

Beyond the Timescape

Chapter 1331: Brilliant Heaven Godfolk

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Revered Ancient has some deep secrets.

Xu Qing considered that topic for a short time. But then, Erniu's hollering interrupted the thoughts of both him and Master Seventh.

From down below he shouted, "Hey, old codger! Little Ah Qing! What are the two of you moping for? We're here, aren't we? Why not... hurry up and find my true form? My senses are telling me that my true form has it too easy lately. As a clone, I just can't let that stand!"

Master Seventh glared down at him. "What the hell are you talking about? Aren't you connected to your true form? You know, like how a head is connected to its own ass!"

Erniu smiled back sarcastically.

Meanwhile, Xu Qing sent his divine will out. Thunderous rumbling sounds resulted as his divine will clashed with the mutagen. The sound spread out continuously, and thus, Brilliant Heaven... was filled with wildly flashing colors and screaming winds. Plants trembled. Beasts howled in agony.

As Xu Qing's divine will expanded, he was able to see just about everything in Brilliant Heaven. But there was one spot with dazzling light that his divine will couldn't quite penetrate.

Erniu was not within that light. But he wasn't far away from it. And when he saw the state Erniu was in... a strange expression appeared on his face. He looked away to the version of Erniu below.

Erniu blinked a few times. Given what he knew of Xu Qing, he could guess the reason for Xu Qing's facial expression. He cleared his throat.

"Well?" he said loudly. "Did you see my true form? Let me tell you, little Ah Qing, I wasn't shooting my mouth off before. Your Eldest Brother is really just on the verge of taking over all of Brilliant Heaven!"

"Would you just shut up!" Master Seventh roared. Apparently, he couldn't take any more of Erniu's jabbering. Ignoring Erniu, he looked calmly at Xu Qing. "The affairs of my unworthy apprentice aren't important. Come. As we proceed to our destination, I'll explain about everything that happened all those years ago."

Xu Qing nodded.

Master Seventh laughed heartily. He was actually very pleased to have brought this apprentice of his here. And when he thought about the cultivation level his apprentice had reached, he felt even better.

Xu Qing could tell that his Master was very excited, and didn't want to do anything to disturb that excitement. He waved his hand, and the air rippled as Zhou Zhengli and the others emerged from space-time.

"I want all of you to scatter, crush the temples, and extract all the ringsource."

They nodded. Extracting ringsource was something they were very good at, especially when it came to living gods.... They quickly became streaks of light that shot off in all directions. Xu Qing watched them leave. Then he and Master Seventh... began to travel through Brilliant Heaven.

Wherever they went, their Summer Immortal fluctuations dissolved the streams of mutagen around them. And the dark skies started to brighten thanks to their passage. The plants trembled as the immortal energy squeezed black blood out of them. Eventually, they withered. It was similar with the beasts, who howled and then collapsed into dust.

Erniu followed along feeling very sad. *How come it seems like they're the perfect fit as Master and apprentice.... I need to work harder! Otherwise the old man could very well acknowledge little Ah Qing as the number one apprentice!*

With that thought in mind, Erniu took a deep breath and raced after Xu Qing and Master Seventh at top speed, looking as though he was already part of the team.

Master Seventh glared at him with an irritated look, but slowed down nonetheless. No matter how much he ran his mouth, he actually approved deeply of his highest-ranking apprentice.

Xu Qing secretly released a bit of immortal power into Erniu's surroundings, helping him to speed up.

In that manner, the three of them proceeded through Brilliant Heaven. They seemed to be moving forward casually, but in reality, every step they took caused the surrounding landscape to completely change. All the while, Master Seventh's words drifted out as he described past glories.

"This is where... Deep Earth's dao planet shattered...."

Some time passed.

"This is where... the Brilliant Heaven Godfolk's ninth altar once stood. Sir Cloud-River, a member of the Senior generation in Deep Earth, along with a group of cultivators from his universe, were able to destroy it!"[1]

Some more time passed.

Master Seventh sighed with emotion as he looked at the lands below. There was a huge ravine, perfectly straight, that stretched as far as the eye could see. And it was astonishingly deep. Inside

of it was an ancient will and some sword energy that pulsed constantly. Because of it, the mutagen in the area had been largely expelled.

“This is where one of the Deep Earth immortals, Daoist Heaven Skysoar managed to execute King Brilliant Glory, who was the apprentice of Brilliant Heaven’s god emperor! King Brilliant Glory had True God personhood, and was incredibly mighty. Senior Skysoar went so far as to sacrifice his own cultivation level to combine all of Deep Earth’s precious treasures and deal the fatal blow, leaving behind that sword mark below.”[2]

Xu Qing looked down at the ravine and could sense the fierce sword energy. Clasp hands, he bowed deeply. Master Seventh seemed very pleased at that.

“Let’s keep going.” Master Seventh continued onward.

They crossed mountains and seas, and everywhere they went, Master Seventh talked about the past, and explained all about the bitter war that had been fought. Eventually, they reached a sprawling plain, where Master Seventh’s voice turned somewhat stiff.

“This place... is where my Master became famous. There used to be a massive mountain range here. That was back before my Master became an immortal. He succeeded here, which was where he fought a battle to the death with a True God. By the time the battle was over, the mountains were gone, reduced to nothing but scorched earth. The True God perished, and my Master’s immortal name spread through all of Deep Earth.”

Xu Qing could understand why Master Seventh’s tone of voice seemed so complicated. Erniu remained uncharacteristically silent off to the side, and didn’t do anything to interrupt.

Thanks to the immortal energy from Xu Qing and Master Seventh, the plants covering the plain withered, and the beasts howled. And then a few temples became visible.... They couldn’t sustain the force, and they crumbled.

Cries of rage erupted from the temples as the statues within them... transformed from clay to flesh. Then the statues charged out into the open, surrounded by mutagen and explosive godfire and godly might. However, their expressions were pure madness, and their eyes seemed unfocused. It was as if they were being controlled by some outside force, and had forgotten how weak they actually were. Using blasts of self-detonation, they charged toward Xu Qing, Master Seventh, and Erniu.

Xu Qing had seen these three Brilliant Heaven godfolk before, albeit not with divine will. They were Crimson Mother, Li Zihua, and Crown Prince Golden Crow.

The first two had been assimilated into Revered Ancient. Crimson Mother chose to become the god of the red moon, while Li Zihua chose to sever his god body and abandon his innate abilities. Crown Prince Golden Crow was merely a space-time shadow.

All those years ago, Xu Qing’s cultivation base wasn’t high enough to see through to these gods’ substructure. Therefore, this was the first time Xu Qing was personally seeing the true meaning of the Brilliant Heaven Godfolk. They were a very unique species!

Thēir bodies were like labyrinths made of a combination of crystal and nerves. Thēy had no permanent form. Instead, anyone who looked at thēm would perceive a form that conformed most accurately to thēir subconscious definition of terror.

Thēir heads were sacrificial altars made of a certain number of light cones. The number varied, and among the gods charging toward Xu Qing, he saw that none had more than twelve light cones. The light cones filled the head area, shining with dazzling brilliance that converged into the image of a face, and further uniting into complex designs. As the light cones flickered, the Brilliant Heaven Godfolk let loose soul-piercing cries. At the moment, thēy were only about 300 meters away.

Xu Qing's expression was placid as his gaze swept over thēm. One glance caused space-time to shatter! The Brilliant Heaven Godfolk shivered from head to toe, then collapsed into crystalline dust that scattered in all directions.

However, Xu Qing kept the light cones that made up the heads. They became beams of light that landed in his palm. There, they emitted a sensation like that of daybreak.

Xu Qing looked thoughtfully at the light. *Daybreak light?* [3]

1. Sir Cloud-River is not mentioned in any of the author's other works. ㊦
2. Senior Skysoar is not mentioned in any of the author's other works. ㊦
3. Daybreak light was mentioned in too many chapters to list individually. It first came up in [chapter 478](#) with some further key explanation in [483.1](#). ㊦

Chapter 1332: Just One Step Away

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Looking at the light in his palm, Xu Qing thought back to when he was outside of Revered Ancient, and his fight with the God Lord subordinate of the mother river. Back then, he had used his opponent's godly authority and his own canon and statute to trace back the origins of his divine abilities.

He had even sensed daybreak light during that time, and had come to understand that it was 1/10,000th of a mysterious light worshiped by the Brilliant Heaven Godfolk! The mysterious traceback also showed... that it was the first beam of light to exist back when Revered Ancient was created.

Now I can see why the Brilliant Heaven Godfolk worshiped this light of Revered Ancient. After all, crystal exists within thēm, especially in those light cones in thēir heads. I just wonder if it's the same with thēir essence. Or did they change after thēy started worshiping that first beam of light in Revered Ancient?

Eyes narrowing, Xu Qing's hand closed into a fist. Instantly, the cones of light crumbled in dust. The light within them flowed into Xu Qing's palm, and then combined with the daybreak light he already had.

With that done, Xu Qing looked out at the world of Brilliant Heaven, a curious expression on his face. He was increasingly looking forward to what was to come on this journey through Brilliant Heaven.

“All members of the Brilliant Heaven Godfolk will release that kind of light upon perishing,” Master Seventh said. “We did a lot of research into that light, and came to realize how fantastic it is. The samples we encountered never lasted for long. And only a few managed to survive when we fused them with Revered Ancient’s suns.”

Calming himself inside, Master Seventh looked at Xu Qing. “That bit you have is one of the few that lasted down to now. In reality, the light that results from the death of most Brilliant Heaven Godfolk are only 1/100,000th of the original. The true original has always been the subject of their worship. At the very least, when we arrived from Deep Earth, they looked like they do now. But based on our investigations, it seems possible that their species... was actually born from that light.

“It’s a dao light that they call... origin light. Even after Brilliant Heaven was about to fall, and was on the verge of being sealed by Deep Earth, they still kept possession of that dao light. And even though we won, the victory was bitter. We didn’t want to push the Brilliant Heaven Godfolk to the limit, so we didn’t try to take that light.”

Master Seventh’s voice seemed like it was dappled with history, like dust swirling in the breeze. With one last look at the sprawling plain, he seemed to sever the emotional baggage and start walking again.

Erniu arrived at Xu Qing’s side. Looking at Master Seventh striding off into the distance, he gravely said, “The old man misses his Master. He was waiting for a really long time for him. And when he finally came back, he wasn’t the same person. Most things in life are like that.”

Erniu sighed. It was impossible to tell what he was thinking about, but he seemed a bit emotional.

Xu Qing didn’t say anything, but he found himself thinking about the chaotic flow of space-time, and how he had found Erniu in the ruins, weeping.

Master’s story has become clear. But Eldest Brother....

Xu Qing looked at Erniu, but didn’t ask for clarification about that incident in the chaotic flow of space-time. Everyone had a right to their own secrets and their own emotional baggage. That was true with Master Seventh and Erniu. It was also true with Xu Qing.

Xu Qing and Erniu walked side by side as they followed Master Seventh through Brilliant Heaven. It was almost like that time back in that palace complex years ago.

About an hour later, Zhou Zhengli and the others were in the middle of destroying various temples and gods, which caused explosive mutagen to surge through Brilliant Heaven. That was when Xu Qing, Master Seventh, and Erniu reached their destination.

It was a massive, never-ending ocean. The angry roar of beasts could be heard everywhere. The water was pitch black and smelled like blood. It was as if, no matter how many years passed, the power of time could not affect this place, and could not change the color or smell of the place.

There was also a very strong godly might and immortal will, seemingly locked in a never-ending clash, like a conflict between water and fire.

Shock waves flowed through heaven and earth, causing a huge tempest to rage atop the ocean. Erniu's true form was on an island in the middle of that ocean.

Xu Qing looked thoughtfully at the ocean. *This is the place I scanned earlier with divine will. It's covered in dazzling light that I can't quite see through.*

Looking very stern, Master Seventh said, "Fourth Sib. Big Sib. Fix this place in your memory. This is where Deep Earth's top immortal fought with the god emperor of Brilliant Heaven! The battle lasted a long time. Eventually, the god emperor was decapitated and ripped to shreds.

"The head was taken by the Summer Immortal Palace, while the body became a black ocean. As for that top immortal of Deep Earth... he perished. The only thing left behind was his discarnate soul. He became the first heavenly dao of Revered Ancient. Without him, Revered Ancient would never have been."

Master Seventh clasped hands and bowed to the ocean. Xu Qing and Erniu similarly bowed. The ocean rumbled loudly, and the waves grew larger. An immortal will spread out explosively, causing rainbows of light to spread over the black ocean and illuminate the dome of heaven.

Eventually, the light faded away. As it did, an island was revealed.

Xu Qing looked at the island. "Master, Eldest Brother's true form is right there."

Master Seventh also looked at the island. "You really can find good spots."

Erniu had apparently recovered his composure, and quickly opened his mouth to speak. But Master Seventh had already started walking.

Erniu blinked a few times and then turned to Xu Qing. "Going forward, little Ah Qing, you'd do well to acknowledge that I, your Eldest Brother, am not the type of person to simply talk big!"

Xu Qing smiled and followed Erniu across the ocean. Soon, they appeared with Master Seventh atop the island, in front of a very dilapidated temple. It had once been incomparably majestic. But now its walls had crumbled, and the gate had fallen apart. Even while standing outside, it was possible to see everything inside.

Inside the temple near to the rubble of the statue was a head, tucked off in the corner. It was Erniu's head!

Next to him was a rat whose fur had been plucked out so thoroughly it only had a few bits left. It lay there shivering, its tail occasionally twitching, occasionally taking some dried meat out from somewhere and placing it in the mouth of Erniu's head. The rat noticed the newcomers immediately. Its eyes went wide, and, with practiced ease, picked up the head onto its shoulders and prepared to flee.

"Don't run, Little Qing!" shouted the Erniu outside the temple. "It's me!"

Xu Qing's eyebrows shot up.

The nearly hairless rat heard the words, stopped in place, and looked at Erniu.

Erniu hurried over looking excited. Turning into a stream of blue light, he shot into the head, whose eyes were closed. The true form and the clone fused. The head shivered, and the eyes slowly opened.

The rat looked elated.

Master Seventh stepped into the temple, looked down at the head, and sighed. "Where's the rest of your body?"

Erniu cleared his throat and prepared to explain. However, that was when the crash of waves outside the island grew louder, accompanied by a heaven-rending, earth-crushing rumbling sound, like the strike of innumerable bolts of heavenly lightning.

And then... the surrounding ocean suddenly began to sink down! The water level dropped at an astonishing rate, roiling as it sank. It was like it was being sucked away. After only a few dozen breaths of time... the ocean completely dried up!

The entire ocean floor was made visible, revealing a mountain range. The island they were on was actually the summit of a massive mountain in that mountain range!

At the base of that mountain there was a massive, astounding corpse! The corpse had no head, and looked like it had been put together from different pieces.

The mountains were actually growing on his body. He was the one absorbing the water of the ocean. Godly might pulsed off him.

Boundless mutagen surged in all directions. But there was something even more astonishing....

Shockingly, almost the entire body was covered with a layer of writhing blue worms! There were so many it didn't seem possible to count them. They were even gnawing their way ravenously into the wounds!

Even Master Seventh was stunned. Xu Qing's gaze hardened.

Meanwhile, Erniu's head flew up and landed on Xu Qing's shoulder, where he started laughing madly.

"You asked where my body is, didn't you, old man? Well it's down there! As for you, little Ah Qing, look! Your Eldest Brother wasn't just talking big! Give me enough time, and I'll devour this Brilliant Heaven god emperor, who is just on the verge of being resurrected! And then, I'll be able to conquer Brilliant Heaven, won't I? I'm really just one step away!"

Chapter 1333: Immortals of Deep Earth

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A cacophony of chewing sounds drifted up from the corpse of the god emperor. The worms were going completely crazy. All of them were going all out to take ravenous bite after bite. The blue light they emanated covered the corpse, so that the entire god emperor looked bright blue.

The sight caused Xu Qing to sigh in his heart. His Eldest Brother was about as far away from “ordinary” as was possible.

Erniu’s proud voice echoed out in all directions. “What do you think? Pretty awesome, right?”

Master Seventh looked surprised as he stared, first at the corpse, then at Erniu. Frowning, he said, “In order to stop the god emperor from returning, we dismembered him. We took the head to the Summer Immortal Palace, then cut the rest of the body into dozens of parts that we sealed in different places in Brilliant Heaven. You... found all the dismembered parts and put them back together?”

Erniu seemed to be quivering in excitement. This was the exact moment he had been waiting for. “Exactly! Listen, old man. Most of the places where you had sealed him were starting to open up. If I hadn’t realized that, it very well could have led to the old god emperor waking up sooner or later.

“It’s just the will of heaven. My foreordained fate was to find out what was going on. And that’s when I came up with my master plan! I chewed my way through the various seals you people had put in place. Then I dragged the body parts here to the ocean of god blood and put them all back together.

“With the nourishment of the god blood, the body parts showed signs of life. At the same time, I split my own fleshly body into a host of worms that have been eating that flesh day and night! What do you think, little Ah Qing? Does your Eldest Brother know how to pull off big jobs, or what?” Erniu threw his head back and laughed complacently.

Master Seventh looked thoughtfully at Xu Qing.

Xu Qing smiled and nodded. “Eldest Brother, you always come up with solid plans. I can’t believe I didn’t think of doing this. You really are just one step away from conquering Brilliant Heaven.”

Xu Qing made sure to plaster the perfect expression of admiration onto his face. His choice of words and his facial expression made Erniu feel about as wonderful as possible. He seemed like he was about to start floating.

“How else could I be the Eldest Brother?” Erniu said jovially.

Xu Qing smiled and nodded, then turned to Master Seventh. “Master, why don’t we help Eldest Brother finish his meal a bit more quickly?”

In response, Master Seventh pointed down at the ground and said, “If you want to spoil him, that’s fine. You haven’t seen my immortal dao, so I might as well take this opportunity to improve your understanding of how I view immortals! Immortal personhood is eternal, but the path to it is not fixed!”

Master Seventh's words were like thunder booming out into Brilliant Heaven. When he started speaking, he sounded a bit sad, but as he continued, his words grew increasingly vigorous until all of the surrounding lands shook. It looked as if... the lands were collapsing, and something hidden beneath Brilliant Heaven were breaking up into the open!

Xu Qing's eyes glittered as he looked at Master Seventh. He could sense his Master's personhood skyrocketing along with his battle prowess. And yet, there were no signs of canon or statute! It was as if Master Seventh, despite being an immortal, didn't have canon!

Master Seventh could tell what Xu Qing was thinking. As he powered up, he continued to explain.

"Fourth Sib, I know you've been to other star rings, and you've met many types of cultivators. You've become an immortal with your own dao, which the people out there call canon. Canon is similar to godly authority, and requires a source. It can be used against various gods of the higher star rings!

"In the past, the immortals of Revered Ancient, whether that was Ancient Emperor Dark Serenity or Emperor Ancient Spirit, followed a path that involved fusing with the natural laws and will of Revered Ancient!

"Actually, those two different paths are very similar.... They both involved gaining enlightenment of the natural laws of a higher star ring."

Having said that, Master Seventh lifted the finger that was pointing down. As his fingertip rose upward, the rumbling from below grew more intense. It multiplied many times over, so that everything below was shaking violently. At the same time, the energy of a higher star ring began to rise up from Brilliant Heaven. It was full of something wild, complex, and primeval!

The moment Xu Qing sensed it, he felt shaken. "Is that...?"

Then, Master Seventh offered the complete explanation. "Your Master... walks yet another path used by the Seniors who came here from Deep Earth! I have no canon. That's because my dream was not to acclimate to Brilliant Heaven. It was to upgrade Deep Earth! I never wanted to merge with Revered Ancient. And that was because our plan was for Revered Ancient to simply be the first part of the journey.

"That is why we never put any permanent natural or magical laws in place. We gained enlightenment of Deep Earth's origin, and became external anchors for Deep Earth's natural laws. We represent Deep Earth wherever we go, and can attract the foundation of Deep Earth to serve as a force of annihilation!

"That is how we became the Immortals of Deep Earth!

Master Seventh splayed his fingers and pushed his palm down toward the lands below. Everything shook wildly.

It looked like the lands of Brilliant Heaven were going to completely collapse under the weight of the palm. And yet, they did not actually shatter. Instead, as they rocked back and forth, they emitted the energy of a higher star ring. Strands of energy proliferated, growing stronger and turning into a roiling mist that was visible to the naked eye.

As Xu Qing watched, the mist created an astonishing panorama like a mirage. It was something Xu Qing had seen before in the Summer Immortal Palace. It was... the Deep Earth star ring! He could see every world, every universe, and every location!

The moment it appeared, it swept toward Master Seventh, merged into him, and caused his energy to skyrocket! Dazzling and auspicious colors swirled into a haze around him.

Yet Xu Qing could see that this power up was actually like an illusory pagoda in the sky. It didn't truly belong to Master Seventh. It would only do that... if the image in the mirage became true and real! Without that, it was only temporary.

"Behold an Immortal of Deep Earth!" Master Seventh said softly. "Unfortunately, as our understanding became more complete, we found that the path upward is terrifying. Brilliant Heaven was only a small factor in it all. This place was a world of gods, and Deep Earth couldn't reach it. Our path could not be walked to the end.

"That is why my Master and his fellow daoists chose to leave. They wanted to explore the path beyond, and determine where to go next. I was left behind in Revered Ancient." Master Seventh sighed. "As of now, I could very well be the only Immortal of Deep Earth.

"Because Brilliant Heaven is close to Deep Earth, my battle prowess is more impressive here! This was where I originally planned to fight that certain person to the death! But using this on the body of the Brilliant Heaven god emperor will be worth it!"

Master Seventh's eyes glittered as if with rivers of stars. Within them were all the worlds of Deep Earth. Then he lifted his hand before dropping it toward the corpse of the god emperor, which was still covered with Erniu in all of his worm forms.

Chapter 1334: Brilliant Heaven Awakens

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Tapping into the origin of the Deep Earth star ring and using it on the outside to further the interests of Deep Earth. That was what it meant to be an Immortal of Deep Earth!

Right now, Brilliant Heaven was completely astir!

As Master Seventh waved his hand, the projection of Deep Earth shot toward the corpse of the Brilliant Heaven god emperor. As it neared, dazzling light expelled all mutagen and rejected the higher star ring energy.

However, it was very evident that the origin of Deep Earth was fundamentally not on the same level as that higher energy. The clash caused the Deep Earth energy to be constantly destroyed. And yet, at the same time, the will of Deep Earth spread. That will was formed from the combined wills of all living beings in all the universes of Deep Earth, including all those who had died in battle in the past.

The moment it appeared, heaven was shaken, and destruction spread in all directions! Brilliant Heaven was shaking.

As Xu Qing hovered in midair and watched, his mind raced. He could sense the vision and boldness of the Senior cultivators who had come from Deep Earth to Brilliant Heaven. They wanted to elevate Deep Earth into Brilliant Heaven, to thereby replace Brilliant Heaven, and allow the effects of cultivator karma to flourish.

Unfortunately... Brilliant Heaven was only a small part of the Ninth Star Ring. And the Ninth Star Ring was only one of the thirty-six higher star rings. Above Deep Earth, everything belonged to the gods. And thus, the cultivator system of old was incapable of doing anything very impressive! Simply making Revered Ancient was the limit. From ancient times until now, the Fifth Star Ring was the only place that had truly been overthrown.

As Xu Qing thoughts swirled, the Deep Earth power wielded by Master Seventh reached the corpse of the Brilliant Heaven god emperor. It did not interfere with the Erniu worms and their devouring of the flesh.

Instead, the power went right into the corpse! Once inside, it relentlessly broke down the corpse, annihilating it so that the Erniu worms could devour it more easily! The pressure from outside caused the corpse to tremble, as if it still had instincts, and could sense what was happening. That was when a muffled rumbling drifted out from the chest of the corpse.

The sound could shake heaven and earth. It was... the pulsing of the god veins inside the god emperor!

At the same time, the sky in Brilliant Heaven seethed with many colors. Endless mutagen roiled in all directions, and a brilliant light swirled to converge around the corpse. It was as if the corpse was instinctively absorbing all of Brilliant Heaven to defend against the incursion of Deep Earth.

Seeing that, Xu Qing waved his hand in front of him. The surroundings rippled like water, and as the ripples spread, space-time instances opened. Beast hides emerged, all of them uniform in appearance.

“Suppress!” Xu Qing said calmly.

The moment the word echoed out, the beast hides floating out from the space time instances ignited, and sent out the boundless might of spell formations! Those beast hides were known as the 49 Taboo Formations![1]

Back when Xu Qing first arrived in the Fifth Star Ring, he took them from an Imperial Sovereign. After researching them, he came to find that they held information about a taboo formation related to word usage. By cultivating it to the ultimate level, the taboo formations could be activated using only two spoken words. The reason the final limit was two words was that the formations were split into yin and yang varieties, and the taboos were split into life and death varieties. They couldn't be combined.

Because of Xu Qing's cultivation base, as well as the blessing of his very unique canon, plus his statute of ontology, he was able to take the formations that originally *couldn't* be one, and actually make them one! He reduced the spoken word to one!

When that word was spoken, the suppressing power was formed naturally, becoming natural law, and a resonance of statute! Using it on the god emperor's corpse made it impossible for the mutagen convergence to be intercepted. That interception was accomplished, not by blocking it and keeping it outside, but rather... by suppressing it!

As a result, the seething mutagen of Brilliant Heaven was suppressed in place by the means of one spoken word!

And thus... the streams of mutagen couldn't move. They couldn't even twitch, much less gather together. Naturally, that meant they couldn't affect Erniu. The Erniu worms looked more pleased than ever as they continued with their ravenous devouring.

The actions of Master Seventh and Xu Qing were both intended to suppress the corpse's instinct and make things easier for Erniu. If they had been attempting to truly destroy the corpse... Master Seventh might not have been able to do it, but Xu Qing probably could have with some effort.

Regardless, thanks to their effort, Erniu was putting everything on the line. In fact, his head form viciously jumped down toward the corpse and burrowed into its flesh. When that happened, the worms underwent another bizarre transformation. They split apart, causing the number of worms to increase dramatically.

At the same time, as the tearing and splitting went on, some worms reached their limit and unexpectedly transformed, turning into blue fleshy strips... that filled in the parts that had been bitten away. They became part of the corpse! The corpse was being replaced!

Ten percent. Twenty percent. Thirty percent....

Taking in the scene as a whole, more and more blue flesh was appearing on the corpse, and the same was happening on the inside!

Gradually, it reached forty percent! Erniu couldn't have been more excited. In the end, it reached the level of fifty percent!

Half of the corpse, whether inside or out, was made of worms transformed into flesh. And that half was blue. Especially noteworthy was the left arm, which seemed to be the source. The blue skin here had already begun to crystallize. And the effects were about to spread.

However, that was when Master Seventh's eyes glittered, all while Xu Qing narrowed his eyes....

Something dramatic was unfolding! A very faint light suddenly gleamed in the chest of the god emperor's corpse! Then, a chaotic, primeval energy surged! Terrifying godly might came with that energy, rising from the corpse to rebuke heaven and earth! Wild colors flashed in the dome of heaven!

The pulsing of godly veins could be heard coming from the chest, even louder and clearer than before. The strands of mutagen that Xu Qing had suppressed were now wriggling violently in an attempt to break free. Intense rumbling sounds filled the air.

At the same time, a murmuring godly voice from antiquity echoed in all parts.

“The ocean of god blood is a very special place.

“The body parts were gathered with a very special method.

“The rootless spirit receives a very special call.

“In this manner... the return begins.”

All of a sudden, a powerful will of return erupted from the corpse of the god emperor. All of Brilliant Heaven was shaking.

In the temples that had not yet been destroyed by Zhou Zhengli and the others, gods prostrated and began to chant.

“Our emperor awakens!”

“Our emperor awakens!!”

The sound grew louder and louder, filling the sky and echoing about. Then, astonishingly, light cones began to emerge from the gaping wound that was left behind when the god emperor was beheaded. There were a total of thirty-six cones! As they intersected, they turned into a face!

It was a face that Master Seventh had seen years ago.

Then, that face which he could never possibly forget... opened its eyes! Holy golden light spilled forth, turning all heaven and earth the color gold.

The god emperor was waking up! Erniu had been used to effectuate the return. It was a special place, a special method, and a special call. Together, they were a ceremony of return!

In the moment hē woke up, the faint gleam of light in hīs chest... erupted dramatically! A seven-colored glow swirled inside, filled with boundless mystery. That light was the very same origin light that the Brilliant Heaven Godfolk worshiped! It was formless, but as the sealing of the god emperor faded... the god emperor returned, and in that seeming moment of being born again, the light glimmered again!

As the origin light shone, the parts where Erniu’s flesh had replaced the god emperor began to show signs of melting! The god emperor’s power surged, and the color blue was visibly reduced. Eventually, even the left arm lost that color.

But then... Erniu spoke from the left arm via divine will, his voice echoing with madness.

“You were plotting against me? Well I was plotting against you!”

“You know why I was chewing you up, you old god codger? At first, it was to get at your godsource so I could get stronger and help my good ol’ Master. But the Revered Ancient crisis was resolved. So the only reason I kept devouring you was to get your light!”

“Your species worshiped that light. And little Ah Qing can absorb it, which proves that he has a use for it. Who cares if that Mi Ming fellow gave him some goddesses? I’m his Eldest Brother! So I’m going to give your light to my little Ah Qing as a gift!”

The madness in the divine will made it clear that, just as always, Erniu was playing a deadly game. As his voice echoed out, he took control of the god emperor’s left hand, plunged it into the chest, and grabbed the source of that ancient and mysterious light.

And then... he ripped it out and threw it high toward Xu Qing!

“Catch, little Ah Qing! And then... hurry up and save me!”

1. The 49 Taboo Formations were previously mentioned in [chapters 1097, 1105, 1107](#). ¹⁶¹

Beyond the Timescape

Chapter 1335: Freedom

Erniu sent the mysterious ball of light flying right toward Xu Qing. Instantly, his proud voice faded into weakness. The blue glow immediately began to fade away from the arm of the god emperor that Erniu had possessed. At the same time, the god emperor’s godly might erupted dramatically. Clearly, Erniu was about to be suppressed and then completely erased.

It was a critical moment. That was when the illusory image of Deep Earth on Master Seventh glittered. Spreading out, it cut off the mutagen from the outside world, thus slowing down the awakening of the god emperor.

At the same time, Xu Qing lifted his right hand toward the glowing ball of light. All of a sudden, a mirror shard appeared within the flesh of his palm. It was a diamond-shaped mirror covered with flowing light capable of reflecting all things in the world. It also pulsed with a canon and statute aura that surpassed that of a Summer Immortal, and was perhaps even higher than that of an Immortal Lord. The immortal will spread further through Brilliant Heaven.

This item came from Immortal Lord Mi Ming! Before Xu Qing left the Fifth Star Ring, Mi Ming had given him a gift of his own canon! If any other person used that canon, the results would be ordinary in nature.

But Xu Qing was different. He had entered Mi Ming’s memories, and had also substituted for Mi Ming in reflected history. During that time, he had lived through the most important part of Mi Ming’s life. Because of the experience, there was probably nobody in any of the thirty-six higher star rings who could almost perfectly unleash Mi Ming’s canon the way he could.

Other than the lamp Grandmaster Bai had given him, this was the most powerful type of canon he could utilize. As the mirror shard glittered in his palm, all of Brilliant Heaven... began to tremble violently, and wild colors flashed in the sky.

Mi Ming’s canon brought a terrifying level of personhood that could suppress anything and everything. And that included the returning god emperor of Brilliant Heaven!

The moment light flashed from the mirror shard, the god emperor of Brilliant Heaven shivered. And the shivering grew more intense as golden mist rapidly gathered within the reflected world of the mirror, quickly turning into the outline of a person.

Off to the side, Master Seventh looked on, his mind and heart trembling. He could sense that the mirror shard was extraordinary, and what was more, it was obvious to him that the figure forming inside the mirror was actually the god soul of the Brilliant Heaven god emperor! The god emperor's true name was even vaguely visible inside the reflection.

That mirror... seems to be especially effective at suppressing gods! Master Seventh thought.

Xu Qing noted the expression on Master Seventh's face, and could guess what he was thinking. Master Seventh had no way of knowing the special way Mi Ming had become an Immortal Lord. Mi Ming had invaded and fused with the primeval motherworld of the Fourth Star Ring, using the planet's power to become a God Lord. He had then used his true name to convert from god to immortal. Because Mi Ming had used that method, he could be considered both god and immortal! That also provided a unique power of suppression.

Based on later analyses, Xu Qing had come to realize that Mi Ming could have reached an even more astonishing level of personhood. However, his final choice had been somewhat regretful. His fusion with the motherworld had been temporary. In the end... he did not completely devour the motherworld!

That would have resulted in even more terrifying transformations and changes. Besides, doing so... would have come with too many obstacles that could have led to failure. Maybe the God Paragon of the Fourth Star Ring would have interfered. Or maybe the primeval motherworld would have been able to reject him, and possibly even sacrifice Mi Ming himself. There were just too many risks... that could have ended in disaster. It was like walking on a thread of spider silk!

That was why Mi Ming had chosen the safest option, and the one most likely to lead to success. After using the state of fusion to succeed at the breakthrough, he took the initiative to break apart.

As thoughts of the matter flashed through Xu Qing's mind, he looked down at the Brilliant Heaven god emperor.

The god emperor's eyes were closed again, but his body was pulsing with great strength. Hē was shivering as if trying to break free, except that the force of suppression from Mi Ming's canon and statute made such struggles useless. Even when hē was at his peak, hē wouldn't have been able to fight against this version of Mi Ming, much less when hē was struggling to return and... had lost the origin light that his species worshiped! All hē could do was allow the mirror shard in Xu Qing's hand to suppress and extract his god soul.

Erniu was getting extremely excited. He could sense that the force of rejection and expulsion from the possessed body was growing weak. Without any hesitation, he started the fusion process again.

The blue that had been retreating from the god emperor's left hand once again surged and then began to spread out to the rest of the body. In an instant, the half that had been possessed... smashed into the other half like a hammer crushing an ice cube!

However, the god emperor was still fighting back. Despite the force weighing down from Mi Ming's mirror shard, that other half... seemed willing to end things in mutual destruction! Maybe hē would be defeated, but hē was not going to just hand over hīs god body!

Upon seeing that, Master Seventh's eyes glittered coldly, and he prepared to take action.

But then Xu Qing spoke to the god emperor below. "If you push this act of deception too far... then it will affect my Eldest Brother's fusion. I can only assume that you're trying to turn what is false into reality."

The god emperor suddenly went still.

"You," Xu Qing continued, "wanted to take advantage of my Eldest Brother's actions to use a special catalyst, a special location, a special method, and a special ceremony... to actually return. Logically speaking, if I hadn't unexpectedly shown up, you might have succeeded."

"But I refuse to believe you're unaware of what's happening on the outside. And it's obvious that, if you go through with your original plan and actually return now, you won't be able to escape being suppressed. Given that, why are you still struggling so hard...?"

A thoughtful expression appeared in Xu Qing's eyes as he looked at the god emperor's corpse. "You're trying to use the karma of me and my Master to actually disappear from this location, then use some other method to return in another star ring...."

"You were worried someone would realize your plan, so you fought as hard as you could, and put on a good front. But inside, you really just don't want to give up. So you're hoping to take advantage of this moment to strike a double blow!"

As Xu Qing spoke, the soul and true name of the god emperor in his mirror shard looked like they were about to combine. But by means of the canon and statute of the shard, Xu Qing could tell that there was actually a very faint force of expulsion pushing apart the soul and the name! The true name... didn't actually belong to the god emperor!

"Senior Li Zihua is finally coming back," Xu Qing said coolly. "I suspect that the reason he left this place for Revered Ancient, and then did everything he did, was because... he was supposed to help you break free!"

Xu Qing had not been totally certain of this earlier. But after what he had experienced in Brilliant Heaven so far, and after what happened when he revealed Mi Ming's canon and statute, he came to a firm conclusion. Most importantly, he couldn't believe that the once grand and dazzling god emperor of Brilliant Heaven wouldn't have some contingency plans in place.

Down below, the god emperor's eyes slowly opened. Golden light glimmered as hīs gaze locked onto Xu Qing.

Xu Qing turned to Master Seventh. "Master, do you mind letting me handle all of this?"

Master Seventh nodded. He could already guess what Xu Qing had decided to do.

Xu Qing bowed, then looked down at the god emperor of Brilliant Heaven. “Because of what happened in the past, I owe Senior Li Zihua a favor. Besides, he already took your true name away. Therefore... stop resisting and let my Elder Brother do what he wants. I’ll let you go. From now on, you aren’t allowed to step into the Ninth Star Ring. This place has nothing to do with you!”

Xu Qing’s voice thrummed with heavenly might. “To gain, you must first give.”

The god emperor remained silent. Xu Qing had openly revealed his entire plan. From the very beginning, he had hoped to use the action of the greed of his opponent to completely return. Unfortunately, the dramatic events on the outside had caught him completely unprepared. That said, he hadn’t been too worried.

Because there was still a plan in place. The reality was that both Li Zihua and Crimson Mother had been given his blessing to leave Brilliant Heaven. He had no idea what exactly would happen after they were gone. However, all of his species who left had been given one responsibility: free him.

The outstanding Li Zihua had done more than any of the others. Right now, all the god emperor had to do was sever all karma with Brilliant Heaven, and he could succeed at his ultimate goal. Yet, deep inside, he was still somewhat unwilling.

A few breaths of time passed. Finally, a sigh drifted out. Suppressing that final unwillingness, he closed his eyes and stopped fighting back.

In the mirror in Xu Qing’s palm, the image of a god soul coalesced. The connection to the true form was severed.

Erniu’s rate of fusion increased dramatically. Over the course of a few breaths of time, he spread through all of the god emperor’s body. Then he sank into an extremely deep sleep.

Looking at his Eldest Brother, Xu Qing realized that he needed just a bit of time, so he closed his hand around the mirror shard. A moment later, the god emperor’s soul and true name were wiped out. All karma with Revered Ancient and Brilliant Heaven was severed. No evidence of their past existence remained.

All living beings in Revered Ancient and Brilliant Heaven no longer had any memories of the god emperor. They couldn’t think of him, even if they wanted to.

He was free. Just as Xu Qing had said, to gain, you must first give. He had given up everything, and had thus acquired freedom.

Master Seventh sighed inwardly. *Freedom? That’s fine. We fought so long, and we ended up winning, but the reality is that... we never truly conquered everything. As long as the god emperor was around, this place could never fully be part of Deep Earth.*

This result put a true end to the story that had begun so long ago.

“What about the light of Brilliant Heaven...?” Master Seventh said, looking at Xu Qing.

Xu Qing extended his right hand, causing the light in front of him to coalesce above his palm. “Master, it seems Eldest Brother just needs a bit of time to awaken. This light is very fantastic.... It

contains secrets of Brilliant Heaven, and beyond that, the will of Brilliant Heaven. I want to absorb it and... see to the bottom of those secrets!”

Chapter 1336: Secrets of Brilliant Heaven

Chapter 1336: Secrets of Brilliant Heaven

When Brilliant Heaven was born, this first ray of light appeared.... Inside Brilliant Heaven, Xu Qing sat cross-legged next to the sleeping Erniu, looking down at the shimmering light in his hand. The glow reflected in his eyes.

Master Seventh was seated cross-legged next to him. “Do what you want to do. I’ll serve as dharma protector for you. I’m also very curious about this legendary light that the Brilliant Heaven Godfolk worshiped, and how it was born.... What secrets does this mysterious light hold?”

Master Seventh’s gaze lingered on the origin light in Xu Qing’s palm. Years ago, Master Seventh had studied that light, but had not come up with any answers.

Xu Qing nodded and closed his fingers around the origin light. He closed his fingers tight. The light flickered dramatically, then turned into a host of threads that sank into Xu Qing’s skin and flowed through his body. Slowly, they filled his flesh, his meridians, his bones, and all parts of him.

As the process went on, Xu Qing’s eyes shone brightly, and his aura surged. The wind began to scream around him.

Master Seventh watched closely, all while placing protective symbols around the area.

As for Xu Qing, his heart was pounding.

Ringsource? he thought.

As the mysterious light spread through him, he could sense that it contained an extremely pure ringsource! Though there wasn’t much, the level of purity was no less than what he had sensed from the Fourth Star Ring’s primeval motherworld! The realization filled him with a strange sensation. Before, whether it was when he had absorbed the light of the Brilliant Heaven Godfolk, or when he had held the origin light in his hand, he had not sensed any ringsource.

Well, isn’t this interesting.

With that, he sent his divine will deeply into the light to study it. Of course, there were hindrances. The light seemed to contain a will of its own, which wanted to prevent Xu Qing from studying it, and actually rejected his attempt at fusion. Apparently, it would only acknowledge Brilliant Heaven Godfolk!

Even though Xu Qing had some daybreak light within him, the fusion still didn’t go smoothly. When Xu Qing saw that happening, his eyes flashed coldly. The canon and statute within him erupted, swirled through him, then viciously crushed down onto the light in an attempt to disassemble it.

The light emitted strong fluctuations in an obvious attempt to fight back.

The coldness in Xu Qing's eyes spilled out into the open. He lifted his right hand, and Immortal Lord Mi Ming's mirror shard appeared, and a cold light erupted from it into Xu Qing. It shot toward the mysterious origin light, and bolstered Xu Qing in his attempt to suppress it.

The mysterious light trembled, yet continued to resist.

Seeing that, Xu Qing waved his hand, and Grandmaster Bai's lamp appeared in front of him. The wick ignited. The eye of the god inside the lamp opened a crack.

Godlight shot toward Xu Qing. Xu Qing shivered as the power of the lamp rushed toward the origin light he was trying to crush. When the power of the lamp smashed into the light, something like a miserable wail echoed out from inside.

It wasn't the voice of a person, but rather, more like a dao resonance. As the voice rang out, the mysterious origin light pulsed more violently. It seemed focused on fleeing, except that under Xu Qing's tight control, that wasn't possible.

In fact, it was gradually starting to weaken. Time slipped by slowly but surely. A day later, the struggle and the expulsion attempts reached their end.

The fact that this origin light lasted for so long shows... that this light is absolutely extraordinary!

Xu Qing's hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture, and his canon erupted and crushed the last bit of strength in the light.

The light couldn't hold out any longer.... It dimmed. The moment that happened, Xu Qing's divine will was able to enter the interior of the light....

Xu Qing's mind and heart trembled. He even started to breathe more heavily.

This....

There in his senses, was a vast, boundless... sea of ringsource! It was incredibly strong! And it was incredibly pure! The quantity present was terrifying. In fact, beneath the sea was thick crystal like a plain of ice. When the ringsource broke through a certain level of strength, that is what it became.

This place....

Xu Qing struggled to control his breathing. In the bottom of his heart, he understood the secret of the light.

If you consider the light to be a lamp, then ringsource is the wick! When the ringsource reaches a certain level of strength and purity, then it creates its own power of expulsion and sends out light. Unless you go into the very depths of the light, you can't sense the ringsource! No wonder Master said that the birth of the Brilliant Heaven Godfolk had something to do with this light....

Xu Qing's heart was racing. Upon emerging from the chaotic flow of space-time in the Fourth Star Ring, he was a Summer Immortal, but his canon and statute transcended that level. It was not at the Summer Immortal level, but rather, at the level of an Immortal Lord! That was how he had statute power.

But Xu Qing knew very clearly that unless he fused with his god clone, he couldn't even unleash the battle prowess of a partial Immortal Lord. The reason was that he had lacked the ringsource necessary to go from Summer Immortal to Immortal Lord! He needed too much, and couldn't get enough in a short time.

Regardless of anything, his canon and statute had already transcended, so the only path that remained in front of him... was to become an Immortal Lord. And that would require time and a stockpile.

If I devoured this light that gave birth to the Brilliant Heaven Godfolk....

Xu Qing licked his lips. However, he didn't immediately begin to absorb the ringsource. Instead, he sent his divine will down into the sea. The moment he made contact with the crystal, his canon and statute erupted. Mi Ming's canon and statute joined in, and the eye of the god inside the lamp opened all the way. Those three types of power smashed into the crystal.

He wanted to send his divine will into the crystal to see what lay beneath it! And so, his divine will pierced into it and began to spread rapidly. It worked well at first. But as his divine will went deeper, the crystal, or perhaps some other mysterious force associated with the light, began to push back with unrelenting force. As a result, Xu Qing's divine will slowed down and showed signs that it would soon be rejected.

At that critical moment, Xu Qing's heart pounded. "Master!"

Outside, Master Seventh could sense what was happening. Without a moment of hesitation, he lifted his hand and roared, "Deep Earth!"

The power of the Deep Earth star ring caused the image of Deep Earth to descend onto Xu Qing. Xu Qing shivered as the power of Deep Earth arrived, giving an extra kick to his divine will. As a result, it was able to shove back down on the expulsion of the sea of ringsource. That downward push seemed to break some sort of barrier. A heaven-rending, earth-crushing boom rang out, and Xu Qing's divine will broke the shackles.

He saw... a planet that seemed to be made completely of some sort of special type of flesh! Dense ringsource and incomparable mutagen filled it, along with innumerable godly voices that distorted everything.

The environment, the planet, the fluctuations, and everything else were so familiar that Xu Qing immediately thought, *The primeval homeworld! Brilliant Heaven is actually the primeval motherworld of the Ninth Star Ring!*

But what astonished him to the core was that... he wasn't just looking at a single primeval motherworld! There were two! Two primeval motherworlds were fused together! It was like a bizarre, binary system! This was the source of that extremely mysterious and powerful origin light!

As Xu Qing reeled, the two primeval motherworlds that made the binary system trembled. That trembling caused a terrifying power of expulsion to erupt from the special primeval motherworlds.

It was incomparable, and completely surpassed the primeval motherworld of the Fourth Star Ring. Mountain-toppling, sea-draining momentum rumbled unstoppably toward Xu Qing. All of a sudden, Xu Qing's divine will trembled and backed away. But the force of expulsion still hit it, and sent it shooting back to where he sat cross-legged. Blood sprayed out of his mouth.

Master Seventh shivered, his face turning pale. "That place...."

In the process of bolstering Xu Qing, he had also caught a glimpse of what Xu Qing had seen!

"Primeval motherworld..." Xu Qing said in a hoarse voice. Even as he caught his breath, realization hit him. "The light worshiped by the Brilliant Heaven Godfolk really is the first ray of light that came with the birth of Brilliant Heaven. At the same time... it's the key to opening the primeval motherworld!"

Chapter 1337: Old Friends

The journey into Brilliant Heaven was over.

Xu Qing left. He took the mysterious light with him, that light which was the key to opening the primeval motherworld.

He left behind the sleeping Erniu, Master Seventh, and an empty tomb. Master Seventh had built the tomb personally, not with divine abilities or magical techniques. Xu Qing had not helped him. Xu Qing observed from the side, and took note of the words inscribed on the tombstone.

"Here Lies my Respected Master, Sir Spiritmortal."

Of course, Sir Spiritmortal was the daoist name of that old immortal from the holy lands. Master Seventh had built him a tomb for the sake of their old Master-apprentice relationship. And as he bowed in front of it, an expression of grief filled his face that sank to the depths of his soul.

The god emperor's karma was erased, and Xu Qing took away the origin light that had long since been worshiped. And thus, the Brilliant Heaven Godfolk lost their origin.... Zhou Zhengli crushed many of them, who perished.

Xu Qing did not wipe out the survivors. Instead, he let them stay in Brilliant Heaven near his Eldest Brother. Erniu was fusing with the body of the god emperor. Though he was currently asleep, given what the scattered remnants of the Brilliant Heaven god emperor had said, they viewed him as their new emperor.

Eldest Brother is asleep. He needs some time before he can wake up....

Before leaving, Xu Qing stood near the empty tomb, flanked by Zhou Zhengli and the others, looking at Erniu. Something like the sunrise or sunset glimmered in his eyes, which was the eternal manifestation of the light he had absorbed. He had taken all of the light into him. He also needed some time.

Because of that, Xu Qing was already thinking of going into seclusion.

Master Seventh was also looking at Erniu. But at the same time, he found himself looking at the tomb. After a while, he sighed.

“You’re thinking of going into seclusion after you go back?” he asked.

Xu Qing nodded. “For the time being, most of the potential calamities in Revered Ancient have been dealt with. Next... I need to go visit some old friends. After that, I’ll go into seclusion to completely absorb the light that the Brilliant Heaven Godfolk worshiped. At the same time, I need to further analyze the secrets of the mysterious light. In addition... Eminent Desolation is still there, and the God Paragons are still watching. My cultivation base isn’t sufficient to deal with any of that.”

Master Seventh clasped Xu Qing’s shoulder. Looking wistful, he said, “The dao will I’ve been cultivating has reached an end point. The best I can do is to watch over Revered Ancient while you’re in seclusion. Go do what you have to do. I’ll be here while you’re gone, but I’ll send my will to the outside world.”

Xu Qing looked at his Master and could tell what he was thinking. The end of Brilliant Heaven had affected his Master mentally, and now he just wanted to be alone. Without another word, Xu Qing bowed, then became a beam of prismatic light that shot up into the dome of heaven.

Zhou Zhengli and the others also bowed to Master Seventh before following Xu Qing. As a group, they rose high into the sky before disappearing into the pathway leading to Revered Ancient. When they were gone, Brilliant Heaven became peaceful and quiet.

Master Seventh looked down from the sky, walked over to the tomb, and sat down. He produced a jug of alcohol. Taking a sip, he let the breeze tug at his long hair.

“Master...” he said softly. Years ago, his Master had left, saying that he would return. And so, Master Seventh had watched over Revered Ancient, all while cultivating a special dao will. He had used a reincarnation method to extend his life. Through many reincarnations and transmigrations, he had guarded the mainland.

All that time, he had been waiting for his Master to come back. Unfortunately... what he had been waiting for wasn’t really his Master. As the wind blew, he sank deeper and deeper into rippling memories.

Time passed. It had already been a month since Xu Qing left Brilliant Heaven. He spent some of that time in the imperial capital of humankind.

Thanks to the leadership of Empress Summer Departure, humankind had fully risen to prominence. As a unified force, they could move mountains, and were now unstoppable.

Since Xu Qing was the imperial tutor, he officiated over the ceremony in which Ningyan officially became the crown prince.[1]

It was a grand and auspicious occasion, but Xu Qing couldn't help think about everything that happened in the past, and would occasionally glance at Ningyan's belly. There was still a vine there. Years ago, Erniu had used Ningyan, sometimes as a shield, other times to smash enemies. Regardless, he had been very useful as a tool. A smile tugged at Xu Qing's lips. [2]

As Ningyan prostrated, his heart pounded. Even after all the time he had spent processing the recent developments, he still felt like he was dreaming when in Xu Qing's presence. The dream went on as the ceremony continued.

When the formalities were over, Xu Qing left. His next stop was the Moonrite Region.

Back at the Green Spirit Pharmacy, he met with the Heir Apparent, Princess Brightblossom, Grandpa Ninth... and of course Ling'er.

Ling'er had grown up into a slender, beautiful woman. Tears streamed down her face as she threw herself into Xu Qing's arms. Xu Qing held her and smiled warmly. It was just like old times. Unfortunately, time would not permit Xu Qing to stay in Moonrite for long. A few days later, Ling'er reluctantly bade him farewell as he left. Before leaving, he took all of the Ancient Spirit destiny aura that he had taken from Emperor Ancient Spirit and used it to bless Ling'er. With her blood purified, she could shoulder the destiny of her species.

Finally, Xu Qing headed in the direction of the continent of South Phoenix.

On the way, he stopped by the island where Yanyan lived on the Sea of Endlessness. There, he completely removed the discarnate divine will that had infected her. As a result, Yanyan's emotions became normal. As he worked, Yanyan looked at him with mixed emotions. The entire time, she looked like she had something to tell him, but in the end... she chose to remain silent.

In South Phoenix, Xu Qing saw several old friends.

He met with the other two apprentices of Grandmaster Bai, Tingyu and Chen Feiyuan. He gave them the gift Grandmaster Bai had entrusted to him, the seed. "Master is not dead. If you're willing to go to him, plant this seed. On the day it blooms, the fragrance of the flower will bring you to him."

Xu Qing also went to see Zhao Zhongheng. Times had changed, but Zhao Zhongheng had not. He was still in love with Ding Xue. In fact, after all the years that had passed, his love for her had become his dao heart. As for Ding Xue... she hadn't changed either. Because of Xu Qing's status, she knew he was beyond her reach. But the emotions from years ago still existed in her heart.

The Mute was the most brilliant of the friends Xu Qing visited. He was already in the great circle of Core Formation. Xu Qing well remembered how he had given him an opportunity that would lead to Nascent Soul.[3]

Then there was Zhang San, the great investor who had bet heavily on Erniu and Xu Qing. When they reunited, Zhang San was very nervous at first. But eventually he relaxed, and even told Xu

Qing about his dreams and aspirations. In the coming days, he planned to travel throughout Revered Ancient.

“I’m going to expand my business to cover the entire mainland!” he said proudly.

Xu Qing smiled and wished him well.

It was raining on the morning Zhang San set sail. Xu Qing saw him off. Then he looked up into the sky.

Flame Phoenix circled above, sounding very pleased with himself as he reached out to Xu Qing with divine will. Second Elder Sister was on Flame Phoenix’s back, waving down at Xu Qing. They were planning to leave South Phoenix for a time to visit other locales. Behind them was a little bird that kept flapping its wings and snapping at Flame Phoenix’s tail. Xu Qing looked at the little bird and smiled.

As the rain fell in sheets, Xu Qing stood at the mouth of the harbor and looked over his shoulder. A young woman in a green gown stepped out of the eaves of a building. She stood beneath an oilskin umbrella, looking at him.

“Long time no see, Qing Qiu,” he said softly. This young woman was the very same girl he had first met in the scavenger basecamp all those years ago. She walked through the rain toward him, and stopped in front of him.

Xu Qing extended his hand and offered her a piece of candy. Qing Qiu looked at the piece of candy for a long time. Finally, she took it and pressed it against her heart. She looked at Xu Qing for a long moment, then turned to leave.[4]

A few hundred paces away, just as she was about to disappear into the rain, her soft voice drifted back to reach his ears. “Big Bro Kid! If my brother hadn’t come to take me away from that scavenger basecamp, I might have gone to Seven Blood Eyes with you. I wonder what things would have been like if that happened....”

Xu Qing said nothing.

After a moment of silence, Qing Qiu put the candy in her mouth and vanished into the rain.

Xu Qing watched Qing Qiu leave, then strolled through the streets of Seven Blood Eyes. He passed many shops and saw many people. Some were mortals, some were cultivators. He had many memories of this place, and there were plenty of familiar locations that made him think of past events. As he reminisced, his heart gradually grew calm.

In the end, he reached the old Harbor 176. Reaching through time, he extracted his original dharmaboat and put it onto the water.[5]

He sat cross-legged in the dharmaboat, and as he felt himself bobbing up and down in the water, he closed his eyes. In that manner... he went into seclusion.

1. Xu Qing was named ‘tutor of the imperial princes,’ or ‘imperial tutor’ in [chapter 929](#). ❹

2. The vine first appeared in [chapter 452](#). That was back when we didn't know Ningyan was his full given name, so he was Ning Yan. ㊦

3. The Mute failed his Foundation Establishment process in [chapter 309](#). When we saw him again in [chapter 996](#), he was already in the cultivation level described here. In [chapter 1009](#), Xu Qing spent time helping him with his cultivation base. ㊦

4. Long before we knew Qing Qiu's name, she gave Xu Qing a piece of candy in [chapter 26](#). Later, he gave her a piece of candy in [chapter 543.2](#). ㊦

5. Xu Qing originally took up residence in Harbor 176 in [chapter 151](#). ㊦

Chapter 1338: Plumdark Awakens

Chapter 1338: Plumdark Awakens

Twenty years passed. During that time, the situation in Revered Ancient changed in heaven-shaking, earth-toppling ways!

In the name of Xu Qing, Empress Summer Departure triumphantly expanded human territory to the point where it matched the extent of human lands in the days of Emperor Eastglory. And that was only what humans directly controlled. During the twenty years that had passed, humans became the top species in Revered Ancient. They controlled more than half of the mainland!

There were other areas home to either gods or ancient species, and yet... they all feared humans and didn't dare to cause trouble. Yet they weren't willing to bend the knee.

It was a stalemate of three parties. That was when Ling'er emerged from the Moonrite Region, accompanied by the Heir Apparent and his siblings. By means of her Ancient Spirit bloodline, she was able to give the countless ancient species of Revered Ancient a face-saving way of submitting.

For a variety of reasons, they didn't want to bend the knee to humankind. But they viewed the Ancient Spirits differently. All of those ancient species were fine with the concept of 'countless species' existing in Revered Ancient. But in reality... they were all nonhumans who existed apart from the humans. And before Ancient Emperor Dark Serenity conquered Revered Ancient, it had been a nonhuman species, the Ancient Spirits, who ruled the mainland. In the end, they could agree to bend the knee to the Ancient Spirits.

And thus, the only obstacle to the complete unification of Revered Ancient were the gods. Naturally speaking, it made the most sense for gods to handle the business of gods. Therefore, Empress Summer Departure went to South Phoenix, prostrated in front of Xu Qing's dharmaboat, and sought his counsel.

Waves rippled on the surface of the seawater, and the dharmaboat bobbed up and down. Xu Qing opened his eyes. He did not emerge from seclusion. But he did wave his hand, causing a stream of light to emerge from the dharmaboat and coalesce in front of the empress.

It turned into a clay statue. It was a statue of a fox.

As the wind blew through the harbor, the statue glittered with dazzling light. The clay became flesh, smooth and lustrous, and charming laughter rang out. Then, the bewitching Starfire appeared in the world again.

“Long time no see, Big Sis,” Starfire said, eyes shimmering flirtatiously. “Thanks for coming. If you hadn’t, that heartless meanie would have completely forgotten about me.”

The empress frowned but said nothing. With a final bow to Xu Qing’s dharmaboat, shē turned and left.

Laughing softly, Starfire looked in the direction of the Moonrite Region, eyes shining with anticipation. “First, Sun. Then, Moon. Finally, Star.... It’s time to change the rankings.”

Starfire began walking.

The first stop was, of course, the Firemoon Darkheaven people. In Firemoon lands, God Mountain trembled as a rain of clay began to fall. As the rain fell, the Firemoon Darkheavens trembled with dread. At the same time, a towering godly might descended with the rain, landing on God Mountain and turning into a godly voice.[1]

“Moonfire. Sunfire. Come out and see me!”

God Mountain trembled as Sunfire and Moonfire appeared and flew up into the sky, expressions uncertain. It wasn’t possible to go very high. Moonfire only advanced about seven paces before stopping silently with bowed head. Sunfire glowed like a dazzling sun, but despite struggling to surpass Moonfire, only advanced by a few more paces. Then the sun turned into a clay sun. After looking up with a penetrating glance, Sunfire looked down.

The laughter of the clay fox rang out in all directions. Instead of Sun, Moon, Star, the rankings were now Star, Moon, Sun.

After that, Starfire went to the locations of many other gods, and used a variety of methods to offer such gods two choices. Option one was to be destroyed. Option two was to become a subordinate god. That was how the gods were subjugated. There were some dangers, as certain sleeping gods were actually stronger than Starfire. But Master Seventh was around the entire time.

During the twenty years of Xu Qing’s secluded meditation, Master Seventh only came out of Brilliant Heaven twice. The first was to exterminate an old-timer from one of the ancient species who had a special magic to rely on. The second was to crush three gods who were half a step into the True God level.

Due to his actions, there were no deadly conflicts between nonhumans, gods, and humans. And thanks to Ling’er and Starfire taking control, the others actually entered an alliance with humans.

In that manner, humans’ place in the world was acknowledged. The end result was that humans... were the ones who unified Revered Ancient. Empress Summer Departure represented humankind. Ling’er represented the nonhumans. Starfire represented the gods. The three parties entered into a treaty agreement called Pure Ancient. The allied forces purged all the secret locations in the Revered Ancient mainland, and did everything possible to cleanse any outside influences.

Time passed. Another twenty years went by.

Xu Qing had now been in seclusion for forty years.

In the second set of twenty years, humankind's position stabilized. Empress Summer Departure became Ancient Empress Summer Departure. Humankind advanced as well. The broken face was still there in the dome of heaven, leaving all living beings uneasy. Were it not for that, it would have been a golden age.

Ningyan grew up to be a remarkable individual. Due to the empress' diligent guidance, he came to be exactly what one would expect of a crown prince. In addition to Ningyan, there were a few other people who grew into their own during those years.

For example, Wu Jianwu established his own set of core daoist teachings and doctrines. They focused on breeding animals. Though his cultivation base was not very high, through his partnership with the beasts that had been with him for so many years, he came to be extraordinary.

Then there was Kong Xianglong, who was a descendant of Palace Lord Kong Liangxiu of the Swordsage Palace in Sea-Sealing County. He continued to carry out the will of Kong Liangxiu, and eventually came to be the reigning palace lord. All he had to do was reach the appropriate level of cultivation base.

Everyone had their own path, and everyone achieved their own type of success.

It was the same with all the major forces in Revered Ancient. Humans, gods, and nonhumans maintained order. Slowly but surely, all connections to outside influence were identified, and records were kept about them. For all intents and purposes, there were no secret locations in Revered Ancient anymore.

With the exception... of one place! It was a place that no nonhuman, no god, and no human had ever entered by even half a step. Even Master Seventh only observed from the outside for a time before leaving it alone.

It was a very unique and special place in the Revered Ancient mainland. It was the Heaveneater Region! It was the place where the Sovereign Kingdom of Violet and Cyan had returned to!

No one entered the place, and no living thing from inside the Heaveneater Region ever left. Everybody seemed to be waiting.

Two years later... the dharmaboat that had been floating in the harbor in Seven Blood Eyes in South Phoenix for the past forty-two years quietly vanished into thin air. The only thing left behind were some ripples in the water.

The moment the dharmaboat vanished, someone materialized in Brilliant Heaven, right next to where Erniu was sleeping. Master Seventh, who sat cross-legged in front of his Master's tomb, didn't notice the new arrival.

The person who had arrived didn't make any disturbance. He just looked at Erniu briefly, then disappeared.

A moment later, that same figure appeared in front of the statue of Grand Emperor Swordsage outside the imperial capital of humankind. No one saw him. No one even sensed him.

Xu Qing stood in front of the statue, looking up at Grand Emperor Swordsage. He wore a black robe and had long violet hair. He didn't look any different than he had forty-two years ago. But there was something profound shimmering in his eyes. After looking at the statue for a long moment, he clasped hands and bowed.

Then he turned in the direction of Sea-Sealing County.

"She's about to wake up..." he murmured. A warm smile appeared on his face as took a step in the direction of Sea-Sealing County.

In the complex deep beneath Sea-Sealing County was a phoenix palace. Within it was a lamp, slowly growing brighter. It was the Plumdark Evergreen Lamp.

The light of the lamp illuminated a woman seated cross-legged in the tranquil hall. She wore a gauzy, plum-colored gown that spread like clouds around her, drifting slowly as if caressed by a fragrant, invisible breeze. She was beautiful, with skin as fair as snow. Her brow seemed to hide infinite emotion, but at the same time, was the picture of elegant charm. She sat quietly on a rush cushion, her hands on her knees, her fingers long and slender.

From a distance, she looked as beautiful as a painting. It looked almost as if time had stopped in order to preserve her spectacular beauty for all time.

But then... a moment passed.

Her eyelashes fluttered, and she slowly opened her eyes and looked at the main door. Her eyes glittered like stars, vibrant enough to illuminate the whole world.

The door slowly opened.

1. We first heard about [God Mountain](#) in chapter 811. ❸

Chapter 1339: Fate Mingles, Destiny Activates!

Chapter 1339: Fate Mingles, Destiny Activates!

The door of the phoenix palace slowly swung open. There was no wind outside, just flowing time that swept in as the door opened. As a result, it was as if the entire phoenix palace became a river of space-time. As the figure outside took a step, waves spread through the space-time.

When the first wave bloomed, the image within time spread through the interior hall. Within that image of shimmering ripples, it was possible to see the Seven Sect Coalition. Birdsong and the fragrance of flowers filled the air. Everything was harmonious.

Off in the distance was the new headquarters being constructed by Seven Blood Eyes cultivators. A bit closer beneath the dazzling starry sky was the Dark Serenity Sect, outside of which, two figures snuck along as stealthily as thieves. These were the days when Seven Blood Eyes had just joined the Seven Sect Coalition, turning it into the Eight Sect Coalition. At the moment Xu Qing had accepted Erniu's invitation to join him in a business transaction with Huang Yikun, to sell a finger back to him.[1]

Up in the dome of heaven, a woman hovered, smiling. She was seductive, with long hair streaming down her back and bound loosely with a pink ribbon. Her violet garment was decorated with stars and glowed faintly. Surrounding her was a faint haze that made her truly seem like an immortal that didn't belong in the mundane world.

Her gaze fell upon Xu Qing, and she laughed softly as she descended. To the astonishment of Erniu and Xu Qing both, she went right up to Xu Qing, put her finger under his chin, and exhaled softly.

"We meet again, child. What are you doing here at the Dark Serenity Sect so late at night? Are you lost?"

This was the first time that Xu Qing officially met Plumdark.

The waves undulated. Outside of the image in time, Xu Qing smiled. And then, the Xu Qing in the image looked up at the seductive woman and softly said, "I'm not lost. There's an invisible string connected to my heart that I followed here."

The words caused the woman to freeze in place.

The first wave in time sank down. On the outside, Xu Qing took a second step, and a second wave filled the hall.

The waves of the Everlasting Immortal Profundity River appeared, filling all that could be seen. It was evening, and the sun was setting. A large boat slowly sailed along the river.[2]

Plumdark sat on the rail looking at the glow of sunset. Xu Qing sat off to the side, looking cautious.

"Xu Qing," she said quietly, "play that song again for me. I want to hear it."

A pensive flute song drifted out. Though the song felt like something from the jianghu, it didn't describe a life of sorrow, nor an existence of loneliness. The flute song swept out with a feeling of hope and joy.

Inside the image, Plumdark shivered and looked at Xu Qing.

As he sat there, he looked up and softly said, “This song used to be called *Parting with Sorrow*. Now it’s called *Reunion*.”

Scenes like these filled the waves in the hall of the phoenix palace. As Xu Qing strode toward Plumdark, every step he took caused images within time to be replayed.

There was the time atop the statue of the huge snake, where they sat and had a heart-to-heart chat. There was the time in the private chamber in Sea-Sealing County when Plumdark put concealment symbols on him. There was the time in the imperial capital of humankind when Xu Qing snatched the Plumdark Evergreen Lamp. All of the images seemed to merge together, creating a trembling in space-time.[3]

Ultimately, Xu Qing strode through the waves until he stood right in front of the cross-legged Plumdark. He extended his hand toward her.

Her eyes glittered as if with starlight, which shone out to illuminate the world. And as Xu Qing approached, color entered that illuminated world. Without any hesitation, Plumdark took Xu Qing’s hand.

Xu Qing looked tenderly at her as she stood.

“I’m back,” he said softly.

After that, there was no sound in the phoenix palace. The complex beneath Sea-Sealing County blurred, and then everything disappeared.

When Xu Qing reappeared, he was no longer beneath Sea-Sealing County. Instead, he was atop Mount Daybreak, a place he had visited for years. There were now two gravestones there. This was the place Xu Qing had long since picked to be his home.[4]

His father and mother, who were already mere blurs in his memory, lay in rest here. They had been sacrificed to Eminent Desolation, so there was no way Xu Qing could find them in space-time. The only evidence of their existence came in the form of these two gravestones.

Together with Plumdark, Xu Qing settled down on Mount Daybreak. Half of a sixty-year-cycle passed.

During that time, civilization flourished in the Revered Ancient mainland. Zhou Zhengli and the others had already acclimated to life, and had gone their separate ways. Some had gone into seclusion, others had founded their own sects to expound their wisdom. After all, each had their own type of cultivation.

High in the dome of heaven, Eminent Desolation’s eyes never opened. However, two swords appeared on Mount Daybreak.

The first came twenty-seven years before, when a god from beyond Revered Ancient crossed the line of demarcation. The sword shot up from Mount Daybreak, into the dome of heaven, and out

into the starry sky. There, it executed the god that had crossed the border. God blood fell. All living beings in Revered Ancient looked on.

The second sword came five years before. However, it didn't fly to the starry sky, but rather, to the outer sea! In that location, a god from another star ring tried to use the Primeval Sea crossing method to reach Revered Ancient. That god was executed by the sword!

All gods observing from outside of Revered Ancient were shaken to the core by those swords.

Because of that, a true holy land actually came to exist in the mainland. People began to travel there, though few people actually stepped onto the mountain. The reason was that Mount Daybreak existed within space-time, but at the same time, didn't exist.

There was one person who could step onto the mountain. However, when she arrived, she simply stood outside observing for a time, before finally deciding to leave. That person was Ling'er.

In life, there are some things that cannot be forced. And that is especially true of love. For example, despite a life of bitterness, Zhao Zhongheng had still not achieved the love he sought.

Decades ago when Xu Qing visited the Green Spirit Pharmacy, he had not stated anything openly. But in the days he had stayed, Ling'er had come to realize the truth.

Another ten years passed. One day as the sun set, the evening glow caused Mount Daybreak to shine radiantly.

A person appeared at the summit of the mountain. He wore a black robe and had long violet hair cascading down his shoulders. As he strode out, he seemed like a mysterious shimmer created by the afterglow of the setting sun. He was none other than Xu Qing.

Behind him was Plumdark, clad in garments that looked like those of a housewife. Her clothing was plain and simple, but she was as beautiful as ever. However, she looked worried, and seemed like she had something she wanted to say to Xu Qing. In the end, she maintained her silence.

Behind her, no longer in soul form, but in possession of a corporeal body, was Patriarch Golden Vajra Warrior. Over the past years, the patriarch had benefited from a lot of good fortune. He had become the steward of Mount Daybreak, and was able to throw his weight around anywhere he went outside the mountain. In his free time he had begun writing novels.... No one could challenge his authority except for Little Shadow....

However, the pride that usually imbued Patriarch Golden Vajra Warrior was gone. Instead, he looked just as worried as the lady of the house. He knew that now was not a time for him to speak. All he could do was step back silently and watch Xu Qing and Plumdark depart.

Plumdark paid no heed to the patriarch as she stepped in front of Xu Qing and adjusted his garments.

"You really have to go?" she asked.

Xu Qing didn't say anything at first. A moment passed. He looked in the direction of the Heaveneater Region. "It's time to end things. He's been waiting for me for years now."

1. The original scene in the Eight Sect Coalition began in [chapter 278](#). ㊦
2. The original scene on the river was in [chapter 299](#). ㊦
3. The heart-to-heart chat was in [chapter 380](#). The concealment symbols were in [chapter 439](#). Xu Qing grabbing the lamp started in [chapter 943](#). ㊦
4. Xu Qing said in [chapter 483.2](#) that he would settle down at Mount Daybreak later in life. ㊦

Chapter 1340: Starlight Blossoms, Two Suns Rise!

Chapter 1340: Starlight Blossoms, Two Suns Rise!

The afterglow of the setting sun shone down on Mount Daybreak. For years, the mountain had experienced no daybreak. But for the past few decades, the sun shone dazzling on it. And right now, the afterglow made it more colorful than ever.

Two figures slowly parted. Outside the glowing light, Xu Qing strode farther and farther away. Inside the glowing light, Plumdark looked off into the distance.

"He's right," a voice said. "That mysterious big brother of his has been waiting for him for quite a long time."

The air rippled as Master Seventh appeared on Mount Daybreak next to Plumdark. He also looked off into the distance, just like her. "It's a battle of destiny between the two of them. Based on my investigations around the Heaveneater Region, I suspect his brother has reached the limits of his patience. All we can do now is keep this place safe."

Plumdark nodded.

Outside of Mount Daybreak were Zhou Zhengli, Sir Star Ring, Sir Vilespirit, and all the others, seated cross-legged in meditation as they made sure their cultivation bases were at the most peak level possible.

All of them waited quietly!

Three days passed.

Xu Qing took his time going to the Heaveneater Region. As he walked, he looked around at the heaven and earth of Revered Ancient, and thought back to his youth. He thought about many

things. He contemplated the things he had done, as well as the blurry images of his father and mother. He also thought about his older brother.

Three days later, beneath an evening glow similar to that on Mount Daybreak, he reached the northern border of the Heaveneater Region. The border itself was formed by a never-ending mountain range, pure black in color.

Xu Qing stood atop the mountain range, the wind buffeting his face as he looked out at what lay before him. On the other side of the mountains was a roiling black fog that covered everything and made it impossible to see the lands below. The fog covered all of the Heaveneater Region. Occasionally, shrill cries echoed out from it, as though an infinitude of demonic monsters roved about, casting a soul-chilling cold into the depths of anyone present.

A very strong mutagen filled the other side of the mountains, and thus the entirety of the Heaveneater Region. It was actually stronger than the mutagen Xu Qing had encountered in Brilliant Heaven. It seemed to be alive, and ready to devour any living thing it encountered.

To Xu Qing, it felt very similar to when the broken face's eyes had opened over Peerless City or Supreme Ancient City.[1]

"This is a place where a godly aura has infected the mortal world, thus giving birth to countless grues." The voice came from behind Xu Qing. Yu Liuchen stepped out of nothing to stand next to Xu Qing. Hē bowed. "Well met, Immortal Lord."

Xu Qing turned to look at Yu Liuchen. He was not surprised. He had not concealed the fact that he was making this journey. What was more, he had long since come to understand more about Yu Liuchen.

Xu Qing shook his head. "I'm not an Immortal Lord."

Yu Liuchen similarly shook his head. "You're not an Immortal Lord, and yet, you surpass Immortal Lord. So what's the difference?"

Xu Qing said nothing. He just looked back at the Heaveneater Region.

"Where gods are," Yu Liuchen continued, "grues exist. Mortals don't understand. Most cultivators don't even understand. They think that grues and gods exist symbiotically. But many gods don't believe that. In fact... Immortal Lords can also detect the same thing.... Grues do not exist symbiotically with gods. To a certain extent, you can say that they are a curse to gods!"

"You're talking about the Grue World?" Xu Qing asked.[2]

Yu Liuchen's eyes glittered with golden light. "Grues come before gods, and die because of gods. They turn into a curse, like a shadow that exists alongside the gods. That is why... gods above Altar God don't..."

Upon reaching this point, Yu Liuchen shivered and stopped talking, as if having just been struck by some backlash. In fact, golden blood sprayed out of his mouth. "The natural laws of the higher star rings won't allow me to explain. It would affect all higher living things. As for me, my special godly authority has allowed me to see some things that are normally kept secret...."

Yu Liuchen wiped the blood from his chin and looked at Xu Qing.

Xu Qing's eyes narrowed. Then he waved his right hand, causing a will of canon and statute to spread out. He looked at Yu Liuchen.

"Try again."

Yu Liuchen took a moment to assess the surroundings, then took a deep breath, lowered his voice, and said, "Think hard. Of all the gods you've seen in your life that are above the Altar God level, isn't it true that... none of them had shadows??"

Yu Liuchen's words caused Xu Qing's eyes to glitter.

"Shadows are mediums of the Grue World," Yu Liuchen continued. "At the same time, they are curses to the gods. This knowledge has been tampered with by the higher natural laws, ensuring that no living beings notice the truth."

As Yu Liuchen continued to speak, he trembled and began to sweat profusely.

Xu Qing thought about it, and realized that it was true. None of the gods above the Altar God level that he had ever encountered had shadows. He had just never noticed it before.

"How interesting..." Xu Qing said calmly. "So you came here to explain more about this?"

Yu Liuchen looked at Xu Qing and bowed deeply. "I guessed that you would come to the Heaveneater Region, Immortal Lord. I've been waiting here for decades, during which time I've targeted the area by telling a total of 370,000 stories.

"Without exception, every single one of those stories ended up being switched with the will of a grue. As a result, I was not able to finish any of the stories. I believe it has something to do with the Grue World. Immortal Lord, that brother of yours... I suspect there's something about his identity that isn't so hidden...."

Xu Qing looked at Yu Liuchen and nodded.

Yu Liuchen let loose a sigh. He had come here in order to tell Xu Qing these things. Now, he didn't want to stay any longer. Stepping back, he disappeared into thin air, leaving behind only some encouraging words for Xu Qing. "I truly hope things go smoothly for you, and that you achieve that which you desire."

The wind seemed to blow a bit stronger on the mountaintop.

"Achieve that which I desire..." Xu Qing murmured. A few breaths of time passed, and then he stepped into the black fog of the Heaveneater Region.

Inside the border of the Heaveneater Region was... the Sovereign Kingdom of Violet and Cyan! At that moment, the entire place trembled. The boundless black fog that filled the Heaveneater Region began to churn, and it quickly turned into a raging sea. Within every furious wave on that sea were ear-piercing screaming sounds. The sound was an intense force of expulsion that sought to eject Xu

Qing! Numerous sinister auras swept through the black fog, filled with malice and intense madness as they converged on him.

Face completely expressionless, Xu Qing lifted his right foot and stepped down. A sound like millions upon millions of thunderclaps exploded out. At the same time, a special destiny aura swirled around Xu Qing, turning into an imperial crown that settled onto his head. Intangible pressure radiated out in all directions.

The special destiny aura... had the same origin as the Sovereign Kingdom of Violet and Cyan! Where it passed, the fog was sent spinning off to the side, revealing a desolate and barren world. The countless streams of malicious will that existed in the fog lurched to a halt, then melted. The environment was no longer cold and sinister. What was more, the force of expulsion reversed, and became a joyous, welcoming cheer!

The reason was that half of the special destiny aura that formed the imperial crown was actually the destiny aura of the Sovereign Kingdom of Violet and Cyan!

Years ago, the Crown Prince of Violet and Cyan had carried out a complex scheme that had not fully succeeded, as Master Seventh resurrected Xu Qing, and Xu Qing had taken half of the destiny aura! Now, that missing half had returned. A half-emperor had returned.[3]

The Sovereign Kingdom of Violet and Cyan, which had come back from antiquity to devour the Heaveneater Region, began to tremble. The black fog roiled more violently than it had all those years ago.

As the kingdom shook, Xu Qing took a second step forward. That step spanned a great distance. When he reappeared... he was in the capital city of the Sovereign Kingdom of Violet and Cyan.

He saw the city itself, and all the citizens that the black fog had concealed. The city looked like a series of ink paintings, blurry, yet clearly defined by an ancient style. The citizens... were the same. They looked like they had been painted into the scene. Amidst the numerous buildings were men, women, elderly, and young ones. It didn't matter their status or identity, they all looked the same.

When Xu Qing appeared, it was as if drops of color had spilled onto the painting. The painting instantly became brighter, and at the same time, all the citizens noticed what was happening. Their gazes were full of hatred, madness, and confusion. It seemed like they wanted to pounce on Xu Qing, but he was blessed by the destiny aura of the kingdom. As dead spirits that existed only because of destiny aura, they had no choice but to bow their heads.

Xu Qing saw all of this. Then he focused his attention on the palace. He took a third step. When that step landed, he appeared in the very center of the capital city... at Zi Qing's imperial palace!

He stood in a black square in front of the main hall. Visible in front of him was an enormous, holy statue. It was... the only statue of the broken face of Eminent Desolation! The statue was clearly a lifeless thing. But it emanated an intense pressure that ensured the entire imperial palace was absolutely silent.

Behind the statue was the open door leading into the hall. Inside the hall, a person sat on the Dragon Throne!

He wore an imperial crown, imperial robes, had violet hair, and was extremely attractive, albeit somewhat sinister. He was none other than... Zi Qing, the Crown Prince of Violet and Cyan! His head leaned against one hand as he looked at Xu Qing outside. A warm smile appeared on his charming, nefarious face.

When he spoke, it was in a warm voice that cut through the gruish, stifling atmosphere. “Just what I would expect of my lil’ bro. You’re clearly as clever as when you were young. You didn’t come to face me in your immortal-god fusion state. In fact, you didn’t even bring your god clone into my kingdom. However, that doesn’t matter. What matters, lil’ bro, is that you’re finally here.”

1. Supreme Ancient City is presumably referring to the city that was the setting of the story in [chapter 1](#). The name of that city was never mentioned up until this point. ￼

2. The grue world was previously mentioned in [chapter 1323](#). ￼

3. The arc in which Xu Qing died and also got half the destiny aura began in [chapter 963.1](#) and went on for a few chapters after that.. ￼