads that stabbed toward the imps. The skin of the imps that were touched turned as gray as ash. Then, that skin would crack, and red light would seep out from within before they exploded.

Xu Qing's gaze hardened. He could now see what was really going on in this world.

*This is the work of two terrifying True Gods, presumably, peak True Gods! One is up above, one is down below, and this is the manner in which they fight each other.*

*Given this strange state of affairs, they must be at an impasse. The True God in the sky wants to break the world apart. His strategy is to send his own god blood down, which turns into those imps, which then try to chop down the trees and break apart the mountains. The trees and mountains are the other True God, who is fighting back, but has gradually lost the initiative in the fight.*

*So, what do the True Radiants want to accomplish here...?*

Xu Qing's mind raced as he kept his guard up. Meanwhile the other surrounding gods were also closely studying the surroundings.

Finally, the True Radiant dwarf seated cross-legged on the black lotus spoke. "Although all of you are mere subservient gods under our rulership, because you answered our call, I won't hide things from you any longer. Everybody on the outside believes that our True Radiant True God perished years ago, and cannot return, but the truth is... that our True Radiant True God isn't dead at all. Hē's right here!"

The dwarf stood and pointed at the huge black tumor. "Hē set a trap and is now on the verge of assimilating another True God! Your mission here is to help our True God by clearing the trees and mountains. You will alleviate some of the pressure our True God faces, and ensure that hē can complete the assimilation process.

"When the time comes that our True God awakens, all of you subservient gods will be handsomely rewarded. And there will be other benefits as well. You will be granted god seals that can be used to gain one-time protection from our True God."

Most of the gods who had teleported here were, in the strict hierarchy of the gods, subsidiary to the True Radiants, and thus had no objection to the mission. After receiving the instructions, the gods prepared their various god magics and then headed toward either the withered trees or the wild mountains.

Of course, only those who were at the Altar God level qualified to consider the pros and cons of the situation. Those were the gods that Xu Qing had taken special note of earlier. After further communication with the dwarf via divine will, those gods nodded and joined the effort to help the True Radiants' True God.

However, they did not work at felling trees or chopping mountains. Instead, they flew up into the dome of heaven and settled down in the air cross-legged around the black tumor. From those positions, they sent their godly aura into the mass of flesh. By connecting directly with the True God in that manner, they could help alleviate some of the pressure Hē faced.

Offering their godly auras to help the True God was like *throwing a cup of water on a burning cart of firewood*. However, having even a bit of additional help to alleviate pressure in critical moments would still be of help to this True God.

That was when Xu Qing heard the dwarf speaking into his mind via divine will.

*"This entire mission came about because our True God used a bloodline magic to summon me. Hē is hovering on the brink of fully assimilating. Since you're an Altar God, you can send your god power into the canopy of heaven and connect directly to the True God. After our True God awakens, you will be bestowed a fragment of godhood!"*

That was a very enticing reward. But Xu Qing... had no way of helping out.

In the end, he wasn't a god. Given the circumstances, he couldn't actually connect to a True God without his true identity being exposed. All in all, this was a peak True God. In fact, even just being this close felt very dangerous to him.

He sighed inwardly. Here in this star ring of the gods, there were wolves in front of him and tigers behind him. It made it really hard to do just about anything.

"Oh, Exalted God," he said, "this is a very important matter in which mistakes cannot be tolerated. My level isn't sufficient for me to be of any help here. Can I request that you simply activate the teleportation and let me leave?"

Xu Qing even sent the true god stone flying back to the dwarf. He had only come here as a last resort. And though it didn't seem likely he would be able to leave, he wanted to at least try. Being able to leave would be the ideal outcome. But if it didn't work... well, it chilled his heart to think about it.

As of now, Xu Qing and the dwarf were the only ones left hovering in the rain of blood.

In response to Xu Qing's request, the dwarf expressionlessly lifted a finger and tapped the true god stone. The black stone trembled and then collapsed into ashes that quickly dissipated.

Hē looked coldly at Xu Qing. "Either cooperate or die."

Xu Qing's eyes glittered dangerously. But then, the huge black tumor in the network of red striations suddenly started twitching. Astonishingly, a crack spread out, and then opened up. It looked like a huge eye opening up.

When the eye opened, a turbid gaze emerged, dropping down... to land on Xu Qing. All of a sudden, the dark red light in the sky seemed to become viscous, and the entire world started to tremble and distort. Chanting spread out through heaven and earth.

Xu Qing shivered. The gaze that had settled on him seemed corporeal, and it was like he could hear the sounds of blood flowing, bones snapping, and the scream of the butterfly's discarnate spirit being incinerated. In an instant, the husk of the butterfly shriveled up. It couldn't sustain the force of the gaze, and it exploded. A boom rang out.

Xu Qing's true body was revealed.

At that instant, a sound like that of a fetal heartbeat rang out from inside the black tumor. It was so loud that it caused the rocky surfaces of the mountain to tremble. An immense pressure was about to descend from the tumor, except, right then, all of the mountains and trees seemed to have found an opportunity to fight back. The lands trembled, the mountains shook, and numerous branches shot up toward the sky.

The black tumor hesitated, and then a howl echoed out from nowhere. The eye had no choice but to close, and focus completely on defending against the attack.

Heaven and earth once again went back to fighting each other.

Meanwhile, the dwarf's gaze sharpened as hē apparently received a transmitted message. His eyes glowed as the 360 ancient corpses all around him opened their eyes and looked at Xu Qing.

"You're not a god. You're a cultivator! Don't tell me that you're... the very same cultivator that God Emperor Death Departure listed as wanted for the kidnapping of Her Grace Starryyes??"

## Chapter 1266: A Refined Palette

### Chapter 1266: A Refined Palette

Atop the black lotus, the eyes of the dwarf glowed with an increasingly intense golden color. Hē had not been born as a god. Granted, his species had produced a True God, but they were not Godfolk in the most accurate sense. Rather, they had worked hard to produce gods.

That was just how things worked according to the rules of the Fourth Star Ring. The ringsource that gods needed could be extracted from the star ring itself, but there was an even better way to get it. It could be extracted from the faith of worshipers.

If a god wanted to get strong, that god needed believers that could make offerings and sacrifices. That was how gods could actually invade countless worlds. The more slaves they had, the more worship they could get from the masses!

That was the case with the butterfly Xu Qing had possessed. Everdoom Netherfly had no blood relation to the scaled oxen. But the scaled oxen worshiped the butterfly, and that was the foundation of his cultivation. In fact, it wasn't just the scaled oxen on that one planet who worshiped him. There were other species on other minor worlds who also offered such worship. As

long as hē didn't perish, and had the good fortune to eventually step into the True God level, then all species who worshiped hīm would benefit as a result.

At that point, the scaled oxen as well as all of the other species who worshiped hīm would be able to add the word True to their species name. They would also be able to expand their territory and become powerful rulers of all the surrounding lands. And yet, substructurally speaking, those species weren't gods.

They worshiped their True God and had the word True in their species name, which meant that it was easier for them to gather god power and godliness. By getting the blessing of their True God to ignite their godfire, then they could become a god.

Those newly born gods would be considered followers of the original True God, and could go out to find their own worshipers. It was like a tree sending out more and more roots in all directions.

The True Radiants were a good example. They were not the only species that worshiped this specific True God. However, after having the word True added to their species name, their sphere of influence expanded beyond the nebula. And at their peak, they had controlled many, many universes.

A species like that might seem glorious, but in reality, they were one of the most lowly types of Godfolk in the Fourth Star Ring. There was more progress they could make.... As time passed, if every member of the species could change their blood into that of the gods, then they would truly be Godfolk.

The vast majority of Godfolk in the Fourth Star Ring were one of those two varieties. As for the latter, if they could proliferate and produce multiple True Gods, or perhaps even a God Lord, then they could consolidate all of their worshipers into one unified species! And then... the personhood of their species as a whole would advance. They would become an imperial clan!

However, that was extremely difficult to do, and over the countless years that had passed, only a few species had ever done that.

The dwarf, who was a postheaven god, had guessed that Xu Qing was the very person declared wanted by God Emperor Death Departure. As a result, his eyes shone with golden light, and his heart was pounding. Hē was fully aware that this was likely the most amazing good fortune and destined opportunity that hē had ever encountered in life!

After all, any reward given by God Emperor Death Departure would be astounding. Even just providing clues would bring a hundred portions of ringsource. And capturing this person alive... would bring the weapon of a God Lord!

Therefore, the dwarf sliced his hand through the air overhead, and then spoke in a thunderous godly voice.

"All subordinate gods present have a new mission. Immediately attack and capture this cultivator!"

His words caused wild colors to flash in heaven and earth. All of the gods working with the trees and mountains looked up, then shot straight toward Xu Qing.

Up above, the handful of Altar Gods seated cross-legged around the tumor looked down at Xu Qing. However, none of them moved a muscle. The True God wouldn't permit it!

The dwarf didn't care. Although helping the True God was still important, comparatively speaking... if he could get that reward from God Emperor Death Departure, the weapon of a God Lord, then for him to become a True God wasn't out of the question! After all, coming from a species that had a True God provided inherent advantages. That wasn't to mention that there were plenty of Altar Gods to offer support. Therefore, as long as he captured this person quickly, there would still be time to offer help to the True God.

Having reached this point in his train of thought, the dwarf leaped off of the black lotus, bringing the 360 corpses along. Peak Altar God power raged as he closed in on Xu Qing.

Withering corruption spread out in all directions as the corpses all opened their mouths and howled in grisly voices. It turned into a wind of corpses that filled the area. This was none other than his godly authority. The power of withering and a wind of death. It was... a voice that demanded life. It all combined into a terrifying dirge of death. The melody became like a physical object that shot toward Xu Qing.

Xu Qing's eyes flashed with cold light. He knew that, being in the Fourth Star Ring, avoiding detection was a matter of luck. And therefore, he had been prepared for it to happen at any time.

*Actually, being exposed in this situation is better than it happening outside. That said, my main goal in this fight is going to be to escape.*

Eyes narrowing, he suddenly shifted, causing himself to become a blur. Instantly, time seemed to become chaos around him, as though it were flowing differently than the surrounding world. At the same time, the area around the dwarf distorted, causing his dirge of death to suddenly become distorted.

As the god magic was broken, an iron skewer flew out of the distorted aspects of time. Immortal energy glittered in heaven and earth, along with the chiming sound of a bell. Instantly, all magical techniques in the area lurched to a halt.

The dwarf, who had been charging right toward Xu Qing, looked astonished. He could clearly sense himself suddenly losing connection to the godly aura within.

The iron skewer shot with astonishing speed toward him. An intense sensation of deadly crisis erupted within him.

As the crisis hit, the dwarf bit his tongue off and spat it out. As the severed tongue sprayed golden god blood, it grew larger in grisly fashion until it turned into a huge tumor. Apparently, it was able to call out to the tumor of the True God up in the dome of heaven. The two connected.

In that manner, the dwarf was able to borrow True God power and send it erupting out. The tongue-turned-tumor then opened like an eye. The gaze locked onto the incoming iron skewer, wrapping around it and isolating it. The gaze also landed on Xu Qing's distortions of time, causing the distortions to fade into nothing. Xu Qing was revealed.

By this point, the dwarf's godly aura was restored. Eyes blazing with killing intent, hē let loose his trump card. The 360 corpses around him erupted into flames.

What was more, the air beneath Xu Qing's feet filled with dozens of golden rifts! Out of them emerged 36 three-eyed god statues, which were formed from the 360 corpses. The moment their feet touched the air outside, a crisp sound rang out like breaking glass. Vertical eyes opened on their foreheads, out of which poured dark golden light, like a corrupting waterfall heading right toward Xu Qing. Wherever it passed, everything became as solid as amber.

Xu Qing's black robe fluttered as the godlight fell toward him. Then he extended his right hand and pushed out. Instantly, the canon of space converged, and the scattered fragments of time around him merged, forming space-time canon. A space-time tempest instantly erupted.

It was a heaven-shaking, earth-shattering tempest that shot up to meet the dwarf's descending godlight. Within the tempest were innumerable immortal sealing marks. And they all erupted!

A massive boom echoed out in the world. Godlight shattered. The 36 god statues exploded. The thick black fog roiled, and the dwarf's face fell as hē began to retreat at top speed.

In the blink of an eye, Xu Qing appeared right behind him. Reaching out, he put his hand on top of the dwarf's head.

Simultaneously, the iron skewer, which had been halted in place by the gaze of the tumor, glittered brightly. The bell chimed again, and the iron skewer broke free, becoming a blinding streak that shot through the air. It stabbed right into the pit of the dwarf's stomach, pierced all the way through, and then appeared next to Xu Qing.

However, Xu Qing was actually frowning.

The dwarf god in front of him was trembling and transforming into a black lotus. The lotus shattered; it was a case of death substitution!

Off in the distance, the dwarf god formed anew, eyes glittering with lingering fear. Truth be told, hē was not surprised by how things were going. Hē knew full well that if God Emperor Death Departure had marked someone as wanted, and that person could evade the divine will inspections of many True Gods, then he wasn't going to be a weakling.

"But this is the god kingdom of a True God!"

As the dwarf's words rang out, nine burning clumps of flesh appeared above Xu Qing's head. Merging into a cage, they dropped toward him.

Meanwhile, the host of other gods had finally arrived, and were launching all sorts of god magics at him. And yet, even as those attacks closed in, the cage of nine lumps of flesh surrounded him.

Xu Qing vanished, having become millions upon millions of blood-red butterflies that flew out in every direction. On the wings of the bizarre red butterflies were countless designs that looked like eyes. And every beat of the butterflies' wings caused a god magic to be sucked into the eyes.

Even more bizarre was that the moment Xu Qing transformed into millions upon millions of butterflies, something happened to the eyes of many of the gods below. Masses of blood butterfly larvae appeared there! And then, after only three heartbeats of time passed, the gods began to scream and howl as the larva formed hives, out of which flew numerous blood butterflies.

This was a god magic that Xu Qing had learned from Everdoom Netherfly. However, when being unleashed by Xu Qing, it had a range far more terrifying than the butterfly god had ever been capable of.

Red butterflies fluttered everywhere, with about half of them flying toward the nine burning clumps of flesh, while the others headed toward the host of gods. Those who were only in the Godfire level scattered in terror. And yet, Xu Qing suddenly appeared right behind a female god.

Reaching out with his right hand, he stabbed his fingers into hēr spine. And with his left hand, he grabbed hēr godsource and extracted a glowing orb that was hēr memories. He crushed it open and absorbed it. This god had blue skin with black marks like a spiderweb under the surface. Shē didn't have much ringsource, so it hardly took a moment to absorb it all. It rushed into Xu Qing, whereupon the god withered into a desiccated corpse.

*Very impure ringsource. And not much of it.*

Having sampled the ringsource of Goddess Starryeyes, other ringsource... wasn't very impressive to Xu Qing. He had a very refined palette now....

Waving his hand, he tossed aside the corpse. At the same time, dozens of other corpses dropped from the sky. They fell from the red butterflies that were manifestations of Xu Qing!

After absorbing the ringsource, the butterflies converged, turning into Xu Qing's true form, hovering in midair. He looked around expressionlessly. Then he reached out, grabbed a god that was hiding, and dragged the god out.

This god was made of crystals. Before the god could speak, Xu Qing shattered the crystals into a host of fragments. Each fragment reflected the terrified faces of the other gods.

One of them was the unsightly face of the dwarf.

"There's still time to start the teleportation and let me out," Xu Qing said.

## Chapter 1267: All the Clues

### Chapter 1267: All the Clues

Xu Qing had a clear goal here, and it wasn't to kill everyone. It was to escape.

If this True Radiant dwarf wanted to avoid fighting, all it would take was a teleportation. Although Xu Qing usually preferred to wipe out all his enemies, after a bit of consideration, he had to admit that getting out of here was more important. After all, his original plan had been to figure out the best way to get back to the Fifth Star Ring.

There was another reason. In this world, though the True God of these True Radiants was in the middle of assimilating, hē was occasionally lucid. Whenever that happened, it was very unfavorable for Xu Qing, and put him in a lot of danger. In fact, during his earlier attacks, he had attempted to use spatial manipulation magic to carry out his own teleportation. Unfortunately, he had been stymied.

The only way to leave was for this dwarf to open the way. Unfortunately, given the dwarf's relationship to the True God, Xu Qing wasn't confident that he could make his escape even if he managed to capture and puppetize the dwarf.

Getting his opponent to back away from the fight seemed like the perfect way to achieve his aim. Therefore, he made sure his words didn't just target the dwarf, but also... the black tumor in the dome of heaven! Xu Qing had learned long ago that living beings were all different. Some were wise, some were foolish. And everyone had their own perspective and view of things.

Up above, the black tumor wriggled briefly, and then, a vortex appeared alongside it. The vortex pulsed with the spatial aura of the outside....

It was the exit!

As it turned out, the one being that was most interested in preventing a chaotic battle was actually the True Radiant's True God! Although Xu Qing could be valuable to hīm, the people hē had brought here weren't even close to being finished with thēir work. So in the end, it made sense to let Xu Qing leave. That would remove many variables, and let hīm focus on the work at hand.

"Ancestral God!" the dwarf blurted anxiously. Hē, of course, did not want Xu Qing to leave, because to hīm, Xu Qing... was too valuable!

Xu Qing's eyes flitted back and forth. He had suspicions about whether or not this exit was legitimate. However, given the circumstances, he finally decided to grit his teeth and shoot toward it. But then... even as Xu Qing's incredible speed brought him right toward the exit vortex, something dramatic happened!

The mountains rumbled, and the trees swayed as the local god unleashed an eruption of godly might. The result was that a huge tempest covered the entire exit. Then the exit crumbled out of existence.

As shock waves rolled out, Xu Qing fell back, his expression grim. At the same time, the fluctuations turned into a voice spoken via divine will.

"Young cultivator friend, that exit is a trick! Hē was trying to harm you! If you help me crush this enemy god, then I'll help you escape!"

No one wanted Xu Qing to leave more than the True Radiants' True God.

But as for who wanted Xu Qing to stay... the one who desired that the most wasn't the dwarf. Rather... it was the god below that the True Radiants' True God had been fighting for years, and was on the verge of being devoured. The chaotic situation at hand was the perfect opportunity for hīm. With Xu Qing here, it was now possible that hē could turn defeat into victory! That was why hē had stopped Xu Qing and also gone all out against the True Radiants' True God.

The entire world devolved into chaos. The blood rain fell harder. The rumbling grew more intense.

And then a raspy voice spoke from within the blood rain. “Look, hē’s trying to prevent you from leaving. Help me crush hīm and I’ll open the exit for you again!”

Xu Qing’s eyes narrowed. The world trembled as more divine will converged.

“Hē’s lying to you. If you step into that exit, you’re dead beyond the shadow of a doubt. Hē has the upper hand in this fight right now, so there’s no way hē wants anyone on the outside to realize what’s going on. After all, you’re only one minor variable. But if people find out about this situation... there could be a lot more variables!”

“Don’t listen to hīm. If we swapped positions, I definitely wouldn’t let you leave. But if you left right now, it would be a big help to me. I hereby swear an oath on my true name, ensuring that I can’t go back on my word. If you don’t believe me, then just ask hīm if hē’ll swear on hīs true name!”

Both of those things were uttered simultaneously by the two gods. And the god below *didn’t* swear on his true name!

Eyes flashing, the dwarf looked at Xu Qing and urgently said, “Fellow Daoist, I was being rash earlier. There’s no need for us to fight to the death. If you help us, we will abide by the promise of our True God!”

With that, hē looked up into the dome of heaven, bowed, and said, “Ancestral God, please release the Altar Gods. Give me the power to help this immortal cultivator to crush the enemy god. In doing so... we can prevent anything unexpected from happening!”

There was a hidden meaning to hīs words. If the Altar Gods joined the action, then their side would have the upper hand in both offense and defense, and would be in an almost invincible position.

The black tumor up above twitched, and then the handful of Altar Gods connected to it opened their eyes. Their divine will was returned to them as the connection to the black tumor was severed. And then they shot downward. It seemed like they really were going to help Xu Qing to crush the True God below.

Most of the Altar Gods weren’t particularly noteworthy. But there were three that had attracted Xu Qing’s attention earlier.

One of them was an evil eye with the pupil of a bronze bell covered in rust. Another looked like an emaciated old woman. And the third was a tree, half of which was covered in blooming crabapples, while the other half was charred and withered.

Xu Qing looked at them with glittering eyes. He had the weapon of an Immortal Lord, but to use it required tapping into the destiny aura of the Fifth Star Ring. Given that he was in the Fourth Star Ring, doing that... would definitely blow his cover. It was time to make a decision, so that’s what he did....

“Fine, all of you, come with me!”

Xu Qing shot down toward the mushroom umbrellas growing on the withered trees!

The mushroom umbrellas, big and small, were covered in crystals. And inside of those crystals was the same thing: an empty minor world. However, the reality was that, though it seemed to fully exist, it was actually in a state between illusion and reality. Normally speaking, there was no way to enter it!

But Xu Qing shot directly toward the minor world and went right inside! This had nothing to do with his canon. Apparently... the minor worlds had opened up on their own!

Xu Qing's face remained as expressionless as ever.

Behind him, the dwarf saw what had just happened. Eyes glittering, hē secretly sent a message via divine will to the other surrounding gods.

*"This minor world is the core of the enemy god. Normally speaking, we can't get inside of it. But now it's open.... All of you follow me in and wipe out everything! If an opportunity presents itself to capture that cultivator alive, do it. Otherwise... kill him!"*

With that, hē shot inside. The Altar Gods also followed Xu Qing into the minor worlds, followed by all the other scattered gods. Thēy got inside easily! After thēy disappeared, the only ones left behind in the world outside of the mushrooms were the two fighting gods.

The god above then said, "You didn't dare to swear an oath based on your true name because you feared the possibility of me locating your true name hidden in your god kingdom memories. But now, you've actually taken the initiative to open your god kingdom! Every part of the god kingdom that gets destroyed will break down some of the power hiding your true name. If enough is destroyed, I can easily find your true name, devour it, and complete the assimilation process!

"It seems you're placing all of your hopes on this cultivator. You gambled. You gambled that he would help you, but also gambled that he would be able to destroy the other gods before I destroy the god kingdom and find him! And that gives you more time to fight against me!

"However... that cultivator is no fool. I swore by my true name, but you didn't. Why would he trust you?"

The god above obviously wanted to break down the enemy's mental defenses. But down below, the mountains rumbled, and the trees swayed.

"Because there's something in my god kingdom memories that is very important to him. In fact, it's more important than your true name oath! I didn't realize it at first. But after getting a close look at him, I realized what karma was at play!"

The black tumor shrank down a bit, and more blood rain fell.

"You can see that I'm telling the truth. So you're getting anxious!" The ground trembled. Hīs entire goal was to get hīs opponent anxious. That was when the flaws would be exposed.

\*\*\*

In the minor world, the sky looked wrinkled, and the lands looked withered. There was no life. There were only ruins that attested to past glory.

Lightning crashed through the sky, and within it was Xu Qing. As soon as he appeared, a wind kicked up.

As it touched him, an image appeared to him. The image depicted the map of a world that had been shattered into millions upon millions of pieces and then put back together into what looked like a complete god kingdom.

The spot where Xu Qing was currently located was identified as just one small part of it! And there was something indescribable calling out to him, coming from a location among all those millions upon millions of pieces that actually wasn't too far from him!

The moment he sensed it, his gaze hardened. Hidden within him was the Sageheaven Pagoda, which was his ticket to getting back to the Ninth Star Ring. And it was vibrating. The reason for that reaction wasn't because of the Sageheaven Pagoda itself. Nor was it the sageheaven god vine that was wrapped around it, sleeping....

It was something that Xu Qing had placed into the pagoda after coming to the Fifth Star Ring, because it had been exhausted so thoroughly it needed to sleep. It was the little golden rat! Because of that call, the rat was waking up!

As soon as it started waking, grumbling sounds echoed in Xu Qing's mind. Xu Qing's pupils constricted, and then his eyes lit up. A seemingly preposterous idea then occurred to him. Struggling to control his breathing, he came to a decision. Then he shot forward toward the source of the call!

Unfortunately, as soon as he started moving, numerous gods descended. Every single one caused the call to weaken, until there were so many gods that the call disappeared altogether. The god kingdom that had been shattered into millions upon millions of pieces was thrown into complete chaos.

As a result, Xu Qing couldn't accurately find what he was looking for! His eyes flashed. Obviously... the god below wanted him to kill all of the gods that had come to help the True Radiants' True God.

This god wanted to make a deal with him.

Coldness filled Xu Qing's heart. But in the end, he said, "Deal!"

\*\*\*

In the ruins of one part of the shattered god kingdom... was a massive golden rat chewing on a hemp sandal. It kept an eye on its surroundings, as if it was worried that someone would notice the sandal and take it back. As it chewed on the sandal, it didn't notice the fragments of hemp that fell down around it, slowly gathering into the shape of a teleportation portal!

## Chapter 1268: A Friend Coming from Afar

## Chapter 1268: A Friend Coming from Afar

Outside of the minor worlds, the fight between heaven and earth got more intense. Blood rain filled the sky, and countless imps swarmed about with axes, attacking trees and mountains alike. The lands rumbled as trees grew rapidly and fought back with great intensity.

There was also a rain of blood inside the minor worlds, as a slaughter was playing out! The howls of anguish that preceded death spread out along with intense rumbling sounds. God magics shook everything, filling the minor world with dazzling, multicolored light.

A deal had been worked out. And one party had demanded the complete extermination of all the other gods! Only then would the hidden fragment be revealed once again.

It was true that, from Xu Qing's perspective, it seemed entirely possible this could be a trick. But he decided to go through with the slaughter anyway. It couldn't be a coincidence that the little golden rat was waking up.

The blood rain in the minor world grew heavier. The corpses of gods fell out of the sky, crushing the ruins below and sending dust out. As the dust mixed with the blood rain, it turned into a blood fog. At the moment, the blood fog roiled as Xu Qing's immortal embryo occasionally appeared and occasionally disappeared within it.

At the same time, the three Altar Gods he had noted earlier were closing in on him in the fog.

Those gods looked like an eye, an old woman, and a half-blooming half-withering tree! Their godly authority surged around

That was especially true of the eye with the pupil that was a bronze bell. His gaze was filled with a canon that reminded Xu Qing of Zhou Zhengli. As soon as it locked onto Xu Qing in the blood fog... the bell rang, causing everything to shake. It turned into a godly voice that could strike madness into the listener.

It was locking onto Xu Qing's soul! The color bronze spread out everywhere, infecting the blood fog and converging on Xu Qing's flesh and blood! In addition, stardust filled with god script poured out from the eyelid of the eye, becoming a torrent that swept forth to block Xu Qing's path forward. In the back of the eye was a suction device that resembled the hand of a buddha, and it exerted a huge gravitational force that locked onto Xu Qing, as if to drag him over to be devoured.

Meanwhile, the old woman and the tree unleashed attacks.

Within the blood fog, Xu Qing's eyes glittered. He knew that time was of the essence, and that delays could bring unintended consequences! He needed to end the slaughter as quickly as possible.

With that thought in mind, his heart filled with determination, and he unhesitatingly gave into the gravitational force and allowed himself to be dragged toward the bronze eye. In fact, he added some of his own effort to get him to the eye faster.

The blood fog roiled, obscuring the line of sight, and making it impossible to see what fighting was going on inside. It was only possible to hear intense rumbling sounds.

That was the sound of numerous Altar Gods unleashing god magics. Mixed in were muffled grunts coming from Xu Qing, as well as the sound of a tolling bell.

An instant later, the fog thinned, and Xu Qing became visible, blood spraying out of his mouth. Astonishingly, he was right in front of the eye-shaped god. Despite being covered in blood, he didn't hesitate for a moment to stab the iron skewer in his hand deeply into the pupil of the eye!

The bronze bell shivered and released an unprecedented scream of lamentation. Countless faces appeared on the surface of the bell, and all were writhing in agony. The weeping turned corporeal, becoming blood-red incantation text that flowed out of the eye and surrounded Xu Qing.

At the same time, a host of innumerable tentacles erupted from the eye and madly stabbed toward Xu Qing like blades. The goal was to push Xu Qing away....

Off in the distance, the other Altar Gods took advantage of the moment to rush in that direction.

A vicious look gleamed in Xu Qing's eyes as he let the tentacles stab into him. Ignoring the injuries and the blood splashing down, he unleashed all of the power of the iron skewer. Rumbling sounds echoed out as the skewer stabbed right into the bronze pupil! The eye shivered. The bronze cracked, and golden god blood oozed out!

The power of Xu Qing's immortal embryo erupted within him, sending terrifying immortal energy out.

The eyeball was crushed out of existence, transforming into a rain of blood that spread out everywhere. Every drop of blood reflected the host of Altar Gods and Godfire gods who had surrounded Xu Qing. The blood fog churned more!

A few breaths of time passed, whereupon an old woman appeared, racing away from the blood fog.

Behind her was Xu Qing, soaked in blood, stepping over some crushed crabapple flowers to give chase. He looked seriously injured. But his killing intent raged out, seemingly connected directly to the blood fog in the minor world.

Behind Xu Qing was the god that was the half-withered and half-blooming tree, whose godly authority seemed to relate to space-time. The crabapple half of the god was already withering, while the other half was collapsing into ashes. His soul lamp had been extinguished, and the god soul within the lamp oil was collapsing into dust.

Xu Qing had killed the eye first because of how the eye focused on him. Next he had killed the tree. That was because the tree's godly authority could bolster his canon, and thus, he could *sustain damage to inflict fatalities*. Now Xu Qing was after the old woman!

Having witnessed Xu Qing kill so many other gods in such short order, the old woman instinctively felt a sensation of deadly crisis. And now, she just wanted to flee. She had no interest in participating any further.

But the fog surged out, and once again, she was inside its borders. A moment later, a scream rang out as the blood fog finally cleared. As it did, it revealed a blood-red dome of heaven.

The old woman raced forward. However, shē was clearly in very bad shape.

Behind hēr, beneath the blood-red sky, Xu Qīng hovered in the air, his robe soaked with golden god blood. Orbiting around him were 36,000 broken planets with faces on them. And every single planet had barely flickering godfire on it.

On the ground beneath him... were innumerable god corpses.

Xu Qīng licked the blood off his lips and looked at the astonished and fleeing old woman. Then he suddenly vanished, leaving behind only a fleeting afterimage.

When he appeared again, he was right next to the old woman. No matter how shē tried to flee, it did no good. To hēr surprise and despair, Xu Qīng reached out and stabbed the fingers of his right hand into hēr throat and squeezed down. The power of his immortal embryo surged through the old woman.

As the sound of a cracking throat rang out, golden light shone from the old woman's eyes, only to turn turbid thanks to the surge of immortal energy. In the end, shē turned into a desiccated corpse.

Xu Qīng released his grip and turned to look expressionlessly in the other direction.

The spot he was looking at shattered. The dwarf staggered out into the open, blood spraying out of hīs mouth. Hīs expression was unsightly, and hē was visibly weak. Hē was also clearly astonished.

Hē had launched some attacks earlier when in the blood fog, but had just kept getting injured. Finally, after almost getting killed, hē decided to just hide and watch. Hīs plan had been to let the other gods wear Xu Qīng out and hopefully create an opportunity for hīm to launch a good attack. Hē had also hoped to eventually be able to capture Xu Qīng alive.

But then a scene of slaughter played out in front of hīm, leaving hīm shaken to the core. Now hē realized how strong this opponent was, and it led to great waves of shock smashing into hīm. Then Xu Qīng looked at hīm, and that gaze caused hīm to feel a profound sensation of unease.

Backing up weakly, hē said, "Fellow Daoist, the most important thing is to wake up our True God! And our True God made a promise to you.... If you and I can just get out of here, I'll open the exit and let you leave!"

Hē knew that it wasn't likely this cultivator would believe hīm. Hē was just hoping to provoke a bit of hesitation. And then hē could take advantage of that hesitation....

Hīs thoughts ran wild, but... before hē could settle on a good idea, hē shivered from head to toe. Then hē looked down to see that hē was melting. It had completely escaped hīs notice before, and didn't cause any pain or other sensation. And it was caused by a black thread that had come to be wrapped around hīs ankle at some point. The thread pierced into hīs skin and went all the way to hīs god soul.

"Ancestral God!" the dwarf screamed.

Xu Qing vanished, then appeared mysteriously right in front of the dwarf god. Moving with lightning momentum, he reached his hand out, and as the chime of a bell rang out, he stabbed his finger into the dwarf's forehead.

The dwarf's face writhed. Hē wanted to fight back, but hīs injuries and the effects of the blood fog, combined with the god curse, had hīm weaker than ever. Add in the chime of the bell, and there was nothing hē could do. In the blink of an eye, hē shivered from head to toe. Countless streams of golden blood oozed from hīs eyes, ears, nose, and mouth, which rose into the air to form a new rain of blood. Then hīs body crumbled, and the pieces fell to the ground.

Xu Qing hovered in the air, allowing the rain of blood to fall onto his wounds. The truth was that he really had suffered some terrible wounds during the fighting, and had been suppressing their effects. After focusing his thoughts on the call that was now clear again, he determined the direction he needed to travel to follow it, and exhaustedly began to move.

Eventually, he reached the world fragment in question, and there he found evidence that indicated a golden rat had been there! There were star ring hemp fragments on the ground that formed a teleportation portal! Given the structure and layout, it did not seem to be the work of a cultivator or a god. It looked more like the result of the innate ability of the golden rat.

Xu Qing looked thoughtfully at the teleportation portal. He had no idea where the portal led to, but he could tell that after activating it, he would need two specific items to actually teleport through it.

One was some star ring hemp. The other was the chronoflitter aura of the golden rats. Without those two things, the portal couldn't be used.

Xu Qing's eyes narrowed. *Years ago at the outer sea of the Revered Ancient mainland, I ran into the Immortal Paragon as he was chasing down a golden rat.... That was when he told me to go to the Fifth Star Ring.*

*And eventually, I did go to the Fifth Star Ring. Then, out on the battlefield, I accidentally ended up teleporting to the Fourth Star Ring.... While recovering in the Fourth Star Ring, I coincidentally ended up being scanned by the divine will of some True Gods, and had no choice but to come into this pocket realm to hide.*

*And then, I coincidentally ran into these two True Gods fighting.... After that, in another coincidence in this minor world, my golden rat woke up, and sensed a relative. Now I'm here, at a teleportation portal made of star ring hemp. Coincidentally, going through it will require me to use the last bit of star ring hemp I got from the Immortal Paragon.*

*Is he saving me? Or has he been trying to lead me here this entire time?*

After some more thought, his eyes shone with determination. In the end, it didn't matter. This was the only option he had. So he prepared to step into the portal. However, right then...

An ancient voice echoed through the minor world. "Young friend, I'm interested in making a second deal. Are you interested? The True Radiants' True God wants to devour and assimilate me, and is about to succeed. But I have a secret magic that you could use to devour that True God. It would boost your ringsource, and would let me turn defeat into victory!"

Xu Qing stopped and looked up into the canopy of heaven. Looking very calm, he said, “Considering you let me in here, you obviously knew all along that karma would play out this way in your god kingdom. In that case, is this deal of yours your idea? Or is it... someone else’s idea? I’m very interested to know whether you are... a god or an immortal!”

\*\*\*

Very far away from the Fourth Star Ring was the distant Ninth Star Ring. The vast expanse of the starry sky there, right in the middle, was the Revered Ancient mainland! The pressure of that ancient immortal in the starry sky grew stronger constantly, leaving all living beings feeling very anxious.

Beneath the surface of Revered Ancient was a vast subterranean location that was tightly sealed by ancient immortals. It was where the Brilliant Heaven Godfolk were. In that remote location was a dilapidated temple.

There was no statue of a god in the temple, but in one corner, a head lay there facing upward, unleashing a torrent of curses.

“All I did was steal the corpse of a peak Altar God! Because of that you fools chased me all this time? You people just wait!”

The head ground its teeth. Then, a very wild-looking old rat appeared. It had almost no fur left, as it burrowed out of nowhere next to the head. There, it made a few lazy squeaking sounds.

The head rolled into a different position so that it could look right at the rat. The head looked surprised. “Say what now? You sense a teleportation occurring very far away?”

## Chapter 1269: Elated Erniu!

### Chapter 1269: Elated Erniu!

Xu Qing stood in the teleportation portal made of star ring hemp. He had all of the requirements, including the star ring hemp from the Immortal Paragon, and the aura of the little golden rat.

With a mere thought, he could begin the teleportation. But instead, he continued to look up into the canopy of heaven. He was waiting for an answer to the question he had just asked.

A moment later, an ancient voice echoed out into the minor world, tinged with a faint bit of confusion.

“I don’t know either.... Years ago, I perished. When I returned, my recollections of the past were that of a god, but at the same time, I had scattered memories of a cultivator.

“Those two types of memories intersect, and thus, I often feel confused. Within that confusion is a voice that occasionally echoes out when the two types of memories clash. The voice tells me that there are clues left behind in my memories, and that one day, he’ll be able to use those clues to do

something. Therefore, he says not to obsess over what I am. I should just walk the path in front of me until, one day, I will meet a cultivator who has a resonance with my memories.

“When you entered that pocket realm out there, I sensed the resonance with the clues. I understood... that you are the person I’ve been waiting for. As for the question you asked, I really have no way to answer it. Maybe I’m a god. Or maybe... I’m a cultivator.

“Furthermore, I have no way to prove what I’m saying is true. Whether you trust me or not... well, that’s up to you. I’m not hiding anything from you. If I impart to you the secret magic that can absorb the True Radiants’ True God, it will cause a stir in the pocket realm, and that will bring the risk that forces on the outside realize what’s happening. But the secret magic is real. Its absorption powers are real.”

Xu Qing looked down at the teleportation portal for a short time. “Transfer the secret magic to me.”

Up above, numerous bolts of lightning appeared, which converged into a jade slip that descended to Xu Qing.

He scanned it, whereupon a secret magic called the Dark Serenity God-Assimilating Incantation poured into his mind. Xu Qing’s eyes immediately narrowed. The first part of the name was definitely a shock to him.

The voice of the True God then echoed out again. “This secret magic comes from the cultivator memories within me. Only someone with immortal energy can use it.”

“Do the memories contain the cultivator’s name?” Xu Qing asked.

“....” A long moment passed before the True God replied, “Unfortunately, no.”

Within Xu Qing’s mind, the Dark Serenity God-Assimilating Incantation formed a dense network of magical symbols. After studying them with divine will, his eyes glittered with silver light. The air behind him vibrated as a towering immortal embryo materialized. Then the magical symbols of the Dark Serenity God-Assimilating Incantation became silver and spread over the surface of the immortal embryo, converging on its right hand.

The immortal embryo lifted that hand and shoved it upward to the sky! The sky shattered as the huge hand punched a hole right through it.

Instantly, the pocket realm was revealed, complete with its raging war between heaven and earth. The mountains erupted. The trees shot toward the sky. Blood rain fell in torrents. The huge black tumor twitched violently. What was more, all of the magical mushrooms began to shine with silver light. The light spread out to fill the entire pocket realm as a majestic silver hand formed.

It was none other than the hand of Xu Qing’s immortal embryo! And it sped directly toward the black tumor! The silver magical symbols rushed out of the hand, becoming a silver river. And because the black tumor was so involved in the intense fight with the True God below, it was quickly covered over.

The silver river... ravenously devoured the tumor! In the blink of an eye, a terrifying torrent of ringsource poured through the silver symbols and into the immortal embryo. An instant later, Xu Qing was assimilating all of the ringsource!

And thus, that ringsource was converted into immortal energy that nourished his immortal embryo! His cultivation base began to rise, reaching the very border of late Quasi-Immortal....

The black tumor began to writhe violently, sending out the mighty pressure of a True God, along with an astounding godly voice.

“How impudent!” The voice shook the pocket realm with such intensity, that rifts opened up everywhere. At the same time, a slit appeared on the black tumor, which opened to reveal a golden eye!

It had no emotions. A cultivator or a postheaven god in this situation would be enraged, but right now, it was simply apathetic. However, a lack of emotions didn’t equate to irrationality. It knew that if, during the process of absorbing the True God below, Xu Qing plundered its own foundation, then its future would be in jeopardy, and it could very well die.

Normally speaking, a Quasi-Immortal cultivator couldn’t possibly steal from it. The real reason... other than the secret magic being used, was that... its enemy was behind it. The True God below struggled and fought back, and was going all out at the last minute.

As Xu Qing assimilated the ringsource, the mountain ranges became like a blade made of a spine, which slashed up and stabbed into the canopy of heaven with an ear-shattering boom. The trees burned themselves to bolster Xu Qing’s silver hand. Their golden light suppressed the godly might of the enemy god, making Xu Qing’s work easier.

At that moment of crisis, the tumor twitched, causing its outer layer of skin to crumble and burn, as it was converting into a terrifying power. That power then sought to drive away Xu Qing and his power of absorption!

Though the True God below was able to block much of that power, it was still so terrifying that as soon as it hit the hand of Xu Qing’s immortal embryo, the hand shattered. The ringsource of a True God sprayed everywhere.

Within the minor world, Xu Qing’s entire majestic immortal embryo also suffered the effects, and exploded. Within the spell formation, Xu Qing coughed up a mouthful of silver blood, within which was some of the ringsource he had not fully absorbed. At the same time, he suffered a backlash thanks to the sudden interruption to his cultivation base breakthrough.

Of course, Xu Qing was a vicious individual. His eyes flashed, and before the blood could even land on the ground, it turned into a blood mist that he quickly inhaled. Blue veins bulged out all over him as the power of the immortal embryo once again surged. The immortal embryo appeared again and then forcefully thrust its hand up again!

The silver hand appeared again outside. Silver magical symbols flowed as it once more began to drain the black tumor!

This time, the absorption played out differently. The extent and the strength far surpassed the previous attempt. And that was because, this time, Xu Qing... didn't assimilate it!

Normally speaking, the process would be to absorb and assimilate it at the same time, turning it into nourishing immortal energy. The entire process could be considered a complete cycle. But after what just happened, Xu Qing knew that expending the effort to assimilate the ringsource would take time away from absorbing it.

Eyes flashing with cold light, he decided to forgo the assimilation, and instead use himself as a vessel to simply contain the ringsource.

There would be some downsides. For one, there was a limit to how much Xu Qing could contain. After all, this was a peak True God. And if the True God could be considered an ocean, then Xu Qing was like a lake. The second downside was that a lot of the ringsource would be wasted, and what he took into himself wouldn't be very pure.

But Xu Qing couldn't worry about those things right now. He had an opportunity to enjoy a big meal right now, and he would swallow however much he could. And after he finished with the meal, he would try to take some to-go as well!

And thus, he viciously absorbed the ringsource! He quickly reached capacity, and yet continued working. What he could fit inside, he fit inside. And what he couldn't fit inside, he kept outside!

Up in the sky, a whole section of the black tumor already looked shriveled up. Though it was small compared to the tumor as a whole, it was obvious that it couldn't fight back much thanks to being locked in combat with the True God below. What was more, that missing section further weakened it, so that the attacks of the True God below were even more effective. After all, the two True Gods were fairly evenly matched to begin with.

The biggest factor in the black tumor's loss of momentum was the fact that Xu Qing couldn't contain all the ringsource, and was letting much of it drain. It was like a deflating balloon!

As a result, the black tumor was in incredible danger. At that critical moment, the tumor shivered, then ignited part of itself, causing a loud cracking sound to ring out. It was trying to rip open the spatial barriers of the pocket realm to allow the energy inside to spread on the outside. Not only would that create an exit, but also, it would alert forces on the outside of what was happening.

It didn't want to resort to this action unless there was absolutely no other option available. After all, it would introduce a host of other variables. But given what was going on, there didn't seem to be any other option. Those variables were the key to resolving the crisis.

However... just as it was preparing to rip open the pocket realm.... The silver magical symbols in the area collapsed on their own. The silver hand also vanished, as well as the immortal embryo in the minor world.

Xu Qing had taken the initiative to stop absorbing the ringsource. Without any hesitation, he activated the teleportation portal and vanished!

He left!

He had worked out a deal with the True God below, but given his personality, he wasn't going to simply trust the other party completely.

From the earliest moment, he had not intended to actually help that True God. He only had one goal. And that was... to take the unbalanced situation and return it to a state of balance! That way, neither party would be able to target him.

"He left?" The black tumor abandoned the plan to rip open the pocket realm.

And then the True God below erupted with full force. Heaven and earth once again went back to fighting. Everything shook inside the pocket realm as the teleportation portal made of star ring hemp slowly dissipated.

But then, in the moment before it was completely and utterly gone....

A finger-sized blue worm with the face of a person burrowed out of the teleportation light. Once it was in the open, the star ring hemp completely faded into nothing, leaving behind no trace of its existence.

The blue worm looked around the area, stunned. "What freaking place is this?"

The human face on the worm looked confused.... If Xu Qing were present, he would definitely be both shocked and delighted. The worm was Erniu! Although Erniu was initially flabbergasted, it only took a moment for his nose to twitch. Then he turned to look in a specific direction, his eyes shining brightly.

*That's the aura of Altar God flesh! Holy crap! What is this place...?*

Erniu excitedly blurred into motion. Burrowing out of the minor world, he quickly arrived... at the spot where Xu Qing had contended with those gods. He looked around at all the god corpses, which included quite a few Altar Gods. There was even a peak Altar God....

Erniu was shivering in elation, and he felt the impulse to rush forward.

Has luck finally smiled on me? The moment I show up, I'm presented with so much stuff to eat? Back in that damned Brilliant Heaven place, I got chased down just for stealing one Altar God. But here... thēy're everywhere! And nobody else is around! I hit the motherlode!

Erniu raced forward. However, he still felt there was something suspicious going on, so he kept his guard up.

*These gods haven't been dead long. I wonder who killed thēm? Whoever did it has a really ruthless way of doing things!*

## Chapter 1270: Primeval Motherworld

### Chapter 1270: Primeval Motherworld

Dark green starlight flowed through a rift in space-time, becoming like moonlight glimmering on an endless black glacier. As the light went on, it spread out over the entire glacier until it was like the canopy of heaven over a world. Beneath that canopy was a temple that had existed for countless years, which was emanating a faint, mysterious light. Other than that, everything was dark.

It was impossible to see anything within the gloom. However, it was possible to hear hair-raising cries. There were also sounds like chewing and the snapping of bones, as well as disgusting swallowing sounds that would cause one's hair to stand on end.

As for the mysterious light, it was only around the temple, which was illuminated hazily. From a distance, it looked like a candle burning in the night.

The temple was deep underneath the frozen glacier. Innumerable years had passed in which no one disturbed it. Deep within the temple were twelve badly damaged statues of gods. They were circled around a red altar, atop which... was a bronze door, standing upright.

The bronze door opened silently, and a figure slowly emerged from the darkness beyond. He wore a black robe, had violet hair, was tall and slender, and had a mesmerizing face. As he looked around with a vigilant expression, his entire person pulsed with a terrifying aura. He was... Xu Qing, who had just experienced a teleportation via the star ring hemp!

*Where am I...?*

He immediately sent his divine will out to scan the area. He was ready for anything. Unfortunately, he had no idea where he was. All his divine will revealed to him was that this place was extremely ancient and full of intense pressure! His cultivation base, his divine will, and everything else about him was under immense pressure. He couldn't even fly.

Xu Qing's brow furrowed. Thankfully, though his divine will was severely limited, he could sense the twelve damaged statues surrounding the altar. They were gruish in appearance, yet were also indescribably holy. They were covered in deep slash marks, like growth rings left behind by the claws of some terrifying entity.

Considering how large they were, and how large everything else was in this place, Xu Qing felt like he had come to a kingdom of giants. He seemed insignificant.

*Is this a temple?*

His eyes narrowed as he studied his surroundings more closely. However, he didn't identify anything unusual. Eventually, he stepped onto the altar. When his shoes touched the blood-red tiles, a red liquid oozed out from beneath his feet. It floated about gruishly, as if it were blood that was waking up.

Xu Qing's eyes flashed, but he kept walking. He wanted to get out of this temple and have a look around to determine where he was.

Soon, the temple filled with a sound like footsteps on a watery surface. It sounded empty and bizarre. And then, the footsteps suddenly stopped.

Xu Qing stood in a crumbling corridor that led toward the outside. He looked up.

Perhaps it was his arrival, or perhaps it was the breeze that came with him. But either way, the dust on the wall shifted. It almost was as if time was passing as the dust revealed the red surface of the wall, and the ancient symbols on it. The designs depicted a god whose skin had been flayed off, reclining on the horizon, his bones having turned into mountains, and his blood flowing toward a bronze planet. Surrounding the god were hosts of greedy blue eyes.

After a while, Xu Qing looked away. The sense of unfamiliarity and suspicion regarding this place were getting stronger.

*Just where exactly am I?*

He turned and looked in the direction of the end of the corridor. Before long, the footsteps echoed out again within the silent temple. The sound went on for the time it takes an incense stick to burn....

Outside, it was dark, with only that mysterious light creating hazy illumination around the temple. Eventually, the main door opened.

Rumbling sounds echoed out into the dark surrounding world. The chewing sounds stopped. And then... pairs of blue eyes suddenly appeared out in the darkness, all of them looking toward the temple.

At the same time, mysterious light erupted from the temple, like the last flash of light before sunset, or the passage of a bolt of lightning. As a result, Xu Qing could see everything clearly as he stepped outside!

There were corpses everywhere! There were never-ending god corpses! They included all types of Godfolk. They came from a host of different time periods! The vast majority were little more than skeletons with some scrap of flesh on them. They were piled up everywhere, as far as the eye could see.

Xu Qing's pupils constricted at the sight of it. He had never seen the corpses of so many gods in one place, not even on the battlefield.

What struck him most deeply was that among the innumerable god corpses were... a host of living creatures. They were everywhere, and they were extremely grisly!<sup>[1]</sup>

Each one had a gray, skeletal body with a rib cage of twelve rib bones in total, divided asymmetrically on the left and right side of the body. The ribs on the left had a sticky violet membrane stretching between each bone, which would inflate when it breathed in. When the membrane stretched thin, it was possible to see the flesh of gods inside being digested.

On the right, the rib bones were crystallized, and would occasionally reveal the protruding faces of agonized gods. Those faces created an endless, tormented flow toward the tumorized head, a cycle that would repeat every few breaths.

Although each creature had different facial features, they all had blue eyes. As for the limbs, they were extremely skinny and covered with bone spurs, while the spine on the back seemed to be

growing upside down. Bone spurs protruded from the skin at the neck, and they glowed with blue light. Astonishingly, at the end of each spur was a shriveled finger. As Xu Qing watched, the fingers would writhe and sway along with the movement of the spurs.

Xu Qing looked at all of this with glittering eyes. He felt a sense of danger, but at the same time, there was something familiar about all this.

*I feel like I've seen these gruish things before....*

Before Xu Qing could think much about it, the strange creatures suddenly let loose shrill cries. A piercing sound wave swept out in all directions, along with a surge of greed. It turned into a wind.

And then countless gruish creatures began to rush in Xu Qing's direction. A sense of deadly crisis erupted within him.

Xu Qing didn't hesitate for a moment. His immortal embryo glittered as it materialized behind him and then rushed forth to meet the incoming gruish creatures. Wherever it passed, the gruish creatures shivered and then howled as their bodies exploded. However, they would form anew only moments later. They seemed to be eternally indestructible.

There were some who looked mostly like the others, except that they had blue patches of ice on them, and they were far more deadly than the others. Seeing that, Xu Qing waved his hand, and his iron skewer flew out and joined the effort.

His canon of parallelism appeared, causing different versions of himself to emerge from overlapping space-time. Like his true form, they unleashed explosive immortal might, becoming shooting stars that shot in various directions.

The sound of slaughter drifted out across the glacier.

About an hour later, as the dark green moonlight shone out over the glacier, a loud cracking sound rang out, and the glacier began to split apart in one area.

Xu Qing shot out from within. Blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth, and he looked to be in bad shape. Behind him were a host of space-time reflections that were slowly fading away. He could now sense that he was able to fly, and so he shot up into the air and pushed down behind him with his hand.

The sheets of ice trembled, then collapsed, closing the opening. On the other side were a host of those gruish beasts. Leading them was a tall figure whose body was twenty percent blue. Hē had one arm that was almost entirely covered with blue, as if it was completely made of ice! Hē looked at Xu Qing with greed, but did not try to give chase.

Xu Qing looked down at that tall being, a scowl on his face.

The gruish beings in the glacier had ordinary battle prowess. It was their eternally indestructible characteristics and endless numbers, coupled with the fact that he couldn't fly, which had made things so difficult. But even with all that, he normally wouldn't have ended up in such bad shape.

What got him really broken-down were the creatures with the blue ice patches. The more ice they had, the more deadly they were. And that was especially true of the one with the ice hand covered with bone spurs.

That being filled Xu Qing with an intense sensation of danger! Only by relying on his space-time clones had he been able to fight his way through and eventually get out of the glacier.

Seeing that they weren't chasing him, he breathed a sigh of relief. But at the same time, he still felt like all of this was familiar, especially that huge figure looking at him from the other side of the opening.

*I've seen something like it before.... Eldest Brother!*

Xu Qing's pupils constricted as he realized where that sensation of familiarity came from! That blue hand of ice with the bone spurs was very similar to the one which would come out of Erniu's chest when he went all out.[2]

*Godfiend?*

Xu Qing's heart pounded as the opening leading into the glacier closed, becoming nothing but a crater. The sight of the tall, blue figure was cut off.

Xu Qing's eyes narrowed as many thoughts ran through his head. Then he sent his divine will around him to check his surroundings. Astonishingly, he was on top of a massive black glacier that pulsed with intense mutagen. Within that mutagen was endless death.

Before he could thoroughly inspect his surroundings, a strange sensation of fear rose up within him. He looked off into the distance. The clouds in the sky rippled as a golden meteor shot forth, heading in his direction.

*Is that...?* He looked closely at the meteor. Soon, he could make out clearly what it was! It was not a meteor. It was... the massive corpse of a god! Though the god was dead, the aura indicated it was a True God! *This....*

His eyes narrowed as a voice spoke into his mind via divine will. It was a voice full of astonishment and disbelief! It was the voice of the goddess Starryeys!

*"This is the primeval motherworld!"* [3]

\*\*\*

Outside of the glacier world was the space-time rift. And in the vast expanse of this universe's starry sky, the corpse of a god floated along. Responding to the direction given, the corpse flew into the rift.

Two people were seated inside the corpse. They were none other than Young Lord Aurora and Immortal Fairy Spirit Phoenix!

Opening her eyes, Spirit Phoenix quietly said, "The primeval motherworld of the Fourth Star Ring. We're almost there. Husband... have you come to a decision?"

Next to her, Young Lord Aurora slowly opened his eyes. “The Immortal Paragon came up with this plan. Call it my predestined fate....”

1. The author goes back and forth between using the divine pronoun for these creatures and the non-gender-specific “it” pronoun usually used for animals or inanimate objects. This feels intentional to me, as if the author intends for these creatures to seem “similar” to gods, but not an actual Godfolk species. Therefore, I will do the same. Occasionally they will have the divine pronoun applied, but not always. ¶
2. The blue hand has come up quite a few times in the past, for instance in chapters 573.2 and 1022. There are other instances, those are just the first two I pulled up. ¶
3. The characters, and later context, imply that this motherworld is a planet. That said, description makes it unclear if it’s a ‘spherical’ planet or a ‘flat earth’ type of thing. ¶