

EMPEROR 1261

Chapter 1261: Crushing Your Head

“Buzz!” Gongsun Meiyu’s divine mirror became dazzling and illuminated the entire garden. The whole scene turned as white as snow; the spectators had a hard time keeping their eyes open.

An eye emerged from her mirror. This extremely beautiful and spirited eye turned seductive in an instant. Its extraordinary splendor would cause people to instantly lose their way.

“Watch out!” Zhang Baitu and Hong Yujiao both shouted in horror. They had suffered under her technique before and knew just how terrifying it was.

However, Jian Xiaotie quickly dragged them away from the fight.

“Young Noble, do you really want to hit me?” Meiyu’s voice was seductive to the bones. It caused others to feel weak and caused their souls to leave their bodies. Her beautiful eyes emitted strange yet enchanting glows like the limpid autumn water.

Li Qiye stopped and stared obsessively at her. In a short period of time, her eyes became even more charming. It sent waves right into Li Qiye’s eyes in order to captivate him completely.

“You are so beautiful.” The confused Li Qiye murmured to himself while standing there motionlessly.

“So frightening.” Many people gasped before this scene. She could control the enemy without the need to fight at all.

Meiyu sneered after seeing Li Qiye falling under her control and voiced her disdain: “And here I thought that you were actually strong. You can’t even handle a single blow, such a dao heart is not worth mentioning.”

Feiyan coldly glared at him. Li Qiye was a dead man in her eyes, she could do whatever she wanted to him.

“Sister Shangguan, you can torture him however you want now.” Meiyu revealed her faint, enchanting smile again.

However, this charming smile seemed very scary to the spectators. The Seductive Gaze in her divine reflection was too much. Once her opponent lost their mind, she could manipulate them to her whim.

“Come over here.” She gently beckoned him over.

Li Qiye seemed incredibly sluggish while being completely under her control. After hearing her order, he slowly walked towards her.

Both Baitu and Yujiao were pale from fear as they cried out: “Young Noble!” However, Jian Xiaotie prevented them from trying to help him.

In the blink of an eye, Li Qiye stood before her. She looked at her puppet and felt quite pleased with herself before smiling to say: “Even if you could dispel the charm, your body itself won’t be able to resist the seduction. This is the most primal power, you can’t withstand it at all.”

She was completely confident in her seductive gaze. As long as one was fixated, it wouldn't matter how powerful they were, they wouldn't be able to control their mind. Their heart would start wavering until they fell completely under her control.

She contemptuously ordered: "Okay, kneel and bow your head to apologize to Miss Shangguan until you crush your skull completely."

"Whoosh!" Suddenly, a hand grabbed her by the hair. This sudden development was completely unexpected. She couldn't react in time because she was standing too close to him.

"Bam!" This hand that gripped her hair slammed her head into a stone pillar until blood spattered.

"Bang!" Another crash could be heard. Her head was swung into the pillar again. Her face was mangled completely beyond recognition. Her initially supreme features were smashed to a pulp and now looked quite scary.

Li Qiye was the culprit. He easily slammed her into the pillar mercilessly.

"Stop!" Meiyu screamed as her blood energy erupted in order to escape his clutches. However, he shifted his grip to her neck. Under his Hell Suppressing Fist, she couldn't move at all.

"Bang!" Her head slammed into a different pillar until it collapsed along with her skull. Blood and brain matter gushed out in the midst of this horrifying carnage.

"Die!" Feiyan shouted and swiftly took action. She intertwined her ten fingers to form a phoenix mudra. A phoenix roar echoed in the sky; it came killing with the aura of a God-Monarch. Its sweeping momentum could shatter the cosmos and sweep through both gods and devils alike.

A God-Monarch's attack was incomparable. It could reverse the stars and flip the world over. She aimed to suppress Li Qiye with this one move in order to regain control of the situation.

However, Li Qiye didn't bother looking at her phoenix mudra. He casually unleashed the Sky Destroyer Fist, a fist capable of shattering myriad dao and the vault of the sky with a sharp and overwhelming might.

"Screech—" The phoenix cried miserably as it was split into two in an instant.

After defeating the mudra, Li Qiye's fist didn't stop and kept flying towards Feiyan at an extreme speed.

It was too fast and sharp; Feiyan was aghast. Her halos came together to form a shield to block this attack.

However, the shield couldn't stop this sharp strike. With a bang, the fist pierced through her chest. She was blown outside while her body shattered several pavilions in her path.

Meanwhile, Li Qiye didn't pause. He slammed Meiyu into a different pillar. Pieces of her flesh continued to fly as her head was completely mashed.

Such a bloody scene scared everyone out of their minds. Some couldn't even bear to watch. Meiyu used to be an irresistible temptress, but now her head had been deformed beyond recognition. The contrast was too great.

“Bam!” At this time, Meiyu’s body suddenly exploded into a blood mist. Li Qiye was forced several steps back from the explosion.

“Little animal, you have angered me!” An endless radiance blossomed from the bloody mist. Meiyu once again appeared before everyone.

Her aura turned even more brilliant and her charm was amplified. Each inch of her skin became even whiter and more perfect. She intentionally revealed herself to the crowd. The spectators felt their blood boiling after seeing her cleavage. Her sweet fragrance assaulted and mesmerized them as well.

This was the ultimate form of her seductive gaze. With her true fate at work, she was able to exert her seductive gaze to its limit. Her divine reflection projected itself on the sky and turned into a gigantic mirror. It poured down an incomparable light that was concentrated on Li Qiye.

At this moment, many cultivators in the garden felt their manhoods rise; they were immediately seduced by her sweet scent.

“Little animal, die!” Meiyu’s eyes were sparkling. Her temptation manifested into a physical form like a heavenly worm spitting out its strings to wrap around Li Qiye.

“Insignificant trick.” Li Qiye didn’t even lift a brow. With a buzz, his inner physique emerged. Universal laws began to suppress the heavens. When the Hell Suppressing Godly Physique came out, Li Qiye seemed to turn into an oppressive god.

“Bang!” He mercilessly stomped down on Meiyu.

“Activate!” Meiyu responded with a cry. The mirror in the sky shifted and illuminated Li Qiye even more.

“Boom!” It didn’t matter how strong her mirror was since it was useless before Li Qiye’s physique. She was instantly trampled beneath his foot.

Li Qiye coldly uttered: “You shouldn’t have schemed against my people.”

“You...” Meiyu screamed and wiggled back and forth in order to escape. Alas, she couldn’t move at all due to the weight of the Immortal Physique.

“Little friend, show mercy.” An old man suddenly appeared in the garden. He reached out towards Li Qiye in order to save Meiyu.

Li Qiye spread out his palm and a black hole emerged and instantly engulfed this man. Under the Heaven Devourer Evil Fist, even this old man could do nothing but accept his banishment.

“Ancestor!” Jian Xiaotie was shocked to see the banishment.

Li Qiye insipidly said: “No one can save you.” The Hell Suppressing Physique activated and came crashing down, obliterating Meiyu.

“No!” She screamed before her death. Her true fate was shattered and turned into bright particles that slowly dispersed. There was not the slightest trace of her left in the aftermath.

Chapter 1262: The Person In The Coffin

The entire scene was eerily quiet after Meiyu's particles dispersed. The crowd could hear each other breathing.

There was no other sound because people had yet to return from their shock.

Feiyan, on the other hand, noticed that the situation was quite dire after her chest was penetrated. She immediately ran for dear life without pausing at all. At this moment, she didn't give a damn about maintaining the appearance of a God-Monarch.

Eventually, people calmed down and noticed the messy garden. They stared in a daze at this astonishing event.

They all knew about Meiyu's cultivation, and her seductive gaze was even more terrifying. As for Shangguan Feiyan, despite being an Intermediate Monarch, she was still not a match for Li Qiye and was suppressed after a single exchange.

One could say that she was being careless and didn't use her weapons. Nevertheless, she was strong enough that her bare hands could still slay ordinary paragons. Thus, it was surprising that she suffered against Li Qiye and was forced to flee.

Zhang Baitu and Hong Yujiao were slack-jawed and couldn't react in a long time. They knew that Li Qiye was very strong, but not to this level. He crushed Meiyu like an ant!

Earlier, they were worried that he might be manipulated by her seductive gaze. It looked like their anxiety was needless since Li Qiye was only pretending earlier.

"Whoosh!" When everyone was still stunned, the void opened and an old man walked out. It was the person Li Qiye banished right before finishing off Meiyu. He was able to escape from deep space without suffering any damage in a leisurely manner — this was indicative of his great power.

Despite his gray hair, his complexion was still good for he was in high spirits and had a youthful vigor. Despite restraining his terrifying aura, just his eyes alone could shatter stars and create a grand dao. His gaze alone was enough to instill cold chills into others.

An old paragon recognized him and murmured: "The Jian Grandfather..."

He was the current master of the Jian Clan, the reason for this celebration — Jian Longwei.

"Friend, you have crossed the line." Jian Longwei couldn't help but shake his head: "This is stirring the hornet's nest, a great catastrophe. I'm afraid no one in the human race can protect you when it has escalated to this level."

Jian Longwei had no hostility against Li Qiye. In fact, he even liked the guy for being so gifted. Unfortunately, he had killed Meiyu and gravely wounded Feiyan. This was offending two great powers in the Heaven Spirit World. Even Jian Longwei would have a difficult time protecting him after this major event.

Li Qiye smiled and replied: "Only the Roaring Conch, it can't be considered a catastrophe."

Jian Longwei didn't know how to respond after seeing Li Qiye's relaxed demeanor. He assumed that this was a case of a calf not being afraid of a tiger and said: "The Roaring Conch can command a hundred tribes, to oppose them is to seek death—"

"Longwei, leave." Before he could finish, a feeble voice sounded in his mind. This voice was not loud and only Jian Longwei could hear it.

However, he seemed to have been struck by lightning after hearing this voice. He even thought that he had misheard and found it completely unbelievable. This matter actually alerted their progenitor!

Li Qiye casually pointed forward and a portal appeared, then he disappeared inside it right away.

Many couldn't react in time after the portal went away, so they just stood there looking silly.

"So strong." Eventually, a person murmured after their mind returned: "No wonder why he dared to help the Peacock Tree refine a billion Teeming Fish. This is a mass murderer, a death god. No, we have to call him the Fiercest!"

"Fiercest." Someone carefully thought over this title and found that it was very fitting. Gongsun Meiyu was the Profound Monarch's favorite concubine, but Li Qiye killed her without a care. Just how decisive and ruthless was he? Such a person was indeed worthy of being called "Fiercest."

Jian Longwei regained his composure as well and told Jian Xiaotie: "Xiaotie, take care of the guests."

In the depths of the Jian Clan was a forbidden ground. A pond was sealed in this place, but it was more apt to call it a coffin made out of water.

This coffin was in the center and emitted a flashing amber hue. Each ray of light seemed tangible.

This liquid amber coffin was so strong that even the seal couldn't contain it completely. People could still feel the faint immortal fragrance of a dragon's saliva. After catching a whiff, they would feel their bloodline become several times stronger as if they were about to turn into a true dragon. They would feel that dragons were surging through the blood in their veins.

An old man dressed in a simple style was sleeping inside this coffin. Despite his humble robes, he had the image of a stately emperor. It was as if he had once soared above the nine heavens, rising above the world; he was a natural born leader.

"Buzz." A portal appeared and Li Qiye came out of it. He went in front of the water coffin to look at the old man before slowly sitting down and giving a gentle sigh after a while.

"Splash!" The sound of water splashing came about. The old man submerged in this coffin floated above its surface and opened his eyes, revealing his devastating power.

He wanted to sit up, but Li Qiye gently waved his sleeve and said: "Jian Wen, there's no need for formalities. If you climb out, it will be problematic to reseal you, so just lie there."

He rested his head down and emotionally looked at Li Qiye: "Your Excellency, it really is you. You have regained your real body."

Li Qiye sat there in a carefree manner and nodded: "It is thanks to Lil' Blackie. He paid a great price."

The old man in the coffin gently sighed in response: "Your Excellency, everything Blackie had was thanks to you. You gave him life, gave him invincibility. What he did was simply to repay you."

Li Qiye sat there and watched his friend who had grown old. He had seen this kind of thing too many times already.

"Time is merciless. Even the old man's dragon saliva cannot seal you much longer." Li Qiye lamented: "You are now old, no longer as mighty as before."

The old man smiled in response: "I'm quite satisfied after living for so long. It is all due to the blessings of Your Excellency and Master."

Li Qiye agreed: "That old man indeed treated you as his own. It looks like I was right to leave you and your sister to him."

The old man chuckled. Even a powerful existence like him still smiled like a child before Li Qiye; it was as if he had returned to the past.

Back then, they were vagabonds without a home. Their days were filled with anxiety and fear, running from one place to another until they met a certain crow. That was the day that they found peace and understood what the word "happiness" meant.

"Your Excellency, have you visited Big Sis?" The old man showed a pure smile like a little boy.

Li Qiye was quiet for a while before nodding his head: "Yes. I didn't want to return after all these years, but I still had to bid her a final farewell."

The old man pondered as well before replying: "Big Sis had no regrets. She only lamented the fact that she couldn't surpass her final dao test in her heart in order to accompany you to the very end. She wanted to apologize to you for being an obstacle to your eternal path."

Li Qiye gently sighed: "Just let the past go, I don't blame her either. I have forgotten about such distant matters. If I took everything to heart, I would never be at peace."

The old man happily added: "I have always thought that Your Excellency would never return and that I wouldn't be able to see you again. I'm quite content now to see you one last time."

Li Qiye nodded but stayed quiet.

Eventually, the old man softly asked: "Your Excellency, are you here to say goodbye?"

"You can say that." Li Qiye affirmed: "It might be for good this time. Seeing you one last time will fulfill one of my wishes."

He asked with a very strange and complicated expression: "Are you going up there now? It is a world where gods and emperors coexist..."

Chapter 1263: Jian Wendi

Li Qiye smiled after seeing the old man's dazed appearance and casually commented: "You said that your big sis couldn't cross the final hurdle, but isn't it the same for you?"

"Your Excellency, you are right about that. It is the same for me, please don't laugh." The old man regained his composure and smiled wryly.

"It's nothing." Li Qiye waved his sleeve in response: "If you wish to know, I can tell you."

"No..." The old man shook his head with a firm demeanor: "I don't want to know nor do I want to ask a single thing! He is he and I am I. Even if he was an Immortal Emperor admired by the masses, he is but a stranger in my mind!"

He resolutely declared: "Even though his blood runs through my veins, in my eyes, I have severed all ties with him, and so have my sister and mother. The moment we had to flee for dear life that day was the moment we were no longer related to him. My surname is Jian, my sister's surname is Jian, and so is our mother's!"

Li Qiye sighed after seeing his expression: "Just let it go. Everything will be buried in the river of time."

"Yes, it is over already, who will still remember or know about it?" The dazed old man quietly whispered: "But my big sis was haunted by this shadow her whole life. She was born to be extraordinary, destined to be great, yet she chose to live a mundane life! It was all because she had a father who wanted to kill his own daughter!"

Jian Wendi was the name of this old man. He was also the progenitor of the Jian Clan and Jian Wenxin's younger brother.

The origin of the Jian Clan had always been a secret in the Heaven Spirit World. No one knew where they came from.

In fact, this matter hid a great secret that those who knew about would rather keep silent. The Jian Clan came from the Mortal Emperor World, and Jian Wendi and Jian Wenxin were the children of an Immortal Emperor. Unfortunately, they couldn't enjoy their lives as a prince and princess.

This emperor used murder to prove his dao. The moment he reached the top, an inner demon appeared that he failed to defeat. Due to his murderous dao, he was doomed to a path of ruthless killing.

Before his ascension, he already had a wife and children. Because of this, he couldn't reach the ultimate state of emotionlessness and ruthlessness. In order to do this, he had to remove his restraints. Thus, before the grand dao, he wanted to sever all emotions by killing his own blood in order to prove his dao.

Alas, he failed at first. His followers were able to save his family and take them away from him. However, he was only half a step away from becoming an emperor at this point, so he was completely unbeatable.

Those who protected his family couldn't escape his wrath. From then on, Jian Wendi's mother fled with her two children all across the nine worlds.

Later on, they met a crow who gave them the idea of faking their own deaths in order to escape.

Their father truly thought that they had died, so he finally defeated his inner demon to prove his dao and became an invincible Immortal Emperor.

After becoming an emperor, he became even more powerful. He was able to calculate his own bloodline and realized that his son and daughter were still alive.

The consequences were easy to imagine. All of the seniors that protected his wife and children died in the battle. The Dark Crow had to appear once again to rescue them from his clutches.

Because their father was an emperor, he was invincible in that generation with nobody capable of stopping him.

At the same time, the bloodline of their father ran through their bodies, so they couldn't escape his vision no matter where they went.

Ultimately, in order to escape the hunt, their mother committed suicide while their bloodline was sealed by the Dark Crow. He then entrusted the children to another extremely powerful being that eventually hid them away.

Because their bloodline had been sealed and their bodies disappeared into the most secretive dimension in this world, even the emperor couldn't calculate where they were hiding via their bloodline.

In the end, the emperor gave up. The sister and brother finally managed to escape this calamity.

As more generations went by, their sealed bloodline was eventually unlocked. They were able to appear in this world once more.

The invincible existence that had protected them all this time took them in as disciples. Because of this, these two were able to start the Jian Clan.

"It's over, everything is now gone." Jian Wendi eventually shook his head and said: "I am a member of the Jian Clan, the past no longer has anything to do with me."

Ever since the start of their escape, the two had decided to take their mother's surname in order to cut off all relations with their father.

Li Qiye felt a bit sorrowful while looking at Jian Wendi. Even though the two of them were able to escape, the whole experience still cast an indelible shadow that hung over their hearts for the rest of their lives.

Her sister was born to be extraordinary and extraordinary she was. Alas, she ultimately pursued the peaceful life of a mortal. Because of this, she gave up competing for the Heaven's Will and a chance to become an emperor. Nevertheless, due to her great wisdom, she couldn't truly experience this peaceful lifestyle.

Luckily, Jian Wendi handled it much better. Even though he couldn't surpass the dao block in his heart, the Jian Clan — under his leadership — still prospered and became an inheritance that lasted to this day.

After a good while, Jian Wendi commented with regret: "It is a pity that I cannot follow you, Your Excellency, to serve you during your journey..."

Li Qiye waved his sleeve and flatly said: "It is enough for you to stay here and protect the Jian Clan. As for paying me back, your sister has done plenty. You don't owe me anything."

Jian Wendi disagreed: "No, Your Excellency. In my mind, you are my second parent. Without you, my sister and I wouldn't have survived and my Jian Clan definitely wouldn't be what it is today. I only hate the fact that I don't wish to go further, I can't face it!"

Li Qiye sighed: "I'm also very happy to see the current Jian Clan. This place can be considered my home as well."

Jian Wendi smiled innocently like a child in front of Li Qiye. It was thanks to Li Qiye that the two of them were able to have the courage to live on.

Jian Wendi issued a command: "Tell Longwei and Xiaotie to come here."

Jian Longwei eventually entered with Jian Xiaotie behind him. The two were quite startled to see Li Qiye casually sitting there.

Jian Longwei was eight thousand years old now, but the times he had met the progenitor could be counted on one's hand. Outside of earth-shattering events, the progenitor normally wouldn't summon him.

As for Jian Xiaotie, he had only met the progenitor once. It was during his coming of age. From then on, he wasn't summoned again.

In fact, not many members of any clan would be able to see their progenitors. This included the ancestors as well.

Jian Wendi ordered the two: "Kneel before His Excellency."

Even though the two didn't know the reason, they didn't dare to disobey their progenitor, so they respectfully kneeled before Li Qiye.

Jian Wendi slowly said: "Longwei is the current clan master while Xiaotie is the next, so you two should know some things about our clan. His Excellency before you is our benefactor and the master of our clan! Our clan was able to exist because of his protection. Remember our eternal creed, His Excellency is our lord and his commands are my commands."

The two of them were inevitably shocked to hear this. This was especially true for Longwei since he had been the clan master for a long time, so he was privy to a few secrets. He knew that there was a great and mysterious character that helped create the Jian Clan.

He didn't expect that he would be able to see this legendary existence in his lifetime.

"This disciple greets Your Excellency." He calmed down and bowed his head towards Li Qiye. Each bow was very sincere as his head touched the ground. Each knock seemingly came from his heart.

"Your Excellency..." Jian Xiaotie also did the same. He didn't know as much as Longwei, but as the successor, he had still heard of a few things about this legend.

He didn't expect to see a mythical being that could even ambush Immortal Emperors. Moreover, this existence had been right beside him for the last several days.

"Rise." Li Qiye accepted the grand gesture from these two and gently waved his hand.

After these two stood up, Jian Wendi ordered: "Take your leave, I will talk to His Excellency now."

They motioned a respectful gesture before quietly retreating.

"The children are filial and gifted at both fighting and scheming, so I am not worried about the Jian Clan at all." Li Qiye nodded: "As long as the old geezer is still there, the Jian Clan just needs to do its own thing, nothing will be able to cause trouble for the clan as it continues to stand strong."

Chapter 1264: Garden In The Sky

Li Qiye sat together with Jian Wendi. The two of them chatted about different matters and the Jian Clan. Unwittingly, the two of them returned to the past when Jian Wendi was still a child while Li Qiye was still the same as ever.

"Your Excellency, are you really going up again?" Jian Wendi knew the answer, but he still had to ask again.

Li Qiye smiled: "Yes, what must come shall come. I have to face it after all. You should know that no one can stop my journey to the very end. I am destined to do so because someone must."

Jian Wendi knew that nothing could change this. The truth was that he knew what the answer was long ago.

In the past, his sister had tried to stop him as well, but like Li Qiye said, no one was able to stop his destiny.

"An age of gods and emperors together..." Jian Wendi sighed and didn't know what to say. Perhaps he should wish Li Qiye luck.

Li Qiye looked at him and smiled: "It is a brilliant era that makes the blood boil. At the same time, it is also a cruel place. The greater the momentum, the more merciless it is."

"I know, it is a shame that I won't be able to see the scene of dragons competing against tigers with my own eyes." Jian Wendi nodded softly.

Li Qiye replied: "You had the chance back then, you could have avoided Hong Tian's generation and came out a few years later to become an emperor. Then you would have been able to see this brilliant era."

After hearing this, Jian Wendi revealed a smile that encompassed many different emotions. There was a mix of inexplicable bitterness yet acceptance as he answered: "Immortal Emperor... so what? Invincibility, so what? It is only an ephemeral firework blossoming above the river of time. I am very content with how many descendants I have now. There's nothing else I would ask for."

Li Qiye felt sentimental while looking at Jian Wendi. Neither of the brother and sister could overcome the void in their hearts.

Their father had left an unsurpassable shadow in their minds. It caused them to prefer a mundane life untempted by invincibility. Both were apprehensive about becoming an existence like their father.

Jian Wendi regretfully said: "I do wish that I could follow Your Excellency to the end of the world like Immortal Emperor Min Ren and the others."

"I'm very happy about what you have today. Your Jian Clan is prosperous and stronger than anything." Li Qiye happily smiled: "Plus, even if you become an Immortal Emperor, I wouldn't want you to follow me to the end of the world. Like Immortal Emperor Min Ren and Empress Hong Tian, they have their own paths as well."

Li Qiye flatly explained: "The ultimate war is my personal ambition and desire. It has nothing to do with others, so I don't want to tie them to my war chariot."

Jian Wendi quietly nodded. There were too many things beyond his reach since someone as extraordinary as him was still trapped by his fate.

After a while, Li Qiye smiled and asked: "Has the old man run out again?"

Jian Wendi smiled back and replied: "It's only natural that after being still for so long, Master would want to take a break and play outside." [1. There is an idiom that is quite difficult to translate. The meaning is about a pendulum swinging from the extreme; the raw translation would be "motion from stillness". In this case, Wendi is saying that his master has been quiet/reclusive for very long, so he naturally will want to come out and play as this is the natural order. I couldn't really incorporate this particular idiom into the sentence without it sounding extremely rigid.]

"That's good, I want to see him." Li Qiye chuckled.

With that, he gently tapped Jian Wendi's shoulder and calmly said: "I should go now. Take care."

Jian Wendi was quiet for a moment before nodding: "Your Excellency, take care. There is still a way to go, I believe that you will eventually become invincible."

Li Qiye smilingly said before turning to leave: "Yes, nothing can stop my determination. Take care and live well!"

"Your Excellency!" He only managed to take a few steps before Jian Wendi shouted: "Will, will I be able to see you again?"

Li Qiye didn't turn around, but he responded in a carefree manner: "I don't know. Just consider this as our final farewell so that you can stop worrying about it."

With that, he casually created a portal and disappeared.

Jian Wendi continued lying there in silence. Time seemed to have stopped for him.

Eventually, he quietly murmured: "See you again, Father."

Tears inadvertently wetted his eyes as they closed.

"Splash!" The water splashed again as he sank into his water coffin to re-enter deep slumber. Perhaps when he woke again, it would be a different era.

In Rainbow City, there was a place where no one could visit. Many people didn't know about it, including those from the Jian Clan. However, among those who did know, they called it the highest city or the final city in this region. Of course, some also referred to it as the place above the clouds.

It was not suitable to call this place a city since it was more of a garden floating in the clouds. At least, in appearance it was.

This great garden was not located in Dragonhark, Dragonwell, or even Dragonspring. It was floating in an unknown location.

Odd flowers and strange grasses were in full bloom. The whole garden had a wafting floral fragrance. Elegant and rich scents came from these flowers alongside very strange fragrances. This place had all kinds of rare species of the nine worlds. In the middle was a wooden house built in an exquisite manner.

It was difficult to imagine the craftsmanship that had gone into it. Perhaps during the building process, each wooden plank, beam, and column were dedicated for this building. Their weight, size, and appearance were scrutinized with an incomparably strict standard. The weight had to be perfect in order to make this house into a work of art.

There were many busy figures in this garden. Some were watering the flowers while others were taking care of the weeds or trimming the bushes. A few were loosening the soil and more were catching worms...

On a careful inspection, these busy people were all old men. Gray robes, huge coats, sleeveless shirts... all of their outfits were different as well.

They also looked different in terms of figures. Some were normal while others were incredibly thin or fat. However, at a second glance, regardless of their uniform or body shape, there was something very similar about them. It was difficult to pinpoint the similarity; perhaps it was their silhouette. This familiar contour gave others the feeling that they had seen these old men before.

In fact, if people were to think about it for a second, they would realize that they really had seen these old men before. For example, the old man that summoned the rainbow fish, the collector at Dragonhark Valley, or the shopkeeper at Rainbow Inn. All of them gave off this sense of familiarity, a *deja vu* of sorts.

Li Qiye appeared in this garden that was forbidden to outsiders without express permission from its master. Regardless of how powerful or heaven-defying one might be, they wouldn't be able to enter this place.

Li Qiye had a beaming smile on his face while looking at the busy old men in this garden. He didn't greet them and only headed straight for the wooden house.

The old men ignored Li Qiye as well and continued with their tasks as if they didn't see his arrival.

In front of this cabin was a tea table with two wooden chairs. On one side was an old man fanning a fire to boil his tea. All of his attention was on this task. His eyes seemed to be jumping along with the fire while he was unaware of Li Qiye.

Li Qiye didn't break the old man's focus and only smiled as he sat down. The wooden chair was so comfortable that it made people want to close their eyes to sleep. It was as if it was specifically tailored for Li Qiye. It fit his body perfectly. Just a bit longer would be too big while an inch less would make it too narrow. There was no room for criticism.

He slowly closed his eyes as if to sleep. Meanwhile, the old man making his tea still didn't notice Li Qiye. All of his focus was on making his tea.

Eventually, the old man finally finished and added the tea leaves. A sweet fragrance came out as he poured himself a cup and one for Li Qiye as well.

The steam that rose from the hot tea actually condensed above the cups to form dragons. One could even faintly hear the wondrous cries of these dragons.

Chapter 1265: Old Man

Li Qiye seemed to wake up as he accepted the teacup. He gently took a sip, letting the tea seep into his belly. There was an indescribable comfort that stemmed from the perfect temperature.

Dragon cries resounded from his belly as if he had just swallowed a gigantic dragon.

Li Qiye couldn't help but praise: "A great tea like this dragon tea can only be found in this place." The aftertaste was incredible as well.

He finally opened his eyes fully and found the garden to be at peace. The old men that were gardening earlier had all disappeared, only Li Qiye and the old tea-maker were left.

At this time, the old man seated himself in the other chair and slowly savored the taste of his tea in a natural and leisurely manner. It was as if he was drinking a tea of immortals. In fact, his tea was not far from being an immortal tea. Even Immortal Emperors wouldn't necessarily be able to drink his dragon tea.

After finishing his cup, Li Qiye sighed with great satisfaction. The old man finished as well.

Li Qiye smiled and teased: "Old man, it seems that you can't stand the loneliness again? Is that why you are playing around like this?"

The old man lied down comfortably in his chair and chuckled: "Being in bed for too long makes my arms and legs numb, so I had to get up to do some work. Toiling is unavoidable in life after all."

"Being hard at work is good, I was actually afraid you would panic from having nothing to do." Li Qiye smiled back.

The old man happily looked at the countless strange flowers in the garden and said in a carefree manner: "What can I do with these old bones of mine? Don't worry about that, Crow. Plus, I can't leave the Giant Dragon Mountain either way, so I'm just running around and playing the merchant — just some coolie's works."

Li Qiye laughed; he was truly enjoying the carefree atmosphere at the garden. This was a conversation with someone at the same level as him, yet they weren't enemies. It was a very enjoyable matter.

"I thought you would continue to plot and hide behind the scenes until all the old men take action. I didn't expect you to come out in this generation." The old man stated: "It is quite surprising that you were able to resist the supreme artifact in the Immortal Demon Grotto as well. I actually thought that you would return there and try to seize it."

"Am I really that kind of person?" Li Qiye couldn't help but smile: "I have always been upright, I'm not the type to scheme like that."

"Upright?" The old man burst out in laughter: "If a crow like you claims to be upright, then even the high heavens would start tearing up from laughing."

Li Qiye was amused as well. Eventually, he replied: "After I left, that existence in the grotto still figured out some way to make my situation very unstable. Lil' Blackie was too anxious. In a fit of rage, he recklessly charged in there." He sighed softly at this point.

"That brat always treated you as a father." The old man dismissively said: "Outside of that little girl, nothing else is as important to him as you, so of course he did what he did."

Li Qiye replied with remorse: "Back then when I took him to the Mortal Emperor World, I only hoped for him to be able to soar to the nine heavens like an eagle. Unfortunately, he couldn't let go of a few things and decided to stay in the Mortal Emperor World. Because of that, well, you know what happened to him afterward."

"His decision also made you lose the opportunity to seize the grotto. Haven't you always been scheming for that item? Unfortunately, you failed." The old man stood up and chuckled.

"It is true that I want the item, but only if it doesn't risk many people's lives. I can only say that I got very close to doing so. I guess certain things were doomed from the start." Li Qiye gently shook his head.

"Heh, this is fine too. If it wasn't for Lil' Blackie getting you out of there and, by chance, if you actually obtained that item, the old heavens would turn blind. If you could obtain all the supreme items that you wanted, how could others bear such injustice? Even the villainous heavens wouldn't want to live on in such an unfair world." The old man cheerfully gloated at Li Qiye's misfortune.

"Just let the past go. I've grown tired of living after such a long life anyway." Li Qiye smiled: "Since Lil' Blackie has saved me, I'll just live freely through this generation and go all out. I'll finish what must be done, there's no need to worry about life and death afterward." [1. This sentence might not make sense unless you remember the artifact that is in the Immortal Demon Grotto and what it does.]

The old man emotionally sighed after insipidly stating: "Yes, it is tiresome to live for so long."

Li Qiye smiled and teased: "I see that you are living quite well. You sleep for a bit then run out and play for a bit. How comfortable and carefree."

The old man glared at him in response: "When the villainous heavens played me like this, what else can I do? I can't die even if I want to, and if I want to live, I can only stay in this place! Luckily, my descendants didn't let me down and managed to pass down my bloodline, so I don't have many regrets."

Li Qiye looked at him and asked: "Have you not thought about going strong one more time to the end of the world?"

“Hahaha, Dark Crow, don’t try to drag me down with you. This is your war, not mine. I’m just an ordinary old geezer now.” The old man chortled: “I am living a nice family life. Running around when I want to, making some tea when I feel like it, and sometimes beating up a few bad kids who won’t listen — I’m quite content with this kind of life already.”

“I can’t believe it.” Li Qiye chuckled: “Back in that distant era, a dragon demon dared to fight all the way to the nine firmaments and opposed the villainous heavens himself. Where is that dragon now?”

“Damned crow, there’s no need to goad me.” The old man didn’t become angry. Instead, he grinned and said: “I have no more aspirations and have nothing to say about my loss back then. I don’t have any grievances about being imprisoned here either. After all, I was not as strong as I imagined, but I can handle losing.”

Li Qiye pondered for a bit before nodding his head: “This is what I admire about you the most, you can see things clearly and are very open-minded. It is true that there is no humiliation in losing to the villainous heavens. This path is very difficult. For millions of years, countless others have tried, and just as many have become bones.”

“In the end, how many are still brooding right now?” Li Qiye gently sighed: “Being able to let things go is the sign of a real hero. I myself can’t get over this hurdle, I just can’t gracefully admit defeat and will try to get up from where I’ve fallen. No matter what it is or who it is, I will start from the beginning to sweep through it all by cutting down all those who try to stop me!”

“But being able to give up is really nice, really nice...” Li Qiye lamented: “By letting things go, everything else will feel acceptable in life. Or rather, many other things are insignificant compared to just being alive. As long as you don’t care, things that used to be important will no longer matter. Like the drifting clouds, they won’t be worth mentioning.”

“Damned crow, it is not the same for you.” The old man smiled and replied: “I have lost completely — this made me realize that I have other things to protect in life, such as my children.”

“If you give up, you would be wasting your immortality.” The old man reflected: “If possible, you should gamble everything just once. If you win, you will have everything. If you lose, at least lose everything as well after utilizing everything at your disposal.”

“After suffering an utter defeat, you might be able to see through it and let go.” With that, he smiled: “When you don’t have anything left to bet with, you will have no choice but to give up.”

“Maybe.” Li Qiye had a somber expression as he responded: “If I’m able to put everything on the table, then I might as well gamble it all away just once. When Wenxin asked me why I can’t stop, the truth is that I didn’t know back then either. Perhaps it is because I haven’t tasted true defeat, being left with nothing but empty hands. Maybe this defeat will even end with my death.”

“Regardless of victory or defeat or even death, there is nothing to be afraid of.” The old man said: “Your life has been quite productive. For many generations, who has led a more brilliant life than you? You have experienced and done everything possible. Even if you stay as an ant, it would still have been a good life.”

“An ant trapped between the heaven and earth...” Li Qiye eventually shook his head and smiled before putting on a determined look: “Even as an ant, I still don’t want to hide. One day, I will stand above all else. My destiny is my own, the heavens will not decide my fate!”

“That’s what I want to hear.” The old man laughed in agreement: “Even as an ant, you would still rather be an extraordinary ant than an insignificant one.”

“Well said.” Li Qiye chuckled: “Yes, I want to be an extraordinary ant!”

Chapter 1266: A Joke For The Ages

Li Qiye and the old man were quite pleased with their statements. They glanced at each other and laughed heartily; tears even came out.

They had experienced countless years and hardships. Once upon a time, they were the rulers at the peak of this world. Very rarely would they be able to laugh this sincerely.

In the eyes of outsiders, they were either unfathomable or too stern and stately. Others seldom spotted them laughing like this to the point their stomachs hurt.

They finally stopped after a long while.

“An ant between the heaven and earth, eh?” It took quite some time before the old man stopped grinning.

Li Qiye cheerfully added with a boisterous chuckle: “The villainous heavens is just a wretch!”

The two of them became tired from their own ruckus and sat back down to rest again with their eyes closed. It seemed that this kind of indulgence felt quite good for them.

In fact, this burst of laughter was very precious. As overlords, they rarely expressed their true feelings before others; they could only reveal their true selves before someone of the same level.

The old man smiled and spoke after resting for a bit: “Crow, in these long and boring years, it is a great joy in life to have met you.”

The gentle breeze blew by. Its gentle coolness was quite comforting, as if it was blowing all worldly troubles away.

“Geezer, I agree that there are fewer than few people who I can sit down and have a talk with.” Li Qiye still had his eyes closed as he happily replied: “Life is less boring from knowing you.”

The years were too long. For both the old man and the Dark Crow, there weren’t too many people that they could talk and laugh so freely with.

The world might be vast, but how many were actually qualified to become their friends?

The old man didn’t respond; he seemed to have fallen asleep in his wooden chair. Li Qiye did the same while basking in the sea breeze.

After a long time, Li Qiye commented: “Geezer, how come I don’t see as many clouds and mists in your mountain range this time? Are all of your kids staying at home obediently?”

“A wicked person just arrived. What if those little monkeys run wild and choose to be blind? You would then teach them a lesson by peeling their skin. I would lose all face if that were to happen, so I told them to play nice at home.” The old man answered with a smile.

Li Qiye chuckled and leisurely said: “Don’t worry, with our friendship, I would show you some consideration. Even if I peeled their dragon scales, I would still spare their lives.”

The old man smiled in response. A bit later, he flatly asked: “Crow, you didn’t come here just to visit this old man, right?”

Li Qiye cheerfully replied: “Forget it, there’s no need to crawl out, your appearance is too terrifying.”

“Hey, don’t be so sure. Maybe one day, you will look even more horrifying than me. The villainous heavens won’t let you off so easily given your plans.” The old man laughed back.

Li Qiye continued: “We’ll talk again when that day comes. After all, the heavens has never forgiven anyone, so I don’t need it to show me any mercy either.”

The two of them paused their conversation again and enjoyed the serenity. Even though the outside world was endless, there was no need to worry about it in this place.

“Crow, what do you want?” After a long time, the old man finally spoke in a calm and plain manner. It was as if this was just an idle conversation between old friends.

Li Qiye opened his eyes to look at the drifting clouds up in the blue sky. He didn’t answer right away.

“The Immortal Dragon Rune, a weapon, or maybe my lifeguarding artifacts?” The old man leisurely listed a couple items.

This plain manner of speaking made it seem like the topic was insignificant, but if others were to find out that he was referring to supreme treasures, they would be scared silly.

“Don’t worry, you can keep your little items. I would be too greedy if I tried to take them away from you.” Li Qiye only smiled.

The old man smiled as well and didn’t seem to care too much.

“Geezer.” Eventually, Li Qiye got to the point: “Back then, that brat Bu Si came to ask you for help, correct?”

It was the old man’s turn to be quiet.

Li Qiye chuckled before continuing: “I don’t know what that brat was playing with or how he shattered. I don’t care what plans he left behind either, I only want to know about one thing.”

“Yes, it’s as you guessed, I have been to the Bone Sea.” The old man didn’t try to conceal this at all.

Li Qiye went on: “I knew it. When his skeletal horse disappeared here, I understood some matters right away. That brat was still thinking about those things.”

The old man smiled: "Bu Si's foresight was not bad, but it is quite limited compared to yours. He was fixated on becoming immortal. However, all of this led back to one thing; it must be traced back to the source."

Immortal Emperor Bu Si had died many times just to revive again. He was a reason for awe during his generation, but in the mouth of these two, he was only a junior.

Li Qiye eventually spoke: "Old man, I want you to open it for me."

"Hah, Crow, that's easy for you to say." The old man responded: "I have spent painstaking efforts on it already. Even though I'm not using it, who knows if I will need it in the future or not?"

"I know." Li Qiye smiled: "You aren't sure if that day will come either, but since you aren't using it right now, lend it to me."

"Crow, what are you thinking?" The old man was still hesitant: "Don't tell me you are looking at the Trident? It won't be that easy."

"Heh, old geezer, you are underestimating me too much." Li Qiye answered: "The Trident might be nice, but I have never thought about obtaining it. I have more than enough treasures in this generation so possessing it doesn't matter. There's no need to suffer in the Bonesea just for the Trident."

"The Bonesea, eh." The old man sighed after hearing this: "That day will come to Heaven Spirit after all. Many things are simply inevitable."

The Bonesea was one of the twelve burial grounds and the most dangerous place in the Heaven Spirit World. It was full of mysteries, a land where countless have fallen, but this didn't deter people from going there.

"That place isn't pleasant at all." Li Qiye chuckled: "But I do have to admit that it isn't a bad location. It is worthy of making so many people drool with greed."

"Greed?" The old man chortled: "It's the same for all twelve burial grounds, but in those devilish places, only the living can enjoy the spoils."

"It doesn't matter since I'm not trying to find a nest or anything." Li Qiye smiled: "However, there is something I need over there. Old man, you have been there many times before, so I need you to open it for me. This is the only way for me to get things done."

The old man didn't answer; it was as if he was sleeping in his chair. Li Qiye didn't rush him either. It seemed as if he had forgotten about his own question while enjoying the breeze.

"Crow." The old man took a long time before answering: "We might be friends. After all, I took in those two as my disciples since I needed to pass down my lineage. The brat married my daughter and this was perfect to make up for my lacking bloodline. However..."

"I know, there is no free lunch." Li Qiye replied: "Geezer, tell me what you want. As long as I can get it, I will seriously consider."

The old man lied there as if he was contemplating the issue. Eventually, he opened his mouth: "Crow, I am now old. I don't know how much longer this old body of mine can last. I have already obtained pretty

much everything I've ever wanted. As for treasures, they are just worldly possessions, I have no need for them."

"Old man, don't tell me you want to betroth another daughter somewhere to me." Li Qiye joked: "If that's the case, then forget it."

The old man smiled and shook his head: "Come on, Crow, others don't know who you are, but I do. If I betroth a daughter to you, she'll just live a life of suffering! I don't want my little girl to wash her face with tears every day."

"My little girls aren't worthy to climb up your high branch." The old man half-jokingly smiled and said: "I only want them to be safe and live happily."

Chapter 1267: Bidding Farewell

Li Qiye didn't mind the rejection from the old man, evident by his smile.

The old man eventually continued: "Like I said, Crow, I don't have any more pursuits, and this is the case for that item too. If you want it, then I shall perform the opening."

"I understand." Li Qiye mused it through and said: "After all is said and done, old man, you want me to owe you a favor."

"Yes, you will owe me a favor." The old man happily replied: "Crow, if you lose, then consider the item as a gift. But if you win... then regardless of what happens in the future, in the new world and era, just don't forget that you owe me a favor."

He leisurely went on: "It doesn't matter to me how much longer I have to live, I just hope that you can remember this favor and take care of my descendants. What do you think, Crow?"

"Old man, in the end you just want me to babysit your descendants." Li Qiye laughed it up and replied: "Everyone says that those who manage to grow old are all wily. You are quite calculating nowadays."

"Old people are sentimental as well." The old man only smiled: "Even though I don't have that many children, their very being is a treasure. If I actually die one day, perhaps they will become other people's prey."

"Dragons, huh." Li Qiye smiled and said: "If that day actually comes, dragon blood will indeed be very tempting. After all, who doesn't want a piece of such a nice meal?"

The old man cheerfully replied: "I do want the little monkeys to turn into true dragons one day, but even if that day comes, it will be a calamity as well. The gods and emperors will all want them."

After a long time, Li Qiye gave a carefree smile and declared: "Why not?! If I can win the final war, then nothing else will matter. I'll just be a babysitter then; old man, you have my promise."

The old man only gave a plain smile. This was within his expectations, so he wasn't overly surprised or lost in jubilation.

The conversation stopped for a while before the old man spoke again: "About Little Jian... I'm sorry, even as her master, I was powerless to help her."

There was a doleful look on Li Qiye's face. He eventually sighed and said: "Old man, you were a good master and did all you could for both the brat and the girl."

"There are a few uncrossable ridges in life. Not everyone can always be strong." He helplessly lamented: "She was nearly flawless. It is a shame that she couldn't escape the shadow of her past."

The atmosphere became solemn. There were a few things that couldn't be changed by even the most heaven-defying of people.

The old man eased up and smiled: "Well, I don't think she had any regrets even in her last moments. In fact, you might be the only one who feels remorse."

"It was her choice back then." Li Qiye faintly smiled: "She wanted to die due to her pursuit of normality. She was a good girl and has done many things for me."

"Just dismiss the past from your mind." The old man added: "You have always been the most important person in the girl's heart, and she believed that she lived a fulfilling life. Despite not being able to overcome her shadow, you brought light to her world. Amidst the hues of carnage and shades of despair, you gave them life. When they were at their most vulnerable, you gave them the courage to live on."

"Thus, consign the past to oblivion." The old man nonchalantly declared: "The brat once said, the light you have given them is brighter than the darkness of the past."

"But the light cannot shine to every corner of the world." Li Qiye had a profound expression as he stared at the sky. It was as if he was peering through everything. After a while, he flatly replied: "There is no savior in this world. Everyone needs to rely on themselves."

The old man laughed in response: "A savior? Those types of people should go to hell! Everyone wants a savior, but such beliefs will turn this savior into a devil! They would only breed inactivity and stagnation. People should be their own saviors; if they can't save or change their own lives, how can a 'savior' do anything?"

"Makes sense." Li Qiye bemoaned: "I saved the lives of those two, but could not save them from their fate."

"Damn it!" In the end, the old man playfully cursed: "Crow, our combined age is older than just about anyone, why are we bewailing like two old women? To hell with this melancholic conversation!"

"Well, old people tend to blabber on and on." Li Qiye grinned.

The two ended up quietly looking at the sky as if it was the most beautiful scene in the world.

This moment of solace was undisturbable. It was a time true overlords like them could find peace.

After a long time, the old man spoke again: "Crow, I will not see you off. Return from whence you came."

Li Qiye quipped: "Fine, it would be too scary if you climbed out of the nest. I know the way."

Just like that, Li Qiye stood up and looked at the old man to say: "Geezer, this is farewell. Perhaps this will be our last meeting."

"Take care, damned crow." The old man responded with a smile.

Li Qiye nodded and turned around without saying anything else.

"Crow!" He didn't get far before the old man cried out. Li Qiye paused his steps.

The old man sat up straight and put on a solemn expression to say: "There are some legends that you have probably heard about. Once you cross that line and reach a certain threshold, destruction is imminent."

"It's not a legend." Li Qiye became quite austere as well: "It is the truth and I'll face it even when I have to cross that juncture."

The old man slowly asked: "Are you prepared?"

"I shall be fearless and fight to the very end when that day comes. As long as I don't fall, nothing will happen!" His voice resounded in the clouds.

The old man softly sighed and murmured: "The inevitable will come after all. I'm afraid no one will be able to escape."

"I believe you can." Li Qiye joked: "Old man, be ready for when it does come. I know you have the power to do so."

He left after saying this.

The old man sat there in silence. After a very long time, he muttered to himself: "Either the start of a new age or the withering of all..."

He ended with a woeful sigh and disappeared. The garden became extremely quiet. This was an eerie silence. If it wasn't for the odd flowers and other vegetation here and there, people would mistake this place for a dead zone.

Li Qiye finally returned to the Jian Mansion and was immediately greeted by Jian Longwei and Jian Xiaotie. They bowed before him and said: "Your Excellency."

"No need for formalities." Li Qiye waved his hand: "Act as before. I won't be staying here for too long, I will be leaving after finishing some matters."

After hearing this, the two couldn't do anything except bow their heads again. They hoped that Li Qiye could stay and teach them a thing or two. In their eyes, if they could be taught by the legendary teacher of Immortal Emperors, they would gain lifelong benefits from it.

Jian Xiaotie busily told Li Qiye: "Your Excellency, a few things have happened at Dongting Lake, so Master Hong wishes to see you."

Li Qiye ordered: "Tell him to come and see me. Dongting Lake has ties with me, so I shall help them."

A bit later, Hong Tianzhou came running in. He quickly bowed his head after seeing Li Qiye: “Young Noble, things aren’t looking too good. Wyvern and the Bloodshark Village demand an answer from us or else they’ll send in their troops.”

Li Qiye had killed Shangguan Feilong and the Bloodshark Scion. This enraged these two powers, prompting them to demand that the lake hand Li Qiye over. Otherwise, they would crush the lake.

“Send in their troops?” Li Qiye smiled: “Let them come so that their blood can dye the blue ocean red. This shall be a baptism for the sea demons to understand the strength of the human race.”

Hong Tianzhou was shocked after hearing this. He couldn’t help but recall the events at the Peacock Land and how terrifying it must have been when a billion fish were sacrificed!

“Wyvern and the Bloodshark Village are nothing.” Jian Xiaotie was stirred. He said: “Give the order, Your Excellency. Our disciples shall trample both of them with haste.”

Hong Tianzhou was stunned after hearing this. Even the Jian Clan was working for Li Qiye? This was simply inconceivable to him.

He calmed down and shuddered before hesitantly speaking: “I heard the Bloodshark Sovereign is a sea god...”

“Just a false god.” Jian Longwei replied nonchalantly: “Does he really think he is a sea god after being recognized by the Trident? If he dares to show himself, I’ll behead him in front of Dongting Lake.”

Jian Longwei declared this in a matter-of-fact manner. This was enough to show the strength of their clan!

Chapter 1268: Besieged

Hong Tianzhou was astonished after hearing this. If an existence like the Bloodshark Sovereign was regarded with such disdain, then just how fierce and domineering was this Jian Longwei?

At the same time, he felt his blood boiling because his lake would definitely be able to overcome this crisis with the Jian Clan’s help.

“I’ll do it myself.” Li Qiye voiced his refusal with a gesture and flatly said: “It is time for the sea demons to open their eyes to the proud human race. Let them know that even at the Dragon Demon Sea, humans can still suppress the heavens!”

Jian Longwei didn’t dare to compete against Li Qiye for this merit. They understood that this person was a supreme overlord. Even if a sea god came along, they would be annihilated. Li Qiye was someone who had killed Immortal Emperors after all!

Li Qiye told Hong Tianzhou: “If the enemies come sieging, then we shall fight and bury them beneath the sea.”

Hong Tianzhou opened his mouth, but no words came out due to some hesitation.

Li Qiye glanced at him and said: “No need for scruples, say what you want.”

Hong Tianzhou took a deep breath and made up his mind: "The ancestors, they, they want to negotiate for peace and are willing to accept the demands from Wyvern and the village."

"Negotiate for peace?" Li Qiye laughed and coldly uttered: "Since when did Dongting Lake become so weak? Would your ancestors ever negotiate with their enemies? When they were still around, surrender would not cross their minds even if they were whittled down to the very last man on the battlefield! Their bones were cast from iron and their hot blood could erect the strongest citadel in this world!"

Li Qiye angrily scolded Hong Tianzhou: "In those years, Godkings and imperial lineages were nothing in your ancestors' eyes. The banners of your clans symbolized a will made of steel and the most invincible corp that annihilated their enemies and crushed all cities in their way. But look at their descendants now. Even ants like Wyvern and the Bloodshark Village can walk all over you, subjecting you to servility! Have you no shame in letting down their supreme, hard-earned prestige?"

Tianzhou felt his face and blood getting hotter. He recalled the glory days of his ancestors when Dongting Lake could look at the rest of the world with disdain. It was just as Li Qiye had said, his ancestors were invincible with nerves of steel.

When they were alive, they proudly trod through the nine worlds and swept through all of their enemies. Hong Tianzhou was ignited. If they were to kneel before these great powers today, it would be a great letdown to their ancestors!

Hong Tianzhou threw caution to the wind and clenched his teeth before declaring: "Young Noble, if you are willing to help me, I am ready to lead our disciples to battle instead of negotiating for peace, even if the elders do not agree!"

"It is good that you have this determination." Li Qiye looked at him and nodded: "Return to Dongting Lake and observe how Wyvern and the Bloodshark Village, these ants, shall be trampled by your ancestors! Let the descendants of the lake remember their invincibility once more so that they will never dishonor their ancestors' prestige again!"

"We shall fight alongside you, Young Noble!" Hong Tianzhou's blood was boiling in this moment as he clenched his fists.

Jian Longwei nodded his head approvingly after seeing this. He knew that Hong Tianzhou's momentary burst of heroism had won Li Qiye's favor. This will change the fate of the lake as well as his own.

If he had faltered earlier and wanted to negotiate, Li Qiye would drop this matter right then and there. From then on, the lake would never rise again after falling into the hands of its enemies.

Both Wyvern and the Bloodshark Village were furious at the murderer, Li Qiye. Shangguan Feiyan, who had suffered defeat to him, vowed to kill him as well.

In just one night, these two powers mustered a one-hundred-thousand-strong army. They quickly mobilized to Dongting Lake and released a message about their intent to destroy it.

This commotion excited this marine region. Many cultivators and sects eagerly awaited the show. Some sea demons were quietly gathering in the dark as well.

Dongting Lake was coveted by many due to its rich nature. So now, when the lake was about to fall, everyone would want to share a cup of the soup.

This was especially true for the sea demon sects close to Dongting Lake. They were secretly waiting for this battle to end. If the lake were to lose, then they would divide it. If the other two powers were to lose, then that would signal an eventual decline, meaning that there would be more promising territories up for grabs.

“Dongting Lake, listen up. Hand over the human brat, Li Qiye, and put down your weapons in surrender. We may forgive you then. Otherwise, your lake shall be crushed!” The village master and king of Wyvern personally led this expedition.

Before the grand army had even arrived, they already sent out this demand to the lake.

With the siege looming over their heads, everyone in the lake became quite nervous. The ancestors here held a meeting throughout the entire night.

The Xu, Lin, and Hong Clans were very unhappy with Hong Tianzhou for contributing to this trouble. It could even be said that they were furious. In their eyes, he was inviting a disaster to the lake.

Originally, they wanted to form a marriage pact with Wyvern and the Bloodshark Village. This development would be mutually beneficial since they could bolster their own status and authority. However, there were no longer any marriages, only enmity.

“Rumble!” On this day, this sea region was full of monstrous waves. Two great armies came from both sides of the lake in a pincer maneuver.

On the left was Wyvern and on the right was the Bloodshark Village. This was a premeditated military deployment.

Wyvern’s army consisted of many gigantic serpents soaring above the surface. This was a sea demon lineage that claimed to be descended from true dragons; the blood of true dragons flowed inside them.

Of course, this was only them exaggerating their own worth. A more credible explanation was that their ancestor was a gigantic sea serpent. The dragon blood inside them was very thin. As for what type of dragon it was, this was still up for debate.

Therefore, the disciples from Wyvern were born as sea serpents. After becoming powerful enough, they would finally gain a humanoid form. Having a humanoid form at birth meant that their bloodline was extremely noble. [1. Just a clarification on the name Wyvern. The raw word means “a dragon with horns not yet grown”, thus a lower-level dragon. I consider wyvern to be closely related to dragons, but at a lower level, so I chose Wyvern. The issue here is that the author is talking about the traditional Chinese dragon, which is more of a serpent, to describe these creatures. If I knew this beforehand, I probably wouldn’t have chosen Wyvern. Maybe Hydra or Drake (not the rapper) would have been a better fit, or Hornless Dragon Country to play it really safe.]

Of course, the masters of this country were willing to maintain their true forms because it had a greater battle prowess. This, however, was very unfavorable for passing down their bloodline.

At this time, a very long sea serpent resembling a gigantic dragon swam closer with a ferocious momentum. It looked like 100,000 dragons were dancing in the sky.

At the same time, bloodsharks were cutting through the towering waves. Each of them was quite large, so surging tides were generated with each sweep of their tails.

They had long and sharp white teeth. When they opened their jaws, these teeth looked just like swords; their cold glints instilled fear into the spectators.

Old men were standing on some of them. These were all elders with soaring blood energies that made it seem as if they wanted to tear the world apart.

“Dongting Lake, we give you one day to hand over Li Qiye and surrender or face the consequences!” Shangguan Feiyan finally showed herself in this great army with her divine halos.

She fled the Jian Clan after suffering a complete defeat and was able to stay alive. This time, she came back with help.

She didn't only want revenge but also to take this opportunity to turn Dongting Lake into her own. She came prepared this time and had great confidence in herself. Even if Li Qiye and the lake were stronger than expected, they would still die!

The encirclement around the lake left the crowd with varying emotions. Some were happy, some were shocked, and some had ulterior motives. Of course, there were some spectators that were watching purely for entertainment.

Someone murmured while watching Dongting Lake under siege: “Shangguan Feiyan wants to wash away the humiliation from the Jian Clan. Li Qiye was really vicious then.”

“He is indeed very ruthless, he even dared to kill the concubine of the Profound Monarch. It looks like he doesn't give a damn about anything.” A sea demon sect master said: “But he might have difficulty escaping unscathed this time, even with Dongting Lake's protection. I heard Shangguan Feiyan didn't only come prepared, she also brought a weapon of a sea god. More importantly, I heard some rumors that she has been able to convince the Bloodshark Sovereign to come and personally destroy the lake.”

“The Bloodshark Sovereign!” Both humans and sea demons were shivering after hearing this name.

“Wow, a legendary sea god. When he comes out, who will be able to contend against him?” A newly debuted cultivator was full of awe.

Chapter 1269: Foreign Aggression And Internal Turmoil

The Bloodshark Sovereign's reputation spread far and wide. Many people were startled to hear this name. This was especially true for the youth who had just made their debut; they thought of the sovereign as an untouchable existence.

“It really is a bit too much to call him a sea god, but he is powerful without a doubt.” A paragon who knew about what happened back then shook his head: “Yes, I can't deny that he is strong, but he didn't become a sea god back then. The Trident ultimately abandoned him.”

“Even if he isn’t a sea god, if a real one doesn’t show up, who can stop him?” A youth said: “Once the sovereign is here, Dongting Lake will be destroyed and Li Qiye will die. This is fine, the humans will know the consequences of opposing sea demons in this region.”

Some humans were quite annoyed at this rhetoric. Another couldn’t help but retort: “Generations are always changing. So what if the Bloodshark Sovereign is strong? Li Qiye is the strongest genius of the human race. He has sacrificed billions of Teeming Fish, defeated Feiyan with one hand and stomped Meiyu to death. He will be invincible in the younger generation!”

The humans had been weak in this world for very long, but they had high hopes in Li Qiye, the rising star of the younger generation. If, say, a human could become an Immortal Emperor in this generation, then the human race would have a greater status. They could even suppress the sea demons in this world.

“Hmph, don’t flatter him too much.” An unhappy young sea demon replied: “Everyone in the world knows that it was the Peacock Tree who performed the sacrifice, Li Qiye was only the errand boy. As for him hurting Miss Shangguan, it was only because he is a despicable wretch and ambushed her when she wasn’t paying attention. Otherwise, how could he hurt a God-Monarch like her?”

“Oh? Then what about Gongsun Meiyu? He killed her with one stomp. Hmph, in my eyes, he will surely become the next Immortal Emperor.” The human cultivator didn’t back down: “Maybe you sea demons are afraid of him becoming an emperor and suppressing you all...”

Before one knew it, small quarrels broke out among the youths before the battle had even started. The humans and sea demons were unrelenting. The young sea demons were certain of Wyvern and Bloodshark Village’s victory while the young humans had absolute confidence in Li Qiye killing Feiyan and crushing Wyvern.

Meanwhile, the older generation was quiet, especially the ones with sects closest to Dongting Lake. Regardless of the victor, this war might spread to them as well.

“Dongting Lake, huh.” A charming spirit imperial lineage heard this news. An ancestor smiled and gently shook his head: “It has been too long, the sea demons have probably forgotten how the lake was established. Back then, in the entire Dragon Demon Sea, they didn’t even dare to breathe loudly. But now, when the lake is in decline, those ants actually want a piece of the cake. Fine then, let them take the lead. I want to see if the lake is still as strong as before or not!”

The 100,000 strong army surrounded the lake in a short period of time. Alarms rang everywhere across the lake. It didn’t matter if the disciples were willing to fight or not, they had to prepare for war.

Hong Tianzhu brought Hong Yujiao back to the lake overnight. Of course, Li Qiye was with them as well.

The lake had entered a state of alert. All locations were heavily guarded with checkpoints scattered across the eighteen docks full of patrolling disciples.

The eighteen docks were the largest foundations of the lake as well as their most fortified strongholds.

The great clans all had their businesses in these docks. According to the iron laws of the lake, these docks and mountains belonged to the lake itself and couldn’t become private properties. For a long time, the clans obeyed these creeds and ruled the lake together.

However, the ancestors later on abandoned the iron laws in order to gain more power. They divided the eighteen docks and the nearby mountains into their own properties.

With that, the division of power became chaotic and messy. Changes of power were frequent, resulting in the lake being lost in chaos.

From then on, the clans became even more disunified and followed their own whims. By only worrying about themselves, many past covenants and pacts with other powers could no longer be carried out.

After Hong Tianzhu returned, he saw many disciples along the way. However, the disciples looked at them with strange stares. Some even avoided the group like a plague.

After seeing this situation, Tianzhu felt quite negative and knew that something big had happened. He knew that the situation was not favorable.

Even juniors like Hong Yujiao and Miss Lin could feel that something was amiss. They became quite nervous as well.

Only Li Qiye was smiling without a care while leisurely walking through the lake.

A disciple quickly told Miss Lin along the way: "Senior Sister Lin, Senior Uncle has called for you."

With that, Miss Lin stopped to look at Li Qiye and Hong Tianzhu.

In fact, this didn't only happen to her, several other disciples had the same happen to them.

"Brother Xu, the ancestor wants you to come back right now..." Previously, many disciples didn't know how to start this conversation, but after the Lin disciple took the initiative, they all came up and opened their mouths.

The group consisted of many excellent disciples from the different clans. They came with Hong Tianzhu to the Jian Clan in order to befriend them.

These disciples glanced at Hong Tianzhu at this time. They weren't stupid and knew that something was wrong.

In their minds, Hong Tianzhu was a good clan master. He was ambitious with great vision, so they were willing to follow him.

"You all should go back." Tianzhu gently sighed. He knew exactly what was going on, but he didn't explicitly reveal it.

These disciples were silent for a moment. Miss Lin bit her lips and secretly glanced over at Li Qiye. In the end, she gathered courage out of nowhere and said: "Junior Brother, you go back, I won't be returning just yet."

Miss Lin and Hong Yujiao were good friends. They grew up as sisters, so their bond was quite deep. In this key moment, she chose to weather the storm together with Hong Yujiao.

"Yes, I'm willing to follow the sect master as well." A different senior brother said: "Go back and tell that ancestor this: if the lake has made any decision, it should be publicly announced. Don't treat us as pawns for those ancestors' benefits."

“That’s right, senior sisters aren’t objects, the ancestors can’t betroth them to whoever they want. One day, it might be us next.” A male disciple stated his displeasure as well.

Some of the disciples felt cheated after finding out that the ancestors from several clans had privately decided the marriage of the two girls. They weren’t stupid. Today, it was these two, tomorrow, it could be them!

Such arbitrary decisions had made them very unhappy. Moreover, Hong Tianzhu was vigorously opposing these marriages. This was something as clear as day to them.

At the very least, their current master was willing to fight for their sake. But as for those ancestors, they treated marriages as a means for their own gains. It inevitably led to some aversion in the minds of these brilliant disciples.

“Yes, we are willing to follow Clan Master through the turmoil. Everything should be transparent instead of being decided in secret meetings! We are not cattle!” All the other disciples were quite unhappy.

After seeing the revolt, Li Qiye smiled and commented: “Not returning is fine.”

The group’s eyes darted towards Li Qiye. Even though they hadn’t known him for too long, he gave them great confidence. His invincibility and decisiveness had conquered their hearts.

“Yes, we have decided! The fate of Dongting Lake should be decided by everyone together, not a few ancestors!” One more disciple concurred.

Hong Tianzhu gently sighed after seeing this. He didn’t know whether to be happy or hapless. He was glad because at least the younger generation was opposing the old. What made him feel sad was that a disaster was befalling the lake, yet these ancestors were still vying for their own benefits.

“Master!” A male disciple rushed over. He immediately whispered after seeing Hong Tianzhu: “Master, you need to run now. The ancestors have decided to depose you and want to keep you under house arrest. I heard them privately say that they want to hand you over to Wyvern as a token of apology!”

Hong Tianzhu’s expression sank. He understood why those disciples from before looked at him as if he was a plague.

Being deposed was something he had expected, but being handed over to Wyvern never crossed his mind.

Chapter 1270: Glory Of The Ancestors

After hearing this, the disciples accompanying Hong Tianzhu were infuriated. This had completely exceeded their imaginations.

Hong Yujiao indignantly asked: “The ancestors are going too far. Do our Hong ancestors share the same opinion?”

The messenger nodded: “Our ancestors have passed this proposal as well after discussing things.”

Hong Yujiao angrily stated: “Do they have no shame? My father has toiled for the clan even if he didn’t perform any meritorious deeds. If a great power sends off their own sect master to another power as a

token of apology, how will we ever show our face in Heaven Spirit again? This is an affront to the reputation of the human race! Not to mention that our enemy is Wyvern, even if it was a sea god's lineage like the Roaring Conch, we still can't do such a thing! This is the epitome of humiliation that will stop us from ever raising our heads again!"

"Yes, why can't we resist their oppression?!" These excellent disciples chimed in: "Our lake is not weaker than Wyvern, so we might as well go all out against them. As one of the three great human powers in Heaven Spirit, if we surrender even though we have the ability to fight, we'll live a life subservient to the sea demons from this day onward..."

One more disciple angrily exclaimed: "The ancestors are taking things too far this time. Even human vagabonds have more backbone than this. Why should we, a great power, kneel and lick our enemies' boots?! At worst, we'll fight to the death so that they can see our determination!"

Hong Tianzhu sighed and cast a glance at Li Qiye to ask: "Young Noble, what should we do now?"

Li Qiye said: "Go to the meeting chamber. Summon all the ancestors, protectors, elders, and supervisors of the lake."

"Okay, we'll go to the chamber." Hong Tianzhu firmly made his decision. For him right now, this was inevitable. There was no path of return, so he might as well risk it all for the lake's final chance.

The meeting chamber was used for deliberations and meetings for the lake. Many of their past decisions were negotiated and decided here.

Later on as the competition for power intensified, the chamber was used less and less often. The ancestors rather negotiated privately and made decisions by themselves instead of deliberating publically.

The chamber had a rustic feel, making it seem as if it was built next to Dongting Lake. One could see the entire lake while sitting in the lobby.

A plaque was hung in the main lobby with the phrase, "seeing clearly the downy feather of autumn". These simple words were majestic and all-deterrenting. [1. Idiom meaning sensitive to the finest detail, omniscient, able to distinguish right and wrong with acuity.]

Hong Tianzhu came to the main lobby, but they were immediately stopped by the disciples there.

"What, you want to rebel?" Hong Tianzhu's expression darkened as he became quite oppressive. He was still the current sect master of the lake and had an important status in the minds of the disciples here.

The guards hesitated for a moment before answering: "Sect Master, the ancestors' decision..."

"Their decision?" Tianzhu coldly uttered: "I have assumed the role of sect master and have been in charge of Dongting Lake until this very day. It is fine if the ancestors want to oust me, but tell them to come confront me in person. The elders and supervisors will transcribe everything. If I have violated the iron creeds of the lake, then I will surrender myself to the lake's disposal. Otherwise, the ancestors need to give me an acceptable answer!"

The disciples hesitated for half a day, not knowing the right words to say. On one side were the ancestors and the other, Hong Tianzhu.

In the end, Hong Tianzhu became angry and shouted: “Go, ask your ancestors and the high ranking members to come. If everyone wants to judge me, I want them to do so in the main chamber in front of our forefathers!”

A disciple quickly affirmed and went to report to the upper echelons. This matter was far beyond their jurisdiction.

The group entered the grand chamber that could accommodate more than a thousand people.

In the center of the chamber was a large chair. It struck an archaic chord to the spectators. What was even stranger was that there was a crow engraved in the back. The bird stood there in repose with resting eyes.

There were many paintings along the wall. The people portrayed were magnificent. Some were adorned in armor with long swords in their hands. Others were scholars with their feathered fans, and more were riders trying to cross mountains and rivers...

The paintings surrounded one particular banner with a silver fox embroidery. This fox looked incredibly realistic. Above it was the word, “Indomitable”.

The young disciples looked all around since they rarely came here. Meanwhile, Tianzhu mirthlessly smiled. Outside of the ceremony when he was crowned as the sect master, there were too few conferences in this place since the ancestors would rather scheme with their own groups instead of caring about the overarching picture.

Li Qiye stood before the big chair and glanced at the portraits. He saw the familiar faces once more, stirring some emotions and buried memories within him. Here were numerous generals that have grown old, countless soldiers that have been laid to rest.

The banner itself created waves inside his heart. It once represented an unquestionable prestige and an indomitable legion.

“Sigh, I didn’t expect my final verdict to be decided before the old forefathers.” Hong Tianzhu peered at the portraits and gave an ironic smile: “It is a bit amusing. Normally, no one comes here to worship and give tribute to the forefathers, but now, here we are.”

The disciples didn’t answer. They understood that the sect master had no chance of reversing the situation after the verdict was made. Once the ancestors from the clans made up their minds, even the high elders wouldn’t be able to do anything about it, let alone the lower tiers.

Li Qiye didn’t offer his opinion. He simply looked at the banner and stared nonchalantly at the group: “Does any of you know what this banner represents?”

The young ones exchanged glances. They knew very little about their older ancestors. Even though the banner was placed here, they didn’t know of its significance.

Tianzhu hesitated for a bit before answering with uncertainty: “I heard our ancestors brought it back from a battlefield. We had a very powerful legion once.”

Despite being the sect master, he still didn't know too much about his older ancestors. In fact, ever since their clans decided to abandon the iron creeds and abolished the unions, they no longer brought up the forefathers. After all, they were the ones who chose to disobey the old laws.

"More than just powerful." Li Qiye looked at the banner and flatly said: "The Indomitable Battalion of the Silver Fox Legion was renowned for being cunning with many illustrious merits. They are definitely among the top of all the famous battalions in existence! This banner represents your ancestors' supreme prestige. Under this symbol, they fought all over the nine worlds and fought crusades against true gods and other Immortal Emperors' legions! Even the ominous grounds couldn't repel their advance!"

"They fought against imperial legions?" The youths became wide-eyed and were startled after hearing this.

"Yes, they fought against imperial legions." Li Qiye nonchalantly continued: "In the distant years, one particular imperial legion considered themselves to be untouchable and provoked the supreme prestige since they thought they could fight against the Silver Fox Legion! Your ancestors personally volunteered to fight. After ten victories, they conquered the imperial city and forced the imperial cavalry to leave Heaven Spirit. In the end, even this Immortal Emperor personally admitted that the prestige of the Silver Fox was not to be provoked!"

"In the nine worlds, who still knows about the Indomitable Battalion and their cunning? Winning victories despite being fewer in numbers, they're experts at lightning speed ambushes!" Li Qiye ended with a sigh.

"Ten victories and conquering an imperial city..." Hong Yujiao was at a loss for words.

In their minds, Immortal Emperors were invincible. Meanwhile, their legions were an extension of their peerless will. Wherever they went, they would sweep through in an unbeatable manner.

But today, they found out that their old ancestors had once defeated an imperial legion!

Just imagining the style and indomitable spirit of their ancestors roused them with heroism and pride. They could envision the scene of their ancestors riding their cavalries through the majestic lands! They never knew of this prestige and glory that belonged to their ancestors who once deterred the nine heavens and ten earths!