

U. Warlord 1411

Chapter 1411: Divine Prison

In the void, each drop of blood corresponded to a single rune. Silver and golden light flared with blinding radiance, like a divine flame roaring to life, surrounding Li Feng and sealing him away.

The blood was transforming into a prison, the likes of which could not be broken.

"This... this looks like an ancient palatial hall!"

The spectators all stumbled back, shocked to no end by the mysterious aura that it gave off. They felt as though their avatars might very well be sucked in if they were too near.

The golden runes interlaced and formed nine seals, each like a golden blade piercing the void and sealing everything within.

The ninth Immortal King made gestures with both hands to control the divine prison, which shone with blazing light.

Some sharp-eyed spectators instantly recognized that the prison seemed to be modeled off the legendary copper Hall of Deities, and had been constructed as a facsimile of it.

"A deific prison... what fearsome strength." Zhang Lie narrowed his eyes. Even he would have to think twice about crossing this man.

The ninth Immortal King and his nine seals wove a web of arcane mystery. It could condense into the form of a copper hall to serve as a prison, ultimately distilling his enemies into essence.

"You were a strong combatant, but alas," the ninth Immortal King remarked. He stood in the void and observed all that stood before him.

His silver blood blazed with energy, trapping Li Feng within the deific prison and starting to subdue him.

The ninth Immortal King continued making complicated gestures with his hands, forming deific flames that burned the interior of the copper hall to a crisp.

Li Feng's sword energy did nothing against the hall; the prison was sturdier than he had expected.

"What? The nine seals of the Immortal King?" Some of the strongest guests were well aware of the strength of these ancient seals.

"The most mysterious and frightening of the powers vested in the Hall of Deities is but these seals. Each Immortal King adds their own seal to the technique, and the nine seals represent the history of the Hall of Deities itself."

Countless geniuses had perished as a result of this technique, which seemed almost impossible to resolve.

At that point, there weren't even nine seals, just one, two, three, four—but even so, no cultivator had been able to break out. Many spectators thought that it would be a miracle if Li Feng were to survive the ordeal at all, let alone overturn the foregone conclusion of victory.

Everyone watched on with bated breath.

The other spectators realized just how strong the ninth Immortal King was. They paid full attention to the fight unfolding before them.

The ninth Immortal King touched the hall with one finger. Divine radiance blared, erupting from the seal like a thousand volcanoes. The sudden resplendence disoriented the spectators as all the Immortal King's divine aura surged toward the hall in the void, suppressing Li Feng.

Simultaneously, his eyes began to glow. The whites of his eyes were like those of any other cultivator, but his pupils mysteriously took the form of shining runes, like a molten sun, like the formation of a supernova, giving off endless, intense light.

Silver light limned with gold shot out from the pupils straight at the hall, burning it whole with deific radiance.

The aura around the ninth Immortal King surged. Many spectators couldn't help but tremble at the force of his might.

"Let's stop the match here. I'll store you within this relic," the ninth Immortal King stated. His eyes glowed with even more resplendent runes, and a miniature copper hall appeared in his hands.

The miniature was palm-sized and bore an ancient, natural appearance. He tossed the relic straight toward Li Feng. It grew larger as it moved, combining into a cohesive whole with the divine light.

As the two techniques merged, a blinding light came from the arena, like divine flame burning.

"This hall..."

The spectators quailed against the might of the copper hall, which seemed as though it could seal away one and all.

Li Feng frowned. As expected, his opponent had used a relic in order to subdue and kill him quickly, hence ending the fight.

"[The Boundless Blade: Godkiller]!"

Silver radiance swept forward in a tide, like a whole herd of holy dragons.

That silver light, imbued with golden threads, formed a mysterious sea, simultaneously real and illusory, which existed in between both realms.

The transient, illusory nature of the light captivated everyone who saw it. The intersection of the real and the illusory—Li Feng's strength combined both domains. Thousands of holy dragons swept across the sky. His strength surpassed time and space, the real and the illusory.

Time became meaningless. The technique affected not just time, but space and even reality itself. In the virtual realm, it seemed to grow even stronger.

"Seal!"

The ninth Immortal King blanched, sensing the threat coming from his attack. He would have to stop Li Feng before he could release this blow.

The ninth Immortal King shouted as he attempted to spur the hall onward with his qi. Then, he swung his halberd straight down toward the front.

Lightning burst forth, filling up the entire arena, so scintillating that the spectators thought that they might go blind.

The might of the lightning was beyond imagination, and it was even accompanied by a special curse.

A silvery-white glow, blinding in its intensity, exploded from Li Feng's body. The shockwaves that emanated from his body were so intense as to distort space. They roared through the air like thundering dragons, turning the sky white.

The lightning dissipated the white glow and killed dragon after dragon before striking Li Feng himself, who was grievously injured. His mental essence seeped out of his wounds.

Li Feng's back was drenched with sweat. Electric currents and crystalline flecks surrounded him, and even his nostrils shone with miniature arcs.

The lightning infused with immortal qi was far too destructive than he could handle. All that power was expended in a single instant. No one would be able to withstand such a blow, not even the attacker himself.

The successor of the Hall of Immortals was likewise struck with the lightning. Its body turned pitch-black and gave off a wisp of smoke. Suddenly, as his body began shining again like armor, in a fan of golden energy.

The lightning struck the Hall of Immortal's armor, captured by its body. Silver feathers revolved around the point of impact, giving off a silver glow.

Chapter 1412: The Nine Seals of the Immortal King

Lightning crackled, and silver feathers flew through the air in a storm. The Immortal King's divine armor grew crystalline.

It was Li Feng's turn to cough up blood. It remained suspended in the air before transforming into grains and dissipating into the environment.

Lightning fell like a waterfall from the void, drenching him whole. The momentum alone was difficult to bear.

As the lightning fell, Li Feng's light-attuned genetic energy dimmed. An arcane energy surrounded him.

"A curse!" a spectator shouted.

The malicious curses imbued within the lightning fell toward Li Feng like a waterfall, causing him to spit out blood as he frowned. He had been struck by a curse.

Divine flames were all around him and cursed lightning above him, attempting to distill him at the same time. Being trapped in this copper hall was a prolonged death sentence.

An ordinary cultivator would already have been killed, but Li Feng and the members of Team Zenith were exceptionally strong hunters that managed to hold on, if only barely.

As Li Feng punched forward, light-attuned genetic energy transformed into a raging flood. Thick, concentrated energy, like roaring dragons and galloping steeds, like sharp blades piercing heaven and earth, fell from the sky.

The entire hall shook. The lightning above him dissipated, and sword energy pierced through the copper hall as it struck.

The spectators gaped.

This unknown combatant had managed to extricate himself from the Immortal King's nine seals at full power! No cultivator across the ages had ever done so. Just who was this combatant?

Sword energy based in reality and in illusion pierced through the copper hall. Li Feng's sword, transformed from a soulshard, was unable to take the strain and shattered.

Even so, before Li Feng could escape from the copper hall, the ninth Immortal King flashed forward, a pair of lightning wings appearing to his back. He sent a flurry of punches toward Li Feng.

In an explosion of blood, the two cultivators sent dozens of punches at each other, both their fists bruised and bleeding.

The melee continued, neither side gaining a decisive advantage. The two cultivators emerged from the copper hall.

Scintillating lightning from both sides exploded in the void, recapitulating an earlier scene of the battle.

Li Feng spat out blood, charred from the lightning strike he had just endured. His body turned an unusual color, marking the activation of the curse.

The ninth Immortal King's armor, Divine Embrace, was able to manipulate lightning. Fighting in the midst of a field of lightning was undoubtedly disadvantageous.

Li Feng was suffering from the corrosion of a curse, while the ninth Immortal King was bolstered by his relics. Even if he suppressed the curse with his own genetic energy, if he couldn't come up with a means of defeating the Immortal King, he would eventually fall.

Despite the particular advantage that light-attuned genetic energy had against curses, maintaining the suppression couldn't be an effective solution.

The ninth Immortal King rushed over once again, forcing Li Feng into a melee. Blood was sent flying into the air as both cultivators' fists landed solidly.

The two cultivators' legs tangled up in a rain of blood.

The ninth Immortal King's eyes were ice cold. He invoked divine radiance as he prepared to use a technique to kill Li Feng.

"[Light's Bulwark: Thousand Dragons Soaring]!"

As Li Feng yelled out, dragons of light materialized and circled his arms. As he punched upward into the sky, all his genetic energy condensed in his fists, launching dozens of dragons into the sky.

The dragons' cries sounded like peals of thunder as they swooped through the air, each dragon so large it could swallow a blazing sun whole.

Thousands of arclight dragons criss-crossed in mid-air before swooping down like meteors.

The arclight dragons exploded in the air in a burst of lightning. Despite the strong protections of the Divine Embrace, it began to crack as a result of the explosions.

The ninth Immortal King frowned. Lightning and curse energy seeped out from the crack in the armor, affecting even himself.

The ninth Immortal King didn't dare use lightning as frivolously as before.

Li Feng took the initiative, charging forward in a bolt of white light. An arclight dragon appeared above his fist, shining with radiance that eclipsed that of the lightning overhead.

The ninth Immortal King met him fist for fist as they struck each other dozens of times over.

The clash resulted in a tremendous explosion of white light and blood in the air. Both combatants were sent flying. They stared at each other from opposite ends of the arena silently.

Li Feng activated a soulshard, manifesting a holy white-gold sword.

Silver scales filled the sword, and its hilt was carved with a golden dragon swiping its claws, shining with holy aura. The holy light dispelled the curse. When Xiao Nanfeng gripped it firmly, his wounds began to heal at an accelerated rate, and his ruined hands slowly returned to pristine condition.

A disaster-grade holy dragon sword! This was the reward that Li Feng had requested after passing the first three trials of the trial-taker's chamber.

Li Feng hadn't expected that he would have had to use the weapon in the qualifiers alone, but he had come across the ninth Immortal King in his last qualifier match. This was one of the top geniuses of the qualifiers, and his peak-grade sword had shattered from forces that far exceeded its tolerance.

The disaster-grade holy dragon sword boasted a strong regenerative ability, and it could remediate both Li Feng's wounds and curse status.

The ninth Immortal King had never considered the prospect of facing as frightening an opponent as Li Feng in the qualifiers alone. Even the Immortal King's nine seals, which no one to date had ever broken, hadn't been enough to trap Li Feng.

Most importantly, he had never heard of Li Feng's name.

The ninth Immortal King was certain that no one else, perhaps not even the invincible Resplendent Sun of the Solarvine race himself, would be able to break out of the nine seals.

The nine seals represented the peak of the Hall of Deities—but Li Feng had managed to bypass the technique.

Although he hadn't yet mastered the technique, it was true that it had failed to work, and that failure had been clearly shown in the public eye. To preserve the reputation of the Hall of Deities, he had to win this match at any cost.

The two cultivators stared at each other in silence, not saying a word. Their gazes were expressive enough to make up for it. Both of them could see their fighting intent and desire for victory mirrored in the other's eyes.

A bolt of lightning streaked across the sky, which both sides took as a signal to resume fighting.

The ninth Immortal King clashed once more against Li Feng, who had grown much faster after his holy dragon transformation. The ninth Immortal King moved like lightning itself, and his Divine Embrace conferred to him a level of speed no less overwhelming than Li Feng's own. The two cultivators moved so quickly that the spectators were largely unable to keep up.

Chapter 1413: The World Lost Color

The clash between the two combatants took place on the eastern half of the arena, then the western half, then back and forth. They moved so rapidly that it looked as though they were blinking from place to place. Sword energy shook the heavens. A dragon howled; a phoenix shrieked. Holy dragons flew through the air, and heavenly fire exploded. The spectators watched the fight unfold with shock and awe.

The ninth Immortal King's body lit up with heavenly fire, silver-white over a blood-red core. Thunder rumbled through the air as the outline of a phoenix manifested behind him. He penetrated space as he charged forward.

"[Holy Dragon Sword: Bleaching the World]!"

Li Feng raised his sword high overhead, glinting brightly.

Heaven and earth suddenly lost color as the surroundings turned dim and dark, as though all that light had been snatched away. Li Feng and the area around him began to glow more brightly than the sun. The light grew more intense as the aura of the technique increased in strength.

He struck, and the world lost color. White light saturated the world; everything was dyed white. The spectators' sight turned solid white.

The ninth Immortal King was forced back in a spray of silver feathers. His Divine Embrace broke, and silver shards filled the air. He coughed out blood and stumbled away.

"[Dream of Light and Shadow]!"

As Li Feng struck, a rainbow arc accompanied his slash, as though an aurora were visible in the sky. It shone in all the colors of the rainbow, momentarily hypnotizing anyone who looked at it.

The spectators found themselves dazed in the aftermath of the attack, while the ninth Immortal King was stunned for long moments, lost in the dazzling gleam of the sword technique.

Li Feng's body suddenly split into tens of thousands of copies, each with a dazzling gaze of rainbow light. The rosy-hued light was captivating and transported those who saw it into a realm of illusion, making it impossible to distinguish which of the copies were real and which were fake.

Pearls of silver blood splashed onto the ground. The ninth Immortal King, his body scarred and wounded, regained consciousness at the last moment and attempted to block with his halberd. However, Li Feng moved too quickly. Under his holy dragon transformation, his speed was nearing

even the speed of light. Manifold illusions arrayed themselves around him, as though they were in a dream.

The sword slash cut through the Immortal King's internal organs and bones. Any other cultivator would have perished, but the ninth Immortal King's constitution was incredible.

The ninth Immortal King transformed into a phoenix, one burning with three colors of flame: blood-red, gold, and silver. Fire blazed through the air as the phoenix's wings unfurled in an explosion of color. This was the true form of the ninth Immortal King.

Zhang Lie frowned. "He was a phoenix all along?"

A nearby spectator replied, "A phoenix bearing three heavenly flames, at that."

The ninth Immortal King bore a phoenix's bloodline, allowing him to rise from the ashes even after a devastating blow. The damage he had incurred had vanished. Flames in red, gold, and silver swept through the arena.

"[Holy Dragon Sword: Light and Darkness]!"

Circles of light revolved around Li Feng in a feat of manipulation, condensing light to such an extent that it took on near-physical form.

As though he had broken through some sort of limit, a transformation occurred.

This technique was born of inspiration from the genetic transmutation that Zhang Lie had once displayed. Genetic energy was a form of energy that was attuned to the elements by one's life and soul itself. No hunter could change their elemental attunement, but the properties of their genetic energy was malleable. Water-attuned genetic energy could take on the ductile properties of gold and the solidity and order of crystal, the density of mud, or even the high temperature of steam.

Water was a malleable element that could take on the properties of its associated counterparts, not as an intrinsic property, but as a skill that Zhang Lie had developed and utilized.

Light-attuned genetic energy couldn't transform into gold or crystal, or even mud or steam, but it was likewise able to accomplish transformations that water-attuned genetic energy couldn't.

The opposite of light was darkness; where light exists, so too must shadow. Darkness was the closest element to light.

Li Feng flared brightly, transforming into a radiant sun. The light began to revolve and strobe, forming a circle of light. Individual photons were accelerated and sent crashing into one another.

This sort of high-energy radiation could easily destroy a star. The pulse of light was supercharged beyond its limits.

A black core appeared where the light bombarded itself, spreading rapidly and transforming into a black hole. A tremendous suction formed around Li Feng's hands.

The birth of a black hole inverted the flow of light-attuned genetic energy. As Li Feng manipulated it, it suddenly grew wider and began giving off dark matter.

Even Zhang Lie and the others were stunned by Li Feng's new technique, which revealed a type of energy visceral and physical in origin, far more so than the far-flung notions of karma and fate.

It had been calculated that, of all the energy that existed in the universe, 26.8% was in the form of dark matter, 4.9% in the form of ordinary matter, and the other 68.3% expended in the expansion of the universe. It could well be said that the universe was formed of dark matter, and it was much like the water and mud of Earth.

This sort of energy was invisible and colorless, unreactive to light and electromagnetic radiation. It was neither black nor white, and was simultaneously transparent and not.

In the past, humanity had only managed to observe such energy indirectly via studying the motion of celestial bodies.

Celestial bodies closer to the center of a galaxy revolved faster, forming the quintessential spiral patterns of nebulae. However, measurements conducted on the arcs traced out by celestial bodies far from the center of nebulae showed that they were moving at almost the same speed as celestial bodies close to the center, a much higher speed than anticipated.

This observation implied that there exists large quantities of invisible matter in the universe.

The distribution of matter in a galaxy can be computed from the diffuse velocity distributions of celestial bodies that comprise it.

Among these, dark matter could be divided into hot matter and cold matter.

Hot matter was present in residual quantities in the form of stable massive particles that interacted on the electroweak scale, with known residual abundance based on thermal decoupling. Neutral in terms of charge and color, it is unaffected by electromagnetism and the strong force.

One example of cold matter was a type of light neutral particle associated with the charge conjugation and parity breaking in the strong interaction. [1]

Chapter 1414: Unethical

The dark matter didn't combine destructively with the light-attuned genetic energy like water and fire, which were mutually incompatible, or constructively, like water and earth. Rather, the dark matter was inert to light; both types of energy remained distinct and non-interacting.

Li Feng slashed forward with his sword, twining light-attuned genetic energy and dark matter together in a technique of shocking strength.

The sea of red, gold, and silver flames was split in two. As the sword flashed with resplendent light, the phoenix's feathers drifted down to the ground.

The ninth Immortal King couldn't have imagined that Li Feng would be this strong. Despite revealing his true form, he was still struck down with just a single blow.

The dark matter exploded, devouring the heavenly flame. The ninth Immortal King barely escaped from the explosion of the mysterious substance.

The red, gold, and silver flames mixed together as the ninth Immortal King transformed back into human form.

The combination of dark matter and light-attuned genetic energy was even more frightening than expected. Despite his phoenix bloodline, it was difficult for him to recover from the assault. His essence scattered like sand into the void. The ninth Immortal King knew that he would have to win now or not at all.

"I didn't want to use this technique, not having mastered it fully—but I want to lose even less."

The ninth Immortal King was shocked that the qualifiers alone could push him to such an extent.

The tri-colored flames transformed into a halberd. Behind the ninth Immortal King appeared an outline of the Hall of Immortals. An ancient aura saturated the arena. The doors to the hall were thrown open as eight indistinct figures emerged.

A few spectators recognized the figures.

"That's the second Immortal King!"

"And the third!"

"And that's surely the fourth."

"These are all the former Immortal Kings!"

The indistinct figures were quickly recognized by the spectators.

"Have they all come back to life?"

As the ninth Immortal King struck, the eight indistinct figures launched their attacks simultaneously. Some used swords, other sabers, yet other spears. The eight former Immortal Kings, who had all made names for themselves in the annals of history, had reached the pinnacle of mastery in eight different weapons. Their indistinct images resolved more and more clearly.

Each Immortal King used an ultimate technique. The skies were resplendent with light and energy, shattering as a raging sea emerged. Wind howled, and mist filled the arena. The other eight kings were barely weaker than the ninth, and each had dominated their generation of cultivators. None among them were weak.

"[Descent of the Immortal Kings]!"

The form of the ninth Immortal King overlapped with those of the previous eight as all the energy combined into one cohesive whole.

Time and space distorted. Nine different techniques in nine different styles were unleashed in an instant of resplendent light.

In the audience stands, a spectator cried out, "The ultimate technique of the Hall of Immortals—and the ninth Immortal King can use it without even having passed the final trial yet?!"

"As expected of the king of prophecy. He's ridiculous—this feat alone makes him surpass all the other Immortal Kings of the past! He truly is the strongest Immortal King."

"The other Immortal Kings were all outstanding figures in their own right, but they pale in comparison to the ninth Immortal King."

Yang Ze asked, "What's the ultimate technique of the Hall of Immortals?"

"The Hall of Immortals is a mysterious existence rumored to possess the ultimate technique of being able to channel the strength of past successors. Allegedly, this technique is intimately connected with the final trial of the Hall of Immortals."

Sun Mengmeng cried out, "In that case, Li Feng's opponent isn't just a single Immortal King, but nine of them combined!"

Yang Ze thundered in outrage, "That's ridiculous! Isn't this supposed to be a one-on-one competition?"

Fang Yi cried out, "Nine against one? This isn't ethical!"

Yang Ze nodded fervently. "The successor of the Hall of Immortals is unethical and unjust! He's a cheater, a rule-breaker!"

Another spectator frowned. "This is only a crude imitation of that technique."

Another gaped. "More impressive than this?"

Yang Ze cried out, "What? The Hall of Immortals has an even more despicable technique?"

Fang Yi asked, "Is the Hall of Immortals even more immoral, then?"

The spectator seemed to have some insider information. "Allegedly, the Hall of Immortals' final trial is to channel the strength and insight of all historical figures of the past. Any who successfully pass this trial will immediately ascend to the peak of the galaxy.

Everyone sucked in a breath.

The spectator who had spoken was no ordinary cultivator. Everyone else took the form of indistinguishable humanoid bodies of light. Only he had runes surrounding his body, a sure sign that he had advanced to greater heights.

"The true [Descent of the Immortal Kings] would have far more than nine kings—all the strongest cultivators of the Hall of Immortals would be summoned."

Yang Ze gasped. "Nine against one is bad enough, but a whole horde of such cultivators?"

Fang Yi shook his head. "This isn't just immoral—it's flagrant disregard for even the most basic of morals!"

A spectator wondered, "If this imitation alone is already so shocking, just how strong must the true Descent of the Immortal Kings be?"

The original speaker shook his head. "All who have seen it have perished."

Either they died to the Descent, or they had vanished within the annals of history.

"I can't imagine just how strong the completed technique must be..."

"Unfortunately, none of the successors of the Hall of Immortals have ever succeeded in this trial, despite how individually skilled each one is. It's clear just how difficult this trial must be."

The speaker inclined his head. "It's been far too long since the last Immortal King who could execute the Descent, so long that all have forgotten the technique..."

The combined strength of the nine Immortal Kings caused the ninth Immortal King's spiritual avatar to decay at an even more rapid clip.

The nine techniques overlapped in a shocking attack that disrupted space and time. Light and darkness inverted, and the virtual realm began to crack. The simultaneous launch of the ultimate techniques of the nine Immortal Kings was beyond the limit of what the realm could handle.

If not for what had occurred with Zhang Lie beforehand, the virtual realm would already have collapsed.

The sagely spectator murmured, "Perhaps we'll see a true Immortal King soon."

The nine-layered technique shot toward Li Feng in an overwhelming blow.

"[Holy Dragon Sword: Extinguishing Heaven's Light]!"

Light-attuned genetic energy rose into the air as a holy dragon soared toward the heavens. Ripples of genetic energy emanated from the point of impact. Even before the blow landed, the sky began to crack. The holy dragon roared as stars fell from the sky. All light gathered around Li Feng's blade.

The light was so intense that no one could look at it without damaging their eyes. As Li Feng's blade shot out, the outlines of the nine Immortal Kings were shattered one by one. The ninth Immortal King charged forth with his halberd, piercing through the flood of light. Where the two techniques met, the virtual realm cracked and broke down.

Chapter 1415: Dark All Over

The two combatants' intense fight had sucked away all the light in the virtual realm, which turned pitch-black as a result. Weak lighting was present only around the two combatants. Both had used all their techniques; they were exhausted and completely drained.

"[Holy Dragon Sword: Extinguishing Heaven's Light]!"

As they clashed, Li Feng mustered up the last of his energy and launched a final technique. Blinding light illuminated the virtual realm once more. He had infused all his remaining genetic energy into the technique and supercharged it. The resulting explosion shocked all the spectators.

The ninth Immortal King's figure was obliterated. Li Feng stood firmly in the air, the arena having shattered long ago, the final victor of this match.

He had won this match by drawing it out.

After both combatants reached their limit, it was a matter of endurance. The ninth Immortal King, channeling a powerful technique like the Descent, had to bear with tremendous stress every moment he kept it up. It was little surprise that his endurance would give out first.

Regardless, Li Feng had won.

Without the earlier clash, the Immortal King wouldn't have been forced to use the Descent; if Li Feng had been too weak, he would have been wiped out by the Descent itself. He was undeniably stronger than the ninth Immortal King.

The spectators, understanding this point, were even more shocked.

"Just who is this? How could he have defeated the successor of the Hall of Immortals?"

"The whole galaxy's going to be in an uproar tomorrow."

"I've never seen this race before. Who's backing this challenger?"

"If he were a successor of one of the strongest forces in the galaxy, he shouldn't have needed to participate in the qualifiers..."

"That race... could it be the famed dark horses?"

"What dark horses?"

"Don't you know? Three members of an otherwise unknown race appeared in this iteration of the Cup, and their successes have made this iteration a huge upset. The invincible Solarvine, the child of Divinity Qinglian, and the successor of Heaven—they've all fallen to members of this race. Can you believe it?"

"What? I heard about the invincible Solarvine's battle! Apparently, that was why we were all kicked out of this virtual realm. But what's this about Divinity Qinglian and the successor of Heaven?"

"Some unknown successor of Heaven—well, even discounting that, the child of Divinity Qinglian was defeated?"

"They all lost to this race of dark horses, these stellar hunters!"

"The reason they're called stellar hunters is because they seem to always be placed against the strongest challengers—and they keep coming out victorious, too! It's almost as though they're participating in the qualifiers precisely to get rid of them."

"According to the investigation of the supreme forces of the galaxy, they seem to be related to a race that last made an appearance centuries, maybe even millennia, ago."

Zhang Lie and the others were unaware of their mythos. They had already moved on to Zhou Ying's match.

Zhou Ying's opponent was a birdman who was uniformly gold. Yang Ze asked, "Who's Zhou Ying's opponent?"

"I'll ask the person next to me," Fang Yi replied.

The spectator to the right of Fang Yi said, "Don't you know? They're one of the smaller races by the edge of the galaxy, the Holywing! Despite their size, they're rather famous, and this particular Holywing is among the best of the younger generation."

"Is that it?" Yang Ze asked. "How does he compare to the invincible Solarvine, the child of Divinity Qinglian, the Hall of Immortals, and all that?"

The spectator was flabbergasted. "Did you just finish watching that other match?"

"Of course."

"Well, to put it simply, a hundred Holywings wouldn't be able to beat a Solarvine, ten wouldn't be able to beat Divinity Qinglian, and a hundred wouldn't be able to beat the Hall of Immortals."

Another spectator beside them laughed. "It's incomparable, after all. The Solarvines lead the Redgold race, which used to be one of the supreme races of the galaxy. What's more, an incredibly strong Solarvine has appeared in the younger generation, the so-called invincible one. Divinity Qinglian is also a famed cultivator within the galaxy."

"And surely nothing needs to be said for the Hall of Immortals. Though they've isolated themselves at the moment and few remember their name, every Immortal King has dominated other cultivators of their generation, and the entire galaxy once knew their name. The Holywings are moderately famous, but that's all."

Yang Ze smiled. "Then we can relax."

"Relax? What for?"

"Zhou Ying should be able to win handily," Yang Ze replied.

"Are you the other challenger's companions, then?"

one spectator asked, his tone mocking. "The Holywings might only be 'famous', but the competitors they field aren't ones that an ordinary cultivator would be able to defeat. Winning against a challenger from a nameless race would be a piece of cake."

Yet another spectator was inspecting Zhou Ying carefully.

"Doesn't she seem familiar to you? It's almost as though she's from that race of dark horses, of stellar hunters!"

The first speaker scoffed. "How could there be that many dark horses? The fact that even the successor of the Hall of Immortals was defeated is shocking enough. Do you think there'd be another one right here?"

The Holywing Yi Shenghan made its move. A golden spear appeared in his hand, surrounded by arcing bolts of lightning. This was an attack that combined the elemental forces of gold and lightning that he was planning on revealing during the Cup.

"That's it for you, then!"

Yi Shenghan cried out. The golden lightning transformed into a pair of wings. He zipped over to Zhou Ying in the blink of an eye.

Every member of the Holywing race was equipped with their namesake holy wings, allowing them to move at a rapid clip. The bolt of humanoid lightning shot straight at Zhou Ying.

Zhou Ying's long hair fluttered in the wind, the color of crystalline jade. It gave off motes of vitality. She was so beautiful no one could take their eyes away, and golden leaves whirled around her. The tips of her hair produced gray fog.

The gray power gathered around Zhou Ying's forehead, which cracked apart. A gray eye budded from her flesh. It opened up to reveal a chaotic opal iris, which seemed to be able to penetrate flesh, soul, and space.

Each leaf was like a miniature sun, orbiting around the woman's body. To her back was a pair of golden wings. Above those wings was a glowing sun, giving off a radiant, holy light.

Her jade-green eyes were flecked with gold, and she seemed to have become one with the land. The vitality radiating from her was visible to the naked eye. Stellar light surrounded her as though she were a goddess given form.

Black energy formed a gauzy dress around her, sticking closely to her limbs and revealing her curvaceous features—no, making them even more curvaceous than they originally were.

Two root-like tendrils writhed under her dress; her body radiated a seductive charm. Zhou Ying seemed to simultaneously exhibit the charm of a holy priestess and a charming succubus...

Chapter 1416: A Lethal Blow

After the ninth Immortal King was sent out of the virtual realm, he was immediately sent deep within the Hall of Immortals for emergency treatment.

An ancient chime rang out as the ninth Immortal King floated in the air, floating wrapped up within a cloud of rainbow light.

A weathered voice came from deep within the hall, low yet penetrating, ancient and mysterious.

"You were far too rash. Even if you were in a virtual realm, to use the Descent without passing the final trial... If not for the fact that I reconstituted your soul with the vast reserves that the Hall of Immortals possesses, you would be lost to the void."

The ninth Immortal King widened his eyes and laughed at the ceiling. "Haha, he was impressive, truly impressive! To think that there were still such strong cultivators from my generation in the universe. It looks as though I'm far too weak to dominate my generation of the universe as yet."

"You're laughing after all this?"

The ninth Immortal King's smile only widened. "Of course. If my opponents were too weak, it wouldn't be interesting."

"As long as your resolve hasn't been shaken."

"I want to take on the final trial of the Hall of Immortals."

The ninth Immortal King's eyes shone like a blazing sun.

Upon seeing Zhou Ying's battle-ready stance, many of the spectators became her fan.

"She's so beautiful! Just what race is she?"

"I thought she was a stellar hunter, but it looks like that was only a disguise."

Zhou Ying wasn't weak in a melee. With a dagger in hand, she exchanged blows with the Holywing combatant. Golden lightning flashed; a storm of golden leaves appeared around Zhou Ying.

"[Avatar of the Fae: Earthbound Prison]!"

She released all her stored vitality at once, causing the ground to quake as thousands of jade-green wood dragons rushed out of the earth. Each dragon was about six hundred meters wide, with skin flecked with golden radiance.

"Reverberate!"

The Holywing clan had made their eponymous wings the core of their fighting style. The golden wings vanished, two divine blades appearing in their stead. The honed blades could cut apart just about anything, including the thousands of wood dragons that Zhou Ying had summoned.

"[Storm of Leaves: Void Cut]!"

Zhou Ying's void daggers cut at the void, sending the two blades flying.

Golden leaves formed a howling storm around her as Yi Shenghan recalled the blades and turned them into wings again. He flapped his wings, sending golden feathers flying through the arena and clashing with the golden leaves.

The sound of metal striking against metal echoed through the air. Feathers and leaves criss-crossed once and again. The golden feathers boasted more penetrating power, but there were much more leaves.

The wings transformed into a set of paired blades, sending crescent arcs of light straight at Zhou Ying. The ease with which the Holywing combatant could switch his blades into wings and back again was stunning.

"[Avatar of the Fae: Worldbound Enclosure]!"

Zhou Ying summoned tens of thousands of wood dragons from the ground, enough to fill up the entire arena. They were thrice as thick as before, and their barkskin shone with metallic luster.

A large number of wood dragons gathered around Zhou Ying and blocked the sword slashes.

Yi Shenghan exploded with strength. Blood dripped down from a single horn that protruded out of his forehead and landed on his blades, imbuing them with potent energy. The wood dragons were swept away.

"Hm?" Zhou Ying felt a breeze by her face. A lock of jade-green hair had been sliced away from her head, and her temples had barely avoided a critical injury. Drops of blood dripped down her face, but her tremendous vitality healed the wound in no time.

"This is the end for you!" Yi Shenghan's eyes flashed with frost. Lightning crackled around him, then exploded forth.

A tremendous flood of energy transformed into a lake of lightning, filling the sky above the arena. Zhou Ying was shocked.

"[Storm of Leaves: Fourfold Void Cut]!"

Zhou Ying gripped a dagger with each hand, and the tendrils growing out of her lower body wrapped around two more. The daggers slashed through the void, and all four converged on the same spot. Like a whirling dervish, she cut through the lake in a tight corkscrew.

Meanwhile, Yi Shenghan's hands began to glow with light. His golden lance surged with killing intent. His hair floated in the air, charged with static, as he flew toward her with a shield of lightning around him.

The two combatants struck each other in a clash of metal.

The fourfold void cut slashed toward Yi Shenghan, who defended with his golden lance. Lightning crackled brightly; golden leaves danced. The leaves and lightning clashed again and again. The fight was a resplendent, gorgeous display of light and energy.

As light exploded around the two combatants, Yi Shenghan's spear gleamed and thrust toward Zhou Ying's forehead.

"You're too slow." Yi Shenghan revealed a burst of hidden strength and speed, seizing victory. His golden lance transformed back into a bolt of lightning and exploded.

Zhou Ying's body cracked into pieces, charred black.

A spectator in the stands sighed. "I do pity that gorgeous beauty."

"It is a pity, isn't it? It's rare to see such a potent combination of vitality and natural energy."

"The Holywings are a strong race, after all. She's already very impressive to be able to fight against Yi Shenghan to this extent.

The spear strike had pierced her forehead in a clean kill; victory had been decided.

"Very impressive for a nameless combatant."

Just as the spectators sighed to see Zhou Ying's defeat, the pieces of her body burst into golden leaves that filled the air.

The spectators were all shocked. Beneath the arena, a horde of wood dragons began to grow once more. They rose aboveground at an incredible rate.

Yi Shenghan waved his divine swords, slashing apart the wood dragons once again.

Amidst the storm of leaves, Zhou Ying's figure manifested once again. Two more tendrils appeared behind her back.

"[Storm of Leaves: Sixfold Void Cut]!"

Each tendril held a void dagger. The six daggers struck as one, forming a sixfold cut in the air.

The spectators gaped. Zhou Ying had revived via the storm of golden leaves!

Yi Shenghan attempted to defend, but Zhou Ying's appearance had been too sudden. He was relaxed in imminent victory, not having predicted her reappearance.

Zhou Ying had hidden part of her strength, only to reveal it at the most opportune moment. Her sixfold void cut was a match for Yi Shenghan's maximum strength and speed, but her opponent was wholly unprepared for it.

Only now did he understand that she too had been hiding her strength and biding her time, preparing for a single deadly blow with which to win the match.

The void daggers slashed at his body, disintegrating it in a shower of blood. His face was filled with disbelief. Within his clan, there was no opponent who could stand against him, and his elder had even imparted a forbidden technique to him in advance of the Cup.

As far as he was aware, only the invincible Solarvine could be a match for him—but he had now been defeated by a nameless challenger!

Rage and anger consumed him.

Chapter 1417: Made Up My Mind

"[Heaven's Blaze]!" Yi Shenghan howled.

He was far too upset by the sudden defeat, and he wanted to at least take his opponent down with him. Blue lightning burst forth.

His clan's forbidden technique burned his mental energy and vitality, paying a hefty price in exchange for a sea of lightning of immense strength and depth beyond his current cultivation. It would have taken Yi Shenghan another decade of cultivation, at least, to produce such an attack normally.

His clan's forbidden technique would allow him to do so now at the cost of mental energy, vitality, and future potential.

Despite the heavy price, despite the lost potential that might never return, Yi Shenghan didn't care. How could he have been defeated by a nameless challenger?

Strong though he might be, Yi Shenghan was nothing more than a pampered brat from a Holywing clan.

The sea of lightning that suddenly manifested dyed the sky blue.

Zhou Ying erupted in a burst of vitality and natural energy, turning into what seemed like a green crystal. Golden radiance shone where her head would be, and gray fog surrounded her.

"[Avatar of the Fae: Galaxybound Enclosure]!"

A titanic burst of vitality and natural energy erupted from her, turning Zhou Ying into a facsimile of a goddess of nature, the princess of the forests. Huge wood dragons emerged from underground, each the size of a skyscraper. A golden tide of dragons appeared, swallowing up the lightning. Zhou Ying retreated into the midst of the wood dragons, which soared through the air and the sea of lightning, surrounding it and encapsulating it with their bodies.

The blue lightning, however, refused to be corralled. It whizzed back and forth. Snakes of blue lightning wriggled out from the cracks in the wood dragons' defenses and through the clouds.

The lightning charred the wood dragons black, but Zhou Ying continuously infused her vitality and natural energy into them. The wood dragons quickly shed off their charred bark as they came back to life.

The sea of wood dragons crashed into the sea of lightning. The skies were dyed blue; the ground, golden. The two types of energy sizzled as they came into contact with each other.

In the end, the lightning lost steam first. Yi Shenghan had sacrificed far more than Zhou Ying did to create his attack, and the resulting strain could not be tolerated for long periods. The golden wood dragons tore apart the sea of lightning, and Yi Shenghan vanished amidst the wood dragons. It was obvious who the true victor was.

The spectators were in an uproar.

"So is she really part of the stellar hunters, then?!"

"Didn't we see her true form just now?"

"Who are these stellar hunters, anyway?"

"Apparently, they're part of a race that participated in the Cup centuries, or possibly millennia, in the past. They weren't weak then, either."

The Hall of Immortals' vast reserves of treasures meant that the ninth Immortal King was able to recover from the mental trauma resulting from his defeat readily. To the universe at large, this was incredible.

It was well known that dying in the virtual realm would deal severe damage to your mind, one which you wouldn't be able to recover from without years of recuperation at least.

Furthermore, the ninth Immortal King had used a technique beyond his capabilities. It wouldn't be unusual if he had to recuperate for a few decades; the fact that he was even up and standing was a miracle.

The Hall of Immortals boasted the strength needed to accomplish such a feat.

It boasted millennia of resources, and each generation was stronger than the last. Every Immortal King that stepped out of the Hall of Immortals was at the top of their generation. Even the supreme forces of the galaxy could not countermand the Hall of Immortals, and no one knew the depths of its strength.

Only if mental restoratives were as plentiful as cabbages to the Hall of Immortals could the ninth Immortal King have restored his mental faculties within such a short period of time.

The ninth Immortal King walked into the depths of the hall.

The depths of the hall were open only to members of the Hall of Immortals, and no foreigner had ever stepped within.

An altar lay in the deepest recesses of the hall, or perhaps a divine tower. Its interior was cylindrical, and floating seats hung on the walls.

Behind each seat was a copper tablet engraved with arcane and abstruse information. At the very bottom seat was an ancient elder; at the next level up, a corpse; even higher up, corpses encased in copper. The higher one went, the more copper there was. The highest seats were covered in a cloudy mist, and it was difficult to see what lay within.

There were an incredible number of seats, so many it was impossible to count them all. These were the strongest members of the Hall of Immortals, who had accomplished great deeds in life, but who were now corpses perched all up along the walls of this divine tower. The difference was that some had barely decayed, while others had been skeletal corpses for millennia.

No one was certain whether they were truly dead, or if they had found another means to live on beyond their physical body.

The ninth Immortal King raised his head and shouted, "I want to challenge the Immortal King's final trial!"

His voice echoed in the divine tower, which began to shake and reverberate. The corpses all began to tremble, either of their own volition or because of the ninth Immortal King's voice.

"You possess the qualifications to do so," a voice replied, from an unknown source.

"But are you aware of what this trial represents?" This time, multiple voices spoke in unison, echoing throughout the tower.

"Of course," the ninth Immortal King replied.

"You're still too young. Your eight seniors have all failed this trial. Although you might be the prophesied ninth Immortal King, this trial is far crueler than you might imagine."

"You should recuperate after just having received a traumatic mental blow. It'll help increase the chance of your success."

The ninth Immortal King replied, "I cannot wait any longer, Elders. If I want to beat that man in the future, I will have to challenge this trial and become a true Immortal King."

The first voice sounded from an unknown source, "I had intended for you to obtain a genetic expansion from the Galactic Rising Stars Cup before you took part in the trial, but it seems that things are not to be."

The ninth Immortal King pleaded, "Elder, I beseech you to grant my request. If my opponent places in the top ten, he'll have a chance at genetic expansion, and will surely grow more powerful as a result. The Immortal King's trial is my only avenue to defeat him."

"If your mind is set, then we won't stop you. Let the trial of the Immortal King begin!"

A set of copper doors opened up within the tower, and ghostly cries and moans could be heard within. Who knew what horrors lay within? The ninth Immortal King glanced into the unknown darkness, swallowed a gulp of saliva, solidified his resolve, and stepped within.

The copper doors slammed shut with a bang.

Chapter 1418: Not Too Large, Not Too Small

As they returned to the hall from which they had come, the members of Team Zenith assembled once more. Zhang Lie praised them all. "You've done very well."

The members of Team Zenith couldn't help but smile. Sun Xiaowu turned to Yang Ze. "What are you smiling about, Yang Ze? You haven't even fought yet!"

Yang Ze scowled. "What, can't I even laugh? It's all but guaranteed that we'll all make it. Do you think I'll fail at the last stage as the last member? That can't be!"

Sun Xiaowu smirked. "You should watch out to ensure that that doesn't happen."

Yang Ze retorted, "You're the one who should watch out! I heard that that black bone lance once destroyed this so-called Heaven. You'd better not be affected by it!"

Sun Xiaowu was unfazed.

"It's just a projection, nothing more."

Yang Ze jeered, "Just a projection? So you won't suffer mental damage just because you're hurt in that virtual space?"

Bu Wentian suggested, "Shall we perform an inspection?"

"Please, Elder!" Sun Mengmeng immediately said.

"Sis, you're far too worried about nothing. Aren't I doing fine?"

"It's better to have an inspection, just in case."

Bu Wentian added, "That bone lance does seem to be a rather cursed artifact. After the fight, the figurine seemed to have gone crazy."

"The competitor I faced?" Sun Xiaowu asked.

Bu Wentian nodded. "It's likely that their mental state was corroded by the bone lance over the course of the match. After leaving the virtual realm, it tried to slaughter everything around it indiscriminately, claiming that it was to feed his lance. In the end, it was killed by a group of cultivators working together, but the bone lance went missing. As a safety precaution, I think it's best if I examine you."

Sun Mengmeng nodded. "Did you hear that? You were in close contact with the bone lance, after all. What if it infected you?"

Sun Xiaowu's lips twitched. "You make it sound like a virus, Sis!"

Zhang Lie nodded. "It's best to get an examination. After all, that black bone lance is a very cursed object. We saw that with our own eyes. The black aura it gave off was sufficient to affect the spectators in the stands."

Sun Mengmeng and Zhang Lie's advice finally caused Sun Xiaowu to give in.

There were a few pieces of special equipment that Bu Wentian had stored in the training rooms, which he quickly pulled out as he began examining Sun Xiaowu. The results came out quickly. "As expected, there's a problem."

Sun Mengmeng cried out, "What problem? Is it serious?"

Bu Wentian looked at the data from the medical devices. "A big problem indeed. It's going to be a headache to deal with... Prepare for the worst."

"What? What's the problem, Elder?!" Sun Mengmeng asked.

"Can he be saved, Doctor?" Yang Ze asked.

"How long does he have to live?!" Li Feng cried out.

"Right, how long will he remain with us?" Fang Yi added.

"We're mentally prepared now, Doc—Elder. Tell us everything."

Sun Xiaowu thundered, "Are you all hoping that I'll die?!"

Zhou Ying implored, "Elder, no matter what, please save Xiaowu! He's still so young and has just recently ascended to the fourth realm. There's so much potential in him. He'll surely become a talented cultivator, and we can't give up on him just like this!"

Yang Ze began to sob, burying his face in his hands. "The Sun family only has a single male heir, and he doesn't yet have a wife! He's vital to the Suns!"

Fang Yi begged, "Please, Elder, save him! We'll be willing to pay any price."

Sun Xiaowu gaped at everyone's antics. "Scram! My family's right here in front of me. Don't steal my sister's lines!"

Yang Ze patted Sun Xiaowu on the shoulder.

"Although we haven't known each other for long, I'll remember you."

Sun Xiaowu scowled. "What do you mean, not for long? We've known each other for years!"

Li Feng clutched his face. "To think you'd perish at such a young age, Xiaowu..."

"Don't just kill me off like that!"

Fang Yi's eyes were lined with sorrow. "We promised to go to the beach together, but to think... It's all happening too quickly..."

"I never made such a promise with you!"

Zhang Lie took his hand. "Xiaowu, be at ease. I will take care of your sister and your family."

Sun Xiaowu sighed. "You too, Captain?"

Sun Mengmeng gave her brother a thumbs up. "Xiaowu, it looks like you can really die with no regrets, after all."

Sun Xiaowu cried out, "Sis, I think I can still be saved!"

Zhou Ying pretended to be a thug. "Xiaowu still owes me ten thousand dollars. Don't think you can avoid paying me off just because you're about to die."

Sun Xiaowu folded his arms. "I've never borrowed money from you! On the other hand, you still owe me \$36.50 from when we went out to eat back on Earth!"

Zhou Ying scoffed. "Details, details!"

The members of Team Zenith joked with each other, lightening the mood and the remnant tension from the qualifiers they had just passed through.

Bu Wentian sighed. "All of you really are optimistic, aren't you?"

Zhang LLie turned to him and frowned. "Elder, is the situation serious?"

Bu Wentian replied, "It's hard to say. Well, it's a problem."

"Is it something bad, then?" Sun Mengmeng asked anxiously.

Sun Xiaowu cried out, "What? Just from a single match?"

Bu Wentian waved a hand. "There's no need to worry too much. It's not too serious. It's likely what Sun Mengmeng said. Because you came in contact with the bone lance, there's a black dot in your spiritual avatar, likely a demonic seed that the bone lance left in it. Fortunately, the competition takes place virtually. If this were in reality, you'd already have become the bone lance's puppet."

"What exactly is this demonic seed?" Sun Xiaowu asked anxiously.

Bu Wentian replied, "At any rate, remain optimistic. Eat if you can, and sleep if you can."

"Don't be like this, Elder! I get scared easily, and I can't take this sort of fright!"

"Fortunately, you encountered me..."

Sun Xiaowu sighed in relief.

"Otherwise, we wouldn't have discovered it."

"Elder, can you help me?"

"Fortunately, we noticed it early..."

Sun Xiaowu sighed in relief again. "So you can help, Elder?"

"...any later, and you'd be dead."

Zhang Lie pursed his lips. "Elder, please don't emulate our jokes."

Sun Xiaowu placed both hands over his heart. "Elder, I thought you were a serious man, but now—it's clear I had the wrong impression of you!"

Bu Wentian scratched his head awkwardly.

Zhang Lie and the others seemed to be having a lot of fun. He tried to join in, but it looked as though that was ill-advised.

Sun Mengmeng asked, "Elder, can you explain yourself, please?"

"As I said, it's a problem. Not a large one, not a small one, just a problem."

Chapter 1419: A Mere Demonic Seed

Bu Wentian continued, "The demonic seed has taken root in your spiritual avatar. It'll feed on your negative emotions and slowly grow as a result, but your consciousness will hardly lose to a mere demonic seed. Its purpose is more like a mark that allows the bone lance to sense you more easily. Similarly, you'll be able to sense the bone lance. If both of you are close to each other, you'll notice a resonance."

Yang Ze patted Sun Xiaowu on the shoulder.

"It looks like the black bone lance fell in love with you at first sight."

Sun Xiaowu scowled. "Scram!"

"So there's no major problem, then?" Sun Mengmeng confirmed anxiously.

Bu Wentian nodded. "Essentially no problem. Don't get too agitated and try to maintain general optimism."

Sun Xiaowu exhaled. "You scared me just now, Elder!"

"Can it be removed directly?" Zhang Lie asked.

Bu Wentian shook his head. "There's no need to, since the impact is minimal."

Sun Xiaowu touched his forehead. "It does feel like I have a time bomb in my head..."

Bu Wentian replied, "Given your willpower, you could hardly lose to a little seed."

"That's true," Sun Xiaowu agreed.

"Furthermore," Bu Wentian added, "no one in the fourth realm has the requisite technology or means to be able to retrieve a small seed from your mindscape."

That was the primary reason he hadn't suggested direct removal.

Bu Wentian continued, "At the very least, it'll have little influence on you in the fourth realm. There's even a bright side: the bone lance has gone missing, so if you find it, you could become its master."

Sun Xiaowu smiled wryly. "That might be a double-edged sword more than anything else."

There were no other issues with Sun Xiaowu's body. Bu Wentian prepared a meal. After they had all eaten, Zhang Lie asked, "Fang Yi, Yang Ze, you two are the only ones left. When do you intend to keep going?"

"A moment later," Fang Yi replied. "It'll be good to do exercise after a meal."

"Then I'll go after Fang Yi," Yang Ze added.

Sun Xiaowu smirked. "These challengers aren't all that easy to deal with. Don't get overconfident."

After the meal, the hunters again entered their respective apparatuses and spectated Fang Yi's match.

Fang Yi's opponent was tall and sturdy, with long purple hair scattered about his shoulders. He was lofty and imposing, and unquestionably strong.

"Let me ask around to see who he is," Sun Xiaowu volunteered.

"He's from the Stargod race, of course," a spectator replied.

"Is he strong?"

"He's a member of an ancient race that was strong enough to be considered a 'god'. What do you think?"

Sun Xiaowu continued, "How does it compare to Heaven?"

"The era of the Stargods coincided with that of Heaven. They were both peak existences then, but the times have since changed. Heaven has fallen, and the Stargods are a shell of their former existence. That said, this challenger shows some signs of their former glory. His name is Xing Yu."
[1]

Another spectator murmured, "However, his opponent seems to be someone nameless."

"Really? It looks like a member of that race that's growing famous, the stellar hunters!"

"Let's fight!" Xing Yu proclaimed. His voice was deep, magnetic, and penetrating. Boulders burst into pieces in the arena, forming a field of rubble around the Stargod challenger.

The spectators were shocked. This was a nameless challenger; did Xing Yu intend to take him seriously from the very beginning?

Others scoffed. "You don't know anything, do you? This is just what Xing Yu's like. He always gives it his all, no matter what the opponent's like."

Xing Yu struck, unwilling to waste even a second of time. His palm glowed with light. Five radiant beams fell from the heavens, each manifesting in the form of a mountain range, locking down the arena.

With a low shout, Fang Yi dashed forward with his spear in hand. He launched his spear, crackling with wind and lightning, with incredible force. It sent wind howling and lightning flashing through the sky.

With his spear, he invoked chaotic energy in the form of lightning and raging wind. The spear left a dozen afterimages in its wake. The five mountains exploded with a heavy thud.

Suddenly, thousands of beasts seemed to roar in unison. The spectators' souls quavered as a tremendous pressure, almost impossible to resist, descended on the stage.

Xing Yu struck. With a wave of his fist, heaven and earth filled with light. The figures of beasts covered the arena with an irrepressible aura.

"[Fist of Ten Thousand Beasts]!"

Even a few of the senior spectators were surprised. This was an ultimate technique of its school, supposedly an invincible fist technique!

Ten thousand beasts howled and roared, among them standard creatures like tigers, bears, and leopards, and those steeped in mythology like dragons and qilins.

The arena was filled with rampant beasts, roaring with divine auras as they pounced forward.

The spectators watched the scene unfold in shock. What surprised them was that Fang Yi stood still where he was, seemingly not fearing the beasts' assault at all.

"[Tiger's Howl, Dragon's Bellow]!"

Fang Yi's spear took on the aspect of a dragon of the winds and a storm tiger as he charged forward.

Wind and storm roared around him, and his spear resonated with his genetic energy. The spear which the king of chaos had granted him demonstrated shocking strength, infusing chaotic energy into the mix.

The lightning tiger and wind dragon corkscrewed into an incredible blow that pierced through the sky and obliterated the ten thousand beasts.

Like a god of beasts, Xing Yu himself ran toward Fang Yi, lifting up a huge chunk of the arena to use as a weapon.

"[Shadow and Light]!"

Fang Yi's appearance blurred into a hundred clones. Spear thrusts and strikes came toward Xing Yu from every direction, turning the arena into rubble.

Xing Yu dove through the rubble and raised a fist, over which divine aura gathered. Heaven shook; the void trembled. The clash between spear and fist gave off tremendous light. Xing Yu's fist smashed into the spear in an explosion like that of a supernova. The void shook. His fist was as hard as steel.

"First blood!"

"Look, they've already drawn blood!"

The spectators gaped. Had the battle been decided so quickly?

The heavens shook as blood was sent flying into the air, bright red and dazzling with light.

"Divine blood! Look at how it catches the light!" The senior spectators all glanced at the sight attentively, their eyes shining.

Chapter 1420: Spear Dyed with Blood

The blood that was drawn from Xing Yu's body glowed red, almost as though it were burning. It released a tremendous aura, and each drop of blood was even more resplendent than a ruby.

Howling winds blew as fist and spear clashed once more. The sky rumbled.

The two young cultivators passed each other in the air, shining with radiant light and runes. They turned and faced each other, their arms drawn back.

"He survived one of Xing Yu's punches without dying—only his palms are bloody!" one spectator shouted.

Everyone could see that there was blood on the haft of the spear.

The drops of blood fell. Fang Yi looked down at his palms.

"Blocking one of Xing Yu's blows is impressive enough. His competitor is certainly rather strong himself.

Xing Yu stood firm and unyielding, his thick purple hair floating in the wind. His eyes were like divine lanterns, giving off incredible light. He looked invincible.

"Xing Yu's invincible. No one can defeat him!" The younger generation of the Stargod race cheered for their strongest challenger.

"The Stargods once dominated over the galaxy, and the ancient blood of our honored ancestors flows through our bodies!"

Many of the Stargods had come to spectate with proud expressions on their faces.

"No. The blood belongs to Xing Yu!" one spectator suddenly shouted.

The others gaped. What? The blood wasn't from Fang Yi?

Everyone was stunned. They froze in shock.

Many were shocked by Xing Yu's strength, thinking that he had managed to draw blood with his initial punch, only to find themselves entirely mistaken.

"Xing Yu's blood?" Many of the spectators gulped, thinking it unbelievable.

The members of Team Zenith smiled confidently. They had witnessed everything clearly. If nothing else, human blood was perfectly ordinary and didn't have special effects associated with it.

Xing Yu stood tall and mighty like a titan of yore. He gave off such tremendous pressure as to make all who saw him hold their breath. His eyes were deep and his sleeves wide, so his hands couldn't be seen.

Meanwhile, his opponent Fang Yi's palms were bright red. Blood dripped down from them, but he didn't seem wounded at all.

The spectators gaped. Had Xing Yu been on the losing end of that first blow? Had he lost to an unknown challenger? No one could believe it.

"This can't be true!" the younger generation of Stargods cried out. They stared at the two combatants.

Was that really the case? In that case, their cheering was premature. What if Xing Yu really were to lose?

The young Stargods suddenly felt a sense of shame and awkwardness.

The spectators from afar made a racket of sound.

"Hm?"

One of the Stargod elders watched on avidly, letting out a deep sigh of relief.

Fang Yi's spear suddenly turned bright red as his two palms, gripping onto the spear, radiated with fiery red light. As he charged forward, that glow spread toward his arms. He was surrounded by divine light, which resonated around him.

"[Hands of the Blood God]!"

The spectators turned hushed. The name of that technique seemed almost overwhelming.

Some of the senior spectators blanched, raising their eyebrows as they all activated their divine sight and observed Xing Yu's elbow. They sucked in a deep breath, their bodies turning cold and goosebumps appearing over their skin.

"What's the matter?" Sun Xiaowu asked.

"It's an infamous vicious technique used by the Stargods. The Hands of the Blood God are a frightening fist technique that drains the opponent of blood, burns up their vitality, and transforms them into a pile of sludge." It was ruthless and widely considered a forbidden technique. Many cultivators in the past had termed this technique the "devil's hands".

Zhang Lie frowned. That these cultivators reacted with such vehemence and fear was a testament as to how frightening the technique was.

"Not all Stargods can comprehend this technique. It's far too difficult for the majority, and a single mistake could well drain the attacker instead."

Few had expected that Xing Yu would be in possession of this forbidden technique. With his own blood, Xing Yu catalyzed the attack.

It had seemed as though Fang Yi had drawn blood from Xing Yu, but Xing Yu had actually gotten hurt deliberately in order to mark Fang Yi's spear and hands.

Fang Yi's arms felt as though they were burning away.

"Open!" Fang Yi shouted, his breath like thunder. Lightning emerged from the void as a howling gale revolved around him. Chaotic energy seeped into his bloodstream through the spear.

Not only did Fang Yi continue holding onto his spear, he defended by counterattacking. His arms trembled as blood surged. His pores glowed with light and sprayed out a cloud of chaotic mist.

Fang Yi had used chaotic energy to resolve the technique, breaking it up and converting it into chaotic energy of his own.

This was a particularly intricate manipulation. Infusing chaotic energy into one's body could easily destroy oneself. It was apparent how bold Fang Yi was, and his growing mastery over the king of chaos' spear.

"Incredible. Even the Hands of the Blood God weren't able to stop him!"

The spectators from the younger generation were shocked, and even some of the older ones widened their eyes.

Countless cultivators had perished to this forbidden technique, many of whom were the strongest cultivators in the galaxy. Some had even perished from it.

The Hands of the Blood God were incredibly difficult to contend with or to resolve, but Xing Yu's opponent had easily done so.

An old cultivator praised, "The younger generation is certainly strong."

"We've fostered them well, it seems."

"The Stargods are an ancient race, after all, and their techniques are outdated. They've been forgotten by history, and they should have stepped away a long time ago."

A few senior Stargod elders shouted with mounting grievance, "Xing Yu, slaughter this nameless upstart on the arena!"

"Xing Yu, what are you doing? Finish off the lad on stage and inform the cultivators of the galaxy that the Stargods are to rise once more! They're not so old that they're destined for a coffin!"

The two young cultivators clashed with each other again like two mountain ridges. The crash echoed through the air.

The two combatants fought rapidly, each transforming into two blurred figures surrounded by divine light. They were so fast that they struck each other dozens of blows within moments.

This shocked everyone in sight. Xing Yu had anticipated winning within ten blows, only to find to his shock that Fang Yi was a stronger opponent than expected.

Many of the spectators' preconceived notions were overturned. The two challengers were both at the apex of their strength. A tremendous battle would unfold, one in which victory wouldn't be obvious.

Xing Yu was rapidly burning through his stamina and quest, with countless killing techniques—a phoenix soaring at one moment, and a roc with its wings outspread. He charged toward the front again.

Xing Yu formed seals with both his hands, shaking the void. One formed a tiger; the other, a dragon. They roared and charged forward in the blink of an eye, straight toward Fang Yi.