

Emperor 3821

### **Chapter 3821: Idiot**

By this point, certain justifications existed for killing Li Qiye. It was tough to defend him when he worked with Xu Cuimei in taking down the statue.

Normally, he was untouchable by virtue of being the saber messenger of Vajra. Nonetheless, Sword Hero had both status and power.

If he actually wanted to kill Li Qiye, the latter being the saber messenger didn't matter as much.

"None of your goddamn business." Li Qiye glanced at him and said dismissively.

The vulgarity surprised the crowd. No one would speak in this manner when talking to such an important character like Sword Hero.

Sword Hero naturally didn't accept the disrespect from Li Qiye. His murderous intent was as thick as can be, not bothering to hide it in the slightest.

"Brat, do you think your status can save you? You can't do as you please just because you have him as a backer." The rays in Sword Hero's eyes could pierce the heart.

People were curious to know who "him" was. As an outsider, Li Qiye clearly had a backer in order to become the saber messenger. It had to be an ancestor from the temple, at the very least.

This was rather important since it could decide how other powers would treat Li Qiye in the future.

"Idiot, you're blinder than a junior. I don't need any backer to do as I please." Li Qiye shook his head.

"How audacious, well, let's see if you can back up your confidence. I will teach you a lesson and let you know that a member of Vajra can't..."

"I'm not a member of Vajra, don't flatter yourselves." Li Qiye interrupted him and said: "Plus, how are you going to teach anyone a lesson when you have no skill to speak of? Where is your confidence coming from?"

The crowd took a deep breath after hearing this. Some smiled wryly in response. Li Qiye was this arrogant when dealing with Phantom and Hu Ben. Now, he was even more aggressive when speaking to Sword Hero, someone far above those two juniors.

Some who have been watching him got so used to it that they didn't think twice.

"Ignorant brat, this isn't the same as before. Sword Hero is a grandmaster!" One youth scowled.

"He'll regret it soon enough." Another added.

"He can't take on His Highness even if he's on the same level as Righteous Scion. His tongue will be the death of him." One more assessed.

The more Sword Hero listened, the stronger his murderous intent became - virtually enough to freeze the area around him. The crowd's experience worsened by the second due to the unbearable nature of his aura.

“This murderous intent is unreal.” One ancestor commented, thinking about backing off.

It became apparent that Sword Hero would kill Li Qiye at all costs today.

“No one will be able to save him.” Someone from the same generation as Sword Hero commented. He knew Sword Hero too well - this was a guy who would keep his words.

Sword Hero has been holding back before Archaic Sun King. Now, he had a venting target who kept on fanning the fire.

He stared at Li Qiye as if the guy was a dead man and uttered coldly: “Brat, give it everything you got. Let’s see how many moves you can survive. This date next year will be your death anniversary.”

“You’re taking the words out of my mouth.” Li Qiye wiped both of his hands clean and said: “I think you’ll last one or two moves at best.”

“What?!” Some audience members blurted.

“Is, is he serious?” One guy thought that this was unreasonable even for Li Qiye.

“This is Sword Hero he’s facing here.” One youth added.

“How is he so confident?” An ancestor shook his head.

Sword Hero wasn’t Phantom or Hu Ben. Li Qiye’s devilishness shouldn’t be enough to make this claim.

“Can anyone in the world defeat Sword Hero that quickly?” An older expert asked.

Most thought that only an invincible dao lord would be able to do so.

“A supreme might not be able to do that either.” A clan ancestor replied.

The crowd thought of two candidates right away - Buddha Supreme and Righteous Supreme.

However, even powerful cultivators like them might not be able to defeat Sword Hero so quickly.

“Hmph, anyone can boast.” A youth sneered.

“Your Highness, show him the immensity of heaven and earth, teach him a lesson!” A genius shouted.

“That’s not enough, just kill him!” Someone else had a bone-deep hatred towards Li Qiye for some unknown reason.

At this point, Sword Hero’s eyes exuded a terrible beam, capable of piercing through the earth.

### **Chapter 3822: Sinister Sword Art**

The rays from Sword Hero’s eyes served as divine swords and ravaged the ten directions, seemingly turning the world into a sieve.

“I want to see how you’ll defeat me with just one or two moves!” Sword Hero laughed. His expression seemed neutral but rage was swelling inside.

This was his first time being treated in this manner. Moreover, it was a junior doing it.

During his youth, his talents were incredible. Even Ye Mingshi and Five-colored Sacred Sovereign were inferior in this regard.

Later on, he lost the competition for the throne. Nonetheless, he was still one of the most pivotal characters in the dynasty. No one would dare to question his current cultivation.

That's why he simply couldn't fathom someone being able to defeat him in one move, especially Li Qiye. He truly believed that no one could do so in all of the southern West King, not even someone like Buddha Supreme.

Furthermore, he was an experienced ancestor, no longer a naive genius. Thus, his battle experience and circumstantial adaptability were excellent.

He tried his best to stay calm despite being furious at Li Qiye. Anyone else would grit their teeth and bellow about wanting to tear Li Qiye to pieces.

"Get ready then. Don't hold back." Li Qiye wiped his hands clean and smiled.

The ancestors exchanged glances. None of them thought that a quick victory was possible.

"Can he do it? I'm sure he has some insane ace cards up his sleeve." One murmured.

"None of them should be enough." A sacred ancestor from the dynasty disagreed.

They racked their brains and couldn't come up with any method capable of defeating a top master in just one move.

As for the youths, they cheered for Sword Hero, wanting Li Qiye to be punished for his arrogance.

Sword Hero didn't relent to Li Qiye's domineering comment. He laughed while his aura surged: "Do whatever you want, I can handle anything."

By this point, killing Li Qiye alone wasn't enough to quell his anger. He needed to make it a horrific death.

Li Qiye casually picked up the blacksmith hammer again and waved it around for a bit before pointing it at Sword Hero: "I'll let you go first or you won't have a chance to do anything."

Sword Hero was going crazy because of Li Qiye's attitude. He took a deep breath to calm his mental state; his eyes pulsed with a terrible light.

"Very well, let's have it your way." He agreed. This was an exception indeed - going first against a junior.

"Clank!" Sword rays emanated from his body, tearing apart the nine firmaments and ten earths. They could definitely cut down the stars above.

He raised his hand and caused continuous explosions. The world seemed to be toppling over. Cracks appeared on the ground and murderous intent oozed out.

The strands stuck below seemed to have been accumulated for a long time. They were eager to come out and devastate the world.

“What are these things?” The sharp intents terrified the crowd, prompting them to run to a safe distance before being split into two halves.

“Sinister Hero Sword Art, the technique that made him famous. He created this dao himself, merciless and destructive.” One ancestor from the same generation explained.

A sacred ancestor who used to be his friend had a serious expression: “Back at the academy, this technique allowed him to tie against Five-colored Sacred Sovereign.”

“Tie?” The crowd took a deep breath.

“So if they tied in the past and Sword Hero is more gifted, doesn’t that mean he’s stronger than the four grandmasters now?” One genius deduced.

“Not necessarily. Cultivation doesn’t rely on talents alone.” A high elder shook his head.

“How is Li Qiye going to survive now, haha?” Some youths started laughing, ready to gloat.

“Clank!” The individual sword rays gathered into a massive sword - the embodiment of violence and murder.

It had devoured all the devils and ghosts underground. Now, three thousand worlds and their inhabitants became the next targets.

One could hear the wails of tormented spirits within the murderous energy.

“Junior, ready to die?” Sword Hero grabbed the sword; his eyes gleamed brightly.

He became the reaper from the depth of hell itself, on the verge of reaping billions of lives.

### **Chapter 3823: One Smash**

The spectators felt themselves being refined by the terrible murderous strands emanating from the sword tyrant - not the best feeling to have.

They thought that this technique would do more than just kill Li Qiye. The remnant waves would inflict untold damage on the land.

Nonetheless, they still watched with bated breath, wanting to see how Li Qiye would deal with this technique. Most youths weren’t so optimistic.

Only the big shots from the last generations were eager to see Li Qiye’s heaven-defying methods against a top cultivator. Perhaps he would summon a peerless treasure.

“Come.” Li Qiye taunted the swordsman with his hammer: “Just one move is all I need.”

Sword Hero’s complexion turned red as he trembled with rage. He has been holding back all this time but every man had a limit.

The crowd exchanged glances, thinking that no one could stay calm after the repeated insults in a public setting.

“Junior, I will let you experience a fate worse than death.” Sword Hero uttered each word in a menacing manner - a testament to his hatred for Li Qiye.

“Clank!” The massive sword became resplendent with a unique glow. It had a yellow hue as if it was the reflection from the water of the Yellow River.

“Die!” He roared and unleashed the accumulated intents with the force of a tsunami.

The energies with their earth origin began to corrode space itself to the horror of the crowd.

Thousands and thousands of evil swords appeared in the slash, eventually culminating into an inescapable net. The technique broke the chaos, severed the yin and yang, annihilated space, and obliterated the stars.

Muddledness took over as death and darkness descended on the world.

“Incredible!” Both the young and old shouted after seeing the power of this move. They thought that no one should be able to survive it. Ashes would be the only thing left of Li Qiye.

“Watch out!” Experts on Li Qiye’s side roared.

The actual combatant simply smiled and raised his hammer.

“Crackle!” A lightning beam suddenly manifested and struck the hammer. It didn’t harm Li Qiye in the slightest.

More crackles ensued before the astounded crowd. An ocean of lightning instantly appeared above the incoming sword slash. Each bolt was as thick as a mountain range and illuminated the realm. The target was still Li Qiye’s hammer.

As the bolts converged on the hammer, they eventually formed a pulse bright enough to temporarily blind the spectators.

“Break!” Li Qiye leaped in the air and smashed the hammer down without holding back.

The ocean of lighting above was pulled downward. The individual bolts looked like an apocalyptic tsunami.

The power of lightning made Sword Hero’s sword technique look trivial in comparison.

The murderous and evil sword strands were instantly overwhelmed by the lightning waves.

The bolts gathered into more pulses and soared forward. Sword Hero assumed a defensive stance with his Sinister Sword Art, sealing the area around him. Unfortunately, this was of no use.

“Boom!” Li Qiye’s hammer smashed the barrier, breaking it in an effortless manner.

The lightning pulses struck the Sword Hero repeatedly, sending him flying for ten million miles.

“Rumble!” He smashed through numerous mountains along the way. Eventually, the last peak managed to hold him back due to a lack of momentum. He became buried in debris - his fate unknown.

The spectators couldn't close their mouth while watching the exchange. Even Righteous Scion had the same embarrassing expression. Xu Cuimei was mentally prepared but her lips still parted.

Everyone stood there in a daze due to the unexpected result. They were so impressed with the Sinister Sword Art, thinking that it would be the end of Li Qiye.

Alas, this mighty move and its unbeatable master were swiftly beaten by one hammer smash from Li Qiye.

### **Chapter 3824: Conclusion**

Sword Hero has yet to come out of the rubble while the crowd remained frozen and shocked.

Some didn't feel like thinking at all. Anyone else would be thinking about the merit law and power utilized by Li Qiye earlier. Which treasure or borrowing method was it?

However, what was the point because all of this felt so right when it was Li Qiye doing it. Shock shouldn't be the reaction at this point, no need to call it a miracle either.

On the other hand, a top genius with talent greater than the four grandmasters had just lost to one smash. It became nearly unanimous that he was comparable to these four now.

That nemesis sword art had an unparalleled might yet it couldn't resist the hammer slash in the slightest.

"One move, just one move..." An ancestor found this astonishing.

Everyone else thought that they were dreaming. Of course, this was obviously happening.

"Li Qiye didn't lie about needing just one move." An expert who has been paying attention to Li Qiye murmured.

As people regained their wits, they thought that even dreams wouldn't have such a shocking development.

Righteous Scion and Xu Cuimei had a wry smile, unable to express their current emotion. The two of them were extremely powerful, enough to dominate any region.

Alas, their achievements were nothing compared to Li Qiye, akin to two fireflies competing with the luminous moon.

"Everything is possible in this vast world." The scion commented after being enlightened today.

"How is Sword Hero?" One spectator asked.

Sword Hero was buried beneath debris so far away. If he were to survive, he would still be with grievous injuries.

"Members of Vajra went to help already." A cultivator said.

Those who loudly supported him earlier kept their mouth shut. None bothered to go there and assist him. In the end, people from the dynasty had to go themselves.

At the very least, they needed to bring back his corpse in the worst-case scenario. A royal member of the clan couldn't be left in the wilderness.

"Are we done here, gentlemen?" Li Qiye then glanced at the crowd.

They exchanged glances and no one dared to answer out of fear. Nothing made sense when it came to Li Qiye. It was best to not provoke this devilish existence in the future.

"We're leaving." An ancestor told his juniors and left.

Others didn't dare to linger around either, not wanting to annoy Li Qiye. Only a minority stuck around. Most kept a safe distance from the peak in order to watch.

"You want me to carry you down the peak too?" Li Qiye looked at Xu Cuimei and Righteous Scion.

The scion had an awkward expression with his mouth slightly open. He was at a loss for words, looking more like an obedient child than an unstoppable genius.

"Of course not, Young Master." Xu Cuimei felt more at ease since she was more familiar with Li Qiye. She smiled and continued: "We do want to invite you to Righteous Sect though."

"Leave it up to fate." Li Qiye nonchalantly replied.

"We'll await your arrival, Young Master." She smiled charmingly.

He then stared at the two with a focus on the scion: "Though I haven't seen Righteous Sect Master, it shouldn't be that easy for you to defeat him."

"The senior was just being kind." The scion no longer had an air of arrogance when speaking to Li Qiye.

"You do know everything, Young Master." Xu Cuimei interjected.

"No need to flatter me, I know what you're doing but out of appreciation for your intelligence, I won't make it hard for you two." Li Qiye waved his sleeve.

"Thank you, Young Master." Xu Cuimei bowed. It was hard being mad at someone cute and smart like her.

"There's nothing else to do at the holy ground, return from whence you came." Li Qiye ordered.

The duo understood that he wanted them to leave. The scion stepped forward and bowed: "It is the fortune of a lifetime to meet you on this trip, Young Master. This is the greatest reward."

Xu Cuimei wasn't as serious as the scion but still put on a solemn expression: "Though our time together was brief, I've truly benefited from your guidance, Young Master. If you ever need me in the future, just say the words and I'll do my best regardless of the danger."

She rarely acted this serious before since it wasn't a part of her carefree personality. This new aura of her looked rather imperious - akin to a god ready to ascend at any moment.

Of course, this aura only lasted long enough for her to finish speaking. She returned to being the spirited and cute lady once more.

Li Qiye didn't find this surprising and accepted their showing of respect. "Go now."

The two bowed once more before leaving the area quietly.

### **Chapter 3825: Speculation**

Li Qiye didn't stick around for long after the two were gone. He tossed the hammer back onto the anvil and descended.

"That's it?" Both the students and teachers nearby were surprised, especially the latter who had been watching the entire time.

The teachers thought that Li Qiye was on the verge of doing something incredible after refining the remnant dregs. Perhaps a great treasure would be the result.

The molten liquid in the cauldron was still surging and splashing. The flame was powerful as well, not allowing the liquid to cool.

Some teachers landed on top of the peak with students behind them.

"Hmm, let's see here." A powerful teacher wanted to scoop up the molten metal but pulled his hand back due to the scorching temperature.

They had no idea why Li Qiye left midway during the process.

"Maybe he was just playing around out of boredom?" A different teacher murmured.

One older teacher shook his head: "No, Li Qiye is not that type of person. He does everything for a reason."

"Is it possible to refine these dregs into a weapon?" A teacher asked: "Sure, the dregs left behind by dao lord-level refinements are probably valuable but not in the eyes of someone like him. This is too much effort."

He was right. Ordinary cultivators could find the molten metals to be valuable. On the other hand, the true masters wouldn't waste their time refining these waste materials.

"He's too eccentric, we can't understand his intent." The old intent shook his head and concluded.

His peers agreed with him and smiled wryly.

"Well, that doesn't matter. The return of the flame is still great news for our academy." One teacher became excited.

Since the cauldron was back, the academy had more chances in the future to craft an amazing artifact.

"True, it'll be way easier to craft something strong now." Others nodded in agreement.

Ultimately, they didn't dare to interfere with Li Qiye's business. They ignored the perpetual interaction between the flame and the remnant metals.

The students that tagged along were curious as well. However, they focused on the hammer instead.



Everyone knew about its legendary tales with the dao lords and top sovereigns. Alas, no one was able to pick it up after the main flame extinguished until Li Qiye.

He summoned an ocean of lightning with it and took down Sword Hero. By this point, even a blind fool could see how wondrous this hammer was. It was right in front of them too.

“Should we try lifting it again?” A student asked.

“Even if you can lift it, are you going to take our academy’s treasure away?” A peer glared at him.

“Right, but there’s no rule about taking it away.” The first student remained interested.

The crowd agreed too. The hammer was left here for millions of years and there was no rule about bringing it away.

The academy seemed content with just leaving it alone. Anyone could take it if they were capable enough.

Thus, they stared at the teachers who were still talking about the remnant metals. The latter didn’t seem to care about this issue.

“Well, if the academy doesn’t stop us, it’ll belong to whoever can take it away.” The first student asserted.

This logic was simple enough. The listeners felt their heart beating faster.

A while ago, students attempted to lift the hammer out of curiosity. Now, after seeing it in action, temptation and greed overwhelmed them.

“I’ll give it a shot.” A hot-headed student stepped forward.

“Up you go!” He gripped the hilt with both hands and mustered all of his strength. He activated his merit laws and different methods to no avail.

Others gave it a shot again despite the first failure. In fact, some even teamed up and tried to lift it together.

No one managed to move the hammer, not even by an inch.

“Why can’t we move it?” They eventually gave up, albeit begrudgingly because Li Qiye did so without putting in any effort at all.

The hammer seemed like paper when he lifted it earlier. They had no idea why.

“Just give up. Your current selves have no chance.” The oldest teacher walked over and smiled at the group.

“Teacher, why Li Qiye and not us?” A student inquired.

“This is a heaven-defying hammer. Only powerful characters like dao lords and supremes can lift it. Others will just be wasting their time.” The teacher replied.

“This still doesn’t answer how Li Qiye did it. He’s not a dao lord or supreme.” Another argued. Though Li Qiye was devilish, his cultivation was still shallow.

“Because the hammer allows it.” The teacher patiently explained.

“Hmm?” The students remained confused.

“The hammer finds Li Qiye worthy, that’s why he can lift it without exerting any strength.” The teacher said.

“So this hammer basically can recognize its masters?” Another asked.

“Sounds about right.” The teacher nodded.

This revelation caused the students to ponder.

### **Chapter 3826: Leaving**

Li Qiye returned to the temple and told the old servant and Fan Bai: “We’ve been here long enough, time to move.”

“Where do you wish to go, Young Master?” Fan Bai became curious.

“Black Wood Cliff.” He replied.

“Is your destination Black Tides, Young Master?” The old servant’s eyes slightly shifted after hearing this.

Fan Bai had no reaction due to her little knowledge. This wasn’t the case for the old servant who had traveled the world. He knew that there was nothing for Li Qiye to do at Black Wood Cliff. The only thing interesting there was Black Tides.

“Indeed.” Li Qiye responded.

The old man took a deep breath. While Li Qiye didn’t make a big deal out of it, those in the know would find this a serious matter.

Black Tides was one of the seven forbidden zones. All were extremely dangerous, hence their classification.

Not to mention ordinary cultivators, even the powerful supremes would be wary when talking about these places, let alone actually going there. Only Li Qiye could make this decision without thinking twice.

“The tides are receding.” The old servant murmured.

“You’ve heard about it?” Li Qiye glanced at him.

“It’s not like I don’t care about external events. The girl from Black Wood told Vajra about the phenomena already.” The old servant responded.

“Yes, it is receding.” Li Qiye nodded but this didn’t matter to him. He would take a trip there either way.

The old servant became worried after the confirmation. Though this happened numerous times in history, they were not prepared for it this generation.

The previous time happened during Eight Stallion Dao Lord's era, the most recent one. A new dao lord has yet to appear. [1]

It hasn't even been a full era since so no one believed Wei Qianqing. Normally, it would be a dozen eras or so.

Thus, the seniors of Vajra had a historical justification for doubting her report. This was the same for the old servant as well.

Unfortunately, Li Qiye had spoken and his words were absolute. The old servant thought that this was an ominous sign.

"Looks like you still care about the southern West King." Li Qiye chuckled while looking at the old servant's worried expression.

"I'm just a regular man who can't forget about the place where I was born, unable to escape the constraints of the five elements and emotions." The old servant smiled wryly.

"True, everyone feels the same way." Li Qiye chuckled and agreed.

The old servant sighed. Things were looking bad for the south. In fact, the holy ground might be facing an existential crisis.

Previously, Buddha Supreme risked his life to protect Black Wood and still failed. Fortunately, Righteous Supreme and Eight Stallion Dao Lord came in the nick of time.

The consequence would have been unimaginable if these two didn't come. The holy ground would be the first to go down.

In the present, Buddha Supreme was nowhere to be found. Righteous Supreme would have a hard time coming out. As for the dao lord? He hasn't been around for a long time now.

The stake was just as high this time. Black Wood needed defenders capable of holding back Black Tides.

He glanced at Li Qiye. Who else could it be but Li Qiye?

"Young Master, are you intending on going straight in?" He asked.

"Not necessarily, I'm not a savior who cares about the wellbeing of others." Li Qiye shook his head.

"But you still wish to go there." He said.

Few in the world knew what awaited in the depths of Black Tides, only that intruders seldomly returned alive.

Nonetheless, he believed that Li Qiye could absolutely do so. But why did Li Qiye want to go there?

"Just going there to finish a trivial matter." Li Qiye glanced at the horizon and said.

The old man thought that only Li Qiye would be able to say this in a nonchalant manner. Even dao lords didn't dare to do so.

"That place is so bizarre." He recalled.

“You’ve been there before?” Li Qiye smiled.

“Not quite, making that claim would be an exaggeration.” He became sentimental: “I was arrogant back then despite achieving nothing. I thought I was invincible and couldn’t help wanting to enter.”

He paused for a moment and memories resurfaced. He swept through Eight Desolaces with his saber, completely dominating his peers.

Because of this, he felt confident enough to enter Black Tides. He eventually found that it was endless and perilous. Fortunately, he knew when to quit and managed to stay alive.

“It’s immensely vast. I was like a headless fly going everywhere. I didn’t know how far I got at all.” He said.

“It’s nothing to be embarrassed about. Just the fact that you left that place alive is incredible enough.” Li Qiye replied.

“You’re too kind.” He forced a smile.

Anyone entering that place would find themselves insignificant, akin to a drop of water in an ocean. Most would be lost right after.

To reach the deepest area was exceedingly difficult. Only mighty dao lords could do so. Of course, there was no guarantee of leaving it alive.

“So what is that thing?” He asked a question that has been on his mind for a long time.

“What did you see?” Li Qiye replied.

“Is it a ghost?” He boldly speculated.

Of course, “ghost” for cultivators was different from “ghost” in the mind of mortals. The ghosts described by mortals were nothing more than remnant intents with grudges.

“That depends on your definition.” Li Qiye smirked and said: “Most would consider them ghosts. As for me, I disagree and believe that they are things that shouldn’t exist.”

“I see.” He fell into rumination.

In the past, he got far enough to see unprecedented things that left an indelible impression on him.

“Go get ready.” Li Qiye commanded, then returned to his room.

### **Chapter 3827: Tag Along**

Yang Ling visited before Li Qiye’s departure.

“I want to go to Black Wood Cliff with you, Young Master.” Though she wasn’t a genius, she still had admirable traits such as being very direct.

She was the first to know about Li Qiye’s journey because Fan Bai came to say goodbye.

“Why?” Li Qiye stared at her.

"I want to broaden my horizon. The seniors told me about Black Wood and its fantastic tales, it's just that I never got the chance to visit it." She hurriedly responded.

He only smiled.

"Young Master, please bring me too, I can serve you or do whatever you need, I'll be very diligent!" She grabbed his arm and begged.

Others wouldn't dare to be so familiar with Li Qiye. Yang Ling, on the other hand, got to know Li Qiye better so she acted boldly.

"Go pack your stuff." Li Qiye eventually granted her permission.

She became excited and cheered before speaking: "No need to go back, my family already prepared everything for me." Having said that, she patted her spatial pouch.

This wasn't her idea alone. Her family, especially her father, wanted her to be around Li Qiye.

He was intelligent enough to understand Li Qiye's limitless potential. There was a chance of him becoming a dao lord in the future.

Thus, he didn't want to miss this opportunity and hoped that his daughter could stay with Li Qiye. This would benefit both Yang Ling and the clan. They might reach an unprecedented height as a result.

"Fine." Li Qiye waved his hand.

Yang Ling happily left and went to look for Fan Bai.

The latter played a big part in Li Qiye's decision. Fan Bai didn't have friends so it was good to have a cheerful girl like Yang Ling around.

Of course, Yang Ling and her father weren't the only ones with this idea.

As Li Qiye was about to leave, the old man from Duality visited again with Dugu Lan behind him.

She was always a sight to behold wherever she went - beautiful and elegant, always commanding attention.

"I heard about your departure, Young Master." The old man bowed and said: "I'm sorry for the lack of hospitality during your stay at Duality..."

"Pleasantries are unnecessary." Li Qiye interrupted.

"You're going to Black Wood, right?" The old man smiled and asked.

"Mmm." Li Qiye nodded.

"So is the seawater really receding?" His eyes shifted slightly.

The big shots in the holy ground have received this information from Wei Qianqing. Nonetheless, virtually all of them dismissed it.

He himself thought that it was extremely unlikely. However, Li Qiye's trip there must be for a reason.

“You tell me.” Li Qiye replied.

He became nervous because this was a dreadful matter. No one in the holy ground could escape this. In fact, all of the south might go down.

“Then we must prepare.” He stared straight at Li Qiye and answered.

“Better work together well.” Li Qiye said flatly.

The old man had no response. The current holy ground wasn’t the same as before.

Prior to this, Buddha Supreme was in charge and solidarity was at an all-time high. One command from him would result in the holy ground working together.

Now, people thought that he was dead. Thus, the various powers had selfish calculations. Despite being one of the most influential figures, he definitely couldn’t unify the holy ground.

“I have neither enough power nor status to do this. Young Master, the holy ground relies on your leadership.” He said softly.

“A bunch of fools, when together, are still fools. There will only be more people and louder fanfare, do you really think they’ll wholeheartedly work together against the enemies?” Li Qiye chuckled.

The old man had an awkward expression. Li Qiye’s comment, though unpleasant, was still truthful.

Vajra was currently in charge but numerous other powers wanted its position. In the past, Buddha Supreme and Sacred Mountain prevented them from acting on it.

A few things were different in the present. First, Buddha Supreme was gone. Second, Archaic Sun King was considered to be a failed leader. Others no longer wanted to be under Vajra’s supervision.

As for Vajra, it certainly had the ambition of no longer being under the rule of Sacred Mountain. That’s the only way for the dynasty to be eternal.

All in all, even if these powers were to rally together for a common cause, internal strife would eventually take over.

“Young Master, are you saying...” He hesitated.

“Just let it be, it’s not actually a big deal. No legacy lasts forever. When it is time to fall, it’ll fall.” Li Qiye said.

“I can’t be as open-minded as you.” He smiled wryly. He didn’t share the same freedom as Li Qiye since he was responsible for Duality Academy.

Though Duality was separate from the holy ground, it was still built on the latter’s land. Thus, if the holy ground were to fall, so would the academy.

The problem was, even if he sincerely tried his best, Vajra and the other divisions wouldn’t listen to him anyway. Only Buddha Supreme had this level of influence.

He eventually sighed and gave up, wanting to focus on the academy’s survival instead.

“Young Master, it is a long and arduous journey to Black Wood.” He then spoke: “Let our Little Lan follow you and take care of your daily needs.”

He then beckoned for Dugu Lan to walk forward.

“I hope to be of service, Young Master. It is my honor to follow you.” Dugu Lan bowed her head.

The old man wanted Dugu Lan to stick around not only because of Li Qiye’s status but also for her to learn more.

Outsiders would consider this preposterous. Dugu Lan was the number one genius of the holy ground. Now, she was about to be Li Qiye’s maid?

“Nothing’s long and arduous about this, it’s just a stroll.” Li Qiye refused.

“Young Master, you must think that our little lady isn’t clever enough.” The old man smiled bitterly.

“No, she’s a rare genius. The academy is lucky to have someone like her.” Li Qiye glanced at her and praised.

### **Chapter 3828: Start Of The Journey**

The old man and Dugu Lan were disappointed due to Li Qiye’s refusal to bring her along. After all, she would have definitely learned many things along the way.

Of course, most would view Dugu Lan as a supreme genius - the only youth capable of contending against Righteous Scion.

The ancestors thought that she had boundless potential as well, destined to stand at the apex. Thus, she was a jewel in their eyes. Someone like her being a maid would be unfathomable.

The duo present disagreed. The old man, in particular, thought that it would be an honor for her to follow Li Qiye - the opportunity of a lifetime.

“I have nothing to teach you, you’re excellent enough already and have done an incredible job learning Trinity Sword Art. Reaching apogee is only a matter of time.” Li Qiye stared at the two and replied.

“Please steer me from mistakes, Young Master.” Dugu Lan smartly asked for guidance, knowing that a chance like this wouldn’t present itself again.

“You’re doing great but if I must point a single thing out, refrain from distinguishing between the light and darkness.” Li Qiye smilingly said.

“This is indeed something I think about, please elaborate, Young Master.” She said.

Trinity was a unique sword art since it consisted of light and darkness. The first two variations were completely different from each other.

Thus, the polar opposites made it difficult for her during training. Her talents and indomitable spirit eventually birthed success, allowing her to utilize this powerful technique effectively.

Nonetheless, she still had questions and doubts regarding her usage of light and darkness.

“They have the same origin.” Li Qiye said: “From darkness there is light and there is light in darkness. This duality creates a majestic momentum and three thousand brilliant mortal realms. These realms are never separated from the two affinities, and that’s the focus of the third technique.”

“I see.” Dugu Lan’s impeccable comprehension allowed her to absorb his guidance.

The third move of Trinity, Myriad Men, summoned the power of the talented geniuses in the mortal realms.

It was different from the previous two since it encompassed both affinities. As for the first two moves, the affinity would absorb or destroy the other.

“Their reason for being is predicated on their twin’s existence.” Li Qiye concluded.

She became immersed in internal training. She suddenly felt much better about the sword art.

“Thank you, Young Master.” She bowed, having gained immense benefits from listening to a few lines from him.

He accepted her gesture and added: “Trinity Sword Art is certainly strong but do not indulge excessively in it. You need to focus on your own grand dao or you’ll never be able to leave the shadow of its creator, not that this should be a goal.”

She became emotional because he touched the biggest issue in her mind. Trinity was extremely strong but she knew that she had no chance of surpassing its creator.

The emperor who created this sword art was known as Prime and considered to be the greatest of them all.

In history, the brilliant emperors and invincible dao lords couldn’t compare to him. That’s why she had no chance of surpassing him regardless of her talents.

“Your grand dao is unique and effective, others would have a hard time reaching you...” He then focused on her grand dao.

Though this was only a casual session, she considered each of his words to be as precious as gold and jade. She earnestly memorized the content in order to ponder them later.

After he finished, she bowed and respectfully said: “I won’t forget your kindness, Young Master. If I can be of use in the future, just say the words and I will be your ox and horse.”

He only smiled in response.

“Young Master, I believe the changes in Black Tides imply immense danger. I don’t think you need to take this risk.” The old man pondered before speaking.

This was because of Li Qiye’s prestigious status. If anything were to happen to Li Qiye, it would be an unthinkable loss to the holy ground and its people.

“Black Tides can’t stop me from leaving. If it could, it would have started crawling instead of just laying there.” Li Qiye smiled.



“Hmm?” Dugu Lan found his comment astonishing.

Black Tides was the name of an ocean but Li Qiye was using verbs to describe it. Dugu Lan eventually asked: “Young Master, isn’t Black Tides an ocean? Is it... alive?”

The erudite old man felt the same way, thinking that Li Qiye’s choice of words was rather strange.

“Alive? Sure, but barely like a lamp running out of oil. It can’t amount to anything.” Li Qiye nonchalantly responded.

Though these two expected this answer, they still became shocked.

“So Black Tides is a living entity...” Dugu Lan murmured.

Most thought that this was only an ocean with black water. They would consider Li Qiye a madman for making this claim. How could a creature be so large?

“Please be careful, Young Master.” The old man repeated, hoping for Li Qiye’s wellbeing.

“Don’t worry, I know what to do.” Li Qiye smiled.

As the group was about to leave Duality Academy, Li Qiye didn’t tell anyone. Nonetheless, Dugu Lan and the old man insisted on sending him away.

They knew that he didn’t like rowdiness so they came alone.

“Can’t follow me forever, go back now.” Li Qiye eventually commanded along the way.

The two bowed deeply as they watched Li Qiye disappearing into the horizon.

### **Chapter 3829: Black Tides**

Black Wood Cliff was located next to Black Tides, spanning two-third of the coastline.

In other words, Black Wood wasn’t a singular cliff but rather, a broader name of a geographic region.

As for Black Tides, it presided to the very south, far removed from the holy ground and Buddha Emperor Plateau.

A mortal would never be able to make a trip from the capital to Black Wood Cliff. A powerful cultivator relying on flying would require a long period of time.

Due to the long distance, the core of the holy ground didn’t care about Black Wood. Whatever danger loomed at Black Wood was just too far away.

Nonetheless, historically, there has always been a garrison for a mighty legion here. This applied to the present day as well.

This particular legion belonged to Vajra. The reason for them being here was simple - to watch over Black Tides.

Of course, a legion alone wouldn’t do much against Black Tides. Nonetheless, this has been tradition.

Black Tides was one of the seven forbidden zones. The majority of intruders would never come back alive, not even powerful supremes.

The south was closer but even the leaders of the north always worried about this area. The reason why the south still existed was due to the effort of the wise sages and cultivators. Dao Lords risked their lives in order to calm this ocean.

This was the case for the other forbidden zones too. One famous expedition was led by Duck Egg Dao Lord, including battles in all seven zones. [1]

More recently during the Chaotic Era, Puresun Dao Lord also fought against the forbidden zones.

There were few records about this era; not too many details remained. However, recent battles were quite famous.

For example, Buddha Dao Lord, Dhyana Dao Lord, and Righteous Dao Lord have all fought Black Tides. Later on, Vajra Dao Lord and his wondrous weapon did quite a number on Black Tides.

Because of this feat, his vajra was considered to be one of the ten greatest dao lord treasures.

In history, there were most likely thousands of dao lord weapons and treasure. Thus, the high rank of his vajra showed just how brilliant it was.

Furthermore, all of them returned alive after the expeditions.

Alas, tragedies happened as well. Leaving alone the older tales, the one that left the deepest impression recently was Scarlet Moon Dao Lord.

This dao lord was brilliant, being a peerless genius with an unmatched grand dao. He dominated and became a dao lord later on.

Unfortunately, the tides suddenly came when he had just finished creating his golden avatar. Since he had just reached this realm, his dao foundation was unstable.

He eventually died to the tides; his vitality, blood, and grand dao were taken by the receding tides.

All of Eight Desolaces trembled in fear. Though some top masters tried to help, they could only watch the tides retreat back to the ocean.

His death served as a warning to the entire world. They have grown complacent after the end of the Chaotic Era.

During the Era of the Blessed, prosperity could be found everywhere. Very few dao lords died during their ascension so people forgot about this risk.

Scarlet Moon Dao Lord's fate became the prime example and reminded everyone of this tragic possibility.

Afterward, other terrible events stemmed from Black Tides. For example, whenever the tides receded, terrible creatures would come forth.

They were strong enough to overwhelm Buddha Supreme. If it weren't for Righteous Supreme and Eight Stallion Dao Lord, the south would have fallen.

That's why the leading dynasties of Vajra always had a legion at Black Wood just to keep an eye out for any suspicious movement.

Though Li Qiye wasn't in a rush, they traveled swiftly while being in the carriage controlled by the old servant.

It didn't take long before they arrived at a great city in Black Wood. People either called it Black Wood Cliff City or just Black Wood Cliff.

It was the home of more than ten million inhabitants. As the group approached, they saw a unique characteristic of the forests and vegetation here.

Everything along the coastline was stained by a black shade. Because of this, the coastline was rather visible even from a distance, looking like a thick black line spanning for ten million miles.

As they got closer to the city, they met more passengers along the way. Since Black Wood Cliff was by the border of the holy ground, they didn't see many people along the way until now.

Yang Ling and Fan Bai stared curiously at the travelers. There were a few mortals but mostly cultivators from various sects and races. This looked pretty similar to Buddha Emperor City.

"I haven't seen this type of clothes before." However, Yang Ling noticed a different group.

It didn't look like the fashion of the holy ground or Righteous Sect. In fact, this seemed different from anything from Eight Desolaces.

They seemed to be from an ancient era. An archaic aura just oozed from them.

"They're from Wild East Eight Kingdoms." The old servant said: "Black Wood Cliff is close to the east so they do come here."

"I thought the eight kingdoms don't mingle with the outside world." Yang Ling asked.

"That's in the past. The barbarians of the east certainly didn't come out during the Chaotic Era and didn't welcome outsiders either. This gradually changed but still very limited. They usually only visit black Wood Cliff, very few go out farther." The old servant smiled.

"So who are they? Do they just want to maintain their lifestyle from the ancient era without dealing with the modern world?" She continued.

In the past, the holy ground had tried to conquer the eight kingdoms to extend its reach. The result was well-known as well.

This was during the golden age of both the holy ground and Righteous Sect. The two enemies decided to work together in order to conquer the eight kingdoms. This expedition was led by eight saints and nine sovereigns.

The eight kingdoms couldn't stop the powerful legions from these two sects, losing one battle after another. What happened next took the legions by surprise. The Ancient Empress appeared and defeated their top masters along with the legions.

From then on, Righteous Sect and the holy ground never tried to conquer the east again.

"Time is an unstoppable flood. Trying to separate from the world is futile. In the end, they'll be swept into the temporal flood as well, no exception." The old servant said.

### **Chapter 3830: Old Rumors**

Li Qiye didn't immediately enter the city. Instead, the old servant led him to the coastline.

A majestic platform floated in the sky above the water right outside of the city. Keep in mind that the entirety of Black Wood resembled a cliff right next to Black Tides.

While standing on this platform, one could see the famous ocean ahead. Virtually everyone in Eight Desolaces has heard of its name before and its horrifying tales.

Nonetheless, to see it in person was still astonishing. When people thought of oceans, they would imagine blue water and a clear sky.

This wasn't the case for the boundless ocean ahead. True to its name, the water was completely black. Moreover, it felt quite thick as well.

If it was only black like squid's ink, then people wouldn't mind adventuring there. However, the thickness was intimidating. They thought that once they took one step inside, they would be stuck there, unable to get out.

Furthermore, due to this thickness, the water surface should be quite calm. In reality, this ocean was furious with high waves always ravaging the shore, ready to sweep the earth away.

The sky wasn't blue either. It seemed that after millions and millions of years, the evaporated water resulted in an all-enveloping thick fog.

In a sense, one would feel that they were standing before a great beast with its bloody jaws wide open. The first impression was usually fear and dread.

Yang Ling and Fan Bai had heard of this place before but this was their first visit. They felt the same way as everyone else.

"Why is the water black?" Yang Ling brought this up.

In fact, this might be the first question in everyone's mind after seeing the ocean. It must have been asked a million times.

Li Qiye smiled while the old servant answered: "There are numerous legends regarding this."

"What are they?" Fan Bai, who was in awe, became interested as well.

“One tells of a source stone of darkness residing in the deepest crevice of the ocean. It stained the entire thing with its dark affinity. If one were to fall in the water without being strong enough, they would rot right away.” The old man answered while gazing at the ocean.

This caused the two to stagger backward right away. Indeed, this black ocean seemed eager to swallow intruders.

“So is this one true?” The reticent Fan Bai asked.

“I don’t know.” The old man stopped staring and shook his head, looking a bit emotional: “Only those who can actually make it there know whether there’s a stone like that or not.”

“Can you do it?” Yang Ling asked, aware that the old servant wasn’t an ordinary cultivator.

“I would only embarrass myself due to my meager cultivation.” The old man smiled wryly: “The number of people that can make it there is pitiful, to say the least. Only characters like Dhyana or Vajra Dao Lord can do so. Others will only be courting death.”

“I’ve heard of this before.” Yang Ling became excited after hearing about the expeditions: “They said that Vajra Dao Lord destroyed the sky vault here with his weapon...”

Yang Ling came from nobility and had memorized the tales of the four dao lords already. This was one reason why she was so excited to visit Black Tides.

“That’s correct, it goes to show how fierce and competitive the battle was.” The old man nodded.

Yang Ling didn’t think of it this way. Vajra Dao Lord was known to be unbeatable. Thus, if he were capable of suppressing Black Tides, the fight wouldn’t have been so devastating. It would have ended rather quietly.

“What about Duality Master?” Yang Ling brought up someone else: “I heard the master came freely without being stopped.”

As a student of Duality, she has also heard about the founder’s exploits. Rumor has it that Black Tides didn’t react to his presence at all. He strolled inside as if it was his own backyard.

Many didn’t believe this particular legend. Everyone knew that Duality Master was a mortal. How could a mortal tread freely in Black Tides? That’s impossible.

Even the dao lords of the holy ground needed to fight the entire way to get inside then killed their way back out.

Any existence, regardless of their power, would find traveling in this region exceedingly difficult. Nonetheless, Duality Master actually did it.

“Yes. According to the records, Duality Master is the only one who traveled freely in Black Tides without any resistance.” The old man solemnly said.

“How did he do it?” Yang Ling couldn’t come up with a reason. This was indeed a mystery that has spanned for eras.

“I don’t know.” The old man said: “Maybe he’s a unique existence, or perhaps he had already escaped the five elements and constraints of the world. Or, Black Tides was afraid so he did whatever he wanted.”

“Afraid of his power? How could a mortal be so strong?” Yang Ling murmured.

Her skepticism was warranted. One could say that no one in this world was stronger than the holy ground’s dao lords during their respective era.

How could a mortal be stronger than a dao lord?

“Cultivation doesn’t determine everything in this world. Duality Master is an exception, the only exception.” The old man said.

Yang Ling nodded in agreement, agreeing that her academy’s founder was special. There have been numerous dao lords in history but only one Duality Master.