

Apocalypse 581

Chapter 581: Playing your cards

『 Once [Revolution] is born, it will surely kill you before anyone else, at that time, I will definitely come for your soul myself... 』

Before the voice of the master of Purgatory finished, the Earth sword flew out and thoroughly shattered the blood rune.

The spell collapsed, bringing with it the curtain of flame and the figure.

Gu Qing Shan silently looked on as the flame died out.

His gaze gradually turned cold.

The Earth sword slowly flew back, hovering by Gu Qing Shan.

「 Do you think it was telling the truth? 」 the Earth sword vibrated and asked him.

“It was” Gu Qing Shan nodded, “however...”

「 However what? 」 the Earth sword asked.

“Assuming yourself to be the ultimate winner when the other player still has a full hand of cards, that is always the dumbest thing you can do” Gu Qing Shan replied.

「 I can't see these cards you're speaking of 」 the Earth sword said.

“That's because game-changing cards must be hidden and only shown right as you're about to play them” Gu Qing Shan told it.

「 Then what do you plan to do next? 」 the Earth sword spoke in its mountainous heavy voice.

Gu Qing Shan muttered: “This Purgatory projection suddenly appeared out of nowhere, spouting a bunch of garbage, but still refused to fight... does it really think the same trick is going to distract me twice?”

Gu Qing Shan quickly walked to the center of the divine temple, raising the Earth sword high and stabbed it into the ground with considerable force.

“I said— get out here!”

He shouted angrily again.

Intense lightning suddenly erupted from the Earth sword.

Countless surprised whispers suddenly came from the void of space.

It wasn't just the lightning that caused that.

In his rage, Gu Qing Shan even poured Soul Points into the Earth sword.

As an ancient Divine Armament, the ceremonial sword of old, the Earth sword had the ability to 'contact' the Gods.

When supplied with Soul Points, it had the power to kill Gods and Daemons alike.

「 Ah, so much Soul Points, if I can't even show my worth now then when would I ever? 」

Infused by huge amounts of Soul Points, the Earth sword whispered.

And it suddenly vibrated.

Invisible waves of power rippled across the divine temple, showing off the true power of a Divine Armament.

The Earth sword's mountainous heavy voice echoed around even the outside of the divine temple.

「 Daemons and hellspawns alike, show yourself! 」

Oom!

The air remained silent, yet at the same time, a stifled impact could be felt exploding around the mind.

From the void of space, beautiful black flowers manifested.

Inside these flowers were alluring enchantresses clad in flimsy clothing, exuding temptation.

They all looked at Gu Qing Shan in surprise.

Tianma.

They were Tianma.

『 Ikikikii, he's angry 』

A female voice resounded, lingering around the divine temple.

『 A sword cultivator. Looks like he's from a cultivation world, but he noticed our presence, could it be he's from a Samsara world? 』 another female voice spoke up.

『 Dummy, with so many people dead, of course, he would notice something, he doesn't necessarily know what kind of existence we are 』

『 True, true, Samsara worlds are rare, it would be too much of a coincidence to run into a little one that knows about us 』

『 Now that you say it, a cultivator's soul is quite delectable isn't it? 』

『 Quite right, quite right 』

The female voices weren't at all afraid.

A second later, all the flowers disappeared.

Wild and appealing women came out from the void of space one after another.

They all came close to Gu Qing Shan, trying to tempt him with their charms.

『 Young man, would you like to play with big sis? 』

『 Big sis is a bit tired, let us sit down and talk for a bit 』

『 What a handsome young man, I'm tempted myself 』

The Tianma all cheerfully spoke.

They gracefully and gently inched closer, almost touching Gu Qing Shan's body.

Gu Qing Shan didn't move at all, but the Earth sword in his hand disappeared.

The flying sword swept through while vibrating sharply.

An invisible air came from the Earth sword, turning into a sword-infused wind that howled all around the divine temple.

Taiyi Sword Array, Incomplete form!

Gu Qing Shan had used a single sword to unleash a part of the Taiyi Sword Array's power.

Hoh!

Within the howling wind, countless screams of pain could be heard.

The black flowers became gloomy, withered and faded into the void of space.

A few moments later.

The wind scattered and silence returned.

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There were no longer any sounds coming from the void of space.

Only the Earth sword's sword tip was softly pointed straight at one Tianma's necks.

「 Alive 」 the Earth sword told Gu Qing Shan.

“Well done” Gu Qing Shan said.

The Tianma was no longer as relaxed as before, instead now shouting in fear: 『 Don't! Don't kill me! Who are you!? 』

Gu Qing Shan replied: “You don't need to know who I am. I'm asking the questions here, what is your relation with [Origin]?”

The Tianma's expression loosened a bit and spoke: 『 Kihihhi, so you wanted to know that, then you need to use a bit of benefit—- 』

The sword flashed.

『 Aaaee—! 』

She screeched uncontrollably as her body fell to the ground.

Gu Qing Shan had sliced off her limbs.

“I know you can easily regrow your limbs, but I guarantee that if you keep refusing to talk, I will have you enjoy this pain over and over” Gu Qing Shan spoke without changing his expression.

『 You bastard! 』

“Speak, what is your relation with [Origin]?”

『 Hmph... 』

As the Tianma hesitated for just a second, the sword was thrust straight into her stomach.

『 Aaeek! You devil! 』

As intense pain struck her, the Tianma once again screamed in pain.

“That much is enough to pass as a devil? Then what are you, after eating so many people’s souls?” Gu Qing Shan’s tone didn’t waver at all.

His sword began to slowly slice along her body towards her chest.

Unable to bear the pain, the Tianma screamed: 『 I’ll talk! I’ll talk! [Origin] came to our master asking to cooperate! 』

“Cooperate? And your master didn’t come here?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

In Tianma society, all lower-ranked Tianma are considered a higher-ranked Tianma’s personal belongings, they don’t have things such as personal rights.

Any lower-ranked Tianma must call a higher-ranked Tianma their master.

So this Tianma’s words weren’t lies.

『 It offered my master a lot of benefits, so the master had us come here to aid it 』 the Tianma told him.

“No, that’s wrong, your master would definitely come here herself for such an important deal” Gu Qing Shan shook his head.

His sword began to slice upwards faster.

The Tianma screeched in pain again, shouting unbearably: 『 Spare me! Spare me! I know I was wrong! 』

It was only after Gu Qing Shan had stopped his torture that she could barely breathe for a few seconds.

“Think carefully before you speak this time” Gu Qing Shan coldly spoke.

The Tianma breathed heavily: 『 I don’t have a reason to deceive you, our master’s power is too great that she couldn’t descend on this world by herself 』

“You’re lying”

Gu Qing Shan shook his head: “Perhaps your master really is overflowing with miasma, so powerful that

it's difficult for her to descend on this world, but she isn't fully incapable of going here herself—— the only price she would have to pay is having her strength limited, unable to fully exert herself here”

Gu Qing Shan continued: “Perhaps she would disguise as a normal Tianma and silently take command until everything is over”

“To be able to persuade a great Tianma, the price [Origin] paid must've been quite great, your master would definitely come here herself to ensure that nothing goes awry”

Hearing that, the Tianma was so shocked she forgot her own pain, shouting in surprise: 『 How do you know so much about us Tianma 』

“Speak, where is your master? Where is she now?”

Seeing that it wasn't possible to fool him, the Tianma could only reply: 『 She had already accomplished what she promised and returned 』

“One final question, why did you not carry [Origin]?”

『 Our Tianma world is a closed-off and heavily isolated, no [Order] can attach to our bodies 』 the Tianma replied.

Gu Qing Shan nodded, withdrew his sword and turned to leave.

The precious material of the Old Gods had already been taken away and [Revolution] was coming, there was no longer any meaning in staying here.

He got the intel he was looking for.

Behind him, cold sword phantoms appeared all over the Tianma's body.

She could only let out a curt scream before being thoroughly silenced.

Gu Qing Shan quickly left the divine temple.

He came all the way to the plaza outside the temple before stopping.

Because Ilya had brought Laura and everyone else here.

“Why are you here?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

“I noticed that there wasn't a single person left alive in this city besides us, so we decided to meet up with you first before doing anything else” Ilya explained.

She sighed: “[Origin] already got the material of the Old Gods, it will soon become much stronger. When that happens, it will definitely not let obstructions like us survive”

“Right, you're the supreme general of the Bramble Bird Kingdom, you must know a lot of things so I have something I need to ask” Gu Qing Shan spoke.

He took off the chilling bell bracelet on his wrist to show her.

“This is a token of the Tianma. In other words, I only need to shake this bracelet to summon them, but why haven't any Tianma come even though I've been shaking it for so long?”

“Do you have relations with the Tianma?”

Ilya couldn't believe what she just heard and asked him back.

In all of known history, she hasn't heard of a single person who could or would actively form relations with the Tianma.

After all, in the eyes of a Tianma, all living beings are nothing but food.

Gu Qing Shan replied: “I owe them a small debt from a while ago, so now I'm planning to pay them back”

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Ilya carefully examined the Tianma bracelet before giving it back to Gu Qing Shan.

“What you have here is a token, not a summoning conduit”

She slowly explained: “Because of the Old God's Barrier that surrounds this world, even [Origin] would have to pay a heavy price to summon the Tianma here”

Gu Qing Shan thought briefly and asked: “Then what if I use this token above the ice layer?”

Ilya smiled bitterly: “If you did that, [Origin] will definitely notice, because it is an [Order], one that had completely covered this entire world”

This was the truth, as soon as [Origin] noticed something, the 2 million demonized and the army of 100,000 will immediately be dispatched.

Never mind how dangerous that was— if the summoned Tianma was not informed of the exact situation beforehand, she might develop a few unnecessary misunderstandings.

Gu Qing Shan thought about it again and asked: “Then one last thing, how do you destroy an [Order]?”

“I'll answer that!” Laura chimed in.

“1000 years ago, when the [Demon King Order] took over the Fallen Zones and was about to spread to the entire 900 million World Layers, the top-level Combatants at the time came up with a solution”

“Whenever the [Demon King Order] was about to take over another world, the Combatants would annihilate every last demonized being currently on that world”

“Without living beings to carry the [Order] and act as its anchor, even the [Order] can only wither and die!”

“So that's how...”

Gu Qing Shan looked up at the sky.

Above the sky was the ocean layer.

The ice layer was above that.

2 million demonized beings were there.

This was an insurmountably huge force.

They were carriers and anchors for the [Demon King Order].

Only after killing them all could the [Demon King Order] be destroyed.

———2 million demonized whose strengths were more and less around his level.

How... do I deal with them all?

Gu Qing Shan silently thought about it.

Ilya noticed and understood his gaze, sighing: “A great army of 100,000 ghosts and 2 million demonized beings, even I won’t be able to deal with that many enemies, not to mention they all carry [Order] with them, capable of exchanging for powerful magic items at a moment’s notice and even summon Demon Lords!”

Gu Qing Shan nodded: “Indeed... killing them all is easier said than done”

He carefully thought about everything that needed thinking, going over every minor detail.

After a while, he looked at Laura.

“Your royal majesty, I have a very important question I need to ask you” Gu Qing Shan asked solemnly.

“Gu Qing Shan, if you have something to say, go ahead, there’s no need to be so formal with me” Laura said.

“I need to be formal, because this is related to the life and death of the Spire Keeper Association, the direction of this entire war, and whether or not you will be able to avenge your parents”

Laura instantly became serious and solemnly spoke: “Speak, I’m listening”

“I need to ask you, are you willing to do everything in your power in order to avenge your parents?”

“I’m willing to do everything in my power”

“Are you willing to pay any price to destroy the [Worlds Apocalypse Online] currently imprisoned in this world?”

Laura spoke with conviction: “I’m willing to pay any price, even if it’s my own life, as long as Triste doesn’t win!”

Gu Qing Shan looked around at the Bramble Bird guards, then at Frost of the Cold Night Ilya.

He asked again: “Your subordinates here, are you willing to let them cooperate with me?”

“Cooperate with you?” Laura asked confusedly.

“Yes, including you yourself, I need everyone to cooperate and support me, only then will we have a small hint of a chance to win against the [Demon King Order] that’s about to turn into [Revolution]”

Laura took a deep breath and sincerely spoke: “Gu Qing Shan, as long as you can really win against [Worlds Apocalypse Online], I, as this generation’s Bramble Bird Empress, will make you——”

“A Duke! A Duke of the Bramble Bird Kingdom!” Ilya suddenly cut in.

Laura was stunned.

Ilya quickly added: “You will become the first-ever non-Bramble Bird person to gain Dukedom in our Bramble Bird Kingdom, as well as the only human capable of travelling in and out of the Mystic Zones as they please. We will pray to the Saint Bramble Tree to bless and watch over your activities in the Mystic Zones”

Laura’s eyes rolled and nodded: “Indeed, that would be the case”

—Umhm, that isn’t bad at all.

Hearing that, Gu Qing Shan felt a bit unexpected, but continued: “Then let me make this clear, for the next short period of time, I need you to do exactly as I say, can you do it?”

Laura looked at Gu Qing Shan.

This person, does he really have a solution to deal with [Revolution]?

If it was anybody else saying this, I wouldn’t believe a single word coming from their mouth.

But Gu Qing Shan was different, everything he’s done up until now were feats that I couldn’t even imagine possible even in my dreams.

If he says he can, he definitely can!

Laura thought about it shortly and walked to his side, taking his hand and telling her guards: “I will obey your words, my subjects will do the same”

The guards immediately spoke: “For the Empress, we are willing to cooperate”

Gu Qing Shan looked at Ilya.

Ilya also nodded, then added: “As long as you won’t make Laura do anything dangerous”

“Of course I won’t, don’t worry”

Gu Qing Shan’s eyebrows loosened.

He stroked Laura’s head and said: “Very well, then leave what’s coming up to me”

“What are you planning to do?” Laura asked.

“Wait a minute—”

“Shannu” Gu Qing Shan suddenly clapped his hand, “come, we’re about to begin”

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“Yes, gongzi”

Shannu turned back into a flying sword and hid herself into the void of space behind his back.

The Earth sword also disappeared from sight.

Gu Qing Shan told everyone: “I’m about to do something, please make sure not to make any sudden moves and definitely do not attack, in order to avoid any accidents”

“Then what should we do?” Ilya asked.

“Everyone here is sharp, simply follow my lead and do what I say”

“What exactly do you want to do?” Laura asked curiously.

“Preparing for the final battle”

Saying so, Gu Qing Shan turned around.

While walking away, he glanced at the War God UI.

A few glowing lines of text had appeared on the UI.

[You’ve gained one use of Iaido]

[You’ve gained one use of Iaido]

[You’ve gained one use of Iaido]

[You’ve gained one use of Iaido]

[You’ve gained one use of Iaido]

[You’ve gained one use of Iaido]

[You’ve gained one use of Iaido]

[Please choose a Skill to use Iaido on]

These were the uses of [Iaido] that he gained while massacring the ghost army on the plains.

During every War God Quest-chain, Gu Qing Shan would receive a different method to use his Soul Points.

This was the main difference between a War God Quest and a Destiny Quest.

Gu Qing Shan ignored these notifications for now and told the War God UI: “Issue the final Quest”

[Ting]!

The notifications on the UI minimized by themselves as the War God System responded: [Please state the Quest objective]

“The final battle is about to come, we will deal with the [Demon King Order]” Gu Qing Shan said.

[Please confirm your quest objective]

“Confirm”

[Where your sword points, the System’s Quest shall follow the System has accepted your Quest objective]

At the bottom of the War God UI, the icon for [War God Quests] lit up.

Lines of glowing text quickly scrolled past the UI.

[This War God Quest is a quest-chain]

[Quest-chain has been prepared, you will have to complete all the Quests and eliminate the Demon King Order to receive the final reward]

[The final Quest had been issued]

[Quest description: Worlds Apocalypse Online: Origin is undergoing its final transformation, it will soon

evolve into its [Revolution] form, escape this world and take over 300 million World Layers]

[Quest objective: Eliminate it]

[Quest reward: A secret]

[Please issue a name for the final Quest]

“Naming again?”

[This is the right of the War God]

Gu Qing Shan smiled and said: “My original world has a saying, ‘The heavens are always watching over you’”

“If heaven and earth really are watching, they will definitely frown upon everything that [Worlds Apocalypse Online] had done so far”

“...And so, this Quest will be called [Heaven’s Punishment]!”

The War God UI quickly accepted: [Decisive Battle Quest: Heaven’s Punishment has been issued]

As this line of text appeared at the very top of the Quest list, the entire Quest was formed into a complete Quest window and disappeared into the [War God Quest] icon.

After issuing the Quest, Gu Qing Shan stood still at the very center of the plaza.

He was a short distance away from Laura’s group, enough that no collateral damage would occur if something went wrong.

Tapping his Inventory Bag, he took out a cushion and set it on the ground, then let go of the Tianma bracelet in the air, using an object manipulation hand seal to have it hover and sway in the air.

Then Gu Qing Shan sat on the cushion.

He swallowed a pill, closed both eyes and began to converge his entire presence.

At a glance, he looked exactly like an ordinary person, even his breathing became faint.

And then his breathing completely stopped.

He was clearly sitting there, but the group watching from outside could sense that he had already wandered away.

Laura stood a short distance away and couldn’t help herself asking as she saw this: “What is he doing?”

“This state is called deep meditation, the method of cultivation for cultivators” Ilya explained.

Laura thought briefly and spoke: “If he told us to not make any sudden movements then let’s remain silent here”

“Yes, your majesty!”

As soon as they said that, the guards all became surprised.

As experienced soldiers, they sharply noticed something.

Gu Qing Shan was sitting still, but a wondrous energy wave emitted from his body to form a sort of unique connection to the heaven and earth.

This was the phenomenon that happened whenever someone broke through a realm.

At Sainted realm late stage for so long, Gu Qing Shan finally decided to breakthrough at this moment in time when the entire scale was tilted against him.

The heaven and earth quickly responded.

Huge dark clouds began to gather in the air, rumbling thunderously.

Laura's expression changed: "What is he thinking!? The lightning of this world is extremely powerful, if he keeps going, he might be struck to death on the spot!"

The group looked up to the sky.

The sky itself was dim from the clouds, but not a single bolt of lightning struck down even after a while.

"What's going on?" Laura was surprised.

"He entered and maintained a state of breaking through, but he's not actually doing it, so the heaven's tribulation only gathered without striking" Ilya hesitantly judged.

Everyone looked at Gu Qing Shan.

This person is acting like he's about to break through, but keeps stalling without actually breaking through at all.

What exactly is he thinking?

Chapter 583

The wind began to howl.

Noticing a cultivator attempting to break through, the Laws of the world responded accordingly.

Unlike other worlds, within this lost world of the Old Gods, the Element of lightning was the strongest.

It represented the will of the Gods, capable of destroying everything.

It was God's punishment!

Because of that—

Although Gu Qing Shan hadn't actually begun his breakthrough, the dark clouds had gathered so much that it extended all the way up to the horizon.

The entire world was plunged into darkness.

Gu Qing Shan also felt that a bit unexpected.

Normally, Tribulation clouds would naturally cover a large enough distance to ensure that it would strike the cultivator without fail.

But this was the first time he saw Tribulation clouds so huge it covered the entire sky.

In just a few moments, the Tribulation clouds had become so thick that the occasional flash of lightning arcing across the sky would seem like a ferocious beast hiding among the clouds.

The majesty of Lightning gradually showed itself to the people below.

“Oh my god, there’s no way anyone would be able to take this level of Lightning Tribulation” one Bramble Bird guard commented.

Hearing that, Laura couldn’t help but ask: “Ilya, you’ve sparred with him before, I need you to make an objective judgment. Can he survive this level of Lightning Tribulation with his current strength?”

Sensing the power gathering in the sky, Ilya gave her evaluation: “If it maintains at the current level, I think he can still take it, however, I heard that a cultivator’s Lightning Tribulation would become stronger step by step during the process...”

“Why did he choose to break through in a world with Lightning Tribulation this strong? I don’t understand!” Ilya was also confused.

Laura bit her lip, unable to say anything.

The wind was getting stronger.

The bracelet of bells hovering in front of Gu Qing Shan began to ring with clear and resounding chimes.

Looking at the bracelet, Ilya suddenly trembled.

“I got it!” she muttered.

“What?” Laura instantly asked.

Ilya replied: “The way for a cultivator to become stronger is to steal and siphon resources from nature to supply themselves and increase their own strength. That’s why whenever they break through, the sky would rain lightning and all sorts of evil creatures would show up to interfere, this is the same fate that every cultivator of every world has to face”

She took a deep breath before continuing: “That’s why he’s currently using the common Law of all worlds and that bracelet in an attempt to summon the Tianma”

“If it works, even without paying any price, the Law of the world itself will unleash the Tianma to try and kill him!”

“Really... how does one even come up with such a solution?” she sighed.

Laura wasn’t at all relaxed: “But the Lightning Tribulation here represents God’s punishment, its power is magnified significantly, and Tianma are creatures that feasts on the soul of humans, wouldn’t they just eat him alive?”

“Let’s keep watching, he won’t do things that pose too much of a risk to himself” Ilya told her.

“That’s not the case at all” Laura smiled bitterly: “Ever since I met him, this guy has been doing only the most dangerous things possible”

While they talked, another unnatural phenomenon had already occurred.

From the void of space around the plaza, a purple-glowing imp suddenly appeared.

This wasn't a Tianma, simply an evil creature that happened to notice a cultivator breaking through.

Back in the cave system of Shen Wu world, Gu Qing Shan had already seen these types when he broke through at the time.

From a certain point of view, the responsibilities of these monsters and the Tianma were the same: to interfere with a cultivator's breakthrough.

They were called 'evil' simply because they were a cultivator's natural enemy.

『 Ah, a cultivator, hak hak, delectable food full of spirit energy... 』

The imp spoke while drooling.

The Earth sword flashed, showing itself from the void of space.

In the blink of an eye, it had already taken the imp's head.

Gu Qing Shan opened his eyes and said: "Don't take their lives, if we cause too much strife, it won't be good for business negotiation"

「 Is that so? Alright 」 the Earth sword replied.

It slowly flew back, silently hovering by Gu Qing Shan's side.

Another evil creature came out from the void of space.

Countless skewers of bones protruded from its body, shaking to the wind as if they each had their own sentience.

Compared to the previous one, this fiend seemed much stronger.

『 Ah, a little one that's about to breakthrough Sainted realm, just enough for today's meal 』

The fiend muttered as it completely exited the void of space.

This time, the Earth sword didn't move quite as fast as before.

It silently flew forward and lightly struck the fiend's head.

The fiend instantly turned into a panicked shadow, slipping into the void of space and disappeared.

For the next while, every evil creature that showed up was 'gently returned' by the Earth sword.

The strangest thing was that even after an incense's worth of time, there were still no Tianma that appeared.

The Tianma Empress didn't show up either.

There were a few times when Gu Qing Shan faintly sensed some Tianma's presence, but they were apparently afraid of something as they quickly fled.

What are they afraid of?

Gu Qing Shan was silently surprised.

It shouldn't be this way at all since the Tianma had already appeared in this world once before, all sorts of other evil creatures had shown up and the Laws of the world had even invoked the strongest level of Tribulation!

This meant that Gu Qing Shan's Tribulation had already been recognized by the world itself.

So— why hasn't any Tianma showed up yet?

Gu Qing Shan couldn't think of any reason on the spot.

But he maintained a clear mind and continued his near-breakthrough state, constantly using his inner sight to monitor the bracelet.

The chimes of the bell resounded in the air.

Time slowly passed.

At a certain point.

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Finally, the void of space was disturbed.

In a flash, a faint but glorious light of the sun set appeared, illuminating the entire plaza.

Within that light, countless faint female voices resounded.

They all sung:

"Little doe sing faint, eating apples on the field;

We have a guest, the metal drums beat;

A moon so bright, when will it fade;

A worry so far away, it can't be cleared"

Gu Qing Shan was shocked.

He had seen the Tianma descend many times before, but never in such a grand manner.

Just who came this time?

While he was thinking, a crack had opened in the void of space.

Flower petals scattered everywhere as music played.

A mature, beautiful woman stepped out from the crack in space.

She wore a jet black robe, her eyes sharp and clean, her body soft and slender, a beauty among beauties.

But unlike other Tianma, this black-robed woman's expression didn't contain a single bit of charm or allure, only solemnity and majesty.

With a flower born from each of her steps, she slowly landed in front of Gu Qing Shan.

She silently observed him.

Gu Qing Shan opened his eyes and carefully looked.

The one who came wasn't the Tianma Empress.

Gu Qing Shan spoke apologetically: "I'm sorry, I didn't mean to call you here, I was actually waiting for someone"

『 You were waiting for someone? 』 the black-robed woman asked.

"Yes, I was waiting for another Tianma" Gu Qing Shan replied.

『 Ah? Then what is the relationship between you and that Tianma? 』 the black-robed woman asked.

Gu Qing Shan froze a bit.

What kind of relationship...

For some reason, he felt that he had to answer this as truthfully as possible.

This was his instinct, a sense of intuition that transcended all rationale.

"Ah, she and I have a cooperative relationship" Gu Qing Shan sincerely answered.

『 Cooperation? ...but what could a human and Tianma cooperate for? 』 the black-robed woman shook her head.

"Mutual benefit, I pay her the asking price so that she helps me win against an enemy" Gu Qing Shan replied.

Hearing that, the woman stared at him for another long while.

Gu Qing Shan really couldn't understand at all.

But this Tianma felt so unique that even when the Earth sword had silently asked him if it needed to attack, he still had it hold back.

He continued: "Then, if there's nothing else, can you please leave? I still need to wait for my business partner"

『 Business partner... 』 the black-robed woman muttered.

She thought for a bit, then waved her hand.

The chilling Tianma bracelet suddenly chimed in joy and flew into the woman's hand.

Gu Qing Shan's eyebrows raised and quickly stood up.

Even if his intuition was telling him not to do it, this bracelet was the Tianma Empress' token, he couldn't just let others take it away for no reason.

Gu Qing Shan took the Earth sword in hand and sincerely spoke: " Ma'am, I'm very sorry, but I can't let you take that bell bracelet"

『 Why not? 』 the black-robed woman asked.

She was still observing him, the look in her eyes seemed as if she was looking at some sort of monster she's never seen before.

“This bell bracelet belongs to someone else” Gu Qing Shan replied.

The black-robed woman spoke: 『 Of course this bracelet belongs to someone else, I know that very well. But what I don't know is—- 』

She finally went into the main issue: 『 As a cultivator, what is it you need that you took my daughter's token and tried to summon her so secretly for? 』

Daugh...ter?

This is her daughter's token?

Gu Qing Shan froze.

Although he had prepared a lot of countermeasures, with several hand seals prepared in silence, he still couldn't quite maintain his calm.

The group not too far from them all heard the black-robed woman's words.

Laura froze.

Ilya froze.

The guards all froze.

They all looked at Gu Qing Shan.

Wha-what are you calling a small debt? This clearly seems like... another sort of debt.

Wait a minute—

This guy... and a Tianma...

Is he crazy? Or did he hit his head somewhere?

Just look, even the mother had personally come!

The crowd looked back at the black-robed woman.

She kept standing there without saying a word, not releasing even a little bit of presence or emotions.

She simply put the bracelet away, placed both hands behind her back and looked at Gu Qing Shan without blinking.

Seeing that, Gu Qing Shan silently put his sword away.

He can't cause more misunderstandings.

To confirm, he asked again: “You said, this is supposedly your daughter's personal item?”

『 Indeed I am 』 the black-robed woman spoke without changing her expression, 『 this is my daughter's Tianma Bell that had been with her since birth, never lost nor given to anybody before, so I'm

extremely curious right now 』

『 Tell me clearly, how did my daughter's little bell come into your hands? 』

Gu Qing Shan has never actually panicked before in his life.

But right now, his composure, calm or anything resembling that all disappeared without a trace.

“About that, erm, it's a long story... I can explain...”

He suddenly gulped, unable to think of the words to say.

The current situation almost seemed to be more dangerous than facing the [Demon King Order].

Chapter 584

TN: Progenitor Fiendess – this can be translated literally as Original Mother of the Fiends.

『 I don't care for a long story 』

The black-robed woman raised her hand and signalled Gu Qing Shan not to speak.

『 I only want to know one thing. A Tianma would never give their personal belonging to someone of another race, so why did she give it to you? 』

She stared straight at Gu Qing Shan and spoke.

“We're business partners, we cooperated in the past” Gu Qing Shan explained.

『 Then that definitely wouldn't have happened, that's why I've been waiting for the bell to ring all this time, I've wanted to see just who could obtain this bracelet from her 』

Noticing the black-robed woman's true attitude, Gu Qing Shan finally reacted in time.

He quickly explained: “Ma'am— aunty, you misunderstood. Actually, I'm calling her this time to pay back my debt”

『 Pay back your debt? Alright then, what are you going to pay her? 』 the black-robed woman asked.

“I was going to give her this world” Gu Qing Shan replied.

『 This world... huh... 』 the woman silently smirked and shook her head: 『 So you're a simple fraud 』

『 To be able to use my daughter for your own gains, you must be quite the sly human, seen only once per several ten thousand years, however... 』

Her tone became cold: 『 Playing around with the Tianma this way, do you think it'll end well for you? 』

Faint black shadows flew out from her body, quickly enveloping the entire plaza.

Her presence gradually rose greater and greater until her expression turned into that of extreme ferocity and anger.

Gu Qing Shan stayed calm and only replied: “I really only meant to pay her back, if you’ll give me a chance, I’ll immediately settle my debt right now”

『 Hah? Do you really think I don’t know that kind of world this is? 』

Apparently hearing the funniest joke in the world, the black-robed woman’s terrifying presence was retracted.

She raised her voice: 『 Very well, then I’ll have them all come here to see what exactly a cultivator’s trick is like 』

『 That way, none of them will ever make the same mistake again! 』

Saying so, the black-robed woman flicked her hand into the air.

The long black sleeve turned into a 2-man tall black tunnel opening.

A faint light of the sunset came from the tunnel.

Countless screams, cries of pain and sorrow, moans and curses all came from the tunnel.

The woman simply pointed at it from afar, extinguishing the various chaotic sounds, leaving only a faint harmonic choir.

Gu Qing Shan’s eyebrows knitted.

To be able to connect two worlds so easily, what power.

The woman shouted to the tunnel: 『 Daughters, come here all of you, we have quite a show to watch 』

The choir on the other side stopped.

Figures came flying out from the tunnel one by one, showing off their luscious bodies and unrivalled beauty.

They were all wearing thin dancer garbs that showed off their charm while maintaining a sense of aloof indifference, completely unlike that of normal Tianma who enjoyed tempting cultivators with lust.

Their gestures were soft, gentle, animated, even the smallest actions contained indescribable charm.

Gu Qing Shan immediately noticed the black-clothed girl among them.

The black-clothed girl only gave him a single glance before turning away.

『 Be careful, Mother believes that you’re trying to court me, taking advantage of or trying to deceive me 』

She silently sent her voice.

“We have proof, couldn’t you have just given her the Virtualized realm cultivator’s soul to clear up everything?” Gu Qing Shan sent his voice to ask her.

『 The Virtualized realm cultivator's soul... according to our laws, this type of precious cultivator's soul must be enjoyed by Mother first before I'm allowed to— but I couldn't help myself and already devoured it all while hiding it from them 』 the black-clothed girl silently explained with a hint of awkwardness in her voice.

Gu Qing Shan sighed, speechless.

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—so I'm a scapegoat huh? This would cause anyone to despair.

“What do I do now?” he asked.

『 I don't know either, but you have to be careful, or you will die right here 』

“Can't you at least give me a suggestion?”

『 Mother is the Progenitor Fiendess of our Tianma world, the strongest Tianma born at the dawn of time 』

“And?”

『 You will probably have to show sincerity about the same standard when you persuaded me, otherwise both our ends won't be pretty 』 the black-clothed girl answered.

“...” Gu Qing Shan.

He had no words.

The Tianma sisters now all stood in front of their mother— the Progenitor.

『 Mother, you said you have quite a show for us to see? 』 one of them asked.

『 Indeed, today I found a human who tried to deceive a Tianma. This is ridiculous beyond all words, but one of you has in fact fallen for it 』 the Progenitor spoke.

All the Tianma sisters were surprised.

『 How could a human's word be trusted? 』

『 How interesting, it had always been us who tempted humans, but now there's a human that tried to deceive us Tianma instead? 』

『 Humans are the most likely species in the infinite worlds to go back on their words, who would be lured by such a creature's words? 』

『 Great Mother, which one of my naïve little sisters was that dumb? 』

They all spoke one after another.

The black-clothed girl lowered her head.

The Progenitor spoke: 『 Li Yang, raise your head 』

The black-clothed girl – Li Yang could only raise her head and answered: 『 Great Mother 』

『 Hm, tell me, how did he persuade you? 』

『 He said he would give me a world as the payment 』

The Tianma sisters all broke into laughter.

『 So it turns out that it was our model big sister who trusted a human! 』

『 How did I not notice, big sister is not only fluent in the arts of domination but in the art of talking to food as well? 』

『 Ahahaha, how unimaginable, that big sister of ours would be tempted? Lusting after a mortal? 』

The black-clothed girl held a calm expression without saying anything.

The Progenitor sighed deeply, apparently very disappointed.

She spoke: 『 Li Yang, you are supposed to be a Tianma Empress, ruler of a realm, yet you were deceived by a human, spending so much effort to help them for free. It seems you are no longer qualified to be Empress 』

The black-clothed girl's expression turned pale.

And her little sisters' eyes all brightened.

If she stepped down, someone would naturally step up, this was obvious. The only thing was that they didn't know who Mother would arrange for that seat.

“Excuse me— I'll have to interrupt you for a bit” Gu Qing Shan suddenly spoke up.

The Tianma went silent.

They all turned to look at him, all with different thoughts on their minds.

The Progenitor spoke: 『 Arbitrarily interrupting someone else is very rude, do you not understand such a simple principle? 』

“Because the one who summoned you here is me, I'm asking you to let me finish what I need to do first. After that, I won't say a word no matter what you do” Gu Qing Shan continued.

The Progenitor asked: 『 Then what do you want to do? 』

Gu Qing Shan replied: “I truly have a debt that I need to settle clearly with Empress Li Yang, after I finish, you can say what you want”

The Progenitor thought about it briefly and coldly chuckled: 『 Fine then, go ahead, it'll be useful for the girls to see what kind of thing they need to look out for 』

Chapter 585

Gu Qing Shan also smirked.

“Empress Li Yang, about what we said before, you will help me defeat an enemy, and I’ll provide you with a world as payment”

He pointed straight at the ground below: “From now on, this world is yours”

Li Yang glanced at him, before she managed to say a word, the Progenitor had already pulled her behind herself.

『 So, you said you’re going to give this world to my daughter? 』 the Progenitor asked.

“Indeed, this world is now hers”

『 Are you serious? Can you take responsibility for your own words? 』

“Very much so, and I can indeed take responsibility for my words” Gu Qing Shan replied.

The Progenitor silently nodded with a sarcastic look on her face.

『 Daughter, today will be a lesson, let Mother teach you just how sly a human can be 』 the Progenitor told Li Yang.

She stepped forward, pointing at the divine temple behind Gu Qing Shan, then faced all the Tianma sisters and explained: 『 Listen well, I’ve seen through the truth of this world—— that structure is the divine temple of the Old Gods, because of that, this place doesn’t belong to him, rather it’s a lost world of the Old Gods 』

The Progenitor then pointed above, saying: 『 Up there is a renowned barrier that contains divinity of the Old Gods—— this world’s very own protective barrier established by the Old Gods themselves 』

『 One of you, try flying up there to show everyone 』 she ordered.

Several Tianma sisters competed to see who could reach it first.

Very quickly, a golden light could be seen in the sky.

The Tianma sisters returned and spoke excited: 『 Dear Mother and sisters, there really is a divinity barrier of the Old Gods, we couldn’t pass through 』

『 Very well, let’s go on 』 the Progenitor continued: 『 Above the divinity barrier is an endless ocean, where a few normal creatures reside 』

『 Above that, is an outer shell of ice that formed its own world 』

The Progenitor smiled and looked at Li Yang, asking: 『 Daughter of mine, can you guess what is there? 』

『 I don’t know 』 Li Yang could only reply.

The Progenitor loudly declared: 『 It has been taken over by an army of 100,000 ghosts, as well as over 2 million demonized people! 』

『 They have already taken this world! 』

The Tianma sisters all became rowdy.

This man kept insisting that he would provide a world as payment, yet the truth was like this.

The Progenitor looked at Li Yang and spoke in a cold voice: 『 In other words, this world is either owned by the Old Gods, or it already belongs to the demons. There is no way that man over there has any claim to it 』

『 He promised you the payment of a world, but look, he has no world to give you 』

『 He has always been lying 』

『 Li Yang do you see it clearly now? 』

Li Yang could only step out from the group of Tianma sisters and knelt with one knee on the ground: 『 Your daughter understands 』

The Progenitor looked at her, sighed and shook her head: 『 How naïve... 』

At this point, a voice called out.

“Excuse me—— I’m afraid I’ll have to cut you off again” Gu Qing Shan said.

The Tianma all looked at him again.

This time, besides Li Yang, every other Tianma had a cruel and bloodthirsty look on their faces.

『 Fraud 』

『 You dared to try and deceive us Tianma 』

『 Sisters... 』

They all shouted in anger, clearly unable to hold themselves back.

Gu Qing Shan only smirked and circulated his spirit energy a bit.

Having wandered at the verge of breaking through for so long, the change in his spirit energy immediately got noticed by the Laws of heaven and earth.

In the sky, bolts of lightning exploded one after another thunderously.

A giant lightning dragon several hundred miles long peeked out from the clouds, watching the crowd below.

Seeing such a dragon born from Lightning Tribulation forced the Tianma to become speechless.

Gu Qing Shan took the Earth sword in hand again, infusing it with Soul Points.

The Earth sword immediately began to vibrate, giving off invisible waves of divine power.

Gu Qing Shan brandished the Earth sword muttering for them to hear: “You all refuse to listen to the end before trying to attack, do you perhaps think you can’t die here?”

Seeing this sword, the Tianma felt fear for the first time.

『 That is... 』

『 Yes, a sword that can kill us 』

『 What do we do? 』

『 Let’s wait and see what Mother thinks 』

They retreated.

The Progenitor stood in front of all the Tianma sisters and coldly smiled: 『 What? Wanting to use force after you got exposed? I've met too many people like you 』

Gu Qing Shan spoke: "I already said, I'm here to pay back my debt, if you believe this world belongs to someone else, that's your problem, it doesn't have anything to do with me. I only intended to let Li Yang know that this world really does belong to her now"

Li Yang suddenly looked up at him.

Is there really still a chance to overturn this situation? she thought to herself.

The Tianma sisters all focused their attention on him.

The Progenitor shook her head: 『 The Old God's divinity still persists, the ghosts, revenants and demonized overrun the surface of the ice, how are you going to prove that this world belongs to you? 』

Gu Qing Shan smiled and answered: "You said you know this world very well, but do you know what this city you're standing on called?"

『 How would I know such insignificant details—— so you intend to weasel your way out of this with words again? 』 the Progenitor asked.

"That's not the case, I'm going to prove to you that I know this world much better than you do"

Gu Qing Shan sighed and continued: "This city was built on a cliff of the highest mountain, the closest location to the ocean, so it was named Tidal city"

The Progenitor asked: 『 And so? This city was created by the Old Gods before they left this world, what does it have to do with you? 』

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Gu Qing Shan shook his head: "This world will naturally prove to you that it belongs to me"

As he said that, a flying sword came from the void of space behind him and shot up to the sky.

Chao Yin.

The ancient sword, Chao Yin!

Like a streak of light, it flew up without any resistance, stopping just at the edge of the sky.

It silently hovered there, waiting for something.

"Open!"

Gu Qing Shan softly utters a single word.

Receiving the order, the Chao Yin sword lightly stabbed its tip into the Old God's barrier.

The Chao Yin sword was originally forged by the Gods and had already brought Gu Qing Shan in and out of the barrier several times, opening the divinity barrier once again is nothing but child's play for it.

A single golden point of light slowly appeared in the sky.

And it didn't stop---

The point grew and turned into a circle that quickly expanded more and more.

The more it expanded, the clearer the blue ocean above the sky could be seen.

At this time, the entire Old God's barrier had been opened by the Chao Yin sword!

Gu Qing Shan didn't care to look at his rapidly decreasing Soul Points value on the War God UI and utter another word.

"Drop!"

Following his order, the Chao Yin sword let out a rapid 'wu wu' sound!

It was controlling the ocean!

In the Age of Old, the Old Gods forged this sword to anchor the four seas.

He who holds his sword is the king of all seas!

An unimaginable sight appeared.

The ocean itself fell from the sky.

The endless raging ocean flowed from the heavens like the Great Flood of legends, enveloping the world below.

Even Tidal city itself was completely submerged.

The world was now a part of the ocean.

Except for the plaza in front of the divine temple, where the water had purposefully avoided them.

The Tianma, the people of the Bramble Bird Kingdom, and Gu Qing Shan.

They stood there completely unharmed.

The turbulent water swept the sea creatures inside hurriedly away from the plaza.

At this time, the Tribulation clouds had yet to disperse, so the several hundred miles long lightning dragon was still swimming around the ocean water, illuminating the water current around them in a blinding blue electrical light.

This scene in front of them was nothing short of an act of god!!!

Everyone who was watching was speechless.

Gu Qing Shan reached out his hand.

Oong!

A sword came down from the sky, falling into his hand.

“The barrier isn’t a problem”

He said.

“The ocean also follows my command”

He continued.

“As for the ghost army—”

He circulated the spirit energy inside his body just a bit.

The lightning dragon recognized his presence.

Roar!!!

The lightning dragon uttered a thunderous roar.

Its gigantic body of lightning descended, dancing around the plaza along with the flowing water current.

The plaza itself was now illuminated in a white-blue shade of lightning.

Gu Qing Shan looked to the Progenitor Fiendess, smiling: “Do you have any other problem?”

Chapter 586

The Progenitor Fiendess stared at the clear blue water all around them, then at the flowing lightning dragon.

『 Indeed, this world’s God’s Punishment was established as Elemental Lightning, so you can borrow the significant magnified power of Lightning Tribulation to eliminate the ghosts 』 she muttered.

“Indeed, that’s why—” Gu Qing Shan spoke.

『 Not yet 』 the Progenitor cut him off, 『 on the ice outer shell, there are still 2 million demonized beings who are around the same level of strength as yourself, how do you intend to deal with them? 』

The Progenitor continued: 『 Although the Tribulation lightning perfectly counters the ghost army, the 2 million demonized all consists of talented youths of various worlds, there are definitely those who came from a cultivation world that have ways to resist the lightning 』

『 You won’t be able to cause too many casualties among them, as they aren’t necessarily afraid of Elemental Lightning like the ghosts 』

Gu Qing Shan replied: “You are correct, which is why the 2 million demonized are part of a different business deal”

『 What business deal? 』

“I will invite Li Yang and her subordinates to help me kill those demonized”

The Progenitor coldly laughed: 『 Hah, in the end, you're still using Li Yang—— if not for her, you alone would definitely not be able to fight against the demonized 』

“You're wrong”

『 That is the truth, I can see it clearly 』

“Actually, this isn't me begging Li Yang to help me”

Gu Qing Shan cleared his throat and spoke with all his sincerity: “Because of how well our last deal went, after I had paid off my debt to her, I will be inviting Li Yang to cooperate with me in a second, separate deal”

He looked at Empress Li Yang and asked: “I want to know, what kind of treasure does your Tianma tribe consider the most precious?”

『 Treasure? Us Tianma——- 』

As soon as Li Yang was about to respond, the Progenitor stopped her.

『 Brat, why are you asking this? 』 the Progenitor cut in.

“Naturally to ask her to join me and deal with the demonized” Gu Qing Shan answered.

『 So you intend to bribe her? 』

Gu Qing Shan laughed it off and patiently explained: “I first need to know what kind of thing you Tianma consider a treasure, after that we'll go into the specifics, is that ok?”

The Progenitor Fiendess stared at him and stayed silent.

Seeing that, Empress Li Yang followed up: 『 Us Tianma only considers Soul Artifacts to be treasures. Soul Artifacts are manifested from Laws of the soul, allowing us Tianma to control and use together with Soul Points, unleashing the power of the Laws hidden inside them 』

『 Soul Artifacts are extremely rare, they almost never appear in any world. In fact, as long as a living being knows how to use Soul Points, they can use Soul Artifacts 』

『 That's why Soul Artifacts are also the most precious treasures of the 900 million World Layers 』

『 Whenever a Soul Artifact is found, a rain of blood and war will soon follow, us Tianma would dispatch troops to join in the struggle for the Soul Artifacts as well 』

Gu Qing Shan spoke: “I see, then I have another question, how many Soul Artifacts do you have?”

『 How many? You must be mad, I myself only have a single one 』 Empress Li Yang answered.

“How did you obtain it?”

『 When I took over the title of Empress, Mother gave it to me 』

“Did you not try to join in the struggle for another one like you said?”

Li Yang chuckled bitterly and looked to the Progenitor Fiendess.

The Progenitor mockingly explained: 『 A Soul Artifact can only be used with Soul Points, each one of them is so powerful that the first to obtain them can easily become the king of a world. Otherwise why do you think so many worlds go to war with each other? 』

“In other words, Soul Artifacts are in fact extremely rare” Gu Qing Shan mused a bit about this information.

He went silent.

『 Brat, what tricks are you trying to pull now? 』 the Progenitor Fiendess pursued.

“It’s not really a trick, but...”

Gu Qing Shan muttered, then turned to Laura.

As Laura’s eyes met with his, she was a bit surprised.

Then she suddenly recalled what Gu Qing Shan told her before.

“I need to ask you, are you willing to do everything in your power to avenge your parents?” he asked.

“I’m willing to do everything in my power”

“Are you willing to pay any price to destroy the [Worlds Apocalypse Online] that’s imprisoned in this world?” he asked again.

“I’m willing to pay any price, even if it’s my own life, as long as Triste doesn’t win!”

...

Laura slowly understood.

So that’s what he meant.

She grabbed something from the void of space.

A small backpack appeared in her hand.

Laura looked down, searching through her backpack while mumbling: “And I thought it would be some sort of really heavy price, so it’s just a Soul Artifact...”

While saying so, she walked towards Gu Qing Shan.

Ilya and her guards followed close behind.

After a bit of searching, Laura gave something to Gu Qing Shan.

“This is a Soul Artifact” she said.

Gu Qing Shan received it from her to see that it was a spear.

A bronze spear that was little heavy, giving off a faint sense of sharpness and coldness as you held it in your hand.

Gu Qing Shan casually tossed it over to Empress Li Yang.

“Can you take a look and tell me what you think about this?” Gu Qing Shan said.

Empress Li Yang opened her eyes wide, catching the bronze spear while still in disbelief.

『 What are you—— 』 she hesitantly asked.

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“Just try it” Gu Qing Shan told her.

Empress Li Yang then held the spear in hand, slowly infusing it with Soul Points.

A white glow appeared on the spear, slowly moving into Li Yang’s body.

Li Yang closed her eyes and silently felt it.

『 Hm... so it’s like this... 』 she muttered.

A second later, she suddenly opened her eyes wide and moved.

Her body turned into a sharp and cold shadow that moved in a flash.

At the very next moment, she had returned to where she was.

Fast!

Too fast!

If you hadn’t been paying attention to her closely, you’d think it was just an illusion that she disappeared just now.

—boom!

It was now that the sonic boom managed to catch up.

The divine temple under the sea broke and crumbled like it was struck by a meteor.

The Tianma sisters all gasped.

That divine temple was made by the Old Gods, although it didn’t have divinity protection, it had still received their blessing and wasn’t something you could easily destroy.

But Li Yang managed to completely destroy it in the blink of an eye.

『 This is a very decent Soul Artifact 』 Li Yang commented.

She was a bit unwilling to part with the spear, but still tossed it back to Gu Qing Shan.

Gu Qing Shan didn’t receive it, instead lightly tapping the tip of the spear.

The bronze spear flew back into Empress Li Yang’s hands.

『 What are you—— 』 she hesitantly spoke.

“It’s for you” Gu Qing Shan replied.

Li Yang was shocked.

The other Tianma shouted: “Big sister, accept it quickly, this is an attack-type Soul Artifact!”

The Progenitor Fiendess pursed her lips tight, not giving any comments for now.

『 Why give it to me? 』 Li Yang stared at Gu Qing Shan and softly asked.

“A deposit”

『 ——deposit? 』

“That’s right, I’m inviting you to cooperate once again, help me kill the 2 million demonized, this Soul Artifact will be my deposit”

Gu Qing Shan continued: “Of course, after the work is done, besides this Soul Artifact, you can have all 2 million souls of those demonized people”

The entire place went silent.

2 million demonized souls.

A few Tianma couldn’t help themselves and began to breathe heavily.

My heavens!

An entire world!

An attack-type Soul Artifact!

2 million demonized souls!

This is truly——

Truly——

Let’s ignore the Tianma’s inner storms for now.

Laura stood on one side, watching the entire process.

She silently pulled on Gu Qing Shan’s sleeve and spoke to him using telepathy.

“Is that really ok?” she asked.

“Of course, to make someone else work for you, you need to pay them—— or are you reluctant to let go of that Soul Artifact?” Gu Qing Shan asked her back.

“Ah, it’s not that, it’s not that, I’m just a bit... a bit...”

“Just tell me, there’s no need to hide anything from me”

“I just checked again and that one seems to be the worst out of all the Soul Artifacts I have. Won’t it be a bit insincere for us to just offer something of that level?”

Gu Qing Shan: “...”

Across from them, Li Yang held the bronze spear and stood there, stunned for a while.

She then suddenly walked in front of the Progenitor Fiendess and knelt down.

『 Mother, I dedicate this Soul Artifact to you 』

Li Yang respectfully said.

The Progenitor Fiendess looked closely at the bronze spear offered to her.

This is a rare attack-type Soul Artifact.

One strike from it was able to destroy the Old God's divine temple.

And that was just a casual strike by Li Yang.

If it was in my hands, and if I were to unleash the full power of this treasure...

The Progenitor Fiendess sighed.

『 Li Yang, it seems I wasn't mistaken after all, the title of Tianma Empress really should be in your hands 』

Saying so, she accepted the Soul Artifact.

Chapter 587

After taking the bronze Soul Artifact, the Progenitor Fiend Mother's expression loosened just a bit.

Her gaze went past everyone else and looked straight at Laura.

『 Pardon me asking, but are you perhaps a Bramble Bird? 』 the Progenitor carefully asked.

Ilya pulled Laura behind herself and replied: "Indeed, we are a group specifically sent by the Bramble Bird Kingdom to help Mr. Gu Qing Shan"

Sensing the power radiating from Ilya and thinking of the stories she had heard about the Bramble Bird, the Progenitor felt a bit uneasy.

The Bramble Birds were the only race that were both capable of surviving in the Mystic Zones and willing to communicate with races from the outside.

The Bramble Birds owned countless treasures of the Mystic Zones, the richest race in the entire 900 million World Layers.

More importantly, these treasures cannot be stolen.

Because—

The Holy Bramble Tree, the greatest life form in all of the Mystic Zones, or perhaps in all of the 900 million World Layers, was the guardian to all the Bramble Bird's treasures.

Besides the ferocious and terrifying creatures in the Mystic Zones, nobody in any other Zones dared to offend the Bramble Birds.

Whether it was the Strife Zones, Super Dimensional Zones, or even the Fallen Zones.

—-in trillions of worlds, not even the demons dared to offend them.

Because of one infamous historical event.

30,000 years ago, a Bramble Bird royal guard went missing mysteriously.

—indeed, even though the Bramble Bird's treasure can't be stolen by any means, a Bramble Bird could be killed.

Even three days after the royal guard went missing, no one in the entire Bramble Bird Kingdom knew where he was.

At that time, the Bramble Bird King issued a bounty.

He declared that if anyone was able to find that royal guard as well as every last detail of why he disappeared, dealing with this matter in a way that made him satisfied, they would receive the rewards provided by the Bramble Bird Kingdom.

The bounty at the time was treasures from the Mystic Zones piled up to form a small mountain.

—at the top of the mountain were three weapons which were accordingly Epic, Legendary and Divine grade.

The Bramble Bird King had said that, in consideration of possible cooperation between multiple people, these three weapons will be granted to the three who exerted the most effort.

As soon as the bounty was issued, the entire 900 million World Layers went mad!

All wars stopped.

Every Combatant at the time gave up on what they were originally doing.

Even demonized groups gave up on their original plans for invasion and set out to search for that Bramble Bird royal guard.

Everybody that was anybody spared no efforts.

Through this immeasurable combined force of power, the missing royal guard was quickly found.

The culprit was a famous interstellar empire.

The empire was one that spanned across 7 World Layers, a significant powerhouse even among the top powers of the interstellar world.

Both level of civilization advancement and military might were at their peaks.

And so the Emperor of that empire had ordered his people to kidnap that Bramble Bird royal guard.

He had hoped to make that royal guard yield and offer up his treasures through torture.

After this was revealed, within the span of one hour, the entire interstellar empire was ripped to shreds by the Combatants of the 900 million World Layers.

From then on, no one had tried anything against the Bramble Birds again.

The Progenitor Fiend Mother pulled back her gaze and looked at Gu Qing Shan.

His relationship with the Bramble Birds was this close?

...
...
...

That's strange...

How did Li Yang get acquainted with him then?

『 Gu boy, you said you wanted to cooperate with Li Yang to eliminate the 2 million demonized, do you have a plan? 』

The Progenitor Fiend Mother looked to Gu Qing Shan and solemnly asked.

This was the very first time she was actually looking at Gu Qing Shan as a person.

“Of course I do” Gu Qing Shan replied.

『 Then tell me, I need to confirm your plan first, because us Tianma can't exert our true power in this world, and I want to ensure Li Yang's safety 』

“Alright, my plan is to overwhelm them with numbers” Gu Qing Shan answered.

『 Hm, continue 』

“That's it”

The Progenitor Fiend Mother squinted her eyes a bit and slowly spoke: 『 We're going to deal with a large army of significant power, and the only thing your plan consists of is just 'overwhelm them with numbers'? Is this a joke? 』

“No, it's not a joke at all”

Gu Qing Shan explained: “A lot of people seem to think that strategies that use less force than the enemy or sudden ambushes to win are what war is all about. But in fact, those are nothing but desperate strategies that put your lives at risk and would only succeed under extremely lucky situations”

He continued: “The art of war, the best strategy above anything else is to have the strong win against the weak and use more to win against less”

“Stronger naturally beats weaker, that's a given; having more troops naturally beats having less, so that's a given——— this is the plain and simple truth that has never and will never change, as well as the military strategy with the highest chance of success”

Hearing that, the Progenitor Fiend Mother's expression relaxed a bit, and silently nodded in approval.

Thinking about it briefly, she asked: 『 That sounds doable on paper, then what about the execution? What do you plan on doing exactly? 』

Gu Qing Shan replied: “When a cultivator breaks through a realm, the heaven rains lightning and masses of evil creatures come, I will probably need Li Yang's help to borrow a few troops”

『 You mean the evil creatures that interfere with a cultivator's breakthrough? 』

“Yes”

Gu Qing Shan looked towards Li Yang and asked: “You are Tianma, so you might be acquainted with quite a few evil creatures, can you summon some of them so that negotiation will be easier?”

Li Yang hesitated: 『 It’s no problem to summon more evil creatures here, but they aren’t as easy to talk to as we are 』

Gu Qing Shan replied: “That doesn’t matter, business is business, even if negotiations break off, at least we can still be friends, that makes it easier in the future”

Li Yang couldn’t hold herself back anymore and laughed: 『 What an interesting man you, are, evil creatures consider humans food, yet you want to make friends with them 』

“I only have one soul, that’s hardly enough to share, but if they cooperate with me, not only will they have treasures to take, they’ll also have 2 million souls to divide between themselves, I’m sure everyone knows what the best choice would be”

Li Yang glanced at him shortly and spoke: 『 Then I’ll need some time to prepare 』

She put her hands together and began to chant an incantation to summon other evil creatures.

Looking at this, the Progenitor wanted to say something, but stopped.

She decided to not say anything.

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The other Tianma exchanged glances and sent voices to each other.

『 Look at them, flirting right in front of us 』

『 What a dirty pair... 』

『 Mother ignored them, did she not notice? 』

『 You really think Mother wouldn’t notice? 』

『 Hah, just give it up girls, that was a Soul Artifact 』

That’s right, that was a Soul Artifact!

Silence.

Everyone all felt a bit dejected.

Suddenly, a voice asked everyone here.

『 Sisters, let me ask you something, between me and Li Yang, who do you think looks prettier? 』

The Tianma girls all froze.

No one bothered to answer this dumb question.

But they all looked straight at Gu Qing Shan.

This seemingly dumb question just opened a new door in front of them all.

Perhaps... hope isn't completely lost.

Gu Qing Shan went to the side, standing with Laura, Ilya and the guards.

"Now there's only one last problem" Gu Qing Shan said.

"What problem?" Laura asked.

Gu Qing Shan replied: "I'm going to cooperate with evil creatures to kill the demonized. I'll need a contract with a strong enough binding force as a guarantee, otherwise if one or more of the evil creatures turn on us mid-way, it'll be extremely troublesome"

Laura took out a brand new Grimoire of Contract from her backpack: "This should be enough, it has binding power to both parties, forbidding all acts of betrayal during the term of the contract"

"What happens in the case of betrayal?" Gu Qing Shan asked.

"The traitor will be killed by the Law of the Contract" Laura replied.

Gu Qing Shan muses: "Killed huh? This type of punishment for evil creatures seems to be a bit..."

Ilya shook her head: "Laura, what you have there is the Spire's Universal Contract, but evil creatures can't be considered with normal means, even if this Contract could kill them, they will surely have a way to revive"

"Then what should we do?" Laura asked.

Ilya smiled: "Did you forget about our Holy Bramble Leaf?"

Laura opened her eyes wide from realization, then scowled again: "But I didn't bring it with me"

"I did" Ilya told her.

She took out a bag full of bright green leaves and gave it to Gu Qing Shan.

"These are leaves from the Holy Bramble Tree, each and every leaf contains an absolute binding Contract" Ilya explained.

"What kind of Contract is it?" Gu Qing Shan asked.

"To be unable to break one designated vow"

"And the punishment for breaking the vow would be?"

"All their powers will be absorbed and their souls will become nutrient for the Saint Tree"

"That impressive? Some evil creatures might not believe it even if I tell them"

"As long as they see our Holy Bramble Tree, they'll understand right away"

Gu Qing Shan was still a bit unconvinced: "What if some of them are as clueless as I am?"

"...Alright, try taking one of the leaves and put it in the palm of your hand"

Gu Qing Shan did as she said and put one of the leaves on the palm of his hand.

The very next instant, Gu Qing Shan felt his inner sight leaving this world.

The leaf gave off the immense power of Law, bringing Gu Qing Shan through time and space, putting him in front of a certain great and divine existence.

A tree.

An ancient great tree that was easily 10,000 meters tall.

But Gu Qing Shan could see more than just that, through his mental connection with it, he noticed hidden inside its enormous shade was vitality and life force, so overwhelming that he could only stare in awe.

This life force was ingrained deep in countless World Layers, and it kept on growing towards the very top of the 900 million World Layers.

Its power was so miraculous and so great that anyone that saw it could only look in worship, unable to mount any hostility.

Sensing the great power radiating off the Saint Tree, Gu Qing Shan was in awe more than ever before.

At the same time, a thought came to him from the tree.

This thought went directly into Gu Qing Shan's mind and made him realize a certain fact.

That as long as a vow was made to the Saint Tree's leaf, the Saint Tree itself would know.

If he were to break the vow in any way, the Saint Tree will absorb his powers, even his soul will become nutrient for its growth.

This was the power of its Law.

In all the 900 million World Layers, no one could go against its Law.

Gu Qing Shan quickly pulled his inner sight back.

"Mighty!" he praised.

Laura patted her backpack and told him: "That's right, my backpack here was also made from the branch and leaf of the Saint Bramble Tree, any item I put inside will be the same as if it was stored in the Saint Tree, and the Saint Tree will only recognize me, no one else can open this backpack"

Ilya added: "I once made a vow to the Saint Tree's leaf to protect Laura, in the case that I fail to do that, all the powers granted to me by the Saint Tree as well as my soul will be taken away"

Gu Qing Shan put back the leaf into the bag and spoke satisfyingly: "A Contract with this much binding force will ensure the matter this time can be dealt with successfully, thank you so much"

Ilya waved her hand: "You don't have to thank me, it's my duty"

"Gu Qing Shan, I am willing to give up any treasure, as long as I can avenge my mother, father and brother!"

Laura's eyes were a bit red as she tugged on the corner of Gu Qing Shan's shirt.

“Hm, don’t worry, we can definitely avenge them”

Gu Qing Shan gently stroked her head and muttered.

Chapter 588

As Gu Qing Shan and Laura finished their conversation, Empress Li Yang called him over.

“What is it?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

『 I’ll begin summoning the evil creatures now, so come here, I have a few things that you might want to pay attention to 』

“Alright”

Gu Qing Shan’s expression became serious.

This was the most important part of the plan, there definitely couldn’t be any mistakes here.

Empress Li Yang explained: 『 As you are about to break through Sainted realm, during this Tribulation, there will be four Fiends and four Devils that will answer the Tribulation’s Law, a total of 8 Seats of Tribulation 』

“So I will have to convince all of them?”

『 Correct 』

“Can you tell me in detail?”

『 The four Fiends are the Flame-eater Fiend, the Shadow Fiend, the Asura and the Tianma 』

『 The four Devils are the Hunger Devil, the Huang Quan Devil, the Bloodthirsty Devil and the Malahoh Devil 』

『 These eight Fiend Kings and Devil Kings will jointly control the 8 Seats of Tribulation, interfering with your breakthrough and pull you to your death 』

“What are the 8 Seats of Tribulation that you speak of?”

『 The 8 Seats represent authority, giving those that hold them the ability to summon others of their own race 』

『 In the infinite worlds there are also infinite Devil and Fiend realms, any ruler of a realm that comes first will obtain a Seat of Tribulation 』

“You mean first come first serve?”

『 Correct, but it must be a ruler of either a Fiend realm or Devil realm that comes here representing their own world to be able to obtain a Seat 』

Empress Li Yang continued: 『 8 Seats of Tribulation mean that there will be a total of 4 Fiend Kings and 4 Devil Kings that arrive, capable of summoning others of their race at a snap of their finger to kill you during your Tribulation 』

Gu Qing Shan sighed: “So even killing people during their Tribulation has specific rules and order, how interesting”

『 Fortunately 』 Empress Li Yang laughed and spoke: 『 This time the one who arrived first was Mother, as she is the great Progenitor of the Original Tianma world, no matter how many Tianma arrive later on, they will always have to obey her words according to the Law of the Seats of Tribulation 』

Gu Qing Shan looked at the Progenitor Fiendess.

She nodded back and told him: 『 You won't need to worry about the Tianma, just try and convince the other 7 』

“Thank you” Gu Qing Shan clasped his fist and spoke.

『 Alright, then we will begin with the simplest target, hmm—— Flame-eater Fiends have the simplest minds, but they are powerful and like destruction in general, if it hears about having 2 million souls to harvest, it'll definitely agree right away 』 Li Yang explained.

She formed a hand seal and chanted the summoning incantation.

A few moments later, a searing flame came from the void of space.

Followed by a deep, hearty voice.

『 Who is calling for me? 』

A black monster covered in flames stepped out from the void of space.

『 This is a Flame-eater Fiend King that's acquainted with us 』

Li Yang quickly sent her voice and told Gu Qing Shan.

The Flame-eater Fiend King glanced around a bit, saw Gu Qing Shan and realized right away.

『 Ah, so you were calling me to kill a cultivator in his Tribulation... 』

As it said that, it couldn't say anything else.

The Tianma standing here were indeed the ones it knew well.

But the Tianma Empress was standing by the cultivator's side with several other strong Tianma around, and even the Progenitor Fiendess was here.

Such a powerful force and the cultivator were both absolutely calm without any sign of battle.

The Flame-eater Fiend King just stood and watched for a while without understanding anything and muttered: 『 The Tribulation is right above, but did I go to the wrong place? 』

It was now that Empress Li Yang stepped forward and explained.

『 So that's why... 』

Hearing her, the Flame-eater Fiend King quickly understood.

『 What!? 2 million souls? 』

『 Indeed, do you want to help or not? If you do, the only price you have to pay is not attacking the cultivator, he's on our side 』

『 Of course that's not a problem, but how do you intend to split the 2 million souls? 』

『 Naturally you get what you kill 』 Li Yang replied.

Hearing that, the Flame-eater Fiend King decided and immediately agreed: 『 Very well, it's a deal 』

Empress Li Yang looked towards Gu Qing Shan.

Gu Qing Shan gave her a leaf of the Saint Bramble Tree.

Empress Li Yang explained again.

Ecstatic at the prospect of 2 million souls, the Flame-eater Fiend King easily made a vow to the leaf.

『 Good, did you obtain the Seat of Tribulation yet? 』 Empress Li Yang asked at the end.

『 I can sense the Seat of Tribulation on its body 』 the Progenitor answered for it.

『 Ah right, could it be, this time's Tianma Seat of Tribulation belongs to the Great Progenitor? 』 the Flame-eater Fiend King carefully asked.

『 It does, but don't worry, I won't compete for souls with you young ones 』 the Progenitor replied.

『 Ahahaha, then thank you Great Progenitor 』

Saying so, the Flame-eater Fiend King quickly returned to the void of space.

According to the plan they discussed just now, it'll gather its subordinates and wait until the Tribulation officially arrives before it comes.

“6 more, who are we calling next?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

Li Yang seemed a bit troubled and scowled as she answered: 『 The Shadow Fiend King, a sly and greedy bastard 』

“Greedy?”

『 Indeed, it should be the most greedy one out of the 4 Devils and 4 Fiends this time 』

“Then summon it quickly, I like a greedy business partner, not to mention, it won't just be you negotiating alone, I will also speak if necessary” Gu Qing Shan replied.

『 Alright 』

Li Yang then changed her hand seal and chanted another incantation.

A few moments later, a shadow appeared on the floor of the plaza.

The shadow slid before Li Yang and slowly rose up.

It appeared to be about 8 meters tall, made entirely from the shadows, at a glance, it looked exactly like an endless dark abyss.

But in fact, it was a Shadow Fiend, furthermore, a King among Shadow Fiends.

『 Lightning Tribulation? How strange, it doesn't seem like you're about to kill him, Empress Li Yang, why did you summon me? 』 the Shadow Fiend King asked.

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Empress Li Yang then explained everything again.

『 2 million souls... wait a minute... 』 the Shadow Fiend King spoke.

Streaks of darkness detached from its body and scattered into the void of space.

As if it was trying to contact other worlds to find something out.

A few moments later, it looked up: 『 So this will be a crucial battle, I can accept your request, but the conditions can't be that simple 』

『 What else do you want? 』 Li Yang asked.

『 You know very well, the thing that us Shadow Fiends like the most isn't souls, but money! 』 the Shadow Fiend King declared.

Li Yang glanced at Gu Qing Shan.

Gu Qing Shan glanced at Laura.

Laura casually tossed a bowl over to him.

Gu Qing Shan received the bowl to find that it was the [Infinite Golden Sand Grail] from before.

Gu Qing Shan gave the bowl to Li Yang and whispered something to her.

Li Yang nodded and tilted the bowl downwards.

Glittering, shining golden sand flowed from the bowl, making a 'sha sha sha' sound as it fell.

『 Ah, what a wonderful sound 』 the Shadow Fiend King muttered.

The golden sand fell rapidly and soon accumulated into a small dune of sand that was only getting bigger as time passed.

『 Gold... so this is the legendary [Infinite Golden Sand Grail]? 』 the Shadow Fiend King asked.

『 Indeed 』 Li Yang replied.

『 So you're willing to pay such a price huh... Very well, seeing how sincere you are being, I will accept, however you need to fulfil one other small wish of mine 』 the Shadow Fiend King smirked.

Li Yang's expression changed a bit and was about to speak.

But she stopped.

Just because Gu Qing Shan had already acted before she did.

At some unknown point, Gu Qing Shan had already placed the Earth sword right on the Shadow Fiend King's neck.

An invisible gust of wind drifted about the Earth sword's blade.

Because the Earth sword was now filled with Soul Points!

The Shadow Fiend King snickered: 『 You're threatening me? Unfortunately you can't kill me, I have 9000 bodies 』

『 Snot-nosed brat, I'll stand right here and do nothing, see if you can kill me 』

"You're just going to stand there and let me kill you?" Gu Qing Shan repeated.

The Shadow Fiend King's voice became low: 『 But I'll tell you this, if you dare to attack me, I will do everything I can during the Tribulation to kill you! 』

Gu Qing Shan nodded and swung his sword.

The Shadow Fiend screamed in pain and angrily roared: 『 You dare—— 』

Before those words could be said, its body had already collapsed and disappeared.

Gu Qing Shan put his sword away.

He then told Li Yang: "Let's continue, summon it again"

Li Yang was surprised and asked: 『 But you already killed it once, it might not come again 』

"If it is really as greedy as you said, it will definitely come again"

『 Why? 』

"Losing a body for no reason without obtaining anything, even I would feel irritated and unwilling, so I'm guessing it should feel that much more than I do"

『...Alright 』

Li Yang formed a hand seal and began to summon the Shadow Fiend King again.

A few moments later——

Another shadow stood up from the ground of the plaza.

『 Brat, so you dared to attack me, well done, well fucking done 』 it grumbled.

The Shadow Fiend King's presence slowly rose, as if it was about to do something.

Gu Qing Shan calmly replied: "First of all, the other 7 Seats of Tribulation had already formed a contract with me, you can ask the Progenitor about this"

The Shadow Fiend King couldn't help but look towards the Progenitor Fiendess.

The Progenitor nodded.

Seeing that was the truth, the Shadow Fiend King couldn't help but feel shocked.

*If the other 7 Seats are all on his side, wouldn't I become the only target during the Tribulation?
But I've already obtained the Seat of Tribulation, so according to the Law of the Tribulation, I will
definitely be summoned again.*

Do I really have to lead my subordinates to fight against the other 7 Kings?

This will be a very tough Tribulation to pass...

—fucking hell, just who's the one that facing the Tribulation here?

"If I can bribe the 7 Kings and offer the [Infinite Golden Sand Grail] as a bargain, you think I'm going to be afraid of a little Tribulation?"

Gu Qing Shan smirked and continued: "If you dare to come and try to attack me, I guarantee that everyone will kill you before anything else— no matter how many bodies you have"

"You won't even get a piece of the 2 million souls, and definitely not the [Infinite Golden Sand Grail]"

"Go ahead, leave now and come back when the Tribulation comes, at that time we'll see who's the one to die"

Gu Qing Shan declared.

Silence filled the air.

The Shadow Fiend King remained silent as well.

Then Gu Qing Shan spoke up again: "If you really want to talk business, then our conditions will be the same as before, at most I'll add in a few of the demonized corpses to smooth out the process"

"Now, please choose, are you going to fight a war with the other 7 Devil and Fiend Kings, or are we going to cooperate and split the souls and treasures?"

Silence again.

A few moments later.

Gu Qing Shan continued to speak: "One last chance, if you're not going to join, we'll just start now"

"Alright, so you're not going to join? Then leave, the battle will begin—"

『 Wait! 』 the Shadow Fiend King changed its tone and smiled: 『 It's business you know, you have to at least give me some time to think about whether or not to take the deal, don't you agree? 』

"You're right, and I prefer to do business where everyone wins more than just killing all the time" Gu Qing Shan also smiled and casually gave it a Saint Bramble Leaf.

"Alright, here's the Contract, just sign"

『 No problem, when can you give me the [Infinite Golden Sand Grail]? 』

"As soon as you sign"

『 Then I'll sign it 』

...

The Shadow Fiend took the [Infinite Golden Sand Grail] and merrily went on its way.

『 How did you know it'll sign the Contract 』 Li Yang asked.

“You said that it was the most greedy, so as long as it came here again, it would mean that it was unwilling and only wanted to get some profits, not to be killed over and over”

“On one side is a part of 2 million souls and the [Infinite Golden Sand Grail], the other side is becoming a target for everyone to kill, I'm sure it's rational enough to choose”

Gu Qing Shan smiled and continued: “That's why I like negotiating with greedy opponents—— it's usually very simple to give them loaded options”

Li Yang sighed and shook her head: 『 I think you might not be human after all 』

“Why not?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

The Progenitor Fiendess stared at him and answered: 『 Because you're more of a devil than any devil 』

Chapter 589

Laura was watching Gu Qing Shan and the Shadow Fiend King's negotiation, so as she heard what the Progenitor said, she couldn't help but laugh.

“Gu Qing Shan, you don't have to be so stingy with the following ones, the things these guys want are all so cheap, it's fine even if we offer a bit more, I still have a lot” she silently sent her voice to tell him.

“I know, but being wealthy is one thing and doing business is another. You can't encourage evil creatures to be greedy and ask for more, that could instead ruin our plans” Gu Qing Shan silently sent his voice in reply.

Laura was a bit surprised and lowered her head to carefully think about Gu Qing Shan's words.

Gu Qing Shan then looked at Empress Li Yang again and told her: “Then let's continue”

『 Alright, the first three Fiend kings had been set, so the next one will be the Asura King 』 Empress Li Yang said.

“What kind of person is the Asura King?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

He recalled the Asura King he met once before.

In truth, Gu Qing Shan held quite a bit of respect for both that Asura King and the Great Ghost General.

To save Soft Note, they were willing to wait for 10,000 years.

Empress Li Yang answered: 『 The Asura King isn't greedy, but he thrives on war and battle, so if he's free, he'll accept our offer very easily, but if they're currently at war with another world then it'll be a bit difficult 』

Li Yang then changed her hand seal and continued summoning.

A few moments later, a green flame erupted from the void of space.

The flame expanded slowly to form a curtain of flame with a face on it.

A male voice came from the green flame and asked: 「 Empress Li Yang, what do you need from me? 」

Li Yang then told him everything regarding the plan.

The person on the other side of the green flame went silent briefly and spoke in a troubled voice: 「 Lately I've been preparing for a few conquests, today just happened to be when we would set out, so it's a bit difficult to spread our forces so thin... 」

Li Yang explained: 『 It'll be a bit too troublesome if I have to find an unfamiliar Asura King in an unfamiliar Asura world, can't you help us this once? 』

「 Heaven's Tribulation huh, the one facing the Tribulation is... ah? 」

The Asura King looked around before suddenly letting out a surprised cry.

He slightly moved and directed the green flame curtain to fly up and around Gu Qing Shan nonstop.

Gu Qing Shan held his sword in hand, keeping a calm expression without saying anything.

The green flame illuminated his body a bit before returning after not too long.

The Asura King caught the green flames again, apparently sensing something and turning silent for a few dozen seconds.

「 This man is the one facing the Tribulation? 」 he suddenly asked.

『 Yes 』 Li Yang replied.

「 Very well, I accept. At that time I will surely come 」 the Asura King replied.

This time it was Li Yang's turn to be surprised.

But since he had accepted, she decided to quickly have him confirm with a Contract before he changes his mind!

Empress Li Yang quickly gave him the Saint Bramble Leaf to make a vow to cooperate.

The Asura King readily made the vow.

Seeing that, Empress Li Yang couldn't help herself asking: 『 Didn't you say you were going to be busy? Why did you accept so quickly? 』

「 2 million souls isn't a small amount, furthermore, that man carries two things that are closely related to our Asura race, so I decided to help him once 」 the Asura King answered.

Hearing the Asura King, everyone looked at Gu Qing Shan in surprise.

He's somehow closely related to the Asura?

「 I'll leave for now, when the Tribulation begins, I will come via the Seat of Tribulation 」 the Asura King said.

“Please wait a second”

Seeing the Asura King about to leave, Gu Qing Shan hurriedly called out.

「 What is it? 」 the Asura King slowly asked.

“Pardon me asking, what are the two things I carry? And how come I don't know about them?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

「 Of course you don't know, they are soul vessel Secret Arts of our Asura race, only those of our tribe would understand when they see it 」 the Asura King answered him.

Gu Qing Shan was stunned.

Back in Huang Quan, I once met the Asura King of 10,000 years ago and received all of their battle experience and skills, yet I never knew about any soul vessel Secret Arts.

It's likely that the Asura King felt that they couldn't be used so he didn't give them to me.

Thinking that, Gu Qing Shan politely bowed and spoke seriously: “Can I trouble you to tell me about them in detail? I will be forever grateful”

「 Alright, I guess I can tell you about them 」 the Asura King muses a bit.

「 You carry the blessing of an Asura King, something only those that held the throne of Asura can bestow, which represents the fact that you've once helped an Asura King solve an extremely crucial problem 」

「 During your journey across the infinite worlds, the Asura of all Samsara worlds will be able to sense this Secret Art and consider you one of their own 」

Gu Qing Shan carefully recalled, apparently the Asura King had been waiting for 10,000 years before that decisive battle.

And I managed to stall the Heavenly God long enough for the Asura King and Great Ghost General to enact their vengeance.

That must be it.

Perhaps at some unknown point, the Asura King had given me this blessing as thanks.

Regretfully, I don't know whether the Asura King and Great Ghost General had dissipated, returned to the cycle of reincarnation or followed Soft Note back to Sky Haze empire.

What would a soul do after accomplishing their will of 10,000 years?

— —I don't know anything about that at all.

Gu Qing Shan sighed.

He then asked: “Just now you said that I carry two things that are closely related to the Asura race, then what was the second?”

The Asura calmly looked at him, suddenly chuckled and spoke: 「 That is a very personal matter, just know that it isn't a bad thing. Perhaps you will understand in the future, but I can't tell you now 」

He swung his hand, fanning the green flames to cover his entire figure.

Then the green flames slowly dissipated.

The Asura King had left the plaza and the lost world of the Old Gods.

After dispelling the summoning technique, he quickly returned to his world.

This was a world plunged in the flames of war.

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A large army had rallied.

All Asura had rolled up their sleeves and were preparing their weapons.

— they were about to enter a war with another world.

The Asura King sat down on his white elephant.

He fell into thought.

“King, what is the matter?” a female Asura by his side curiously asked.

“It’s nothing, relay my order, we won’t set out on the crusade for that world”

“Ah, but everyone had prepared—”

“I know, there will soon be a Heaven’s Tribulation. I will lead us all to enjoy a feast of slaughter, then we will continue our conquest”

“Yes!”

The female Asura quickly jumped down from the white elephant and relayed the Asura King’s orders.

The Asura King sat alone on top of the white elephant and stayed silent for a long time.

All of a sudden, he muttered.

“How rare for that to be”

“An Asura fights for their entire life, never shedding a single tear, yet she dedicated her tear to you...”

On another side.

Gu Qing Shan was still very confused.

He felt an abrupt sense of sorrow.

But he was in an emergency situation and there was still a lot to do.

“Alright!” he pressed his thoughts down for now and took a deep breath: “So next we’re going to summon the four Devils?”

Empress Li Yang replied: 『 Yes, but unlike the Fiend Kings, we Tianma don't really associate with the Devil Kings, so my incantation will randomly summon the Ghost Kings from several Ghost realm, and we'll need to negotiate with them at the same time 』

“Sounds like it'll be quite difficult” Gu Qing Shan replied.

『 Indeed, it will be troublesome since they will be here all at once 』 Empress Li Yang confirmed it.

At this point, even the Progenitor Fiendess herself came forward and assured them: 『 Don't worry, since I'm here, even if negotiation breaks down, they won't dare to act up on the spot 』

“Thank you! Can you tell me what kind of characteristics the four Devil Kings might have? I'll make sure to keep them in mind”

『 That's simple 』 the Progenitor Fiendess looked at Li Yang.

Li Yang explained: 『 The Hunger Devils aren't well-versed in soul-type magic, but they themselves have a resistance to magic, they enjoy eating living being's brain the most 』

『 Huang Quan Devils are what living beings turn into after death, you can't kill them, only send them back to slumber in Huang Quan, so definitely don't offend them or it'll be very troublesome 』

『 A Bloodthirsty Devil's fighting prowess is unimaginably powerful, whenever they suck enough blood, their strength will increase by a large margin 』

『 Malahoh Devils are a bit similar to us Tianma, but unlike us, this type of devil has to kill every day, otherwise they will die. But in exchange, they don't need a living being's soul or Soul Points, they can be satisfied by absorbing the miasma that appears when a living being dies 』

“Alright, I understand them better now, let's begin” Gu Qing Shan said.

『 There is one most important point that you have to remember 』

“What is it?”

『 The Fiend Kings all have their own thoughts and agenda, but the Devil Kings aren't the same as Fiend Kings. Devil Kings only respect the ability to kill and the strong who can kill the most in the bloodiest way 』

“Got it” Gu Qing Shan replied.

Empress Li Yang formed another foreign hand seal and began to chant.

This time, four unknown Devil Kings will appear at once!

Beside the Progenitor Fiendess, everyone else was anxious.

Ilya and the guards stood around Laura, cautiously watching their surroundings.

The Tianma sisters were gathered in one place discussing something.

Gu Qing Shan calmly waited.

This chant was longer than any of the other ones.

As Li Yang chanted, a faint dust mist began to rise from their feet slowly until it reached their waist.

The grey mist began to swirl.

At a certain point, Empress Li Yang suddenly shouted: 『 The Seats of Tribulation had gathered, show yourselves, o’ Devil Kings! 』

Boom!

Boom!

Boom!

With three loud noises, the Devil Kings appeared in the mist.

The first to appear was a grey-skinned monster about 10 meters tall.

Its limbs were thin and long, extremely flexible at a glance. Its body was as thin as dried wood, but its stomach was bloated with an eyeless face growing from it.

This was the Hunger Devil King.

The second to appear didn’t look like a Devil at all. Instead, it looked like some sort of demon beast, with a pair of thick hind legs, arms fashioned with razor-sharp claws, a pair of vertical iris and a mouth full of teeth.

This was the Bloodthirsty Devil King.

The third to appear was a human-headed bird monster with four pairs of wings, giving off a chilling cold essence with a ferocious face.

This was the Malahoh Devil King.

The Hunger Devil King, Bloodthirsty Devil King and Malahoh Devil King all arrived at the plaza at once!

Empress Li Yang looked around, but didn’t see any Huang Quan Devil King answering her summon at all.

『 Strange... Why did no Huang Quan Devil King come to take the Seat of Tribulation? That’s simply not possible... 』

She scowled and muttered in confusion.

Chapter 590

Within endless space.

A giant sailboat appeared.

“Four more World Layers on the left head”

“Direction confirmed”

“Approaching warzone”

“Sending out identity verification”

“Waiting!”

A few moments later, hurried footsteps could be heard from the deck of the ship.

The footsteps continued all the way until it reached the captain's room.

"Report, Chairman! The frontline has confirmed our identity and requested us to immediately engage in battle!"

An old man with a long white beard stood with his back to the one reporting and muttered: "So urgently? It seems the war situation is quite severe"

Next to him, a few other robed old men stood exchanging glances, sensing the worry in each other's eyes.

Someone asked in confusion: "Over a few hundred different organizations and empires had jointly participated in the allied army, why is the war situation still this fierce?"

"Not to mention, the strongest Lord-class Combatants have all joined in the battle already" another old man commented.

At this time, someone else ran into the captain's room and hurriedly spoke: "Report! Our allied army has surrounded Aboul, but Triste has obtained the sealed world, the situation has fallen into a stalemate"

Following that, a third intelligence officer came running in and reported: "Chairman, the [Demon King Order] has brought reinforcement in, several thousand True Demon Generals have entered the war zone"

"Several thousand True Demon Generals!" someone exclaimed in shock.

"Yes, the same force that finally took down the Fallen Zones during the last all-out war"

"That's very bad"

"It seems they really are holding nothing back!"

The group inside the captain's room were loudly discussing this.

Someone couldn't help but speak: "For over a thousand years, we've always been fighting them, but this was the first time we've seen them being this desperate"

The captain's room fell into silence.

Everyone fell into thought.

Out of nowhere, a white pigeon appeared in the room, flew around the room a bit before landing on the old man with the white beard's shoulder.

The old man took a piece of paper off of the pigeon's leg and solemnly looked at it.

"Take a look at this, this is from a spy I had placed in the Fallen Zones, he just sent me the newest intel"

The old man gave the paper to the one next to him.

[The Lord of True Demons had set out and would soon take command of the main demon army at the frontline] reading this message out loud, everyone's faces went pale.

Each of them checked the paper as their expressions became more and more severe.

Even this True Demon that was the closest to the realm of Demon King had also set out.

The scales of war were about to tilt horribly against them.

The old man with the white beard sighed: "It seems the demons are desperate to obtain whatever is sealed in Triste's world"

"I have a faint idea what it might be, so we definitely have to stop them"

His gaze became stern.

"Send out my orders"

"All members of the Spire Keeper Association will enter the frontline and participate in the war immediately!"

Hearing that, everyone couldn't help but straighten their backs and shout: "Yes!"

Within endless space, the giant sailboat adjusted its direction a bit and began heading in another direction.

Millions of similar but smaller sailboats were behind it, increasing their speed to follow the giant sailboat.

They were heading to the frontline warzone.

———

On another side.

Triste's collection world.

The lost world of the Old Gods.

Tidal city.

Empress Li Yang once again chanted the long incantation to try and summon the Huang Quan Devil King.

But the drifting mist still showed no change.

This time, even the other three Devil Kings were surprised.

『 Mother, what do you think about this? 』

Li Yang looked at the Progenitor Fiendess and asked in confusion.

Only to see that the Progenitor Fiendess was staring at Gu Qing Shan with a strange expression on her face.

She said: 『 Would the three Devil Kings please use your Seats of Tribulation to sense where the Huang Quan Devil King is? 』

The Hunger Devil King, Bloodthirsty Devil King and Malahoh Devil King all tried to use their Seats of Tribulation to sense where the Huang Quan Devil King was.

In just a few moments, they all looked at Gu Qing Shan.

『 Huang Quan... Devil King? 』 the Hunger Devil King spoke in disbelief.

『 This is the one who triggered the Tribulation, isn't he? Why did the Huang Quan Devil King Seat of Tribulation appear on him? 』 the Bloodthirsty Devil King asked suspiciously.

『 How interesting, a holder of the Seat of Tribulation is also the one facing the Tribulation, this is completely unheard of 』 the Malahoh Devil King spoke.

The Progenitor Fiendess muttered: 『 No, that can't be right, Huang Quan is the realm of the dead, but he's a living person, how could he be the Huang Quan Devil King? 』

At this point, everyone realized what was going on.

Gu Qing Shan was actually the Huang Quan Devil King!

Laura shouted: "Gu Qing Shan, what's going on here? Are you already dead?"

Li Yang also looked at him: 『 Aren't you going to explain? 』

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Gu Qing Shan tapped his Inventory Bag and took out a scepter.

A jet black shaft with a horned black skull at one end, the Devil King Warden Rod.

As it appeared, the Rod was already giving off a faint sound that almost couldn't be heard.

This was the calling of Heaven's Tribulation to the Huang Quan Devil King.

Because Gu Qing Shan himself was a living person as well as the one facing the Tribulation, it couldn't grant him the Seat of Tribulation, so it gave the Seat to the Devil King Warden Rod instead.

Gu Qing Shan gently stroked the Devil King Warden Rod, thinking about the battles he went through in hell and sighed: "That's correct, I am the Huang Quan Devil King"

『 How is that possible? Did you perhaps bypass the Law of life and death and revived yourself? 』 the Progenitor asked.

"No, I only used a certain technique to fake my death and enter Huang Quan as a soul— because at the time I had some business I needed to take care of in Huang Quan"

While he said that casually, everyone just fell silent at his words.

What an unimaginable story, you said you needed to take care of some business in Huang Quan— — but a living, breathing person is actually the ruler of hell, who's going to believe that? Yet the Seat of Tribulation really did appear on him.

Empress Li Yang took a deep breath, trying to calm herself down.

『 Very well, then let us talk in details about this time's Tribulation 』

She repeated what she told the Fiend Kings.

『 Devil Kings, do you have any objections to our plans during this Tribulation? 』 she asked.

The Devil Kings said nothing for now.

They were still staring at Gu Qing Shan.

“It’s very rare for a Tribulation to be able to give this much benefits, so I thought no one would reject this offer—— or perhaps you have something else you want to do?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

The Malahoh Devil King spoke first: 『 It’s not really that I have other things to do, I’m just curious 』

“Curious?”

『 That’s right, you’re still a living person, even if you have the ability to infiltrate Huang Quan, how did you gain the support of over billions of dead people? How did you actually gain the title of Huang Quan Devil King? 』

“That’s probably because I killed quite a few of the ones that tried to disobey me” Gu Qing Shan explained.

『 Hah? 』

Hearing that, the three Devil Kings were intrigued.

That’s quite the tale he’s telling, just what kind of massacre must’ve happened for a living person to become the ruler of hell?

The three Devil Kings were very interested in this, so they exchanged glances and quickly decided something among themselves.

The Bloodthirsty Devil King spat out a shining pearl from its mouth and spoke: 『 When it comes to killing, I want to see what kind of thing you actually did 』

It shined the pearl on the Devil King Warden Rod.

The glow of the pearl quickly got brighter to squarely envelop the scepter.

“What is that?” Gu Qing Shan scowled.

『 Don’t worry, it’s just a clairvoyance technique to see what kind of experience a weapon had gone through 』 the Bloodthirsty Devil King replied.

A blood-coloured screen was quickly projected from the pearl and formed a clear image.

In the image, Gu Qing Shan held the Devil King Warden Rod in his hand, standing in hell and sighed: “The bunch of you, do you really think I’d be opening some sort of charity work after I became the Devil King?”

Following his voice, countless screams of pain and agony echoed through hell.

Over a quadrillion dead people were erased at once.

The image changed.

Countless demons came from the sky, about to destroy the human realm.

Gu Qing Shan stood on top of the mountain and raised his scepter.

An invisible power poured out from the scepter to envelop the entire world.

His voice came after: "You all won't die, go and devour them!"

Countless voices followed his order.

"For the Devil King!"

"Yes! Great Devil King!"

"Long live the Devil King!"

"Go!!!"

"Devour them!"

With waves of thunderous roars, almost a quintillion dead people crawled on the bodies of gigantic demons, devouring them in a frenzy.

The demons were quickly eaten until only their bones were left.

The image dissipated.

Everyone was still stunned.

He coldly erased over a quadrillion dead people.

He commanded the dead people of hell to devour countless demons and even Demon Lords.

There were only two scenes shown, but they both shook everyone without end.

"So handsome... That's how a king should be" Laura's eyes were glowing in awe as she commented in a low voice.

The others said nothing.

Seeing how silent everyone was, Gu Qing Shan glanced to Empress Li Yang to signal her to speak.

But Li Yang was still stunned.

Gu Qing Shan could only clear his throat and spoke: "Alright, that was all in the past, what we need to discuss is in the present"

"Do the three Devil Kings have any objections to my offer during this Tribulation?" he asked.

A moment of silence.

All three Devil Kings replied: 『 We have no objections! 』

Chapter 591

Empress Li Yang had prepared a lot of methods to deal with the Devil Kings.

Gu Qing Shan himself was also wondering what kind of rewards he should offer to convince the Devil Kings.

But in the end, all it took was seeing a part of the battle in Huang Quan for the Devil Kings to agree to his plans.

『 Then we'll form a Contract now? 』 Empress Li Yang asked.

『 No problem give the Contract here! 』 the Malahoh Devil King spoke first.

Receiving the Saint Bramble Leaves, all tree Devil Kings happily made their vows on it

The entire process was quick and simple.

Seeing his plans coming through, Gu Qing Shan clasped his fist to the three Devil Kings: "Thank you all, then we shall meet shortly"

『 Ahaha, it's nothing, nothing to speak about 』 the Hunger Devil King spoke.

『 As fellow Devil Kings, of course we all have to look out for each other 』 the Bloodthirsty Devil King spoke.

『 In life, everyone needs a friend or two to help each other out, aren't I right, Huang Quan Devil King? 』 the Malahoh Devil King spoke.

"Of course, and I'm more than happy to make a few more friends" Gu Qing Shan smiled and replied.

Seeing his attitude, the Malahoh Devil King took out a jade spoon and threw it to Gu Qing Shan.

『 This is my token, whenever you need to, you can use that to summon me 』 the Malahoh Devil King explained.

The Hunger Devil King and Bloodthirsty Devil King also each gave Gu Qing Shan their own tokens.

The Hunger Devil King's token was a ball of rice, while the Bloodthirsty Devil King's token was a gourd of blood liquor, together with the Malahoh Devil King's token, Gu Qing Shan was in disbelief at how strange these tokens were.

Then the three Devil Kings stood there looking at him, waiting to receive his own token.

At this point Gu Qing Shan felt a bit of a headache.

Even if he gave them a Communication talisman, those can only be used in the same world.

He doesn't have anything that could bypass the world limit to transfer information.

Then he remembered something and smiled: "I don't have a token that I can give everyone, but you're all welcome to visit the Justice Iron Fist Club to find me at any time"

The Malahoh Devil King couldn't help but ask: 『 If I remember correctly, that place should be a Super Dimensional world, yes? 』

"Ah, it is" Gu Qing Shan confirmed.

The three Devil Kings exchanged glances, feeling incredibly shocked.

This Huang Quan Devil King is able to settle down on a Super Dimensional world—— which means he at least has friendly relations with a Lord-class Combatant.

It's widely known that all discovered Super Dimensional worlds are already owned by Lord-class Combatants.

Within the 900 million World Layers, Lord-class Combatants are akin to gods!

The three Devil Kings silently sighed and erased the faint thoughts of personal benefits from their minds.

Of course, they didn't know that Gu Qing Shan only arrived at the Iron Fist Club when Barry and Kitty were both nearly at the end of their ropes, bringing hope for Barry's recovery, as well as having Xiao Die as a 3rd party to introduce them that he managed to obtain membership.

Naturally, regardless of how strange and roundabout the process actually was, being able to form relations with a Lord-class Combatant was already impressive enough.

The mist scattered.

The three Devil Kings returned to their Devil realm and patiently waited for the Tribulation to begin.

The deal had been sealed.

Gu Qing Shan nodded to everyone and went back to his cushion and slowly sat down.

"I'll need to prepare myself for a bit before I begin facing my Tribulation" he said.

The Tianma sisters all hurriedly backed away.

They were all knowledgeable enough to know how deadly a Lightning Tribulation was, not to mention in this special world.

『 Wait! 』 the Progenitor Fiendess shouted.

Gu Qing Shan looked at her.

『 Lightning naturally counters the ghost army, that is indeed a wonderful coincidence for you 』
The Progenitor Fiendess' expression was solemn and continued: 『 But in this world, the Old God's divinity has greatly increased the power of Lightning, which in turn also increases the power of the Lightning Tribulation. I fear that before the ghost army dies, you will have already been struck to death, are you sure about this? 』

Gu Qing Shan smiled and replied: "I can feel it as well, this is probably the toughest Lightning Tribulation I've ever faced in my life, but now that the arrow has been nocked, I'll have to release it no matter what"

Hearing that, Laura had an extremely troubled expression.

She silently pulled on Ilya's sleeve.

"Your majesty, what is it?" Ilya asked.

"Will he be in danger?" Laura asked.

Ilya explained: "Because of the Old God's divinity, what was originally a tough ordeal will become even tougher for him"

"But then, if that was the case then why does he still insist on doing it? Wouldn't he at least have some level of confidence?" Laura asked.

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Ilya smiled bitterly and answered her: "There is no guarantee of failure or success in a Heaven's Tribulation, not to mention one that's several times stronger than it should be— just look at the Tianma"

Laura turned to them.

The Tianma all had nervous expressions on their faces as they retreated.

— they were taking more and more distance from Gu Qing Shan.

"We should also back off as well, otherwise if we stay in the range of the Tribulation it would only cause him more trouble" Ilya told her.

She and the guards then protected Laura as they backed away from him.

Laura was even more anxious and asked in a low voice: "Do we not have a way to help him?"

Ilya shook her head: "Before breaking through, a cultivator would always prepare pills, formations, weapons, armors, talismans and other necessities to help themselves. This is part of what's allowed by the rules of the Tribulation"

"I trust that he had prepared everything he could prepare within the range that's allowed, the only thing to do now is to watch over and see if he will be able to endure this Lightning Tribulation"

Ilya noticed Laura's worry and sternly reminded her: "Laura, remember this well, this is the path he chose for himself. No one can walk on it but him, otherwise the power of Tribulation will only increase"

Laura was stunned for a bit before muttering: "But then... his armor..."

Hearing that, Ilya also remembered.

"Ah" she looked at Laura curiously, "I did try to give him a set of Bramble Bird General armor, but he couldn't wear it. According to him, you've already given him an armor"

"Laura, what you gave him should be a hidden armor correct? What kind of armor was it exactly?"

"I..." Laura's face slowly went pale.

In the middle of the plaza, only the Progenitor Fiendess and Empress Li Yang were still standing by Gu Qing Shan's side.

"I'm about to begin, you should take some distance as well"

Gu Qing Shan spoke as he sat down on his cushion and closed his eyes.

『 No need to hurry, I shall help you determine how strong the power of the Lightning Tribulation is first 』 the Progenitor Fiendess spoke.

“Then I’ll trouble you” Gu Qing Shan said.

His inner sight passed through his entire body, controlling the residue spirit energy to concentrate at his Dantian to prepare for the breakthrough.

Under his mindful accumulation, the spirit energy inside his Dantian slowly rose and reached a certain limit.

The time for his breakthrough was approaching!

The Laws of heaven and earth immediately noticed the changes inside his body.

A storm began to pick up, the Tribulation clouds above started to swirl.

All of a sudden, two streaks of purple lightning came out from the Tribulation clouds and slowly went into the lightning dragon’s head.

The lightning dragon’s eyes were drawn in! (1)

Roar!!

The hovering lightning dragon in the sky opened its eyes wide and stared down at Gu Qing Shan.

The Progenitor Fiendess’ expression greatly changed and shouted: 『 The lightning dragon became sentient— this is a characteristic of a Virtualized realm Lightning Tribulation! Gu Qing Shan, you won’t make it, disperse the spirit energy in your Dantian immediately! 』

Gu Qing Shan shook his head: “Everything we’ve done so far rests on this moment! It’s already the final gamble, I won’t back down!”

Seeing him like that, the Progenitor Fiendess understood his determination. After careful thinking, she gestured to Li Yang with her eyes.

『 Someone like this is very useful for us, letting him die here is too much of a waste, try and convince him to stop 』 she silently sent her voice.

Hearing that, Li Yang also sent her voice: 『 Mother, can he really not make it through this Tribulation? 』

『 The chance is too slim, he’s still only Sainted realm, but this Tribulation was supposed to be for those three realms above his own, it’s next to impossible for any cultivator to survive 』 the Progenitor Fiendess replied.

Li Yang felt her heart tighten, quickly thought about it and came up with an idea.

『 Gu Qing Shan, do you remember your Shifu? 』 she asked.

Gu Qing Shan then stopped his breakthrough and opened his eyes to look at her.

—right, at the time Shifu was fighting with the Virtualized realm Qi Yan while she and I were preparing the Tianma magic in the sky.

She had indeed met Bai Hua Fairy before and knew that she was my Shifu.

Gu Qing Shan asked: “What about my Shifu?”

『 Nothing, but I’m the ruler of the Tianma realm interconnected with Shen Wu world, if you are willing to return to Shen Wu world before breaking through, not only will the power of the Tribulation greatly decrease, you can also ask for advice from your Shifu— after all, she was the first cultivator in your world to break through Sainted realm 』 Empress Li Yang told him.

Gu Qing Shan thought about it briefly: “You mean, Shen Wu world also has its own Samsara cycle?”

『 It does 』 Empress Li Yang nodded.

Gu Qing Shan said: “If that’s the case, then please deliver a message to my Shifu”

Empress Li Yang was stunned for a bit before she realized: 『 You mean you still want to break through right here? 』

“This Heaven’s Tribulation is something I must go through, the only option for me is to go forward and face it”

Gu Qing Shan continued: “If I can’t make it through this Tribulation, please tell her something for me. This life, I am forever grateful for being able to join Bai Hua sect and become her disciple, being taken care of and taught by her. It’s unfortunate that I couldn’t repay her for what she’s done for me, but if I still have a chance in my next life, I will definitely go to hell and back for her to pay back this debt”

Note:

(1) The dragon’s eyes were drawn in: In ancient Chinese, it’s said that at the pinnacle of art, an artist can create life through their drawings, and the only way to prevent that is to not put the finishing touches on their art, which is usually the eyes. Thus the eyes signify sentience/life in a lot of Chinese literature, where they say that no matter how beautiful everything else in the drawing is, if the eyes are bad/not drawn in, that drawing doesn’t have life.

Chapter 592

Empress Li Yang looked at Gu Qing Shan in shock.

She wanted to say something else, but as she felt his determination, she had no words that could persuade him.

The Progenitor Fiendess sighed and pulled her away.

『 It’s fine, even us Tianma can’t help someone who has no regard for their own life or death 』 she said.

Li Yang’s gaze was still glued on Gu Qing Shan as she was pulled off the plaza.

At this point, there was no one else inside the range of the Tribulation.

Gu Qing Shan began his breakthrough.

Circulating spirit energy in his Dantian, he forced them all though a certain bottleneck.

This caused spirit energy all around his body to rush and strike towards the bottleneck as well.

The Laws of Heaven and Earth recognized the signs of his breakthrough.

Within the Tribulation clouds, arcs of lightning exploded one after another, creating bright flashes.

The giant lightning dragon fully escaped its restraints of clouds and water as its electric purple eyes locked onto Gu Qing Shan.

Roar!!!

The giant lightning dragon opened its jaws wide and charged downwards.

Sensing that, Gu Qing Shan opened his eyes and leapt from his cushion.

Taking the Earth sword from the void of space, his body turned into a light blue sword phantom and rushed at the lightning dragon.

Secret Art, [Crescent Slash]!

The sword phantom and dragon clashed in the sky——

Boom!

The sword phantom was struck away by the lightning dragon, but the dragon itself also lost control and crashed into a structure just outside the plaza.

As soon as the lightning dragon crashed into it, the structure was decimated without a single sound and disappeared.

The dragon turned its head and once again took flight.

In the sky, the light blue sword phantom dissipated to show Gu Qing Shan's body.

Various places on his body were already charred black.

A sword phantom can cut through anything, but it couldn't handle a simple impact with the lightning dragon.

Gu Qing Shan tapped his Inventory Bag, took out a pill and swallowed.

He was clearly surprised as he muttered: "So it can become this terrifying huh?"

A female voice came from the void of space: "Gongzi, use me"

"Ah? You have a solution?"

"I can disperse some of the lightning, but the destructive range of lightning as it explodes is a bit too wide, you need to be careful"

"Very well"

Gu Qing Shan nodded, put the Earth sword back into the void of space and drew the Six Paths Great Mountain sword.

Below, the lightning dragon once again charged at him.

Gu Qing Shan pointed his sword downwards.

Secret Art, [Water Flow Severance] x8!

Streak after streak of sword phantoms exploded as they came out from the tip of the Six Paths Great Mountain sword, flew through the sky and struck at the dragon's head.

The lightning dragon endured the impact and kept flying upwards.

Finally, when it was around 200 meters away from Gu Qing Shan, the lightning dragon roared before dispersing into smaller arcs of lightning and returned into the Tribulation clouds.

Gu Qing Shan finally let out a sigh of relief.

A total of 40 sword phantoms with the [Law Breaker] property was needed to destroy the lightning dragon.

He quickly took out another pill and swallowed.

The sky remained silent.

It was as if the Tribulation clouds returned to silence without reacting to him.

“Wah~! Hooray, I knew Gu Qing Shan could do it!” Laura sighed in relief and loudly laughed.

“That's not it, Laura, the situation isn't optimistic at all” Ilya spoke with a heavy expression.

“Ah? No way, he already destroyed that lightning dragon didn't he?” Laura asked.

“That lightning dragon was only a half-sentient creature formed from the first reaction of Heaven and Earth. At most it only served to signify the opening of the Tribulation” Ilya explained.

Empress Li Yang stood on one side and nodded: 『 That is indeed the case, not a single bolt of true Tribulation Lightning had fallen down yet 』

“Is Tribulation Lightning stronger than that lightning dragon?” Laura asked.

『 Several times stronger, at least! And as time passed, the power of Tribulation Lightning would only increase 』 Empress Li Yang answered her.

The Progenitor Fiendess also added: 『 The lightning dragon is only the trigger for the Tribulation, the real thing only truly begins now 』

She sighed and shook her head: 『 The results of this ordeal have been decided, he won't make it 』

『 Why are you so sure, Mother? 』 Li Yang hurriedly asked.

『 He is already injured facing the lightning dragon, never mind the several kinds of increasingly powerful lightning strikes afterwards. There is still the Soul Annihilation Lightning where any living being struck by it will be instantly reduced to ash, not even leaving their soul to enter reincarnation 』

The Progenitor Fiendess continued: 『 After the Soul Annihilation Lightning, he will have to face Manifestation Lightning, whose power will also be increased greatly in this world 』

『 I can't even begin to imagine what kind of form the Manifestation Lightning will take 』

Hearing that, Empress Li Yang no longer held any hope for a fluke.

She gritted her teeth and flung something to the sky.

It was a small black box, every Tianma noticed it as soon as it was thrown out.

『 What are you doing!? Do you want to be killed by the Tribulation Lightning as well? 』

The Progenitor Fiendess sternly questioned her.

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『 No, this is only a set of armor, Heaven's Tribulation won't notice me 』 Empress Li Yang explained.

『 Only an armor? 』 the Progenitor sighed, then spoke: 『 In that case, Heaven's Tribulation will indeed allow it—— but that is also very strange, as a sword cultivator that fights at the frontline, why does this brat not have even a piece of armor? 』

『 Yes, if he had been wearing armor, he wouldn't have gotten hurt just now, so I gave him a Tianma armor for now, to temporarily help him resist the lightning 』 Empress Li Yang said.

While they were talking, a 'thud' could be heard from behind them.

Laura's legs had given out so she fell down on the spot.

Seeing her desperate fearful expression, Ilya realized that something was wrong.

"Your majesty, what's the matter?" she hurriedly asked.

"The armor..." Laura muttered.

Ilya understood.

She solemnly spoke: "Your majesty, this Heaven's Tribulation isn't a joke, if your armor is only a prank, please take the hidden armor off him and let him wear the Tianma Empress' armor to resist the Tribulation Lightning"

"...No, I can't take it back" Laura lowered her head and said.

Can't take it back?

Ilya was stunned.

Everything that belonged to the Bramble Bird royal family was marked with a unique insignia from the Saint Tree, any time that they wanted to take something back, they could simply ask the Saint Bramble Tree to do so.

This was a secret only known to the royal family and the two generals.

But Laura said she couldn't back it back.

Without being able to think further than that, a surprised voice sounded in Ilya's ears: 『 How is that possible! 』

Ilya hurriedly looked back.

The Tianma armor had scattered into parts and circled around Gu Qing Shan's body, but couldn't equip themselves onto him.

This was exactly the same as when Ilya gave him the Bramble Bird General armor.

The Tianma Armor flew back and turned into a black box again as it landed next to Empress Li Yang's feet.

Seeing that, Ilya was even more confused.

She muttered: "Could it be the armor is sentient? And it had already accepted him as the master? No, if that was the case, the armor should've already activated"

"No other armor could equip themselves on him... just what..."

A thought came to her.

Ilya just recalled a frightening possibility.

It couldn't be---

Both her hands were gripped by someone else.

It was her Highness Laura--- no, her majesty.

"Big sis Ilya, do you remember, there used to be a Bramble Bird King who awoke the same [Infinite Worlds' Shelter] ability as I did? Then he went to the Endless Abyss of broken worlds and brought back a certain armor?"

"I remember" Ilya's heart beats faster and faster.

Could it really be---

No, that's impossible!

As she thought that, Laura lightly nodded.

"Yes, what I gave him was that armor"

Laura softly said, as if she was a young child admitting their mistake, but her tone was firm unlike never before.

"Your majesty... this is..."

Ilya was completely frozen from fear.

Laura shook her head: "Don't say it, I already know this is my fault"

"So you realized that you shouldn't have lent that armor away?"

"No, I shouldn't have given that armor to Gu Qing Shan before I was able to awaken it!"

"But now, it's no longer time for me to hide behind him"

"This is the time that I must win against my fear!"

Saying so, Laura slowly stood up.

Her every word contains overflowing determination.

“Ilya”

“I’m here”

“Gather everyone for the ceremony”

“Understood”

But without needing Ilya’s order, the Bramble Bird guards had already surrounded Laura, kneeling on one knee around her in a circle.

They said nothing and silently waited for that moment to come.

——the moment that Laura had kept avoiding all this time.

Laura pulled out a dagger, cut the tip of her finger and touched it to her forehead.

“O’ great Mother Tree, I’m ready to be an adult” Laura whispered.

With those words, a glorious light came from her forehead and shot all the way to the sky.

This was a blinding golden light that contained power surpassing that of this world, even the Heaven’s Tribulation was nothing compared to it.

The light seemed to have broken something.

An endless overwhelming power poured down with the light.

The Bramble Bird guards all showed fanatical expression as they trembled and spoke in unison: “””” Long live the Empress!””””

Ilya looked at Laura and joyfully spoke: “Your majesty, do your best, the great Mother Tree has sensed your plea, it has descended on this realm!”

Laura lightly nodded.

She turned to the faraway glorious golden light: “O’ great Mother Tree, I vow to you, I will never be too scared to participate in this coming of age ceremony ever again”

“Because, only an adult Bramble Bird can truly inherit the throne”

“Only the Bramble Bird sovereign... can awaken the Sovereign Armor”

Chapter 593

Gu Qing Shan stood still with his sword in hand.

The Tribulation clouds were turning thick, plunging the world into stifled darkness.

A few sprites of light began to appear from among the clouds.

They hovered in the air, accumulated into shining white and blue balls of light that appeared slow but descended quickly towards the ground.

Two flying swords turned into streaks of light as they flew upwards, slashing from afar.

Gu Qing Shan was using his full power, so the sword phantoms they released were extremely concentrated, flying out at top speed!

From afar, it looked as if streaks of white light were flying from the swords with each swing, slashing one ball of light after another.

The balls of lightning exploded into glittering electricity that filled the air.

Whenever these arcs of electricity met, they would form a bigger slithering electric snake that made a blue-white cut in the darkness.

The light and the glittering streaks of electricity filled the dark sky.

It was a magnificent sight.

But Gu Qing Shan's expression only became more solemn.

He took a deep breath and changed his sword stance.

Once a Tribulation begins, the power of Tribulation Lightning would slowly increase over time.

— the arduous journey was still ahead.

Five breaths later.

Countless shining stars dotted the sky.

The huge amount of Tribulation Lightning shined like stars in the sky, radiating light in large areas.

There was nothing but Tribulation Lightning in the sky!

Gu Qing Shan stared closely at the Tribulation Lightning and silently nodded.

“Right at this moment”

Taking the Chao Yin sword in hand, he prepared to infuse it with Soul Points to go straight to the ice layer above, bringing the power of Tribulation Lightning with him!

There were 100,000 ghosts and 2 million demonized there!

Right as Gu Qing Shan was about to move, a voice called out.

“Gu Qing Shan, wait!”

Gu Qing Shan stopped and turned around to see a shocking sight.

A gigantic tree that connected heaven and earth was standing behind him.

It was the Saint Bramble Tree.

This wasn't a projection that arrived through the leaf, but the real great tree itself!

It had directly bypassed the limit of space-time to directly arrive at this world!

Laura stood below the shade of the tree, waving to him.

“What are you doing?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

“I’m sorry that I gave you an armor that couldn’t be used. Please wait a minute, I need to make that armor work now” Laura loudly yelled out.

Gu Qing Shan was a bit surprised.

Armor?

“Her highness had determined herself to go through the coming of age ceremony, please wait for a few moments” Ilya silently sent her voice.

“Is the coming of age ceremony dangerous?” Gu Qing Shan instantly sent his voice back to ask her.

“It isn’t, she will only run into a few minor obstacles— before, her fear of heights had prevented her from trying, this was the first time she had decided by herself to proceed through with the ceremony”

“Alright”

Gu Qing Shan turned and smiled at Laura and spoke: “Then you’ll have to hurry up, because—”

Boom!

While he was talking, a bolt of Tribulation Lightning came down, Gu Qing Shan only barely managed to block it with his sword.

He was struck deep into the ground.

Seeing that, Laura hurriedly spoke: “Gu Qing Shan, don’t die ok!? I will finish this very quickly!”

She came in front of the Saint Bramble Tree and grabbed a bunch of thorns.

Fresh blood poured from her hand.

Ouch!

Laura scowled.

These were the thorns of the Saint Bramble Tree.

On the tree, apart from where the leaves grew, there were thorns all over.

This was a mystical tree that was born and grew up during the Age of Old, having withstood the test of time and nurtured by it, every living being that thought to harm it had already turned to dust.

Within the 900 million World Layers, this old Bramble tree was nigh-unbeatable.

Fortunately, while it had untold power, the tree itself had a grasp of the Laws and Truths of Growth and Destruction, thanks to that, it didn’t use its power to destroy or abuse its power too much by interfering with the natural order of the worlds.

If the Saint Bramble Tree were to have any weakness, that would be the very same Law of Growth that it grasped— for a type of termite worm would periodically grow on it.

This termite worm was the natural enemy of the Saint Bramble Tree.

Even a newborn termite worm would be able to counter the majority of the Bramble Tree's powers, rendering it unable to do anything in retaliation.

However, any Bramble Bird could easily deal with these termites.

And so, at this time, when the Saint Bramble Tree heard Laura's call, it immediately came to her without hesitation.

It could sense that the Bramble Bird royal bloodline had sustained heavy losses.

And that this little one right here was the last of the Bramble Bird royal bloodline.

Laura bit her lip, endured the pain and grabbed onto another bunch of thorns.

Then her legs.

She began to climb up the Bramble Tree following its thorns.

With the entire tree being about 10,000m meters tall, the top of the tree easily reached the peak of the sky.

Laura would have to climb up the entire length of the tree bare-handed to be considered accomplishing the coming of age ceremony.

Her hands and feet nimbly moved, quickly climbing upwards.

At the same time, the sharp thorns pierced through her hands and feet, leaving her blood on the tree.

In just a few seconds, she had already made it up several hundred meters.

Ever since she was small, she had already undertaken the training necessary to climb, it was only because of her fear that she still hadn't truly attempted it.

"This pain is nothing to me"

She continued to climb.

"I already lost my family, I already lost too many things, how could I let mere heights hold me back?"

She glanced downwards unconsciously, her mind suddenly went blank, the familiar fear instilled in her body suddenly came back again.

At this time, Gu Qing Shan abruptly flew up to where she was, smiling: "Do your best, the slower you climb the more it hurts, it's best if you climb all the way up at once"

He went past her up the sky to once again face the Tribulation Lightning.

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The very next second.

A blinding bolt of lightning struck him straight on, once again knocking him straight into the ground.

Thunk!

The sound of a heavy impact.

“Gu Qing Shan!” Laura screamed.

She looked down at the newly-formed hole in the ground anxiously

“Don’t you dare die right now! You managed to save even my life, I know you’ll be able to hold on until I reach the top!” shouting that, she reached her hand up to grab a new bunch of thorns.

—she had forgotten her fear.

Climb.

Climb.

Climb faster!

On the side of the tree riddled with thorns, she climbed faster and faster.

While hiding in the hole, Gu Qing Shan was using his inner sight to watch Laura.

Ah—

That hurts a bit.

He rubbed a charred spot on his shoulder and silently sighed.

Truthfully he could’ve avoided that one.

But Laura’s expression seemed to have stiffened, just like whenever I carried her to fly.

So I took a minor hit.

A little girl sure is easy to fool, she immediately forgot her fear and hurriedly resumed her climb.

Hm, what a brave little girl indeed.

If I had such a strong-willed daughter, I would probably be really happy for her as well...

While he was daydreaming, more bolts of Tribulation Lightning came from above.

The Tribulation is ruthless.

Gu Qing Shan sighed, waited for a bit before moving again to receive the lightning.

This time, he was much more careful.

All three of his swords manifested, manipulating them so that they would always destroy a bolt of Tribulation Lightning right before it reached him.

More bolts of Lightning rained from above, chasing after him and trying to strike him no matter the cost.

Gu Qing Shan was fully focused, controlling his three swords to unleash a dance of black sword images in the sky, defending against the rain of lightning from above.

After a while, the shower of lightning finally stopped.

Gu Qing Shan reappeared, breathing heavily.

During that tough battle, he was risking his life every moment, giving his all every second that he could.

“How is it? Have enough yet? How about resting a bit before we continue?”

He muttered towards the Tribulation clouds, took out the best spirit energy replenishment pill he had, chewed and swallowed.

—-all of a sudden, Gu Qing Shan felt something.

He slowly looked up.

The Tribulation clouds were glowing.

The black Tribulation clouds slowly turned crimson.

A ball of glowing crimson lightning came out from the cloud.

This was a ball of lightning about as large as a large soccer stadium.

From its crimson color, anyone could tell what it was.

—-Soul Annihilation Lightning.

Among countless types of lightning, this could be considered the strongest one.

Any living being struck by this will immediately be eliminated down to their very soul, not even leaving a chance for reincarnation.

The Soul Annihilation Lightning came down.

Looking at the huge bolt of Soul Annihilation Lightning coming from above, Gu Qing Shan couldn't help but mutter: “It seems I've teased it a bit too much...”

Laura kept climbing.

Very soon, she would reach the top of the tree!

A distance of 10,000 meters wasn't much for any Professionalist.

To a Bramble Bird, that distance was even less of a problem!

She also saw that bolt of lightning.

Even though she didn't know that it was, she could still sense the dangerous air it gave off.

Laura started climbing even faster.

The crimson lightning was coming for Gu Qing Shan.

Laura leapt upwards, landing on the top of the tree.

Standing stably at the very top, she loudly declared: “O' Great Mother Tree, I desire your recognition!”

The entire tree began to glow in a bright blue light.

These light faintly glowed, gathered all at the top of the tree and infused themselves into Laura's body.

The dark green pair of small wings behind her back suddenly sprouted, turning into a pair of long wings as tall as she was.

The dark green color peeled itself off as her wings glowed in a refreshing bright green light.

Three glowing leaves silently manifested on the tree.

After the three leaves showed themselves, they quickly disappeared into her wings.

Laura stared at this in shock.

I didn't know the Mother Tree would grant me such profound grace after my coming of age ceremony.

Under normal circumstances, when a Bramble Bird accomplishes the coming of age ceremony, they would receive one kind of blessing from the Saint Tree.

Even a royal family member would be the same.

Only the King would receive a second kind of blessing.

However, even more than the King, in their entire history, only royal Bramble Birds most beloved by the Mother Tree would receive three kinds of blessing!

The three leaves that manifested for Laura represent three different blessings.

And she could already feel the presence of [Infinite Worlds' Shelter] from one of the leaves.

Now, she had finally fully awoken this ability.

At the same time, a crown made of Bramble wood came from the Saint Tree and gently landed on Laura's head.

"Long live her majesty!"

"Long live our Empress!"

The Bramble Bird guards already began to chant.

"What a... genius" Ilya was joyful beyond all words.

Laura recalled what she wanted to do.

Her gaze fell below.

The bolt of lightning had already passed over a distance of 10,000 meters and was about to clash with Gu Qing Shan's sword.

Laura hurriedly ordered: "In the name of the Sovereign, I order you— awaken!"

Chapter 594

The crimson lightning fell from above striking at Gu Qing Shan.

With his sword in hand, Gu Qing Shan stood still without moving.

As the Soul Annihilation Lightning was just about to reach him, literally inches away from the tip of his sword, he breathed a deep sigh.

Laura had done what she needed to do.

Gu Qing Shan looked towards the giant Soul Annihilation Lightning———

There's no need to hold back anymore.

At the very next second—

——almost as if someone had warped reality itself, Gu Qing Shan and the Soul Annihilation Lightning both disappeared and switched places with each other.

Divine Skill, [Shadow Shift]

The lightning struck the ground.

Boom!!!

The dirt and sand below exploded from the impact, forming a bottomless hole in the middle of the plaza.

“Tch! That strong huh, what a waste”

Gu Qing Shan turned to look and regretfully said.

Leaping upwards, he soared upwards like a swallow, swiftly making his way to the top of the sky.

He was nimbly avoiding and dodging bolt after bolt of Tribulation Lightning on the way.

——since Laura's coming of age ceremony was over, he didn't want to touch even a single bit of lightning anymore.

The wind howled by his ears.

The Tribulation clouds were roaring in anger, accumulating power for its next attack.

The bolts of Tribulation Lightning that he dodged slowly stopped striking downwards and turned around to chase after him.

Gu Qing Shan drew the Chao Yin sword, flew past the Tribulation clouds and headed to the dark sky above.

It's time to eliminate the [Demon King Order]!

But right at this moment, time stopped.

Everything grinded to a halt.

Gu Qing Shan noticed that even though he couldn't move, he still had his ability to think.

A foreign thought connected to his own, speaking in a voice full of vicissitudes.

「 Young one, I've been watching you for a very long time, the same way I've watched Laura by your side. Now that I've been summoned, I've appeared before you 」 the foreign thought spoke.

“Who are you?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

The voice sighed and spoke: 「 Me? I'm right on your body, originally I was recuperating, but it seems I now have work to do 」

Gu Qing Shan realized and asked: “You mean you are the armor that Laura gave me? You were damaged?”

「 Correct, just so that we're on the same page—— back in Aboul, Triste had used four poisonous thorns given to her by the Lord of True Demons to assassinate the Bramble Bird royal family 」

“Four poisonous thorns?”

「 Yes, at the time, the Bramble Bird King, Queen, Laura and her younger brother, their family of four were taking a family picture when Triste who was right behind them suddenly ambushed them 」

“How did Laura survive?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

「 At the very last moment, his majesty had put me on Laura to protect her 」

「 Because Laura had the [Infinite Worlds' Shelter] ability, as long as she wasn't killed by the thorns on the spot, she would be able to activate her ability and escape from Triste's pursuit 」

“...Laura had a great and wise father”

「 I really have to say, the thorns from the Lord of True Demons really were impressive, even [Time Stop] couldn't stop it, even when I had used everything to defend I was still damaged 」

“What about Laura?”

「 Fortunately, she was unharmed 」

The armor's thought became stern and asked him: 「 Right now, I solemnly ask you one thing 」

“Please go ahead”

「 Fate always provides a choice, a choice made will bring about to unimaginable change, to both me and you—— so I must know, will you keep wearing me after this battle and continue forward, or will you return me to Laura after this battle is over 」

“I will return you to her” Gu Qing Shan instantly replied.

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The armor's thought asked him: 「 You can consider the option to take me away, after all, there are few armors in this world as great as I am 」

It continued: 「 I also don't enjoy staying on the Saint Bramble Tree very much, rather than becoming a symbol of status for the King of a race, I prefer to be worn and display my strength on a true battlefield 」

“No, this has nothing to do with your choice”

Gu Qing Shan shook his head: “You already belong to Laura, she lent you to me, so I will return you to her afterwards, that is all”

「 However—— 」 the armor wanted to say something else.

Gu Qing Shan cut it off: “A father at the last moments of his life had hoped that you would be able to protect his daughter, I can feel the weight of that final act of love a father did for his daughter”

“If you were able to endure the thorn of the Lord of True Demons, then I hope you will be able to keep staying by Laura’s side and protect her”

“This was her father’s wish, and also this stranger’s wish”

“Because of that, I will definitely not take you with me”

The armor silently listened to the end.

Time was still stopped, everything remained exactly where they were.

Then a laugh suddenly came.

The armor’s voice suddenly became calm and glad: 「 Truthfully, I have also made a vow to the Saint Bramble Tree 」

“What kind of vow?”

「 I vowed to forever protect the Bramble Bird race that took me out from the chaotic Abyss, that I would forever protect their sovereign 」

The armor continued joyfully: 「 Just now if you were even a little bit greedy, wanting to take me away, I would’ve immediately returned to Laura’s side 」

「 It seems Laura’s eyes were quite sharp indeed, being able to pick out such a worthy guardian 」

「 If that is the case, I will follow her and your mutual wishes and fight by your side 」

The world then returned to normal.

The wind howled by his ears.

Gu Qing Shan noticed he still continued his flight upwards.

The Tribulation clouds were preparing its next wave of attack.

Laura stood at the top of the tree, loudly cheering for him.

The Tianma were all prepared for the moment when the sky split apart.

[Time Stop] had been dispelled!

At the same time, a faint white light appeared around Gu Qing Shan’s body, almost as if it was mist, but glowing bright at the same time.

“This light is——”

「 It’s me, I am a creation of the Gods, my form is unseen 」

“Why do you take this form?”

「 Because light is the manifestation of the Gods’ solemnity 」

While the armor talked, Gu Qing Shan noticed two lines of glowing text appearing on the War God UI.

[Your armor has entered its battle state]

[You can now check the armor’s details, would you like to check?]

“Show me”

Gu Qing Shan said.

A few more lines of glowing text appeared below.

[Item name: Ancient Artifact, Armor of Gods’ Protection]

[Grade: Ancient Divine Armament]

[This armor was carefully forged by the Gods, originally meant to be granted to heroic figures among living beings, but because of how powerful its defensive capabilities turned out to be, the Gods dismissed the idea]

[This armor has the following abilities:]

[Elemental Erasure: After you receive elemental damage, the armor will activate Elemental Erasure to negate the very next elemental damage]

[Immunity: After you receive physical damage, the armor will activate Immunity to negate the very next physical damage]

[God’s Order: When you are about to receive fatal damage, when the armor sense your fate of death, it will immediately activate [Time Stop] once]

[The following is the War God UI’s details]

[War God Skills: This armor is an ancient divine artifact, it contains untold divinity, but has no skills that you can learn]

[Doomsday Chronicles: This armor was carefully forged by the Gods, in the past life, when the Bramble Bird royal family were all killed, it came into the Light of Dawn, Triste’s hand. She then dedicated it to the Lord of True Demons, where it became known as the True Overlord Armor]

[Note: You can pay 1000 Soul Points to check the historical event related to this armor]

“I’ll pay it”

[Related historical event unlocked]

[Historical event: Defeat of the Lord of True Demons]

[Defeat of the Lord of True Demons: During a crucial decisive battle, the True Overlord Armor suddenly left the Lord of True Demons as he was about to be struck by all-out attacks from all sides, heavily wounding him]

[Afterwards, the Lord of True Demons did everything in his power to destroy this armor that betrayed him]

Reading this, Gu Qing Shan couldn’t help but sigh.

So even an armor has feelings.

The Lord of True Demons’ defeat must’ve come from its will to avenge the Bramble Bird royal family.

“Alright, I’m going!”

Gu Qing Shan loudly declared.

It was now time to eliminate all enemies!

It was now the time to put an end to this!

Following Gu Qing Shan’s determination, the faint light around him became bright.

A mysterious solemnity exuded from him.

At the same time, a voice came from the burning bright light.

「 Go! I’m here with you

Chapter 595: Never seen before

The lost world.

Aside from the plaza just outside the divine temple, Tidal city, as well as everything else, was now submerged underwater.

With the Chao Yin sword in hand, Gu Qing Shan was covered in a burning bright glow.

With a single thought, the ocean itself followed him into the sky.

The jet black Tribulation clouds in the sky were unleashing bolt after bolt of lightning, striking at Gu Qing Shan.

Gu Qing Shan didn’t retaliate at all, fully focused on just avoiding them.

The bolts of lightning that missed him quickly slowed down, then sped up as they flew upwards, once again chasing after Gu Qing Shan.

This was a magnificent sight.

A vast ocean of water was rising from the ground.

Within that ocean was a blank void.

Within that blank void, a man shining with bright light held a sword as he dodged and avoided the pursuit of lightning bolts.

But since he was only avoiding without retaliating or letting the lightning strike anything else, the bolts weren’t disappearing.

More and more Tribulation Lightning accumulated in the sky.

The white-blue bolts of lightning were like huge cold stars, giving off a faint thunder and sparks of electricity in their flight.

The crimson Soul Annihilating Lightning, on the other hand, was silent and much faster than other bolts of lightning. It kept close behind Gu Qing Shan without veering off even a little.

Lightning bolts, as numerous as stars, glittered in the sky.

So many stars it seemed like an ocean.

A tidal wave began to form.

And Gu Qing Shan was weaving between the sky and ocean as he brought the sea of lightning with him.

He was still abusing his Divine Skills [Ground Shrink] and [Shadow Shift] to avoid them without fighting back.

At a certain point, Empress Li Yang nervously looked at this and asked: 『 Mother, you've seen the most Tribulations out of all of us, what is he trying to do? 』

The Progenitor Fiendess stared at the bright scenery in the sky and replied after a while: 『 It seems he's accumulating Tribulation Lightning 』

『 Accumulating Tribulation Lightning? Does he really want to die!? 』 Empress Li Yang couldn't help but exclaim.

The Progenitor Fiendess shook her head and suddenly smiled: 『 A weak one, but quite a brave one indeed 』

『 What are you... 』

『 Look, the Manifestation Tribulation Lightning is coming! 』 the Progenitor Fiendess squinted her eyes and spoke.

Empress Li Yang looked up to see that the Heaven's Tribulation had begun to change.

More and more crimson balls of lightning came out from the Tribulation clouds, gathered in one place and manifested as a giant lightning hand.

This was a hand created from Soul Annihilating Lightning, it was sentient, but only had a single will, to erase the one facing the Tribulation from the world of the living.

The hand of lightning slowly expanded, growing bigger and bigger turning into a thick, muscular crimson arm.

In the sky, another bunch of crimson lightning had gathered to slowly form a long whip.

The giant hand immediately grabbed the whip and flew straight towards Gu Qing Shan!

At this time, Gu Qing Shan's situation had become extremely dangerous.

He glanced around.

There was nothing but Tribulation lightning around him.

With this many bolts of lightning together with the newly made Manifestation Tribulation Lightning, this should be when the power of the Lightning Tribulation reached its peak.

"It's time!" Gu Qing Shan loudly said.

“Will you borrow the power of the Tribulation Lightning to eliminate the ghosts and revenants now?” Shannu asked.

“No, first we have to avoid the demonized first” Gu Qing Shan told her.

Shannu nodded: “Indeed, the Lightning Tribulation counters the ghosts, but it doesn’t counter the demonized, not to mention there are over 2 million of them, so if they interfere, it might become troublesome”

“That’s why we have to make sure the demonized won’t interfere”

“How do we do that?”

“I’ll have to rely on you, Shannu”

“Ah?” Shannu froze.

Gu Qing Shan continued: “There’s not much time, I’ll delegate the tasks now”
“Chao Yin sword, you control the field”

The Chao Yin sword let out a ‘wu wu’ sound, expressing its understanding.

“Earth sword, you break the ice”

「 No problem 」 the Earth sword replied with its mountainous heavy voice.

“Shannu, memorize your lines”

“Yes— wait, gongzi, what do you mean memorize my lines?”

“My acting skills should be at max level, so when the time comes, you’ll just have to use it”

“Gongzi, can’t you explain it a bit more clearly? I’m still a bit lost...”

Gu Qing Shan tapped his Inventory Bag and took out a piece of bone from a revenant.

—this came from the battle on the plains when the Earth sword killed one of the bigger revenants.

“Take this!”

Gu Qing Shan threw the bone to Shannu and carefully told her the lines.

At the very next second, the lightning whip came flying with a snap!

Pop!

Gu Qing Shan disappeared.

He immediately used a Divine Skill to avoid the manifested giant arm of lightning’s attack.

“Shannu!”

Gu Qing Shan shouted.

Behind him, an autumn-like blue steel sword appeared from the void of space.

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The sword flew upwards at full speed with his order, piercing through the thick Tribulation clouds.

Due to the [Law Breaker] property, the countless gathering bolts of lightning inside the Tribulation Clouds didn't damage the Six Paths Great Mountain sword at all.

As soon as it went through the Tribulation clouds and reached the top of the sky, the sword turned into a blue-dress girl.

Shannu looked down at Gu Qing Shan.

"Gongzi, I'll send you off!"

"Alright!"

While they spoke, Shannu's body became blurry.

[Shadow Shift]!

She had switched places with Gu Qing Shan.

At this point, Gu Qing Shan had directly bypassed the Tribulation clouds to get to the top of the sky.

He held the Chao Yin sword and pointed upwards.

[Even a sea of suffering shall pass!]

The vast ocean above split apart at his order.

Within the dark blue ocean, a path appeared in front of Gu Qing Shan.

At this time, the Six Paths Great Mountain sword had once again gone through the Tribulation clouds back into the void of space behind Gu Qing Shan.

"We're going!"

Gu Qing Shan shouted.

He swung the Chao Yin sword.

All the sea water flowed in reverse and up into the ocean layer above.

Gu Qing Shan leapt upwards and flew into the open path with his three swords.

——he had entered the ocean layer.

In the sky below, the Tribulation clouds finally reacted.

The endless sea of white-blue Tribulation Lightning and the thick bolt of crimson lightning all charged upwards!

The Manifested Soul Annihilating Lightning arm and whip followed below.

All the Tribulation Lightning had gone past the thick Tribulation clouds to chase after Gu Qing Shan.

The Tribulation clouds itself also moved.

The jet black clouds started to float upwards into the ocean layer.

—–the Tribulation clouds were also chasing after Gu Qing Shan!

When the Tribulation clouds that represent the Law of heaven and earth got close to the ocean, the water opened a wide path for it as well.

Countless flashing bolts of lightning shot out from the clouds to chase after Gu Qing Shan.

A second later, the world returned to silence.

Gu Qing Shan, the ocean, the Tribulation Lightning, the Tribulation clouds, all of it disappeared from the lost world below.

When the one facing the Tribulation left, so did Heaven’s Tribulation.

This had never been seen before, most likely not even one person in the entire history of cultivation had tried something like this.

The Progenitor Fiendess became stunned for a few seconds: 『 This brat... 』

『 Mother, what do we do now? 』 Empress Li Yang asked.

The Progenitor Fiendess closed her eyes and spoke: 『 We wait, when the time is right, the Heaven’s Tribulation will call on us 』

She recounted everything that happened so far in her mind, sighed and spoke: 『 Li Yang, how did you become acquainted with this person, tell Mother 』

『 Huh? Why does Mother want to know such a minor thing? 』 Li Yang asked, a bit unpleasant.

『 Because I need to carefully evaluate this person all over again from the very start 』 the Progenitor Fiendess sighed.

—–

On another side.

The ocean layer.

Gu Qing Shan flew through the rapid water current, following the exact same path he did before to locate the ghost army’s main camp.

The ghost army was stationed on the East, the demonized on the West, they didn’t mingle with each other, but they maintained a close eye on each other.

Gu Qing Shan released his flying swords and formed hand seals.

“The Heaven’s Tribulation is going to catch up very soon, so you all need to be fast!” Gu Qing Shan said.

All three swords gave off a sharp gleam.

They all vibrated, dived into the ocean water and flew towards the ghost army's camp.

The three swords quickly flew around the camp's edge, slicing through the layer of ice.

When the first ghost had noticed, the three swords had managed to circle around the camp once and cut out a gap about the width of an arm.

At first glance, this didn't seem to be useful at all.

A camp that could house 100,000 ghosts was quite large, about the size of a small town, so even though it began to float after it was severed from the bigger ice layer, it was still stable enough to not move at all on the surface of the ocean.

Since there was an eternal snowstorm above, the temperature was very low, in just a few dozen breaths' worth of time, the gap would have refrozen and sealed back up.

But Gu Qing Shan wouldn't let such an opportunity pass.

He kept flying upwards as he summoned his swords.

The three swords returned to hovering around him.

"The most crucial moment is now, Earth sword, your turn"

「 Don't worry, just make the hand seal and I'll give everything I've got 」

"Shannu, you can go now, remember to let loose a bit when acting, don't be too nervous"

"Understood, I'll go now"

The Six Paths Great Mountain sword flashed and disappeared in front of Gu Qing Shan.

Gu Qing Shan held the Chao Yin sword and glanced downwards.

A bit further under the ocean, boundless thunder and lightning were creeping up.

The sea of Tribulation Lightning was about to catch up.

Chapter 596: Separation

Triste's collection world.

The ice layer.

There was silence in the ghost army's camp.

They were all quietly reorganizing themselves.

They were soldiers created by [Order], tools.

Because of that, [Order] upgrading wasn't necessarily going to bring them any benefit.

——at most, the only benefit they would get was that to exist a bit longer.

For now, the ghosts and revenants were silently waiting for the [Order] to wake up.

At that time, they would keep on following the [Order]'s directives like they always had.

But about a kilometer away from the ghost army's camp, resounding cheers and celebration could be heard.

That was the demonized's camp.

2 million demonized had set up camps all over the frozen wastelands.

They gathered to party and celebrate this campaign's total victory while they waited for [Origin] to finish evolving.

A few hours ago, [Origin] had entered a dormant state.

And it was currently undergoing a final evolution.

The [Demon King Order] had gotten what it wanted, and the war was over.

When [Origin] becomes [Revolution], every demonized would obtain greatly increased strength.

There will be more supportive functions, better equipment, better skills and abilities, and naturally, better Quests with more substantial rewards.

This was what they were looking forward to.

The demonized were fully satisfied.

They all immersed themselves in the frenzied celebration.

However, as excellent Combatants, they still hadn't completely lowered their guards.

A few unlucky bastards who happened to be weaker were selected to be on guard at the perimeters of the camp.

Being on guard was a tiring and meaningless necessary job.

These guards stood still in the snowstorm, bored and annoyed out of their minds, carefully watching for any movements.

—-as if there would be any fucking movements!

The entire ice layer is barren, what kind of movement would there be!?

Even though they were all upset, they still couldn't help but obey their orders to stand guard around the camp.

All of a sudden, the ice layer shook.

After a brief moment of being stunned, they all became cautious.

Boom!

The layer of ice suddenly broke apart, forming a hole about several meters wide.

A ferocious face appeared from under the ice, followed by its huge body.

A revenant.

A huge revenant had just appeared in front of the demonized's camp.

Two demonized people came to face it.

“Stop! This is our turf”

“What are you doing here?”

They spoke up at the same time.

The giant revenant didn't bother to answer and simply roared angrily to the sky.

This roar caught the attention of more demonized.

A leader-looking demonized came out.

“What happened?” he asked.

“Don't know, it didn't bother to tell us” one of the guards reported.

The leader-looking demonized smirked and spoke: “Then I'll do it myself”

“Revenant, what are you doing coming to our place?”

The giant revenant loudly roared: 「 You bunch of slaves, too noisy, affecting our rest 」

Hearing that, the leader-looking demonized person's smile slowly faded.

Slave?

This was the most sensitive word to the demonized as a whole.

“Revenant, what do you want?” the leader's face became stiff as he asked.

The giant revenant breathed heavily and shouted: 「 Now, you slaves, must shut up and give peace and quiet!!! 」

—-and you're demanding us to stay quiet as well?

Never mind whether or not we can actually affect you all the way over there, you fucker dared to speak this way to me?

The leader became angry and coldly smirked: “How unfortunate, there's so many of us, we're like this. If you don't like it then you can scam”

More and more demonized understood the situation as they got closer, shouted and cursed at the revenant as well.

“You're nothing but the [Order]'s tool and you dare to show us up?”

“They can't exchange for anything, have no Soul Points and can only follow orders”

“Who are you kidding? They're the real slaves here”

“Scram, get the fuck away from us as far as you can!”

The giant revenant looked around, then spoke: 「 We'll leave, but if anything happens, don't even think to ask us to protect you! 」

Hearing that, all the demonized laughed.

“You mindless ghosts, there's 2 million of us here!”

“Who needs your protection!”

“Scram!”

The giant revenant paid no more attention to them and turned to go back towards the ghost army's camp.

While the giant revenant and the demonized were talking.

At the back of the ghost army's camp.

An ancient looking sword silently appeared below the ice.

It pierced the ice, lightly moved around, swinging and cutting.

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With the power of 86,370,000 tons of weight and the layer of sword phantom, the ice was no different from paper to it.

The sword moved quickly, going in the direction opposite of the demonized's camp as it kept breaking the ice.

Behind it, the cut blocks of ice dropped into the ocean, creating a sea of ice bergs.

Naturally, such a huge commotion wouldn't escape the ghost's attention.

But before they could do anything, the situation had changed——

Below the camp, the vast ocean lightly lifted everything upwards.

Being lifted by the water, the entire camp wasn't tilting at all, it simply rested squarely above the layer of ice.

Below that, the seawater was constantly swirling and churning to form a tsunami completely made of ice and water.

The ghost army's camp was swept away by the tsunami, carried away by the waves!

Naturally, the demonized saw this magnificent sight.

But seeing what was happening 1 kilometers away, they only stood laughing and raining jeers at the camp without showing any intention to chase after it.

They simply watched as the water picked itself up, formed a tsunami and carried the whole ghost army's camp of 100,000 away from them!

The ghosts didn't understand what was happening at all.

A few particularly smart ghosts quickly checked the tide below, noticed the laughing and jeering demonized far away and quickly realized what was happening.

—so this was a prank by the demonized.
What a bunch of shitty beings.

On another side.

At the bottom of the ocean.

Time slowly passed.

One breath,

Two breaths,

Five breaths,

Ten breaths.

This was the limit.

Even with the ancient armor's protection, being surrounded by lightning on all sides without any gaps, Gu Qing Shan still suffered a few minor wounds.

There was now too much Tribulation Lightning for him to keep on dodging.

This is as perfect as it's going to get!

Gu Qing Shan leapt upwards, leaving the bottom of the ocean as he headed up towards the ghost army's camp.

A few moments later, he caught up with them.

At this point, the Earth sword was still continuing to break the ice of the army's camp.

The Chao Yin sword was constantly using [Even a sea of suffering shall pass] to carry the ghost army forward.

Only the Six Paths Great Mountain sword returned to him.

"How is it?" Gu Qing Shan asked.

"I turned into a ghost and temporarily managed to fool their leader, but once the Tribulation Lightning appears, these demonized might notice right away

Shannu's worried voice came from the sword.

"What are you afraid of?" Gu Qing Shan asked.

"Gongzi, there are 2 million of them"

Gu Qing Shan laughed and told her: "It doesn't matter, we bought enough time already. Now that they've been separated this much, with the current speed of the tsunami, even if the demonized noticed the truth, they wouldn't be able to catch up"

He held the sword tight.

Just a bit below him, an endless sea of lightning was about to catch up.

Gu Qing Shan swung his sword to break the layer of ice above and took to the sky.

Followed by countless orbs of lightning.

Gu Qing Shan quickly selected his target and activated [Ground Shrink]

He disappeared from the air and appeared in the middle of the ghost army's camp.

「 Human—— but not a demonized! 」

The ghosts shouted.

They immediately prepared to attack and rip this human to shreds.

Gu Qing Shan smiled apologetically.

“I'm sorry, but you have more important things to worry about than killing me”

He pointed all around.

The ghosts wouldn't bother to listen to his nonsense.

——but they indeed didn't attack.

Because a presence that brought absolute terror to them had appeared.

It was their natural born fear, an insurmountable force, a great power of heaven and earth that perfectly countered their existence.

The ghosts and revenants looked around.

Elemental Lightning?

No! This is a type of lightning even more ferocious than that!

Countless bolts and orbs of blue, white and crimson lightning came out from the frozen ocean.

This lightning appeared all over the perimeter of the camp and quickly filled their visions

Besides the orbs and bolts, there were also several hundred arms made completely from lightning that held crimson whips of lightning in their hands.

——as time passed, more and more Manifestation Lightning was created inside the Tribulation clouds.

The entire camp was now surrounded by Tribulation Lightning.

A second later.

With the center of the ghost army's camp as the target, all of the lightning struck down!

Chapter 597

Gu Qing Shan was now facing his Tribulation seriously.

This time, he didn't run or avoid them.

In the sky, below in the water, all around, countless bolts of lightning came soaring from all directions.

Most of the ghosts and revenants weren't able to avoid them in time and were turned to ash by the Tribulation Lightning.

A few particularly powerful ghosts tried to block them

But this was Tribulation Lightning whose strength had been increased by the Old God's divinity, so they were simply turned to fine grey ash at the very first touch.

The entire camp went into a frenzy.

Gu Qing Shan stood at the center of the camp, controlling his three swords to circle around him, striking each and every bolt of lightning that came his way away.

He couldn't leave.

Because if he did, the Tribulation Lightning would quickly follow.

So he had no choice but to use all he had to defend against the power of the Tribulation.

Like a rain shower in a monsoon, the white-blue bolts of lightning poured down on him one after another without stopping.

Gu Qing Shan stood still in one place, not backing off even a little bit.

Briefly, all three swords showed themselves.

Countless black sword shadows appeared and scattered, destroying the bolts of lightning they struck.

As soon as the white-blue lightning went away, the crimson Soul Annihilating Lightning came down on the camp like a giant spotlight.

Gu Qing Shan still didn't avoid it and swung his swords to receive the strike.

Secret Art, [Crescent Slash] x8!

The crimson spotlight was struck by the light blue sword phantoms, breaking off and scattered like blood, collapsing irregularly.

As soon as the giant bolt of Soul Annihilating Lightning was destroyed, 12 giant arms of shining lightning held up their lightning whips and proceeded to attack him.

This was the most terrifying Manifestation Lightning.

Gu Qing Shan——

Turned and ran away!

He had no choice, when Soul Annihilating Lightning manifested itself as a whip, its power increased exponentially.

Even with the Armor of God's Protection, Gu Qing Shan wasn't convinced he would remain unscathed after being struck by that.

12 whips of lightning followed and struck at him with consecutive snaps.

Gu Qing Shan ran away even faster!

Immediately, countless moans of pain arrived in his ears.

They were the final cries of ghosts struck by the whips just before their deaths.

The three swords followed closely behind Gu Qing Shan.

"Gongzi, there are still a third of the ghosts alive, they're about to escape!" Shannu hurriedly told him.

"Is that so?"

Gu Qing Shan ran around the camp as he paid some attention to the ghosts.

At first, when the Lightning Tribulation suddenly appeared from the ocean, more than 10,000 ghosts were eliminated on the spot.

After that short battle, the countless stray bolts of lightning had destroyed over 50,000 more.

At this point, most of the ghosts who could finally move were scrambling to run away from the camp.

They realized what was going on.

The Tribulation Lightning was striking at the camp.

So their only way to survive was to escape from the camp!

These weren't harmless ghosts, there were quite a few ghosts whose speed were significantly faster than a cultivator at the same level.

And those speed-type ghosts were the first to run away at full speed.

In just a few seconds, they had already gotten to the perimeter of the camp, just one second later and they would have escaped.

Gu Qing Shan sighed deeply and told Shannu: "Don't worry, they won't get away"

He quickly returned to the center of the camp and equipped the unique title [Starflame War God].

Immediately, [Conquer] was activated!

The entire army of ghosts were the targets.

A ghost commander stood out and loudly ordered: 「 Go! Kill that cultivator, as long as he dies, the Tribulation will end! 」

「 For survival, kill him! 」

Roar!!!

The ghosts all turned around, charging at Gu Qing Shan with their weapons!

On another side.

The demonized's camp.

"This is lightning, no, much stronger than normal lightning, it seems to be a cultivator's Lightning Tribulation"

One of the demonized carefully sensed the presence from afar.

"Something isn't right... ghosts and revenants naturally fear Elemental Lightning, did they run into some trouble?"

He asked suspiciously.

Another demonized coldly smirked: "Who cares, they dare call us slaves, let them die"

A demonized cultivator stood up: "I know what this is! A cultivator is facing Heaven's Tribulation and using the power of Tribulation Lightning to eliminate the ghosts!"

He continued: "We should go save them, and take a look at who's facing the Tribulation— you should know, when a cultivator passes a Tribulation, their strength will be magnified significantly, we can't let our guards down"

"Are they going to be strong enough to win against 2 million of us here?" another demonized asked jokingly.

The cultivator was stumped.

The other person continued: "If [Origin] gives us a mission to save them, I'm willing to do it for the rewards. But if there's no benefit, who would go?"

He was expressing the thoughts of most demonized people here.

Indeed, not only were there no mission rewards, there wasn't the slightest bit of benefit either, why should we save those bastards who look down on us and call us slaves?

At this time, the leader of the demonized stood up.

"Don't be noisy, I've sent someone over to check. Regardless of what happened, this is still the most crucial period of time for [Origin], everyone should stay on guard to prevent anything unexpected" he said.

Seeing their leader say that, the demonized had to nod and agree.

"Report—!"

A demonized breathed heavily as he ran into the camp and knelt in front of the leader.

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"So, what's the situation?" the leader asked.

"No, no good, we couldn't see the exact situation" the demonized answered while short of breath.

“Couldn’t see it?” the leader asked in surprise.

“Yes, the entire ghost army’s camp was being carried away from us by the tsunami waves too fast, and there are more and more lightning being created every second so we couldn’t get a clear look into the camp” the demonized explained.

The leader fell into thought briefly and asked: “What about the Lightning Tribulation? Did it disappear?”

The demonized replied: “It didn’t. The Lightning Tribulation is closely following the ghost army’s camp without stopping. It’s possible that they’ve suffered heavy damage”

The leader fell into thought again.

“Lightning Tribulation...”

Suddenly, he recalled the giant revenant that appeared out of nowhere.

Realizing what happened, the leader’s expression warped.

“This is very bad!!!”

“Relay my order, everyone immediately set out to reinforce and save the ghosts, kill anyone that disobeys orders on the spot!”

“Roger!”

The demonized were surprisingly well-disciplined.

In just a few dozen seconds, they have organized themselves and turned from a festive mood to battle-ready.

They orderly headed into the frozen ocean.

Sprinting at full speed disregarding loss of stamina, the demonized finally caught up with the ghost army’s camp in the shortest possible time.

The ghost army’s camp was now silently floating atop the ocean.

Bolts of blue or crimson lightning were still striking into the camp.

However, there weren’t any ghosts here.

In the entire camp, there was only a single cultivator with a sword in hand, enduring the lightning strikes.

He had some minor wounds, but basically unscathed.

A bright white light enveloped his body, blocking the occasional lightning strikes that got through for him.

When the demonized finally reached the camp, the lightning was slowly disappearing.

The tsunami no longer carried the camp forward.

As if it was perfectly timed.

The cultivator breathed heavily as he sat down on the spot.

Taking a pill from somewhere, he chewed it as he glanced around curiously.

The force of 2 million demonized had quickly surrounded the camp.

This was a situation where he wouldn't be able to escape even if he had wings.

They didn't let their guard down despite there only being a single person.

Because they noticed.

This was the very same person who escaped from [Origin]'s pursuit at the top of the Old God's mountain peak.

And just now, he had used his own Tribulation to eliminate all the ghosts!

Thinking that, the demonized all felt a chill climbing up their body.

Their leader stepped out.

"What a magnificent feat, eliminating 100,000 ghosts by yourself, I truly have to commend you" he stared closely at Gu Qing Shan and clapped.

"No need, I felt absolutely drained after that, if there's a next time, I wouldn't do this again even if I died" Gu Qing Shan laughed bitterly.

Three swords were silently hovering behind him in the air.

The demonized leader looked at his swords and asked curiously: "Now, this is no longer the peak of the Old Gods, how are you going to escape from us now?"

"Ah? Why would I want to escape? Or do all of you want to kill me?" Gu Qing Shan asked.

"Of course, [Origin] put a bounty on your head, the rewards are quite enticing, I'll tell you that much" the demonized leader smiled and said.

"Gu Qing Shan, I know your name, seeing how excellent of an enemy you are, I hope you will stay there and surrender"

"And then what?"

"After appropriate division, we will decide who gets to kill you"

"You expect me to surrender with such a terrible offer?"

"At least you won't be tortured, and that your corpse will be left in one piece—I can promise you that?"

Gu Qing Shan appeared curious and asked him: "Why are you this confident?"

"Do I really have to spell it out for you?"

The demonized leader asked him in return.

He looked around with a smile of absolute confidence.

2 million demonized people had formed an encirclement, standing everywhere there was space to stand.

2 million people against 1.

The results were obvious.

Gu Qing Shan just went silent for a brief second.

“Well it’s good that you’re all here, saves me the trouble of a round trip...” he muttered.

“What are you saying?” the demonized leader asked.

Gu Qing Shan didn’t answer.

Wind began to pick up around the camp.

The strange thing was that the wind didn’t come from above, instead, it rushed upwards from the ground.

This time, the Heaven’s Tribulation wasn’t a Lightning Tribulation.

The Wind Tribulation had come.

In the past, below the sea of swords in Shen Wu world, Bai Hua Fairy had broken through Sainted realm and entered Projection realm under similarly dire circumstances.

But in the end, she became the first great cultivator to break through the duo Tribulations of Wind and Lightning in the cultivation world.

And today, it was Gu Qing Shan’s time to face his own Wind Tribulation.

But unlike Bai Hua Fairy, Gu Qing Shan’s Wind Tribulation was carefully rigged by himself beforehand.

To kill the 2 million demonized here.

He had bribed the Devil Kings and Fiend Kings who obtained the Seats of Tribulation.

And now, the wind had picked up.

The armies of Fiends and Devils were approaching.

Chapter 598

A world completely made out of magma and volcanoes.

A black fiend covered in flames stood at the top of a volcano, muttering: 『It’s here, I can feel it calling me 』

It drew a flaming great blade from the burning volcano and stared down below.

It was looking down at a sea of endless boiling lava.

The Flame-eater Fiend King brandished its flaming blade, shouting to the sea of lava: 『Come with me, the harvest of 2 million souls awaits us! 』

With that shout, it slashed the void of space apart and stepped inside.

From the sea of lava, countless flaming figures jumped out and followed the Flame-eater Fiend King closely into the crack in space.

On another side, a world with only two colors of grey and white.

The Shadow Fiend King also sensed the Tribulation summoning it.

It stared down at the [Infinite Golden Sand Grail] in its hand for a while before carefully putting it away.

『 About this time, what do you think? 』 it questioned.

A few other shadows who were its aides had already finished discussing, as one of them stepped out and answered: 『 Sire, even though souls are useless to us, it still is a valuable asset. They can be used in various evil creature realms as a type of currency 』

The Shadow Fiend King stood silent for a bit, then spoke: 『 Very well, either way, I've already signed his Contract, and this Contract doesn't mess around 』

『 Souls aren't exactly my favorite type of money, but the old saying holds— who feels sad about having too much money? 』

The shadows around it all nodded.

The Shadow Fiend King stood and declared: 『 Prepare the troops, your king will lead you to a great profit! 』

『 Yes, sire! 』

In another world.

The Asura King was on his white elephant.

At this time, he was resting by a female Asura, drinking a wonderful liquor poured by her.

All of a sudden, he sensed something.

Downing the entire cup at once, he stood up on the white elephant's back and shouted: 「 In this Tribulation, your King allows you to fight to your heart's desires! I only hope that you will improve your skills and find your own path to become strong! 」

He laughed as he spoke with a tone similar to that of a party goer that was about to arrive at a big celebration.

In front of the white elephant was a flight of stairs that led downwards from his palace— to a large plaza preparing for war!

The battle-ready Asura army had all gathered at the plaza, cheering loudly at his declaration.

“Battle! War! Battle! War”

“Battle! War! Battle! War”

“A great honor had been bestowed on us!”

The Asura King nodded in approval, took a halberd in hand and flew up, entering the space vortex that opened up in the sky.

In a world of hungry ghosts, the Hunger Devil King called upon its subordinates.

In a dim and depressing world, the Bloodthirsty Devil King wore its King Armor and loudly commanded its army.

At a world of tombs, the Malahoh Devil King brought the force of its race into the space vortex.

—they were all heading to the lost world of the Old Gods.

The Progenitor also felt the calling of the Tribulation.

『 We're about to begin, this time, I will be bringing my old subordinates 』 she said.

As the Progenitor was about to leave, Empress Li Yang came forward and bowed.

『 What is it? 』 the Progenitor Fiendess asked.

『 Great Mother, originally you wanted to summon us here to open our eyes, and this Heaven's Tribulation is truly a never-before-seen sight for this daughter. This daughter only asks that you allow her to bring her subordinates and join you in the battle 』 Empress Li Yang requested.

After a bit of thinking, the Progenitor Fiendess smiled: 『 Very well, you may bring your subordinates 』

『 Thank you, Mother! 』 Li Yang joyfully said.

Seeing that, the other Tianma sisters also tried asking to come with all at once.

The Progenitor Fiendess flicked her hand up: 『 All of you shall come. Witnessing such a grand ordeal at least once is beneficial to all of you 』

Saying so, her body had already started to melt into the void of space.

Li Yang's sisters also quickly left to summon their subordinates and got ready to enter the battlefield.

At this point, all the 8 Kings that held the Seats of Tribulation were ready.

The ice layer.

The intense wind howled around the camp.

Gu Qing Shan stood at the eye of the wind storm, unmoving.

The demonized quickly noticed something wasn't right.

“What's happening?” the demonized leader asked.

Next to him, a cultivator explained: “It's the Wind Tribulation”

“Wind Tribulation?”

“Yes, when a cultivator breaks through Sainted realm to enter Projection realm, not only will the heaven rain lightning, evil creatures will also come in troves. This Wind Tribulation that’s about to happen should be calling various Fiends and Devils to come to kill him”

“Will it affect us?”

“It won’t, as long as we don’t enter the range of the Wind Tribulation”

“Why can’t we go in?”

“If we enter the range of the Wind Tribulation, the Tribulation will recognize that as several people trying to face the Tribulation together, it will summon even more evil creatures that will recognize us as targets to attack”

The leader’s expression loosened and asked: “Which means, even if we don’t do anything, he’s going to die?”

“Correct, even if he manages to survive the Tribulation due to some sort of luck, it will have already used up all his strength, at that point, just a few of us will be more than enough to kill him”

The leader laughed: “Then I’ll have to pray that he won’t die in the Wind Tribulation, his life is worth quite a big bounty after all”

Around him, powerful demonized all smiled.

“Relay my order, everyone sit back and enjoy the show, there’s no need to go in to die for no reason”

“After the Wind Tribulation is over, if that guy is still alive, we’ll divide the possible bounty appropriately before killing him” the leader said.

“Roger!” everyone loudly replied.

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The order was quickly relayed around the 2 million demonized.

Everyone now understood what a Wind Tribulation was.

The demonized all calmed down briefly.

——let this terrifying bastard face his Tribulation.

The fact that cultivators had to face a Tribulation in the first place was strange.

Most other Professions naturally become stronger as they proceed step by step on their path.

But cultivators weren’t that fortunate, they had to repeatedly fight with their lives on the line against heaven itself to secure a chance at becoming stronger.

The Lightning Tribulation was already a terrifying ordeal.

And now with the Wind Tribulation, against evil creatures that would arrive in troves, a cultivator was expected to face thousands by themselves and survive.

Anyone could tell just how dangerous that was at a single thought.

No one here would be willing to have a taste of that if they could avoid it.

Thinking that, the demonized quickly took a considerable distance from Gu Qing Shan, afraid that they might get caught up in his Wind Tribulation.

Now all they had to do was wait.

Wait until he either dies or becomes exhausted.

Gu Qing Shan stood at the middle of the ghost army's camp and saw what the demonized were doing from start to end.

"...How cooperative"

He muttered.

At a certain point, perhaps sensing something, he took out the Devil King Warden Rod and stabbed it on the ground.

The head of the scepter was giving off a bright red light.

This was the Tribulation's summon.

It was about to begin.

Gu Qing Shan looked to the sky.

Above.

The wind howled and screamed.

Countless strange and bizarre creatures appeared from the void of space, looking down at the world below.

These creatures were all created from fire and flames, only looking very closely could you see their ferocious charred expressions through the bright fire.

An excited voice called out.

『 Hm, indeed there are 2 million souls here, and you even got them to orderly line up right here for us, how extraordinary 』

A black creature covered in intense flames came down from the sky, landing next to Gu Qing Shan.

The Flame-eater Fiend King had arrived.

Right after him, all over the camp, countless blurred shadows swirled and rumbled, as if countless creatures had appeared below the ice, on the ice as well as all over the void of space.

A cold voice came.

『 Tsk, tsk, tsk, there really are 2 million souls just waiting here to be killed? Seeing how well you prepared everything here, I'll forgive you for killing one of my bodies from before 』

A huge shadow stood straight up from the ground, standing at about 8 meters tall, at a glance, it looked exactly like an unknown abyss of darkness.

The Shadow Fiend King had arrived next to Gu Qing Shan.

The dim and greyish sky was suddenly illuminated as a glorious light of sunset appeared, causing everyone to look up.

Within the beautiful light, countless faint female singing voices could be heard.

They were singing in unison:

『 The little doe sing faintly, eating apples on the field;
We have a guest, the metal drums beat;
A moon so bright, when will it fade;
A worry so far away, it can't be cleared 』

With the song, countless black flowers manifested from the air.

A matured, graceful and beautiful woman stepped on the flowers as she slowly descended.

She lightly landed next to Gu Qing Shan.

『 Where are the ghosts? 』 she asked Gu Qing Shan.

“Killed them all” Gu Qing Shan curtly answered.

『 Much better done than I thought 』

Saying so, the Progenitor Fiendess looked all over at the army of demonized people.

While looking, she couldn't help but lick her lips.

『 ...All of them are young souls below 30 years old, exactly to my tastes... 』

The Progenitor Fiendess had arrived.

A few seconds later, a topless handsome man jumped down from the sky.

He rested his halberd on his shoulder as he looked around.

『 My people are ready to kill at any time 』 he casually said.

The Asura King had arrived.

Three more black boiling devilish presences appeared from the ground.

The three Devil Kings appeared at the same time.

『 2 million... perhaps a bit more than that 』 the Hunger Devil King chuckled as he spoke.

『 The Huang Quan Devil King certainly doesn't cut any corners 』 the Bloodthirsty Devil King praised.

『 So many wonderfully juicy lives to take, when can we start? 』 the Malahoh Devil King impatiently asked.

As they spoke, they also walked up to Gu Qing Shan.

Now, the 4 Fiend Kings and 4 Devil Kings had all gathered!

Gu Qing Shan placed his hand on the Devil King Warden Rod and muttered: "Let us begin"

Chapter 599

In the sky.

The cloud layer had been raised by several levels by the constantly howling wind.

Countless flickering flames appeared from the void of space.

There were also faint singing voices accompanied by beautiful blooming black flowers all over the sky.

Occasionally, beautiful girls with inviting expressions would peek out from the flowers, glancing down below before smiling and returning.

A few demonized were feeling tempted.

On the ice, countless black shadows were loitering, apparently not yet in this world, but could arrive here at any moment.

A resounding gallop of horses came from the void of space, their unified chanting echoed across the entire ice layer.

""""Battle! Battle! Battle!""""

The beat of the war drums roused everyone's fighting spirits.

But no matter how hard the demonized looked, they couldn't see anything at all.

More and more bizarre, strange and out-of-this-world creatures appeared from the void of space one by one.

But they quickly hid back into the wind as soon as they appeared.

They were soldiers of the Devil Kings, waiting for their ruler's orders.

As the demonized leader carefully observed this, he felt more and more uneasy.

Even the demonized army was now feeling a bit restless.

The leader quickly grabbed the cultivator next to him and asked: "Are you sure this is a Wind Tribulation?"

"I'm definitely not mistaken, you should be able to feel the immense power of heaven and earth as well, sir" the cultivator answered.

"I can feel the power alright, but aren't there too many evil creatures here!?" the leader questioned him.

"That is indeed true, I've never seen such a huge Wind Tribulation ever before" the cultivator also hesitantly confirmed this.

“Look, they’ve begun to attack that guy!” another demonized said.

“Ah? Really?”

The leader hurriedly looked over.

Within the ghost army’s camp, the four Fiend Kings and three Devil Kings had surrounded Gu Qing Shan.

They all drew their weapons and pointed them at Gu Qing Shan.

It seems the fighting is about to begin.

—so it really is just that guy’s *Wind Tribulation!*

Watching this, the leader wiped the sweat off his forehead and silently sighed in relief.

He loudly declared: “Relay my orders!, those creatures are there to kill him, reassure everyone and tell them not to act carelessly, or they might get caught in the Wind Tribulation”

As the order got relayed, the demonized reassured themselves.

On the other side.

The Progenitor Fiendess held a small black dagger, pointing it at Gu Qing Shan.

She told him: 『 According to the Law of the Tribulation, we were supposed to be here to kill you 』

“And so?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

『 So we, as the leaders, must at least attack you once in order for the Tribulation to recognize that we’ve done our job and fulfilled our responsibilities 』 the Progenitor Fiendess explained.

『 That is indeed the case, Huang Quan Devil King, raise your sword 』 the Bloodthirsty Devil King also said.

Gu Qing Shan obediently took out the Earth sword and raised it sideways in front of himself, taking a defensive stance.

『 One by one, everybody, don’t go out of order 』

The Shadow Fiend King cleared his throat and solemnly said.

It walked up first and lightly flicked its finger on the Earth sword.

『 Done! 』

As soon as it said so, the Shadow Fiend King suddenly disappeared from everyone’s sight.

『 The deal was that; you get what you kill, so I’ll be going first 』

Its voice came from afar.

At the same time, on the West side of the camp, an area filled with demonized people—

Shadow after shadow suddenly came out from the ice, ambushing them!

The demonized people's ranks went into chaos.

Shadow Fiends were experts at hiding and ambush, and this time the entire Shadow Fiend Kingdom's army had come!

Blood spurted everywhere as cries of pain and rang out.

『 Ahahaha, so many souls! Go, take as many as you can! 』 the Shadow Fiend King triumphantly laughed.

『 Yes, sire! 』 countless unified voices replied.

More and more shadows suddenly appeared from the ground, each attack perfectly hitting vitals and instantly taking their lives.

Whenever the demonized tried to hurriedly retaliate, the fiends would dive back into the shadow to hide.

In just a single moment, thousands of demonized had been killed!

As time passed, the number only increased.

The other Devil Kings and Fiend Kings stopped watching it.

『 How devious, I need to go as well 』 the Flame-eater Fiend King angrily said.

It drew its blade and lightly tapped the Earth sword.

Ki!

A light sound of metal.

The Flame-eater Fiend King instantly disappeared.

『 If the Shadow Fiends have taken the West, I'll be taking the East! 』

Its voice came from afar.

One second later.

Fire rained from the sky.

Flames as numerous as stars in the sky rained from above to the East of the encirclement.

Among the ferocious rain of fire, countless Flame-eater Fiends were mixed in, descending on the demonized.

They quickly attacked the demonized.

Large numbers of demonized people were killed by the rain of fire on the spot!

A few smaller Flame-eater Fiends didn't hit the demonized, but struck the frozen ground below them instead, causing the demonized to become off-balance.

The Flame-eater Fiends have also begun their harvest of souls!

「 Kah, how would us Asura miss out on such a big war? 」

Saying so, the Asura King lightly tapped the Earth sword with his halberd.

Ki!

As soon as the sound rang out, the Asura King disappeared as well.

「 That bunch in the middle seems to be the strongest, and their leader seems to be there as well—— so leave that direction to us Asura! 」

His voice came from afar.

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In the sky, the thunderous sound of war drums and horns resounded.

Large cracks opened in space.

Led by a white elephant, various types of Asura war-mounts came charging out, followed by the great Asura army.

Drunk from the war horns, they ran across the sky, charging towards the ground!

The Asura King stood on top of his white elephant with a halberd in hand, pointing it to the demonized leader.

「 Come! Fight me with all you've got, I will grant you the honor of dying in battle! 」

The Asura King shouted.

The demonized leader couldn't help but pull out his weapon, angrily shouting back: "I am NOT a cultivator!"

His voice was quickly drowned out by the thunderous charge.

Following the Asura King was his entire Asura army, choosing to go straight for close combat.

The war began with an all-out skirmish!

Back in the ghost army's camp, the three Devil Kings were impatient.

『 Damn it! DAMN IT! They already stole so many souls, we need to hurry as well 』 the Hunger Devil King shouted.

The three Devil Kings exchanged glances and nodded.

They all pulled out their weapons and lightly tapped Gu Qing Shan's sword.

Ki!

Ki!

Ki!

With three tiny sounds of impact, their bodies turned and disappeared from sight.

At the same time, the devils hiding in the voice of space seemed to have gotten their orders.

Countless creatures roared without inhibition, shaking heaven and earth.

Waves after waves of Hunger Devils, Bloodthirsty Devils and Malahoh Devils descended from above.

They ignored whatever arbitrary method the Shadow Fiend King and Flame-eater Fiend King decided to divide the sides and simply went straight into killing the demonized army as they liked.

With their participation, the entire demonized encirclement was plunged into chaos!

『Damn you, why aren't you devils following the rules!』 the Flame-eater Fiend King impatiently shouted.

Not too far away, the Hunger Devil King replied: 『You got tricked by the Shadow Fiend King. The only rule is you get what you kill, wasn't that decided from the start?』

The Flame-eater Fiend King was slightly shocked, face-palmed itself and loudly declared: 『All Flame-eater Fiends! Follow my lead and charge!』

It pointed at where the Shadow Fiends were.

——that was the area with the most demonized gathered.

The burning Flame-eater Fiends immediately began to act!

On another side, the ghost army's camp.

Ki!

Another light sound of impact rang out from Gu Qing Shan's sword.

The Progenitor Fiendess put her dagger away and smiled: 『There, now all of us had attacked you once, fulfilling the responsibilities of the Tribulation. I'll be enjoying this feast now』

“Please go ahead” Gu Qing Shan said.

The Progenitor Fiendess turned into a puff of black smoke and disappeared.

In the sky, the wind blew even stronger as more and more black flowers manifested.

There were so many flowers that they almost replaced the sky itself, turning the entire camp dark.

One of the demonized cultivators noticed this and looked up.

“No! That's impossible! Why are there so many Tianma!?” he shouted in despair.

Indeed, the entire sky was now filled with black flowers.

As if every Tianma that could come had arrived.

The flowers bloomed.

Countless beautiful enchantresses with enticing figures and bewitching expressions stood up from the flowers.

They looked down at the intense battles below with glowing eyes as they felt the bloody and violent fighting.

Their charming giggles were akin to the chiming of silver bells.

『 What a magnificent sight 』

『 Life and death, chaos and fear, such situations are always where us Tianma thrive 』

『 That's right, this is where we are best-suited to hunt 』

『 Quit talking girls, I'm already so hungry... 』

The very next instant.

All the black flowers disappeared.

The Tianma girls also disappeared without a trace.

But the scene of the battlefield began to turn bizarre.

One demonized suddenly shouted hysterically.

Some other demonized stood still with strange smiles on their faces.

Some demonized threw down their weapons and knelt crying on the ground.

Some even started attacking their own people.

All sorts of strange and weird situations appeared all over the battlefield.

The ghost army's camp.

Gu Qing Shan held the Earth sword and stood still.

Intense wind howled as his Wind Tribulation continued.

This was an extremely dangerous Tribulation, one where cultivators supposedly had to face the full invasion of the fiends and devils of various realms for the very first time during their long years of cultivation.

But even after Gu Qing Shan got bored of standing around, there still wasn't a single evil creature that tried to bother him.

Every single evil creature summoned was busy fighting with the demonized.

Gu Qing Shan raised the Earth sword, then lowered it, then raised it again, then lowered it again.

...this is really boring.

"So this is how it feels to slack off huh"

Gu Qing Shan muttered.

Within the range of his inner sight, the demonized in all directions were facing the toughest battles in their lives.

At this point in time, even if the demonized weren't able to use the [Demon King Order] to exchange for items, there were still 2 million of them, enough to destroy an entire world!

But their enemies were the Devil Kings and Fiend Kings of 4 Fiend realms and 3 Devil realms together with their full army!

Even more shamelessly, not only were these fiends and devils powerful, they had actually taken the initiative to ambush and attack first!

The armies of 7 realms were massacring the 2 million demonized souls, occasionally even stealing kills from each other.

Gu Qing Shan shook his head and pulled his inner sight back.

Raising the Devil King Warden Rod, he likely tapped it on the Earth sword as well.

Ki!

A small chime.

As the Huang Quan Devil King, Gu Qing Shan has to attack himself once as well.

“So, my work here is done”

He put the Devil King Warden Rod away.

After silently watching the battle situation for a bit longer, Gu Qing Shan put the Earth sword back into the void of space as well.

Chapter 600

Without any background banter or time for the demonized army to prepare, the battle immediately became a desperate struggle for life.

Struggling for their lives, facing the strange and paranormal means of attacks by the fiends and devils caused the demonized to not know what to do.

To be able to join an army of a Fiend King or Devil King, whose purpose was to invade other worlds, the troops were naturally veterans in war who had been baptized by blood and fire.

On the other hand, their enemies were youths under 30 years old who surrendered themselves to the [Demon King Order] as a shortcut to gain power by choice.

—-and at this time, the [Demon King Order] was currently dormant in evolution, unable to provide these demonized any help at all.

The scales soon tilted.

The evil creatures of the 7 worlds quickly gained the upper hand.

They got more and more proficient in killing the demonized.

Some of the smarter demonized noticed how bad the situation was and began to use their life-saving artifacts while hiding behind others.

Soon enough, the first deserter appeared.

He unwinded a scroll that enveloped him in shining magical runes.

With a flash, he disappeared.

Gu Qing Shan had already noticed this.

“Naïve” he shook his head.

A few seconds later.

The deserter’s dead body fell from the sky.

The faint figure of a beautiful woman gradually rose from his body.

『 Naïve little one, once you enter the range of the Tribulation, the Laws of heaven and earth wouldn’t allow you to escape 』

As the Tianma said so, she glanced around her.

A few moments later, her eyes lit up.

Not too far away from her, another fearful demonized had taken out a tool used for running away.

The Tianma licked her lips as her figure leapt and disappeared into the void of space.

...

All things must come to an end.

And the battle quickly reached its conclusion.

The rain of fire above was fading away.

The Flame-eater Fiend King brought its subordinate back, laughing as it walked up to Gu Qing Shan.

『 Thanks for the hospitality, I don’t have much to give in return, so I’ll let you have this 』 the Flame-eater Fiend King spoke.

It gave a medallion that depicted a burning bright flame to Gu Qing Shan.

『 Crush that medallion and you’ll be immediately transported to my world, you’re welcome to be my guest at any time 』 the Flame-eater Fiend King explained.

This wasn’t a token used for communication, but rather a type of treasure.

“Ah, thank you” Gu Qing Shan clasped his fist and replied.

The Flame-eater Fiend King nodded and quickly walked into the void of space, leaving this world.

On another side of the battlefield.

At some unknown point in time, all the corpses here were gone without a trace.

The chaotic swirling shadow below the layer of ice had already disappeared, leaving just a layer of frozen blood.

The Shadow Fiend King stood here silently thinking for a while before it returned to the camp.

It appeared from the ground to face Gu Qing Shan.

『 Peace indeed does make wealth. Although I'm still mad because you destroyed one of my body, but a generous business partner as yourself deserves appropriate treatment 』

The Shadow Fiend King walked up to Gu Qing Shan and began to chant something at his arm.

A black flame came off Gu Qing Shan's arm and flew up.

This was the legendary curse that the Ruler of Purgatory had left on Gu Qing Shan when they met in the world below.

At Gu Qing Shan's death, the Ruler of Purgatory would have followed this curse to find Gu Qing Shan to take away his soul.

The Shadow Fiend King grabbed the black flame with its hand.

『 If you don't mind, I'll be taking this as payment for helping you dispel that curse 』

It pointed at the flame and said.

"Not at all, feel free to take it" Gu Qing Shan smiled and answered.

Earlier, he had tried many different methods but still couldn't get rid of that curse.

Now that the Shadow Fiend King had a way to remove it, of course Gu Qing Shan wouldn't stop it.

Now that the curse was gone, the Ruler of Purgatory wouldn't be able to mess with Gu Qing Shan anymore.

The Shadow Fiend King clenched the black flame in hand and nodded.

『 Farewell 』

"Farewell"

The Shadow Fiend King went back into the ice without a sound and disappeared.

From another side, the Asura King rode his white elephant away as he bid Gu Qing Shan goodbye.

『 I'm in a hurry! We'll talk more next time! 』

He loudly declared.

Saying so, the Asura King led his army back into the various cracks in space they had made.

— they still have another war to fight, so they're going to prepare and rush over right away.

The other three Devil Kings' harvests were also quite considerable, so after they said goodbye to Gu Qing Shan, they used the Law of Tribulation to return to their respective realms.

The Progenitor Fiendess smiled as she descended from above.

『 What a lavish feast that was, you had arranged everything so well from the start to the end without leaving any openings 』

Her tone suddenly changed a bit as she whispered: 『 How's this, I will allow you and my daughter Li Yang to continue your close business relationship 』

She put heavy emphasis on the word 'close'.

After that, the Progenitor Fiendess also went into the void and space and silently left.

The Tianma quickly followed.

Fiends and Devils, all left the world.

After a while.

The wind stopped blowing.

The world returned to silence.

Only the snow continued to fall.

Gu Qing Shan stood in the middle of the devastated ghost army's camp, glancing around.

The Tribulation clouds faded.

There wasn't any other single living being under the sky.

The 2 million demonized people's bodies and souls were thoroughly collected between the fiends and devils without leaving anything behind.

The only thing left uncleaned was the icy ocean water, which was now dyed red in blood.

Gu Qing Shan was suddenly surprised.

A line of glowing words appeared on the War God UI.

[Projection realm Tribulation, completed]

He seemed to have broken through some sort of door, or to be precise, recognized by the Laws of heaven and earth, as Gu Qing Shan's internal spirit energy began to increase.

Within the Laws of heaven and earth, every time a cultivator breaks through a realm, their life essence will take a leap forward.

——the most obvious show of this wasn't just the fact that they became stronger, but also their lifespan greatly increased.

Naturally, other Professions also have ways to increase their practitioner's life span, but that's simply an increase in lifespan.

While a cultivator's existence itself undergoes evolution in every aspect.

This was a great increase that bypassed the limit of natural Laws.

Which was why the worlds test cultivators by forcing them through a Tribulation.

Gu Qing Shan closed his eyes and silently felt the changes inside his body.

His maximum Soul Point limit was increased to 600.

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His total spirit energy reserve was doubled.

His lifespan was now 2000 years.

His inner sight was now much stronger, doubling the area it could cover while at the same time allowing him to monitor even tiny changes like the process of how a snowflake was formed.

“Projection realm...”

Gu Qing Shan sighed satisfyingly.

Finally, I've caught up to Shifu's steps, and I've reached the heights where she stands.

I am now a Projection realm cultivator.

Out of nowhere, an intense pulling force acted on him.

Gu Qing Shan's expression changed.

Then he realized something.

“Chao Yin sword, you're responsible for guarding me, if anything unexpected happens, freely use my Soul Points to protect me and escape” he quickly said.

The Chao Yin sword appeared from the void of space, giving an affirmative 'wu wu' sound.

With the short time he had, Gu Qing Shan tapped his Inventory Bag and took out a few single-use defensive formations.

Lights of various colors erupted.

In just the blink of an eye, the formation plates were all activated!

Gu Qing Shan took out a cushion and sat down.

“Earth sword, Shannu, come with my soul form!”

「 Sure 」 the Earth sword replied.

“Yes, gongzi” Shannu replied.

Gu Qing Shan closed his eyes.

Immediately, the intense pulling force could be felt clearly from the void of space.

His soul vessel left his body, flew to the air and directly entered the space vortex.

His two swords flew close to his soul vessel as they travelled.

The ice layer once again returned to silence.

Gu Qing Shan sat still on the cushion with both eyes closed, unmoving.

The Chao Yin sword hovered by his side, silently protecting him.

Time slowly passed.

At some point, a glorious light appeared from a ripple in the void of space.

A clear chiming female voice came, singing faintly:

『 Jiǎojiǎo bái jū, zài bǐ kōnggǔ. Shēng chú yī shù, qí rén rú yù. 』 (TN: The same poem from ch282)

The singing voice slowly faded before it couldn't be heard anymore.

A beautiful black-clothed girl came out from the void of space.

She lightly floated down to the ghost army's camp.

『 Ara? A formation? 』

The black-clothed girl reached out her hand in surprise, trying to touch something in the air.

A seven-colored light immediately came out.

『 Perhaps it would be useful for others, but for us Tianma... 』

The black-clothed girl smiled lightly as her body flashed.

She appeared inside the camp.

She slowly walked closer to Gu Qing Shan as she observed him, then asked: 『 You've just finished breaking through, so you're now solidifying your realm? 』

Gu Qing Shan didn't reply.

“Ooongg—!!”

The Chao Yin sword suddenly let out a threatening noise.

It came forward to defend Gu Qing Shan.

It was now that the black-clothed girl noticed it was there.

『 You should have already met me, I'm Li Yang 』 the black-clothed girl said.

After thinking briefly, she added: 『 Don't worry, I won't do anything to him 』

“Oong...”

The Chao Yin sword let out a hesitant 'wu wu' noise but still didn't move away.

Empress Li Yang finally noticed something wasn't right.

She looked at Gu Qing Shan and carefully sensed him.

『 Ah? His soul isn't here—— to leave his body at such an unsafe location, was he in a hurry to do something? 』 Empress Li Yang asked in shock.

“Oong!”

The Chao Yin sword nodded with its hilt.

Empress Li Yang understood.

Something really must've happened.

She asked the Chao Yin sword: 『 I understand, his body is currently at its weakest moment, so you're protecting him? 』

The Chao Yin sword nodded with its hilt again.

Empress Li Yang said: 『 Don't worry, I won't get any closer 』

She waved her hand to take out a bamboo chair, sitting down on the spot.

“Oong?” the Chao Yin sword asked.

『 It's nothing, I'm afraid that you might not be able to protect him well enough on your own, so I'll stay here to guard him as well 』 Li Yang explained.

The Chao Yin sword returned to silence, no longer letting out any sounds.

It recognized her goodwill.

But it didn't leave the area around Gu Qing Shan either.

Li Yang sat across from Gu Qing Shan, silently watching him.

She was paying close attention in all directions, just in case something might happen.

A few moments later.

There truly weren't any other living beings in the area.

Li Yang slowly calmed down.

She giggled deprecatingly and muttered: 『 A Tianma is guarding a human against harm, even if I say it no one's going to believe it 』

Very naturally she looked at Gu Qing Shan.

After a few moments, her eyes became gentle.

Then she quickly turned away awkwardly.

The Chao Yin sword noticed everything.

It suddenly remembered a certain sword and what it was taught.

After that, the Chao Yin sword lightly swung its hilt and made a decision.

—it maintained an alert state, but silently hid into the void of space, no longer visible at a glance.

Time kept passing.

The snowflakes fluttered as they fell from above.

The blood-red ocean water was quickly covered up bit by bit by the pure white snow.

Everything had ended on this vast frozen wasteland.

The world maintained its silence.

Only a single black-clothed girl was seriously staying on alert for anything that might happen around a devastated military camp.

At certain points in time, she quickly stole some glances at the man sitting across from her.

She remained here.

She was guarding him.