

Emperor 3771

Chapter 3771: Landslide Defeat

The massive bow looked like a crescent moon from the string being pulled back all the way. Its power was palpable as if everything in this region was being gathered here.

Hu Ben was well prepared in delivering a finishing blow.

“The final ace card of Smoke-fire Platform, the vein is the bow while the earth flames serve as the arrow.” One ancestor emotionally remarked.

The big shots from the last generation were in awe, aware of the power contained in this arrow. Being struck would have terrible ramifications.

This wasn't an actual weapon, just part of the fortress' foundation in combination with the lava dragon.

“Raa!” The dragon's claw slashed the white tiger's forehead.

“Boom!” The word, King, on the tiger's forehead, was crushed. Thus, the barrier crumbled right away and the tiger was torn apart.

The dragon then came for the scion, wanting to tear him to pieces without mercy.

“This is the best opportunity!” One ancestor shouted.

As the dragon was on its way, Hu Ben also released the string and fired the fire arrow.

This arrow melted space and time along its path, akin to snowflakes touching a molten blade. Its target was the scion's throat.

“Whoosh!” It was inches away from his throat before people heard the wind-breaking noise. They felt sharp pains all over from the gales.

The two fatal moves from the dragon and the arrow made contact with the scion at the exact same time. This resulted in total spatial devastation. The spot where he stood melted and became something akin to a quagmire.

“Hell yes!” Some started cheering after seeing this. Hope resurfaced once more on the side of the holy ground.

This should be enough to seriously injure the scion, winning some face back for their side.

“What a magnificent and splendid attack.” One youth heaved a sigh of relief.

“Hu Ben is worthy of being one of the four, his ability is commendable.” A genius clapped excitedly.

The top ancestors nodded approvingly as well: “Yes, Hu Ben's plan was masterful.”

This celebratory mood permeated the crowd. Unfortunately, they stopped laughing a while later.

After the spatial quagmire dispersed, the scion appeared before them again. There were no serious injuries contrary to their expectation. In fact, there was no sign of blood. Only his clothes and hair were slightly disorderly.

They saw him holding a spear made out of bones to block the dragon's claw. As for his other hand, he was gripping the supposedly fatal arrow earlier.

This arrow contained incredible power yet his two fingers stopped it from piercing his throat. The distance of one inch made all the difference.

Astonishment and speechlessness struck the crowd. Hu Ben's ultimate attacks didn't harm the scion at all.

Hu Ben turned pale as a result. His opponent's strength was insane.

"This was an impressive attack. Unfortunately, it's not enough to kill me." The scion smiled and activated his power, becoming dazzling along with his skeletal spear.

"Whoosh!" The spear pierced through the lava dragon and slew it. Next, he added force to his two fingers and broke the fire arrow.

The arrow, bow, and dragon were one - the foundation of the fortress. Since two have been destroyed, the bow exploded as well.

Hu Ben was sent flying as a result, smashing through several peaks while vomiting blood. His armor and bones shattered.

He ignored his wounds and leaped backward. This swift maneuver made him spit out blood again but he didn't dare, instantly disappearing into the horizon.

Everyone watched Hu Ben run away like a dog without a master in silence. The youths opened their mouth but no words came out.

They weren't in a position to criticize him since he had actually done quite well. They might not have done any better.

Hu Ben had tried his best and still lost. His opponent was just at another level.

"Old geezers like us might not have been able to pull off a more powerful attack." One big shot commented.

Thus, fleeing after doing everything he could wasn't disgraceful.

"Not satisfying at all." The scion chuckled while floating in the air.

The geniuses of the holy ground lowered their head, not daring to challenge him. It would be futile anyway since their defeat could be far worse than Hu Ben's.

"Rumble!" He called for his chariot and went on the move again.

While he looked around, no one dared to meet his gaze. Finally, his eyes focused on the direction of Minor Sacred Mountain: "I hope this trip won't end as a disappointment."

With that, he crossed through Smoke-fire Fortress and entered the holy ground.

The crowd continued to stare at his departing figure in a daze.

“Who can stop him?” One genius became pessimistic.

Chapter 3772: Xu Cuimei’s Thoughts

Sun rays illuminated the gurgling creek with a golden hue. As the water rippled, it appeared as golden powders were floating along the currents.

“Splash!” A carp leaped out of the water and shared the same glow.

Li Qiye sat on a boulder, asleep and looking like a statue. Minor Sacred Mountain was quiet without anyone coming to disturb him from his zen state.

The young cultivators in the holy ground and even the older experts have left to observe Righteous Scion. Thus, serenity returned to the mountain.

After seeing the fall of Smoke-fire Fortress, numerous experts and big shots were on the move.

This had nothing to do with stopping the scion. They merely wanted to watch all the battles possible in order to see his power and benefit from it. The fortress event made it clear that they wouldn’t be able to stop him.

In reality, very few older experts could beat him in battle. Thus, the young ones would only be asking for humiliation by challenging him.

The scion traveled across the land in a haughty manner. He flew above numerous sects without hiding his aura. This didn’t change as he crossed ancestral grounds either.

This naturally infuriated the members of these clans and sects. It was nothing short of blatant provocation.

Not only that, he even visited the well-known sites of the holy ground. These places contained vestiges and memorials of the old sages. He seemed to be purposely provoking his opponents by doing so.

Nonetheless, not a single soul dared to fight him. Most great powers didn’t have the strength to put up a real fight. The only way was to go all-out and this wasn’t worth the price.

This feeling was vexing but the scion’s notoriety was at an all-time high. Some even thought that only the four grandmasters would be able to beat him.

Li Qiye didn’t care about the rumors and stories spreading across the land. He simply focused on fishing at the creek.

Today, he had an uninvited guest. He opened his eyes and took a look - a beauty stood before him.

She was none other than Xu Cuimei of Righteous Sect. However, Thunderblade and Cloudwhip weren’t with her today. She walked closer and bowed deeply.

“Where are your lackeys today?” He smiled.

She sat down next to him on the boulder and smiled back: “It’s troublesome bringing them around, you wouldn’t like it either, Young Master.”

“Smart, Righteous will prosper with a disciple like you around.” He praised.

"I'm elated to hear this even though I am unworthy." She shook her head: "Our sect can't do anything while you are present at the holy ground. Offending you will result in being trampled on the ground."

"I don't represent the holy ground. A passerby like me will leave sooner or later." He chuckled.

"But I'm sure you will pick a successor, Young Master." She rested her chin on both palms and stared at him.

"That's possible." He didn't answer directly.

"The holy ground is so lucky to have a talent such as yourself, no one else can compare." She said quietly.

"You're going to make me smug praising me like this." He joked.

"As if mere praises can please you, that would be a miracle." Her eyebrows were perfectly shaped like crescent moons, looking both pretty and cute.

"Given your attitude, it looks like I'll have to take it easy on you later." He smiled.

"Thank you ahead of time, Young Master." She responded.

"Let's see here. Hmm, you have the potential to prove your dao and become a dao lord." He stated.

"Perhaps, but Eight Desolaces is vaster than our imagination with too many geniuses to count. Nothing is certain in the future." She tilted her head in contemplation.

"That's the right mindset." He nodded.

"Unfortunately, with Young Master around, we're just fireflies trying to compete with the moon." She shook her head.

"Are you here today to just flatter me?" He asked.

"No, I'm here to gather information." Her lips pursed up slightly into a faint smile.

"Oh? Regarding what?" He didn't mind.

"I'm curious about your merit laws that are capable of breaking our seven chapters. It doesn't look like you have cultivated anything from the holy ground due to a lack of Buddhist affinity." Her shimmering eyes brimmed with curiosity.

She didn't try to hide her intention so she met his gaze directly.

"Train and practice, practice and train. I've gradually forgotten many things during this process. Maybe chalk it up to old age and a bad memory." He casually answered.

"Forgotten?" She didn't expect this answer and took her time analyzing it.

This wasn't plausible since a cultivator would never forget their merit laws. Moreover, he emphasized the "training" part. As one trained more, they would have a deeper impression of their merit laws, not the opposite.

Nonetheless, she was intelligent and knowledgeable enough to read the deeper meanings.

“Grand Dao Oblivion or Grand Dao Immaculation... These only belong in the legends, I haven’t heard of anyone obtaining these states...” She murmured. [1]

He chuckled and didn’t answer.

“Young Master, you seem to be shrouded in fog, as inscrutable as can be yet I can’t help but want to learn more.” She touched her chin and ruminated for a while before looking up to tell him.

“Knowing too much isn’t always a good thing. It might be a source of fear and will affect your cultivation in the future.” He said.

“I see, I will keep this in mind.” She nodded.

“What are you trying to do?” He asked.

She narrowed her eyes. Though she looked lovable with a smile, there were secrets hidden deep in her eyes along with wisdom.

“I’m not at fault, I was only playing around before wholeheartedly focusing on my goal. That’s why the world misunderstood, I’m sure.” She shrugged in response.

“Most can’t do this. They care too much about fame and honor, unable to be at peace.” He replied.

“There have been plenty of sages in history. Though there are plenty of worthless cultivators too, my achievements are nothing compared to the great ones.” She said.

“You have a good way of thinking. This makes you inferior to no one.” He nodded.

“And you, Young Master? Fame and honor aren’t your pursuits either. What is it that you seek?” She smiled at him, wanting to satiate her curiosity.

A brief silence ensued. He eventually said: “An answer.”

“An answer?” This wasn’t the expected response but she didn’t pry any further.

Chapter 3773: Rivercross Lock

During their conversation, someone else climbed up Minor Sacred Mountain.

It was a girl in full chainmail. Not even a gust of wind could get through. Half of her face was covered as well. Nonetheless, the exposed section indicated that she was an exceptional beauty with starry eyes and an air of heroism. No man was her superior.

The rings had a silvery glow similar to fish scales. She resembled a divine commander descending from above. Nonetheless, the masculine nature of the armor wasn’t enough to hide her exceptional grace. Her body could be the perfect vessel for worldly energies.

A silver chain coiled around her arm and led all the way to her shoulder. The tip on the back looked like the end of a wing. She seemed ready to take flight at any second.

A girl like her always commanded attention wherever she went, enough to make eyes go bright. People would make way for her after sensing her commanding presence.

“This disciple greets you, Young Master.” She traveled up the steps and bowed her head respectfully.

Li Qiye glanced at her and shook his head: “Miss, I’m afraid you got the wrong person. I don’t know you and you’re not my disciple.”

“Fairy Dugu advised me to come and see you, Young Master.” The girl said.

“Alright, looks like someone is giving me more trouble. I’ll never have peace at this rate.” Li Qiye chuckled and nodded.

“One of the five heroes of Duality, Rivercross Lock, Wei Qianqing.” Xu Cuimei stared at the newcomer and said, seemingly amused.

The girl looked over at the unfamiliar face and was surprised: “And you are...?”

“I’m nobody important, just a disciple from Righteous Sect.” Xu Cuimei responded: “But I have heard of you before, Garrison Commander Wei of Black Wood Cliff. Everyone knows who you are.”

Wei Qianqing was one of the five heroes of Duality. However, she was older and not from the same class as the rest.

In the past, she was the First Sister of Duality, not Dugu Lan. She was nearing graduation when Dugu Lan’s group joined.

However, even though she had left, the academy didn’t have another to be the fifth member of the five heroes. That’s why she remained listed as one. After her departure, Dugu Lan became the First Sister since she was the strongest.

She came from a noble and distinguished clan in Metropolis, the Wei. They always had members working as notable officials in every generation.

Qianqing chose the military branch and joined the army to train. She was already strong and quickly soared through the rank, becoming a general first then the commander of Black Wood Cliff.

Keep in mind that Black Wood Cliff was pivotal to the holy ground. Not just anyone could be selected as its commander.

“Miss Xu.” She has heard the events so far and knew who Xu Cuimei was despite it being their first meeting.

“I’m only here to sightsee, don’t mind me.” Xu Cuimei said with a smile.

Qianqing heard that Li Qiye was the golden saber messenger of Vajra. Why was he talking to Xu Cuimei?

“You didn’t come here for nothing.” Li Qiye said.

“I am here to ask for your help, Young Master.” Qianqing stopped thinking about other issues.

“I’m afraid I won’t be of use.” Li Qiye shook his head.

“No, you can, Young Master. I heard that you can control chaos primal beasts, that’s why I need your help.” She said.

“Oh?” He smiled.

Qianqing hesitated to speak because Xu Cuimei was around.

“I guess it’s time for me to leave?” Cuimei touched her chin in a cute manner.

“Speak.” Li Qiye ordered.

Qianqing took a deep breath and revealed: “From my observation, the water in Black Tides will recede soon.”

“?!” Xu Cuimei who has been nonchalant all this time became startled.

“Highly likely.” Qianqing didn’t wish to divulge this to an outsider, especially not someone from Righteous Sect. Alas, she had to obey Li Qiye.

“The signs are pointing to sooner than later.” She elaborated.

“It’s a serious matter.” Cuimei had a solemn expression.

This was surprising to Qianqing. She didn’t expect to be taken seriously right away.

This wasn’t her first time delivering this message. She told numerous big shots before but they didn’t give a damn. They thought that it wouldn’t happen so soon. But now, this girl actually trusted her. The girl’s sincerity made a good impression.

Black Tides was one of the seven forbidden zones. Its water receding was a monumental event.

“It hasn’t been that long since the last generation.” Cuimei frowned: “It had done so once during the end of Eight Stallion Dao Lord. Why is it doing it again now? This is too early, it should be several generations each time.”

Every few generations, the water would recede and monstrous creatures would come onshore.

The most recent occurrence was during the end of the most recent dao lord’s generation - Eight Stallion.

“I told His Majesty and the grandmasters. All the influential characters disagreed.” Qianqing smiled wryly. Of course, she understood the reason why they thought that she was mistaken. It hasn’t been long enough yet.

“In that case, something odd is going on.” Cuimei commented.

Qianqing appreciated the trust shown so she smiled: “Looks like you have done your homework on Black Tides.”

“I’ve only heard about its legends.” Cuimei shrugged and answered: “When the monsters come, Black Wood Cliff will bear the brunt.”

“Yes, the monsters always start at the cliff.” Qianqing agreed. She turned towards Li Qiye and said: “Millions will die in this scenario and the cliff will fall. Without reinforcement from the dynasty, my troops alone can’t last. That’s why I need your help, Young Master. If you can control the chaos primal beasts, you’ll be able to assist us and save the citizens.”

“How many beasts do you think it’ll take to hold Black Wood Cliff?” Li Qiye chuckled.

Qianqing didn’t have a response for this.

“Even Buddha Supreme couldn’t protect the cliff.” Li Qiye added.

In the previous event, Buddha Supreme personally came to fight against the invading monsters to save Black Wood Cliff.

The battle lasted for a long while, eventually seeming futile. Fortunately, Righteous Supreme showed up in the nick of time. The two worked together and pushed the horde back for a period of time. Alas, they seemed to be endless.

Finally, Eight Stallion Dao Lord came and the trio successfully protected Black Wood Cliff.

Chapter 3774: Incoming Trouble

The stand of the trio shocked the world. Because of this battle, Buddha Supreme was renowned for his heroism and power. Future descendants would never forget his majestic style.

Nonetheless, though the trio certainly showed their might, some thought that they were lucky. If the water didn’t rise back, the trio might have not been able to defend Black Wood Cliff. This was mere speculation and also an indicator of the monsters’ power.

In another repeat, it would be a disaster for the holy ground and the rest of the south because the dao lord was no longer around. Buddha Supreme has been missing as well.

Who would be able to stop the monsters in their absence?

That’s why Wei Qianqing didn’t know how to answer Li Qiye. Her troops alone stood no chance, hence her attempt to ask Li Qiye for help. However, these chaos primal beasts wouldn’t be enough against a full invasion.

“I can only do my best. Even if I can’t defend Black Wood, I’ll buy enough time for the citizens to evacuate.” She said softly.

“Ye, the chaos primal beasts can’t save your Black Wood but there is someone capable of this.” Xu Cuimei smiled and winked.

“Who might it be, Miss?” Qianqing was surprised. The first people that came to mind for her were Buddha Supreme or Righteous Supreme.

However, they weren’t people she could meet whenever she wanted. Buddha Supreme’s whereabouts have been unknown.

“Right under your nose. Who else can it be but the young master?” Xu Cuimei smiled.

Qianqing thought that Xu Cuimei was playing around. She initially wanted the help of the chaos primal beasts but realized that this was futile. If the beasts couldn’t do it, neither could Li Qiye.

She had heard of Li Qiye’s tales before but still thought that his cultivation was still too shallow. Going against those monsters required true strength.

Nonetheless, Xu Cuimei didn't look like she was joking.

"Please show me the right path, Young Master." She bowed towards Li Qiye.

She had no other option left and was desperate. She had reported this matter to Archaic Sun King but the king disagreed along with the other influential officials.

"Protecting the citizens and your garrison? Not difficult at all." Li Qiye responded: "But if you wish to fight against Black Tides with your legion, that's an egregious overextension of your ability."

"Young Master, you have a plan?! Just protecting the garrison is more than enough!" She became ecstatic.

She naturally knew that protecting the entire cliff was impossible. It took Buddha Supreme, Righteous Supreme, and Eight Horde Dao Lord to barely do so back then. Just protecting the garrison was more than enough.

"Indeed." Li Qiye said.

The excited girl bowed at Li Qiye again: "Young Master, please save the people, this will be a great contribution to humanity."

"Do you see what's up there?" Li Qiye chuckled and pointed at the palace above.

"I see it but I'm not quite following." Qianqing followed his direction and stared at the palace, feeling a bit lost.

"Of course. Okay, tell me, what's the origin of Black Wood Cliff?" Li Qiye smiled.

"It was built by the sages of the holy ground." She answered without needing to think.

This was indeed the case. The historical cultivators erected Black Wood in order to defend against the invasion from Black Tides. Dhyana Dao Lord, in particular, spent considerable time here in order to bless it with top Buddhist laws, increasing its defensive potential.

"There you go." Li Qiye said: "The cliff is filled with the power of the holy ground. You just need to bring the statue of Dhyana Dao Lord there, it'll help you activate the cliff's true power. This might not be enough to protect the entire region but your garrison should be fine."

Qianqing stared at the palace in a daze after hearing this. The palace had four statues brimming with divinity. Each represented one dao lord of the holy ground and authority.

Members of the holy ground went on pilgrimage to pay respect to both the palace and the statues.

"Take, take one statue? How? No one can do so!" She blurted out.

In history, fewer than few could make it to the pinnacle and the palace, let alone taking one statue away. This should be impossible. In the present, perhaps only Buddha Supreme would be able to do so.

"The young master can do it." Xu Cuimei winked at her.

Li Qiye smiled and didn't deny this.

Qianqing's confusion grew. Could Li Qiye really make it up there with his low cultivation? Taking the statue away was even harder.

"It... would be sacrilege." She became worried.

The statues represented the dao lords and authority. To take one away would be disrespectful to the ancestors and the holy ground.

"That's up to me to decide." Li Qiye nonchalantly said, speaking as if he was the current master of Buddha Holy Ground.

She suddenly had the illusion of seeing the master of this land. A second later, she thought that this was ridiculous.

Li Qiye was only a regular cultivator. Being the golden messenger of Vajra didn't mean that he could take charge of the holy ground. Sacred Mountain was still there. Nonetheless, this feeling was palpable.

"The question is, do you dare to do it or not?" Li Qiye added.

Qianqing's thoughts ran amok. Would she do it if it was possible? After all, this could be construed as disrespect.

Vajra Dynasty wouldn't be able to protect her. In fact, it might be the first to execute her as an apology.

She thought about it for a while before gritting her teeth: "I'll do it if it's possible."

This was the only possible option right now. The dynasty wouldn't send reinforcement due to a lack of trust. Her legion would die anyway during the invasion.

Chapter 3775: Young Monk's Arrival

Wei Qianqing's choice was risky. Just one wrong move might implicate her clan as well but she had made up her mind.

"Let's get started then." Li Qiye smiled, gently raising his pole and reeling. The string was quite long so the loud reeling noise lasted a while.

Once finished, he grabbed the bronze ring from the end of the string. It looked colorful and moist, brimming with life after it was empowered.

Qianqing didn't expect this at all, thinking that it would be a hook. Why was this guy using a ring as the bait? What was he trying to do if not fishing?

Meanwhile, Xu Cuimei watched with great amusement and interest, especially in the bronze ring. She didn't say anything but her eyes flashed with wisdom, clearly aware of the underlying reasons.

Li Qiye put the ring back on his finger. "Buzz." It suddenly became bright because thousands of Buddha images suddenly appeared.

A supreme world of Buddhism materialized, capable of saving all living beings and enlightening three thousand worlds. Each Buddha had enough power to derive wondrous things with a snap of the fingers.

People wanted to prostrate and had the urge to join Buddhism. All of this happened in the blink of an eye.

Once the light dispersed, everything returned to normal. The ring was just another ordinary ring - unadorned and seemingly worthless.

Qianqing felt all the pressure during the visual phenomenon. Her legs trembled as she wanted to kneel before him.

She took a deep breath, thinking about the terrifying item. She gandered again and didn't see anything special about the ring now.

Even the smiling Xu Cuimei became serious after seeing that phenomenon. Qianqing might not know the power contained within this ring but Xu Cuimei did.

Moreover, the special girl also understood that everything was within Li Qiye's grasp. He was the ruler and the ultimate existence of the holy ground, able to call for rains and clouds.

"Okay, little girl, follow me. I need a coolie." Li Qiye got up and stretched.

"I am ready to obey and offer my service, Young Master." Cuimei stopped thinking about the implications and bowed respectfully.

Qianqing disagreed with this but had to find the right words. She quietly said: "I, I don't think this is proper."

"Why not?" Li Qiye nonchalantly replied.

"Because... Miss Xu is a disciple of Righteous Sect." Qianqing spoke her mind.

This concern was warranted because taking a statue from the palace was sacrilegious enough. Now, to bring Xu Cuimei along? It could absolutely be considered as traitorous - a crime punishable by clan extermination, hence her worries.

Xu Cuimei only shrugged, looking ready to follow Li Qiye's orders.

"I'm afraid that no one will be able to help you if something were to happen, Young Master." Qianqing warned.

"I've decided, it'll be fine." Li Qiye didn't care at all and smiled.

Qianqing was overwhelmed by his confidence and actually believed that he could take charge in this matter. This feeling caught her off guard.

Meanwhile, no one paid attention to Minor Sacred Mountain because they were fixated on Righteous Scion.

After defeating Hu Ben, he traveled uncontested across the holy land. He visited many holy locations and no one stopped him.

Though he never did anything disrespectful, it seemed improper for him to visit these sites because of the competition. The intent seemed provocative in nature.

Nonetheless, being annoyed was one thing but challenging him? No one was strong enough.

“The scion is at Buddha Emperor Plateau now!” This news caused quite a stir.

The plateau was the core of the holy ground with all the central powers. This challenge has escalated to the next level.

“Who will be the next to fight?” All eyes were on this region.

The five divisions of the plateau were immensely powerful. Most geniuses came from the various sects in this place as well. They had to do something in order to uphold the holy ground’s reputation.

“Maybe Phantom Sacred Child?” One person murmured.

Phantom came from Divine Ghost Division and was the strongest genius there. He was a top candidate to fight.

“I don’t think so, he might be waiting to help Dugu Lan up in Minor Sacred Mountain.” Someone else speculated.

“Yes, I heard he managed to borrow a supreme weapon from Myriad-blood Sect. He’ll fight together with Dugu Lan, it’s more advantageous to wait for the right moment.” A big shot with a good information network explained.

“Right, show patience now and reap the result later.” Many agreed with this: “Since he has a top weapon, he needs to conserve his strength for the final battle. That’s how to use it to its fullest potential.”

Sure enough, Phantom didn’t show up as the scion traveled across Divine Ghost Division. Nonetheless, the members of the holy ground still felt quite oppressed.

“Rumble!” The scion’s chariot continued to soar through the air. His aura and dao laws descended like waterfalls as he looked down on the world.

He has made it to the border of Heavenly Dragon Temple - a place filled with monks.

His oppressive aura didn’t garner a response. The entire domain seemed rather quiet as the chariot moved slowly forward.

On top of a particular peak was a bodhi tree. Its branches swayed to the wind. Despite a lack of radiance, its ample Buddhist affinity made it seem ready to turn into a Buddha.

A young monk was sitting beneath this tree. His kasaya was dirty and disorderly as he held a large piece of meat with both hands and chomped down.

A monk like him didn’t fit the sacred image of Heavenly Dragon Temple and the bodhi tree.

However, the scion’s chariot stopped at the base of this peak.

“Righteous Scion stopped?” The keen spectators who have been paying attention to him wondered why since they didn’t notice the monk.

Chapter 3776: Strange Monk

The chariot stopped and Righteous Scion deboarded, slowly walking up the cliff.

At the start, some were surprised to see him making a stop in this place. It didn’t take long before a keen eye realized it and shouted loudly: “Look, beneath that tree! Golden Cicada Buddhist Child!”

Others followed this call and sure enough, Golden Cicada was chomping down roasted meat beneath the tree. They just didn’t notice him since their attention was on the scion prior.

“Looks like he wishes to challenge Righteous Scion.” An older expert remarked.

Many nodded in agreement. On the first day of the challenge, Dugu Lan accepted; Hu Ben and Phantom then showed their support.

Only Golden Cicada didn’t show his stance, not even his shadow could be seen. This made most think that he wasn’t going to participate in this challenge. After all, some monks didn’t worry about external affairs.

This particular encounter was far more low-key compared to the one back at Smoke-fire Fortress. Hu Ben’s appearance had plenty of fanfare.

On the other hand, Golden Cicada didn’t say a word and only showed up along the path. He knew how to keep it low-key.

“Impressive, worthy of being the Monk of Wisdom’s disciple.” People began praising him for rising up to the challenge.

“The four geniuses are not letting us down.” One genius said.

The scion was clearly unbeatable yet Golden Cicada still chose to fight alone. This alone was worthy of the utmost admiration.

Hu Ben relied on the fortress and a legion to fight him previously. This made the monk seem superior in terms of determination and courage.

“Wait, maybe Golden Cicada Buddhist Child is far stronger than Hu Ben?” One expert wondered.

Among the four, Golden Cicada was the youngest and the last to make his dao debut. Moreover, he saw what happened to Hu Ben earlier yet he still wanted to fight one-on-one against the scion? One must assume that he was stronger than Hu Ben.

As the scion climbed the cliff, each step was an entire world. The dao of nature followed each of his movements as he became the lord of this region as well.

On the other hand, Golden Cicada continued eating without being affected. Nothing in the world was more interesting than the piece of roasted meat in his hands right now.

This was a bizarre scene - a supreme lord moving up the cliff while his opponent relaxed beneath a tree.

Everyone watched with bated breath; some became awfully tense and clenched their fists tightly. They were worried for the young monk.

The monk didn't seem to notice the scion and continued immersing in his meal. As for the scion, he waited patiently without bothering his potential opponent.

The scene went from bizarre to interesting. Time came to a halt - the whole scene became a painting.

A meat-eating monk and the greatest genius of the south - there was something romantic about this meeting. The two have yet to fight yet people already felt that this would go down in history.

Golden Cicada finished his meal in a jiffy, leaving only the bones behind. Alas, he seemed unsatisfied and continued licking his ten fingers clean.

Some shook their head; others had a wry smile. Those who didn't know him would consider this to be a disgrace for the Monk of Wisdom and Heavenly Dragon Temple.

On the other hand, those who knew him beforehand thought that this was expected. They knew the type of person he was.

"Sorry for the wait, Benefactor." Golden Cicada placed his palms together and smiled.

"It's fine to wait in this wonderful weather." The scion seemed to be in good spirits.

"Hmm, how mighty you are." Golden Cicada stared at the scion with his pure eyes and concluded.

"Your Buddhist art is peerless as well." The scion complimented.

The spectators exchanged glances after hearing the cordial conversation. They felt that a battle between these would be magnificent and flawless.

"The holy ground hasn't been entertaining you during your eastward journey. A monk normally abstains from these matters but today, I have no choice but to bother you."

"Don't worry, one of my biggest wishes this time is to see World Crossing. It is an honor to fight you, Buddhist Child." The scion laughed heartily.

"I have only learned ten percent or so at best." Golden Cicada smiled.

This confirmed to the crowd that he had started learning it.

World Crossing was Dhyana Dao Lord's derivation of Buddhamization. Both Buddhamization and Evil Devourer were merit laws belonging to the Supreme Four Truths.

Thus, this became a competition between two great merit laws of the famous scripture.

"I've barely scratched the surface as well." The scion earnestly said.

Normally, he acted with pride and arrogance. This humble response was a striking contrast to his usual demeanor.

Of course, he wasn't trying to be humble towards the monk. This was only to show respect to the Supreme Four Truths - a series of invincible arts in history.

“That’s good, ten percent versus barely scratching the surface, a perfect match. Nonetheless, I have favorable conditions today, please excuse me for that.” [1]

“The holy ground is blessed with boundless Buddhist affinity, I will not miss the chance to see it in action. Let’s get started.” The scion chuckled. Today, he no longer dared to be careless against his foe.

“Raa!” Having said that, a golden dragon materialized and coiled around him.

“Heaven Devourer Dragon Guard!” People recognized this merit law right away.

The scion has already put on a defensive line before the start of the battle. This truly surprised the spectators.

“He’s taking this fight very seriously.” One spectator said.

Remember, it took the scion a long time before needing to activate it even against Smoke-fire Fortress and Vigorous Tiger Legion.

“So Golden Cicada Buddhist Child is far stronger than Hu Ben?” One genius found this hard to believe.

“No way, Golden Cicada Buddhist Child is the youngest and the last to cultivate. He could be stronger but definitely not by a large margin.” Another expert felt the same astonishment.

“Remember, this is Buddhist Holy Ground.” An ancestor explained: “Heavenly Dragon Temple is the orthodox branch, that’s why they have World Crossing.”

Numerous powers and dynasties have taken charge of the holy ground in the past. Alas, none ever had access to this art. Sacred Mountain only gave it to Heavenly Dragon Temple.

Chapter 3777: Buddha's Six Paths

The scion activated his draconic defense, ready to take on his enemy.

“Amitabha.” Golden Cicada placed his palms together and solemnly chanted: “Oh Merciful Buddha.”

After the chant, his kasaya became resplendent and a Buddhist aura enveloped him.

He seemingly disappeared from sight before being replaced by a Buddha. In reality, he was still the same as before. However, his dignified expression and aura made him look like someone else, no longer being the same carefree and unrestrained monk.

Moreover, his kasaya was famous for being dirty and greasy everywhere. Now, the light has washed it clean.

Despite his young face, he still fitted the role of a sacred monk as if he was the reincarnation of Buddha.

The Buddhist light seeped through his skin and into his body. He seemed to no longer be made from flesh and blood, having been turned into a golden statue with a holy aura.

Not to mention the young cultivators, even ancestors were impressed with his current form. In fact, the weaker youths felt their knees buckling, wanting to prostrate and join Buddhism.

The meat-and-wine transgressor was gone, replaced by a dignified monk.

“Nice!” The scion laughed and crossed through space to appear before the monk.

The latter retaliated right away with a finger strike. Buddhist affinity materialized beneath his feet. He seemed to be standing in an ocean of Buddhism now and all of its power channeled through his finger, turning into a supreme grand dao.

“Boom!” He seemed to be pointing out the flaws and mistakes of all living beings. The gods and spirits would follow his lead.

“Creation Point, one of the six paths!” An ancestor shouted in astonishment.

“Boom!” The finger struck the scion and sent him flying, breaking through numerous peaks before creating a pit on the ground.

The crowd became slack-jawed from the first exchange. Some rubbed their eyes or pinched themselves to check that it wasn’t a dream.

“Is this really happening?” Even an older expert thought he was seeing things.

“How... he sent the scion flying with one finger strike...” Another spectator couldn’t believe it.

Their disbelief was understandable due to the perceived power difference. The scion has left a deep impression after taking down Hu Ben’s legion and the fortress.

Both Golden Cicada and Hu Ben were part of the four geniuses. The former was also the youngest so this result didn’t make sense.

“Creation Point is one of Buddha’s Six Paths.” A big shot from the last generation took a deep breath. [1]

The six paths were top merit laws created by the holy ground’s progenitor, Buddha Dao Lord. This art belonged to Sacred Mountain and Golden Cicada shocked everyone by using it.

Even the Vajra Dynasty, the current ruling power, didn’t have these merit laws. On the other hand, Heavenly Dragon Temple taught the youth these great techniques.

“Heavenly Dragon Temple has always been trusted by Sacred Mountain.” An ancestor from another sect became jealous.

No other sects in the holy ground enjoyed this privilege. Alas, it was also understandable. The temple has been absolutely loyal to Sacred Mountain throughout the years, always supporting it regardless of the situation.

“This finger strike is insanely powerful.” Another spectator found it hard to calm down.

A traveler who had been to Myriad Beast Mountains found this strange: “The Buddhist child got stronger way too fast in such a short time.”

He saw the young monk in action back in the valley. However, the guy wasn’t as powerful compared to his current self.

“His cultivation didn’t increase that fast.” A high elder explained: “This is the territory of Heavenly Dragon Temple. It’s brimming with Buddhist affinity and power.”

Everyone agreed with this assessment. Just think about it, the Buddhist child grew up here and cultivated supreme Buddhist laws, being extremely familiar with the affinities present.

Thus, just one wave of his hand could command considerable power from the land.

“No wonder why he said something about favorable conditions earlier.” An expert realized. Having the home-court advantage was quite beneficial.

“Bam!” The scion got out of the rubble.

This wasn’t surprising. People thought that no one in this world could kill him with one finger. They also noticed that his draconic guard wasn’t fully penetrated. Its light flickered for a bit before recovering.

“That defensive technique is exceedingly difficult to break.” An ancestor commented.

He might have lost the exchange earlier but it didn’t mean anything.

“Creation Point is impressive indeed.” The scion praised.

“How embarrassing, I borrowed the power of the land here to make up for my shallow cultivation yet still didn’t accomplish anything.” Golden Cicada calmly answered.

It seemed that the monk wanted to break the draconic guard with the power of the land. Unfortunately, the actual power difference between the two was considerable. He only managed to send the scion flying without inflicting serious injuries.

“Because you’re younger than me. Maybe you’ll be even stronger than me when you reach my age.” The scion admitted his opponent’s potential.

The listeners nodded in agreement. Golden Cicada Buddhist Child’s age was the thing holding him back the most.

Chapter 3778: Flowergrasp Smile

The monk has broken everyone’s perception of him with the battle today. His image always centered around his gluttony. Though he was strong, he wasn’t considered to be on the same level as the other three geniuses.

Thus, the success thus far surprised all spectators.

Righteous Scion laughed happily and said: “How interesting, a worthy foe. Looks like this trip to the holy ground will be worth it.”

The crowd exchanged glances - the scion clearly thought more of Golden Cicada than Hu Ben.

The fight back at the fortress was magnificent from a visual perspective and Hu Ben did as well as he could - definitely better than most.

However, the scion never treated him like a real opponent from start to finish. This wasn’t the case right now.

“Boundless potential, he might become the best monk in the holy ground, enough to inherit Sacred Mountain’s legacy.” A high elder became emotional.

This comment made the crowd shudder.

“Inherit the great legacy? Im-impossible.” One youth disagreed.

“It’s actually quite likely.” An ancestor stared at Golden Cicada and said seriously: “He might have the most potential among the four geniuses of Vajra. He’s already from a Buddhist Sect and had access to top merit laws. It’s plausible that he might be able to inherit the Supreme’s legacy.”

No one doubted the fact that he might become a sacred sovereign in the future due to all of his innate advantages, whether it be his background or talents. Thus, no one else had a better chance of becoming the successor of Sacred Mountain.

Therefore, some started thinking meticulously about their next course of action. It would be best to befriend him as soon as possible to benefit themselves and their sects.

Meanwhile, Golden Cicada placed his palms together, not feeling complacent from the praise: “You’re too kind, Scion. In terms of power, I am far inferior, merely being protected by the wise sages. Truly embarrassing.”

“That’s no big deal.” The scion was in a great mood and said: “Let’s see how many moves it’ll take for you to force me to go all-out.”

“Clank.” Having said that, he summoned White Tiger.

This wasn’t the first time the crowd saw this lance of his. Its aura rampaged as if a dao lord was here in person.

“Let’s go!” He leaped into the air and thrust his lance straight at his opponent.

“Boom!” Ten suns instantly appeared and accompanied the thrust.

“This move again!” A few spectators shouted since they had seen this tyrannical attack back at the fortress.

“Oh Merciful Buddha!” Golden Cicada chanted and channeled Buddhist laws to quell all unrest.

Buddhist lotuses appeared beneath him and instantly blossomed, changing the landscape in a magnificent manner.

The flower directly beneath his feet was the largest. He looked transcending and immaculate while standing on top of it, resembling the leader of Buddhism.

He spread his palm the same way as a lotus would blossom, releasing boundless Buddhist light. Within the light were scripture runes that could create three thousand worlds. He had all of this within his grasp.

“Another of the six paths, Flowergrasp Smile!” An ancestor took a deep breath after seeing this.

Most were astonished because there was a good possibility of the monk knowing all six paths. This incited envy and jealousy among the crowd. Just knowing one path would be a lifetime of benefits.

On the other hand, Golden Cicada seemed to have the best of luck and had access to all.

“Clank!” After the lotus flowers disappeared, people saw him closing his palm and gripping the lance with the stability of a mountain.

In this split second, he smiled like a merciful Buddha. With that, grand dao power of the Buddhist affinity emerged in everyone’s heart like a budding seed.

“Holy Buddha!” The weaker cultivators were converted by the smile. Many got the urge to give in.

This moment was fleeting. They eventually regained their wits and understood the horrifying event.

At the same time, Golden Cicada attacked once more. His grip on the lance loosened and his hand slid across the lance, aiming straight at the scion’s chest. All of this happened in a smooth and fluid motion.

Buddhism preached mercy and compassion. However, this palm strike was anything but, carrying enough power to crush heaven and hell.

“Grand Palm, a sure-kill move!” The spectating ancestor blurted out.

This title was rather common. Many other moves shared these characters. However, it had a special significance in the holy ground and was usually accompanied by death.

Some said that this merciless attack was improper for a Buddhist to use. Nonetheless, it was acceptable to use for the sake of subduing evil.

Back then, Buddha Dao Lord used it to take down evil and bring light back to the realm.

The scion reacted quickly and brought his lance back in front of his chest.

“Boom!” This didn’t do anything and he was sent to the ground like a falling meteor, creating a second pit with cracks emanating everywhere.

The crowd stared at the pit, astounded. The scion lost the second exchange as well.

“So strong!” One youth said with admiration.

“Grand Palm is insane!” A big shot murdered.

The power of this attack exceeded expectations. Many ancestors thought that they would either die or be left crippled if struck.

“The six paths are truly strong.” This sentiment could be heard everywhere since Golden Cicada had used three paths thus far.

“He has to be the number one among the four geniuses, right?” An emotional spectator murmured.

Chapter 3779: Lankavatara Ward

By this point, the astonished spectators had a different evaluation of Golden Cicada, assuming that he was far stronger than Hu Ben.

“Boom!” The scion got out of the pit again and floated in the air.

The ultimate move didn’t actually injure him. However, there were cracks on the draconic guard. His robe and hair were slightly messy as well, no longer looking cool like before.

The crowd took a deep breath after seeing this. An ancestor said: "And here I thought he would be wounded by the Grand Palm. He keeps on beating expectations."

"This is messed up." Another big shot shuddered.

Grand Palm was a famous killing move, usually a sure kill. Though the strike didn't directly hit his chest, the damage should have been grievous. Alas, this wasn't the case at all.

"I have heard of Grand Palm long ago, it lives up to its fame." The scion praised.

"Seems like I have learned nothing and can't even wound you." The monk expected this result.

"If your cultivation were the same as mine, then my rib cage would have shattered. Ever since I finished my dao, you're the first among the young generation to do this to my draconic guard." The scion said.

This haughty comment served as the highest praise for the monk.

The cultivators from the holy ground exchanged glances, suddenly becoming excited.

"Hmm, this draconic guard is a top technique from Heaven Devourer Dao Lord. Few in this world can break it, Golden Cicada's Grand Palm did an amazing job." One expert nodded approvingly.

Both techniques were considered to be on the same level. That's why Golden Cicada instilled confidence in the crowd.

Even the older experts and ancestors present didn't think that they could break the draconic guard with one move.

"He can uphold the temple's prestige with this fight." One genius added.

They thought that even in the case of his defeat, he had done enough to show the power of his sect. The problem lay in the scion being too strong.

"Okay, warm-up is over, let me see your true ability." The scion heartily laughed.

"That was only a warm-up?" Most found this surprising because the two have resorted to top techniques already.

"They're using dao lord merit laws to warm up? Looks like we're not even qualified to perform a warm-up then." One proud genius smiled wryly.

The young ones took pride in their top techniques. Alas, these techniques couldn't compare to the dao lord-level ones. Thus, the scion's comment was hurtful, albeit truthful.

"Amitabha, I've heard of your peerless prowess long ago and can't wait to see what you can do, Scion." Golden Cicada had a solemn expression that didn't match his youthful face.

"Buzz." His kasaya lit up again and released Buddhist hymns and chants.

The temples inside Heavenly Dragon resonated and sent out dao characters flying towards him. He looked like an ocean capable of taking in everything.

"What merit law is this?" Someone whispered.

“He’s borrowing the power of Heavenly Dragon Temple.” A big shot quietly answered.

The characters eventually turned into an external golden kasaya. One could hear countless chants empowering the regalia.

Several images of various Buddhas appeared on the surface, seemingly wanting to protect Golden Cicada.

“Lankavatara Ward, a great scripture left behind by an enlightened monk. Other monks have chanted for it for generations now, empowering it.” An ancestor elaborated.

The spectators didn’t need to know this scripture to be aware of its power. Golden Cicada’s defense looked unbreakable as he resembled a golden statue.

“Incredible Buddhist affinity.” The scion laughed: “Blessed by countless monks, penetrating this won’t be easy.”

“You’re being humble, Scion. My attainment is limited so I can’t borrow all the blessings of the great monks. As for you, you have finished your grand dao and don’t need to borrow external forces.” Golden Cicada said.

The big shots exchanged glances after hearing this.

“Righteous Scion’s dao is finished.” One of them said.

“This is expected, he’s an heir now and should have his own grand dao.” Another replied.

In order to become a dao lord, one needed to create their own grand dao. Otherwise, using someone else’s merit laws - regardless of how powerful - would still render the practitioner inferior to those in the past.

“If I didn’t have my own power today, I wouldn’t be able to break this.” The scion confidently said.

“Boom!” He channeled his power and dao laws descended like waterfalls.

Chaos energy ravaged and tore the sky vault apart. Primordial power also manifested. All three affinities gathered around him.

The crowd became startled since they felt their own dao laws being affected by his eruption. They immediately became suppressed as if he was holding them by the throat.

“This is his grand dao.” A big shot gasped.

He has yet to use it; just the activation alone suppressed virtually everyone in the audience.

“Amitabha.” Golden Cicada placed his palms together then unleashed a dual palm strike.

“Boom!” With this attack, six paths became one and the yin and yang joined forces - creating a cycle of death and rebirth. Space and time were refined as a result. Fleeing to another dimension or space-time was futile.

“Reincarnation Seal!” A different ancestor bellowed after seeing this.

Chapter 3780: Reincarnation Seal

“Boom!” The seal’s suppression rendered escape an impossibility.

The crowd felt their power being sapped away along with their soul into that endless cycle.

Once sucked inside, the soul would be broken down to nothingness. Their traces in this world would forever be erased.

This made them scream in horror. Treasures and merit laws still couldn’t escape the cycle of life and death. The most powerful cultivators would become helpless.

They finally got a taste of a mighty and dreadful Buddhist art. However, the scion remained undeterred.

He chuckled and raised both hands, pulling the power of the celestials and myriad laws.

“Boom!” The waterfall-like grand dao was pulled before him in order to receive the incoming seal. The scion looked determined to take this move directly instead of dodging.

Surprisingly enough, there were no deafening explosions, only faint booms. The sweeping dao waterfall slowly engulfed the seal, akin to a snake eating its prey.

“Boom!” Finally, the entire seal disappeared after losing the contest.

“What the hell?!” Someone bellowed. The ultimate seal was actually devoured?

“Force Devourer!” One ancestor knew its origin.

“That’s Force Devourer?” Others exchanged glances.

In fact, some audience members have seen this move before since Liu Huaishi used it against Chi Xiaoyue back on Minor Sacred Mountain.

The powerful Xiaoyue couldn’t do a thing despite her praiseworthy power. Now, Force Devourer looked purer and more effective. It didn’t only stop the enemy but devoured their attack as well.

“Boom!” The scion continued controlling the flow of the dao and pushed it upward.

Force Devourer then roared like a gigantic dragon showing off its claws. “Boom!” It then soared towards Golden Cicada but it wasn’t alone. Reincarnation Seal was with it as well, being used against its master.

As this combination traveled closer to the monk, it also absorbed everything along the way - the myriad laws, time and space, and other affinities. Thus, it built up more and more power, causing the world to turn dark and the spectators to turn pale. Even the ancestors were horrified by the increasing force.

“Merciful Buddha.” Golden Cicada chanted instead of running away.

His golden light became dazzling and soared to the nine firmaments. A golden avatar took over, spanning for thousands and thousands of meters. Clouds only reached its waist.

Lankavatara Ward has been activated to its limit as the various Buddhas protected him like an insurmountable wall.

Unfortunately, this wasn't enough. The great wall crumbled, unable to stop Force Devourer for a second.

"Boom!" Golden Cicada and the gigantic avatar were blown flying. He broke through several peaks along the way.

The cultivators from the holy ground screamed in horror, shocked by the sudden reversal. Though the monk won the first two exchanges, he lost this one far worse.

"Buddhist Child!" A few worried about his survival since he represented the glory of the holy ground. They didn't want to see him killed by the scion.

"Whoosh!" Golden Cicada finally leaped out of the rubble.

He looked far more sorry compared to the scion earlier with bloody wounds all around. Even his kasaya was stained red. The Lankavatara Guard has been penetrated. Blood dripped down his lips. These injuries were quite serious, just not fatal.

"Just give up now." One expert said quietly.

Someone as young as him shouldn't shoulder this heavy burden. Despite all of his achievements, he was only fifteen or so.

Few in the entire holy ground dared to rise up to this occasion. The weight of the burden could break this youth's spine.

"Buddhist Child, you have defended the holy ground's reputation well enough. We take pride in you, it's fine to rest now." Another expert said.

Most pitied him and didn't want to watch any longer.

"Amitabha." Golden Cicada slowly floated up and still channeled his power again.

The dirt and blood didn't affect his holy aura and his image as a great monk deserving of respect.

This genius didn't want to broadcast his heroism to anyone, only silently meeting the scion along the way. He also showed zero fear during the fight, going all-out from the start.

Such determination and spirit were quite rare. His peers paled in comparison.

"Your Force Devourer is at a masterful level, I am in awe." He said.

"Still lacking time and experience." The scion disagreed and said: "You're a whole realm beneath me yet still withstood an attack empowered by my grand dao. You're definitely among the top three of this generation."

Others agreed with this high assessment, thinking that the monk deserved it.

"How embarrassing, I still have a long way to go." The monk shook his head.

"It's fine to concede now." The scion posed with both hands behind his back, clearly confident in his victory.

All eyes were on the monk now, thinking that he had done his job and earned honor despite losing.