

Emperor 4191

Chapter 4191: Finding Treasures

Delving deeper into the ocean made everyone realize how boundless it truly was. They saw amazing phenomena as well.

In one area, there was a skeleton resembling a dragon. Each bone was as large as a mountain. Standing on top of it was quite a stirring experience. Many years have passed and the divinity has dispersed from the bones. Nonetheless, they still had the color of white jade.

Another skeleton had collapsed into the bottom of the ocean. Nonetheless, its sharp bones still pointed straight at the sky as if they were spears flashing with a frightening pulse.

A whale-like skeleton had its skull looking straight up and its jaws wide open, wanting to devour the sky. Because of its sheer size, it affected the current and created a maelstrom.

Cultivators were ecstatic to see these massive skeletons. One of them ran over and shouted: "A primal beast! Its bones and core must be extremely precious."

Others felt the same way and started a treasure hunt. This wouldn't be a bad haul at all even if they didn't get any divine sword.

Unfortunately, this group couldn't find anything. An experienced ancestor nearby shook his head: "These bones have been around for who knows how many years. The precious bones and cores were either taken by the currents or eaten by other beasts. Plus, visitors in preceding trips would have found them first."

Listeners agreed with this and gave up. They thought that the previous waves of cultivators must have taken all the good things.

Only a few were lucky enough to spot divine swords here. Shortly after the big waves of arrival, news came about the death of a gigantic beast. The water there was dyed red from its blood.

"Poplar Paragon and the ancestors from Wooden Sword managed to kill a one-legged monster and took a lightning sword from its back."

"Damn, looks like Wooden Sword should never be underestimated." One ancestor took a deep breath and said: "I saw how powerful that monster was just two days ago. It devoured a group from Nine-wheel Citadel including five elders in the blink of an eye."

"Poplar Paragon is taking up the mantle again after the death of Pineleaf Sword Lord. The kingdom seems to be on an upward trajectory." An ancient ancestor said: "He's indeed strong enough to do so, only the Five Overlords are stronger than him right now."

In a different spot, cultivators ran over after seeing flashing sword rays. Alas, they disappeared once people got there. It turned out that an elder from Daoist Sword Ground managed to seize the sword before anyone else.

On the surface, a group led by several ancestors from Sea Emperor was chasing a six-winged solar dragon for ten million miles. The dragon lost the fight and had to flee.

Sure enough, information traveled about this fight a while later. “The ancestors of Sea Emperor killed a six-winged solar dragon and obtained three divine swords from its lair!”

This message stirred the crowd and made them more enthusiastic. Alas, the majority of divine swords were taken by the behemoths.

“What are we even doing here? Just useless spectators?” A member from a small sect said bitterly.

Those from small sects and even vagabonds appreciated their luck in being able to enter Sword Ocean. They wanted to obtain a divine sword in order to change their future for the better.

Unfortunately, it was easier said than done. Only the top sects had the ability to seize these swords.

“We have zero chance.” A vagabond became dejected: “Just be happy that we’re alive in this dangerous place. I saw the sect master and members of Flying Grass wanting to fight a lionfish. All of them were eaten, not a single soul got out.”

“More of us are dying too. Our group consisted of sixty-seven non-affiliated cultivators. We got ambushed by a nine-headed serpent, now, there are only six of us left.” A young cultivator who was covered in wounds said.

“Don’t be so pessimistic, cultivation is a path filled with dangers and glories. Very few make it through with a smile. It’s not like we haven’t gotten anything, I know of someone who got a divine sword.” An older vagabond said.

“How?” The young one didn’t believe him.

“It’s true, I saw a golden dragon giving him the sword. It’s an amazing one too, like one from a dragon god.” The old vagabond replied.

“That sounds like a fantasy, you’re lying.” The majority of the group didn’t believe him.

“He’s not lying, I saw it too. That golden dragon had an auspicious aura and a visual phenomenon consisting of countless swords.” A prodigy interjected.

“It’s not unprecedented. Rumor has it that Violet Abyss Dao Lord was given a heavenly sword by a spirit fish in this ocean.” A relatively successful vagabond added.

“Yes, something similar happened to a genius from Nine-wheel Citadel too, a sword from an aquatic elephant.” Another old man nodded.

“Where is the kid then?” A few cultivators’ eyes flashed with greed.

Trying to rob the behemoths was courting death. However, a vagabond? That shouldn’t be a problem.

“Don’t be stupid.” An old vagabond shook her head: “The guy left long ago. Plus, the fact that he got a sword from a golden dragon means that his future is limitless, someone blessed by heaven. If you try to rob him, he’ll come back one day for revenge and exterminate your clan.”

“No, I was just curious, haha, that’s all.” The others smiled awkwardly after being figured out.

Everyone paid attention to the stories about the divine swords. Only Li Qiye didn't care since he had a destination in mind.

There was a sinkhole in Sword Ocean - deep and bottomless. It was surrounded by water yet none could get in, not even a single drop.

It seemed that a powerful force separated it from the outside world.

Cultivators came and became quite interested in this weird phenomenon.

"There has to be a divine sword in there." One youth wanted to enter.

"This is the eye of the sea, a rather famous place. You can go in if you're tired of living." A senior snorted.

"Is it that bad?" The youth asked.

"There is no returning." The senior answered: "No one has returned alive in history, whether it be peerless geniuses or invincible ancestors.

"I see..." The youth took a deep breath.

Chapter 4192: Eye Of The Sea

"No, there was one survivor." An old man nearby disagreed.

"Who is it?" The youth became surprised right away.

"The one and only in history." The old man said mysteriously.

"Just tell us already!" Those nearby became impatient.

"Starshooter Dao Lord." The old man stared at the sinkhole and said: "As far as I know and everyone else for that matter, he's the only one."

"An invincible dao lord..." Others found this answer acceptable.

Starshooter was the fourth dao lord of Sea Emperor whose sword dao dominated the realms.

"A dao lord is strong enough to fight against the living creatures of the forbidden zones. This eye might be scary but it's not enough to stop a dao lord." An expert said.

Dao lords were the ultimate existences in the mind of regular cultivators. They were viewed as omnipotent.

"No." The old man shook his head: "The dao lord did it during his youth, before he became a dao lord."

This caused the crowd to exchange glances.

"I thought this place was dangerous and only suicidal people entered. Was the dao lord already invincible at a young age?" One youth asked.

“It was strange indeed.” The old man elaborated: “He wasn’t at a high level then, just an unknown cultivator. Because of this, they might have been unsubstantiated rumors since he never brought it up either.”

“Geniuses are different from us.” An expert said: “He already had legends despite being young. Not just anyone can reach the apex.”

“Maybe this place is the reason why he was able to become a dao lord.” Someone had a different perspective on this matter: “The fortune here allowed him to embark on the path towards invincibility.”

“It’s possible.” The old man agreed: “Keep in mind that as I’ve mentioned earlier, the dao lord never brought up this issue. People didn’t know what he got from here, whether it be a divine sword or a treasure.”

“Whatever it is, it should be incredible.” Temptation reared its ugly head again.

“A fortune capable of making someone a dao lord.” Many stared at the sinkhole with greed in their eyes.

Becoming a dao lord was virtually all cultivators’ lifelong pursuit. Of course, nearly all ended in failure outside of a small group. Today, an opportunity was right in front of them; their heart started beating faster.

“Should we give it a shot?” A hot-blooded young man wanted to be the next lucky guy, thinking that he would find success just by jumping into the hole.

“Feel free to play the terrible odds.” His senior glared at him and said: “I’m sure that across the years, hundreds of thousands of cultivators have jumped in. How many actually came back out with the exception of Starshooter Dao Lord? Do you think you’ll be another exception?”

“Well, no...” The young man smiled awkwardly and didn’t dare to jump.

“Forget it, find a more realistic spot.” A last-gen cultivator gave up on this sinkhole and said: “The probability is too low here.”

No one wanted to put their life on the line when the odds were insurmountable.

“Wait, who’s over there?!” As they were leaving, someone shouted.

They looked over and sure enough, a man was standing next to the edge of the sinkhole.

“It’s Li Qiye!” Someone else bellowed after taking a good look.

“Indeed, what is he doing here?” They became interested again.

“This is it.” Li Qiye stared at the bottomless sinkhole and smiled.

“Is he trying to challenge it? He wants the fortune inside?” An expert murmured.

“I don’t know if I would call this a challenge, more like an insane attempt from a madman.” Someone from the last generation murmured.

“He’s already the world’s richest. This risky business isn’t right for him.” One youth who didn’t like Li Qiye still didn’t want him to die.

“Is wealth alone not enough? He wants to become a dao lord too?” His friend wondered.

“This is unnecessary indeed.” A big shot shook his head then shouted at Li Qiye: “Young Noble Li, the eye of the sea is fatally dangerous, you already have enough resources, no need to obtain this fortune. Don’t let greed be your downfall. Find contentment in what you have.”

He persuaded with sincerity and logic, hoping to save Li Qiye. Everyone knew that Li Qiye’s cultivation was shabby. However, his wealth allowed him to contest against anyone or any sect for that matter.

He had all the advantages in the world. It would be idiotic to jump into the sinkhole for something that might not even be there.

“Unfortunately, I am never content.” Li Qiye looked back at the big shot and smiled: “Nonetheless, I do appreciate your comment. Here, have this.” He casually tossed a treasure to the big shot then jumped into the sinkhole.

“He actually jumped?!” The crowd became startled.

“He has to be crazy. Only a crazy man would do this.” One ancestor got closer and stared at the darkness.

“Just stop trying to judge him with conventional wisdom, he’s different.” A high elder said.

“He’s dead for sure, there’s no way he’ll be a second Starshooter Dao Lord.” One youth commented. The odds were minuscule.

“The madman could shock all of us and perform another miracle.” Someone else calmed down and said.

“Can his sorcery overcome this nefarious place?” Another wondered.

Chapter 4193: Dreadful Creature

Nothing but darkness could be seen beneath the sinkhole. Li Qiye looked up and no longer saw the hole above or any light.

It appeared boundless just like the sky. Alas, Li Qiye was strong enough to analyze the entire area and see through the black veils.

He scanned around and understood everything, not being at risk of death like other visitors.

“Creak...” A heavy grinding noise sounded both far and near, akin to a heavy stone door being pushed open.

However, Li Qiye knew that it was a gigantic creature encompassing the entire domain. Its size was unfathomable. The uninvited intruder woke it up so it started moving.

He stood there with a smile, completely unaffected. Though the creature was barely moving, it felt as if mountain ranges were on the move.

Nonetheless, it didn’t result in a quaking effect - meaning that the creature had full mastery over its body’s movements, a testament to its power.

“Clank!” A sharp gale cut through the air. A saber landed on the ground, easily cutting through it like a piece of tofu.

Its glint illuminated the dark area, allowing Li Qiye to see how deadly it was. A regular cultivator wouldn't be able to see the blade in its entirety due to its length.

The glint also had a nether presence as if it came from hell and belonged to a reaper. Just one swing would reap a million lives. Alas, this was still not enough to frighten Li Qiye.

“Clank! Clank! Clank!” The first blade was only the beginning. Countless ones began descending while intersecting and clanking with others; each taller than the heaven.

This was more than enough to scare someone to death. The blades could eviscerate and mince the earth into countless pieces. Cultivators were more fragile than insects before them.

Upon closer inspection, one would find that these reaper blades were actually legs belonging to the massive monster.

It simply moved and gave the impression of countless blades descending. Both heaven and earth along with Li Qiye were right beneath it.

The smile still didn't disappear on his face during a moment when others might soil themselves.

“Another visitor at last.” Words of an ancient language came from above. The entire world was filled with these words. Weak cultivators would instantly explode from the sound waves alone.

He understood and chuckled.

“Tell me a reason not to eat you.” The creature seemed to be the ruler of the world, capable of determining the fate of others.

“I'll spare you since I'm in a good mood. Leave.” To which Li Qiye responded.

“Spare me?!!!” These words echoed and smashed the spatial fabrics. The creature hasn't heard anything this ridiculous and funny in a long time.

“Your audacity knows no bounds, speaking like this when standing before me.” It wasn't angry, just amused by this insignificant creature.

“Don't waste my time, I'll leave after I get what I want. Be smart and move or I'll rip you apart.” Li Qiye patiently said.

“Arrogant brat, do you even know what this place is?” It laughed heartily.

“Don't know, don't need to know, don't care either.” Li Qiye said: “Move.”

“I'm surprised that you know about the thing in this place. Unfortunately, whoever sent you here has sent you to your death. I'm afraid that I can't spare you either since I can't recall the last time I tasted meat. I need a good meal today.” The creature spoke.

“Are you sure?” Li Qiye smirked.

“No one can leave this place without my permission. Your fate is to become food in my stomach.” It said chillingly.

“Unfortunately, I’m always the exception.” Li Qiye shook his head.

“Hahaha, we’ll see about that, junior!” The creature laughed thunderously.

“Creak! Creak! Creak!” Powerful gales and creaking noises ensued. It finally moved faster to circle Li Qiye.

This allowed light to come in for a moment. Anyone else would be paralyzed on the ground after seeing the creature - a colossal centipede. When it stood upright, the stars would circle around it.

“Let me take a look at you.” Its head could finally be seen - looking ferocious with a bloody mouth and two sharp teeth.

It opened its eyes and red rays illuminated Li Qiye. They looked like two suns made of blood.

Chapter 4194: Old Acquaintance

The world turned red once the solar eyes opened. There seemed to be blood flowing on the ground.

The atmosphere was terrifying but this creature took it to the next level. Its jaws were large enough to devour millions in one bite.

Not to mention the cowardly, even experienced and decisive ancestors would lose their courage. Some might be paralyzed on the ground or piss their pants.

“You are one of the few who get to see my true form.” Each of the centipede’s words was thunderous, enough to send people flying and rupturing their eardrums.

“Just a thousand-legged worm.” Li Qiye nonchalantly responded.

“Hahahaha!” The creature laughed again, releasing its true power.

“I want to see what you can do, little one.” It was finally furious and lunged forward in order to get a better look at him.

The reality was that they were still extremely far away. The centipede was insanely long so its head was still far away. Once its head got closer, it became even more frightening than ever. Li Qiye was but a speck of dust versus this monster.

In the blink of an eye, the head was now next to Li Qiye but he had no reaction.

The one to react was the centipede. First was astonishment then it took a more careful look. Afterward, all of its mountainous legs started shaking.

“You, you... you are Li Qiye!” It said with uncertainty.

“I believe I’m the only one with this name.” Li Qiye smirked.

The centipede trembled again after this was confirmed. It couldn't stay calm at all. Its grand dao was finished, allowing it to lord over most cultivators in history. Alas, the name "Li Qiye" smashed its mind with the force of a heavy hammer.

Millions of thoughts and possibilities crossed its mind in a short span.

"I won't change my mind about sparing you, especially since you know my name. Leave." Li Qiye ordered.

The creature was woken up from its stupor after hearing this. It took a deep breath and began shrinking its body at a rapid pace.

In just one second, a middle-aged man appeared before Li Qiye, looking rather charming and graceful. One would never connect him and the ferocious centipede just now. The difference was extremely drastic.

"I was blind to not recognize you, Great Emperor. Please forgive me." He prostrated and apologized.

"You must be from the nine worlds to know this." Li Qiye said.

"I had the fortune of seeing you in Stone Medicine, Great Emperor. Lady Zi Yan granted me an audience. I was just a weak demon back then, that's why you don't remember me." He spoke respectfully.

The emperor with the title "Prime" - Li Qiye. His name and title were taboo and couldn't be uttered carelessly even though the nine worlds were gone.

This was an existence that had ascended yet could still come back to Eight Desolaces. No other emperors and dao lords had done the same as far as he knew.

Despite being a monstrous demon, he was aware that Li Qiye was far above his level. It was best to be subservient.

Prime tore apart the nine heavens and massacred whoever he wanted back then. He could definitely do the same right now too.

"Oh, I remember now, Ye Qingcheng's follower, Cloud Soaring Venerable." Li Qiye remembered this man.

"It is an honor to be remembered by you, Great Emperor." The man became ecstatic.

He worked for Ye Qingcheng then and even tried to recruit Li Qiye. Though he wasn't the best at cultivation, his craftiness made up for it.

"It's surprising to see you alive." Li Qiye said.

This was miraculous indeed. Numerous invincible beings have turned to dust. This included Immortal Emperors and dao lords.

They bloomed beautifully and made their mark in history, albeit only for a short period. As for this Cloud Soaring Venerable? He was only a speck of dust in comparison.

However, he managed to live longer than all of them.

“Great Emperor, my cultivation was shallow and weak. After the events at Stone Medicine, I decided to retire and this kept me safe from various calamities. Later on, I couldn’t accept dying from old age and took a risk coming to this place. I came across a sword containing a grand dao and swallowed it. It kept me alive until now.” The man honestly answered.

“Hmm, you can’t leave. This prison traps you here but also lets you live. A disaster and a blessing in one.” Li Qiye commented.

“Yes, Great Emperor. I’m sure the sword will cut my heart and use my body as a sacrifice if I try to leave.” He said.

“This sword isn’t matchless or anything but it’s still impressive. It already has a master and without permission, you won’t be able to leave unless you can refine its grand dao and truly fuse with it.” Li Qiye smiled.

“Right, Great Emperor. Later on, I learned that this is the sword of the second grave. Though it was abandoned by its master, it is still invincible for regular cultivators like us.” The man smiled wryly.

“Become greedless, exercise patience, and cast off unnecessary thoughts. Flow with fate, refine the sword’s way and it shall obey, gain many more days...” Li Qiye started reciting.

The man memorized the mantra. Once Li Qiye finished, he prostrated and smashed his head on the ground. He was moved to tears as he spoke: “Thank you for your guidance, Great Emperor. I can’t say enough to express my gratitude.”

“Fate has brought us together so I granted you a fortune.” Li Qiye said: “Rise, it is up to you now.”

“I won’t forget what I’ve learned today, Great Emperor.” The man slammed his head one more time before standing up.

Li Qiye then focused on something else not far from there.

Chapter 4195: Heavenly Scripture

He gazed at something resembling a stone table not far from there. It had damage in all four corners and looked rather coarse. One half was protruding upward, making it look like an open book. The side surfaces also had numerous layers just like a stack of pages.

It seemed to be naturally formed because the workmanship was too shoddy. If someone had carved it, they would need to quit their job right away.

Most would not take a second look at it. Those who took their time for some reason would also dismiss it as a regular table that was badly constructed.

However, powerful existences or gifted individuals would spot peculiar details about the table, aware that it was special.

After taking their time, they would be able to sense how thick it was, seemingly consisting of countless rock layers. Each layer was a record of an entire era; their weight and significance couldn’t be overstated.

For apex existences, they would note that this was not a dead entity. The “pages” were deriving supreme grand dao and exuded an invisible light.

Being able to see through this table was a privilege for the supreme existences. Weaker beings would only be able to sense the peculiarity, unable to study it.

Li Qiye walked over with Cloud Soaring Venerable right behind him.

“This table was here already before my arrival. I knew that it was profound right away.” He said: “Alas, I could only touch the bare surface. After swallowing the sword, my cultivation soared, so did my dao comprehension. Once I tried again, I knew that this thing contains a supreme sword dao. I spent days researching it only to fail again.”

“It’s not that easy for most.” Li Qiye smiled.

“Right, a regular demon like me got nothing from it. Back then, this one brat came and observed it. He couldn’t understand anything within but managed to come up with his own dao, such a peerless talent.” The man said.

He was referring to Starshooter Dao Lord, the only person that had left this sinkhole alive.

“Someone was here, flipping the pages.” Li Qiye gently patted the surface of the table.

“Not any of us.” Cloud Soaring Venerable said. Whether it be him or Starshooter Dao Lord or anyone else, none was strong enough to do so: “It must have been before my arrival.”

“Sword Burial Zone.” Li Qiye didn’t need to trace back to the past and knew after one touch.

“No wonder.” The venerable responded: “The existences in these zones are just too strong, capable of suppressing us all.”

He was a terrifying cultivator at this point - virtually invincible in the eyes of cultivators. Alas, he was still afraid of these existences, aware that he would be killed once targeted.

“Great Emperor, what is this thing?” He stared at the table and asked.

He has been in this area for millions of years but couldn’t come up with an answer. He only knew that it was magnificent.

“I’ve lost a few things back then.” Li Qiye answered vaguely.

The venerable didn’t pry any further. An invincible existence like Li Qiye should have plenty of artifacts. If some were missing, Li Qiye wouldn’t bother to care or search for them.

However, this seemed to be different since he made the effort of coming here.

“It’s back again.” Li Qiye sentimentally said as he touched the table: “A conclusion is necessary.”

The venerable watched with bated breath, wanting to know more about this ultimate artifact.

“Buzz.” The table became radiant and numerous runes emerged. They were numerous and inscrutable.

Someone as strong as the venerable couldn’t decipher them without needing more time.

The stone layers seemed to be coming back to life and started flipping just like pages in a book. Each flip ignited a corresponding rune. It didn't take long before the runes danced, seemingly becoming one with the rhythm of heaven and earth.

"Boom!" A dao beam shot to the sky then the rest of the runes floated upward, creating a mystical ocean.

"Rumble!" Suddenly, loud detonations came from above. A supreme heavenly tribulation suddenly gathered, ready to kill everything beneath.

Meanwhile, the runes didn't stop their process. One rune possessed a magnificent divinity, capable of slaying the eternal firmaments. Another heralded billowing primordial chaos...

These dao runes had a creation power - gestating new worlds and new grand dao...

"This is a heavenly tribulation...?" As for the venerable, he was gasping due to the emergence of the heavenly tribulation. Even historically mighty cultivators were afraid of heavenly tribulations. This fear was more pronounced in a centipede demon like him.

"Gather!" Li Qiye roared and combined all the runes.

"Boom! Boom! Boom!" The lightning bolts in the tribulation shot downward at the same time.

However, he waved his hand and captured both the lightning bolts and the dao runes. These destructive forces were powerless under his grasp, unable to escape.

The venerable took a deep breath after seeing this. He needed to run against the frightening lightning bolts while Li Qiye caught it with his bare hand and even gathered them next to his chest.

'Prime, the greatest of all emperors, he is this strong? Who the hell can match him?' The venerable thought.

Eventually, things started calming down due to Li Qiye's suppression. Once the light dispersed, a supreme scripture appeared in Li Qiye's hand.

"Can it be..." The venerable had a good idea of what it was.

"One of the Nine Heavenly Scriptures, Finality." Li Qiye answered: "It was known as the Physique Scripture in the previous epoch."

"I see..." The venerable became emotional.

Chapter 4196: Abandoned By The Sword

Li Qiye had opened a new page in the Physique Scripture previously and created a new grand dao for the next epoch.

The venerable was in awe. So he has been hugging one of the nine scriptures for so long.

"I might as well be blind." He said: "The jewel couldn't shine in my possession."

The nine scriptures contained the ultimate merit laws. People just needed to learn one of them and would become invincible dao lords.

The entire original version was here with him for millions and millions of years yet he gained nothing from it. He started fantasizing about fully learning the complete grand dao within.

Alas, he knew that his comprehension was lacking. It wasn't meant to be.

Li Qiye glanced at him and said: "Your Soul Devourer is a top sword already with an impressive dao. Once you fuse with it, you'll gain a lifetime of benefits so no need to worry about the heavenly scripture. What you seek is already in your stomach. Absorb it and the path towards ascension awaits."

"Right you are, Great Emperor." The venerable stopped being obsessed with the heavenly scripture and said: "Greed knows no bounds. I'm sure some would want to learn all the paths too after obtaining this."

Finality Sword had nine paths. Each path would take the user to a supreme sword dao. Alas, cultivating one was immensely difficult, let alone all nine.

Seeking quantity wasn't always correct. After all, people had limited talent and time. Being too greedy meant knowing many arts in a superficial manner - something inferior to those who focus on a single dao.

Only the supreme geniuses could learn all the different schools. Otherwise, it would only be a waste of time. The venerable was naturally talented. He just couldn't compare to the greats.

"Great Emperor, do you know how much longer it'll take for me to melt it?" He asked with anticipation.

"Is there anything you still worry about in this world?" Li Qiye asked.

"Well... no. I have no one left." He pondered before shaking his head. This sounded rather sad but it was the reality for top masters.

His family and friends passed away eras ago. Even his sect has been reduced to ashes. Thus, he was completely alone.

"Then what's the point of coming out?" Li Qiye said: "The world is still relatively the same, this was the case a billion years ago and will be so a billion years after. You have no worries or obsession, it's the same staying here or being reclusive somewhere else."

The venerable agreed with this logic after thinking about it. Before his lifespan ran low, he was living as a hermit in a reclusive mountain, eating simple meals every day. Today, he was also alone in this ocean. The difference was about the same.

"The problem here is anxiety, you worry that you won't be able to leave this place. It is a mental chain hindering your mind and heart. This, in turn, slows down your dao progression." Li Qiye continued:

"Have you thought about what you would do after leaving this place? You'll most likely live reclusively again unless you want to see the world or compete with others."

"Right, there's nowhere to go outside. Might as well stay here..." The venerable murmured to himself.

A weight was gone after hearing this. Li Qiye was right. So what if he could fuse with the sword's grand dao? Where would he go afterward? There were no acquaintances or friends to catch up with. He didn't have any intention of becoming the number one and taking over the world.

He had tried to do so during his youth and prime. This was no longer part of his wish. It seemed that there was no point in leaving this place for him.

“A mind as free as flowing water; a dao as untethered as nature itself.” Li Qiye said: “Let the sword dao melt on its own, no need to be impatient. Your shackles will break eventually.”

“I understand, Great Emperor. Thank you.” The venerable prostrated.

He was trying too hard to break the shackles in the past. This actually slowed down the process and made it harder for him to digest the divine sword and its dao. Now, he realized that time was on his side. This place wasn't so bad after all.

“I'm finished here.” Li Qiye put away the heavenly scripture and wanted to leave.

“Farewell, Great Emperor. I hope that I'll be able to contribute to your cause one day.” The venerable bowed.

Li Qiye accepted his gesture with a smile then left.

After Li Qiye was gone, he reflected on the past. He didn't expect to see an acquaintance after an epoch. Back in Stone Medicine World, he worked for Ye Qingcheng who was killed by Li Qiye. The latter had left the nine worlds yet they managed to meet again in this place. Mulberry fields have turned into blue seas but certain things still remain.

After Li Qiye left the sinkhole, he met others right away - Daoist Peng and Ningzhu's group.

“Young Noble, I've finally found you!” Daoist Peng seemed elated to see him as if he was a savior.

“Why are you here?” Li Qiye glanced at the old man.

“I...” The daoist rubbed his palms together awkwardly while looking at Li Qiye with puppy eyes.

“Daoist Peng lost his sword.” Ningzhu smiled and helped him out.

“Yes.” The daoist nodded repeatedly like a chicken eating grain. He hurriedly added: “It was so strange but my ancestral sword suddenly flew out one day and I couldn't catch it. I chased after and eventually saw it flying into this place...”

He paused for a bit before continuing: “I-I'm lucky that everyone here decided to help me get to this place, but I've lost sight of the sword...”

He saw A'zhi and Tie Jian along the way and they helped him get inside. Otherwise, he would have died long ago.

Unfortunately, this place was massive and he had no idea where to go to look for his sword. This was a thousand times worse than trying to find a needle in a haystack.

He immediately thought about Li Qiye. The guy was magical on top of having numerous followers. Thus, he decided to look for Li Qiye.

Nonetheless, he knew that they had a shallow relationship, only acquaintances at best. Why would Li Qiye help him find the sword in this dangerous place?

Alas, he had no other option, hence the lack of confidence in his voice: "Young-young Noble, if you can find my ancestral sword, I will give you everything I have as payment."

This didn't make sense either since he was talking to the world's richest. A daoist like him could only muster a few coins.

Moreover, mobilizing his legion to find the sword would require untold expenses. He certainly couldn't afford this.

"I see." Li Qiye wasn't surprised by this. He glanced at the daoist and said: "Fine, I'll help you out since you've managed to find me."

"Thank you, Young Noble!" The daoist bowed deeply after hearing this.

Chapter 4197: Limitless Sword Formation

There were victors and losers in Sword Ocean, either rewarded with fortunes or death.

Some groups lost every single member but this didn't deter the mass' enthusiasm. Whenever good news came out about someone obtaining a divine sword, others couldn't help but jump into the ocean.

"Rumble!" Explosions could be heard from the oceans. Hurricanes and tidal waves came subsequently.

"What's going on?!" This startled those nearby.

A beam shot to the sky, looking like the strongest of its kind in the world. The clear light illuminated the entire ocean.

"Are you seeing this?!" It stole everyone's attention.

What made this beam special were the dao runes accompanying it. This made the beam even brighter; the runes seemed to be empowering it.

It served as a pillar capable of shouldering the sky and connecting it with the ground. It seemed that climbing up was a way to reach immortality or travel through time.

Spectators felt time slowing down, that they could catch every single detail of a blossoming flower. Their swords then resonated with the beam, wanting to fly out of the scabbard.

Golden particles eventually scattered from the beam; the sword resonance became more violent. Owners had a harder time holding on to their sword.

"Can someone tell me what the hell is going on?!" A youth shouted.

"It's an ultimate divine sword emerging." An expert knew right away.

"That place used to be shrouded by dense fog. I've been lost there before." An experienced cultivator was surprised.

"You're right, it was so easy to get lost there." An ancestor agreed.

“What are we waiting for then?!” The crowd shouted and soared towards the beam.

“It’s such an incredible phenomenon. Can it be a heavenly sword?” Someone else asked.

“It could be Myriad Era, time is of the essence!” An ancestor who heard about this became impatient.

It didn’t take long before this became the new focus at the ocean. No one wanted to miss this opportunity.

“If it’s actually Myriad Era, whoever gets it will be unstoppable.” Some started fantasizing even before catching a glimpse of this heavenly sword.

Everyone knew that heavenly swords were even stronger than dao lord swords. Thus, the temptation was irresistible.

The only one yet to be seen among the nine was Myriad Era, rumored to be the leader and the strongest.

Once people got there, the thick mist was gone and replaced by a blue ocean with golden shimmering.

The source of the golden glow came from the broken ships in this region. Some were made from a golden metal, still as shiny as before. A few were well-preserved enough to be taken out and reused.

People noticed and desired them right away. Each usable ship was an expensive treasure. Alas, this wasn’t the time for salvaging.

The most important thing was a particular island with two parallel mountains forming a valley - the source of the beam.

From a distance, it looked like a portal to an immortal world. Spectators found it impossible to contain their excitement.

“It has to be there!” A cultivator pointed at the island.

“Come, we’re getting on the island!” One ancestor ordered his men.

However, this group was stopped by a series of tablets descending from above. Loud detonations from their appearance deterred the newcomers.

They landed on the ocean and created massive waves. However, they floated and didn’t sink to the bottom.

The tablets were covered in diamond-shaped runes. They activated and immediately sealed the surrounding waters.

“Diamond Rampart!” The ancestor was astounded.

“Nine-wheel Citadel! Are they trying to monopolize the island?!” An expert shouted.

“They’re too unreasonable!” Those from bigger sects such as Armament and Wooden Sword didn’t appreciate this.

They knew that Nine-wheel Citadel was strong but it couldn't afford to face the wrath from everyone else.

"It has to be Myriad Era for them to do this, right?" Someone speculated.

"Open!" A high elder from a prestigious clan could wait no longer and began attacking the wall.

"Boom!" The attack caused some lights to disperse but didn't move the wall in the slightest.

"Clank!" Loud sword hymns suddenly echoed.

People looked up and saw countless swords descending.

"Retreat!" They reacted quickly and left the area of effect.

These swords came together to form a massive sword formation - always rotating and releasing a murderous aura.

"Limitless Sword Formation!" Experts shuddered after seeing this.

"That's a sword formation from Sea Emperor." The crowd was smart enough to keep a distance.

"Sea Emperor and Nine-wheel are working together..." Everyone understood what was going on.

Chapter 4198: Dong Ling

Sea Emperor was the strongest in Sword Continent while Nine-wheel Citadel claimed the second spot. Their combined force could be enough to sweep through everyone.

If the continent were to unite, it would be enough to contest this alliance. However, politics and logistics made this impossible.

Spectators realized that Myriad Era was no longer in reach. This sword would eventually end in the pocket of these two behemoths.

"What gives them the right to do this?" A youth said indignantly while looking at the wall and the sword formation.

"What are you going to do about it? There's nothing any of us can do, they're too strong." Another cultivator nearby said.

The youth couldn't respond because reality was cruel. It would be futile trying to fight them.

"We need to band together." A cultivator suggested: "The divine sword has no master and belongs to the virtuous, what gives them the right to barricade the area? Sword Ocean isn't their house. They might be strong but logic and reasons still reign. Only evil sects do as they please."

"You're completely right." Another became agitated after hearing this: "Putting the divine sword aside, I'm sure there are plenty of other treasures in there, they don't get to monopolize it! Everyone in the world deserves a bowl of soup from this pot!"

“Let’s take down this wall and sword barrier, let them know that Sword Continent is a righteous land with laws and orders. Their haughtiness and arrogance aren’t welcomed here!” Another fanned the flames while actually attacking the two defenses.

“Boom!” The attacking treasure was instantly destroyed by the sword formation.

This reminded the crowd of how useless it was. Their raging emotion was immediately extinguished.

“What should we do?” Another asked.

The disorderly crowd couldn’t do anything outside of spewing grievances. They needed a leader right now, one with enough prestige and authority.

“What can we do, that’s the question.” A disciple from a large sect smiled wryly. Defeating the defenses required the same level of offense. Otherwise, it would only be courting death.

“Sea Emperor Sword Kingdom, Nine-wheel Citadel, this is rather disgraceful.” A calm voice suddenly sounded.

People looked back and saw an old man dressed in a simplistic style. He stood upright and looked rather muscular. His eyes were bright and had no sign of aging.

His hand movements contained a mighty sword intent; he himself resembled a sword ready to slash at any moment. Each of his words sounded like the hymn of a sword and contained a sword intent.

“Sect Master Ling Jian of Daoist Sword Ground!” Older experts recognized him right away.

“Senior Ling Jian.” Others came to greet him.

As one of the Six Sect Masters, he was famous alongside Pineleaf Sword Lord since they were both from the same generation.

“You’re right, Senior Ling Jian, they are pushing it right now.” Someone complained.

“This imperious act is unacceptable.” Another uttered.

“What gives them the right to take all the natural resources? We need to band together and stop their tyranny!” One youth was heated up and shouted.

“We need to teach them the character, ‘no’. They can’t take all of us on.” One more wanted to stir the crowd and cause trouble.

“What they’re doing is no different from the conduct of an evil sect. They deserve to be persecuted and punished.” One guy chimed in.

“Yes, they have fallen down the evil path, it’s time to eliminate evil!” Those antagonistic against the two sects took advantage of this opportunity.

“Hmph, eat as you like but watch what you say.” A scowl could be heard before a cold declaration:

“There are consequences for running your mouth.”

A youth and his fellow sect disciples appeared. He embraced a sword while looking like the embodiment of an abyss.

“Abyss Scion!” The crowd recognized him right away.

His warning silenced the rowdiness right away. Cultivators spoke fiercely when there was no one from the two behemoths around.

They immediately kept their mouth shut after his arrival. Actually going against Sea Emperor and Nine-wheel required both courage and power. Further consideration was well-advised.

“We are merely speaking the truth, everyone can see what you’re doing.” One expert didn’t bite it and said what was on everyone else’s mind.

“That’s not up for you to decide. Henceforth, any attack or offensive comment will be considered a declaration of war towards Sea Emperor.” The scion’s eyes flashed frighteningly, causing others to swallow their words.

“I’m shaking in my boots right now, hahaha. Do you think your threat alone can shut everyone up?” Someone laughed and joined the conversation.

It was none other than Dong Ling, looking slovenly in dress and manner.

“Darn right!” Many voiced their support.

“I’m just stating facts.” The scion snorted.

“The fact is that your sect and Nine-wheel are trying to monopolize the treasures here when you have no claim on it in the first place. This imperious act is intolerable.” Dong Ling said, winning the love of the crowd.

Chapter 4199: Challenge

“Well said!” More chimed in.

These two behemoths were dreadful entities. Expressions would change whenever their names were brought up. This applied to the ancestors, not just the young generation. But now, Dong Ling dared to criticize both sects together.

For some of the spectators, they were happy to see someone taking the vanguard. It would be best to see a battle with heavy losses on both sides. It would give them more openings to enter the island.

“What a hero, worthy of being one of the ten. A heaven’s favorite indeed.” A last-gen expert praised happily.

“Dong Ling, you’re right, everyone is on your side! We will go against the tyrannical sects that have fallen to the evil path.” Others chimed in.

“Don’t be afraid, we’re right behind you!” More shouted.

Of course, they were only paying lip service. No one was actually moving closer to stand behind him or explicitly stated their intention of fighting Nine-wheel and Sea Emperor.

Nonetheless, their cries still annoyed Abyss Scion and left him in a difficult position. These men dared to challenge his sect’s authority.

He gazed at Dong Ling and uttered coldly: "You spoke as if justice is on your side. If they're only words, then we'll still forgive you if you stand aside right now but if you actually want to do something, I suggest that you think twice first."

"Think twice? No need for that. I've heard of your Abyss Sword Dao and its power, I wish to see it today." Dong Ling smiled, directly challenging the scion.

These circumstances weren't easy for the youth since he risked the wrath of two behemoths later. However, this could be construed as a competition between two youths.

Sects would normally turn a blind eye to this. It would be a different story if a member of the last generation such as Ling Jian were to get involved. Ling Jian had a lot to think about before making a hasty decision.

"I bet Dong Ling is the most decisive and courageous out of the ten!" A crowd member shouted.

"Yes, he puts us to shame." A genius said.

Rumor has it that Dong Ling came from an ancient sect, but either way, it shouldn't be able to match Nine-wheel and Sea Emperor. Thus, his challenge was quite commendable.

"You wish to fight me, Daoist Dong Ling?" The scion wasn't afraid of Dong Ling, merely angered that he was being challenged.

He was potentially the strongest of the ten so he was confident in his chances.

"That's right, I don't want to miss seeing a top sword dao. Please give me pointers." Dong Ling tapped the sword hanging by his waist.

"Very well, I'll help you out if you seek death! This is no longer a duel!" The scion said murderously.

Listeners realized that the scion was serious in upholding his sect's authority.

"Fine, till death then." Dong Ling's eyes narrowed as he took one step forward.

The scion scowled and did the same. The two gazed sternly at each other.

"There should be a ranking for the ten." One youth said.

"There are only eight now." Another replied.

Both Starshooter Prince and Hundred-Blade Noble were killed by Ninth. Nonetheless, people were still curious about the rest.

"Can Dong Ling win? The scion has all the advantages." A genius said.

Dong Ling's ancient sect was Heaven Silkworm with top weapons and techniques. Alas, so did Sea Emperor. Moreover, Dong Ling hasn't displayed anything special compared to the scion.

If they were to rank him, he would not be among the top five. In fact, most would list him among the bottom three spots along with Qingcheng Zi and Pendant Sword Maiden.

These three had the weakest background among the ten prodigies. Qingcheng Zi came from Mount Qingcheng, only a vassal sect of Sea Emperor. This was the case for the maiden's clan as well.

"The scion is top three, Dong Ling's chances are low." One expert who was unhappy with Sea Emperor still had a high evaluation of the scion.

"I feel the same way, except that the scion might be first place, not just top three." A fan of the scion replied.

The majority supported Dong Ling voicing his grievances towards the two behemoths. However, they thought that he had no chance against the scion.

"Stop flattering Abyss Scion, he ran away from Li Qiye like a dog that has lost its master." A vagabond who hated Sea Emperor and nobles commented.

Weaker cultivators couldn't afford to provoke Sea Emperor. Thus, they were happy to see Li Qiye take them down a notch.

"Yes, nothing is absolute in this world." A youth from a small sect added: "People hated Li Qiye and thought that he would lose to Abyss Scion back then. Hell, he took down the scion and even killed the ancestors from Sea Emperor."

Thinking back on this event brought joy to some spectators.

"You can't compare Dong Ling with someone as devilish as Li Qiye." Another replied.

"Just wait and see, we'll find out soon enough." One ancestor patiently said.

Chapter 4200: Silkworm Dragon Sword Dao

The crowd watched the duo with bated breath.

"Clank!" Dong Ling unsheathed his sword. Its radiance fully displayed its extraordinary nature.

"Scion, let's get started." Dong Ling said while assuming a battle stance.

"Clank!" The scion also readied his Violet Abyss, releasing its permeating dao lord aura.

When he channeled his vitality and energy into the sword, it pulsed brightly and dao lord laws manifested into reality, rendering the crowd breathless.

It was as if he wielded the sword of order, capable of delivering the ultimate judgment. The dao lord aura intensified as a result - one wave higher than the previous.

"The scion has the weapon advantage." An expert stated the obvious.

Dong Ling's sword was brilliant but there was quite a gap between the two swords.

"Excuse me then. Evening River Sun!" Dong Ling roared and performed a vertical solar slash, creating rays as bright as sun rays.

The slash crossed through the air and resembled a temporal river. The rising sun looked tiny and ephemeral in comparison before this sword dao.

“Impressive!” Many shouted. Even the ancestors stronger than Dong Ling were impressed by the attack. The slash wasn’t restricted by time and space, instantly appearing before the scion.

“Not bad!” The scion was unperturbed and retaliated: “Earth Eater!”

As Violet Abyss swung down, the sky vault seemed to be smashed. An abyss was formed and ate up Dong Ling’s dao river.

The power of the abyss was immense since it contained a heavenly dao on top of a dao lord sword. Spectators naturally trembled before its might.

Nonetheless, Dong Ling still didn’t give up and continued to maintain his momentum.

“Clank! Clank! Clank!” Their swords collided three times.

Dong Ling had no problem keeping up in terms of internal energy and cultivation. Alas, his sword broke into two pieces.

The aftershock caused Dong Ling to stagger backward and spat out a mouthful of blood.

“It’s over so fast?” One spectator asked.

“The scion is untouchable among the young generation.” A youth said.

“Actually, I don’t think Dong Ling’s cultivation is inferior, he can keep up for quite a while.” An ancestor said: “It’s a shame that his weapon and merit law are inferior.”

The crowd felt bad for Dong Ling, thinking that this match was over.

“Your life is forfeited.” The scion pointed his sword forward. Its murderous aura seemed eager to pierce through Dong Ling’s body.

“It’s too early to say that. Your sect isn’t the only one that has capable weapons.” Dong Ling laughed and said.

He decided to summon a different sword - one of the fire affinity. The flames oozing from it had the appearance of dragons.

“Clank! Clank! Clank!” Other swords in the audience resonated, clearly approving this sword.

It was rather old and has been passed down for millions of years. Alas, time didn’t weaken its imperial aura - one of an Immortal Emperor.

He looked spirited while being illuminated by the flames. Its imperial aura made him regal and domineering.

“What is this sword?!” Everyone thought that this new weapon was on the same level as Violet Abyss.

“A fine sword you have there.” Even the scion praised.

“A divine sword left behind by an ancient emperor.” One ancestor said.

“Earth Eater!” The scion attacked right away, splitting heaven and earth apart along with the celestials.

“Bring it!” Dong Ling used a new technique: “Soaring Silkworm Dragon!”

The imperial sword flew upward and transformed into a hybrid dragon. Its sword energies ravaged the sky.

The contest between an imperial and a dao lord sword caused fiery sparks to splash everywhere. Destructive shockwaves emanated outward since they didn’t hold back.

“Azure Dragon!” Dong Ling performed the second variation even before the first was finished.

He whirled his sword and the entire world was engulfed by it. The dragon started shooting out annihilation rays.

“Boundless Abyss!” The scion’s sword exuded a violet radiance. His Abyss Sword Dao intensified and resembled a primordial beast opening its jaws, successfully devouring the second variation.

“Source-seeker Dragon!” Dong Ling pulled back his technique and focused it at a single point to stop the incoming abyss.

“Rumble!” The battle shifted from the sky all the way down to the ocean floor then up again.

One had access to a heavenly dao while the other utilized the art of an ancient emperor. The profundities of their techniques mesmerized the spectators.

“I can’t believe Dong Ling is this strong, it’s an even fight.” One expert said.

“I suppose he’s among the top three too, we were mistaken.” A last-gen member added.

“It looks like Heaven Silkworm School is not weaker than any dao lord lineage. His sword dao is magnificent.” One ancestor commented.

“How strange. Rumor has it that his sect was created by two ancient ancestors. It never produced an emperor or dao lord before, so how does he have access to these two things?” One king found this astonishing.

“This type of ancient sect is old beyond traceability, they might have resources unknown to outsiders.” A high elder answered.