

Apocalypse 256

Chapter 256

Gu Qing Shan held the Earth Sword in hand, reading through the Quest description again.

It used words like “the sky is falling” and “the world is about to collapse”, meaning the System has also felt something.

Shen Wu world will undergo an immense change in the near future.

Next is the Sealed capsule, once opened, he’ll have to use whatever is in there otherwise it will disappear.

But it’s not easy to guess what is in there for him to use.

Gu Qing Shan couldn’t help but ask: “System, just what is inside the Sealed capsule?”

[Ting]!

The System responded: [The System doesn’t know exactly what it is either, the situation was too chaotic at the time so the System randomly absorbed a power that you possess, ready to be used during the process of returning to the past. But the trip was so smooth that it wasn’t used at all and is kept sealed until now]

[The Sealed capsule is only there to help keep the power in the same state, not trap it, so you can try and scan to see what exactly is inside]

“Fine...” Gu Qing Shan sighed.

In the past life, at his peak he was already a Sword Saint, so anything he was able to use should be quite strong more or less ———

Gu Qing Shan held the Sealed capsule in front of himself and started scanning it.

Two blinking lights revealed themselves inside the Sealed capsule.

One of them was circling around the Sealed capsule’s edge, transmitting a vibration to Gu Qing Shan’s hands.

While the other was following behind the first light nonstop.

“Ah, so it’s [Summon Soul Karma Strike], unfortunately, it doesn’t help at all in this world...”

Gu Qing Shan had an expression of nostalgia, surprise, and slight disappointment.

This sword style isn’t known for being very strong, but because it touched a little bit on the Law of the world, it has a special place among all the sword styles of the world.

There are two strikes in this style.

The first strike is called [Summon Soul], using a relic of a deceased, it summons the soul from the Six Paths of Reincarnation to attack an enemy.

The second strike [Karma Strike] is sure to always hit, it siphons power from the soul of the dead to increase the overall damage.

Unfortunately, the soul is summoned from the Six Paths of Reincarnation, so it does not have a body and is unable to cause physical damage.

Which means, even if the strike is sure to hit, it can't really take advantage of that.

In the past life, [Summon Soul Karma Strike] was specifically used to deal with God's Chosens that have powerful, unique Skills but a weak body.

However, in the cultivation world and Shen Wu world, all cultivators' souls and bodies are equally strong, so this sword style won't have any role to play.

At this point, the Earth Sword in his hand became a slightly heavier, as if asking him why he's silent.

"If you've already unsealed yourself, then I'll be risking myself a bit more as well" Gu Qing Shan very seriously said, "no one in our Bai Hua sect will have to die, I swear I will change the direction of all this"

The Earth Sword let out a heavy echoing voice: 「 That's the way it should be; I will fight with you 」

Suddenly, the War God UI popped up some notifications again.

[The user has successfully broken through to Golden Core realm, maximum Soul Points increased to 100]

[Current Soul Points: 10/100]

[As the user has become stronger by a wide margin, according to user's memory, all sword styles that won't lead to the user's body/soul vessel collapse are as follows"

[Secret Art: Drawn Shadow]

[Detected user to have a deep understanding of sword styles, Soul Points cost for reawakening old sword styles has decreased as low as possible]

[To awaken Secret Art: Drawn Shadow, Soul Points cost: 10]

[Would you like to awaken this Secret Art?]

Seeing this Secret Art, Gu Qing Shan couldn't help but sigh.

This is a Secret Art that he found in an ancient ruin near the end of the final battle in the past life.

Unfortunately, it was a bit too late, he has only just managed to memorize the entirety of this Secret Art and the final battle had already arrived.

Before this Secret Art could show off its power, it was already the end of the world.

Now that he has returned, his memories have all been sealed, and Secret Art requires Soul Points to awaken due to their power.

Of course, he can just get more Soul Points from killing enemies.

Looking at the Earth Sword in hand, Gu Qing Shan felt an overwhelming confidence.

He's already very far into the path of regaining what he had lost, and he will only surpass himself from the past more and more from now on.

“I want to awaken this Secret Art” Gu Qing Shan said.

[User has spent 10 Soul Points, Secret Art: Drawn Shadow has been awakened]

Right now, Gu Qing Shan has four Secret Art in total, in order, they are [Water Flow Severance], [Crescent Slash], [Seven Stars Flowing Dragon], and [Drawn Shadow]

Holding the Earth Sword, Gu Qing Shan walked in front of the rock wall.

He was hesitating a bit and didn't attack.

「 Don't worry 」 the Earth Sword's voice came from his mind, 「 I can feel how much force you want to use and control myself enough that you won't instantly destroy this tunnel 」

“Then that's great” Gu Qing Shan breathed out in relief.

If every single strike he makes weighs 86,370,000 tons, then no matter how much finesse he has, this rock tunnel will definitely collapse.

Not to mention, he won't be able to use quite a few non-lethal swordplay from now on.

Luckily the Earth Sword has a spirit, so it can naturally connect with his mind, able to feel and read his intention.

Gu Qing Shan held the Earth Sword and lightly tapped the rock wall.

The wall was broken enough that the damaged sword is able to pull itself out.

The damaged sword shook a bit, then started to circle around and around Gu Qing Shan.

“Stop moving, you'll make me dizzy” Gu Qing Shan frowned and said.

But that only made it circle around him even faster.

“Fine, fine, fine, I'm going” Gu Qing Shan helplessly said.

From Golden Core realm onwards, a cultivator can already fly freely as much as they want.

Which means he can go get the other sword now.

Gu Qing Shan once again made his way back to the lava lake, lightly jumped up and flew over.

He flew to the middle of the lava lake, hovered in the air and lightly tapped the mound of rock under the second sword with the Earth Sword.

Bang!

The sword flew up from the mound of rock and threw itself onto the bank of the lava lake.

A sound of impact, the sword just stayed still on the ground without moving.

The damaged sword hovered, lightly tapping the second sword, as if calling it.

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The second sword was heated so much it was glowing red, slowly stood up, hovered around, then saw Gu Qing Shan.

It then nodded lightly with its hilt towards Gu Qing Shan.

“No need to thank me, it’s just something I happened to do” Gu Qing Shan said.

He looked at the Quest UI.

[Quest name: It’s a joy to help others]

[Quest description: Do everything within your power to help the sword and gain its affection]

[Quest objective: Finish the sword’s request]

[Note: The beginning of success, please keep doing your best]

[(Status: Incomplete)]

What? It’s not completed yet?

Didn’t I already rescue the sword?

Gu Qing Shan turned to look, only to see both swords have already started to circle around and around him nonstop.

“Stop doing that... dizzy...”

“Fine, fine, fine, I’ll come with you...”

Gu Qing Shan can only fly again, made his way to the other side of the lava lake, then continued down deeper into the cave.

The air was getting hotter and hotter.

At this point, the air itself was being bent from the heat, making him unable to see clearly what’s in front of him in the cave tunnel.

Gu Qing Shan frowned, then decided to just release his inner sight to look at the road ahead.

He doesn’t know why, but inner sight can only extend up to 10 meters ahead in this area, making it useless for anything besides looking at the road.

This tunnel is ridiculously deep.

Even with Gu Qing Shan’s speed as a Golden Core realm cultivator, it took him over half an hour to get to the end of the tunnel.

It was a really long way to make it here.

The two swords hovered at the end of the tunnel.

On the other side of the entrance to the tunnel, a red-glowing dark mist blocked his vision.

“We’re here? Hah, finally”

Gu Qing Shan breathed out, then walked to the entrance of the tunnel.

When he looked outside, suddenly his expression changed.

“This is—”

Scorching hot air rose up from below, blowing Gu Qing Shan’s hair and clothes upwards.

Gu Qing Shan’s expression was very serious.

Right outside of this tunnel was a bottomless chasm.

At the bottom of the chasm, boiling lava flowed all over, moving deeper and deeper into the ground.

Gu Qing Shan just stood there looking at the lava for a while.

Suddenly he spoke: “This isn’t right”

It really wasn’t right, the lava seems to be sentient, flowing at a really fast pace, like a river moving downstream.

As soon as it finds a crack, all the lava would rush there, trying to eat through and open it up.

While real lava doesn’t do that.

The ground was being melted by the lava bit by bit, while the lava itself slowly dug deeper and deeper into the ground.

When the two swords saw him get to the cave entrance, they flew straight forward, quickly disappearing into the darkness.

Gu Qing Shan was a bit stunned, but then saw them return, shaking their shafts, as if urging him to go on.

“Alright”

Gu Qing Shan jumped up and began to fly across the chasm

The two swords led the way while Gu Qing Shan flew behind, quickly making their way to the other side.

This is the other side of the chasm.

There was also a tunnel entrance here, seems to be a downward heading winding path.

Gu Qing Shan landed, was about to keep going, but suddenly flew backwards and observed the lava cave carefully.

He flew once around the chasm, then created a light to illuminate the area around.

The cliff face around appeared clearly in his eyes.

A grey mud-like outer layer dripped all the way downwards, forming a smooth, vertical descent full of cracks.

This is a phenomenon that can only be seen after lava has passed through and melted the rocks beneath into magma.

A terrifying truth suddenly dawned upon Gu Qing Shan.

——this lava wasn't originally here, it dug its way here from above, corroding the floor as it went deeper and deeper.

"All of this, was created by the rain of fire?" Gu Qing Shan asked.

Both swords let out an 'ong ong' sound to signify agreement.

"So it really is because of the rain of fire... how could it be..." Gu Qing Shan muttered.

Magma cools down really rapidly, but this lava has flowed from the top layer of the earth all the way down here, melting deep into the ground.

To be able to keep the same temperature after all this time, either it needs to be sentient, or it must be controlled with spirit energy.

But just who could keep controlling such a devastating rain of fire for such a long time?

The rain of fire in the sky hasn't stop falling at all, if it's a cultivator that did this, their spirit energy would've been depleted long ago.

No single cultivator could do this, not even someone as strong as the three Saints.

While Gu Qing Shan was thinking, the two swords had returned and started flying circles around him.

"Alright, alright, I'll go"

He held his suspicion down in his mind and followed the swords deeper into the magma tunnel.

The long journey restarted.

This time, the road wasn't as mild as before, it was a much steeper vertical decline.

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If it weren't for the two swords leading him forward, Gu Qing Shan definitely couldn't have made it this far.

They have been moving for a few hours already.

The air was dense with hot air, the temperature only rose more and more as they walked.

Gu Qing Shan had no choice but to let out spirit energy and completely cut himself off from the air outside.

Suddenly, a thin presence appeared, making Gu Qing Shan cautious.

"Spirit energy wave? ... It's so pure, and so massive..."

He frowned unexpectedly.

He didn't expect to feel spirit energy wave at such a place.

——ever since they arrived at Shen Wu world, besides from the demons, the cultivators haven't seen a single living being.

Last time, they at least discovered a few corpses of Sainted Realm Martial cultivators, but now they haven't discovered anything at all.

The three Saints guessed that this world's humanity must have been killed to extinction by the demons.

But now, Gu Qing Shan felt a spirit energy wave.

This is a bit unbelievable.

This place is extremely far from the surface, and with how much the magma cave is forked, wanting to return on the same road is practically impossible.

The Earth Sword fell into his hand as Gu Qing Shan carefully dashed forward.

At the other entrance of the tunnel, the swords finally stopped.

Gu Qing Shan stopped there, looked outside and suddenly exclaimed in shock: "How is this possible!?"

Outside the tunnel entrance was another chasm.

But below this chasm wasn't flowing lava.

It was a dried lake.

In the middle of the lake there was a hole about the size of a bowl.

The excess spirit essence turned into white mist, rising up from the hole.

The two swords shook a bit in the air, then started to descend.

Gu Qing Shan followed behind them.

As soon as he landed, Gu Qing Shan quickly walked towards the hole in the ground.

Inside the hole, there was a minute amount of water left.

There was a small fish in the water, dejectedly floating in place.

Seeing this, Gu Qing Shan forgot about everything else.

In the desolate dead Shen Wu world, there's still a small fish still living so deep underground.

With how thick the spirit essence here is, this obviously used to be a spirit vein, while this spring of water just happened to form above the spirit vein.

Although everything else has been evaporated by the high temperatures and there was only a small bowl's worth of spring water left, this fish still managed to endure and lived on.

It's a miracle of life.

It could possibly be the very last living being in this world.

Thinking so, Gu Qing Shan tapped his Inventory Bag and let out a 10 cubic meters' cube of spirit spring water.

This is spring water collected from the most famous spirit spring in Bai Hua Immortal country. Gu Qing Shan has been using this water for personal hygiene and for making tea and other drinks.

The cool air from the water quickly filled the area.

The sad, dejected little fish felt the cool air, shook its body and jumped up, looking at the cube of spirit spring water.

There was a look of desire in its eyes.

The two swords shook their hilts, seemingly urging it to get in.

The fish looked at Gu Qing Shan.

Gu Qing Shan said: "Come"

The fish jumped straight into the spirit spring water.

It swam happily and excitedly around inside the water cube.

The two swords just floated silently watching this scene.

Suddenly, the small fish jumped out of the water, swam in front of Gu Qing Shan and touched his forehead three times.

With each touch, a small white light would sink into Gu Qing Shan's forehead.

After three taps, three small lights appeared on Gu Qing Shan's forehead.

The lights began to merge into one and disappeared into his body.

After this, the fish went back into the water and enjoyed the refreshing coolness.

As he felt an exhilarating coldness, Gu Qing Shan felt delight all over his body.

A notification appeared on the War God UI.

[The System did not guarantee any rewards, but you have received an unknown gift]

[You received the Dragon Fish Pearl]

[Dragon Fish Pearl: Mend all wounds on a soul vessel in a few seconds]

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This is something extremely rare!

Feeling the coldness still emitting from his forehead, Gu Qing Shan looked at the fish in surprised.

"Thank you" he said.

The fish jumped out of the water, then jumped back in a few times over.

From the looks of it, it wanted to thank him for the water.

Gu Qing Shan nodded, then said to the fish and the two swords: "If there's nothing else, let's get out first"

Suddenly, the swords once again flew circles around him.

“...There’s more?”

“Alright, you lead the way” Gu Qing Shan couldn’t help but agree.

Just like that, the two swords lead the way, Gu Qing Shan was in the middle, while the fish took the cube of water floating in the air with it and moved forward with them.

In this underground magma tunnel, besides from that single lake from before, there was nothing but innumerable amounts of tunnels.

Not long after they left, lava began to pour in from the entrance that they came in from.

This underground lake was quickly being drowned under the lava.

The spring in the middle of the lake that was still letting out fumes of spirit essence before quickly depleted, no longer able to resist the heat, and no spirit essence remained.

After the fish left, the little puddle that it was swimming in before also quickly dried up and disappeared.

At this point, Gu Qing Shan, the two swords and the fish that can float were already very far away from the spring.

Once then entered the next tunnel entrance, they began to go on another long journey through the tunnels.

A few hours later, the heat began to slowly retreat.

Instead, a chilling air began to fill the area.

“Cold essence?” Gu Qing Shan frowned.

How could there be cold essence this deep underground?

While he was thinking, the two swords once again stopped at the next tunnel entrance.

Like before, Gu Qing Shan walked forward and looked out from the entrance.

Another chasm.

But unlike before, this is the true end of the journey.

Outside the tunnel entrance, there was nothing but the endless chill of darkness.

Whether he looked up, down or ahead, all he could see was darkness.

Gu Qing Shan couldn’t see anything, and he couldn’t sense anything with his inner sight either.

He tapped his Inventory Bag, took out a jade bottle and threw it into the stifled darkness.

In a matter of seconds, the jade bottle disintegrated into grains of sand, scattering below into the abyss.

Gu Qing Shan opened his eyes wide.

Such terrifying power, almost like sword phantoms being concentrated to its utmost limit.

Next to time, the two swords were dancing up and down, trying to gesture something.

“Get too close and I’ll die? Don’t worry, I’m not going anywhere near that” Gu Qing Shan said.

Then he couldn’t help but ask: “But then, what did we come here for?”

The two swords began to scratch the surface of the rock, slowly revealing the thing hidden inside.

It was a small formation plate, covered in dust and dirt, evidently very old.

This place was completely hidden from his inner sight, if it weren’t for the two swords, Gu Qing Shan wouldn’t have even noticed that there was a formation plate hidden there.

The two swords carefully carved away all the dirt and mud.

The small fish waved its fin, controlling some water to wash the formation plate clean.

Then the water turned into a hand, softly lifting the formation plate in front of Gu Qing Shan.

“A teleportation formation? I... need to get stronger before coming back?”

Gu Qing Shan asked.

The swords and the fish all nodded at the same time.

They stared at Gu Qing Shan for a while, then flew deep into the dark abyss.

They were gone.

Gu Qing Shan took the formation plate in hand, then read the notification on the War God UI.

[Golden Core Thaumaturgy randomizer Quest 2: It’s a joy to help others (completed)]

[If you can’t become stronger, you won’t be able to trigger the third Quest, thus getting the record of 2 completed mission as the final result for drawing your new Thaumaturgy]

After reading through this, Gu Qing Shan just stood there in silence for a while.

「 What’s the matter? 」 the Earth Sword’s heavy voice rang out.

“I want to know, if I wanted to save Shifu’s life, what should I do?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

「 To be able to save Ling er’s life, strength that trumps all adversary is needed, it’s not something you should be thinking about right now 」 the Earth Sword responded.

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“I’m exceptional?” Gu Qing Shan laughed deprecatingly.

His voice sounds a bit lonely: “Just now, they said I’m still too weak, only if I’m able to become strong enough before a certain time comes, will I be qualified to participate in the next plan of action”

“The black corpse says I’m too weak”

“Even the Quest feels that I’m too weak”

「 Then what do you plan to do? 」 the Earth Sword asked.

Gu Qing Shan stayed silent and said nothing.

He put his hand on the formation plate and infused it with spirit energy.

In a flash, he disappeared.

...

The guerilla camp.

"They haven't returned yet?" Gu Qing Shan asked.

A chaplain answered him: "Yes, General Ning has sent a Communication Talisman over, quite a few cultivators have already left as reinforcement"

"Bring out the map"

"Yes"

They quickly gave him the map.

Spreading the map out, Gu Qing Shan asked: "Which location?"

The chaplain pointed at a certain point.

"What's the situation?" Gu Qing Shan asked.

"They encountered a horde of demons too numerous to kill all at once so they were caught in a stalemate, unable to escape"

Gu Qing Shan returned the map to him and quickly left.

He quickly donned the You Ji General armor set and left the tent.

His airship rose to the sky.

About 10 miles away from the battlefield, he could already hear battle cries of "KILL" all over.

Countless lights of different colors flew everywhere, hitting the horde of demons.

The demons came screaming, rushing at the cultivators without any regard for their own lives.

The cultivators also stood their ground, switching wave after wave, unwilling to back down.

At the center of the battlefield, several giant demons a few dozens meters tall were rampaging.

Dozens of small lights emitting intense spirit pressure were circling them, waiting for the right moment to unleash their most powerful attacks.

In the middle of the intense battle, an airship silently landed at the border of the battlefield.

The battlefield was easily a few hundred miles long, so there was nothing but demons at the border.

Thus no one noticed when the airship landed.

Gu Qing Shan was wearing his golden armor, put his airship away and appeared.

He glanced over at the War God UI to check his Soul Points.

[Current Soul Points: 0/100]

Staying silent for a bit, Gu Qing Shan donned the silver mask, then grabbed the Earth Sword from the air.

He was observing the battlefield.

All the cultivators in this sector have been killed, and since the battle has begun to enter a stalemate, all reinforcing cultivators had gone to aid the main battlefield.

There were demons everywhere within Gu Qing Shan's sight right now.

"Let's pull out all the stops" he said.

「 Right 」 the Earth Sword responded.

A moment later, the Earth Sword in his hand suddenly became heavier, then returned to normal.

Gu Qing Shan knows that the Earth Sword has fully released its weight of 86,370,000 tons.

He checked all his titles.

[You Ji General], [Sword 15], [Talented General], [Ace Assassin]. He chose to equip [Ace Assassin].

[Title: Ace Assassin (Assassin title has been overwritten)]

[Description: You only need one strike to kill an enemy stronger than yourself]

[Equipping this title, you gain the specialist Skill: Harvest (Advanced)]

[Harvest (Advanced): Whenever you kill an enemy in one hit, you'll regain all the spirit energy used for that strike]

Gu Qing Shan quickly made his way to the battlefield

At the border of the battlefield, a bunch of demons felt the spirit energy wave and turned to him.

A single human cultivator.

How great, this is food delivering itself!

Delicious flesh!

The demons screeched in frenzy, rushing towards Gu Qing Shan with reckless abandon.

They looked like a black mass of claws and fangs.

Gu Qing Shan bent his knees, then disappeared in place.

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A golden flow suddenly appeared inside the sea of black, turned into a crescent white slash, decimating countless demons.

As the sword phantom disappeared, the intense wind pressure let out by the slash blew all the flesh and blood outwards.

In the middle of all that, Gu Qing Shan reappeared.

He faced the millions of demons head on as his one strike turned into countless phantoms.

All resistance, all forms of blocking were useless before the Earth Sword.

The sharp sword turned part of the sea of demons into a sea of blood and flesh.

Notifications were popping up like crazy on the War God UI.

[Determined instant kill, returned spirit energy]

[Determined instant kill, returned spirit energy]

[Determined instant kill, returned spirit energy]

[Determined instant kill, returned spirit energy]

...

Gu Qing Shan swung the Earth Sword to get rid of the blood, then headed towards the center area.

Right now, killing Foundation Establishment realm demons wouldn't give him any Soul Points, he has to find demons much stronger than he is.

All the low-ranked demons on the way were killed by Gu Qing Shan's random attacks, but none of them managed to slow him down even a little bit.

Clang!

A loud sound of impact, as Gu Qing Shan held his sword and moved backwards, he evaluated the opposing demon.

This is a Golden Core realm late stage Dashing Unihorn Demon, its main advantage is overwhelming speed, usually taking the role of quick attacker and assassin in the army.

Even Rejuvenation realm cultivators might not be able to catch up with it.

The Dashing Unihorn Demon smirked while looking at Gu Qing Shan and disappeared again.

Gu Qing Shan didn't even change his expression and just raised the Earth Sword.

He thrust forward.

The Dashing Unihorn Demon stopped in midair, barely avoiding this attack.

The thrust was aimed so well that the Dashing Unihorn Demon couldn't help but increased its speed to the max to avoid.

The Dashing Unihorn Demon roared lowly, passed the sword tip and wanted to ram into Gu Qing Shan's chest and skewer his heart.

A sudden change.

"Bam bam bam bam bam!"

Five consecutive black sword shadows slashed its body, turning it to mush.

The Dashing Unihorn Demon didn't even have time to wonder what went wrong before being turned to mush by the overwhelming force and have its flesh flew everywhere.

The War God UI popped up a notification.

[Determined instant kill, returned spirit energy]

[Soul Points +50]

Feeling the spirit energy in his Dantian once again full, Gu Qing Shan pulled back his sword.

Around him, countless black sword shadows were attacking everywhere.

Secret Art, [Drawn Shadow]

When this Secret Art is used, numerous sword shadows will be drawn and attack together with the main body of the sword.

The number of shadows is determined by the user's cultivation and sword skills.

Each shadow is just as strong as the main body.

The battle just now made more demons aware of his presence as they once again rushed over.

Gu Qing Shan held his sword at his side, slowly walked forward step by step.

Countless black sword shadows appeared in the air, covering him as he moved.

——the single use of [Drawn Shadow] from before hasn't finished.

Purely from the understanding of swordsmanship, Gu Qing Shan has already far surpassed his past life after being taught by Bai Hua Fairy.

From then on, after going through battle time and time again with the demons, Gu Qing Shan was standing at a peak he has never been at before.

Because of that, the shadows of his sword once drawn will only keep continuing without end.

Facing the tsunami of millions of demons rushing at him, Gu Qing Shan didn't even bother to look and calmly walked forward on the battlefield.

Layers upon layers of black sword shadows circled around him appeared, disappeared, then reappeared.

Before the demons could even get close, they've already been finely diced by the countless sword shadows.

——each strike carries the same force as 86,370,000 tons, plus carrying his sharp sword phantoms.

The sword shadows formed a hurricane of swords.

Gu Qing Shan has turned into a moving meat grinder, massacring the demons at unimaginable speed and efficiency.

On the War God UI, two lines notifications were going crazy at the same time.

[Determined instant kill, returned spirit energy]

[Determined instant kill, returned spirit energy]

[Determined instant kill, returned spirit energy]

[Determined instant kill, returned spirit energy]

[Soul Points +10]

[Soul Points +8]

[Soul Points +11]

Soul Points +15]

...

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He tapped his Inventory Bag and took out a jade tag.

This is the Golden Core realm scripture that Bai Hua Fairy prepared for him, Bai Hua Rejuvenation Script.

[Discovered Golden Core realm scripture: Bai Hua Rejuvenation Script]

[The scripture is split into three parts, first stage comprehension Soul Points cost: 30, second stage Soul Points cost: 60, third stage Soul Points cost: 120]

Gu Qing Shan checked his Soul Points to see that it has increased from 0 to 174.

But it's still not enough to fully comprehend the entire script.

He raised his sword, turning himself into a bright crescent moon that cut through the horde of demons.

The black blood of demons splattered everywhere like a shower.

The notifications went crazy again.

A demon whose body was covered in flames discovered him, screeching as it jumped to attack him from behind.

This is a Rejuvenation realm demon.

Gu Qing Shan's strike has just reached its end, he could only barely manage to turn around, using the Earth Sword and his armor to absorb the impact.

Clang!

A huge impact.

Gu Qing Shan was knocked flying backwards a few dozen feet.

"Peh"

He raised the Earth Sword and stood up again.

His equipped title has been changed to [You Ji General]

A few moments later, he disappeared.

The strikes came invisibly fast, tearing through the air.

Three consecutive strikes hit the demon, tearing a part of its flesh away with each strike.

Even when the demon is as strong as a Rejuvenation realm late stage cultivator, it still couldn't stop the sword at all.

It wasn't until the 4th strike that the demon was able to gather its power to protect its body.

But then, the terrifying human sword cultivator suddenly disappeared, then came a thrust filled with lightning element from behind its back.

As the strike hit, the demon was stunned in place, trembling but unable to move.

The 5th, 6th and 7th strike.

Gu Qing Shan had held back the strength of each strike to make sure he couldn't outright kill the demon.

7 blinding bright lights appeared on the Earth Sword.

Gu Qing Shan once again changed his equipped title, this time it's [Talented General]

As the sword slashed forward, the Secret Art was unleashed.

[Seven Stars Flowing Dragon]!

[Rampaging Sword Qi]!

A lightning dragon rose from the Earth Sword, crunched down on the demon and continued forward into the writhing sea of demons.

Lightning naturally counters all demons, increasing the damage greatly.

Wherever the lightning dragon passed by, all the demons screamed in agony before being turned to dust in just a few seconds.

Once again, notifications popped up like crazy on the War God UI.

[Soul Points +100]

[Soul Points +7]

[Soul Points +11]

...

Right after that, another phantom dragon formed from sword qi escaped from the Earth Sword and flew out in another direction, devastating the ranks of the demons as the foul stench of their blood filled the air.

Double dragons!

Gu Qing Shan returned his sword, tapped his Inventory Bag and took out a few Spirit Replenishment pills to chew and swallow.

At Golden Core realm, his body could already endure the force of [Seven Stars Flowing Dragon], but it still consumes a lot of spirit energy.

Suddenly, a long notification appeared on the War God UI.

Gu Qing Shan checked it.

[Amidst the intense battlefield, you've frequently used Ground Shrink enough for the Skill to level up]
[Divine Skill, Ground Shrink (advanced): Using a special speed technique, ignore the constraints of space and immediately appear at an appointed location or enemy within range]
[Range: As far as your inner sight]

From the 30 meters limit it has increased all the way to the range of his inner sight, an exceptionally large change.

The range that a cultivator's inner sight can envelop will gradually increase as their cultivation advances.

Every time Bai Hua Fairy uses this Skill, she can move over hundreds of meters at a time without any trouble, this must be why.

Gu Qing Shan was a bit pleased.

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Aside from that, as the two dragons were rampaging across the battlefield, his Soul Points was also increasing nonstop.

[Current Soul Points: 560]

That's more than enough!

Gu Qing Shan immediately said: "I choose to comprehend the full Bai Hua Rejuvenation Script"

[The user has comprehended the full Bai Hua Rejuvenation Script, Soul Points spent: 210]

[Current Soul Points: 371,
372,
392,
416,
...]

His Soul Points was still increasing.

Gu Qing Shan just stood there until all the knowledge from the system comprehension has been digested, then changed his title back to [Ace Assassin] again.

He once again went in the middle of the sea of demons and lightly swung his sword.

Secret Art, [Drawn Shadow]

Countless black sword shadows exploded outward, blooming like a beautiful but deadly flower.

[Determined instant kill, spirit energy returned]
[Determined instant kill, spirit energy returned]
[Determined instant kill, spirit energy returned]
[Determined instant kill, spirit energy returned]

...

[Soul Points +12]

[Soul Points +5]

[Soul Points +9]

...

After the Secret Art was finished, there was no demons left near him.

Inside the silver mask, Gu Qing Shan closed his eyes.

His spirit energy began to circulate according to Bai Hua Rejuvenation Script, layered on top of each other then finally merged and once again was absorbed into the manifestation inside his Dantian.

Being nurtured by this miraculous method, the dragon-shaped manifestation grew a bit tougher, stronger.

Gu Qing Shan's spirit energy was full again.

This is the good thing with using Soul Points to breakthrough, as long as he succeeds, his spirit energy will be fully replenished.

Gu Qing Shan's spirit energy wave increased by about 30%.

At the moment, he's a Golden Core mid stage cultivator.

Looking around, he found himself still only at the outermost edge of the battlefield, most of the demons around him were only Golden Core or Foundation Establishment realm.

The truly powerful demons were all at the center of the battlefield, fighting against the human main fighting strength.

Only great cultivators at Rejuvenation or Ascended realm are qualified to enter the fray.

"Seems like I still haven't qualified to enter the true battlefield..." Gu Qing Shan glanced over and mutter.

Then he suddenly roared: "Not enough! This is nowhere near enough!"

A golden light flew up, passed through the clouds to reach the sky above.

Gu Qing Shan reappeared, closed his eyes, looked upward and began breaking through again.

The Earth Sword only silently floated next to him, protecting him.

A few moments later.

Gu Qing Shan coughed up some blood.

He bent down, then began coughing up even more blood.

His body ached all over like he was slashed by a thousand knives, his acupoints were all stretched to their very limits, close to the point of breaking.

But his spirit energy wave was increasing once again.

Golden Core late stage.

At this time, a notification popped up in [War God Skills]

[Because the user had broken through in rapid succession, usage of cultivation scriptures to breakthrough has entered a cool down period]

[The user can gather Soul Points to decrease the cool down period]

It didn't say how long the cool down period was, but Gu Qing Shan understood.

It simply wanted Gu Qing Shan to challenge even stronger foes.

If he wants to breakthrough again, he has to gather more Soul Points!

The Earth Sword let out a deep echoing voice: 「 You're in too much of a rush, it won't be good for stabilizing your realm 」

"It's fine, I know that very well" Gu Qing Shan said.

For normal cultivators, burning through stages in a rush isn't a good thing.

Breaking through in rapid succession will put very heavy stress on both the body and the mind of the cultivator, they can't help but spend even more time to nurture their body and get used to their new stage of cultivation.

But in the past life, Gu Qing Shan has already reached the pinnacle of cultivation just below Sainted realm, his memory of this was extremely clear.

For him, Golden Core realm is nothing but a revisit, this won't affect his firm Dao heart in the slightest.

The only worry he has is his body being under too much stress.

Chapter 260

This is the best medicine available to heal himself with.

As soon as the pill went in, it turned into a stream of warmth water that flowed straight to his stomach, then spreads all around his body.

The aching in his body disappeared, turned into a gentle warmth, even the acupoints stretched to their breaking limits were beginning to return to normal.

The boiling spirit energy in his Dantian was also made to calm down and stabilize.

His body healed very quickly.

In a few moments, the pain was replaced by an itchy, numb feeling.

Then, even that itchy feeling quickly disappeared.

Gu Qing Shan's wounds were barely flesh wounds now.

Since this medicine caught the eyes of and was specifically sent to Gu Qing Shan by Bai Hua Fairy, of course it wouldn't be your average everyday pill.

Unfortunately, there weren't too many, only two pills total.

Gu Qing Shan put away his airship again, this time stood in the air and silently watched over the battlefield.

He squinted his eyes, quickly glancing over and understood the situation completely.

Humanity's attacks are powerful, enough to kill large groups of weak demons with a single attack.

But there are just too many demons.

With his own eyes, Gu Qing Shan saw a spell-using cultivator became out of breath, couldn't retreat in time and was instantly swallowed up by the sea of demons.

The demons just kept rushing forward, no matter how many they killed there would still be more, enough to drive anyone to despair.

Why are there so many demons?

Gu Qing Shan looked further past the battlefield.

At the back of the demon army, the rain of fire was still pouring down without mercy, devastating the earth.

The rain was a calamity that couldn't be resisted no matter what, the demons had no choice but to run for their lives towards the direction of the group of humans.

Which makes the human cultivators feel more and more pressure.

Is this kept on going, both their stamina and spirit energy will quickly be depleted without any way to replenish it quickly.

While the amount of demons that came here would only increase more and more as time passed.

The scale of victory was slowly tilting towards the demon's side.

If this is allowed to go on, the human's side will definitely lose.

*Strange, why did the rain of fire just happened to move in that direction at this exact time?
Is it a coincidence, or is it being controlled by some mysterious force with ulterior motives?*

After thinking for a while, Gu Qing Shan still couldn't draw any conclusions.

This is completely unknown world that requires more investigation, more digging for him to arrive at the truth.

But now---

He held the Earth Sword in hand, getting ready for battle.

The Earth Sword started to speak in its deep voice: 「 Do you still want to fight? Even if you have a high-level healing pill, your wounds still need a few days' of rest to fully recover! 」

“I need to fight a bit more to get used to this realm, after I feel it's enough, I'm breaking through to Rejuvenation realm” Gu Qing Shan answered.

The Earth Sword shook and said: 「 Breaking through to Rejuvenation... But according to the laws of the world, if a cultivator breakthrough consecutively and still attempted to breakthrough a realm, the Heaven's Tribulation will become much fiercer than it's supposed to be! 」

「 That type of Lightning Tribulation isn't normal, even a Rejuvenation realm cultivator can't guarantee that they'll be able to endure it, with your wounds... 」

“Don't worry, it's only a Lightning Tribulation”

Saying so, Gu Qing Shan didn't wait anymore and started descending.

In a few seconds, the golden light fell in the middle of the sea of demons again, massacring demons with reckless abandon.

If a powerful giant demon suddenly appeared to attack, the golden light would suddenly retaliate in full force.

A few seconds later, one or two dragons would be seen rampaging across the battlefield.

After the frenzied massacre.

Gu Qing Shan looked at the notification on the War God UI.

[You have gathered enough Soul Points, usage of cultivation scriptures to breakthrough cooldown period has ended]

Very good, he muttered.

...

On the other side.

The center of the battle field.

A Faceless Giant roared for the last time.

Its body turned ashen, then crumbled and dissipated.

This is the way that a Chaotic species dies.

Ning Yue Xi lifted her long Blade up, wiping the blood off her lips and asked: “How many are left?”

“The 3rd and 5th squad's cultivators have all fallen, we have four squads left” Leng Tian Xing was bloodied all over, breathing heavily as he reported.

Right as they say that, a few more giant demons slowly came close.

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Donk! Donk! Donk!

Their steps were heavy, each time they moved, even the ground trembled.

“Send out more Communication Talismans and order the next wave of reinforcements” Ning Yue Xi frowned as she said that.

Right now, even she was feeling a bit tired.

But as the current supreme commander here, her expression must not show it, otherwise it may negatively affect the troop's morale.

Suddenly, the sky began to dim.

The cloud gathered as the wind screamed, focusing in this area.

The world instantly became dark.

Rumble, rumble!

The sound of thunder.

All the cultivators couldn't help but look at where the clouds were gathering in shock.

Even the demons couldn't keep up their overflowing rush anymore.

They were all looking at the sky, confused and unsure.

"This feeling... could it be, Heaven's Tribulation?"

Ning Yue Xi loudly cursed: "What kind of crazy person faces a Tribulation on the battlefield? Are they afraid they won't die fast enough!?"

There were demons and cultivators all over the battlefield.

If even a single cultivator enters the range of the Heaven's Tribulation, it will automatically think the amount of people facing the Tribulation increased, making the power of the lightning even more terrifying.

And then there were demons literally everywhere on this battlefield, once they see an opening, they'll directly ignore their own fears of the lightning to attack and interfere with the one facing the Tribulation.

Wanting to successfully break through under such complicated and dangerous situation is nothing short of daydreaming.

Which bastard went crazy and decided to breakthrough here of all places?

A flash of blue light descended from the sky and struck the ground.

Boom!

The intense shockwaves rang out.

Everyone was now able to pinpoint the Lightning Tribulation descending at the Southwest corner of the battlefield.

All the cultivators in that sector have already died, there should be nothing but an endless sea of demons there right now.

But now, the demons were screaming in fear, scattering, running away from that direction.

Lightning Element is dubbed as “Smiting”. Cultivators who has this sort of Element can greatly increase their damage against demons.

Lightning consists of two Laws, one of death and one of life, but no matter which it is, they’re both the natural enemy of demons.

And now, the demons are facing actual lightning from a Tribulation.

This is the most powerful kind of lightning.

All demons instinctively fear this devastating lightning from the bottom of their souls.

The Heaven’s Tribulation slowly began.

Streak after streak of lightning fell, striking the cultivator facing the Tribulation.

Gu Qing Shan was standing right in the middle of the Lightning Tribulation, striking away the first bolt of lightning.

Instead of scattering, the bolt broke apart as it flew into the sea of demons, killing a large amount of them.

「 You’re definitely going to die, in over 100,000 years, I’ve never seen a crazy cultivator such as you 」 the Earth Sword sighed heavily.

“There’s no path to live for those that aren’t crazy” Gu Qing Shan was basically soaked in demon’s blood and casually answered.

After using Soul Points to breakthrough consecutively to Golden Core late stage, he went into the sea of demons to kill more and more, finally negating the cooldown period for breaking through with Soul Points.

Now, he was attempting to breakthrough to Rejuvenation realm.

In a single battle, Gu Qing Shan was trying to go all the way from Golden Core early stage to Rejuvenation realm.

No wonder even the Earth Sword felt that it couldn’t be done.

The second bolt of lightning fell.

Gu Qing Shan once again swung his sword and struck the bolt of lightning at another group of demons.

Boom!

The lightning exploded, taking a large patch of demons away with it.

Before such lightning, any demons below Sainted realm can only give up and die.

This is a problem of their nature being unable to resist lightning.

Gu Qing Shan coughed up some more blood.

This time, it's not his body, but rather his soul vessel that reached its limit and got wounded for not being able to take such a large leap in strength after consecutive breakthroughs.

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Gu Qing Shan frowned, then lightly tapped his forehead with his finger.

A ball of light lightly flew out at the tip of his finger.

[Dragon Fish Pearl: Mend all wounds on a soul vessel in a few seconds]
[Would you like to use the Dragon Fish Pearl?]

"Use it"

The light then scattered into Gu Qing Shan's body.

A cool and refreshing feeling flowed from around his body to his Thought Sea, quickly healing all the wounds on his soul vessel.

One breath, two breaths, three breaths.

The cool feeling disappeared.

Gu Qing Shan's soul vessel has fully recovered.

"Such an amazing treasure, I really want to know what that fish's original form is" Gu Qing Shan muttered.

At the moment, his spirit was high and all he had were a few scratches on his body.

And he already reached Golden Core late stage.

The lightning kept on striking, with the amount increasing more and more.

While heading towards the center of the battlefield, Gu Qing Shan was still swinging the Earth Sword, knocking all lightning that descended on him away into the waves of demons.

「 Are you planning to keep on going like this, breaking through while using the lightning to kill the demons? 」 the Earth Sword asked.

"Two birds with one stone, why wouldn't I?" Gu Qing Shan said.

「 You're not afraid that the demons will enter the range of the Tribulation and do everything to kill you? 」 the Earth Sword asked again.

"They're still waiting for their chance, but right now..."

Gu Qing Shan swung his sword again.

Each and every bolt of lightning that came down all got knocked away into the army of demons, causing chaos and discord.

The destructive presence of the Lightning Tribulation scares the demons even more than the rain of fire far behind them.

The stronger demons are still hesitating, looking for a chance to strike so they haven't moved forward yet.

Gu Qing Shan was still advancing, anywhere he went by, the demon army was scattered or made to run for their lives, unable to pay attention to the human army's attacks.

At this point, the lightning suddenly stopped.

A heavy storm suddenly came screaming.

The sky became darker.

A more devastating Tribulation lightning was about to descend.

Because Gu Qing Shan had broken through stages in succession, and then further attempted to breakthrough a realm right away, the heaven and earth is about to bring upon him a greater trial, to stabilize the world's Laws.

There have been too many genius cultivators who died at this stage of breaking through many times in a row.

Countless bolts of Tribulation lightning were gathering above the black clouds.

With so many arcs of lightning building up across the dark sky, it almost seemed like a river of stars.

No, a river of lightning.

Such a rare and magnificent sight appearing means that the Heaven's Tribulation has reached its most dangerous segment.

The river of lightning in the sky began to shine brighter and brighter, then without any warning, began to rapidly descend upon Gu Qing Shan all at once, like a giant waterfall.

Gu Qing Shan rested the Earth Sword on his shoulder while cupping his hand to look at the sky above.

He was regaining his breath to prepare for the tough battle ahead.

「 Be serious with this, do not die at this place 」 the heavy voice rang out.

“I guess this is you worrying?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

「 That's right, I've lived for countless years, but I've never seen such a reckless cultivator like yourself before 」

“Don't worry, this kind of Lightning Tribulation is just what I needed”

「 Needed? 」

“Right, to help me break this stalemate”

Gu Qing Shan swung his sword down.

In the next moment, he moved like a storm, turning into a blurry shadow as he zipped towards the center of the battlefield and attacked.

The rain of lightning followed right behind him.

While moving, the bolts that got close to him were once again knocked away, turning into snakes of lightning that scattered everywhere he went.

The demons were being decimated in groups at a time.

Suddenly.

A Faceless Giant roared, walking towards Gu Qing Shan.

This is the strongest demon currently on the battlefield, as it moved, so did all the other demons.

*—-that crazy cultivator has borrowed the lightning from his Tribulation to kill too many demons, he can't be left alone anymore!
He must be killed!*

The demons rushed to him like a tsunami.

At the same time, Gu Qing Shan swung the Earth Sword and struck a blood red bolt of lightning.

The blood red lightning after being hit by the Earth Sword turned into a thick red string, pierced and exploded inside the Faceless Giant's chest, then continued all the way towards the sky.

Staggering for a few more steps, the Faceless Giant kneeled, then fell down face-first, crushing numerous weaker demons on the ground before turning into dust.

Gu Qing Shan stopped and received the screaming rain of lightning chasing after him, knocking them away one after another.

The Tribulation lightning bolts were all heading towards the tsunami of demons.

In the very next moment, they crashed!

Boom!

Boom!!

Boom!!!

The Tribulation lightning exploded in succession, while the tsunami of demons began letting out cries of horror, agony and fear.

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It didn't take long before the entire wave of demons that tried to come towards him were dealt with by the lightning.

The rest of the demons ran away, not the least bit interested in pursuing the human cultivators anymore.

All they wanted now is to run for their lives and get away from the lightning as far as possible.

But the Heaven's Tribulation was merciless and mechanical, it didn't change at all no matter what happened below.

As time passed, the amount of lightning only increased, gradually becoming too numerous to count.

Never mind the demons, even Gu Qing Shan himself was beginning to feel immense danger.

Gu Qing Shan frowned, then thrust forward.

Secret Art, [Drawn Shadow]!

Endless black sword shadows bloomed.

The lightning was being knocked away by the numerous layers of swords.

The descending lightning exploded like beautiful white fireworks, but also like falling meteors, crashing and destroying large groups of demons, turning them to ash.

Wherever Gu Qing Shan went, the demons could only run or die.

Behind him, the army of demons was already scattered.

He was still heading towards the center of the battlefield.

All the cultivators watching this felt stunned.

Even now, they still don't know just who this mad man is.

Although Gu Qing Shan was wearing the noticeable golden You Ji General armor set, his face was being hidden by the silver mask that blocked even inner sight, so no one knows for sure.

One female cultivator timidly asked: "What should we do now?"

It was now that Ning Yue Xi finally recovered from shock and hurriedly ordered: "Retreat! Make sure not to enter the range of the Heaven's Tribulation, otherwise we'll be harming him instead"

The cultivators all sighed from relief and quickly fell into line.

They were also about to reach their limits.

There were still some more giant demons left, but none of them reached the realm of the Beast Saints.

Facing the might of the Heaven's Tribulation, all the giant demons stopped their feet, roaring in anger and helplessness.

Even the strongest of them, the Faceless Giant has fallen to the lightning.

None of them dared to advance anymore.

Behind them was the rain of fire, in front was the human's Heaven's Tribulation, terrifying calamities both of them.

What do we do now?

One of the giant demons thought for a bit, then started running in another direction.

Its action instantly created a chain reaction, as all the other giant demons followed after it towards that direction as well.

As the most powerful demons has begun to run, the rest of them followed suit.

They were running, pushing, stepping on each other to follow the giant demons.

The demons were retreating with their tails between their legs.

Not too long after, there was nothing else around Gu Qing Shan.

All the demons have retreated.

Only the commanding ranks of humanity's army stood around the perimeter to protect him.

"All of you pay attention, he saved everyone's lives, make sure he's protected well enough to make it through this Tribulation, do not make any mistakes" Ning Yue Xi ordered.

"Roger!" the cultivators responded.

However, everyone was all extremely curious, just who is this brave soul that thought of such an insane idea to get rid of the demon army.

One of them looked at him, then suddenly said: "This is a correct line of thought, maybe we could use this method to scare away enemies later on"

The person standing next to him wryly smiled: "If it were you, would you have dared to do this?"

The Heaven's Tribulation is always the most fearsome and dangerous trial that a cultivator has to pass. It's hard to guarantee being able to succeed even under the best possible conditions, never mind having to be careful of the demons while using the power of the Tribulation to kill them.

Even cultivators only have a single life, who would want to try risking it like that?

A single mistake means the end.

After thinking about that a bit more, he realized just how dumb what he just suggested was and sighed.

The lightning was still striking down, but it's beginning to weaken.

About 10 minutes later, all that's left in the sky was the rain and wind, there was no more thunder or lightning.

The Heaven's Tribulation is over.

Gu Qing Shan waited for a bit.

But this time, his soul vessel didn't leave his body to go into the space-time vortex.

It seems the corpse was hurt really badly this time, enough that it didn't have strength to spare to pull him over there.

Gu Qing Shan just stood in place, feeling the changes in his body.

The dragon manifestation inside his Dantian once again underwent a metamorphosis.

It began to change its form, slowly turning humanoid.

You could basically see that it was taking Gu Qing Shan's form.

Humans are the treasure of heaven and earth.

Spirit energy taking a humanoid shape means that it's able to connect with heaven and earth, fulfilling the triad of Heaven, Earth and Man. (1)

A Rejuvenation realm cultivator can use their miniature spirit form at any time to feel the Laws of the world, taking one step further on the path of understanding the nature of the world, otherwise known as Dao. (2)

From now on, the cultivator's life span will increase a thousand years, they can instantly become the elder of any sect, flying becomes second nature, travelling around the world in a single day is no longer just a dream.

Gu Qing Shan's miniature spirit form has finally manifested.

Note:

(1) Heaven, Earth and Man: There's a saying in Chinese, to be able to guarantee success in anything, you need to gather the triad of "Heaven's blessing, geological advantage, and human harmony". "Heaven's blessing" is another way to say "luck", as ancient Chinese people heavily believed that if it's time for you to succeed, you will naturally be able to do so.

(2) miniature spirit form: also called Rejuvenation form, the original word in Chinese carried both the meaning of "becoming younger" and "new born baby". In cultivation novels, this typically means that the egg (golden core) hatches and reborn you anew inside yourself, giving you extra life span and making you become younger again, which is where the name Rejuvenation realm comes from.

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Gu Qing Shan removed his mask and said: "You still don't recognize me?"

Looking at his familiar face, Ning Yue Xi couldn't help but be stunned for a few seconds.

She was a bit hesitant to accept this and asked: "Are you... alright?"

Leng Tian Xing also came here, looked at him and was completely flabbergasted: "Weren't you still normal yesterday morning, how the hell did you suddenly become a Rejuvenation realm now?"

Their reactions couldn't be helped, Gu Qing Shan's cultivation speed was simply too terrifying, making everyone unable to accept this right away.

If this wasn't due to overwhelming talent, he could very well be under the Tianma's influence, falling to demonic possession.

Once that happens, the cultivator's realm will increase exceptionally fast, but will die just as quickly.

The Tianma will be waiting for the right time to collect the dead cultivator's soul as food.

Gu Qing Shan answered: "Shen Wu world is too dangerous so Shifu gave me a hand and helped me achieve this realm"

The surround cultivators realized, then couldn't help but sighed.

So this is thanks to Bai Hua Saint helping him, no wonder his cultivation increased so quickly. That's fine then, he hasn't fallen to demonic possession, and definitely not a second Ning Yue Xi.

Without any outside help, the only person able to increase cultivation so quickly in the younger generation is Ning Yue Xi.

Thinking that, everyone started letting their guard down around him.

The cultivators came up one by one, enthusiastically clasping their fist to welcome him.

“Well met, General Gu”

“We have to thank you, General Gu for your help this time”

...

Regardless, the fact that General Gu can use his Tribulation to overturn the stalemate and change the flow of the war is still unprecedented. No one, without absolute confidence and bravery, would have tried and succeeded in doing so.

“We're saved thanks to you, but what you did really is insane, your life is a life too, don't you know?” Ning Yue Xi said with an expression of concern.

Gu Qing Shan smiled and replied: “Aren't I fine right now?”

Ning Yue Xi asked: “Then you won't mind me checking you?”

“Of course”

Ning Yue Xi held his hand, sending her spirit energy in and circulated it around his body once before retracting it.

“So you really are fine” Ning Yue Xi sighed from relief.

She turned around to find everyone was staring at them, suddenly realizing that she might have acted a bit too caring towards him.

Ning Yue Xi then put up a serious front and ordered: “Since General Gu's body is fine, let us prepare to return to the camp”

““Roger!”” all cultivators replied.

...

The camp.

Ning Yue Xi's General tent.

Ning Yue Xi, Gu Qing Shan and Leng Tian Xing were gathered here to talk.

“How is General Gong Sun?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

“He's still unconscious” Ning Yue Xi answered.

“Aside from him, are there any other unconscious people?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

Ning Yue Xi answered: “There are, a few scouts found a Blade lodged inside a cliff, they also immediately fell unconscious when they pulled it out”

Leng Tian Xing said: "I got a few medical sages to take a look at them, but everyone said that their soul vessel was struck and will be unable to wake up for at least 3-5 days"

"There's also the Vanguard troop's You Ji General Hao Yi, he found a spear stuck on the ground, but when he picked it up and tried using it, he went into a coma"

Gu Qing Shan contemplated for a bit, then suddenly thought of something.

He asked: "I remember the previous time, when you and General Gong Sun discovered Shen Wu world, you also discovered a few corpses of powerful Martial cultivators right?"

"Yeah" Ning Yue Xi answered, "they were all Sainted realm cultivators, it was really unbelievable"

Gu Qing Shan stood up and said: "If it's like that, then I have a theory, we need to go to the ruins to check if it's true"

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He then looked at the two sitting across from him, then smiled while apologizing: "Alright, just give me the map, I'll go there myself"

Ning Yue Xi and Leng Tian Xing have gone through a few days of tough battle, so they were both exhausted right now.

They needed rest.

"It's too dangerous for you to go alone, give me one night to recollect myself, we'll go tomorrow" Ning Yue Xi said.

"It's fine, I'm only going to look, don't worry" Gu Qing Shan said.

"That place is the biggest ruins here, the other ruins found aren't nearly as big as it is, so there's definitely a lot of danger there, I highly suggest you and I team up and go" Ning Yue Xi was clearly concerned.

"I'll come with you as well, such a place is sure to have something eerie going on, you might need someone to help in case anything happens" Leng Tian Xing also said.

"No need, I'll go and return really quickly"

Gu Qing Shan stood up and wanted to leave.

When he was about to get out of the tent, Ning Yue Xi couldn't help herself standing up.

She realized how flustered she was acting but still raised her voice: "So someone wants to disobey direct orders from a superior! General Leng, what does the military law say to that?"

Leng Tian Xing answered: "Under non-combative situations, disobeying orders will result in the whipping punishment, from 10 to 30 strikes, depending on the severity of the order"

Gu Qing Shan stopped.

Ning Yue Xi regained her composure, putting both hands behind her back and said: "General Gu, what do you say?"

Gu Qing Shan sighed: “Are you serious right now? I’m only going to investigate the truth, why are you stopping me?”

“I don’t care what you want to do, I’m giving the orders” Ning Yue Xi insisted.

“I’m just going ——” Gu Qing Shan tried to explain.

“I still haven’t had anyone experience the whipping punishment before, maybe I’ll do it myself” Ning Yue Xi very nonchalantly said.

Gu Qing Shan shook his head angrily: “I swear; this will hurt the nature of our relationship. Also, do you really believe a sword cultivator like me will be afraid of the whipping punishment?!”

He then turned around and sat down neatly on the chair.

Ning Yue Xi didn’t bother to retort, only ‘hmph’ in satisfaction and sat back down.

Seeing Gu Qing Shan’s troubled look, she consoled him: “It’s fine, we’ll leave together tomorrow”

Saying so, she didn’t wait for Gu Qing Shan’s answer and just closed her eyes to meditate.

“Right, let’s go together tomorrow” Leng Tian Xing also smiled.

He’s the most tired person here, but thinking of the mission tomorrow, he took out a pill and began to enter deep meditation.

Only Gu Qing Shan still sat there, bored and annoyed at the same time.

He sighed, then opened the War God UI to check the battle details from before.

[User has broken through Rejuvenation realm, maximum Soul Points increased to 200]

[Current Soul Points: 7200/200]

[Detected user’s cultivation to have increased by a large margin, according to user’s memory, all sword styles that won’t lead to the user’s body/soul vessel collapsing are as follows]

[Secret Art: Swallow Return]

[Detected user to have a deep understanding of sword styles, Soul Points cost for awakening old sword styles has decreased as low as possible]

[Awaken Secret Art: Swallow Return, Soul Points cost: 200]

[As this is a high-levelled assassination Secret Art, the Soul Points cost is higher]

[Would you like to awaken this Secret Art?]

“Awaken”

[200 Soul Points spent, Secret Art: Swallow Return as been awakened]

[Current Soul Points: 7000/200]

At this moment, Gu Qing Shan is able to use a total of 5 Secret Art, in order they are: [Water Flow Severance], [Crescent Slash], [Seven Stars Flowing Dragon], [Drawn Shadow] and [Swallow Return]

[Ting]!

After the Secret Art notification disappeared, a new notification popped up.

[You have become a Rejuvenation realm cultivator]

[Because your speed of breaking through greatly eclipses that of normal cultivators, you've proven yourself to have the making of a true War God. The System congratulates you]

[Extra reward: You've received the right to choose Thaumaturgy for two realms at the same time]

[Note: With your break-neck speed of cultivation, at this time, your Golden Core Thaumaturgy randomizer Quest has yet to be completed and the Rejuvenation Thaumaturgy Quest has already come, thus the extra reward is as follow]

[You can pick one of two choices]

[Option 1: Immediately complete the Golden Core Thaumaturgy Quest, you'll receive the highest amount of randomized choices possible, at the same time unlocking a new Rejuvenation Thaumaturgy Quest]

[Option 2: Both the Golden Core realm and Rejuvenation realm Thaumaturgy Quests will be merged into one]

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[You cannot, it will still be only one Thaumaturgy] the System answered.

"Then who would pick the second option? Two realms combined for only a single Thaumaturgy?" Gu Qing Shan sighed.

The System responded: [But with the second option, your chances of getting a combat-type Thaumaturgy will greatly increase]

[There's also a chance for you to get a Divine Skill]

Gu Qing Shan gasped.

A Divine Skill?

There's a chance I can get a Divine Skill?

If that's really the case, there's no need to even consider option 1, he has to take this once-in-a-lifetime chance to get that Divine Skill.

With one more Divine Skill, no matter what dangerous situations he's in, he would be able to ensure his safety by at least 10% more.

"I want to ask, what's the percentage for getting a combat-type Thaumaturgy and what's the percentage for getting a Divine Skill?"

The System responded: [The chance to get a combat-type Thaumaturgy is 50%, the chance to get a Divine Skill is 30%]

30%?

I'll bet on it!

I have to!

Gu Qing Shan didn't hesitate anymore and chose the second option.

30% chance is already much higher than what he thought it would be.

Gu Qing Shan was ready to bet his luck even if there's only a 10% chance!

[Ting]!

[The user has chosen option 2]

[Initiating, Golden Core/Rejuvenation Thaumaturgy Quests has merged]

[The user will get an increased chance to draw combat-type Thaumaturgies and a chance to draw a Divine Skill]

[Maximum amount of Quest completed for both realms has been set to 7]

[Quest difficulty increased greatly]

[You've completed 2 Quest. Quests remaining: 5]

[Quest will now continue]

[Please continue to get stronger to fulfil the requirements for the 3rd Quest]

At this point, the notifications on the War God UI stopped.

Reading through the notifications, Gu Qing Shan couldn't help but clenched his fists.

7 Quests.

The amount of Quests has been determined, instead of being limited to 7 days. Of course, he still wanted to complete them as fast as possible.

Because the faster he's able to draw the new Thaumaturgy, the sooner he'll get stronger!

An uneventful night.

The day after, Ning Yue Xi picked out a few dozen Rejuvenation and Ascended realm cultivators, as well as Gu Qing Shan and Leng Tian Xing to go together to the ruins.

This place was a desolate desert.

A few dozen airships landed one after another.

The cultivators quickly found the location from before and had gathered around.

Ning Yue Xi carefully took out a sealed jade box and opened it.

There was a damaged formation plate inside.

"It's this formation plate" Ning Yue Xi said, "General Gong Sun picked it up from the ground, right as he tried to use it, the ruins opened up beneath the ground and he was knocked out"

"Where are the ruins now?" Gu Qing Shan asked.

"After he was knocked out, the ruins were closed once again" Ning Yue Xi explained.

"Seems like it's a mechanism-type formation plate, give it here, I'm going to check it" Gu Qing Shan said.

Ning Yue Xi gave him the jade box and advised him: "Be careful with it"

Gu Qing Shan received the jade box, unlocked all the seals and silently stared at the formation plate.

He then had a very strange look on his face.

"Haven't even gotten to know, already tried touching everywhere... so it punished..." he muttered.

The cultivators around didn't quite understand so they exchanged glances.

General Gong Sun already fell unconscious; could it be this one went crazy instead?

Seeing the strange looks everyone was giving him, Gu Qing Shan decided to just communicate with the formation plate via sending voice.

A few moments later, Gu Qing Shan took out a few spirit stones, placed them on the holes of the formation plate and infused it with his spirit energy.

The ground began to shake and opened up, revealing a staircase leading downwards.

"Come, let's go down" Gu Qing Shan put the formation plate away and said.

Everyone checked to see that he was still conscious, showing no signs of fainting any time soon.

"How did you do that?" Ning Yue Xi couldn't help but ask.

"The formation plate has a spirit"

Saying so, Gu Qing Shan placed the formation plate on his open palm.

"Come on, show everyone"

Following his words, the formation plate started to float on its own, and even very animatedly shook the dust off its body.

"A weapon spirit!" someone exclaimed loudly.

All the cultivators were in an uproar.

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In the cultivation world, it's incredibly rare for a weapon to have its own spirit and sentience.

It's very hard for a weapon or treasure tool to birth a spirit by itself, there's only a really small chance for them to appear after numerous years of careful nurturing and forging a bond between them and the cultivator.

But now, a formation plate that was randomly picked up off the ground has a spirit!

The hell!?

Could it be, all the cultivators who fell unconscious before were because they tried to refine the weapons for themselves before getting permission, which caused the spirits to become mad and attack their soul vessel, thus making them faint?

No cultivator has ever even thought of the possibility of a weapon randomly picked up off the ground would have a spirit, so all of them were careless and fainted from the same reason.

Looking at the formation plate floating in the air, everyone's eyes were red with envy.

A weapon with a spirit is incomparably more powerful than not!

Who knew, Shen Wu world's level of Smithing has already reached such a level!

“How did you know?” Ning Yue Xi asked.

“I met a sword, but I didn’t attempt to refine it” Gu Qing Shan answered.

“And then?”

“I got along with it quite well afterwards”

“If that’s the case, doesn’t that mean there are sentient weapons all over Shen Wu world?” Leng Tian Xing asked.

“That seems to be the case” Gu Qing Shan answered.

The formation plate flew a couple circles around Gu Qing Shan, then suddenly shot straight into the underground ruins and disappeared from sight.

“Let us go quickly” Ning Yue Xi said.

Everyone nodded, already couldn’t wait to enter the ruins.

The damp and cold staircase kept leading downward without them being able to see the end.

The formation plate was flying in front of them, at every dead end, it shook a little bit and a new road would open.

The group of cultivators followed the formation plate for a whole hour before they reached what seemed to be a place of worship.

The temple was quite large, enough for everyone to dwarf everyone who stepped inside.

This place worships the Buddhas.

The statues of Buddhas were extremely life-like and animated, almost as if they were smiling gently, observing the living beings below.

However, there was a thick layer of dust all over the temple hall, there obviously hasn’t been anyone here for a really long time.

The group stood at the entrance of the temple, using their inner sight to scan around.

There was almost nothing in this abandoned Buddhist temple.

There was only a single table in front of the Buddha statues with a bowl neatly placed on it.

The bowl itself was jet black, the outside appeared to be full of scratches and cuts, seemingly an antique.

Having gone all the way here, all they found as an unassuming bowl, so everyone was a bit disappointed.

But then, the formation plate that led the way came before the bowl, stood upright and leaned forward.

Its gestures look like a respectful bow.

After it bowed, the formation plate flew next to the bowl and floated in place.

“What do we do now?” Ning Yue Xi asked in a low voice.

“I think we should follow what it does” Gu Qing Shan said.

He stood in front of the bowl, respectfully bowed before walking into the temple hall.

Suddenly, the bowl let out a golden light, enveloping Gu Qing Shan and sucked him into the bowl.

“A space-altering technique! This is no ordinary treasure!” a cultivator well-versed in Smithing said with excitement.

“Where did Gu Qing Shan go?” Ning Yue Xi asked in a low voice.

“There’s a miniature space inside the bowl, he’s probably in there right now” the cultivator answered.

“Will there be danger?”

“There won’t be, Buddhist are famous for being pacifists, not to mention, this thing is probably used to relay some sort of information”

“But this is Shen Wu world, and their Smithing techniques have been shown to be much more advanced than ours”

Seeing how the cultivator was unable to retort, Ning Yue Xi said nothing else, bowed to the bowl and walked into the temple hall.

The bowl once again let out a golden light, circled around the temple hall and sucked her in.

Leng Tian Xing quickly followed

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When the three of them entered the bowl, the others quickly followed.

A golden light once again appeared from the bowl, swept around the temple hall and brought all the cultivators inside.

There was still one person left outside the temple hall.

He stood there, waiting until the very end after everyone has already gone in.

At this moment, he showed an expression of pure excitement as he rushed towards the formation plate.

He has been waiting to get this formation plate into his hands since they were on the way.

If he already knows that the formation plate is sentient and is prepared for it, he doesn’t have to worry about his soul vessel being hurt from retaliation.

As an Ascended realm formation user, he knows very well just how powerful a sentient formation plate can be.

With this formation plate, even Gong Sun Zhi won’t be able to beat him.

Now that everyone has gone inside the bowl, this is the best chance for him to make the formation plate his.

When everyone comes out and wonder where the formation plate went, he can just act like he doesn't know as well.

"Ahaha, you're mine, mine!"

He muttered in frenzied excitement.

He flew as fast as possible to grab the formation plate.

It was just one step away from his hand.

Suddenly, a black light emit from the bowl, sweeping over his body.

The cultivation was instantly turned into a pile of dried bones without any flesh or skin, scattered on the ground.

An Ascended realm cultivator, killed in an instant.

The formation plate landed on the skull, knocked on it twice, mocking him.

After staying there for a while, the formation plate seemed to have felt something, slowly floated up and landed inside the bowl.

The world inside the bowl.

Gu Qing Shan landed feet first, quickly followed by Ning Yue Xi.

Then came Leng Tian Xing and the rest of the cultivators.

In the darkness, a heavy, agonizing voice came.

"Amitabha, the demon's army is too great, we were unable to hold them off. Having no other choice, the highest powers of the world decided to join hands to perform a never-before-seen heaven and earth offering ritual. So I have recorded the entire process as history for times to come"

The voice slowly disappeared, followed by the scenery starting to appear around them.

"This is... a recorded image?" Leng Tian Xing hesitantly asked.

The group looked around to find themselves standing on a highly raised ritual altar.

The scene below was busy as numerous people gathered, all of them cultivators.

Quite a few cultivators were wounded, some had to sit on the ground, a few others couldn't do anything but lie on the ground.

The armor they were wearing were more or less damaged at different levels.

The thing that truly made for a spectator are the numerous weapons floating in the sky.

They were either standing still, or flying around chasing each other, only when they're summoned by the cultivators that the weapons would fly down and stay next to them.

All the people who entered the bowl were either Rejuvenation realm or Ascended realm, so they instantly recognized that they were watching a recorded scene of times passed.

“All of these weapons have their own spirit” Ning Yue Xi commented after a bit of observation.

Gu Qing Shan also chimed in: “Take a look at their armors”

The group quickly looked at the cultivators’ armors.

All the armors, while damaged, were still letting out a dim light, occasionally even formed intricate patterns or divine beast’s avatars.

Ning Yue Xi sighed: “Their Smithing abilities are definitely much more advanced than ours”

“It might not just be Smithing, take a look around us” Leng Tian Xing said.

Gu Qing Shan turned to look at the great cultivators that were on the ritual altar like they were.

There were a total of 12 people.

The presence they emitted was as deep as the sea, despite not actively using spirit pressure, they were still letting out immense pressure to those around.

“That’s right, this feeling, it’s the same as the three Saints” one of the cultivators here exclaimed in horror.

“My god, and there are 12 of these cultivators, could it be they were all Sainted realm?” another also realized.

Gu Qing Shan silently felt it and also agreed.

Even this recorded image is miraculously advanced, allowing them to actually feel the presence of those around at the time.

Shen Wu world had 12 Sainted realm cultivators, an incredible fighting force.

But then, a thought surfaced in everyone’s minds at the same time.

—*—even such a force couldn’t win against the demons?*

According to what they’ve known so far, there are easily over a million types of demons with varying strength, and there are also high-tiered demons so strong that even the three Saints could only barely stop them.

Luckily, all those high-tiered demons disappeared just as suddenly as they appeared.

No one knows where they came from, or where they went.

While the group was spaced out thinking, the 12 Sainted realm cultivators looked forward, as one of them stepped out and walked in front of the altar.

He loudly declared: “The time has come; we welcome the four Venerable”

Before he finished speaking, the 12 Sainted realm cultivators as well as all the cultivators below the altar knelt down on one knee, clasping their fists ceremoniously.

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A green smoke appeared in the Eastern sky, turning into a 5-clawed green dragon, carrying an old man with a fluttering white hair and beard, surfing the clouds.

A pillar of fire that reached the sky appeared on the Southern sky, as a masculine man rode a blade of fire, heading towards the altar.

At the Northwest direction, a raging tsunami came crashing in, carrying one male and one female, casually chatting as they slowly arrived.

As these four appeared, everyone's expression seemed much more solemn.

When the four stepped onto the altar, they retracted all the miraculous sights and waved their hands: "Stand up"

Only when hearing that did the cultivators dared to stand.

Gu Qing Shan suddenly said: "They aren't Sainted realm"

His eyes were glued straight to the four, feeling the terrifying pressure they emitted.

"They feel a bit like the Formless Tianma Saint King at that time" Ning Yue Xi also frowned.

"You're right, they're definitely cultivators who reached the realm above Sainted" Gu Qing Shan confirmed her guess.

"There is a realm above Sainted... and there are four of them who managed to reach it here..." one of the cultivators muttered in both fright and confusion.

The cultivators exchanged glances, still in complete disbelief.

Suddenly, Leng Tian Xing thought of something, his expression paled as he asked: "If they are that powerful, how did they still lose to the demons?"

As soon as he asked that, a dread silence filled the room, as no one dared to speak.

At this point, the four Venerables and the 12 Sainted realm cultivators were discussing something, occasionally breaking out into argument, like they couldn't all agree.

The scene suddenly disappeared, then resumed after a while.

Right now, a lot of time has passed since the image for cut off.

Everyone else has already left the altar, only the four Venerables stood at each corner of the altar, making the same hand seals.

They seem to be conducting a special secret ritual.

While the four did what they did, the sky above the altar began to break, revealing the chaotic space-time vortex.

The space-time vortex didn't appear for very long, suddenly disappeared as heaven and earth returned to normal.

A strange accessory was seen floating in the sky.

It gleamed, then suddenly broke and crumbled to dust.

A few moments later, three figures appeared in the sky.

While Gu Qing Shan and everyone was looking to see more, the scene suddenly disappeared.

Feeling a bit dizzy, they all got teleported out of the bowl.

The group of cultivators reappeared in the temple hall again.

“Hm?”

“We’re outside?”

“Why did it suddenly got cut off?”

The group of cultivators only panicked for a second before regaining their senses.

Everyone looked at the same direction.

The entrance to the temple hall.

A group of strange and mysterious cultivators were standing there.

They all wore hats with large brims and black leather jackets that hid their hands.

Such an outfit not only hid their faces from view, it also blocked any small signals or actions that their hands might be doing.

There was spirit energy residue in the air.

A few cuts on the bowl were glowing hot.

It seems that these unknown cultivators had attacked the bowl to cause Gu Qing Shan’s group to be teleported outside.

These unknown cultivators were also emitting Rejuvenation and Ascended realm spirit energy waves.

The unknown cultivators also seem shocked, lifting their heads to reveal the surprised expressions under the large brim hats.

Both sides were evaluating the other party.

For the period of one whole breath, no one said anything.

Time almost seemed to stop at this point.

The cultivators of the world of cultivation found that they don’t recognize these cultivators.

Ning Yue Xi, Leng Tian Xing and the rest of the great cultivators were all long-term Generals of the army, between everyone here, they have memorized just about every single face in the army in their inner sights so that they won’t forget.

With a single glance, they understood these are people that they’ve never seen before, complete strangers.

Even their outfits, tools, weapons and armor were never seen before.

Perhaps they're cultivators from Shen Wu world?

—-but Shen Wu world's cultivators should have already died without any survivors remaining.

This is something the three Saints has discovered and confirmed from the very start.

Which means, these cultivators wearing large brim hats aren't people of the cultivation world, and aren't people of Shen Wu world.

At this point, including Gu Qing Shan, all the cultivators realized something.

Something that no one has ever even thought of before.

Without any warning, history began to change at this very moment.

At this moment, two very different cultivation civilizations had met each other in the ruins of a third destroyed civilization.

But time always move forward, it wouldn't stop at this moment forever.

Because someone broke the silence.

"Ah? There's people here?"

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Behind him, when the others saw his hand on his sword, they already understood.

But the unknown cultivator still gently smiled and said: "We are —"

The situation suddenly changed.

A blinding golden light instantly appeared right in the middle of their group.

In a single moment, intense sword qi exploded without any warning.

Endless black sword shadows bloomed like a wild lotus, slashing back and forth, carving them to pieces.

Each black sword shadow contains the force of 86,370,000 tons thanks to the Earth Sword.

Together with Gu Qing Shan's Divine Skill [Ground Shrink], the unknown cultivators didn't have enough time to react.

No matter how cultivated they are, standing 5 steps within range of a sword cultivator's sudden attack, coupled with the full weight of the Earth Sword, there's no way they would survive.

In less than a single breath, Gu Qing Shan had already killed 7 people.

"Bastard! Attack!" the unknown cultivator in charge shouted.

"Kill them!" Ning Yue Xi only spaced out for a split second before drawing her blade with a shout.

The cultivators on both sides were experts on the battlefield, as soon as they heard their orders, they didn't even hesitate to attack the other party.

The unknown cultivator in charge drew his sword and faced Gu Qing Shan.

His strikes were fast and his attacks were unfamiliar to him.

Suddenly, his sword bent almost like a snake, dodged through Gu Qing Shan's attack and went into an opening in the same motion.

A Secret Art triggered.

Over a hundred thousand sword phantoms turned into an intense tsunami, concentrated fully on Gu Qing Shan's body.

Clink clink clink clank clink clink!

In a single moment, Gu Qing Shan was hit by the numerous swords, his golden armor was vibrating from the shock of the tsunami of swords.

Gu Qing Shan could only protect his vitals before being knocked backwards several dozen feet.

The golden light flew backwards.

It wasn't until he crashed into the back walls of the temple hall, coughing up blood did he fell down to the ground.

What a powerful strike.

If Gu Qing Shan didn't have the General armor set, he would've already died.

Looking down, he could see the golden armor was already dented all over.

Crashing down, Gu Qing Shan had to use his sword to prop himself to stand up.

"This Secret Art... truly is powerful..." he was breathing heavily.

On the other side, the unknown cultivator was standing still, this sword still thrust forward, but he didn't pursue.

"Your attack, is it [Swallow Return]?" the unknown cultivator suddenly asked.

"Correct" Gu Qing Shan answered.

The unknown cultivator sighed and dejectedly said: "So this is [Swallow Return], I've searched for so many worlds without finding it, who knew I would meet it in such a fashion"

Bam!

A thick mist of blood exploded from behind him, the unknown cultivator fell straight down on the ground, no longer breathing.

He's dead.

Secret Art [Swallow Return], at the time that the sword cultivator attacks, another sword will appear to attack at the same place from behind the enemy.

Two notifications popped up on the War God UI.

[You've killed a Rejuvenation realm late stage sword cultivator]
[Determined instant kill, spirit energy returned]
[Soul Points +100]

Gu Qing Shan stood straight up, didn't even spend the time to eat a healing pill and once again rushed into the battles.

In such an enclosed place, a sword cultivator's attack is the most frightening thing.

And after the unknown cultivator died, Gu Qing Shan was the only sword cultivator left in the temple hall.

He has to join into the battles as soon as possible.

Quickly moving, Gu Qing Shan appeared next to an unknown spell cultivator, currently making hand seals.

A sword flashed, then Gu Qing Shan disappeared.

The unknown spell cultivator screamed.

The hand he was using to make the seal was chopped off, fallen to the ground.

An Elemental spell quickly followed and took his life.

At this time, Gu Qing Shan had arrived at the other side of the battle.

He turned into a white crescent slash, cutting through an unknown Martial cultivator at the belt.

As an Ascended Realm Blade user, Ning Yue Xi was similarly suitable for battle in such an enclosed space.

Wearing the blood red Ding Yuan general armor set, she ignored all impacts as she crashed into and cut through her enemies, one or two slashes at a time.

The battle quickly ended with the total massacre of the other side.

This was a spontaneous battle, starting with Gu Qing Shan's sudden attack.

Since he took the initiative, Ning Yue Xi and the rest of them didn't have any casualties, only a few were wounded.

The battle ended just as suddenly as it started.

Everyone was breathing heavily from the shock, still very confused.

"Why did you suddenly attack? I think everyone here deserves an explanation" Ning Yue Xi looked at Gu Qing Shan and asked.

All the cultivators looked at him.

According to military laws, acting on your own without orders can result in execution if it's serious enough.

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“Do you know any of them?” Gu Qing Shan calmly asked.

“I don’t” Ning Yue Xi answered.

“Have you ever met people wearing such attire before?”

“No”

Gu Qing Shan continued: “Then let’s collect the spoils of war first, that way it’ll be more convincing as I tell you the reason”

Ning Yue Xi stared at him, then finally nodded: “...Do it”

The cultivators began to collect the weapons and other items from the dead corpses on the ground.

Finally, they found a small flag on the unknown sword cultivator’s body.

There was a large character for “Order” written on the flag.

Someone tried infusing it with spirit energy.

Immediately, a solemn voice came from the flag.

“Order: Direct disciple Zhang Hong Chi will lead the 5th squad and go into the Weapon Spirit world to search for treasures”

“Aside from your mission, do not attempt to investigate the identity of the people from the other world”

“This is a decision of the sect, do not question it”

“If you meet people from the other world, you are free to kill or capture as ordered. Beautiful captured women are treated as the maids of the disciples; those strong enough can also be captured to be used as slaves in the mines, others must be killed”

The group of cultivators could only open their mouths wide.

“They are cultivators from another world!” one Ascended realm cultivator gasped in shock.

“Even a half-Ascended realm cultivator is only considered a direct disciple” another muttered.

In the cultivation world, an Ascended realm could already become the head of a sect, or form their own sect.

But on the other side, that’s just a direct disciple.

Then, what about their elders and sect master-level cultivators, what realm would they be?

Everyone thought about it for a bit, then couldn’t help but feel a chill coming up.

The meeting this time was completely unprepared for.

Who could guess that they would meet people of another world in this ruins?

And the Order flag’s orders revealed a terrifying piece of information.

Those people would definitely have attack them!

It's possible that they would've tried to lull them into a false sense of security before suddenly attacking. And an even more terrifying piece of information.

———their world has already found out about and plans to do something to the cultivation world.

Everyone regained their senses and quickly thanked Gu Qing Shan.

Ning Yue Xi also sighed from relief.

Since the other side carry bad intentions from the start, Gu Qing Shan's suddenly attacking them couldn't be considered to be arbitrarily acting on his own.

It would be called taking the initiative instead, for the sake of reducing casualties for their own group.

Ning Yue Xi frowned and asked: "Qing Shan, did you know about this before?"

"No, I didn't"

Listening to the orders in the Order flag, Gu Qing Shan was smiling with extremely bitter sentiments.

"Then why did you attack as soon as you see them?" Leng Tian Xing asked.

"Ever since coming to Shen Wu world, I've seen quite a few trails left behind, so I deducted a few things"
"Seeing the situation today, it further reassured me that my deduction was correct"

Gu Qing Shan's eyes contained both nostalgia and confusion.

His eyes look like they were looking past the layers of space, trying to see outside of Shen Wu world.

All the mysterious and eerie happenings in the previous life.

And in this life, being able to randomly meet the bronze pillar and corpse.

The three figures that appeared out of nowhere from the recorded images.

Shen Wu world having no other living beings asides from the countless weapon spirits.

And most importantly, Bai Hua Fairy's omen of death.

Thinking that, the confusion in Gu Qing Shan's eyes disappeared.

It was instead replaced instead by determination and killing intent.

"Tell us a bit about your deduction then" Leng Tian Xing patted his shoulder and said.

Gu Qing Shan nodded.

This must be said clearly and directly, to avoid anyone trying to test their luck.

He arranged his words for a bit, then said: "Between us and them, there could only ever be a single surviving side"

Everyone became silent.

Thinking of what happened before, quite a few people started to feel more and more uneasy.

“Why do you think so?” Ning Yue Xi’s face paled as she asked.

Gu Qing Shan thought for a bit, then decided to just explain his point of view in the way that cultivators could understand.

He couldn’t predict how the words he said today will one day become the most famous example of deduction in the history books to come.

“Let’s take our world for example”

Gu Qing Shan started to speak.

“A single world only has so much resources, so those who hold more resources are naturally the ones who becomes stronger and more powerful”

“Then what would happen if one day, two different worlds met?”

“Even lone cultivators will kill each other in the struggle for resources and treasures, then why wouldn’t two unfamiliar cultivation civilizations do the same?”

“Both sides would definitely want the other’s resources no matter what”

“Because of this, when two civilizations meet, it’s impossible to assume that the other side carries good will”

“When two civilizations meet, the biggest possibility is a fight to the death between themselves”

Gu Qing Shan finally started to explain his view.

“If we go one step further, if there are countless worlds and countless civilizations, then any worlds that reveal themselves will very quickly be destroyed”

“All the worlds that hides in the shadow will all wage war on the revealed world for the sake of resources”

“To steal, to take, to get the resources that they need”

“As well as to prevent the revealed world from continuing to grow and one day become a threat to themselves...”

“And all of this, is simply to make their own civilization become stronger, more powerful, to allow their world to survive the apocalypse born from the endless sea of demons”

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These words are nothing but the simplest explanations that he glossed over for the sake of the cultivators, explaining why he suddenly attacked the other group.

There are still a few details that he knows he can’t mention, otherwise it would bring a lot of follow up questions.

The large corpse that claims he’s existed for over 100,000 years had warned him and told him of an incredible secret.

A world that absorbs another will make its living beings become stronger.

The world itself is a resource for gaining strength.

The world itself is the main resource that civilizations have to fight and compete over.

This is the entire truth.

Countless, endless demons travel between the worlds, looking to ultimately destroy every living being.

Within that Apocalypse, each civilization only aims to become stronger, to be able to resist against the destruction and death.

Because of that, when two worlds meet, one of them will have to be merged into another.

And this is the truth.

Gu Qing Shan suddenly thought of another problem.

This relationship between the civilizations is mainly caused by the terror of the Apocalypse.

The civilizations only wanted to become more powerful as fast as possible, to avoid being destroyed by the Apocalypse.

But then.

The ringleader of all this, the main aggressor, the very reason why the civilizations go mad for power, the demons themselves... What exactly are they?

The demons have all sorts of extraordinary power and abilities, their methods of action are completely inconceivable, and even their thoughts can't be used to assume their main intention.

Humans don't understand them, can't understand them.

In this moment of history, all the other truly terrifying things have yet to appear.

But then — — —

Where did they come from?

Who made them?

Are they really demons?

After living through 2 lives, this is the first time Gu Qing Shan has truly begun to contemplate this.

He got lost in his thoughts.

But the more he thought about it, the deeper he felt the secret becomes, as if there was some sort of horrible truth hidden away so that no one can ever find it.

Looking at the other cultivators, they still haven't regained their senses from his glossed-over explanation.

Ning Yue Xi sighed and spoke up first: "If a war is inevitable, then let's take a look at their equipment to see if we can find some of their intelligence"

That's right, everyone here is a Rejuvenation or Ascended realm cultivator, everyone's knowledge is vast.

Everyone agreed to discuss it among themselves to see if anything can be found.

The cultivators put all the weapons, formation plates, pills, talismans... in the same place.

They quickly found that the large brim hats they were wearing has the ability to conceal their presence.

A cultivator who was an expert Smith commented: “This is something that every one of them has, since it’s so commonplace, they must live in an environment where they need to be constantly on guard”

Gu Qing Shan picked up the sword cultivator’s sword and looked at it carefully.

The sword looked almost brand new, as if it was forged not too long ago.

It’s possible that the sword cultivator had only just received this before they came here.

The [War God Skills] icon on the War God UI began blinking.

A few notifications popped up.

[Discovered weapon]

[Guang Yang sect’s direct disciple’s personal sword, exhibited Skills are as follows]

[Guang Yang basic sword style 7th strike. User: Zhang Hong Chi]

[Secret Art: Torrent. User: Zhang Hong Chi]

[Because these sword styles come from an unknown world that the user has never been to before, Soul Points required to learn these sword styles are increased]

[To comprehend Guang Yang basic sword style 7th strike, Soul Points cost: 17]

[To comprehend Secret Art: Torrent, Soul Points cost: 190]

Gu Qing Shan’s eyes lit up.

This is the Secret Art from before, its power was quite exceptional.

If he didn’t have [Swallow Return] that specializes in assassination and killing, it would’ve been a much harder battle.

He should learn this Secret Art.

As for how it costs more Soul Points, it’s completely irrelevant.

He instantly replied: “I choose to comprehend Secret Art: Torrent”

[190 Soul Points spent, the user has comprehended Secret Art: Torrent]

A new notification popped up.

[You’ve learnt a sword style of another world]

[Congratulations, you’ve barely cleared the requirements, initiating Thaumaturgy Quest number 3]

Reading the notifications, Gu Qing Shan was really happy.

Finally, he could continue the Thaumaturgy Quest.

After completing 7, he can draw a merged Thaumaturgy of 2 realms!

He looked around.

The other cultivators were still examining the spoils of war in a neat and orderly fashion.

The current situation isn't exactly ideal for him to arbitrarily leave the group and act alone.

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Gu Qing Shan kept his rush down and joined in with evaluating the other world's cultivation civilization.

Everyone noticed all the other world cultivators had a gem ornament.

The gem ornaments were different sizes, different colors, and a few were emitting light.

After examining them, everyone unanimously agreed that they were space-type treasure tools, basically works the same way as an Inventory Bag.

A cultivator who was an expert in treasure tools tried to access one, then shook his head.

He didn't give up and checked another gem ornament.

After a while, he finally had no choice but to give up.

He explained: "Both the gem ornament's inner design and the way they were made were extremely advanced, only the owner themselves know how to open them, once the owner dies, there's no way for anyone else to open them"

Hearing that, everyone shook their heads and sighed.

The other world cultivator's clothing and armor has also been removed and put to one side.

An expert Smith cultivator came up to check the armor and weapons, then finally said: "Their weapons are sharp and armor are tough, although it's not as good as the ones from Shen Wu world, but they're definitely much better than ours"

Shen Wu world's Smithing has reached an advanced level unlike any other, this has become common sense for them.

A cultivator who studied pills took out one of the pills, first sniffed it, then broke it in half and chewed it.

After closing his eyes for a while, he answered: "Their level of pill making is also more advanced than ours, this pill's potency has already surpassed our top-tier pills"

"Their talisman is also much stronger" a person holding a few talismans also added.

At this point, everyone looked at Gu Qing Shan.

How lucky, how fortunate.

Thankfully he took the initiative and killed off quite a few of them in an instant.

Otherwise, if both sides had gone into a drawn out battle, it hard to know who would've won.

"What about formations? Our formation and theirs, whose is stronger?" Gu Qing Shan suddenly asked.

In small skirmishes, weapons, pills and talismans and are greatest support for a cultivator.

But in large scale wars, formations are the deciding factor.

One of them reported: "We just discovered, formation user Wang Yun is dead"

“He’s dead?”

“Those are his remains”

Someone pointed to the pile of bones in the corner

“That’s strange, there was no one else here, how did he die?” Leng Tian Xing asked.

Suddenly, an image appeared from inside the bowl and projected into the air.

It showed what happened to Wang Yun.

All the cultivators watched and could only sigh at the bowl.

Even an Ascended realm cultivator was so easily killed, no one here has any way to deal with such a powerful artifact.

Not to mention, the artifact has a spirit.

A powerful artifact that was also sentient, for now, no one tried to touch it.

The most important thing right now is to quickly find out how strong the other world cultivators are.

—especially their level of advancement regarding formations.

Ning Yue Xi asked: “General Gong Sun is still currently unconscious, who else here is an authority on formations?”

All the cultivators stayed silent.

The path of formations is too hard so normal people wouldn’t even come close to it.

“Then we’ll have to return before being able to draw any conclusions” Ning Yue Xi couldn’t help but said.

“Actually, there’s no need for that” Gu Qing Shan picked up the formation plate and faced it towards an empty spot in the temple hall.

“We only need to see its effectiveness”

He took out a few spirit stones and put them into the formation plate, then controlled it.

Four phantom images appeared from the formation plate: Azure Dragon, White Tiger, Vermillion Bird and Black Tortoise.

Gu Qing Shan tried tapping the Vermillion Bird phantom.

A flame rose from the formation plate, turning the entire temple hall into a sea of fire.

Gu Qing Shan quickly retracted his spirit energy.

The flame dissipated.

Gu Qing Shan tried tapping the Black Tortoise.

A frost appeared on the formation plate, spreading outwards as the entire floor began to freeze white.

Gu Qing Shan retracted his spirit energy.

The white frost stopped spreading.

Gu Qing Shan sighed: "Such an intricate formation plate that has four different methods of attack, as well as being able to hold such strength, I believe it has far surpassed our level of formation"

Everyone just stared blankly at this scene, speechless.

The sense of dread started to spread in everyone's minds.

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One of the cultivators shouted angrily: "I'm an Ascended realm cultivator, I'd rather risk my life for my Dao rather than going to another world to mine until death!"

All the cultivators felt incredibly down, clearly losing their will.

Leng Tian Xing was holding a jade tag.

Before the fight, one of the cultivators was holding this jade tag.

Because Gu Qing Shan took the initiative and killed them, the owner of the jade tag didn't have time to put it back into the gem ornament.

Leng Tian Xing used his inner sight to scan over it, said nothing, then gave it to Gu Qing Shan.

Gu Qing Shan also scanned it to see that there was a Daoist script inside.

This Daoist script starts from Qi training realm and continue all the way to Golden Core realm, detailing what should be prepared, what should be done for each stage, each realm, how to break through, what changes will their bodies undergo...

At the end of the jade tag, it was mentioned very clearly that this Daoist script is made specifically for regular cultivators of their sect, each person gets one.

And that this scripture was specifically made to help cultivators quickly advance through low-levelled realms like Foundation Establishment and Golden Core.

After Gu Qing Shan take a look, he gave it to Ning Yue Xi.

The jade tag quickly passed through the hands of everyone here.

It was after a while that someone started speaking with a shaken voice: "Golden Core realm cultivators are considered to be our main fighting force, but it's only considered a low-levelled realm to them?"

All the cultivators exchanged glances, once again in disbelief.

Comparing the two worlds, Smithing, Pill, Talisman, Formation, they're more advanced in every aspect, and now even their overall cultivation is lower than theirs.

At this moment, everyone was feeling fear and despair in their hearts.

Suddenly, Gu Qing Shan muttered: "Wait a minute, something's not right"

“What is it? Did you find something out?” Ning Yue Xi asked.

Gu Qing Shan said: “Give me the jade tag, there was a detail that I didn’t quite pay attention to, I need to confirm it again”

He quickly received it.

Gu Qing Shan scanned it with his inner sight again, this time not leaving a single letter or word.

All the cultivators kept their mouths shut, staring at Gu Qing Shan, seemingly hoping for some kind of hope.

Finally, Gu Qing Shan has finally seen through the entire jade tag and said: “There’s a problem here, there’s no mention of any disturbance or interference from space whenever they breakthrough a realm”

“What does that mean though?” a cultivator was confused.

“That means they’ve never met a Tianma before” Gu Qing Shan said.

“So what if they’ve never met a Tianma, maybe their world has such a strong protection that even the Tianma doesn’t dare to go there” Leng Tian Xing replied.

Everyone once again fell into a mood of despair and depression.

But Gu Qing Shan was still contemplating this.

In the cultivation world, no matter how strong a cultivator is, the Tianma has never once stopped trying to disturb and lure the cultivators into demonic possession.

—then why does the Tianma not go to that world, is it simply just because they’re scared?

At this time, the bowl slowly floated up, circling around Gu Qing Shan up and down.

Gu Qing Shan regained his senses, looked at the bowl and told Ning Yue Xi: “I think I’ll have to go in there again”

Ning Yue Xi gritted her teeth: “Everyone, prepare a formation, all of you will guard outside this time, I will enter together with Gu Qing Shan and Leng Tian Xing to find out the truth”

“Roger!” the cultivators answered.

Gu Qing Shan respectfully bowed to the bowl and said: “Please lead us in”

Three trails of light extended, enveloped them as they disappeared.

Inside the bowl, the images continued.

After the cultivators of Shen Wu world spent a lot of effort, they finally managed to open up a space crack.

Three figures appeared in the sky.

Two of them were women wearing white robes, both of them unrivalled beauties.

Standing there, they emitted a solemn, pure pressure, giving off a feeling of being inviolable.

The thing that was most noticeable that both of them looked to be only maids, both their hands and feet bound by shackles, firmly suppressed by the chains, unable to be released even a single bit.

The chains were also letting off a dim light, enveloping the both of them.

One of the women held a red gourd, the other held a clear glass bottle.

They were both respectfully lowering their heads on either side.

A young man wearing a purple shirt was standing in the middle of the two women.

When he appeared, both Ning Yue Xi and Leng Tian Xing couldn't help but looked at Gu Qing Shan.

"What is it?" Gu Qing Shan asked.

"At a glance, both this physique and presence are similar to yours" Leng Tian Xing answered.

"However, your faces are different, it's very easily distinguished from looking for a bit" after observing Gu Qing Shan for a few seconds, Ning Yue Xi nodded and confirmed.

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The man's expression was thin and his gaze was cold, his body was looming, almost unreal, as if he was not actually existing in this world.

By just standing there, a horrifying flower of flame was blooming from his body, burning space itself into black charred cracks.

The two stunning women were surprised, looked around, then down at the group below.

Gu Qing Shan noticed a subtle change in their expressions.

One of the women muttered in a low voice: "Big sis look, an untouched world!"

"My yes it is, a completely new world, how unfortunate that they are so weak, it seems this will be another massacre again" the other woman sighed in a very low voice.

"Hmph, young master is probably very pleased inside right now" the woman looked at the Zishan young man.

The young man said nothing, only released his inner sight to scan around.

The four Venerables and the 12 Saints felt the women's presence and were a bit hesitant.

They looked exceptionally powerful, but they're both shackled and chained, making it impossible to judge clearly.

It wasn't until they all felt the Zishan young man's spirit energy waves that their expression changed to that of joy, bowing to the man in the sky.

One of the cultivators stood out, asking: "Pardon me, but are you perhaps a friend of Lu Xian?"

Hearing that, the Zishan young man smirked full of sarcasm.

He started speaking to the women: "Years ago, father killed a certain person. Some of his belongings were suitable for me to use, who could've known, one of the small things in there would help open the barrier and let me find this area"

"What would you like to do, young master?"

"Get the gourd"

Hearing that, the women's faces slightly grimaced.

The gentle and beautiful one of the two women softly asked: "Young master, why can't we take the 5-Elemental essences instead?"

The Zishan man coldly laughed: "If we do that, everyone on our side will feel it, the benefits will have to be split evenly"

"If I refine this entire world myself, the majority of the benefits will belong to our sect instead, wouldn't that be much better?"

"Now get me the gourd!"

He turned around to look at the women with a cruel look in his eyes.

The women had no choice: "Yes!"

One of the women pushed the chains on her hand away, lifting the gourd at her chest and pointed the gourd downwards.

A very fleeting look of unwillingness appeared in her eyes, but quickly disappeared.

The Zishan man made a hand seal, shouting: "Go!"

Immediately, the gourd began to let out a 5-colored light.

Then the Zishan man changed his hand seal, putting more spirit energy inside.

Instantly, a black fire instead started to spew out from the gourd.

The Zishan man coldly looked down and spoke: "This world isn't too bad; the only downside is that there are too many people"

Before he even finished speaking, a devastating rain of fire began to fall from the sky.

Following the countless cries of horror, fright and curses, the images stopped.

Everything became black.

The voice from before resounded again.

"The cultivators have all been massacred, the only ones left on this world were we weapon spirits"

"Without human cultivators, we ourselves had no way to become stronger by ourselves"

"Without human cultivators, we can only befriend eternal loneliness, until the day that the world is destroyed"

"We want to avenge our masters; we want to avenge ourselves"

"If you're willing to help us, please receive this bowl"

“This bowl is able to destroy hundreds of thousands of demons of the worlds, unfortunately the Buddhist lineage of our world has already died out, it is no longer able to show all of its power”

The voice disappeared.

Seeing all of this, the three people exchanged glances.

As a white light flashed, they once again appeared inside the temple hall.

The bowl flew up by itself, landing in Gu Qing Shan’s hands.

Gu Qing Shan held the bowl, contemplating for a long while

Ning Yue Xi also had a complicated expression on her face, asking: “You want to help them? To help these weapon spirits?”

“With the current circumstances, helping them also means helping ourselves” Gu Qing Shan answered.

He very carefully put away the bowl.

The bowl didn’t resist at all, letting him put it away inside his Inventory Bag.

Leng Tian Xing suddenly asked: “But then, how did they come here?”

“Who are you talking about?”

“The cultivators of Shen Wu world used some sort of treasure tool as a catalyst to break open the space vortex and brought the Zishan young master here”

“Right”

“But the cultivators we met just now, how did they come here?”

Leng Tian Xing continued: “If it was easy for them to come here, then this world would’ve already been invaded by them completely”

TN: Zishan = Purple shirt. Because “purple shirt young master” sounds really lame, he’ll be called “Zishan young master” from now on.

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His words made sense, so both Ning Yue Xi and Gu Qing Shan nodded.

“We came here through the gate that the demons created” Gu Qing Shan said, “if they also have access to such a gate, this world would’ve already been theirs”

Ning Yue Xi said: “This might be a very crucial point. The next time we meet, we have to capture one of them to interrogate”

The rest of the cultivators gathered around, the three of them began to describe the scene they saw before.

After knowing everything, the rest of the group only shook their heads and said nothing.

The things they went through today has shocked them greatly.

Even if everyone here were great cultivators who have went through all sorts of thick and thin, their Dao hearts firm and tough, they still need some time to digest everything that they found today.

A while later, Leng Tian Xing was the first to speak: "The four people we saw were cultivators at a realm above Sainted, yet when they saw the Zishan young master appeared, they all had expressions of joy and hesitation. Which means the Zishan young master must have been even stronger than they are"

Ning Yue Xi couldn't help but ask: "Then wouldn't that mean he killed every person in this world by himself?"

Gu Qing Shan answered: "From what I can see of the Zishan young master, unless something unexpected happened, it definitely was his doing"

Everyone went silent again.

"That can't be, if there really exists such a high realm, why has no one in our world manage to cultivate to such a height before?" a Rejuvenation realm cultivator questioned.

An Ascended realm cultivator answered: "In the Age of Old, we even had Divinity with us, but since then, after the 1000 years of blank history, the strongest anyone has ever made it to was Sainted realm"

They all sighed and remained silent.

Gu Qing Shan suddenly said: "The rain of fire is still here"

Hearing that, everyone's expression changed.

The group of great cultivators here have never felt such panic and dread ever before.

This was the very first time that they noticed how a calamity has been looming over their heads this whole time.

The rain of fire was unleashed by that Zishan young master, but right now, the rain of fire was still falling from the sky nonstop.

Which means, the Zishan young master really was using the rain of fire to refine the world for himself, bit by bit.

Refining an entire world!

What an unbelievable thing!

If he's able to do that, he definitely knows that there were more cultivators who suddenly appeared on this world.

Then why did he not kill them, the cultivators who came from the cultivation world?

There must be something else very important that's keeping him.

But sooner or later, he will know about what happened today, and put out some time to deal with them.

At that moment, the two worlds will officially enter a state of all-out war.

No, more accurately, it'll be a world trying to totally enslave another.

All the cultivators fell silent again.

Everyone's hearts were heavy and stunned.

Even Gu Qing Shan didn't think that he would find out such an incredible truth from this world.

If the Destiny Quest had remained the same, he would've already completed it by now.

But now, the Destiny Quest's objective is to "at least keep Shen Wu world intact"

Then, did the System feel something?

Is this world going to be changed somehow?

Gu Qing Shan contemplated.

"We have to report this to the Saints immediately" an Ascended cultivator said.

"The Saints are nowhere to be found, even our Communication Talisman's couldn't reach them" for the first time, Ning Yue Xi angrily replied.

Then both she and Gu Qing Shan gasped, suddenly remembered about the Universal Talisman.

"Let me" Gu Qing Shan said.

Tapping his Inventory Bag, he took out a Communication Talisman.

He didn't use words but rather his inner sight to record everything they found out recently to the Communication Talisman.

The good thing about inner sight is how he's able to hide what he's saying from the people here.

Using his exploration down the magma cave as an excuse, he also recorded the secret that the large corpse told him into the Communication Talisman.

Very carefully, he placed the Communication Talisman into the Universal Talisman and hoped that Bai Hua Fairy will see the new intelligence as fast as possible.

And also that they could help her.

Suddenly, Ning Yue Xi's expression became firm and said: "Everyone swear in front of me that you won't divulge what we found today to anyone after we return"

"We can avoid it for a short time, but not forever" Leng Tian Xing said.

"This matter is too big; we have to wait for the Saints' reply before we decide on what to do next" Ning Yue Xi replied.

Hearing that, Gu Qing Shan also nodded in agreement.

The rest of the cultivators also understood from hearing her.

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This is such an unbelievable tale that if it's made known to everybody, the morale of the entire alliance troop will plummet.

Everyone swore one after another.

The exploration into the underground ruins stopped here.

The cultivators followed back the way they came in, using airships to return to the camp.

As a Ding Yuan General brought a group of You Ji Generals back to camp, several guards cultivators came to receive them.

Thankfully, Ning Yue Xi also chose powerful great cultivators to go on this trip, so despite being fearful inside, they showed nothing on their faces.

Ning Yue Xi quickly went to meet the other Ding Yuan General, Sun Ming monk.

Immediately after, the two Ding Yuan Generals began giving out order after order.

The entire camp became very busy.

As the cultivators were so deeply drowned in consecutive military missions that needed to be done as soon as possible for the sake of reinforcing this camp into an outpost, they quickly forgot about how Ning Yue Xi led a group of cultivators out to explore.

Only the great cultivators who were led by Ning Yue Xi noticed from her arrangements the feeling of a brewing storm.

As Gu Qing Shan still has his mission from the three Saints, no one gave him any other missions.

After passing on all necessary matters, he headed to his tent, looking up to see the rain of fire pouring down at the far horizon.

What unimaginable power, how would they be able to stop that?

His heart was heavy.

Suddenly, his Universal Talisman gave a response.

Gu Qing Shan quickly went back to his tent and opened the Universal Talisman.

A Communication Talisman came out.

Infusing it with spirit energy, he heard Bai Hua Fairy's voice.

"Sorrow was wounded so I brought him into the space vortex to avoid further pursuit"

"What you did was correct, when meeting the enemy, just take the initiative and definitely do not hesitate"

"As for what you said about the 5-Elemental essences, if that really is the truth, then the reason why the three of us are stuck at Sainted realm without being able to breakthrough for so long must be because of the world's limit"

"If that's the case, Xuanyuan will leave to look for the 5-Elemental essences, while I will stay in the space vortex to protect Sorrow"

The voice from the Communication Talisman stopped.

The world's limit?

It's possible, maybe something happened to the cultivation world in the past, leading to cultivators only being able to reach Sainted realm.

If that's the case...

Gu Qing Shan suddenly thought of something and quickly spoke into the Communication Talisman:
"Shifu, then maybe you could try breaking through in Shen Wu world"

He put the Communication Talisman into the Universal Talisman, then it quickly disappeared.

Soon enough, Bai Hua Fairy reply came

"There's a very strong enemy hiding in Shen Wu world. If I attempt to face the Tribulation in Shen We world, these people will definitely band together to deal with me"

Gu Qing Shan was shocked.

Has the situation become so dire already?

Not long after, another Communication Talisman came out.

"Give them my order, all other world cultivators are to be killed on sight"

Gu Qing Shan transferred this Communication Talisman to Ning Yue Xi.

While Ning Yue Xi was wracking her head in worry, she instantly regained her spirit after receiving this Communication Talisman.

"Then I'll relay the order and make sure everyone knows the situation"

"Don't make them seem too strong"

"Don't worry"

Leaving those words, Ning Yue Xi quickly left.

Since the Saint dealt with this matter so decisively, there probably won't be any problem with troop morale for the time being.

Since every issue on hand is already dealt with, Gu Qing Shan looked to the War God UI.

A notification was still blinking.

[Congratulations, you've barely cleared the requirements, initiating Thaumaturgy Quest number 3]

[Quest description: The world is moaning in agony; the remaining weapon spirits are helping it fight against the fire. The user must go deeper into the abyss of the world to further find out its secrets]

[Quest objective: You probably need to see some sort of key item. Specifically, even the System couldn't look into what that exactly is]

[Note: The System will try everything it can to support you. You can use the special power inside the crystal ball prematurely to find out the real truth of this world]

After reading through the Quest details, Gu Qing Shan nodded.

This was the very first time that the War God UI openly admits that it's helping him, as well as expressing the desire to investigate this world.

Just look, this matter is so dangerous that even the War God UI is doing everything it can.

Looking at the crystal ball, Gu Qing Shan saw that it was full of white mist again.

He then lightly tapped the crystal ball.

Immediately, all the white mist appeared from inside the crystal ball and flowed inside from every hole on his body.

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[Ting]!

The System chimed.

[You've received one use of Deep Presence Concealment]

[Deep Presence Concealment: When you use any Presence Concealment techniques, no inner sight can ever find you]

[Duration: 3 days]

This is very useful.

After reading through, Gu Qing Shan silently put it away at the back of his mind.

He then took out the formation plate that the fish gave him, holding it in hand.

While he was about to release his spirit energy to control the formation plate, Gu Qing Shan suddenly noticed his Inventory Bag wasn't staying still.

As he tapped his Inventory Bag, the bowl flew out and floated in the air.

The bowl then let out a golden light, emitting an audible Buddha chant.

The place around him suddenly became very solemn.

"You don't have to use this formation plate" a voice from the bowl.

Gu Qing Shan looked at the bowl questioningly.

The bowl's spirit continued: "That place is guarded by a few swords, but if you go there, in the end all you'll find is a weapon spirit who doesn't suit you"

"If that's the case then what should I do?" Gu Qing Shan asked.

The bowl flew a circle around him, then slowly said: "Actually, there's nothing in this world that can escape the eyes of a weapon spirit, I've seen very clearly everything that you've done"

"I've picked out a few heirs, but you're the one I found most suitable"

Inside the bowl, the formation plate that led the group to the temple hall before jumped out.

"Activate this formation, we'll leave together" the bowl said.

The formation plate flew in front of Gu Qing Shan.

Gu Qing Shan looked at the formation plate in his hand, then back at the one floating in the air, unable to decide.

The two formation plates represent two very different directions.

“Where do you want to lead me?” he asked.

“The Lu Xian’s old place, since that place is secluded, others won’t be able to find it” the bowl said.

“He was once the strongest man in this world, he broke through the world barrier to travel to another”

“When the cultivators of this world was unable to beat the demons and had to ask for reinforcement from outside, they wanted to call him back”

Gu Qing Shan asked: “What are we going to do there?”

“I’ll take you to receive his bestowal, there, you’ll be able to slowly cultivate and breakthrough”

“I and the other weapon spirits will help you breakthrough faster and reach the realm that the Lu Xian achieved”

Gu Qing Shan contemplated, then asked: “How long will we be there?”

“About a year” the bowl spirit slowly answered, “rest assured, we’ve calculated, it would take that man at least another year to refine this world completely for himself”

A year!

If it takes that long...

Gu Qing Shan refused: “I wholeheartedly thank you for your good will, but I can’t go with you”

The bowl then said: “You have to go with me, all you need is a year to reach the same realm as that man, at that time, all the weapon spirits of the world will also help you”

It spoke excitedly: “At that time, you can definitely defeat him, you can definitely save this world”

“One year is too long, I’m sorry but I can’t go” Gu Qing Shan shook his head and put the floating formation plate back into the bowl.

“But why? Are you unwilling to save this world?” the bowl spirit couldn’t understand.

“The world can wait; I want to save my Shifu first”

Saying so, Gu Qing Shan infused spirit energy into the formation plate in his hand.

The plate flowed.

A second later, Gu Qing Shan disappeared from inside the tent.

The end of magma cave.

The dark abyss.

A place where eyesight and inner sight are both equally useless.

Gu Qing Shan stood at the edge of the chasm, activating the formation plate to call the two swords and the fish.

A few moments of wait.

A sword suddenly appeared from the darkness, followed by another one.

Then finally the fish also appeared.

It seems to be in much better spirits than before, swimming around Gu Qing Shan in a friendly manner.

“You didn’t think I’d actually return? Isn’t that obvious, I have to return” Gu Qing Shan smiled and replied.

“...Hm, I’ve prepared myself”

“Polite? Don’t worry, I’ll make sure to be polite”

After saying that, Gu Qing Shan saw the fish turning back to look at the two swords.

Half of the damaged sword was actually flat, and now that he got a closer look, he realized the sword he rescued at the lava lake is also half-flat.

At this moment, the two swords stuck together, slowly merging into a single sword.

The fish swam around the sword once, then headed inside, turning into two mystical ancient characters that carved itself into the hilt of the sword.

The two characters shined, quickly combined into the hilt, as if it was meant to be there.

The sword fell down into Gu Qing Shan’s hand.

A few glowing lines of text appeared on the War God UI.

[An ancient sword, once called Chao Yin (damaged)]

[In the Age of Old, Shen Wu world was once an endless ocean. When the Divinities left, they forged this sword to anchor the four corners of the ocean]

[He who holds this sword is hailed as the king of the seas]

[Having been through countless years, this sword is now damaged, you must fully repair it to be able to demonstrate its power]

Only those simple words, no excess information and no Skills.

Gu Qing Shan looked at the sword in surprise, asking: “You are —Chao Yin?”

The sword shook a little, then suddenly let out a stream of light, piercing through the dark abyss and brought Gu Qing Shan with it towards the bottom of the abyss.

The light enveloped Gu Qing Shan closely, protecting him from harm.

After a while, both Gu Qing Shan and the sword arrived at the very bottom of the abyss.

This place was hard and solid, there was nothing here to see.

The only thing around here was sword qi, a frightening amount of sword qi, enough to suffocate.

It's a good thing that Gu Qing Shan has an understanding of the sword surpassing that of a Sword Saint, otherwise the sword qi here could've even severed his thoughts.

If that happened, he would've become a literal retard that was unable to think.

With Chao Yin sword in his hand, he was brought to a secluded place in the abyss.

There was a small cave blocked by a large magma rock boulder, hidden from view.

Chao Yin sword brought Gu Qing Shan here and went silent.

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"There's someone coming?" Gu Qing Shan asked.

The sword slightly tilted its hilt.

Gu Qing Shan suddenly thought of the cultivators wearing large brim hats from before.

After a bit of thinking, Gu Qing Shan made the hand seal for the Super Presence Concealment Script.

[Ting]!

[Deep Presence Concealment is in effect, while your presence is concealed, all signs of your existence will be unable to be felt or searched out, unless you're seen by the other party]

Gu Qing Shan found a couple more rocks, completely sealed off himself and silently waited for what happens next.

A few moments later, the sound of a lot of something flying here from afar was heard.

"Be a bit quicker!"

A strict male voice shouted.

The sound of about 7-8 people landing.

Then the cultivators wearing large brim hats appeared at the bottom of this abyss, all of them were carrying swords with them.

They formed a circle, then pierced a sword into the ground.

"Now, open this place up so we can look at what's inside" the strict voice ordered.

The sword shook lightly, letting out the sound of metal screaming.

The strict voice continued: "Stop struggling, this is a secret technique that our young master paid a great price to get, specifically devised to deal with you weapon spirits"

"You can live if you'll cooperate, but if you dare to struggle any further, we'll activate the secret technique and kill your sentience!"

Hearing that, the sword became tame.

Shortly after, an 'ong ong' sound began to rang out from the ground.

The ground itself was opening up.

“Right, that’s a good boy” the strict voice spoke satisfyingly.

After a while of rumbling, the earth was covered in cracks, then the sword suddenly fell into the largest crack.

“Hak hak, want to run? Try out my tool control technique ——“

In the very next moment, the voice became frightened: “What is this!?”

An intense rumbling filled the entire bottom of the abyss.

And then, all the rumbling suddenly stopped after cries and screams of pain.

Despite hiding in the cave, Gu Qing Shan was struck dizzy by the intense rumbling.

He closed his eyes, and leaned on the rock wall behind, letting the wind screamed like wolves and demons as it passed through the cracks.

The sound of the wind screaming and crying didn’t stop for a few dozen seconds later.

After waiting for a bit more, he finally stood up and went outside to check.

The middle of the area was completely empty.

Every one of them had disappeared, not leaving a single drop of blood left.

Gu Qing Shan sighed and shook his head.

The scene just now was too humbling.

When the earth broke open, an endless sea of swords appeared in their eyes.

Millions of swords were screeching at the same time, the sword qi that was produced can instantly kill any living beings caught inside.

Gu Qing Shan looked around, couldn’t believe that this entire place was nothing but a small entrance to the sea of swords below.

Chao Yin sword flew up and stabbed itself into the ground in front of Gu Qing Shan.

“You want to lead me down?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

Chao Yin sword let out a ‘wu wu’ sound.

“Alright then” Gu Qing Shan replied.

When he took the sword, a light slowly enveloped him.

The ground broke open again.

This time, Chao Yin sword slowly descended, bring him above the sea of swords.

And Chao Yin sword let out a large cry first before everything else.

Thanks to that, all the swords inside the sea of swords kept silent.

Chao Yin sword began to lead Gu Qing Shan down.

Right away a few swords couldn't help but start shaking.

Chao Yin sword once again let out a 'wu wu' sound.

See that, Gu Qing Shan also chimed in: "That's right, I'm not the invaders from that world, I'm someone who fights against them"

As soon as he said so, a series of clanging noise rang out as the sword started to make way for him.

A path opened up for Gu Qing Shan.

"Thank you, thank you" Gu Qing Shan clasped his fist and said.

Chao Yin sword brought Gu Qing Shan and flew all the way downward.

Wherever they went, all the swords around made way for them, allowing them to go deep inside the sea of swords.

Looking around, Gu Qing Shan saw nothing but swords emitting sharp sword qi.

Some of the swords were still dimly glowing, others seem damaged beyond repair, and there were even a few that still had blood on them.

As if all the swords of this world has gathered here to hide.

They remained here, remained silent, even when they stood there and did nothing, they were still letting out a stifled sense of loss.

On the way, after seeing all this, Gu Qing Shan couldn't help but ask: "Why are all these swords here?"

Chao Yin sword shook a little.

"...Their masters have all died? They have nowhere else to go?" Gu Qing Shan sighed.

Strictly speaking, the special existences that are weapon spirits needs to be constantly nurtured by their master's inner sight to grow.

Humans as the essence of all things, as a cultivator's strength increases, so does their soul vessel.

But if a spirit wanted to keep evolving and grow, they need to link themselves with a cultivator's soul vessel, allowing the soul vessel feedback to nurture them, giving them more sentience and will over time.

All the sword cultivator of this sword is already dead.

And so these sword spirits have lost their place to be, they had no choice but to stay silent as time passed by uselessly, surviving as the hopeless future comes.

All that awaits them is eternal loneliness

Chapter 270

Wherever Gu Qing Shan and the Chao Yin sword went, all the swords were pointing their tip downwards, as if to show their stance.

Gu Qing Shan couldn't help but sigh.

Once a sword gains a sword spirit, it will live by its sword cultivator for its entire life.

You could say that a sword spirit has seen over half of their sword cultivator's life.

It's not just a weapon, it's also their partner, their friend.

And a sword cultivator will stay by their sword for the majority of their own life as well.

Once a sword cultivator dies, the despair that a sword spirit feels must be unimaginable.

Following the Chao Yin sword, Gu Qing Shan continued to head lower and lower.

After a while, they finally arrived at a ruins.

This area was completely dark; he couldn't see anything.

When Gu Qing Shan released his inner sight, he found this ruins were as empty as it felt, there was nothing but a thick layer of dust.

But Gu Qing Shan didn't look down on this place a single bit.

The distance from here to the ground should be the same as from the ground to the sky.

Creating such a wide place like this here is already incredible, not to mention there were so many sword spirits gathered around protecting this place.

"What do we do now?" Gu Qing Shan asked the Chao Yin sword.

The Chao Yin sword escaped from his hand and began to fly back and forth in the ruins.

Finally, it arrived at a high platform in the ruins, then lightly tapped a place on a heavily damaged wall.

An incredibly small light quickly flew around the entire ruins.

The Chao Yin sword tapped the wall again.

Another light.

This time, the light stayed on Chao Yin sword's shaft.

Suddenly, a calm female voice was heard: "So it's you..."

The dim light began to expand and grew brighter.

After that, the entire ruins were lit up.

The Chao Yin sword returned next to Gu Qing Shan.

A second later, the wall opened up from both sides as a blindingly bright light slowly flew outside, hovering in front of Gu Qing Shan.

When the blinding light faded, Gu Qing Shan could finally see what the other party was.

It was a small, slender armor set, made from a dark red and black material, countless phantom flames covered each and every part of the armor set as they flickered on and off.

The entire armor set was letting out a domineering presence, just by standing in front of it, Gu Qing Shan was already feeling intense pressure on himself.

It was a female armor set.

Then Gu Qing Shan realized, no wonder the bowl spirit said that he would only meet a weapon spirit that wouldn't suit him.

As soon as the armor set appeared, Chao Yin sword started to 'wu wu' nonstop to Gu Qing Shan.

Gu Qing Shan understood and clasped his fist: "You've called me here senior, please pardon me asking but, what can I help you with?"

The armor set started to speak with a female voice: "It's not that I called you here, but rather the Chao Yin sword wanted you to meet me"

"But why?"

"Because it's too heavily damaged, unable to tell you everything properly. While I am the only Divine armament of this world, capable of holding a conversation with you"

The female voice then said: "Now, tell me your name"

"This humble one is Gu Qing Shan, pleased to meet you, senior"

The female voice then said: "I am the Wild Raging Flame Armor, forged and awakened 30,000 years ago in the Age of Divinity. After thousands of years, my master has already passed and this world is also about to perish, but I remain intact"

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Right as her voice stopped, a notification popped up on Gu Qing Shan's War God UI.

[You've met the Sovereign of the spirits]

[Thaumaturgy Quest 3 completed]

[Initiating Thaumaturgy Quest 4]

[Quest description: This is an unprecedented meeting. Unbelievably, you've met with this world's most powerful weapon spirit, allowing hers and your destiny to interlace]

[Quest objective: The System is unable to provide you any heading for any objectives]

[Note 1: Every action you take from now on will bring about a completely unpredictable future. For now, perhaps you need to think about your own goals]

[Note 2: There is a difference of several levels between the two of you. She will probably not agree to don herself onto a man's body and she can control the entire sea of swords. Caution when talking is advised]

After reading through all the notifications, Gu Qing Shan silently sighed to himself.

He's never seen the System being this irresponsible before that it couldn't even give a proper Quest.

While he was thinking, a [Ting] chimed.

The System responded.

[This is a completely unknown world with a completely unknown fate, the System can only make educated guesses as it goes. The System isn't omnipotent]

Gu Qing Shan regained his composure and silently asked inside: "If that's the case, how will I complete this Quest?"

[Ting]!

A line of text appeared on the War God UI.

[The Quest is considered a spontaneous Quest, when current events are over, the Quest will also be considered to be]

So it's a Quest meant to be given as free points, that's fine then.

While Gu Qing Shan was nodding satisfyingly, he suddenly realized.

Wait a minute, this Quest doesn't have any rewards.

"Hey System, does the Quest not have any rewards?"

Gu Qing Shan silently asked inside.

But the War God UI didn't respond, either it's busy doing something else, or it's pretending not to hear anything.

Gu Qing Shan couldn't even retort anymore.

He had no choice but to look at the Wild Raging Flame Armor and asked: "Now that I'm here, is there anything I can help you with?"

"Before that, don't rush, I have something to ask you" the female voice spoke.

"Please do" Gu Qing Shan answered.

"Why did you refuse the Buddhist bowl?" the female voice became strict.

"Are there any problems with that?" Gu Qing Shan asked back.

"To you, does the life of a single person means more than the survival of an entire world?" the female voice asked him.

"The world is only worth saving precisely because it has people that we treasure" Gu Qing Shan answered.

His tone was slow, but contained an unshakably firm will: "If I can't even save the one I treasure, what use is there left for the world?"

The female voice became silent.

After a while, she casually spoke: "You remind me of a few dozen thousand years ago, of my female master..."

Her tone became more gentle: "The world is about to fall into the hands of another. Originally, as this is the destiny of all worlds, I had nothing to say about it"

"But their violent conducts upon this world have made me furious"

Gu Qing Shan nodded, waiting for her to continue.

The female voice kept going: "And now, they have even found the method to torture the weapon spirits"

"Although I am capable of leaving this world any time I want, I really can't stand to see so many weapon spirits going through such pain"

"If you have a way to deal with them, I can cooperate with you"

Gu Qing Shan replied instantly: "I have a way to resist them"

The female voice seemed intrigued: "Ah? Then tell me"

"The 5-Elemental essences" Gu Qing Shan quickly spoke, "as long as we can find the 5-Elemental essences, there is a method to allow this world to leave its place and merge with our world"

"That way, we can become stronger, enough to fight against them"

The female voice suddenly spoke angrily: "Did you see the rain outside?"

Gu Qing Shan was a bit shocked, but answered: "I've seen it"

"That rain means that there is something refining this world above the sky"

She continued: "I also know this secret method of yours, but the process to merge two worlds is a very long one, I'm afraid we can't afford that much time"