

**Chapter 691 - Balancing Water and Fire, Rising Up to Daemon Commander**

“This fellow Ru really is getting more and more beautiful!”

Han Qiongzhi could not help but sigh. Even for someone whose thoughts were not as delicate, Han Qiongzhi could still tell that a strange sense of understanding existed between them, which left her feeling a little jealous. However, Ru Xin had been extremely composed, which prevented her from losing her temper, as that would make her seem petty instead.

Li Qingshan gazed at the glass bottle in his hand. He had never said a single sugared word to this female confidante of his, even spending most of the time exchanging foul words, but their relationship was anything but normal. They only needed to say a single word to go through hell for each other.

He had always been a man who liked fine alcohol, who liked fine women, and who did not disguise his desires. However, whenever he was with a beauty like her, rarely did he ever become worked up. She was truly an outlier.

Han Qiongzhi said, “What, you can’t forget about her?”

“The world is going to keep spinning, so why can’t I forget about her?” Li Qingshan stowed away the medicine preciously and stood up. He laughed aloud. “How dare you look down on me earlier! I’ll let you taste my power today!” As a result, he picked up Han Qiongzhi and made his way into the bamboo loft.

Han Qiongzhi broke free from his grasp. “Hell no! You better use your school of Novels techniques to deal with it!”

Li Qingshan pushed her over on the bamboo floor boards and smiled. “That won’t be up to you to decide!”

Han Qiongzhi gazed at him. “You better try the effects of the medicine! I still have missions for the Hawkwolf Guard to carry out!”

Li Qingshan was taken aback. After obtaining the medicine, he was eager to try it; he wanted to see if he could break through the final barrier and reach Daemon Commander. This desire was so great that it surpassed all lust, but Han Qiongzhi had travelled a great distance to come and visit him. He could not just abandon her here, right? He had to get along with her well, but he never expected her to see through him.

“Go do what you need to do. Do you think I’ll be happy if you just try to get me off your back like that? When we do something like that, I hate it when you’re half-hearted. The world is going to keep spinning, so why must you rush something like this? Cultivation takes priority!”

Han Qiongzhi silently thought to herself, I might not be of any help to you, but I definitely won’t become an obstacle in your path of cultivation.

“Thank you!”

Li Qingshan held her face and kissed her deeply before smiling. “I’ll spare you today. I’ll definitely make you beg for mercy next time.

Han Qiongzhi's face reddened. "Don't even think about it!" Then her voice softened. "After you finish cultivating, don't forget to come find me, or I..."

Li Qingshan watched Han Qiongzhi vanish into the horizon before returning to the Qing Xiao dwelling. He took out the bottle of faint red medicine and stared at it for a while. He felt rather perplexed.

"Since the legendary Flower of Water and Fire doesn't exist, where did this medicine come from?"

He was not too familiar with alchemy, but whether it were pills or medicine, it had to come from somewhere. It could only be produced by merging the effects of a few medicinal herbs.

He thought long and hard, but he was unable to think of anything. He would have to ask her the next time he saw her.

Li Qingshan removed the stopper and drank it all in one gulp. The taste was somewhat familiar for some reason, but before he could taste it closely, the liquid had spread through his body. After a slight refinement, it was immediately converted into a strange medicinal effect.

He tried absorbing it into his daemon core, and a sliver of joy suddenly flashed through Li Qingshan's eyes. He held his breath as all of his muscles tensed up.

It really was effective!

The conflict between the two powers that originally opposed one another as water and fire, the spirit turtle and phoenix that struggled to merge together, was gradually being mitigated. Although this was nowhere close to merging, all he lacked was this step through the door. The thin barrier had finally been pierced through.

It was like among the sky filled with dark clouds, a tiny crack had appeared, allowing a streak of light to pass through and enter Li Qingshan's head.

In that moment, the arduous comprehension he had developed over the past year filled his head. A solution finally appeared for the difficult problem that had troubled him for all this time. Li Qingshan riled up with vigour and shut his eyes, beginning a new round of cultivation.

Time passed by in a hurry. When the rivers of ice melted and spring arrived, the mirror clone suddenly turned into a puddle of water in the depths of the endless earth, within the surging magma. Within the surging fire, it evaporated away.

This also meant that Li Qingshan needed to devote all of his attention to the breakthrough. In the Qing Xiao dwelling, he opened his eyes. There was some exhaustion, but most of it was relief and joy. He said quietly, "It's time!"

He began practising the Spirit Turtle's Method of Sea Suppression and the Phoenix's Scripture of Nirvāṇa at the same time.

The two could be described as the very source of his daemon core. Originally, if Li Qingshan wanted to practise one of them, he would have to suppress the other. This was the first time he practised them both at the same time, which would definitely lead to the most violent conflict between the two powers.

The daemon core spun away, glowing with azure-blue and scarlet-red light at the same time. The azure-blue light was vast and expansive, filled with a peaceful and tranquil aura. The scarlet-red light was much smaller, but it was unending, like it could never be extinguished.

Sure enough, the two powers clashed violently. The different lights became more and more blinding. They were so pure that they could not accept any other power, let alone a power that was the exact opposite.

Instinctively, the spirit turtle wanted to suppress the phoenix to the very bottom of the ocean, extinguishing its final flicker of flames, while the phoenix did not back down either. It blazed brilliantly as if it wanted to evaporate away the ocean and burn the spirit turtle to death.

Li Qingshan carefully controlled the two powers, neither allowing the spirit turtle to defeat the phoenix in a single blow, nor allowing the phoenix to gain the upper hand. He did his best to maintain a balance between the two powers. For a moment, they were at a stalemate.

In such an intense clash, the two types of light criss-crossed, gradually showing signs of merging together. This was from the result of his past year of arduous cultivation, but it was also thanks to the assistance from the bottle of medicine from Ru Xin, which helped him save large amounts of time.

Li Qingshan knew he had already reached the most critical juncture. Success or failure all depended on this moment. Suddenly, he released his control over the spirit turtle while pushing the mantra of the first layer of the Phoenix's Scripture of Nirvāṇa to the limit.

There was a rumble in his head, making Li Qingshan's head ring. The two coloured lights filled his mind. Behind him, the phoenix wings suddenly extended to the limit, almost unconsciously letting out a magnificent phoenix cry.

The phoenix broke through the spirit turtle's suppression and spread its wings. The spirit turtle also seemed to recognise this power, no longer suppressing it anymore.

Li Qingshan returned to his senses. He was overjoyed. He drew all the light back into the daemon core. The two powers were no longer so distinct anymore. Instead, they both contained each other, like a taichi diagram of red and blue, rapidly revolving around.

Having faced numerous difficulties and obstacles, he had finally, truly reached the first layer of the Phoenix's Scripture of Nirvāṇa now. He gained the right to use the phoenix's innate ability, but he still had not comprehended what the phoenix's innate ability was exactly.

His daemon qi had virtually lost control, rushing out violently. If it were not for the containment of the Eight Gates Formation of Golden Locks, it almost would have rushed into the air.

When he subdued the conflict between the powers of water and fire, the daemon core recovered its perfectly-round state. At the same time, it underwent a qualitative change, advancing towards the realm of Daemon Commander.

## **Chapter 692 - The Realm of Daemon Commander, The Profound Light Illuminates All**

Actually, Li Qingshan possessed the ability to reach Daemon Commander a long time ago. After reaching the fourth layer of the spirit turtle, he had only been a step away from Daemon Commander. Coupled with the first layer of the phoenix, he already had enough daemon qi.

However, when the two powers in the daemon core conflicted with one another, he would instead be better off not practising the Phoenix's Scripture of Nirvāṇa. Now that he merged water and fire, he immediately began to break through.

His daemon qi rapidly surged. The Eight Gates Formation of Golden Locks that enveloped the mountain vaguely showed signs of being unable to keep it suppressed. The eight gates of Life, Death, Resting, Alarm, Obstruction, Opening, Wounding, and View constantly revolved, glowing with resplendent, golden light.

Li Qingshan realised that if he let his daemon qi surge into the air, probably everyone within the range of fifty kilometers could see it. He would not be able to hide his identity as Northmoon anymore.

He extended a finger, and the central formation disc of the Eight Gates Formation of Golden Locks flew out. He bit the tip of his tongue and sprayed the blood on the formation disc. Immediately, the formation disc began to spin rapidly.

Unleashing the power of the formation like this could make it last a little longer, but it would completely damage the Eight Gates Formation of Golden Locks.

Li Qingshan could no longer care about that anymore. He stood tall. His black hair became scarlet; his skin darkened. A pair of iron hooves pressed against the ground as a pair of ox horns plunged into the air. He rapidly swelled up and grew taller.

Three meters, ten meters, fifteen meters, thirty meters... Even when he reached sixty meters, he showed no signs of stopping down. In the blink of an eye, he had reached ninety meters, but he continued to grow.

If it were not for the fact that when he originally constructed the dwelling, he focused the most on space, hollowing the entire mountain, it would have collapsed by now.

When Li Qingshan reached a hundred and twenty meters tall, he finally stopped growing. Two streams of white smoke rushed out of his nostrils, and a few tiger stripes appeared on his face. His scarlet eyes were murderous, shining like fire. He seemed even more terrifying and vicious compared to the past. Only the pair of phoenix wings on his back demonstrated a different magnificence.

After many years of arduous cultivation, he had finally become a Daemon Commander. Li Qingshan bellowed out at the sky, filled with utter delight.

At the same time, new innate abilities began condensing in the daemon core.

The ox demon stood with an indomitable spirit, completely unshakable. The tiger demon battled the world, lunging about and roaring. The spirit turtle suppressed the territories in the ocean, obscuring itself and hiding away.

Li Qingshan silently comprehended the innate abilities and extraordinary splendour flashed through his eyes again and again. These three innate abilities were exceptional, enough to push his strength to a

whole new level. At the same time, his original innate abilities would grow stronger with his breakthrough to Daemon Commander. The overall increase in his strength was more than ten times. If he encountered an opponent like E Dan again, there would be absolutely no need for him to put up a bitter battle at all. He could defeat them with ease. Below the third heavenly tribulation, he no longer had any opponents.

However, something went wrong with the phoenix's innate ability. Originally, he thought he could directly unlock three innate abilities of the phoenix, but he only unlocked one.

Regular Daemon Commanders all knew three innate abilities. They unlocked one from condensing a daemon core, unlocked another by transforming into a Daemon General, and unlocked the final one when they reached Daemon Commander. Every single transformation that Li Qingshan practised had its own system of abilities, so logically speaking, the phoenix should have had three innate abilities.

And that was easier for him to accept. The phoenix's power was far too weak after all. It had barely reached a balance with the spirit turtle, but it still stood no chance against the spirit turtle in terms of strength, so there was nothing strange if he could not unlock three innate abilities. He believed that as long as he cultivated to the second and third layer, he would obviously gain those two innate abilities.

However, what he found absolutely unacceptable was how he had no idea what the phoenix's innate ability was. It was neither an active ability like the Tiger Demon's Breath, nor was it particularly similar to a passive effect like the Strength of the Earth. He only felt his life force become a little stronger.

Li Qingshan possessed a total of ten innate abilities now, except the effects of the phoenix's ability were unknown. In other words, he possessed three times as many innate abilities as other Daemon Commanders. Even Mo Yu, who was known as the crown prince of daemons, only possessed a measly three innate abilities.

"It's time for me to take back what belongs to me! It's also time for me to see the people I need to see!"

The largest lake in the Ruyi commandery was Calm Wave lake in the south. Calm Wave lake spanned three prefectures, extending as far as the eye could see. It was vast. The mortals that lived on its shores even believed this was what the oceans in the legends looked like.

Because the lake water was calm and without waves, it was known as Calm Wave lake. The people who lived on the shore were mostly fishermen; their lives were very peaceful and comfortable. That was until a year ago when strange freak waves began to regularly dominate the lake, which swallowed many boats. Sometimes, the waves would even reach the shores, so the people who lived there would not be spared.

Rumour had it that a powerful daemon had come to make trouble, but for some reason, those cultivators who flew around through the sky never came to purge it. This place had once been the largest region of water Li Qingshan had refined, but before long, the unknown daemon had devoured it.

Right now, Li Qingshan stood on a white cloud in the sky, gazing down at below.

Calm Wave lake truly was vast. Even at such heights, he was unable to see all of it. Li Qingshan could still remember it had taken him tremendous effort to refine this lake. Now that it had been stolen from him like this, he would be lying if he said he did not feel angry at all.

If he had guessed correctly, the bastard that the Dragon King of Ink Sea sent was in this region of water. He could try out the spirit turtle's new innate ability first!

Li Qingshan waved his hand, and a hexagonal piece of the Spirit Turtle's Profound Shell appeared before him. A scene gradually appeared on there, which was Calm Wave lake below.

With a thought, Calm Wave lake displayed in the Spirit Turtle's Profound Shell rapidly pulled closer. It shot past a flying swallow and stopped on a certain region of water. He could clearly see the waves on the surface of the lake. Then he passed through the surface to explore underneath.

Li Qingshan waved his left hand and another piece of the Spirit Turtle's Profound Shell appeared, also displaying an image. However, it displayed the neighbouring region of Calm Wave lake, also beginning to search around.

Pieces of the Spirit Turtle's Profound Shell appeared around him, forming a sphere. They all displayed different images, like they were different monitors showing different places.

Standing among them, Li Qingshan felt like everything was under his control. This was the spirit turtle's new innate ability, the Profound Light Illuminates All.

This innate ability was rather similar to the Watermirror's disc, and there were techniques with similar effects in the cultivation community. However, their results were worlds apart.

The Watermirror disc could look through the entire Academy of the Hundred Schools at most. Even if he combined it with the Water God Seal, at most he could look through Moon Court lake. If he used techniques alone, their range would be even smaller.

However, with this "Profound Light Illuminates All", as long as Li Qingshan wanted to, he could concentrate all of the power on a single piece of the Spirit Turtle's Profound Shell, and he could even see what was going on hundreds of kilometers away. It would be in high definition too, basically like the spy satellites of his past life. It definitely bore strategic significance.

And, he had only just grasped this innate ability. Once he grew accustomed and acquainted with it, the effects should become even more powerful. He could even imagine a day when he could just sit in his dwelling with a panoramic view of the entire nine provinces, just like how shut-ins could know everything going on around them without setting a single foot out of the door.

Speaking of which, damned shut-ins really did resemble the spirit turtle. In order to avoid various dangers, they shut themselves in at home, browsing around through a screen every single day. As for the characters in games and personalities on forums, they were basically like the Watermirror's Image.

Suddenly, Li Qingshan's gaze stopped on a piece of Spirit Turtle's Profound Shell. He smiled, revealing two sharp tiger fangs.

"Yep, found it!"

### **Chapter 693 - Innate Ability of the Ox Demon, Gravity of the Earth**

Finding the enemy that he had absolutely no information on was even easier than Li Qingshan originally anticipated it to be.

Through the illumination of the Profound Light Illuminates All, he saw a magnificent palace sitting in the region of deep water in the centre of Calm Wave lake. Water daemons swam around in the surroundings like guards. They moved around in an orderly manner, which formed quite a sight.

Li Qingshan thought in wonder, He really is a Daemon Commander from the Ink sea. He sure knows how to play around. I just wonder about his strength.

He could basically conclude that the water Daemon Commander the Dragon King of Ink Sea sent was probably much more powerful than those Daemon Commanders of the Ruyi commandery, but he did not particularly care about that. The only worry he had to consider was the Water God Seal in the enemy's possession. That represented the right to control over almost half of the water in the Ruyi commandery. Not only could it provide endless daemon qi, but abilities and techniques used with it would definitely be drastically enhanced.

It was exactly because of this that it was very unlikely for the enemy to return the water territory obediently. As daemons, strength was still everything at the end of the day.

Li Qingshan could wield his own Water God Seal and mobilise vast amounts of water to attack too, but when two powerful daemons that each controlled a half of the water in the Ruyi commandery began fighting, the water would probably reach everywhere. Countless lives would be lost. He was not exactly a kind-hearted person, but he did not want innocent casualties either unless he had absolutely no other choice. Moreover, there was no need for him to kick up such a great stir to deal with a Daemon Commander anyway. He only had to find the target and directly take him out.

When he tried to take a look at the situation inside the palace, the scene remained stuck. It did not move. A pliable but tough force obstructed it. As it turned out, a spherical barrier enveloped the palace.

"The Profound Light Illuminates All, together!"

Li Qingshan swung out with his finger and pointed at the piece of the Spirit Turtle's Profound Shell that depicted the palace. The other pieces of Spirit Turtle's Profound Shell flew together and overlapped with one another, forming a hexagonal cylinder.

The frozen scene suddenly pushed forward until it reached inside the palace and clearly depicted what was going on in there. Li Qingshan was surprised once again. They're actually holding a banquet!

Seven or eight guests sat at the banquet; there were both males and females, all varying in appearances. Li Qingshan recognised a good handful of them, all Daemon Commanders he had once defeated. Despite being unruly Daemon Commanders, they all now used chopsticks obediently and rather unnaturally.

Li Qingshan sneered inside. In the past, he could take on all of them at the same time and defeat them alone, so there was even less of a reason for him to worry about these Daemon Commanders now. His gaze gathered on the primary seat of honour very soon.

An ugly, pasty, square-faced man sat there, holding a cup in his hand as he gazed around complacently. He gave off a unique aura, the aura of the strong.

Li Qingshan knew that this was the enemy he had to deal with this time.

The ugly man groaned. His head swiveled around as he scanned through the surroundings like he had noticed something.

“He’s quite sharp.” Li Qingshan sniggered. He continued to study him fearlessly.

The ugly man was in doubt. He had suddenly felt like someone was watching him, but he discovered nothing at all upon closer inspection. Only when he considered how it was impossible for anyone to enter the palace silently did he relax slightly.

“I hope big brother Sha can unite all the water territory in the Ruyi commandery soon and give that bastard a thorough beating and chase him out of the Ruyi commandery!”

A fat man stood up and toasted. He was the bullfrog Daemon Commander Li Qingshan had once taught a vicious lesson to.

“How is it enough to just chase him out of the Ruyi commandery? We should have his limbs ripped from his body to go with big brother Sha’s wine!” An old man immediately followed up, his face filled with hatred.

“Ripping off his limbs won’t be everything. We even have to dig out his daemon core to nourish big brother Sha so that big brother Sha can become a Daemon King sooner!”

“No, no, no. We can’t spare his life. We have to tear him to pieces. We’ll each have a piece and taste his flesh.”

“I want to eat his brain!”

“I want to eat his heart!”

When Northmoon was mentioned, all of the daemons put on a tough and fierce appearance and spoke up, each more vicious than the last. A while later, they had already divided up every single piece of flesh on Northmoon’s entire body. Two Daemon Commanders even almost flipped the table over their dispute to see who would get his heart. One of them had never even fought Northmoon before.

Li Qingshan widened his eyes. His face was bright red. He tried everything he could to hold it back, but he could hold it back no longer. With a spurt, he clutched his belly and collapsed on the cloud, breaking into laughter.

“With the likes of you, it’ll be more fitting if you eat my cock! If it weren’t for the sake of the Dragon King of Ink Sea, I would have torn you to pieces a long time ago!”

With the joys that came with peeping, Li Qingshan was in no hurry to take action. He wanted to see what other hilarious things these daemons could come up with!

At the same time, the “big brother Sha” also laughed aloud. “Thank you for your blessings, brothers, but I’ve come in the place of sir dragon king to invite that bastard Northmoon to the Ink sea. There’s really no reason to get all violent.”

“Big brother Sha, how can that be? We’re still relying on you to avenge us!”



“Don’t fret. Let me finish. This will depend on whether Northmoon is sensible or not. If he’s willing to hand over the Water God Seal in his possession obediently, then so be it. But if he’s not willing, then I’ll let him taste some pain. However, under the orders of sir dragon king, we daemons are still forbidden from killing one another. We can lop off his limbs and take his daemon core at most.”

Big brother Sha switched the conversation topic to something else, and a vicious light flashed through his small, beady eyes. Ever since he obtained the Water God Seal, he could sense that his cultivation rate had become much faster. If this continued, he could probably become a Daemon King in less than two centuries, so he desired Northmoon’s Water God Seal even more.

Although he had heard about Northmoon’s glorious achievements in battle, his strength could not be compared to these local Daemon Commanders as a direct subordinate under the Dragon King of Ink Sea. He also had half the water territory in the Ruyi commandery as a foundation now. Combined with these Daemon Commanders, he was not afraid of Northmoon if they actually began fighting.

Li Qingshan smiled even wider, except his smile gradually twisted viciously. He licked his lips. “You want to eat me? Then I’ll let you all get a taste of me!”

He dispersed the Spirit Turtle’s Profound Shell and leapt out. He did not make his way down, instead flapping his wings and flying up into the sky.

Fierce wind whistled by; gradually, it was no longer pure wind. It was imbued with a sharpness even more cutting than blades and swords—atmospheric winds. Just like the underground magnetic field, it was a powerful force that determined the boundaries of this world.

Li Qingshan continued to climb higher, and the atmospheric winds turned violent, roaring madly past his ears. However, they were completely invisible and omnipresent.

Only when a stream of atmospheric winds brushed past his face and left behind a small, bloody cut did he stop climbing higher. He raised his head and gazed at the further depths of the windstorm. “Diving into the earth is not easy, but climbing up into the sky seems even more difficult!”

Then he gazed down. He had already thrown the clouds far behind, which had become very small. He could see the entire Calm Wave lake too; it seemed like the size of a pond.

He unleashed the wings of wind violently. After becoming a Daemon Commander, the innate ability that belonged to the tiger demon had become more powerful and robust than ever. As he flapped them, they merged with floating slivers of atmospheric wind.

Clouds followed dragons, and the wind followed tigers!

TL: This saying comes from the Qian hexagram of the I Ching, Yi Jing, or Classic of Changes. It basically means mutual compatibility between certain things.

The wind fed the flames, and the wings of the phoenix blazed brightly.

Li Qingshan’s eyes narrowed, locking onto the palace at the bottom of Calm Wave lake. He suddenly descended.

The ground shot towards him with startling speed. In the blink of an eye, Calm Wave lake had completely filled his field of vision.

Li Qingshan's pupils dilated, and his heart tensed up. He never thought he would actually be able to move so quickly now!

No longer suppressed by the spirit turtle, the power of the phoenix wings could finally be pushed to their limits. The wings of wind amplified them further, and the slivers of atmospheric wind assisted them.

However, that was not all. The ox demon's new innate ability played a critical role too.

As Li Qingshan fell, a circular shape suddenly sunk in on the surface of the lake, only a few meters across. Directly below it was the underwater palace. A similar hole had appeared on the roof of the palace.

Big brother Sha currently sat under the hole. The moment before, he was still drinking happily with the Daemon Commanders, but in the next moment, he had collapsed on the ground in a horrible position. It was like an invisible force had pushed him down to the ground heavily. For a moment, he was actually immobilised.

There was a messy clatter as all the cups and dishes on the ground were reduced to dust. The jade table in front of him, as well as the jade tiles around him, suffered the same fate, forming a circular region that had sunken in.

"Big brother Sha!" The Daemon Commanders all paled in fright.

Big brother Sha lay firmly on the ground. His face was filled with shock, as he actually had no idea where the attack came from.

As the water god of this region, no one could hide from his senses if they entered this water territory. Even if they could completely conceal their aura, they could not conceal their existence. As long as they entered the water, they would obviously have to part the water to advance. Yet, even after being attacked right now, he had yet to discover the enemy.

The method of attack was far too strange. It was nothing physical, nor was it some ability or technique. Although it did not cause him any substantial damage, he felt like he was carrying a mountain on his back, completely immobilised.

"What's going on?"

The Gravity of the Earth was the name of the ox demon's new innate ability, only a single word off from the Strength of the Earth. As its name suggested, it could control the gravity within a certain region, making everything as light as a feather or as heavy as a mountain.

The reason why Li Qingshan could fall so startlingly fast was because he had been enhanced by this gravitational pull. As long as they dwelled in this region, no creature, absolutely nothing, could escape from this force. What attacked big brother Sha was the boundless earth, or in other words, he could not withstand his own weight.

Big brother Sha could sense intense danger; it was as if imminent catastrophe was descending over him. He responded extremely quickly. With a sudden transformation, he turned into a huge, dark-green,

softshell turtle, and he immediately felt much safer. He was extremely confident in the defences of the turtle shell on his back. Among his three innate abilities, the most powerful one was the shell.

At that moment, all the Daemon Commanders felt tremendous daemon qi descend from above. Before they could even respond, they saw a flash of scarlet light in their eyes.

Li Qingshan landed a punch on the turtle shell. He only paused for a moment, and he grinned.

The unforgettable scarlet hair and eyes made all the daemons cry out, "Northmoon!"

Soon afterwards, the lake water surged in violently and swept them away. The magnificent underwater palace was immediately reduced to pieces, surging off into all directions.

The banquet had come to an end.

### **Chapter 694 - Innate Ability of the Tiger Demon, Subservience to the Tiger**

The willows and poplar trees around Calm Wave lake were verdant. It was the height of spring, so many people moved around the lake. There were young masters and misses on spring outings, as well as travelling merchants and vendors carrying out business.

The ground suddenly shook. Many people lost their footing and fell to the ground, and a small carriage almost rolled into the lake.

"What's going on? Is it an earthquake?" Someone pointed at the sky and exclaimed, "What's that?"

Everyone in the surroundings gaze over. A straight streak of scarlet light pierced through the air and vanished into the surface of the lake. Some people said it was a meteor, but they were immediately rebuked. Were there any meteors that traveled with such a trajectory?

As they discussed, a great boom rang out from the distance. Because it was overly far away, the boom was not particularly startling.

Afterwards, everyone saw it. Wherever the scarlet light passed by, the clouds parted, vaguely forming a circular hole. A thin, white line rose up on the water, rapidly growing in size. A terrifying wave that no one had ever seen before rushed over.

Everyone cried out in alarm and scattered like birds and beasts.

In the centre of Calm Wave lake, the water over a hundred meters deep had been forcefully parted, forming a huge pit in the water.

At the very bottom of the pit, Li Qingshan was upside down, having punched Sha Bie on his shell. The turtle shell flashed with light and produced totemic patterns filled with a primitive, simple, and indestructible will.

This was the innate ability that Sha Bie took the greatest pride in. He was not a divine beast like the spirit turtle, but the turtle shell was still a lifebound item of his, something he had developed over a thousand years. He did not hold back with his spiritual qi, pushing his innate ability to the limit.

The only way to kill him was to burst through the turtle shell, but unless he ran out of daemon qi, his shell could not be destroyed. Right now, he had the Water God Seal in his body, so his daemon qi was virtually endless. He was basically undefeatable.

That was unless a Daemon King attacked him and used overwhelming strength to smash apart his shell, but how could a mere Daemon General achieve that?

Crack!

The sound of something breaking rang out, and his back ached. Sha Bie's eyes bulged out. "Impossible!"

Under Li Qingshan's punch, the totemic patterns only remained for a split second before twisting and shattering. The indestructible turtle shell caved in and shattered like paper.

When he reached the fifth layer of the ox demon, he could rival a Corpse King in strength. Now that he had become a Daemon Commander and stood over a hundred and twenty meters tall, just how much strength did he possess? Amplified by the terrifying speed when he descended from above, what might could he unleash? All of this combined was not something a Daemon Commander could contend with!

And, what if Li Qingshan's most powerful method of attack was added into the equation too? His fist was pitch-black, wrapped in the power of the Tremors of the Ox Demon. Even the Corpse King had once suffered against this attack, and it had become even more lethal now.

The so-called powerful defence and being in an undefeatable state was no different from a pretence to Li Qingshan.

He directly pierced Sha Bie's colossal body. The power of tremors tore apart his flesh, shattering his last bit of fighting will.

The mountainous islands on Calm Wave lake obstructed the tsunami-like wave. When it reached the shore, it had already subsided by a lot, but it was still several meters tall. It slammed against the banks.

The power behind that attack had actually made the largest lake in the Ruyi commandery surge, only settling down after a very long time.

The mortals all thought it was the might of the heavens, but even the cultivators cultivating near the lake became dumbstruck as their hearts shook.

In the depths at the centre of the lake, water crashed down like an avalanche, stirring up the sand and grit on the bottom of the lake. The sediment only settled after a very long time.

Li Qingshan shook his right hand viciously. He felt like the bones in his hand were about to break earlier. He said to Sha Bie's huge head beside him. "Even I can't really withstand that strike of mine, so do you really think you can still withstand it?"

His words were completely unwarranted. If he had not used his innate ability and immobilised Sha Bie, who would be stupid enough to stay put and try to block it forcefully?

"The Dragon King of Ink Sea sent me. Northmoon, how dare you try to kill your clansmen and disobey sir dragon king's orders!?"

Sha Bie laid on the bottom of the lake, lingering on his last breath. Even his head was riddled with terrifying cracks. Before he could even understand what was going on, he was already heavily injured, on the brink of death.

Fortunately, upon reaching his realm of cultivation, all daemons possessed extremely great life force. As long as they did not lose their daemon cores, they could even survive damage to their vital points. He mobilised his daemon qi to heal his wounds as he tried to use the dragon king's name to frighten Northmoon.

Li Qingshan smiled. "I'll just lop off your limbs and then take away your daemon core. Oh right, the Water God Seal too!"

"Sir dragon king bestowed the Water God Seal upon me. I'm bold enough to give it to you, but are you bold enough to take it? I will give up on this water territory and leave here!"

"If you mention the dragon king again, I'll butcher you. Right now, this is just between the two of us!"

Li Qingshan smiled. He hated being threatened very much, but what he hated even more was the fact that he really was rather fearful of the Dragon King of Ink Sea. The more time he spent together with the Great Banyan Tree King and the Golden Cicada Spirit King, the more he understood about the terrifying strength of these older, reputed Daemon Kings.

If he were a Daemon King who had just undergone the third heavenly tribulation, Li Qingshan would be confident enough to take him on in battle right now, but the Dragon King of Ink Sea had been crowned as one of the Ten Daemon Kings several thousand years ago. In an open confrontation, it was no longer an issue of victory or defeat. Even escaping with his life intact would be very difficult.

"Alright, alright. Since you're bold enough to take it, I'll give it to you. However, my daemon core is off-limits. If you want to coerce me into it, I'll blow up my daemon core, and that'll be that. You won't even obtain the Water God Seal. If you kill me, sir dragon king..."

Sha Bie suddenly realised he had slipped up. Violent murderousness erupted beside him. His black eyes clearly reflected a handsome and twisted face. He thought, Oh no!

"Do you really think my words mean nothing? You better just die!" Li Qingshan slammed down with both hands.

Sha Bie bellowed out and tried to blow up his daemon core so that he could destroy the Water God Seal too.

"The Spirit Turtle Suppresses, Tremors of the Ox Demon!"

Li Qingshan slammed down on Sha Bie with his left hand and produced a ring of azure light, enveloping Sha Bie in the blink of an eye. He forcefully suppressed the daemon core. His right hand was enveloped in black cracks that rapidly spread across Sha Bie.

Sha Bie's huge body shattered violently, only leaving behind a cyan daemon core and a Water God Seal that hovered in the water. With a swing of his hand, Li Qingshan stowed both the daemon core and the Water God Seal away.

However, this was not over yet. He opened his eyes as wide as possible and let out a deep tiger growl.

Sha Bie's figure appeared once again in the rippling lake water, fading in and out with the undulations. However, under Li Qingshan's gaze, he gradually consolidated. It was Sha Bie's soul that was supposed to have moved on into the afterlife. Meeting Li Qingshan's eyes, his head blanked out. Suddenly, he began lowering his head towards Li Qingshan, showing great respect.

Li Qingshan smiled. "That's a pretty good effect!"

The third innate ability of the tiger demon—Subservience to the Tiger.

Why were ghosts subservient to the tiger? Legends had it that tigers possessed the power to control a myriad of ghosts, while those that a tiger ate would turn into a subservient chang ghost, or a haunt, following the tiger around to do evil and create even more haunts.

Li Qingshan's innate ability could convert the souls of the creatures he killed, whether they were human or daemon, into subservient ghosts, serving him with devotion. It was like a ghost control technique.

PS: After all sorts of hardships, Qingshan has finally become a Daemon Commander, obtaining three more innate abilities. The book is close to crossing two million characters too. There's one more release today, so I need to gather my energy and beg furiously for monthly votes.

### **Chapter 695 - Slaughtering the Daemons, Collecting All the Water Spiritual Qi**

Although the haunts did not possess much battle prowess, the tiger demon's ability dominated their minds, so they demonstrated absolute loyalty. Not only did this mean Li Qingshan could kill people, he could even enslave the people he killed and prevent them from moving off into the afterlife or returning to sa?sa?ra. Moreover, haunts would always tell him everything that they knew. It was perfect for investigating secrets.

Since Sha Bie came from the Ink sea, he should understand the situation of the Ink sea. Since he killed Sha Bie, Li Qingshan definitely would have fallen out with the Dragon King of Ink Sea, so it was perfect for him to learn a bit about the Ink sea's situation through his mouth, so he could respond accordingly.

Li Qingshan was indeed fearful of the Dragon King of Ink Sea, but that did not mean anyone could threaten Li Qingshan with the Dragon King of Ink Sea's name. Having grown accustomed to treating the Golden Cicada Spirit King and the Great Banyan Tree King as equals, he truly did not want to remain in a lowly position and go see some sir dragon king. He had already fallen out with some sh\*tty Beast King, so offending another one made no difference.

As he gazed at the haunt that Sha Bie had turned into submit to him, Li Qingshan felt some pity. If only he possessed this ability sooner. Challenging the world with a group of his enemies could have been extremely delightful.

Suddenly, he looked back and sensed clusters of daemon qi traveling away from Calm Wave lake. These guests who wanted to carve up his flesh had scattered and fled. Cold light flashed through his eyes. Since he had already done this, he might as well go all out!

Due to the circumstances back then, sparing their lives had already brought Li Qingshan great discontent, yet they actually still dared to discuss how to deal with him here. They could all go and die!

He casually tossed Sha Bie's haunt into the Asura Field, and Li Qingshan turned into a scarlet light, rushing into the air. He arrived high in the sky and waved his right hand. "The Profound Light Illuminates All!"

Pieces of the Spirit Turtle's Profound Shell flew together and displayed scenes in the directions that the cluster of daemon qi had fled off into. Very soon, they locked onto all of the escaping figures.

Li Qingshan chose the closest one. With a flap of his wings, he kicked up some flames and shot off as a scarlet streak of light.

.....

A series of lamps were lit in a majestic hall within the Ink sea. It resembled a buddha hall, except there was no image of the buddha. One of the lamps was suddenly extinguished.

These were no regular oil lamps, but life lamps. The one that had been extinguished belonged to Sha Bie who Li Qingshan killed.

"What? Old Sha is dead!"

Mo Yu rushed over. A sliver of surprise had appeared on his face that was always so expressionless. Just who is bold enough to kill a member of the Ink sea? Old Sha is not someone that anyone can simply kill either.

Suddenly, he thought of a possibility and became even paler. He turned into a black swirl and vanished from the hall.

In the depths of the Ink sea, a huge dragon, pitch-black like ink, coiled up. It was as stern and dignified as a mountain, yet as gentle and elegant as clouds. The black dragon that Si Qing had transformed into through the Black Emperor Dragon Classic was like a tiny snake compared to it. It did not seem like a living creature at all.

The Dragon King of Ink Sea opened his eyes. A while later, he closed them again.

.....

**Boom!**

A colossal bullfrog, the size of a small mountain, landed on the banks of Calm Wave lake heavily and crushed countless buildings and structures, leading to countless cries from humans. However, the bullfrog was in no shape to care about the ants around it. He kicked off powerfully with his two hind legs and produced two deep pits in the earth, leaping forward as hard as he could.

He left the banks instantly. His seemingly-cumbersome body would travel several kilometers with each leap. Before long, he was already fifty kilometers away from the palace in the lake.

Right now, he was overwhelmed with regret. He should have never participated in this banquet. He had personally witnessed Northmoon's viciousness before. That was not something he could contend with.

And, from the hurried glimpse he had caught earlier, he discovered something even more startling. From the aura that Northmoon gave off, he had clearly already faced the second heavenly tribulation and reached Daemon Commander.

If Northmoon were just a Daemon Commander, that was nothing. He himself was a Daemon Commander too. However, Northmoon was a terrifying existence that had defeated a great group of Daemon Commanders when he was still a Daemon General. Now that he had become a Daemon Commander, just how powerful would he be? If that strike earlier had landed on him instead, he would have been reduced to minced meat already. The worst part of it all was he had even blanked out for a moment, making him flee slower than the others.

At this moment, a tremendous cluster of daemon qi rapidly drew closer. The bullfrog panicked and bounded away even faster, but in the blink of an eye, the daemon qi had arrived over his head.

“The first one!”

Li Qingshan flapped his wings and swooped down like a hawk catching a rabbit, lunging towards the bullfrog. When he neared the ground, he had already reverted to his original form, becoming a colossal existence standing around a hundred and twenty meters tall. Compared to him, the huge bullfrog seemed tiny.

The bullfrog tried desperately to leap away, but his body suddenly weighed ten times more. Immediately, he fell out of the air. Before he could even respond, a hoof pushed him into the ground. The great strength and the intense gravity immobilised him. He was like a tiny frog under the claws of a vicious tiger.

“Spare me, fellow!”

“I already spared you once, but you didn’t change your ways, so I think you’re better off dead!” Li Qingshan said.

With his tiger claws, he ripped apart the bullfrog with ease and killed him on the spot, digging out his daemon core and suppressing it with the spirit turtle. At the same time, he tossed the body into the Asura Field, prepared to make fried bullfrog out of him. As a Daemon Commander who had cultivated for all these years, he should taste quite nice. He felt a tinge of regret when he thought about the softshell turtle. If he had known about this earlier, he would not have shaken him into so many pieces. He could have stewed him into soup, which would probably be extremely nourishing.

In the end, he converted the bullfrog’s soul into a haunt. In short, he did not waste any part of him. Afterwards, he took off as a scarlet light again, chasing down the next Daemon Commander.

With his speed that surpassed regular Daemon Commanders and the Profound Light Illuminates All to lock onto them, Li Qingshan hunted down the Daemon Commanders he wanted to eat one by one, converting them all into haunts. He obtained another eight daemon cores, where five of them were water daemon cores.

Sha Bie was worried that Northmoon might launch an attack with his Water God Seal, which was why he intentionally befriended these water Daemon Commanders. He never thought everything would develop completely against his expectations, which all ended up benefitting Li Qingshan instead.



However, Li Qingshan primarily practised the Phoenix's Scripture of Nirvāṇa right now, so he had no use for these daemon cores at the moment. He tossed them all into his hundred treasures pouch for the day he needed them.

After doing all that, Li Qingshan returned to Calm Wave lake and took out the Water God Seal he had taken from Sha Bie. With its original master dead, he easily suppressed and erased the remaining aura on the Water God Seal, uniting all the water in the Ruyi commandery once more. Afterwards, he even fused the two Water God Seals together, forming an even stronger Water God Seal that could contain even more regions of water.

With a thought, the surging water spiritual qi gathered towards the Water God Seal in his hand. Then, he accepted it into the Ocean pearl in his body.

After reaching Golden Core, the rate at which he could gather spiritual qi had become even faster, but it was nowhere near enough for the Ocean pearl. It had been empty the entire time. Now, he used the Water God Seal to fill the Ocean pearl up very quickly, approaching full capacity strand by strand.

Li Qingshan was amazed. The spiritual qi Golden Core cultivators required truly was tremendous. The spiritual qi he had absorbed during that time was enough to make ten cultivators go from first layer Qi Practitioners to late Foundation Establishment.

A while later, the Ocean pearl suddenly flashed, finally full.

Although he had basically filled up the Ocean pearl, it was like force-feeding it with spiritual qi, where actually converting the spiritual qi into his own strength would still take large amounts of time for refinement. However, it did save him a vast amount of time, a decade at the very least. He no longer had to worry about gathering resources to practise the Arts of the Boundless Ocean.

Li Qingshan did not stop gathering spiritual qi with that. He continued to absorb it endlessly, completely replenishing the daemon qi he had used up during the battle and even reaching a state fuller than before.

The glow on the Water God Seal had already dimmed by a lot. The water spiritual qi in the lakes and rivers were not inexhaustible. Instead, they had been gradually accumulated over a long period of time. It had only become such a tremendous resource over thousands of years of accumulation, ever since the founding emperor of Great Xia made a clean sweep of the local gods.

If there was a hundred percent in total, then Li Qingshan had already used up fifty to sixty percent of it in the past. During the year or so Sha Bie was here, he had never stopped absorbing spiritual qi, so he had used up ten to twenty percent. As such, only rough twenty to thirty percent remained. However, who knew how many pills a mere twenty to thirty percent was equal to and who knew how much time on cultivation could be saved with that.

Now that he had directly fallen out with the Dragon King of Ink Sea, it would be very difficult for him to hold onto his position as a water god, so he obviously had to hurry up and take away everything he could to prepare for the days to come.

However, the remaining twenty to thirty percent of spiritual qi left Li Qingshan rather troubled. He thought, Isn't there another place where I can store this spiritual qi? He directed his finger at the Asura Field, and the surging spiritual qi was all drawn in there.

The climate in the Asura Field changed drastically. Dark clouds piled up in the air, enveloping several hundred kilometers in the surroundings. The clouds grew thicker and thicker, and torrential rain poured down, but it was not regular rain. It was filled with spiritual qi, like the spiritual rain the Spiritual Rain technique summoned.

The rain fell into the lake, and the water level rapidly rose up, spilling out very soon. The water turned into rivers that surged across the land recklessly.

The asura were currently in a stalemate with the haunts. As the water surged over, they all leapt to higher places.

The water flowed through the lush rainforest, and the trees grew at a visible rate. Some of the older trees even began to develop a sliver of intelligence. This was a sign of becoming a daemon.

The Great Banyan Tree King spread his branches and smiled. "I really haven't been serving as his teacher for all this time for nothing!" The night roamers emerged from their treehouses. Seeing the miraculous rain pouring down, they all spread their arms and drank the rain.

Although it was only twenty to thirty percent of the total spiritual qi, it was the accumulation of all the rivers and lakes in the Ruyi commandery across several millennia. It was enough to alter the Asura Field into a blessed land of cultivation. He could cultivate in there in the future.

Li Qingshan drew the last sliver of water spiritual qi into the Asura Field, and the Water God Seal completely dimmed. The rays of the setting sun were already stretching across the sky. He exhaled and was about to leave when the spirit turtle suddenly gave off an omen of warning. He looked back.

In the eastern sky, a black swirl appeared out of thin air and turned into a pitch-black figure. It was Mo Yu with his black cloak and his face as pale as a corpse's.

"Northmoon, it really was you!"

After quite a journey, Mo Yu finally arrived above Calm Wave lake. He stared straight at Li Qingshan with his eyes filled with deathly stillness like he was looking at a corpse.

"So what if it's your grandfather?"

Li Qingshan smiled. He had gone on a slaughter today, and he would be settling a grievance too.

### **Chapter 696 - Fighting Mo Yu (One)**

The rays of the setting sun gradually subsided, and the stars appeared.

Above Calm Wave lake, two figures confronted one another. One blazed like fire, with his lips curled into a flagrant smile, while the other was as gloomy as a shadow, his face so cold that it seemed like he was always wearing a mask.

"So you've already become a Daemon Commander."

Mo Yu said in a lifeless tone, devoid of any fluctuations. However, shock filled him on the inside. Just how much time had Northmoon spent going from a Daemon General to a Daemon Commander? A decade? Perhaps even less than that! Even among human cultivators, that could be regarded as extremely fast. It was completely beyond belief to daemons.

“What, are you frightened out of your mind?” Li Qingshan smiled.

“No wonder you’re so bold. Do you know what crimes you’ve already committed? You’ve broken the rule of peaceful coexistence the dragon king set down, killing fellow clansmen.”

Li Qingshan laughed aloud. “It has been much longer than a single day or two since you’ve wanted to kill me, yet you still say something so hilarious right now. There has always been a single rule among daemons, which is the law of the jungle. If you really want to draw a clear line, then sure. I killed them because they wanted to kill me. I’m killing you also because you want to kill me!”

“Kill me?” A fluctuation finally appeared in Mo Yu’s tone, as if he had remembered a problem he had never considered before.

This was not because he was foolish. Instead, it was a habit he had developed over thousands of years. As the crown prince of the Green province daemons, never had anyone threatened his life. Only he ever determined the deaths of others.

Coming to Calm Wave lake and seeing Northmoon again, all he thought about was how to kill him so that Northmoon did not escape again. He never considered the possibility that he might be killed.

With the reminder, he began to think. Back then, Northmoon was already powerful enough as a Daemon General. Now that he had become a Daemon Commander, what kind of strength would he possess? He could not help but regret not killing him off in a simple and direct manner back then.

However, Mo Yu forgot about a problem. Even if he wanted to kill him, would Li Qingshan just let him kill him?

“Yeah, you better not forget you still owe me a debt. It’s about time you paid it off!”

Li Qingshan had once clashed with Mo Yu in the past and had a century of his lifespan shaved away by one of Mo Yu’s innate abilities, the Death Bringer Curse. This was not a particularly lengthy time to Li Qingshan, but it still caused him great discontent.

After a period of silence, Mo Yu said calmly, “You will die.” He said it as if he was declaring some predetermined reality.

“I will die!” Li Qingshan actually nodded and admitted at complete ease. “Everything in the world struggles to escape the cycle of life, so who can claim eternal life? Though, you’ll definitely die ahead of me!”

When he reached there, he no longer said anything more. He swung his right hand, and all the ripples on Calm Wave lake below were flattened, extending off into the distance. It was like a huge mirror, reflecting the inky-blue sky as well as the crescent moon on the horizon.

“Watermirror Image!”

The Northmoon in the reflected scenery suddenly moved and leapt out of the surface of the water.

Even a lion would use its full strength to catch a rabbit, let alone the fact that Mo Yu was no rabbit. With his innate ability that allowed him to move through space freely, killing him definitely would not be an easy feat.

In the past, Li Qingshan rarely ever used his mirror clone in battle. He would only let his mirror clone launch a sneak attack at critical times, as the mirror clone was far too weak. It could basically withstand a single strike or two at most, and in intense battles, he had to concentrate and not split his focus.

But right now, after Li Qingshan reached Daemon Commander, the two problems had both been resolved. First, his mirror clone was no longer so feeble. It benefited from Li Qingshan's increase in strength. Furthermore, Li Qingshan's soul sense had become much more powerful, enough to control two bodies at the same time in battle.

As a result, the mirror clone could finally fight alongside him!

The phoenix wings and wings of wind unfurled at the same time, and Li Qingshan and his mirror clone set off together, attacking Mo Yu from the sky and the lake.

Mo Yu unfurled a pair of pitch-black, feathered wings, but the wings were not like the wings of birds. Instead, it seemed to be layered together with shadows, extending rapidly through the night sky. In the blink of an eye, the wings had reached over a hundred meters across as if they wanted to shroud the entire sky. An ominous feeling filled them.

Black feathers drifted about and left behind black streaks. When the wings enveloped them, the aquatic life in the lakewater all died. Mo Yu stared straight at Li Qingshan as his black pupils flowed like liquid, filling his eyes and replacing all of his eye whites. It was eerie and terrifying.

Gaze of Death!

Li Qingshan halted, and a frigid coldness immediately penetrated his skin, seeping through his organs and straight into his soul.

If someone could see Li Qingshan's "flames of life", then they would have seen the flames flicker violently and dim slightly. Mo Yu's innate abilities truly were strange. They could ignore the enemy's speed, strength, and defence and directly attack them.

Last time, Li Qingshan had suffered under this move. Even with his ever-burning flames of the phoenix, he had almost struggled to endure it. If Gu Yanying had not suddenly appeared and brought the Dragon King of Ink Sea's order of "stop where you should", he basically would have been in life-threatening danger.

This time, Mo Yu used his full strength right from the start, so how could Li Qingshan still stand a chance?

Li Qingshan gradually slowed down, stopping in front of Mo Yu in the end. His face was completely sheet-white, and his heart seemed to stop beating. Even the blazing phoenix wings behind him had dimmed. Having lost the control of his will, his mirror clone was like a puppet with broken strings, collapsing into the surface of the lake.

Mo Yu said as he resided in the centre of the darkness, "You have become stronger, but to me, it means nothing. Do you really think that you can decide when you will die? When I said you would die, I didn't mean some time in the future. I meant right now."

As he said that, his shadowy wings suddenly extended and enveloped Li Qingshan like two pitch-black hands. Mo Yu made his way across a path paved from shadows towards Li Qingshan. Facing the immobilised Li Qingshan, he only needed a gentle swing of his hand to behead him, but he failed to notice the corner of Li Qingshan's lips curl slightly. Even if he noticed it, he would have only believed it to be twitching out of despair on the verge of death.

The power of death was invading Li Qingshan's body endlessly, wanting to sever his life force. However, never had his flames of life been so powerful before. The phoenix was no longer the phoenix the spirit turtle suppressed either.

The daemon core spun about and sent streams of warmth through his body, purging the coldness of death. This was the unending power of the phoenix.

Mo Yu arrived in front of Li Qingshan and was prepared to swing his hand and behead him when his body suddenly sank. A force tugged him downwards, immediately alarming him.

A fist coiled with black cracks was already in his face. Mo Yu was taken aback as if he did not even have the opportunity to use his teleportation ability. The fist smashed viciously into his corpse-like face.

### **Chapter 697 - Fighting Mo Yu (Two)**

With Li Qingshan's great strength that could rival Daemon Kings, just who could block a punch from him with their face? The power of tremors shattered the air and produced a rumble. The fist deeply embedded itself into Mo Yu's face.

Bang!

Mo Yu hurtled backwards. Li Qingshan smiled viciously, about to go after him, but darkness suddenly enveloped him.

Although Mo Yu had been sent flying, the wings of darkness grabbed him firmly, drowning him out.

The moment the light vanished, Li Qingshan saw that Mo Yu's collapsed face did not reveal any blood, flesh, or bone. Instead, it was a ball of pitch-black like flowing ink. Originally, he thought Mo Yu's original form was a crow, but it did not seem so simple anymore.

Deep darkness filled Li Qingshan's surroundings. Li Qingshan flapped his wings, but he felt like he remained in the same spot the entire time. It was like he had fallen into a black hole, and all of his connections with the outer world had been severed. There was only an aura of death that attacked every opening on his body.

Is this his fourth innate ability? Or is it a variation of his original innate ability? As some sh\*tty crown prince, he really does have some skill in him!

Li Qingshan was surprised, but not panic-stricken. Instead, he became rather excited. If Mo Yu were like Sha Bie, someone he finished off in a few moves, he would instead be disappointed.

Since this was an ability that isolated him from the world, he had the perfect ability for destroying this boundary. He pulled back his fist slowly and immediately struck the space there in the most violent way possible.

A black egg hovered silently above the mirror-like surface of the lake. Suddenly, the surface of the black egg bulged slightly and ripples emanated outwards.

With a crack, a fracture appeared on the surface of the black egg. Soon afterwards, another part of it ruptured. Within the black egg, all of the directions were confounded together. Li Qingshan thought he punched in the same direction, but under Mo Yu's control, he constantly changed the direction he attacked. However, even with that being the case, destroying the black egg was only a matter of time.

Mo Yu's eyes narrowed slightly. Even if regular Daemon Commanders were powerful, it would all just be brute strength. Once they were trapped in the black egg, it would still be death. However, he never expected that Northmoon could actually break the black egg, and as it seemed, he had done so with great ease.

Mo Yu took out a pitch-black bamboo flute and brought it to his lips, playing it slowly, but it produced no sound at all. The sound of the flute was directly transmitted into the black egg.

Li Qingshan felt his body colden. The dry sound of the flute did not fluctuate, filled with deathliness and numbness. Simply unpleasant was no longer enough to describe it. Merely listening to it for a while was enough to bring on despair, to lose all interest in life. Even when he clutched his ears, the sound of the flute would worm into his heart with the darkness and deathly stillness, eating away at his life force.

Li Qingshan suddenly remembered that when he fought against Mo Yu last time, Mo Yu had cawed at him towards the end, which reduced his lifespan by a century. Although the flute was very different from the caw, they were extremely similar in essence.

The Death Bringer Curse!

Mo Yu's most terrifying innate ability had many variations. Through this pitch-black flute, he could push its power to the limits, no longer just reducing the enemy's lifespan, but directly destroying their will to live. In an intense battle like this, the consequences that came with losing the will to live went without saying.

For a moment, even Li Qingshan lost some of his interest in living. A feeble feeling of weariness like an old man with a foot in the grave filled his mind. However, he immediately escaped from this feeling, not through the mental suppression of the spirit turtle, but through his own willpower.

Drinking fine alcohol, sleeping with fine beauties, and fighting powerful enemies. There were plenty of interests in life. He found endless joy in contending against the heavens, contending against the earth, and contending against humanity.

As a result, he laughed aloud and swung his fist. Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! The black egg shattered loudly. He said to Mo Yu, "You've used up your three tricks, so is that it?"

Mo Yu's expression changed slightly. His innate abilities all possessed overwhelming power, so when he encountered an enemy he was unable to overwhelm, he was actually left at a loss over what to do.

At this moment, the mirror clone lunged over from behind and pierced him with a punch, but all that remained was a blur. Mo Yu flapped his wings and took off. As an avian, his speed was startling too, but a scarlet streak of light intercepted him. Li Qingshan's speed was still superior after all.

Li Qingshan used the Tiger Demon Digs Out the Heart, but he missed. The fierce wind he stirred up produced a great pit in the lakewater, kicking up a colossal wave.

Mo Yu immediately vanished, appearing behind Li Qingshan and reaching towards the vital point of his neck.

Originally, it seemed like he has to turn into a black swirl whenever he teleports, but it looks like that's only for long-range teleportations. In close combat, it's basically no different from instantaneous transmission. He received that punch of mine earlier just to trap me. It didn't seem to injure him in any way.

As he thought, a piece of the Spirit Turtle's Profound Shell flew out automatically and blocked Mo Yu's attack. At the same time, he used the wings of wind to sweep back. Mo Yu teleported once again.

In the night sky, a scarlet ball of light rampaged around, producing brilliant streaks. A black shadow constantly flashed around, appearing and vanishing suddenly without any signs.

For a moment, neither of them could do anything to the other. It was basically impossible for Mo Yu to defeat Li Qingshan in close combat. Their speed was virtually the same, while his strength was nowhere close to Li Qingshan's. Even if Li Qingshan remained on the spot and allowed him to hit him, he would struggle to rip through his ox hide and break his tiger bones.

However, it was not easy for Li Qingshan to capture Mo Yu as he constantly teleported around.

"Haha, didn't you say I would die today? You only flee, so how are you supposed to kill me?" Li Qingshan punched through a blur Mo Yu left behind and sneered loudly.

"Didn't you say I would die before you? Come kill me!" Mo Yu retorted.

What a troublesome innate ability. I need to find an opportunity to deliver a lethal blow. I refuse to believe I still can't kill you even with my ten innate abilities!

Just as Li Qingshan contemplated a countermeasure, a familiar voice rang out from the horizon.

"The two of you, please stop for a moment and hear me out!"

Gu Yanying descended from above. With such a great disturbance within the Ruyi commandery, she learnt the news of it very soon as the White Hawk commander and rushed over.

"Yanying!" Mo Yu frowned slightly. It was her appearance last time that made him lose the perfect opportunity to kill Northmoon.

Li Qingshan feigned displeasure. "Gu Yanying, what do you have to say?"

But regardless, they both stopped. Gu Yanying smiled gently. "Since neither of you can kill the other, you should stop for today. Northmoon, you can keep cultivating, and you'll definitely become stronger and stronger. Mo Yu, you're quite close to Daemon King, so why don't you seek revenge then?"

To Li Qingshan, the rate at which his strength grew would definitely be faster than anyone else's as long as he had time. However, if Mo Yu could undergo the third heavenly tribulation, his strength would grow in an overwhelming way. This suggestion seemed very reasonable.

Li Qingshan raised an eyebrow. "Who said I can't kill him?"

Mo Yu said nothing. He did not believe there was the possibility of defeat today. Standing in an undefeatable position, as long as they kept fighting, he could definitely find an opportunity to deliver a lethal blow to Northmoon. Moreover, he had not even used his trump card yet.

"No matter who gets killed, I won't stop you. After all, that's what you want. However, if you keep fighting, both of you will die! Mo Yu, you'll die at Northmoon's hand, while Northmoon, you'll be killed by the dragon king! An outcome where you perish together is not amusing! As a friend of both of you, I have a responsibility to prevent something like this from happening."

Gu Yanying stopped smiling. Her gaze was like a hawk's.

### **Chapter 698 - One Has to Die, the Legend of the Ink Sea**

Hearing that, both Li Qingshan and Mo Yu's faces hardened. Although they had known Gu Yanying for different lengths of time, they trusted her judgement quite a lot. Never had she declared their deaths with such confidence.

"Like what I said. You'll die ahead of me. Even this woman doesn't hold high hopes for you!" Li Qingshan suddenly laughed and sneered at Mo Yu again.

Mo Yu said flatly, "Today, regardless of whether I survive or die, you will definitely die. However, there's no need for the dragon king to take action personally."

They both happened to be rather unconvinced over Gu Yanying's judgement. Mo Yu obviously did not think he would die. It was the exact opposite actually. He was still holding back, and he was prepared to overwhelm and kill Northmoon as long as Gu Yanying did not obstruct him.

Li Qingshan believed that once he killed Mo Yu, all he had to do was conceal his aura properly and go back to being a Scarlet Hawk commander, and that would be enough. No matter how powerful the Dragon King of Ink Sea was, where was he supposed to find him? His only worry was that Gu Yanying might sell him out.

Both of them happened to look at Gu Yanying at the same time. The resolve in their eyes went without saying. They wanted to continue this battle until someone died.

"Foolish men!" Gu Yanying brought her hand to her forehead and sighed. She shook her head. "Alright. Since you insist, I definitely won't be interrupting this battle."

Gu Yanying chose to back away, moving away from Calm Wave lake. She spectated from the pavilion on the mountain to the western bank of Calm Wave lake, expressing her absolute neutrality. As a White Hawk commander, she should have been overjoyed to see two powerful Daemon Commanders become wrapped up in internal strife. She had already lived up to her responsibility to them by speaking up and telling them to stop.

"Big sis, they don't want to stop?"



In the pavilion, Si Bao leaned on the railing and gazed into the distance, lifting up her thick brows slightly. A battle on such a level was extremely rare in this day and age.

“They’re not going to stop until someone dies this time.”

Gu Yanying nodded. She, who had always been so graceful and unworried, was quite solemn right now. Although she had never planned on becoming lovers with anyone, more friends always guaranteed a larger network she could access. Whether it was Mo Yu or Li Qingshan, they were both very important to her.

“Big sis, you don’t have to worry. According to my observations, it’ll end in a draw at most. Without using any abilities, Mo Yu can’t even touch a hair on Northmoon, which really makes me question how he cultivated. He has actually already reached Daemon Commander, and he’s just a mess of strength.”

“As for Mo Yu, his Shadow Displacement is as nimble as it can get, and he’s never been a regular crow in the first place. Even if he endures a few blows from Northmoon, it won’t lead to any substantial damage. Fleeing is not a problem for him if the situation turns against him. He can move over fifty kilometers away in a heartbeat, so just who can catch him?”

Si Bao calmly analysed her observations from their clash earlier. She was skilled with actual combat, and her words were convincing. To her, this battle would end in neither victory nor defeat at most.

“You underestimate the two of them too much. Mo Yu still has a chance to kill Northmoon, but once he fails, Northmoon will kill him. Northmoon thinks he can escape the dragon king’s pursuit, but he won’t be capable of that.”

Gu Yanying leaned on her hands and the railing, gazing at the two figures on the horizon.

“Really? I’ll have to take another look... If it really does end up like what you said, big sis, then you won’t be able to make use of them!” Si Bao smiled.

“Yeah, all I can do is make use of you.”

Gu Yanying extended her hand to pinch Si Bao’s nose. She was only joking when she said she would make use of them. Over these years of contact, she personally believed she had not let down any of them. If it were just being used one-sidedly, why would they maintain their relationship? It was not like they were idiots.

She would help neither this time. She felt very much at ease.

.....

“This time, she won’t be able to save you,” Mo Yu said flatly.

“Yeah. Originally, she could have saved you this time, except you’re not clever enough.”

Li Qingshan smiled. If Mo Yu had agreed to a ceasefire, he would not pursue a battle relentlessly, basically doing it for Gu Yanying’s sake. He would hope to not actually push the Dragon King of Ink Sea over the edge, where he would come out in person to hunt him down. However, Mo Yu was clearly determined to kill him, so he would definitely use this opportunity to bring this to an end.

As he spoke, he smoothed all of his thoughts, like smoothing out every single ripple on the surface of the lake. Against Mo Yu who could appear anywhere, he actually closed his eyes like that.

Here!

His mind rippled slightly and developed an obscure feeling. Li Qingshan suddenly struck out, punching out diagonally towards his right back.

Mo Yu had just shifted there, prepared to launch a sneak attack and disturb Li Qingshan, but he never expected a fist to flow over the moment he appeared. He was unable to dodge in time at all.

With a great boom, the punch landed right on Mo Yu's chest. Even the air split open, becoming riddled with cracks. Mo Yu's body could already be regarded as tough among Daemon Commanders, but Li Qingshan's iron fists were unstoppable. He had still been blown away viciously, his chest rupturing and becoming riddled with vicious wounds. However, there were no organs inside, only a pitch-black liquid like ink that had been stirred up viciously into a mess.

Li Qingshan was about to go after him, but Mo Yu had already teleported several hundred meters away. He stared at him in doubt and surprise and thought, Was it luck?

Si Bao let out an interjection of surprise as she spectated the battle. She saw it very clearly. Northmoon's punch did not land out of luck; instead, it was filled with confidence. Had he grasped the patterns of Mo Yu's movements during the battle? But that did not seem too likely.

Gu Yanying explained to alleviate her doubts, "Didn't I tell you before? He has the ability to obscure the heavenly secrets and avoid being divined, which also means he can carry out some divination."

"So you're saying that he's using his premonition to grasp Mo Yu's movements? Just what kind of daemon is he?!"

Si Bao widened her eyes in disbelief. Knowing divination was nothing, but being able to use it in such an intense battle and predict the opponent's next move was impressive. Even if he were slightly weaker, he could easily gain the upper hand. Was he supposed to be some exotic beast that naturally possessed the ability of foresight?

"Even I don't know. He seems to be a hybrid of many bloodlines; each bloodline is extraordinary, which is why he possesses so many innate abilities."

"But maintaining this premonition will definitely take a great toll on his mind. He won't be able to maintain it for long periods of time."

"However, even if Mo Yu's physique is different from regular daemons, just how many punches can he withstand?" Gu Yanying calculated silently. It was probably about time for Mo Yu to take out his trump card!

Li Qingshan flapped his wings of wind and fire and turned into a streak of scarlet light, flying towards Mo Yu. Before he had even reached Mo Yu, he suddenly changed directions and lunged down. Sure enough, Mo Yu had shifted to the position he had been anticipating, allowing Li Qingshan to plant a kick on his shoulder and send him falling towards the lake. His entire shoulder collapsed, reduced to a clump of blurry, black liquid. He was unable to neutralise the power of shockwaves for quite some time.

Right when he was about to fall into the lakewater, Mo Yu shifted again, but before he could even catch his breath, the smear of scarlet light had already arrived within arm's reach.

Li Qingshan kept his eyes shut, flying around in the sky and constantly barraging Mo Yu's body. Even if his physique was extremely special and could withstand a tremendous amount of damage, it was virtually impossible for him to maintain his shape. Under the constant attacks, unable to fight back at all, the expression on his face became more and more human. It was filled with anger!

The spirit turtle still remained at the fourth layer, waiting for the phoenix to climb to the same level of cultivation. Only when he achieved a balance between water and fire would the spirit turtle continue to progress. However, after reaching Daemon Commander, Li Qingshan could use the spirit turtle's powers more freely and flexibly. After his soul sense was strengthened, he could withstand a greater toll.

With his speed, he could rush over with a single flap of his wings as long as he predicted where Mo Yu would teleport to next. As long as this continued, victory was merely an issue of time.

Mo Yu shifted away once more, and Li Qingshan tailed him like a shadow, throwing a punch at his face. Mo Yu took out a painting scroll from his sumeru ring and unfurled it with a flap. It was blank.

Gu Yanying's eyes narrowed. "He's finally taken it out."

And what's this?

Li Qingshan shivered inside. He wanted to pull back, but it was already too late, so he threw his punch at the painting scroll. Who cared what it was. He would rip it apart first and see.

The punch landed on the white paper and kicked up a series of ripples. A strange thing happened. The thin paper was not ripped in half. Li Qingshan's fist inched into the paper instead. The painting scroll suddenly rolled up and swept Li Qingshan inside completely.

The painting scroll unfurled again in Mo Yu's hand, and Northmoon's figure appeared on it, remaining in the posture where he flapped his wings and threw his punch. Each strand of drifting, scarlet hair could be made out clearly, like a life-like copy of him.

A sliver of delight appeared on Mo Yu's face. "Northmoon, I've put up with you for so long, so do you finally understand my power? I'll take you back to the Ink sea right now and hand you over to the dragon king."

Si Bao said in surprise on the pavilion, "Mo Yu actually possesses such an exotic treasure for sealing and suppression! From its quality, it should be an arcane treasure at the very least!"

Gu Yanying sighed. "But can he really suppress him? This is Mo Yu's lifebound item. If he didn't use this painting scroll, then it would be just like what you said. He could still escape. However, if the painting scroll is destroyed, he'll definitely be heavily injured!"

"His lifebound item? Why would his lifebound item be a painting scroll!?" Si Bao was stunned.

Lifebound items normally referred to a certain part of a daemon that had been refined and cultivated, like Sha Bie's shell. It was closely connected to the life of the owner, and it possessed extremely great power. However, what kind of daemon had a painting as a lifebound item?

“Don’t tell me...”

Si Bao thought of the only possibility. The daemons in this world came in all different shapes and sizes. Who knew how many types there were exactly. Not all daemons were birds or beasts. Sometimes, when a rock or a well gained intelligence, they could also turn into daemons.

“Yeah, his original form is actually a painting, a crow inside a painting.” Gu Yanying nodded. Having reached this point, she no longer needed to keep this secret for him.

“That means... the Dragon King of Ink Sea... No wonder...”

Si Bao suddenly understood many secrets, such as why Mo Yu had “mo” or “ink” as a surname and why the dragon king’s son would be a crow.

Gu Yanying said slowly, “The Ink sea was not named after the dragon king. Legend has it that the Ink sea was once extremely clear, but an immortal dwelled by the seaside and liked to paint and write calligraphy, frequently washing his brushes in the sea. As time went on, the seawater blackened and became the colour of ink.”

Si Bao had heard of this legend too, except there had always been many of these folklores. Most of them were exaggerated and strange, not worth her attention. Only when she heard it right now did she become surprised. “Don’t tell me the legend is true!”

“Who knows? Look, the time to determine victory has arrived.”

On the snow-white paper, Li Qingshan, who had been sealed in the painting, suddenly swiveled his eyes, meeting Mo Yu’s.

### **Chapter 699 - Victory Already Determined Both Inside the Painting and Out**

The moment he was sucked into the painting, Li Qingshan saw a white world. He was unable to separate the sky from the ground, and it seemed boundless, yet also as cramped as a prison. He knew he had been trapped in the painting.

He frowned subconsciously, having discovered that he was immobilised. He could not even make the simplest of actions. But to his joy, he could still mobilise daemon qi and use innate abilities. He immediately unleashed the powers of the Tremors of the Ox Demon in an attempt to rip up the painting from inside out.

Black ink marks emanated away from him on the paper. They were shaped like cracks, but they rapidly dispersed.

In the world within the painting, his ability with the great destructive power had been reduced to a non-threatening animation. The way which the world operated, even the way he existed, had been changed from its very core, introducing new laws.

It went without saying that even if he used the flames of the phoenix, he would not be able to burn the painting. At most, he would produce a burning bundle of flame-shaped ink.

Is this the so-called second dimension? This doesn't feel particularly great! Trapped in a difficult situation, Li Qingshan did not panic. Instead, he found a strange sense of novelty about it all, amazed by this wondrous move.

Mo Yu gazed at Northmoon in the painting with utter delight. Nothing was more satisfying than watching his enemy being reduced to a tiny painting. He looked into the west at Gu Yanying who stood in the pavilion.

Yanying, do you see this? I've won this battle! You may be the cleverest woman I've ever seen, but even you can't anticipate everything.

Northmoon was far too fast. Mo Yu had no confidence in being able to suck him into the painting. He had bided his time for so long before grasping the opportunity and establishing his victory in a single stroke.

Li Qingshan observed the white world quietly and gradually noticed that it was not pure-white, but slightly yellowed, like an ancient painting that had stood the test of time.

Bah, doesn't that go without saying? This has always been a painting!

He cursed inside. Suddenly, he realised that a few white figures existed in the white world. Compared to the yellowing environment in the surroundings, they were clearly much whiter. He could vaguely make them out as a bird perching on bamboo.

Don't tell me these used to be in the painting? Bird, bamboo... Li Qingshan suddenly recalled the black bamboo flute that Mo Yu played. Don't tell me this bird is a crow? The one trapped in the painting before was Mo Yu. No, he wasn't trapped. He has always been a painting! I see! I see!

It's no wonder that he can withstand my attacks time and time again. Logically speaking, with my current strength and the lethal power of the Tremors of the Ox Demon, any Daemon Commander who receives my attacks directly will be crushed to a pulp, yet he's able to remain perfectly fine. Instead of saying his original form is a crow, I'd be better off saying he's a cluster of ink. He's never had flesh, blood, bones, a brain, or a heart in the first place, so he has no so-called vital points. Even if his body is shaken to pieces, he can reassemble!

Li Qingshan thought of this important point, but it did not seem to be of much help to his current situation. Now was not the time for him to think about the contents of the painting. Instead, he was supposed to find a way to break out. He had to make himself move first.

If it were the second dimension, then so be it. He had to be a moving picture at the very least!

However, when he tried to unleash his limitless strength to move his body, he felt an omnipresent force pinning him down on the spot. He could not even twitch his muscles.

The only thing worth rejoicing over was Mo Yu saying he would take him back to the Ink sea and hand him over to the dragon king. As it seemed, the painting could only suppress, and it was impossible to attack the suppressed target from outside the painting.

That went without saying, or the painting scroll would be a little too overwhelmingly powerful. All Mo Yu would have to do was teleport behind the enemy and suck them in. If he could do that, couldn't he even butcher Daemon Kings as he pleased?

Little did he know that Mo Yu was currently hesitating as well. As his lifebound item, he could obviously enter the painting and launch attacks, but the strength that Northmoon demonstrated earlier left him shaken.

Li Qingshan would never wait obediently for others to handle him. He silently mobilised the power of the spirit turtle and began analysing the painting scroll.

In the painting, he produced ripples that vanished at the edge of the paper. He gradually came to a sliver of understanding. The restraint did not come from the scroll, but himself. He had yet to "adjust" to life as a person in a painting. This adjustment was not about becoming accustomed to it. Instead, it was about an understanding of laws.

Hmm? What's this?

"Give up. All of your struggles are in vain. Today is the day you die."

Mo Yu's eyes were pitch-black, and his voice was hoarse and unpleasant, filled with a deathly aura. He used the Gaze of Death and the Death Bringer Curse at the same time, wanting to weaken Northmoon from outside the painting first. If he could snuff out his will to live, that would be for the best.

Li Qingshan's blank pupils swiveled over suddenly, meeting Mo Yu's. He could see the world outside the painting. He blinked his eyes at first before his entire face began to move. He sneered and moved his lips.

"Mo Yu, you better save your efforts. I was wondering what kind of daemon you were. Turns out you're just a cluster of ink. This must be your final move already! Heh, what's so difficult about escaping from a painting?"

Mo Yu was surprised. He never imagined Northmoon to adjust so quickly, so he immediately gave up on the thought of entering the painting. Although the world inside the painting was his territory and could place numerous suppressions on Northmoon, he really did not want to clash with him again. He would be better off bringing him back to the Ink sea!

"You can stop with the boasting. Do you think you can escape from the painting just by adjusting to the laws in the painting?"

"There are plenty of ways to break out. Let's try this move first!"

An incomplete sword suddenly appeared in Li Qingshan's hand. The sword was pitch-black like ink. At the same time, his body began to move. He swung the sword gently at Mo Yu, and a sharp strand of sword qi emerged from the paper.

"This is!?"

Even when he took on Li Qingshan's punches, Mo Yu was unafraid, but his expression changed when he saw the sword qi. He tilted his head in a hurry to dodge, but as it was last minute, a slash appeared on his pale-white face. Black blood flowed out, and the wound did not close up.

The incomplete, black sword was the strand of sword qi that Li Qingshan had nurtured in his body from refining the Three Absolutes Calligraphy. After condensing the Ocean pearl, the sword qi had become more and more consolidated. Originally, it was merely a strand of sword qi, but Li Qingshan was able to clutch it in his hand and wield it like a real sword in the painting.

When he analysed the painting scroll, Li Qingshan accidentally discovered a familiar seal, the seal the creator of this painting left behind. This painting actually shared the same origins as the Three Absolutes Calligraphy, so he naturally thought of the incomplete sword qi in his body.

With the strike being effective, Li Qingshan laughed aloud. The incomplete sword in his hand turned into inky strokes, like a high-quality animation of ink and watercolours. Sword qi shot out.

Whenever a strand of sword qi left the paper and turned into a proper strand of sword qi, Li Qingshan understood a little more. Although his sealing into the second dimension from the third dimension had been rather sudden, escaping from the second dimension was not exactly impossible.

Right now, he understood three things at the very least. First, Mo Yu should have been a creation of the Five Absolutes Immortal, which was why the incomplete sword in his hand could overwhelm him. However, if that were the case, was the Dragon King of Ink Sea supposed to be something from a painting too?

Secondly, as long as he destroyed this painting scroll, he would be able to heavily injure Mo Yu. If he could refine the painting scroll, there was even an opportunity to control him. The painting alone was an arcane artifact, and he could use it to threaten the Dragon King of Ink Sea. However, this was not particularly likely.

Thirdly, the Five Absolutes Immortal was absolutely awesome. It was no wonder that even brother ox would speak words of praises when he saw an incomplete fragment of the Three Absolutes Calligraphy that was merely a spiritual artifact. Of course, he only spoke with a tone along the lines of "this junior's got something in him".

The sword qi burst out of the painting strand by strand. Mo Yu seemed to be in an extremely tight corner. As long as the sword intent locked onto him, the sword qi would tail him relentlessly. He could only block it and not dodge it. If he had been some other Daemon Commander, then forcefully blocking a few strands of sword qi would have been nothing, except the sword qi overwhelmed him. Every strand that landed on him would definitely result in a wound.

As a result, he became stuck between a rock and a hard place. Outside the painting, he was unable to directly attack Northmoon; all of his attacks would be converted into ink when they landed on the scroll. This was the law that the creator had set down to protect his painting. After all, the painting never inherently possessed the ability to suppress enemies. That was the case unless the power of the attack surpassed the law, but that would directly destroy the painting scroll. Mo Yu would never be able to accept that.

If he rolled up the scroll, it would probably be ripped apart before long, and Northmoon would escape. After all, Mo Yu knew how the Three Absolutes Calligraphy had been ripped into so many pieces back then.

He could only wait for the incomplete sword in Northmoon's hand to run out of power before immediately rolling up the painting, returning to the Ink sea, and handing him over to the dragon king.

As he slashed away, the incomplete sword in Li Qingshan's hand became shorter and shorter. In the end, only the hilt remained. After all, it had only been condensed from sword qi. It was not inexhaustible.

Before Mo Yu could even catch his breath, Li Qingshan fished out the real Three Absolutes Calligraphy, and the incomplete sword in his hand immediately recovered, becoming even sharper and more consolidated. As long as his spiritual qi did not run out, he could continue swinging away forever until the scroll had been ripped apart.

"Oh no!"

Now, Mo Yu understood who had killed his subordinates and stole the Three Absolutes Calligraphy during the Exhibition Matches of the Nine Prefectures. He recalled Gu Yanying's warning and considered letting out Northmoon and escaping.

However, when he recalled Northmoon's various sneers and remarks, he made up his mind and took out a copy of the Three Absolutes Calligraphy too before leaping into the painting.

Under no one's control, the painting fluttered down towards the lake. Gu Yanying's gaze was as sharp as a hawk's. She watched on from the pavilion, staring at the scene in the painting. They each wielded an ink sword and engaged in an intense battle. Clumps of ink dripped and danced about as they maneuvered through the yellowed paper. Their figures would overlap at times and separate at others.

Mo Yu was obviously better adjusted to the laws in the painting than Li Qingshan, and he could use the scroll to suppress Li Qingshan. This was the reason why he was bold enough to leap into the painting. He gained the upper hand with ease.

Si Bao constantly moved her head around, wanting to make out the front of the painting. "Big sis, who will win?"

Gu Yanying sighed. "Victory has already been determined!"

As the painting fluttered through the night wind and finally succumbed to the pull of gravity, about to fall into the water, Mo Yu suddenly leapt out of the painting. He was riddled in wounds, and his brows were firmly furrowed. His ink sword had vanished, and he clutched his chest with one hand and grabbed the painting scroll with the other, shaking it violently. Li Qingshan was shaken out of the painting, hanging onto a Three Absolutes Calligraphy with his mouth and holding another Three Absolutes Calligraphy in his left hand.

Mo Yu immediately unfurled his black wings in an attempt to flee. His hand tightened. He looked back, only to find Li Qingshan grabbing onto the other end of the painting.

Mo Yu roared, "Let go!"

Li Qingshan smiled, "Don't even think about it!"

**Chapter 700 - A Battle of Life and Death, the Dragon King's Wrath**



After a series of clashes, he had finally gained the upper hand. Li Qingshan was tempted to laugh aloud. Although Mo Yu had dominated the first part of the battle in the painting, his daemon qi was not endless. He had used numerous innate abilities at full strength before Li Qingshan heavily injured him a few times. It had actually taken a very big toll on him.

As for Li Qingshan, he exhibited startling endurance. As time went on, Mo Yu gradually weakened instead. Li Qingshan landed three slashes on him, defeating him. Mo Yu wanted to escape now, except how could he get away so easily?

Li Qingshan gripped the scroll firmly. Even if the Dragon King of Ink Sea was here, he could forget about prying it from his hands in a single piece. The painting did indeed possess wondrous powers, but it paled in comparison to some arcane artifacts forged from metal in terms of toughness. It definitely could not withstand the full-powered tugging of two Daemon Commanders.

“You- Northmoon- what are you trying to do?”

In that moment, fury filled Mo Yu’s face, but he immediately recovered his expressionless face of a corpse. Northmoon had the upper hand right now, but he did not strike immediately, so he was clearly planning something else.

“Why don’t you let go first, and we can talk slowly?”

Li Qingshan had noticed a long time ago that the painting was extremely important to Mo Yu. Otherwise, he would have directly teleported away after leaving the painting. It would take Li Qingshan quite some time before he could break free, and by then, Mo Yu would have been long gone already. He would not be able to chase him down. However, Mo Yu went as far as to release him just to take the scroll away with him.

The reason why he was in no hurry to strike was obviously to maximise his benefits and minimise the conflict. If Mo Yu really came from the painting, then it was highly likely that as long as he refined the painting, he would be able to control him. If he possessed a hostage like him, then even the Dragon King of Ink Sea would have some second thoughts about taking action against him.

Mo Yu’s behaviour made him even more certain about his theory.

“What are your conditions? You can ask away, but don’t even dream about this painting!” Mo Yu said firmly.

The painting was the very core of his existence. Although he was self-conscious and had turned into a daemon that could cultivate, he was still unable to break free from this relationship. From a certain perspective, he was a so-called artifact spirit. If Northmoon refined him, the only fate awaiting him was being reduced to a servant.

“You don’t seem to understand just who should be talking right now.”

Li Qingshan suddenly pulled back, and the scroll became taut. He continued to smile, but his scarlet eyes flashed with cold light. He glanced at Mo Yu’s hand that gripped the scroll. His hand that was originally pale had now become black, virtually merging with the scroll. If it were not for that, Li Qingshan would be considering a sneak attack right now.

“If you destroy the painting, then you’ll become a bitter enemy of the Ink sea, well beyond reconciliation. The Green province, no, the nine provinces, will no longer have a single place that can shelter you.”

“Are you saying that if I let you go today, we can still resolve our grievances peacefully and become a pair of good friends?”

Li Qingshan sneered. A threat like that only made Mo Yu’s bravado even more evident. If he did not subdue or kill Mo Yu today, was he supposed to wait until Mo Yu underwent the third heavenly tribulation and became a Daemon King before seeking revenge again?

Mo Yu gazed at the sky. He let out a long sigh. “Forget about it!”

Li Qingshan smiled. He’s finally giving in! However, he saw Mo Yu’s expression harden. With a great tug, there was a rip, and the scroll split into two pieces down the middle. Mo Yu would actually rather destroy it than hand it over to Li Qingshan.

Light poured out from the rip, forming a white cluster of fluid. It fluctuated in shape as it tried to envelop Li Qingshan. This was the wondrous world that existed in the painting. Before it completely dispersed, Mo Yu had turned it into a final counterattack. If he were drawn in, even Li Qingshan would definitely suffer heavy injuries.

However, Li Qingshan was constantly on guard, so how could he fall for that? He pulled back immediately, and the white fluid dispersed very quickly, merging with the space there. When he looked at Mo Yu, he had already dove into a black swirl with half of the scroll and vanished, completely severing the possibility of Li Qingshan repairing the painting.

“He sure does have some resolve, but with everything that has happened already, does he really think he can still leave?”

Li Qingshan praised him before becoming stern. He flapped his wings and rushed into the air. As the world spun around him, pieces of the Spirit Turtle’s Profound Shell scattered.

Li Qingshan shut his eyes before opening them again. “The south west! The Profound Light Illuminates All!”

With a wave of his hand, all of the shell pieces stacked together, extending off in the south west direction. Sure enough, he discovered Mo Yu several hundred kilometers away. He never thought he would flee in the opposite direction of the Ink sea. He sure had his wits about him.

Li Qingshan turned into a streak of scarlet light and whistled off in the south west direction like a meteor.

The moment Mo Yu completed his teleportation, black blood spurted out of his mouth violently. Ripping apart the painting had already caused him heavy wounds he could not heal right now. Suddenly, he shivered inside and gazed back. There seemed to be a scarlet eye several hundred kilometers away, staring straight at him. He forcefully controlled his injuries and immediately carried out a second teleportation, changing directions once again.

“Has he gone to the north now? The Profound Light Illuminates All!”

Mo Yu teleported three times in a row, constantly changing direction, but the feeling of being spied on followed him like a shadow. It was like a sword hanging over his head, ready to fall at any time.

And, the distance he teleported became smaller with each time. When he carried out a final teleportation after much difficulty, he only shifted several dozen kilometers away, but he was still unable to escape from the surveillance. He knew this distance to Northmoon was merely the matter of a sprint.

Mo Yu was already completely worn out, and his wounds violently acted up. The wounds left by the Three Absolutes Calligraphy had closed up after great difficulty, but they had ruptured again now, oozing with black blood.

A while later, a scarlet streak of light leapt out from the horizon, gliding over swiftly. Mo Yu knew he had no chance at escaping, so he simply stood there, calmly watching the scarlet light draw closer. "Northmoon, you've gone too far!"

Li Qingshan exhaled. His breath expanded along the way, turning into a whistling tornado that swept towards Mo Yu.

If I tear you to shreds, can you still recover from that?

.....

In the pavilion, Si Bao saw them vanish and was about to chase after Northmoon's scarlet light when a hand pressed down on her shoulder. Si Bao looked back in confusion. "Big sis!"

"It's time for us to go back."

"Aren't we going to see the outcome?"

"Life and death has already been determined!"

Gu Yanying shook her head sternly. She hoped very much that Mo Yu could agree to Li Qingshan's conditions. That way, there would still be leeway. She could ask the Dragon King of Ink Sea to step forward, pay a price, engage in negotiations, and so on...

However, she understood that Mo Yu would not accept it. She could try and persuade Li Qingshan to spare Mo Yu, but he would not agree to it either.

She had heard plenty of ostentatious things like "it's for your sake" before, but she understood how many people detested such things, posing around, predicting people's futures, and saying so-and-so would happen if they did not listen to them! Even if that really was the case, how many people could accept something like that wholeheartedly?

She knew it was useless, but she still ended up saying it, and it still ended up being useless. There was nothing worse than watching something horrible happen while being powerless to stop it. From today onwards, the cultivation community would lose another two of her acquaintances!

Mo Yu let out a miserable cry and turned into a black crow, circling around the beam of wind and flying towards Li Qingshan. He dripped with ink.

Faced with the final struggle, Li Qingshan's face hardened. He silently raised his fist, prepared to send his opponent off on his final journey. Suddenly, he twisted around and punched backwards.

The crow vanished and turned into Mo Yu again, who appeared right behind him.

Against this lethal punch, Mo Yu spread his arms, completely fearless. He did not even show a hint of surprise. His lips curled slightly, and they opened and closed soundlessly.

You will die!

Li Qingshan's heart sank. The moment the punch came in contact with Mo Yu's body, he turned into a clump of pitch-black ink and exploded loudly.

He had blown up his daemon core to take him down with him!

The might was ten times greater than any Golden Core cultivator blowing up their golden core Li Qingshan had ever seen. The ink seemed to dye the sky black. The black ball filled with the power of death swelled to the limit, like a black sun had appeared in the sky.

Within a range of several dozen kilometers, all of the vegetation withered away and all humans and animals perished.

Li Qingshan had already been expecting this, so he had taken precautions. The moment Mo Yu blew up his daemon core, pieces of the Spirit Turtle's Profound Shell flew out and formed a firm sphere. After reaching Daemon Commander, the defences of the most basic ability of the spirit turtle, the Spirit Turtle's Profound Shell, had become even greater.

The black sun swallowed it silently. Immediately, cracks appeared on the Spirit Turtle's Profound Shell, already on the brink of collapse. It only lasted for a moment before shattering loudly. The darkness swallowed Li Qingshan. The power of death faced off against his flames of life one last time, invading and attacking it.

This was not because the Spirit Turtle's Profound Shell was not powerful enough. Instead, having fought until now, Li Qingshan had constantly used his innate abilities and constantly predicted Mo Yu's movements. Both his mind and daemon qi had taken an extremely great toll.

The black sun slowly shrunk, disappearing in the end.

Li Qingshan looked at the crescent moon and the sky full of stars. He exhaled deeply and smiled. "Mo Yu, I just didn't die in the end!"

The moment that the Spirit Turtle's Profound Shell lasted for had blocked most of the damage, and fortunately, this explosive power had no guidance, only expanding off in all directions disorderly. Otherwise, he really would be in danger.

After going through great difficulties, he had killed his enemy. That was as satisfying as it could get!

But now was the time to run!

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Over five thousand kilometers away, before the life lamp had been extinguished, a pair of dragon eyes opened again. The Ink sea began to surge.

In the Ink sea, the dragon king roared.

In South Hub city, the lord of the Green province, the Fierce King of Chu, stood on the top of the city walls, gazing far into the depths of the Ink sea. His soul sense reached hundreds of kilometers away. All he saw was an ink dragon rise up into the air, coiling about and soaring through the sky like a colossal pillar that upheld the sky, crossing the distance between the sky and the sea. The Ink sea roared, wanting to follow along.

“Fellow Ink Dragon, what’s happened?” the Fierce King of Chu asked loudly.

The Dragon King of Ink Sea did not answer him. He flew over South Hub city, travelling directly for a place over five thousand kilometers away in the south west direction.

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All of Li Qingshan’s hairs stood on end. He experienced terror he had never experienced before. There were clearly no enemies within the range of his senses, but the feeling of danger was like a sword swinging towards his neck. Only a millimeter remained before his head hit the ground.

He composed himself and took precautions with the spirit turtle, just in case divination locked onto his position. In the end, he erased his aura.

However, something went wrong when he reached this step. During the explosion earlier, he had been covered in ink. Upon closer inspection, the ink did not simply stick to his skin; instead, it even reached as deep as his bones. Even his daemon core had been enveloped in an aura of death.

It was unable to harm him, but he was unable to clean it all away quickly either. If he had guessed correctly, the Dragon King of Ink Sea and Mo Yu shared the same origins, so the splotches of ink were as prominent as a lantern in the dark. Even if he hid his aura, it would be completely useless.

“Is this Mo Yu’s final Death Bringer Curse? Hehe, those in the past were all a joke. Now this is a fucking Death Bringer Curse. I gotta say, nicely done!”

Li Qingshan praised as he flapped his wings, throwing himself into the atmospheric winds.