

Chapter 661: Save Me, Senior Brother!

Wang Baole's eyes were wide, and blood flowed from his mouth non-stop, but his presence remained overpowering. In fact, it grew stronger as he kept talking.

"This isn't fun at all. When I was in the Mi Luo Forest, I rode on Star Fang Beasts and had everything I wanted. I wouldn't be here if not for my senior brother ordering me to train here!" Wang Baole sat up and pulled out two Star Fang Beast cores as he spoke. He started sucking at one to heal himself while using the other to rub his wounds.

He had left his storage bracelet with his avatar, but it was mainly used to store his Dharmic Armaments. Other precious materials had been split across his various storage bags. Wang Baole had learned his lesson, one could never have too many storage bags.

He sucked at the beast core after pulling it out and stared angrily at Daoist You Ran.

"You a**. I must have knocked myself on the head too hard. There are so many planets I could have ended up on and had fun on. Why did I choose the Vast Expanse Dao Palace!"

Wang Baole glared at You Ran while sucking hard on the Star Fang Beast core in his hand. His words echoed in the cavern. Daoist You Ran, who had been charging at Wang Baole, suddenly stopped in his tracks after hearing what Wang Baole had just said. His eyes widened. It was as if he had just seen a ghost!

He reported to the second Divine King and clearly knew of the first Divine King of the Never-Ending Clan. He knew how terrifying and powerful the man was. His heart had skipped a beat when he had first heard "first Divine King" come out of Wang Baole's mouth.

After recovering from the initial shock, his first reaction was that of disbelief. He didn't rank high in the Never-Ending Clan's hierarchy. He only knew of the first Divine King and not the latter's true name. Wang Baole might have been able to put together a somewhat convincing lie, but someone from the Federation shouldn't have been able to evoke the name of Mi Luo Forest. Wang Baole had said it so easily.

He had pulled out his Star Fang Beast cores just as easily. That had shocked Daoist You Ran as well. He immediately recognized those as beast cores belonging to beasts at the Spirit Immortal realm.

Such cores were priceless. Mi Luo Forest was renowned for being protective of its kind, but Wang Baole had been able to pull out two such cores, one to suck on and the other to rub against his injuries. The flagrant display of wealth sent Daoist You Ran reeling back. However, he still wasn't fully convinced.

Then, Wang Baole's eyes suddenly flashed sharply. He started to speak in the tongue of the Never-Ending Clan. It was the pure language of the Dark Sect. As soon as he spoke, waves of shock rose inside Daoist You Ran and threatened to drag him under!

"Let me tell you. My senior brother has sealed a blessing on me, and he'll lock on to this place if I die. With his powers, he'll be back to go back in time and find out what happened. Even if you have some

means of evading the blessing, you'll still be dead. You stupid a**, try it if you don't believe it. See if my senior brother doesn't rush here!" Wang Baole almost shouted out his last few words.

Daoist You Ran was immediately overwhelmed with panic. There were people in the Vast Expanse Dao Palace who spoke the Never-Ending Clan's language, but they wouldn't have been able to speak it so fluently. There should have been some accent. Wang Baole had no accent at all. He spoke it as if it were his native language. Alarm flashed across Daoist You Ran's face, and he couldn't help but question Wang Baole.

"You have anything to prove it?"

Daoist You Ran seemed slightly cowed, causing Wang Baole to release a sigh of relief secretly. He kept a fierce look on his face as he struggled to his feet and shouted.

"Proof? My senior brother didn't give me anything like that. He only told me to announce the name he went by in the Never-Ending Clan. No one in this part of the universe was going to harm me if I did that! You Ran, I demand an answer for what you've done today. I don't care about what you're planning with the Dao Palace, but the Federation is where I'm undergoing my training. You're just a pathetic foot soldier of the second Divine King in the Never-Ending Clan. How dare you interfere with my training!"

Wang Baole knew the Vast Expanse Dao Palace had been destroyed by the second Divine King. He naturally guessed correctly that the Never-Ending Clan members coming after the Dao Palace on the ancient sword reported to the second Divine King.

"I want an apology from you, right now! Then, compensation. I won't tell my senior brother about this. You can scam with your Death Dao Battleship!"

Wang Baole huffed, puffing himself up, his tone of voice extremely hostile. He knew that he could do things another way. He could've tried getting Daoist You Ran on his side by using his senior brother's name. He could've also tempted him with promises of sweet deals. He could've even eased the way towards a more cordial negotiation. But he had abandoned such ideas after some thought. They were all beneath him.

His senior brother, Chen Qing, was the first Divine King. From what Little Missy had shared about his senior brother and what he had seen in the Mi Luo Forest and learned in his Dark Dream, his senior brother was a decisive man who had no qualms about killing others and was arrogant to the point of being unreasonable. Such a man naturally always had his way. As his junior brother, he couldn't be seen as someone soft, as that would draw suspicions.

His judgment had been right. Daoist You Ran found Wang Baole's arrogance infuriating, but he didn't question such an attitude. He might have found it even more suspicious if Wang Baole hadn't acted in such a manner. His haughtiness angered Daoist You Ran, but it also planted doubts in Daoist You Ran's mind.

Wang Baole had deviously mentioned terms that others wouldn't have known as he spoke. His mentioning of the Death Dao Battleship and the second Divine King had seemed casual and almost conversational. It was precisely these details that had given Daoist You Ran a shock.

He wasn't willing to just let it all go though. His plan had been to sacrifice the entire Federation, then meld with the Death Dao Battleship and become one with the latter. He had planned to use that to regain his Planet realm cultivation. He would have been able to advance in his cultivation in his new and different form.

Things would have been easier if the first Divine King had made his presence known. He would have yielded to the Divine King unquestionably and fallen to his shaking knees. Whom he faced instead was a mere Core Formation realm cultivator. He might call himself the junior brother of the first Divine King, and might even make quite a bit of sense, but Daoist You Ran just couldn't believe him. He didn't want to.

He was clearly struggling internally. Then, a sharp glint flashed across his eyes. No one knew what he was thinking, but he suddenly stirred and appeared above Wang Baole. He raised one hand, unleashed his Soul Conduit realm cultivation, and gathered a terrifying, destructive force in his hand, sending it charging towards Wang Baole.

He seemed intent on killing and silencing Wang Baole!

He lifted his hand and was about to slam it down when Wang Baole's eyes suddenly flashed with a vicious light. He had been prepared for that. He started muttering the sutra in his heart, the first few words flying off the top of his head as he shouted.

"Save me, Senior Brother!"

Wang Baole yelled as he secretly mouthed the sutra in his heart. At that moment, the heavens rumbled, the Death Dao Battleship shook, the Vast Expanse Dao Palace trembled, and the ancient sword quaked. A power rose from the depths of distant space, crossed the expanse of the universe, descended upon the Solar System, upon the sun, and landed on the ancient sword. It appeared... inside the cavern on the battleship!

Boom!

It was a power terrifying beyond measure. Wang Baole thought he heard an indistinct snort. He trembled, wondering fearfully if the mysterious presence had truly awakened...

This was no place for him to consider that too deeply though. Based on his experience, this aura appeared and vanished within an instant. It was the best instrument to strike fear in his enemies' hearts, one perfect for his current predicament.

He had guessed correctly. Daoist You Ran almost lost his wits, the mysterious force that had been unleashed by Wang Baole's sutra sending him reeling back. The backlash forced a mouthful of blood to his lips, and shock colored his eyes. He didn't retreat though. Instead, there was a madness in his eyes as he charged towards Wang Baole, attacking!

"Wang Baole, if you truly are the first Divine King's junior brother, you would have a trump card up your sleeve. The aura you have unleashed is terrifying, but... I'm not convinced by it. Come, as long as you can survive this attack of mine, I will turn around and leave!"

"If you can't... then you're just lying!" Daoist You Ran had clearly gone mad. He was almost convinced. The sutra's power had him quaking in his boots, and there was a voice in his head screaming for him to run away immediately before he got himself killed!

But he had to attack. He had been planning this for too long and wasn't going to just give it all up. That was why... he was going to try his luck. If the fates willed it so, he would die without regret!

"You're like a dog with a bone!" Wang Baole simmered in frustration. He thought his performance had been flawless. He had even whipped out his sutra. He hadn't expected Daoist You Ran to be out of his mind.

There wasn't enough time for him to think of another plan. As the threat of death approached, and as his entire body shook in fear, a flash of madness crossed Wang Baole's eyes!

Let's wing it!

Chapter 662: Thearch Collapse!

He had to wing it, there was no way around it!

Wang Baole wasn't a coward. This had been proven time and again from the various encounters he had survived in the Federation. Hidden beneath his mild exterior was a character that was brutal to his enemies and even harsher to himself!

Wang Baole's eyes were filled with madness as he watched Daoist You Ran unleash his attack at him. He knew that with his current level of cultivation, there was no way he could fully unleash the Rebirth Severing and Five Punishments techniques, even after absorbing the spirit energy from the Death Dao Battle Robes.

It was impossible to unleash them here and use them as his final trump card, so he had only one option left!

It was... the Flame Snatch Thearch Armor!

His armor might have shattered, but Wang Baole still had one ultimate technique that was his trump card. It was his greatest gain since his arrival on the ancient sword!

That was... the Thearch Collapse!

It wasn't as simple as blowing his armor up but a technique inherent in the Thearch Armor inheritance. The practitioner was to sacrifice the Thearch Armor that he had painstakingly cultivated, compress said cultivation using a special method, and unleash a terrifying power that was beyond imaginable.

This power would shake the heavens and unleash an indescribable force against both the caster and the target. Wang Baole wouldn't have resorted to such madness in normal circumstances, but he was left with no other options.

Death was inevitable if he tried to run. If he wasn't going to wing it and fight for his life now... when then was he going to do it?

These thoughts flashed past Wang Baole's mind as he sent all his cultivation into the Flame Snatch Thearch Armor without hesitation. He also activated the full power contained within the armor itself!

He sent his will into the armor, unleashing his full cultivation and his full potential. His body, which had slimmed down, shrank to skin and bones rapidly!

The light in his eyes grew brighter all this while, as did the light emanating from his armor—it shone like a star. As Daoist You Ran drew closer, Wang Baole shouted!

“Armor Removal!”

The roar thundered and sent the entire cavern shaking. The brightly shining armor on Wang Baole separated from his body and reassembled into a huge cube made of flesh and blood meridians before him!

It looked like a box made of ligaments and tendons. Blood-colored meridians circled inside, forming a sphere that wrapped around the Divine Armament skeletal arm. The appearance of the cube sent the abyss surrounding it shattering into pieces as waves of terrifying spirit energy surged outwards.

The waves of spirit energy were so powerful that even Daoist You Ran was taken aback. His pupils contracted, and his heart raced. He abandoned all thought of testing Wang Baole, retreating hurriedly and evading the brilliant light.

He clearly felt threatened by the waves of spirit energy emanating from Wang Baole's Flame Snatch Thearch Armor. They felt different from the earlier spirit energy that had been released. Less powerful, but more real.

It was as if... one was distant and the other up close and personal. One was the invisible explosion of a star while the other, the collapse of the ground beneath one's feet!

Both made his heart race fearfully. The latter left a greater impact due to the visual shock!

Daoist You Ran retreated almost instinctively. It was too late though. He had forced Wang Baole into a corner, and Wang Baole wasn't going to let him go so easily. Besides, Wang Baole knew that this was the only chance he was going to get!

A vicious light flashed across Wang Baole's eyes as he shouted.

“Body Possession!”

Daoist You Ran reeled back with shock and retreated hastily when he heard those words. The cube-shaped Flame Snatch Thearch Armor exploded. It didn't erupt. Instead, it seemed to have dissected itself and transformed into dozens of pieces that then surrounded Daoist You Ran. It all happened in a blur, disrupting whatever laws were set in place on the battleship. The disassembled armor locked on to Daoist You Ran. No matter how fast he retreated, they continued to surround him!

Within the blink of an eye, the dismantled pieces had appeared all around Daoist You Ran—above him, under him, in front and behind him, to his left, and to his right. They closed in and trapped him!

Everything happened extremely quickly. From the moment Daoist You Ran abandoned the idea of testing Wang Baole, to Wang Baole's relentless and vicious retaliation, they ended up in their current

situation in the blink of an eye. Daoist You Ran seemed to have reached the limits of his shock. He didn't hesitate. Once he saw that he couldn't escape the disassembled armor segments, he bit the tip of his tongue. His left and right heads exploded at the same time!

This was one of the Never-Ending Clan's techniques. It wasn't the first time Wang Baole was witnessing it. Despite that, he had no way of stopping You Ran. The violence in his eyes intensified as he unleashed the second final step of the Thearch Armor inheritance's ultimate technique!

"Nine Folds!"

As soon as Wang Baole shouted those two words, the cube that had surrounded Daoist You Ran suddenly folded itself, transforming itself from a three-dimensional entity into something two-dimensional, then into a one-dimensional plane!

The sight was beyond bizarre. Daoist You Ran appeared to be imprinted onto that one-dimensional paper-like plane, and his body showed signs of disappearing. Wang Baole wasn't done yet. The paper bent then folded itself again!

Signs of Daoist You Ran's destruction grew clearer. Just as the piece of paper tried to fold itself again, a sudden thundering sound exploded. The paper was blown apart from the inside by an incredible force. Daoist You Ran had blown up both his heads and forced his way out of the sealed space, narrowly escaping with his life.

Wang Baole spat out a mouthful of blood. He was obviously reluctant to accept Daoist You Ran's successful escape, but he had no choice. The chasm of power separating them was too vast. He might possess numerous incredible mystic techniques that had caught Daoist You Ran by surprise, but in the end, he could only injure the latter further. Killing him remained a challenge!

If that's the case... Wang Baole watched as the one-dimensional plane exploded and Daoist You Ran fought his way out. He decided to simply wing it. He shouted again, doing so before the mystic technique was complete.

"Thearch Collapse!"

An indescribably powerful force erupted from the folded piece of paper that had been in the midst of being ripped apart. The explosion was so powerful it formed waves of energy that surged outwards and flooded everything in the area!

Rumbling erupted in the cavern, like thunder that seemed never-ending. It sounded like the furious roars of a heavenly beast. Wang Baole shuddered violently and spat out a mouthful of blood as he stumbled backwards. Waves of spirit energy ripped outwards and rushed over him. A pale-faced Wang Baole immediately activated the spell that allowed him to switch places with his avatar!

It was then that a bloodied hand shot out from the center of the Thearch Armor and made a grab for Wang Baole. A soft, gentle light appeared just as the hand approached. Little Missy materialized. She lifted her hand and pointed, and a white light suddenly emerged from within the Thearch Collapse. It dashed out and appeared between Little Missy and the gigantic bloody hand. It was... the skeletal Divine Armament arm that had been joined to Wang Baole's Thearch Armor!

Little Missy and the gigantic bloody hand were instantly connected via the skeletal hand. A deafening thunder rose to the skies as a blinding light erupted from the Divine Armament arm. There was a muted grunt inside the Thearch Collapse, while Little Missy's face paled. She exhaled a wisp of green air, and her materialized body trembled and turned several shades fainter. She stepped back, drawing the skeletal Divine Armament arm to Wang Baole's side.

Her appearance and attack gave Wang Baole the time to switch places with his avatar, and he disappeared in the next moment, his avatar reappearing in his place!

The backlash from the Thearch Collapse rushed towards the avatar almost immediately after its appearance. Wang Baole had no time to react at all. The avatar was pulled under instantly, disintegrated and turned to dust!

That wasn't the end of the attack. Amidst the howling storm that resembled the roars of a heavenly beast, the golden lake was turned into tumultuous waves that evaporated when exposed to the air. The cavern walls stood no chance at all and turned to dust instantly. The enormous pillar that hung in the ceiling, though extremely malleable and gifted with an incredible recovery rate, was also destroyed. It collapsed almost immediately, triggering a chain reaction that traveled up the flesh-lined pathway and resulted in an explosive force that surged outwards!

The entire cavern was decimated. The destruction spread for at least a hundred feet. Only the Death Dao Battle Robes remained seated and immobile as the ceilings crashed down. It seemed relatively impervious to the destruction around it. The only damage was the crack on its forehead, which grew a slight bit wider.

Chapter 663: A Narrow Escape!

The entire cavern was flooded with power as the Thearch Collapse's destructive shock waves collided with the force of Daoist You Ran's self-destruction of his two heads. The clash created an incredible force. Regardless, it wouldn't have resulted in such destruction if it had taken place elsewhere.

Within the pillar hanging over the cavern were vast quantities of flesh and blood that had been distilled and used to heal the injured Never-Ending Clan and the damaged Death Dao Battle Robes. However, that wasn't its original function!

At the height of the Death Dao Battleship's glory, the pillar and its numerous blood and flesh veins had been used to transport fuel, which had been formed from the endless crushing of skeletons and grinding down of bones into fuel. The fuel was then sent to the wielder of the battle robes, who would then make use of the fuel to power and steer the battleship!

The pillar was akin to an eternal engine!

The force of both Wang Baole's Thearch Collapse and Daoist You Ran's self-destruction of his heads had destroyed the pillar and in turn... blown up this eternal engine with endless power!

That had been the cause of this unimaginable, vast power. The power wasn't contained within the cavern. It flowed up the pillar and spread throughout the numerous veins into the second level!

Countless blood and flesh veins exploded with the destruction of the pillar, causing the entire second level to quake. Cracks began to appear and widen, and eventually, the pillar collapsed.

A deafening explosion followed, rumbling in the air. The earth caved in, as a significant portion of the second level was affected by the explosion. The cultivators who had been engaged in fierce battles on the second level were all alarmed by the sight. Feng Qiuran, especially. She had exhausted herself while being pursued by her enemies and had suffered severe injuries that had almost caused her to pass out. Her strong will was the only thing keeping her on her feet right now.

At present, the lands caved in and shattered rock and stone spewed into the air. The entire world shook violently. Both Feng Qiuran and her pursuers were affected by the destruction around them, shock coloring their eyes as multiple explosions erupted around them at the same time.

The dozens of blood and flesh veins that were directly linked with the pillar came from the skies. They didn't escape unscathed after the pillar's collapse, allowing the destruction to spread to the first level.

The world was transformed drastically. Both sky and earth shattered, and the first level suffered a similar fate. Violent quakes shuddered through the worlds, with the sacrificial altars on the respective levels suffering the greatest damage!

All veins led back to these sacrificial altars. They rumbled as the veins suffered damage and collapsed, their grinding stuttering to a pause. The fearsome beasts that were pulling the handles were, in turn, yanked back violently.

As the tug-a-war of forces continued, numerous of the gigantic wooden handles began showing signs of splintering and cracking. Three handles snapped!

Handles cracked, beasts roared, and the earth shuddered. All three worlds on the first level shook. The entire Death Dao Battleship shook.

With the collapse of the pillar and its veins, and the quaking of the millstones, the interference given off by the battleship was severely weakened to the point that teleportation was now possible.

Zhao Yameng, who had been hiding on the second level and racing away from each cave-in, immediately sensed that. Panic flashed across her eyes. She looked around, but Wang Baole was nowhere in sight.

She had no idea where Wang Baole was at this moment, or what had happened to result in this series of catastrophic changes. She watched as the world collapsed around her. After a moment of silence, she clenched her jaw and twisted her teleportation talisman without hesitation.

The blinding light of teleportation flashed to life. Zhao Yameng vanished from the battleship in the next moment, reappearing outside the battleship, above the Sea of Fire in the region of the sword handle.

Zhao Yameng's breathing stopped momentarily. She seemed dazed, but soon, she let loose a sudden burst of speed and began racing towards the Vast Expanse Dao Palace. She attempted to reach out to Federation cultivators on her way!

Zhao Yameng wasn't the only one who had escaped successfully. There were many others, including Feng Qiuran. She wasn't as lucky as Zhao Yameng though. She had reappeared in the sword body instead of the sword handle. She had been injured severely while on the battleship and spat out a

mouthful of blood upon her reappearance outside the battleship, passing out and falling straight into the Sea of Fire.

Despite her serious injuries, she instinctively summoned a protective light barrier that prevented her from burning into mere ashes after sinking into the Sea of Fire.

The survivors made their escape when the opportunity had presented itself to them. As for Wang Baole, he had switched places with his avatar in the collapsing second level. He spat out a mouthful of blood upon reappearance. He too suffered grievous injuries. Fortunately, his physical resilience was extraordinary, and he also had the green lotus, which boosted his rate of recovery beyond that of an ordinary person's. Even though he was extremely weak now, he didn't lose consciousness. He immediately pulled out his teleportation talisman and attempted to escape after sensing the changes in this world.

He wasn't sure if he was going to succeed, but this was his only hope. He wasn't confident that his last attack had truly destroyed Daoist You Ran.

There's a great chance I only injured him seriously. There are still many Never-Ending Clan cultivators and enslaved Dao Palace cultivators on the battleship... Wang Baole had a dark look on his face. He twisted the teleportation talisman, and a burst of light erupted from it. Wang Baole was overcome with excitement as he disappeared in a dazzling burst of light.

When he reappeared again, it was outside the Death Dao Battleship and... in the sword body of the ancient sword!

Others might consider this a dangerous region where death hid behind every corner, but it was heaven to Wang Baole, who was an adopted disciple. He forced down the blood in his mouth and took a handful of pills. After finding out where he was, he dashed out with the intention to leave the area. He intended to return to the Vast Expanse Dao Palace as soon as possible and make use of the teleportation array formation to escape the ancient sword and return to the Federation. Only then would he be safe, at least for the moment.

Things were clearly not going to go according to his plans. He had been right about Daoist You Ran, the latter hadn't died. In addition, his hatred towards Wang Baole had exploded. There was no way he was going to allow Wang Baole to live. A furious howl rang out in what had been the cavern in the third level the moment Wang Baole teleported. A figure darted out amidst waves of spirit energy rippling outward and the explosion of shattered stone and rock.

The person was in a sorry state. Out of his six limbs, only three remained. Out of his three heads, only one remained. His body was covered in deep cracks that exposed blood and flesh and for some, bone as well.

It was... Daoist You Ran, who had narrowly escaped death!

He panted, chest heaving heavily as he watched everything fall down around him. He lifted his head and stared at the cracked and shattering passageway made of blood and flesh. His eyes turned red at the sight of it all. It wasn't irreparable, but the damage was going to cost him time. Even if he managed to restore everything, the battleship would still not be the same as it had been before. He howled furiously, his anger ringing out in the air!

“Wang Baole!” Daoist You Ran’s hatred towards Wang Baole had grown so strong it was immeasurable. With red eyes, he appeared at the spot where Wang Baole had teleported away. Without hesitation, he formed a series of hand seals with his right hand and grabbed, expending his life essence decisively to look back in time!

Illusory figures appeared before him instantly. He saw Wang Baole shatter his teleportation talisman and teleport himself away. Daoist You Ran tugged one of his arms and shattered it without hesitation. The vitality contained within the arm materialized into a large hand formed of fog. It grabbed at Wang Baole’s illusory figure!

It wasn’t possible to capture Wang Baole’s true form since he was long gone. What was left were mere traces, but they were sufficient for Daoist You Ran’s use. What he intended to capture was the rippled strand that had been formed the exact moment of the teleportation. By tracing the strand, he would be able to perform his spell and teleport himself over!

A fierce light flashed across Daoist You Ran’s eyes the instant his hand of vitality grasped Wang Baole’s illusory figure.

“Found you!”

Daoist You Ran took a step forward and vanished!

Chapter 664: In Murderous Pursuit!

Wang Baole’s staggering form continued running inside the region of the sword body, disregarding his increasingly serious injuries. He ran without rest, using everything he had in him.

Before he had started though, he left a puppet at the place he had teleported to. Then, without turning back, he raced away.

Fortunately, after some time racing in the sword body, he finally found himself in a familiar area. He was able to identify where he was.

I’m not anywhere near the sword handle... Pale-faced, Wang Baole’s spirits sank, and his heart grew heavy as he realized where he was.

He knew he only had two options. He could follow the original plan of traveling to the sword handle and returning to the Vast Expanse Dao Palace, where he could then use the teleportation array formation to leave the ancient sword and return to the Federation. Or, he could venture deeper into the sword body!

The first option was definitely the better choice and the one he preferred. However... even though it might seem simpler and worry-free, there were greater chances of the unexpected happening.

If Daoist You Ran survived and comes after me, I won’t be able to avoid his pursuit even if I escape into the sword handle...

I can only bet on his death or that he wouldn’t be able to catch up with me in time. Wang Baole fell silent. He was torn. However, the mental struggle didn’t last long before decisiveness flashed across his

eyes. He turned and started running in another direction—not towards the sword handle but deeper into the sword body!

The blood in his body continued to churn as he ran. Fortunately, his physical body was resilient, and his recovery was boosted by the green lotus. That allowed him to maintain his speed.

Nevertheless, he couldn't keep the blood from rising to his mouth. After flying for some time, he finally couldn't stop himself from spitting out a mouthful of blood.

There were small pieces of flesh mixed with the blood. He didn't know where they came from, but the churning he had been feeling inside him eased considerably after he had spat out that mouthful of blood. However, the moment of ease was followed by dizziness and waves of pain that continued ceaselessly.

Hurt my internal organs... There was a dark look on Wang Baole's face. He extended his senses into his body and concluded that those chunks of flesh had probably been his organs.

Throwing them up had felt like hollowing himself out. Endless exhaustion rose inside him and spread to every part of his body. His vision was growing blurry.

A sudden urge to just lie down assaulted him, threatening to pull him under like a tsunami. Before that could happen, Wang Baole bit his tongue. The pain helped clear the fog from his mind. His eyes cleared as his breathing quickened.

I can't stop. I can't just rely on luck! Wang Baole took a deep breath, gritted his teeth, and continued running. He had chosen to enter the sword body to avoid pursuit. It wasn't because he couldn't gamble on the outcome if he had chosen otherwise but because he dared not do so!

He would be left with no other options should he lose that gamble. If he chose to enter the sword body, the potential for trouble might seem greater, but so was his chances of survival.

After all, the hexes in the sword body posed no danger to him while they were obstacles to others!

Even so, Wang Baole knew how powerful Daoist You Ran's cultivation was and how many tricks he had up his sleeve. If Daoist You Ran did come after him, Wang Baole couldn't simply place all his hopes on the hexes.

I need to keep widening the distance between us and give myself more time so that I can venture deeper into the sword body. There's a greater chance then that Daoist You Ran will find it difficult to pursue me. That's going to be hard though... Wang Baole's eyes flashed as the gears in his head spun furiously. He kept on his path, advancing rapidly towards a place he remembered.

No matter what I choose in the end, be it to escape or ensure that Daoist You Ran is too afraid to come after me, I'll need to perform another long-distance teleportation!

I can either make use of the teleportations that result in the frequent change in landscape, or I could make use of... the Immortal Platform! There was a look of determination in Wang Baole's eyes. He remembered that an Immortal Platform could be found in the direction he was now traveling.

His long-term plan was to travel towards the Immortal Platform and make use of it to teleport away so that Daoist You Ran could no longer come after him. His short-term plan was to locate areas that were in the midst of teleportation and make use of them to teleport further away!

After organizing his thoughts and making up his mind, Wang Baole swallowed another pill and continued running. A loud rumbling erupted from where Wang Baole had reappeared outside the battleship. Daoist You Ran emerged.

His appearance was immediately sensed by the puppet that Wang Baole had left behind. It blew itself up instantly. Daoist You Ran was one step too late in stopping it. He got to the puppet and stared at the pile of disintegrated materials with a dark look on his face.

Vicious, decisive, careful, and with numerous tricks up his sleeve... I've underestimated Wang Baole! The murderous intent in Daoist You Ran's eyes intensified. He formed a series of hand seals and unleashed some spell that located where Wang Baole was. Then, he started the chase. He was determined. This time... he wasn't going to rest until Wang Baole was dead!

When Daoist You Ran locked onto Wang Baole and left in pursuit, a distance away from him, alarm flashed across Wang Baole's face as he raced ahead. He had left the puppet behind to keep watch. It would be great if Daoist You Ran didn't follow the traces that had been left behind by his teleportation and given chase, but if he did, Wang Baole would know immediately. That would be the worst-case scenario. However, Wang Baole was prepared for it. That was why he didn't hesitate when he sensed Daoist You Ran. Instead, he let loose another burst of speed!

He had been traveling at top speed, but this wasn't the time to worry. He set aside concerns for how it might aggravate his injuries and unleashed his full speed as well as his Lightning Immortal Transformation. He was like a bolt of lightning. He stopped searching for any regional teleportations that might be in the vicinity and instead concentrated solely on reaching the Immortal Platform.

Time was of the essence. There was no room for distractions. With his full speed unleashed, he charged brashly into one hex after another, passing them one by one.

The hexes lost their effect as soon as Wang Baole approached, allowing him to pass through before reactivating themselves again. Wang Baole approached his destination rapidly.

Daoist You Ran, on the other hand, possessed powerful cultivation that allowed him to force his way through hexed areas. Even should the hexes explode around him, the resultant damage was minimal. However, there were still too many of them, which caused some delay. His speed, which should have surpassed Wang Baole's, was slightly reduced because of that.

In addition, the sword body was governed by chaotic laws that led to great uncertainty during teleportations. Daoist You Ran was forced to rely on his spells as he conducted his pursuit. He could only narrow the distance between him and Wang Baole, unable to reach him in an instant!

The distance between him and Wang Baole narrowed as he chased after the latter anxiously. When he finally saw Wang Baole in the distance, he gritted his teeth and chose to teleport instead of charging through the hexes.

He vanished then reappeared less than a hundred feet behind Wang Baole, his face pale. He hastily waved his hand and made a grab at Wang Baole before retreating hurriedly.

The space he had stood at earlier immediately caved in. Numerous, gaping tears in space appeared, ready to rip everything apart. Even though Daoist You Ran was a powerful cultivator, he still gasped at the sight.

Wang Baole raised his right hand in a wave, sending a Dharmic Armament out behind him that self-destructed. The shock waves collided with Daoist You Ran's grab. Wang Baole spat out another mouthful of blood. Daoist You Ran's attack had been hasty, and he had managed to block it successfully with his Dharmic Armament, but the backlash still managed to aggravate his existing injuries.

Wang Baole didn't slow down though. Instead, he picked up his pace and formed a series of hand seals while he continued to run. Numerous spheres of electricity materialized. He flung them into the hexed areas that he passed by, blowing them up and triggering a series of explosions as the hexes blew up in his wake. His intention was to create obstacles in Daoist You Ran's path as well as to stir more chaos.

The sword body was already filled with chaos, like a volcano on the verge of eruption. What Wang Baole was doing was adding fuel to the fire, intensifying the chaotic elements and inflaming the Sea of Fire.

"Wang Baole!" The expression on Daoist You Ran's face was dark and stormy. He had to dodge some of the explosions, which in turn widened the distance between him and Wang Baole. He dared not teleport easily now. He had struggled with his earlier attempt and nearly landed where he hadn't wanted to due to the chaotic laws of this place. Even though he had forcibly changed his landing, that had led to a spatial collapse. After his shock, he had learned to be more cautious.

Chapter 665: Killed!

His caution led to reduced speed in his pursuit. The repressed resentment he experienced while inside the battleship surfaced again. His cultivation clearly surpassed Wang Baole vastly, but Wang Baole was like a slippery eel that constantly slipped out of his reach!

He had been so close to killing Wang Baole earlier, but Wang Baole had managed to escape. Even though he had been injured grievously, he hadn't passed out. In fact, he continued to release numerous lightning spheres while running away, triggering multiple hexes in the sword body and creating greater chaos. Despite his Soul Conduit realm cultivation, Daoist You Ran had to proceed with great caution.

"Wang Baole!" Daoist You Ran was beyond infuriated. He was panicking as well. He couldn't leave the battleship for long, as there were too many things he still needed to attend to in the battleship. The longer he got delayed here, the greater the impact he would face when trying to repair whatever damage had been done to his plans.

Amidst his panic, a look of determination settled in Daoist You Ran's eyes!

Ahead of him, Wang Baole continued running away. His mind was going blurry. If not for the green lotus inside his body, unleashing its full power and allowing his body to continue healing as his injuries continued to grow more serious, he would have passed out a long time ago.

Despite the green lotus, Wang Baole was at the end of his rope. It was solely his will to survive that was driving him forward as he continued to be pursued.

Wang Baole had lost almost all sense of direction. He had only one place, and a single thought, in mind. That was to find the Immortal Platform and escape!

But... the difference in cultivation and his injuries were gradually making that a wild dream. He might not be in such a bad state if Daoist You Ran weren't hot on his heels, but he had barely stumbled about for half an hour before explosions erupted behind him once again.

Daoist You Ran had expended a portion of his life without hesitation and charged through numerous hexes, which exploded in his path. He was like a bolt of lightning, racing forward fearlessly. Compared to his power, Wang Baole was like dust, destined to be shattered into a million pieces should they collide.

Wang Baole laughed bitterly as danger once again approached. There was no despair in his eyes, though. He didn't seem to have any intentions of retreating. His Thearch Armor might have been destroyed, and Little Missy might have lost consciousness, but Wang Baole still had a final trump card!

His problem was that he didn't know how to unleash this trump card. After all, it hadn't been triggered despite the intense danger he had faced in the cavern. Perhaps the only way to awaken it was to be in even greater danger!

Wang Baole wouldn't have risked that, but now... he might die anyway, so there wasn't much point in being afraid.

Vicious determination flashed across Wang Baole's eyes at that thought. Just as Daoist You Ran appeared, like a sudden bolt of lightning, Wang Baole turned and faced him. His hands came together to form a series of hand seals, and he pressed them hard on his dantian and yelled, "Devouring seed!"

Daoist You Ran charged forward as Wang Baole unleashed the full power of his devouring seed. His right hand lifted and transformed into a mountain peak formed of black fog that surged towards Wang Baole.

"Die!"

The attack was so powerful that it seemed to affect even the heavens and earth, as well as the mountains and rivers that rested between the two. When it landed, waves of energy rippled through space, and the air showed signs of tearing. However, just as it was about to land on Wang Baole, the devouring seed inside him unleashed its powerful suction force and transformed him into a black hole.

A vortex materialized and started to spin, causing the incoming mountain peak to shudder. It appeared that the vortex was on the verge of devouring it whole!

The difference in their sizes led to a bizarre sight, something akin to a snake trying to devour an elephant!

"I noticed something strange inside your body. You want to drain my Dharmic powers? Sure, do your worst!" A flash of viciousness flickered in Daoist You Ran's eyes. He activated his cultivation, and waves of spirit energy exploded from his body.

The blast inundated Wang Baole, leaving him shuddering. His devouring seed churned desperately as it tried to suck dry the terrifying power contained within the mountain peak. It managed to drain a great

portion of it. However, the remaining smaller part of it continued to surge outwards, flooding over Wang Baole and the area around him.

Cracks began to appear on his body, and bones began to shatter and turn to dust. Wang Baole clenched his teeth and bore the agonizing pain. It was nothing compared to the growing devouring seed inside his body, which continued to expand as it continued sucking crazily. He felt as if he was going to be ripped apart. It felt like he was housing an Anti-Spirit Bomb.

“Drain that. Don’t you enjoy doing that? Come on, keep on draining!” Daoist You Ran’s face was twisted into an ugly look of violence and blood lust.

Pain colored Wang Baole’s face. He felt as if his body was going to be ripped apart at any moment and that his body and soul were going to be destroyed. This feeling grew with the passing of every second. He felt his flesh turn to mist. The destructive force assailing him, warping everything out of shape, seemed ready to wipe him out completely. Even Little Missy was startled awake by the immense danger that Wang Baole had gotten himself into. She realized what was going on and started shrieking in his head.

“Wang Baole, you’re crazy. What are you doing?”

“Devouring seed... explode!” Wang Baole wasn’t crazy. He pulled out the mask which Little Missy was resting in as he yelled out those words and flung it far away with the remaining strength he had left. Little Missy would be far away from the center of the devouring seed’s explosion. Even if he were to be destroyed, in both body and soul, Little Missy would still have a chance to survive.

Little Missy panicked. She couldn’t stop Wang Baole, though. She could only watch as Wang Baole barked out the order, as the devouring seed grew increasingly unstable inside his body, and as the green lotus showed signs of shattering, appearing to be on the verge of self-destruction alongside the devouring seed. Daoist You Ran seemed to realize what was happening as well. His spirit energy surged in response, ready to retaliate against any attack... Then, suddenly, Wang Baole’s scabbard, which had been refined to the seventh-grade and had resisted his control since then, shuddered violently. It seemed to sense impending death. A black strand darted out from its shaking body!

It was one of the hundreds of hexed threads that had been infused and sealed inside Wang Baole’s scabbard during its refinement on the Vast Expanse Dao Palace Main Star!

It raced towards Wang Baole’s devouring seed, sucked the destructive energy held within the devouring seed, and devoured it completely. A black light flared up within the black strand. It leaped out of Wang Baole’s body and appeared between him and Daoist You Ran!

This was a completely unexpected development. Daoist You Ran had the edge over Wang Baole earlier, but the sudden appearance of the black strand sent alarm flashing across his face as he sensed the spirit energy contained within it. He retreated instantly, even risking teleportation.

It was too late... As Wang Baole spat out a mouthful of blood, he could sense his scabbard unleashing its power. He panted and lifted his right hand with great difficulty. Then, he yelled at the retreating Daoist You Ran.

“Kill!”

The skies in the sword body shuddered with the fall of his hand and his single word. Countless hexes shattered. The ancient sword trembled. The black strand rushed forward like a blade that could cleave through all living things, passing smoothly through all defenses and everything in its path. The abyss shattered in its wake. Shock and alarm colored Daoist You Ran's eyes as he teleported himself away. Then, something shifted suddenly in his eyes. His body stuttered imperceptibly for a second!

Everything happened too quickly. That was why no one had noticed. Not Wang Baole, not even Little Missy. The black strand descended like a bolt of lightning, slicing through Daoist You Ran!

A pained scream rang out in the air and was followed by a sudden silence. Daoist You Ran's body was cleaved into two clean halves, and blood spurted out as the two halves fell. Wang Baole spat out another mouthful of blood, and depleted of all energy, he too finally fell.

Little Missy materialized at that instant. Face pale, her form blurry and indistinct, she grabbed hold of Wang Baole immediately. Her eyes were filled with pain and heartache for Wang Baole, but she seemed relieved too. She turned and stared at the cleaved halves of Daoist You Ran then and discovered illusory starlight glimmering in the exposed wounds of the two halves. Her face was instantly filled with shock!

"Star-Seeding Dao?"

Little Missy shuddered as shock flickered in her eyes. She didn't hesitate and carried Wang Baole away hurriedly, racing not towards the Vast Expanse Dao Palace in the sword handle but... towards the Immortal Platform, where Wang Baole had intended to go!

Chapter 666: Husband!

A myriad of emotions flickered across Little Missy's face as she carried an unconscious Wang Baole away with her. There was loss and bewilderment, anger as she clenched her jaw, and hesitation and doubt. They were all the result of having seen the illusory starlight in Daoist You Ran's corpse.

Ordinary cultivators wouldn't have been able to see such starlight. This unique spell was only visible to special spiritual forms!

"Star-Seeding Dao... a legacy that the Vast Expanse Dao Palace inherited from a mysterious place. My father called it the sect's most powerful Dao after reading up on it!" Little Missy murmured to herself. She was no stranger to the Star-Seeding Dao. She hadn't been qualified to learn it, but she was aware of how powerful it was.

It could be viewed as a mystic art of cloning or, alternatively, that of enslavement. However, its true essence was neither. Its principles defied normal logic. One must know that despite the numerous stars in the universe, there were different types of stars, be it a planet or an eternal star.

However, the Star-Seeding Dao didn't differentiate between planets and eternal stars. The stars were instead divided into three tiers and three corresponding realms.

The Star realm, the Moon realm, and the Sun realm!

At the Star realm, the cultivator was required to fall into a deep slumber. Depending on the level of his cultivation, he would be able to give out numerous Star Seeds that would then fuse themselves with the

living creatures of the universe. These creatures would then be able to practice cultivation until the time came when the cultivator harvested all the Star Seeds with a single thought.

The harvest wasn't merely for the Star Seeds but for all cultivation and vitality housed inside the Star Seed hosts. Then, by applying another mystic technique, the harvested gains would be augmented multiple times. The cultivator would break through the Star realm and enter the Moon realm!

This somewhat resembled what the State Preceptor had done when he had refined the giant python puppet, whose will had eventually been usurped by the donkey. However, it was much more powerful than what the State Preceptor had done.

As for living hosts for the Star Seeds, cultivators were considered inferior candidates. Hosts that fully unleashed the mystic art's power were entire stars. A Star Seed implanted in a star would allow all living creatures on the star to play host to the Star Seed!

As long as enough stars were harvested, one could attain powers that vastly surpassed that of a typical Star realm cultivator upon reaching the Moon realm. Of course, the most fearsome and powerful would be a cultivator at the Sun realm. One would be able to plant seeds in an entire patch of universe, harvest said region, and gain unimaginable power!

Little Missy had no recollection of anyone who had ever attained the Sun realm, though. There had only ever been one person who had attained the Moon realm in the entire Vast Expanse Dao Palace. She remembered clearly that her father had sighed after browsing the contents of the mystic art and said that this mystic art wasn't from this universe. He hadn't said anything more after that.

What she remembered about the Star-Seeding Dao made one thing very clear to Little Missy, and it was that... Daoist You Ran was but a mere Star Seed host. That meant... there was someone else in the ancient sword who was the true mastermind behind everything that had happened.

You Ran was but one of his dancing puppets!

This was a surprising revelation but not a shocking one. The part that made her clench her teeth and feel lost was related to the uniqueness of the Star-Seeding Dao. It was a legacy that had to be inherited. Such an inheritance... required someone with cultivation at the Star realm being willing to use his own soul to form a seed!

Basically, a Star realm cultivator had to surrender his own soul to create the original seed for the next partitioner of the Star-Seeding Dao. The first person from the Vast Expanse Dao Palace who had inherited this legacy from a mysterious place had acquired such a seed, which had been in slumber for an unknown number of years.

He had been the pioneer who had acquired the Star-Seeding Dao. The legacy had then been passed down from generation to generation in the Vast Expanse Dao Palace, and there had been only one cultivator every generation.

The last cultivator of the Star-Seeding Dao was Lord Zhou... Could it be him? It can't be anyone from the Never-Ending Clan. Such a mystic art requires the predecessor's complete consent for the inheritance to be valid. Even a powerful cultivator at the Star realm wouldn't be able to influence the inheritance! Little

Missy fell silent. She was more confused than ever. She had fallen into a deep slumber after being injured severely and entering the mask. She had no inkling of what had happened after that.

The mask had been shattered, and she had become incomplete, losing many of her memories. She had found the enormous corpse on the moon familiar but had no recollection of him.

Of the memories she currently had, those regarding Lord Zhou showed a mild-mannered, dignified man with unbending righteousness. She didn't believe that such a person could be capable of these deeds—especially those that had taken place in the Death Dao Battleship.

The familiar heads hanging on the ends of the tentacles, the devouring of Dao Palace cultivators, and the plan to sacrifice the entire Federation—these couldn't be the actions or desires of the man in her memories!

Little Missy fell into a confused silence. Wang Baole rested in her arms as she continued racing through the skies. They finally found the Immortal Platform. She struggled to activate the Immortal Platform, sending Wang Baole away. Her blurry form finally dissipated, sending her and her confused heart back into a deep slumber.

While that was happening, in the damaged Death Dao Battleship, under the collapsed cavern of the third level... a fourth level was revealed!

Even Wang Baole hadn't managed to discover this level. It remained unaffected as the world outside shook and collapsed.

It was a completely different place compared to the other worlds, which had been dark and filled with corpses. Birdsong and floral fragrance filled the air, the skies were blue, and oceans covered the surface of this world. In the middle of the vast ocean, there was an island. On the island, there was a mountain. And, atop the mountain, floated a soft, glowing light.

Within the light sat a person, indistinct and fading in and out of view. It appeared to be a woman. Her long hair flowed to her shoulders. She was likely an incredible beauty.

If someone of incredible cultivation, who had the ability to see past all disguises and discern one's essence, were present now, they would be able to tell instantly, that this woman... was not of the Never-Ending Clan. Her incredible beauty wasn't merely a superficial piece of clothing!

If Little Missy was there, she would have been shocked to see this woman. That was because she was no stranger to her at all!

She had been one of Little Missy's friends in the past, a cultivator from the Vast Expanse Dao Palace!

The woman sitting in the glowing light had appeared to be asleep before Daoist You Ran had died. Her eyelashes fluttered then, and she opened her eyes, revealing the starlight held within!

He has died... That's not surprising though, considering that his opponent is the Saint's chosen one. The woman smiled. She felt a loss at Daoist You Ran's death, but she wasn't particularly upset. He wasn't the only Star Seed host she had in her possession. The Never-Ending Clan member who had discovered Wang Baole collecting fragments of the mask in the Sea of Fire on the sword handle had been another one of her Star Seed hosts as well.

She hadn't interfered with their affairs much. She had only observed silently through their eyes, allowing the Star Seed hosts to act according to their desires and will. They themselves had no idea that someone had planted a Star Seed inside them or that their deaths could be determined with a single thought.

Since You Ran has carried out his plan to this point, he should be allowed to complete it. That should make a rather good game. The woman smiled after some thought. She lifted a finger on her right hand. In the distance, waves rolled and the sea parted. Up rose a body!

It was the body of a Never-Ending Clan member that exuded Soul Conduit realm cultivation. Something drew the body over, before the woman. She pointed again. Daoist You Ran's memories materialized as a soft glowing light, which entered the body through its head. Then, she did something else, causing flesh and skin to begin to shift as clothes materialized on the Never-Ending Clan cultivator!

It wasn't conventional clothing, but... the body of a Dao Palace cultivator!

It was the exact image of Daoist You Ran as he had appeared in the Dao Palace!

After accomplishing all that, the woman waved her hand. The newly born Daoist You Ran vanished and reappeared on the second level. He shuddered, then opened his eyes and immediately climbed to his feet. Fury lit up his eyes as he howled.

"Wang Baole!"

He had no memory of being killed. He only remembered discovering Wang Baole draining the battle robes and rushing over to stop him. Before he had been able to do anything, Wang Baole had blown up his Thearch Armor and sent the entire cavern crashing down on them. The first and second levels of this world had caved in.

He had abandoned the idea of chasing after Wang Baole then decisively. Instead, he had begun salvaging the situation while carrying out his own plans!

He suspected nothing. The woman had allowed the newly reborn Daoist You Ran to inherit his control over the enslaved Mie Liezi and the other cultivators.

He had no idea that on the distant fourth level, there was a pair of eyes watching him secretly.

"Everything in this world, including the stars... has their destined path. Observing as their fates unfold, and instead of interfering directly, transforming into an omniscient power that nudges them in the right direction, that... is the Star-Seeding Dao! Perhaps we should call this... the Heaven-Seeding Dao! The past generations of cultivators have gotten it all wrong!" The woman enveloped in the glowing sphere on the fourth level murmured. Her eyes devoid of emotion, she turned and gazed in another direction.

Her gaze seemed to see right through the battleship, past the ancient sword, and past space, landing on the distant... moon!

"That is why... my dear husband, I don't regret what I've done. I'm clearly the more suitable of us both... Your master made the wrong choice. You lost the green lotus. What then gave you the right to inherit this mystic technique... In which case, even if I did steal the legacy left to you by your master through deception and caused your death, why did you continue to hold on to this grudge even after you died and turned into the living dead?"

Chapter 667: Declaring War on the Federation

It was unlikely that there was anyone on the ancient sword who knew the identity of the woman who was currently gazing at Earth. Even if there was someone who did, they wouldn't have the chance to enter the fourth level in the battleship and gaze upon the figure in the glowing sphere of light.

It didn't matter whether what she practiced was the Star-Seeding Dao or the Heaven-Seeding Dao though. This had almost nothing to do with Wang Baole at the moment. His final battle with Daoist You Ran had awakened his scabbard and released a hexed strand that it had absorbed previously, killing the latter.

If news of this were to spread, it would surely shock the entire Dao Palace and the Federation. It was an impossible feat!

Wang Baole had relied on numerous external powers, such as his various mystic techniques—Soul Guiding, Dream Spinning, Ten Thousand Tribulations, and A Thousand Lives. He had also relied on the Thearch Armor's self-destruction mechanism and the spirit energy he had drained from the Death Dao Battle Robes. In addition, Daoist You Ran hadn't been fighting at peak condition. Wang Baole's final blow had been the result of something unexpected as well.

Daoist You Ran had frozen for an imperceptible moment during his attempt to teleport away and avoid the black strand. Wang Baole, Little Missy, and even the mysterious woman hadn't noticed that.

That was the true cause of Daoist You Ran's death. With his cultivation, he would have been able to avoid a fatal hit even if he couldn't avoid being hit at all.

His death had led to the mysterious woman's construction of a new Daoist You Ran. She might have inserted Daoist You Ran's memories into the new body, but there was still a time-lapse between his death and his rebirth.

Perhaps she hadn't cared about that, or perhaps it was like she said and what she practiced was the Heaven-Seeding Dao. She followed certain laws that she had been enlightened of and set herself. She observed the fates of the others. Instead of interfering with destiny directly, she transformed herself into a supreme consciousness that tried to influence and nudge others along discreetly.

That was how... Zhao Yameng had appeared in the sword handle after being teleported out of the battleship and had enough time to run away. Others wouldn't have been able to return to the Vast Expanse Dao Palace in such a short period of time, but Zhao Yameng was a true inner sect disciple of the Vast Expanse Dao Palace. She had the right to activate a small part of the array formation on the ancient sword, as well as the knowledge to do so.

This had allowed Zhao Yameng to locate a teleportation array formation on an island in the shortest possible time, modify it, and teleport herself a farther distance.

This had allowed her to establish communications with Sect Lord Xu and the others in the Dao Palace. When the Sect Lord received Zhao Yameng's voice transmission and heard the contents of her frantically conveyed message, his breathing quickened, and alarm flashed across his face.

“Mie Liezi has been enslaved. Feng Qiuran’s status is unknown. Daoist You Ran is from the Never-Ending Clan! The mission was a trap. Most of the cultivators who participated in the mission are dead or enslaved. Sect Lord Xu... you must evacuate everyone immediately!”

Shock colored Sect Lord Xu’s face. He didn’t hesitate though and chose to believe what Zhao Yameng had told him. There was no time for him to consider the matter in detail. He immediately contacted the giant tree. The latter was to gather all cultivators from both the Dao Palace and the Federation. He was going to activate what they had set in place prior to and during the mission.

Wang Baole had left orders prior to the mission. Sect Lord Xu was an old and cunning fox himself. He hadn’t approved of the rescue mission and had prepared for the worst. Even though he was still shocked by what he had just found out, he didn’t panic. Instead, he carried out his plans meticulously.

It took but six hours for everything to be in place. When Sect Lord Xu had first arrived with the second batch of Federation seedlings, he told Wang Baole that his mission was to construct a second teleportation array formation in secret. This was to be their contingency plan.

This should’ve been a difficult task. However, with Wang Baole, the fourth Grand Supreme Elder, supporting and covering his tracks, everything went smoothly. While the rest had been away on the rescue mission, he was the sole Nascent Soul realm cultivator in the entire sect. He might not have the rights to activate the Dao Palace’s teleportation array formation, but he had his backup teleportation array formation ready for deployment.

After activating the smaller teleportation array formation, Sect Lord Xu immediately sent the Federation cultivators away in batches. Their numbers were few. As a result, their departures progressed swiftly even though the teleportation array formation was a relatively small setup.

The giant tree led the first batch home so that he might inform the Federation of everything that had happened on the ancient sword. He himself stood quietly inside the teleportation array formation, modifying the array formation so that it would self-destruct after the final teleportation. He didn’t activate the self-destruct mechanism though. Instead, he held onto his voice transmission ring and gazed into the distance, waiting anxiously.

He had gained knowledge of most of what had happened inside the battleship through Zhao Yameng’s voice transmission. He knew the low odds of Wang Baole’s survival, which caused his spirits to sink. Regardless, a fierce light continued to shine in his eyes.

A day passed as he waited. Zhao Yameng, who had utilized her rights as an inner sect disciple and her knowledge to modify teleportation array formations, finally returned. Both of them activated the teleportation array formation. She stared in the direction of the Death Dao Battleship silently. Both of them knew that they could wait no longer. They sighed and initiated the teleportation.

They didn’t inform the Dao Palace disciples of what had gone on in the battleship as they didn’t know whom to trust. The fate of the Federation was at stake, so they dared not risk that.

The sounds of explosions suddenly rumbled in the air as the teleportation array formation began to break down. The sounds it was giving off were louder than all previous teleportations. It resounded throughout the Dao Palace and caught the attention of the Dao Palace disciples.

Dugu Lin was the first to sense it. He vanished from where he had gone into seclusion and reappeared at the teleportation array formation. It was located behind Grand Supreme Elder Wang Baole's grand palace. There were traces of a destroyed array formation on the ground. Emotions flickered across Dugu Lin's face, but he remained silent.

It didn't take long before the disappearance of the Federation cultivators caught everyone's attention. News traveled across the Dao Palace like wildfire, causing shock and suspicion. That didn't last long. Soon, a deafening explosion erupted in the distant Sea of Fire, shaking everyone to the core. They turned towards the direction of the explosion and saw an enormous battleship rushing towards them from the distant Sea of Fire.

It was the Death Dao Battleship!

Daoist You Ran had clearly repaired and restored the battleship. It wasn't at its ideal, full functionality, but it functioned. It approached the Dao Palace steadily, then stopped right before it. The main Dao Palace island was like an ant compared to the enormous battleship. Shock filled the Dao Palace cultivators. They trembled under the authority and power emanating from the battleship. Then, numerous figures darted out from the Death Dao Battleship!

These were all familiar faces. They were the cultivators who had left on the rescue mission. Most of them were Nascent Soul realm cultivators, though a few were at the Core Formation realm. The two that attracted the most attention were Mie Liezi and Daoist You Ran.

Their faces were dark and solemn. A closer look would reveal that the expression on Mie Liezi's face was more dazed than stormy, while Daoist You Ran was the one who was truly furious.

His senses had clearly informed him of the disappearance of all Federation cultivators from the Dao Palace. He knew what that meant.

He and Mie Liezi, alongside a dozen or so Nascent Soul realm cultivators, flew out. They hovered in mid-air above the main Dao Palace island. Everyone on the island lowered their heads and extended their greetings.

Dugu Lin stood amongst the crowd. His eyes fell on his master. He was one of the rare few who had noticed the dazed look on his master's face. He stared at his master, then shut his eyes, concealing the sorrow hidden deep within.

As the Dao Palace cultivators fell to their knees in greeting, Mie Liezi spoke. His hoarse voice resonated in the air like thunder.

"The Federation cultivators broke their promise and abandoned their principles. With Wang Baole as their leader, they stole precious treasures from the Never-Ending Clan battleship and harmed cultivators from the Dao Palace. These despicable and shameless cultivators staged an ambush on Elder Feng Qiuran. Because of them, the Dao Palace suffered tremendous losses!

"The Federation is not to be trusted. They have to pay a price for what they have done!

"I hereby make the following announcement. All Dao Palace cultivators are to gather immediately. We are declaring war on the Federation. We shall... wipe the Federation from the face of the Solar System. They shall become the fuel that will light the Vast Expanse Dao Palace's path towards our former glory!"

Chapter 668: Divine Palace!

War between the Federation and the Dao Palace had become an inevitability. Wang Baole was unaware of that at the moment, though, as he was still unconscious. Little Missy had used the Immortal Platform to send him to a place he wouldn't have been able to reach with his own level of cultivation!

It would have been challenging for him to reach this place even with his status as an adopted disciple, as a certain opportunity was required for it to present itself. Little Missy had given him that opportunity!

The skies weren't the dark and ruined skies of the sword body. Half of it was painted a pitch-black, while the other half was a burning, fiery red. If one were to take a closer look at the skies, they would be able to see the air warp and distort itself in the red part of the sky. The red half of the heavens seemed to be rippling with intense heat!

The pitch-black half resembled a starlit sky. Countless stars scattered across the half. The land... was a flat plain. There was no Sea of Fire, no green meadows, no ruins or corpses that were clear signs of past battle.

Wang Baole lay on the ground, motionless. He had suffered catastrophic injuries. His unconscious body healed sluggishly even with the green lotus inside it.

Time passed slowly. No one knew how much time had gone by, as the skies remained unchanged. There seemed to be no concept of day and night here. Nothing changed. Everything seemed eternal. At least, that was what Wang Baole saw when he opened his eyes—an unchanging, eternal sky.

Where... am I... Weakness and intense pain surged through his body, and there was bewilderment in his eyes.

He had been awake for an entire day, but his mind remained fuzzy, it was a complete blank. It was as if there was a gap in his memories. He had stared dumbly at the sky for one whole day without any visible reaction.

As the day passed and his injuries repaired themselves, the gaps in his memory began to fill in. His memories still seemed fuzzy though, possibly a side-effect of unleashing some terrifying mystic technique right before he had passed out.

The Death Dao Battleship... Daoist You Ran... a murderous pursuit... the scabbard... Fragments of his memories began to surface. Wang Baole lay there, his thoughts confused. His breathing suddenly quickened as his eyes regained slight focus.

I remember now. I was being pursued by Daoist You Ran. At the last moment, I triggered a hexed strand inside my scabbard... it killed him! Wang Baole became alert at that thought. His mind and his body tensed. He sat up immediately, scanned his surroundings, and then lifted his face skyward.

The vastness of his surroundings and the bizarre-looking sky drove Wang Baole into a long bout of silence. He shut his eyes slowly and called out for Little Missy. He didn't receive a reply.

When he opened his eyes again, he took stock of his injuries and discovered that nearly half of his injuries had been healed. His mind was still a bit foggy. There was something else that didn't affect his body much. The memories in his head—he could remember many things, but they felt more distant.

He had quite a few ideas about what had caused that. The one he thought was most likely to be right was... how this might have something to do with him forcibly activating his scabbard.

“My level of cultivation wasn't high enough for me to wield the scabbard. Is that why when I forcibly unleashed it, it affected my memories, sorta like a partial memory wipe...” Wang Baole muttered to himself. He rubbed at his forehead, then scanned his surroundings again. He wanted to know where he was.

Now that he had regained consciousness, he began studying his surroundings in detail. Gradually, his breathing began to quicken, and emotions flickered across his face. He took a deep breath, then got to his feet. He fought against waves of dizziness as he raced across the lands, inspecting the surrounding area. Then, he returned to his original spot and stood there as waves of emotion threatened to pull him under.

This isn't the sword handle, or the sword body, or any kind of island. There's no Sea of Fire or any hexes around!

The temperature... is lower than the temperature found in the sword handle and the sword body... Wang Baole's heart began to race. He stared at the sky and studied the red half of it for some time. Then, his eyes shifted to the starlit black half. He stared at the stars, located familiar celestial bodies, then shuddered. He knew where he was!

The tip of the sword... Wang Baole stared at the ground beneath his feet. A bolt of lightning seemed to flash across his mind, sending his body shivering. It took him a long while before he was ready to accept reality, that he was indeed at the tip of the sword.

He had his guesses about how he had arrived here.

“Was it Little Missy... did she bring me here when I was unconscious?” Wang Baole muttered. He didn't do anything reckless. Instead, he sat down and pulled out his pills, then continued the healing process.

He remembered Daoist You Ran perishing, which meant that war between the Federation and the Dao Palace had just been avoided. Even if war were to break out, the difference in power between the two would not be as vast as it had been. The Federation wouldn't be at the Dao Palace's complete mercy.

That was why Wang Baole wasn't panicking at the moment. He took a few days to allow his injuries and his body to recover almost fully. His memories finally cleared up as well. Then, he got to his feet, his eyes alert, and began to comb the area.

As the Grand Supreme Elder of the Vast Expanse Dao Palace, Wang Baole knew things a typical Dao Palace disciple didn't know. For example, the tip of the sword... was considered a restricted area of the Vast Expanse Dao Palace. Legend spoke of the land being where the ancient elders of the Vast Expanse Dao Palace slumbered!

The weakest of these elders were at the Planet realm, while some of them were even at the Eternal Star realm. Feng Qiuran had said that she believed that some Star Domain realm elders had survived and were at the tip of the sword.

She had no proof, but Mie Liezi had shared her beliefs. Wang Baole had only listened to what she had said casually. He might have thought about entering the sword tip one day, but he hadn't expected it to happen so soon!

With Little Missy back in slumber, Wang Baole had to be even more careful. He slowed down his pace, surveying his surroundings while on the move. The sword tip was vast, but it clearly couldn't compare to the sword body. He traveled for a few days before the land began to look different even though the skies remained unchanged.

It was as if the land had been divided into two halves by someone. A long barrier made of ice and snow stretched before Wang Baole, without an end in sight.

Wang Baole stood before the ice and snow and stared at the snowy lands ten feet ahead of him. He pondered for a moment, then took a step forward and crossed over.

A frosty, bone-piercing wind rushed at him the moment he stepped onto the snowy lands. It hit the barrier behind him and stopped. It was as if the snowy and windy land existed on a plane different from that of the flat plains behind him.

The skies were divided into two halves, one fiery hot and the other starlit, and the land was covered with ice and snow. The bizarre sight made Wang Baole more cautious. He didn't stop moving, but he didn't rush himself. He advanced carefully. After a long time, he finally saw three enormous, indistinct-looking buildings in the distance. He stopped in his tracks as his eyes widened.

After a long while, Wang Baole sucked in a cold gasp of air and began moving faster. The three towering buildings became clearer in his eyes as he approached.

They were three... thousand-foot-tall palaces, which were sealed in clear ice. They resembled three glaciers!

Wang Baole was awed by their majesty. When he got within a certain radius of the buildings, suddenly... a wisp of consciousness darted out from the palace on the left!

It was like an invisible, fearsome hurricane that swept across the air and rushed at Wang Baole like powerful waves. Wang Baole was like a tiny raft adrift in the ocean. His mind turned blank instantly. The terrifying wisp of consciousness didn't keep its hold over him for long, retreating instantly. Then, a voice, cold and devoid of emotion, echoed in the air.

"As an adopted disciple, you are qualified to shoulder the responsibility of rebuilding the Dao Palace. You may access the first Spiritual Palace for a chance to achieve phenomenal breakthroughs in your cultivation!"

Wang Baole didn't have time to react to those words before the enormous palace on his left let loose a series of loud cracking sounds. Layers of ice cracked and shattered instantly, falling apart and revealing the entire palace before Wang Baole's eyes!

Having been released from its icy prison, the palace began to emanate a crimson glow. The light transformed into an enormous pillar of light that rose to the heavens!

Chapter 669: The Relentless Wang Baole!

As Wang Baole stared at the ice that had suddenly melted, at the enormous palace that had unexpectedly revealed itself before him, and at the beam of red light rising into the sky, his breathing stopped momentarily. His hair ruffled as waves of spirit energy rippled from the towering beam of light. He stumbled back from the force of the spirit energy.

The land around him began to shake. It was as if a ferocious beast that had been in deep slumber for eons had just suddenly opened its eyes. The incredible power that emanated from it upon its awakening shook the world!

It might not be appropriate comparing Wang Baole to an ant next to the palace, but he was still incredibly small in comparison. The size of the palace and the aura it exuded gave one an impression of something unimaginably majestic and vast.

The impression given would have been magnified if one had been gazing at the palace from afar. The three palaces were enormous. With the other two palaces still sealed in ice, the palace with its crimson beam of light seemed especially arresting a sight.

It took more than thirty seconds before the palace's overwhelming aura slowly dissipated. The red beam of light continued rising into the heavens, and rings of spirit energy continued rippling outward from the beam. However, everything else returned to normalcy. The doors of the palace slid open slightly, spilling red light into the open.

It was but a narrow opening, a mere slit when compared to the entire palace, but to Wang Baole, the gap was wide enough for three grown men to march through while holding hands.

It was an awe-inspiring sight, but he was no longer a young and inexperienced brat who had just begun his journey of cultivation. He didn't act rashly. Instead, he surveyed his surroundings and thought carefully about what the icy voice had said earlier. He began piecing together the clues he had gathered. It gradually led him to a conclusion.

I'm being presented with a golden opportunity! Wang Baole's eyes shone brightly, burning with excitement and hunger. He had dreamed of becoming the Federation President since he was a kid. He knew that only the most powerful... had the right to command the entire Federation. If he could become stronger, he would have the power to master his own destiny!

Having survived a battle with Daoist You Ran and having experienced the powerlessness he had felt while on the Death Dao Battleship, Wang Baole's single-mindedness towards his cultivation and his pursuit for strength was unquenchable. He might not show it on his face, but in his heart, he hungered desperately for greater power!

Having thought it through and assessed the situation, Wang Baole raced towards the palace decisively. He arrived before the palace almost instantly. He stood before the opened doors, gritted his teeth, and stepped into the red light on the other side of the door!

Wang Baole's vision blurred and then cleared instantly. He was inside the palace, surrounded by a vast emptiness. There were three statues around him, and a red pearl was set on the top of their heads. It gave off a red light. Before him, sat an elder!

Shock rippled through Wang Baole when he saw the elder. He took a few steps back instinctively. Then, he steadied his breathing, cupped his fists, and took a deep bow.

"Greetings, Senior!"

Wang Baole continued standing there after his bow while sneaking a peek at the elder sitting before him. At first, he wondered who the person was, but he soon realized something was wrong.

He's not real? A thought flickered in Wang Baole's mind. He could tell that the elder's body wasn't real. It seemed illusory. He sat there, motionless.

As Wang Baole was studying the man before him, the elder, whose eyes had remained shut for who knows how long, suddenly opened his eyes. A gaze, bright like twin stars, landed on Wang Baole.

He felt something explode in his head. Those eyes seemed to see through him. No secret remained concealed under those eyes. Everything was exposed before the illusory elder's assessing gaze.

The feeling didn't last, as the elder soon retracted his gaze. Sweat poured down Wang Baole's forehead. He was breathing heavily and utterly shocked. He was still recovering from that shock when the illusory elder spoke with a raspy voice.

"You are qualified to take the trial. If you can endure the force of my spirit energy for ten counts, you will be deemed to have passed the trial. If you pass, you will receive the chance to enter the Ten Thousand Spirit Blood Pool once, and the opportunity to strengthen your physical body!"

The elder didn't give Wang Baole the freedom to accept or reject the offer. After he was done speaking, he raised his right hand suddenly and pointed at Wang Baole. The moment the finger stilled in mid-air, a powerful force that resembled a hurricane erupted from the elder's body. Waves of spirit energy surged outward like tumultuous waves stirred by a wild storm and rushed at Wang Baole like a tsunami, threatening to pull him under.

The force of those waves of energy could wipe everything out. They sent the earth quaking and the skies shaking, causing the world before Wang Baole's eyes to blur. He had become a single leaf in the storm, unable to hold onto his mind or a single breath. His entire body seemed to be screaming. He passed out instantly, his body shuddering under such terrifying power.

Wang Baole had no idea how much time had passed before he finally regained consciousness. He lay outside the palace, amidst a deathly silence. He was confused for a moment before he suddenly sat up. Memories of what had happened before he had passed out surfaced in his mind. His breathing stopped momentarily. Then, he turned his head towards the palace. The doors were still open, causing him to let loose a sigh of relief.

Seems like this trial won't disappear if one fails... There's no harm done even if I fail. I'll simply be pushed out? Wang Baole fell into a contemplative silence. He recalled what had happened before he had passed out. That might have something to do with him not being mentally prepared for the trial.

Let's give it another go! Determination flashed across Wang Baole's eyes. He got to his feet, shifted, and once again entered the palace. This time, he was ready for it. He unleashed his full cultivation as soon as he stepped inside, roaring as he tried his best to stand his ground. He didn't last long. Waves of spirit energy spiraled into a hurricane inside the halls a second time. In the next instant, Wang Baole's body was swept out of the halls, through the narrow opening between the doors. He crashed into the ground and was knocked out immediately.

Wang Baole woke up an hour later. He sat up and stared unblinkingly at the palace, the gears in his head spinning furiously. He reached a conclusion. He wasn't going to be able to breeze through this trial.

The rules didn't say anything about using Dharmic treasures! Wang Baole's eyes flashed. He lowered his head and began rummaging through his storage bag. After a short while, he pulled out several Dharmic Armaments. He armed himself and then charged forward, entering the palace again. This time, he managed to last three counts. On the fourth, a loud thud sounded from his body, and he passed out, being sent out again.

It's not that my body can't withstand the pressure, it's my senses, they're too sensitive. That's why I'm affected by the overwhelming pressure. I might stand a chance if I can somehow dull my senses... Having woken up again, Wang Baole frowned and began thinking. After a long bout of contemplation, his eyes suddenly lit up.

What if I knock myself out after I enter the palace. Doesn't that mean I won't be able to sense the suppressive force at all? Maybe I'll pass that way. If that doesn't work, I'll just have to... recite the sutra. Wang Baole grew excited at that thought before sighing. He really didn't want to use the sutra unless it was his last resort. He had a feeling that the mysterious entity had probably just fallen asleep after he had been awakened the last time. If he were to disturb his rest again, he might just incur the entity's wrath.

"He probably isn't a morning person... Of course, most importantly, I, Wang Baole, should be relying on my own abilities to win this chance for a breakthrough!" Wang Baole muttered to himself. Then, he dashed through the opening again. This time, before the elder could unleash his cultivation, Wang Baole raised his hand decisively and smacked himself hard on his own forehead.

There was a loud smack. He had used quite a bit of force and was knocked out immediately. Relentless to a fault, Wang Baole had even unleashed his cultivation as he hit himself on the forehead. This time, he was knocked out so hard that he might be declared dead. He fell to the floor with a loud thud. The illusory elder froze at the sight. As an illusion, he didn't possess much intelligence. But it was clear that Wang Baole's self-inflicted violence had confused and bewildered him.

The waves of spirit energy that he had unleashed dissipated. There was analysis and assessment in his eyes as he pondered whether Wang Baole had fulfilled the requirements of the trial.

He had never encountered something like this before. There were many who had been knocked out by his blast of spirit energy, but Wang Baole's unconsciousness was akin to a complete shutdown of his five senses. He was currently no different from a corpse. To a certain extent, that meant that he was no longer affected by the elder's suppressive force... Ten counts passed as the illusory elder was steeped in confusion.

A long moment passed. The confused elder gave Wang Baole a strange look and then shut his eyes.

“You pass!”

Chapter 670: Nascent Soul!

Wang Baole couldn't hear the two words. He had given it all he had with that single blow to his forehead. If his physical body wasn't so resilient, he might have smacked himself dead instead of unconscious.

That was why even though Wang Baole had the green lotus to help with his recovery, he still took another two hours before he finally opened his eyes. He looked around with confusion in his eyes. His head felt like it had just been split wide open. It was fortunate that he was used to waking up after being knocked out. Then, he recalled what happened prior to his being knocked out. His eyes widened, and he got up hurriedly and looked around him. He wasn't outside the palace, he was still inside!

The illusory elder had vanished. What remained in the spot where he had sat was a floating, glowing, oval-shaped doorway. It seemed to be waiting for Wang Baole.

Wang Baole was overwhelmed with excitement at the sight. His head stopped hurting, and he stood up and hurried over. He studied the doorway, then looked around him. He wouldn't be called Wang Baole if he still didn't realize that he had passed the trial. Beside himself with excitement, Wang Baole burst out into laughter.

“What a smart daddy I am. A simple trial like this is a piece of cake!” Wang Baole said smugly as he patted his tummy. It wasn't as bouncy as he remembered it to be. It was hard and muscular instead. He was ill-accustomed to the feeling and didn't get a kick out of patting himself.

Being too skinny isn't a good thing. It's better to have more meat on me, it's more comfortable to touch. Wang Baole sighed. He stood before the glowing doorway, took a deep breath, then stepped through.

His vision blurred and then cleared immediately. The doorway functioned like a teleportation portal, sending Wang Baole to a small world that the Vast Expanse Dao Palace had created solely for the inheritance of its legacy!

It was a small world that couldn't even rival the size of the moon. In fact, it was a mere one-tenth of the moon's size. It might be huge to an ordinary person, but its size was nothing to Wang Baole.

Regardless, he was still shocked by the world's appearance when he first landed. The sky was pure white with red painted in the middle. The colors weren't the skies' true colors, but... a reflection of the land's!

The vast white lands were devoid of plant life. White desert sand filled the entire world, and a huge basin was situated in the middle.

To be more precise, in the middle of this world was a ring of mountains that looped into a circle. The result was something that looked like a basin from afar. In fact, it resembled a crater lake!

That wasn't what had taken Wang Baole aback. What had sent him gasping and had shaken him to the core were the countless corpses of huge beasts piled on the circular mountain range!

The dead beasts looked fearsome and terrifying. Wang Baole didn't recognize most of them, but there were a few he recognized—beasts that belonged in the ancient legends of the Federation, beasts like the great dragons!

He saw several dragons—winged beasts of ancient western civilizations—as well as enormous, green serpents of the east.

He also saw the bodies of several giants, as well as piles of Never-Ending Clan corpses. There must have been at least a hundred thousand corpses on those mountains.

They had all been flung onto the mountains, their necks sliced open. If he could see into the mountains, he would be able to see the purple-black stain of the mountain rocks, as if they had all been drenched in blood!

The expression on his face turned solemn at the sight. He couldn't stop the images from surfacing in his mind. Many years ago, someone must have exterminated hordes of beasts and Never-Ending Clan members here. Someone had slit their throats here, then watched them howl and shriek as their blood spilled, flowed down the mountains, and gathered in the basin... transforming the basin... into a vast lake of blood that now pooled in the middle of the ring of mountains!

The blood lake was reflected onto the sky. That was the pool of blood-red in the middle of the pure white sky!

Is this... the Ten Thousand Spirit Blood Pool? Wang Baole hovered in mid-air as he looked down at the blood lake in the center of the mountain range. After some time, he shoved down the shock he had been feeling. A strange light appeared in his eyes.

From what the elder had told him, Wang Baole already knew that the greatest property the Ten Thousand Spirit Blood Pool had was in strengthening the physical body. After witnessing the corpses with his own eyes, he realized what was going on here.

It distills the blood of ten thousand spirits, then uses the nutrients in their blood to nourish the bodies of Dao Palace cultivators. That is how those who come here seeking a breakthrough achieve a vastly stronger physical body!

This is a rare opportunity! Wang Baole took a deep breath. He wasn't a clean freak, and he wasn't bothered by the smell of blood or how the blood lake was formed. Even clean freaks would find it difficult to refuse this chance at achieving a breakthrough. An instinctive hunger began to unfurl inside Wang Baole as he gazed at the blood lake.

It was like how parched earth would hunger for rain. That was how Wang Baole felt at the moment. He only thought for a brief moment before his eyes flashed, and he dashed towards the lake.

He approached the lake and, without hesitation, crossed his legs and lowered himself, sinking to the bottom of the lake.

An unimaginable Blood Qi erupted from the lake and charged towards Wang Baole as soon as he came into contact with the water!

It seemed as if the Blood Qi had been waiting in the lake for numerous years. It had reached a certain fullness, and Wang Baole's appearance presented it with an outlet. An overwhelming, tumultuous Blood Qi rushed into Wang Baole instantly, breaking into his body mercilessly and drilling madly into his every pore.

Wang Baole almost cried out. He felt as if flesh blood was drilling into his body, and as if countless iron needles were stabbing him. He shuddered violently as Blood Qi rushed crazily through his body, intensifying the pain. He started to feel as if something was trying to tear him apart from the inside. His body seemed on the verge of explosion.

Blood Qi was unlike Spirit Qi. It did nothing for his cultivation. It was only meant to nourish his physical flesh. Wang Baole couldn't tell if he was delusional, but amidst the pain, he could feel his body strengthening after having seen no improvement for so long!

He was right, his physical body was becoming stronger. As Blood Qi continued to make its way inside him, his body continued to be torn apart. His meridians, bones, and internal organs were all ripped apart!

Upon closer look, one would see his blood, flesh, and bone disintegrating, inch by inch, as Blood Qi continued to drill inside him. They then reformed instantly as they were nourished by the Blood Qi!

There was no way this didn't hurt!

No matter how stubbornly resilient Wang Baole was, he was currently in so much agony that he could pass out at any moment. He gritted his teeth and forced himself to stay awake. He was able to do that since he had been knocked out multiple times and was now used to it. Else, he would have long lost consciousness.

He wasn't sure if the trial would end upon his losing consciousness, but he didn't want to bet on that not happening. That was why he was going to try his best to keep himself awake!

The pain grew stronger. The sensation of his body being torn apart, and the deafening thunder that accompanied the sensation, were secondary to the pain. In fact, he soon found himself facing a more unbearable trial.

As his physical body grew stronger, the remnant thoughts of the dead that had remained in the lake—their madness and their resentment—erupted inside Wang Baole's head as he continued draining the Blood Qi!

The pained howls of countless beasts lashed out inside Wang Baole's mind as he struggled with his pain. Those beasts and Never-Ending Clan members seemed to have taken him over. He was experiencing the madness, grief, and fury they had felt in their last moments!

These remnant thoughts lashed out at Wang Baole, forcing him to lose his sense of self momentarily. He became a huge dragon, and his throat was slit open. Then he was some other beast, whose throat was also sliced open. He could feel himself transforming into these beasts and Never-Ending Clan cultivators.

It felt like he was experiencing death repeatedly. He couldn't tell how many times he had died.

He finally couldn't take it any longer. He passed out. That finally signaled the end!

The instant he lost consciousness... his physical body began to exude a strange scent while laying in the pool of blood. It suddenly broke through and unleashed... an incredible power that far surpassed that of an ordinary Nascent Soul realm cultivator!

His physical body had reached the Nascent Soul realm!