

Worth 801

Chapter 802: The Exchange of Life Essences!

Exchange Life Essences? Wang Baole was stunned. He felt that the statement was a little weird. He secretly thought that the exchange of life essences was extremely dangerous. Moreover, essences involved the core of one's soul and couldn't be easily traded away...

Thinking to that point, Wang Baole was a little cautious and was about to control his Dharmic Battleship to leave. But just as he was about to leave, a wisp of aura similar to that of the stone golem patriarch suddenly spread forth from within the star system. Not waiting for Wang Baole's expression to change, the second and third wisp of Planet realm auras congruent to that of the Sovereign Patriarch also spread forth.

Like a sun paired with two moons, they engulfed the entire star system. Luckily, the three mighty figures' auras were gentle, and their suppressive forces were restrained. However... they still shook Wang Baole's soul.

Why are there so many Eternal Star realm individuals? Including this place, I've already met two during my journey! Wang Baole felt his mouth go dry. He was quickly pondering in his mind whether to continue using his senior brother's name or to try using his Dao Scripture to scare them. Meanwhile, the three auras trapped Wang Baole there. As the nearest vine to him shook slightly, seven to eight silhouettes flew out from within the fruit planet under the vine and stepped onto a leaf.

The leaf quickly spread and neared where Wang Baole was.

Wang Baole blinked and secretly sighed. Since the three auras had trapped him, Wang Baole didn't dare to forcefully leave. So as he felt depressed in his heart, he tilted his head to stare at Little Wu.

Little Wu felt confused after being stared at. After being stunned for a while, he didn't know how he bothered his daddy and felt indignant in his heart.

Wang Baole also didn't know why he wanted to stare at Little Wu. But after doing so, he felt more comforted in his heart. After coughing, he stopped considering how to leave. Instead, he flew out of his Dharmic Battleship with a flick of his body, gazing at the approaching leaf and the seven to eight cultivators atop it.

Those cultivators looked similar to humans, but their ears were a little long, making them look like rabbits. Their bodies also looked very strong, with each of them having round waists and large arms. While the muscles on their bodies were like jumping mice and startled people, they also made it easy to neglect their gender...

The seven to eight cultivators who looked like strong men were actually all female. As for their cultivations, their leader was a Spirit Immortal, while the rest of them were at least early-stage Soul Conduits. At the same time, not only did they not have any enmity towards foreigners on their faces, they were actually somewhat fanatical. After nearing, they all looked at Wang Baole.

Being looked at like that by those females, Wang Baole felt a strange palpitation in his heart. Therefore, he quickly cupped his fists and spread his Divine Sense.

“Chen Qing civilization envoy, Long Nanzi, greets his fellow Daoists.”

The Divine Sense was the best way to break past the language barrier. Wang Baole learned this from his multiple expeditions. As his Divine Sense spread out, the vine leaf the females were on also stopped within the cosmos in front of Wang Baole. The Spirit Immortal female leader atop the leaf sized up Wang Baole as a smile appeared on her face.

“Welcome to the Vine civilization, you can call me Ling Shan.”

A smile was often the easiest and most direct communication method when strangers came into contact for the first time. Sometimes, it could convey many different meanings and was often quite effective. But because the smile was overly fanatical, Wang Baole couldn't help but feel nervous. So he tested the waters by asking a few questions.

The several females from the vine civilization answered each and every one of Wang Baole's questions. Such sincerity made Wang Baole even more nervous. But he gained a deeper understanding of the star system more or less.

The vine civilization was indeed a matriarchal civilization. Although there were male cultivators there, they were a minority in terms of both numbers and status. At the same time, the vine civilization was spread across the Never-Ending Clan's star domain like dandelions. They spread out to become tribe-like small civilizations of various sizes and were part of the few neutral parties. They didn't actively participate in battle, but if someone messed with them, all of the tribes would gather together to unleash a counterattack.

This place was one of the vine civilization's many tribe star systems. Towards Wang Baole's arrival, they were very enthusiastic. They even invited Wang Baole to head to one of the planets to rest.

At first, Wang Baole decided not to go. However, being engulfed by the auras of the Eternal Star realm and Planet realm mighty figures, he had no choice but to agree. He stored his Half-Dharmic Battleship, brought along Little Wu and the donkey, and stepped onto the vine leaf.

Worried that the donkey couldn't control its mouth and would eat something it wasn't supposed to, thereby bringing trouble to himself, Wang Baole thought for a moment and stored the donkey, who was visibly excited, into his storage bag.

Little Wu is fine, this child doesn't eat anything he sees. Wang Baole coughed. As he was about to ask the females more questions, their gazes turned towards Little Wu, and their eyes became visibly brighter. There were even some who were whispering to one another. This scene made Wang Baole feel displeased in his heart. As for Little Wu, he was also visibly trembling with fear. Looking towards Wang Baole, he wanted to speak, but he stopped himself.

Just like that, under the invitation of this place's female cultivator, Wang Baole brought Little Wu to the nearest fruit-like planet. That place wasn't very different from a real planet. There were mountain valleys and rivers, the air was clear, and Spirit Qi was abundant. Green plants covered the entire planet, causing the place to be covered with fog perennially, as though it was a paradise.

Through the fog, one could faintly make out many treehouses on the ground. Besides that, Wang Baole also saw the mountain ranges on the planet. They even contained some minerals that were extremely

valuable in the Divine Eye civilization. There was such a huge amount of minerals that many were exposed to the elements.

At the same time, many trees bore fruit. Although Wang Baole didn't do much research on elixir refinement, he still saw what some precious herbs looked like in the Divine Eye civilization's ancient literature. With a simple sweep of his gaze, he actually saw seven to eight different extremely valuable medicinal fruits.

So rich! Wang Baole's heart beat faster. After blinking, he pondered about whether he could trade for some here.

Bringing this thought with him, Wang Baole also saw some winged children on the way to the planet. Their little faces peeked out from the fog occasionally as they looked towards Wang Baole and company curiously before quickly going back into the fog. As they did so, sounds of frolicking spread in waves.

This scene would make anyone's soul calm down unwittingly. Wang Baole also heaved a sigh of relief. He noticed that the general atmosphere of the vine civilization was the same as what he scouted out previously. According to the records of the ancient literature that Wang Baole read in the Divine Eye civilization, when meeting such kind civilizations, so long as one didn't do anything taboo, they would normally not be in any danger.

This was actually true. Wang Baole was invited onto that planet and entered a palace meant for welcoming guests on one of the mountain peaks out of the many mountains. When he entered, spirit fruit, wine, and other delicacies that Wang Baole hadn't seen before and couldn't name but felt could be eaten were served by the vine civilization's female cultivators.

Those female cultivators still all had huge arms, round waists, and majestic auras. After becoming used to it, Wang Baole's previous feelings of shock and fear lessened. So after pondering for a moment, he cupped his fists courteously while speaking towards the Spirit Immortal female who received him.

"Senior Ling Shan, is it possible to trade for some materials here?"

Hearing that, the Spirit Immortal female laughed. After raising her right hand, a jade slip appeared in her giant hand, and she passed it to Wang Baole.

"Fellow Daoist Long Nanzi, while our vine civilization remains a neutral civilization, we also provide fair trade deals for visitors from all civilizations. So long as you have enough plant stones, you can exchange them for any of the items listed here."

After hearing that, Wang Baole's eyes shone. After taking a look at the jade slip, his heart unwittingly beat faster. Truly, the types of items listed in the jade slip were so comprehensive that it exceeded his knowledge. He hadn't heard of many of the materials listed inside.

And every type had a corresponding number of plant stones required to exchange for it. It could range from one to thousands and even to hundreds of thousands. The most expensive item of all was an Eternal Star Pill!

It was worth more than three million plant stones!

Wang Baole blinked, raised his head to look at the female, and asked courteously, “Senior Ling Shan, may I know the exchange rate between plant stones and Spirit Stones?”

Faced with Wang Baole’s inquiry, Ling Shan smiled and shook her head while saying, “Fellow Daoist Long Nanzi, Spirit Stones cannot be exchanged for plant stones. Plant stones are an item unique to the vine civilization. There’s only one way to exchange for them. That is... exchanging for them using your life essence!”

Chapter 803: A Huge Sacrifice!

Through the thorough explanation of the vine civilization’s female cultivator, Ling Shan, Wang Baole’s eyes grew wide, and he couldn’t help but inhale. Taking a close look at the burly female cultivator in front of him, he mumbled, “You can do that?”

Wang Baole felt that he had widened his horizons. Simply put, the only way for one to exchange for plant stones was for them to leave their bloodline within the vine civilization. Because the vine civilization was a matriarchal society, they were very persistent in looking for bloodlines. They searched for the bloodlines of all outstanding organisms within the universe and incorporated them into their own civilization, thereby causing their civilization to continuously develop, evolve, and achieve their maximum potential.

Although Wang Baole saw this method as somewhat primitive, since the vine civilization had Eternal Star realm mighty figures, it was obvious that it was on a much higher level compared to the Federation. So, Wang Baole had no right to comment much. He could only sigh with emotion while thinking that, with the vastness of the universe and its uncountable amounts of different types of civilizations, many paths of progression that outsiders would struggle to understand would be formed.

It was just that... after Wang Baole asked for the prices thoroughly, he looked at the jade slip in his hand and realized that to exchange for an amount of resources that he would find satisfactory, he required at least hundreds of thousands of plant stones...

Even if he reduced his requirements and lowered all of his needs to the bare minimum, he would still need around ten thousand plant stones. If that was the case... the difficulty of obtaining materials would be increased infinitely. That was because a normal life essence could only be exchanged for one plant stone.

“So, are you interested in a trade deal with the vine civilization?” After telling Wang Baole everything he wanted to know, Ling Shan swept her gaze towards Wang Baole while speaking with her eyes full of anticipation.

But after she finished speaking, Wang Baole wasn’t given a chance to reply before her expression suddenly changed as though she was listening to something. It was as though a mighty figure had sent her a voice transmission. At the same time, Wang Baole also felt a gaze that came from the cosmos sweep across his body thoroughly.

When Wang Baole became fearful, Ling Shan’s expression changed to one of disappointment. When she lay her gaze upon Wang Baole’s body again, she shook her head and sighed.

“Fellow Daoist, your body is more special... I’m afraid you’re unable to meet our requirements.” After speaking tactfully, Ling Shan looked towards Little Wu, who kept his head down from the start and seemed to be hiding beside Wang Baole. When she did so, her eyes shone brightly.

“However... this fellow Daoist here meets the vine civilization’s requirements perfectly. If he is agreeable, we can quote a price of two plant stones for one portion of life essence!”

Once Ling Shan spoke, Little Wu’s expression changed completely. Wang Baole also had his eyes grow wide.

“Daddy, save me...” Little Wu’s body trembled, and he was about to cry. Wang Baole also felt very displeased in his heart. He knew his condition and guessed that the Eternal Star realm mighty figure should have more or less noticed that his body now wasn’t his true flesh body. That was why Ling Shan spoke in that manner just now. However, he still felt that he was beaten by someone in a certain aspect.

Humph, this is because my flesh body isn’t here. If it was, I think this vine civilization would quote a price of ten thousand plant stones in exchange for a portion of life essence. After all, I’m the Federation President, Junior Brother of Chen Qing, and the only Dark Child of this generation! Thinking in this way, pride spread in Wang Baole’s heart as he suppressed his indignance somewhat. Afterwards, he started analyzing Ling Shan’s words. His eyes also gradually lit up as he looked at Little Wu while shaking his head instinctively.

“No!”

Hearing that, Little Wu was immediately moved. He heaved a sigh of relief in his heart and secretly thought that his daddy treated him well after all...

But just as he thought that, Wang Baole’s words entered his ears.

“This foster son of mine has an incredibly huge background. He is the prince of the Black Earth Empire and is a direct descendant with an extremely pure bloodline. One plant stone isn’t enough, there must at least be five!”

“Daddy, don’t be like this, I’m still a child!” Hearing Wang Baole’s words change, Little Wu felt almost all of his hair stand on end. Many memories of what he heard regarding the vine civilization in his homeland previously appeared in his mind. As his hair stood on end, he instinctively tried to escape.

But Wang Baole was faster. In an instant, he neared Little Wu and pressed on his shoulder. A genial smile appeared on his face. It also expressed anticipation and happiness.

“Little Wu, didn’t you say you had 100 thousand concubines at first? This small thing now is nothing to be worried about. I don’t need you to use all the power you used to conquer 100 thousand concubines. You just need to use 10% of that power. Go and obtain 100 thousand plant stones for me.”

“Daddy, hear me out. I really can’t, I...” Little Wu cried. As he did so, he grabbed onto Wang Baole’s leg and wouldn’t let go no matter what. His voice was wretched, and his expression showed extreme fear.

Seeing that, Wang Baole became softhearted for a moment, sighed, and looked towards Ling Shan.

“This is my dearest son, so I only have one request. Do your best!”

Wang Baole sighed with emotion in his heart and secretly thought that he was still too softhearted and couldn't stand seeing others cry. So after saying that, he waved his hands, tilted his head, and said, "I'm handing him over to you!"

Hearing Wang Baole's agreement, Ling Shan and the several female cultivators beside her immediately became excited. They discussed for a while and sized up Little Wu again, even sending voice transmissions to their clan elders. After repeated confirmation, they were extremely satisfied with Little Wu, so Ling Shan smiled slightly.

"Don't worry, Fellow Daoist, this isn't the first time our vine civilization has exchanged resources with humans. Rest assured that your son won't be put in any danger. My clan sisters in charge of this will be bringing him over." While speaking, Ling Shan raised her right hand, weaved hand seals, and pointed. Immediately, a giant vortex suddenly appeared in the empty space beside her.

As the vortex buzzed while spinning, as though a path was created out of nowhere, dozens of silhouettes with lithe and graceful figures walked out from it. These ladies all had skin as white as snow and looked extremely beautiful. Some even had heavenly fragrances fit for a national beauty. What made Wang Baole's pupils grow wide the most was that these ladies were all shy. They didn't seem to be faking it, but their disposition and other areas were all extremely pure.

That greatly confused Wang Baole. He looked at those ladies, then looked at Ling Shan and company. His brain couldn't react to that so quickly. As for Little Wu, he also stared with wide eyes and swallowed a few mouthfuls of saliva. Immediately, he stopped crying and put on a proper expression as he got up rapidly. After arranging his clothes, he bowed towards Wang Baole with cupped fists.

"Since Daddy has ordered me to do something, I must complete my mission no matter what!" After speaking, he turned around quickly, as though he was scared that Wang Baole would go back on his decision, and walked towards that group of ladies on his own accord. His jolly steps made Wang Baole feel even more uncomfortable in his heart.

But things were already as they were, and Wang Baole hadn't thought of stopping them. Under the accompaniment of Ling Shan, he was assigned a penthouse to rest. Before leaving, Ling Shan told Wang Baole that because the exchange amount was rather huge this time, he would have to wait for at least half a month.

Towards that, Wang Baole expressed his understanding. So, in the next half a month, although he didn't see Little Wu again, Wang Baole toured the vine civilization under the accompaniment of its cultivators. Wang Baole was especially interested in the vine civilization's artifact refinement. It just so happened that Ling Shan had a certain level of expertise in artifact refinement. Therefore, she shared her thoughts on artifact refinement with Wang Baole, and he did likewise during their casual conversations, and they both benefited from it.

Just like that, half a month slowly passed. When Wang Baole finished touring almost the entire vine civilization and increased his artifact refinement expertise through application, Little Wu... returned.

While one couldn't exactly say that he looked completely different, he wasn't too far from it. Returning while being supported by two female cultivators, Little Wu had black eyebags and looked like his vitality was greatly sapped. The moment he saw Wang Baole, Little Wu threw a jade slip towards him.

“Daddy, I’ve tried my best, let me rest for a while...”

Seeing Little Wu like that, Wang Baole was visibly moved and felt warmth in his heart. That was especially so after he saw the number of plant stones on the jade slip actually exceeded his requirements and reached 160 thousand. Seeing that, Wang Baole was even more touched.

Even the two female cultivators who brought Little Wu back felt amazed.

“Fellow Daoist over here actually completed the exchange amount five days ago, but he insisted on persevering just to make his daddy happy. Such willpower is extremely hard to find.”

Hearing their words, Wang Baole’s expression gradually became weird. But he didn’t think too much of it. After settling Little Wu down, he immediately contacted Ling Shan and started exchanging. Very quickly, Wang Baole used up all 160 thousand plant stones and purchased large amounts of precious materials.

After finishing that, although Little Wu was reluctant to leave, Wang Baole said goodbye to the vine civilization cultivators and left the star system. He stepped into the cosmos once again and continued speeding towards places even further away.

Chapter 804: An Old Acquaintance!

On the following journey, as Wang Baole went further and further away from the Divine Eye civilization, he slowly obtained more rewards. At the same time, as he continued feeding his dragonfly Stone Bamboos, it finally completed its evolution and reached the level of Dharmic Battleship!

However, because Wang Baole hadn’t reached the Spirit Immortal realm, he couldn’t fuse with his Dharmic Battleship like Fairy Ling You did and cause it to become his own armor-like incarnation.

Although the situation was as such now, Wang Baole had done research on how to resolve this problem. However, they were imperfect, and he required more time to analyze and obtain a result.

Besides that, the resources Little Wu exchanged for through his huge sacrifice also made Wang Baole’s forces get even stronger buffs in this period of time. For example, almost all of the battleships in his storage bracelet were upgraded by Wang Baole. Now, every battleship’s explosive power was much stronger than before.

That was especially so considering more than a hundred battleships were specially designed by Wang Baole to have an explosive power equivalent to that of an all-out attack by a Soul Conduit realm mighty figure. As for the rest, they all had an explosive power equal to that of a perfected stage Nascent Soul.

There were even ten battleships that Wang Baole reserved as his trump cards. Once they exploded, they would have an explosive power equal to that of a perfected stage Soul Conduit. Under Wang Baole’s calculations, combining his battleships’ power with his Divine Justice Shield and Dharmic Battleship Locust, even if he met a Spirit Immortal... so long as his opponent didn’t have a Dharmic Battleship, Wang Baole was very confident of defeating them.

And even if his opponent had a Dharmic Battleship, Wang Baole was confident of dealing with them and leaving the battlefield at any time.

So, it really is better to travel ten thousand miles than to read ten thousand books... Wang Baole felt a multitude of emotions. He felt that his decision to go on an expedition was very correct. And if he continued like this, he felt that when his army returned in the future, it would definitely astound everyone.

Moreover, during his travels and under his consolidation, and especially after he was boosted by the pills Little Wu sacrificed himself to exchange for, he was quickly and steadily getting closer to the perfected stage Soul Conduit realm.

By the time I return... I hope to have already broken through the Soul Conduit realm and stepped into the Spirit Immortal realm. Then, if I could incorporate my Thearch Armor with my Dharmic Battleship, my power would exceed that of others by a huge amount. Combining that with my Divine Armament... It wouldn't be impossible for an early-stage Spirit Immortal to suppress a mid-stage Spirit Immortal! Wang Baole had lofty spirits and soaring determination as he controlled the Dharmic Battleship. He brought the donkey and Little Wu, who was full of vigor after recovering, along as he traveled forward.

Maybe because Little Wu had made a huge sacrifice for Wang Baole, after recovering, although he still revered Wang Baole, he was obviously much more relaxed. When he was together with the donkey, he didn't suck up to it like before. Wang Baole did indeed feel that Little Wu had done a lot for his previously, so he treated him more nicely.

Although the donkey didn't know the details, it did follow Wang Baole since young. Hence, it was very sensitive towards Wang Baole's actions and faintly noticed this. Although it was unhappy in its heart, he tolerated it after considering his food source.

After all, there was a certain portion of the resources Little Wu traded for via his sacrifice that Wang Baole threw to the donkey as food. At the same time, he sent a voice transmission to the donkey, telling it to be nicer to Little Wu. That way... they could still make Little Wu sacrifice himself in the future.

Maybe because of that, the calm donkey also accepted Little Wu's change.

Just like that, time passed again as the Dharmic Battleship sped through the cosmos. Four months quickly elapsed. During these four months, Wang Baole went deeper into the cosmos, and his loot gradually increased. His battleships were upgraded once more, and his cultivation got even closer to the perfected stage Soul Conduit realm.

When Wang Baole saw that he had already traveled for a very long time and was deliberating on whether to teleport back to the Divine Eye civilization, he came to a star system... that still shocked him despite what he saw on his expedition!

The vastness of that star system exceeded all the star systems Wang Baole had previously seen. In fact, with his simple judgment, that star system should be as big as tens of thousands of Solar Systems.

As for Eternal Star suns alone... there were actually hundreds of them there. Traces of human intervention were also very clear. That was because, in the middle of the star system, hundreds of Eternal Stars were gathered to form an indescribably majestic array formation!

Within the array formation, was a giant market!

The market wasn't formed by planets but was formed by an irregularly shaped pangea. There were hundreds of planets that were around the size of Earth surrounding it. Any of them could shock Wang Baole, as he could see that they were all modified strongholds!

The hundreds of planets all had different racial civilizations. It seemed as though they came here specifically to trade with others, causing the liveliness of this star system to exceed the total of all the other civilizations Wang Baole had seen on his expedition by a lot.

Just for cultivators of various shapes and sizes alone, Wang Baole saw thousands. Some were humanoid, some looked like ferocious beasts, and some even looked like plants.

Besides that, there were also many lifeforms like stone golems. What made Wang Baole especially shocked was that he saw a Dharmic Battleship without an owner, who had achieved sentience, fly in front of him.

"Daddy, this place should be a cosmos trade center." Little Wu's knowledge had come in handy many times on this expedition. After seeing this star system, he immediately spoke softly to Wang Baole.

Wang Baole gazed at Little Wu with a sense of profoundness and began asking questions. Very quickly, he gathered from Little Wu that there were many markets of various sizes spread around the cosmos controlled by the Never-Ending Clan to provide trade centers for cultivators from nearby star systems.

There were many markets like this, and every one of them had extremely deep-seated backgrounds. That was especially so for some big markets. And this market... was one of the rare big markets Little Wu talked about.

"Daddy, the pangea in the middle is the main market and the area of the organizer. The surrounding planets are both the strongholds of various clans and their own small markets. Cultivators who come here can go to any of them and trade for the items they want." Little Wu coughed and was very pleased with how knowledgeable he was. But he didn't forget who the daddy was, so he remained courteous when talking to Wang Baole.

"Interesting." Wang Baole looked towards that pangea and controlled the Dharmic Battleship to speed in that direction after thinking, nearing it quickly. After landing, he stored his Dharmic Battleship and started strolling around the pangea. The place was a world where penthouses existed atop every mountain, every river, and within every ocean and desert.

Some penthouses had many people in them, while others had fewer people in them. The items they sold all differed and were of a wide variety. Whether it was Dharmic Artifacts, pills, recipes, cultivation techniques, or materials, they all had many types of items.

Wang Baole strolled around for seven days. In those seven days, he looked through most of the shops on the pangea. He took a closer look at some of them, while just taking a passing look at others. But no matter how he looked, the desire and envy in his heart had already reached a maximum. Truly, any shop was enough to make him extremely interested.

I'm still poor... If he hadn't come to this place, Wang Baole would have thought that he could be considered pretty wealthy. But after coming to this place, he truly understood what opulence was.

This feeling continued until he came to a giant three-storied penthouse that was built on the ocean and reached a maximum. The penthouse was atop the ocean's surface. It looked like it was constructed atop the ocean surface, but it also seemed like it was floating above the ocean. The entire palace was built using supreme-grade Spirit Stones as its base material. At the same time, it was also adorned with many items that Wang Baole couldn't even name. They caused the palace to be resplendent. Reflecting the light of the hundred suns in the heavens, it shook the surrounding cosmos.

Of all the shops Wang Baole had seen, the palace had the most comprehensive selection of items. The palace stocked almost every item he had seen previously.

At the same time, the cultivation levels of the people who went there were at least at the Spirit Immortal realm. In fact, Wang Baole even saw Planet realms with courteous expressions that dared not act wildly due to their cultivation in the shop.

All of this made Wang Baole choose between some items that previously caught his eye reluctantly while being extremely interested. As the palace's salesman looked at him calmly, Wang Baole sighed. Just as he was about to make a purchase... the salesman in front of him quickly raised his head to look behind Wang Baole. Taking a few quick steps, he bowed deeply with cupped fists in Wang Baole's direction.

"Greetings, Young Master!"

When the salesman looked behind Wang Baole, Wang Baole had already noticed it beforehand. When he turned his head to take a look, he saw an extremely familiar silhouette. He wore white robes, held a paper fan in his hands, and wore a square hat. He walked out of the palace and towards them, carrying himself with an extraordinary aura.

That person was a youth, and his robes seemed to contain the laws of water. His robes floated as though there were waves atop them as he walked. The square hat on his head contained shocking waves and seemed to be able to suppress the surroundings like a Divine Armament. The paper fan in his hand was even more amazing. Although it was only half-opened, Eternal Star realm level waves spread from within it.

The moment he saw the youth, Wang Baole narrowed his eyes and exclaimed in his heart.

Xie Haiyang?

Chapter 805: A Pity It's Not You!

That person was Wang Baole's old acquaintance... Xie Haiyang!

The mysterious man who claimed that he was a businessman in the Ethereal Dao College, Xie Haiyang, then later disappeared. He reunited with Wang Baole in the Vast Expanse Dao Palace and then disappeared again after that...

That was, until now. When Wang Baole saw Xie Haiyang at this place, although he was shocked, he discovered that he didn't feel that surprised. It was as though he subconsciously thought that he would meet Xie Haiyang at any point in time.

I'm afraid... this person has an even larger background than I previously guessed. Wang Baole was deep in thought. On the one hand, he thought of the game that Xie Haiyang popularized in the Vast Expanse Dao Palace. Now that he remembered it, whether it was his feelings then or now, he felt that the supposed wandering star was obviously a... colony!

Wang Baole pondered in his heart and remained cautious, but he didn't show it on the surface. He only turned his head to take a sweeping glance before turning around. But with that sweeping glance, other than identifying Xie Haiyang, he also got a clear look at the Divine Armaments and Dharmic treasures on Xie Haiyang's body.

He wore a Divine Armament that was made in the shape of a face cloth on his head, had nomological robes on his body, and his paper fan contained the suppressive force of an Eternal Star realm cultivator. Any of those Dharmic Artifacts would be enough to make everyone green with envy and wish to snatch it. But if they all appeared together on the body of one person, such greed would be mostly suppressed.

Because... someone who owned all three items at once obviously had an extraordinary status and position. It also meant that the person definitely had a horrifying background that could shake the heavens. Hence, he could wear all three items on his body so freely.

Those three items made Wang Baole more sure of his previous judgment. But he had no intention of recognizing Xie Haiyang. Wang Baole felt that it was best for him to avoid such a mysterious character.

At the same time, he was now disguised as Long Nanzi, so he wasn't scared of being found out. As for Little Wu and the donkey, they were within the Dharmic Battleship that had already been stored away by Wang Baole. So now, he could make use of this opportunity to indirectly understand Xie Haiyang's background.

For example, this shop, which could be considered the largest shop with the most comprehensive collection of items in this place, was obviously owned by Xie Haiyang. If not, the salesman opposite him couldn't possibly call him Young Master so courteously.

Based on that thought, Wang Baole continued to look at the materials around him after turning around. While discussing the price with that salesman, he put on a look that showed that he didn't care too much about Xie Haiyang. The tone he spoke with was also different from how it was when he was in the Federation after being changed by his essence technique.

Maybe because Wang Baole's acting skills were indeed superb, coupled with the uniqueness of his essence technique, but Xie Haiyang only took a cursory glance after entering the shop before he headed for the stairs leading to the second floor. On the way there, all the other salesmen greeted him. In fact, many customers there also bowed slightly towards him as a sign of respect.

This scene made Wang Baole's heart skip a beat. He deliberated on whether to leave that place after a while and go to other shops to ask tacitly and indirectly learn about the background of this shop.

While Wang Baole was pondering, Xie Haiyang had already gone up the stairs. However, just as his silhouette was about to disappear, right before he stepped onto the second floor, he stopped for a moment unnoticeably. He then continued walking, stepping onto the second floor afterward.

As there were obstacles involved, and since the place didn't allow one to spread their consciousness to check, Wang Baole didn't notice Xie Haiyang's action. But from the slight pause in his footsteps, Wang Baole still felt that something was amiss. Therefore, he didn't stay for long. After choosing all of the items that caught his fancy, he picked out a portion from them and looked at how much he had. He tolerated the pain of spending and purchased them.

But when he was checking out, the salesman looked thoroughly at Wang Baole's receipt, raised his head, swept his gaze towards Wang Baole, and spoke while shaking his head.

"Fellow Daoist, there are many materials among the items you chose that our shop won't sell to any old customer. You need to spend a certain amount at our shop first before we can provide them to you according to their level."

Wang Baole was stunned. After inquiring, his expression turned sour. Out of the materials he chose, most of them were like this. If he was unable to purchase them, he might as well not buy anything.

That was especially so considering that there were three types of materials that he couldn't find previously in other shops. If he couldn't buy them here, then he didn't know when he would get a chance to buy them again.

So the salesman's reply made him unwittingly furrow his eyebrows.

"How about this, our young master returned just now. Wait for me, Fellow Daoist, I'll go up and communicate with him. Our young master loves making friends and is very easy going. I believe he'll agree to sell those items to you." Obviously, the salesman could get a commission from Wang Baole's purchases. That was especially so considering that Wang Baole's order was decently large. So after thinking, he got Wang Baole to wait there while he turned around and went up to the second floor.

Wang Baole didn't prevent the salesman from doing so. Instead, he stood there with narrowed eyes and waited silently, hoping to see how things would develop afterward. It would be best if things turned out successfully. If not, he would have to think carefully about how to handle the situation.

Not much time passed, only around 100 breath's of time, before the salesman came down from the second floor smiling and spoke after reaching Wang Baole's side.

"Fellow Daoist, our young master has agreed to let you purchase those items. He invites you to go rest upstairs. I'll prepare the materials you purchased for you."

Wang Baole's expression remained the same as he took a close look at the salesman. He didn't notice anything strange, so he looked towards the stairs leading to the second floor again. After a moment, his eyes flashed slightly, and he suddenly laughed.

"Very well!" Speaking, he walked towards the stairs. The salesman was bamboozled by Wang Baole's sudden laughter and felt that it was strange for him to suddenly have a sense of profoundness. But he didn't think much of it. After sending Wang Baole to the staircase, he expressed that Wang Baole could go up alone and then went to prepare Wang Baole's items.

Since he decided to go upstairs, Wang Baole didn't hesitate and quickly made his way up to the second floor. As he turned his head, he saw Xie Haiyang seated at a tea table drinking tea not far away.

The environment on the second floor was more elegant than that of the first floor. Curio shelves with extraordinary Dharmic Artifacts displayed on them surrounded the second floor. Meanwhile, there were four incense pots at the four corners of the rooms. Wisps of green smoke rose from them and circulated around the entire room. They had a pleasant smell and were somewhat beneficial for cultivation since they could improve Spirit Qi circulation in one's body.

Besides that, the floor was carpeted with a giant piece of leather. It was a type of ferocious beast skin that Wang Baole had never seen before. It seemed able to disperse warmth on its own, making the temperature of the entire second floor very comfortable.

As Wang Baole observed the surroundings, Xie Haiyang also raised his head to observe Wang Baole. He looked closely at Wang Baole until Wang Baole tilted his head to lock eyes with him. Then, Xie Haiyang narrowed his eyes and laughed.

Wang Baole didn't express any emotion. He wore a smile on his face that showed that he was meeting Xie Haiyang for the first time as he cupped his fists and greeted Xie Haiyang.

"Thank you, Young Master, for agreeing to sell that batch of materials to me. How may I address you, Young Master?"

"My name is Xie Haiyang. There's no need to be courteous, Fellow Daoist. You and I are old acquaintances, after all. There's no need for formalities, don't you think?"

"Old acquaintances?" Wang Baole was stunned as he looked at Xie Haiyang weirdly. He didn't speak immediately, instead, acting like he was searching his memory thoroughly. After a few breaths, he gave a forced smile.

"I messed up my aura while cultivating recently. Maybe because some of my memories turned foggy, I can't really remember at the moment. I hope you won't mind. No matter what, I still thank you for allowing me to buy those items." Wang Baole didn't deny it. Being well-versed in human interaction, Wang Baole was clear that sometimes, if one was too persistent in denying something, it was akin to admitting the truth. After all, when normal people were met with these kinds of situations, most of them wouldn't try to clarify themselves so anxiously.

That was indeed the case. Wang Baole's expression and words made Xie Haiyang feel a hint of doubt. He didn't bring up the topic again. Instead, he raised his teacup while making small talk with Wang Baole.

Seeing that Xie Haiyang didn't recognize him, Wang Baole cupped his fists and prepared to leave. But the moment he turned around, his heart jolted, and he secretly cursed... He had still revealed himself.

Almost as soon as Wang Baole noticed that, Xie Haiyang's eyes lit up and he smiled while saying, "What a small world! Senior Brother Baole, I trust you've been well?"

Wang Baole stopped, looked at the surroundings, then looked at Xie Haiyang. His face didn't make him seem as though he was at a loss. Instead, it expressed an awkwardness one would feel when being called the wrong name.

"Thank you once again, Young Master. I, Long Nanzi, must take my leave." He even coughed once, seemingly actively trying to help Xie Haiyang resolve the misunderstanding caused by calling him the wrong name.

Hearing that, Xie Haiyang sighed and shook his head while feeling a multitude of emotions.

“My apologies, I remembered wrongly. I thought you were a good friend of mine from long ago and was going to give you a discount. After all, it’s not easy to meet an old friend in a foreign land. Since you’re not him... forget it.”

Hearing that, Wang Baole blinked and suddenly spoke.

“How many percent off?”

Chapter 806: Life’s a Stage, and We’re All Actors!

Xie Haiyang gave Wang Baole what seemed like a smile before coughing softly and speaking with a mild tone.

“Since we’re old pals, you should get the best deals. How about... a 20% discount?”

Wang Baole’s eyes brightened when he heard what Xie Haiyang had said. He abandoned the idea of leaving and, instead, burst out laughing and approached Xie Haiyang. He stopped ten feet away from the latter, then spoke loudly, his eyes shining with the joy of meeting an old friend in a foreign land.

“Xie Haiyang, Fellow Daoist Xie, haha, it’s been a long while since we last saw each other. I didn’t expect to see you here. I was afraid of speaking to you earlier, but after looking closely for a long while, I could finally confirm... that you’re indeed Xie Haiyang, my old friend.”

Wang Baole sighed, a distant look entering his eyes as he reminisced about the past. Happiness shone visibly on his face. So obvious was his pleasure that it almost seemed like an act...

“Fellow Daoist Haiyang, I never would’ve imagined bumping into you here. Destiny is such a strange and mysterious thing, I feel. But that’s also why life is so beautiful and amazing,” Wang Baole said as he took a seat.

After a round of hearty sighs, he blinked and said, seemingly nonchalantly, “Since this is your store and I’m getting a 20% discount on account of us being friends, I’ll have to show my support and buy more stuff.”

Xie Haiyang was stunned by Wang Baole’s sudden friendliness, and hesitation flickered in his eyes. He eyed Wang Baole carefully, then asked suddenly, “What’s your name, Fellow Daoist?”

“Eh?” Wang Baole froze momentarily. He remained smiling as he replied in the next instant, “I’m Baole. Fellow Daoist Haiyang, have you forgotten my name?”

A strange look settled on Xie Haiyang’s face when he heard that, and the hesitation in his eyes deepened. He appeared to be doubting his judgment. He had felt a faint mark on Long Nanzi that he had left on some of Wang Baole’s items in the latter’s storage bag when he had been in the Federation.

It was a mysterious mark. Even powerful cultivators wouldn’t have noticed it without taking a deliberate, careful look. It had been passed down from his clan’s patriarch. Members of his clan used the unique mark on clients they planned to invest heavily in. The mark allowed other members of the clan to recognize these clients easily. In addition, it also allowed them to appear whenever their clients were in

need of their services. There were no ill intentions behind the setting of the mark. In fact, to a certain extent, it was a sign of blessing.

The energy signature that was being given off by the current mark was very weak, though. If not for the fact that Long Nanzi was standing so near him, Xie Haiyang wouldn't have been able to sense it at all. That was the reason for his doubt. Even though he had sensed the mark, he was unable to use the mark to determine Long Nanzi's true identity.

The aura and vibes that Long Nanzi was giving off were drastically different from the client on whom he had remembered imprinting the mark.

That had been the reason for his earlier test. He hadn't gotten a conclusive outcome from the first test. So, after picking up his cup of tea, he attempted a second test. Long Nanzi's reaction made him more certain of his guesses.

After all... despite his travels across numerous civilizations, the Federation was the only one that had a custom of ending a conversation and having a guest take his leave simply by one's picking up his teacup.

However... Long Nanzi's next reaction raised further suspicions. Long Nanzi's admission... had come too easily. It was clear that he had done so intentionally and had done so in order to get a discount.

After some time, Xie Haiyang decided to give up guessing. He stared at Wang Baole and asked openly, "Senior Brother Baole, what's your last name?"

"Ah?" Wang Baole pretended to look stunned and confused. He seemed unable to understand how his old acquaintance could have forgotten his family name. He was secretly pleased, though.

He had no idea how Xie Haiyang had seen through his guise. Regardless, he had no intention of revealing his true identity and hadn't wanted to admit to knowing Xie Haiyang in the first place. The man had picked up his teacup and lured him into taking his leave unwittingly, which ultimately exposed his guise. Someone else might not have made a connection, but Wang Baole knew Xie Haiyang to be an extraordinary character. He knew that Xie Haiyang would notice something.

That had been why Wang Baole had improvised and switched from being on the defensive to being on the offensive. He put on an act of pretending to be an acquaintance for the purposes of getting a discount. He knew that his plan worked when Xie Haiyang asked that question. After the moment of surprise and incomprehension, Wang Baole allowed a dark look to settle on his face as he stood up in anger.

"Fellow Daoist Haiyang, I really didn't expect to see you here today. Your departure had been unexpected. Besides, I never thought you might appear in such a place. But there's really no need to insult me by saying that you've forgotten my last name, is there?"

"Acknowledge me as an old friend or don't acknowledge me as one, the choice is up to you. I'm not the sort of person who's desperate for a 20% discount!" Displeasure flashed across Wang Baole's face. He turned away, showing his intention to leave. However, he didn't do so in a hurry. He had to give the other man a chance to speak. After all, 20% was still an extremely attractive discount.

He had allowed for some ambiguity in his words. He had mentioned that Xie Haiyang's departure had been unexpected. That could be interpreted in many ways. If Xie Haiyang had left in an ordinary fashion,

Wang Baole could mean that he had been surprised at the departure. If the former had left in a bizarre or mysterious fashion, then surprise was even more warranted.

The way he phrased his words left Xie Haiyang in a bind. Xie Haiyang got to his feet hurriedly and tried to stop Wang Baole.

“Brother Liu, please, don’t go. Liu Baole, your temper hasn’t changed at all. I was just joking with you. About my departure, you must remember what I told you when we first met. Where there’s business to be done, that’s where I’ll go.”

The tight look on Wang Baole’s face softened. He turned and gave Xie Haiyang a look. He couldn’t believe the alien. Xie Haiyang was still trying to test him. He had even given him a different name—Liu Baole. It made him sound rich, though. Only those born with dashing good looks deserved such a name. Nevertheless, the name didn’t fit his style at all.

Wang Baole had no intention of revealing his true identity, though. After some thought, he decided to neither deny nor acknowledge the name. Instead, he lifted his hand and pulled out a jade slip, then handed the jade slip over to Xie Haiyang.

“Fellow Daoist Haiyang, let’s leave that aside for a moment. Could you help me with the purchase of some materials? Here’s the list.”

Xie Haiyang blinked when he heard that. He took the jade slip from Wang Baole and glanced through the list. A smile appeared on his face.

“No problem at all. But my old friend, we must separate business and friendship. Even with the discount that I’ve given you, the total cost of these materials is going to be sky-high. Can you really afford to pay?”

Wang Baole remained calm on the outside as he sighed secretly on the inside. He knew that he wouldn’t be able to afford the materials. An overwhelming sense of poverty crushed him then, making him feel just a bit smaller. His skills at keeping up appearances were top-notch, though. Even if he couldn’t afford the materials on the list, he would still be able to get a 20% discount on what he had selected earlier. In addition, he might be able to erase whatever suspicions Xie Haiyang still harbored about his identity. A serious look settled on his face then.

“Brother Haiyang, do you trust me? If you do, I, Liu Baole, will write you a promissory note right now. Just treat this as extending credit to me. Just this once!”

Xie Haiyang’s facial muscles twitched. He looked closely at Wang Baole again. The doubt he had was preventing him from making a judgment call. Wang Baole’s acting skills had been put to good use. If he had denied his identity right from the start, Xie Haiyang would have caught him lying straight away. But the more he admitted to their friendship, the more uncertain Xie Haiyang became.

Xie Haiyang pondered for some time. Then, his eyes flashed. He looked around before whispering, “Brother Baole, I have a business proposition. Would you be interested in it? There’s an element of danger involved in the deal, but it’s minimal. Should you succeed, the rewards awaiting you will be great. They’ll be enough to get you all the materials you want and leave you with sizable wealth after that!”

“A business proposition?” Alarm bells started ringing in Wang Baole’s head, and a look of hesitation appeared on his face.

“That’s right. Don’t worry, my friend. I’m talking about a mission that’s been issued by a mysterious and powerful cultivator. He’s extremely powerful and has a grudge against the Never-Ending Clan. However, because of some unknown reasons, he’s unable to strike at them directly. He hasn’t been able to let go of his grudge despite the years that have passed. So, from time to time, he issues missions in various cities, gathering cultivators and getting them to wear specially-made masks, then teleporting them to a random planet where they are to hunt down Never-Ending Clan cultivators!

“He has issued more than thirty missions so far. He takes charge of the teleportation to and from the planets, as well as the cleanup. The cultivators that he gathers are responsible for killing the Never-Ending Clan cultivators. The cultivators get nothing if they are killed. But, if they survive, they’ll be rewarded with Red Crystals. The number of Red Crystals they are awarded is determined by the number of Never-Ending Clan members they manage to hunt down and kill!

“Red Crystals are the hard currency used in the Never-Ending Dao Domain. Three hundred Red Crystals should be enough to get you everything on your list!”

Chapter 807: Pig-Faced Mask!

“Red Crystals...” Wang Baole started thinking. He wasn’t clear what these crystals were, but the fact that they were being used as hard currency meant that they must be rare. That it was a rare resource whose value was recognized by everyone meant that its value had something to do with its use for one’s cultivation.

He had guessed right. Xie Haiyang soon explained to him the reason for the Red Crystals’ worth. The crystals were mysterious items that could speed up one’s advancement in cultivation once a cultivator reached the Planet realm. The origins of the crystals were mysterious and unknown, and only the Never-Ending Clan could produce them. A fixed number of crystals were produced and circulated throughout the Never-Ending Dao Domain.

The clan had technically gained complete control over the economy in the Dao Domain.

No one knew how these crystals were made. Even refinement masters found the dissection and analysis of the structure of the crystals a challenge.

“There are rumors though, that the crystals... have something to do with the extinct Dark Sect. Someone even postulated that the crystals... are created from the blood of the Dark Sect’s Heavenly Dao!”

Xie Haiyang gave Wang Baole a considering look then. He hadn’t tried to be tactful at all, revealing those postulations nonchalantly. Those casual words took on a different note when Wang Baole heard them.

He had his suspicions about Xie Haiyang. He had always wondered why Xie Haiyang treated him differently from the others. He recalled their initial meeting at the Ethereal Dao College. Xie Haiyang had been very friendly then, but that had been because of his instincts as a businessman who never turned down any potential business. After that, Wang Baole had ended up on Mars and then spent time in the Vast Expanse Dao Palace on the ancient sword. When he met Xie Haiyang again, the man had... changed. He had become slightly different from who he had been before.

Now, with what Xie Haiyang had just said, the man was obviously showing his cards to Wang Baole. Wang Baole understood immediately. Xie Haiyang was telling him the reason he had given Wang Baole such preferential treatment.

Wang Baole wasn't going to just take his word for it, though. He didn't spend time wondering why Xie Haiyang knew he was a Dark Child. Instead, he appeared as if he had known about Xie Haiyang knowing all along. That inspired another bout of uncertainty in Xie Haiyang. After a moment of hesitation, Xie Haiyang took a deep breath and smiled wryly.

"Fellow Daoist, let's not beat around the bush. It doesn't matter if I've met you before. I'm just a businessman. You can rest assured when you do business with me. I never take advantage of others, and I never do harm to others either. What I do is purely business!

"Take this, for example. I've recommended this mission to you so that you can earn enough Red Crystals to purchase the materials on your shopping list. I'm not going to hide the fact that the referral gives me the right to claim ten percent of your reward. But that won't be coming out of your pocket. The Flame Patriarch will be paying me separately. I've recommended five cultivators to join the mission. The application will remain open for another three days. After that, they will begin teleporting participants.

"The Flame Patriarch is the powerful cultivator I mentioned earlier. He is extremely powerful, enough so to reign supreme over a domain. The Never-Ending Clan finds him a troublesome opponent as well, but the price they would need to pay to exterminate him is hefty... The Never-Ending Clan's facing some internal turmoil now, and no one's willing to take on such a task.

"There's some danger involved, but based on previous missions, we know that the Flame Patriarch isn't just going to send all of you to die. The planet that he's chosen is likely only presided over by a Planet realm cultivator. The enemies you face will be less powerful than that."

"There may be Spirit Immortal realm cultivators amongst them, but you'll be able to avoid them if you take the necessary precautions," Xie Haiyang said with a wave of his hand. He hadn't hidden any information from Wang Baole at all. He wasn't interested in testing him or making any more guesses about his identity. If the man before him was truly Wang Baole, he would've told him the truth anyway. That was the only way to prove his trustworthiness. Besides, Xie Haiyang was a firm believer in practicing honesty. That was how one should lead one's life.

That was why he didn't see a need to deceive the man before him even if he wasn't Wang Baole. After he was done sharing all that information, he turned towards Wang Baole and waited for the latter's reply.

Wang Baole fell into a bout of contemplative silence. He wasn't going to take up the offer immediately. He inquired about a few other details, then got Xie Haiyang's contact details. After that, he bade farewell and went on his way. He told Xie Haiyang that he would give him an answer in three days.

Xie Haiyang watched Wang Baole leave, then returned to his seat. He stared at the wisps of smoke rising from the cauldron next to him. There was a look of contemplation in his eyes. He didn't react to the sudden figure that had appeared soundlessly behind him.

The intruder had a blurry outline to his figure, and his facial features looked indistinct. He stood there quietly, with his back slightly bent and his fists cupped, as if awaiting instructions.

“So be it. Why fixate over whether I’ve met him before. It’s good to make new friends. He might become another important client who I should be investing heavily in,” Xie Haiyang said, laughing as he picked up the scrolls on the table and began reading.

The blurry figure standing behind him said softly, “Young Master, do we remove the mark that the guest has left on our servant?”

“There’s no need for that,” Xie Haiyang said coolly without looking up.

As Xie Haiyang uttered those words, the tiny grain of gray dust stuck on the shoulder of the servant who had attended to Wang Baole earlier downstairs shook.

Wang Baole had given that servant a pat on his shoulder before making his way out with a smile. He had since put some distance between him and the store. When the dust shook, he stopped in his tracks momentarily, then quickened his pace. The energy signature given off by his essence technique shifted. A wisp of it split away, landed at Wang Baole’s feet, and transformed into an insect that crawled into the ground and hid away.

He entered multiple stores. When he left each store, his physical appearance would be transformed. He left traces of his essence technique in the stores. His energy signature changed as he walked amidst the crowd and left traces of his energy signature on the people he passed.

He located an inn in the market after he was certain that no one was following him and paid a hefty sum for a room. Then, he sat quietly in the room, a look of contemplation on his face as he considered everything that Xie Haiyang had told him.

He seems to have sensed the spiritual essence that I left behind... It doesn’t matter. If what he said is true, then I should consider taking part in the mission... It’s just killing someone. In fact, this is exactly what I need if I want to advance my cultivation and quickly achieve a breakthrough from the Spirit Immortal realm to the Planet realm... To kill! An icy glint flashed across Wang Baole’s eyes. After a bout of contemplative silence, he swept his eyes across the room before suddenly shuddering, then vanishing into thin air. He had used his essence technique and transformed into a winged insect. He found a slitted opening in the window and flew out.

His essence technique remained activated as he flew, and his insect form soon split into numerous winged insects that spread throughout the market. The spiritual essence that he had left behind on his way to the inn transformed, taking on various forms, such as that of a winged insect, an ant, or dust. They were his ears, hearing everything and collecting every bit of information.

Only Wang Baole, who possessed the essence technique, could have conducted such an information-gathering exercise. It was quite effective. Within three days, after eliminating huge chunks of useless data, he had managed to consolidate information on the Flame Patriarch. The information that he had gathered helped him verify what he had learned from Xie Haiyang.

After consolidating the information he had gathered and assessing it, Wang Baole gathered the spiritual essence that he had sent out. At that point, it was almost the end of the third day. He picked up his jade slip and sent a voice transmission to Xie Haiyang.

“Fellow Daoist Haiyang, I’ll do it!”

Xie Haiyang had been awaiting news from Wang Baole. He burst out into laughter when he heard Wang Baole's reply. He trusted his guts. Even if the man wasn't Wang Baole, his instincts told him that... this man was going to be an important client in the coming days.

He displayed extraordinary enthusiasm when he got the voice transmission from Wang Baole, making arrangements for the latter's application. He rushed to get it done before the deadline, ensuring that Wang Baole got a placement.

"Baole, you're in luck. You just made it. The mission starts in two hours!"

"Where do I report?" Wang Baole asked.

"You don't have to go anywhere. You'll know what to do in two hours' time. I'll just share something with you first... There's really almost nothing... that the Flame Patriarch is incapable of achieving! He's almost infallible, really!" Xie Haiyang said. He ended the voice transmission with those ambiguous words.

Wang Baole raised his eyebrow, and a considering look entered his eyes. He didn't spend a long time thinking, though. Two hours later, his Divine Sense were suddenly violently stirred. Then, in the blink of an eye, blue strands suddenly appeared out of nowhere and gathered before him silently. They pooled together and transformed into... a gruesome-looking pig-faced mask!

"The mission starts when you put on the mask!" The cold, emotionless voice of an old man rang out from the mask as the mask came into being. The words reverberated across Wang Baole's Divine Sense... and in the mind of his true form, which was currently resting in his coffin on the main Divine Eye planet!

Chapter 808: The Mission Begins!

In one of the distant corners of the main Divine Eye star was land that many had thought had suffered a meteorite's landing. It was a deserted land, barren of everything save an enormous crater.

Any plant life that had grown here had withered and died, and an aura of death permeated the air and prevented beasts from venturing close. The uniqueness of this piece of land had drawn the attention of many cultivators. However, no matter how much the cultivators who came hunting searched the land above and even below ground, they went away with nothing.

It was as if no one could see the coffin even though it was lying right there. So, even though everyone had their own guesses about the place and believed that the meteorite was behind what was strange about the land, they started paying less attention to the area as time passed.

But now... Wang Baole's avatar stood inside an inn in the market as a pig-faced mask hovered before him. The voice that had rung out from the mask had managed to traverse vast distances to reach his true form lying inside a coffin deep underground. It had reverberated in his head!

The voice sounded so clear, almost as if someone had spoken into his ear. Wang Baole's true form opened his eyes instantly, and they were filled with shock. The fact that... the Flame Patriarch's voice could penetrate the walls of the coffin meant one thing... that he was probably as powerful as Wang Baole's senior brother!

Someone else had been stirred by the voice. The mask that Little Missy dwelt in, which Wang Baole kept on his true form, shook faintly. Little Missy appeared to be on the verge of waking up.

The turn of events sent Wang Baole's true form into a contemplative silence. A long moment later, his eyes fell shut again. A vast distance away, in the inn, Wang Baole's avatar remained shocked. After checking out what had happened to his true form, Wang Baole took a deep breath and extended a deep bow towards the pig-faced mask in front of him.

He straightened his back, raised his arms, and held the mask. There was a moment of silence where hesitation flickered in his eyes. In the end, he chose to put on the mask.

The instant he put on the mask, a strong power surged from it. It didn't bother inspecting Wang Baole. Instead, it enveloped him fully, then gave him a hard yank.

Wang Baole could feel himself losing complete control of his body with the sudden yank. At that same instant, he disappeared from the room in the inn.

Everything had happened without a sound. There had been no energy signatures indicating teleportation had taken place. No one had noticed anything. A powerful array formation had been set up around the inn, but it had posed no challenge to the teleportation. It was as if Wang Baole... had simply vanished!

In the next moment, when Wang Baole could finally see again, he had arrived at... a completely foreign world!

It didn't seem right to call it a world. This place was filled with ruins that extended all the way to the horizons. It felt ancient. Everything seemed old and ravaged by time.

Stars filled the skies while ruins littered the lands. Wang Baole stood on the ruins of a building that had originally been shaped like a hook sword. Such ruins could be found everywhere around him. Multiple figures, all wearing different masks, continued to appear.

Some of those masks were shaped like the heads of cows, fish, and horses. There were many more, which were of beasts that Wang Baole had never seen. There were more than two hundred of them. As soon as they appeared, they started surveying their surroundings and assessing the other participants.

Wang Baole reeled back. He had done a sweep and realized that he couldn't sense the aura coming off anyone. He couldn't discern their levels of cultivation either. He could see them perfectly with his eyes, but they were blurry figures to his Divine Sense—not completely non-existent, but indistinct nevertheless.

It's the mask! Wang Baole touched the mask on his face contemplatively. He was able to reach some basic conclusions from the looks that everyone was giving.

For example... most of the participants' eyes were filled with violence and wildness. They appeared hostile, seeming as if they were used to killing. The fact that they had chosen to participate in this mission indicated that they were men of extraordinary abilities. They must have their reasons for signing up. After all... the rewards that the Flame Patriarch was offering were enough to tempt Wang Baole. Others must also be equally tempted.

As they all sized one another up, light erupted from the ruins around them suddenly. The light was faint. If it had come from a singular spot, few might have noticed it. But they were all shining at the same time, like fallen stars. The light did resemble starlight, spilling from every corner and gathering before everyone.

Because the lights had been faint at first, they didn't seem particularly bright after they gathered into a single spot of light. However, as the lights continued to gather, the sphere of light grew increasingly blinding. An incredible power built up inside the sphere of light, stirring the lands and enveloping the world.

Everyone, including Wang Baole, was awestruck. They looked down hastily, as if in the presence of a deity. Even the most defiant of them instinctively toned down and made a show of respect and deference.

Wang Baole did the same as well, keeping his head down while wondering who was the more powerful one between the entity before him and his senior brother, Chen Qing. He had a feeling that his senior brother was still the stronger one of the two, but probably only by a slight margin.

The only aura that can overpower and crush it... is probably the aura unleashed from reading the Dao Scripture. Wang Baole narrowed his eyes and continued thinking as he kept his head down. The more he thought about it, the more he realized how weak he truly was in the grand scheme of the universe. He didn't even deserve to be called an ant. That would be undeserved flattery.

*D*mn. Honestly, I'm really weak.* The conclusion made Wang Baole feel quite uncomfortable. He wondered if there was any other way to put it so that he might feel better about himself. It was then that an old, emotionless voice drifted out from the blinding sphere of light hovering before everyone.

"Firstly, the mission has begun since you landed on this planet. It will last twenty-four hours. When the twenty-four hours are up, I will send those still alive back.

"Secondly, the mission objective is to kill Never-Ending Clan members. You will be graded according to the number of kills you have and the level of cultivation of those you have killed. When you return, you will receive Red Crystals that correspond to your grade. Note this... there is no limit to the number of Red Crystals that can be awarded!

"Thirdly, the mask hides your identity. It also tracks your location and allows me to teleport you back. In addition... I've cast a spell on every mask that acts like a curse. It can weaken a cultivator whose level of cultivation is below that of the perfected Eternal Star realm, causing a drop in their level of cultivation!

"The more badly injured your target, the greater the effect of this curse. However, it can only be used once and will only last fifteen minutes!"

"A final reminder. Do not lose your masks. You're on your own if you do." Once the aged voice inside the sphere of light was done talking, it didn't give anyone a chance to react before shuddering violently. The sphere of light dissipated and filled the entire world. Everyone, including Wang Baole, shuddered. The masks on their faces shimmered, and they were pulled backwards with a yank.

In the blink of an eye, everyone... vanished again!

The mission had begun!

The second teleportation appeared to take a longer time than the first. He had no idea how much time had gone by. It was like having an out-of-body experience. Then, his body started shaking, and his mind woke, as if from a long, deep sleep. He opened his eyes, and what appeared before him were... red skies and white lands!

The skies were blood-colored. That was because the sun was blood red!

The desert lands were white. They didn't take on the cast of the skies and instead seemed to retain their own natural colors. It was a stark contrast. In addition, the winds and the surrounding plant life were vastly different from what Wang Baole recognized!

The winds weren't invisible. They were indistinct, mist-like entities that blew across the deserts. As for the plants, they were black. It seemed to be a defense mechanism that they had developed against the crimson red sun.

As soon as Wang Baole was able to see clearly, he immediately moved away from the other cultivators. Most of them did the same. They moved back and widened the distance between them and the others. Wariness and hostility shone fiercely in their eyes. They were like venomous snakes baring their fangs as they tried to show how dangerous they were. They wanted the rest to know that they weren't to be trifled with.

There were a few who didn't move. They stood there, seemingly filled with confidence. A tall, muscular-looking man dressed in a green robe looked at the cultivators standing near him with a condescending gaze.

"A bunch of useless good-for-nothings. I don't care if we're all participants of the same mission. Just remember, don't follow me, and don't fight me for my target. Otherwise... I don't mind killing a few more people!"

Chapter 809: A Disguise!

The green-robed man was wearing a bull-faced mask that gave him a fearsome look. His eyes glistened murderously and with a coldness that seemed to send the temperature around him dipping. It was a look that made one instinctively step back and avoid any conflict with the man.

Wang Baole blinked, and his gaze landed on the man. Before he could look away, the man noticed his stare. He appeared to have something against the pig-faced mask that Wang Baole had on. He glared back and then sneered.

"The last time I joined this mission, I found the man who wore that exact mask annoying, so I killed him. You interested in meeting the guy?"

Wang Baole raised his eyebrow. He had just arrived at this place and hadn't yet familiarized himself with the terrain. He didn't want to get into a fight now. Besides, they were on the clock. If not for that, with his temper, he would have sent a kick flying towards the man's face.

Of course, there was also the fact that he couldn't tell what level the man's cultivation was at. Wang Baole snorted secretly and left without saying a word. With a single bound, he was off and away.

The muscular-looking man snorted when he noticed Wang Baole leaving. Scorn flickered in his eyes as he spoke.

“Gutless cow...” What he had intended to say was “gutless coward”, but he didn’t get the chance to utter the final syllable before Wang Baole unleashed a sudden burst of speed. Even though the mask concealed one’s energy signature and thus prevented others from discerning one’s level of cultivation, one’s level of cultivation could still be determined from the speed that he or she was capable of.

Besides, Wang Baole was capable of reaching extreme speeds. He might only be at the late-stage Soul Conduit realm, but the sudden burst of speed he had unleashed was almost equal to that of a perfected Soul Conduit realm cultivator. It made the man with the bull-faced mask swallow his final syllable as he stared in shock.

The cultivators around them realized what Wang Baole’s speed revealed about his level of cultivation. A contemplative look appeared on their faces before many of them started speeding away into the distance at varying speeds. Even the slowest of them was at the early-stage Soul Conduit realm. There were four who were extremely fast... unleashing the speed of Spirit Immortal realm cultivators.

These four Spirit Immortal realm cultivators had been discrete and had blended in with the crowd. Their sudden display of power had the man with the bull-faced mask sweating profusely.

There are Spirit Immortal realm cultivators this round. I didn’t expect that! He suddenly regretted his earlier boasting. After a moment of fearful embarrassment, he quickly moved away and raced off into the distance.

The more than two hundred participants who had arrived swiftly spread out and disappeared into the white desert.

It was a barren land with sparse vegetation, most of which was withering and on the verge of dying. The life of this planet and its Spirit Qi appeared to be draining away rapidly.

As Wang Baole ventured deeper into the desert, he could sense more clearly how Spirit Qi was slowly draining away from the planet. Despite his recent arrival on the planet, he could feel the level of Spirit Qi plummeting during the short period of time he was there.

With the rate that it’s going, it’ll only take three to five days... before this planet dies completely. Shocked, Wang Baole picked up his pace and headed further into the distance. He was ready to inspect the area when suddenly... a faint voice echoed in his ear.

“Outsider... help me...”

It was a voice that was extremely old and ravaged by time. It sounded extremely weak and seemed to belong to an old man on his deathbed who was using his last breath to call out for help.

Shock flickered across Wang Baole’s face, but he didn’t stop moving. Instead, his speed picked up as he headed in a different direction. He unleashed his Divine Sense and allowed them to sweep across the land, inspecting both the skies above him and the lands below him. But he found nothing.

The faint, weakened voice vanished after its fleeting call for help, not calling out again. That caught Wang Baole’s suspicion instantly.

A hallucination? That's impossible! Wang Baole narrowed his eyes. After a moment of consideration, he stared down at the dried land and began to wonder if what he had heard had been the planet's voice. He hadn't heard of such incidents, but this seemed like the best possible explanation for what had just happened. Another explanation was... that a powerful cultivator, who was unimaginably stronger than Wang Baole, was hidden somewhere around here and had done that.

Regardless of which was right, Wang Baole had no intention of lingering. He unleashed a burst of speed again and left hastily. He headed off into the distance and traveled for fifteen minutes before he saw the edge of the desert and... ruins bordering the desert.

The architectural style of the ruins was different from that of the Federation and the Divine Eye civilization. It was a style that favored the pyramid shape. Skeletons, dried up and preserved by the arid desert climate, could be seen scattered amidst the collapsed buildings. They looked humanoid, except bigger.

This had clearly been some form of a residential area. Perhaps the location of a sect. But it had suffered a massacre. From the skeletons scattered around the area, the massacre had been a recent one.

Maybe a month ago? Wang Baole narrowed his eyes. After a moment of silence, he looked around and then suddenly transformed his physical appearance. An additional four arms and two heads grew out from his body, and his pig-faced mask also transformed into something else. He no longer looked like one of the cultivators participating in the mission, having transformed into a member of the Never-Ending Clan!

He coughed slightly, then tried uttering a few words in the Never-Ending Clan's language under his breath. Once he got used to speaking the language, he started moving again. This time, he abandoned his earlier cautious approach and charged ahead brazenly, leaping across the desert. He was about to speed up as he reached the plains when his eyes flashed suddenly. He looked to his right.

A loud roar erupted from the horizon, and the sounds of horrible laughter rang out. Seven Never-Ending Clan members appeared, laughing as they raced along. The one in the center of the group had a slender young man in his grip. He held the young man by the forehead and had cast some sort of spell over his prisoner. Wisps of green smoke were escaping from the young man's eyes, nose, mouth, and ears, entering the Never-Ending Clan member's palm. The Never-Ending Clan member's face was filled with glee, while his prisoner's face was laced with agony. Veins pulsated fiercely on the young man's face while his eyes glistened with pain and hatred.

The group had noticed Wang Baole the moment he had turned his eyes in their direction. They stopped in their tracks. One of them eyed Wang Baole's attire with slight suspicion in his eyes before yelling at him.

"Which team are you from?"

Wang Baole didn't answer the question. He studied the group carefully and concluded that only two out of the seven of them were at the Soul Conduit realm, with the rest being at the Nascent Soul realm. The most powerful of them appeared to be their team leader, but he was only at the mid-stage Soul Conduit realm.

Wang Baole nodded with great satisfaction, then said, "I'm from your team."

As they froze upon hearing his words, Wang Baole attacked. He surged forth with incredible speed, transforming into a mist that enveloped them.

He was too fast. Only the team leader managed to react in time and retreat hastily, shock coloring his face. The rest... including the early-stage Soul Conduit realm cultivator, didn't get the chance to escape. They were instantly enveloped by mist, withering away as their vitality was sucked dry by the Thearch Armor and their souls taken by the Demonic Eye Art. They had no chance to scream out in pain before... they perished in the mist and were destroyed... in both flesh and spirit!

The team leader, who had retreated in time and appeared to have avoided the mist, couldn't escape his fate. A large arm reached out from the mist and grabbed his head, like how he had grabbed the young man's head. A voice from within the mist uttered, "soul search." The team leader's eyes widened as he released a cry of terror and pain.

He cried out once, then he too was enveloped by the mist, his voice silenced completely. A long while later, the mist gathered and transformed back into Wang Baole's physical form. A strange light shimmered in Wang Baole's eyes. He had gained quite a bit of information on the planet through the soul search!

He knew... that after the massacre that had taken place on this planet a month ago, most of the Never-Ending Clan members that had been stationed on the planet had left. Only one camp remained on the planet. It had approximately three hundred thousand cultivators, who were charged with cleaning up and running the planet.

The camp was quite a distance from where Wang Baole was now, but with his speed, he should be able to reach it within two hours.

He also knew that the cultivator with the highest level of cultivation in the camp was a late-stage Spirit Immortal realm Never-Ending Clan member. He also knew that there was only one Spirit Immortal realm cultivator in camp. A Planet realm cultivator had been in charge, but based on what the dead team leader had known, the Planet realm cultivator had matters to attend to and had left the planet a month ago.

An army camp... Wang Baole licked his lips as he assessed his current level of cultivation. It had gotten stronger from the earlier bout of killings. He looked down at the dying young man. Gratitude shone in his eyes. His lips parted. He seemed like he was trying to tell Wang Baole something, but he didn't manage to get anything out before life gradually drained from him.

Wang Baole sighed as he stared at the young man. With a wave of his hand, he sent a sea of sand rising into the air and then down again, over the young man. Having given the young man a burial, he turned away and headed off again. He took on the appearance of the team leader and raced straight for the army camp.

Chapter 810: Fishing in Murky Waters!

Red skies lay above him, and white land rested beneath his feet as Wang Baole dashed ahead, disguised as the dead Never-Ending Clan team leader. He ran brazenly, breaking the sound barrier repeatedly and leaving a series of thunderous booms in his wake. His speed increased as he shot across the sky and approached the camp.

He was fifteen minutes away from reaching the camp when another team of Never-Ending Clan warriors appeared before him. They stopped at the sight of Wang Baole. After looking him over and verifying his identity as a fellow warrior, they cupped their fists in greeting.

Wang Baole blinked. They were too close to the camp now. Even though his mission objective was to kill these Never-Ending Clan cultivators, it would be to his advantage to start the killing when he had slipped into the camp. He would be able to make use of his essence technique to conceal his true identity. If he attacked here and now, it might spark unnecessary investigations into the attack.

Wang Baole controlled his murderous urges. He glanced at the group coldly, then sped past them without slowing down.

This wasn't the only group of Never-Ending Clan cultivators that Wang Baole met on his way to the camp. He came across seven to eight teams in the next fifteen minutes. The first few teams had greeted him when they had seen him. The rest had mostly ignored him.

Wang Baole wasn't interested in attacking them, so he continued advancing based on the memories that he had acquired in his soul search. Finally, the camp appeared ahead of him!

The Never-Ending Clan camp looked quite unique. Above the land, nine enormous spheres floated in midair and gave off black light. From a distance, they looked like nine black holes sucking in the surrounding light.

According to those memories, there are nine separate dimensions in the nine spheres... Wang Baole narrowed his eyes as he watched Never-Ending Clan cultivators enter and leave the nine spheres. He focused his attention on the highest sphere. He could feel faint spirit energy coming from the sphere.

Wang Baole quickly retracted his gaze. With a single step, he rushed forward and headed for the fifth sphere. That was the branch that the dead team leader belonged to. As he stepped into the sphere, the power of an array formation stirred and swept across him as a check was performed on his identity token and his soul's aura. The power from the array formation receded after the check was done. Wang Baole had passed the check.

Senior Brother's essence technique is really quite useful, Wang Baole thought gleefully as he entered the dimension inside the sphere. A vast land lined with mountains unfolded before his eyes. There was no sun in this dimension, yet the lands weren't subsumed in darkness. The skies appear to give off light. Simply-built halls could be seen squatting amongst the mountains. There appeared to be some kind of logic to their locations. Shouts and cheers could be heard from the halls from time to time.

Basically, there are typically nine armies stationed at a Never-Ending Clan camp. Each army sphere hosts an army, each army is made up of more than a hundred smaller teams, and every team has its own hall that serves as a base for the team. Wang Baole narrowed his eyes as he took in the sight before him and assessed the situation silently. He had taken on the appearance of the dead team leader and was now part of the fifth army. The team leader was a top performer when compared to the other team leaders and seemed to be one of the ten strongest cultivators in the fifth army. That had been why some of the Never-Ending Clan cultivators had greeted him with respect on his way there.

In this case... let's start with the fifth army then! An icy glint flashed in Wang Baole's eyes. His appearance shifted drastically as he raced ahead. He had turned into a mosquito before anyone could notice his transformation and flown into a nearby hall.

He heard laughter ringing in the air as soon as he entered the hall. There were a dozen Never-Ending Clan members inside. They were standing around in a circle, laughing. In the circle were two native cultivators that had been maimed. Their eyes were red, and they were tearing into each other like mindless beasts in a ring.

The scene didn't stir any bit of compassion in Wang Baole. He wasn't that kind or sympathetic of a person. This wasn't the Federation. He didn't feel obliged to protect this world and its people. Regardless, the murderous tinge in his eyes did deepen a slight shade. He flew towards the group and darted into the ear of one of the Never-Ending Clan cultivators swiftly. He shot out of the other ear in the next moment, a wisp of blood mist trailing behind him as he headed for his next target.

He was too fast. Before the two fighting cultivators realized what had happened, the Never-Ending Clan members around them shuddered. Blood erupted from one ear of each of the Never-Ending Clan members, and their eyes had widened in shock and confusion. Afterward, their bodies had withered swiftly before the fighting cultivators' eyes. They then fell to the ground, sucked completely dry.

An invisible force swept over them as they fell, shattering their corpses and turning them to fine dust that scattered across the floor of the hall.

The two native cultivators stared dumbly at the sight, shock filling their eyes. Then, their vision turned dark, and they passed out.

Wang Baole appeared next to their unconscious bodies, then quickly transformed his appearance to that of one of the Never-Ending Clan cultivators that he had just killed. He then smoothed his robes, strolled out of the hall, and headed for the next one.

Lather, rinse, repeat. With Wang Baole's level of cultivation and the essence technique's gift of transformation, he went through three dozen halls within half an hour, leaving a trail of slaughtered Never-Ending Clan cultivators in his wake. After he was done with one hall, he would take on the appearance of another cultivator and repeat the cycle.

His many kills got his Demonic Eye Art all worked up. It was giving off strong lust and hunger. Wang Baole didn't try to restrain it. He needed its vitality and fervor. He needed that... to speed up the advancement of his cultivation so that he could break through to the next cultivation realm.

But he knew that killing on such a massive scale was going to get him exposed more quickly. It would become easier to track him and lock down his location. That was why he quickly took on someone else's appearance and left the army sphere for the next.

The days must have passed too peacefully for the Never-Ending Clan. Perhaps they had been seeing a dearth of challengers, or perhaps they had crushed all rebelling forces on the planet. Whatever the reason, the lack of danger meant that the Never-Ending Clan camp was slow to react to the sudden situation. After two hours, when Wang Baole had decimated numerous teams in almost all of the army spheres, someone finally realized something was amiss.

An investigation unfolded instantly, followed by swift feedback. Commotion spread across the entire camp, and alarm bells blared in the air, sending the cultivators into shock. News of an intruder who had infiltrated the camp and secretly killed a large number of their warriors spread like wildfire.

When the news spread out, Wang Baole was in the form of a Nascent Soul realm cultivator in the third army. He had been on his way back to his base hall. As soon as he stepped inside, he caught the solemn looks on the faces of the Never-Ending Clan cultivators in the hall. Someone was rattling off at top speed.

“An intruder has broken into our camp and is slaughtering our people!”

“How is that possible? The camp’s array formation didn’t sense any intrusion at all!”

Wang Baole heard that and noticed how numerous voice transmission slips had started vibrating. He allowed a shocked look to settle on his face as he pulled out his voice transmission slip swiftly and pretended that it was vibrating as well. He gasped, incomprehension and fury coloring his eyes before he barked out to the Never-Ending Clan members around him, “I’ve received a message as well. Damn it. How did this happen? Who’s the foolhardy idiot who’s done this? Could it be the cursed survivors? How dare they do this to the Never-Ending Clan!”

Other cultivators of similar status didn’t suspect anything as they discussed the matter in shock and disbelief. The officer in charge of his hall, the leader of the small team, and a Soul Conduit realm elder frowned and barked, “What’s with the panic? They’re just remnant survivors. What can they do?”

His Soul Conduit realm cultivation surged outward alongside his words, driving everyone in the hall into an instinctive silence. At that very moment, an incredible presence filled with fury erupted on the planet. It came from the ninth army sphere. A Spirit Immortal realm power flooded the camp, including the hall, and an old voice tinged with murderous fury reverberated inside everyone’s minds.

“Put the camp on lockdown, search the grounds, and find the hidden intruder. I want to know which fool is defiant enough to attempt this!”

Thunderous booms erupted around the planet as soon as the elder’s commands descended. The camp was in instant full lockdown. Murderous auras erupted from the cultivators in the halls as they charged out and began the hunt.

Wang Baole was amongst them. There was a dark, furious look on his face. Together with the Never-Ending Clan members around him, he started searching in earnest. In fact, he appeared to be putting a lot of effort into it. He pointed at one corner and shouted, “Team leader, something’s not right here. The energy signature here seems chaotic and doesn’t match the energy signature of our Never-Ending Clan members. I’m guessing that an intruder passed this area!”