

Emperor 4521

### **Chapter 4521: Chronoblood Amber**

“The final auction of the night and the best of them all. This one belongs to our auction house.” The auctioneer announced.

He paused for a moment before continuing: “It was found by a clan elder in a perilous location. After an appraisal, we have determined that the outer layers are made from rare chronoblood amber. We can’t tell with absolute certainty whether this is its natural form or was created by men. The latter has a higher probability while the former would make it one-and-only in history, as far as we know.”

“Chronoblood amber...” One big shot said: “Just the amber block alone is priceless since it can be reused.”

Cultivators with a bit of background, especially existences from previous generations, understood the significance of this amber. Its value couldn’t be overstated in the mind of ancestors.

In history, the reason why ancestors could live for so long wasn’t due to their lifespan. It was because they used temporal blood stones to bury themselves, entering a prolonged state of hibernation.

These stones were awfully expensive. The stronger the cultivator, the more stones required. A regular sect had no chance of keeping up. Only the great powers would do so for their ancestors.

Alas, even the behemoths didn’t have unlimited resources. There was no lack of ancestors dying from old age since they couldn’t keep up with the expense.

This particular amber took it to the next level. Normally, regular blood stones could be replaced by the ancestor’s descendants. The amber would only need to be used once and could last forever. Of course, “forever” wasn’t accurate here. It was just long enough to seem like an eternity.

There were two sources, man-made and natural. The first was refining the purest temporal blood stones and taking their essences to create the amber. This refinement process was extremely difficult. The refiner needed to be powerful enough. Moreover, the number of stones required was unreasonable as well. Therefore, refining enough amber for complete encapsulation meant expending immeasurable resources.

On the other hand, chronoblood amber could be found in nature, created by heaven and earth. Only one or two cultivators have come across it in history.

Now, this large block of amber could be reused by the powerful existences.

The auctioneer continued his introduction: “I don’t need to elaborate on the amber’s value. The key focus should be the little lady in the amber. She is not from our era or even epoch, judging by her clothes. It’s hard to give an exact date but she might be older than any current lineage.”

“Do you know anything more about her background?” Sky-judge Ancestor asked.

“Our ancestors have perused numerous ancient scrolls with a focus on old characters. Unfortunately, we know nothing about her background, at least for now.” The auctioneer shook his head.

“Is she still alive?” The “eastern fence” cultivator inquired.

“Uncertain.” The auctioneer answered: “We would need to open the amber in order to see. But since this is chronoblood amber, she is most likely alive.”

The big shots exchanged glances and agreed with this logic. Someone being encased in chronoblood amber should be from an ultimate lineage far exceeding dao lord lineages.

The girl’s status should be noble and prestigious beyond words, being sealed at such a young age.

Nonetheless, there was another possibility - that coincidental circumstance had her encased in this amber. This probability was virtually impossible because natural-found chronoblood amber was too rare.

Moreover, this amber would be found in places blessed by the heaven. They were usually dangerous and unavailable to cultivators. How could a little girl traverse through the perils and enter the amber at the right time?

“What is the starting price?” A big shot became impatient with the long introduction.

“Our auction house paid a sky-high price to the clan that found it.” The auctioneer replied.

No one thought that he was embellishing because just the amber alone was priceless, let alone the young girl.

“We will not be asking for refined jades.” The auctioneer revealed.

This was understandable because after so many eras of business, they most likely had plenty.

“The normal restrictions are lifted for this one.” The auctioneer said: “We only ask for items that might interest us, any quantity is fine. Let us appraise the items first and you can wait to make an official bid.”

“No restrictions at all?” A big shot asked.

“Yes, so feel free to rest and discuss it with your sect before making a proposal.” The auctioneer nodded.

Many big shots got up right away. Of course, they weren’t leaving the auction but rather, going to talk with their sect about potential items to offer to the auction house.

It didn’t take long for them to return, clearly having gained more authority. Prior to this, they came with enough refined jades but for this last auction, the seller only wanted items. This caught them off guard.

“The auction shall commence.” The auctioneer said after all the participants have returned to their seats.

“Can we bid several times?” Someone asked.

“Yes, as long as each bid is in good faith.” The auctioneer replied.

“Let’s go already.” Another urged.

“I offer Puresun Dao Lord’s Puresun Mantra.” A grand cultivator began.

## Chapter 4523: The Dongfang

Nonetheless, their criticism was warranted. Imperial secret laws were mighty but they weren't superior to the best dao lord merit laws.

Even if this one was somehow special, it still couldn't be exchanged for the key auction.

The cultivator said: "Our law is special not because of what it is but rather, its origin."

"Are you saying that this law is from an immortal, not an emperor?" A few participants started laughing after hearing this.

The cultivator didn't become embarrassed and earnestly answered: "Sounds about right."

"Sounds about right?" The crowd stopped laughing and became serious.

They were only messing around earlier but this response changed everything.

"Impossible, immortals don't exist." An ancestor from an immemorial sect shook his head.

The cultivator calmly explained: "I'm not saying that our law came from an immortal but rather, a very particular existence."

"Who?" The auctioneer showed signs of being interested as well.

The cultivator pondered in silence for a bit. He clearly hesitated before answering: "This is a taboo that few know about. Our clan is from an immemorial era and has ties with this being, hence our fortune."

"Taboo? What taboo?" The big shots started thinking about it.

Suddenly, as they spoke and thought about this issue, a bolt seemingly coursed through their mind and made them shudder in unison.

"The one... that shouldn't be spoken." They eventually recalled a particular legend. They then shut up and realized that this cultivator might be talking about it.

"So the Dongfang has this history." One of them murmured.

"Yes, how surprising since it's an unremarkable clan." Someone from a great lineage said: "This might be the reason why they're still around."

The auctioneer had a serious expression as he nodded: "This secret law's origin is frightening indeed. However, it alone is not enough."

He paused for a bit then added: "If your clan adds another item, then it'll be considered."

"What is it?" The cultivator became surprised.

The auctioneer revealed a smile akin to a greedy merchant staring at gold. He said: "I heard that your clan has a decree personally written by that existence. How about adding it?"

"No." The cultivator refused right away.

"Then that's the end of it." The auctioneer waved his hand in regret.

“What decree are they talking about?” A crowd member became interested.

After all, this auctioneer was the best in Grotto Courtyard and had seen countless treasures before. He was clearly interested in this particular decree.

The value of the amber was obvious at this point yet the Dongfang still refused to bid their decree? This was a testament to the latter’s worth.

They thought that this might be related to the forbidden existence. Of course, the auctioneer and the Dongfang member stopped talking about it. The conversation stopped there.

“Alright, any other bids?” The auctioneer changed the subject. His eyes shifted towards Li Qiye.

Alas, Li Qiye only focused on the girl within the amber and didn’t hear anyone else. She commanded his full attention for some unknown reason.

Jian Ming and the daoist knew that the girl was his reason for being here. The amber itself didn’t matter.

“True Immortal offers a secret art of Blessed Dao Lord, a dao lord weapon, and an immemorial heavenly portal.” Alchemy Child made an offer representing the entire sect this time, not just his master.

“Three Thousand Dao offers three dao lord merit laws, three bottles of divine ascension pills, six boxes of goldmend powder...” Cloudgrasp Elder also made a bid.

Three Thousand Dao was just as capable as True Immortal. After these two behemoths made their bid, the other big shots felt as if they were no longer in the running.

The bid from Alchemy Child was not bad at all because Blessed Dao Lord was special. These might not be the dao lord’s best merit law and weapon. Nonetheless, they should still be superior to most. It seemed that True Immortal also coveted this final auction.

“Our school offers an art for indestructibility and another for communicating with heaven and earth.” A member of a mysterious sect also made an interesting offer.

“We offer an ancient stone...”

Everyone bid differently, one by one. Quantitative appraisals were exceedingly difficult for these treasures.

A few of them were added to the list by the auctioneer. For example, the behemoths. The auction house was interested but not overly motivated to make a sale just yet.

“I want this.” Suddenly, Li Qiye stopped looking at the girl and interrupted the bids.

Everyone immediately stopped and he became the center of attention.

#### **Chapter 4524: Bestowing Grace**

The crowd became nervous. He had been quiet in the last auctions so they relaxed considerably.

Though the competition remained fierce, no one went as high as Li Qiye did. Therefore, his involvement was not a good sign.

Nonetheless, they still felt curious about his bid since it would be nothing short of monstrous and oppressive. There could only be one winner for this final auction. The majority was only here to watch the show at this point.

“Obviously, who doesn’t want this? Finish the auction first.” One junior complained.

“If our young noble wants this, then he’ll get it. Take a look in the mirror first and realize how futile your bids are.” Jian Ming immediately retorted.

A few big shots gritted their teeth in annoyance. Wise Ancestor smiled awkwardly and slapped him again.

“What is your bid, Young Noble?” The auctioneer asked eagerly, feeling the same anticipation as the rest of the crowd.

“Very well, since fate has brought us together, I shall bestow a fortune to your auction house.” Li Qiye smiled and said.

“A fortune? Great, great, that’s a great bid!” The auctioneer became emotional and blurted out.

When he repeated “great” three times, everyone knew that this was not going well.

“What fortune?” One big shot asked.

Someone who was part of the list complained: “This bid is too vague while we’ve bid real physical items, what is a fortune here?”

No bid has been praised on the same level as Li Qiye’s just now and this worried the winning participants.

“Our ancestor has just sent a message. In addition to the aforementioned items, an Immortal Monarch of our sect is willing to bestow his grace to the auction house.” Alchemy Child received a message from a high-ranking member.

“An Immortal Monarch?!” This shocked the crowd.

“What does this mean?” A youth understood little about this matter.

The big shots, on the other hand, understood what a favor meant in this case. It was a great deal for the behemoths to do so.

“In True Immortal’s history, only very few existences can have this title.” A knowledgeable cultivator commented.

The crowd exchanged glances. True Immortal had produced countless top masters before. Alas, only a few could gain this title. They could be counted on one’s fingers.

“How many have received True Immortal’s grace before? Especially from an Immortal Monarch too.” A big shot from the south murmured.

The grace could vary in nature. However, it usually meant that the receiver would gain the protection of the giver without doing anything in return.

In this case, it extended beyond that since an Immortal Monarch has personally bestowed his grace, meaning that he would offer full assistance whenever Grotto Courtyard was in danger. There were other benefits too, albeit not as consequential. Therefore, this truly added weight to their bid.

“In addition to the previous items, our progenitor is also willing to extend his grace to Grotto Courtyard.” Cloudgrasp Elder waited for Alchemy Child to finish before revealing the intent of his sect’s big shot.

“Progenitor? Dao Sanqian!” This prompted some older cultivators to take a deep breath.

This was a being existing alongside the river of time. The title alone stirred the listeners.

“How does this compare to the Immortal Monarch’s grace?” Someone wondered.

The protection of Dao Sanqian meant that the auction house could operate for years without worries.

On the other hand, although the identity of the Immortal Monarch remained unknown, this character should still be brilliant.

“Who would I pick?” A big shot murmured: “True Immortal or Three Thousand Dao? Feels about the same.”

“Not necessarily. The progenitor of Three Thousand Dao is known as the teacher of dao lords. He absolutely stands at the apex, no different from a dao lord, or so people say.” Someone from the west didn’t dare to say Dao Sanqian.

“This is True Immortal we’re talking about, someone with the title of Immortal Monarch is definitely an ancient existence from a dao lord’s generation, perhaps a disciple of Blessed Dao Lord or a general of another...” A big shot commented.

Others agreed with this. During True Immortal’s strongest era, someone with the title of Immortal Monarch must have incredible achievements and might not be inferior to Dao Sanqian.

“Don’t forget, True Immortal is older than Three Thousand Dao, it has an advantage in terms of resources and foundation.” Someone else brought this up.

This was also true. The rich history of True Immortal implied incredible wealth and stability. Three Thousand Dao was lacking comparatively.

“I would pick True Immortal.” One participant concluded.

By this point, they realized that all other contestants have been knocked out. It would go down to either True Immortal or Three Thousand Dao.

“We must have this item.” Alchemy Child said with absolute confidence since he was representing True Immortal, not just his master.

### **Chapter 4525: Ignorance**

“Don’t make claims you can’t carry out.” Jian Ming sneered.

There was already an existing feud. If Alchemy Child could, he would absolutely kill Jian Ming. Therefore, he instantly retorted: "Fool, our Immortal Monarch is an apex existence while you all are mere worms. Being disrespectful to my sect and the monarch will leave you with a burial-less death."

"Yeah, yeah, our young noble doesn't give a damn about your monarch or sect. If he wants this auction, he'll get it. Be smart and get out of the way."

Alchemy Child naturally couldn't compete in a childish argument since he hasn't done it before. After all, Jian Ming traveled extensively and lived on the streets, honing his tongue with experience.

"Why are we dragging this trivial matter out? Grotto Courtyard, make a decision already." Li Qiye waved his hand at the auctioneer.

Meanwhile, the auctioneer was still stunned after hearing Li Qiye's bid earlier. He finally regained his wits after the comment.

"Our monarch said that the courtyard could state whatever demand, everything is negotiable." Alchemy Child said confidently: "Thus, please carefully consider and pick our sect. This is the only right choice that will help your auction house exist for an eternity with a supreme foundation. Let me know what you think."

Others exchanged glances. Alchemy Child wouldn't dare to make this claim without permission. Therefore, he was acting as an official representative of True Immortal. It seemed that this monarch truly wanted the item at all costs.

"We appreciate True Immortal and the monarch's kindness." The auctioneer bowed toward Alchemy Child.

This made the latter think that a decision has been made. Victory was his. Therefore, his expression changed as he started gloating with total satisfaction, looking down on the rest of the crowd and telling these mere insects to never mess with True Immortal.

He arched his chest forward, smirked, and didn't try to hide it in the slightest.

Alas, the auctioneer's next line brought him back to reality: "After careful deliberation from our ancestors, we have chosen a winner for the final auction of the night, Young Noble Li. Thank you, everyone, for participating in the auction. It was our pleasure to serve you all today..."

This took most by a storm. Only a few big shots didn't find this surprising, albeit still unexpected.

Alchemy Child's expression was still one of jubilation as he stood there frozen, unable to process the outcome. His complexion then changed color repeatedly, matching his internal emotions.

His haughtiness has been slapped back to reality by the auctioneer. This turned into anger and unacceptance.

"Auctioneer, you must deliberate with the auction house regarding this important matter. Don't make the wrong choice and mess up the future." Alchemy Child raised his voice at the auctioneer.

The big shots snorted and sneered after hearing this. Participants of auctions didn't always win and had to accept the result. After all, the highest bidder would always be the winner. Therefore, the opportunities were equal for all.

Now, Alchemy Child had threatened both Li Qiye and the auction house. This was unbecoming and detrimental to his reputation.

Of course, he was only an alchemy servant. His action didn't necessarily harm True Immortal's image.

The auctioneer didn't like this and waved his hand, no longer using honorifics: "You need not worry about our future. We have discussed this thoroughly already and came up with this decision. Your sect's conditions were indeed generous but they aren't suitable for us. I apologize."

"The decision came so fast, what is this about thoroughly, such nonsense." Alchemy Child stopped choosing his words.

Despite their business creed, the auctioneer's patience grew thin. They didn't need True Immortal to interfere with their method. Moreover, Alchemy Child was a nobody. Even a big shot from True Immortal was not qualified to preach.

The crowd also thought that he was a sore loser. This was truly hard to watch.

"Bah, you're making a fool out of yourself and your sect. It's just one auction." Jian Ming said: "How did the so-called number one sect in the world not find anyone better to act as their representative? Maybe it should change its name to True Asshole instead, except learn to hide it with your pants instead of exposing it and making a fool out of yourselves."

"True Asshole, hah!" A few youths started laughing while imagining the image.

"This brat's mouth is too foul." A big shot shook his head and smiled.

One cultivator in stealth laughed: "The brat is annoying but he got it right this time."

"You!" Alchemy Child was livid: "Our sect will annihilate your..."

"I know, I know, annihilate my clans and make servants out of us after your young emperor becomes a dao lord, wait, flay my skin and drink my blood, flattening our ancestral ground... anything else? I've heard it all before."

"..." Alchemy Child nearly vomited blood from anger.

"The auction is over, please leave." The auctioneer told Alchemy Child, politely telling him to leave but in reality, workers were ready to escort him out.

### **Chapter 4526: Lake**

Guests started leaving after the end of the auction. A few big shots came and talked to Li Qiye.

Though they didn't know about his background and identity and his cultivation wasn't impressive, the fact that he was recognized by the auction house showed that he was somehow special.

Thus, they wanted to befriend him and introduced themselves before leaving.



“I’m from Wutong Mountain, our jade tree’s flowers blossom once every five hundred years. The fermented wine made out of them is wonderful so when you have time, Fellow Daoist Li, come for a drink.” A big shot elegantly invited.

“Sky Mountain always welcomes visitors. Visit us when you have time, Fellow Daoist Li.” Another invited directly.

“Ancient Sword wants to befriend someone like you, your presence will brighten our humble abode.” Others also invited him.

The majority tried to talk to him but some also stayed far away from him. After all, he had offended both True Immortal and Three Thousand Dao - the two strongest lineages in the contemporary. It would be hard for him to stay in Sky Border.

Some thought that the feud with True Immortal was especially serious. He had humiliated them enough to warrant revenge. This was a serious consequence, potentially life-threatening.

Therefore, they preferred to stay away instead of getting involved in this mess.

“Young Noble, Archipelago remembers your kindness. If you ever need assistance, every member of Archipelago will be of service.” Turtle-seeker said as he was about to leave.

The fire dragon pills were too generous. He kept on bowing repeatedly before waving from a distance.

Eventually, only Li Qiye’s group and members of the auction house were left.

“Alright, time to pay up.” Li Qiye told one of them.

The old man from the auction house immediately bowed and answered: “It is an honor to have you here, Young Noble. These are just minor gifts, please accept.” Having said that, he handed over the paperwork, meaning that Li Qiye didn’t need to pay for the prior auctions.

He stared at the old man and smiled: “A bit clever. Very well, let’s not dwell on formalities and vulgar things such as money. However, I won’t take advantage of you. Bring pen and paper over, I will leave behind one character for your grotto.”

“Thank you, Young Noble, thank you!” The old man was overwhelmed with excitement. One character from Li Qiye was worth countless times more than the payments.

It didn’t take long before workers brought everything necessary over for Li Qiye to write.

“Wow, wonderful items.” The daoist commented while looking at the prepared objects: “Iron stone-bamboo as the shaft, fur of a heavenly fire fox as the brush. Ink made from celestial smoke grass, inkstone carved from seven-star dao rock. And the paper, let’s see here, a total of eighteen layers embedded together...”

He stared at the old man and said: “These are perfect materials for a master to write a talisman, not just simple calligraphy.”

These items were extremely valuable and could be considered treasures for making talismans. They were never used for regular writing.

Normal cultivators would never have the chance to see them. In fact, just holding the brush was virtually impossible due to its weight, let alone writing.

The auction house intended to have the perfect items for Li Qiye to leave behind a peerless dao.

In fact, anyone capable of writing with this brush would leave behind a part of the dao regardless of the content.

“How crafty.” Jian Ming said: “This is wanting our young noble to leave behind a dao affinity.”

The old man chuckled awkwardly and said: “The young noble is a marvelous existence. Regular pen and paper aren’t worthy of his touch. He must have the best materials possible for writing. Only these things are worthy of being containers for his calligraphy.”

“Can’t argue with that.” Jian Ming was impressed by the old man’s choice of words. Yes, it would be insulting to let Li Qiye write on regular pen and paper after knowing his identity. Moreover, they would help preserve the embedded dao for eras to come.

Whether they did it out of respect or for their own gains, there was nothing improper about the act.

Li Qiye only smiled and casually wrote, never removing the pen from the paper.

Once the character was finished, everyone saw that it was the character, “lake”. The first impression was that it was written clumsily.

Upon closer inspection, there was something archaic about it. After enough time, they would then appreciate the sharp strokes akin to the swings of a blade. Instead of being carved onto a rock, this dao was embedded onto the paper.

Eventually, while reading from a dao comprehension perspective, they saw that this was a natural character with no gaps and breaks. It was as if he had taken out a heavenly dao and imprinted it here. This dao was as vast as an ocean with runic dragons soaring within.

“Thank you for your gift, Young Noble.” The old man bowed again.

Li Qiye glanced at the auctioneer with the goatee and said: “Though your auction house is not the primary branch, this character will give you legitimacy and bless you with good luck to live on while not shaming the ancestors.”

“We will remember your teachings, Young Noble.” The auctioneer and the old man kneeled. The former continued: “We descendants find it glorious to be in your presence and earning your grace. This is a momentous event that we won’t ever forget.”

“I know that there are inconveniences so I’ll forgive you this time.” Li Qiye smiled.

The auctioneer smiled wryly and said: “I am weak and have let down the ancestors. Plus, my true appearance is very ugly, that’s why I do not wish to show it to you, Young Noble.”

“There’s nothing ugly about an octopus. Plus, you’re occupied so it’s fine.” Li Qiye waved his hand.

“What?!” Jian Ming and the daoist felt their scalp tingling.

“You, you’re Seal Ancestor?!” Jian Ming stared with his eyes wide open.

“How different from what I saw.” The daoist murmured.

He had snuck into the grotto to steal some treasures but was scared away. He only caught a glimpse of Seal Ancestor’s true form during that time.

Wise Ancestor smiled as well, not expecting the auctioneer to be the famous Seal Ancestor.

Rumor has it that Seal was the strongest and oldest ancestor of the grotto. He had lived for many years but few have seen his true form. Moreover, he was apparently omnipresent in the grotto. His tentacles could sense every inch and corner of this place.

The appearance of this auctioneer didn’t make anyone think that he was Seal Ancestor in the slightest.

### **Chapter 4527: Seal Ancestor’s Fortune**

One theory noted that Seal Ancestor’s true form must be rather unsightly with countless tentacles. This contributed to the auction house’s peace because few dared to cause trouble here.

Jian Ming had heard about Seal Ancestor’s tales before. Today, he finally got to meet the being, albeit not in his true form.

The daoist was utterly surprised because he was one of the few who saw Seal Ancestor’s true form. Though he only saw a small part of the gigantic being and only briefly, he still noticed the different auras.

There was nothing threatening coming from the auctioneer, the opposite of the great octopus.

“Since my offer was a fortune, pick while I’m still here.” Li Qiye said.

The auctioneer bowed and said: “I actually have a request but I’m afraid it might be out of line...”

“Speak, don’t worry.” Li Qiye said.

The auctioneer took a deep breath and said: “Our lake is from an immemorial period, tracing back to the previous epoch. The sages were sure that it must have something to do with our roots. After generations of research and rumination, we have understood a thing or two.”

“That’s why you all built the sect here, hoping to use the magical lake to control an independent domain. Unfortunately, this is just the result of greed.” Li Qiye chuckled and said.

“Right. I myself was arrogant and wanted to use my own power to control this magical force. I absorbed it into my body in order to call on the dao.” The auctioneer had a sad smile.

“You would have been reduced to ashes if it wasn’t for your bloodline. It’s also unfortunate that your branch isn’t the orthodox one.” Li Qiye added.

“That I am aware of.” He respectfully said: “We have never dared to act as the main branch since that would be disrespectful to the ancestors.”

The grotto actually had an impressive origin dating back to the previous epoch. Rumor has it that their progenitor was a follower of a supreme existence and had numerous contributions. As time passed, their clan prospered and declined. One notable period was during the leadership of the two saints.

Once the two saints left, their primary branch was no longer active. They, the side branch, eventually built the auction house on the ancestral lake.

This lake contained an unknown power with a mysterious seal. This helped them last for so many eras now.

“Your request is to open the seal in order to escape.” Li Qiye already knew the answer.

“That is indeed my request, please help me, Young Noble.” The auctioneer got on his knees.

Previous sages of the auction house successfully borrowed the power of the immemorial lake. During the auctioneer’s generation, he became ambitious and wanted to channel this power into his own body for better control. Alas, he nearly lost his life in the process.

Nonetheless, he did gain something from the reckless endeavor. He was able to control part of this power. The negative side effect included being trapped in the seal, unable to leave. Therefore, he wished for a miracle from Li Qiye.

“To carry out my end of the bargain, the fortune I can grant only includes freeing you.” Li Qiye said flatly: “What you will learn and the blessings obtained by the spirits depend on your own comprehension and luck.”

“I understand. This is more than enough.” The auctioneer kowtowed.

“Very well, prepare yourself. I will help you find the temple of the spirits and its mysteries.” Li Qiye said.

The man then sat down in a meditative posture, entering a state of zen and channeling his energy to harmonize with the world around him.

Li Qiye raised one finger and utilized a mystical dao technique to follow a natural path leading to the door beneath.

Golden particles oozed from the tip of his fingers as if they were stars. They traveled and left behind a temporal trail.

This trail seemed to be indelible and created a divide in time and space. While standing in this divide, one could turn back and see the past or look forward and see the future. The starry beam eventually touched the old man’s forehead and created a tsunami within his mind.

“Boom!” His true body started shaking violently.

He felt an explosion finally opening the gate inside his mind. In the past, he has tried countless times only to fail. Alas, Li Qiye was able to do so in just a few seconds.

With the opening of the gate, he found himself to be standing in a massive dimension and heard deafening battle cries.

He looked forward and saw heroic spirits marching. They resembled the great gods - gigantic and wielding divine weapons.

Banners fluttered everywhere, each large enough to blot out the sky. The symbol engraved on them was none other than an animated silver fox.

He then heard battle horns and suddenly, he returned to an ancient carnage where his godlike ancestors fought to the death. Their blood rained down as they faltered.

Keep in mind that the auctioneer was in his true form. Nonetheless, he felt tiny compared to the combatants participating in this hopeless battle. Alas, his ancestors marched forward for the sake of the land and the future of their race.

Though he wasn't from the same time and space, he could still smell the stench of blood. The horns made his blood boil, wanting nothing more than to join the battle to fight with his ancestors.

"Focus up, feel the grand dao." Suddenly, he heard Li Qiye's whispers. The words resonated like bells and woke him up from his rage.

He was drenched in a cold sweat, realizing that he had almost lost his way. He sat back down again and meditated to learn the mysteries of the dao.

#### **Chapter 4528: Foolish Provocation**

After Li Qiye carried out his part of the bargain, he left the grotto with the rest.

The auctioneer with the goatee and the ancestors of the grotto walked with Li Qiye to the gate before waving enthusiastically.

"We forgot about those bandits from the Du." Jian Ming suddenly remembered their business here: "Gotta teach them a lesson to stop them from being so haughty."

"When will you learn anything?" Wise Ancestor glared at him and said: "Our mission is to take our dao stone back, not to stir trouble. You've done enough of that."

"Ancestor, we'll naturally resort to peaceful measures first before using force. If they are unable to tell right from wrong, then we'll destroy their lair." Jian Ming laughed and spoke as if he could destroy the Yu with one hand wave.

"Who's gonna do it? You?" The ancestor joked.

Jian Ming's eyes shifted shadily as he smiled: "Ancestor, we both know that my meager skills can't do anything but you and the young noble are invincible. The Yu are nothing and will be dealt with in a few seconds."

He took advantage of Li Qiye being around and spoke fearlessly. Li Qiye didn't seem to mind so Wise Ancestor stopped scolding him.

Jian Ming then confidently led the group toward their target.

"Why are you following us? We're busy here." Along the way, he glanced at the daoist and asked.

"I'm not following you, stop being so noisy." The daoist retorted.

"Well, you're walking behind me and in the same direction as I am." Jian Ming glared at him.

"It's a big road, mind your own business." The daoist responded.

"It's okay to be a follower, no need to be shy since we'll recruit you. It's hard to watch you like this." Jian Ming never wanted to lose an argument.

"You think too highly of yourself, you're not part of this at all." The daoist became irritated.

"If you're following our young noble, then we're in the same camp. Hehe, I know what you're thinking, you want the young noble to bestow you something nice. If that actually happens, then don't forget about my contribution, I want a piece of the pie too." Jian Ming got closer and whispered.

The daoist kept on walking and ignored Jian Ming while he smirked, clearly coming up with another scheme.

They left the city to find the Yu. Alas, a group stopped them along the way.

These were familiar faces - Alchemy Child and his friends. However, there was one addition - an old man wearing a robe with golden stitchings. The robe was spotless and without a single wrinkle.

Though he wasn't particularly tall and sturdy, his complexion made it feel as if he was made from bronze. This was rather threatening but strangely enough, his eyes were calm like a clear lake.

"Stop right there!" Alchemy Child roared.

"Sir Alchemy Child, what a surprise to see you again. I would have thought that you would be too embarrassed to show your face near the city after being escorted out by the auction house. Wow, True Immortal, strong with thick skin too, how admirable."

Alchemy Child started trembling with rage again. It was one thing after another - losing to Li Qiye and then getting kicked out by Grotto Courtyard.

"Brat, mind your words or I'll rip out your tongue!" Another member of True Immortal bellowed.

"Oh no..." Jian Ming patted his chest as if he was horrified for a second before looking normal again.

"Ignorant fool, I won't argue with you." Alchemy Child took a deep breath and managed to calm down.

He looked over at Li Qiye and cupped his fist: "Fellow Daoist, our young emperor is truly interested in your immortal grass. Would you like to visit True Immortal as a guest?"

He suddenly changed into a different person - amicable instead of haughty. No one would buy this act. It seemed that they haven't given up on the immortal grass.

"I see." Li Qiye smiled.

"Our young emperor is a true dragon, a future saint in the making, I don't need to say more regarding his supreme talent. He also loves to befriend everyone and after hearing your name, he wishes for a meeting."

"I have no reputation to speak of." Li Qiye responded.

"Stop going around in circles." Jian Ming laughed and said: "Just say that you want the immortal grass and state the offer. Maybe our young noble will be benevolent and sell it to you."

Alchemy Child chose a different method this time around. After all, they didn't want others to say that they were forcing Li Qiye or capturing him back to True Immortal.

He ignored Jian Ming again and calmly said: "Fellow Daoist, just name the price. We will buy it from you as long as it is reasonable."

"Not for sale." Li Qiye instantly refused.

"Don't be so fast, Fellow Daoist. Everything is negotiable, please come meet our young emperor. Maybe a friendship can come out of this..." Alchemy Child didn't give up.

"Not everyone is qualified to be my friend." Li Qiye said.

"You!" Alchemy Child's tone changed instantly.

"Bold words." A few pedestrians heard Li Qiye and couldn't believe it.

One cultivator said: "Everyone wants to befriend a potential dao lord in the making. Who is this brat? So arrogant."

"Did you hear that?" Jian Ming said intimidatingly.

Alchemy Child's expression became ugly. He could no longer pretend to be polite and coldly uttered: "Li, don't pick the hard way because you can't redo your choice later."

"Finally showing your fox tail. How despicable and unbecoming of a True Immortal's member." The daoist joined in.

"Haha, do you want to be slapped again? Our ancestor will be happy to oblige." Jian Ming poured salt on Alchemy Child's fresh wounds.

### **Chapter 4529: Untethered Vajra**

"Slap me again? In your dreams, today is a different day." Alchemy Child snorted.

"Oh? Got a backer this time?" Jian Ming smiled and said: "I'm afraid to say that your backer won't be able to protect you from the young noble. He can wipe out your sect with one hand."

"You're not leaving this place unscathed today after insulting our sect!" Alchemy Child threatened.

"Yep, that mouth still needs a slapping." Jian Ming concluded.

"Gold Elder." Alchemy Child told the old man next to him.

The latter had no choice but to step forward. He cupped his fist and said: "Gentlemen, let's put this behind us. We can talk and clear out any misunderstandings. I, Untethered Vajra, would truly appreciate it."

“Untethered Vajra?” Wise has been staring at the old man the entire time. He thought that he knew him from somewhere and became startled after hearing the title.

“Untethered Vajra?” A young listener nearby found it unfamiliar.

However, the older experts, especially the vagabonds, immediately became emotional.

“He’s here?” One of them blurted.

“Who is he?” The young listener asked.

One old vagabond stared at the old man with admiration in his eyes. He excitedly explained:

“Untethered Vajra is renowned and was well respected by many great powers. He might be the greatest vagabond cultivator in the world.”

“He’s that strong?” Those nearby were surprised.

“At least in the previous generation, he was unbeatable among vagabond cultivators.” The old vagabond continued.

Untethered Vajra swept through the realms and was considered an esteemed guest wherever he went. Some considered him to be the most accomplished vagabond cultivator.

This was easier said than done. Though he wasn’t the strongest cultivator, he was a role model for those from humble beginnings.

“That’s not what I heard. He might not be a vagabond or from a small sect at all.” A passerby joined the conversation: “Rumor has it that he is from a timeworn lineage dating back to the previous epoch. They lived in a place known as Vajra World and were the strongest there. Alas, the great calamity ended their epoch. Nonetheless, their sect was lucky enough to have survivors. These men then lived in seclusion and no longer went by their old names. Of course, these facts are all disputed...”

This passerby had so much knowledge of the vajra and enlightened the crowd.

They noticed that he seemed to be protecting Alchemy Child and started talking.

“Why is he mingling with True Immortal?” One asked.

“Not strange at all, he was good friends with many great powers and even served as a guest cultivator for many of them.” An expert responded.

“Vajra, help me teach them a lesson, let them know the immensity of the world.” Alchemy Child ordered.

The vajra smiled wryly. He thought that he was very unlucky being near Golden. True Immortal then came asking for help. He didn’t like being ordered around by this arrogant brat. Alas, there was nothing he could do.

Alchemy Child recruited him because the youth was hellbent on obtaining the immortal grass. He couldn’t return to his master empty-handed. He wanted to contribute and be remembered for this.



“Why did Alchemy Child seek Untethered Vajra? True Immortal has plenty of experts.” A crowd member commented.

True Immortal certainly didn’t need to ask anyone for help but it was happening right now.

“Maybe their ancestors can’t come to Golden fast enough.” One youth said.

“No, they’re doing this on purpose. Robbing someone is not good for their reputation.” One senior understood and sneered.

Others agreed with him right away. True Immortal cared about its reputation and didn’t want others to think that they were robbing Li Qiye of his immortal grass, at least not so blatantly.

Once this happened, they could justify it being Alchemy Child - a servant - acting on his own volition. Furthermore, Untethered Vajra was not from their sect.

Untethered Vajra didn’t know all of this, only that True Immortal needed his help and he couldn’t refuse.

“Fellow Daoist, please come with us to True Immortal.” He demanded with a commanding tone.

His voice intimidated the crowd and showed them his power.

“Not interested.” Li Qiye glanced at him once.

“I apologize then.” He roared and raised his hand.

Bestial roars could be heard as a golden radiance erupted. Images of dragons and tigers could be seen as he became gigantic.

The crowd members shuddered after seeing his gathered power.

“Whoosh!” His large hand reached for Li Qiye with flashing lights, looking like a golden dragon with its claws at the ready.

Li Qiye seemed feeble in comparison, unable to resist. Alas, once it actually came close enough, it was no different than a breeze hitting him.

Li Qiye became amused. This man was putting up an act so he decided to play along.

He retaliated with a palm strike and easily stopped the attack. The old man exaggerated by staggering several steps backward.

“Fellow Daoist, your power is... something else.” Untethered Vajra struggled for breath.

“That strong?” Spectators couldn’t believe it.

“His cultivation doesn’t look that impressive.” An older cultivator found it puzzling.

Of course, it wouldn’t be difficult for Li Qiye to stop this combatant. However, he didn’t use any force at all yet the man still acted as if he was defeated.

## **Chapter 4530: Acting**

“You are as strong as a god.” Untethered Vajra’s expression was rather exaggerated as if he was grievously wounded after the exchange.

However, he didn’t relent and continued: “Nonetheless, I will overestimate myself and try again.”

He took one step forward and gathered energy once more. Roars resounded before he made a move.

“I don’t know how strong Li Qiye is, but just look at that impeccable aura.” A spectator praised.

The bestial roars were intimidating and real - a testament to the cultivator’s strength.

Untethered Vajra seemed eager to fight regardless of Li Qiye’s power, not wanting to let down True Immortal.

“Strong you may be, I will fight in my young noble’s stead.” Wise Ancestor stepped forward.

“So be it, let’s see what you can do, Wise Ancestor.” Untethered Vajra shouted.

“Clank!” Wise unsheathed his sword. Its divine pulse frightened the crowd since they could feel the ancestor’s strength.

“Take this!” Untethered Vajra roared. He summoned a portal and let out a raging lightning storm.

“Come!” Wise raised his sword, ready to parry the incoming lightning bolts.

However, the moment his slash touched the bolts, they suddenly dispersed into nothingness. Untethered Vajra seemed to be injured by the sword energy and staggered again.

“The sword art of the Wu is peerless indeed.” He praised.

Wise was left speechless. He merely started the first variation to repel the lightning bolts. How did his foe lose already?

Wise knew that he wasn’t strong enough to defeat Untethered Vajra so effortlessly. He then went on to perform a vertical slash. The energy traveled like a rainbow across the sky.

Untethered Vajra became resplendent. A diamond shield manifested into reality and landed in front of him, looking like an unbreakable mountain range.

“Bam!” Alas, unlike its appearance, the shield broke down to the slash and Untethered Vajra staggered backward for the third time.

“How can I stop your sword art?” He said, aghast. It was as if Wise was the strongest swordsman in the world.

Wise, on the other hand, felt the toughness of the shield earlier. His attack had no chance of piercing it, let alone crushing the entire thing. He knew that his opponent purposely destroyed his own shield.

Why would he do something to help his enemy? Of course, Wise wasn’t an idiot and understood right away.

Untethered Vajra had no intention of helping True Immortal. Alas, he couldn’t refuse their request and had to put on an act to shield himself from repercussions.

“Fellow Daoist, try this move! Soaring Dragon!” Untethered Vajra released a golden dragon into the sky. It raised its claws and revealed its fangs, capable of tearing apart an entire army.

“Very well.” Wise understood that this was all for show.

Thus, he gathered all of his sword energies. They took the form of a rising sun with chaotic rays.

“Rumble!” The two of them fought in the air and swept away the clouds. The sun and moon lost their colors.

“You have truly mastered the techniques of the Wu.” Untethered Vajra praised again.

“You’re too kind, your commendable arts have broadened my horizon.” Wise laughed.

Though the battle seemed fierce and flashy, they always held back at the last second. Weaker cultivators would think that they were serious and fighting to the death.

Li Qiye chuckled after seeing this. The old men were crafty enough to put on a good show for the audience.

He then stared at Alchemy Child and said: “How do you want to die?”

“You dare?!” Alchemy Child barked back.

“You tell me.” Li Qiye smiled and walked closer.

“Go!” Alchemy Child waved his hand and his fellow sect members unsheathed their weapon and readied their treasure.

A dozen or so immediately surrounded Li Qiye.

“Allow us.” Jian Ming and the daoist joined the fray.

Jian Ming opened his trunk and released strange treasures, instantly going on the offensive.

The daoist was normally reserved but in reality, he was immensely strong in battle. He waved one banner and sealed the disciples inside a tornado.

Alchemy Child was only a servant under the young emperor and didn’t have a high status in True Immortal. Thus, his men were only regular disciples, no match for Jian Ming and the daoist.

Alchemy Child turned pale and could sense death coming for him. He shouted: “Don’t be insane, my master is a scion and will be a dao lord soon. If you touch a hair of mine, you will become his enemy...”

He tried to threaten Li Qiye. Most would give True Immortal and the young emperor face, not wanting to go to the extreme. He had done this plenty of times in the past to deter his opponents.

“I will give you a chance to attack or I’ll crush your neck.” Li Qiye naturally wouldn’t fall for this.

Alchemy Child could see that the threat didn’t work. He shouted for help: “Untethered Vajra, help me!”

“Fellow Daoist, please show mercy!” Untethered Vajra acted as if he wanted to save Alchemy Child. Alas, he couldn’t get away from Wise.

Wise wanted to laugh because he wasn't putting in any strength in his attack yet the vajra acted as if he was under unbearable pressure.