

1701 Crimsonfrons White Tiger

The toughest parts of a beast were usually their fangs and claws. Everything aside from those two would be relatively inexpensive.

However, knowing the young man's strength, the crowd did not dare utter a word of complaint. They reluctantly nodded before getting to dismantling the carcass as well.

It did not take them long to dissect the massive wolf carcass.

The various body parts of the Goldface Skywolf were invaluable materials, but given Zhang Xuan's current wealth, they were not enough to catch his eye. Besides, those cultivators had gone through a lot in order to kill the beast. As a master teacher, it would be inappropriate for him to steal their loot.

From how they divided the spoils of victory, Zhang Xuan noticed a few subtle details.

He had thought that their group had known one another prior to entering the folded space, but that was not the case.

It was clear that they were guarded against one another, and in the distribution of the spoils of victory, they attempted to claim as much for themselves as possible. Despite having decided to group up together, it seemed like their hearts were not aligned with one another.

The strongest young man, who seemed to serve as the de facto leader of the group, suddenly approached Zhang Xuan.

“Friend, it seems like you are wandering around the area alone. Why don't you join our group? The area around the Temple of Confucius is vast, and there are many experts and beasts roaming around. Not only is it dangerous for you to venture about the area alone, it will be difficult for you to acquire anything good given your limited fighting prowess!”

“We can watch each other’s back in a group!”

“Putting everything aside, the Goldface Skywolf that we have just defeated has already gone extinct on the Master Teacher Continent, making it an extremely rare and invaluable existence! Without sufficient strength, it would be difficult to acquire even a clump of its hair, let alone its hide and claws!”

The others quickly nodded in agreement.

Venturing around in a group would mean having to split any loot with the group, but the Temple of Confucius was not short of treasures!

Besides, it would be difficult for an individual to fend off the dangers lurking in the area alone and acquire anything substantial. Furthermore, if a stronger expert robbed him, he would be completely helpless against the other party!

Back on the Master Teacher Continent, out of deference for the Master Teacher Pavilion, cultivators would dare not go overboard. However, they were currently in a folded space filled with threats at every corner. Even the arm of the Master Teacher Pavilion was not strong enough to enforce its rules within the folded space!

One could kill a couple of people and dispose of their corpses, and no one would be any the wiser!

This folded space was, in the truest sense, a land of lawlessness. The only thing that could bind one’s actions were one’s principles and morals.

Master teachers might still feel compelled to uphold their values, but what about the other unaffiliated cultivators? What about the Otherworldly Demons?

After a moment of contemplation, Zhang Xuan eventually nodded. “Alright!”

Since he had no direction at the moment, it would not hurt for him to follow this group. At the same time, it would serve to conceal his identity so that he would not draw anyone’s suspicion.

Upon hearing Zhang Xuan's agreement, the young man stood up and introduced himself with an air of dignity. "I am Mu Xiao, an offspring of the Mu Clan!"

A hint of astonishment flashed across Zhang Xuan's eyes.

It turned out that the young man was an expert of the Mu Clan!

Considering his strength, it was likely that the young man was a trump card that the Mu Clan had kept hidden all this time.

Zhang Xuan clasped his fist and introduced himself. "I am Xuan Zhang, an unaffiliated cultivator!"

"So, it's Brother Xuan! It's a pleasure to meet you!" Mu Xiao replied out of courtesy.

The remaining members of the group also introduced themselves as well.

Of the group of seven, six of them were disciples of major powers. Only one of them was an unaffiliated cultivator.

"Let's continue ahead!"

After sealing their alliance, Mu Xiao beckoned for the crowd to gather, and they began advancing once more.

Zhang Xuan noted that they were walking in the same direction that he had been intending to head in earlier, and he quietly followed behind them.

This walk lasted four whole hours.

Within this period of time, they encountered another three beasts wielding strength on par with the Goldface Skywolf. Knowing that his exceptional strength would bring doubts to his identity, Zhang Xuan adjusted his fighting prowess to match that of an ordinary Aureate Body realm cultivator.

The truth was that the crowd had invited Zhang Xuan into their group anticipating that he would possess exceptional means and treasures, considering how he was able to walk around the folded space alone safely. However, when they saw that his fighting prowess was so-so, they swiftly lost their

interest in him. Unknowingly, their attitude toward him turned cold as well.

“You hardly did anything at all, so I’m afraid that we can’t share anything with you this time. You’ll have to try harder to pull your weight next time!” Mu Xiao told Zhang Xuan as they dissected the third beast they encountered.

“Tsk! I thought that he would possess some formidable means! You really can’t expect anything of an unaffiliated cultivator!”

“He hardly contributed anything in killing this beast! He has no right to take anything at all!”

...

Such discussions could be heard amid the group.

Their words were particularly jarring, but Zhang Xuan could not be bothered to waste his words on something as trivial as this. Instead, his eyes were fixated in the direction that the beast had appeared from previously, and his eyes slowly lit up in agitation.

He could not help but notice that the three beasts that they had encountered in the midst of their journey had all been traveling in the opposite direction to them. It seemed too much of a coincidence for them to all be heading in the opposite direction. Could it be that they were walking in the right direction and the Temple of Confucius lay right ahead of them?

With such a thought in mind, Zhang Xuan immediately wanted to break free of the group and advance forward individually. However, before he could do so, a rustling sound suddenly echoed from the forest around them. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click for visiting.

Following which, a Crimsonfrons White Tiger emerged from the woods ahead of them.

This beast was at Intuitive Impulse realm consummation. As soon as it appeared, it emanated a powerful pressure that caused one’s heart to jolt in fright.

“Everyone, raise your arms!” Mu Xiao exclaimed anxiously upon catching sight of the beast.

Huala!

There was no novice in the group of seven. Upon hearing the command, they immediately whipped out their weapons once more and got into their positions, ready to face any enemy that would pounce on them.

Roar!

Seeing that someone dared block its path, the Crimsonfrons White Tiger flew into a rage. With a ferocious roar, it dashed right into the group.

With a single move, the large beast had already demonstrated its superior strength against the group. It tore its claws down, choking a suffocating moan from the surrounding air. Ripples of shockwave burst right for Mu Xiao as though sharp sword qi.

“Greenwood Barrier!”

Mu Xiao narrowed his eyes in astonishment. He quickly flicked his wrist and placed a dome-shaped wooden shield before him.

It was an artifact from the Mu Clan.

Kacha!

As powerful as the Greenwood Barrier was, the Crimsonfrons White Tiger was simply too powerful. With another flick of his claws, cracks had already started forming on the surface of the Greenwood Barrier.

Pu!

Unable to take it any longer, Mu Xiao spurted a mouthful of fresh blood and was sent flying.

Knowing that they would be next victims if they did not make a move, someone amid the group bellowed, “Let’s make a move together!”

Upon hearing the order, the remaining members of the group dashed forward simultaneously.

Brandishing their weapons furiously, they sent all sorts of powerful attacks toward the Crimsonfrons White Tiger. However, they were not even able to pierce the other party's skin.

Roar!

With a ferocious roar, the Crimsonfrons White Tiger spun its body abruptly, sending the cultivators around it flying. Their pale faces and the spurts of blood showed that most of the cultivators had already suffered grievous injuries despite the short encounter with the massive beast.

To think that they would be no match for the Crimsonfrons White Tiger even after putting their strength together!

As expected of an Intuitive Impulse realm consummation beast, the strength that it wielded was indeed fearsome!

“Are we going to die here?”

Seeing how they were unable to breach the massive beast's defenses even after exerting their full strength, despair and horror surfaced on the faces of the cultivators. The realization that they could really lose their lives right there suddenly struck them, and this feeling left them feeling deeply terrified.

Had they known earlier, they would never have ventured so deeply into the area.

Just when they thought that death would fall upon them, the weakest fellow of their group suddenly strutted right up to the Crimsonfrons White Tiger.

“I can't fly here, and traveling on foot takes simply too long... It must be fate that has brought us here together. Since our fates have intertwined with one another, I'll bestow you a chance. Become my tamed beast!” the young man named Xuan Zhang said calmly.

“Roar?”

The Crimsonfrons White Tiger was stunned.

Is there something wrong with this fellow's head?

You are going to give me a chance to become your tamed beast, are you? Did your head get jammed in between doors or something?

The other cultivators were also dumbstruck by what they had just heard.

All this while, the young man had not been able to contribute much even in their battles against Aureate Body realm beasts. Yet, at that moment, he actually wanted to take an Intuitive Impulse realm consummation beast as his tamed beast.

Even beast tamers would have to take several years to cultivate their feelings with a beast before they could convince it to seal a contact with them. No one knew how long the Temple of Confucius would remain open for, but it was certain that it would not last several years.

Putting aside the limitations of the young man's strength, it was already an impossible feat on the sole basis of time!

It was precisely for this reason that they had chosen to slay every single beast that came their way. They did not even bother to consider the possibility to taming one of the beasts and taking it back to the Master Teacher Continent.

Given that that fellow was only at the Aureate Body realm, was he not afraid of the Crimsonfrons White Tiger killing him with a single slap?

Before the doubtful gazes of the crowd, the Crimsonfrons White Tiger released a ferocious howl and slashed its claws down upon Zhang Xuan's head.

1702 White Tigers Are Amazing

Si la!

It sounded as if the fabric of space was being torn apart. The movements of the Crimsonfrons White Tiger were so powerful and swift that they produced sonic booms in the air.

The blatant contempt that Zhang Xuan had shown it had truly enraged it.

This maneuver was clearly much stronger than the moves that it had used to subdue Mu Xiao and the others. Even a Saint pinnacle artifact would be destroyed under its crushing force.

On the receiving end, it seemed as if the young man facing the Crimsonfrons White Tiger had been scared silly. He remained completely stationary, not attempting to dodge the attack at all!

I was still wondering what kind of expert you are, but who would have thought that you are just another coward!

The Crimsonfrons White Tiger sneered coldly as it smacked its claws down upon the young man's head.

Weng!

Contrary to everyone's expectations, a crimson explosion of gray matter did not happen. Instead, a metallic reverberation echoed in the air instead. The Crimsonfrons White Tiger narrowed its eyes as it hurriedly retracted its trembling claws.

It had used its full might to crush the young man's head, but not only was the young man completely fine, its claws had been jolted numb instead!

In an instant, the Crimsonfrons White Tiger realized that even though the young man appeared to only be at the Aureate Body realm on the surface, his strength had already far surpassed it.

“Roar!”

With a low growl, the Crimsonfrons White Tiger turned tail and fled.

What the heck is this...

It had just planned to grab a small snack to fill its empty belly, but who could have known that it would end up encountering such a tough nut!

There must have been a problem with the posture that it had woken up in!

This would not do. It should return to bed and sleep for a while, and perhaps, it would find that it was just a nasty nightmare...

The beasts inside the folded space had not experienced too many battles, and their intelligence was considerably lower than the beasts on the Master Teacher Continent. Nevertheless, that did not mean that they were so foolish as to court death.

If it was unable to crush the young man's head after exerting its full strength, it was apparent that the young man was not an opponent that it could defeat. As the saying goes, 'Of the Thirty-Six Stratagems, fleeing is the way to go'!

“Did I permit you to leave?”

How could Zhang Xuan allow the Crimsonfrons White Tiger to leave as it pleased after smacking his head? Without any hesitation, he sent a kick over.

Wuwuwu!

The Crimsonfrons White Tiger skidded over ten meters on the floor before collapsing weakly to the ground. Its head was spinning so much that even maintaining its balance was an arduous task!

“You've had your fun. It's time to submit to me!” Zhang Xuan said as he sent another kick at the Crimsonfrons White Tiger's face.

A minute later...

A droplet of blood essence drifted into Zhang Xuan's glabella. The Crimsonfrons White Tiger had finally submitted! Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click for visiting.

"That's more like it!" Zhang Xuan nodded contentedly. He hopped onto the back of the tiger before turning his gaze to the bulging-eyed crowd behind him. "I still have some matters to attend to, so I'll be leaving now."

Leaving those words behind, he nudged the tiger's belly with his leg. The latter immediately began galloping ahead, disappearing into the mountain forest in the blink of an eye. It was as if it had never appeared before.

"He... managed to tame a Crimsonfrons White Tiger alone?"

"Did he even take three minutes for that? My gosh! What in the world did I just see?"

...

Mu Xiao and the others gulped down several mouthfuls of saliva each.

They had thought that the other party was just a Bronze, but who could have known that he was a hidden Challenger!

They found themselves unable to keep up with the abrupt turn of events.

"If I had known earlier, I would have tried harder to get on good terms with him. With the backing of such a powerful expert, I would have been able to make bountiful gains here!"

"We were blinded by the paltry gains before us. Of the three beasts that we have slain earlier, we distributed none of it to him at all. Considering how we've offended him, we should already be thankful that he was willing to make a move to save our lives..."

"Hai! We have truly missed an ideal opportunity..."

...

The crowd dearly regretted their earlier actions.

It was true that there were many treasures waiting to be uncovered in the Temple of Confucius, but equally great were the dangers as well.

If they had an expert to cover them, they would definitely have been able to increase their gains. Unfortunately, their greed had foiled an opportunity delivered right to their doorstep, and it was unlikely that such a chance would present itself to them once more.

...

Oblivious to the emotions of the group that he had left behind, Zhang Xuan was advancing swiftly on the back of the Crimsonfrons White Tiger.

“You are a beast residing in this folded space. Do you know where the Temple of Confucius is located?” Zhang Xuan asked.

The many means that he had at his disposal had failed in helping him locate the whereabouts of the Temple of Confucius. Considering how the Crimsonfrons White Tiger had grown up there, he should be familiar with the surroundings. It would be best to have a local guide take him around instead of wandering aimlessly around the area.

“Master... what is the Temple of Confucius?” the Crimsonfrons White Tiger asked uncertainly.

Zhang Xuan frowned upon hearing the question. “Do you really not know?”

The Crimsonfrons White Tiger shook its head.

Zhang Xuan pondered for a moment before asking, “Do you know of any restricted grounds in this area that you are forbidden from entering?”

It was likely that the Temple of Confucius would be a restricted area where the beasts were denied entry. While the Crimsonfrons White Tiger might be unfamiliar with the term ‘Temple of Confucius’, it should at least know of the various restricted grounds.

Hearing Zhang Xuan's question, the Crimsonfrons White Tiger pondered for a moment before replying, "There is one restricted ground in the area—the territory of the Goldspirit Cloudtiger. There was one time when I accidentally stepped into his territory and ended up being nearly pummeled to death. Master, the Goldspirit Cloudtiger is the Monarch of everything within a radius of ten thousand li from here. It should be able to help you in whatever you are looking for!"

"The Goldspirit Cloudtiger?" Zhang Xuan frowned upon hearing an unfamiliar name.

Having read through the books in the Sanctum of Sages, he had a decent knowledge of the many beasts in the world, and this included those that had gone extinct. However, he had never heard of a Goldspirit Cloudtiger before.

"That's right... It's a tigress. I once tried to court her, but... Cough cough, I didn't succeed..." the Crimsonfrons White Tiger said awkwardly.

Back then, it had prided itself on its silky white fur and dashing appearance, so it had attempted to court the Goldspirit Cloudtiger. Yet, shortly after it arrived in the other party's territory, before it could even meet the other party, it had been thrown out with its tail between its legs.

It was extremely embarrassing even when it thought back on it now.

Tigresses were indeed existences not to be trifled with!

It was then that it had made up its mind to never find a tigress for its wife, or else it would not know when it would be killed in its sleep. For the time being, the female wolf next door looked rather demure and gentle.

Unaware that the thoughts of the Crimsonfrons White Tiger had begun wandering around the place, Zhang Xuan asked, "How strong is it?"

Even though the mount that he had just acquired was only at Intuitive Impulse realm consummation, its superior defense and astounding strength allowed it to rival even Sempiternal realm intermediate stage beasts in a battle.

Despite that, it had still been crushed by the so-called Goldspirit Cloudtiger. Just how powerful was the other party?

“It’s at Sempiternal realm consummation! It’s one of the Five Monarchs of this forest!” the Crimsonfrons White Tiger explained.

“Five Monarchs?”

“Un. They are the five strongest existences in this forest, having reached Sempiternal realm consummation. In comparison, I can only be considered to be in the lower middle tier within the forest!” the Crimsonfrons White Tiger replied honestly, not daring to lie to its new master.

“Master, if you wish to seek anything, they will surely know better than me!”

Zhang Xuan nodded in response.

The higher one’s standing was, the more one was bound to know.

“Bring me to the Goldspirit Cloudtiger!” Zhang Xuan commanded.

“Yes, Master!” Not daring to utter another word, the Crimsonfrons White Tiger immediately confirmed the location before galloping ahead furiously.

Ding ding ding!

During their journey, Zhang Xuan heard the sound of metallic clangs sounding ahead. Coming a bit closer, he saw two groups of people coming to blows over a stalk of a medicinal herb.

On the other hand, the two groups of people swiftly halted their actions upon hearing the flurried footsteps. A moment later, they saw a young man seated atop a massive white tiger slowly approaching them.

“Is that an Intuitive Impulse realm consummation Crimsonfrons White Tiger?”

“Who in the world is that fellow? Why is he sitting on the back of the tiger?”

“Wait a moment... could he possibly have tamed the Crimsonfrons White Tiger?”

...

The two groups of people were horrified to see Zhang Xuan and his tiger, such that they even forgot about their conflict. On instinct alone, they opened up a pathway for Zhang Xuan to pass by.

On the other hand, Zhang Xuan waved his hand at the crowd beneath with a smile. As though a superior checking on the work of his subordinates, he said earnestly, “Hello! I see that you have all been working hard. Carry on, carry on! There’s no need to be affected by my presence. I am just passing by...”

As he said these words, he knocked the tiger’s belly lightly once more with his leg.

Hula!

The Crimsonfrons White Tiger warped into a streak of white light as it flitted through the crowd. With the lighting effect from the sun, the young man on the tiger’s back appeared to be towering and powerful, almost as if a deity.

“That must be what a true expert is like...”

The crowd muttered among themselves.

While they were still struggling to survive and adapt to this new environment, the other party had already tamed a powerful saint beast to explore the area.

That was the despairing gap between a true expert and commoners like them.

“... I nearly forgot. Give me that medicinal herb!”

“No! It’s mine...”

After recovering from their shock, they resumed their furious shouting and tussling over the medicinal herb.

1703 Encircling the Cloudtiger

“What has become of the love and compassion of humans?”

Seeing how the two groups had returned to tussling with one another over a medicinal herb, Zhang Xuan clutched his chest with a pained look on his face. “Treasures are indeed the bane of mankind. This folded space is already dangerous as it is, but instead of cooperating with one another to survive this ordeal, they opted for infighting instead. I have never felt so embarrassed to be a human!”

“Roar!” The Crimsonfrons White Tiger expressed its agreement.

“I guess there’s no choice then. In order to allow the humans to halt their infighting and unite with one another to overcome this ordeal, I shall go through the trouble of taking away all of the treasures in the area so that they will have nothing else to fight over!” Zhang Xuan said with a benevolent glow on his face.

The Crimsonfrons White Tiger was just about to nod in agreement as well when it suddenly realized that there was something very weird about those words. It tilted its head in bewilderment. “Roar?”

To be able to find such a righteous excuse to plunder the treasures on this land... Its new master sure was shameless!

Did he have no sense of shame?

Unaware of how his image had just crumbled in the mind of the Crimsonfrons White Tiger, Zhang Xuan instructed with an air of righteousness, “You are familiar with the local terrain, and you are able to travel around fairly quick as well. If there are any formidable treasures around the area, bring me to them!”

“Roar!” Knowing that its master had already made up his mind and it would be futile to complain, the Crimsonfrons White Tiger could only nod in agreement before darting forward swiftly.

It had to be said that the Crimsonfrons White Tiger really did know the area well. Under its lead, Zhang Xuan was brought from one rare treasure to another. It would have taken him far longer if he had to scavenge them one by one manually.

In less than four hours, he had already swept away everything good within a radius of several hundred li.

There were ten-thousand-year-old medicinal herbs and rare ores that could not be found on the Master Teacher Continent. Delighted by the returns, he even recruited another five beasts to assist him in the treasure hunt.

With no more treasures remaining the area, the conflicts in the area had visibly reduced.

Seeing that the world had taken a step toward peace, Zhang Xuan smiled in satisfaction. With his noble deed done, he strutted off with his six tamed beasts toward the territory of the Goldspirit Cloudtiger.

Fearing that the intelligence provided by the Crimsonfrons White Tiger was off, he posed the same question to the five beasts that he had just tamed, and their responses were the same. Within this forest, the Goldspirit Cloudtiger was the indubitable sovereign.

“Hide in here for the time being. When I beckon you later on, I want you to launch a decisive strike to take down the Goldspirit Cloudtiger together!”

After traveling for another an hour, they were already nearing their destination. Zhang Xuan flicked his wrist and stowed the six beasts into the Myriad Anthive Nest.

Sempiternal realm consummation beasts were far stronger than master teachers of the same tier. Even with his current fighting prowess, it was likely that he would face trouble dealing with the Goldspirit Cloudtiger.

It was not a coincidence that he had tamed so many beasts. In truth, he was intending to use them as reinforcements!

If he really could not defeat the Goldspirit Cloudtiger, he could set the six beasts on it simultaneously. Even as a Sempiternal realm consummation beast, it would be tied down for a moment.

He would use the time bought to launch his strongest technique and defeat it in a single move!

After stowing the tamed beasts, Zhang Xuan crept amid the tall grasses as he swiftly flitted toward the area pointed out to him earlier.

Before he could reach the lair of the Goldspirit Cloudtiger, he heard footsteps ahead. With a swift maneuver, he climbed onto the top of a tree and observed the situation ahead of him through the leaves.

A short distance in front, a group of eight was advancing warily. Every single one of them was holding their weapon tightly, prepared to engage their enemy at any moment.

“Even the weakest among them is at Intuitive Impulse realm consummation, and there is a Sempiternal realm consummation cultivator among them too... It seems like they have also learned of the existence of the Goldspirit Cloudtiger and have come to subdue it...” Zhang Xuan quickly analyzed the situation.

He could not possibly be the only one who would think of seeking the strongest beast in order to ask about the location of the Temple of Confucius.

It was true that the outer perimeter was suitable for cultivation, and there were many treasures lying around. However, there was no one who did not know that the true treasures lay within the Temple of Confucius.

Opportunities often came with risks. This was a once in a lifetime opportunity to climb to the top, and many would be willing to brave any danger for it!

“Who is it?”

While Zhang Xuan was still deep in thought, the Sempiternal realm consummation cultivator walking at the forefront of the group suddenly turned his gaze to Zhang Xuan's direction.

The short moment of contemplation earlier had caused a fluctuation in Zhang Xuan's emotions, leading to some imperfections in the concealment of his aura. It was just a slight leak, but with the entire group on guard, it was inevitable that he would be discovered.

Knowing that he had been exposed, Zhang Xuan chuckled softly as he walked out. "I was just passing by the area..."

The Sempiternal realm consummation cultivator who had spoken earlier was an elder in his sixties. With an authoritative furrow in between his brows, he questioned, "Are you a master teacher?"

Seeing that some members of the group were dressed in master teacher robes, Zhang Xuan replied affirmatively, "That's right!"

"I am a grand elder of the Beast Tamer Hall, Wu Changping. I am determined to tame the beast ahead of us, so I have to ask of you not to interfere in our affairs!" the elder said imposingly.

"I don't intend to interfere in your affairs, but would it be fine for me to remain around the area to take a look?" Zhang Xuan asked.

Since the other party had come before him, it would not be appropriate for him to cut right in and snatch their target.

In any case, his goal was to find out the general direction of the Temple of Confucius from the Goldspirit Cloudtiger. With the Prime Amulet in his hand, he should be able to zone in on the exact location easily as long as he had a direction to work with.

Hearing that the young man intended to loiter around the area, a middle-aged man amid the group harrumphed. "I can't allow that. Please leave right now, or else we'll be forced to evict you!"

"You intend to evict me?"

“We have already set our eyes upon the Goldspirit Cloudtiger. Your presence here will only hinder us,” Wu Changping replied coldly. “Please seek another beast of your own!”

Seeing that he was not welcome there, Zhang Xuan shrugged nonchalantly and said, “Very well then. I wish you the best of luck.”

After which, he turned around and left.

As soon as he was out of the group of eight’s sight, he flicked his finger and sealed the space around him before making his way back.

“I say, we should have just killed that fellow from earlier. Why do you all even bother to waste your breath with him? We aren’t on the Master Teacher Continent anyway, so there’s no need to abide by those troublesome rules!” the middle-aged man who had bellowed at him earlier grumbled in annoyance.

“I have no qualms about killing a master teacher here, but it would be bad if we alarmed the Goldspirit Cloudtiger in the midst of doing so. That fellow is the Monarch of this forest. Having fought many battles, its instincts are particularly sharp. We have to move with the utmost caution around it and subdue it in a sweep!” Wu Changping said.

“You’re right. I should have considered the matter more carefully!” The middle-aged man nodded in agreement. After which, a frown emerged on his forehead as he asked, “We placed that item in the lair quite a while ago. That fellow should be knocked out by now, right?”

“It should have fainted by now, but based on the intelligence we have gathered, the Goldspirit Cloudtiger is known to possess formidable innate resilience. We mustn’t let our guard down around it. Let’s wait a little longer...” Wu Changping said.

“Un!”

It was apparent that Wu Changping was the leader of the group. Upon hearing his words, the crowd continued to crouch quietly amid the bushes, suppressing their auras and breathing.

Roughly ten minutes later, Wu Changping raised his hand and said, "Alright, it should be about time. Let's head in and take a look!"

Upon hearing those words, the middle-aged man made his way over to the cavern ahead with silent footsteps. With his movements, Zhang Xuan could tell that he was a Sempiternal realm cultivator too, albeit only at the primary stage.

Nevertheless, his prowess was already enough to make him a powerhouse of the Master Teacher Continent.

Even Sword Saint Xing only had as much strength as him! Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click for visiting.

Hu!

The middle-aged man entered the cavern.

Hong long!

Shortly after he entered, a deafening explosion sounded. Following which, the middle-aged man flew out of the cavern with an even faster speed, and his back broke several towering trees before he finally skidded to a stop. Blood spewed wildly from his mouth.

"Sh*t! It didn't fall for our trap. We can only push our way through!"

Wu Changping swiftly understood that their initial plan had failed. With a furious bellow, he took the lead and charged forward.

Hualala!

The remaining members of the group also swiftly advanced toward the cavern. Barely after they got into position, the ground suddenly tremored beneath them. A massive beast was slowly making its way out of the cavern.

1704 A Cry of Help

The massive beast emerging from the cavern was around ten meters long and five meters tall. Similar to the Crimsonfrons White Tiger, it was cloaked in glorious golden fur. Even before making a move, one could already smell the stench of bloodshed drifting in the air.

After entering the folded space, they had encountered quite a number of beasts. Their cultivation realms were frighteningly high, but their fighting experience was sorely lacking. It still had not been easy to deal with them, but the occasional mistakes that they made created exploitable openings.

However, it was completely different with the massive beast before them. From the strong killing intent that seemed to be embedded into its very presence to the extreme wariness in its eyes, it was apparent that it was a veteran in battle. Without a doubt, many powerful beasts had fallen under its claws.

In order to become one of the Monarchs within this forest, one had to possess indomitable strength.

Sweeping its cold gaze across the group of eight, the Goldspirit Cloudtiger uttered wintry, “It has been so long since anyone has had the guts to wreak havoc on my territory.”

Astonishingly, the Goldspirit Cloudtiger actually spoke the language of the humans.

There should not have been any humans in the Temple of Confucius for tens of thousands of years. For this reason, the Goldface Skywolf and Crimsonfrons White Tiger could only communicate in the natural language of their own race. It was only after taming the latter that Zhang Xuan could converse with it through their telepathic connection.

Yet, this massive fellow was actually able to speak in the tongue of the humans... Even Zhang Xuan was slightly surprised by this anomaly.

“Don’t waste your words on it. Get into formation!” Wu Changping bellowed with a darkened face.

The fact that the Goldspirit Cloudtiger was able to speak in the tongue of the humans likely meant that it knew a lot about the human race. The fact that their earlier ploy did not work likely meant that it was already guarded against them from the very start.

Hula!

The group of eight raised their weapons and surrounded the Goldspirit Cloudtiger. An inexplicable link formed among their auras, almost as if there were fine threads connecting them together. With just a glance, it was apparent that on top of forming a formation, they had also utilized some kind of formidable artifact.

It was no wonder they were reluctant to allow Zhang Xuan to watch by the side. They had already made thorough preparations to subdue and tame the Goldspirit Cloudtiger, so there was no way that they would risk allowing anyone to steal the fruits of their labor.

“How meaningless!”

Unconcerned by the movements of the group, the Goldspirit Cloudtiger released a ferocious roar. With a powerful pounce, it leaped on the middle-aged man closest to it.

It seemed to be intending to barge through the formation through focusing its attack on an individual.

Weng!

Before its claws could land, rich energy gushed into the middle-aged man’s body through the narrow threads in the surroundings, filling him with power. His body lit up with a faint glow.

Augmented by the influx of energy, the middle-aged man raised his massive saber and slashed down furiously. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click for visiting.

The massive congregation of saber qi manifested in the form of a towering saber afterimage in the air.

Boom!

The claw and the saber afterimage collided with one another, and the Goldspirit Cloudtiger could not help but retreat.

To think that they are able to channel the strength of a group into the body of one... Zhang Xuan nodded.

There was no way that the middle-aged man would have been able to defend against the Goldspirit Cloudtiger's attacks alone. It was through the use of the narrow threads that the group infused their strength into the middle-aged man together, thus overpowering the massive beast.

As a result of their collaboration, even someone as powerful as the Goldspirit Cloudtiger found itself unable to breach their defenses.

"It seems like they have used a Great Sage artifact!"

Considering how the thread was able to withstand the strength of so many people without hindering the middle-aged man's power output, there was no doubt that the artifact was at Great Sage tier at the very least.

While it could not match up to the Dragonbone Divine Spear, it was already on par with Wu Shu's golden saber.

"I see. It's no wonder you dared challenge me. It seems like you have some tricks up your sleeves..."

The Goldspirit Cloudtiger harrumphed coldly upon seeing that it had failed to breach their defense, but it did not show the slightest hint of being flustered. Instead, it whipped its thick tail furiously instead.

It was as if its tail was a weapon; it actually harnessed might greater than that of its claws. Warping into a blur, it darted toward the middle-aged man once more.

Realizing the major threat of the tail, the middle-aged man raised his saber once more to counterattack.

Peng!

The saber and the tail collided with one another. This time, it was the middle-aged man whose face paled, and he was forced to retreat several steps.

The Goldspirit Clouttiger made use of this opportunity to further its attack. It swiped its claw forward ferociously.

The best way to overcome a collaborative formation when one was unable to analyze its structure and flaws was to focus one's attacks on an individual. It was apparent that the Goldspirit Clouttiger was aware of this fact as well.

The Goldspirit Clouttiger's movements were swift and powerful. It seemed as if the middle-aged man was unable to cope and would succumb very soon. Nevertheless, Zhang Xuan still shook his head.

That attack won't work...

If it was so convenient to overcome the might of a Great Sage artifact, such artifacts would not drive so many cultivators frenzied in search of them.

Just as Zhang Xuan thought, the next moment, Wu Changping swiftly formed a hand seal.

Huala!

The next moment, the string in the air was suddenly pulled taut. An incredible surge of energy was channeled from the group into the narrow string, granting it unbelievable resilience and power.

“Attack!”

Following Wu Changping's order, the other members of the group directed their weapons toward the Goldspirit Clouttiger via the narrow string.

“Roar!”

The Goldspirit Clouttiger clearly did not expect the string to possess such astounding prowess. It hurriedly raised its head and roared furiously.

Huala!

Countless surges of golden sword qi flew forth from its mouth to deflect the weapons and the string.

It's able to shoot out sword qi too? The Goldspirit Cloudtiger is truly talented! Zhang Xuan's eyes lit up in surprise.

He had thought that the massive beast would have no choice but to submit to the group, but who could have known that it would actually be able to release an outpour of sword qi? Just the Goldspirit Cloudtiger's overwhelming strength and resilience were a pain to deal with. If it could use battle techniques on top of that, Wu Changping and the others would really face great difficulties trying to subdue it.

"The Goldspirit Cloudtiger is known for its proficiency in metal attribute offense. Do you think that we wouldn't have a countermeasure against that? Let me tell you this, that's exactly what we were waiting for!" Wu Changping chuckled triumphantly as he tapped his finger.

Tz la!

The next moment, the color of the string changed. It assumed a color reminiscent of lava, as if flames had been infused into it.

Huala!

The group channeled all of their zhenqi into the string. As if oil had been scattered atop a spark, a burning inferno burst forth.

In an instant, a blazing net appeared in the sky, trapping the Goldspirit Cloudtiger altogether.

They have really prepared themselves well. It seems like the Goldspirit Cloudtiger is going to succumb soon, Zhang Xuan remarked internally with a slight hint of awe in his voice.

As expected of a grand elder from the Beast Tamer Hall! Wu Changping's understanding of his prey, grasp of the situation, and meticulousness in his planning and execution were truly praiseworthy.

Metal was known for its sharpness and resilience. The Goldspirit Cloudtiger was of the metal attribute, which made it extremely difficult to trap in a battle

While the string that they had brought was resilient and could be reinforced with their zhenqi, it would only be a matter of time before it snapped.

This was also where the strength of the metal attribute lay.

However, in anticipation of that, Wu Changping had prepared fire.

Of the Five Elements, fire curbed metal!

As soon as the fire burst forth, the metal attribute in the Goldspirit Cloudtiger's body was immediately weakened. In fact, as it had just released a metal attribute offense earlier, the backlash that it suffered was greater than usual.

With this single move, the tables had turned.

I really mustn't underestimate the experts of the world...

Zhang Xuan thought in alarm.

Even though the possession of the Library of Heaven's Path granted him an edge in battle, he could not allow himself to get complacent due to it. There were still many ways that others were able to corner and subdue him.

Had he been in the Goldspirit Cloudtiger's position, the only way that he could have resolved it was probably to bring out the Otherworldly Demon Ancient Sage's corpse.

“Roar!”

Watching as the blazing net swiftly closed in on it, the Goldspirit Cloudtiger also realized that the enemy had come well-prepared. It knew that it was in a critically disadvantageous position.

All of a sudden, it raised his head and roared once more.

But this time, the roar carried no hint of aggression to it. Instead, Zhang Xuan sensed pleading in it, reminiscent of a distress call.

“It's a call for help... Does the Goldspirit Cloudtiger have other companions?” Wu Changping's face warped in horror.

1705 Heavenwood Greenserpen

“Quick! We need to subdue it right now!”

Knowing that they would be in a bad position once the Goldspirit Cloudtiger’s companion came over, Wu Changping drove his zhenqi to his limits. The blazing net grew more and more searing as it contracted rapidly.

As a grand elder of the Beast Tamer Hall, he had a deep understanding of beasts. The earlier call was sharp and distinctive, a clear sign that it was beckoning its companion. Just one Goldspirit Cloudtiger was enough a headache for them to deal with; if another one came at this moment, they would surely die!

Realizing the dangerous position that they were in, anxious looks appeared on the faces of the others as well. They hurriedly drove their zhenqi into the blazing net to hasten the process.

“Hahaha! To think that you, the Goldspirit Cloudtiger, one of the Five Monarchs of the forest, would actually be caught by a bunch of fellows like this! How embarrassing it would be to be in a position like yours!”

A mocking voice echoed in the air as a slender figure darted out of the cavern.

This slender figure bore some resemblance to Zhang Xuan’s Netherworld Azure Dragon Beast, but it was much larger, and its bloodline was significantly purer. Just like the Goldspirit Cloudtiger, it was a Sempiternal realm consummation expert!

“It’s a Heavenwood Greenserpen!” Wu Changping’s face paled. Without any hesitation, he ordered, “Retreat!”

Right after those words were said, the blazing net around the Goldspirit Cloudtiger dissipated into nothing. Following which, he turned around and began running into the distance.

As expected of someone who had lived for many centuries, his priorities were very clear. As soon as he noticed that something was off, he was willing to abandon anything, no matter how valuable it was.

Just the Goldspirit Cloudtiger was enough to nearly corner them. With a Heavenwood Greenserpent thrown into the mix, it formed a combo far beyond their means to deal with.

“Ah?”

Wu Changping fled the moment that he noticed that things had gone awry, but the others in the group were not as decisive as him. They were stunned for a moment before hurriedly rushing away.

Just from their reactions, it was apparent that other than Wu Changping, none of them were beast tamers!

With their tamed beasts fighting alongside them, true beast tamers boasted amazing fighting prowess. However, taming beasts was not an easy feat at all. The slightest mistake could very well incur the beast’s backlash. For this reason, it was important for beast tamers to be able to assess the situation and know when to flee.

In fact, there was an unofficial adage within the Beast Tamer Hall that went ‘The first step to beast taming is learning when to flee’!

Many unexpected situations could happen during the process of beast taming. A beast tamer who did not know when to flee would have already died a hundred times over before they could reach Great Sage!

“Don’t you think it’s inappropriate for you to leave just like that after trying to drug and kidnap one of us?” a chilling voice echoed from beneath the ground.

Huala!

Before the other members of the group could get far, the ground suddenly rumbled furiously, as if an intense earthquake had struck the area. Following which, a massive beast rose up from the earth. It had the head of a lion, the horns of a deer, the eyes of a tiger, the body of a moose, the scales of a dragon,

the tail of an ox... Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click for visiting.

It was a chimerical Qilin!

Unlike Zhang Xuan's Inferno Qilin, it was of the earth attribute. With a simple flick of its claw, a firm wall of yellow soil rose up from the ground and encircled the fleeing crowd, blocking their path of escape.

The remaining members of the group did not expect another beast to appear. Only at that moment did they understand why Wu Changping had fled so quickly, hesitating not in the slightest to abandon them.

Awful looks could be seen on their faces as they realized that they had been betrayed.

“Break!”

The current strongest member of the group, a Sempiternal realm intermediate stage elder, raised his sword and hacked it down on the wall of yellow soil.

Huala!

The wall of yellow soil crumbled beneath the ferocious might of the sword. However, before the crowd could relish in their momentary victory, the wall of yellow soil had already regenerated at an astounding rate. In the blink of an eye, the crowd was trapped once again.

“If only I knew this would happen, I never would have listened to Wu Changping! Why in the world did I even risk my life for this?”

The crowd felt their hearts sinking into the abyss.

Just like most other existing groups wandering around the folded space, their group had formed spontaneously as well.

Wu Changping had gathered all of them and said that this was the only possible way that they could get to the Temple of Confucius. He had even reassured them that he had a Great Sage artifact and that this matter was already in the bag. After carefully contemplating over the matter, they had felt that Wu

Changping's words made sense, so they had joyfully joined the group as well.

Who could have known that they would end up facing three Sempiternal realm consummation beasts simultaneously? More importantly, no one had thought that Wu Changping would actually flee faster than any one of them there!

He won't be able to get away either...

In contrast to the furious looks on the faces around him, Zhang Xuan glanced in the direction that Wu Changping had fled in and shook his head.

He had to admit that the old man had made a wise decision to take flight as soon as he realized that things had gone awry, but unfortunately for him... this was not a situation that he could possibly flee from.

As if fulfilling Zhang Xuan's prophecy, the call of an avian echoed from within the cavern.

Huala!

Following which, a magnificent bird cloaked in a layer of flames dashed out from the cavern. With unimaginable speed, it bolted for Wu Changping in order to apprehend him.

Xiong xiong!

Before the talons of the bird could reach, its flames had already surged forth to construct an inferno barrier ahead, sealing Wu Changping's path of escape.

"The Celestialfire Phoenix?" Wu Changping's face paled as his body trembled nonstop.

He had thought that the only beast within the cavern was the Goldspirit Cloudtiger, and he had prepared accordingly. Who could have known that following the emergence of the Goldspirit Cloudtiger, the Heavenwood Greenserpent, the Terra Qilin, and the Celestialfire Phoenix would make an appearance too? Before they knew it, they were already faced with four legendary beasts!

Furthermore, each of them wielded prowess that far surpassed him.

How could he possibly stand a chance against something like this?

Hula!

Without any hesitation, Wu Changping tossed out his weapons furiously, hoping that it would buy him some time. However, that was all meaningless before the agile Celestialfire Phoenix. The vast difference in strength was not something that he could bridge singlehandedly.

Before long, he was already bound by a bundle of flames, forced to grovel on the ground.

With this, the group of eight had been fully apprehended. Despair and fear could be seen in their eyes as they shot frightened glances at the powerful beings before them.

Seeing that its comrade had managed to apprehend the pesky humans who had dared lay their hands on it, the Goldspirit Cloudtiger glared at the guffawing Heavenwood Greenserpent and spat, “Mock me all you want after you get back. Hurry up and release the seal on me!”

“Alright, alright! I’ll help you open it!” After using up a lifetime worth of laughter, the Heavenwood Greenserpent turned its head to the cavern and said, “Brother Acheron, I’ll be counting on you for that then...”

“Un, give me a moment. I’ll be right out...”

Another voice sounded from within the cavern. The crowd turned their gazes over and saw a massive silhouette slowly making its way out of the cavern.

Its movements were extremely slow. It took an entire eight minutes from the moment that its silhouette appeared before it was able to fully make its way out of the cavern

It was a massive tortoise.

“The Goldspirit Cloudtiger, the Heavenwood Greenserpent, the Acheron Blacktortoise, the Celestialfire Phoenix, and the Terra Qilin... These are the Five Elements Divine Beasts?”
Wu Changping’s face paled as realization struck him. “I should have guessed!”

Legend had it that Kong shi feared that the space in the Temple of Confucius would be unstable, so he had captured five powerful beasts, each representing one of the Five Elements, in order to stabilize the space. They had eventually come to be known as the so-called Five Monarchs to the other beasts in the folded space.

When he heard of the Five Monarchs, he had instinctively assumed that they would be scattered around the area. After all, powerful beasts were extremely territorial, and they could not tolerate other beings, especially those as powerful as them, trespassing on their land. As such, he could not have imagined that they would actually all be within the Goldspirit Cloudtiger's cavern.

The Acheron Blacktortoise crawled up to the Goldspirit Cloudtiger slowly and opened its massive mouth.

Huala!

Water cascaded down on the blazing net, extinguishing it in an instant. The Goldspirit Cloudtiger's body immediately expanded as sword qi burst forth from its acupoints.

Under the barrage of sharp sword qi, the string was severed at every inch before scattering all over the floor.

Despite being a Great Sage artifact, being set on fire before being doused in water shortly after had already ruined the structural integrity of the string. In its fragile state, the Goldspirit Cloudtiger's sharp sword qi was able to destroy it easily.

"These fellows are here to kill you. How do you intend to deal with them?" the Heavenwood Greenserpent asked.

"We have to deal with them, but there's still one more fellow hiding in the area. Let's capture him before deciding on what to do!"

The Goldspirit Cloudtiger lowered its head and sniffed twice before bellowing, "Friend hiding over there, I applaud you for your exceptional use of spatial seals. However, it's not enough to hide from me!"

As it said those words, it glanced at where Zhang Xuan was hiding with killing intent rippling in its eyes.

1706 One on One with the Goldspirit White Tiger

Have I really been discovered?

Zhang Xuan's eyes narrowed in astonishment.

Back then, his spatial seal had allowed him to enter the barracks of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe without being noticed. Who could have thought that his trump card would actually fail him here!

Could the other party's nose really be that effective?

With the doubt that the Goldspirit Cloudtiger was trying to lure him out, Zhang Xuan continued camping on the spot quietly.

In response to his quietness, the Goldspirit Cloudtiger sneered coldly, "Since you aren't going to come out, I'll just have to force you out myself then!"

With a growl, it swiped its claw and sent a surge of sword qi in Zhang Xuan's direction.

This sword qi was infused with the keen intent of the metal attribute. It tore a vacuum through space as it bolted toward Zhang Xuan.

While Zhang Xuan had sealed the space around him, he had not broken free of the dimension that he was in yet. As long as an attack was sufficiently powerful, it could still tear through his spatial seal and injure him.

As soon as Zhang Xuan saw the trajectory sword qi, he realized that it was not a bluff from the Goldspirit Cloudtiger. It had indeed managed to find him.

With a helpless sigh, he tore free of the spatial seal and moved his feet.

Hu!

In that instant, time seemed to have slowed down for Zhang Xuan. Despite that, he only managed to dodge the sword qi by a hair's breadth. Scratching his head in exasperation, he faced the five divine beasts before him and said, "If I said that I'm only passing by and am not from the same group as them, will you believe me?"

He really was not from the same group as those fellows before... although he was indeed there to capture the Goldspirit Cloudtiger as well.

Of course, he would not be so dumb as to give himself away. What was standing before him were five Sempiternal realm consummation beasts! Even with his current fighting prowess, the best that he could do was flee as far from them as he could!

"Passing by? Don't you think it's rude of you to pass by my lair without coming in to greet me?" the Goldspirit Cloudtiger scoffed.

Huala!

The Goldspirit Cloudtiger was still burning with fury at having almost been caught by a bunch of damned humans, so how could it possibly be in the mood to listen to Zhang Xuan's reasons? With a furious bellow, it sent a barrage of sword qi toward Zhang Xuan.

The relentless barrage of sword qi formed a long current reminiscent of a majestic dragon.

"That's a no then. I guess I have no choice..." Seeing that the Goldspirit Cloudtiger was unwilling to believe him, Zhang Xuan knew that there was nothing else that he could say to persuade it otherwise.

In such a situation, he would have to allow his strength to do the talking. Taking a deep breath, he flicked his wrist, and the Dragonbone Divine Spear materialized in his grasp.

"Break!" Zhang Xuan pushed the spear forward to meet the barrage of sword qi.

Huala!

Putting his strength from his soul energy, zhenqi, and physical body into the Dragonbone Divine Spear, the spear warped into a bolt of light before it collided together with the barrage of sword qi. A devastating shockwave rippled out as a result of the clash, causing cracks to appear in the space around. Countless trees were uprooted, and boulders were shattered into fragments.

This single clash actually produced a hemispherical depression of over several hundred meters wide in the midst of the dense forest!

“What the hell... Is he really only at Aureate Body realm?”

The trapped Wu Changping and the others widened their eyes in shock.

They recognized the young man—he was the fellow who had been following behind them earlier before being driven away by them. They had thought that he was just a simple Aureate Body realm cultivator, an insignificant existence to them. Never in their dreams did they imagine that he would actually be this powerful!

If they had known in advance, they surely would have pulled him into their group. With him, they would have been able to capture the Goldspirit Cloudtiger and escape before the other four beasts even came to realize the anomaly!

“I thought that he was a weakling, but it turned out that he’s actually the strongest of us all...” Wu Changping shook his head in bitter regret.

Earlier, they had discussed whether they should kill the young man or not. It was fortunate that they did not try it, or else the young man would have destroyed all of them before they could even encounter the Goldspirit Cloudtiger!

“Oh? It seems like he’s not too weak!” the Heavenwood Greenserpent remarked.

It did not think that the Aureate Body realm lad hiding by the side would actually harness such fighting prowess within that small frame of his. It stroked its serpentine beard with its claws as it studied the young man in interest.

“Humph!”

On the other hand, the Goldspirit Cloudtiger was less than pleased to have its attack countered by the young man. It was already at the peak of its anger when even a mere Aureate Body realm lad turned out to be able to counter its attack. Its eyes widened in fury as it scrunched its body tightly together, its golden fur trembling nonstop.

“Die!”

Si la!

As if released from a bowstring, the Goldspirit Cloudtiger dashed forward and made use of its momentum to whip its tail toward Zhang Xuan.

The tail moved with such swiftness that it seemed to disappear completely from sight, making it nigh impossible to discern the trajectory of the attack.

“How fast!” Zhang Xuan narrowed his eyes in shock.

He knew that he would not be able to withstand the attack given his current strength. Thus, he quickly activated the Zhang Clan blood essence within his body.

Huala!

The other party’s movements immediately slowed down. With a light leap, he escaped from the Goldspirit Cloudtiger’s area of attack.

Boom!

A massive crater was smashed into the ground.

Knowing that he would not stand a chance at this rate, Zhang Xuan wiped off the cold sweat on his forehead and said, “Hold it for a moment...”

“Are you going to beg for mercy now? It’s already too late!”

Seeing how the young man had managed to evade its strongest attack with ease and even had the leisure to chat, even though the Goldspirit Cloudtiger was furious, it knew that it was unlikely to be able to subdue the young man in the short run.

Thus, it halted its attack, wanting to hear what the young man had to say.

In any case, the five divine beasts were gathered there. The earth and the sky were completely sealed. There was no way that the young man could possibly escape.

“I know there’s no chance that I’ll be able to escape from here anymore, so at the very least, I would like to have a fair duel with you. Will you at least accede to this request of mine?” Zhang Xuan clasped his fist.

“Fair duel?”

The five divine beasts glanced at one another, not knowing what in the world he was saying.

“Indeed. I am only at the Aureate Body realm at the moment, so I know that I won’t stand much of a chance against you all. Nevertheless, I would still like to fight for a chance for survival. I want to challenge the Goldspirit Cloudtiger to a one-on-one duel. If I lose, the only thing that awaits me is death. However, if I win by any chance, I beseech you to let me go!” Zhang Xuan said.

“Hah!”

The five divine beasts immediately understood Zhang Xuan’s intentions.

The young man was afraid that they would attack him together. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click for visiting.

“Human, you should stop trying to judge us by your standards! You are belittling us far too much! Even if we are of the same cultivation realm, we aren’t going to stoop so low as to gang up on you!” the Heavenwood Greenserpent remarked impassively.

As ones who had inherited the bloodlines of ancient divine beasts, as well as monarchs who ruled over countless subjects, they had their own pride to uphold.

Putting aside ganging up on someone weaker than them, they would not do so even for someone in the same cultivation

realm as them!

“You can rest assured that I won’t allow them to interfere in our battle!” the Goldspirit Cloudtiger spat.

It was just a moment ago that it had nearly been captured by a group of humans, and now, another human actually wanted to challenge it to a one-on-one duel... Given how it had already embarrassed itself earlier, if it was still unable to deal with someone two realms weaker than it, what right would it have to rule over the other beasts in the forest?

“That’s a relief...”

To be honest, Zhang Xuan had given the matter a try not expecting the five divine beasts to accede to his request. In fact, he had already been planning his escape route, but it seemed like there was no need for it anymore. Heaving a deep sigh of relief, he raised his head and said, “One more thing. As a cultivator, it’s not against the rule for me to use my artifacts in battle, right?”

“Feel free to use whatever artifacts you have!” The Goldspirit Cloudtiger harrumphed coldly, thinking nothing of Zhang Xuan’s request.

It would already be the blessing of the heavens that an Aureate Body realm lad like him had such a formidable spear. While the spear was indeed remarkable, the Goldspirit Cloudtiger was confident that it could deal with it.

“Also... I happen to be a beast tamer. It won’t be against the rules if my tamed beasts assist me, right?” Zhang Xuan asked.

“Tamed beasts? Humph! If you have anything decent, just bring them all out!” the Goldspirit Cloudtiger remarked arrogantly.

“I’m reassured then...” Nodding in satisfaction, Zhang Xuan flicked up his Dragonbone Divine Spear. “Let’s begin!”

“Humph!” The Goldspirit Cloudtiger let loose a furious roar before charging forward with narrowed eyes.

However, barely a second after it started moving, it suddenly felt a sharp pain assaulting its soul, as if someone was pricking

it with countless needles. Following which, a suffocating pressure crushed down on it.

“Soul offense? Sh*t...”

Not expecting the young man to have such a card up his sleeves, the Goldspirit Cloudtiger’s massive body stiffened on the spot.

The Beast Tribe were known for their superior physical body, which granted them defensive and offensive capabilities far superior to human cultivators. However, they had a fatal weakness, and that was their soul. The other party had executed a soul offense right from the start, and it was stronger than what it had ever faced before. Caught completely off guard, it ended up succumbing to the move.

1707 The Cloudtiger Submits

“Soul offense?”

The Heavenwood Greenserpent was taken aback. It did not expect the Aureate Body realm cultivator to have such a technique at his disposal

“So what if it’s a soul offense? Cloudtiger has been training her soul energy in order to prevent her killing intent from clouding her mind,” the calm Acheron Blacktortoise said. “She has just been caught off guard at the moment; once she recovers, she will be able to destroy that fellow with a single move! Besides, soul offense is a double-edged sword. At the very most, he will only be able to launch a single effective attack on the soul of a Sempiternal realm cultivator... There’s no way he will be able to do it a second time!”

It was not just its movements that were slow—even the pacing of its speech was slow as well.

The Heavenwood Greenserpent nodded in agreement to the Acheron Blacktortoise’s judgement.

The five of them had inherited the bloodlines of the Ancient Divine Beasts. While their souls might have been their weakness, it was not a weakness that anyone could exploit.

Besides, soul offense was a double-edged sword. As powerful as soul attacks were, it would cause considerable backlash to the practitioner as well. Even if the young man was a skilled soul cultivator, how many times could he launch an attack as powerful as that?

Shortly after the Acheron Blacktortoise said those words, the Goldspirit Cloudtiger also recovered from its disorientated state. With a howl of fury, it charged toward the young man before it.

This time, it was truly enraged.

To think that a Monarch like it would end up falling for the soul offense of a mere Aureate Body realm cultivator. It was

fortunate that the other party had not used the opportunity to assault it, or else it would have been in deep trouble. If it really lost to the other party, it would not be able to face its subordinates anymore!

“What? At the very most, I’ll just die together with you!”

Seeing how swiftly the Goldspirit Cloudtiger had recovered, Zhang Xuan’s eyes paled in horror. In a slight fluster and with desperation in his movements, he pushed his spear furiously to counter the other party’s offense.

“You are still thinking of retaliating, are you? Dream on!” the Goldspirit Tiger spat coldly.

It was already bad enough for it to have succumbed to the young man’s soul offense once. Was the young man really so naive as to think that his soul offense would work on it once its guard was up?

It gathered all of its concentration on reinforcing its mind in an attempt to defend against the young man’s soul offense, but the next moment, it heard a whoosh sound above its head.

It seemed as if something heavy was swiftly approaching it.

“Cr*p, I fell for his trap...” Feeling a crushing pressure overhead, the Goldspirit Cloudtiger immediately realized that it was a feint.

The killing move was actually hidden above it!

Raising its head, it was just about to see what was falling on it when it suddenly felt a powerful will intruding into its mind, causing a bout of light-headedness.

“That fellow’s pale face is a trick as well!” The Goldspirit Cloudtiger widened its eyes in realization as its mind swiftly blanked out.

If the young man was truly as weakened as he looked, how could he possibly be able to execute such a powerful soul offense?

It was apparent that the young man was feigning weakness in order to make it lower its guard!

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Barely after it made sense of the situation, an immense force had already smashed right into its head, causing its body to sway weakly from side to side.

While it was unsure what kind of artifact it was, the fact that it was able to inflict such tremendous damage on it meant that it was a Great Sage artifact at the minimum!

“This is... a Great Sage brick?” the Heavenwood Greenserpent murmured with a hint of disbelief in its voice. It could hardly believe what it was seeing.

“It seems to have been infused with several tons of Golden Origin Spirit Stone!” the Acheron Blacktortoise added with twitching lips. “Golden Origin Spirit Stone is so rare that not much of it can be found in the world. Yet, it was actually used it to forge a mere brick...”

It was so extravagant that they could hardly wrap their minds around the concept!

That was the invaluable Golden Origin Spirit Stone that they were talking about! Just adding a sprinkle of it into the forging process would turn a Saint pinnacle artifact into a Great Sage artifact!

Yet, to use several tons of such a valuable ore to forge a dumb old brick...

Bro, can you tell me which wastrel forged you? I'll pummel some sense into that idiot!

While the two divine beasts were still overwhelmed by how wasteful human cultivators were, they heard the brick exclaiming excitedly, “Hahaha! Hurry up and surrender, stupid tiger! Otherwise, I, the Golden Origin Cauldron, shall burn you into cinders!”

“The Golden Origin Cauldron? Could it be that... this brick is supposed to be a cauldron?” The Heavenwood Greenserpent gritted its teeth so tightly together that its gums were starting to feel a bit numb.

Can anyone tell me how in the world this lump of metal resembles a cauldron?

How in the world did you find the courage to call yourself a cauldron?

Don't you know what you look like? What Golden Origin Cauldron and burn you into cinders? Even if the Goldspirit Cloudtiger allows you to do whatever you please with it, you have no furnace to burn it down at all!

Not only were the divine beasts rendered frenzied by the sight before them, even the trapped Wu Changping and the others were utterly bewildered by the situation.

It sure was hard to understand the world of aristocrats...

While he was risking his life for a single divine beast, the other party was forging the incredibly invaluable Golden Origin Spirit Stone into a useless lump of metal.

Disregarding the mental breakdowns occurring around him, Zhang Xuan bellowed deeply once more, "Go!"

Huala!

The Infernal Blacksaber, Wu Shu's golden saber, Bei Xin's spear, and the Dragonbone Divine Spear all flew forth.

Just like that, the Goldspirit Cloudtiger suddenly found itself coming under the simultaneous assault of five powerful artifacts. As if that was not enough, from time to time, an inkstone would suddenly charge forward and smash itself onto its face.

"The hell... Can this still be called a one-on-one?"

The Heavenwood Greenserpent, Terra Qilin, and the others felt their vision blacking out.

Earlier, that fellow declared righteously that he wanted to have a fair fight with the Goldspirit Cloudtiger in the hope of winning a chance at survival. They had anticipated a solemn duel between the two, but contrary to their expectations, the young man had actually dispatched so many artifacts to fight the Goldspirit Cloudtiger instead!

While other cultivators were praying fervently to acquire just a single Great Sage artifact, this fellow actually had six of them in his possession...

Are you actually the illegitimate son of the head of the Blacksmith Guild headquarters?

No... Not even the illegitimate son of the Blacksmith Guild headquarters would have so many Great Sage artifacts with him!

With those Great Sage artifacts moving alongside him, it was as if the Goldspirit Cloudtiger was facing the assault of six Sempiternal realm experts simultaneously...

Hand on heart, can you really consider this a one-on-one?

Seeing how its good friend was nearly being pummeled into a domestic cat, the Celestialfire Phoenix could hardly bring itself to watch on. "Should we interfere?"

"But that fellow has asked whether he's able to use his artifacts earlier, and we gave him our consent..." the Heavenwood Greenserpent replied awkwardly.

When the fellow asked him the question earlier, they had thought that the other party was just courteously asking for permission to use that spear of his...

But it seemed like they were still lacking in worldly experience.

The heck was that courtesy! That was a trap, and an utterly shameless one at that!

Which Sempiternal realm cultivator could possibly withstand the assault of so many artifacts at once?

"Wait a minute... What is that fellow doing over there?"

While the divine beasts were still raging over Zhang Xuan's shamelessness, they saw the young man raising his hand once more.

Hula!

All of a sudden, six beasts appeared around the Goldspirit Cloudtiger. Their cultivation ranged from Intuitive Impulse

realm consummation to Sempiternal realm...

As soon as they appeared, they pounced right toward the Goldspirit Cloudtiger.

The remaining four divine beasts glanced at one another, stupefied.

“Those are his tamed beasts?”

“They... seem to be from this region, right?”

“It seems so!”

“So, in the short period of time that the folded space appeared, he managed to tame six beasts?”

The Heavenwood Greenserpent trembled in rage. “When did our beasts become so prideless and cowardly?”

The fact that they were able to speak human tongue meant that they knew a fair bit about human culture. It was not surprising for them to know of the beast tamer occupation as well.

It had only been a couple of hours since the humans had entered the forest, and yet, the other party had already tamed six beasts. Was this not a little too fast?

“We have to make sure to settle this matter later on. We must make it clear to our subordinates that we, the Beast Tribe, mustn’t lower our heads to others!” the Heavenwood Greenserpent uttered passionately. “This is especially so for the subordinates of Cloudtiger’s region. Given how prideful she is, how can her subordinates be so weak-minded...”

The Goldspirit Cloudtiger was a noble beast who would go to any lengths to protect its pride and reputation. Why were its subordinates so cowardly?

But before the Heavenwood Greenserpent could finish its words, the Goldspirit Cloudtiger, who had still been battling furiously a moment ago, suddenly lowered itself on the ground.

A droplet of blood essence seeped out from its glabella and floated over to the young man.

The massive tiger placed its head on the ground subserviently.
“Goldspirit Cloudtiger pays respects to master!”

1708 One Word Is All It Takes

“The heck!”

This sight made the eyes of the Heavenwood Greenserpent nearly fall to the ground. The other three divine beasts also exchanged horrified looks with one another.

They were the ones who had inherited the bloodlines of Ancient Divine Beasts. They were dignified, powerful, lofty, regal... But in such a short period of time, the Goldspirit Cloudtiger had actually chosen to submit to a mere human.

There was something really wrong about this!

“She has really sullied our reputation.” The Heavenwood Greenserpent was seething with rage.

It was the head of the Five Monarchs of the forest.

It had thought that it was already shameful for the subordinates of the Goldspirit Cloudtiger to actually have allowed a mere human to tame them, but barely a moment after it thought so, those beasts' leader submitted!

Was this not as good as a crisp slap to its face?

It was true that the Goldspirit Cloudtiger was under a lot of pressure, having to deal with six Great Sage artifacts and five beasts simultaneously. In fact, it had already been thinking of reinforcing the Goldspirit Cloudtiger, but it did not expect the latter to surrender so quickly!

Where did all of its self-esteem go to?

“Rise. Swallow this pill!” Zhang Xuan flicked his finger and fed the Goldspirit Cloudtiger a grade-9 pill before heaving a sigh of relief.

In truth, the reason he had proposed to fight a one-on-one with the Goldspirit Cloudtiger was to make use of the opportunity to tame it.

And just as he had planned, through a mixture of scare tactics and a bit of guidance through telepathy, he had managed to convince the Goldspirit Cloudtiger to submit to him.

With the Goldspirit Cloudtiger on his side, even if the remaining four divine beasts turned on him, he would at least have the power to protect himself.

“With this, it should be considered my victory, right?”

With a flick of his wrist, Zhang Xuan collected his tamed beasts and his artifacts back into his storage ring before turning to look at the Heavenwood Greenserpent.

“Lad, what kind of sorcery did you use to make the Goldspirit Cloudtiger bow down to you and acknowledge you as her master?” With an awful look, the Heavenwood Greenserpent questioned Zhang Xuan with killing intent flaring from its eyes.

“Do you want to hear the truth?” Zhang Xuan asked.

“Of course!” the Heavenwood Greenserpent replied with gritted teeth.

“The truth is that... I am your master from your previous life. In the midst of her fight with me, the Goldspirit Cloudtiger realized my true identity. That’s why she submitted to me without any hesitation!” Zhang Xuan said as he gazed into the blank space with a deep look in his eyes, reminiscent of a true expert.

“You are our master from our previous life? Bullsh*t!” The Heavenwood Greenserpent nearly fainted from the rubbish that the young man was spouting.

Can you come up with a better excuse than that?

What master in our previous life? Why don’t you say that you are the reincarnation of Kong shi?

The heck, I can also say that I was your grandfather in my previous life!

“You don’t believe me?” Zhang Xuan frowned in discontentment.

“Believe your head!” the Heavenwood Greenserpent retorted angrily. Even if you want to fool us, do you think that we’ll accept such an excuse?

Turning his sights away from the raging Heavenwood Greenserpent, Zhang Xuan looked at the other three divine beasts and asked, “What about you? Do you not believe me either?”

“It’s no use stalling for time. We won’t let you do as you please anymore!” the Acheron Blacktortoise replied slowly.

The Celestialfire Phoenix harrumphed. “Let’s not waste our words on him. There’s something really weird about this fellow. Let’s just kill him first before discussing anything else!”

“Let’s do it then. I’ll make the first move...” the Terra Qilin said as it took a step forward.

In truth, they also felt a little pressured by the peculiarities that the young man had displayed so far. Putting everything aside, there was something really amiss about how he was able to tame the Goldspirit Cloudtiger so swiftly.

As Monarchs of the forest, they were extremely prideful creatures. Who would be willing to give up a position of superiority just to become subservient to a man?

“It seems like none of you believe me...” Zhang Xuan shook his head in disappointment before looking at the four divine beasts before him straight in the eye. “Do you dare to make a wager with me?”

“A wager?”

“That’s right! I’ll wager that I just have to say a single word to express my identity in order to make the Heavenwood Greenserpent bow down to me and acknowledge me as its master!” Zhang Xuan said calmly as he placed his hands behind his back leisurely. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click for visiting.

“You think that I’ll submit to you with just a single word?”
The Heavenwood Greenserpent nearly choked on its flurrying anger. “Are you certain that there isn’t anything wrong with your head?”

As a beast who had inherited the noble bloodline of the dragons, it was a powerful and highly-esteemed existence in the Beast Tribe. Even if it was grilled alive, there was no way that it would submit to a mere human!

Putting aside a single word, it was futile even if the other party used up his entire lifetime worth of words.

“Just give the word and say if you are willing to accept my wager!” Zhang Xuan shrugged nonchalantly. “The wager is simple. If I am able to make you submit, you must acknowledge my identity and make the other three divine beasts submit to me. If I am unable to do it, I’ll free the Goldspirit Cloudtiger and kill myself on the spot!”

“You want me to make them submit to you too?” The Heavenwood Greenserpent was slightly startled. It did not expect the young man to propose such a wager.

“Indeed. As the head of the Five Monarchs, surely you have some confidence in yourself, right?” Zhang Xuan said with a taunting smile.

“Humph! If our boss is willing to submit to you, we have no qualms about submitting to you. However, can we really trust you to fulfill your end of the bargain if you lose the wager?” the Terra Qilin challenged.

Having known the Heavenwood Greenserpent for so many years, they were already familiar with the latter’s temper.

It was incredibly obstinate and unbending, especially when it came to matters that compromised its dignity!

The only one who had made the Heavenwood Greenserpent submit in so many years was Kong shi. Yet, the young man wanted to make it submit to him.

What a joke!

“That’s right! If you can make our boss submit to you, we’ll acknowledge you as our master!”

“What’s there to be frightened of? There’s no way our boss will bow to a weak human like you!”

The Celestialfire Phoenix and the Acheron Blacktortoise also voiced their support proudly.

“I’ll hold you to your promise then,” Zhang Xuan replied calmly.

“Hah! I just hope that you won’t renege on your promise when the time comes!” the Terra Qilin spat coldly.

“This…”

But at this point in time, a frown furrowed its way onto the Heavenwood Greenserpent’s forehead. The situation was developing so quickly in a direction that it did not expect that it felt like there was a need for it to stop and think things through.

The fearlessness of the young man and his ability to make the Goldspirit Cloudtiger submit to him so quickly left it feeling a little unnerved.

At this lull in the conversation, the Terra Qilin sent a telepathic message to the Heavenwood Greenserpent. “Boss, you have always disliked the scheming humans. We believe in you! Why don’t you accept this fellow’s request and save Cloudtiger first?”

Considering the Heavenwood Greenserpent’s temperament, this was a wager that they were bound to win. There was nothing for them to fear!

“This…” Uncertainty flickered across the Heavenwood Greenserpent’s eyes for a moment before it finally gathered its resolve and nodded. “Very well, I’ll accept your wager!”

It would not dare make guarantees for other beasts, but it was at least confident in itself.

Even if it died, it would never bow down to another human in its life.

“Let’s begin then!” Seeing that he had managed to convince the Heavenwood Greenserpent to accept his wager, Zhang Xuan heaved a sigh of relief. “Are you ready? I don’t wish to leak the matter to others, so I’ll be sending you a telepathic message instead. Please listen to me very closely!”

“Feel free to do whatever you want. No matter what you do, there’s no way I’ll submit to you. I advise you to give up on this meaningless pursuit!” the Heavenwood Greenserpent sneered coldly.

Some things were simply impossible!

No matter what the other party said, there was nothing that would be able to change its mind.

Even if you are Kong shi’s reincarnation, as long as I refuse to acknowledge you, what can you do about it?

Having made up its mind, it pricked up its ears to listen closely to what the young man was going to say.

Just as it was making preparations, the Celestialfire Phoenix, Terra Qilin, and Acheron Blacktortoise were discussing the situation telepathically.

“Rest assured, I know our boss very well. No one can make his determination waver!”

“I think that fellow is intentionally stalling for time. There’s a chance that he might have some reinforcements on the way. We have to keep a close eye on the surroundings!”

While they were discussing the matter fervently, they suddenly saw the young man taking in a deep breath before shouting a single consonant telepathically.

Padah!

Instantly, the Heavenwood Greenserpent collapsed to the ground, its body trembling nonstop. It glanced frightfully at the young man before lowering its body all the way down.

With agitation in its voice, it exclaimed, “Heavenwood Greenserpent pays respects to master!”

1709 Guarding the Exi

“Our boss... has acknowledged him as its master?”

Utter silence loomed in the area.

The Celestialfire Phoenix, Terra Qilin, and Acheron Blacktortoise were all stunned silly. They remained rooted to the spot, and their minds seemed to have stalled.

They knew just how obstinate the Heavenwood Greenserpent could be... But with just a single consonant from the other party, it actually sprawled right to the ground with no regards for its dignity at all. To make matters worse, there was a look of desire in its eyes.

What in the name of heavens had just happened?

At the same time, Wu Changping was on the verge of insanity as well.

In order to tame the Goldspirit Cloudtiger, he had made many preparations. He had promised many treasures to convince the other seven members of the group to assist him in his mission. On top of that, he had even expended a Great Sage artifact for this purpose... but in the end, he had failed to acquire anything and even been captured.

On the other hand, this fellow had managed to tame the Goldspirit Cloudtiger within a few short minutes. With another word, he made the Heavenwood Greenserpent grovel on the ground, not daring to appear disrespectful at all.

This was ridiculous!

“Seal the contract!” Zhang Xuan instructed.

Toward beasts who possessed the Dragon Bloodline, there was no weapon stronger than the Eight Notes of Heavenly Dragon.

No matter how high-tiered the Heavenwood Greenserpent was, it was unable to break free from the restraints of its bloodline. It was precisely due to his awareness of this that

Zhang Xuan intentionally made a wager with it. As expected, the others had swiftly been baited by his promise.

It was not that they were fools, but it was simply unthinkable for a mere human to be able to speak the language of the Pureblooded Dragons!

No one would expect an Aureate Body realm cultivator like him to have so many tricks up his sleeve, such that even Sempiternal realm experts like them would end up being caught off guard time and time again.

Even though the Heavenwood Greenserpent was a little reluctant to relinquish its freedom, under the pressure of the Eight Notes of Heavenly Dragon, it had no choice but to offer its blood essence.

After sealing the contract, Zhang Xuan turned to the three remaining beasts and said, "It's your turn. Since I was able to make the Heavenwood Greenserpent submit with a single word, it's my victory. Of course, it's just an ordinary wager. No vows were made, and there's nothing to bind you to your words. If you don't intend to follow the wager..."

"Ridiculous! The blood of the Ancient Divine Beasts runs through our veins. How can we possibly renege on our promise?"

"A loss is a loss. Since our boss has chosen to submit to you, I have no problem acknowledging you as my master..."

"I just hope that you won't force us into doing anything that violates our principles..."

...

The Terra Qilin, Celestialfire Phoenix, and Acheron Blacktortoise were not too happy about the situation, but they were too proud to renege on their promise. They nodded and offered their blood essence to Zhang Xuan.

In any case, since the other party had been able to make their boss submit, it was not too embarrassing for them to acknowledge the other party as their master. It was at least something that they could live with.

“That saves me a lot of trouble...” Seeing that the other three beasts had decided to abide by their promise, Zhang Xuan heaved a sigh of relief.

The main reason Zhang Xuan had made the wager was to make those three divine beasts submit to him as well. Of course, with the Heavenwood Greenserpent and Goldspirit Cloudtiger on his side, he would have been able to eventually beat them into submission. Nevertheless, this would spare him a great deal of trouble.

“Since you have chosen to submit to me, as your master, I should at least reciprocate your loyalty!”

After taming all five divine beasts, Zhang Xuan looked at every one of them before speaking again.

“Goldspirit Cloudtiger, as a metal attribute beast, you possess superior offensive capability, but your defense is considerably lacking. More importantly, despite the immense strength you wield, you lack precision in control. That left you with a lot of openings that I could exploit. I’ll point out a couple of your major flaws now, and as long as you make corrections accordingly, you should be able to raise your fighting prowess significantly!”

He went on to elaborate on several flaws that the Goldspirit Cloudtiger suffered from, as well the ways to correct them.

When he fought with the latter earlier, the Library of Heaven’s Path had already uncovered the flaws that it was suffering from. Combining that with his knowledge as a beast tamer, it was extremely easy for him to find the solutions to those flaws.

Cultivating in accordance to Zhang Xuan’s impartation, the Goldspirit Cloudtiger did enjoy a significant rise in its fighting prowess. A brilliant gleam surfaced in its eyes as it knelt onto the floor once more, this time out of earnest respect for Zhang Xuan.

If it had only submitted due to the threats and benefits that Zhang Xuan had promised, this time around, it was out of earnest respect for him.

Following which, he offered some pointers to the cultivation of the remaining divine beasts as well, inducing a significant leap in their fighting prowess. Excited over their newfound strength, they hurriedly bowed in gratitude to Zhang Xuan.

Having reached Sempiternal realm consummation, they had thought that it would be difficult for them to advance their fighting prowess unless there was a major evolution in their bloodline. They had never thought that there was still room for them to improve further.

If they continued cultivating in accordance to Zhang Xuan's words, they might even be able to push for a breakthrough to Ancient Sage in the future!

To them, this was much more attractive than being the Monarchs of this forest and ruling over a bunch of beasts.

“Master, what do we do about these fellows?” The Heavenwood Greenserpent pointed to Wu Changping and the others.

“Their actions lacked consideration, and they were disrespectful to the Goldspirit Cloudtiger. Nevertheless, their actions don't warrant the death sentence. Make them compensate for their actions and set them free!” Zhang Xuan said with a wave of his hand.

To be honest, he was kind of glad that the group of eight was in front of him. If he had charged right into the lair, he would have been the one who was encircled by the five divine beasts. Perhaps, he might not have even gotten a chance to fight one on one, and things might not have ended as smoothly as they did.

However, it was a fact that the group of eight bore malicious intentions toward him, and they had made a move on the Goldspirit Cloudtiger. Considering how the latter was now his tamed beast, he could not let the group of eight go without making them pay a hefty price.

“Yes, master!”

Seeing that his master was not the type of honest to a fault human, the divine beasts heaved a sigh of relief.

It seemed like they would not be taken advantage of by others serving him.

Under the menace of the five divine beasts, Wu Changping and the others had no choice but to submit. They obediently handed over the treasures that they had amassed over this period of time along with grade-9 pills, artifacts, and the like before they were finally set free. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click for visiting.

“Take them! I’ll leave it to you to decide how you want to split these items among yourselves. Also, I want to make it clear that your loyalty will not go unrewarded. If you perform well, I have no qualms granting you my Great Sage artifacts!” Zhang Xuan said.

The artifacts that Wu Changping and the others had handed over could not even catch his eye, so he left it to the five divine beasts to deal with them internally. At the same time, he also dropped them expectations for the future.

Managing one’s tamed beast was actually not much different from managing one’s subordinates. On top of the carrot and the stick, what was more important was to give them positive expectations for the foreseeable future.

Resolving the flaws in their cultivation and promises of invaluable treasures... With the offer of such alluring benefits, the five divine beasts would be more inclined to submit to him both physically and mentally.

As expected, after hearing his words, looks of agitation appeared on the five divine beasts. From the looks of it, it seemed like Zhang Xuan had won their loyalty for the time being.

After Wu Changping and the others left, Zhang Xuan finally posed the doubt lingering in his heart. “Shouldn’t you all be scattered around the area? Why are you gathered inside the Goldspirit Cloudtiger’s lair?”

Based on what he had heard from the Crimsonfrons White Tiger, the Five Monarchs each had their own territory in the

forest and rarely interacted with one another. Why would they gather together in a lair?

“As soon as we noticed that the dimension has been opened and humans have made their way in, we immediately gathered together here. Firstly, we intended to come up with a countermeasure to curb the threat of the humans. Secondly, we also wanted to guard the exit and prevent anyone from passing through it!” the Heavenwood Greenserpent explained.

“Exit?” Zhang Xuan’s eyes lit up upon hearing that word. “Could it be that... the exit to the Temple of Confucius lies within the cavern?”

Given that the five divine beasts had come out of the cavern... could it be that the supposed ‘exit’ was located in there?

“That’s right!” The Heavenwood Greenserpent nodded. “Back then, Kong shi brought us here and delegated the responsibility of guarding the exit and preventing anyone from finding it to us. I suppose that’s the trial he has entrusted to us!”

Hearing those words, Zhang Xuan frowned in confusion. “You said that Kong shi captured you? In other words, you have met Kong shi?”

It had been tens of thousands of years since Kong shi had vanished from the Master Teacher Continent.

While those of the Beast Tribe tended to enjoy greater longevity than human cultivators, none of them were able to live that long. Otherwise, just by accumulating a bunch of old monsters across many generations, they would be able to claim the Master Teacher Continent and take on a dominant position in the world!

It was impossible for the five divine beasts to have lived for tens of thousands of years, so what could they mean by saying that Kong shi had captured them?

1710 Desert Dimension

“Of course, we’ve seen him before! It hasn’t been too long since Kong shi left this dimension after all!” The Heavenwood Greenserpent nodded affirmatively as if it was the most natural thing in the world.

“It hasn’t been long since Kong shi left this dimension?” A deduction surfaced in Zhang Xuan’s mind, and he hurriedly asked, “How long has it been since Kong shi left this dimension?”

The Heavenwood Greenserpent pondered for a moment before replying, “Roughly four hundred years, I suppose!”

“Indeed!” Zhang Xuan’s body shuddered at having his hypothesis verified.

He had thought that it was odd when the Heavenwood Greenserpent said that Kong shi had brought them here, but he did not think that they were lying to him. There was no reason for them to lie to him.

Instead, he thought that this anomaly could be attributed to a difference in the flow of time instead. Most likely, the flow of time within the folded space was slower than the flow of time on the Master Teacher Continent, or else the divine beasts would have already been reduced to a pile of bones by now.

The words that the Heavenwood Greenserpent had just said effectively verified his deduction.

Doing a rough calculation, it had been around forty thousand years since Kong shi left the Master Teacher Continent. Yet, in the eyes of the Heavenwood Greenserpent, it had only been four hundred years since he had left. Did this not mean that the flow of time within the folded space was a hundredth of the world outside?

In other words, the passing of a day in this folded space equated to the passing of a hundred days in the Master Teacher Continent!

If such time deceleration could be used on an Ancient Sage, the latter would be able to extend their lifespan significantly without resorting to hibernation.

No, this doesn't work either... With my mastery of temporal arts, I should be able to notice it if there's any difference in the flow of time. Yet, why do I not sense anything at all? Zhang Xuan wondered with a frown.

Having comprehended the Time Quintessence, he was no longer as ignorant of time as he had been before. If there was a difference in the flow of time, he surely would have noticed it. Yet, that was not the case. Why was it so?

Forget it, there's no point thinking about it now... I'll probably find my answer once I get to the Temple of Confucius!

Unable to figure out the reason after some thought, Zhang Xuan shook his head and tossed the matter to the back of his mind.

He turned to the five divine beasts and said, "Bring me to the exit!"

The Heavenwood Greenserpent led the way forward.

The cavern was spacious, and there was a huge hole in the middle where a pool of lava flurried. It felt like anything in the world would melt within the pool of lava.

"This is... the exit?" Zhang Xuan was taken aback. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click for visiting.

No matter how he looked at it, all he could see was the crater of a volcano. It was hard to imagine that the Temple of Confucius was located within the crater.

"I'm not too sure about the details either. Back then, Kong shi instructed the five of us to guard this area, so we guessed that it's the passageway leading to the Temple of Confucius!" the Heavenwood Greenserpent explained.

Kong shi's wisdom was expansive and transcendental. It was not something that beasts like them could fathom.

Perplexed, Zhang Xuan activated the Eye of Insight and scanned his surroundings, but he was unable to find any indicative signs at all. In the end, he could only shake his head.

“For the time being, you should enter my folded space. Whether the passageway lies within the crater or not, I’ll just have to check to find out!”

Knowing that he would not find anything dawdling in the area, Zhang Xuan stowed the beasts into the Myriad Anthive Nest with a wave of his hand. After that, he leaped right into the pool of lava.

Given how even the Empyrean Heavenly Flame was unable to burn his physical body, there was no way that he would fear mere lava. As searing as it was, such heat could not bother him anymore.

He continued to swim downward for a while longer. Soon, a spatial seal reminiscent of that in the Subterranean Gallery appeared before him. Without any hesitation, he dived through the spatial seal.

Hula!

The world warped around Zhang Xuan, placing him in a short state of disorientation. By the time that he recovered from his light-headedness, he was already standing in a completely different world.

The area that the five divine beasts lorded over was a forest with lush greenery, but the land that he was currently standing on was a desert. Intolerable heat waves swept across the surface of the sand, and the entire world seemed to be covered with an endless shade of beige. There was no end in sight.

“Is this the exit you spoke of?” Zhang Xuan sighed helplessly.

From the looks of it, it felt like he had leaped from one folded space to another. However, this folded space did not seem to have anything to do with the Temple of Confucius at all!

Could he have gone the wrong way?

“This...”

The Heavenwood Greenserpent was also baffled by the change in scenery. They did not think that such a world would exist behind the seal that they had guarded for four hundred years.

It was clear that they had never been there before.

The Heavenwood Greenserpent pondered for a moment before suggesting an idea. “Master! I have scouted the entire forest, and this is the only way out of it. Could this be another trial set up by Kong shi? Perhaps, you have to continue searching for the next exit in order to get to the Temple of Confucius!”

“I guess that’s the only possibility...” Zhang Xuan shook his head helplessly.

He could not think of another rational explanation other than this.

Perhaps, it might be more accurate to think of the entire folded space as a layered dungeon. Only by finding the exit would he be able to proceed to the next floor. He would have to overcome several floors before he would finally arrive at the Temple of Confucius.

Of course, he had known from the very start that it would be no simple feat to get to the Temple of Confucius. He swiftly decided on another direction with a twist of the Dragonbone Divine Spear, and riding on the back of the Heavenwood Greenserpent, he charged ahead.

There was not a single person to be found within the arid desert. In less than two hours of flight, both Zhang Xuan and the Heavenwood Greenserpent were already feeling a little light-headed. Their lips were starting to crack from dryness.

Something is amiss here... Zhang Xuan thought with a tight knit between his brows.

Given their cultivation, putting aside a desert, their bodies would not have any abnormalities even if they were to sleep on top of lava. It was unthinkable for them to become dehydrated after a short two-hour journey.

Zhang Xuan studied the folded space closely and swiftly noticed that it was constructed in a manner very different from other spaces. It was ingeniously designed to form a formation

that would continuously sap one's water and stamina. He turned to the Heavenwood Greenserpent and said, "It seems like this is really no ordinary desert. We have to quickly find the exit, or else we might lose our lives here!"

As he spoke, he took out the spirit essence that he had kept in his storage ring and drank it. It quenched his thirst and rejuvenated the sapped vitality in his body. He passed it over to the Heavenwood Greenserpent to have a drink as well before proceeding ahead.

After another hour of journeying, he suddenly noticed some footprints on the ground.

"It's the footprints of a human. Could it be that another human has entered this folded space through the exit?" Zhang Xuan frowned doubtfully.

He had needed to deal with the Five Monarchs before he was able to find his way here. Furthermore, the location of the exit was extremely discreet, hidden in the midst of the lava. Typically speaking, it should have taken quite a bit of time for others to find this location. It was bizarre to find fresh footprints in the midst of the desert.

Could it be that someone had entered the area ahead of him?

"Let's head over to take a look!"

Intrigued, he activated his Eye of Insight and followed the trail of footprints.

Soon, he discovered a group of men ahead of him. There were powerful emanations of zhenqi all around, which seemed to suggest that they were battling with some other entity.

Taking a closer look, there were eighteen men in total. They were all dressed in different clothes, and the strongest of them was at the Intuitive Impulse realm.

Their faces were ghastly pale, and their lips were cracked. They looked like they were in a much more terrible state than he was.

The entity that they were battling against was a giant made out of sand. It had no distinctive features, but the powerful aura

that it released showed that it wielded strength comparable to a Sempiternal realm primary stage cultivator.

It was precisely due to this that, despite their numerical advantage, the group of eighteen was still facing trouble taking it down.

“Break!”

Knowing that he could acquire important intelligence from the group ahead of him, he whipped out his Dragonbone Divine Spear and tossed it toward the sand giant.

Huala!

As if a javelin, the Dragonbone Divine Spear pierced right through the sand giant, and its aura immediately dissipated.

Huala!

It crumbled into a pile of yellow sand on the ground.

“Thank you for saving our lives!”

Seeing that Zhang Xuan had defeated the sand giant that they had been struggling with, the crowd heaved a sigh of relief before bowing respectfully to Zhang Xuan.

Seeing their haggard faces before him, it was apparent that they had been in there for at least several hours.

Perplexed, he asked, “How did you all get here?”

“We passed out after the brilliant light emanated from the Temple of Confucius enveloped us, and when we woke up once more, we were already here... Elder, why did you ask us that question?” an Intuitive Impulse realm cultivator in the group replied.

He seemed to be a little surprised by Zhang Xuan’s bizarre question.

1711 Sand Giants

“You were already here when you woke up?” Zhang Xuan was taken aback.

He had woken up in the forest ruled by the Five Monarchs, but these people actually woke up here. Could it be that the crowd was not just teleported to a random location, they were teleported to random folded spaces as well?

It’s no wonder I couldn’t feel Luo Ruoxin or any familiar auras around!

He had encountered quite a few cultivators in the forest earlier, but he did not find any familiar faces. He had not thought much of it back then, but at this moment, it was already more than apparent that something was wrong.

It seemed like the Temple of Confucius was far more complex than he had predicted.

“What was the sand giant earlier? Since you have been here for several hours already, did you notice anything striking?” Zhang Xuan continued asking.

The forest was filled with treasures and the ‘teacher’s milieu’, which could raise a cultivator’s Soul Depth. On the other hand, this desert seemed to be challenging a cultivator’s limits. Parched and sweltering, they were completely two different worlds! Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click for visiting.

But since everyone was teleported to a different folded space, there should be some kind of exit that would take him to another folded space.

“The sand giant is a lifeform that exists in this desert. We encountered it after traveling for roughly four hours, and it attacked us upon noticing our presence... If not for your help, we might have already succumbed by now!” the Intuitive Impulse cultivator revealed without hiding anything from Zhang Xuan.

“As for anything striking... I’m afraid I didn’t see anything of that sort. However, we did encounter a few other groups during our journey, and they seemed to be looking for an oasis. I’m not too sure whether they have managed to find it or not, but we didn’t see anything of that sort on our journey...”

“Oasis?”

Those words made Zhang Xuan’s eyes light up.

Indeed! Since there was a desert, there was bound to be an oasis somewhere.

It was highly likely that the exit would be located in the oasis!

Zhang Xuan nodded in delight upon finding a clue as to what he should be looking for. After which, he turned his sight back to the Intuitive Impulse realm cultivator. “How did you encounter the sand giant earlier?”

“We were simply resting to alleviate our exhaustion and quench our thirst when that fellow suddenly appeared and attacked us!” the Intuitive Impulse realm cultivator replied.

“You were trying to quench your thirst?” Zhang Xuan frowned.

If that was the triggering factor, he did drink a bit of spirit essence earlier too, but the sand giant did not appear.

“That’s right. However, it feels like there’s something really weird about this place. No matter how much water we drink, it doesn’t seem to quench our thirst. Instead, the more we drink, the feebler we become,” the Intuitive Impulse realm cultivator said bitterly.

“Drinking water doesn’t work?” Bewildered, Zhang Xuan flicked his wrist and took out a gourd of water. With a sip, he realized that his mouth was getting more and more parched. It was as if he was pouring flames into his body, causing it to wither bit by bit.

He threw the gourd back into his storage ring and took out the spirit essence that he had collected from the forest earlier. Taking a sip of it, he felt his acupoints loosening in relaxation.

The parched sensation on his tongue alleviated, reinvigorating him.

“I see...” Zhang Xuan nodded in realization.

From the looks of it, it seemed like water was useless there. The only replenishment one could drink was spirit essence!

“Elder, you have spirit essence with you? Can you... share some with us?”

While none of those in the group were as strong as Zhang Xuan, they were still top-notch experts of the Master Teacher Continent. With their sharp eyes, they saw his lips cracking after drinking a sip of water, but drinking a sip of spirit essence brought him back to normal condition.

It was apparent to them that only drinking spirit essence would alleviate their thirst and soothe their exhaustion!

“You want some spirit essence? I am...”

Since Zhang Xuan had collected plenty of spirit essence earlier, he was very willing to give it out to the other members of the group. However, a thought came in his mind, and he asked, “Give me a moment first. You mentioned earlier that the sand giant attacked you while you were drinking water, right?”

The crowd nodded.

“May I trouble you to copy what you did when you drank water earlier? Make sure not to leave out any details. If we could attract another sand giant, it could possibly provide us with the key to escaping from this desert!” Zhang Xuan instructed.

He did not expect the sand giant to be so weak as to die with a single toss of his spear. Considering how large the desert was, it would be foolish to think that he would be able to find the oasis just by wandering around aimlessly. The wiser decision would be to rely on the native race living in this desert!

However, the problem was that he would have to first attract a sand giant.

The fact that he had wandered around for more than two hours but encountered no sand giants likely meant that there was some kind of trigger to draw it in.

“This...” No one in the crowd was a fool. Upon hearing his words, they widened their eyes in realization and nodded.

“Very well!”

Zhang Xuan put his Dragonbone Divine Spear aside and reverted his aura back to normal, making it appear as if he was an ordinary Aureate Body realm cultivator on the surface.

Hula!

After accomplishing all this, he turned his gaze to the crowd and gestured for them to do it. One of the cultivators swiftly flicked his wrist and took out a gourd.

At their cultivation realm, there was no one who did not have a storage ring. They would usually keep a long-term supply of food and water in their storage ring in case of emergencies.

The cultivator gulped down several mouthfuls of water, but the more he drank, the more withered he seemed to become.

Frustrated, he tossed the gourd into the sand.

Gulu gulu!

When the water from the gourd flowed into the sand, it was as if water had been poured upon burning oil. A sizzling sound echoed across the desert as white smoke drifted into the air.

Boom boom boom!

As the white smoke drifted higher and higher, the crowd suddenly heard the sound of flurried footsteps sounding from afar. Two massive sand giants were bolting in their direction!

“They are both at Sempiternal realm primary stage... Elder, you must protect us!”

The faces of the crowd warped in horror.

It was at the behest of this elder that they had lured the other party over. While they had the numerical advantage, they knew that they did not stand a chance against two sand giants given their current fighting prowess.

“Rest assured!” Zhang Xuan said confidently.

Instead of whipping out his Dragonbone Divine Spear, he pushed his feet against the burning sand and dashed toward one of the sand giants.

He opened his palm wide and pressed down heavily on it.

Hula!

A powerful rush of zhenqi swiftly enveloped the saint giant.

Roar!

It seemed like the sand giant also possessed sentience. It appeared to be aware of the disadvantageous position that it was in and raised its fist in a fluster to break open the zhenqi around it.

A furious storm swept across the area, and clouds of sand rose into the air.

Without a doubt, the sand giant was a powerful adversary. It was no wonder the group of eighteen had their hands tied dealing with it. However, it was still insufficient as an opponent for Zhang Xuan.

The sand giant hurled punch after punch, but it was unable to breach the zhenqi barrier around it.

On the other hand, the second sand giant seemed to have realized that Zhang Xuan was a formidable foe as well, and it charged forward in a hurry to aid its companion.

“Don’t worry, I don’t plan on leaving you alone!” Zhang Xuan chuckled softly as he flicked his other palm at the second sand giant.

Padah!

The second sand giant was immediately forced to the ground, unable to move at all.

Gazing coldly at the two helpless sand giants before him, Zhang Xuan harrumphed coldly. “Submit to me, and I can spare you from death!”

“Roar!”

It was hard to tell whether the two sand giants had truly understood his words, but they released ferocious howls and continued clawing at the zhenqi pressing them down.

“It seems like you aren’t going to submit to me until I show you a bit of force... Very well, I shall let you try my hand then!” Seeing that he had been disregarded by the two sand giants, Zhang Xuan narrowed his eyes coldly.

He flicked his finger and sent a surge of sword qi toward the two sand giants.

Before taming a beast, one had to first exert one’s dominance over the beast to show the beast that resistance was futile. Only a beast who had given up on resistance could be tamed.

This was the method commonly used by most beast tamers, pummeling the beast first before dropping them incentives... While the sand giants did look a little silly, it was likely that they obeyed this convention as well.

Weng!

Zhang Xuan was intending to use his sword qi to teach the sand giants a lesson, but as soon as the sword qi sliced through the two of them, they began crumbling apart.

Huala!

In the blink of an eye, they had been reduced to a pile of yellow sand.

“The hell...” Zhang Xuan’s lips twitched.

1712 The Appearance of the Oasis

Zhang Xuan had been planning to emulate his success back at the forest—tame a sand giant and have it lead him to the oasis. He did not think that the sand giant would be so brittle that even a casual shot of his sword qi would actually make it crumble into sand.

Not even he had the ability to revert the sand back into sand giants!

“Isn’t its spirit a little too weak?” Zhang Xuan rubbed his glabella speechlessly.

He had thought that those two fellows would at least be as tough as normal Sempiternal realm cultivators, but who could have known that they would fall so easily!

In terms of spirit, they were really much feebler than the artifacts that he had enchanted.

“I’m sorry to bother you, but can you help me lure a few more sand giants over?” Zhang Xuan turned to look at the cultivators with an embarrassed look on his face.

It had not been easy for them to lure two over, but he had ended up slaughtering them before acquiring any useful information... He really had to take note of this matter so as to not make the same mistake again.

“Alright!”

The crowd nodded.

Another cultivator from the crowd took out a gourd, but this time, he tossed it out without bothering to drink it.

As water flowed into the desert, white smoke began drifted out from the sizzling sand. However, this time around, no sand giants appeared even after the crowd waited for quite a while.

“I think it would only work if you drink the water,” Zhang Xuan said.

“Un!” Shaking his head helplessly, the cultivator took out another gourd of water and sipped a few mouthfuls.

He was still fine before he drank the water, but as soon as water entered his mouth, his face immediately turned so red that it seemed as if smoke would billow out of his face. Enduring the light-headedness, he tossed the gourd out once more.

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Water flowed into the desert, and just like before, two sand giants were drawn over.

These two sand giants were also at Sempiternal realm primary stage, and they did not seem to possess too much intelligence.

Taking a deep breath, Zhang Xuan engaged the two sand giants once more. This time around, he did not dare to exert too much strength. He focused mainly on trapping the two of them on the spot.

The two sand giants continued pummeling the seals trapping them in place, but they were unable to break free.

“Soul Search!”

This time, instead of attempting to tame the sand giants, he chose to utilize his soul art.

Having read all of the books in the Jiang Clan and comprehended the Soul Quintessence, he had become highly-skilled in the techniques of the soul oracles such as Soul Search.

It was just that it disrupted the harmony of the world, so he avoided using the technique as much as he could.

The sand giants before him did not seem to be natural lifeforms, so he did not have much hesitation using Soul Search on them.

Hula!

His consciousness dived within the body of sand, and the next moment, he found himself surrounded by darkness. Vaguely, he could see a seed of light shining in the very depths of the darkness.

“That is... spirit enchantment art?” Zhang Xuan frowned.

He had thought that the sand giants were a little too dull for Sempiternal realm beings, but who could have known that they were the products of spirit enchantment!

That explained their surprising weakness despite their cultivation. It was inevitable that the intelligence of enchanted beings would be lower compared to ordinary cultivators, so their fighting prowess would be highly lacking as well.

During the confrontation with the Master Teacher Pavilion headquarters in the Empire Alliance City, Wang Ying had enchanted all of the Master Teacher Pavilions, but the overall prowess of the army had still been severely limited.

“Wait a minute... these sand giants are made out of ordinary sand! To be able to grant ordinary sand prowess comparable to Sempiternal realm primary stage cultivators...” Zhang Xuan suddenly froze in place.

These sand giants might have been a little dull, but there was no questioning the strength that they wielded. Otherwise, the group of eighteen would not have faced so much trouble dealing with one.

He had slain three of them so far, and after their spirit disintegrated, they had immediately dissolved back into ordinary sand. In other words, there was something within this desert that could enchant ordinary sand and bestow it strength comparable to Sempiternal realm cultivators!

That was an extremely scary notion in itself!

As one who had cultivated the Heaven’s Path Spirit Enchantment Art, Zhang Xuan was confident that his enchantment abilities were unrivaled in the world, even when compared to Wang Ying, the head of the Spirit Awakener Guild headquarters! But even so, he knew that the limits of his ability lay in bestowing spirit upon items that had form.

Toward formless entities, his enchantment was unlikely to work at all, let alone bestowing them the strength of a Great Sage!

Peng!

Deep in thought, Zhang Xuan lost control of his soul energy for a moment, and the flicker of life in the two sand giants immediately extinguished. Their bodies swiftly crumbled back into a pile of sand.

Zhang Xuan stepped forward to take a closer look at the heap of remaining sand. They were indeed only ordinary sand. There was nothing else mixed within it.

Following which, he scanned his surroundings and narrowed his eyes.

It was just as he had expected.

If these sand giants were products of enchantment, it was likely that the spirit awakener who had enchanted them knew where the exit was!

In other words, the key to escaping this folded space lay in whether he was able to find the spirit awakener or not.

Just that... how was he supposed to find this spirit awakener?

Zhang Xuan fell into deep contemplation, and a moment later, realization dawned upon him.

“If I recall correctly... the sand giants seem to have emerged from that direction. It’s likely that the spirit awakener is in that direction too!”

He had to be in direct contact with an item if he wanted to enchant it. While he did not know whether the spirit awakener in the desert was bound by the same restrictions as him, the direction that the sand giants had appeared from likely held a clue of some kind.

“Everyone, follow me!”

Without any hesitation, Zhang Xuan led them in the direction that the sand giants had appeared from.

After traveling for roughly ten minutes, he came to a halt.

There was still no difference in his surroundings yet. All that was within sight was yellow sand.

Zhang Xuan looked around him, but he was unable to find a clue whatsoever. Thus, he turned to the group of eighteen and instructed, "I'll need you to attract a sand giant here once more..."

Upon hearing the request, bitter looks appeared on the faces all around.

Not only are you depriving us of spirit essence, you are even forcing us to drink water to dehydrate ourselves...

Do you know that we'll die of thirst at this rate?

As stifled as the crowd was, they knew that the young man was their only hope of getting out of this darned place. Without any hesitation, another cultivator repeated the previous ritual.

Not too long later, two sand giants raced over from another direction.

These two sand giants were clearly much stronger than before. While their cultivation was still at Sempiternal realm primary stage, their fighting prowess was significantly higher. At the same time, they seemed to possess greater intelligence.

Knowing that it was impossible to tame the sand giants, Zhang Xuan killed them without any hesitation. After which, he continued walking in the direction that the sand giants had appeared from.

After traveling for another ten minutes, he had the group of eighteen repeat the ritual once more.

Two more sand giants appeared, but this time, the fighting prowess of the sand giants had risen to Sempiternal realm intermediate stage.

"It seems like the fighting prowess of the sand giants increases the closer we get to the spirit awakener..." Seeing that there were finally some changes in their circumstances, Zhang Xuan's eyes lit up in excitement.

Just like that, they continued ahead. Whenever Zhang Xuan felt uncertain of the direction, he would have the crowd conduct the ritual of drinking water and pouring it away.

Repeating the process another ten times, the fighting prowess of the sand giants had increased to Sempiternal realm advanced stage.

However, it seemed like the fighting prowess of the sand giants had reached a cap and was unable to grow any further.

“This was the strength of the sand giants ten minutes ago, and the strength is still equal at the moment. If I form a straight line between the two points that we summoned the sand giants... it’s likely that the spirit awakener is located on another perpendicular line along the very center of this straight line!”

Spirit awakeners used their souls as a medium to control their enchanted artifacts, and the strength of their control would depend on the distance between the spirit awakener and the enchanted artifact. Considering that the two sand giants were of equal strength, it meant that the extent of the spirit awakener’s control over his enchanted artifact was identical at both points.

In other words, it was likely that the spirit awakener was equidistant from the two points.

The possible regions that were equidistant to the two points where they had summoned the sand giants were along the perpendicular line formed at the center of the straight line connecting the two points.

To put it in simpler terms, they only had to head to the center in between the two points where they had summoned the sand giants and travel either up or down, and they would be able to find the spirit awakener!

“Let’s go!”

Having confirmed a direction, Zhang Xuan headed to the center point and began heading upward.

Some time later, just as the crowd was swiftly approaching their limit, they heard an exclamation.

“Look! There’s an oasis just ahead!”

Zhang Xuan quickly turned his gaze ahead. Just as the voice had said, there was a conspicuous hint of lush greenery amid the dull yellow sand of the vast desert right ahead of them.

1713 The Bizarre Lakewater

Covering only several dozen mu, the oasis was not too big. There was a crystal-clear lake sitting quietly at the center of the greenery. Like a beautiful gemstone embedded at the tip of a tiara, it was extremely eye-catching. A massive tree towered by the side of the lake, and its lush leaves provided coolness for the cultivators standing beneath.

“There’s indeed an oasis!”

“Water! I want to drink water!”

Unable to take it any longer, the cultivator dashed forward in desperation.

Upon seeing the oasis, Zhang Xuan fell into a moment of contemplation. He quickly scanned his surroundings before his eyebrows shot up in horror.

“Wait a moment! Don’t drink the water!” he shouted as he rushed forward to stop them.

However, too overwhelmed by thirst, the reddened-eyed crowd had already charged straight toward the lake in desperation. In the time he had spent contemplating, some of them had already scooped up a handful of water and sipped on it.

Noticing Zhang Xuan’s intense reaction, one of the calmer cultivators turned his gaze over and asked, “Elder, what’s wrong?”

Even though the young man had been depriving them of spirit essence in order to lure the sand giants, it was a fact that he had brought them to the oasis. On top of that, he had shown sharp judgement far surpassing any of them. Perhaps, he might have noticed something that led him to stop them.

“There’s something really weird about this situation!” Zhang Xuan remarked as he hurriedly held back the other cultivators who had not sipped on the water yet. “Given how long it has been since you teleported in here, some groups should have

discovered the secret behind the desert and rushed over to the oasis. In fact, the footsteps around show that some people have definitely been here before us. Yet, where did those people go?”

He had been delayed in the forest for several hours before coming to the desert. While the secret behind the desert was rather obscure, there were bound to be some who were able to find their way over.

After all, most of those who had entered the Temple of Confucius could be considered as powerhouses of the Master Teacher Continent. Their intelligence and sharpness far exceeded that of ordinary cultivators.

However... where did those people head to?

“You’re right! There are indeed footsteps leading into the oasis...” Taken aback, the Intuitive Impulse realm cultivator hurriedly looked around him and noticed some shallow footprints around the perimeter of the oasis. Unfortunately, they had become indistinct after being cloaked by a layer of sand.

“Amazing, this water really works! Finally, I won’t have to suffer anymore...”

The few who had dashed into the oasis and tested the water cried in excitement.

The water that they had brought could not quench their thirst at all. In fact, it only seemed to further dehydrate them. At this point, they felt like they were on the verge of bursting into flames.

“Let me give it a try too...”

Upon hearing those words, the other cultivators whom Zhang Xuan had stopped immediately dashed forward, wanting to get a taste of the water as well. However, just as they were about to drink the water, the middle-aged man who had first drunk the water suddenly began convulsing wildly, and white smoke rose from his body.

“Ah...” A hoarse cry of agony escaped from his throat.

It was as if something was strangling his neck, causing him to roll frantically on the ground with his eyes bulging in desperation.

But the more he rolled, the more smoke seemed to rise from his body. It felt as if he would combust into flames at any moment.

“I...”

The middle-aged man was not the only victim. Another three cultivators who had rushed ahead of the pack to drink the water had fallen to the ground as well. White smoke began drifting from their bodies, and it looked like they were being put through inhuman pain.

“This is really bad!”

Alarmed, Zhang Xuan hurriedly flicked a surge of Heaven’s Path zhenqi toward the middle-aged man, intending to alleviate his conditions. However, before his Heaven’s Path zhenqi could reach him, the rolling figure suddenly cracked in the middle.

Huala!

He was reduced to a heap of yellow sand.

“This...”

Horrified by the sight before them, the crowd hurriedly backed away from the water with pale faces.

If the cultivators before them had been burned into cinders or reduced into skeleton, they could still have accepted the conclusion.

When they chose to enter the Temple of Confucius, they had already resolved themselves that they might not come back alive. However, these men had been reduced to yellow sand! What on earth was going on?

To be reduced to sand upon death... It could not be that the vast desert around them was the remains of countless corpses, could it?

Just the thought left goosebumps rising all over their bodies, and terror seeped into the very depths of their soul.

“Elder, save me...”

With the middle-aged man being reduced to a heap of yellow sand, the other three cultivators pleaded with horror imprinted in their eyes.

They had entered the Temple of Confucius with the intention of overcoming their bottlenecks and progressing to higher ranks. Who could have known that it would actually bring them so close to the jaws of death?

Zhang Xuan was also startled by the happenings, but he knew that it was not the time for him to fall into a daze. He quickly rushed to the three of them and placed his fingers on them. His Heaven’s Path zhenqi swiftly surged into the bodies of the trio.

Huala!

As soon as his zhenqi entered their bodies, he immediately sensed a bundle of flames devastating each of their bodies, threatening to burn them into cinders.

“Humph!”

With a harrumph, Zhang Xuan channeled his Heaven’s Path zhenqi to quell those bundles of flames.

Tzzzz!

As soon as his Heaven’s Path zhenqi collided with the bundles of flames, he immediately felt a powerful force corroding his Heaven’s Path zhenqi, seemingly attempting to combust his zhenqi into flames.

“Break!”

Furiously infusing more and more Heaven’s Path zhenqi into the three of their bodies, Zhang Xuan’s body began to take on a golden sheen, as if turning into a moving golden sculpture.

His zhenqi, physical body, and Primordial Spirit were able to endure even the might of the Empyrean Heavenly Flame.

While the bundles of flames in the trio’s bodies were a little queer, they still were not sufficient to hurt him.

Hu!

Under the furious onslaught of his zhenqi, the bundles of flames were finally quelled. Feeling that they were finally out of death's jaws, the pale-faced trio crumbled to the ground with a mixture of relief and trepidation. They quickly kneeled onto the ground and kowtowed to Zhang Xuan. "Elder, thank you for saving our lives!"

"There's no need to stand on ceremony!" Zhang Xuan said with a wave of his hand. Turning to the crowd, he said, "There's something really queer about this place, so let's not stay around the lake. For the time being, let's back out of the oasis!"

Even if Zhang Xuan had not said such words, the crowd would have been too frightened to remain around the lake anymore.

Death was not that frightening of a concept to them anymore, but to be burned down into yellow sand, such that every last trace of their existence would vanish... this was an extremely sinister way of dying that they could not even bear the thought of.

Unlike the rest of the crowd, Zhang Xuan did not back out of the oasis. Instead, he walked up to the heap of sand remaining of the middle-aged man and pinched a handful of it up. Leaning in, he examined it closely.

The middle-aged man had been burned so cleanly that not even his clothes were left. Had he not seen it with his own eyes, he would have never believed that a person could simply vanish just like that.

"Elder, what do we do now?"

An Intuitive Impulse realm cultivator stepped forward to examine the heap of sand as well, but he was unable to deduce anything from it. Thus, he could only turn his gaze to Zhang Xuan.

"Take this spirit essence and let the crowd drink it!" Zhang Xuan flicked his wrist and tossed several gourds over.

This was the spirit essence that he had gathered from the forest, and it could alleviate the thirst of the crowd for the time

being.

It was not that he had intentionally kept it away from the crowd, but it appeared that one who had drunk the spirit essence would not be able to attract the sand giants anymore. As such, he had been left with no choice but to keep it away from them so that they could reach the oasis. However, since they had already reached their destination, there was no reason for him to keep it from them anymore.

“Thank you, elder!”

Taking the spirit essence, the Intuitive Impulse realm cultivator hurriedly passed it around the crowd, and after gulping down large mouthfuls of it, their thirst was finally quenched. They could not help but turn to Zhang Xuan with looks of gratitude.

Paying no heed to the crowd, after Zhang Xuan had finished examining the sand grains, he began walking around the perimeter of the lake.

A cold air was emanating from the lake before him. Standing beside it, he could not feel the slightest hint of heat despite being in the midst of a sweltering desert. At the same time, the lake was also extraordinarily clear. It looked so innocent that it did not seem to have anything to do with the flames that had killed the middle-aged man earlier.

Despite scanning the perimeter of the lake, Zhang Xuan was unable to find anything peculiar about it. There were also no animals or the like within the oasis, so the matter could not really be attributed to anything else. Seeing that he had reached an impasse, Zhang Xuan walked up to the lake and scooped up the water, just like what the middle-aged man and the trio had done earlier.

“Elder, be careful!”

Seeing that Zhang Xuan had scooped up the water, everyone leaped in fright.

“It’s fine!” Zhang Xuan reassured them with a smile.

Even the Empyrean Heavenly Flame was unable to hurt his body in the least, so there was no way that bundle of flames

could pose any threat to him. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click for visiting.

Looking at the clear water that he had scooped up in his both hands, he scanned it using both his Eye of Insight and Spiritual Perception, but he was still unable to find anything wrong with it. Perplexed, he leaned in and sipped a mouthful of the water.

“Elder!”

“Be careful!”

The faces of the crowd turned pale in horror upon seeing the unbelievable sight before them.

The middle-aged man had died shortly after drinking the water. What were they supposed to do if something happened to the elder before them as well?

1714 The Manmurdering Tree

Swallowing the water did alleviate his thirst. Squatting quietly on the spot, Zhang Xuan focused his attention intently on the internal state of his body. As soon as the slightest spark of flame appeared in his body, he would quell it right away.

But even after waiting for a while, nothing happened at all. It was as if the water was completely ineffective on him.

When he stood up once more, there was a deep frown on his forehead.

If the flame had appeared in his body, he might have been able to trace down its origins. However, with nothing appearing at all, he had no idea how he should proceed on from here.

Could this be something similar to the Yellow Water of the Netherworld, which he had encountered in Ancient Sage Ran Qiu's ancient domain? Was the water poisonous to others but harmless to him?

"Elder, are you fine?" the Intuitive Impulse realm cultivator asked carefully.

Seeing there was no white smoke puffing out of the young man's head, and there was no cry of agony either, the crowd heaved a sigh of relief.

"I'm fine!" Zhang Xuan replied with a nod.

"That's a relief. It was really a horrifying sight to see a living person being reduced to yellow sand... If not for the fact that I have traveled here together with him, I would have thought that he was a sand giant in disguise!" the Intuitive Impulse realm cultivator remarked fearfully.

"Sand giant in disguise? Being reduced into yellow sand..."

A flash sparked through Zhang Xuan's mind as a thought surfaced in his head. He quickly turned to the Intuitive

Impulse realm cultivator and asked, “You said earlier that you only found a sand giant after traveling for four hours. In other words, you didn’t encounter any sand giants in the first four hours at all, did you?”

“Hmm? Yeah, that’s right!” The Intuitive Impulse cultivator was slightly taken aback by Zhang Xuan’s question, but he swiftly nodded affirmatively in response.

From the moment they woke up after being teleported out of Qufu, they had been in the midst of this desert. There was no danger at all initially, but on the fourth hour, they suddenly encountered a sand giant. They had mentioned this right from the moment they met, so it was not a secret at all.

“To only meet a sand giant on the fourth hour... Could it be that the sand giants are actually the remains of the dead cultivators?” Zhang Xuan murmured with a grim look in his eyes.

It was weird that the sand giants only appeared four hours after the opening of the folded space. Could it be that the first batch of cultivators had only found the oasis four hours after the opening and became the first group of sand giants?

“Remains of dead cultivators?”

The crowd was stunned.

Thinking about it, everything seemed to fit together. As horrifying as the idea was, it was actually plausible!

The middle-aged man had been reduced to sand after his death, which was the very reason that they had thought about sand giants in the first place!

“We’ll know the truth with a quick test!” Zhang Xuan said with narrowed eyes.

He walked back to the heap of sand that the middle-aged man turned into and placed his finger on it.

In the next moment, his consciousness was plunged into a world of darkness.

“As expected!” Zhang Xuan frowned grimly.

The fact that that he was brought into this dark space while using his spirit enchantment art meant that it was possible to enchant life into the heap of sand!

Focusing his attention, he enchanted a spark of flame into the heap of sand, breaking the darkness within this dark space.

Huala!

The heap of yellow sand slowly rose to its feet, becoming a massive sand giant. However, it only wielded the prowess of an Aureate Body realm cultivator.

“It’s no wonder enchanted sand could wield the strength of Sempiternal realm cultivators!” Zhang Xuan widened his eyes in realization.

Previously, he had been perplexed by how enchanted sand could wield such great fighting prowess. From the looks of it, it seemed like the sand that had made up the sand giants was not ordinary sand but the corpses of cultivators!

In other words, the sand giants that they had been fighting with all that while were actually the experts who had been reduced to sand by the oasis!

In other words... they had been fighting the dead!

“Wait a moment... if that’s the case, where in the world is the spirit awakener?” A doubt surfaced in Zhang Xuan’s mind as he quickly scanned his surroundings.

If his deduction held through, the spirit awakener had to be in the oasis. However, other than the lake, a field of grass, and a towering tree, there was nothing in sight.

“Even I have to come into direct contact with the heap of sand in order to enchant it... There’s no way the spirit awakener was able to enchant spirits into heaps of sand from a distance away!” Zhang Xuan rubbed his glabella in frustration.

He felt like he had already gathered the clues required to solve the puzzle, but everything still remained an enigma to him. Somehow, he was unable to form a complete picture with the clue to see through the veil of mystery.

And the very crux of that was the spirit awakener. Until he found the spirit awakener, this matter would remain a mystery to him, and he would not be able to find the exit out of this desert world.

He had also observed the lake very closely earlier. Crystal clear, he was able to see to the very bottom of the lake with ease, but there was no exit in sight.

As such, it was very likely that the exit was not located in the oasis.

“Earlier, the middle-aged man was reduced to yellow sand after drinking the water, but nothing happened to me when I consumed it. Also, it’s only possible to enchant the corpses after they have been reduced to heaps of sand. If there’s nothing wrong with the water, it has to be something above the water then!” Zhang Xuan frowned in bewilderment as he turned his gaze to the surface of the water once more.

Only those who drank the water from the oasis would be reduced to sand and become enchanted into sand giants. He felt that as long as he could understand how those cultivators were turned into yellow sand, he would be able to find out where the spirit awakener was hiding!

Thus, he scooped up another mouthful of water and examined it closely, but he still found nothing worth noting. It was just simple water with nothing inside. Just as he was about to give up, a slight breeze suddenly blew through the oasis. The tree towering by the lake swayed along with the breeze, its leaves rustling noisily.

Hu!

The cotton blooming all over the towering tree fell into the lake with a light tug of the breeze, and they floated quietly on the surface of the water. A moment later, they dissolved apart and vanished in the water.

“Could that be the culprit?” Zhang Xuan narrowed his eyes.

He hurriedly walked up to the towering tree and pinched a handful of cotton out.

Tzzzz!

To his astonishment, it felt as if a bundle of flames was burning on his palm. This bundle of flames bore a striking similarity to the flames that he had found in the bodies of the trio!

“Just as I thought!” Zhang Xuan nodded in realization.

It was no wonder those before them had ended up bursting into flames after drinking the water whereas he remained completely fine. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click for visiting.

It seemed like the key lay in these cotton buds.

Only when one drank water laced with cotton would they be reduced to yellow sand and transform into sand giants!

When he checked the water, the cotton had already dissolved into the lake, so it was no wonder he had been unable to find anything at all.

He had finally found the cause behind the mysterious flames... but where was the spirit awakener?

Zhang Xuan walked up to the tree and examined it closely. However, there was nothing peculiar in sight.

He raised his hand and placed it lightly on the tree trunk. A moment later, a smile crept onto his lips.

He leaned in to the tree and whispered, “You are the culprit, aren’t you?”

Hualala!

Another breeze brushed across the oasis, gently shaking the tree. It was as if the tree was feigning ignorance to Zhang Xuan’s words.

“You know, it doesn’t really matter to me whether you feign ignorance or not,” Zhang Xuan remarked leisurely.

With a flick of his wrist, the Infernal Black Saber materialized in his grasp, and with flash of cold light, it slashed right for the massive tree.

Let’s see how you are going to feign ignorance after I chop you down!

Hula!

But before the Infernal Blacksaber could come into contact with the tree, a hurried sharp gale of wind burst through the air. Glancing upward, Zhang Xuan saw a tree branch darting right for his head like a piercing spear.

The movement of the tree branch was extremely swift and forceful. In terms of prowess, it was actually on par with an attack from a Sempiternal realm consummation expert.

Nevertheless, Zhang Xuan still dodged the attack easily with a side step.

Sou sou sou!

However, it did not seem like the tree was willing to let him get away scot-free. Dozens of other tree branches suddenly shot forward and pierced right in Zhang Xuan's direction, as if the charge of innumerable ferocious dragons. The force of their movements left behind lingering black streaks in the air.

"Impressive!" Zhang Xuan narrowed his eyes as the earlier smile vanished from his face.

With a flick of his finger, he sealed the space around him to temporarily fend off the tree branches. Following which, he raised the Infernal Blacksaber and executed hundreds of slashes in the blink of an eye.

It was apparent that the tree wielded strength on par with Sempiternal realm consummation experts. He had to make sure to tread carefully, or else he might end up losing his life.

1715 Submission of the Massive Tree

The sharpness of the Infernal Blacksaber was not to be underestimated. It easily tore through the assaulting branches, thus undoing their offense. However, the incredible force behind their movements still left Zhang Xuan's arms feeling terribly numb, and he was forced to retreat a step due to the impact.

The reason Zhang Xuan was able to oppose Sempiternal realm consummation experts despite the current limitations of his cultivation was mostly due to the powerful artifacts in his possession. In terms of sheer strength, he was still far beneath most experts.

Sou sou sou sou!

The severing of its branches did not seem to inflict the slightest pain or damage on the massive tree. Instead, it swiftly sent even more branches to assault Zhang Xuan, each of them carrying strength rivaling Great Sage 4-dan Sempiternal realm consummation experts. With the tremendous pressure from the movements of the branches, even the surrounding space moaned under the strain, seemingly ready to collapse at any moment.

“Elder...”

Not expecting the elder to actually start fighting with the tree in the midst of his observation, the crowd was alarmed. They swiftly realized that the tree was likely the culprit behind the death of the middle-aged man, and they quickly rushed in to offer their aid as well.

“Don't come over!”

However, Zhang Xuan's voice halted them.

Given how even he was having trouble dealing with the tree, they would only be courting death by joining the fray.

Hula!

But the next moment, countless roots suddenly rose from beneath the sand to assault the crowd.

“Roots? Ah, I get it now. You have spread your roots throughout the entire desert, and it’s through your roots that you were able to enchant those sand giants!” Zhang Xuan remarked in realization.

While the tree was considerably tall in comparison to humans, it could not be said to be towering compared to other trees in the Master Teacher Continent. Yet, it wielded strength comparable to Great Sage 4-dan Sempiternal realm consummation cultivators. For it to gain such much power, its roots were bound to stretch far and wide. It was probably through its roots that it was able to enchant cultivators who had died dozens or even hundreds of li away. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click for visiting.

It went without saying that Zhang Xuan did not believe that the tree would be capable of remote spirit enchantment when even he was incapable of it.

“You might have plenty of roots, but I do have ways to deal with you too...” Having uncovered the trump card of the tree, Zhang Xuan could not be bothered to waste his breath anymore.

He flicked his wrist.

Hula!

The Five Monarchs immediately materialized right before him, exuding the powerful auras of superior beings. At Zhang Xuan’s command, they charged toward the massive tree simultaneously.

“This...”

“That elder actually has so many beasts with him?”

“Is it just me or is every single one of them actually at Sempiternal realm consummation?”

“Any one of those beasts would be more than enough to wipe out our whole party...”

...

Seeing the young elder releasing so many powerful tamed beasts at once, the crowd watching the battle could not help but gulp down a mouthful of saliva as their lips trembled in fear.

It already would be a huge blessing if an average Great Sage cultivator had successfully tamed a Great Sage beast, but this young man actually had so many tamed beasts, and every single one of them was incredibly powerful at that. They had thought that they already thought very highly of the young elder before them, but it seemed like they had been underestimating him!

This visual shock left them stunned for a very long time.

As soon as the Five Monarchs joined the battle, the massive tree immediately showed signs of being suppressed on all fronts.

A short moment into the battle, the Celestialfire Phoenix declared confidently, “Master, don’t worry. Allow me to deal with him!”

Hula!

A blazing inferno poured forth from its mouth, dyeing half the sky scarlet. As soon as the massive tree encountered the flames, it immediately recoiled in fear. The imposing disposition that it had commanded a moment ago vanished altogether.

While the massive tree was able to release cotton buds that would burn even Great Sage cultivators down into yellow sand, it was ultimately still a tree. It was inevitable that it was fearful of direct flames.

Xiong xiong xiong!

Fully aware of the massive tree’s weakness, the Celestialfire Phoenix continued pouring flames down. Before long, the

massive tree began to dry up, and its lush leaves withered yellow. Its strength was swiftly wilting away.

“I know that you are a sentient being capable of thought. Submit to me, and I can spare you from death. Otherwise, you will meet your end today!” Zhang Xuan placed his hands behind his back and remarked coldly, as if he had little regard for the tree’s life.

Having tamed the Five Monarchs, he was practically invincible against cultivators beneath Ancient Sage. Unless an Ancient Sage made an appearance, no one would be able to stop him anymore.

Given that the tree had intentionally harmed so many cultivators and enchanted them into sand giants, it was apparent that it was an intelligent lifeform.

Since that was the case, it would be best for him to collect it for his own use. After all, he could never have too many trump cards.

Barely a moment after Zhang Xuan said those words, a thought surfaced in his mind. “You want me to submit to you? Dream on!”

“Very well. I hope that you enjoy being burned into cinders like the cultivators you have harmed!” Zhang Xuan replied coolly with a grand wave of his hand.

Xiong xiong!

The Celestialfire Phoenix turned into the scarlet color of flames as it darted toward the massive tree while pouring flames down on it.

The incredible outpour of flames caused the surroundings to turn incomparably scorching. The massive tree swiftly withered under the searing heat, and it did not take long for it to become charred dead.

“Hmm?”

Seeing how the massive tree had refused to submit even when it was on the verge of death, Zhang Xuan frowned. He glanced at the floor, and his lips crept up. “Terra Qilin, sweep up all of

the roots underground for the Celestialfire Phoenix to burn. I don't believe that the tree will be able to survive this!"

Hearing Zhang Xuan's command, the Terra Qilin swiftly dived into the desert. A moment later, amid intense quakes, a massive web of roots was rooted out from the ground.

Without any hesitation, the Celestialfire Phoenix burned the roots as well.

The inferno swiftly spread to create a sea of flames.

While the flames breathed out by the Celestialfire Phoenix could not compete with heavenly flames, its prowess was far superior to earth flames.

If it ignited its bloodline to further enhance its flames, it might be able to melt down even Great Sage artifacts!

"There's no way I'll submit to mere humans. Give up on this futility!"

Despite having its roots burned to ashes, the massive tree still refused to give up. A weak will was transmitted over to Zhang Xuan, carrying a persevering spirit.

"It still isn't going to submit to me even with this?" Zhang Xuan was taken aback.

It was just a mere tree. Did it really need to have so much backbone?

Even without the tree trunk, as long as the roots remained intact, the massive tree might still be able to resuscitate itself. However, if it lost its roots as well, the only fate that awaited it was death!

"No, that's not right. If it's able to remain unfazed even with this, it's likely that destroying the roots will not kill that tree..." Zhang Xuan fell into deep thought.

Unlike master teachers, most spirits were unbounded by principles and rules. When survival was at stake, there was no reason for them to clutch onto their dignity and refuse to submit.

There was no reason for a mere tree to be so obstinate, refusing to submit even with its life on the line!

This meant that it probably had something that would ensure its survival. At the very least, the massive tree was confident that burning its trunk and roots would not be enough to kill it...

“The lake!” A spark flashed across Zhang Xuan’s mind as he lowered his gaze to the lake not too far away.

He had not noticed it earlier, but despite the searing heat from the Celestialfire Phoenix’s flames, it did not seem like the water in the lake had reduced at all.

“Acheron Blacktortoise, you possess the water attribute. I want you to sap away all of the water in this lake. I would like to see how long that tree can last!” Zhang Xuan instructed.

“Yes, Master!”

The Acheron Blacktortoise slowly made its way over to the lake and opened its massive mouth.

Hula!

The water in the lake immediately began gushing into its mouth at a frightening speed. It was almost as if there was a vortex in its mouth!

It did not take long for it to finish devouring all of the water in the lake. At the very bottom of the lake, there was a tiny, white root. It had a texture that reminded one of warm jade.

Without any hesitation, Zhang Xuan tore the root out from the ground and held it in his palm. The next instant, the tree trunk and roots that the Celestialfire Phoenix was torching suddenly withered into yellow sand, as if they had lost the foundation supporting them.

“Indeed, this is the main body...”

Upon seeing such a sight, how could Zhang Xuan still not understand what was going on?

The massive tree and its roots were all just extensions of the main body, reminiscent of puppets that the root had taken

under its control. It was no wonder the massive tree had refused to submit to them. As long as they failed to find its main body, there was no way they could have killed it!

“Celestialfire Phoenix, burn this root for me! Golden Origin Cauldron, if we aren’t able to burn it, I’ll need you to help me sear it into cinders!” Zhang Xuan instructed as he tossed the root out.

The next moment, the Golden Origin Cauldron, the Celestialfire Phoenix, and the other beasts and artifacts swiftly converged on the tiny root.

“Pl-please don’t kill me!”

Seeing so many experts eyeing it with hostility, the root trembled in fear. It cried out in despair, “I’m willing to submit! I’m willing to submit!”

If it had never been rooted out, as long as its main body remained, it could regrow the massive tree and its long web of roots anytime it wanted. However, given the current circumstances, it did not seem like it had any other way out of this than to submit!

“That’s more like it!” Seeing how the root had cast aside its bravado after being caught, Zhang Xuan nodded in contentment.

He quickly sealed a contract with the root.

With this, the culprit who had left all of the cultivators in the desert trembling in fear had become his tamed beast.

1716 The Ice Dimension

In truth, it was not accurate to call the root his tamed beast.

After taking in a sliver of the other party's soul, Zhang Xuan swiftly realized that the root was indeed a tree and not a beast.

It was a lifeform named Berserk Yellowsand Wood, which Kong shi had found. He took it and planted it in his folded space to serve as the guardian of this world. As long as one infused sufficient power into it, it would be able to reduce anything into sand and enchant it for its own use.

This was not just limited to humans but weapons and saint beasts as well.

It sounded like a formidable ability, but due to the limitations of its soul energy, it was only able to control a handful of sand giants simultaneously.

With its current strength, controlling two Sempiternal realm advanced stage sand giants simultaneously was already the limit of its ability.

As the new master of the Berserk Yellowsand Wood, Zhang Xuan was able to tap into its abilities. Nevertheless, even he was only able to control three Sempiternal realm advanced stage sand giants simultaneously.

In other words, if he worked hand-in-hand with the Berserk Yellowsand Wood, they would only be able to control five Sempiternal realm advanced stage sand giants simultaneously. That was not enough to form an army.

Nevertheless, as his cultivation rose, his ability to control sand giants would only grow stronger and stronger. It might become a powerful weapon to deal against the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe in the future!

As for the Berserk Yellowsand Wood itself, it was no exaggeration to say that it could be more powerful than the Five Monarchs if he used it well. After all, its ability allowed

it to turn anyone whose cultivation did not exceed it into yellow sand as long as certain conditions were met.

There was no doubt that this was an extremely frightening ability that would strike horror into the heart of any cultivator!

At the same time, while the prowess of sand giants was severely discounted due to their low intelligence, they were unafraid of sustaining injuries or death. As long as one could keep it constantly enchanted, it would never die. It would definitely be a headache for anyone to deal with.

I could give the Berserk Yellowsand Wood to Wang Ying...

He did not have much of a need for the artifact, especially since he already had plenty of trump cards in his possession. However, if he gave it to Wang Ying, the latter's fighting prowess would surely rise significantly. In fact, if she could use it well, she might even be able to overpower Zheng Yang!

Thinking of it, it was likely that Zheng Yang and Wang Ying, as the respective heads of the Combat Master Hall and Spirit Awakener Guild, had entered the Temple of Confucius as well. It was just that he did not know which dimension they had been teleported to.

Suppressing these miscellaneous thoughts in his mind, he glanced at the Berserk Yellowsand Wood and asked, "There should be an exit out of this dimension. Where is it located?"

Zhang Xuan had only realized it after taming the Berserk Yellowsand Wood, but the latter actually did not kill too many cultivators. In fact, most of the sand giants that went after them earlier were simply corpses that it had reanimated.

If the Berserk Yellowsand Wood had truly wanted to go on a massacre, many would have been dead by now. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click for visiting.

Thinking about it, if the Berserk Yellowsand Wood was truly an uncontrollable force that craved the lives of others, Kong shi would not have allowed it to continue living on this world.

"The exit is located at the bottom of the massive tree..."

As it spoke, the Berserk Yellowsand Wood moved a little.

Hong long!

The earth quaked intensely as all of the sand suddenly seemed to fall back into the earth, as if devoured by some powerful force. Following which, where the massive tree had existed previously, a seal reminiscent of a door appeared.

“The entire desert was indeed under your control. It’s no wonder your roots were able to reach everywhere in the desert,” Zhang Xuan remarked.

He stowed his beasts and artifacts back into his storage ring before turning to face the crowd behind him. “I’m intending to enter the next dimension. If you wish to follow me, come along with me. Otherwise, you can simply cultivate here. Without the yellow sand, you should be able to advance your cultivation much faster here than anywhere else!”

With the vanishing of the yellow sand, the environment was no longer as arid as before. Spiritual energy swiftly gushed into the dimension, reaching a level of concentration similar to the forest dimension before. At the same time, ‘teacher’s milieu’ began suffusing the area as well.

If the crowd was unwilling to brave any more danger, they would be able to make massive advancements in their cultivation just by cultivating there. Just from this alone, their expedition would not have been wasted.

“Elder, I wish to follow you!”

“I think I’ll stay behind here. It’s simply too dangerous. Even with plenty of treasures lying around, I won’t be able to enjoy them if I lose my life...”

It did not take long before the group of eighteen was divided into two teams, the remain and the leave factions.

“I’ll leave it to you to decide what you want to do. Think it through carefully. In any case, the exit is right here, and you can make your decision anytime you want. I’ll be going on ahead...”

Without saying too much, Zhang Xuan walked right into the spatial seal and vanished.

These cultivators that he had just met could only be considered acquaintances. There was no reason for him to get too deeply involved with them. He might have saved them once, but he could not continue taking care of them along the way, and he did not have the ability to guarantee their safety. If they wanted to acquire as much as they could from this ancient domain, they could only depend on themselves.

Besides, he had to look for Luo Ruoxin. Furthermore, he was certain that Zhao Ya, Yuan Tao, and Wei Ruyan, who had been captured a while back, would definitely be here. As such, he did not have the time or inclination to be merrymaking with a group of adventurers and enjoy the expedition.

A short moment after Zhang Xuan's departure, an Intuitive Impulse realm cultivator suddenly shook his head and remarked, "If we were a bit more decisive in choosing to follow behind that elder, we might have been able to reap great gains. It's unfortunate, but it seems like the window of opportunity has already slipped by."

The man earlier might have been young, but he was discerning and rational. Even with the great dangers that lay throughout the ancient domain, it felt like the young man would be able to overcome them with ease. If they could follow such a leader, it was likely that they would be able to meet with their own fortuitous encounter as well.

Of course, the young man had no reason to share the treasures that he had collected with them, but even the scraps and morsels that he left behind would allow their cultivation to surge swiftly. At the very least, they would be faring way better than they were at the moment.

However, they had already missed this opportunity.

...

Oblivious to the regrets lingering in the group that he had just departed from, the space around Zhang Xuan distorted once more. Before he knew it, he was standing on an icy plain.

With two prior experiences, he did not panic in the least. Instead, he flew as high as he could to survey the surroundings.

Just like in the forest, the higher he flew, the greater the pressure on him. With his current cultivation realm, thirty meters was already the limit.

“The environment here is even colder than the Glacier Plain Court...”

The entire world seemed to be cloaked with a thick layer of snow, and the gale that blew through the snowfield from time to time brought bone-chilling shivers to anyone brave enough to stand in the open in such weather. Even Aureate Body realm cultivators would feel an urge to cover themselves beneath multiple thick layers.

“It still isn’t the Temple of Confucius yet... I guess I’ll have to find another exit in this snowfield!” Zhang Xuan shook his head helplessly.

He had thought that he would be able to find the Temple of Confucius swiftly after the ancient domain opened, but it seemed like he had underestimated the trials that Kong shi had put in place.

This was already the third dimension that he had entered, and who knew how many more awaited for him?

“There are the Five Monarchs in the forest, the Berserk Yellowsand Wood in the desert... There should be something that forms the crux of this snowfield too. As long as I can find out what it is, I should be able to find the exit easily...”

He spun the Dragonbone Divine Spear to decide on a direction before advancing forward.

The first thing that he had to do was find other lifeforms, be it the indigenous beings that lived in the snowfield or the experts from the Master Teacher Continent who had entered this world. Through them, he would be able to acquire critical intelligence and successfully identify the location of the exit.

After flying for an hour, Zhang Xuan caught sight of a group of people trudging through the snow.

Zhang Xuan was just about to approach them to seek out more information when his eyes suddenly widened, and he halted his footsteps.

“Otherworldly Demons!”

There were around twenty people in the group, but the person who led the group at the forefront and the other two who followed at the very back were extraordinarily tall. Coupled with the intense killing intent they were emanating, it was apparent that they were Otherworldly Demons!

Judging from the intensity of their auras, it seemed like they had reached the Sempiternal realm. Even though they were no Wu Shu or Bei Xin, they could certainly be considered experts among the cultivators who had entered the ancient domain.

As for the remaining members of the group sandwiched between them, they were all humans. However, it seemed like they had been curbed by the Otherworldly Demons through certain means. With deadpan looks on their faces, they trudged through the snow lifelessly under the Otherworldly Demon’s lead.

“Hurry up!” the Otherworldly Demon at the forefront bellowed impatiently.

It seems like an artifact that controls their souls, Zhang Xuan thought with a frown.

Through his Eye of Insight, he could see that the captured humans were led by a very thin thread, and there was not the slightest hint of emotion on their faces.

There was only one possibility for a situation like this. The souls of the humans were being controlled by the Otherworldly Demons through some means. Otherwise, there was no way that they would have followed them so obediently.

Sighing deeply, Zhang Xuan took a closer look at the crowd, and he suddenly caught sight of a familiar figure.

Wait a moment... Hu Yaoyao?

1717 Encountering the Altar Again

Of the twenty cultivators controlled by the Otherworldly Demons, there was a young lady who boasted a seductive figure. Even though she was in a slightly unkempt state, she still commanded a charm that made it difficult for one to tear away one's eyes from her. She was a student that Zhang Xuan had taken in back at the Hongyuan Master Teacher Academy, the head of the Bewitching Devil Faction, Hu Yaoyao!

Back then, Hu Yaoyao had been taken to the headquarters of the Terpsichore Guild and inherited the highest heritage of the predecessors. Within a short span of a few months, she had astonishingly managed to raise her cultivation up to Saint 9-dan pinnacle, just a step away from reaching the Introspective Convalescence realm.

Of course, part of it could be credited to Zhang Xuan's guidance back then, but more than that, her diligence and talent had definitely played a huge role as well. At the same time, it seemed like the Terpsichore Guild headquarters had held back no resources at all in grooming her.

Her current strength was already more than enough to make her an authoritative figure within a major power, but in this ancient domain, which was filled with the top-notch experts, her strength was rather lacking. As the cold wind blew from the horizon, she trembled under the frost. Her face had turned rather flushed under the effects of the coldness, but it seemed like she was still coping for the time being.

There were no visible injuries on her, but her spirit seemed to be a little withered.

The cultivation of those around her was not too high either. Over ten of them were only at Saint 9-dan, and the rest were at the Introspective Convalescence realm. Given so, it was no

wonder that they were helpless before the prowess of three Sempiternal realm Otherworldly Demons.

Even though Zhang Xuan had seen a familiar face, he did not rush into making a move. Instead, he sealed the space around him and discreetly followed behind the group.

Three Sempiternal realm primary stage Otherworldly Demons did not pose a threat to him at all. He could easily kill them whenever he wanted to. However, he felt that it was more important for him to uncover the intentions of the Otherworldly Demons.

After traveling for around ten minutes, a glistening frosted layer of ice came into sight.

“Hurry up!”

Following which, he saw several other groups of humans being led over as well. All in all, there were around a hundred humans gathered in the area, and they were all from different occupations.

At the very center of the icefield was a circular altar with all sorts of formation flags erected around it.

An Otherworldly Demon dressed in black armor stood by the altar as he ordered three Otherworldly Demons to inscribe formation marks on the ground.

“Bring the hostages here!” he commanded with a grand wave of his hand.

The Otherworldly Demons hurriedly positioned the human hostages in a circle around the altar. At the same time, Zhang Xuan noticed a thin thread wrapped around the wrists of the human hostages, completely sealing their cultivation.

Are they intending to tribute these human hostages to that god of theirs? Zhang Xuan thought as his face darkened.

He had seen this altar many times in the past. The Kings of the Qingtian Lineage had used it several times to offer tribute to the Spirit God in exchange for power. However, treasures had been used as tributes back then. For them to kidnap these

humans... were they planning to use these live humans as sacrifices?

However, what did they hope to obtain by sacrificing these humans to that god of theirs?

Were they intending to use these tributes to find the exit in this snow dimension?

But if it's just to find the exit, there's no need for them to go to such lengths! Zhang Xuan swiftly refuted that hypothesis with a deep frown.

Having cleared the forest dimension and desert dimension, he already had some experience with looking for the exits. As long as one traveled to the crux of the dimension, it was not too difficult to find the exit.

There was no reason for them to tribute the lives of so many people in order to find the exit!

The main purpose of the Otherworldly Demons entering the ancient domain was to acquire the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn. Considering how they had not even confirmed the location of the Temple of Confucius yet, it did not seem wise for them to conduct such slaughter at this point in time. It could very well draw the hostility of all parties within the ancient domain onto them prematurely.

No matter what the purpose of the Otherworldly Demons is, saving that group should be my first move...

Since Zhang Xuan had witnessed such a sight, he could not possibly allow them to die before his eyes. Furthermore, his student, Hu Yaoyao, was among the crowd.

Scanning the fighting prowess of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe gathered in the area swiftly, there were thirteen of them in the Sempiternal realm, twenty at the Intuitive Impulse realm, and the rest were in the Aureate Body and Introspective Convalescence realms. All in all, they numbered less than fifty people.

Such a force posed no threat to Zhang Xuan at all. He could easily slaughter all of them with ease. Even the strongest individual among them, the black-armored Otherworldly

Demon, was only at Sempiternal realm advanced stage, a long way off from matching him.

The thin thread that is used to seal the crowd's cultivation is likely a Great Sage artifact. If I launch an attack recklessly, the Otherworldly Demons might trigger the Great Sage artifact out of rage and kill Hu Yaoyao and the others on the spot! Zhang Xuan thought, furrowing his brows. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click for visiting.

Even without relying on the prowess of the Five Monarchs, he would still be able to defeat them with ease given his current fighting prowess. However, if he pushed the Otherworldly Demons too far, there was a chance that the Otherworldly Demons might choose to kill all of the hostages out of desperation.

In order to prevent such a tragedy from happening, he had to first devise a flawless plan.

“Breaking the spatial barrier demands a heavy price, so we can't afford to make the slightest mistake. Ensure that every artifact is placed in their exact location!” The black-armored Otherworldly Demon continued to issue commands.

The Otherworldly Demons swiftly moved artifacts one after another onto the altar.

Taking a swift look, there were rare spirit stones, the blood essence of Great Sage beasts, unique formation scripts, all sorts of miraculous medicine... In any case, the sheer number of treasures that were being heaped onto the altar was so great that it could nearly match a tenth of his entire wealth!

Breaking the spatial barrier? Could it be that they are intending to teleport straight into the Temple of Confucius?

The black-armored Otherworldly Demon had spoken in the native tongue of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe, but Zhang Xuan was able to understand it.

Even for the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe, this pile of resources was not something that they could afford to squander away. Instead of finding the exit, they were setting

up an altar. It was apparent that their motive was not as simple as just moving onto the next world!

Regardless of what they are trying to do, I should focus on saving the hostages first!

If he wanted to stop the Otherworldly Demons, a battle was inevitable. However, in order to do so, he had to ensure the safety of the hostages.

After a moment of hesitation, he altered his appearance and headed behind a block of ice before undoing the spatial seal concealing his figure. With a flick of his wrist, he equipped himself with a Saint pinnacle sword.

If he dashed right in, there was no way that he would be able to save anyone. At the same time, he would not be able to uncover the secrets behind the altar and deduce the motives of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe.

As such, the best move that he could make at the moment was actually to be captured like Hu Yaoyao and the others. He could make use of this opportunity to undo the seal placed upon the crowd. Once the safety of the hostages was confirmed, he would finally be able to let loose.

“Let’s do it then!”

The black-armored Otherworldly Demon was facing away from Zhang Xuan as he supervised the setting up of the altar. Knowing that this was an ideal moment for him to strike, he dashed forward furiously.

Warping into a streak of lightning, he formed a straight line together with his sword as he pierced straight for the heart of the black-armored Otherworldly Demon.

At the same time, he drove his prowess as an Aureate Body realm cultivator, invoking a golden sheen to envelop his body. At this moment, it felt as if he was the incarnation of a Buddha.

This assault might have seemed flawless, but the truth was that Zhang Xuan had suppressed his strength to the level of an ordinary Aureate Body realm cultivator. At the same time, he did not utilize his Spatial Quintessence and Time

Quintessence. As a result, despite the swift speed that he was moving at, it was hardly enough to faze a Sempiternal realm expert!

“It seems like a fish has escaped from our net! Aureate Body realm consummation? No wonder...”

Sensing the assault of an enemy, the black-armored Otherworldly Demon harrumphed coldly. Without turning around, he bent his finger backward and flicked it powerfully.

Ding!

A formidable aura collided with the tip of Zhang Xuan’s sword. Despite being enveloped in a thick layer of sword qi, his sword still produced a metallic clang upon contact with the aura. It was as if it had struck a thick metal wall; no matter how he pushed his sword forward, it simply would not move at all.

“Break!”

With a desperate look on his face, Zhang Xuan released a deafening roar as he brought his sword upward and hacked it down.

Tzzzzz!

Dozens of surges of sword qi converged together, forming a single line as it descended upon the aura barrier impeding his advancement.

Huala!

The aura was swiftly sliced into two, and Zhang Xuan continued his furious charge.

“Hmm? It seems like you do have some ability!” The black-armored Otherworldly Demon was slightly startled to see that the young man was actually able to overcome his casual finger flick.

He turned around to face the young man, and with a swift maneuver, he grabbed the sword pointed right at him between his fingers.

“To be able to avoid our lines of sight and make a decent assassination attempt on me, I must admit that you are quite an outstanding individual. You would have grown into a formidable expert with sufficient time if you had chosen to escape. However, since you have chosen to make me your enemy, I’m afraid that you won’t have a future!” With a derisive chuckle, the black-armored Otherworldly Demon crushed his palm down upon Zhang Xuan.

Hula!

That palm felt as if it had come from the heavens themselves. Even the surrounding space trembled a little in the face of its might.

1718 Zhang Xuan Has Been Captured

“How can you be so powerful?” Zhang Xuan’s face warped in horror as he cast aside his sword and retreated in a fluster.

His current fighting prowess was only that of an Aureate Body realm consummation cultivator. As long as the enemy did not feel threatened by his existence, they would not make a move on the hostages.

Seeing how the young man had decisively chosen to escape as soon as his assassination failed, the black-armored Otherworldly Demon harrumphed coldly. “Do you honestly think that you still stand a chance at escaping?”

The next moment, the force of his palm strike intensified. Immense pressure gushed over in waves, leaving Zhang Xuan feeling as if he was standing before a giant.

“Break!” Zhang Xuan roared with a hint of panic in his voice.

Hong long!

The Saint pinnacle sword, which the black-armored Otherworldly Demon was still holding onto, shattered in the air, producing a shockwave comparable to the force of a Saint 9-dan cultivator imploding their dantian. The immense force caused the black-armored Otherworldly Demon’s attack to waver, thus buying time for Zhang Xuan to escape.

Using this precious time that he had bought by sacrificing his beloved weapon, he immediately flitted away as quickly as he could.

“Hold it right there!”

Hualala!

Seeing that the assassin was going to get away, the surrounding Otherworldly Demons immediately drew their weapons as they prepared to make a move.

“Lay down your arms. That fellow interests me. Leave him to me!” The black-armored Otherworldly Demon chuckled softly as he took a step forward and thrust his palm downward.

The explosion of a Saint pinnacle weapon was plenty formidable, but it was simply too weak to faze a Sempiternal realm cultivator.

Hula!

Another massive palm appeared in the air above Zhang Xuan. At the same time, the space around him seemed to have frozen, rendering him unable to move at all.

“Damn it!” Zhang Xuan cursed with a savage look on his face.

The next moment, blood spurted from his mouth. As if he had ignited his bloodline ability, his aura suddenly surged by twofold. With his newfound strength, he attempted to break free of the frozen space around him.

“You are powerful for an Aureate Body realm cultivator, but the gap between the Aureate Body realm and Sempiternal realm is not something that one can bridge with just talent and wits... Get down here!”

Huala!

The black-armored Otherworldly Demon placed his hands together, and sonic booms suddenly echoed relentlessly in the air. Zhang Xuan was still unable to break free of the spatial restraints around him. As if a tightly-bound crab, no matter how he struggled, he was unable to get away at all.

“Come here!” The black-armored Otherworldly Demon beckoned with his hand, and Zhang Xuan floated helplessly toward him.

At this moment, Zhang Xuan’s face was completely pale. It seemed as if he had been drained of all his strength due to the ignition of his bloodline.

Knowing that his fate was sealed, Zhang Xuan spat a mouthful of saliva at the black-armored Otherworldly Demon as he bellowed furiously, “Kill me if you will, but I, Xuan Zhang, will never submit to you!”

“Kill you? Hahaha! Rest assured, I’ll allow you to live a little longer. The more formidable a master teacher is, the purer their zhenqi would be. You are the perfect tribute to our god... I was still worried that we might not have enough tributes here, but now that you are here, my worries are allayed...”

With a light chuckle, the black-armored Otherworldly Demon tossed Zhang Xuan over to Hu Yaoyao and the others.

“Shackle him! He shall be used as one of our tributes!”

“Yes, Commander!”

Two Otherworldly Demons rushed up to Zhang Xuan, and with a light grasp of their hands, a narrow thread wrapped itself around his wrist, sealing his cultivation. In such a state, he would not be able to exert his zhenqi at all.

After that was done, the Otherworldly Demons swiftly returned to preparing the altar.

With everything working out as he had planned, Zhang Xuan heaved a sigh of relief. Just as he was able to study the narrow thread wrapped around his pulse, he suddenly heard a sigh in his ears.

“You shouldn’t have come here. You are sacrificing yourself for nothing!”

The one who had spoken was an Introspective Convalescence realm elder not too far away from him.

“Elder, do you know why they have prepared this altar?” Zhang Xuan asked.

He was slightly surprised to see that the other party was completely awake, unlike the lifeless looks on the other cultivators around him. However, he swiftly attributed the matter to the elder’s higher cultivation. Perhaps the Great Sage artifact did not work as well on him.

“They are intending to tribute us to break open space to construct a bridge that leads straight into the Temple of Confucius!” the elder said with a suppressed voice.

As his cultivation had been sealed, he was unable to use zhenqi telepathy.

“Break open space? Construct a bridge that leads straight into the Temple of Confucius?” Zhang Xuan was slightly taken aback. “Isn’t there an exit in this snow dimension? As long as they find the exit, they should be able to reach the Temple of Confucius. Is there a need for them to go through so much trouble for this?”

“Exit?” Hearing that, a bitter smile appeared on the elder’s face. “There’s indeed an exit here, but it’s impossible to enter the Temple of Confucius through these exits!”

“Impossible?” Zhang Xuan frowned doubtfully.

Having traveled from one dimension to another, he had deduced that the ancient domain had a structure similar to a dungeon. As long as he went deep enough, he would eventually reach the Temple of Confucius.

“The Temple of Confucius has six Subordinate Halls and one Prime Hall. The Subordinate Halls should correspond to each of the dimensions. The exits and entrances of these dimensions are connected to one another, so if we progressed from one exit to the other, we would only be traveling among the six dimensions. It’s impossible to reach the Temple of Confucius in such a manner!” the elder said. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

“Take this snow dimension for example, if we continued moving from one exit to another, after passing through five dimensions, we would only return here!”

“Ah... Is that the case?” Zhang Xuan was taken aback.

He had thought that as long as he traveled through all of the dimensions, he would eventually arrive at the Temple of Confucius. Who could have thought that the dimensions actually formed a closed-loop?

Did that not mean that he was traveling in circles?

“But this is a secret that even the Master Teacher Pavilion headquarters isn’t aware of. How do you know about it?” Zhang Xuan asked doubtfully.

Despite all of the positions that he had, he was unaware of such critical intelligence. If Pavilion Master Ren of the Master Teacher Pavilion headquarters knew of this matter, he would have told him... It did not make sense for the elder before him to know of this matter!

“I happen to be fairly proficient in the tongue of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe, and I heard them discussing the matter earlier. It seems like the only way to enter the Temple of Confucius is to break open the space of one of the dimensions and enter its corresponding Subordinate Hall!” the elder said.

“Enter the corresponding Subordinate Hall? If I’m not mistaken, only those who possess the Celestial Amulet of Legacy are able to enter the Subordinate Halls, right?”

If everyone could enter the Subordinate Halls just by breaking open the space in the ancient domain, what would be the point of distributing the Celestial Amulets of Legacy in the first place?

Similarly, there would be no need for the world to vie over them.

“It’s indeed impossible to enter the Subordinate Hall without the Celestial Amulet of Legacy, but they will still be able to reach the exterior of the Subordinate Hall. That’s the true outer perimeter of the Temple of Confucius, and the spiritual energy is much more concentrated there. Those who cultivate there will be able to raise their cultivation swiftly. Furthermore, even if one is unable to enter the Subordinate Hall, one will still be able to camp at the exterior and snatch the loot of those who managed to get in! As such, most experts have chosen to camp at the exteriors, and it’s said that... there are Ancient Sages among them!” the elder explained.

“Ancient Sages? They are camping at the exteriors, too?” Zhang Xuan narrowed his eyes in horror.

“Indeed. Due to the restrictions placed on the Temple of Confucius, they won’t be able to enter the Subordinate Halls or the Prime Hall. Nevertheless, they will still be able to camp in the area and snatch the possessions of those leaving the

area. After all, those who enter the Temple of Confucius will eventually have to leave the area. In fact, that's probably where the true danger lies. Ordinary cultivators like us can only be content with roaming around the dimensions. If we really reach the exterior, we will probably lose our lives before we know it!" the elder said bitterly.

"Forget it, there's no point talking about it now. We'll become tributes very soon anyway, so it's not as if those things have anything to do with us!"

"I guess so," Zhang Xuan replied perfunctorily while he processed the massive load of information that he had just received.

He had thought that Ancient Sages would not be able to enter even the dimensions that they were in, but they were actually able to reach the very exterior of the Temple of Confucius...

A thought emerged in Zhang Xuan's mind.

If the Otherworldly Demons are aware of such information, does it mean that they have already finished scouting all six dimensions, or could it be that one of their experts have already reached the exterior of a Subordinate Hall?

He had already traveled through three dimensions so far, but Zhao Ya, Wei Ruyan, and the others were nowhere to be seen. At the same time, he did not see the Hundred Schools of Philosophers, and even Luo Ruoxin and the others were nowhere to be found.

Was there a chance that they had already reached the exteriors of the Subordinate Halls?

1719 Activating the Altar

From the looks of it, it seems like I'm lagging behind the others. I'll have to hurry up...

He had already wasted almost ten hours traveling through the three worlds. If someone managed to make their way into the Subordinate Hall during this period of time, the treasures inside would likely have been emptied out already.

He really had to make haste. He could not continue wasting time on searching for exits.

Turning his gaze to the Otherworldly Demons, he noted that they were almost done arranging their artifacts on the altar in a specific manner. Knowing that there was no time to be wasted, he placed his finger on the thread sealing his pulse.

Weng!

With a jolt, a book materialized in the Library of Heaven's Path.

Placing his finger on it, the content within the book swiftly flowed into his head.

“Soulthrift Shackle, a Great Sage artifact capable of sealing an individual's soul and zhenqi. It's forged out of the tendons of the Sempiternal realm consummation beast, Primorigin Acheron Fish. Even Sempiternal realm consummation cultivators have trouble escaping from it. Flaws: ...”

Reading through the content, Zhang Xuan nodded in realization.

Just as he had guessed, the artifact that had trapped the crowd was a Great Sage artifact. If he had chosen to really assassinate the black-armored Otherworldly Demon instead of letting himself be captured, Hu Yaoyao and the others would have been killed with just a thought from the latter!

I have to deal with this thing first... Zhang Xuan took a deep breath before activating his Eye of Insight.

Knowing the flaws of the thread, he swiftly devised a feasible way to discreetly snap the thread.

Huala!

With a thought, his Primordial Spirit flicked the thread lightly. His zhenqi immediately broke free of the Great Sage artifact and flowed smoothly through his body once more.

However, he did not let it show. Instead, he turned to the elder and sent him a telepathic message. “Elder, do you want to kill these Otherworldly Demons?”

The elder was taken aback.

The fact that the other party was able to send a telepathic message to him meant that his cultivation had not been sealed.

Fearing that the elder would speak and alert the Otherworldly Demons, Zhang Xuan hurriedly continued. “Don’t talk and just follow my orders. I have a surge of zhenqi here. I want you to follow my orders and channel it toward the thread wrapped around your wrist!”

Knowing that it was of paramount importance not to alarm the Otherworldly Demons, the elder nodded discreetly.

“In order to break free of the thread binding us, we’ll need ten people to cooperate with us. So, I need you to help pass the zhenqi on over to the next person!” Zhang Xuan added, and he infused several surges of zhenqi into the elder’s body.

The best way to deal with this Great Sage artifact was for him to tame it and use it for himself. The way to tame it was to strike ten of its flaws simultaneously. However, the crowd was trapped at the moment, and he did not dare to move too much for fear of alarming the Otherworldly Demons. Thus, he could only borrow their hands to exert his own zhenqi.

The elder nodded silently as he mouthed, Alright.

Using his body as a bridge, he passed the zhenqi onto the person ahead of him.

The person who had received the zhenqi was first stunned for a moment, but he swiftly received Zhang Xuan’s telepathic message. The cycle continued on and on.

Knowing that this was their only shot at survival, all of them followed the instructions strictly without saying a word. The surge of zhenqi swiftly went half a circle before reaching Hu Yaoyao.

It's you...

Upon hearing the zhenqi telepathy and sensing the zhenqi flowing into her body, the image of a certain young man immediately surfaced in Hu Yaoyao's mind.

Her body jolted, and she quickly turned her gaze over.

Xuan Zhang... Zhang Xuan! It's indeed that fellow!

She could not help but smile a little when she heard the name reported by the other party.

If that fellow was truly there, they were in safe hands.

Even though she had gone to the Terpsichore Guild headquarters shortly after leaving the Hongyuan Master Teacher Academy, news about him had continued echoing in her ears.

In just a few short months, he had gained great prestige and standing on the Master Teacher Continent. With him making a move, there was no way that anything would happen to them.

Oblivious to the fact that someone had already seen through his disguise, Zhang Xuan sent a telepathic message to everyone. "Alright. Let's make a move on my command. Make sure to exert the zhenqi at the coordinates that I have given you. There mustn't be any mistake!"

The next moment, all of those who had received his zhenqi placed their fingers on the thread wrapped around their wrists.

"Begin!"

Weng!

The thread shuddered a little. Following which, Zhang Xuan felt a consciousness seeping into his mind. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

The Great Sage artifact had submitted to him!

“Protect the crowd. If any of the Otherworldly Demons intend them harm, stop them at any cost!” Zhang Xuan relayed his orders to the thread before turning his gaze toward the Otherworldly Demons once more.

They continued setting up the altar, and roughly ten minutes later, they finally came to a halt.

Even though they looked extremely exhausted, there was an excited gleam that could be seen in their eyes.

One of the Otherworldly Demons clasped his fist and reported, “Commander, we have finished setting up the altar. It’s ready to be activated at any moment!”

“Very well! Tell the men to prepare themselves!” The black-armored Otherworldly Demon nodded in approval.

Flicking his wrist, an icy-cold crystal surfaced in his grasp. He placed it at the very center of the altar.

Weng!

A faint light slowly enveloped the entire altar, and an imposing surge of energy seemed to slowly diffuse into the surroundings.

Is that crystal... the core artifact that guards the snow dimension? Zhang Xuan wondered.

The guardian of the forest dimension was the Five Monarchs, and for the desert dimension, it was the Berserk Yellowsand Wood.

The icy-cold crystal was in perfect harmony with the snowy environment, such that it seemed as if it would be able to tap into the power of the dimension itself. From that alone, it was likely a similar existence to the Five Monarchs or the Berserk Yellowsand Wood.

Since it was possible for the guardian to be beasts or a plant, there was no reason that it could not be an ore.

Weng weng weng!

As the altar activated, the energy from the icy-cold ore seemed to grow stronger and stronger. A brilliant pillar of light burst

into the sky, threatening to tear a dimension rift in the space above.

It seemed like the dimensions had a spatial seal limiting the movements of those within it to thirty meters and below. As a result, the pillar of light halted upon reaching thirty meters. It struggled frantically, but it was unable to overcome this limitation at all.

“Ignite!”

With a grim look on his face, the black-armored Otherworldly Demon tapped the altar, and the altar began to revolve. As if ice cubes placed in a burning cauldron, the artifacts placed on the altar began to melt, bestowing the pillar of light with greater power.

Under the augmentation from the ignition of the artifacts, the pillar of light finally broke through the restriction, and with a deafening roar, it surged up into the sky.

With the assault of the pillar of light, countless glaring dark lacerations appeared in the space around. The snow dimension trembled nonstop, as if someone was trying to tear it apart.

Are they trying to forcefully destroy a spatial law of this dimension? Zhang Xuan jolted in astonishment.

He had been thinking about how one could break open the space in the dimension to reach the Temple of Confucius. He never would have thought that the trick was actually this.

It turned out that the greater stabilization of space in the ancient domain was actually the result of a higher-order spatial law at work. As long as one ripped apart this higher-order spatial law, it would be possible to rip open a dimension rift and arrive at the Temple of Confucius.

Huala!

As more artifacts on the altar were consumed, the pillar of light rose higher and higher. Soon, it had already reached over fifty meters high.

Sixty meters!

Seventy meters!

Eighty meters!

...

Ninety-nine meters!

It seemed like this was the very limit of the sky. As the pillar of light struck this point, a faint seal came into sight. Ripples diffused on it with a brilliant shimmer of light.

No matter how the pillar of light knocked on the seal, it was unable to break through it.

A massive temple could vaguely be seen beyond. It seemed to be hiding on the other side of the seal.

“It’s the Temple of Confucius!” Zhang Xuan exclaimed as he turned his gaze back to the altar.

At this moment, all of the artifacts had already been depleted. The might of the pillar of light was starting to diminish.

As if having expected such a situation to arise, the black-armored Otherworldly Demon harrumphed coldly. “Prepare yourselves! We’ll be releasing the zhenqi of those tributes to pay respects to the Spirit God!”

Hualala!

A tall Otherworldly Demon walked to the back of the crowd before and whipped out a bizarre artifact, which floated quietly in the air.

1720 The Reappearance of the Spirit God

This artifact resembled a jade compass, yet it could have been a jade tortoiseshell. As soon as it came into contact with the narrow thread that connected everyone, the crowd felt a numbing sensation coursing through their body. The next moment, their zhenqi began gushing out through the thread uncontrollably.

“They don’t intend to kill the hostages?”

Zhang Xuan’s initial intention was to use the Soulthrift Shackle to counterattack and kill the Otherworldly Demons. Contrary to his expectations, however, instead of killing the hundred human hostages that they had to tribute them to their god, the Otherworldly Demon had only sapped their zhenqi.

Since that was the case, he did not think that he needed to make a move right now. To be honest, he wanted to see what the Otherworldly Demons had to do in order to get into the Temple of Confucius.

Given that there was no danger for the time being, he acted as if he had been controlled as well and allowed his zhenqi to flow through the Soulthrift Shackle as well, just like the other human hostages.

Soon, the flow of their zhenqi formed a circular loop.

Weng!

A striking light shone from the Soulthrift Shackle and harmonized with the inscriptions on the ground.

Hong long!

The pillar of light above the altar immediately expanded severalfold. Augmented by the energy of the crowd, it gushed toward the heavens with far greater might than before.

Hualala!

Under the intense assault of the pillar of light, the sound of flowing water echoed from the seal above. However, it still refused to break open.

Seeing such a sight, the black-armored Otherworldly Demon narrowed his eyes. With a flick of his wrist, he took out a saber and slit his palm softly.

Fresh blood gushed out from his hand and dribbled onto the altar.

In an instant, the pillar of light grew even brighter than before.

“This descendant of the Spirit Tribe, Bei Hong, offers his blood as a tribute to the Spirit God. I humbly beseech the Spirit God to bestow upon us the strength to break the spatial seal!” The black-armored Otherworldly Demon spoke in a tribal voice reminiscent of a curse.

The light above the altar grew even more blinding. Following which, a massive door appeared before everyone’s sight.

This door emanated an astoundingly oppressive aura. It felt as if even someone of Zhang Xuan’s ability was nothing more than an ant before this aura.

He’s summoning the Spirit God? Zhang Xuan’s eyes narrowed.

The Skyleaf King had used this ability before. His cultivation had still been low back then, but he did not think that he would still be utterly helpless even against the will that lay on the other side of the door in his current state.

Hu!

The door slowly appeared, and a vague silhouette came into sight.

Along with the presence of the silhouette came a crushing pressure on his soul. Even with his Soul Depth of 29.9, he could not help but feel his state of mind falling into an unstable state.

Given how even its silhouette was powerful enough to cause such a sensation within him, if the figure turned around, it was

likely that everyone's will would collapse and die on the spot before any tribute could be offered.

Formidable... Zhang Xuan's body stiffened as his face paled.

He had encountered an Ancient Sage in the past, but it was apparent that the Spirit God was way stronger than the Ancient Sages. In fact, it was doubtful whether Vicious would have been able to compete with her at his peak!

In fact, it felt like if the Spirit God simply walked through the door, the entire Master Teacher Continent would disintegrate under the sheer pressure that she exerted upon the world.

But why does the Spirit God's silhouette look a little familiar to me?

While being astonished by the might wielded by the Spirit God, a sensation similar to what he had felt previously struck him.

Back when he was still in the Qiu Wu Palace, when he caught sight of the Spirit God summoned by the Skyleaf King, he had also felt this sensation of familiarity as well. If he had to describe this feeling, it would be something akin to *déjà vu*, as if he had seen the other party somewhere before.

At this moment, such a feeling arose in his heart as well. Not only was he unable to shake off such a feeling, it also seemed to be growing stronger by the moment.

Yet, when he attempted to grasp at the feeling, he found his memories blurring and his consciousness blanking out, preventing his thoughts from running. It was as if some compelling force was intentionally keeping him from thinking deeper into this matter.

If it was something that was beyond what Zhang Xuan could do at the moment, he would not waste his time on it. Thus, he shook off the miscellaneous thoughts in his mind and focused his attention on the silhouette above.

With the appearance of the Spirit God, the depletion of *zhenqi* grew even faster. In just a short instant, everyone's face had already turned pale.

“I beseech the Spirit God to bestow upon us a passageway into the Temple of Confucius...” the black-armored Otherworldly Demon named Bei Hong uttered with a deep voice as he allowed his blood to continue flowing into the altar.

Due to the profuse loss of blood, his body had already begun trembling uncontrollably. It seemed as if he would reach his limit very soon.

Hula!

Shortly after those words were spoken, a ray of light burst through the door, and the spatial seal that the altar was unable to destroy began to slowly melt like the winter frost encountering the spring sun.

Soon enough, a passageway appeared above.

The Spirit God had answered Bei Hong’s prayers and made a move!

“Thank you, Spirit God!” Bei Hong knelt onto the ground and bowed earnestly. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Hu!

Following which, the silhouette vanished, and the door slowly dissipated. Bei Hong struggled to his feet and turned to the Otherworldly Demons around him, saying, “This passageway will only last thirty breaths. Hurry up and make a move!”

“Commander, these humans have seen us paying tribute to the Spirit God. Should we...”

One of the Otherworldly Demons gestured to kill the human hostages.

“Sovereign Chen Yong has ordered us not to harm the master teachers for the time being. Their zhenqi has been depleted, so they won’t be able to pull off anything anyway. Let’s not cause any unnecessary complications and quickly leave the area!”

Bei Hong harrumphed as he darted toward the opened spatial seal.

“Where do you think you are going?”

Seeing that Bei Hong was going to leave the area, how could Zhang Xuan allow him to do as he pleased? Without hiding his cultivation any longer, he reached out, grabbed Bei Hong, and pulled him down.

Huala!

The two of them were nearly a hundred meters apart, but Zhang Xuan's movement was not bound by the limitations of space. His fingers wrapped themselves around Bei Hong's ankles, and the latter's movement swiftly slowed to a halt.

“You... hid your true cultivation?” Bei Hong widened his eyes in horror as he felt his body plummeting to the ground.

The strength that was being exerted through the hand wrapped around his ankle was actually even stronger than his! Alarmed, he quickly whipped out his saber to sever the hand on his ankle.

Hula!

Despite Bei Hong's aggression, he did not utilize his full strength as he expected the young man to retract his hand. Contrary to his expectations, the young man's hand continued to grip his leg firmly. A grim look appeared on his face as he drove his strength further.

Ding!

The saber struck the young man's sword, causing sparks to fly around the place. Yet, the saber failed to leave even the slightest print on the young man's hand!

“How is this possible?” Bei Hong narrowed his eyes in disbelief.

His saber was a Half-Great Sage artifact. Putting aside Aureate Body realm cultivators, a slash from his blade would lop off even the heads of the Sempiternal realm cultivators! But such a saber actually failed to leave any mark on the young man at all. Just how powerful was the young man?

“Kill him!”

In that instant, Bei Hong realized that he was severely overpowered. He knew that it would be impossible for him to defeat the young man with his saber, so he immediately turned his gaze to the Soulthrift Shackle instead.

He had not tamed the Soulthrift Shackle yet, but he was still able to command it to do his bidding. With this artifact in his possession, he would not fear the young man no matter how powerful the other party's defense was!

He commanded the Soulthrift Shackle through his mind, but even after waiting for a while, there was still no response. He hurriedly turned his gaze to the Soulthrift Shackle, only to see that it was swaying leisurely in the young man's hand.

“You... tamed my artifact?”

At that instant, Bei Hong felt as if his head was exploding apart.

In order to enter the Temple of Confucius, Sovereign Chen Yong had lent him this artifact to use. Even he had been unable to tame the Soulthrift Shackle, so why would it end up submitting to the young man all of a sudden?

“Heh!”

With a cold sneer, the young man tapped on the Soulthrift Shackle lightly.

Hula!

The Soulthrift Shackle immediately darted upward and bound Bei Hong as if he was a rice dumpling.

Given how the young man had even successfully tamed the Soulthrift Shackle, Bei Hong immediately realized that there was no way that they would stand a chance against the young man even if they put their might together. Thus, he quickly turned to his subordinates and bellowed anxiously, “Everyone, run away!”

But barely after the shout escaped from his mouth, he realized that five powerful Sempiternal realm consummation beasts had appeared on the iceland and slaughtered all of his tribesmen. There was not a single survivor.

“You... Pu!”

There was no doubt that this was the doing of the young man. Unable to take it any longer, Bei Hong spurted a mouthful of blood.

“Seal!”

Knowing that he would still be able to wangle more information from Bei Hong, Zhang Xuan flicked his wrist and threw the latter into the Myriad Anthive Nest. After this was done, he swiftly stowed the altar and the icy crystal on top of it into his storage ring.

Following that, he turned to the crowd and said, “The exterior around the Temple of Confucius is too dangerous. It’ll be much safer for you to remain here!”

After saying those words, he leaped up and headed right into the spatial passageway.

1721 Xuan-er, Hurry Over

“Wait for me!”

Before Zhang Xuan could reach the passageway, he suddenly heard a shout below. Following which, a figure darted in his direction and grabbed onto his robe.

“Hu Yaoyao?” Zhang Xuan wondered speechlessly.

The person who had grabbed him was none other than the familiar face among the crowd, Hu Yaoyao!

“This friend over here, it’s extremely dangerous to proceed any further than this. It would be best for you to remain behind!” Zhang Xuan said as he raised his palm, intending to send the young lady back to the ground.

Through his communication with the elder earlier, he had heard that there were not just Sempiternal realm Otherworldly Demons in the exteriors of the Temple of Confucius—it was very likely that there were Ancient Sages as well! It was an extremely treacherous place where he could not even guarantee his own safety. Considering how Hu Yaoyao was only a Saint 9-dan cultivator at the moment, it was practically suicide for her to enter as well!

In any case, he had disguised himself as someone else, so it was not as if Hu Yaoyao knew that it was him.

Just as Zhang Xuan was about to make the move, he heard a voice speaking telepathically in his mind, “Zhang Xuan, if you dare throw me down, I’ll run straight to your Zhang Clan and claim that you molested me and demand that you take responsibility for me!”

“Pu!” Zhang Xuan nearly fainted upon hearing those words. “How did you know it’s me?”

He dared not claim that his disguise was flawless, but he was confident that even Ancient Sages would have difficulties trying to see through his disguise. Considering how Hu

Yaoyao was only at Saint 9-dan pinnacle, how did she recognize him?

More importantly... she even threatened to wreak havoc at the Zhang Clan!

A similar conflict had happened back when they were still at the Hongyuan Master Teacher Academy, just that he was the one who claimed that he had been violated back then. This lass sure was vindictive, even remembering this matter after so long!

But considering Hu Yaoyao's personality... she was really capable of something like that!

Of course, it was not as if anyone would believe it, but just thinking of how embarrassing it would be for the head of the Three Premier Clans and the Sanctum of Sages, as well as a 9-star master teacher, to have a young lady running to his home and claiming that he had molested her... Even if no one would take it for real, his dignified reputation would be ripped apart!

More importantly, what if Luo Ruoxin heard of the matter?

Sighing deeply, Zhang Xuan shook his head and replied telepathically, "It's dangerous on the other side. Think it over carefully..."

"I want to go!" Hu Yaoyao insisted resolutely.

"Very well then!" Seeing that Hu Yaoyao was adamant, Zhang Xuan knew that he would not be able to shake her off.

Thus, he grabbed her and dashed into the spatial passageway.

Huala!

The two of them warped into two streaks of light as they dashed right through the spatial passageway. Barely an instant after they disappeared from sight, the spatial passageway dissipated, and the spatial restriction swiftly reformed itself.

Watching as everything reverted back to normal, the crowd of ex-captives stood back up.

They had thought that they were doomed, but before they knew it, the Otherworldly Demons had already been killed,

and their benefactor had left through the spatial passageway, leaving them dazed on the spot.

“Elder, what should we do?”

The crowd turned to the elder whom Zhang Xuan had communicated with earlier.

He was the strongest cultivator among them, so it was inevitable that the crowd would think highly of his input.

The elder pondered for a moment before replying. “Since the Otherworldly Demons have been killed, we should be out of danger for the time being. Why don’t we focus our attention on cultivating? Once the Temple of Confucius closes, we won’t have such a chance anymore.”

To be honest, even if someone inflated his guts tenfold, he would not dare to head to the exteriors of the Temple of Confucius. He valued his life far too much to put himself at such risk. Since that was the case, he might as well cultivate where he was and try to push for a breakthrough as soon as possible.

“You’re right!”

The crowd nodded in agreement.

Having just come to close to death’s jaws, their appetite for risk was at an all-time low. Knowing that being too ambitious would only come back to bite them, they did not think that it was wise to test the limits of their capabilities.

“Xuan Zhang...” Looking at the sky where the duo had vanished into, the elder remarked deeply, “Who could have thought that there would be such a formidable young man in the Master Teacher Continent? His capabilities can be said to nearly be on par with the great Zhang Xuan...”

However, before he could finish his words, his body suddenly froze on the spot. “Xuan Zhang, Zhang Xuan... Could it be...”

As such a realization struck him, a bitter smile surfaced on his lips.

It seemed like it was true that real experts paid no heed to petty details.

Could he have been any more perfunctory with the name that he made up for himself?

Anyone would have been able to connect the dots once they had some time to think over it after the matter.

Are you sure you are trying to hide your identity from the world and not proclaiming yourself to everyone you come by?

Well, I guess this means that I'm indebted to him. I'll have to make sure to repay this debt to the Zhang Clan in the future...

A debt of a life was not something that he could shrug off. Since he knew the other party's identity, he would have to find some way to return the favor to the Zhang Clan in the future.

...

Hu!

Traveling across the spatial seal, Zhang Xuan and Hu Yaoyao fell to the ground at the same time.

In the foreground, one could vaguely see a massive structure floating in the air.

"Have we arrived?" Hu Yaoyao shook her head in an attempt to expel the dizziness as she got to her feet.

"It seems so!" Zhang Xuan replied.

The spatial laws in the dimension that he had just entered were far stricter than the forest dimension, the desert dimension, and the snow dimension. Even with his prowess, he could not even fly at all.

In the previous locations, he could at least still fly at a low altitude. In this dimension, he could only obediently travel on foot, just like an ordinary mortal.

Hu Yaoyao pointed at the massive structure in the distance and asked as she tidied her clothes, "Is that the Temple of Confucius?"

Zhang Xuan nodded in response.

It seemed like the elder was right. Traveling through the spatial seal would bring him to the exterior of the Temple of

Confucius. However, it might not be a good decision to rush right over. Considering the dangers that could be lurking around the area, it was best for him to clarify the situation before heading over.

This was even more so given that it was a passageway opened by the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe. If there was an Otherworldly Demon Ancient Sage lying ahead, they would really die indignantly!

Hula!

With a flick of his wrist, the bound Bei Hong appeared before him.

“Soul Search!”

Knowing that Bei Hong would not speak no matter how he interrogated him, Zhang Xuan could not be bothered to waste his effort questioning to the other party. Without any hesitation, he executed Soul Search on the other party right away.

Hu!

Information swiftly surged into Zhang Xuan’s head.

Just as he had heard from the elder earlier, the outer perimeter of the Temple of Confucius was made up of six dimensions. The exits and entrances were linked to one another, so if one traveled from one exit to another, one would only be moving around in circles.

This was intelligence that Bei Hong had received from Sovereign Chen Yong. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

As for how Bei Hong was able to receive the information from Sovereign Chen Yong when he was unable to use his Communication Jade Token, the secret lay in the altar.

The Spirit God that the Otherworldly Demon Tribe revered was simply so powerful that even though the Temple of Confucius was created by Kong shi himself, it did not wield

sufficient strength to stop that powerful figure beyond those doors.

If Sovereign Chen Yong was able to send information in here, it's likely that he has entered the Temple of Confucius as well! Zhang Xuan's eyebrows shot up in worry.

Previously, he had heard that the most powerful Otherworldly Demon Emperor had discreetly entered the Master Teacher Continent. From the looks of it, it was likely that the person was Sovereign Chen Yong!

No one in the Master Teacher Pavilion had met Sovereign Chen Yong before, but it was definite that he was an Ancient Sage expert. It left Zhang Xuan feeling a little unnerved to know that there was such a powerful expert lying around him.

However, why would Sovereign Chen Yong command Bei Hong not to kill master teachers?

There was another peculiar command that Bei Hong had received that left Zhang Xuan feeling a little perplexed.

During the trip that he had made to the Subterranean Gallery, he had learned that the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe was divided into three factions.

Based on the information that he had gathered so far, Sovereign Chen Yong was a conservative leader who opposed a full-blown war against the humans.

On the other hand, Sovereign Chen Ling was more belligerent, supporting aggression against mankind in order to bring as many benefits to the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe as possible.

As for Sovereign Chen Xing, he seemed to be sitting on the fence. There was a period of time when he had allied himself with Sovereign Chen Yong, but currently, it seemed like he had switched sides to support Sovereign Chen Ling instead.

Since Sovereign Chen Yong was a conservative leader, he probably had his concerns for passing a non-aggression order against the master teachers. Perhaps, he was unwilling to further sour the relations with mankind.

Very soon, Zhang Xuan finished browsing through all of the useful information that he had acquired from Bei Hong.

All in all, Bei Hong had only received orders to lead the other Otherworldly Demons to open up a passageway using the altar to enter the Temple of Confucius. There were no other orders aside from that.

As for further intelligence regarding the Temple of Confucius, it was hard to tell whether Sovereign Chen Yong was withholding information from his subordinate or that he had not scouted that far yet, but there was nothing at all.

After conducting the Soul Search, Zhang Xuan placed his palm lightly on Bei Hong's head and killed him.

In the end, he still could not bring himself to believe in the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe.

Whether Sovereign Chen Yong was expressing goodwill to them or not, it was too much of a luxury for mankind to simply believe in the goodwill of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe. That would be no different from betting the fate of mankind on the enemy's kindness, and that was utter foolishness!

Furthermore, it was just a few days ago that the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe had attempted to launch a major invasion on mankind!

In the end, it was still better to be safe than sorry.

Sighing deeply, Zhang Xuan raised his head to scan his surroundings for danger when his eyebrows suddenly shot up. He flicked his wrist, and a jade token appeared on his palm. A line of words surfaced on it.

“Xuan-er, when you see this message, hurry over to where we are. We have just caught sight of Zhao Ya...”

1722 Hu Yaoyao's Advancemen

“They have caught sight of Zhao Ya?”

The one who had sent him the message was none other than his father, Sword Saint Xing!

“Did they... manage to get here as well?” Zhang Xuan’s eyes lit up.

From his experience in the previous three dimensions, he had found that he was unable to send messages to everyone else. Could the reason that his Communication Jade Token had suddenly begun trembling be due to the fact that his parents, the Xingmeng Sword Saints, were in the same dimension as him, or was the restriction to send messages lifted in this dimension?

Zhang Xuan tapped his finger on the Communication Jade Token and swiftly crafted a message before sending it over. “Where are you all?”

A moment later, the Communication Jade Token lit up, and a line of words appeared. “Hall of Great Accomplishment, Pavilion of Warm Spring!”

“Pavilion of Warm Spring?” Zhang Xuan frowned.

Putting aside whatever pavilion his parents were in, he did not even know where the Hall of Great Accomplishment was!

“Let’s take a look around!” Zhang Xuan sighed deeply.

In any case, the Temple of Confucius was right ahead of him. Since his father was able to send him the exact name of their location, he should be able to find it with some looking around.

Hu Yaoyao looked at Zhang Xuan intently and asked, “Are we heading over as well?”

“Un. Given that we are already approaching the vicinity of the Temple of Confucius, it’s likely that we’ll encounter many powerful experts. If we encounter any danger later on, I want you to turn around and flee right away. There’s no need to worry about me, understand?” Zhang Xuan instructed sternly.

“Humph! You’re thinking that I’m a burden, aren’t you? While my cultivation hasn’t reached Great Sage yet, my fighting prowess is still decent. The reason I was captured back at the snow dimension is because they caught me by surprise with a soul attack!” Hu Yaoyao knew that Zhang Xuan was worried about her, but she still could not help but retort in displeasure.

Half a year ago, this fellow had still been a junior whom she could bully as she liked, but at that moment... she found that she could not keep up with him no matter how far she pushed herself, and this realization filled her with frustration.

“Of course not, there’s no way I would think of you as a burden. As long as you can flee quick enough in the face of trouble, there’s no way you would be a burden to me!” Zhang Xuan nodded in agreement.

It was such a nostalgic feeling to Hu Yaoyao, being stifled by that fellow’s words to the point that she felt like spurting blood.

The reason that she had said that her fighting prowess was decent was to tell him that she would be able to lend her a hand in times of danger; there was no way she was going to pull him back. Yet... all he could think of was having her escape so that she would not drag him down in battle!

Am I that useless in your eyes?

Hu Yaoyao gritted her teeth in fury. The next moment, however, she suddenly put on a provocative smile as she strutted toward Zhang Xuan in a manner that showed off her curvaceous body. With a seductive voice that would make any man’s heart pound, she purred, “Are you doubting my abilities? Shall we make a bet then?”

“A bet?”

“That’s right. I’ll perform a dance, and if your state of mind is affected by my dance, I want you to apologize to me. You’ll never say words like asking me to run whenever we encounter danger again. On the other hand, if you can remain unfazed by my dance, I’ll do whatever you tell me to do from now onward. I’ll not cause any trouble for you!” Hu Yaoyao eyed Zhang Xuan intently with her crescent eyes.

“Fine by me!” Seeing that Hu Yaoyao was insistent on the matter, Zhang Xuan nodded.

In truth, he was also interested to see what a pinnacle terpsichore was capable of. While Hu Yaoyao’s cultivation was lacking, she did inherit the highest heritage of the Terpsichore Guild headquarters, so it would indeed be foolish to simply disregard her capabilities.

“I’ll be starting then!”

With a simple step forward, Hu Yaoyao began her dance. In the blink of an eye, she seemed to have transformed into a lithe fairy from the heavens. Her graceful movements and ethereal disposition harmonized with one another to produce a charm that seemed to draw one’s soul in. One look was all it took for a man to fall under her spell, captured by her charisma.

Zhang Xuan had to admit that Hu Yaoyao’s figure was truly perfect, even among all the ladies that he had met so far. It was a balance so perfect that even the slightest bit more meat would make her appear plump, and the slightest bit less meat would make her appear thin. This was a symmetry that seemed to have come from the hands of the heavens themselves. While she could not switch into more beautiful clothes due to the environment, her slightest movement and subtle gestures seemed to electrify one’s soul over and over again.

“Not bad!” Zhang Xuan nodded in approval.

Hu Yaoyao’s confidence in her fighting prowess was not unfounded. Even though her cultivation was only at Saint 9-dan pinnacle, her dance could easily cause even Great Sage 2-dan Aureate Body realm cultivators to lose control of themselves.

While it did work for cultivators of both genders, it was particularly effective on male cultivators. Even Sempiternal realm male cultivators might fall for her terpsichorean art if they were caught off guard.

As the saying went, even the mightiest of heroes would find it hard to resist the charms of a beauty. In the very first place, Hu Yaoyao was an incredibly beautiful and charismatic individual as she was. Without resorting to terpsichorean arts, her disposition and demeanor carried the ability to draw others to her. Coupled with her dance, even with the limitations of her cultivation, she was still able to exude a charm that others would find hard to resist.

Of course, there was still a distinction between making her opponents succumb to her terpsichorean art and killing them.

Due to the limitations of her cultivation, she would have difficulties trying to leave even a mark on the body of Aureate Body realm cultivators even with a weapon in hand.

“You... are unaffected by my dance?”

As the dance came to an end, Hu Yaoyao's movements slowly trailed to a beautiful stop. Looking at the clear, innocent eyes of the young man standing opposite of her, her posture could not help but slump in disappointment.

Due to her godsent appearance and figure, she had swiftly been chosen as an Inceptive Sage candidate shortly after entering the Terpsichore Guild headquarters. The reason that she had been given permission to enter the Temple of Confucius was because she had already mastered the highest heritage of the Terpsichore Guild headquarters, which granted her the ability to protect herself even when faced with Great Sage cultivators.

Given the abilities that she wielded, when she met Zhang Xuan once more, the thought of competing with him to determine who was superior immediately surfaced in her mind.

Back when she was still at the Hongyuan Master Teacher Academy, she could not even begin to count how many men

had fallen before her skirt. There were no male master teachers who would not view her in deference, fearing to cross her path.

The fellow standing before her, Zhang Xuan, was the only thick-headed oaf who was blind to her charms, viewing her as no different from anyone else.

She had thought that she would finally be able to faze this thick-headed oaf after inheriting the highest heritage of the Terpsichore Guild headquarters, but to her astonishment, the eyes of the thick-headed oaf were actually clearer than she remembered them being.

Bro, are you sure that your eyes are fine?

At that instant, Hu Yaoyao felt an urge to find a physician to check on his eyes.

Right when she was feeling utterly defeated, Zhang Xuan suddenly spoke. “Well, I have to admit that I was a little affected by it.”

“Really?” Hu Yaoyao’s eyes lit up, but the next moment, as if suspecting that Zhang Xuan was just trying to console her, she eyed him in skepticism. “I don’t see any traces of you being affected by my dance though...”

“Your Aerial Dance of Linglong was well-performed. You managed to capture the demeanor of a fairy soaring into the heavens perfectly, leaving the spectators with the feeling that they were in a dream.

“However, the flaws in your dance are very apparent as well. Firstly, your movements were too intentional. The charm of a fairy is accentuated not by flaunting her figure but through the transcendental air in her gestures and movements. What you should be focusing on is the ethereal and not the worldly!

“Secondly, the intent of your dance is too blatant. This causes cultivators to put up their defenses, making it harder than ever to breach their mental resilience...”

Without stopping to catch his breath, Zhang Xuan pointed out seventeen flaws. After which, he paused for a moment before carrying on. “How should I put this? The dance that you have

performed earlier has simply too many flaws, such that I can't watch on anymore. It leaves me feeling a little nauseated. Well, you also know that I'm a perfectionist, so..."

"You..."

Once again, Hu Yaoyao found herself on the verge of spurting blood.

Perfectionist? Perfectionist your damned head!

It's one thing for you not to be mesmerized by my alluring dance, but you actually felt nauseated watching it...

Hu Yaoyao felt tears brimming in her eyes. All of a sudden, all she could see was hopeless despair ahead of her career as a terpsichore.

While others pleasure themselves by watching my dance, all you can see in my performance are flaws. If you continue being like this, I don't think that we can hang out anymore!

"There's no need to be disheartened," Zhang Xuan said with a face so earnest that no one could fault him on his words.

"These are the corrections I have made for the dance that you have just performed. As long as you study it, you should be able to further your terpsichorean art. This way... I guess your dance won't be as nauseating to me anymore!"

"..." Hu Yaoyao rubbed her glabella in distress.

Why do I suddenly feel so tired?

It's fortunate that I'm only friends with him. Honestly, I don't think I could stand having a person with emotional intelligence as low as him as my significant other. Otherwise, with all the traumas and frustration that I would receive from interacting with him, it would just be a matter of time before I resorted to self-harm!

As stifled as Hu Yaoyao was feeling, she still quickly memorized the flaws and corrections that Zhang Xuan had stated.

Following which, she began to study his words closely. The more she pondered over his words, the more convinced she felt that he was right. His words were deep, but at the same

time, they were simple and direct. Her body began to move along with his words, and once again, she performed the Aerial Dance of Linglong.

Her movements became faster and faster, and her gestures became more and more ethereal.

Hong long!

Some time later, a rush of zhenqi surged into her body. To her surprise, her Saint 9-dan bottleneck suddenly loosened at this moment, allowing her cultivation to surge right up to the Introspective Convalescence realm.

“I... actually made a breakthrough?” Hu Yaoyao’s body froze in astonishment.

Her eyes instinctively turned toward the young man with conflicting emotions rippling within them.

The young man was able to see through the flaws in her dance so easily, and just by following his directions, she could correct those flaws and advance her cultivation and terpsichorean art.

From the looks of it, it seemed like being useless to him... did not sound that bad anymore!

At the very least, she was able to receive his guidance.

Whatever! If he thinks I’m useless, so be it! I’ll just follow him and fish for a couple of pointers here and there. I’ll be spared from so much hard work just by leeching off him...

Just like that, Hu Yaoyao’s fighting spirit was ignited once more.

1723 The Encounters of the Xingmeng Sword Saints

“Alright, let’s hurry up and head over!”

Hu Yaoyao’s breakthrough was completely within Zhang Xuan’s expectations. As long as the other party was able to receive his guidance humbly, he would be able to make the other party achieve a breakthrough so easily that the other party would begin doubting themselves!

This was the ability that he wielded, humble and low profile, just like him.

“Un!”

Knowing that Zhang Xuan had urgent matters to attend to, Hu Yaoyao did not dare to delay him any longer. She followed quietly behind him while reinforcing her cultivation.

They began making their way toward the Temple of Confucius that they saw in the distance.

The magnificent structure floated in the distant sky, appearing vaguely in sight. With incredible speed, the duo flitted over.

Zhang Xuan had expected the journey to be fraught with dangers, but it turned to be so peaceful that it scared him!

Putting aside Otherworldly Demons, he did not even see a single beast along the way.

Ten minutes later, they were finally standing before the magnificent structure. There was a plaque hanging at the entrance with four majestic words calligraphed on them—Hall of Great Accomplishment!

This must be one of the six Subordinate Halls of the Temple of Confucius!

He had learned from Luo Ruoxin that there were six Subordinate Halls to the Temple of Confucius, and each of them corresponded to a Celestial Amulet of Legacy. Without a

doubt, the Hall of Great Accomplishment should be one of the six Subordinate Halls.

Mist drifted across the entrance of the Hall of Great Accomplishment, obscuring it from view. Nevertheless, from the tightly shut gates, it seemed like no one had entered yet.

Looking around, Zhang Xuan found four mini pavilions in the area, named 'Warm Spring', 'Irate Summer', 'Cooling Autumn', and 'Frozen Winter'.

Is that the Pavilion of Warm Spring? Zhang Xuan thought as he made his way over to the pavilion marked with the words 'Warm Spring' together with Hu Yaoyao.

This pavilion was not too big. As soon as he entered the area, he saw a huge number of people standing in the vicinity. Some of them were dressed in master teacher robes whereas others wore the robes of their clan or casual wear.

All in all, there were roughly thirty people. Even the weakest of them was at Saint 9-dan.

“Clan head!”

Upon seeing Zhang Xuan, a couple of figures walked forward to greet him.

Zhang Xuan also recognized them. They were the grand elders of the Zhang Clan.

They had been in seclusion all this while, and they had only arrived in Qufu two days prior.

The current Zhang Xuan had already stripped off his disguise and reverted to his original appearance.

“Xuan-er, you are here!”

Zhang Xuan was just about to ask where his parents were when he heard a voice coming from the distance. Following which, the Xingmeng Sword Saints walked over with hastened footsteps.

Upon seeing that they were not injured, Zhang Xuan heaved a sigh of relief. At the same time, he could not help but notice

something that stunned them. “How did you... raise your cultivation so quickly?”

Prior to entering the Temple of Confucius, they had only been at Sempiternal realm primary stage. However, in just a few short hours, they had actually managed to advance their cultivation to Sempiternal realm consummation, thus putting them at the very pinnacle of the Master Teacher Continent!

“We stumbled upon a fortuitous encounter...”

Following which, Sword Saint Xing began explaining with a smile.

Upon hearing his explanation, Zhang Xuan was rendered speechless.

His parents were far more fortunate than him. Instead of the six dimensions, they were teleported straight to the exterior of the Temple of Confucius.

The spiritual energy and teacher’s milieu in there were much more concentrated than the six dimensions. Furthermore, it was filled with treasures when they had just arrived. With the aid of those treasures and their Soul Depth of 29.9, it was inevitable that their cultivation would surge by leaps and bounds.

Seeing the incredulous look on his son’s face, Sword Saint Meng added with a smile, “Furthermore, we haven’t been cultivating for just a couple of hours... Rather, we have already been here for three months!”

“Three months?” Zhang Xuan was taken aback.

It had only been twelve hours since the Temple of Confucius opened, so how in the world could they have cultivated there for three months?

“Your father and I happened to stumble upon a blessed land where the flow of time is accelerated. As such, even though a couple of hours have only passed for the rest of you, we have already cultivated for a very long time here!” Sword Saint Meng explained.

“This...” Zhang Xuan widened his eyes in shock.

Their luck was too overpowered!

It was one thing for them to be teleported right to the exterior of the Temple of Confucius, but they had actually stumbled upon a blessed land with accelerated time on top of that. He could not help but think of the suffering that he had gone through moving from one world to another, battling enemies one after another.

“Do you know where the blessed land is? Could you find it again?” Zhang Xuan asked.

If they could find it, he would head in there and cultivate for a while to raise his fighting prowess before moving on to do anything else.

“I don’t think we’ll be able to find it anymore. The blessed land activated when we came into contact with its mechanism, and when we were finally done cultivating, it vanished on its own. We tried looking for it afterward, but it was nowhere to be seen... Actually, even without relying on the blessed land, your cultivation speed is already fast enough as it is...” Sword Saint Meng consoled.

“Alright then!” Zhang Xuan rubbed his glabella. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Even though he was gladdened by the advancement in his parents’ cultivation, he could not help feeling a little frustrated as well. He had always taken pride in the speed of his cultivation, but after such a long period of time, he was still stuck at Aureate Body realm consummation, yet to take a single step forward at all...

Sighing deeply, Zhang Xuan looked at his parents and asked, “How did you all get straight to the exterior of the Temple of Confucius? I was teleported to the dimensions outside instead. Furthermore... how did the two of you remain together?”

He had been teleported to the forest dimension outside, and he had been unable to find any familiar faces at all. On the other hand, not only did his parents teleport straight to the exterior,

from what he had heard from them, it seemed like they had never separated from one another at all.

“This probably has something to do with the Celestial Amulet of Legacy!” Sword Saint Xing replied. “When the Temple of Confucius first opened, your mother, I, and a few other grand elders were in the midst of studying the Celestial Amulet of Legacy. Before we knew it, we had already been teleported here... Furthermore, I can vaguely feel an inseverable relationship between the Celestial Amulet of Legacy and the Hall of Great Accomplishment before us.”

“The Celestial Amulet of Legacy?” Zhang Xuan lowered his head to look at the glowing amulet that Sword Saint Xing was holding onto.

It was emanating an aura that seemed to meld perfectly with the aura of the Hall of Great Accomplishment. It felt like they were actually a single entity that had been split in two, and there was a unique resonance between the two of them.

If that Celestial Amulet of Legacy teleported my parents to the Hall of Great Accomplishment, why didn't the one in my hand do anything of that sort? Zhang Xuan wondered in bewilderment.

The Celestial Amulet of Legacy in his grasp was the Prime Amulet, so going by normal circumstances, should he not have teleported straight to the Prime Hall?

So far, he had not even seen the shadow of the Prime Hall. Instead, he was forced to travel through the forest dimension, desert dimension, and snow dimension... He knew that he would face many dangers in the Temple of Confucius, but the least Little Amulet could do was point out a direction for him!

Had he known that Little Amulet was actually so useless, he would have thrown it away back then!

“Since your Celestial Amulet of Legacy resonates with the Hall of Great Accomplishment, why didn't you all enter the Subordinate Hall?” Zhang Xuan asked.

Since they had already reached the destination and had the required Celestial Amulet of Legacy as well, why were they

still idling outside the premises?

“We tried, but we were unable to open its massive doors. It’s likely that the time hasn’t come for it to be opened yet...”

Sword Saint Xing replied. “However, based on my observation, it will likely open within four hours or so!”

Through the windows, Zhang Xuan gazed at the nearby Hall of Great Accomplishment and noticed that the massive doors at its entrance were firmly shut, emanating a forbidding air.

Despite the resonance between the Celestial Amulet of Legacy with the Hall of Great Accomplishment, it seemed like they had not fully harmonized with one another yet.

“In the Jade Communication Token, you mentioned that you spotted Zhao Ya’s trail. Where is she?” Zhang Xuan asked.

He had been worrying about his students ever since they were kidnapped. While he had reassured himself time and time again that they would be fine, he still could not help but worry about their plight.

“She’s...” Sword Saint Xing was just about to answer the question when a resounding explosion sounded in the air. Following which, the pavilion that they were in suddenly began quaking nonstop.

“They are here again...” Sword Saint Xing stood up and narrowed his eyes.

“Who’s here?” Zhang Xuan asked with a frown.

“Otherworldly Demons. They know that your father has a Celestial Amulet of Legacy, so they come over every now and then to challenge us!” Sword Saint Meng explained.

Lowering his gaze, Zhang Xuan saw an Otherworldly Demon standing right in front of the pavilion. The Otherworldly Demon was gripping onto a sword in his hand, and he emanated an air of concentrated killing intent.

“Sword Saint Xing, I am Bei Yuan. Do you dare face me in a duel?” the Otherworldly Demon bellowed with a voice reminiscent of a deafening bell.

1724 Zhang Xuan Accepts the Battle

“Battle?” Zhang Xuan frowned in incomprehension. “The Otherworldly Demons actually dared to appear in the open... not to mention, they are even adhering to the rules?”

Based on what he knew, etiquette and such meant nothing to the Otherworldly Demons. Driven by their bloodlust, they were mostly interested only in slaughter. Thus, it was extremely bizarre for an Otherworldly Demon to actually issue a formal challenge.

More importantly, there were many powerful master teachers in the Pavilion of Warm Spring... Given that the deep-seated conflict between the master teachers and the Otherworldly Demons had gone on for tens of thousands of years, it was inevitable that both sides would have some loved ones who had been killed by the other party. Was the Otherworldly Demon not afraid of being killed running over here like that?

“It’s not that they want to adhere to the rules. They have no choice but to do so!” Sword Saint Xing explained with a bitter smile.

“They have no choice but to do so?” Zhang Xuan was perplexed by those words. A moment later, he widened his eyes in realization. “Could it be that... there are Ancient Sages here?”

It was only in the presence of the Ancient Sages would even Sempiternal realm consummation experts be forced to obediently abide by the rules. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

“Indeed, there are Ancient Sages around the area. The Ancient Sage of our Zhang Clan is here too... As the Ancient Sages of both sides are a little apprehensive about facing the other, they have come to an agreement to resolve any conflict by a fair

duel. Willful murder is prohibited... Otherwise, there's no way that it would have been so peaceful around here!" Sword Saint Xing explained.

Zhang Xuan nodded in realization.

It was no wonder he did not encounter any danger along the way. It must have been due to the pact between the two factions.

Otherwise, it was likely that a war would have broken out before the Subordinate Hall even opened. Perhaps, they might even have ended up whittling each other down, only to have the treasures end up in the hands of another.

To use an analogy from his previous life, the Ancient Sages on both sides were like nuclear weapons keeping each other in check. The reason that neither side was willing to mobilize their Ancient Sages was because they knew that the scales would immediately tilt if they lost their Ancient Sages.

Considering how they had not even seen the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn yet, there was no reason for them to go all out and take on such a risk.

"The reason they are challenging me is because they wish to acquire the Celestial Amulet of Legacy in my hands... or possibly enter the Temple of Confucius right behind us!" Sword Saint Xing whipped out his sword and sneered coldly. "However, how could I allow them to do as they please?"

"Father, please wait a moment!" Seeing that Sword Saint Xing was about to head down, Zhang Xuan stood up and halted him. "Allow me to face him instead!"

"You?" Sword Saint Xing was taken aback.

"Indeed. While my cultivation is only at the Aureate Body realm, I do have the strength to fend off Sempiternal realm cultivators. Furthermore, I did stumble upon some minor fortuitous encounters on my way here, and I think this would be a good opportunity for me to test myself," Zhang Xuan replied confidently.

While Sword Saint Xing had already reached Sempiternal realm consummation, the enemy was no weakling. It was not

that he did not have any confidence in Sword Saint Xing's fighting prowess, but he was simply unwilling to see any harm coming to the other party.

Sword Saint Xing assessed Zhang Xuan deeply for a moment before nodding. "Alright then... Take care! If you find yourself forced into a corner, run right back here."

His son might only have been in his early twenties, but he possessed many means that made even the Master Teacher Pavilion headquarters apprehensive of him. To be honest, he was not confident of defeating Bei Yuan by himself, but his son very likely had the capability to pull it off!

"I will!" Zhang Xuan nodded. After that, he leaped out of the pavilion and appeared right before the Otherworldly Demon. "I am Zhang Xuan. If you wish to challenge my father, you'll have to bypass me first!"

"Are you able to make decisions here?" It seemed like Bei Yuan did not recognize Zhang Xuan. Seeing how young the fellow standing before him was, Bei Yuan eyed him skeptically. "If you lose, I expect you to hand over the Celestial Amulet of Legacy!"

"Of course I can!" Zhang Xuan chuckled softly in response. "If I lose, we'll hand the Celestial Amulet of Legacy to you. However, what if I win?"

Bei Yuan flicked his wrist and took out a metallic armor that boasted astonishing flexibility. Patting the metallic armor forcefully, Bei Yuan harrumphed. "If you win, I'll give this Great Sage armor to you as compensation!"

"You are intending to trade the Celestial Amulet of Legacy with just a Great Sage artifact? Do you take me for a fool?" Zhang Xuan's eyebrows shot up in disdain.

Even the Hundred Schools of Philosophers offered an Ancient Sage artifact to match the Celestial Amulet of Legacy! To offer a mere Great Sage artifact for the wager... the other party was really taking him too lightly!

"What do you want then?" Bei Yuan frowned.

They had also conducted similar duels earlier, and even though their tribesmen had lost, Sword Saint Xing did not raise any requests. Why would this wager suddenly become unfair when it came to this young man?

“Three Great Sage artifacts!” Zhang Xuan demanded firmly.

“Three Great Sage artifacts?” Bei Yuan narrowed his eyes upon hearing the other party’s demand. “You’re dreaming!”

“So be it then! I can’t be wasting my time on you either. You should know that the Celestial Amulet of Legacy is necessary to enter the Temple of Confucius. While it’s only the Subordinate Hall, so the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn wouldn’t be there, regardless, the heritage of Kong shi is bound to be extraordinary. You’d better think it through. Don’t say that I didn’t give you a chance when that time comes... If you aren’t going to accept the deal, you should hurry up and say so. I am exhausted from exploring the area, and I want to take a rest!” Zhang Xuan stretched his back lazily as he walked back to the Pavilion of Warm Spring.

“This...” Bei Yuan fell silent.

Three Great Sage artifacts was a hefty price to pay, but it came nowhere close in comparison to an opportunity to enter the Temple of Confucius and obtain Kong shi’s heritage.

“Give me a moment. I’ll return and discuss the matter with the others!”

Leaving these words behind, Bei Yuan turned around and headed to a pavilion not too far away with the words ‘Irate Summer’ written on it.

Not too long later, he returned and said, “I’ll agree to your request!”

After saying those words, he flicked his wrist, and three Great Sage artifacts materialized before him.

In reciprocation, Sword Saint Xing stepped forward and placed the Celestial Amulet of Legacy floating in the air as well.

“Let’s begin! I don’t believe that a young brat in his twenties could possibly be a match for me!” Bei Yuan spat.

With both sides offering up their stakes, Bei Yuan wasted no time in drawing his sword, prepared to leap right into the duel.

“Hold it a moment. Before we begin, I believe that there’s a need for us to clarify the rules!” Zhang Xuan raised his hand.

“Rules?”

“Indeed. The battle between us should be regarded as a fair duel, right?”

“Of course!” Bei Yuan nodded in agreement.

“Since it’s a fair duel, I should be able to make use of any skills at my disposal, right? To put it in more straightforward terms, a formation master would be able to make use of his formations, and a beast tamer would be able to bring his tamed beasts into the battle. Does that sound fair to you?” Zhang Xuan asked.

“Of course! Whatever occupation you have, feel free to use those techniques in the battle!” Bei Yuan shrugged nonchalantly.

A formation master’s strength indubitably lay in setting in formations, and a beast tamer’s strength included his tamed beasts. They had devoted their time to furthering those arts in order to be able to use them in battle, so there was no denying that it was part of their capabilities as well.

“I see... That makes things really easy then!” Hearing Bei Yuan’s agreement, Zhang Xuan flicked his wrist and commanded, “Tamed beasts, give that fellow a beating of his life!”

Huala!

As soon as those words sounded, the Five Monarchs immediately materialized before Zhang Xuan and surrounded Bei Yuan. The sheer intensity of their auras combined seemed almost strong enough to tear space apart.

“These are your tamed beasts?” Bei Yuan staggered in utter shock upon seeing those five tamed beasts.

At the same time, the Xingmeng Sword Saints and the many master teachers in the Pavilion of Warm Spring also widened their eyes to the brim, rendered speechless by the sight before them.

Those are five Sempiternal realm consummation tamed beasts...

Are these the 'minor fortuitous encounters' that you mentioned earlier?

If these are considered as minor fortuitous encounters, is there anything in the world that could be considered as a major fortuitous encounter?

"Indeed," Zhang Xuan said. "I am a beast tamer, and we agreed that it's fair for me to use my tamed beasts in battle earlier, right? Hurry up and make your move then!"

"..." Bei Yuan spurted blood.

Fair your head!

How am I supposed to fight against five Sempiternal realm consummation beasts simultaneously?

"If you aren't going to take the first move, I'll be going first!" Zhang Xuan remarked impatiently. Raising his hand, he passed down the order to attack. "Get him!"

Roar! Roar! Roar! Roar! Roar!

The five Sempiternal realm consummation beasts charged at Bei Yuan.

Putting aside their cultivation realm, each of them carried the bloodline of the Ancient Divine Beasts, and as the Five Monarchs of the forest dimension, they had survived many battles. Even though Bei Yuan was not weak, he would not be a match for even a single one of them, let alone five of them at once.

All it took was a few breaths for his body to be bruised, fractured, and bleeding all over.

Knowing that he would die if he obstinately held on, Bei Yuan desperately screamed, "I'll admit defeat..."

“Heh, that’s more like it...” Zhang Xuan nodded in satisfaction as he stowed the three Great Sage artifacts into his storage ring.

Glancing at the Pavilion of Irate Summer, he said, “Is there anyone who wants to challenge me? I, Zhang Xuan, am more than willing to play along. Otherwise, I’ll challenge all of the Otherworldly Demons in the Pavilion of Irate Summer. Is there anyone who dares to take up my challenge?”

1725 The Prowess of the Roo

“Audacious!”

“Yet another conceited fool who overestimates himself just because he has accomplished something!”

“Naive! Do you think that you are invincible just because you have tamed a couple of beasts?”

While Zhang Xuan was dueling Bei Yuan, quite a number of Otherworldly Demons had already headed out of the Pavilion of Irate Summer. Upon hearing the arrogant words spouting from Zhang Xuan’s mouth, their faces turned livid with anger, and infuriated bellows escaped their lips.

There were around thirty Otherworldly Demons in sight at the moment, and over six of them possessed similar strength to Bei Yuan. Even though Zhang Xuan had tamed five Sempiternal realm consummation beasts, he still would not stand a chance against all of them combined.

“What’s the use of arguing over there? If you have the guts to accept my challenge, take out your treasures and stake them as wagers,” Zhang Xuan replied boredly. “Similarly, I’ll also put the Celestial Amulet of Legacy on the line. Those who possess true strength speak through actions, not through words!”

The faces of the Otherworldly Demons turned livid in fury.

The young man was right. Nothing that they said would be meaningful; strength was something that had to be displayed!

“I’ll give you ten minutes to think about it. I’ll take a short nap for the time being. If you wish to take me up on my challenge, I don’t mind playing with you all!” Zhang Xuan tossed those words to the Otherworldly Demon before returning to the Pavilion of Warm Spring while lazily stretching his back.

“Our clan head sure is formidable...”

“He’s actually able to render so many Otherworldly Demons speechless at once. This is the kind of imposing air that a true

powerhouse should have!”

The cultivators in the Pavilion of Spring Autumn nodded in respect.

It was true that neither side dared go too far due to the involvement of the Ancient Sages, but the Otherworldly Demons were clearly in a more advantageous position than the humans due to their superior strength. As a result, it had been the humans who were in a passive position so far.

They did not think that the head of the Zhang Clan would actually be able to turn the tables on the Otherworldly Demons as soon as he appeared!

“You’re Zhang Xuan, aren’t you? I am Bei Feng, and I’m willing to accept your challenge!”

Before Zhang Xuan could return to the Pavilion of Warm Spring, a towering Otherworldly Demon suddenly walked out from the crowd. He was one of the remaining six Sempiternal realm consummation cultivators.

Seeing that someone had taken the bait, Zhang Xuan asked with a smile, “What’s your wager?”

“I only have a Great Sage artifact. I can give it to you if I lose the duel. In exchange, I won’t ask for you to give me the Celestial Amulet of Legacy if I win. All I want is to claim three slots to enter the Hall of Great Accomplishment!” Bei Feng said.

“Three slots?” Zhang Xuan frowned in bewilderment.

“Based on the inscriptions that we have found in the area, it seems that our Celestial Amulet of Legacy allows us to bring ten people into the Hall of Great Accomplishment,” Sword Saint Xing said.

“I see!” Zhang Xuan nodded contemplatively. “Sure, I have no problem with that. I’ll accept your wager!”

Even if Bei Feng won the duel and obtained three slots to enter the Hall of Great Accomplishment, it would still be a highly disadvantageous situation for them. In a battle of seven against three, the Zhang Clan should be able to easily overpower and

kill those three unfortunate Otherworldly Demons tagging along with them.

In any case, Ancient Sages were not able to enter the Temple of Confucius, and they did not have the power to interfere with the happenings inside.

“I know that those five beasts are your tamed beasts, but they aren’t a clear indication of your individual prowess. The one I am challenging is you, not your beasts. As a master teacher, won’t you cast aside your beasts and face me in a proper duel?” Bei Feng asked.

“In other words, you don’t want to use my tamed beasts?” Zhang Xuan asked as an unreadable smile crept onto his lips.

“That’s right! I admit that your five beasts are formidable, but do you dare pit your true ability against me and fight me with your own strength? Don’t you think that it’s dishonorable for a master teacher like you to be so reliant on your tamed beasts?” Bei Feng taunted.

“I can face you without my tamed beasts... but since it’s a handicap on my side, I want you to wager another Great Sage artifact!” Zhang Xuan said.

“You want me to wager another Great Sage artifact?” Bei Feng frowned as he lowered his gaze in hesitation. After a moment of contemplation, he flicked his wrist, and a crimson spirit stone materialized on his palm. “I don’t have any more Great Sage artifacts, but this Sacred Blood Crystal is fueled using the blood essence of Sempiternal realm consummation beasts. It harnesses the full energy of an expert of that caliber. It’ll be a convenient source of spiritual energy for your cultivation. While it can’t compete with a true Great Sage artifact, its value should almost be on par with one. Will you take this as a replacement?”

Zhang Xuan took a look at the crimson spirit stone, and he immediately sensed the concentrated spiritual energy that was emanating from the rock. It was so concentrated that it almost felt tangible.

If he cultivated using it, he would indeed be able to advance his cultivation swiftly. Without a doubt, it was something that would be useful to him.

“Very well, I’ll accept your deal!” Zhang Xuan nodded in agreement.

To be honest, he felt like he was hoarding a little too many Great Sage artifacts at this point. He did not need any more of them. In terms of utility, the Sacred Blood Crystal was definitely far more useful to him.

Perhaps still a little worried about the matter, Bei Feng declared loudly, “The Ancient Sage of you humans and the Ancient Sage of my tribe will bear witness that the use of tamed beasts is forbidden in this duel!”

Zhang Xuan did not know where the Ancient Sages were hidden, but this declaration effectively meant that the rule had been officialized. Anyone who dared turn their back on this rule would be severely punished.

This was because the ceasefire was of the utmost importance for both sides to preserve their fighting prowess for the fight over the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn later on. While it was true that every single Sempiternal realm consummation cultivator was an invaluable addition to the team, the Ancient Sages would not compromise the bigger picture just to protect a single one of them.

“Rest assured! Since I have already agreed to your terms, you can expect me to honor my promise!” Zhang Xuan replied confidently as he moved his tamed beasts into his Myriad Anthive Nest.

“I’ll believe in your honor as a master teacher!” Bei Feng nodded.

Taking a deep breath, he took a step forward and whipped out his weapon.

It was a Great Sage tier moon glaive. This was also the artifact that he was wagering on the duel.

“Clan head, be careful!” one of the grand elders exclaimed worriedly. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Without his tamed beasts, their clan head would only be an Aureate Body realm cultivator. It did not seem impossible for him to match an enemy two realms stronger than him.

Was it really possible for one to breach such a huge disparity in strength?”

“Heh!” Zhang Xuan chuckled softly as he stepped forward. With a flick of his wrist, a jade-like root appeared on his palm.

“I did say that I wouldn’t use a tamed beast, and I’ll honor the end of my promise... However, I don’t have any formidable Great Sage artifacts, and this root is something that I have acquired out of coincidence. It’s still decently resilient and hard to be used as a weapon. You shouldn’t have any qualms with me using it in battle, right?”

“A root?” Bei Feng took a look at the item that the young man was holding in his hand, and only after confirming that it was indeed a root did he finally nod in agreement. “Feel free to use it as your weapon!”

As long as the young man did not use his tamed beasts, it would not matter much to him whether the young man used a Great Sage artifact or not. Besides, he had taken a closer look at the root and had not noticed anything peculiar about it.

“That’s good... Little Root, I’ll leave the rest to you!” Zhang Xuan nodded as he lazily tossed the root up into the air.

“Leave it to me!” the root replied through the diffusion of its thoughts.

After that, it flew into the aerial space right above Bei Feng.

“Mere cheap street tricks!” Bei Feng spat coldly as he flung the moon glaive in his grasp toward the root.

Si la!

The space tremored under Bei Feng's movements. A Sempiternal realm consummation cultivator paired with a Great Sage artifact produced a might that would leave anyone trembling in fear.

Hu!

But before the moon glaive could strike the root, the space around them suddenly jolted. The next instant, Bei Feng found himself standing in the midst of a desert. A towering tree stood quietly in front of him. With a tug of a light breeze, buds of cotton slowly descended upon the ground as if snow.

Alarmed by the changes around him, Bei Feng narrowed his eyes and shouted, "What's this?"

Unbeknownst to him, wisps of nearly indiscernible cotton had fallen into his mouth as he spoke.

"What's going on?"

"What kind of artifact is that?"

Not expecting a mere root to produce such a massive desert, everyone was stunned. For a moment, they were not able to react at all.

"Bei Feng, it's just an illusion. You just have to find a way to break it..." one of the experts of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe shouted in agitation.

"Alright..." Bei Feng said.

However, before he could finish speaking, his body suddenly started convulsing wildly.

Hualala!

The next instant, Bei Feng was reduced to a pile of yellow sand. Not a trace of him remained.

Silence immediately devoured the entire area.

1726 The Appearance of the Ancient Sage

Hu!

With a light sway of the towering tree, the desert suddenly vanished from sight. Everything reverted to normal, as if what they had witnessed earlier was nothing more than a figment of their imagination.

The only difference was that the Otherworldly Demon known as Bei Feng had vanished completely from the face of the world.

“Bei Feng has died?”

“His soul aura has completely vanished without a trace. Has his body really been reduced to yellow sand? How is this possible?”

“What just happened?”

The Otherworldly Demons were utterly horrified by what they had just witnessed. It was so inconceivable that they could not help but doubt the integrity of their eyes.

In terms of fighting prowess, Bei Feng could be said to have been the strongest among them all. Yet, despite his strength, he had been reduced to yellow sand barely after the duel started. Just what in the world was that root?

How could it wield such frightening prowess?

The Otherworldly Demons were not the only ones who were appalled by this turn of events. The Xingmeng Sword Saints and the other master teachers watching the duel were dumbstruck as well.

They had thought that Zhang Xuan would have a tough battle against Bei Feng, especially since he had been forbidden from using his tamed beasts. Who could have thought that he would end the battle with even greater ease than before?

To end the battle in less than two breaths... Furthermore, it was not a simple death. Every single trace of Bei Feng's existence had been completely erased!

"Xuan-er, this..." Sword Saint Meng murmured worriedly.

"Don't worry, it's nothing much. It's one of the minor fortuitous encounters that I told you about earlier. I happened to tame this root by chance," Zhang Xuan replied with a reassuring smile.

As fearsome as the root appeared to be, it was actually extremely easy to defend against it. As long as one sealed one's acupoints and prevent its cotton from getting into one's body, the root would be rendered completely helpless against one. In terms of true fighting prowess, it was actually nowhere near the level of the Five Monarchs.

Sword Saint Meng felt an ache in her chest.

Minor fortuitous encounter?

Five Sempiternal realm consummation beasts and a seedling that could easily eradicate a Sempiternal realm consummation expert from the face of the world... if they are considered as minor fortuitous encounters, what do we count as then?

Aren't we nothing at all?

"Return!" With a flick of his wrist, Zhang Xuan placed the root back into the Myriad Anthive Nest. Following which, he beckoned with his hand, and the Sacred Blood Crystal and the moon glaive flew right into his grasp.

"Since I have won the duel, I won't stand on ceremony," Zhang Xuan remarked.

Without paying any heed to the response from the Otherworldly Demons, he threw those two artifacts right into his storage ring.

Hong long long!

Barely after he collected those items, a fearsome aura suddenly crept across the land as if a tornado had descended upon the world. Cracks appeared all over the floor, and the Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter Pavilions began

trembling nonstop. It felt as if they would succumb to the immense pressure at any moment.

“This is... the strength of an Ancient Sage?” Zhang Xuan narrowed his eyes as he hurriedly raised his head to take a look. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

However, the pressure seemed to be omnipresent, so he was unable to discern where it was coming from.

“While that root isn’t a beast, it does have its own life and consciousness. That should be enough for it to be deemed as a tamed beast. Yet, you speak of a fair duel?”

The domineering voice reverberated across the land.

Following which, Zhang Xuan felt his body tensing on the spot. It felt like some formidable force had locked onto him, and it was threatening to crush him to death.

Jiya! Jiya!

His bones creaked resoundingly as cold sweat poured down his head.

It was apparent that the Otherworldly Demon Ancient Sage had deemed his actions to be an infringement of the rules and had decided to make a move.

“Old Geezer Yu, didn’t you hear my descendant asking if he could use the root earlier? Your subordinate clearly agreed to his terms. Are you intending to cause trouble just because your subordinate lost the duel? If a fight is what you want, a fight is what you’ll get!”

Just as Zhang Xuan was about to reach his limits, a voice suddenly reverberated in the air as well. Following which, an energy reminiscent of a warm breeze in spring embraced his body, causing the pressure crushing him to vanish.

It was just a simple clash between the two Ancient Sage experts, but the shockwave produced a crisp sound reminiscent of a river battering a boulder. It felt as if even the reinforced

space in the Temple of Confucius would shatter from their strength.

“The Ancient Sage of the Zhang Clan?” Knowing that the newly arrived Ancient Sage was on his side, Zhang Xuan heaved a sigh of relief.

From the looks of it, the old ancestor of the Zhang Clan had decided to make a move as well.

“Your descendant mentioned that the root is hard and resilient, but he never revealed that it possesses such an enigmatic ability...” The voice of the person named Old Geezer Yu echoed in the air.

“Since it’s a duel, your subordinate should have known that there was a possibility that he would be killed. How naive must your subordinate have been to expect his enemy to come clean about his trump card?” The old ancestor of the Zhang Clan harrumphed coldly. “Besides, while the root does possess enigmatic abilities, the same could be said about your subordinate’s moon glaive!

“A loss is a loss. If you don’t have the courage to face a loss, you should have stopped your subordinate from accepting the duel in the place! If you really want to exact vengeance for your subordinate, why don’t you stop hiding like a darned tortoise and come out to face me? Even if I suffer some injuries while doing so, I swear that I’ll bust your nuts!”

“You...” Old Geezer Yu was so furious that his voice was quivering with rage. However, it seemed like he did fear the old ancestor of the Zhang Clan quite a bit. Instead of fussing over that matter, he harrumphed. “Humph! I’ll overlook your provocations for today, but I don’t believe that you’ll be able to constantly guard this fellow! His name is Zhang Xuan, isn’t it? I’ll remember it. I’ll have plenty of opportunities to end his life once we’re out of the Temple of Confucius...”

“You useless bunch of fools, stop staring with your mouths wide open. Return to the Pavilion of Irate Summer and wait patiently for the Hall of Great Accomplishment to open!”

“Yes!” Hearing the order from their old ancestor, the Otherworldly Demons hurriedly turned around and returned to the pavilion.

“Hold it a moment!”

Barely after the Otherworldly Demons started retreating toward the Pavilion of Irate Summer, they suddenly heard a loud bellow—it was from Zhang Xuan.

Seeing that Zhang Xuan was not willing to let this matter rest, the faces of the Otherworldly Demons turned livid. “Do you still intend to duel with us?”

“That’s right, I still want to continue challenging you all. Rest assured, I won’t use my tamed beasts or the root now. Is there still anyone brave enough to face me in a battle?” Zhang Xuan had never been so good-tempered as to let someone who exerted pressure and threatened him get away without paying a hefty price.

It was not as if he had never killed an Ancient Sage before!

You want to kill me? Very well... Watch helplessly as I do your subordinates in!

If you dare make an appearance, I’ll throw the Book of Heaven’s Path right at you and make my second Ancient Sage kill!

An Otherworldly Demon could not help but ask skeptically, “Are you certain?”

“If none of you have the guts to accept my duel even after I have given you so many concessions, I suggest you return to the otherworldly battlefield and never appear on the Master Teacher Continent ever again. With how cowardly you lot are, there’s no way you can ever become a threat to mankind!” Zhang Xuan harrumphed arrogantly.

“You...” The Otherworldly Demons clenched their fists tightly together upon hearing those words.

“Are you really not going to use your tamed beasts and root?” Old Geezer Yu’s voice echoed in the air.

“I’ll swear in my capacity as a master teacher that I’ll rely only on my own strength and my weapon. Surely you won’t be so frightened as to deprive a mere Aureate Body realm cultivator of his weapon, right?” Zhang Xuan raised his head proudly, devoid of the slightest fear toward Old Geezer Yu. “If you aren’t going to allow me to use my weapon, just treat it as if I did not say anything!”

“Humph! Use your weapon then!” Old Geezer Yu harrumphed coldly.

His subordinate had also used his weapon earlier. Even if Zhang Xuan had a truly powerful weapon in his grasp, due to the limitations of his cultivation, there was only so much that he would be able to do.

“Is there anyone who dares fight me?” Zhang Xuan pointed his finger forward and challenged imposingly. “If your subordinates are frightened, I don’t mind having all of them coming at me. In other words, they can fight me one after another or fight me all at once. If I, Zhang Xuan, show even the slightest frown in response, I’ll renounce myself as an offspring of the Zhang Clan!”

“Well said! You are indeed a man of our Zhang Clan!” the old ancestor of the Zhang Clan complimented with a heartened tone. Following that, he harrumphed coldly at the Otherworldly Demons. “Old Geezer Yu, my descendant has already made so many compromises. Surely you can’t still be scared of him, can you?”

“You...” Not expecting to be humiliated by a mere Aureate Body realm cultivator, Old Geezer Yu was on the verge of exploding from rage. “Very well, I’ll give you what you want. However, it won’t just be a simple duel but a life-and-death duel! In other words, the duel won’t end until either this young brat dies or my subordinates die! Do you still dare accept the challenge?”

He had really lost his temper.

Ever since he became an Ancient Sage, no one had dared talk down to him in such a manner. Yet, a young brat actually

dared to taunt him again and again. This was not something that his pride would allow.

That young brat had powerful tamed beasts and a formidable root, but his cultivation was sorely lacking. The young brat might possess methods to deal with Sempiternal realm cultivators, considering how he dared to make such a challenge in the first place. However, Old Geezer Yu refused to believe that none of his subordinates would be able to stop the young brat!

Knowing that the other party was determined to use this opportunity to kill this descendant of his, the old ancestor of the Zhang Clan harrumphed coldly. “Old Geezer Yu, you sure have the cheek to talk...”

Just as he was about to reject the request, another voice interrupted him.

“Fine, I’ll accept your challenge!”

1727 I'll Humbly Accept Them

Seeing how rashly Zhang Xuan had agreed to Old Geezer Yu's challenge, the old ancestor of the Zhang Clan was horrified.

"Have you thought this matter through?" he asked Zhang Xuan worriedly. "You won't be allowed to use your tamed beasts or the seedling; you'll only be able to use your own weapon! It's not too late to back down now."

"I don't intend to back down, and I hope that the other party won't back down either!" Zhang Xuan replied with an indomitable air. With a straightened back, he said, "Suppressing the Otherworldly Demons is part of my responsibility as a master teacher. Even if I'm no match for them and all of this is nothing more than a futile sacrifice, I won't back down!"

"Well said!" the old ancestor of the Zhang Clan roared with a hearty laughter.

"Put your mind at ease and focus your attention on eradicating those Otherworldly Demons. Since we have already agreed on the rules, that Old Geezer Yu wouldn't dare to renege on his promise and interfere in the duel. If he were to so make a move, he can be certain that he will have to face the rage of my sword!"

"Hah! I'll be glad as long as you don't renege on your promise!" Old Geezer Yu sneered eerily in response. "As you have all heard, that young brat wants to challenge all of you, and you have the option of swarming him together if you want to... We of the Spirit Tribe have inherited the bloodline of the Gods. We are unparalleled, and we can't allow ourselves to be defeated by mere humans! If you lose in this battle, I don't think that there's any need for you to exist in this world anymore. On the other hand, if you successfully defeat him, I'll bestow upon each of you a droplet of my blood!"

“A droplet of our lord’s blood?”

“Lord, please rest assured. We won’t let you down!”

Upon hearing the reward, the faces of the Otherworldly Demons flushed in agitation as a brilliant light shone from their eyes.

“Let’s begin then!”

Hula!

Shortly after those words were said, dozens of Otherworldly Demons immediately encircled Zhang Xuan, sealing all of his escape routes.

“You...”

Not expecting the Otherworldly Demons to be so shameless as to really gang up on Zhang Xuan, the faces of the master teachers in the Pavilion of Warm Spring turned livid in fury.

“It’s fine, I can handle them. There’s no need to breach the rules over something as minor as this...” Seeing that the master teachers were intending to head forward to aid him, Zhang Xuan waved his hand and chuckled softly. After which, he turned to the Otherworldly Demons and asked coldly, “We agreed earlier that I’m allowed to use my weapons, right?”

“Of course!” Old Geezer Yu’s voice echoed loudly in the air.

“Very well then! Allow me to draw my weapon first before proceeding with the duel!” Zhang Xuan nodded. He flicked his wrist, and the Dragonbone Divine Spear immediately materialized in his grasp. With a simple swing, it warped into a massive ancient dragon that soared across the air.

“This is... Ancient Sage Ran Qiu’s Dragonbone Divine Spear, a real Ancient Sage artifact? No, that’s not it. Its powers have been sealed, so it can only exert the strength of a Great Sage artifact at the moment... This won’t be sufficient to pose a threat to them...” Seeing the weapon that Zhang Xuan had taken out, Old Geezer Yu widened his eyes in astonishment before falling into deep contemplation.

There was no doubt that the Dragonbone Divine Spear had been a formidable weapon at its peak, and even he would have

had to run as far as possible if he encountered it. However, it was a different matter now that its power had been sealed.

Most of his subordinates had reached the Sempiternal realm, and nearly all of them had a Great Sage artifact in their possession. They should at least be a match against the severely weakened Dragonbone Divine Spear.

Old Geezer Yu was confident that his subordinates would be able to stand their ground, but the next moment, the young man flicked his wrist and took out a gigantic slab of metal.

It was also a Great Sage artifact.

“A Great Sage brick artifact? Furthermore, it seems to be forged out of Golden Origin Spirit Stone... Who in the world is so extravagant as to use the Golden Origin Spirit Stone in such a wasteful manner?” Old Geezer Yu frowned.

However, that was not the end of it yet.

Hu hu hu hu hu!

In the blink of an eye, more weapons materialized in the surroundings, forming a defensive circle around Zhang Xuan.

The Infernal Blacksaber, Bei Xin’s spear, the Soultheft Shackle, Ancient Sage Zi Rong’s inkstone...

These six artifacts emanated a fearsome pressure reminiscent of six separate Sempiternal realm consummation experts.

“You... How do you possess so many powerful artifacts?”

Everyone had thought that the young man would only bring out a single Great Sage artifact to aid him in his battle—after all, each Great Sage artifact was an invaluable treasure. Yet, who could have known that he would bring out so many of them in the blink of an eye?

Such extravagance had stunned everyone watching the scene.

Putting aside the rarity and value of Great Sage artifacts, just taming a single Great Sage artifact could easily take several decades or even centuries of one’s life.

Yet, a twenty-year-old man had actually managed to tame so many of them. This was too unbelievable!

“Attack!”

Seeing as the number of Great Sage artifacts was growing by the second, the Otherworldly Demons realized that they could really lose against the young man at this rate. Thus, one of them immediately shouted the order for the group to launch their attack.

“Hold it a moment. I haven’t taken out all of my artifacts yet...” Zhang Xuan grumbled as he continued flicking his wrist.

Hu hu hu!

Another four Great Sage artifacts appeared. It was the moon glaive and the other artifacts that he had won in the two earlier duels.

As soon as those four artifacts earlier, Zhang Xuan’s fingers danced agilely among them, tapping them accurately on certain points.

Weng weng weng weng!

The four Great Sage artifacts echoed in unison, indicating their submission to Zhang Xuan. They had all acknowledged him as their master.

Huala!

Following that, the four Great Sage artifacts rose into the air as well, directing their edges toward the Otherworldly Demons.

“Ten Great Sage artifacts? This... How is this a fair duel?”

“Is this what he means by ‘Even if I’m no match for them and all of this is a futile sacrifice, I won’t back down’?”

Seeing the legion of Great Sage artifacts floating around Zhang Xuan, the Otherworldly Demons felt goosebumps rising on their skin, and they nearly spurted blood in frustration.

They could overlook a single artifact, but ten of them... That was equivalent to facing ten Sempiternal realm cultivators at once! Did they even stand a chance against such a powerful force?

Thinking about the impassioned words of the young man earlier, as if a lone hero fighting off hordes of enemies, they felt their hearts stifling up.

No match your head!

Futile sacrifice my ass!

The one who is in a disadvantageous position is clearly us!

“What are you all waiting for? Are you waiting for your deaths?” Old Geezer Yu roared in frenzy.

As an Ancient Sage, he had lived for many years. Yet, he had never seen something as eerie as this.

“Y-yes!”

The longer they waited to strike, the more time Zhang Xuan would have to coordinate his artifacts together. If those artifacts were really able to coordinate with one another impeccably, they would stand no chance. Thus, he charged forward furiously.

The Otherworldly Demon who had roared the command to attack earlier was the first one to charge forward and reach Zhang Xuan. The weapon that he wielded was a Great Sage crescent blade.

He was one of the initial six Sempiternal realm consummation experts, and in terms of strength, he was nearly on par with Bei Yuan. The tremendous strength that he boasted was brought out perfectly through his forceful weapon. With a simple hack, a deafening sonic boom echoed in the air, and even the surrounding space distorted slightly as a result of the force exerted.

Hula!

Zhang Xuan felt a tremendous might descending right upon his head.

Just when it seemed like he would be split in half, his time suddenly accelerated. He easily turned around to face the crescent blade before adeptly tapping his fingers on it.

Weng!

An excited buzz sounded from the crescent blade. Following which, its massive body jolted ferociously, and it escaped from the Otherworldly Demon's grip. It turned its blade against the Otherworldly Demon and swung itself down furiously.

“The heck...”

The eyes of the Otherworldly Demon widened in horror at this abrupt change.

The next moment, his head plopped to the ground. Even before he died, he still had no idea what was going on.

“This... Did he just tame that crescent blade?”

The master teachers were dumbstruck by what they were seeing.

And Old Geezer Yu looked utterly frenzied as well.

To be able to tame their weapons and turn them against their masters in the midst of battle... How were they supposed to face an enemy like this?

Before the crowd could recover from their shock, the young man had already charged into the crowd. Every weapon that came into contact with his finger would immediately turn on its master. At the same time, the brick, Dragonbone Divine Spear, and the other weapons were also collaborating closely with one another to destroy the Otherworldly Demons.

“Initially, I thought that the Otherworldly Demons were going too far by ganging up on Zhang shi, but why does it seem as if it's Zhang shi who is the one bullying them?”

“To actually snatch the enemies' weapons and turn them against their masters... I wonder how traumatized these Otherworldly Demons are!”

“There's no need to wonder about it, it's definitely worse than what you can ever imagine! It's no wonder Zhang shi dared challenge all of them at once... It seems like he was prepared for this. Right from the start, he was already planning to slaughter all of the Otherworldly Demons!”

...

Amid the discussions, Zhang Xuan had quietly backed out from the crowd. With his hands behind his back, he leisurely watched the massive battle between the Otherworldly Demons and the weapons.

He could not help but remark, “I am deeply grateful for the gifts that you have offered me. I’ll humbly accept them!”

1728 The Blood of an Ancient Sage

“Pu!”

“Humbly accept your head!”

The Otherworldly Demons who found themselves coming under the furious offense of their ex-weapons were utterly frenzied. The pitiful plight that they were in made tears stream down their faces.

You know full well that we never intended to give our weapons away to you! What you are doing isn't 'humbly accepting' our weapons but stealing them, alright? Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

A fair duel should mean all of us using zhenqi to fight with one another, but look at what you are doing!

Fair your head!

At this rate, it would almost be better if you had brought your tamed beasts out to bite us to death! At the very least, we wouldn't have to face such humiliation...

Under the onslaught of weapons under Zhang Xuan's control, the Otherworldly Demons fell one after another. In the blink of an eye, over thirty of them had already been slain. Witnessing such a sight before him, the Ancient Sage named Old Geezer Yu finally came to the limits of his tolerance.

“You... you're courting death!”

His motive for having his subordinates challenge the human cultivators was to obtain the opportunity to enter the Hall of Great Accomplishment. However, with nearly all of his subordinates dead, what use did he have for the slots?

It was not as if he could enter the Hall of Great Accomplishment himself!

Hong long!

A massive hand suddenly materialized in the air, sealing the space surrounding the Hall of Great Accomplishment. An astounding might that seemed as if it could seal even the heavens rushed down from the sky, threatening to crush Zhang Xuan into minced meat.

“Powerful!”

Realizing the danger heading his way, Zhang Xuan drove his zhenqi desperately, hoping to flee as far as he could. However, he found his body completely bound in place. No matter how he struggled, he was unable to get away.

Ancient Sages were the most powerful existences on the Master Teacher Continent. Even the most resilient material in the world would be crushed under their imposing might. Given Zhang Xuan’s cultivation, he stood no chance against such a force.

Hula!

Just as Zhang Xuan was nearing his limits, the cold glint of a sword suddenly flashed through the air.

However, this sword glint was not aimed at the palm descending from the sky, and it did nothing to alleviate the tremendous pressure that Zhang Xuan was under. Instead, it was aimed at a void in space.

Puhe!

The sound of a sword plunging right into flesh ripped through the air. Following which, fresh blood dripped from the void in space.

It seemed like the old ancestor of the Zhang Clan had been biding his time to determine Old Geezer Yu’s location before making his move!

“You...” Old Geezer Yu shrieked in anger.

At the same time, the palm in the sky flickered a little before vanishing into thin air.

Huhu!

Ripples diffused from a void in space. Old Geezer Yu knew that he was in a disadvantageous position at the moment, so he fled without any hesitation.

“Haha, this sure is exhilarating!” the old ancestor of the Zhang Clan roared in hearty laughter.

It was extremely difficult to kill a cultivator who had already reached Ancient Sage. In truth, the two of them had fought with one another for many years, but there had been no conclusion to their battle. This time around, the old ancestor had managed to land a direct strike on Old Geezer Yu’s vitals. While it was insufficient to take down Old Geezer Yu once and for all, the latter would have to recuperate for quite a period of time.

The reason that he was able to do it was because his descendant had managed to provoke Old Geezer Yu into losing his temper, thus leading him into making a reckless move.

Lowering his head to look at the battlefield once more, he saw that all thirty of the powerful Otherworldly Demons had already collapsed to the ground as corpses.

A huge array of weapons had fallen into Zhang Xuan’s possession. They danced joyfully around him, as if concubines seeking imperial favor.

“You might be young, but your capabilities and wisdom are remarkable. Not bad!” the old ancestor of the Zhang Clan complimented.

Following which, a force slowly swept across the battlefield, gathering the blood droplets scattered over the ground. These crimson droplets converged together in the sky before being filled into a jade bottle.

“It’s due to you that I had the opportunity to severely wound Old Geezer Yu. As a senior of the Zhang Clan, I can’t allow your contributions to go unnoticed. I’ll bestow these five droplets of Ancient Sage blood to you!”

“Thank you, old ancestor!” Zhang Xuan accepted the jade bottle respectfully.

To be honest, he had no idea what the blood of an Ancient Sage could be used for. However, the fact that it could drive the Otherworldly Demons into a frenzy, going to the extent of accepting his challenge despite the risks that they would face, there was no doubt that it was an invaluable treasure.

“The blood of Otherworldly Demon Ancient Sages harnesses concentrated killing intent, so it might not be as useful to your cultivation. Besides, this is only your spoils of war and not my reward. As a senior, I can’t be too stingy with my reward. So, I’ll bestow this jade bottle to you as well. It contains five droplets of my blood. Use it well and strive to advance your cultivation to higher realms as soon as possible. I believe that you’ll be able to bring the Zhang Clan to greater heights!” the old ancestor of the Zhang Clan said.

Hula!

Right after those words were spoken, a jade bottle materialized in the air. Even before it approached Zhang Xuan, he could already feel tremendous power pulsating within the blood droplets within the jade bottle, as if they would combust into flames at any moment.

Even though Zhang Xuan’s bloodline had already been stripped from him, considering that it was the blood of an Ancient Sage from the same clan within the jade bottle, it was likely to be of far greater use to him than the blood of an Otherworldly Demon Ancient Sage.

“Xuan-er, hurry up and thank our old ancestor!” Sword Saint Xing reminded Zhang Xuan anxiously through telepathy.

“Thank you, old ancestor!” Zhang Xuan bowed deeply.

“There’s no need to stand on ceremony. This is what you deserve!” the old ancestor of the Zhang Clan said.

As the voice trailed to a halt, the imposing aura lingering in the air disappeared, as if it had never been there in the first place.

Knowing that the old ancestor had returned to hiding, Zhang Xuan heaved a sigh of relief.

There was no doubt that many Ancient Sages would have made their way into the Temple of Confucius in hopes of acquiring Kong shi's ultimate treasure. Given so, it would be best not to parade their strength around.

After all, it was always the tree that stood out from the others that would fall in the face of a furious gale.

If they unintentionally drew the ire of the other Ancient Sages, and the other Ancient Sages chose to gang up on them, they would be dead before they knew it.

Zhang Xuan sent a telepathic message over to Sword Saint Xing. "What is the use of the blood of an Ancient Sage?"

"Every droplet of Ancient Sage blood possesses an incredible amount of energy," Sword Saint Xing explained with an excited gleam in his eyes. "Furthermore, it contains their comprehension of cultivation as an Ancient Sage as well. As such, if one could assimilate the blood of an Ancient Sage into one's body, one's cultivation will be able to improve by leaps and bounds, possibly reaching an unthinkable level!"

"Assimilate?"

"That's right. For example, if a mortal came into contact with a droplet of Ancient Sage blood and successfully assimilated it without exploding from all the power raging within his body, they would be able to advance from Fighter all the way to Great Sage at once!" Sword Saint Xing explained.

"This..." Zhang Xuan narrowed his eyes in shock.

It had taken him so much time, effort, and resources in order to advance from Fighter to Great Sage... and yet, a mere droplet of Ancient Sage blood was more than enough to do the same.

This was way too fearsome!

Of course, he also understood that it was just an example. Putting aside the fact that it was impossible for a mortal to assimilate the overwhelming power harnessed within the blood of an Ancient Sage, even if they somehow found a way to pull it off, their zhenqi would be extremely bloated from achieving breakthroughs in such a forceful manner.

As a result of that, their fighting prowess would be beneath that of an ordinary Great Sage, and it would be hard for them to push their cultivation further, considering their weak foundation.

“However, the true appeal of Ancient Sage blood lies not in the tremendous energy nor the comprehension of cultivation infused in it. What truly drives others frenzied over it is the power of the Ancient Sage’s Blood Reincarnation that the blood harnesses. If a cultivator sustains severe damage, as long as their soul didn’t dissipate on the spot, a single droplet of Ancient Sage blood will allow them to make a complete recovery. Its effects are so powerful that even a head lopped off could be reattached once more as long as the cultivator hasn’t breathed their last breath yet!” Sword Saint Xing explained.

“This...” Zhang Xuan’s body froze on the spot.

He could not even begin to describe his shock anymore.

Due to his Heaven’s Path zhenqi, he possessed miraculous recovery abilities that allowed him to swiftly heal from most injuries. Nevertheless, if someone lopped his head off, there was no way that he would have been able to recover from that kind of severe injury.

Yet, the blood of an Ancient Sage was able to heal such severe, near-death injuries. To put it in other words, every droplet of Ancient Sage blood was no different from an additional life!

It was no wonder the Otherworldly Demons had gotten so agitated over it. It was truly a priceless treasure!

“Father, Mother, I’ll give you one droplet each. It’s unlikely that I will use all five droplets here...” Recovering from his shock, Zhang Xuan uncorked the cap of the jade bottle and flicked his finger.

Two droplets of blood pulsating richly with power flew toward the Xingmeng Sword Saints.

It would be much better for him to give a droplet to each of his parents so that they would at least be able to protect

themselves from harm. In any case, it was unlikely that he would use all five blood droplets there, so there was no harm in doing so.

There were unpredictable dangers lurking in the Temple of Confucius, and it would set his mind at ease if his parents had such a life preserving treasure with them.

“This...”

Not expecting their son to give them such an invaluable treasure without any hesitation, the Xingmeng Sword Saints exchanged glances with one another before clenching their fists tightly in agitation.

With such a son, what more could they wish for in the world?

1729 Where Is Zhao Ya?

Knowing that it was a show of filial piety from their son, the Xingmeng Sword Saints did not reject Zhang Xuan's gift and accepted the blood droplets from him.

Despite the miniature sizes of the blood droplets, when they fell into the hands of the Xingmeng Sword Saints, they nearly dragged the duo down into the ground.

This weight was not unique to just the blood of Ancient Sages. Even a single strand of those who had reached Ancient Sage was as heavy as a mountain. If not for the Xingmeng Sword Saints' recent advancement in cultivation to Sempiternal realm consummation, they might not even have been able to lift it up!

"You should hurry up and assimilate it into your bodies!" Zhang Xuan said with a smile.

"Un!"

Without any hesitation, the duo sat down, and they each absorbed a blood droplet into their body. Following which, they slowly channeled it toward their dantian.

A short moment later, they abruptly opened their eyes.

"Have you succeeded?" Zhang Xuan asked with a doubtful frown.

"How can it be that easy to assimilate the blood of an Ancient Sage? We have only stored it in our dantian separately so that we can constantly wash our zhenqi through it constantly. Over time, our zhenqi will be suffused with the aura of an Ancient Sage, and this will be highly beneficial to our cultivation!" Sword Saint Xing said with a smile.

If it was that easy to absorb Ancient Sage blood, it would truly be unworthy of its reputation as the ultimate treasure that countless cultivators sought.

It was something that would require at least several years or decades of hard work.

As such, they had chosen to store the blood droplet in their dantian for the time being. By washing their zhenqi through it, they would be able to slowly assimilate it into their bodies. With sufficient time, the blood droplet would be completely suffused throughout their body, granting them the ability of Blood Reincarnation!

“I see!” Zhang Xuan nodded in realization. “I’ll give it a try as well!”

After saying those words, he sat down on the floor. With a light tap of his finger, he absorbed a droplet of the Ancient Sage blood in the jade bottle into his body.

Hula!

As soon as the blood droplet entered his body, it fused right into his body. Not only was there a complete lack of resistance, he even felt the blood droplet pulsating joyfully through his body. It was almost as if it had finally returned to its place of origin.

“This...” Zhang Xuan was utterly confused by the situation occurring in his body. “How have I assimilated the blood droplet just like that?”

They said that it would be a difficult process that required much time and effort, did they not?

Why was it so easy for him then?

“You have already assimilated it?” Hearing that his son had successfully assimilated the blood droplet into his body, Sword Saint Xing raised his head and directed a doubtful gaze over.

“Indeed!” Zhang Xuan nodded as he swiftly elaborated on the happenings after the blood droplet entered his body.

“I think I understand,” Sword Saint Xing said. “Twenty years ago, when our old ancestor incurred severe injuries, he needed the blood of a Zhang Clan offspring in order to sustain his life. Back then, the only person in the Zhang Clan whose bloodline

purity met the mark was you... In other words, a portion of your blood flows through his body!”

“My blood flows in his body?” Zhang Xuan’s face twitched upon hearing those words.

Somehow, he could not help but find something really weird with those words. It was almost as if he had been reunited with his long-lost son!

“The primary reason that we infused your blood into the old ancestor’s body was to sustain his life, but the sheer purity of your bloodline induced an evolution in the old ancestor’s constitution, thus further enhancing his fighting prowess! As such, when you tried to absorb the blood of the old ancestor, it was as if that blood droplet was returning to its source. Naturally, it goes without saying that it would be much easier for you to assimilate the blood droplets than us,” Sword Saint Xing explained with a smile.

“I see...” Zhang Xuan nodded as he decided not to think any deeper into the matter.

He focused his attention on perceiving the Ancient Sage blood that he had assimilated into his body, and he found that it had fused impeccably with his own blood. Not only so, he found overflowing vitality sprouting in the depths of his body.

It was truly a mysterious feeling. It was as if life itself was coursing through his body. If he had to put this feeling into words, it would be that even if someone snapped off his arm, he would be able to grow a new one the next instant. There was no need for him to worry about getting hurt anymore.

However, he could sense that while there was an immense volume of vitality in his body, it was not infinite. It would deplete and run dry eventually.

There was a pill known as the Grand Intermittent Pill that could allow a person’s severed limbs to regrow, but its effects were far inferior to those of the Ancient Sage blood.

Firstly, the Grand Intermittent Pill had minimal effectiveness on Great Sage cultivators due to the limited energy harnessed within it. Secondly, Ancient Sage blood was capable of

reviving a person no matter how tattered their body was, even if their head was lopped off. On the other hand, the Grand Intermittent Pill would only regrow a cultivator's severed limbs. If a cultivator's head was lopped off, no number of Grand Intermittent Pills would be able to heal them.

I should give a droplet to Ruoxin as well, Zhang Xuan thought with a smile as he placed the remaining two blood droplets into his storage ring.

It was not easy to acquire such treasures, and he had no intention of keeping them to himself. He also had people whom he held dear and wanted to protect.

As for the blood of the Otherworldly Demon Ancient Sage, I should find some time to see what I can do with it...

Considering how his Heaven's Path zhenqi was able to emulate the zhenqi of Otherworldly Demons, he might be able to use these blood droplets of the Otherworldly Demon Ancient Sage... But with so many master teachers around, this was definitely not the time or place to be experimenting with the blood droplets. He would just have to leave it for later on.

"Oh right! You have acquired news on Zhao Ya. Where is Zhao Ya?" Zhang Xuan stood up and looked at his parents.

He was going to ask them about the matter concerning Zhao Ya when the Otherworldly Demons suddenly came to challenge Sword Saint Xing, so there had been no time to inquire. Since the Otherworldly Demons had already been dealt with, it was time to get back to that.

"There are four pavilions here. We are residing in the Pavilion of Warm Spring, and the Otherworldly Demons have dominated the Pavilion of Irate Summer. Beasts have swarmed the Pavilion of Cooling Autumn, and the Pavilion of Frozen Winter is being taken up by an unknown group of people. Prior to your arrival, I sensed a hint of cold aura coming from their group, so I took a closer look. For a split moment, I seemed to see your student!" Sword Saint Meng said.

Sword Saint Meng was hot-tempered at times, but she was extremely meticulous when it came to details. Considering that

this was a matter that concerned her son, she had been keeping a close eye on it. Even though the cold aura was indistinct, it had still caught her attention.

“So... there’s a good chance that Zhao Ya is in the Pavilion of Frozen Winter?” Zhang Xuan asked in agitation. He hurriedly rose to feet and walked to the windows to take a look.

Of the four pavilions, Spring corresponded to Autumn, and Summer corresponded to Winter.

From the Pavilion of Warm Spring, the Pavilion of Frozen Winter happened to be hidden by the other two pavilions, not allowing him to peer into the situation there.

“However, I only took a quick glance before the other party disappeared back into the group. I thought that she resembled your student, but I was unable to confirm whether it’s really her or not!” Sword Saint Meng said.

“We’ll know once we head there to take a look!” Zhang Xuan said imposingly.

So long as there was a chance that Zhao Ya could be in the Pavilion of Frozen Winter, it was his responsibility as her teacher to check the area out.

Seeing that Zhang Xuan intending to head over, Sword Saint Xing hurriedly added, “I’ll follow you. I should at least be able to lend you a hand...”

“It’s fine! I can handle this on my own!” Zhang Xuan shook his head and turned down Sword Saint Xing’s offer to help.

In no way could the Xingmeng Sword Saints be considered weak, but the very fact that the other party had been able to kidnap Zhao Ya and Wei Ruyan discreetly likely meant that the other party was a formidable foe. Furthermore, he had not ascertained whether the kidnappers were truly an enemy or not. It would be much safer for him to head there alone. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Knowing that his son possessed means far beyond him, Sword Saint Xing could only shake his head helplessly and instruct,

“Be careful!”

“Un!” Zhang Xuan replied before swiftly making his way over to the Pavilion of Frozen Winter.

“Intruder, please halt!”

Before Zhang Xuan could even approach the Pavilion of Frozen Winter, he had already heard a voice in the air. Following which, an overpowering pressure crushed down from the sky.

“An Ancient Sage?” Zhang Xuan narrowed his eyes in shock.

He had experienced such formidable might just a moment ago—it was a force that could only have been exerted by an Ancient Sage!

It was unlikely that an Ancient Sage would easily make a move on him. More likely than not, the pressure served as a warning to remind him that the Pavilion of Frozen Winter was under the protection of an Ancient Sage as well.

Of course, that was only to be expected. If those in the Pavilion of Frozen Winter did not possess such strength, they would have been eliminated by the others already. There was no way that they would have been able to safely occupy a pavilion by themselves.

“Elder, I don’t harbor any malicious intentions. I have a junior who is very likely within the Pavilion of Frozen Winter, and I wish to enter to take a look!” Zhang Xuan clasped his fist politely.

Even though the old ancestor of the Zhang Clan was likely in the vicinity as well, he did not dare push his luck.

“I know you. Zhang Xuan, twenty years old, the head of the Three Premier Clans and the Sanctum of Sages. You single handedly destroyed an army of 110,000 Otherworldly Demons strong in the Subterranean Gallery, sparing mankind from a catastrophe. Impressive,” the Ancient Sage said.

Zhang Xuan was surprised by how the anonymous Ancient Sage was aware of his affairs. He clasped his fist and bowed. “I’m unworthy of your praise!”

“Given your contributions to mankind, I would have welcomed your visit with the warmest hospitality from my side if it had been on any other occasion. However, I’m afraid that I cannot permit you to enter the Pavilion of Frozen Winter at the moment, and I beg your pardon for that,” the Ancient Sage said.

“Why?” Zhang Xuan frowned. As he pondered over the other party’s words, a thought surfaced in his mind, and he asked, “Elder, are you a master teacher?”

1730 Ten Breaths Is All It Takes

The other party did not show the slightest hostility to him despite knowing of his deeds in the Subterranean Gallery. Instead, the other party even labeled his deeds as ‘contributions to mankind’. Those were words that would only typically be spoken by master teachers!

Could the other party be one of the Ancient Sages of the Master Teacher Pavilion headquarters?

But if the other party was a master teacher as well, why was the other party stopping him from entering the Pavilion of Frozen Winter?

“I am not from the Master Teacher Pavilion, but...”

The Ancient Sage began explaining, but before he could finish his words, a crisp echo suddenly sounded from the Pavilion of Frozen Winter, as if some kind of seal had just been broken. Concentrated cold energy burst out from the broken seal into the surroundings, cloaking the Pavilion of Frozen Winter with a layer of frost in the blink of an eye.

“Zhao Ya is indeed in there!” Zhang Xuan’s face darkened.

It was the exact same cold energy that Zhao Ya had emanated after he successfully altered her meridians! There was no mistake!

Hu la!

Paying no heed to the Ancient Sage, Zhang Xuan dived right into the Pavilion of Frozen Winter.

It was apparent to him now that the other party was simply stalling for time to achieve their goals!

So what if the enemy that he had to face was an Ancient Sage?

If worst came to worst, he would just have to use his golden page and toss the Book of Heaven’s Path at the other party!

For his student's safety, this was a price that he was willing to pay!

Hu la!

Light flooded out from the Pavilion of Frozen Winter and formed a thin barrier around the building. Zhang Xuan rammed right into the barrier, but he found that he was unable to breach it with his current strength.

"You can't enter now!" the imposing voice of the Ancient Sage exclaimed.

"Scram!" Zhang Xuan roared as he whipped out the Dragonbone Divine Spear and pierced it toward the light barrier.

Weng!

The attack of the Dragonbone Divine Spear caused the light barrier to waver a little, but the light barrier swiftly stabilized without the slightest scratch on it.

"Break!"

Unwilling to give up, Zhang Xuan infused all of his strength into the Dragonbone Divine Spear and thrust it toward the light barrier once more. This time around, however, bundles of black flames began emerging from the surface of the spear.

Having undergone the trial of the Empyrean Heavenly Flame thrice, his body was already able to harness this devastating force of nature. Focusing all of the Empyrean Heavenly Flame that he had absorbed into the tip of the Dragonbone Divine Spear, it did not take long for the light barrier to be set alight.

"Empyrean Heavenly Flame?"

The Ancient Sage hidden by the side was astonished. He was just about to raise his hand to extinguish the flame when the sound of a millstone scraping against the ground reverberated loudly in the air. Following which, the four pavilions began trembling simultaneously.

"What's going on?" Knowing that something major had just happened, Zhang Xuan could only abandon his attempt to breach the light barrier in order to scan his surroundings.

A loud explosion sounded from the towering Hall of Great Accomplishment, and a crack opened between the tightly shut entrance gates.

An aura of history poured forth from the depths of the Hall of Great Accomplishment, suffusing the Pavilions of Warm Spring, Irrate Summer, Cooling Autumn, and Frozen Winter. In an instant, the crowd could vaguely see the passing of the seasons unfolding swiftly before their eyes.

As the Celestial Amulet of Legacy in Sword Saint Xing's hands came into contact with the aura of history, a warm glow burst forth from it, forming a light sphere that covered a diameter of ten meters.

Tzzzzzz!

Tugged by a compelling force, the Xingmeng Sword Saints and the others found their bodies being pulled uncontrollably toward the depths of the Hall of Great Accomplishment

“The Hall of Great Accomplishment has opened! Xuan-er, let's go,” Sword Saint Xing shouted anxiously.

“I have to save Zhao Ya first!” Zhang Xuan exclaimed anxiously as he turned his sights back to the Pavilion of Frozen Winter once more.

Since he had finally found Zhao Ya, as her teacher, he was obliged to bring her back unharmed!

Kacha!

Launching a barrage of stabs with the Dragonbone Divine Spear, it did not take long for the light barrier to be pushed to its limits and shatter under the pressure. Zhang Xuan immediately made use of this opportunity to dash into the pavilion.

However, just as he was making his way in, a light sphere formed of cold energy bolted out from the Pavilion of Frozen Winter. It followed closely behind the Xingmeng Sword Saints and the others, heading into the Hall of Great Accomplishment.

Within the light barrier, Zhang Xuan noticed a slender figure shrouded in an icy aura. Who else could it be other than Zhao Ya?

The light sphere seemed to have been formed using her powers.

The Xingmeng Sword Saints and the others were able to enter the Hall of Great Accomplishment successfully due to the Celestial Amulet of Legacy in their possession. However, the group that was in the light sphere constructed by Zhao Ya was able to pass through the cracks in the entrance of the Hall of Great Accomplishment without any problem as well.

“Zhao Ya...” Seeing that Zhao Ya had entered the Hall of Great Accomplishment, Zhang Xuan widened his eyes in panic.

Huhuhuhu! Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Following that, twenty beasts charged out of the Pavilion of Cooling Autumn and dashed straight toward the entrance of the Hall of Great Accomplishment. It seemed like they intended to sneak into the Subordinate Hall in the midst of the chaos. However, just inches away from the Hall of Great Accomplishment, they found themselves being halted by an invisible barrier. No matter how they tried to push forward, they were not able to advance a single step forward.

Most of these beasts were at Great Sage 3-dan and 4-dan, but it was apparent that their strength was nothing in comparison to the barrier. It was almost as if they were termites trying to bring down a towering tree! Even if they pushed with all their might, the barrier would not waver in the least.

“Those scoundrels have entered the Hall of Great Accomplishment by making use of Zhao Ya’s unique constitution!” Zhang Xuan nearly exploded from fury as realization struck him.

How could he get so careless at a time like this? He should have known that the other party would make use of Zhao Ya to

enter the Hall of Great Accomplishment! Blinded by his anxiety to save Zhao Ya, he had ended up missing the opportunity to enter the Hall of Great Accomplishment together with his parents. Now that they had all entered the Subordinate Hall, he was the only one left outside. What the heck was that?

“This won’t do. I must enter the Hall of Great Accomplishment as well!” Zhang Xuan muttered anxiously as he charged furiously toward the entrance of the Subordinate Hall.

It had not been easy for him to find his student once more. He would never forgive himself if he lost this chance to save her because of a careless mistake on his part!

If worst came to worst, he would just have to make use of the Library of Heaven’s Path to find the flaws in the barrier. Even if he had to tear the entire place down, he was determined to get in!

Hu!

In the blink of an eye, Zhang Xuan reached the invisible barrier. He had thought that he would be kept out just like the other beasts clawing desperately ahead of them, but contrary to his expectations, a warm glow suddenly embraced his body. Before he knew it, he was already on the other side of the barrier.

Zhang Xuan was startled for a moment before realization struck him. How I could have forgotten about that? I have the Prime Amulet in my hands!

Previously, Luo Ruoxin had told him that the Celestial Amulets of Legacy only worked against the Subordinate Halls that they corresponded to whereas the Prime Amulet granted entry to all of the Subordinate Halls and the Prime Hall.

It was due to how useless Little Amulet had been in the outer dimensions that he had ended up forgetting about its existence. After all the disappointments that it had brought him, it was finally proving its value at a crucial time like this!

“Elder, please bring us along with you...”

Before Zhang Xuan could charge all the way into the Hall of Great Accomplishment, he suddenly heard desperate voices behind him, so he turned around to take a look.

They were from the beasts who were clawing frantically at the invisible barrier but to no avail.

Zhang Xuan gazed deeply at them for a moment before saying nonchalantly, “Become my tamed beast, and I’ll bring you in!”

“This...”

Hearing those words, the beasts were stunned for a moment before a huge commotion broke out.

“You want us to become your tamed beasts? You’re dreaming!”

“The reason we of the Beast Tribe cultivate is so that we can live freely without deferring to anyone. You might be powerful, but there’s no way you are going to make us submit to you!”

“At the very most, we’ll just give up on the opportunity to enter the Hall of Great Accomplishment! We’ll still be able to improve quickly by cultivating around the exterior of the Temple of Confucius anyway...”

“Even if I die here, I, the Verdantcloud Beast, will never submit to anyone!”

The main reason that they had entered the Temple of Confucius was to find their own fortuitous encounter and advance their cultivation. However, if they had to submit to a human and lose their free will over it, they would rather give up on this rare opportunity.

“Heh!” Hearing the words from the beasts, Zhang Xuan chuckled softly.

With a flick of his spear, he crossed the invisible barrier once more, dashing right into the horde of beasts.

Pipa! Pilipala!

Ten breaths later, he flicked his spear behind his back as he gazed quietly at the subdued beasts before him. “Are you

ready to submit now?”

“... Paying respects to master!”

Hualala!

The beasts swiftly got to their knees and bowed down to Zhang Xuan. The arrogant Verdantcloud Beast even took the lead in offering its blood essence to Zhang Xuan to seal a contract with him.

The other beasts anxiously followed suit as well. It was as if they were afraid that their new master would not recognize them if they were too late in professing their submission.

“...” The old ancestor of the Zhang Clan.

“...” The anonymous Ancient Sage.

When did those of the Beast Tribe become so subservient?

Even they, as Ancient Sages, would not be able to force those of the Beast Tribe to do anything against their will. Otherwise, any Ancient Sage would have been able to easily form an army of Great Sage beasts.

Yet, this young man actually managed to do it within seconds.

In an instant, all the experts who were unable to enter the Hall of Great Accomplishment found themselves dumbstruck.

1731 Hall of Great Accomplishmen

“Let’s enter!”

With all of the beasts pledging their loyalty to him, Zhang Xuan nodded in satisfaction. He moved all of the beasts into the Myriad Anthive Nest before making his way through the invisible barrier once more.

But things did not go as he had expected this time around. He found himself colliding with the invisible barrier that had halted the footsteps the beasts. Unlike before, he was not able to pass through it.

“What’s going on?” Zhang Xuan’s lips twitched at this unexpected situation.

Could it be that he had waited for too long and was no longer able to enter the Hall of Great Accomplishment?

If that was really the case, he might burst into tears on the spot.

“Master, you are bringing too many beasts in with you...” Just as Zhang Xuan was trying to make sense of the bizarre situation before him, Little Amulet’s voice sounded in his head. “Normal Celestial Amulets of Legacy can bring ten people in. As the Prime Amulet, I can bring fifteen people in. However, you tamed over twenty beasts earlier...”

Hearing those words, Zhang Xuan heaved a sigh of relief. Fortunately, it was not that he could not enter the Hall of Great Accomplishment anymore but that he had exceeded the load capacity. He sent a telepathic message back to Little Amulet and asked, “Won’t it work if I place them in a folded space?”

“It won’t work! Otherwise, your parents would have been able to bring everyone into the Subordinate Hall!” Little Amulet explained.

“I see!” Zhang Xuan nodded in comprehension.

There was no way that Kong shi would have allowed the rules that he had imposed on the Subordinate Halls to be circumvented that easily. Otherwise, there would be no point in setting those restrictions in the first place!

Thus, Zhang Xuan released the beasts whose cultivation were lower till there were only fourteen of them left. He tried walking through the invisible barrier once more, and this time, he was able to pass through it without any issues.

Shortly after passing through the light barrier, Zhang Xuan suddenly said, “Wait a moment, that isn’t right. The Heavenwood Greenserpent is in my folded space as well. If we factor them in as well, doesn’t it mean that the number of people I have with me has already exceeded fifteen?”

The fourteen beasts only included those which he had just tamed a moment ago. Other than them, he also had the Heavenwood Greenserpent, Goldspirit Cloudtiger, Crimsonfrons White Tiger, and so in the Myriad Anthive Nest. Thus, the total number of beasts he had with him was, in fact, more than twenty!

“They are considered native lifeforms to the Temple of Confucius, so they are allowed to pass freely through the barriers in the Temple of Confucius. As such, they aren’t counted in the quota!” Little Amulet explained.

“There’s such a thing as well?” Zhang Xuan asked in astonishment, not expecting there to be such an exception to the beasts in the Temple of Confucius.

Shaking his head, he hastened his footsteps and swiftly advanced into the Hall of Great Accomplishment.

It had been over a minute since the others had entered the area, so he would have to up his speed in order to catch up with them.

Passing through the massive gates, he found himself standing in the midst of a humongous hallway. Sculptures of many different demeanors and postures were placed neatly on both sides. Some were deep in thought, some were looking into the distance, some were reading a book, some were in the midst of

their cultivation... They were sculptured so lifelike that it seemed almost as if they would come to life at any moment.

“Are these... the seventy-two Sages?”

It did not take long for Zhang Xuan to recognize the models behind those sculptures. They were none other than the seventy-two Sages under Kong shi’s lineage.

Kong shi was known to have had over three thousand students and seventy-two direct disciples. His seventy-two direct disciples were known as the seventy-two Sages, and the strongest ten of them, which included Ancient Sage Ran Qiu and Ancient Sage Bo Shang, were respectfully referred to as the Ten Apostles.

Each of the seventy-two Sages had their fair share of legendary exploits, achieving astounding accomplishments in their lifetime. Their deeds had been recorded by the Master Teacher Pavilion in the form of literature and artwork so as to remind the world of their greatness and the sacrifices that they have made for mankind.

Zhang Xuan had once seen some of their artwork, so it was not too difficult for him to recognize the sculptures.

Ancient Sage Zi Yuan, Ancient Sage Zi Qian, Ancient Sage Zi Liu, Ancient Sage Ran Geng...

Familiar names surfaced in Zhang Xuan’s mind as they overlapped together with the sculptures before him. Looking at those ancient figures, he could almost see the devastating battles against the Otherworldly Demons back in their era.

Without their support, there was no way that Kong shi could have quelled the threat of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe singlehandedly back then!

They were the cornerstone to mankind’s swift development across the years. In that era of despair, their existences were symbols of hope to mankind. Even after the passing of tens of thousands of years, their names still remained unforgotten by the world.

Zhang Xuan solemnly bowed to them to express his deepest respect to these great men before moving on.

The sculptures of the seventy-two Sages emanated slight pressure on those walking past them, tempering one's state of mind and soul. Without a doubt, this was extremely beneficial for the advancement of one's Soul Depth.

After taking a few more steps, Zhang Xuan saw a few master teachers sitting cross-legged on the floor, unable to advance any further. They were the grand elders of the Zhang Clan. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Due to the limitations of their Soul Depth, it was likely that they would incur severe injuries if they forced themselves to advance ahead. Since that was the case, it would be wiser for them to make use of the pressure to swiftly raise their Soul Depth.

Seeing that they were deep in concentration, Zhang Xuan chose to pass them by without disturbing them.

Until that moment, he still was not too sure who the culprits who kidnapped Zhao Ya and the others were. However, the fact that they were able to pass through the hallway consisting of the sculptures of the seventy-two Sages meant that their Soul Depth did not pale in comparison to his.

With such high Soul Depth, it was likely that their cultivation had reached Sempiternal realm consummation. If that was the case, they would pose a major threat to his parents and the other members of the Zhang Clan.

Coming to the end of the hallway, Zhang Xuan found himself arriving before a grand hall.

His parents and the other grand elders of the Zhang Clan were standing in the middle of the hall, and opposite to them were eight youths who emanated imposing auras. Just as he had guessed, all of those eight youths were Sempiternal realm consummation experts!

Seeing that his parents were fine, Zhang Xuan heaved a sigh of relief. After which, he turned his gaze to the eight youths.

A young lady stood at the center of the crowd. Her eyes were tightly shut, and surges of cold energy were flowing out from her body. It seemed like she was trying to activate some seal on a wall in the hall.

Zhang Xuan's eyebrows shot up, and he exclaimed anxiously, "Zhao Ya!"

He hurriedly rushed over toward her.

"Xuan-er, it doesn't seem like she's able to hear our voices!"

Before he could reach Zhao Ya, the Xingmeng Sword Saints quickly sent a telepathic message to inform him.

"She can't hear our voices?" Zhang Xuan was taken aback.

"Un. We tried calling for her earlier, but there was no response from her. She didn't even turn her head around, as if she couldn't hear us at all," Sword Saint Xing replied.

"She must be too engrossed in deciphering the painting on the wall. We can't really tell what her purpose for doing so is," Sword Saint Meng said as she secretly pointed to the wall.

"Painting?" Tracing Sword Saint Meng's finger, Zhang Xuan finally noticed the massive painting on the wall. The painting was of remarkable verisimilitude, as if an entire world was sealed within it.

Zhao Ya was continuously channeling her cold energy into the painting, seemingly trying to undo the seal cast on it.

Normally, Zhao Ya should have noticed his presence as soon as he stepped into the hall, not to mention that he had even called for her. The fact that she was not reacting at all likely meant that she was in a trance.

Seeing that Zhao Ya was unharmed, Zhang Xuan heaved a sigh of relief, and his unnerved heart finally settled down for the time being.

He turned his attention to the eight youths standing opposite to them and narrowed his eyes. "Who are they?"

"I asked them earlier, and they said that they are the offspring of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers!" Sword Saint Xing

said.

“Hundred Schools of Philosophers?” Zhang Xuan frowned. “They are the descendants of the seventy-two Sages, right? Why did they kidnap Zhao Ya, and what is the painting on the wall?”

All along, he had thought that it was the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe who had captured Zhao Ya, Wei Ruyan, and Yuan Tao.

Considering the callous nature of the Otherworldly Demons, it was completely within their nature to pull off something like this... Yet, who would have thought that the culprits were really from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers?

While he had stumbled upon some clues that pointed to the Hundred Schools of Philosophers, he had still held some reservations toward suspecting them. After all, their lineage originated from Kong shi, who had held principles and propriety in high regards. It was hard to believe that they would commit something as impetuous as kidnapping a person to achieve their own goals.

This did not fit with the common perception of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers!

Not only so, what was even more bizarre was that these offspring of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers were actually more interested in a painting than the sculptures of their ancestors outside! Could it be that some kind of incredible secret was hidden within the painting?

Harboring such thoughts in his mind, Zhang Xuan could not help but take a closer look at the painting before him.

The first thing that he noticed was the antiquated aura emanated by the painting. It felt like an artifact that had survived through history. He activated his Eye of Insight in an attempt to take a closer look at it, but he found that the painting seemed to have fused perfectly together with the time and space of the hall, thus obscuring it from his view.

This was probably the seal that Zhao Ya was trying to break.

Nevertheless, he could still feel an air of grandeur coming from the painting. It seemed as if one's consciousness would be absorbed into the painting with just a single look.

“Is it possible for this to be the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn?” Sword Saint Xing's voice suddenly sounded in Zhang Xuan's ears.

1732 An Opportunity to Achieve a Breakthrough to Ancient Sage

“The Great Codex of Spring and Autumn?” Zhang Xuan’s eyebrows shot up. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

“The Great Codex of Spring and Autumn is said to be the strongest artifact that Kong shi left behind. There are those who say that it’s a book, there are those who say that it’s a weapon, and there are also those who say that it’s a spatial artifact. In any case, no one has seen the true form of the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn before. So, wouldn’t it be possible for it to be a painting?” Sword Saint Xing analyzed.

“Otherwise, why would the experts of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers rush right here as soon as the Hall of Great Accomplishment opens in order to decipher this seal? Furthermore, it’s apparent that they are aware that Zhao Ya’s strength is crucial to deciphering this seal, which explains why they kidnapped her!”

Hearing those words, Zhang Xuan fell into deep thought.

There was some sense to what Sword Saint Xing was saying.

Most information available about the Temple of Confucius came from rumors, so it might not necessarily be true. While the name ‘Great Codex of Spring and Autumn’ suggested that the artifact existed in the form of a book, the artifact might be able to assume multiple forms.

This was similar to how the Dragonbone Divine Spear was able to alternate between the form of a spear and a skeletal dragon.

Zhang Xuan turned his gaze back to the magnificent painting on the wall and scrutinized it closely through the Eye of Insight. While its contents were a little obscure due to the seal, he was still able to make out the scenery of a barren snowfield. It seemed like a world of permafrost lay on the other side of the painting.

“There are temporal laws infused within the painting...”

Through examining the painting carefully, he could feel the power of space and time infused within the painting. It was likely that the flow of time within the painting was different from that of the real world.

If a separate concept of time existed within the painting... could the painting really be the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn?

If that was the case, he would have to snatch the painting regardless of the cost. Even if the other party was the Hundred Schools of Philosophers, he would not pull his punches!

An idea suddenly flashed across Zhang Xuan's mind. Even though I might not recognize the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn, Little Amulet should be able to discern it!

He was lacking in knowledge concerning the ancient era, but Little Amulet was different. It had specially been forged by Kong shi to serve as the key into the Temple of Confucius, so it should be able to recognize the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn!

Thus, he sent a telepathic message to Little Amulet to ask about the matter.

“Great Codex of Spring and Autumn? Hahaha, that's the most ludicrous thing I have ever heard in my life! That's the Canvas of Four Seasons, which Kong shi drew personally!” Little Amulet replied amid guffaws in the Myriad Anthive Nest.

There was a light breeze in the Myriad Anthive Nest, which caused Little Amulet to flutter.

“Canvas of Four Seasons?”

“Didn’t you notice the four pavilions prior to entering the Hall of Great Accomplishment? Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter—those are the four seasons of the world!” Little Amulet explained.

Zhang Xuan pondered for a moment before nodding in agreement.

Thinking back, Kong shi’s superior breakthrough method to Great Sage also involved conceptualizing one’s body as the world to emulate the four seasons of nature. He had thought that it was on a whim that those pavilions were named after the seasons, but it seemed like there was more to it.

“What use is the Canvas of Four Seasons that those of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers would go to such lengths for it?”

While Zhang Xuan was slightly disappointed to learn that the painting was not the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn, there was no denying that he was intrigued by the painting.

Even if it was not the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn, it was likely a formidable artifact of some sort. It would not have caught the attention of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers otherwise.

“The Canvas of Four Seasons harnesses the concept of the four seasons—Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter—allowing one to use the forces of nature to temper oneself,” Little Amulet replied. “On top of that, time flows faster within the painting compared to the external world, roughly around twofold. In other words, a cultivator who cultivates for two years in the painting would find that only one year has passed in the real world... As such, it’s the ideal artifact to groom aspiring talents!”

Zhang Xuan nodded in agreement.

The reason that the Zhang Clan had been able to remain the number one Sage Clan even after the passing of so many years could mostly be credited to its Blood Reservoir. Utilizing the difference in the flow of time, the offspring of the Zhang Clan

were able to comprehend secret arts and master occupations much faster than their counterparts.

The same went for the Master Teacher Pavilion headquarters. Of course, the pointers of 9-star master teachers were invaluable in reducing the detours in one's cultivation, but more than that, the difference in the flow of time in the Hall of Spring and Autumn ensured that the Master Teacher Pavilion headquarters would have powerful experts in every generation.

In fact, it was largely due to cultivating in the Hall of Spring and Autumn that Zheng Yang had been able to advance his cultivation far faster than the rest of his students.

Given how the Canvas of Four Seasons allowed one to cultivate for two years within the span of a year, it could be considered a decently powerful artifact.

"However, based on what I know, what is truly valuable about the Canvas of Four Seasons isn't the difference in the flow of time but that Kong shi has sealed a fragmented piece of the world within it!" Little Amulet added excitedly.

"Sealed a piece of the world?" Zhang Xuan contemplated for a moment before nodding in agreement. "I see. Considering how the cycle of seasons in the painting is still persisting to this day, I suppose it's to be expected that it contains a fragmented piece of the world!"

There were several tiers to folded spaces. The most ordinary folded space involved creating a dimension that was suited for storing objects but insufficient to sustain life. An example of that would be storage rings.

Folded spaces that were of a tier higher could be viewed as greenhouses. It was possible to create conditions capable of sustaining life in these folded spaces, but they were highly dependent on external inputs in order to maintain these conditions. If one persistently neglected to supply spiritual energy to these folded spaces, their condition would gradually deteriorate to the point that it would be hard to sustain life.

Zhang Xuan's Myriad Anthive Nest was at such a tier. He had to supply his spiritual energy into it in order to ensure that it

developed positively. This was different from the Master Teacher Continent, which was able to produce its own spiritual energy and breed new life dynamically.

The fact that the painting was able to emulate the cycle of the four seasons likely meant that it was a space similar to that of the forest dimension. It could produce its own spiritual energy to support life, which placed it at a higher tier than his Myriad Anthive Nest.

Considering the strength that Kong shi had wielded, his ability to seal a fragmented piece of the world into his painting was not surprising.

“It’s to be expected? You don’t seem to understand the significance behind this. The fragmented piece of the world infused into the painting is not the same as the world you see before you right now,” Little Amulet explained. “It’s a fragmented piece of the ancient world!”

“A fragmented piece of the ancient world? Is there anything different about it? At the very most, won’t the difference simply lie in the concentration of spiritual energy...” Zhang Xuan did not think too highly of the matter.

It was likely that the concentration of spiritual energy had been much higher in the ancient era, considering how the world had been able to support the rise of Kong shi, the seventy-two Sages, and so many powerful experts. However, what about it? Even if Kong shi had sealed a fragmented piece of the ancient world into the folded space, it was ultimately just a fragmented piece. It could not be compared to the vast lands of the current Master Teacher Continent!

Before Zhang Xuan could finish his sentence, his eyes suddenly narrowed as a thought rose from the depths of his mind. “No, that’s not all. You are saying that the fragmented piece of the world sealed within the painting comes from tens of thousands of years ago, back in the era when cultivators were still able to advance to Ancient Sage. So, if one were to cultivate within the Canvas of Four Seasons, there’s a chance that one could achieve a breakthrough to Ancient Sage, right?”

Yang shi and Sword Saint Xing had shared several pieces of information with him regarding Ancient Sages. Around ten thousand years ago, a certain ‘quality’ seemed to have vanished from the atmosphere of the world. Without this quality, the many Sempiternal realm consummation of the world found themselves unable to take the final step forward to reach Ancient Sage.

It was due to this change that human Ancient Sages willingly went into hibernation in order to prolong their lifespan as much as possible so as to protect mankind from the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe.

Considering that this ‘quality’ had only gone missing in the last ten thousand years, if the fragmented piece of land that Kong shi had sealed within the Canvas of Four Seasons was truly from his era, did that not mean that it would harness the ‘quality’ required for one to achieve a breakthrough to Ancient Sage too?

“That’s right! Why else do you think they would go so far for this painting?” Little Amulet nodded smugly in agreement.

“I see... This painting represents an opportunity to achieve a breakthrough to Ancient Sage... Since that’s the case, I should give it my all to acquire it!” Zhang Xuan nodded determinedly.

Given his rate of cultivation, while he was only at Aureate Body realm consummation, it was likely that he would be knocking on the bottleneck of Ancient Sage soon enough. If he could not advance any further than that, it would truly be torture for him!

Since the opportunity was right in front of him, he had to seize it by hook or by crook!

“Thanks for your reminder. Little Amulet, you aren’t as useless as you seem after all...” Zhang Xuan burst into hearty laughter.

If not for Little Amulet explaining the significance of the Canvas of Four Seasons to him, it might have slipped right through his fingers!

“...” Little Amulet.

On the other hand, Sword Saint Xing stared speechlessly at his son, who had abruptly broken out in huge peals of laughter amid the tense silence between both sides.

Did his son just lose his mind due to sheer joy?

1733 The Use of the Icy Crystal

As Zhang Xuan and Little Amulet had communicated through telepathy, Sword Saint Xing was unaware of their interaction. He thought that it was because he had said that the painting could be the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn that his son had suddenly gotten so excited.

However, to only start laughing after several minutes had passed... his reaction speed was a little slow!

“Xuan-er...”

Seeing how his son’s laughter did not stop even after some time, Sword Saint Xing could not help but call him out of worry.

“Un!” Zhang Xuan quickly recovered from his laughter and nodded. “No matter what, we’ll have to get that painting!”

He might still have been a distance away from Ancient Sage, but his parents were already at Sempiternal realm consummation. They were ready to take the final step forward at any moment. If they could acquire the painting and successfully achieve a breakthrough to Ancient Sage, there would be very little for him to worry about for the rest of the journey through the Temple of Confucius!

“Very well!” Hearing the words of their son, the Xingmeng Sword Saints nodded.

Weng weng weng!

While they were chatting, the seal on the Canvas of Four Seasons was starting to waver under Zhao Ya’s ceaseless attacks. It seemed as if it would break open at any moment.

“Very soon...”

Upon seeing this sight, the eyes of the eight youths lit up in anticipation.

Kacha! Kacha!

While everyone was waiting expectantly for the seal to be undone so that they could take the painting away with them, the sound of something shattering apart suddenly broke the silence in the hall.

Astonished by this abrupt noise, the crowd quickly turned their gazes over, and to their horror, the frozen river depicted in the painting had actually begun melting.

“This is bad. We need to hurry up! Once spring arrives in the painting, we won’t be able to undo the seal with cold energy anymore!” one of the eight youths exclaimed.

He quickly rushed to Zhao Ya’s back and channeled his zhenqi into her body, providing her with the extra energy required to decipher the seal as quickly as possible.

The others also realized the urgency of the matter, so they quickly rushed over and channeled their zhenqi into Zhao Ya’s body through a secret art. In an instant, the surge of cold energy exerted by Zhao Ya intensified, hastening the rate at which the seal was being undone.

“Spring arrives in the painting?” Knowing that Little Amulet was knowledgeable about the issue, Zhang Xuan quickly asked, “Does that mean to say that the seal is interrelated with the current season depicted in the painting?”
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“As the Canvas of Four Seasons moves from one season to the next, the seal also has to alter accordingly in order to seal the energy in the painting and ensure that it doesn’t leak out,” Little Amulet explained. “I reckon that those fellows from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers calculated that it would be winter in the Canvas of Four Seasons at the moment, so they kidnapped your student to decipher the seal.

“The seal takes on the cold attribute when it is winter in the painting, allowing those who possess the Pure Yin Constitution to easily manipulate and decipher the seal. However, once spring settles in, the seal will change

accordingly. If they don't have a corresponding power, it'll be impossible for them to continue deciphering the seal anymore!"

"Judging by how the glaciers are melting and rivers are starting to flow once more, the Canvas of Four Seasons has already started progressing from winter to spring. Should I help them decipher the seal?" Zhang Xuan asked.

To be honest, he had no idea what kind of energy would correspond to the spring seal. If he did not lend a hand to the Hundred Schools of Philosophers, there was a good chance that there would not even be a painting for them to fight over. If that was the case, he might as well help them for the time being and battle with them over the ownership of the painting afterward.

In any case, he had the Five Monarchs, more than a dozen tamed beasts, and many Great Sage artifacts in his possession. No matter how powerful the eight youths from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers were, he did not think that they would be a match for him.

"Do you think that it's a sheer coincidence that you arrived at the Hall of Great Accomplishment after breaking out of the snow dimension?" Little Amulet harrumphed.

"This..." Zhang Xuan was first taken aback for a while before his eyes lit up in comprehension. "The Canvas of Four Seasons is in its winter season at the moment, and the snow dimension is filled with frost as well. If there's a connection between the two of them, could it mean that..."

Having thought it through, Zhang Xuan flicked his wrist, and the icy crystal that had been placed on the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe's altar materialized in his grasp.

The icy crystal was no longer as cold as it had been previously. On the contrary, he felt warmth and nourished by the crystal, as if life was finally returning to the world after a long period of frost. Reminiscent to the painting before him, the energy in the icy crystal was gradually progressing toward spring.

"I see..." Zhang Xuan nodded in realization.

He had been addressing the third dimension that he had entered as the snow dimension all that time, but that was not an accurate term. To be more precise, it should have been called the dimension of four seasons.

The season in there was not limited to winter. It would cycle between spring, summer, autumn, and winter.

It just so happened that it was winter when he entered the dimension, which was why all he could see was snow.

The artifact that was controlling the weather in the dimension of four seasons was the crystal that he was holding onto. Had he not taken it away, the snow in that dimension would have started melting, thus ushering spring back to the world.

“That crystal in your hand is the crux to breaking open the seal!” Little Amulet said.

“Un!” Seeing that it was just as he had guessed, Zhang Xuan nodded. Then, with a slightly doubtful voice, he asked, “I thought you didn’t know anything at all? Why are you suddenly so knowledgeable about all of this?”

From the forest dimension all the way to the dimension of four seasons, Little Amulet had been completely useless. Yet, at that moment, it was speaking with absolute confidence. If it had known all this information from the very start, why did it not say so?

“Hmm...” Little Amulet pondered for a moment before proudly replying, “It might be because Kong shi has sealed my memories in a manner such that I only regain the relevant memories when I enter specific places. Unless I enter the hall itself, I will be completely ignorant to whatever is in it. For example, if you ask about what is in the other five Subordinate Halls, I wouldn’t be able to tell you anything!”

“Alright then...” Zhang Xuan sighed helplessly.

He could see why Kong shi would impose such a restriction on the Prime Amulet. Otherwise, all of his heritage and treasures would have been swept away by a single person, and that was unlikely what Kong shi wanted.

“With this crystal, I should be able to decipher the Canvas of Four Seasons as and when I like. Since that’s the case...” Realizing that he was in an advantageous position instead because he had entered the dimension of four seasons, Zhang Xuan shot a glance at the Hundred Schools of Philosophers, who were desperately trying to release the seal within the limited time that they had, and a smile crept onto his lips.

The eight youths were standing in a straight line behind Zhao Ya, connected to each other palms to backs. They had channeled all of their zhenqi into Zhao Ya’s body, supplying her with sufficient energy to exert a steady surge of cold energy toward the seal.

“Since you had the guts to kidnap Zhao Ya and put her in a trance so as to make her do your bidding, I don’t think you can blame me for what I’m going to do next,” Zhang Xuan muttered beneath his breath.

Chuckling softly, he calculated his timing carefully before dashing forward swiftly, as though a bolt of lightning.

His movements were extremely swift, and he had even ignited his Zhang Clan bloodline for this. As such, before anyone could even react, he was already right above Zhao Ya.

“Sever!”

Without any hesitation, Zhang Xuan flicked his finger and sent a surge of sword qi to sever the contact between the palms and Zhao Ya’s back.

Boom!

As the contact was severed before the eight youths could retract their zhenqi from Zhao Ya’s body, the resulting effect was no different from the eight youths donating their energy to Zhao Ya.

Under the guidance of Zhang Xuan’s zhenqi, the huge influx of energy within Zhao Ya’s body swiftly tore through all of the bottlenecks in her cultivation, causing her strength to surge furiously.

Kacha! Kacha!

In just two breaths, she had already reached Sempiternal realm consummation.

“Teacher...”

The rise in her cultivation seemed to have broken whatever mind control technique was placed on Zhao Ya. She swiftly regained her consciousness, and upon seeing Zhang Xuan’s figure above, her eyes lit up in agitation.

“Seal the remaining zhenqi in your body away from the time being. You can use it when you are pushing for a breakthrough to Ancient Sage!” Zhang Xuan instructed as he sent the method to sealing that huge bundle of energy to her.

Even with the furious surge in Zhao Ya’s cultivation all the way to Sempiternal realm consummation, she still had a tremendous amount of energy lingering in her body. After all, in her body was the full zhenqi of eight Sempiternal realm consummation experts!

Zhang Xuan was thinking of having Zhao Ya seal it away for the time being and use it in the future when she attempted for a breakthrough to Ancient Sage. Otherwise, it would be a pity to allow such precious energy to go to waste.

“Zhang Xuan, you are courting death!”

Not expecting their zhenqi to be suddenly stolen in such a manner, the eight youths exploded in rage.

1734 Breaking the Seal

“Courting death? Look who’s speaking here!”

Floating in the air, Zhang Xuan glared down at the eight youths beneath him with utterly cold eyes.

“You kidnapped my students and limited their freedom. With no regards to her will, you forced her to expend her strength to help you decipher the seal on the painting... Is this the kind of propriety that the Hundred Schools of Philosophers abide by? Is this what you have inherited from Kong shi?”

Even the final shred of goodwill that Zhang Xuan harbored toward the Hundred Schools of Philosophers had vanished by that point.

Not only did they go around forcing the Luo Clan and the Zhang Clan to accept their challenges to acquire the Celestial Amulets of Legacy, they even captured his students and collaborated together with the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe. It seemed like they had already lost sight of what they stood for at the very start.

“We’re doing this for mankind!” one of the youths amid the group shouted angrily.

“For mankind? What a coincidence! What I’m going to do right now is for mankind as well. Get them!” Zhang Xuan replied with a cold sneer.

Knowing that it was meaningless to argue with the other party, he flicked his wrist.

Huala!

The Five Monarchs and countless weapons materialized around the area and charged for the eight youths from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers.

“You...”

The eight youths did not think that Zhang Xuan would make a move on them without any hesitation. They were angered by

his actions, but given the current situation, they had no choice but to focus their effort on fending off the incoming enemies.

“Teacher...” Seeing that her teacher was confronting the youths from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers directly, worry rippled in the depths of Zhao Ya’s eyes. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

“Don’t worry, I’m not so weak as to be done in by them! Tell me how you were kidnapped by them and what happened afterward. I’ll redress your grievances!” Zhang Xuan said.

“This was what happened...” Zhao Ya began to recount her story.

Back to the time at the Empire Alliance City, she ordered the members of the Glacier Plain Court to return back to the City of Glacier while she remained in the Empire Alliance for a period of time to reinforce her cultivation. Wei Ruyan also stayed behind to protect her during her cultivation. Thinking that there would be few who were able to pose a threat to the two of them, Zhang Xuan did not think much about it and returned to the Zhang Clan.

But just when the two of them were finally about to leave Empire Alliance City, they encountered a young man.

The young man did not make a move on them right away. Instead, he informed them that he was from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers, and there was something important that he needed their help with. However, due to confidentiality issues, he could not tell them what it was yet.

Naturally, the two of them could not possibly accept such a questionable request. Thus, they ended up battling one another, and they swiftly found themselves being outmatched and captured.

By the time they realized that they were in a dire situation, it was already too late for them to send any help messages out.

After that, they were confined in a solitary location. However, the other party did not mistreat them. Instead, they supplied them with sufficient cultivation resources to further their

cultivation, and there were even experts who helped them on the difficulties that they were facing with their cultivation.

On top of that, they imparted the method to deciphering the seal to them.

As for the reason that Zhao Ya had been in a trance earlier, it was actually in order to protect her. The seal on the Canvas of Four Seasons was extremely powerful, and it would inflict tremendous pressure on one's mind while trying to decipher it. Through placing her in a trance, the chances of her losing concentration and sustaining irrecoverable damage would be significantly lowered.

“Despite their forceful measures, you went along with them and did whatever they asked you to. Why?” Zhang Xuan frowned.

He knew Zhao Ya's personality very well. She was an obstinate individual who would never yield to force. When had she become so obedient as to obey the orders of someone who had kidnapped her?

This was completely unlike the Zhao Ya that he knew.

“They said that...” At this point, Zhao Ya's face reddened as she bit her lips. “As long as I helped them to decipher the seal, they would offer you an opportunity to push for a breakthrough to Ancient Sage...”

“Offer me an opportunity to push for a breakthrough to Ancient Sage?” Zhang Xuan was taken aback.

“That's right. They said that you are the most talented master teacher on the Master Teacher Continent. The roots of both the Hundred Schools of Philosophers and the Master Teacher Pavilion trace back to Kong shi, and they be considered close allies. As long as we were willing to do them this favor, they would reciprocate as well,” Zhao Ya replied awkwardly.

“So, you followed their instructions...” Hearing those words, Zhang Xuan felt both a little angry and touched at the same time.

Sighing deeply, he shook his head and said, “I appreciate your intentions, but when have I ever succumbed to a challenge

before? It might be difficult to achieve a breakthrough to Ancient Sage, but I haven't fallen so far that I need to sacrifice my own students in exchange for an opportunity for a breakthrough! Rest assured, if there's truly such an opportunity in the world, I will be able to obtain it with my own strength!"

"Teacher, I was wrong..." Zhao Ya's voice grew a little meek.

"Alright!" Zhang Xuan waved his hand. "Considering that you had good intentions, I won't pursue this matter any further!"

After which, he turned in the direction of the eight youths and ordered, "Stop!"

Hu la!

The Five Monarchs and his many Great Sage artifacts swiftly returned to Zhang Xuan's side, leaving eight incapacitated youths lying powerlessly on the ground. The pummeling that they had been put under had completely ruined their dashing appearance.

"This is just a small punishment for kidnapping my students. Anyone who dares to touch my students will have to bear the consequences of their actions. Since Zhao Ya hasn't sustained any injuries as a result of your doings, I'll spare your lives. However, I want you to answer my questions first before I set you free."

Looking at the eight youths on the ground coldly, he asked, "Firstly, what is the Hundred Schools of Philosophers intending to achieve by snooping around and kidnapping my students? Secondly, has the Hundred Schools of Philosophers already allied with the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe... or could it be that you have converted those Otherworldly Demons into your subordinates?"

Upon learning that those of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers did not intend to harm Zhao Ya, a thought surfaced in his mind.

Could it be possible that the Otherworldly Demons whom he had seen alongside the Hundred Schools of Philosophers were actually their subordinates?

He, for example, had managed to forge a Soulless Metal Humanoid out of an Otherworldly Demon Ancient Sage, and he had Vicious subdued in his Book of Heaven's Path as well. However, that did not mean that he was working with the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe.

The Hundred Schools of Philosophers might have something similar to that.

"We are only obeying the orders from our superiors. We aren't too sure about the specific details of the matter, so pardon us for being unable to answer your question," one of the youths answered while hissing in pain.

"You are unable to answer my question?" Zhang Xuan gazed down at the youth intently, as if peering right into his mind.

Faced with Zhang Xuan's eyes, the youth hesitated for a moment before replying affirmatively, "... Yes!"

"It's fine if you are unwilling to speak. I'll find out soon enough. Now, scram!" Zhang Xuan turned around and flung his sleeves coldly.

He was indebted to Kong shi, and Ancient Sage Bo Shang and Ancient Sage Ran Qiu had indirectly helped him as well. Since these youths were their descendants, and it did not seem like they had forsaken mankind to ally themselves with the Otherworldly Demons, there was no need for him to claim their lives.

"We aren't leaving," one of the youths protested resolutely.

"Throw them out!" Zhang Xuan commanded imposingly.

The Five Monarchs and the many Great Sage artifacts charged forward once more, and it did not take long for the eight youths to be thrown right out of the Hall of Great Accomplishment.

Without Zhao Ya's unique constitution escorting them in, they would not be able to enter the Subordinate Hall again.

After dealing with the youths from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers, Zhang Xuan finally turned his gaze back to the Canvas of Four Seasons. The snow in the painting had mostly

melted, and the seal had assumed another form. It was completely different from the seal that Zhao Ya had spent so much effort deciphering earlier.

“Teacher, the seal has changed... The seal releasing technique that I have learned won’t work on it anymore,” Zhao Ya said anxiously with a pale face.

She tried to channel her cold energy toward the seal, but she realized that she was unable to control the seal anymore.

The attribute of the seal placed on the painting had already changed accordingly to match the season of the painting.

“Don’t worry, I have my own ways!” Zhang Xuan chuckled softly as he flicked his finger.

Weng!

The icy crystal that he had obtained earlier materialized before him, and he lightly pushed it forward.

Hu!

The icy crystal immediately surged toward the seal, and as soon as it came into contact with the seal, it began to revolve on the spot. It swiftly formed a vortex that devoured the seal on the painting in the blink of an eye.

Seeing that the icy crystal was indeed effective against the seal, just as Little Amulet had said, Zhang Xuan heaved a sigh of relief. He quickly beckoned the Xingmeng Sword Saints over.

“Let’s head in to take a look!”

Following which, he took the lead and stepped into the unsealed painting. The others also quickly followed suit without any hesitation.

Silence returned to the majestic hall.

1735 The Requirements to Achieving a Breakthrough to Ancient Sage

Those who had reached the pinnacle of painting were capable of constructing worlds that anyone could enter and live in. More frighteningly, the world that they created could be so lifelike that one would not even realize that one was in a painting.

It was said that tens of thousands of years ago, the Painter Guild had been blessed with a painter of unparalleled talent. He had created his masterpiece, consisting of a massive world and a ravishing beauty, when he was in his prime. Obsessed with his work, he had spent much time in his masterpiece along with the ravishing beauty, and as time passed, he had even fallen in love with the ravishing beauty. One day, he had entered the painting and never left it again.

As a painting created by Kong shi himself, the Canvas of Four Seasons was a work far above the tier of any 9-star painter, be it in terms of conceptualization of the work or the grasp of space-time. The painting was almost no different from a massive folded space, where the end was nowhere in sight.

“There’s spiritual energy within this painting, and it’s extremely concentrated at that!”

Standing on top of a boulder, Zhang Xuan took a deep breath, and he could not help but be astounded by the capabilities of Kong shi.

There was no doubt that this painting had surpassed the level of 9-star painters, achieving the realm of Unadorned Reality.

Everything that was within the painting felt perfectly natural, such that it was impossible to discern any difference between it and the world outside. With an attack of the Dragonbone Divine Spear, Zhang Xuan was still able to open dimension

rifts within the painting and traverse through it. More astoundingly, the dimension rifts would slowly repair themselves as well.

Had he not known that it was a painting, he would have never been able to imagine that it was a simulation of reality.

Zhang Xuan swiftly found a clearing before calling the shocked Xingmeng Sword Saints over. “Give it a try and see if you are able to achieve a breakthrough to Ancient Sage here!”

As his cultivation was only at Aureate Body realm consummation, he was unable to sense the ‘quality’ that was required for one to achieve a breakthrough to Ancient Sage. However, his parents were already at Sempiternal realm consummation, and they were just a step away from reaching that legendary level.

“Un!”

Knowing that there was bound to be a reason behind their son’s words, the duo swiftly sat down and began cultivating quietly. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Hong long long!

As they began cultivating, the spiritual energy in the area swiftly converged on them and surged into their bodies. Slowly, their auras grew stronger and stronger.

Some time later, the two of them halted their cultivation and stood up.

“We are able to feel the bottleneck of our cultivation, and it feels like we’ll be able to overcome the bottleneck with sufficient time... At this rate, it might really be possible for us to achieve a breakthrough to Ancient Sage!” Sword Saint Meng said.

Hearing those words, Zhang Xuan’s eyes lit up.

It was only a deduction from him and Little Amulet that one would be able to achieve a breakthrough to Ancient Sage in

the Canvas of Four Seasons. However, if that was truly the case, the value of this painting was truly phenomenal!

“Since that’s the case, why don’t you two try to push for a breakthrough right now?” Zhang Xuan suggested with a smile.

Considering how he had kicked out the offspring of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers, it was likely that the Ancient Sage who had stopped him from entering the Pavilion of Frozen Winter earlier would be enraged.

If his parents could achieve a breakthrough to Ancient Sage right now, they would at least be less defenseless against other Ancient Sages.

“Right now?” Hearing those words, the Xingmeng Sword Saints exchanged glances before shaking their heads bitterly.

“You are thinking too lightly of Ancient Sages!”

“It’s true that a fragmented piece of the ancient world is sealed here, and the ‘quality’ of the air in here allows one to take the final step forward and achieve a breakthrough to Ancient Sage. However,” Sword Saint Xing said, “it will still take a lot of time and effort in order to do so. It’s not something that can be achieved in the spur of the moment!”

“Even among Kong shi’s three thousand students, only seventy-two of them successfully reached Ancient Sage. This is not an undertaking that anyone can succeed in! It’s true that the aura lingering in this painting is crucial to achieving a breakthrough to Ancient Sage... but if one’s accumulation is insufficient, the presence of the ‘quality’ in the air won’t make any difference!”

Zhang Xuan was startled for a moment before nodding.

“You’re right...”

His parents were right.

Reaching Ancient Sage was a major breakthrough, and it was highly demanding on one’s comprehension of the world. If one could not even meet the prerequisites for a breakthrough, it was impossible to succeed even if one was in a suitable environment.

Even in the ancient era, not every cultivator was able to become an Ancient Sage. Those who were able to reach that realm were all top-notch geniuses.

“What exactly is the ‘quality’ in the air that allows one to achieve a breakthrough to Ancient Sage?” Zhang Xuan asked.

“I can’t point out exactly what it is either, but I do know that people named it the Aeon of Ancient Sages. As long as one’s accumulation reaches a certain level, one will be able to tap into the Aeon of Ancient Sages to rise to greater heights!” Sword Saint Xing explained.

“Aeon of Ancient Sages?” Zhang Xuan nodded contemplatively. “Does this thing exist naturally in our environment, or is it something that could be depleted?”

“There aren’t any records as to where the Aeon of Ancient Sages comes from and why it exists in our world, so I have no way of answering your question for sure,” Sword Saint Xing explained slowly. “However, based on my deduction, it’s likely to be a depletable resource just like rare ores. Once we run out of it, it’ll be nigh impossible to bring it back.

“Back when people realized that it was no longer possible to achieve a breakthrough to Ancient Sage, a huge panic broke out amid the upper echelons of the Master Teacher Continent. There were many remarkable talents who had already accumulated enough to push for a breakthrough, but for some reason, they just weren’t able to take the final step forward. It was also around that period of time that they discovered the existence of the Aeon of Ancient Sages!”

As the ex-head of the Zhang Clan, he had heard of this story from his predecessor.

The realization that no one was able to achieve a breakthrough to Ancient Sage anymore had cast a cloak of despair over the Master Teacher Continent. Those who had cultivated all their life and reached Sempiternal realm consummation with much difficulty suddenly found their cultivation limited. No matter how hard they pushed themselves, they had simply been unable to advance any further. It was inevitable that they would be terrified.

Furthermore, the Otherworldly Demons had also made use of the opportunity to launch attacks on the Master Teacher Continent. It had truly been a period of nightmares for mankind. Humans had nearly succumbed to despair then.

It was fortunate that the Ancient Sages had then decided to devote their lives to protecting mankind by going into hibernation!

Realizing that they were still able to fend against the Otherworldly Demons for the time being, the panic had gradually calmed down.

Were it not for the sacrifices made by the Ancient Sages, mankind would have already ceased to exist!

“I understand that the Aeon of Ancient Sages is a crucial quality to making a breakthrough to Ancient Sage, but exactly what else is required other than that?” Zhang Xuan asked.

His parents had said that they were unable to achieve a breakthrough due to their accumulation being insufficient, but what exactly did that mean? What did they have to accumulate that was insufficient?

Or to put it in other words, what requirements did one have to meet in order to push for a breakthrough to the highest realm?

“Ever since ancient times, Ancient Sages have been the symbol of the highest fighting prowess in the world. There has been a lot of research done on it to study the requirements in order to achieve a breakthrough to that pinnacle realm. Firstly, the presence of the Aeon of Ancient Sages is necessary. Secondly, one’s Soul Depth must reach 30.0. Thirdly, one must achieve a soul span of a million kilometers!” Sword Saint Xing explained.

“Soul span of a million kilometers?” Zhang Xuan frowned. “What does that mean?”

He could understand the first two requirements that Sword Saint Xing had mentioned, but what did the third one mean?

“It’s really simple. When you refine your soul energy into a soul thread and extend it outward, the longest distance that your soul thread is able to reach will be your soul span!”

Zhang Xuan fell into deep thought.

Hid soul had been tempered by lightning and heavenly flames, making it extraordinarily powerful. He had also used his soul energy to perceive his surroundings before. However, he had never tried threading his soul energy and extending it as far as possible.

Seeing the expression on Zhang Xuan's face, Sword Saint Xing could tell that his son had never tried testing his soul span before, so he asked with a chuckle, "Do you want to give it a try and see what your soul span is?"

Those who were unaware of the conditions required to achieve a breakthrough to Ancient Sage would not bother testing their souls in such a manner. It was dangerous to spread one's soul too far outward. If the soul thread snapped, one could potentially incur severe damage.

"Alright, I'll give it a try!" Zhang Xuan nodded in agreement. He was also curious how far he could go.

Taking a deep breath, Zhang Xuan began refining his soul energy into a soul thread before pushing it outward.

100,000 kilometers!

200,000 kilometers!

300,000 kilometers!

In the blink of an eye, he had already passed the 500,000 kilometers mark, but his soul thread showed no signs of slowing down. In fact... he realized that he had not even used a tenth of his soul energy yet!

1736 Achieving a Breakthrough to Ancient Sage

Hu!

Zhang Xuan finally came to a halt.

“How is it?” the Xingmeng Sword Saints asked curiously.

They knew that their son was the head of the Jiang Clan and had a soul oracle student. Without a doubt, he was likely to be highly proficient in the field of soul arts. However, they were not too sure what realm he had reached, so it was inevitable for them to be interested in his results.

“This...” Zhang Xuan scratched his head awkwardly. “The world in here is simply too small. My soul thread has already reached the end of the world.”

While this was a world that Kong shi had created through extraordinary means, it was ultimately still a folded space. There was no way that it could be boundless like the Master Teacher Continent. All in all, the world was less than a million kilometers wide in diameter.

It was not large enough for him to push himself to his limits!

However, if one thing was for sure, when it came to souls, he was already comparable to the Ancient Sages!

Of course, he would only be comparable to them in terms of quantity. When it came to quality, he was severely lacking. At the very most, he would only be able to protect himself from the soul offense of the Ancient Sages. He was still lacking sufficient power to be able to quell experts of that level.

“Even though the world in the painting is small, the fact that you were able to reach the end of the world shows that you possess extraordinary soul span. As long as you raise your

Soul Depth and cultivation up to the mark, you should be able to reach Ancient Sage!” Sword Saint Xing remarked in astonishment.

His son’s talent was truly overpowered.

While other cultivators struggled to keep up with their soul span even after their cultivation had reached Sempiternal realm consummation, he had already met the requirement despite only being at Aureate Body realm consummation.

Perhaps, the bottleneck that had made Ancient Sage unreachable to most cultivators might be a mere mini hurdle for him, just like any other cultivation realms.

“Actually, it’s not too difficult to increase your soul span. I have a soul cultivation technique manual over here that you two can cultivate...” Zhang Xuan flicked his wrist and took out a book.

As one who had comprehended the Soul Quintessence and inherited the heritage of the soul oracles, he had long formed his own school of study regarding souls. The soul cultivation technique manual that he was offering to the Xingmeng Sword Saints was tailored to the constitution of those in the Zhang Clan. As it was completely unrelated to the heritage of the Jiang Clan, it could not be considered betraying the Jiang Clan’s secrets.

“This cultivation technique is indeed highly effective in increasing one’s soul span. As long as we cultivate it diligently, we should be able to reach a soul span of a million kilometers within a month!” Sword Saint Xing remarked in agitation after swiftly browsing through the manual.

“Un. I’m looking forward to the day that you two become Ancient Sages!” Zhang Xuan said with a chuckle.

“I’m glad that you think highly of the two of us, but it really isn’t as easy as that!” Sword Saint Xing shook his head.

“Other than the three core requirements, there are many other factors that can affect the possibility of one’s breakthrough to Ancient Sage, such as one’s understanding of cultivation, one’s ability to harmonize with the world, one’s state of

mind... In any case, a breakthrough to Ancient Sage is truly no easy feat. As powerful as your soul cultivation technique is, it'll only increase our chances of success by ten percent!"

"Only ten percent?" Zhang Xuan was taken aback.

"Indeed. Stepping into the Ancient Sage realm symbolizes overcoming one's fundamental limits to reach a higher level of existence. To make an analogy, it's no different from a carp leaping across the Dragon's Gate! One's constitution changes completely, including one's meridians. There's no way to make that leap that easily..." Sword Saint Xing explained.

However, before he could finish his piece, he suddenly felt the world around him quaking intensely. Surges of spiritual energy were swiftly gathering in a certain direction. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Following which, an overwhelming burst of energy gushed into the heavens, splitting the world in half.

"This... Someone is achieving a breakthrough to Ancient sage?" Sword Saint Xing widened his eyes in disbelief.

He felt as if his head was going to explode. Not a moment earlier, he had said that it would be incredibly difficult to achieve a breakthrough to Ancient Sage!

Who in the world was it?

Sword Saint Xing quickly turned his sight to the center of the vortex, and he saw an eerie-looking saber floating quietly in the air, greedily devouring the spiritual energy and Aeon of Ancient Sages in the air. Its strength swiftly grew greater and greater.

It was as if rivers of spiritual energy were filling up an ocean. The flow of energy was so quick that it caused the saber to shake nonstop.

"This is... your weapon?" Sword Saint Xing gulped.

The dazed Zhang Xuan nodded in response. He was taken aback by the situation as well.

The one that was achieving a breakthrough at the moment was the Infernal Blacksaber.

He did not place it back into his storage ring after chasing the eight youths from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers away, so it had ended up following him into the Canvas of Four Seasons.

In the first place, the Infernal Blacksaber was a Half-Ancient Sage artifact, and it had devoured the fresh blood and souls of 110,000 Otherworldly Demon soldiers. It had already accumulated enough for a breakthrough, but it had just been lacking the final catalyst to do so. The Aeon of Ancient Sages in the painting just so happened to be what it lacked, thus allowing it to successfully advance to Ancient Sage!

Hualala!

A tremendous amount of spiritual energy swept across the area as if hurricanes, causing the ground to tremor intensely. As the Infernal Blacksaber continued to absorb spiritual energy furiously from the painting, the surrounding space began to dissipate.

“The spiritual energy in here isn’t sufficient for it to make a breakthrough! If this goes on, I fear that the world in the painting will be completely destroyed!” Sword Saint Xing narrowed his eyes in horror.

Usually, when a cultivator pushed for a breakthrough to Ancient Sage, they would prepare ample cultivation resources so that they would not abruptly run out of energy in the midst of their breakthrough.

However, the Infernal Blacksaber was just a weapon, so it was inevitable that it would neglect something like that. Zhang Xuan had not expected it to achieve a breakthrough at that moment, so he had not made preparations in advance.

If they were on the Master Teacher Continent, there might still have been ample spiritual energy in the air to sustain its breakthrough. However, they were in a painting. Considering how its foundations were not too stable in the first place, the surrounding space was already starting to collapse due to the

strain that it was under. At that rate, the entire painting might just be utterly destroyed.

It had not been easy for him to find the Aeon of Ancient Sages required for one to make a breakthrough to Ancient Sage. It would be a huge waste if the painting was destroyed just like that!

“Infernal Blacksaber, absorb this!”

Knowing that there was no time to lose, Zhang Xuan flicked his finger.

Hula!

A droplet of blood harnessing a concentrated reservoir of energy surged toward the Infernal Blacksaber.

It was the blood that Old Geezer Yu had shed after he was injured.

The old ancestor of the Zhang Clan had collected the blood and given it to him. If there was anything that he had that could provide sufficient energy for the Infernal Blacksaber to achieve a breakthrough, it was that.

Tzzzzzz!

As soon as the Infernal Blacksaber came into contact with the blood, it swiftly absorbed it. However, it seemed like the spiritual energy harnessed within a single droplet was not enough for its breakthrough.

Thus, Zhang Xuan flicked the other droplets of blood over one after another.

Soon, he had already depleted all five droplets of Old Geezer Yu’s blood.

It was only after absorbing the fifth droplet of blood that the Infernal Blacksaber finally calmed down. An aura of invincibility drifted off from its body, and it felt as if it could split the painting in two and escape with just a single slash.

Hong long long!

A dimension rift appeared in the sky of the painting, and ominous clouds swiftly gushed in.

It was a cultivation ordeal, the Ancient Sage Ordeal!

Under normal circumstances, it would have been impossible for one to summon a cultivation ordeal within a folded space. However, the Ancient Sage Ordeal was simply so powerful that the world within the painting was not able to stop it.

Kacha!

Lightning and heavenly flames descended from the sky and shrouded the Infernal Blacksaber. The Infernal Blacksaber swiftly channeled the remaining energy from Old Geezer Yu's blood to alleviate the destructive might from the cultivation ordeal, allowing it to absorb the energy safely. Slowly, crimson marks surfaced on its blade.

Under the tempering of the lightning and heavenly flames, the Infernal Blacksaber became more and more sinister. Just a glance at it was more than enough to unnerve one's will.

Hu!

Some time later, the ominous clouds finally began to dissipate, leaving the Infernal Blacksaber floating quietly in the air. With a light slash, the space in the painting was sliced apart as easily as a blob of tofu.

"I have finally reached Ancient Sage! Hahaha!" The Infernal Blacksaber burst into laughter. Following which, it turned to Zhang Xuan and kneeled on the floor. "Thank you, Master!"

1737 Assimilating the Ancient Sage Blood

“Rise!”

With a wave of his hand, the Infernal Blacksaber fell into Zhang Xuan’s hand. He immediately felt the destructive energy harnessed within it.

Before, he would need to resort to all kinds of means in order to defeat a Sempiternal realm consummation expert. However, with the Infernal Blacksaber in his grasp, he would be able to easily slay dozens of Sempiternal realm consummation experts with just a simple slash.

Even though there was only a realm of difference between Ancient Sage and Sempiternal realm, the gap between the two realms was as great as the distance between the heavens and the earth. This difference was not something that could be breached with just quantity.

“I’ll finally be able to protect myself from other Ancient Sages now...” Zhang Xuan’s eyes lit up in agitation.

Even though the golden page did grant him the ability to kill other Ancient Sages, it had its limitations too. For example, if Old Geezer Yu had continued hiding quietly, he would have been unable to do anything about the other party even if he had the golden page in mind. However, the situation was completely different now that the Infernal Blacksaber had reached Ancient Sage!

If Old Geezer Yu made a move on him again, the Infernal Blacksaber would surely be able to trace the origin of his aura and injure him!

That was also how the old ancestor of the Zhang Clan managed to drive Old Geezer Yu away.

This was another invaluable trump card in his possession. If he used it together with the Otherworldly Demon Ancient Sage

corpse, he would be able to kill other Ancient Sages in a surprise assault!

He was no longer as reliant on the golden page as he was before.

“Alright, you should reinforce your cultivation!” Zhang Xuan instructed.

The Infernal Blacksaber nodded, and it began flitting into the distance to find a quiet spot to cultivate. However, before it could get far, it ran into the Dragonbone Divine Spear, which was making its way over. It hurriedly bowed respectfully to the latter before going on its way.

It was only after reaching Ancient Sage that the Infernal Blacksaber realized just how powerful the seal placed on the Dragonbone Divine Spear was. Once its seal was released, there was no doubt that it would not stand a chance at all against the Dragonbone Divine Spear.

“Xuan-er, your spear...”

Upon seeing this sight, Sword Saint Xing widened his eyes in astonishment.

The hierarchy among artifacts was extremely straightforward; they would only bow to artifacts stronger to them. If the Infernal Blacksaber had paid its respects to the Dragonbone Divine Spear, did it not mean that the latter was even stronger than an Ancient Sage artifact?

He knew that the Dragonbone Divine Spear was no ordinary power, but he was not too sure just how powerful it was.

“It’s nothing much. It’s just another minor fortuitous encounter,” Zhang Xuan explained with a smile.

“It’s just another small fortuitous encounter?” Sword Saint Xing staggered on the spot and nearly broke down.

Do you have some kind of misunderstanding as to what ‘minor fortuitous encounter’ means?

If your Dragonbone Divine Spear, Infernal Blacksaber, and all those Great Sage artifacts you have are only minor fortuitous

encounters, what in the world could be called a major fortuitous encounter?

“Wait here for a moment. I’ll go tame this painting...” Without explaining himself, Zhang Xuan quickly made his way toward a certain direction.

Not too long later, he arrived before a cave. With a simple grasp, a scroll appeared in his hand.

It was the original painting of the Canvas of Four Seasons. He had found the painting while threading his soul energy together to extend it as far as he could.

With a few taps, the painting swiftly acknowledged him as its master, and he stowed it into his storage ring.

Hu la!

With a jolt, the Xingmeng Sword Saints suddenly found themselves returning to the hall. They instinctively turned their sights toward where the painting had been placed previously, only to find that it had completely disappeared from sight.

A short moment later, Zhang Xuan also left the painting and materialized on the spot. “Do you want to cultivate here or follow me?”

The greatest treasure in the Hall of Great Accomplishment was the Canvas of Four Seasons. However, the sculptures of the seventy-two Sages, the rich spiritual energy, and the inscriptions on the walls were all invaluable resources for cultivation as well.

They would be able to advance their cultivation tenfold faster in the hall than anywhere else.

The Xingmeng Sword Saints glanced at one another before shaking their heads in unison. “We won’t be following you anymore. It’s peaceful here, and it’s a good opportunity for us to cultivate our souls and state of mind, as well as to assimilate the Ancient Sage blood. We’ll try to achieve a breakthrough here!”

They had realized that they would only be a burden to their son if they followed him with their current strength. Since that

was the case, it would be better for them to remain in the Hall of Great Accomplishment and cultivate. If they could achieve a breakthrough to Ancient Sage, they might still be able to continue supporting their son in his endeavors.

“I’ll remain here, too!” Hu Yaoyao said.

She had only recently achieved a breakthrough to the Introspective Convalescence realm, and she would be even more of a burden if she insisted on following Zhang Xuan around.

Zhao Ya stepped forward and said, “Teacher, I’ll follow you. I know where they took Wei Ruyan and Yuan Tao!”

“Un!” Zhang Xuan nodded. He pondered for a moment before flicking his finger, sending a droplet of Ancient Sage blood toward Zhao Ya. “Absorb this droplet of blood first!”

Many dangers lay ahead of them. Even though every droplet of Ancient Sage blood was an invaluable treasure, there was nothing more important to him than his student’s safety.

“Yes!”

Zhao Ya quickly sat down and absorbed the droplet of blood into her body. Power flurried through her body, but in less than ten minutes, she stood up once more with brilliant light shining from her eyes.

“Have you... managed to assimilate the Ancient Sage blood?” Zhang Xuan asked in astonishment.

The reason for him being able to assimilate the blood swiftly was because the blood from the old ancestor had originated from him. However, why was Zhao Ya able to do it so quickly as well?

“Yes, Teacher!” Zhao Ya nodded. “After you reconstructed my meridians, I realized that I am able to convert any energy into my zhenqi swiftly. Even though the droplet of blood harnesses a lot of energy, it still doesn’t pose too much of a problem for me to assimilate it!”

“Meridians?” Zhang Xuan frowned.

He tapped his finger and sent a surge of zhenqi into Zhao Ya's body to check on her condition. It seemed like after the alteration in Zhao Ya's meridians, her ability to assimilate energy into her body had become far stronger than other cultivators.

In that respect, even Zhang Xuan would pale in comparison to her.

Then again, considering how her meridian network was even more rational than that of an Ancient Sage, it was no wonder that she had been able to assimilate Ancient Sage blood so swiftly!

“Let's go!”

The fact that Zhao Ya had assimilated the Ancient Sage blood meant that she, at the very least, had a life preservation method if anything bad happened. Bidding farewell to his parents, Zhang Xuan began making his way out of the Hall of Great Accomplishment together with Zhao Ya.

Looking at the departing duo, a bitter smile crept onto Sword Saint Xing's face as he remarked, “He might be my son, but I have to say that he and his students are really overpowered...”

Just to assimilate a droplet of Ancient Sage blood, they had to store it in their dantian and absorb it bit by bit over a month or so. On the other hand, those two were actually able to assimilate it into their bodies within moments. This was truly an inconceivable feat.

“We need to work much harder as well. Otherwise, if our son and his students surpass us, we won't be able to maintain our dignity as elders before them!” Sword Saint Meng said.

“Indeed, indeed!” Sword Saint Xing nodded.

The two of them sat down on the floor and began cultivating.

...

“Old ancestor, you have to redress our grievances!”

Outside the Hall of Great Accomplishment, the eight youths who had been driven out were crying with snot and tears dripping down their faces.

They had dedicated much time and effort to preparing for the expedition before they were finally able to get into the Hall of Great Accomplishment. They had never expected that they would be viciously pummeled before being thrown out of the Subordinate Hall before they could acquire anything at all.

“You can only blame yourselves for your lack of strength!” the hidden Ancient Sage remarked with a hint of resignation in his tone.

“It’s not that we are weak, but that fellow has tamed so many beasts and powerful artifacts! If not for those, there’s no way that he would have been a match for us!” One of the youths gritted his teeth hatefully.

What was great about that fellow?

All he had were his tamed beasts and artifacts. Without those two, there was no way that he would have stood a chance against them!

“That’s right! Old ancestor, we beseech you to create a chance for us to have a fair duel with him!”

“If he’s able to defeat us without those external aids, we’ll willingly admit our defeat!”

The other youths quickly nodded in agreement.

“This...” The old ancestor for silent for a moment before speaking up once more. “Brother Hongtian, my descendants would like to have a fair duel with your descendant. Will you grant me this favor?”

“Feel free to discuss any arrangements with my descendant. Rest assured, as long as you don’t resort to anything unprincipled, I don’t intend to intervene in his matters!” the old ancestor of the Zhang Clan said. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

While Zhang Xuan and the others had entered the Hall of Great Accomplishment, he had remained hidden in the vicinity.

“That’s a relief...” the old ancestor of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers replied.

1738 Assaulting an Ancient Sage

Hu!

The seal of the Hall of Great Accomplishment glowed, and Zhang Xuan and Zhao Ya flew out.

“Where do you think you’re going?”

The eight youths with a couple of others from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers swiftly surrounded the two of them as soon as they appeared.

“What? Do you still want a pummeling?” Zhang Xuan harrumphed coldly.

He had already spared their lives, but they did not know gratitude. Did they really think that he was a pushover?

“We want a fair duel with you, one-on-one. You aren’t allowed to your weapons or tamed beasts. Do you dare take up our challenge?” one of the youths spat coldly.

“Fair duel? What are the stakes then?” Zhang Xuan shot a nonchalant glance at the youth.

Without any stakes involved, he could not be bothered to waste his time fighting a meaningless battle with this crowd.

Before the youth could reply, the voice of the Ancient Sage sounded in the air. “Earlier, Brother Hongtian gave you five droplets of Ancient Sage blood. If you are able to win the duel with them, I’ll also offer you five droplets of Ancient Sage blood as the wager!

“This is the stake that we are willing to offer. What do you have to offer us then?”

“What do I have to offer?” Zhang Xuan pondered for a moment before saying, “I can spare their lives!” “Find

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“...” The Ancient Sage suddenly felt an uncomfortable throbbing in his heart.

In the first place, it's uncertain who will win in the duel. Furthermore, I have offered you five droplets of Ancient Sage blood, but is this really all you have to offer me? Are you that certain that you'll be able to win?

“If you lose to us, you have to hand over the Canvas of Four Seasons!”

“Indeed! You have to bring out the Canvas of Four Seasons as your wager!”

...

The other youths shouted vehemently.

However, before they could finish their piece, they found Zhang Xuan looking at them with a gaze that seemed as though he was looking at fools. “Are you dreaming? Do you think those few droplets of blood from your old ancestor are worth me bringing out the Canvas of Four Seasons as a wager?”

“T-then... Your wager won't work either! If you lose the duel, we will have nothing to gain from the battle!”

The crowd from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers protested furiously.

The Ancient Sage from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers felt even more stifled than before.

“That isn't any of my business, is it? It's not as if I'm really interested in having this duel with you. If you don't want to battle me, we can always call the duel off,” Zhang Xuan uttered as he stretched his back lazily.

He had not intended to duel with those from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers in the first place, so it was not as if it would hurt him dearly not to have the duel.

“How about this? We’ll bet five droplets of blood for an opportunity to achieve a breakthrough in your Canvas of Four Seasons,” the Ancient Sage from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers suggested.

“Hmm... That wager does sound fair to me, but I’m only at Aureate Body realm consummation whereas your descendants are all Sempiternal realm consummation cultivators. There are two realms of difference between us, so isn’t it extremely disadvantageous for me to be unable to use my artifacts and tamed beasts?” Zhang Xuan said.

“I’ll have them lower their cultivation to your level!” the Ancient Sage from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers replied.

It was indeed unfair for them to impose so many restrictions on the other party and yet send cultivators of higher realms against him.

“That would be great. Let’s begin then!” Zhang Xuan nodded before taking a step forward. With a light chuckle, he remarked, “So that we don’t waste each other’s time, you may come at me together. However, if you come at me all at once, I might not be able to hold myself back. I’ll have to ask for your pardon if a couple of you lose your lives in the process!”

“You want to kill us? Try it then!” one of the youths sneered coldly.

He suppressed his cultivation down to Aureate Body realm consummation before charging toward Zhang Xuan, making the first move.

Using some mysterious secret art, the movement of the youth became extremely swift. In the blink of an eye, the youth had already arrived before Zhang Xuan, and his palm struck diagonally down toward Zhang Xuan’s head.

In that instant, the youth thought that he had already gotten Zhang Xuan for good, but before his palm could connect, he suddenly felt a sharp sensation in his chest as air gushed out of his lungs. Turning his eyes downward, he found that the other party’s palm had already sunk right into his chest.

Peng!

The youth flew into the distance before he crashed wretchedly on the floor, coughing out huge mouthfuls of blood.

To his astonishment, he could not even discern how Zhang Xuan had made a move on him at all! It was as if the other party's palm had simply teleported right in front of him!

“Come at me together. There's no way any of you stand a chance against me in a one-on-one!” Zhang Xuan shot a glance at the remaining youths.

“Let's get him together!”

The crowd had seen the earlier exchange, and they realized that the other party's fighting prowess was far greater than theirs in the same cultivation realm. There was no way that they could possibly hope to defeat him alone. Without hesitating for long, they nodded at one another before charging at the other party simultaneously.

Peng peng peng peng!

Before the crowd could even reach Zhang Xuan, the person in question had already charged right into them. As if a tiger around a pack of lambs, there was not a single person who was able to withstand a blow from him.

They were the top geniuses from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers, and they had prided themselves on their superior fighting prowess against their peers. Yet, before the young man before them, the strength that they were so confident of was so laughably pathetic that it seemed as if they were little kids parading before an adult.

“How could he be so powerful?”

Witnessing this scene, the Ancient Sage of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers could swiftly tell that his descendants had lost the battle!

Even though the other party was only at Aureate Body realm consummation, his true fighting prowess was already on par with Sempiternal realm cultivators!

Of the entire Hundred Schools of Philosophers, the only one known to possess such superior capability was Kong Shiyao!

Watching the battle a little longer, it was painfully apparent that even in a group battle, they were not close to being a match for Zhang Xuan.

As much as he did not want to admit it, the Ancient Sage of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers still sighed deeply and advised, “You aren’t a match for him... Admit defeat!”

However, barely after he spoke those words, an unexpected situation occurred.

Under the relentless assault from the group from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers, Zhang Xuan accidentally made a fatal mistake, leaving him open for a brief moment. One of the youths keenly noticed this opportunity and pierced his finger toward Zhang Xuan’s blind spot.

In the face of this unexpected crisis, perhaps it was because Zhang Xuan thought that it was too late for him to avoid the attack, he lifted his palm to strike the youth’s head instead.

This was a move of mutually assured destruction! The youth might be able to pierce his finger through Zhang Xuan’s heart, but he would also have his head smashed to bits by the latter and die on the spot!

More importantly, judging from the frightening momentum of the duo’s movements, it was already too late for them to retract their attacks.

“Halt!” the Ancient Sage of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers roared anxiously.

A powerful surge of energy swiftly shrouded the entire area, sealing the surroundings space. It seemed like the Ancient Sage of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers had decided to make a move in order to prevent a tragedy from happening.

However, a moment after he released his energy, the young man below, who was moments away from having his heart pierced, suddenly moved in an awkward trajectory and mysteriously avoided the deadly move.

Following which, a saber materialized in his palm.

Huala!

To the astonishment of the Ancient Sage of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers, the target of the saber was not his descendants but him!

“That is... an Ancient Sage weapon!” The Ancient Sage of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers narrowed his eyes in shock.

He did not think that the young man would intentionally reveal a flaw just to lure him into making a move and confirm his location.

He immediately attempted to flee, but it was already too late. The saber had wrapped its aura around him, keeping him firmly in place.

Puhe!

A sharp glint flashed across the air, and fresh blood spurted in the air.

“Haha! You have my deepest gratitude for your generosity!” Zhang Xuan chuckled softly as he swiftly caught all of the blood with a gourd that he had prepared.

All in all, there were over twenty droplets of blood.

Those five droplets of Ancient Sage blood were no longer enough for him to make a move. From the very start, this was what he was aiming for!

The Ancient Sage of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers had been polite to him on the surface, but he had overlooked the despicable actions committed by his descendants, turning a blind eye as they kidnapped his students and made use of them for their own gain. Not only so, he had even used his powers to suppress him so as to stop him from getting to Zhao Ya.

There was no way that he would miss an opportunity to get even with the other party!

“You...”

Having lost too much blood, the face of the Ancient Sage of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers paled from frailty.

Infuriated by the sudden assault, he was just about to make a move when he suddenly felt an imposing aura raging by the side.

It was the old ancestor of the Zhang Clan, Zhang Hongtian, warning him against making a move on his descendant. Knowing that he could not afford to fight with Zhang Hongtian at the moment, he suppressed his raging fury and held himself back.

To think that an Ancient Sage like him had actually been fooled by an Aureate Body realm brat, even suffering injuries in the process! Such a thing was completely unthinkable!

“The young head of the Zhang Clan sure is a remarkable figure! I am impressed. Our Hundred Schools of Philosophers admit our loss. Farewell!”

Hu la!

With a powerful gale, the Ancient Sage of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers swiftly pulled his descendants back to his side before turning around, preparing to leave the area.

“Wait a moment. Where are the five droplets of Ancient Sage blood that you promised me for losing the challenge? Are you intending to renege on your promise?” Zhang Xuan shouted after the Ancient Sage.

The Ancient Sage of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers staggered upon hearing those words. He nearly spurted out a mouthful of fresh blood.

Suppressing the stifled feeling in his chest, he flicked a jade bottle over before leaving decisively.

He was afraid that he would be choked to death if he continued conversing with the young man!

1739 Poison Dimension

“That’s more like it!”

Catching the jade bottle, Zhang Xuan nodded in satisfaction.

Those who wanted to force him into a duel had to pay a corresponding price for their actions. Not even Ancient Sages would be an exception to that rule!

“Your saber’s made a breakthrough to Ancient Sage, has it?” the old ancestor of the Zhang Clan asked in shock. He could hardly believe what he had just seen.

“Un!” Zhang Xuan nodded affirmatively.

“Great. That’s great!”

There was a brief moment of silence before the old ancestor of the Zhang Clan burst into hearty laughter.

Over the years, he had been singlehandedly propping the Zhang Clan up, and it was extremely tiring for him. He knew that if he passed away, the Zhang Clan would swiftly fall into decline, and that was not something that he was willing to see. However, the breakthrough of that saber meant that the Zhang Clan had another Ancient Sage to rely on.

Furthermore, the lifespan of an artifact was far longer than a human’s. There was no doubt that its existence would ensure the safety of the Zhang Clan for a very long time.

“I still have some students who are in the hands of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers, so I’ll be taking my leave!” Zhang Xuan clasped his fist.

With the departure of the Ancient Sages of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers and Otherworldly Demonic Tribe, there was nothing else that could pose a threat to them there.

“Go on!” The old ancestor of the Zhang Clan waved his hand.

If not for the interference of the old ancestor from the Zhang Clan, his earlier assault would not have succeeded. In the

worst-case scenario, he might have even died to the Otherworldly Demon Ancient Sage earlier. Thus, he bowed deeply to the old ancestor of the Zhang Clan before prompting Zhao Ya to lead the way ahead.

The two of them flew an extremely long distance, and it was not until the Hall of Great Accomplishment was nothing but a blur in the scenery that Zhao Ya finally came to a halt.

“I entered this space with the Hundred Schools of Philosophers from here!” Zhao Ya said.

Taking a look, Zhang Xuan realized that this was the place where he and Hu Yaoyao had entered from. It seemed like it was the same for the others as well.

“Break!”

Zhang Xuan had only managed to arrive in the exteriors of the Hall of Great Accomplishment through the offerings of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe, which had opened a spatial passageway there. However, with the Infernal Blacksaber upgraded to Ancient Sage tier, he did not have to depend on such elaborate techniques anymore.

Huala!

With a slash of the Infernal Blacksaber, a black rift appeared in midair.

Zhang Xuan pulled Zhao Ya and leaped right into the black rift.

The next moment, the two of them returned to the dimension of four seasons.

However, what that stood before him was no longer a field of snow. Flowers had bloomed amid verdant greenery, replacing the monotonous whiteness from before.

If not for the fact that the Introspective Convalescence realm elder was still in the area, he would have wondered if he had entered another world.

Having been in this dimension before, it did not take him too long to find the exit to the world. The duo swiftly dived through the spatial seal to enter the next dimension.

Hu!

Before they knew it, they found themselves standing in the midst of a mountain forest filled with miasma.

Zhao Ya took a look at the surrounding environment. “Wei Ruyan is likely to be in the Subordinate Hall corresponding to this dimension!”

Zhang Xuan nodded in agreement. He flicked his wrist, and a pill appeared on his palm. “Swallow this!”

“Alright!” Zhao Ya popped the pill into her mouth before asking doubtfully, “Teacher, is this an antidote?”

“The air and water here are poisonous. Monitor your condition and be careful!” Zhang Xuan explained.

Due to his Innate Fetal Poison, he had devoted a fair portion of his time to studying poison. With a glance, he could tell that the mountain forest was not as simple as it seemed. Despite the silence drifting in the area, there were no formidable beasts that posed a threat; the truth was that the entire area was suffused with lethal poison that would callously suffocate the unwary.

Following closely behind her teacher, Zhao Ya asked, “Teacher, what do we do now?”

“Let’s find the exit of this dimension for the time being. If my guess is correct, the location of the Subordinate Hall should be directly above the exit!” Zhang Xuan said.

Having gone through a couple of dimensions, he was already fairly well-versed in the rules.

He randomly picked a direction with his Dragonbone Divine Spear, confounding Zhao Ya in the process, before trudging off in the chosen direction.

There were venomous scorpions and snakes all over the jungle, but as one who possessed the Heaven’s Path zhenqi, Zhang Xuan did not fear them. They carried on ahead without facing much danger.

After traveling for roughly an hour, they encountered a group of master teachers whose faces had turned frighteningly pale.

It was apparent that they had been poisoned.

Zhang Xuan gave them a couple of pills infused with Heaven's Path zhenqi to cure them of their poison. Following which, he asked them a few questions to determine the approximate location of the exit before rushing over.

...

"This should be it!"

Roughly two hours later, the duo finally halted right before a medium-sized pond.

"This seems to be nothing more than an ordinary pond. Teacher, why do you think that this is the exit?" Zhao Ya asked doubtfully.

She had also heard the answers provided by the group of master teachers, but even they had been oblivious to the true location of the exit. How could her teacher be so certain about the matter?

"That's simple!"

Without bothering to explain himself, Zhang Xuan swiped his hand through the air and grabbed an ant in between his fingertips.

This ant was crimson in color, and it was roughly the size of a bean. With just a glance, it was clear that it was an extremely venomous creature.

With a light chuckle, Zhang Xuan placed the ant on the back of his hand.

Puhe!

Without any hesitation, the ant bit through Zhang Xuan's skin, injecting venom right into his bloodstream. At the same time, Zhang Xuan did not use his Heaven's Path zhenqi to neutralize the poison, allowing it to spread freely through his body instead.

In the blink of an eye, the back of his hand had already started turning black, and blisters were starting to form here and there.

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Not understanding the intentions behind her teacher’s actions, Zhao Ya panicked.

She could tell that the venom that had just been injected into her teacher’s body was deadly. If it made its way toward her teacher’s heart through the bloodstream, that could result in instantaneous death!

“Calm down, there’s no need to worry!” Zhang Xuan said calmly.

With a casual wave of his hand, the water in the pond splashed into the air and scattered over his wound.

Tzzzzzzzz!

It was as if the lethal poison on the back of his hand had encountered its nemesis. White smoke rose into the air, and the blackness and blisters from before swiftly retreated. Before long, his hand had reverted to its original state, as if it had never been poisoned before.

“This...” Zhao Ya was taken aback. “Is the water in this pond actually an antidote?”

“That’s right!” Zhang Xuan nodded. “As treacherous as these dimensions seem, Kong shi left them behind in order to test the future generations to see if they are qualified to inherit his treasures. His aim was never to cause meaningless deaths! As such, there was bound to be an antidote of some kind near the exit. Otherwise, it would be meaningless for him to leave his heritage behind, only to have no one alive to inherit it!”

Zhao Ya nodded in realization.

“I asked the previous group of master teachers that we encountered earlier where the most dangerous location, the place that has the greatest number of venomous creatures, is in this dimension. They pointed me toward here. The cultivation technique that Kong shi practices emphasizes the harmony of nature; where there is yin, yang is bound to exist as well.

Wherever the density of venomous creatures is the greatest, it's likely to be where the antidote lies. That's why I was certain that this is where the exit lies!" Zhang Xuan said confidently.

He knew that it was impossible for the group of master teachers that he had encountered previously to know where the exit was. If they knew, they would have escaped from the poison dimension instead of wandering helplessly around the area.

While they did not know where the exit was, in the long period of time that they had spent there, they should have gotten a rough idea of where the more treacherous terrain was.

After they made their way there, the first thing that Zhang Xuan realized was that there were no venomous creatures around the perimeter of the pond. That was more than enough to back up his deduction.

Realizing that they were right before the exit, Zhao Ya asked, "Teacher, should we tear a dimension rift right now to save Ruyan?"

Based on what her teacher had said, the Subordinate Hall where Wei Ruyan had been taken to was likely right above the pond.

"We are going to save her, but before that, there's one more thing that we have to do. Wait here for me while I go into the pond to take a look. The fact that the antidote that neutralizes the poison from the venomous creatures in this dimension can be found within the pond means that the crux to the dimension is likely to be in there as well. We'll have to grab that first!" Zhang Xuan said.

The crux of the forest dimension was the Five Monarchs. In the desert dimension, it was the Berserk Yellow Sand Wood. In the dimension of four seasons, it was the crystal. There was little doubt that something similar could be found in the poison dimension as well.

Like the crystal, it was likely to be an artifact that would play a crucial role in whatever they encountered within the

Subordinate Hall.

In any case, it was always better to be prepared.

After saying those words, Zhang Xuan leaped right into the clear pond without any hesitation.

1740 Fishing

With a depth of around ten meters, the pond was not too deep. Beyond that was where the spatial seal that led to the next dimension lay.

Instead of entering the spatial seal, Zhang Xuan chose to swim around its vicinity to take a closer look.

But even after swimming all the way around once, he was unable to find anything at all. Putting aside any lifeforms, he could not even find any rocks, ores, or anything that could remotely resemble an artifact. It was all clear water.

“Did I guess incorrectly? Does the crux of the dimension not lie here, or could it be that... someone has beaten me to it?” Zhang Xuan frowned. “No, that’s not right. If someone had claimed the crux of the formation, the poison lingering in the air would have receded by now...”

In the desert dimension, the desert had vanished after he took the Berserk Yellowsand Wood. In the forest dimension, as he had left together with the Five Monarchs, it was not clear what had happened after they departed. Nevertheless, no longer restricted by the authority of the Five Monarchs, it was unlikely for the beasts in the dimension to remain so orderly.

The same applied to the poison dimension as well. Considering how poison was still lingering in the air and the pond still possessed the properties of an antidote, it was likely that the crux of the dimension had not been found.

“Eye of Insight!”

Zhang Xuan scrutinized every nook and cranny within the pond, and soon, he noticed that something was amiss.

The substance that would neutralize the surrounding poison seemed to be growing scarcer and scarcer.

Zhang Xuan pondered for a moment before flying out of the pond. He waited for a few seconds before checking on the

pond once more, only to find that the substance had fully regenerated within.

“Teacher, have you found it yet?” Zhao Ya asked.

“Not yet. However, I have a good guess as to what the crux of the formation is. Bring me a bamboo pole!” Zhang Xuan instructed with a smile.

Zhao Ya left the area. Shortly after, she returned with a bamboo pole in hand.

Taking the bamboo pole, Zhang Xuan shook it lightly, jolting the leaves off. Driving his zhenqi through the bamboo pole, he manifested his zhenqi as a thin thread at the other end of the bamboo pole before concentrating his zhenqi at the very tip of the thread, as if preparing a delicious bait for the prey to be reeled in.

“This is... a fishing rod? Teacher, are you intending to fish at this pond?” Zhao Ya was taken aback.

” for visiting.

Furthermore... the fish seemed to have quite an eccentric personality.

“Don’t estimate this fellow. It’s a Sempiternal realm consummation cultivator. Put aside coming onto shore, he wouldn’t die even if he was thrown into a pot of boiling oil!” Zhang Xuan explained.

Zhao Ya’s initial shock slowly turned into intrigue as she asked, “If it possesses such strength, how did it end up being fished up?”

A Sempiternal realm consummation fish was likely to be a being of great intelligence. Yet, it had been fished up by an ordinary bamboo pole... This was unbelievable!

“I can’t help it—it was out of habit! In the past, Kong shi would often come to fish me. He would hook me up each and every time before releasing me shortly after. Each time, I would be caught dozens of times, so I eventually got used to it!” the koi fish explained.

Zhao Ya’s cheeks continued to twitch.

Despite its strength, it still allowed itself to be hooked up each and every single day... Furthermore, from the looks of it, it seemed like it enjoyed the process. Was it really that bored?

More importantly, to fish the same fish every single day... Kong shi must have been bored to death!

“Don’t listen to his nonsense. If I’m not wrong, Kong shi also used his zhenqi as his fishing line and bait. What that fellow is interested in is not just the bait but the fishing line as well, am I right?” Zhang Xuan shook his head with a light chuckle before turning his gaze to the koi fish.

“This... It’s all fleeting clouds!” the koi fish said in embarrassment.

“I see!” Zhao Ya widened her eyes in realization.

It was no wonder an ordinary fish was able to cultivate to Sempiternal realm consummation. It turned out that it had been consuming Kong shi’s zhenqi all along.

Naturally, there was no way that it would pass on such a delightful task to any other fish.

“I thought that I’d hidden myself quite well earlier. How did you find me?” asked the koi fish doubtfully as it turned to Zhang Xuan.

The way that it had hidden itself was extremely discreet, such that it would have been nigh impossible for even those who possessed the Eye of Insight to see through its disguise. There were a few other groups who had arrived prior to them, but they had failed to notice its presence.

Yet, the young man had actually known that he needed to use a fishing rod to hook it up, and that had left it feeling itchy all over. As a result, it could not help but bite the bait and allow itself to be hooked up.

“The antidote that you have left inside the water is similar to my zhenqi. It’s not something that anyone could create,” Zhang Xuan explained. “If I’m not mistaken, it probably originated from Kong shi, right?” “The full saying is that “Kong Zi fishes with a rod and not with a net; he hunts not those who have returned to their nests”. It displays his compassion

toward the world. It's fine to fish for food, but one should restrain from overfishing. At the same time, it's immoral to hunt animals down in their safe haven and resting spot. This analogy can be used to draw parallels to many more circumstances.

1741 Meeting Luo Qiqi Once More

The reason that he had allowed a venomous creature to inject its toxins into his body was to prove his deduction to Zhao Ya, as well as to feel how the antidote within the pond neutralized the toxins of the venomous creatures.

He had swiftly realized that the antidote worked in a similar manner to his Heaven's Path zhenqi.

Other than Kong shi, he could not think of anyone else who possessed such an ability. That was also why he had thought of making a fishing rod with his own zhenqi. To be honest, he had not really been sure whether it would work out or not!

"It's indeed Kong shi's unique zhenqi, but... why do you possess the same ability as him?" the koi fish asked questioningly.

"It's because I'm a Celestial Master Teacher as well!" Zhang Xuan answered with a chuckle.

"You are a Celestial Master Teacher? That explains a lot..." The koi fish widened its eyes in realization. "Alright, I have made up my mind! I'm going to be with you from now on! Back then, Kong shi instructed me to stay here, saying that I should only leave when the next Celestial Master Teacher comes by. That way, I'll be able to be fished every day!"

"Fished every day?" Zhang Xuan recoiled in disgust.

That koi fish sure was a masochist, wanting to be caught every day.

"You should enter my folded space for the time being. I'll call you when I need you!" Zhang Xuan said with a wave of his hand.

"Roger that!" the koi fish replied excitedly.

The next moment, it entered Zhang Xuan's Myriad Anthive Nest and found a massive brick lying before it.

"Woah! This brick is forged so exquisitely..." the koi fish complimented.

It had seen quite a few bricks in its lifetime, but it had never seen one with so many good materials wasted on it.

"You are the one that is a brick. Your whole family are bricks! I am the Golden Origin Cauldron, a true cauldron through and through!" the Golden Origin Cauldron roared in fury.

"You are a cauldron?" the koi fish scoffed in disdain. "So, you should be able to light up a fire, right? Why don't you come grill me then? People have told me that I taste wonderful grilled! Don't you want to try a slice of me? Quick, I can't hold myself back anymore..."

"..." the Golden Origin Cauldron.

"There's no need to go through that much trouble. Raw slices are good enough!" the Infernal Blacksaber harrumphed coldly as a cold glint flashed off its blade.

"Ah. I'm sorry..." Horrified by the appearance of an Ancient Sage artifact, the koi fish immediately lowered its head subserviently, not daring to run its mouth anymore.

...

Unaware of the little drama that had just happened within the Myriad Anthive nest, Zhang Xuan brought Zhao Ya to the area above the pond.

Just like before, he was unable to advance any further upon reaching an altitude of thirty meters. Thus, he whipped out the Infernal Blacksaber and sliced the air above him.

Huala!

Space was torn apart, and a dimension rift emerged in its place. The duo continued heading upward, and it did not take long for them to arrive on flat ground.

Similar to before, a massive palace could be seen right in front of them in the distance.

“This should be the Subordinate Hall,” Zhang Xuan said.
“Let’s head over!”

So, the two of them swiftly made their way forward.

“This is... the for visiting.

“Kong shi truly saw past the facade of power and wealth!”
Zhang Xuan remarked as he examined the room carefully.

Similar to the poison dimension, the layout of everything in the room felt perfectly natural. It was an environment that stripped a person of their worries and frustrations, leaving them refreshed and invigorated.

Cultivating in such an environment would surely be highly beneficial to raising one’s Soul Depth.

“Since the gates have already opened. Wei Ruyan and the others should have already entered this Subordinate Hall. Where are they?” Zhao Ya scanned her surroundings doubtfully as well.

The entire room was visible with a glance; there was nowhere for one to hide. It was apparent that they were the only two people in that room. This did not make sense. There should have been quite a number of people there.

Boom boom boom!

Just as they were perplexed by this bizarre situation, they suddenly felt a disturbance in the spiritual energy ahead.

“They should be right there!” Zhang Xuan said.

Tracing where the disturbance was coming from, Zhang Xuan hurried ahead and left the room through the back door in front of them.

The moment they walked out, a gush of concentrated zhenqi suddenly washed over them, exerting immense pressure on them.

Beyond the back door of the Hall of Lull was a garden.

“We have already reserved the Bodhi Fruits on the tree. I’ll have to ask you to return from where you came!” a voice harrumphed coldly.

“There’s no one in the world who doesn’t desire treasures, but these are things that we have put a great deal of effort into obtaining. We can’t give them to you!”

“The treasures of the world go to those who are capable enough to acquire them. We are the ones who made sufficient preparations to acquire them, so it goes without saying that they belong to us!”

...

From where the voices were soundings from, Zhang Xuan could see two factions standing opposite one another, the air between them a little tense.

The group on the right side consisted of ten members, and Wei Ruyan was among them as well. The other nine were dressed in identical clothes, which indicated their identity as offspring of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers.

On the other hand, the group on the left side only consisted of a single person. A round orb twirled with a light hum in front of her.

Dimension Silencer!

The person was actually Luo Qiqi!

Upon the entrance of Zhang Xuan and Zhao Ya, the crowd swiftly turned their eyes over to take a look at the two new guests.

“Zhang shi!” Luo Qiqi’s eyes lit up with a hint of anticipation.

Zhang Xuan directed a nod at Luo Qiqi before turning his gaze to the Hundred Schools of Philosophers.

Among them, only Wei Ruyan paid no attention to his arrival. She was in a trance, just like Zhao Ya before. Her hands were directed toward the Bodhi Tree, which was located not too far away from her, and the fruits were gradually becoming more and more crimson under the influx of her zhenqi. It seemed as if the fruits would mature at any moment.

“This isn’t an ordinary Bodhi Tree; it’s Great Sage tier!”

Noticing Zhang Xuan’s doubt, Luo Qiqi hurried over. “Unlike the one in the Hongyuan Empire, consuming the Bodhi Fruits

growing on it increases the chances of a cultivator reaching a Soul Depth of 30.0 by thirty percent, thus reaching the level equivalent to an Ancient Sage!”

“It allows one’s Soul Depth to reach 30.0?” Zhang Xuan was startled for a moment as his eyes widened in shock.

It was a common saying among master teachers that Soul Depth was the hardest to cultivate, and that was something that he could relate deeply with!

Be it his zhenqi, physical body, or soul cultivation, as long as he had the corresponding cultivation techniques, he would be able to advance with ease. However, he could not do the same with his state of mind.

It had already been a few days, but he had only managed to raise his Soul Depth from 28.1 to 29.99. He was still lacking a bit to reaching 30.0.

It might have appeared to be a simple 0.01, but this final step happened to be the greatest hurdle to overcome. Who knew how much time and effort would be required to overcome this challenge?

If the Bodhi Fruit really could raise one’s Soul Depth to 30.0, one’s chances of achieving a breakthrough to Ancient Sage would really be raised significantly! I translated it as Hall of Lull for standardization purposes, but the word, in the context of manors and palaces in the ancient era, refer to the bedroom of the owner.

1742 Bodhi Frui

“That’s right. If not for that, there’s no way they would have gone through the trouble of bringing Wei Ruyan here!” Luo Qiqi replied.

Hearing those words, Zhang Xuan narrowed his eyes deeply.

He really had to say that the Hundred Schools of Philosophers had a far deeper understanding of the Temple of Confucius than the Master Teacher Pavilion.

First, it was the Canvas of Four Seasons imbued with lingering Aeon of Ancient Sages, and then, it was a Bodhi Fruit that allowed one’s Soul Depth to hit 30.0, reaching a level comparable to an Ancient Sage.

It seemed like they had already studied the entire Temple of Confucius thoroughly and had made elaborate preparations for that very moment.

Hong long long!

Under Wei Ruyan’s relentless infusion of zhenqi, the Bodhi Fruits on the tree began to sway a little, emanating a deep fragrance.

This was a sign that the fruits had matured!

Hu!

Wei Ruyan finally halted her flow of zhenqi. It was clear that she had overexerted herself trying to hasten the maturity of the Bodhi Fruits. Her face was slightly pale, and she was panting heavily.

“Wei Ruyan!” Zhao Ya anxiously sent a telepathic message over.

“Senior Zhao Ya?” Wei Ruyan was beginning to recover from the trance that she was in. With a dazed look on her face, she scanned her surroundings in search of a familiar face. She swiftly found Zhao Ya, and at the same time, she also noticed the young man standing next to her. Her eyes slowly widened

in astonishment as she softly muttered in disbelief,
“Teacher...”

“Un!” Seeing that Wei Ruyan was unharmed and that her cultivation had risen a little, Zhang Xuan heaved a sigh of relief.

“Teacher!”

Realizing that it was not her imagination, Wei Ruyan immediately rushed over to Zhang Xuan and Zhao Ya’s side. However, barely after taking a few steps, a young man suddenly stepped forward and blocked her way.

“You can’t go over yet. You need to pick the Bodhi Fruits for us first!” the young man said.

The irritated Wei Ruyan coldly hissed, “Get lost!”

“Don’t forget what you promised us!” The young man’s face darkened as he reminded haughtily.

“You dare to threaten me?” Wei Ruyan narrowed her eyes in fury as an imposing aura emanated from her body. She was ready to let all hell break loose if pushed too far.

However, before she could make a move, the voice of her teacher sounded in the air. “My student has helped you hastened the maturity of the Bodhi Fruits, but you still need her help to pick them for you? Ruyan, come here!”

Completely disregarding the Hundred Schools of Philosophers, Zhang Xuan turned to Wei Ruyan and urged her to come over.

“Yes, Teacher!” Wei Ruyan swiftly walked around the young man to go to Zhang Xuan’s side.

“You are Wei Ruyan’s teacher, Zhang Xuan?” The young man frowned in displeasure.

“I am,” Zhang Xuan replied curtly.

“You came at a good time. Since Wei Ruyan follows your orders, I need you to order her to harvest the Bodhi Fruits. Of the six fruits here, we can give you one as a reward for your hard work!” the young man said haughtily.

As if doubting what he had just heard, Zhang Xuan asked incredulously, “Did you say that you’ll only give one Bodhi Fruit to Ruyan in exchange for her hard work?”

“That’s right!” The young man nodded. “Our Hundred Schools of Philosophers requires the remaining five Bodhi Fruits, so we have to bring them back with us. The only reason that we are willing to spare a Bodhi Fruit to you is in view of the hard work that she has put in all this time. If you don’t want the Bodhi Fruit, you can choose something else equivalent in value!”

“Spare?” Seeing the young man putting on airs, Zhang Xuan shook his head wryly. “Since you know that Ruyan has put in plenty of hard work, allow me to speak a few words of fairness!”

“Feel free!”

“You were able to enter this Subordinate Hall due to Ruyan’s unique constitution, right?”

“That’s right!”

“The Bodhi Fruits are mature and ready for picking because Ruyan has been using her zhenqi to stimulate its growth, right?”

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“Then it’s really simple then. Since you have done nothing at all, all six Bodhi Fruits should go to Ruyan. What’s there to fight about? Alright, Ruyan, go and pluck all of the fruits!” Zhang Xuan remarked earnestly.

“You... What do you mean by that?” Not expecting Zhang Xuan to snub them in such a manner, the young man widened his eyes in fury.

“I don’t mean anything by that. I’m just speaking a few words of fairness!” Zhang Xuan said. “Since you played no part in entering the Subordinate Hall and maturing the Bodhi Fruits,

what right do you have to claim possession of the Bodhi Fruits?”

“Audacious! Do you know who you are talking to?” the young man roared furiously, angered by Zhang Xuan’s impudence.

Hualala!

The remaining eight from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers quickly surrounded the three of them and released their auras, attempting to pressure them into submission. Just like the group from the Hall of Great Accomplishment, they were all Sempiternal realm consummation experts!

“Teacher...” Wei Ruyan’s complexion turned ugly upon seeing that someone dared to threaten her teacher.

But just as she was about to say something, her teacher raised his hand and said, “Don’t worry, leave it to me!”

“Yes, Teacher!” Wei Ruyan nodded.

She knew her teacher capability very well. Since her teacher had told her not to worry, it really meant that there was nothing for her to worry about.

Zhang Xuan glanced at the youths surrounding him, and a wry smile crept onto his face. He took a step forward.

These youths from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers were indeed formidable, but the Infernal Blacksaber had just advanced to Ancient Sage tier, and he had many artifacts and tamed beasts with him. If he wanted to, he could easily subdue all of them.

Just as he was about to make a move to teach those arrogant fellows a lesson, Luo Qiqi suddenly spoke. “Allow me to do it instead!”

Without waiting for Zhang Xuan’s response, she dived into the crowd.

As soon as she made her move, the incredible strength that she wielded immediately showed.

Just like Zhao Ya, she had actually reached Sempiternal realm consummation!

“...” Zhang Xuan felt his head hurt a little.

Previously, when he unintentionally wreaked havoc at the Luo Clan and left, she had only been at Saint 9-dan.

Yet, within such a short period of time, she had actually managed to advance her cultivation all the way up to Sempiternal realm consummation!

The rate at which she was achieving breakthroughs was ridiculous!

Everyone around him told him that he cultivated extremely quickly, but whenever he looked at his students, he felt like he still had a long way to go!

Weng weng weng!

The Dimension Silencer rotated with a light hum in the air, keeping the surrounding space tightly sealed. Luo Qiqi flitted around the crowd as if a butterfly amid a field of flowers.

There was no doubt that the youths from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers were powerful, but it was painfully obvious that they were no match for Luo Qiqi!

“It seems like her grasp over the Dimension Silencer has improved!” Zhang Xuan nodded in approval.

He had seen the young lady using the Dimension Silencer to halt the elders of the Luo Clan before. Back then, her control over the Dimension Silencer’s powers had still been a little unrefined, and it had felt like she was only tapping into its raw strength. However, at this moment, her control felt wholesome, to the point that her movements almost felt like an artform in itself.

In this moment, it was no exaggeration to say that she had become one with the Dimension Silencer!

“Luo Qiqi won’t lose to them. Let’s harvest the fruits!” Zhang Xuan said with a smile as he turned his sights to the Bodhi Tree.

The Bodhi Tree before him was a little similar to the one that he had seen at the Hongyuan Master Teacher Academy. However, it was far lusher, and the aura that it emanated felt significantly deeper.

They say that cultivating under the Bodhi Tree can enhance one's soul cultivation and state of mind! Zhang Xuan thought excitedly.

Ordinary Saint realm Bodhi Trees had the effect of calming a person's mind and dispelling their inner demons. Considering that the Bodhi Tree before him had reached Great Sage, its effects were likely to be more pronounced!

If I cultivate under this tree, perhaps I might be able to advance my state of mind beyond 30.0!

His state of mind had already reached 29.99, a sliver away from reaching the level of the Ancient Sages. It would be a huge waste for him to ingest the Bodhi Fruit only to advance his Soul Depth by 0.01. As long as he sat beneath the tree and meditated, he should be able to make a breakthrough soon enough!

While Zhang Xuan was pondering over that matter, Wei Ruyan walked up to the Bodhi Tree and reached out to grab one of the Bodhi Fruits.

Weng!

A pulsation of energy burst forth from the Bodhi Fruit. It was a natural defensive mechanism of the Bodhi Tree in order to keep those who intended to harvest its fruits.

However, the pulsated energy was easily neutralized by Wei Ruyan using a secret art.

Kacha!

The fruit was plucked from the branches.

Tzzzzz!

The moment that the fruit was harvested, black smoke gushed forth from the branch that the fruit had been snapped from, and it swiftly shrouded Wei Ruyan.

“That’s... poisonous gas?” Zhang Xuan was taken aback.

He did not expect the Bodhi Tree to have such a defensive mechanism as well.

It was no wonder those youths had been unwilling to pick the fruits themselves, insisting that Wei Ruyan do it. If they had really tried to do it by themselves, there was a good chance that they would have ended up being poisoned to death.

1743 The Ability of the Koi Fish

The poisonous gas released by the Bodhi Tree would have been extremely tricky to resolve for any other cultivator, but to Wei Ruyan, it was no different from tonic. As she absorbed all of it into her body, an excited gleam flickered across her beady eyes.

“You can raise your cultivation through the black smoke too?” Zhang Xuan was taken aback.

Wei Ruyan nodded.

“As expected of the Innate Poison Body,” Zhang Xuan remarked in awe.

This unique constitution sure was powerful.

If others were afflicted with that poison, they would die within moments. Yet, Wei Ruyan was actually able to make use of this deadly material to raise her cultivation. Even Zhang Xuan could not help but envy that overpowered ability of hers!

It did not take long for Wei Ruyan to finish assimilating the energy within the black smoke. She quickly retrieved a jade container from her storage ring and placed the Bodhi Fruit inside. Once that was done, she moved on to the next Bodhi Fruit and repeated the process.

The same black smoke poured forth and shrouded Wei Ruyan. This time around, however, it seemed to be significantly denser than before. Under its onslaught, the young lady shuddered a little, and her face turned pale.

“What’s wrong?” Zhang Xuan asked with a frown.

“The poisonous gas is too powerful. There’s only so much that I’m able to absorb,” Wei Ruyan replied frankly.

Even as one who possessed the Innate Poison Body, the amount of poison that she could take in and assimilate at once

was limited. If she attempted to take in too much poison, she risked overloading her body with power.

The poisonous gas released by the second Bodhi Fruit was far greater than the first fruit, and this was something that she had not expected.

It took a long while before she finally managed to curb the rampaging poisonous gas within her body, and she heaved a sigh of relief. Then, she turned her sights to the third Bodhi Fruit.

Tzzzzzz!

This time, the black smoke released by the Bodhi Tree was even greater than before. Forced to assimilate so much poisonous gas at once, Wei Ruyan's body began shuddering uncontrollably, and her face gradually turned paler and paler. Just as she was about to reach her limits, she felt someone placing his palm against her back.

Following which, her teacher said, "Use the black smoke to push for a breakthrough!"

"Yes, Teacher!"

Knowing that her teacher was intending to help her raise her cultivation, Wei Ruyan quickly focused her concentration on channeling the poisonous gas toward overcoming her bottleneck.

The poisonous gas emanated by the Bodhi Tree was lethal, but it was an exceptionally powerful catalyst to temper one's state of mind. Zhang Xuan used his Heaven's Path zhenqi to help clear the various blockages within Wei Ruyan's body so that she could circulate her zhenqi easier.

With every Bodhi Fruit that Wei Ruyan picked, the poisonous gas emanated by the Bodhi Tree would grow significantly stronger. By the time she came to the sixth fruit, the poisonous gas emanated was so powerful that it seemed as if it would corrode even the surrounding space.

Zhang Xuan meticulously facilitated Wei Ruyan's flow of energy in order to ensure smoothness in driving her zhenqi.

Geji! Geji! Geji!

Some time later, sounds echoed from Wei Ruyan's meridians. It was a sign that showed that she had successfully cleared the bottlenecks in her way. Her aura surged, and before long, her cultivation had already reached Sempiternal realm consummation, just like Zhao Ya.

After reinforcing the overwhelming power coursing through her body, Wei Ruyan clasped her fist and bowed in agitation.

“Thank you, Teacher!”

If not for her teacher's help, she would have wasted a good half of the poisonous gas there. If things had gone wrong, she might have sustained heavy injuries because her body was unable to withstand the stress imposed on it.

With her Sempiternal realm consummation cultivation and her overpowered Innate Poison Body, it was unlikely that she would find anyone who was a match for her beneath Ancient Sage.

The heartened Zhang Xuan nodded in approval. Then, his face visibly turned cold as he turned his gaze toward the nine youths battling with Luo Qiqi.

If not for the fact that he was around, Wei Ruyan would have sustained irreparable damage from the growing intensity of poisonous gas emanated from the Bodhi Tree. This kind of harm was not something that a mere Bodhi Fruit could compensate for!

These fellows expected Wei Ruyan to harvest the fruits for them, but they did not take any preventive measures in order to protect her. It was apparent that they saw her as no more than a tool that they could dispose of after squeezing her dry!

Peng peng peng!

At that moment, the battle between Luo Qiqi and the nine youths from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers finally came to an end. The fighting prowess exerted by Luo Qiqi with the Dimension Silencer was simply too powerful. Even with the eight of them collaborating with one another, they did not stand a chance. Their faces were pale from the injuries that

they had sustained in the battle, and their complexions looked incredibly awful.

The fact that they had been chosen to enter the Subordinate Hall to seek the Bodhi Fruit meant that their standing in the Hundred Schools of Philosopher was considerably high.

They had grown up basking in the respect of those around them, but they had ended up being so viciously pummeled during such an important mission. This was not something that their pride could accept.

“Zhang Xuan and Wei Ruyan, those fruits are of the utmost importance to the Hundred Schools of Philosophers. I hope that you can hand them over...” the young man who seemed to be the de facto leader of the group said through gritted teeth.

However, in response to the request from the young man, Zhang Xuan simply waved his hand and said, “Break their limbs and throw them out!”

Whether they did it intentionally or not, he could not accept the fact that they had placed his precious student in such a dangerous position. They had to suffer the consequences of their actions.

“Sure thing!” The Golden Origin Cauldron leaped out and charged toward the nine young men.

Soon enough, their limbs were all fractured by the Golden Origin Cauldron before they were tossed pathetically out of the Hall of Lull.

None of them would have feared the Golden Origin Cauldron at their peak, but after Luo Qiqi’s attacks, they no longer wielded the strength to retaliate.

“Teacher, I’ll leave these Bodhi Fruits for you to decide what to do with them!” Wei Ruyan said as she passed the fruits over.

“Un!” Zhang Xuan took the Bodhi Fruits and placed all of them but one into his storage ring. He passed the Bodhi Fruit over to Wei Ruyan and said, “You’re the one who collected so many Bodhi Fruits, so you should hold onto one. However, don’t rush into using it. I have a formula here that can raise

your Soul Depth. I want you to cultivate under the Bodhi Tree and raise your Soul Depth to 29.9 first. Once you're done, you can use the Bodhi Fruit and push for a breakthrough to Ancient Sage!"

"Yes!" Wei Ruyan nodded.

With a tap of his finger, Zhang Xuan imparted the secret art to temper one's state of mind over to Wei Ruyan.

"Zhao Ya, this one is for you!"

Zhang Xuan took out another Bodhi Fruit and passed it to Zhao Ya together with the secret art.

Due to their unique constitutions, they were able to advance their zhenqi cultivation swiftly. However, this had also led to the cultivation of their minds severely lagging behind. This would be a good opportunity for them to cover the gap.

"Qiqi, this one is for you..."

After sorting his two students out, Zhang Xuan took out another Bodhi Fruit and passed it over to Luo Qiqi.

Luo Qiqi had arrived in the Hall of Lull earlier than them. Even if he did not come, with her fighting prowess alone, she was bound to have been able to obtain one for herself.

"Thank you!" Luo Qiqi took the fruit, but her eyes remained firmly upon Zhang Xuan. There was a conflicted look in her eyes as she said, "Zhang shi..."

Seemingly knowing what she was going to say, Zhang Xuan waved his hand and said, "I have taught you pill forging before, which affirmed our relationship as teacher and student. It's impossible to dictate one's feelings, but propriety is not something that can simply be disregarded. It's impossible for us to come to be! In the first place, the engagement between us was a huge misunderstanding... I believe that you are aware that there's someone whom I love as well, so... I'm sorry."

Since it was impossible for him to give her happiness, it would be better for him to break it off decisively.

Dragging it out would only cause more harm to the other party. He did not want the other party to spend her life

pursuing something futile.

“I...” Luo Qiqi’s face collapsed as her body trembled in agitation.

She knew that the odds were in her favor, and she knew that it would be nigh impossible to achieve what she desired. Nevertheless, she had not thought that she would be rejected so bluntly.

By the side, Zhao Ya’s face also darkened upon hearing those words.

As the saying went, ‘A day as my teacher, a father I’ll respect for life’!

A student was not allowed to have any other relationships with their teacher, or else it would be considered a breach of propriety. Such a thing was frowned upon in the Master Teacher Continent. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

She wanted to pursue her happiness, too, but she knew that her attempts to do so would only sully her teacher’s reputation. This was a dilemma that had left her deeply conflicted.

Noting the depressed look on Luo Qiqi and Zhao Ya’s faces, Zhang Xuan sighed deeply internally as he smiled. “Alright! For the time being, you should focus on raising your cultivation. You are still young, and there is much more to life that you haven’t seen or experienced yet. One day, you’ll find someone far more suitable for you than me!”

If there were any alternatives, he would not have wanted to hurt the two of them. However, if he failed to maintain a firm attitude toward this matter, he would only give them false hope, and there was nothing more painful than pursuing something that would never come to be.

Knowing that they needed some time to themselves in order to calm down, Zhang Xuan waved his hand and said, “I’ll leave you all here to cultivate. Try your best to raise your Soul Depth as quickly as possible. Meanwhile, I’ll go look for Yuan Tao...”

Just as he was about to leave, a voice suddenly appeared in his mind. “Master, I can dig up this tree for you. Do you want to take it away with you?”

“You are able to dig this tree up?” Zhang Xuan was taken aback.

“Heh, I am the crux of an entire dimension, you know! Of course I am able to dig up a mere tree!” the koi fish replied proudly.

1744 Gongxi Qing

“Is that so? Let’s take it away then!”

Zhang Xuan’s eyes lit up in excitement.

That whole time, he had been thinking that it would be wonderful if he could take the Bodhi Tree away with him. After all, this was an ideal impetus for him to push for a breakthrough in his Soul Depth to 30.0. Who would have thought that the little koi fish would be able to do it for him!

But after giving it some more thought, the matter made sense.

The koi fish was the crux to the poison dimension, and the poison dimension corresponded to the Hall of Lull. It was likely that there was some inseverable connection between the two. There had to be some reason for Kong shi choosing to groom the koi fish and leave it in the poison dimension in the first place.

“Alright!” Hearing Zhang Xuan’s approval, the koi fish immediately flew out, and with whip of its tail, it leaped into the pond located at the center of the backyard.

Gugugugu!

The water in the pond began to swirl into a massive spiral.

Gradually, the water spiral rose into the air and enveloped the Bodhi Tree, pulling it off the surface of the ground.

“This...”

Zhang Xuan did not think that it would be so easy to retrieve this precious Bodhi Tree. His eyes lit up in excitement.

Hula!

He swiftly stowed the Bodhi Tree into the Myriad Anthive Nest, choosing an empty clearing in the area to plant it. Shortly after it was planted, a pond formed in its vicinity, and koi fishes swam delightfully within it, splashing water into the air from time to time.

Zhang Xuan quickly examined the replanted Bodhi Tree and noted that it did not wither due to the movement. Instead, its trees grew even lusher. Furthermore, it seemed to harmonize with the other Bodhi Tree that he had acquired from the Hongyuan royal family, and they swiftly fused together into one body, forming a passageway that could temper one's soul and Soul Depth.

“With this, I shouldn't face any troubles trying to push for a breakthrough to Ancient Sage!” Zhang Xuan chuckled softly beneath his breath.

With this tree placed in the Myriad Anthive Nest, he would be able to cultivate whenever he had time. Reaching a Soul Depth of 30.0 was simply a matter of time!

Of course, the fastest way was still to consume a Bodhi Fruit. However, even though his Soul Depth was already on the verge of a breakthrough, his cultivation was severely lacking. He felt that the Bodhi Fruit would be put to greater use with his parents and the others.

“Teacher...”

Seeing that the Bodhi Tree had been taken away, Zhao Ya and the others were slightly bewildered. It was just a moment ago that their teacher had prompted them to cultivate under the Bodhi Tree, but the next moment, he had suddenly taken it away.

In response, Zhang Xuan cleared his throat and said, “You should head into my folded space to cultivate!”

Since he had taken the Bodhi Tree away, there was no reason for them to remain in the area. Thus, he waved his hand and helped the three girls into the Myriad Anthive Nest as well, leaving them to cultivate their Soul Depth.

Then, he quickly made his way out of the Hall of Lull.

...

Huhuhu!

Thrown out of the Hall of Lull with their limbs broken, the nine youths from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers

trembled in fury. Frenzied looks covered their faces, and it seemed as if they were on the verge of going berserk.

After consuming a grade-9 Grand Intermittence Pill, their shattered bones had already begun to heal, but their rage only deepened with time.

Unable to take it any longer, one of the youths asked, “Gongxi Qing, what do we do now?”

The young man named Gongxi Qing was the de facto leader of the group, the person who had given orders to Wei Ruyan and Zhang Xuan earlier. He was a descendant of Ancient Sage Zi Hua.

“We can’t let this matter go just like that!” Gongxi Qing gritted his teeth furiously.

As offspring of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers, the populace of the Master Teacher Continent were no different from barbarians in their eyes.

In the first place, those barbarians should have taken pride in the fact that they were of use to them in the Temple of Confucius. Yet, not only did they snatch all of the treasures away, they had even pummeled them into such a state. It was a heinous crime! Unforgivable!

“We have to teach them a lesson so that they’ll know never to cross the Hundred Schools of Philosophers!”

“Zhang Xuan doesn’t seem too strong, but that young lady known as Luo Qiqi is far beyond our means to deal with at the moment!”

“Zhao Ya and Wei Ruyan’s cultivation has reached Sempiternal realm consummation as well. We wouldn’t stand a chance against them in a fight!”

...

The others discussed the situation worriedly.

They were infuriated, but they also knew that their opponents were beyond their means to deal with.

“We might not be a match for them, but the loss of the Bodhi Fruits is a huge matter. The old ancestor will surely intervene. I’ll send him a message right now...” Gongxi Qing harrumphed coldly.

Bearing the excruciating pain from his newly healed bones, Gongxi Qing took out a unique jade token and sent the details of the conflict over. However, he did not go in depths about who the culprit was. He only mentioned that the Bodhi Fruits had been stolen and that they had sustained severe injuries.

A moment after he sent the message, tremendous pressure suddenly weighed down from the heavens. It was so intense that it left the crowd feeling deeply suffocated.

Following which, an elderly figure suddenly appeared before the crowd. Upon seeing the states of the nine youths, the face of the elderly figure turned livid as he demanded, “What happened?”

As he spoke, a droplet of blood oozed out from the tip of his finger. The droplet of blood split into nine portions, with each portion entering the body of one of the nine youths. In an instant, the injuries that they had sustained began healing at a visible rate due to the sheer vitality contained within the blood. It did not take long for them to be restored to full health.

This was one of the abilities that Ancient Sages possessed, Blood Reincarnation!

The elderly figure was an Ancient Sage expert!

“Old ancestor, you must redress our grievances!”

After recovering from their injuries, Gongxi Qing and the others immediately kneeled onto the ground and cried sorrowfully.

“Who’s the culprit?” The elderly figure narrowed his eyes as the aura that he emanated grew even colder.

The elderly figure appeared to be in his sixties, and he did not have a beard. His eyes carried a hint of desolation, but his face was slightly pale. It was hard to tell whether he was exhausted from traveling there through space too swiftly or had met with some danger and been injured.

“The culprit is a master teacher from the Master Teacher Continent!” Gongxi Qing spat through clenched teeth. “We brought Wei Ruyan into the Hall of Lull and had her help us mature the Bodhi Fruit. However, that fellow came over and snatched the ripened fruits from our hands. He even injured us and broke our limbs...”

“Did you tell him your identity?”

“We did! We told him that we are from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers and that these Bodhi Fruits are of vital importance to us. We even offered to give one of the Bodhi Fruits to him as compensation. Yet, that scoundrel still chose to make a move on us!” Gongxi Qing continued indignantly.

“When did the master teachers of the Master Teacher Continent become so arrogant?” the elderly figure sneered in fury.

In an instant, it was as if someone had set his aura ablaze. A rampaging aura poured forth from his body, crushing everything around him. All of those who stood in the face of this aura could only shiver in fear, not daring to speak a word aloud.

The Hundred Schools of Philosophers and the Master Teacher Pavilion both had their roots from Kong shi, and propriety was something of the utmost importance to them. Since their people had already matured the Bodhi Fruit, it was inappropriate for the other party, especially given that he was a master teacher, to snatch it away by force. If one resorted to brute strength for everything, how would one be any different from the Otherworldly Demons?

“Old ancestor, you must redress our grievance! We beseech you to kill that fellow for us!”

“Even if we spare his life, the least we should do is cripple his limbs so that he will learn a painful lesson for his arrogance!”

Sensing that they had successfully invoked the rage of the old ancestor, the crowd roared furiously.

“Rest assured, I’ll surely redress your grievances!” The elderly figure nodded.

Spreading his Spiritual Perception into the area, the elderly figure's voice boomed in the surrounding area. "The master teacher who has just entered, may I know whose descendant you are? I hope that you can offer a fair explanation as to why you have treated my descendants in such a manner. Otherwise, don't blame me for being merciless!"

Hu!

A wind blew silently in the area, but there was no response at all.

"From the looks of it, it doesn't seem like he's the offspring of any Ancient Sage. Since he isn't under anyone's protection, I won't stand on ceremony..." The elderly figure harrumphed coldly as a malicious aura drifted forth from his body.

At this moment, the descendants behind the elderly figure suddenly exclaimed in agitation. "Old ancestor, that fellow is coming out!" "Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Shortly after, a slight glow emanated from the entrance of the Hall of Lull, and a figure appeared before the crowd.

"We must make him understand that those from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers aren't to be trifled with!" Gongxi Qing sneered coldly.

However, the very next moment, he saw the old ancestor's body stiffening as an incredulous expression crept onto the latter's face. "The person whom you were referring... The person who stole the Bodhi Fruit from you... is Zhang Xuan?"

"That's right! He's the scoundrel who made a move on us!" Gongxi Qing nodded vehemently.

"I see... I forgot that I had some matters that I still have to attend to, so I'll be taking my leave. A matter as trivial as this doesn't require my intervention, so settle it among yourselves!"

Hu!

And with a poof, the old ancestor disappeared from sight.

“...” Gongxi Qing.

“...” The crowd.

1745 Stone Forest Dimension

Gongxi Qing and the others were utterly dumbstruck by what they were seeing.

That was their old ancestor, an Ancient Sage expert! It was just a moment earlier that he had declared that he would redress their grievances, but as soon as he learned that the culprit was Zhang Xuan, he turned tail and fled without any hesitation!

What the freaking hell was that?

Was the other party not just a mere Aureate Body realm consummation cultivator?

Why did it seem like their old ancestor... feared the other party?

While Gongxi Qing and the others were feeling stifled at being left in the lurch by their old ancestor, the old ancestor was on the verge of spurting blood as well.

He was actually the same Ancient Sage who had been injured by the Infernal Blacksaber back at the entrance of the Hall of Great Accomplishment!

Of course, given the tremendous strength he wielded as an Ancient Sage cultivator, there was no way that he would fear a mere Aureate Body realm cultivator. However, the young man had an Ancient Sage saber in his possession, which changed the very nature of things. Furthermore, he could feel that Zhang Hongtian was hidden somewhere around the area, discreetly protecting the young man from the dark.

If he was really caught between an Ancient Sage cultivator and Ancient Sage saber in his wounded state, he could end up losing his life! Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Ancient Sages were extraordinarily resilient creatures. However, if one successfully slew an Ancient Sage, one would find that the body of an Ancient Sage was filled with treasures from head to toe.

He had thought that the reason why Zhang Xuan was able to enter the Hall of Great Accomplishment was because he had studied the Zhang Clan's Celestial Amulet of Legacy thoroughly, to the point that he was able to decipher its seal and overcome it even without the amulet in hand. The possibility that Zhang Xuan would have been able to enter the Hall of Lull as well had never crossed his mind.

Who would have thought that even after fleeing there, he still ended up encountering the other party?

“The rest are in the midst of preparing for that matter, so I can't bother them at the moment. However, once they are done with that, we'll surely get back at them!” The old ancestor harrumphed.

It went without saying that the powerful Hundred Schools of Philosophers did not just have him as their only Ancient Sage. However, it just so happened that the others had more important matters to attend to, so he was the only one free enough to take care of the younger generation.

He had thought that with him standing up for the younger generation, neither the Master Teacher Pavilion nor the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe would dare cross their path. Yet, contrary to his expectations, he ended up being severely wounded as soon as he made an appearance...

The more he thought about it, the more miserable he felt.

However, as one who had survived to become an Ancient Sage, there were hardly any challenges that he had never encountered before. He would just have to tolerate it for the time being. Once the others were free, it would be time for him to exact his vengeance!

...

With the Infernal Blacksaber in his grasp, Zhang Xuan walked out of the Hall of Lull.

He knew that his actions in the Hall of Lull would surely draw an Ancient Sage from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers over, so he had taken out the Infernal Blacksaber in advance to counter any assault.

It was impossible for an Ancient Sage to kill him while keeping his location hidden. As soon as the other party revealed his location, the Infernal Blacksaber and golden page would swiftly rush forth to reap the other party's life. Thus, there was nothing to fear.

Walking out of the seal, Zhang Xuan saw the nine youths standing completely unharmed before him. Infernos of rage were burning in their eyes, but they did not attempt to make any moves against him.

“Oh, you've recovered,” Zhang Xuan remarked nonchalantly as he cast a sweeping gaze across the surroundings.

While it was possible for them to recover from their fractured limbs using the Grand Intermittence Pill, they would still have to rest for at least a couple of days before they could make a full recovery. Considering how their injuries had completely vanished within ten minutes of being thrown out, it was very likely to be the doing of an Ancient Sage.

However, even after scanning the surroundings, he could not find anything at all. At the same time, the Infernal Blacksaber also reported that there were no Ancient Sages around.

Knowing that the trembling nine youths did not even pose a threat to him, Zhang Xuan shot them a piercing glare, which caused them to drop to their knees, before walking back down the road that he had come from.

It did not take long before he returned to the poison dimension. Without the koi fish around, poisonous creatures had swiftly swarmed around the pond. It seemed like it would not be long before the tiny 'safe haven' in the poison dimension was devoured by poison.

After passing through the exit, Zhang Xuan found himself standing in the midst of a world filled with boulders of all sizes.

It was as if he had stepped into the midst of a bald mountain range, filled with nothing but massive rocks. His visuals were instantaneously assaulted by the overwhelming onslaught of monotonous gray; there was not the slightest greenery in sight.

From the looks of it, it seemed like he was standing in the center of a stone forest.

The area was not as dry as the desert dimension, and it was not as rich in spiritual energy as the forest dimension either. If he had to use a single word to describe the current dimension that he was in, it would be ‘bizarre’. The boulders around him had extremely bizarre shapes, and just taking a swift glance at the surroundings was enough to leave his eyes spinning.

“It seems like these boulders are depicting a certain kind of move.” Zhang Xuan leaped onto one of the taller boulders and pondered with a frown.

Looking at the general shape of the stone forest, he found that it resembled multiple experts executing their secret arts all at once.

“I’ll know it once I give it a try!”

He swiftly found a cluster of boulders and began studying them. Emulating the shapes of the boulders, he felt his zhenqi flowing in a unique trajectory, and the next moment, his palm shot forward lightly.

Padah!

A sonic boom reverberated in the air, and a small dimension rift was torn apart at the tip of his palm.

“It’s indeed a battle technique! Furthermore, the prowess it wields is incredible!” Zhang Xuan narrowed his eyes in astonishment.

So far, he had only casually emulated the movements; he had not even tried to practice it seriously! Could it be that... the boulders formed multiple sets of incredibly powerful secret arts?

If that was the case... where should one start cultivating from? Was there a sequence to it?

If he studied it randomly, would it cause any unintended side effects?

“Forget it! I should look for the exit first!” Zhang Xuan soon made up his mind.

If he found the exit, he would be able to find the corresponding Subordinate Hall. Ultimately, the outer dimensions were only trials that Kong shi had posed to those who ventured into this dimension. The true treasures lay within the Temple of Confucius.

This time around, Zhang Xuan chose to spin the Infernal Black Saber before swiftly flitting in the direction that it had pointed out.

An hour later, he finally found some signs of human activity. Following the trail, he soon stumbled upon a group of master teachers. They were standing in a clearing in the stone forest, and they were arguing vehemently with one another.

“The sequence of my movements is right! You won’t face any problems as long as you cultivate in accordance to my moves!”

“Rubbish! My sequence is the only one that is correct. Look, those two movements of yours don’t even connect to one another. It’s apparent that you’ve gotten it all wrong!”

“You dimwits! I have already cultivated in this sequence, and I can feel my mastery of my technique deepening significantly. If you really think that you are right, why don’t we have a spar and see whose sequence is superior?”

“Indeed! What’s the point of arguing so much? Let our strength do the talking!”

...

In the midst of their arguments, the master teachers really ended up coming to blows with one another. A furious gale whipped up in the surroundings and shockwaves from colliding blows rippled destructively into the surroundings.

However, they did make sure to construct an isolation barrier around them to avoid damaging the boulders around to the

best of their abilities.

“Just like the group of sword practitioners I encountered at the Sword Lagoon, these fellows are unknowingly losing their sanity...” Zhang Xuan shook his head lamentably.

He had encountered such a situation back in the Qianchong Empire. The sword practitioners there had come to blows as soon as they had a disagreement with one another, which was atypical of sword practitioners. He did not think that he would see the same sight here as well.

The battle ended as quickly as it started. Before long, a man stood victorious over the others.

“See, the sequence that I have followed is the most powerful of all. This should be enough to show that I’m right. Alright, hurry up and start making your offerings!” The victorious master teacher nodded in contentment.

“Alright, we’ll follow your sequence then!”

The others reluctantly nodded in agreement.

“Making your offerings?”

On the other hand, Zhang Xuan was confused as to what was going on.

The more he looked at the situation, the more bewildering he found it.

Master teachers were supposed not to be superstitious. Why were they talking about making their offerings?

Hiding by the corner, Zhang Xuan continued watching the movements of the master teachers in bewilderment.

The victorious master teacher took out a couple of valuable artifacts and placed them before the boulder, as if making an offering to it. Not too long later, the artifacts began to burn up, and a golden glow shone from the boulder.

Following which, a silhouette suddenly surfaced on the boulder and began moving around, seemingly demonstrating some sort of battle technique.

“The secret art that the master teachers were practicing earlier is just the form, so is this the zhenqi circulation pathway that goes along with the movements?” Zhang Xuan wondered.

The silhouette moving on the boulder was currently demonstrating a kind of internal breathing technique that seemed to go along with the movements that the master teachers had executed earlier, but there were still some imperfections between the two.

“How is this still not right? The sequence I deduced doesn’t link up with the internal breathing technique... Pu!”

The triumphant master teacher followed the movements of the silhouette on the boulder, but a moment later, his face paled, and a mouthful of blood spurted from his lips.

If the movements were at odds with the internal breathing, there was a high chance that one’s cultivation might go berserk. He had been extremely confident with the sequence that he had deduced, but who would have thought that it was still wrong?

“Let’s continue studying the movements. We can’t afford to make a mistake anymore, or else we’ll be trapped here for good!” The triumphant master teacher shook his head helplessly.

He was just about to continue examining the boulders around the area when a young man suddenly flew over and said, “Hello, I have arrived in this dimension just a moment ago. If I may ask... what are you all doing?”

1746 Sequencing

The newly arrived young man was, of course, none other than Zhang Xuan.

He was truly bewildered by the deeds of this bunch of master teachers.

Master teachers believed not in the supernatural, and they did not subscribe to the idea of karma either. Yet, this bunch of people were actually making offerings just like Otherworldly Demons. Furthermore, judging by their tone, it seemed like the exit was somehow related to what they were doing. Unable to hold back his curiosity any longer, he had flown out to ask them.

With the Infernal Blacksaber advancing into an Ancient Sage artifact, he would be able to protect himself even against the Otherworldly Demon Ancient Sages. Thus, there was no need for him to conceal his identity anymore, so he did not bother doing so this time around.

However, it seemed like the master teachers did not know him as they stared at him warily, seemingly trying to determine whether he was an enemy or not.

Zhang Xuan was perplexed for a moment before realization struck him. Most of the master teachers that had entered the Temple of Confucius were actually the grand elders of major powers who had gone into seclusion awaiting the opportunity to make a breakthrough to Ancient Sage.

Having abandoned the secular world for long periods of time, they were unaware of the huge fuss that Zhang Xuan had kicked up on the Master Teacher Continent in recent times. Going by this logic, it was not surprising that they had not heard of him.

Facing the wary master teachers before him, Zhang Xuan pinned his master teacher emblem on his robe before clasping his fist with a smile. "I'm actually a master teacher, too!"

Upon seeing the master teacher emblem, the group visibly heaved a sigh of relief.

“So, you’re a fellow ally. How did you end up alone here?” the triumphant master teacher asked.

“I was too engrossed in my cultivation, and I lost track of time. By the time I knew it, the group I was in had already gone on without me,” Zhang Xuan said.

“I see... This dimension contained many powerful secret arts, so it’s understandable that you lost track of time while trying to practice them. However, I must say that it’s truly a miracle that your cultivation hasn’t gone berserk while attempting to practice these techniques individually!” the triumphant master teacher remarked.

After chatting for a while, Zhang Xuan found out that the name of the triumphant master teacher was Mu Xu. He was from the Five Elements Mu Clan.

He had been in seclusion for three hundred years, and he had only left his seclusion recently due to the emergence of the Temple of Confucius. Thus, he was hardly aware of the current affairs of the world.

As a result, even when Zhang Xuan introduced himself with his real name, there was not much of a reaction from the other party.

“I apologize for peeking earlier, but I noticed that you practiced your moves before making an offering to the boulder. Following which, a silhouette appeared on the boulder. May I know what’s going on?”

After chatting for a while to get familiar with one another, Zhang Xuan finally posed the doubt that had been plaguing his mind for quite a while.

“The boulders in this stone forest are profound artifacts harnessing incredible heritages. Formidable secret arts can be found on them. I believe that you should have noticed this too by now!” Mu Xu explained. “However, these secret arts are distributed across multiple boulders in random sequences. If one wants to grasp any of these secret arts, one must decipher

the sequence and awaken the memories of the predecessors sealed in the boulders. As long as one's form and internal breathing are aligned with one another, one will be able to leave this dimension and enter the corresponding Subordinate Hall!"

"Enter the corresponding Subordinate Hall?" Zhang Xuan was surprised to hear these two words coming from Mu Xu.

This was the first time that he had heard a master teacher trapped in one of the six dimensions saying such words.

"Indeed. Someone has already successfully cleared the dimension; we are already considered the slower bunch, having yet to succeed till now," Mu Xu said with a bitter smile.

"You mean to say that... someone has already entered the Subordinate Hall? Then, do you know what the name of the corresponding Subordinate Hall is?" Zhang Xuan asked.

"It seems to be called the Hall of Divine Crusade. It contains the details of the crusade that Kong shi and seventy-two Sages went on to subdue the Otherworldly Demons. In fact, this stone forest contains the secret arts that they have left behind. Those who manage to enter the Subordinate Hall will probably be able to obtain their true heritage... As such, we have been trying our best to figure out the pattern to these boulders. Since you are here, why don't you join us as well? If we can uncover the sequence of the movements from these boulders, we'll be able to enter the Subordinate Hall just like the others!" Mu Xu said.

Those words gave Zhang Xuan a good idea of what was going on.

It seemed like the method to entering the Subordinate Hall in the stone forest dimension was vastly different from the other dimensions.

For the other dimensions, the Subordinate Halls were located directly above the exits. As long as one sliced open the space above the exit, one would be able to reach the exterior of the corresponding Subordinate Hall. However, the stone forest

dimension actually necessitated one to find the sequence of the secret arts hidden amid the boulders.

“With so many boulders around here, how do you figure out which one you should examine?” Zhang Xuan asked on.

There had to be at least ten thousand boulders in the area. Wouldn't he die of exhaustion before he could sequence all of the movements in these boulders?

“The boulders are divided into multiple regions too. Each secret art has its individual region. In each region, there are boulders with smooth surfaces like this one lying around in a circle, and they contain a silhouette of the predecessors. There are roughly ten thousand of them, but only a thousand of them contain traces of the secret art. What we have to do is figure out the sequence behind these one thousand boulders!” Mu Xu explained.

Zhang Xuan nodded in realization.

On his way there, he had also noticed that not every boulder within this dimension harnessed a portion of a secret art. However, he had been too focused on searching for the exit and did not pay too much attention to them.

With this, his search area was considerably decreased, and his workload diminished significantly as well.

“There's no time to be wasted, so let's start studying the boulders once more!”

After chatting for a while longer, Mu Xu prompted everyone to get back to work. He took out a sword himself and began carving on the ground, seemingly trying to make sense of the movements that he had seen from the boulders.

Seeing that the group had returned back to their intensive debate, Zhang Xuan leaped onto the highest boulder in the area and scanned his surroundings.

Due to the reminder from Mu Xu, he quickly realized that the boulders with a smooth surface were distributed orderly in a circular fashion around the area. Approaching them one by one swiftly, he found that exactly a thousand of them harnessed the silhouettes of the predecessors.

Flaws!

With a thought, the boulders were swiftly compiled into a book in the Library of Heaven's Path. He glanced at the hundreds of sequences that the master teachers had come up with and inscribed on the ground.

Hula!

Putting all of this information together, Zhang Xuan finally opened the book carefully.

“There are still forty-seven flaws...”

Zhang Xuan quickly browsed through the forty-seven flaws before reorganizing the sequence of the movements to resolve some of these flaws. When he checked once again, the number of flaws reduced to forty-five. He had to continue this process roughly a dozen more times before there were finally no more flaws remaining.

“I guess this sequence should be the correct one!” Zhang Xuan heaved a sigh of relief before finally turning back to the crowd.

At this moment, Mu Xu and the others seemed to have deduced another ‘correct’ sequence, and a fervent debate broke out among them all.

“Stop spouting nonsense and settle it with a spar. The strongest among us is bound to have the most accurate sequence of us!” Mu Xu said with a wave of his hand.

“Alright!”

The crowd nodded in agreement.

They were just about to begin their duel when Zhang Xuan, who had been watching the situation all the while, suddenly flew over and said, “Hey, I have also found a sequence that I find logical. Can I join the duel?”

“Can't you see that we're in the middle of a serious debate? Stop troubling us and go away! You just arrived just a moment ago, so what can you have possibly found? We have already been here for roughly eighteen hours, but we still haven't found the right one yet!” Mu Xu frowned in displeasure.

“Young man, learn some humility. Don’t set your eyes too high. Since you have just arrived, you should focus on watching and learning rather than trying to impress!”

“We are dueling in order to determine whose order is the most accurate. You should go to the side and rest. We can talk after you have made sense of what the boulders mean!”

“You do know that each of these boulders represent a different move, right? How many of them can you recognize and distinguish? If you haven’t done at least that much yet, it’s pointless to try sequencing them!”“Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

...

The other master teachers waved Zhang Xuan away dismissively.

They had studied the boulders in the region for a very long time, but they were still unable to find the correct sequence. Given that, what could a fellow who had just arrived possibly know?

To even think that he could possibly come up with the correct sequence within this short period of time, that was a completely ridiculous notion!

“I...”

Not expecting to be spurned, Zhang Xuan shook his head and sighed.

That being said, it was not as if he could not understand the dismissive response from the others. In the five to six minutes since he had arrived there, it was impossible for an ordinary master teacher to memorize the forms on the thousand boulders in the area. Putting aside finding the correct sequence, they would not even have been able to put together a remotely logical battle technique!

“Ignore him! Let’s continue our discussion...”

Not wanting to waste any time on an attention seeker, Mu Xu gathered the crowd and carried out a duel using the sequences

that they had just deduced. However, before there was a conclusion to their duel, they suddenly felt a burst of energy pulsating not too far away.

Unbeknownst to them, the young man had already activated the smooth boulder by the side, and a silhouette appeared on its face.

1747 Hall of Divine Crusade

“He’s wasting a precious artifact for nothing...”

Not expecting the young man to actually make an offering to the predecessors after they had ignored him, Mu Xu frowned in disapproval.

Each attempt to invoke the predecessors would require them to tribute an invaluable amount of treasures, such that they did not dare do it recklessly despite the wealth that they possessed as 9-star master teachers.

Yet, the young man actually invoked the predecessors within ten minutes of his arrival, before he could even make sense of what was going on.

Just what kind of unreliable ally did they find themselves?

“He seems to be terribly conceited. Whatever. Once he fails, he will understand the difficulty in sequencing the moves. It isn’t something that one can possibly come up with on the spur of the moment!”

“What a waste of artifacts though!”

...

The silhouette on the boulder began moving amid the discussions of the master teachers, and Zhang Xuan hurriedly followed it while executing the movements that he had compiled using the Library of Heaven’s Path.

The internal breathing method and the movements harmonized impeccably with one another.

“This...”

The crowd was stunned.

They had studied the boulders for eighteen hours, but they had not managed to sequence the movements to such an extent. This fellow had only been there for six minutes, but he had

already managed to harmonize his movements with the internal breathing.

Their eyes widened into huge circles as they watched the sight before them with incredulity.

“No, that’s not it. His movements are starting to diverge with the internal breathing method of the silhouette!” Mu Xu suddenly remarked.

The crowd quickly turned their gazes over. Just as Mu Xu had said, some discrepancies were starting to show between the movements of the young man and the internal breathing technique of the silhouette in the boulder. Disharmony was starting to appear.

“See, it’s just as I have guessed. It’s impossible to succeed in one try!”

It should not have been something to celebrate over, considering how they were supposedly on the same front, but somehow, the crowd could not help but heave a sigh of relief.

They did want to leave this dimension and enter the corresponding Subordinate Hall. However, if the young man successfully found the right sequence within five minutes, all of their pride, dignity, and ego would be completely shattered! Their hearts were not strong enough to accept something like that!

As a result, they could not help but feel gladdened by the young man’s failure.

However, their gladness did not last too long. The young man suddenly halted his movements and glared at the silhouette on the boulder with a disapproving frown. As if an elder disappointed by the incompetence of a junior, he sternly lectured, “The sequence you are practicing the internal breathing is wrong!”

Pu!

The silhouette in the boulder spurted blood.

“...” Mu Xu and the others.

“Follow my movements!” Zhang Xuan commanded sternly before continuing on with his execution. The silhouette in the boulder visibly hesitated for a moment before following Zhang Xuan’s movements as well.

“...”

Mu Xu and the others were shocked speechless. This had to be the uncanniest sight that they had ever seen!

They had spent eighteen hours there desperately searching for the correct sequence in futility, but within minutes of his arrival, that fellow had not only found the correct sequence but was even lecturing the silhouette in the boulder, berating the latter for having gotten it wrong.

The one who had left behind this secret art was either Kong shi or one of the seventy-two Sages, and yet, to tell the other party that they were wrong...

It was as if a mini explosion had occurred in their heads! All of a sudden, they did not feel so good.

“That’s more like it! After giving my version a try, don’t you think that the technique has gotten much stronger? Aren’t the movements harmonizing much better with the internal breathing?”

Soon, the demonstration came to an end, and Zhang Xuan looked at the silhouette on the boulder with a slight smile.

Kacha!

Before it could respond, the silhouette suddenly wavered lightly before vanishing from sight. Following which, the boulder split open, revealing a massive stone portal.

Beyond the portal, one could vaguely see a majestic palace. It was likely to be the Hall of Divine Crusade that Mu Xu had mentioned earlier.

“Let’s go together!” Zhang Xuan beckoned for others for follow him before taking the lead into the portal.

“This...”

The crowd glanced at one another uncertainly before eventually entering the portal. Even at that point in time, they could not help but feel a little dreamy on the inside.

Crossing the stone portal, they swiftly found that they were transported into another world. Not too far away, the Hall of Divine Crusade towered in the air.

Unable to hold back his curiosity any longer, Mu Xu walked up to Zhang Xuan and asked, “The sequence that you have come up with is clearly incompatible with the internal breathing method shown by the silhouette. Why were you still able to open the stone portal?”

Mu Xu was not the only one who was curious about this. The others also found this occurrence unbelievable.

It was apparent to them that the young man’s sequence of movements did not harmonize with the internal breathing method shown by the silhouette. Yet, why did the silhouette choose to follow his movements instead and even open the stone portal?

In the past, when the sequence differed, the one to spurt blood was them!

“I looked through the movements and realized that there were some fundamental flaws with the secret art left behind by the silhouette. So, I modified it a little in order to make it more logical and stronger. Seeing that the secret art that I modified was more correct than his, it goes without saying that it learned from me instead!” Zhang Xuan replied as a matter-of-factly.

Any cultivation technique filtered through the Library of Heaven’s Path would eventually end up in its most perfect form.

Since the secret art practiced by the silhouette was flawed. It went without saying that the silhouette would be delighted to have him correcting the flaws for it.

“Not only did he find the right sequence, he even corrected the mistakes made by the predecessors...”

In this moment, Mu Xu and the others found themselves so suffocated that they could not say a word at all.

Just what kind of monster had they encountered?

Proceeding ahead in the Subordinate Hall, it did not take long before they arrived in a massive square. There was a huge crowd gathered in the area. It was likely that they had entered there from the stone forest dimension, just like Mu Xu.

However, as they did not have the Celestial Amulet of Legacy, they could not enter the Subordinate Hall and had no choice but to remain outside.

Murals were inscribed on the walls of the Subordinate Hall, detailing countless formidable techniques. The crowd was studying them intently, completely absorbed in them.

Back in the stone forest dimension, they could only deduce the sequence and hope that what they had deduced was right. However, at that moment, the correct sequence was shown to them through the murals on the walls.

This was similar to a diligent student being shown the answer sheet after going through a difficult examination. It went without saying that they would have to internalize everything on the answer sheet so that they could do better next time around! Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Zhang Xuan quickly took all of those murals into the Library of Heaven's Path with a swift glance before turning his gaze to the entrance of the Subordinate Hall.

The plaque above the Subordinate Hall displayed the words 'Hall of Divine Crusade'. Those words carried an imposing presence, weighing in the hearts of those gazing upon them.

The massive gates at the entrance were open, and access was only restricted by the invisible barrier shrouding the Subordinate Hall. Most likely, someone had already entered it.

"Let me go in to take a look!"

With a wave of his hand, Zhang Xuan took out the Little Amulet and began making his way in.

Unlike the crowd gathered outside, he passed right through the barrier and entered the Subordinate Hall without any problems.

Sou! Sou!

Before Zhang Xuan could properly land his footing into the Hall of Divine Crusade, he suddenly felt two surges of sword qi surging right toward his heart.

His face immediately darkened as he halted his footsteps. With an agile sidestep, he narrowly dodged the two surges of sword qi.

Gazing forward, he saw two young men standing in front of him with a sword in their hands. Intense killing intent could be felt from the depths of their eyes, leaving the blood of others running cold.

These two young men were dressed in master teacher robes. From the exterior, they seemed no different from other master teachers. However, the sheer intensity of their killing intent left one feeling as if one would be dragged down into the netherworld.

“Otherworldly Demons?” Zhang Xuan’s eyes narrowed in alarm.

He did not think that he would actually encounter Otherworldly Demons in there!

Since that was the case, it meant that they had managed to lay their hands upon the Celestial Amulet of Legacy corresponding to the Hall of Divine Crusade!

There were six known Celestial Amulets of Legacy in the world. One of them was with the Master Teacher Pavilion headquarters, one was with the Zhang Clan, and one was with the Luo Clan. As for the rest, their whereabouts were a complete mystery.

Judging by the current situation, the Zhang Clan’s amulet corresponded to the Hall of Great Accomplishment, and it was

likely that the Luo Clan's amulet corresponded to the Hall of Lull. Otherwise, Luo Qiqi would not have been able to get into that Subordinate Hall!

Since there were Otherworldly Demons there, it was likely that one of the Celestial Amulets of Legacy had fallen into their hands.

Huala!

However, it did not seem like the two Otherworldly Demons were about to give him any more time to ponder about this matter. They flicked their wrists and sent a barrage of sword qi over, not allowing them to rest for a breather at all.

It was as if a roaring river was charging right at him, threatening to sweep him away with its force.

These two Otherworldly Demons were actually Sempiternal realm consummation experts!

“Humph!” Zhang Xuan's eyebrows shot up.

With a flick of his wrist, he whipped out the Dragonbone Divine Spear and pierced it toward one of the two Otherworldly Demons. At the same time, he brought out the Golden Origin Cauldron along with his other artifacts and sent them toward the other Otherworldly Demon.

1748 Stone of Divine Crusade

A few breaths later, the two Sempiternal realm consummation Otherworldly Demons were killed on the spot.

Even without resorting to the Five Monarchs, the seedling, and the koi fish, Zhang Xuan was still able to subdue the two Otherworldly Demons with ease.

He hurled their corpses into his storage ring before proceeding deeper in.

What appeared before his eyes was a stately hall. Its walls were filled with paintings that emanated a warm glow. As soon as he stepped into the hall, he found a powerful pressure pressing down on him. Had his soul energy been weak, it would have been hard for him to take even a single step forward.

This is a good place to temper one's soul! Zhang Xuan thought as he strolled leisurely around the hall.

The Hall of Great Accomplishment contained the Aeon of Ancient Sage, the energy required for one to achieve a breakthrough to Ancient Sage. The Hall of Lull contained a treasure that raised one's Soul Depth. Clearly, the Hall of Divine Crusade was a place for one to temper one's soul, thus strengthening one's soul energy and soul span.

Wandering around the room, Zhang Xuan did not find anyone else around, and a frown emerged between his brows.

It was clear that the two Otherworldly Demons were serving as sentries to ward off any possible intruders from interfering in their business. As such, it was certain that there were more Otherworldly Demons doing something within the Subordinate Hall, perhaps scouring for the ultimate treasure there.

But why was there no one in sight? Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

“What’s in this hall?” Zhang Xuan asked Little Amulet telepathically.

Little Amulet had its memories sealed, and they would only awaken when it came to the areas corresponding to each memory. It was likely that it would know what was inside the Hall of Divine Crusade.

“The greatest treasure in the Hall of Divine Crusade is the Stone of Divine Crusade left behind by Kong shi. It contains the lingering will of Kong shi, and it’s extremely effective in strengthening one’s soul,” Little Amulet explained based on the memories it had awakened.

“Stone of Divine Crusade?” Zhang Xuan’s eyes lit up upon hearing those words. “Where is it?”

His soul cultivation had come to a halt after reaching Aureate Body realm consummation. If he could find the Stone of Divine Crusade, he might be able to push his soul cultivation a step further, perhaps even achieving a breakthrough to the Intuitive Impulse realm!

“It’s located right behind the Subordinate Hall. You’ll be able to see it after passing through that door!” Little Amulet said as it wiggled its body to point out a direction.

“Alright!” Knowing the rough location of the Stone of Divine Crusade, Zhang Xuan swiftly made his way over with widened strides.

Walking out of the stately hall, he found himself standing before a relatively vast courtyard.

There were boulders all around the courtyard, forming a mini stone forest by its own.

A few Otherworldly Demons were sitting not too far away from Zhang Xuan. There were deep frowns on their faces, and some of them were scratching their heads in frustration, seemingly trying to figure out something incredibly profound.

At the very center of the stone forest was a stone platform. A spherical boulder was placed atop the stone platform, and it emanated a warm glow. A silhouette seemed to be dancing

along the spherical boulder. Somehow, the silhouette appeared a little familiar.

Instead of rushing forward to confront the Otherworldly Demons, Zhang Xuan hid himself and asked Little Amulet, “What are they doing?”

Most likely, the spherical boulder at the very center was the Stone of Divine Crusade that Little Amulet had mentioned. Why were the Otherworldly Demons squatting around the area instead of going right in to claim it?

“It’s not that they don’t want to enter the stone forest, but they are unable to do so. It may seem simple enough to walk into the stone forest and claim the Stone of Divine Crusade, but the truth is that there’s only a single way to enter the forest. All it takes is one wrong step to be completely devastated by sword qi!” Little Amulet harrumphed.

“Sword qi?” Zhang Xuan was taken aback

He quickly took another look and found that there were a couple of Otherworldly Demons lying by the side with their eyes tightly shut. They had already breathed their last breath.

“Do you know the correct path to entering the stone forest?” Zhang Xuan asked.

“I don’t!” Little Amulet replied with a shake of its head. “This is a trial left behind by Kong shi to test the later generations, so there’s no way he would grant me knowledge of the answer. However, it’s likely to have something to do with what you encountered in the previous domain. Take a closer look. Each of those boulders contain a certain movement of a technique. As long as you can sequence these movements correctly, you should be able to enter the stone forest without any trouble!”

“I see,” Zhang Xuan replied contemplatively.

He took a look at the boulders around the stone forest and found that they were made of a similar material to the other boulders in the outer dimension. It seemed like there was some kind of move infused into them.

Flaws!

Having prior experience tackling such a puzzle, Zhang Xuan swiftly gathered all of the movements in the stone boulders and compiled them into a manual in the Library of Heaven's Path.

As there was nothing that he could reference, there were a lot of mistakes.

He altered the compiled manual according to the movements of the Otherworldly Demons in the stone forest, and the number of flaws immediately decreased.

He continued to alter the manual over a hundred times more before the sequence was finally corrected to its flawless form.

“Alright, I am done deducing the sequence. Will I be able to pass through the stone forest by following this sequence?”

Zhang Xuan asked once more for verification.

“As long as the sequence is correct, you should be able to get in without any trouble. However, there cannot be any mistakes at all. Otherwise, you'll have difficulties overcoming Kong shi's sword qi,” Little Amulet remarked worriedly.

Zhang Xuan nodded in response.

Going through the sequence once more, he was just about to enter the stone forest when he suddenly halted.

The movements of the boulders came together to form a complete technique. However... what if the technique in this stone forest was flawed?

He was confident in the competence of the Library of Heaven's Path. Any technique that had gone through the verification of the Library of Heaven's Path had to be in its most perfect form. However, there was no guarantee that the person who had set up the stone forest would be correct!

Such a situation had happened earlier in the stone forest dimension! The errors made by the silhouette there could still be corrected, but errors here could easily result in his death!

“Infernal Blacksaber!”

After a moment of hesitation, Zhang Xuan whipped out the Infernal Blacksaber.

Even if he came under a barrage of sword qi, the Ancient Sage Infernal Black Saber should still be able to withstand it.

Following which, he summoned the Golden Origin Cauldron and the Five Monarchs. “I’ll be entering now. The rest of you, follow behind me. If any of the Otherworldly Demons dare to wreak havoc, kill them without any hesitation! Don’t let any of them escape!”

Then, he went through the sequence that he had derived using the Library of Heaven’s Path once more before making his way in.

So far, he had not found the exit of the stone forest dimension. However, going by the rules of the other dimensions, it was likely that the exit was amid the boulders that reflected the technique that he had just grasped.

After all, the crux of each dimension had always been the key to obtaining the ultimate treasure in the Subordinate Hall! If he had managed to get to the crux of the dimension, he would have known the correct sequence to clearing the stone forest before him and acquired the Stone of Divine Crusade.

Since he was already there, it was too late for him to return to the stone forest dimension and experiment. Thus, he could only take a step at a time and pray fervently that the technique that Kong Shi had personally created had no flaws at all!

Zhang Xuan walked up to the very first boulder and brushed past it. However, he did not invoke the attack from the stone forest. He quickly continued proceeding deeper in.

“You...”

Taking a few more steps, he finally stumbled upon the Otherworldly Demons, who were scratching their heads for a solution. Too lazy to even make a move on them, Zhang Xuan simply flitted past them and proceeded ahead.

“Heh! A fool rushing to his death...”

Seeing the human who had appeared out of nowhere charging in without the slightest hesitation, the Otherworldly Demons sneered coldly.

It had taken the deaths of several of their companions in order for them to comprehend the rules of the stone forest. They knew that they could not mess around in the stone forest, or else they would suffer tragic deaths before they knew it.

On the other hand, that fellow had actually charged randomly around the area as soon as he arrived. This worked in their favor, too. They could use that fellow as a sacrificial pawn to help them scout out the road.

With such thoughts in mind, they gazed upon the young man with contemptuous smiles on their faces. Yet, contrary to their expectations, the young man proceeded deeper and deeper into the stone forest, not sustaining the slightest damage at all. Slowly, the smiles on their faces faded.

“This isn’t right... He seems to know the correct path! Quick, follow him!”

No matter how foolish they might have been, the truth could not have been more apparent after seeing this sight. It was obvious that the young man knew the right path! Thus, the leading Otherworldly Demon barked out an order and quickly traced Zhang Xuan’s trail.

However, after taking a few steps, they suddenly felt an intense killing intent pouring down on them. Turning around, they saw a bunch of beasts and artifacts charging up to them.

“Get them!” Ding Ding bellowed coldly, and the hordes of beasts and artifacts charged forth.

Piliipala!

A few minutes later, the Otherworldly Demons were left lying on the ground, their eyes bulging in disbelief even after they had breathed their last breath.

1749 Advancement in Soul Cultivation

Passing through boulder after boulder, it did not take long for Zhang Xuan to reach the stone platform at the very center. He could not help but frown in astonishment.

I'm not getting attacked at all... Could it be that this technique has reached the level of a Heaven's Path technique as well? If that's the case, who in the world would be able to cultivate it?

The sequence that he had used was based on the perfect manual that he had compiled using the Library of Heaven's Path, and it was actually the correct answer to clearing the stone forest!

Did this not mean that the secret art left in this stone forest had also reached the level of a Heaven's Path technique?

Could Kong shi really possess the Library of Heaven's Path, just like me? Zhang Xuan deduced contemplatively.

Considering that this trial was in one of the Subordinate Halls, it was likely that the secret art had been left behind by Kong shi. Zhang Xuan was certain that it would be impossible for anyone who did not possess the Heaven's Path zhenqi to successfully practice any Heaven's Path technique.

Otherwise, he would not have had to impart a simplified version to them each and every time.

The fact that Kong shi had created such a secret art meant that it was highly likely that the other party possessed the Heaven's Path zhenqi and was able to practice Heaven's Path techniques. The only possibility of that happening was if Kong shi possessed the Library of Heaven's Path as well!

Zhang Xuan pondered on this matter for a while, but he knew that the only way to verify it was for him to meet Kong shi once more. Thus, he decisively tossed the matter to the back of

his head and calmed his mind down. Following which, he slowly walked up to the Stone of Divine Crusade on top of the stone platform and grabbed it.

Weng!

Sensing Zhang Xuan's approaching hand, the Stone of Divine Crusade emanated a blinding light. In an instant, Zhang Xuan felt as if someone had plunged his soul into the midst of burning lava, causing searing heat to suffuse his body.

“Humph!”

Given how Zhang Xuan was able to survive even the Emyrean Heavenly Flame, what could heat of this level possibly do to him? He swiftly suppressed the burning sensation within before biting his finger and dripping a droplet of blood on the Stone of Divine Crusade.

It did not take long before the Stone of Divine Crusade finally abandoned all attempts to retaliate and acknowledged him as its master.

As soon as he received the acknowledgement of the Stone of Divine Crusade, the searing sensation swiftly vanished, replaced with a feeling of warmth. As the silhouette on the Stone of Divine Crusade moved, a surge of concentrated soul energy gushed into his body, nourishing his Primordial Spirit.

Zhang Xuan immediately knew that this was a good opportunity for him to push for a breakthrough, so he crossed his legs and sat down. He drew his Primordial Spirit out of his body and touched the Stone of Divine Crusade.

Hong long long!

As concentrated soul energy flowed from the Stone of Divine Crusade into his Primordial Spirit, Zhang Xuan could feel himself growing stronger and stronger. It did not take long before his current bottleneck was torn down, and his soul cultivation surged into higher realms.

Two hours later...

He had already reached Great Sage 3-dan Intuitive Impulse realm consummation.

After reaching that realm, the rate of advancement of his soul cultivation suddenly slowed considerably. Lowering his gaze, he noticed that the silhouette dancing on the Stone of Divine Crusade had already come to a halt, as if fatigued from all its dancing.

“It seems like the Stone of Divine Crusade needs to recharge...” Zhang Xuan chuckled softly.

The Stone of Divine Crusade harnessed concentrated soul energy that could be used to raise one’s soul cultivation, but just like spirit stones, the amount of soul energy within it was limited. It could not supply an endless stream of soul energy.

However, after taming the Stone of Divine Crusade, Zhang Xuan knew that unlike spirit stones, the Stone of Divine Crusade was not a one-time use artifact. It could be reused once more after it was allowed to recharge for some time.

Otherwise, it would not have been placed at the center of one of the Subordinate Halls, requiring one to overcome numerous trials to acquire.

Now that my soul cultivation has reached the Intuitive Impulse realm, I wonder if that is possible...

At the Intuitive Impulse realm, a cultivator would be able to vaguely sense the will of the heavens, allowing him to take steps to avert danger. As one who possessed the Library of Heaven’s Path, he knew that he would suffer the backlash of heavens if he raised his cultivation to that level. So, he wondered if it would be the same for his soul cultivation as well.

Thus, he returned his Primordial Spirit to his physical body and tried to grasp at the intangible will of the heavens.

Kacha! Kacha!

The next moment, a powerful streak of lightning descended from the heavens, causing his body to convulse under its might.

“Indeed...” Zhang Xuan’s cheeks twitched as he grumbled with a darkened face.

He had thought that his Primordial Spirit might be an exception to the rule, but it seemed like that was not the case.

From the looks of it, it was impossible for him to try peering into the secrets of the heavens. Divine retribution would instantaneously fall upon him the moment that he tried to do so.

However, the most powerful ability that Intuitive Impulse realm experts wielded was their ability to predict the future in advance. If he could not utilize that ability, his fighting prowess would be severely compromised.

Since that could not be helped, he would just have to regard this as a simple advancement in his zhenqi and strength.

Previously, he would still have struggled a little to confront a Sempiternal realm consummation expert with the Dragonbone Divine Spear. If he wanted to kill the other party, he would have to either launch an unexpected assault or use other means to support him. However, with the advancement in his soul cultivation, he could already crush the other party through sheer strength.

Hu!

Knowing that it would be hard for him to further advance his cultivation within a short period of time, Zhang Xuan was just about to place the Stone of Divine Crusade back into his storage ring when he heard an anxious voice. “Master, can you lend me that stone in your hand?”

Hearing that voice, Zhang Xuan’s eyes widened in agitation.

“Vicious, when did you wake up?” he asked anxiously.

The voice came from none other than Vicious, who had gone into hibernation while trying to assimilate his upper body.

Zhang Xuan did not think that the other party would awaken at a time like this.

“I woke up after sensing the soul energy emanated by the Stone of Divine Crusade. Master, can you lend me that for a use? My soul is currently a little weak, and that stone will help me swiftly recover from my weakness!” Vicious requested.

Zhang Xuan was slightly surprised to see that Vicious was able to recognize the Stone of Divine Crusade, but considering that he had fought on equal terms with Kong shi in the past, it was indeed likely that he would be well-versed in the treasures of Kong shi.

“But I have already absorbed all the soul energy in the Stone of Divine Crusade,” Zhang Xuan replied with a frown.

Similar to a spirit stone devoid of spiritual energy, he did not see how the empty Stone of Divine Crusade would be of any use to Vicious.

“Master, if all the Stone of Divine Crusade is capable of was storing soul energy, it would be unqualified to be considered as one of Kong shi’s prized possessions. Master, please bring me out and pass the stone to me!” Vicious implored.

“Alright then!” Zhang Xuan nodded.

With a flick of his wrist, he took out the Book of Heaven’s Path and placed the Stone of Divine Crusade on it.

Huala!

The Book of Heaven’s Path opened, revealing half of Vicious’ body. With a light tap, the Stone of Divine Crusade flew out and revolved steadily around the Otherworldly Demons who had been killed in the stone forest earlier.

Weng!

A few moments later, the silhouette on the surface of the Stone of Divine Crusade began moving once more as a brilliant light shone from it.

“This... The Stone of Divine Crusade is absorbing the souls of others!” Zhang Xuan narrowed his eyes in astonishment.

Through the Eye of Insight, he could see the Stone of Divine Crusade purifying the souls of the deceased Otherworldly Demons and converting them into concentrated soul energy.

“Un. The Stone of Divine Crusade has the ability to cleanse and devour souls. To soul cultivators, it’s a treasure on par with Ancient Sage artifacts. In fact, the Seal of Souls of the Soul Oracle Guild is made out of the same material as the

Stone of Divine Crusade!” Vicious explained. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

“The Seal of Souls is made out of the same material?” Zhang Xuan was stunned for a moment before widening his eyes in realization.

It was no wonder he found the Stone of Divine Crusade rather familiar. So that was the reason!

One must know that the Seal of Souls was currently sitting quietly in his storage ring. It was just that he had not really used it yet.

“To be able to absorb souls and convert them into concentrated soul energy... the ability of the Stone of Divine Crusade is indeed terrifying!” Zhang Xuan nodded in agreement.

If all the Stone of Divine Crusade was capable of doing was supplying one with concentrated soul energy between long intervals, it would be unworthy of being called an ultimate treasure. After all, there were probably plenty of resources out there that could substitute it. However, if it was able to recharge swiftly as well by absorbing and cleansing souls, it would indeed be a formidable artifact worthy of becoming any major clan’s family heirloom!

“You can hold onto it!”

The ability of the Stone of Divine Crusade could be said to be a malevolent one. However, Zhang Xuan believed that it was foolish to classify artifacts as ‘malevolent’ or ‘benevolent’. Ultimately, it depended on who was using it. In the hands of a good person, even the most vicious weapon could be used for good. Conversely, in the hands of a bad person, even the most seemingly harmless object could be used for evil.

Thinking back, the trial to obtain the Stone of Divine Crusade had been unbelievably harsh. The requirement to clear the stone forest was actually to cultivate a secret art that had reached the level of Heaven’s Path... and this was a feat impossible for any cultivators without the Library of Heaven’s Path!

Somehow, Zhang Xuan felt as if Kong shi was aware of his existence. It was as if the Stone of Divine Crusade had been left just for him.

After all, no one other than him could have reached the Stone of Divine Crusade!

“Thank you, Master!” Vicious thanked Zhang Xuan in agitation.

Following which, he began to absorb the soul energy of the Stone of Divine Crusade and reinforce his soul.

1750 Apricot Pavilion

“How far has your strength recovered after assimilating your upper body?” Zhang Xuan asked as he watched Vicious recovering more and more as he absorbed the energy from the Stone of Divine Crusade.

Vicious had recovered a great deal by assimilating his finger, head, and eyes. Considering how huge his entire upper body was, he should be able to raise his cultivation significantly by assimilating it as well.

“Master, my strength is currently equivalent to a newly ascended Ancient Sage!” Vicious replied.

“Ancient Sage?” Zhang Xuan’s eyes lit up in excitement. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

He had been wondering if Vicious’ fighting prowess would be raised to Ancient Sage after assimilating the upper body, and that was indeed the case!

Even if Vicious only wielded strength comparable to a new Ancient Sage, given his previous fighting experience, the chances were that he would be far stronger than the Ancient Sage Otherworldly Demon corpse that he had forged.

Paired with the Infernal Blacksaber, that would be equivalent to having a real Ancient Sage protecting him all the time. He would not have to be too worried about his safety for the time being.

“Un. My upper body has been suppressed under the Sanctum of Sages for tens of thousands of years, and all of the killing intent within has pretty much been squeezed out, leaving behind nothing but pure power. In my current state, I should be able to pass off as a master teacher while using my powers without anyone seeing through it!” Vicious added.

“That’s really great!” Zhang Xuan clenched his fists tightly in agitation.

Even with his standing on the Master Teacher Continent, it would still be unsafe for him to get too involved with the Otherworldly Demons. Considering the tension between mankind and the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe, a simple accusation that he was colluding with the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe could land him in deep trouble. Thus, as far as he could, he wanted to distance himself from any possible connections with the enemy.

Considering how Sage Kui was Kong shi's grandstudent, as well as the fact that he had made use of his sculpture and the academic aura in the Sanctum of Sages to suppress Vicious' upper body for tens of thousands of years, it was no wonder that the killing intent within had been purified.

With this, he would be able to use Vicious without worrying about others misunderstanding him.

“Alright, I'll leave you to recover your soul. Try to get to your peak as soon as possible!” Knowing that he had yet another powerful trump card in his possession, Zhang Xuan heaved a sigh of relief before making his way out of the stone forest.

The opened Temple of Confucius had attracted many Ancient Sages, and it was likely that some of them bore malicious intentions toward him. The stronger Vicious was, the greater the guarantee on his safety.

In any case, it would never hurt to be more careful.

Stowing his artifacts and tamed beasts away, Zhang Xuan returned to the hall and collected the paintings on the wall one after another. Then, he turned around and headed to the entrance.

Leaving the Hall of Divine Crusade, he saw that there was a large group of master teachers outside sitting around the perimeter of the Subordinate Hall, still deeply focused on learning the secret arts inscribed on the walls.

“Where else could Yuan Tao be if he isn't here?” Zhang Xuan frowned.

The fact that there were only Otherworldly Demons there meant that the Hundred Schools of Philosophers had not been

there. If that was the case... where did Yuan Tao go?

Zhang Xuan intended to return to the stone forest dimension to continue searching for Yuan Tao when he suddenly felt something. He flicked his wrist and took out his Communication Jade Token.

There was a line of words on the token.

“Zhang Xuan, come to the Apricot Pavilion as soon as you can!”

“A message from Luo Ruoxin? Apricot Pavilion... Where is the Apricot Pavilion? Wait a moment, is it possible to send messages across different dimensions?” Zhang Xuan was confused.

He had tried when he first arrived, and the conclusion that he had come to was that the Communication Jade Token only worked when they were in the same dimensions. Yet, he had received Luo Ruoxin’s message...

He was certain that the Apricot Pavilion was not in that dimension, or he would have already seen it.

When did it become possible to send messages across different dimensions? If it was possible to do so, why had he not been able to reach Luo Ruoxin or his parents earlier on?

As if sensing Zhang Xuan’s doubt, Luo Ruoxin sent another message over. “The Apricot Pavilion corresponds to the desert dimension. I’ll wait for you in the desert dimension.”

“Desert dimension?” Zhang Xuan repeated with a frown.

He pondered for a brief moment before returning to the stone forest dimension.

As he knew where the various exits were, it did not take him long to backtrack to the desert dimension.

At that moment, there was no longer any sweltering heat in the desert dimension. Spiritual energy suffused the area. Except for the fact that there was no greenery or native beasts in the dimension, its environment bore some similarities to the forest dimension that he had been in.

Most of the cultivators who had entered the desert dimension chose to sit down on the spot to cultivate, and their hard work had been significantly rewarded.

The Intuitive Impulse realm cultivator whom he had been with earlier had achieved a breakthrough to the Sempiternal realm as well after several hours of absence. At the same time, he also looked much younger in terms of appearance.

Knowing that this was the mystical effects of the Temple of Confucius, Zhang Xuan did not dwell too much on it. He quickly determined the direction to the oasis and flitted over. It did not take long before he found Luo Ruoxin and Wu Chen.

“You’re here,” Luo Ruoxin remarked with a smile. As if seeing right through Zhang Xuan’s doubts, she explained, “The dimensions in the Temple of Confucius have already been opened. It’s no surprise that we are able to send messages to one another now that the space has been joined together.

“The space has been joined together?” Zhang Xuan taken aback for a moment before widening his eyes in realization.

It seemed like when he opened an exit, he was effectively joining two dimensions together. Considering how master teachers were now able to traverse from dimension to dimension without any trouble, it was not surprising that messages were able to do the same.

“How did you know that this dimension corresponds to the Apricot Pavilion?” Zhang Xuan asked.

It was impossible to know what the name of the Subordinate Hall was before entering it. If Luo Ruoxin knew such details about the Temple of Confucius, why did she not tell him in advance?

“Considering how some people have already been to the exteriors of the Temple of Confucius, it isn’t too surprising that I know. Not only so, I have also managed to find out the details of the other Subordinate Halls,” Luo Ruoxin said.

“All in all, the six Subordinate Halls are the Great Kui Hall of Literature, Apricot Pavilion, Twin Auxiliary Halls, Hall of Great Accomplishment, Hall of Lull, and Hall of Divine

Crusade. Those from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers possess the Celestial Amulet of Legacy to enter the Great Kui Hall of Literature, and they have already taken away Kong shi's entire collection of books. The Master Teacher Pavilion has the amulet to enter the Twin Auxiliary Halls.

“The amulets in the possession of the Luo Clan, Zhang Clan, and Otherworldly Demonic Tribe correspond to the Hall of Lull, Hall of Great Accomplishment, and Hall of Divine Crusade respectively. Those places have already been opened and explored, leaving only the Apricot Pavilion behind. If I'm not mistaken, you are the one who took the crux of the desert dimension away, right? Let's enter the Apricot Pavilion together and see how we can obtain the ultimate treasure of this Subordinate Hall!”

“Are you referring to this seedling?” Zhang Xuan asked.

“Un.” Luo Ruoxin nodded in response. “We need to hurry up. There are already a couple of people there, and the Hundred Schools of Philosophers are also intending to use Yuan Tao's Emperor Bloodline to get into the Apricot Pavilion. I'm not too sure what exactly they are intending to do.”

“I understand!” Hearing that Yuan Tao was in the area as well, Zhang Xuan heaved a sigh of relief.

“Let's go in!” Luo Ruoxin turned to Wu Chen.

“Un!” Wu Chen nodded before tapping his finger upward.

Si la!

A crack appeared in the space above the oasis, and a spatial passageway formed before their eyes. Vaguely, one could see a grand palace at the very end of the passageway.

“Tearing apart space with just a single finger?” Zhang Xuan frowned.

Having been to the desert dimension before, he knew how resilient its space was. At the very least, one had to reach Ancient Sage in order to be able to tear apart its space. Yet, Wu Chen was able to pierce through it with just a single finger, much more easily than what the Infernal Blacksaber was capable of. Could it be that he had stumbled upon his own

fortuitous encounter and successfully advanced to Ancient Sage?

“Let’s go.”

Luo Ruoxin noted the confusion in Zhang Xuan’s eyes, but perhaps because they were in a rush, she did not explain the matter to him. Instead, she took the lead and flew into the spatial passageway.

Zhang Xuan followed closely behind her.

Just like the previous few times that he had arrived in an exterior of the Temple of Confucius, he found himself standing before a towering building after traveling for some time. There were two massive words inscribed on the entrance plaque that radiated faint light—Apricot Pavilion!

Just as Luo Ruoxin had said, there were a lot of people gathered outside the Apricot Pavilion. There were some from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers, some from the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe, and a couple of those from the Beast Tribe as well. Heavy tension weighed in the air although the different parties did not come to blows with one another. They seemed to be waiting patiently for the final Subordinate Hall of the Temple of Confucius to be opened.

Vaguely, one could feel overwhelming auras lingering in the background. It seemed like the only reason that they were enjoying this eerie, transient peace was because of the Ancient Sages tying one another down.

1751 Apricot Tree

“Zhang shi!”

As soon as Zhang Xuan arrived in the area as well, Ren shi from the Master Teacher Pavilion headquarters immediately headed forward to greet him.

Following which, the Luo Clan’s Luo Ganzhen, Jiang Clan’s Jiang Fangyou, and a couple other powerhouses from the Master Teacher Continent gathered around him.

It seemed like those people had stumbled upon their own fortuitous encounters as well. Just like his parents, they had all reached Sempiternal realm consummation!

After exchanging a few pleasantries, Zhang Xuan realized that other than the six outer dimensions and the Subordinate Halls, there were a few unique space-time regions in the Temple of Confucius. Those who managed to stumble upon one would find their flow of time accelerating, and overcoming the bottlenecks that they faced in their cultivation would be much easier.

From the looks of it, it was clear that they had benefited greatly from the Temple of Confucius, and their journey had not been wasted.

On the contrary, it seemed like it was only Zhang Xuan, who had been busy wandering around the area and did not spend too much time cultivating, who was lagging behind the others.

“First and foremost, I should save Yuan Tao...”

While he was chatting, Zhang Xuan caught sight of Yuan Tao’s figure amid the crowd where the offspring of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers were gathered.

Just like Zhao Ya and Wei Ruyan, Yuan Tao’s senses had been sealed, so he could not sense that Zhang Xuan was in the vicinity.

Upon seeing that Zhang Xuan was intending to head over, Ren shi hurriedly tried to persuade him. “Zhang shi, the Ancient Sages have already announced that the different powers aren’t to make a move on one another. Anyone who violates the rules will be killed on the spot!”

“That’s a rule that the Ancient Sages decided upon in order to secure the safety of the younger generation. Otherwise, if a battle erupted and all of their geniuses who have a chance of advancing to Ancient Sage were killed, their journey here would have been in vain!” Luo Ganzhen added.

“Given the current circumstances, it would be best not to get into a conflict with them. Besides, with our Ancient Sages around, I doubt that they will dare harm Yuan Tao!”

“This...” Zhang Xuan knew that what Luo Ganzhen said was right, but he could not help hesitating.

“They’re right,” Luo Ruoxin remarked with a smile. “The Hundred Schools of Philosophers won’t harm Yuan Tao yet. If we make a reckless move here, the situation could take a turn for the worse. It would be better to save him after we enter the Apricot Pavilion, where the Ancient Sages can no longer interfere. Besides, this might also be a good opportunity for Yuan Tao!”

“Good opportunity?” Zhang Xuan frowned.

“Un. The Apricot Pavilion is the area where Kong shi imparted his teachings to others, so his words echo within the entire building. Since the Hundred Schools of Philosophers has kidnapped Yuan Tao, it’s certain that they have made preparations for something with his Emperor Bloodline. This could be an opportunity for him, and it would be a huge loss if we saved him right now. Taking a step back, even if he is placed in a dangerous position, we can step in and save him at any moment!” Luo Ruoxin said.

Zhang Xuan nodded in realization.

He did not know that the Apricot Pavilion was the place where Kong shi had imparted his teachings to others.

Back then, when he was still in the Hongyuan Empire, he had made a reputation for himself with his Impartation of Heaven's Will by inducing the breakthrough of cultivators, animals, and even plants. Considering that Kong shi was far stronger than him, his teachings were bound to be on a far higher level.

It was no wonder a mere root was able to trap so many powerful experts at once. Most likely, the root had also listened to Kong shi's teachings, and its sentience blossomed, thus bestowing it extraordinary capabilities!

"It's going to open very soon!"

While the few of them were talking among themselves, a loud rumbling sound reminiscent of thunder echoed from the underground. Following which, the seal shrouding the Apricot Pavilion emanated a brilliant flash of light.

With the experience from the Hall of Great Accomplishment, Zhang Xuan knew that this was a sign that the Subordinate Hall was about to open, and his hands could not help but tremble slightly in anticipation.

Weng!

Soon, the massive gates slowly creaked open.

"Let's go!" a person amid the crowd bellowed.

After that, Yuan Tao made an incision at the tip of his finger and squeezed out a droplet of blood. The energy within the blood swiftly enveloped the group from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers, and they began making their way to the seal. They were able to slip right through the seal without any issues.

A lot of the Otherworldly Demons also made their way to the seal as well. It was unsure what kind of secret art they used, but shockingly, they were actually able to bypass the seal to enter the Apricot Pavilion!

Noting the doubtful look on Zhang Xuan's face, Luo Ruoxin telepathically explained, "There are some Otherworldly Demons who possess similar constitutions to Yuan Tao."

Hearing that, Zhang Xuan nodded in response.

Unique constitutions were not a trait unique to just humans. It was not too surprising that the Otherworldly Demons had unique constitutions similar to those of humans.

Hu la!

After the Otherworldly Demons entered, those from the Beast Tribe quickly flew toward the seal as well.

Unlike the other two groups, they threw an amulet into the air, and the amulet swiftly enveloped them in a unique layer of energy. It was the last Celestial Amulet of Legacy!

As many had guessed, it was really in the hands of the Beast Tribe!

“Let’s enter as well!” Seeing that most of the powers had entered the Subordinate Hall, Zhang Xuan flicked his wrist and took Little Amulet. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

He was just about to shroud the entire crowd with the powers of Little Amulet when Wu Chen suddenly clasped his fist and said, “Milady and Zhang shi, I’ll wait outside for the two of you.”

After saying those words, he took a step back and retreated from the area shrouded by Little Amulet.

As if knowing that Wu Chen would make such a decision, Luo Ruoxin nodded calmly in response. “Un. Let’s go!”

“He...” Zhang Xuan was perplexed.

“He’s already an Ancient Sage. Even with the powers of the Prime Amulet, he won’t be able to enter the Subordinate Hall!” Luo Ruoxin explained.

“As expected...” Hearing Luo Ruoxin admitting it, Zhang Xuan nodded in realization.

He had guessed that earlier, but to think that it was actually true!

It seemed like the Aeon of Ancient Sage in the Hall of Great Accomplishment was not the only way for one to achieve a

breakthrough to Ancient Sage in the Temple of Confucius. Most likely, Wu Chen had stumbled upon some fortuitous encounter of his own.

Hulala!

Zhang Xuan released some of the tamed beasts from his Myriad Anthive Nest and brought Luo Ganzhen, Jiang Fangyou, and the others into the majestic palace before him instead.

Unlike the other Subordinate Halls, what lay beyond the entrance was not a vast room but a courtyard that spanned a diameter of a hundred meters. At the very center was a towering altar locked down by some kind of seal.

Nevertheless, an oppressive aura could be felt drifting forth from it, keeping everyone at bay.

On the two sides of the towering altar were dozens of apricot trees planted neatly in two rows. It was still in the midst of winter in the Apricot Hall, so the trees had already shed their leaves, leaving behind forlorn branches.

The space directly in front of the towering altar was filled with round cushions. With just a swift glance, Zhang Xuan could tell that there were at least three thousand of them. Most likely, this corresponded to Kong shi's three thousand students.

"So, this is the Apricot Pavilion." Zhang Xuan frowned.

He had thought that the place would appear to be more sacred or deific. Contrary to his expectations, it looked very ordinary.

"When Kong shi imparted his teachings, his students would be listening below!" Luo Ruoxin explained with a nod. "Don't underestimate this place. As shabby as it might appear to you, it's actually the most important location in the Temple of Confucius aside from the Prime Hall!"

"It's the most important location aside from the Prime Hall?" Zhang Xuan frowned in confusion.

Other than the towering altar and a couple of trees, there was nothing that seemed to be of significance within this courtyard. It did not feel like a place where treasures would be

kept. He honestly could not tell how important this place was supposed to be.

“Kong shi’s Impartation of Heaven’s Will reached an advanced level. Those cushions and apricot trees likely possess lives of their own. Otherwise, those from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers would have already charged right ahead to the altar. They wouldn’t be standing there motionlessly, clearly biding their time!” Luo Ruoxin told Zhang Xuan telepathically.

Hearing those words, Zhang Xuan’s eyebrows leaped up in astonishment.

When he utilized the Impartation of Heaven’s Will back at the Hongyuan Master Teacher Academy, he had managed to instill spirit even within ordinary weapons. As such, it was no wonder that Kong shi was able to bestow sentience upon mere cushions and trees.

Seeing that the Hundred Schools of Philosophers were dawdling in front, refusing to proceed at all, one of the beasts impatiently growled, “Are you all heading forward or not? Otherwise, we’ll be making our way over first...”

“If you aren’t going to enter, we’ll be moving ahead of you. You’d better not dream of snatching whatever treasure we obtain from us, or else we’ll give you hell to pay for!” another beast spat coldly.

A young man from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers, seemingly their leader, chuckled softly and said, “Feel free to enter if you wish to. We’re intending to wait a little longer!”

He was none other than the scholarly young man whom Zhang Xuan had encountered at the White Creek Mountain, the descendant of Ancient Sage Zi Yuan, Yan Xue.

“So be it!” Seeing that the Hundred Schools of Philosophers was really not intending to make a move, the beast harrumphed coldly. “A useless bunch of cowards you lot are. Since they don’t dare enter, let’s go in!”

With that, the beast began dashing toward the cushions right in front.

From experience, the beast knew that even the most ordinary looking object in the Temple of Confucius could possibly be an invaluable treasure. Considering how these cushions had remained perfectly intact even after the passing of tens of thousands of years, there was no doubt that there was something special about them.

Hula!

But before the beast could even reach the cushions, the sharp sound of something piercing through the air echoed. It hurriedly turned its head around, only to see a tree branch surging in its direction. The branch's movement was so forceful that it tore a black rift in its path of motion.

Wuuuuuuu!

At the same time, a couple of apricot trees marched forward and encircled the beasts.

1752 Yan Xue's Astonishmen

“A mere couple of trees actually dare to block our path? Dream on!”

The beast who had spoken earlier raised its talons and swiped it down.

Its talons were incredibly sharp, possibly on par with Great Sage artifacts. With its aggressive move, the surrounding space shuddered a little, and small pitch-black dimension rifts appeared in the air.

The talons and fangs of those from the Beast Tribe were top-notch materials for forging Great Sage artifacts. Furthermore, the beast wielded strength on par with the Five Monarchs. Even Sempiternal realm consummation master teachers would have trouble defending against its assault.

Under normal circumstances, such sharp talons should have been more than enough to tear the tree branches into shreds. Yet, before those talons could reach their target, a resounding ‘pah’ sound suddenly echoed in the air.

A glaring laceration appeared on the face of the beast. A tree branch had materialized from nowhere and whipped the beast right in its face!

“Roar!”

The burning pain on its face left the beast feeling deeply humiliated and frenzied. It swiped its claws furiously against the tree branches ahead of it, creating a nearly impregnable wall of attacks before it. Despite that, the tree branch was still able to slip past its defenses during crucial moments and accurately strikes its areas of weakness.

Before long, the body of the beast was already covered with glaring lacerations, and fresh blood flowed ceaselessly from its body.

Seeing that their leader was in a disadvantageous position, the remaining beasts immediately rushed forward to offer their

support. However, as tree branches whipped through the air, it did not take long for them to be grounded on the floor, completely powerless to retaliate at all.

“This...”

Seeing such a sight, the eyebrows of the crowd twitched frenziedly. They were unable to believe what they were seeing.

Those of the Beast Tribe were known to possess superior physical prowess compared to average cultivators, yet they were all done in by a single apricot tree.

“Heh!”

Witnessing such a sight, the scholarly young man, Yan Xue, chuckled softly before closing his eyes, as if he had expected things to end in such a manner.

A young man from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers walked up to Yan Xue and asked with a suppressed voice, “Shall we make a move? If we could save them right now, we might be able to win their gratitude and successfully tame them.”

Considering how badly those beasts were being pummeled, if they could intervene at this moment and save them, it was very likely that they could win their goodwill and convince them to serve as their tamed beasts.

“There’s no need for that. Putting aside the fact that it’s uncertain whether we’ll be able to save them or not, just the fact that we didn’t stop them earlier is enough to turn their hostility toward us,” Yan Xue replied calmly. “Besides, these apricot trees only serve to halt intruders from proceeding any further. They won’t kill anyone, so you don’t have to worry!”

“Alright then!” The young man nodded.

It was indeed likely that those beasts would harbor some grudges toward them for not stopping them when they attempted to advance earlier. Even if they were to step forward and save them right now, those beasts would only take it as if they were trying to humiliate them. In the worst-case scenario, the beasts might even direct their wrath toward them!

“Those beasts won’t be able to get away. Once we succeed, they will follow us around obediently. Then, we won’t be able to shake them off even if we want to...” Yan Xue chuckled softly.

At this moment, however, a young man at the very back of the crowd suddenly dashed forward as swift as a bolt of lightning.

Hu!

In the blink of an eye, he was already right before the beasts. He adeptly weaved a net using his zhenqi and dragged all of the beasts out of the attacking range of the apricot trees.

“Thank you for saving our lives...”

Knowing that the young man was trying to save them, the beasts turned to him with looks of gratitude. However, contrary to expectations, the young man suddenly dashed right into their midst and...

Pilipala!

Fists and kicks were hurled here and there.

The beasts were stunned.

Those from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers and the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe were stunned as well.

They had thought that the young man had saved those beasts in order to win their goodwill and successfully recruit them to his side. Yet, after saving them from the whipping branches of the apricot trees, he proceeded to pummel them by himself. What the heck?

The apricot trees also stared at one another in confusion. The tree branches that they had extended to teach the young man a lesson for interfering in their affairs retracted in apprehension.

They had thought that the young man was trying to save those beasts from them, but it turned out that he wanted to pummel them as well! Was it because their whipping had awakened something in the depths of his heart and he wanted to give it a try?

“This is our opportunity!”

Yan Xue was stunned for a moment before a confident smile crept onto his lips. He immediately turned to the other offspring of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers and urged, “Those beasts are being unjustly tortured by that young man over there! As long as we step forward to stop that young man, we’ll be able to win their gratitude and loyalty!”

“Yes!” Hearing those words, the crowd nodded in agreement.

The beasts there had all reached Sempiternal realm consummation. Taming any one of them would mean a massive surge in their fighting prowess. If they could return to the Hundred Schools of Philosophers with even one of them, their standing would surely rise through the ranks!

“Let’s save those beasts from the distress they are in!”

Thus, the young men hurriedly rushed forward and brandished the swords in their hands toward the young man physically abusing those beasts.

“What are you doing? Stop your ridiculous actions!”

“It’s fate that we met here. Friends from the Beast Tribe, we can’t watch idly as you are bullied by this young man!”

“Friends from the Beast Tribe, we are here to save you!”

The young men issued resounding declarations, spouting righteous words one after another. In that moment, they seemed like heroes who had taken it upon themselves to vanquish the world of evil.

“Those fellows sure catch on fast.” Yan Xue nodded in approval. “They know what they have to do in order to win the gratitude of those beasts. As long as they win the goodwill of the beasts, it will be much easier for them to tame them afterward.”

He was just about to continue issuing a few more orders to direct the situation when his eyes suddenly bulged out of his eyes. An utterly horrified expression appeared on his face as an expletive escaped from his mouth. “Sh*t! What the heck is happening now?”

Before the swords of his comrades could even strike the young man pummeling those beasts, the beasts roared furiously. They swiped their claws and swept their tails toward his comrades, and in the blink of an eye, the geniuses of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers were lying on the ground, bruised all over.

Not only so, the de facto leader of the Beast Tribe even howled in fury. “What the heck are you lot from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers trying to pull? Try hindering us one more time from getting pummeled, and I swear that I’ll eat all of you alive!”

“This bunch of idiots! Can’t you all see that we are enjoying the pummeling that this expert is bestowing upon us?”

“Shameless hero wannabes! Scram and stop bothering us!”

The beasts bellowed with the utmost fury. After sending the crowd flying, they turned back to the young man and pitifully pleaded, “Please continue to hit us as hard as you can! Please! Harder! Harder!”

“...” Yan Xue and the others clutched their hair in frenzy.

The eyes of the Otherworldly Demons also grew as wide as chicken eggs, and they even forgot to gulp down their saliva.

The apricot trees had also stopped moving, and their branches had fallen to the wintry ground out of utter shock. It was as if they could not process what was going on.

Those of the Beast Tribe had always been known to be haughty and egoistical. Why in the world were they deriving joy from being pummeled like that?

There had been cries of agony, not cries of delight, when the apricot trees were pummeling them earlier. Did something weird awaken in them during this short period of time?

“Submit to me, and I’ll beat you up whenever I have time!” Zhang Xuan waved his hand grandly.

The hide of the beasts was a little too thick. His hand was starting to hurt from all the pummeling that he had done.

“That would be our pleasure! Paying respects to Master!”

“Long live our Master! Woo...”

Huala!

The next moment, all of the beasts kneeled onto the ground with proud looks on their faces. It was clear that they did not think that it was beneath them to acknowledge the young man as their master.

Kacha!

Yan Xue tugged out a clump of hair from the top of his head, but too overwhelmed with shock, he could not feel anything at all.

The heck! What the hell are you all feeling so proud about!

You are going to become someone’s tamed beasts! No matter how high your standing may be, it doesn’t change the fact that you are a mere pet. A pet, do you get it? Is this something to be happy about?

To actually submit to someone else after being pummeled...
When did those of the Beast Tribe become so easy to tame?

After taming the beasts, the young man waved his hand before walking into the midst of the apricot trees. “Alright, I have exacted vengeance for you!”

Seeing how the young man had become so bloated up after taming those beasts, Yan Xue could not help but sneer coldly. “He’s courting death!”

Whatever tricks he had used on the beasts in order to tame them, there was no way that it would work on the apricot trees.

Those apricot trees were existences that had heard Kong shi’s teachings! Confronting them was no different from courting death!

Before Yan Xue’s contemptuous gaze, the young man had finally arrived right before the apricot trees.

Hula!

The apricot trees swiftly encircled the young man, leaving no room for the latter to retreat at all.

1753 Dictum of Absolute Truth, Decree to Dictate Spring and Autumn

The young man who had tamed the beasts and stepped into the midst of the apricot trees was, of course, none other than Zhang Xuan.

Seeing that there were so many beasts who wielded strength on par with the Five Monarchs, there was no way that he was going to pass on this ideal opportunity to bolster his forces. Thus, when he saw the tree branches whipping them viciously, his first reaction had been to dash forward and save them before pummeling them himself.

Through injecting the Heaven's Path zhenqi into their bodies, he was able to heal their injuries and remove whatever traumas were within their bodies. His actions had immediately won him the respect and gratitude of the beasts, and they had willingly acknowledged him as their master.

At that very moment, he was completely surrounded by a thick layer of apricot trees. They were eyeing him intently, and it seemed as if they would lash him dead the moment that he showed an opening.

Nevertheless, Zhang Xuan did not panic at all. Instead, he flicked his wrist and took out a jade-like root.

Huala!

It was as if the apricot trees had seen a seal of approval, and they quickly opened up a path for Zhang Xuan to pass through.

Zhang Xuan had intended on passing right through the opened path, but he suddenly halted and pondered for a moment. Then, he sent a telepathic message to the apricot trees. "Wait a moment. The reason you are so powerful is that you listened to

Kong shi's teachings, right? Why don't I conduct a lecture for you, too?"

The apricot trees were so formidable because they had listened to Kong shi's teachings. Previously, Zhang Xuan had wondered if Kong shi had the Library of Heaven's Path as well, especially given the fact that the latter was able to cultivate a technique at the level of Heaven's Path. Since these apricot trees had heard Kong shi's teachings before, they should be able to deem whether his lecture or Kong shi's was better.

This could serve as a gauge for him to determine whether Kong shi really possessed the Library of Heaven's Path or not.

It was an indirect manner of doing so, but this was the best he could do at the moment.

"Huala?"

The apricot trees shook their branches in confusion.

We have already opened up a path for you to pass. Why do you still want to conduct a lecture for us?

Paying no heed to the confusion of the apricot trees, Zhang Xuan began on his lecture. "The path of cultivation isn't just limited to men and beasts. Plants are able to seek enlightenment through cultivation as well..."

"Hulala?"

The apricot trees were a little perplexed at the start, but after listening to a portion of the lecture, they began to dance excitedly around the area. It seemed as if they could not curb the overflowing exhilaration in their hearts!

The content of the other party's lecture was as deep and profound as Kong shi's, and every single word that he spoke seemed to hammer right into the core of their existence.

In other words... while the young man before them might not seem like anything much, in terms of imparting knowledge, he was already on par with Kong shi!

While Zhang Xuan was busy imparting knowledge to the apricot trees, Yan Xue, the other offspring of the Hundred

Schools of Philosophers, and the Otherworldly Demons frowned in incomprehension to the bizarre situation before them.

They had expected that fellow to be whipped viciously once he stepped into the midst of the apricot trees, similar to what had happened with the beasts. Yet, contrary to their expectations, the apricot trees did not make a move on him at all. Instead, they seemed to have fallen into a daze.

“He’s sat down. He seems to be saying something... Is he conducting a lecture for the apricot trees?” shouted someone in the crowd.

Upon hearing those words, the crowd swiftly noticed that the lips of the young man were moving nonstop. It was hard to tell what he was saying—it could have been a lecture, or he might just have been conversing with the apricot trees.

Huala!

Before they could recover from their shock, a few apricot trees suddenly lowered all of their tree branches on the ground, as if earnestly paying respect to the young man before them.

“They are trees that have heard Kong shi’s teachings, yet... they are acknowledging the young man’s lecture?”

Everyone was stunned.

These were trees that had grown to Sempiternal realm consummation listening to Kong shi’s lectures. They were strong enough to subdue any cultivators in the same realm as them... So, why in the world were they so obedient toward the young man?

This did not make sense at all!

Hong long long!

At this moment, the ground suddenly quaked. Following which, the crowd saw the wilting leaves fallen on the ground standing up one after another, and they sprinted agitatedly toward the young man, as if drawn in by his teachings.

“Even tree leaves are able to benefit from his teachings?”

The crowd felt as if the boundary between reality and fantasy had been blurred. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

It was one thing if trees were able to listen to his lecture. After all, Kong shi had imparted his teachings there for many years, so it was no wonder that the trees had gradually become sentient and gained the ability to cultivate. But those tree leaves... they were already half wilted, and they were on the verge of returning to the earth at any moment. Yet, they were still able to run over to listen to the lecture!

Was this not a little too exaggerated?

A thought suddenly flashed across Yan Xue's mind as he exclaimed in astonishment, "Wait a moment. These trees have already reached Sempiternal realm consummation... so why would they still shed leaves? More importantly, why would these leaves wilt?"

"This..."

Hearing those questions, the crowd behind was stunned.

Indeed! If the tree was able to reach this level of cultivation, every single one of its branches and leaves was comparable to Great Sage artifacts. Be it spring, summer, autumn, or winter, the changing of the seasons would not be able to faze it at all!

"Perhaps the fallen leaves and their wilting might just be a natural process it follows... In other words, when spring comes, these leaves automatically return to the branches instead of growing out new ones!" Yan Xue remarked deeply.

Barely after he finished his words, the wilted leaves that were in the midst of listening to Zhang Xuan's lecture suddenly shuddered a little. Following which, they flew atop the branches of the apricot trees, and their yellowish exterior gradually returned to their former lush green.

At the same time, the apricot trees seemed to have welcomed a new spring.

A youth from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers suddenly recalled something, and he gulped in shock.

“Dictum of Absolute Truth, Decree to Dictate Spring and Autumn... this is an ability that only Kong shi possessed...”

Legend had it that while Kong shi was traveling around the world, he stumbled upon an old tree that had withered to death. Out of compassion, he held a lecture beneath the old tree, and not long later, the old tree was born anew. Strength and vitality returned to its trunk, fresh green leaves began sprouting on the branches, and delectable fruits grew from blossoming flowers. The old tree had ushered in its new spring.

Out of awe for Kong shi’s deeds, his students came up with the analogy ‘Decree to Dictate Spring and Autumn’...

Could it be that the young man before them possessed such an ability as well?

“This isn’t Dictum of Absolute Truth! The old tree that Kong shi lectured under was already dead whereas these apricot trees are all Sempiternal realm experts. How can the two feats possibly be compared to one another?” Yan Xue exclaimed through gritted teeth.

The Hundred Schools of Philosophers boasted the most complete heritage from Kong shi. Yet, it was ironic how they ended up finding themselves completely helpless in the Temple of Confucius. On the other hand, the fellow was able to make astonishing moves one after another.

This had left Yan Xue feeling deeply humiliated.

“Yan Xue, since the apricot trees and the leaves are in the midst of listening to that fellow’s lesson, can’t we make use of this opportunity to slip through? It not now, when else should we strike?” a young man said to Yan Xue telepathically.

“This...” Hesitation surfaced in Yan Xue’s eyes.

There was some truth to what the young man had told him. The greatest obstruction to them was those apricot trees, and their attention was focused on the young man before them. This was indeed an ideal opportunity for them to strike.

Yan Xue pondered for a moment longer, but he still felt a little worried about the matter. Thus, he turned to the young man who had proposed the idea earlier and said, “You can give it a try then...”

The young man nodded in agreement before making his way forward.

Sou sou sou!

However, before he could even get close to the apricot trees, a sharp moaning sound suddenly resonated in the air. Turning his head anxiously, he saw a huge chunk of tree leaves darting right his way!

Pu!

In an instant, the young man found his chest impaled by dozens of leaves, and fresh blood spurted from his mouth.

Everything happened too quickly. Before the thought of retaliating could even formulate in his mind, he was already severely injured!

Silence!

No one had thought that the tree leaves would be so powerful. After witnessing the sight, no one in the area dared to step forward.

Yan Xue’s lips quivered in shock. For a very long time, he was unable to find any words.

He had thought that it was an opportunity for them to strike, but who would have thought that the tree leaves would remain fully on guard even while they were in the midst of listening to the fellow’s lecture? It seemed like they were determined not to allow anyone to get past them.

“A wind...”

The crowd was plunged into silence. Just as everyone was at a complete loss as to what to do, a light breeze suddenly whistled from the distance, and it lightly caressed their faces. However, it swiftly grew stronger and stronger, to the point that the tree leaves began rustling noisily.

Soon, the earth also started to quake as well.

“Look!”

Everyone hurriedly raised their heads, and they saw that the altar nearby had started radiating a blinding light. There seemed to be a figure floating quietly in the air. Following which, a grand voice filled the air.

“T-this is... the Empyrean Resonance! It’s finally here...” Yan Xue’s eyes lit up as his body trembled in agitation. This is one of the terms with layered meanings. To look at it in a simpler manner, Dictate Spring and Autumn simply means an ability so great that even the seasons bowed down to one’s might. However, Spring and Autumn also happens to be an era of Chinese history, and it referred to the chaotic period which Kong shi lived in. The ability to Dictate Spring and Autumn can also mean the ability to calm the chaos and rise above all those powers and bring peace to the world.

1754 Yuan Tao Lifts the Altar

Zhang Xuan turned his head over and saw a silhouette on the towering altar conducting a lecture. His words were few, and they were extremely difficult to hear and comprehend at the start. However, as those words struck his consciousness, the doubts that he had harbored regarding cultivation seemed to suddenly clear up.

It was as if he had just spent years immersed within a sea of knowledge, bringing his comprehension of cultivation to a far profounder level.

“This...” Zhang Xuan’s eyebrows shot up, and his eyes widened in surprise.

He could vaguely sense the intentions behind those indistinct words. They were the interpretation of Heaven’s Path techniques verbalized in a concise and very understandable manner, such that any cultivator could easily assimilate it into their field of knowledge.

In imparting the wisdom contained within Heaven’s Path techniques to others, it was clear that Kong shi had achieved a far higher level than him!

It was his belief that even though his cultivation was beneath Kong shi, his ability to impart knowledge did not pale too much in comparison to the latter. However, upon hearing the words of the silhouette, he realized that they were not even standing on the same level at the very start!

“This is Kong shi’s Simple Words of Profound Wisdom!” Luo Ruoxin’s voice suddenly appeared beside Zhang Xuan’s ears.

Turning around, Zhang Xuan realized that Luo Ruoxin had come right beside him at some point in time.

“Simple Words of Profound Wisdom?” Zhang Xuan repeated Luo Ruoxin’s words with a hint of confusion in his voice.

“It’s using the simplest words to depict the most profound logic. His ability to impart knowledge reached a level comparable to the teachings of heavens,” Luo Ruoxin said. “There’s no denying that Kong shi is a person of great talent, perhaps even surpassing you!”

Zhang Xuan nodded in realization. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

The words spoken by the silhouette were simple, but they contained the deepest understanding of the world. They brought epiphanies to their listeners, making them aware of things that they had never even considered.

The blue sky, the four seasons, so on, and so forth; there are many phenomena that are very natural to us, and we take them for granted. It’s inevitable that we think that we know them very well, but when we try to explain why it is so, we find ourselves unable to verbalize them in a manner that’s convincing and credible.

This was similar to the case of Heaven’s Path techniques. Beneath their deceptively simplistic exterior, they contained innumerable transformations and profound logic in order to overwhelm any opponent with apparent ease.

Simplifying the profound had never been an easy task, and it would continue to trouble future generations of master teachers.

Yet, Kong shi actually managed to do it!

Finally making sense of what was going on, Zhang Xuan suddenly recalled a certain matter, and he turned to the young lady beside him and asked, “How were you able to come here?”

Even while he was imparting knowledge to the apricot trees, the latter would still attack whoever dared get close. How did Luo Ruoxin manage to come to his side?

“The phantasm left behind by Kong shi has started its lecture, and those apricot trees and leaves have gone to listen,” Luo Ruoxin explained with a smile.

Only at that moment did Zhang Xuan realize that the apricot trees, which had gathered respectfully around him a moment earlier, were already standing beneath the towering altar. They swayed ceaselessly along with the slight breeze, and it was hard to tell whether they were shaking out of agitation or twitching.

“...” Zhang Xuan felt a suffocating sensation in his chest.

In the past, it had always been those who listened to his lecture that became uninterested in the lectures of others. But this time around, the tables had turned. Even after the long lecture that he had conducted, the apricot trees and leaves still left him for a couple of words from Kong shi.

Hualala!

Just as Zhang Xuan was feeling a little uncomfortable on the inside, the Otherworldly Demons and Hundred Schools of Philosophers in the area suddenly rushed forward and sat down on the round cushions in front of the towering altar.

“Is this the opportunity that they have been waiting for?” Zhang Xuan was stunned for a moment before realization struck him.

Ever since they entered the Apricot Pavilion, the Hundred Schools of Philosophers had opted to remain in the outer perimeters of the courtyard, refusing to step in as if they were waiting for something. From the looks of it, they had been waiting for Kong shi to begin his lecture.

“While the altar where Kong shi imparts his teachings from is made out of ordinary materials, years of Kong shi’s lectures blessed the altar with his spirit and power, forming some kind of phantasm,” Luo Ruoxin explained. “Rather than saying that the silhouette on the altar is Kong shi, it would be more accurate to say that it is traces left behind of him over time.

“At specific times, the phantasm activates, and it begins conducting a lecture. Even though these apricot trees and leaves have listened to this lecture many times over, they are still able to gain new insights from it each time around, thus

filling them with anticipation each time it happens. This is also the greatest strength of Simple Words of Profound Wisdom!”

Zhang Xuan nodded in agreement.

This was also the greatest difference between Kong shi and Zhang Xuan’s lectures. The crux of Simple Words of Profound Wisdom was not to tear down a concept into bite-sized pieces so that even a child could comprehend it. Rather, it served to deliver a profound concept in an easier to understand manner while still evoking deeper thoughts within one, allowing one to form one’s own perspective and viewpoint.

On the other hand, Zhang Xuan’s lectures were too explicit and direct, and as a result, they lost some of their meaning.

It was true that simplifying a concept would make it much more comprehensible, but if done to extremities, it would only encourage rote learning and stifle creativity.

“Your lessons are too detailed, and they’re filled with your own interpretation of the topic,” Luo Ruoxin said. “Other cultivators will adopt your line of thought strictly and emulate your cultivation style, effectively creating models made out of the same mold.

“On the other hand, Kong shi’s Simple Words of Profound Wisdom encourage cultivators to formulate their own interpretation of a topic through the knowledge that he has imparted, and through doing so, he’s able to nurture many different types of experts!”

Cultivation should not and must not be a process of emulation.

If a teacher imposed their system of cultivation and ideologies upon their student, they would be robbing their student of the chance to unleash their imagination and form their own interpretation of matters.

In truth, simple words were more than enough. What a student truly required was a spark to set them upon a path. Only when they were walking paths that they had selected themselves would they be more likely to reach heights that no other had ever reached.

“Un.” Zhang Xuan nodded deeply in agreement. He could not help but turn to the young lady before him with a slightly complicated look in his eyes.

Despite the time that they had spent together, the young lady still remained a complete mystery to him. The more he came to know her, the more there seemed to be to her.

It was as if he was swimming across a vast ocean. No matter how far he swam, the shore was nowhere in sight.

Her words seemed to be casual, but often, they would point him in a direction, as if a mentor guiding a mentee quietly by the side.

He knew that she would not reveal her identity even if he probed her, so he sighed deeply inwardly before asking, “Aren’t you going to listen to Kong shi’s lecture?”

As Zhang Xuan cultivated the same Heaven’s Path techniques as Kong shi, the lecture by the phantasm was not valuable to him. However, the same could not be said for Luo Ruoxin.

“This lecture is just the start. In a moment, we should be able to see some movements from Yuan Tao. If things go well, he might just be able to get something good out of this,” Luo Ruoxin said.

“Alright!” Zhang Xuan nodded.

Previously, Luo Ruoxin had said that there was a chance that this would be a fortuitous encounter for Yuan Tao, but nothing had happened so far even after Kong shi’s phantasm had started on a lecture. Most likely, the main show had not started.

Intrigued, Zhang Xuan scanned the area to look for Yuan Tao, only to see the latter walking silently toward the towering alter with a dazed look in his eyes.

“He has sealed his senses, so he’s unable to hear Kong shi’s lecture...” Zhang Xuan was first slightly stumped by Yuan Tao’s bizarre actions before widening his eyes in realization.

There were so many experts there, and as soon as they heard Kong shi’s voice, they immediately took their seats on the

round cushions to listen obediently to the lecture. Despite that, Yuan Tao was still able to move. Most likely, this had something to do with his sealing of senses.

Since he was unable to hear Kong shi's voice, it was no wonder that he had remained unaffected.

Geji! Geji!

Walking up to the towering altar, Yuan Tao suddenly lowered his arms and exerted immense pressure upward. It seemed like he was trying to forcefully pry something out of the ground.

"This..." Zhang Xuan was taken aback.

He had been wondering what Yuan Tao was up to, but to think that he was intending to take the entire altar!

"This is the altar where Kong shi imparts his teachings. It has long surpassed mortality, so ordinary zhenqi won't be able to faze it," Luo Ruoxin said. "As one who possesses the Emperor Bloodline, Yuan Tao boasts astonishing strength even without the augmentation of zhenqi. There's no better candidate than him to move the altar!

"As long as one is able to take this altar away, through Kong shi's phantasm, one will be able to produce generations of experts with ease..."

Hualala!

Yuan Tao's strength poured forth, and under the tremendous might propping it up, the towering altar shook nonstop. Eventually, it began to budge and rise from the ground.

1755 Strike Down the Phantasm!

Weng weng!

Seeing the altar being plucked off the ground sent the apricot trees into a rage. In an instant, branches and leaves shot forth to strike down Yuan Tao.

“This is bad...” Zhang Xuan’s face warped in horror.

He had witnessed the prowess of the apricot trees and their leaves earlier. Even he would have sustained severe injuries if he was struck, let alone Yuan Tao, whose cultivation was far lower than his.

Zhang Xuan wanted to dash forward to save him, only to be stopped by a tug on his wrist. Turning his head, he saw Luo Ruoxin shaking her head at him.

He was deeply conflicted within, but he knew that Luo Ruoxin had her reasons for stopping him. Trusting her, he chose to suppress his worries and watch how the situation unfolded.

Weng!

The branches and leaves had already arrived by Yuan Tao’s side at that moment. In response to their assault, a light hum echoed from Yuan Tao’s body as he seemed to have activated some kind of defensive barrier. A warm glow wrapped itself around his body and materialized in the form of light armor.

The armor was not too thick, but no matter how the branches and leaves struck the armor, they were unable to penetrate it.

“Is that the Panoply of Golden Words of the Ancient Sages?” Zhang Xuan’s eyes lit up.

He had heard of this before. Similar to the Golden Warriors of Mentor’s Calligraphy, the Panoply of Golden Words was a kind of manifestation of an Ancient Sage’s power in the form

of armor that was impenetrable by anyone beneath Ancient Sage.

It seemed like the experts from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers had foreseen the dangers in retrieving the altar, so they had prepared such a trick in order to protect Yuan Tao.

Pipah!

However, under the furious lashing of the apricot trees, the Panoply of Golden Words shrouding Yuan Tao gradually faded. It was ultimately still a manifestation of energy, so it would eventually be depleted especially when placed under furious assault.

“Rise!”

Even though Yuan Tao’s six senses were sealed, which made it nigh impossible for him to perceive his surroundings, he was still somehow able to sense the aggression launched against him. With a furious roar, he pushed his strength to its very limits.

Xiong xiong xiong!

The Emperor Bloodline coursing through his body ignited, and the avatar of a for visiting.

Everything happened in an instant, so those from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers and the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe had no time to react at all. Before anyone could make a move, the phantasm was struck right into Yuan Tao’s glabella.

There was a brief moment of absolute silence before a huge commotion broke out in the area.

“What the heck are you doing?” Yan Xue’s goosebumps rose up from the sheer horror of what he had just seen, and he roared maniacally.

The reason that they had attempted to steal the altar was to acquire the phantasm, but the young man had actually struck the phantasm into Yuan Tao’s body. Overwhelming indignation and rage flooded Yan Xue’s mind, and he was actually lost for a moment.

It was completely ridiculous!

On the other hand, Zhang Xuan quietly landed on the ground and returned to where he had stood earlier.

However, he then saw Yuan Tao's body expanding furiously after accepting the phantasm. His plump body further swelled up into a balloon, such that it seemed as if he would rise into the air at any moment.

Geji! Geji!

In the blink of an eye, he had already become completely round. His height and width exceeded two meters, and he looked like a massive boulder.

“What is going on?” Zhang Xuan was stunned by the changes in Yuan Tao's body.

Never in his wildest dream did he think that something like this would actually happen. A Longxi is a mythical beast that resembles an armored rhinoceros.

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1756 Failure?

Zhang Xuan quickly turned to Luo Ruoxin, only to see her directing a smile of assurance toward him. It seemed like she had known that this would happen right from the start.

Knowing that this was not an unexpected development, Zhang Xuan internally heaved a sigh of relief before looking at Yuan Tao worriedly once more. The latter's body was still continuing to bloat up. In less than a minute, his height had already shot up to eight meters tall, and it seemed as if he would blow up at any moment.

Should worst come to worst, Zhang Xuan was prepared to step in at any moment to save his student.

“This is a trial for him. If he's able to take in the phantasm, he'll be able to rise above the rest,” Luo Ruoxin said telepathically.

“Take in the phantasm?” Zhang Xuan was surprised to hear those words. A thought flashed through his mind, and he narrowed his eyes in shock. “Do you mean that... Yuan Tao is currently trying to assimilate the phantasm into his body?”

Zhang Xuan had wrapped the phantasm together with his Heaven's Path zhenqi before striking it into Yuan Tao's body. He had thought that he would only be temporarily storing the phantasm inside Yuan Tao's body, but based on what Luo Ruoxin was saying... Yuan Tao was trying to assimilate the phantasm.

The phantasm was a manifestation of Kong shi's many years of lectures! It was impossible to gauge how powerful it was in terms of energy, but the knowledge of cultivation and battle techniques that it boasted would leave anyone frenzied over it!

Just the lengths that the Hundred Schools of Philosophers had gone to in order to acquire the altar gave a good idea as to how invaluable the phantasm was!

Assimilating that trove of knowledge was a far greater fortuitous encounter than even advancing one's cultivation to Ancient Sage!

"The Terra Qilin is a beast tamed by Kong shi himself, and it serves as the crux of a portion of the Temple of Confucius. It shares a similar origin as the phantasm, thus allowing the phantasm to fuse flawlessly together with it. You have already done what you can as a teacher. As for how far he can go, that's something that he'll have to decide on his own!" Luo Ruoxin remarked as she gazed at Yuan Tao calmly.

Hearing those words, Zhang Xuan could not help but gulp down a mouthful of saliva.

His girlfriend sure was extraordinary! There was probably no one on the Master Teacher Continent would ever dream of violating a phantasm left behind by Kong shi. Yet, his girlfriend had actually designed a ploy to allow Yuan Tao to assimilate the phantasm into his body. This was really unthinkable!

Previously, he had thought that she was an expert from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers. However, from the looks of it, that was unlikely to be the case. There was no way an offspring from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers would treat Kong shi's phantasm in such a manner.

"Spit it out right now!"

At the same time, Yan Xue and the others finally managed to make sense of what was happening, and their faces reddened in fury. It looked as if they would explode at any moment.

They had put in great effort in order to bring the altar and phantasm over... But who would have thought that despite all their planning, the treasure would end up going into someone else's belly?

Hula!

Yan Xue was unable to take it anymore. He whipped out a sword and directed it toward the heart of the bloated Yuan Tao from behind.

As he drove his sword forward, it produced a metallic resonance in the air, as if he was weaving his sword through the surroundings. With each movement of his sword, it seemed to gain greater strength and speed, as if the very world was augmenting his swordsmanship.

Despite his young age, it seemed like he had comprehended Sword Quintessence... and just like Zhang Xuan, it seemed like he had grasped at least two of them!

“Humph!” Witnessing Yan Xue’s attack, Zhang Xuan’s eyebrows shot up, and he harrumphed coldly.

He drew the Dragonbone Divine Spear and darted in front with a swift flit, appearing behind his student in an instant. Raising his arm, he pushed the spear forward with astounding momentum.

With Zhang Xuan’s soul cultivation having reached Intuitive Impulse realm consummation, he was already able to stand toe-to-toe with Sempiternal realm consummation cultivators without a problem.

Ding ding ding ding!

The tip of his spear met Yan Xue’s blade. In the blink of an eye, they collided with one another multiple times. A frightening shockwave rippled into the surroundings, crushing everything in its path. Even space seemed to be creaking under barrage of attacks as small dimension rifts appeared in the area.

“Zhang Xuan, do you know what you are doing? Without Kong shi’s phantasm sealing the area, the entire Temple of Confucius will lose its grounding! This space will swiftly be struck by a space-time turbulence, and we could be permanently stuck in the rifts of space-time, unable to return to reality!” Yan Xue bellowed furiously as he launched frenzied assaults one after another.

“Since you know the consequences, why did you still make my student steal Kong shi’s phantasm?” Completely unfazed by Yan Xue’s questioning, Zhang Xuan replied calmly as he fended perfectly against Yan Xue’s attacks.

In the first place, it was the Hundred Schools of Philosophers who concocted the entire scheme to steal the altar, but when something did not go according to their plans, they immediately pointed their fingers to him instead. Was this how the descendants of the seventy-two Sages conducted themselves?

“I admit that we are the ones who first attempted to steal the phantasm, but we have other motives...” Before Yan Xue could finish, an overpowering aura suddenly swept across the area. It was as if huge tidal waves were crashing around the area, interrupting the battle between the two of them.

Sou sou sou!

Both Zhang Xuan and Yan Xue were forced to part and retreat a far distance away from one another.

Zhang Xuan quickly drove the Heaven’s Path zhenqi through his body to heal his injuries before standing up to look at the very center of the overpowering aura. He saw that Yuan Tao’s height had already risen beyond ten meters, and it seemed as if he was a giant who wielded peerless strength in the world.

Hula!

Raising his head and howling ferociously, Yuan Tao swallowed the avatar of Longxi above his head. The next moment, his aura began to surge steadily.

Aureate Body realm intermediate stage... Advanced stage... Pinnacle... Perfection... Consummation!

Intuitive Impulse realm intermediate stage... Advanced stage... Pinnacle... Perfection... Consummation!

Sempiternal realm...

In the blink of an eye, Yuan Tao had already reached Sempiternal realm consummation!

Even so, his strength was still surging, showing no signs of halting.

“Is he going to push for a breakthrough to Ancient Sage now?” Zhang Xuan narrowed his eyes in agitation.

He did not think that this would be such a huge fortuitous encounter for his student. At this rate, Yuan Tao could very well exceed Zhao Ya and the others and reach Ancient Sage!

“The energy required to reach Ancient Sage is simply too great. His accumulation is too low at the moment, so it’ll be hard for him to do so.” Luo Ruoxin shook her head with a deep look in her eyes. “Furthermore, the Aeon of Ancient Sage is required in order to push for a breakthrough, and there isn’t such a thing here.”

“Don’t worry, I am here!”

Knowing that this was a rare opportunity for his student, there was no way that he would allow this chance to slip through his fingers. Without any hesitation, he flicked his finger and sent a jade bottle toward Yuan Tao.

Tzzzz!

As soon as the jade bottle came before Yuan Tao, its cap opened, and crimson droplets flowed into his mouth. Before long, tremendous energy was coursing through Yuan Tao’s body, granting him the strength that he required to push for a higher realm.

Blood of the Ancient Sages!

Fortunately, he had acquired quite a few droplets of Ancient Sage blood after scheming against the Ancient Sage from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers. This was the ideal situation to use them.

At the same time, he opened the Canvas of Four Seasons and allowed the Aeon of Ancient Sage to flow out into the surroundings.

Kacha!

With these two factors in place, Yuan Tao’s on-the-verge-of-exploding body seemed to have finally burst through the resilient bottleneck holding him back, and his aura surged once more.

His aura became so powerful that it seemed like clouds would billow and thunder would rumble at a wave of his hand. Even

space did not seem to be able to restrain his might any longer.

Hong long!

A cultivation ordeal appeared.

Heavenly flame and lightning gushed down from the sky as if it was the end of the world.

Even Yan Xue and the others, who wanted to force Yuan Tao into spitting out the phantasm, did not dare approach him.

They could tell that Yuan Tao had just summoned the Ancient Sage Ordeal, the final trial that one had to undergo in order to push for a breakthrough to a higher level of existence. Death would swiftly befall them if they approached a power of this scale.

Kacha! Kacha! Kacha! Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

The relentless searing of the heavenly flame and the ceaseless tempering of the lightning bolts swiftly refined the rampaging energies within Yuan Tao's body, causing his figure to become compact once more. He returned from a height of ten meters to his usual size.

Lightning and flames appeared to crackle on the surface of his body, and it seemed like he was slowly learning how to wield these two frightening powers of nature. Even space seemed to cower in the face of his strength.

“The Ancient Sage blood has been fully depleted!”

However, very soon, Yuan Tao's growth sputtered to a stop. He was going to push through the final bottleneck that stood in between him and a true Ancient Sage, but the energy that he had proved to be insufficient.

The amount of energy required for a breakthrough to Ancient Sage was simply too great. Zhang Xuan had harvested quite a few droplets of blood from the Ancient Sage of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers earlier, but it was apparent that they were still lacking.

Huhuhu!

As the amount of energy in Yuan Tao's body swiftly depleted, the cultivation ordeal also seemed to slowly dissipate. However, it was not because Yuan Tao had cleared the ordeal but that it was abruptly terminated. In other words, his attempt to push for a breakthrough to Ancient Sage was a failure.

A chance to achieve a breakthrough to Ancient Sage was extremely hard-to-come-by, such that it could be said that it happened by sheer chance. If one failed to achieve a breakthrough, it was hard to tell when an impetus to make a breakthrough would come once more. It might not even come at all!

To make matters worse, the difficulty of the Ancient Sage Ordeal the second time around would at least be two times harder.

In other words, it was nigh impossible for a cultivator to successfully push for a breakthrough to Ancient Sage if they failed the first time.

It was a truly lamentable situation to fail due to a lack of energy.

“Will his effort be wasted just like that?” Zhang Xuan mumbled beneath his face with a livid look on his face.

1757 The Appearance of the Prime Hall

Luo Ruoxin glanced at the young man in the sky and said, “His efforts won’t be wasted. Haven’t you realized that Yuan Tao is intentionally suppressing his cultivation so as to not achieve a breakthrough?”

“He’s intentionally suppressing his cultivation?” Zhang Xuan frowned in confusion.

“That’s right.” Luo Ruoxin nodded. “It’s true that it is much harder to achieve a breakthrough to Ancient Sage on one’s second attempt. For this reason, most people are determined to succeed on the first try. However, this also makes for the weakest Ancient Sage!

“A breakthrough to Ancient Sage can be seen as an attempt to wrestle power from the heavens so as to become an existence equaling to the heavens themselves. Those who achieve a breakthrough on the first try are able to achieve this feat as well, but at the same time, the strength that they gain from the heavens is severely limited. The very attempt to oppose the heavens is a good opportunity to temper one’s power and refine one’s use of energy. Subsequent attempts to overcome the Ancient Sage Ordeal do become much harder, but if one can pull through, it makes the future progression of one’s cultivation much easier!”

“This... Is it similar to Kong shi’s superior breakthrough method to Great Sage? Is it some form of trial as well?” Zhang Xuan asked.

There was the Saint Ascension Decipher to achieve a breakthrough to Sainthood, as well as a superior breakthrough method to reaching Great Sage. They were much harder ways to push for a breakthrough, but those who succeed would attain power far greater than their peers. Could there be something similar for Ancient Sage as well?

Luo Ruoxin placed her hand behind her back as she looked into the distance with deep eyes. “You could put it that way. Pushing for a breakthrough to Ancient Sage is similar to having a huge tidal wave washing away the sand within one’s body. The more times one confronts the Ancient Sage Ordeal, the finer and more condensed one’s zhenqi will become.

“During his breakthrough, Kong shi held himself back three times when he was on the verge of breakthrough to Ancient Sage, and it was only on the fourth time that he finally succeeded. That was also how he managed to rise as the World’s Teacher, becoming an existence that rivaled the world!

“Even though it might seem like Yuan Tao has failed to push for a breakthrough to Ancient Sage, his physical body has successfully assimilated the power of the Ancient Sage blood. In other words, he already possesses the body of an Ancient Sage. While he isn’t a true Ancient Sage yet, the power that he wields is already sufficient to deal with nascent Ancient Sages!”

“This...” Zhang Xuan was taken aback. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

It was already plenty impressive that Yuan Tao wielded strength comparable to nascent Ancient Sages despite still being at Sempiternal realm consummation. Yet, Kong shi had actually held himself back three times before finally pushing for a breakthrough to Ancient Sage. If so, how powerful could he have been?

There was no cultivator in the world who did not desire to surpass their limits and become an existence that towered above the heavens. Yet, Kong shi had been able to overcome such temptation and calmly temper himself before finally surpassing his limits. From that, it could be seen that his mental resilience was extraordinary.

It was no wonder that he had led mankind to prosperity. Even though Zhang Xuan did not harbor the reverence that those of

the Master Teacher Continent had toward Kong shi, he had to say that he was filled with respect for the latter.

Zhang Xuan suddenly froze on the spot. “Hmm? Wait a moment, there shouldn’t be too many people who knew about this secret, right? Why would Yuan Tao do it?”

It was likely that not even Yang shi nor Sword Saint Xing and the others were aware of this fact. Knowing that Luo Ruoxin likely originated from some incredible power, it was not too surprising for her to be aware of all this. However, Yuan Tao had followed him from the Tianxuan Kingdom, so how did he know it as well?

The temptation to reach Ancient Sage was incredible. If one did not have such knowledge in advance, it was unlikely that one would take a gamble and forsake what could be said to have been their only chance to achieve a breakthrough.

“He has assimilated Kong shi’s phantasm, so his understanding of cultivation probably surpasses even the seventy-two Sages at this point,” Luo Ruoxin explained. “It’s just that assimilating the phantasm makes one very susceptible to being influenced by Kong shi, and that would be extremely disadvantageous to your growth. Otherwise, I would have had you assimilate the phantasm instead.”

Hearing those words, Zhang Xuan could not help but shake his head bitterly. “Disadvantageous to my growth?”

He had known that if he could make a breakthrough to Ancient Sage, there was hardly anyone in the world who would have been able to pose a threat to him. By then, what would he have to worry about growth?

“You are a Celestial Master Teacher as well, and you are destined to walk a different route from Kong shi. If you attempt to walk his route, all you will become is another one of the seventy-two Sages. You would never be able to surpass him,” Luo Ruoxin said calmly.

Zhang Xuan pondered for a moment before nodding.

To surpass the predecessors, one had to first denounce their path.

If all one could do was emulate the actions of the predecessors, it would only eventually lead to stagnation.

For example, each of the seventy-two Sages were astoundingly talented individuals who achieved great things in their time. While it could be said that it was Kong shi who brought them to their eventual heights, ironically, it was very likely that Kong shi was their limitation as well. They had been so confined within Kong shi's heritage that they were unable to truly surpass themselves and discover their own paths.

In fact, this could also be why the Hundred Schools of Philosophers was unable to surpass their founders.

At the same time, to cast away one's heritage and attempt to search for one's own path could be considered an act of lunacy. It was a heritage that guaranteed a path to greatness, and casting it aside could condemn one to a life of mediocrity.

Ultimately, surpassing one's predecessors was an act easier said than done.

To tread on a path that was bound to greatness or to cast everything aside to struggle for an incredibly slim chance of overcoming one's limitations...

There was no right or wrong answer to this question, and this was a choice that one would have to make by oneself.

Kacha! Kacha! Kacha!

As Zhang Xuan was deep in thought, a brilliant ray of light suddenly rose from the altar ahead of him, soaring right into the heavens.

Following which, he saw another five rays of light converging from the distance as well. The tremendous energy pierced through the deep blue sky, and a pitch-black dimension rift slowly expanded from the point of convergence of the six rays.

Beyond the pitch-black dimension rift, the silhouette of a humongous palace came into sight.

"T-this... this is the Prime Hall! The Prime Hall of the Temple of Confucius has finally surfaced!" Ren Qingyuan exclaimed in agitation.

So far, the crowd had only explored the six Subordinate Halls, but none of them had found the Prime Hall. However, with all six Subordinate Halls activated, the energies that they released destroyed the final seal on the Temple of Confucius, causing the Prime Hall to appear.

The legendary artifact that was said to be able to dictate the fate of the Master Teacher Continent lay within the humongous palace right before them—the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn!

“Let’s head over!”

Yan Xue took a look at the Prime Hall in the sky before turning to glance at Yuan Tao and Zhang Xuan. Even though he was deeply reluctant, he knew that there was nothing that he could do anymore. Thus, he beckoned the crowd from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers over before dashing toward the dimension rift.

The Otherworldly Demons also quickly made their way toward the dimension rift.

Seeing that Ren shi and the others were trembling in excitement, Zhang Xuan said with a smile, “You go on ahead!”

He knew that there was still some time before the entrance of the Prime Hall would be opened, so he was in no hurry to head over. Instead, he turned his attention to Yuan Tao.

At this point in time, his student had already reinforced his cultivation, and the Ancient Sage Ordeal had fully retreated as well.

“Teacher!”

Opening his eyes, Yuan Tao felt the strength coursing through his body, and he could not help but tremble in agitation. He swiftly walked up to his teacher and kneeled before him.

His six senses had initially been sealed, but the seal had broken as soon as he took the phantasm into his body. He knew that it was all thanks to his teacher’s help that he possessed his current strength.

“Un!” Zhang Xuan nodded in satisfaction.

This was truly a huge fortuitous encounter for Yuan Tao. To assimilate Kong shi’s phantasm and push for multiple breakthroughs all at once, he had surpassed Yuan Tao, Wei Ruyan, and even Zhang Xuan in a single shot.

“Even though you possess the physical body of an Ancient Sage, your state of mind and soul are still slightly lacking. I have a cultivation technique and Bodhi Fruit over here that will do you much good!” Zhang Xuan said as he passed the Bodhi Fruit over.

While Yuan Tao had inherited Kong shi’s phantasm, he still had to temper his state of mind a step at a time.

“Yes!” Taking the Bodhi Fruit, Yuan Tao quickly swallowed it, and the next moment, he could feel his state of mind swiftly reinforcing itself.

Had it been Zhao Ya or Wei Ruyan, they would still have had to make some preparations and condition their bodies before consuming the Bodhi Fruit. However, possessing the body of an Ancient Sage, Yuan Tao did not have such concerns.

Huhuhu!

After dealing with Yuan Tao, Zhang Xuan brought Zhao Ya, Wei Ruyan, Luo Qiqi, and the others out from his Myriad Anthive Nest.

“The Prime Hall has opened. Do you want to follow me to search for more fortuitous encounters or continue cultivating here?”

This was the first time that the Prime Hall of the Temple of Confucius had opened in dozens of millennia, and it was likely filled with both risks and opportunities. Even though he was their teacher, he felt that he should entrust the choice to them.

“I wish to enter the Prime Hall to take a look!” Zhao Ya said firmly.

“Me too!”

The other two replied in unison.

Meanwhile, Luo Ruoxin shot a glance over when she saw Luo Qiqi coming out of Zhang Xuan's Myriad Anthive Nest, and an inconspicuous frown crept onto her forehead. However, she chose not to say a word.

1758 Ancient Sage Yan Qing

Noting the slight frown on the young lady's face, Zhang Xuan's eyebrows shot up in realization. He quickly rushed over and frantically explained, "I met her earlier in the Hall of Lull, so I brought her and Wei Ruyan out together..."

"Let's go!"

However, completely nonchalant to Zhang Xuan's explanation, Luo Ruoxin took the lead and headed to the Prime Hall first.

"This..."

Bewildered by Luo Ruoxin's reaction, Zhang Xuan quickly followed behind her.

The exterior of the Prime Hall was much grander than that of the Subordinate Halls. At that moment, the massive square in front of the Prime Hall was already completely filled with people.

Most of the experts who had been trapped in certain dimensions for one reason or another had made their way there, thus forming a crowd that numbered several thousand.

Even if they were unable to enter the Prime Hall, it would not have been a waste of a trip if they got to witness the mystical abilities of the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn.

"Master, I have already regained my memories. The six Subordinate Halls have to be opened in order for the gateway to the Prime Hall to surface..." Little Amulet's voice sounded in Zhang Xuan's mind. "I can get you in but not now. The Prime Hall has yet to fully open!"

"I see!" Seeing that the useless amulet had only managed to regain its memory after everything was in place, Zhang Xuan shook his head helplessly. He walked up to Luo Ruoxin, and upon seeing that the latter's face was still as cold as ice, he shuddered a little as he tried to explain the situation. "This... That's really not it... We only met by coincidence..."

Luo Ruoxin turned to look at Zhang Xuan, but just as she was about to speak, an excited voice sounded by the side.

“Zhang shi, I knew that you would be here!”

Following which, a figure excitedly rushed up to him.

“Fei-er, you’re here as well!” Luo Qiqi’s eyes lit up as she quickly walked toward the approaching figure.

It was none other than her good friend, the princess of the Huanyu Empire, Yu Fei-er!

Spotting Luo Qiqi as well, Yu Fei-er gave her a warm hug and said in gratitude, “I already know that Ji laoshi took me in as his student because of you...”

She was only a small princess of the Huanyu Empire. To be able to catch the eye of Elder Ji Ruochen of the Master Teacher Pavilion headquarters and even be accepted as her direct disciple... it went without saying that her good friend, the little princess of the Luo Clan, had played a part in that.

Otherwise, even if she was truly talented, there was no way that she would have been able to catch the eye of the upper echelons of the Master Teacher Continent from where she was.

“There’s no need to stand on ceremony!” Luo Qiqi replied with a smile.

They swiftly caught up with one another before Yu Fei-er turned to look at Zhang Xuan with a smile. Her voice sounded firm and resolute as usual, but there was a hint of conflict that one could sense from her tone. “Zhang shi, it has been quite a while since we last met!”

She harbored some feelings for the young man before her, but she had already heard of what happened with Luo Qiqi, and that made her acutely aware that the two of them did not have a future together. She felt indignant, and she was reluctant to accept the truth as well. However, she was a prideful person, and she was not one to demean herself and cling to someone. Thus, she chose to put on a bright smile and greet the young man like normal.

“Yeah, it has been a while...” Zhang Xuan scratched his head as he turned to Luo Ruoxin awkwardly. “Look... it really is a coincidence...”

Luo Ruoxin shot a glance at the young man before her, who was flustered from trying to explain himself but was unable to find the proper words to do so, and her lips curled up slightly. Without saying anything, she continued looking ahead.

Unknowingly, the square in front of the Prime Hall was already divided into four clear factions. The Master Teacher Pavilion and the major clans of the Master Teacher Continent formed one faction, the Hundred School of Philosophers formed one faction, the Otherworldly Demons formed one faction, and those of the Beast Tribe formed the final faction.

The members of each faction were grouped close together, eyeing those of the other factions warily.

Zhang Xuan closed his eyes and carefully perceived the surroundings. It was vague, but he could certainly feel numerous powerful auras hidden in the surroundings.

Most likely, the reason that a delicate peace could be constructed between the four powers was due to the Ancient Sages restraining one another.

“Senior!”

Zhang Xuan was just about to consider if he should slice an Ancient Sage or two to procure some fresh blood when he heard a call not too far away. Turning his head, he saw Yang shi flying over with a smile on his face.

“You... have achieved a breakthrough to Ancient Sage!” Zhang Xuan was stunned for a moment before his eyes lit up in agitation.

The aura coming from the elder before him was as vague as ever, making it hard for one to gauge the depth of it. At first glance, it seemed like the other party was only slightly above him, but when he attempted to take a closer look, he realized that he was gazing into a boundless ocean. No matter how he looked at it, it seemed like there was no end to his strength.

Without a doubt, it was apparent that this junior of his had stumbled upon some kind of fortuitous encounter, thus becoming the first cultivator to have successfully reached Ancient Sage.

“I had good luck!” Yang shi remarked with a light smile.

“There’s no such thing as luck in cultivation,” Zhang Xuan replied.

Yang shi had long reached Sempiternal realm consummation, and the reason that he had been traveling around the world was to find the Aeon of Ancient Sage, the final impetus required for him to achieve a breakthrough to Ancient Sage. It was due to his previous accumulation that he had been able to grasp the opportunity when it finally knocked on his door.

“Everyone...”

A crisp clear voice suddenly echoed in the air.

The crowd quickly turned their heads over and saw an elderly man standing in the air in front of the Prime Hall.

“It’s an Ancient Sage from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers!”

The elderly man was wearing clothes identical to the Hundred Schools of Philosophers, so there was no question of which faction he belonged to.

“Since the Prime Hall has appeared, I don’t see any reason for us to continue hiding in the shadows. Come out!” the elderly man said lightly, but his voice reverberated through the area.

“Indeed, there’s no need for us to continue hiding!”

“It’s clear that we all have the same goal. Since the Prime Hall has finally surfaced, there’s no reason for us to continue lurking in the shadows!”

“Let’s come out then!”

Boom!

As these voices sounded one after another, numerous figures swiftly appeared in the sky above the square. The number

averaged out to around six to seven Ancient Sages for each faction.

“There are so many Ancient Sages here!” Zhang Xuan’s eyebrows shot up in astonishment.

His initial estimation was that there would be around five to ten Ancient Sages in the Temple of Confucius, but in an instant, the area was already filled with twenty people. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

The person whom he had injured previously was standing among the Hundred Schools of Philosophers’ Ancient Sages.

While other cultivators could have gone there in seek of other fortuitous encounters, the aim of the present Ancient Sages was clear—the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn.

Previously, when the Subordinate Halls were beginning to open, they had chosen to hide in the background in order to protect their descendants from others, as well as to avoid unnecessary conflicts with other factions.

However, the opening of the Prime Hall signified that they were swiftly approaching the finish line. At such a point in time, there was no point in them hiding anymore. It was time for them to lay out their cards.

“Having been through the six Subordinate Halls, I believe that we have gained a rough idea of how the Temple of Confucius works. The Prime Hall has indeed surfaced, but its entrance is still shut tight. There’s another important process that we have to do in order to open it once and for all!” the elderly man said.

An Otherworldly Demon Ancient Sage harrumphed. “Ancient Sage Yan Qing, you are already the strongest one of us here. Stop beating about the bush and cut to the chase. What do you expect us to do?”

“Ancient Sage Yan Qing? Is he a descendant of Ancient Sage Zi Yuan?” Zhang Xuan frowned.

Ancient Sage Zi Yuan was the leader of the seventy-two Sages, the First Senior of Kong shi’s direct disciples. Yan Xue

seemed to be his descendant, and it was very likely that Yan Qing was Yan Xue's predecessor.

"Junior, do you recognize that Ancient Sage Yan Qing?" asked Zhang Xuan in a telepathic message to Yang Shi.

"I don't know him... While our Master Teacher Pavilion shares the same origin as the Hundred Schools of Philosophers, we rarely come into contact with one another," Yang Shi, who had joined the Master Teacher Pavilion's group of Ancient Sages, replied telepathically.

"You don't recognize him, but those of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe are able to refer to him by his name so confidently..." Zhang Xuan frowned.

From what he knew, the Ancient Sages from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers had not appeared for tens of thousands of years, such that even the Master Teacher Pavilion headquarters were not sure about the current situation within the Hundred Schools of Philosophers. Yet, for an Otherworldly Demon to be able to address the other party directly and even remark that the other party was the strongest of them all...

He could not help but recall the uncanny interactions that he had spotted between the Hundred Schools of Philosophers and the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe.

"I'll just make things clear. Since we are all here, I expect to get a share as well. So far, our Beast Tribe hasn't managed to obtain anything from the Subordinate Halls. If you wish to leave us behind, I can only say that you should be prepared to face our wrath!" a massive beast from the Beast Tribe uttered coldly.

This beast had also reached Ancient Sage, and the space around him seemed to be oddly firm.

"White Overlord, please calm down. The reason that I had everyone come out is to discuss the allocation of the slots for entry into the Prime Hall. As for what kind of fortuitous encounters those who enter will find within, that will depend on their own skills and luck!" Ancient Sage Yan Qing said with a smile. Zi Yuan, real name Yan Hui, was Confucius'

most favored disciple. He's one of the most revered figures in Confucianism, such that his figure can be seen in Confucian temples.

1759 White Overlord

“Alright, I’ll listen to you what you have to say. However, I’ll make things clear first. We of the Beast Tribe want at least two slots. If you can’t satisfy our demand, you can be assured that we’ll lay waste to everything here!” the beast known as the White Overlord sneered coldly.

The original body of the beast was a white fox that spanned a length of ten meters. Even without exerting any strength, its very presence seemed to send shudders through space.

If it really went berserk, it was likely that it could bring massive devastation upon at least half of the crowd in the square.

“To ask for two slots right from the start, don’t you think you are being a little too greedy?” a middle-aged man floating above the Master Teacher Pavilion headquarters sneered back.

“So what?” The White Overlord turned to look at the middle-aged man, and a malicious air burst forth from it, jolting onlookers’ souls.

From the looks of it, it seemed like it was exceptionally skilled in soul offense.

“Try it then! Let’s see if the sword in my hand agrees with that! If I recall correctly, a predecessor of our Zhang Clan, Zhang Yu, single-handedly subdued nine of your Ancient Sages with his sword twenty millennia ago!” the middle-aged man scoffed. “Let’s see if I can achieve what he did today!”

“Zhang Clan? So, he’s the Ancient Sage of our Zhang Clan.” Zhang Xuan’s eyebrows shot up.

Even though the Ancient Sage of the Zhang Clan had helped him previously while they were outside the Hall of Great Accomplishment, he had not met the other party in person. He knew that the other party was a very forthright person, but who would have thought that he would actually be able to

stand on equal ground with the strongest Ancient Sage of the Beast Tribe!

Taking a closer look at the middle-aged man, he saw that the other party was dressed in a green robe, and he had eyebrows shaped like crescent blades. Other than a sword hanging by his waist, there were no ornaments to him. Yet, despite his seemingly ordinary appearance, he wielded strength that no one would dare to snub.

“He’s the last Ancient Sage of the Zhang Clan, Zhang Hongtian! A man of great talent, he achieved a breakthrough to Ancient Sage at a very young age. At the same time, he has a carefree and righteous personality. He abhors evil to an extreme extent, such that he will never hesitate to stand up in the face of injustice. He was still very young when the Aeon of Ancient Sage first began fading from the world, and he should have been able to spend his youth happily and without much worry. However, he still made the choice to hibernate so that he would be able to protect mankind for as long as he could...” Yang shi sent a telepathic message to Zhang Xuan, explaining the background of the Ancient Sage of the Zhang Clan.

Rumor had it that the Ancient Sage had only been in his early five hundreds when he achieved a breakthrough to Ancient Sage. That was the age when most cultivators in the upper echelon started to settle down and make their own families, enjoying the prime of their lives. Yet, he unhesitatingly chose to bid farewell to his loved ones in order to go into hibernation. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

There was no way such a decision could have been easy for him to make. Without a doubt, he was someone worthy of respect.

“You...” Not expecting Zhang Hongtian to snub it entirely, the White Overlord turned its massive fox head and harrumphed. “I admit that your Peerless Sword is formidable, but it won’t be easy for you to kill me... And as long as you fail to kill me,

you can be certain that I'll hunt down every single member of your Zhang Clan. I sure do want to see how many of your descendants you will be able to protect!"

"Hahaha! Sure, be my guest! If I recall correctly, there are quite a few communities of White Foxes around, and you have a fair number of descendants as well. Touch a single offspring of my Zhang Clan, and I'll slay ten of your foxes. Kill ten offspring of my Zhang Clan, and I'll massacre your entire race!" Zhang Hongtian scoffed with his back straightened.

"You lunatic! You dare..." the White Overlord roared with its teeth gritted tightly together.

"Try me then! I, Zhang Hongtian, have never feared doing anything ever since I started cultivating! Try asking that lot!" Zhang Hongtian spat calmly as he tilted his head toward the Otherworldly Demon Ancient Sages.

"Humph!" The Otherworldly Demon Ancient Sage who had spoken earlier harrumphed coldly in displeasure.

"That's probably Old Geezer Yu..." Zhang Xuan was able to vaguely recognize the other party from that harrumph.

He had already found the other party's voice familiar with they were dealing with Ancient Sage Yan Qing, but it was only upon hearing Zhang Hongtian's words that he finally put the two together. It was the Otherworldly Demon Ancient Sage that he had encountered in front of the Hall of Great Accomplishment!

"There's indeed nothing that you dare not do. I seem to recall that a large bunch of the White Overlord's descendants were tamed by an offspring of your Zhang Clan a while ago, back at the Apricot Pavilion?" Old Geezer Yu said with a cold sneer.

"Tame? What did you just say?" The White Overlord was visibly stunned for a moment before it growled menacingly.

Clearly, it was still unaware of this matter.

"If you don't believe me, you can take a look yourself. Are the offspring that you dispatched to the Apricot Pavilion still with you? Are you still able to communicate with them?" Old

Geezer Yu replied calmly as he glanced at Zhang Xuan with a sinister smile.

The last time that human lad schemed against him, he had suffered a deep laceration. Since he had an opportunity to return the favor, it went without saying that he had no intention of allowing it to go to waste.

The White Overlord glared at Old Geezer Yu before turning around to relay commands to one of the Ancient Sage beasts behind it. A moment later, the Ancient Sage beast whispered something to the White Overlord's ear, and the latter's face immediately darkened as it turned its gaze in Zhang Xuan's direction.

Its eyes glowed like an inferno that would burn down anything in sight.

"How did I end up getting implicated here?" Zhang Xuan was rendered speechless.

He was an insignificant Aureate Body realm cultivator among the cluster of Ancient Sages, so why in the world did they pull him into this conflict?

Noticing the malicious intentions in the White Overlord's eyes, Zhang Hongtian suddenly recalled what had happened outside the Hall of Great Accomplishment, and he could not help but turn around and ask, "Did you tame its descendants?"

The beasts that Zhang Xuan had tamed outside the Hall of Great Accomplishment had not been all that strong, and they were not the White Overlord's descendants. However, those who had entered the Apricot Pavilion were very different.

Anyone who had investigated the Temple of Confucius in advance would understand the importance of the Apricot Pavilion. Those who had been selected to enter it were the top-notch talents from each power. Could it be that his descendant was able to tame even proud geniuses like that?

"Those are its descendants? I didn't know... Earlier, when I went into the Apricot Pavilion, I saw a bunch of beasts getting pummeled by the apricot trees. Seeing that they were on the verge of death, I quickly dived in to save them. Out of

gratitude to me, they ended up submitting to me... However, I don't recall there being any white foxes among the group!" Zhang Xuan said.

The truth behind the submission of the beasts was due to his Beast Pummeling Taming Method, but of course, it was not a convenient moment to mention something as controversial as that.

"They submitted to you out of gratitude?" Unable to hold himself back any longer, Zhang Hongtian burst into laughter. "Hahaha! You did great!"

As an Ancient Sage, he could tell that Zhang Xuan was lying with just a single glance. The reason that he burst into laughter was because he suddenly recalled how haughty the White Overlord had been a moment ago, only to find out that its descendants had submitted to his the next instant.

This was such a timely face slap that words could not begin to describe how exhilarating it was to him!

Amid his laughter, Zhang Hongtian said, "White Overlord, since your descendants have already submitted to my descendants, why don't I give you a chance to submit to me as well? As long as you become my tamed beast, I'm more than willing to give you two slots!"

"You're courting death!" Hearing those words of ridicule, the White Overlord was unable to hold himself back anymore.

With a furious roar, he leaped forward to tear Zhang Hongtian apart.

A pitch-black claw imprint sliced across space, tearing dimension rifts open.

It was apparent that the White Overlord was extremely strong, even among the Ancient Sages.

"I could be courting death, but there's no way in hell will I ever die by your wretched hands..." Paying no heed to the rage of the White Overlord, Zhang Hongtian chuckled softly as he drew his sword and drove it forward.

Wuuuuu!

The whistling sword clashed together with the White Overlord's claws.

Boom boom boom!

A huge, spherical dimension rift was produced as a result of the collision. The White Overlord was forced to take a step back, but it immediately prepared itself to charge forth once more to launch a follow up attack.

However, at that moment, Ancient Sage Yan Qing suddenly stepped forward and stood in between the two of them. With a wave of his hand, he produced a barrier reminiscent of a cloth that prevented the two from getting close to one another.

“Enough. The urgent matter at hand is entering the Prime Hall, not fighting with one another. If you really wish to settle the scores between the two of you, I won't stop you once this matter is over. However, for the time being, I'll have to ask you to take a step back,” Ancient Sage Yan Qing remarked calmly.

1760 I Have Many Cruces

Zhang Hongtian gave it a try, but he realized that the cloth-like barrier before him was frighteningly resilient. He immediately realized that the prowess of Ancient Sage Yan Qing was far above his, so with a cold harrumph, he turned around and said, “Since Ancient Sage Yan Qing has spoken up, I’ll spare you for the time being!”

He flicked his wrist to return his sword back to his waist before regrouping with those from the Master Teacher Pavilion, standing quietly on the spot. It was as if he was completely unaffected by the conflict that had just occurred.

At the same time, it seemed as if the White Overlord knew that it was not a match for Zhang Hongtian or Ancient Sage Yan Qing, so it whipped its tail back and quietly returned to its group, not daring to utter a word of complaint. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

“Given that the Prime Hall of the Temple of Confucius hasn’t even opened yet, it’s unwise for you to leap at one another to tear each other apart.” Seeing that the two of them had finally calmed down, Ancient Sage Yan Qing retracted his palm and smiled. Turning to the crowd, he said, “Moving back to the topic at hand, since everyone knows how the Prime Hall is opened, let’s discuss how we should allocate the slots to entering the Prime Hall!”

Hearing that the other party was raising the matter regarding the allocation of slots once more, Zhang Hongtian said with a frown, “I’m sure that you already have your own ideas. Feel free to state your suggestion. If we find it appropriate, there’s no reason for us not to agree with it!”

“Indeed, I do have some thoughts in mind!” Ancient Sage Yan Qing admitted with a smile. “Having cleared the six Subordinate Halls, we know that even if the Prime Hall opens, we’ll also have to bypass the seal that Kong shi has personally

left on it. Without the corresponding Celestial Amulet of Legacy, there's no way that we will be able to enter!"

The crowd nodded in agreement.

They had tested the six Subordinate Halls, and there was indeed no way of bypassing the barrier without the corresponding Celestial Amulet of Legacy or unique constitution. This was especially with regards to Ancient Sages. If they attempted to forcefully tear down the barrier, they would only end up suffering a severe backlash!

There was no doubt that Ancient Sages were extremely powerful, but Kong shi was a man known as the World's Teacher. There was no way an ancient domain left behind by him could be breached through forceful means, even by Ancient Sages!

"To enter the Prime Hall, we'll need the Prime Amulet. All in all, the Prime Amulet can bring a total of fifteen people into the Prime Hall," Ancient Sage Yan Qing said.

Some discussions broke out amid the crowd shortly after. They were starting to plan their next moves.

The White Overlord harrumphed coldly. "We don't even know where the Prime Amulet is at the moment. If it's not in our hands, won't we be forced to watch in futility while others harvest the treasures in the Prime Hall for themselves?"

It was pretty much common knowledge who was in possession of the six Celestial Amulets of Legacy at this point in time, but the Prime Amulet had yet to make its appearance.

Most people thought that the reason that Zhang Xuan had been able to enter the Subordinate Halls without any problem was because he was in possession of the blood essence of his students. After all, the Subordinate Halls that he had entered were indeed the ones that corresponded to the unique constitutions of his students.

Furthermore, there was a widespread misconception that the Prime Amulet only granted one entry into the Prime Hall. No one, including the Hundred Schools of Philosophers, was

aware that it granted passage into the Subordinate Halls as well.

“The reason I said such words is because I know where the Prime Amulet is!” With a light chuckle, Ancient Sage Yan Qing’s eyebrows shot up proudly. “To be honest with you all, the Prime Amulet is currently in my hands!”

Right after saying those words, an amulet materialized right before him. He flicked it lightly, and an imposing air of authority suffused the area.

“That’s the Prime Amulet?”

“What a formidable aura!”

“It’s clearly much stronger than the other Subordinate Amulets!”

“We’ll be able to enter the Prime Hall with that?”

A commotion broke out in the square as everyone turned to look at the amulet in the sky with a heated gaze.

That was the entrance ticket into the Prime Hall right in front of them! If they could acquire it, they would only be a single step away from the ultimate treasure of the Master Teacher Continent!

“That is...”

While the crowd was staring intently at the imposing amulet in the air, Zhang Xuan frowned slightly before shaking his head speechlessly.

He recognized the amulet in Ancient Sage Yan Qing’s hands. It was the one that he had fought Yan Xue over at the White Creek Mountain. In other words, the Prime Amulet in the other party’s hand was a fake!

Despite being an Ancient Sage, is he really unable to tell that the Prime Amulet in his hands is a fake? Zhang Xuan wondered doubtfully.

Ancient Sage Yan Qing was an individual who boasted strength even greater than Zhang Hongtian. Yet, he was unable

to discern the authenticity of the amulet that he had in his possession.

Noticing Zhang Xuan's doubts, Luo Ruoxin sent a telepathic message over to explain. "The Prime Amulet was personally forged by Kong shi, and not even the seventy-two Sages saw its true form. Even I was unable to see through it when I first laid eyes on it, so how could he possibly be able to discern its authenticity?"

So far, it seemed like Yan Xue and the others still thought that they had taken the real Prime Amulet, which meant that the only ones who knew that the Prime Amulet was a fake were Zhang Xuan, Luo Ruoxin, and Wu Chen.

"You're right!" Zhang Xuan nodded in agreement as his lips crept upward. "This will be interesting. Even though their Prime Amulet's a fake, they are still making conditions. Let's see what they can come up with..."

The crowd had no choice but to follow the arrangements made by Ancient Sage Yan Qing because they thought that the Prime Amulet was in his hands. However, once the crowd realized that his Prime Amulet was actually a fake, there would surely be a huge uproar. In an instant, the Hundred Schools of Philosophers would draw the ire of everyone present in the square.

Zhang Xuan could not help but wonder how they would salvage the situation later on.

But other than that, there was also one thing that piqued Zhang Xuan's curiosity. If the Hundred Schools of Philosophers truly thought that they had claimed the real Prime Amulet, why did they declare their possession of it and even offer to share the slots with other powers?

Were they not simply asking for trouble?

"The Prime Amulet is the key to entering the Prime Amulet, so I believe that none of you will have any qualms with us taking away a third of the slots on the grounds that we are in possession of it, right?" Ancient Sage Yan Qing stowed the

amulet back into his storage ring before turning to address the crowd.

“I have no objections to that.” Old Geezer Yu was the first one to voice his approval.

“We are fine with it as well.”

“Sounds rational to me.”

The others hesitated for a moment before expressing their agreement as well.

Without the Prime Amulet, even if the Prime Hall opened, they would only be able to watch helplessly from the outside. It could be said to be a very fair arrangement for the Hundred School Philosophers to only take away a third of the total slots.

Seeing that he had everyone’s agreement, Ancient Sage Yan Qing heaved a sigh of relief inwardly before continuing.

“Since our Hundred Schools of Philosophers have taken away five slots, we’ll first distribute a slot each to the four powers respectively as a token of goodwill so as to prevent any unnecessary conflict. It should be fine, right?”

“I have no issues with that,” the White Overlord replied.

Considering how the Beast Tribe had obtained nothing so far, it would take anything that it could get.

The experts of the Master Teacher Pavilion also glanced at one another and hesitated for a moment before eventually nodding in agreement.

They were not in a good position to negotiate either, so they could only make do as well.

“Nine out of the fifteen slots of the Prime Amulet have been taken up so far. How do you intend to distribute the remaining six slots?” Old Geezer Yu asked.

“It’s very simple!” As if expecting such a question, Ancient Sage Yan Qing chuckled softly before replying. “We will have to open the entrance of the Prime Hall in order to enter its premises, and in order to do so, we’ll need the cruxes of the six outer dimensions. Each of these six cruxes will correspond

to a slot. Whoever is in possession of a crux will be given a slot. I believe that none of you will have any qualms with such an arrangement, right?”

“This...”

“I guess it’s fair.”

“If we wish to enter the Prime Hall, we’ll have to open it first. It’s only right to reward those who have aided in the opening of the Prime Hall, so they are indeed entitled to a slot each...”

The Ancient Sages nodded in agreement.

In this negotiation, the only ones who had a voice were the Ancient Sages. Great Sage cultivators had no say in the matter at all.

A crux corresponds to a slot each? Zhang Xuan was taken aback. He scratched his head blankly as he pondered, I seem to have quite a few cruxes with me at the moment...

1761 Cruxes

Previously, he had been wondering why Ancient Sage Yan Qing, despite being the strongest Ancient Sage in the area and in possession of the Prime Amulet, would offer to distribute the slots, thus giving other powers the opportunity to lay their hands on the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn.

However, he swiftly understood why after hearing those words.

Even with the Prime Amulet in hand, it would be futile if the Hundred Schools of Philosophers was unable to open the entrance to the Prime Hall.

And the key to opening the Prime Hall were the cruxes of the six outer dimensions!

As far as he knew, it seemed like... he had obtained four of the cruxes all by himself.

“It seems like Little Amulet isn’t completely useless after all!” Zhang Xuan widened his eyes in realization. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

He had been rather perplexed when he heard that his parents had been teleported right to the vicinity of the Prime Hall due to the Celestial Amulet of Legacy in their possession. He had thought that Little Amulet was not working properly—there should not have been any reason for him to be teleported into the outer dimensions. However, when he looked back, there was indeed no mistake at all!

He had to enter the outer dimensions in order to obtain the cruxes because they were crucial to opening the Prime Hall. Otherwise, even with the Prime Amulet, he would only have been able to stand helplessly outside the Prime Hall, unable to do a thing at all.

“The Ancient Sages are restricted from entering any of the six outer dimensions, so I can’t verify where the cruxes are at the

moment. However, the fact that the Prime Hall has surfaced shows that the cruxes of the six outer dimensions have been taken away. I have no doubt that the cruxes are among us now. As long as you are willing to take it out, you'll be able to exchange it for a slot for your own power!" Ancient Sage Yan Qing announced.

Due to the restrictions on Ancient Sages, he was unable to travel freely within the Temple of Confucius, so he could not be certain who was in possession of the cruxes.

If Ancient Sage Yan Qing had been able to ascertain the whereabouts of the cruxes, he would have been able to approach the owners privately and strike deals with them. It was precisely because they could not ascertain the whereabouts that they had been left with no choice but to gather everyone in the square and propose an open distribution of the slots.

"Why don't I start first?"

Seeing that there was no movement from the crowd, Ancient Sage Yan Qing smiled lightly as he tapped his finger in front of him. A book materialized before him, and he flicked it lightly.

Wuuuuuuuu!

The book immediately flew for the Prime Hall. It fitted perfectly in one of the apertures by the side of the entrance before emanating a light glow, seemingly indicating that it was a correct fit.

Taking a closer look at the entrance, Zhang Xuan realized that there were three apertures on both sides of the entrance. All in all, they corresponded to the cruxes of the six outer dimensions.

"That is the crux of the book ocean dimension, which corresponds to the Great Kui Hall of Literature. Our Hundred Schools of Philosophers managed to obtain it, so we are entitled to another slot!" Ancient Sage Yan Qing said.

The Hundred Schools of Philosophers had five slots due to their possession of the Prime Amulet, and they had just

obtained an additional one. With this, they had taken nearly half of all fifteen slots. In other words, no matter how the remaining slots were distributed, they would still be the greatest winner there, so there was no need for them to worry.

After slotting the book into one of the six apertures, Ancient Sage Yan Qing turned to the crowd and said, “Those who have obtained any of the other cruxes, I’ll have to ask you to please take them out. Don’t worry. With the Ancient Sages from the four major powers standing here, no one will dare rob you of your slot and possession. If you feel that your cultivation is lacking and would like to relinquish your slot, you can trade it for other resources. As long as it’s within our means to do so, the Hundred Schools of Philosophers will fulfill your demands!”

“This...”

“Where are the remaining cruxes?”

“Argh! If I’d known in advance, I would have tried my best to search for the cruxes. At the very least, I would have been able to obtain at least a single slot for my power...”

“Who would have thought that the six outer dimensions would play such a crucial role?”

...

Intense discussions could be heard amid the crowd.

The cultivators present were glancing at one another, hoping to know where the cruxes were and who had taken them away.

Seeing that no one was stepping out from the crowd, an inconspicuous frown appeared on Ancient Sage Yan Qing’s forehead, and he continued his persuasion. “Are you worried that we won’t keep our promises? With so many Ancient Sages here, we can put our honor on the line to promise you that whatever artifact the crux is, we’ll only use it to open the Prime Hall. Once the entrance to the Prime Hall opens, we’ll return your possession to you!”

If only he had the cruxes in his possession, he would have activated the Prime Hall immediately. There would have been no need for him to waste his breath on this.

At this moment, an eerie voice suddenly sounded from the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe.

“I know where the cruxes of the forest dimension and desert dimension are...”

The person who had just spoken was none other than Old Geezer Yu.

Ancient Sage Yan Qing immediately shifted his gaze over and anxiously asked, “Where are they?”

If even a single crux was missing, they would never be able to open the Prime Hall and enter its midst. In other words, the expedition would come to a standstill.

“It’s in the hands of the lad who tamed the White Overlord’s descendants!” Old Geezer Yu harrumphed coldly.

“Him?”

Ancient Sage Yan Qing and the other Ancient Sages swiftly turned to Zhang Xuan.

“This...”

Seeing that everyone’s eyes were upon him, he could not help but scratch his head awkwardly. He was still in the midst of assessing the current situation when Old Geezer Yu suddenly rooted him out.

“My young friend, may I ask if the cruxes of the forest dimension and desert dimension are really in your hands?” Ancient Sage Yan Qing asked.

Knowing that there was no way that he could hide it anymore, he honestly replied, “I believe so. However, the cruxes of the two dimensions are living beings, so I’m a little skeptical as to whether they can fit into the apertures there.”

The crux of the forest dimension was the Five Monarchs, and the crux to the desert dimension was the tree root. Considering that both of them were living beings, how could they be stuffed into the aperture by the door?

“It doesn’t matter whether they are living beings or not. As long as you take them out, they’ll automatically fit into the

aperture once they come into proximity with the Prime Hall,” Ancient Sage Yan Qing replied.

“I see...” Zhang Xuan nodded contemplatively.

With a flick of his wrist, he took out the Five Monarchs and gestured them forward.

Hu!

As if attracted by some kind of mysterious force, the bodies of the Five Monarchs were drawn uncontrollably toward the entrance of the Prime Hall. At the same time, their figures kept contracting until they became something similar to the round plate of a Yin-Yang compass.

Kacha!

The round plate fixed itself onto the aperture and emanated a light glow.

“This...”

Surprised by the happenings, Zhang Xuan could not help being taken aback for a moment.

Seeing that it was working, Ancient Sage Yan Qing heaved a sigh of relief. “Since you are in possession of the crux of the forest dimension, you have just won an additional slot for the Master Teacher Pavilion. If the crux of the desert dimension is still with you at the moment, you should quickly take it out as well.”

Zhang Xuan nodded in response.

With a flick of his wrist, a tree root appeared on his palm.

Similar to the Five Monarchs, it was swiftly drawn to the entrance of the Prime Hall before finally being embedded into one of the apertures. The light shrouding the entrance suddenly intensified, as if heralding the impending opening of the Prime Hall.

“Great!” Ancient Sage Yan Qing nodded in agitation. “We are still lacking the cruxes of the poison dimension, stone forest dimension, and four seasons dimension. May I invite those

who are in possession of those cruxes to step forward and help us open the Prime Hall?”

His voice echoed across the square, but no one amid the crowd stepped forward. It was as if the cruxes of the three remaining outer dimensions had vanished without a trace.

“Could it be that the cultivators who have obtained the cruxes of those three dimensions didn’t come to this square? Or perhaps, have the three cruxes not yet been obtained?”

“That’s impossible. Without retrieving the cruxes, the gates of the six outer dimensions wouldn’t have connected with one another!”

...

Seeing that no one was stepping forward, all of the Ancient Sages could not help but frown.

Taking a deep breath, Ancient Sage Yan Qing declared once more, “Allow me to reassure whoever’s in possession of the cruxes that no one will make a move on you. I, Yan Qing, promise with the honor of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers that I’ll ensure your safety, and anyone who dares to make a move on you will have to suffer my wrath!”

By then, a seed of worry had sprouted in the depths of his mind. Things were not going well. As long as those in possession of the cruxes refused to step forward, the Prime Hall would never be opened. At this rate, they might have to resort to other means.

Ancient Sage Yan Qing was just about to make one last reassurance when Zhang Xuan timidly raised his hand and said, “I think that the cruxes of the poison dimension and four seasons dimension might be with me as well!”

“They are with you? In other words, you have single handedly obtained the cruxes of four outer dimensions?”

Utter silence filled the surroundings.

1762 Entering the Prime Hall

Most of those in the square had been in the six outer dimensions, but without any clear directions and the limitations on their flight and Spiritual Perception, obtaining even a single crux would have been a huge stroke of luck. Yet, the young man before them had actually obtained four of them.

This was way too exaggerated!

In the sky, the lower jaws of Zhang Hongtian and Yang Shi fell slack, nearly falling to the ground.

This was a situation that they had never dreamed of.

“They are all with you?” Ancient Sage Yan Qing’s cheeks twitched in disbelief.

Their Hundred Schools of Philosophers had gone to great lengths in order to obtain just a single crux. On the other hand, this fellow had singlehandedly obtained four of them.

Was he even human?

However, this worked in their favor as well. At the very least, they would be able to open the Prime Hall much faster.

“Un!” Zhang Xuan nodded, not hiding anything at all.

With a flick of his wrist, he took out the ice crystal and the koi fish. The two of them swiftly flew into the apertures beside the entrance of the Prime Hall, and the light radiating from the gates brightened even further.

“You have single-handedly won four slots for the Master Teacher Pavilion,” Ancient Sage Yan Qing murmured with a slightly bitter look on his face. Sighing deeply, he turned to look at the crowd once more and said, “All that is left is the crux of the stone forest dimension. May I know who is in possession of the crux?”

No one stepped forward, so the situation fell into a standstill once more.

“That stone forest dimension is filled with boulders recording cultivation techniques and battle techniques. There isn’t a crux in it, is there?”

“Indeed. I have been in the dimension for several hours, and I didn’t find anything that resembles the crux of the dimension!” “Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

“Can you tell us what the crux of the stone forest dimension is supposed to be?”

...

There was a bout of commotion as the crowd turned to Ancient Sage Yan Qing in seek of answers.

Zhang Xuan was as perplexed as the rest of the crowd.

He had been to the stone forest dimension himself, and anyone who found the correct sequence to any one of the secret arts would be granted access to the Subordinate Hall. Judging from that, it did not seem like there was any crux to the dimension. So, what were they supposed to be placing in the aperture?

“The stone forest dimension has no tangible crux. Its crux is the secret art that allows one to enter the Hall of Divine Crusade and claim the Stone of Divine Crusade!” Ancient Sage Yan Qing revealed.

He seemed to be rather knowledgeable about the affairs concerning the various outer dimensions and Subordinate Halls.

“The secret art is the very crux of the dimension?” Zhang Xuan was taken aback.

He had been feeling a little embarrassed about taking the cruxes of four outer dimensions for himself... but all of a sudden, he realized that he had not obtained four but five cruxes!

It sure was really difficult to be low profile! How embarrassing!

“That’s right. As long as one imprints the correct sequence of the secret art into the last aperture, the Prime Hall will open. So, for the person who entered the stone forest dimension and comprehended its crux, I’ll have to invite you to step forward,” Ancient Sage Yan Qing replied.

Halfway through his words, he suddenly noticed a raised hand amid the crowd—Zhang Xuan.

Turning his gaze over, Ancient Sage Yan Qing asked, “What’s wrong?”

At the same time, a bad premonition seemed to creep into his heart. He had an inkling what the young man was going to say and do, but the notion of it was so ludicrous that he instinctively rejected it.

“Cough cough... It’s hard for me to say this, but it seems like the crux of the stone forest dimension is with me as well!” Zhang Xuan said with an awkward chuckle.

“...” Ancient Sage Yan Qing.

“...” Zhang Hongtian.

“...” The others.

Why the heck are you getting embarrassed?

If anything, we are the ones who should be feeling embarrassed, alright?

Of the four major powers and several thousand experts, we only managed to obtain one crux in total whereas you obtained a total of five of them...

All of a sudden, the crowd sudden felt an urge to simply drop dead.

Zhang Xuan chuckled awkwardly for a moment longer to soothe the atmosphere before walking up to the entrance of the Prime Hall. With a tap of his finger, he imprinted the formula of the secret art into the aperture.

Weng!

Light burst forth from the entrance of the Prime Hall as the entire place began to shake nonstop. With a deafening creak,

the massive gates began to open.

Following which, a primordial aura drifted out from the interior of the Prime Hall, commanding an imposing, ancient air.

Seeing that the Prime Hall had finally been opened, Ancient Sage Yan Qing suppressed the stifled sensation in his chest and swiftly took command of the situation. “Since the slots have already been confirmed, I’d like to ask the four major powers to select their cultivators to enter the Prime Hall!”

The final distribution of the slots were seven for the Hundred Schools of Philosophers, six for the Master Teacher Pavilion and major powers of the Master Teacher Continent, one for the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe, and one for the Beast Tribe.

This was based on the rules that they had agreed on earlier, so the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe and Beast Tribe had no way of refuting the distribution of slots.

Besides, whether one was able to obtain the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn or not was based heavily on luck. Numbers might not necessarily be an advantage in the Prime Hall.

It did not take long for the Hundred Schools of Philosophers, Otherworldly Demonic Tribe, and Beast Tribe to select the men to enter the Prime Hall.

On top of the restriction that prevented any Ancient Sages from entering the premises, the Prime Hall appeared to also have an age limit of fifty years old. Anyone beyond fifty would be barred by the invisible seal around the Prime Hall.

Naturally, each major power chose the strongest members in their ranks who met those two restrictions in order to enter the Prime Hall.

“How do we determine the distribution of slots here?” one of the Ancient Sages of the Master Teacher Pavilion headquarters asked.

Pretty much all of the slots had been won single-handedly by Zhang Xuan, so his opinion weighed a lot in determining the distribution of the slots among them.

“Me, Ruoxin, Zhao Ya, Ruyan, Yuan Tao, and... Qiqi as well. That makes up six!” Zhang Xuan said contemplatively.

The Ancient Sage nearly fainted on the spot upon hearing those words. “No matter what, shouldn’t you at least reserve two slots for the Master Teacher Pavilion?”

It was true that he had played a huge role in securing the slots for them, but it would not do for him to take them all away!

“Rest assured, I’ll reserve two slots for you. Right, Zheng Yang, Wang Ying, and Lu Chong are here too, aren’t they? Where are they at the moment? I’ll have to reserve three slots for them as well,” Zhang Xuan added.

Considering how huge an affair the opening of the Temple of Confucius was, it was certain that Zheng Yang, Wang Ying, Lu Chong, and the others would be there. It was just that there were too many people there, and the place was simply too large, resulting in them not meeting one another.

Hearing the calculation that Zhang Xuan was making, Yang shi could not help but politely remind him, “We only have a total of six slots.”

That was eleven slots, far beyond what they had at the moment!

“Six slots? Don’t worry, it won’t be six in a moment’s time,” Zhang Xuan said with a mysterious smile on his lips. He turned to Zhao Ya and the others and instructed, “Look for Zheng Yang and the others. Get them here as soon as possible!”

“Yes!” Zhao Ya and the others replied as they hurriedly took out their Jade Communication Tokens to send messages.

With the six outer dimensions connected with one another, it was already possible to communicate remotely.

“Alright! Since the members have already been decided, let’s enter the Prime Hall!” Ancient Sage Yan Qing commanded imposingly.

With a wave of his hand, the ‘Prime Amulet’ surfaced before him once more. A surge of energy poured forth from his Prime

Amulet, enveloping the various experts chosen by the Hundred Schools of Philosophers.

Yan Xue was also one of those enveloped within the surge of energy.

“Let’s head over as well!”

There was only one slot for the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe and the Beast Tribe respectively. It went without saying that they were displeased with the situation, but they knew that it would be hard for them to renegotiate this matter.

Seeing that Zhang Xuan and the others were still dawdling, having yet to finalize the candidates that they would send into the Prime Hall, Yan Xue harrumphed coldly. “Stop wasting our time and hurry up!”

“It’s fine, you don’t have to wait for us. Feel free to go on ahead. We’ll follow soon!” Zhang Xuan replied with a smile.

“You are telling us to enter ahead of you? Do you even understand what you are saying?” Taken aback by the words Zhang Xuan had spoken, Yan Xue was visibly stunned for a moment before his eyebrows knitted together.

Was there something wrong with their heads?

The Prime Amulet could only take fifteen people into the Prime Hall in a single go. Did those fellows naively think that they would come back for them after they entered the premises?

“Feel free to go ahead. We’ll quickly follow along once we have chosen our candidates!” Zhang Xuan replied affirmatively.

“Very well then!” Scoffing deeply in his heart, Yan Xue could not be bothered to waste his breath on a fool who could not even make sense of something as simple as this. Thus, he turned around and led the group toward the towering entrance of the Prime Hall.

Hula!

It took an instant for them to arrive right before the seal.

The 'Prime Amulet' emanated another burst of light, shrouding the group chosen by the four major powers.

"We won't be waiting for them any longer. Let's enter!"
Unwilling to waste any more time, Yan Xue rushed in.

Padah! Padah! Padah!

An overwhelming surge of energy swept across the area. Before the group could get in, the defensive mechanism of the seal activated. In a single blast, they were sent flying into the distance, falling to the ground helplessly, and blood spurted into the air.

1763 Actually... the Prime Amulet Is Also with Me

“What’s going on?”

Everyone was stunned.

Ancient Sage Yan Qing’s eyebrows shot up as he rushed forward anxiously to check on what had gone wrong.

Why were they rejected by the seal, suffering a major backlash even before entering the Prime Hall?

Those were the top geniuses of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers! Nothing bad could be allowed to happen to them!

The Prime Hall had already opened, and they had the Prime Amulet in hand. All of the criteria had been met!

While he was completely baffled by the situation, Ancient Sage Yan Qing flicked his finger and sent several pills into the mouths of the injured youths.

It was only after consuming those pills that those from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers finally felt themselves recovering a little.

The fact that the seal in front of the Temple of Confucius was able to fend off an Ancient Sage was enough to show how powerful it was. If not for Kong shi’s benevolence, they could have died!

Even Ancient Sages were no exception to the rule!

Of course, if the seal did not boast such prowess, the Ancient Sages could simply have banded together to forcefully destroy the seal. They would not have had to waste their breath.

Perhaps the Master Teacher Pavilion and the Hundred Schools of Philosophers might still be a little hesitant due to their deference toward Kong shi, but those from the Otherworldly

Demonic Tribe and Beast Tribe would not have been so reserved.

Looking at the recovering crowd, Ancient Sage Yan Qing turned to Yan Xue and asked with a deep frown, “Why did they suffer a backlash from the seal?”

As one of the people in question, he thought that Yan Xue should know what was going on.

“Old ancestor...” Yan Xue hesitated for a moment before saying, “It seems like the Prime Amulet is insufficient for us to pass through the seal!”

Previously, he had been able to enter the Apricot Pavilion by utilizing Yuan Tao’s bloodline. At the very least, he had been able to pass through the seal without suffering any backlash. However, when he tried to enter the Prime Hall, he had vaguely gotten the feeling that the Prime Amulet was nothing more than a flimsy piece of paper, providing no protection from the seal at all.

“It’s insufficient for us to pass through the seal?” Ancient Sage Yan Qing frowned.

With a clasp of his fist, the Prime Amulet swiftly flew between his fingertips. He pinched the Prime Amulet in his grasp lightly.

Huala!

Under the influx of his energy, the seemingly powerful amulet dissipated into countless sparks. As if a piece of paper thrown into flames, it disintegrated into countless pieces before vanishing completely from sight.

“The Prime Amulet... is a fake!” Ancient Sage Yan Qing’s eyebrows shot up in horror.

By that point, it was apparent to anyone present that the Prime Amulet in their grasp was a fake! Otherwise, how could a treasure specially forged by Kong shi possibly be reduced to dust so easily with just a light pinch?

After all of the commotion that he had stirred up, who could have thought that the Prime Amulet in his possession would

actually be a fake?

At that instant, he felt as if someone had bestowed him with several crisp slaps, leaving him with a burning sensation on his cheeks.

To think that the Hundred Schools of Philosophers would actually make such a huge mistake... Everyone fell completely silent.

Unable to suppress his rage anymore, Ancient Sage Yan Qing spat at Yan Xue with a hint of coldness in his voice, “Are you sure that you acquired this amulet from the Master Teacher Continent’s White Creek Mountain?”

If the Prime Amulet was truly acquired from the ancient domain left behind by Ancient Sage Ran Qiu, there should have been no way that it was false!

“There’s no doubt about it. I definitely acquired it from there!” Yan Xue nodded as he explained himself agitatedly. All of a sudden, he froze for a moment before exclaiming, “Wait a moment... Back then, Zhang Xuan competed with us over the Prime Amulet! It was out of fear that he would snatch the Prime Amulet from us that we left in a hurry...”

“He competed with you over the Prime Amulet?” Ancient Sage Yan Qing turned to look at Zhang Xuan.

The young man had already shocked everyone present by taking out five cruxes required to unlock the Prime Hall. Could it be that he had, by any chance, acquired the Prime Amulet as well?

It was through the records of their predecessors that they had found out that the Prime Amulet was located in the White Creek Mountain, so there was no way that there was any mistake with the information. Since they had acquired the fake one, could the real one be in the hands of the young man?

It would really be damned if that was the case.

Taking a deep breath, Ancient Sage Yan Qing turned to Zhang Xuan and asked, “Zhang shi, do you know what’s going on?”

“This... Yan Xue is right. Back then, we were all on the White Creek Mountain, and Brother Yan Xue took the fake Prime Amulet and fled away right after. I tried to stop him to warn him, but it was to no avail. As a result, I had no choice but to take the real Prime Amulet away with me...” Zhang Xuan sighed with a look of pity.

He would eventually have to enter the Prime Hall, so there was no point denying it.

“You... Pu!”

Hearing those words, Yan Xue nearly choked on his rage. The injuries he had sustained immediately flared up, and blood spurted from his mouth.

Are you really saying that I fled after taking the fake amulet?

You were even more determined to grab the Prime Amulet than me back then, alright?

If not for the fact that I fled fast enough, you might have ended up snatching the fake amulet from my hands!

So, why are you making it sound like I was acting like a retard?

To say such words after grabbing the real amulet... is it really fine for you to be so despicable as a master teacher?

“Are you saying that the real amulet is in your hands?”

Ancient Sage Yan Qing asked with a deeply stifled sensation in his chest.

“Indeed, it’s with me!” Zhang Xuan nodded. “Going by the previous rules, the one who possesses the Prime Amulet is able to claim a third of the total slots, five of them. A slot will be distributed to each of the major powers, and each crux entitles one to an additional slot... So, all in all, I trust that you have no complaints with me taking eleven slots, right?”

Ancient Sage Yan Qing’s body staggered as he felt fresh blood coursing up his throat.

He had set such terms because he had thought that he would be able to grab at least half of the slots for the Hundred Schools of Philosophers. Yet, they were telling him that the

Prime Amulet was a fake. This turnaround meant that they only had two slots in total.

All of a sudden, he felt that all of his arguing previously had benefited a stranger... Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

The intense feeling of indignation made him feel as if his heart was going to explode on the spot!

Moreover, the fact that the young man knew that the Prime Amulet in their hands was a fake all along but chose not to point it out... he had obviously intended to watch them make a fool of themselves!

Then again, even if the young man had said it earlier, he might not have believed it.

After all, the fake Prime Amulet had been forged so exquisitely that despite having examined it closely with his eyes and Spiritual Perception, he had been unable to find any flaws with it at all!

Only when attempting to challenge the might of the Prime Amulet would one realize that it was completely fragile!

Even though Ancient Sage Yan Qing felt as if he had been made to look a fool, he still nodded in agreement. “Since we already agreed on it previously, we won’t change our minds now!”

It was too late for them to change their minds, and two slots could still work for them.

In terms of understanding the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn, there was no one on the Master Teacher Continent—be it humans, Otherworldly Demons, or beasts—who came close to competing with the Hundred Schools of Philosophers. As long as they were able to enter the Prime Hall, the ones who bore the most hope in obtaining the Great Codex of Spring of Autumn was indubitably them!

It was precisely with such confidence that they had chosen to readily distribute the slots to others. Otherwise, holding the

Prime Amulet as hostage, they would have been able to fight for much better terms for themselves!

“That’s good to hear,” Zhang Xuan said. “Wait here for a moment. I’ll bring everyone in once I’m done organizing my group.”

“This...”

The Ancient Sages of the Master Teacher Pavilion were shocked by the turn of events as well. They never would have thought that things would suddenly turn so favorable for them. They could not help but direct curious gazes toward the young man who had made all of that happen.

It was one thing for that young master teacher to single-handedly obtain the cruxes of five outer dimensions, but to think that he would actually be resourceful enough to acquire even the Prime Amulet itself, thus outdoing even the Hundred Schools of Philosophers. When did such an incredible figure appear in the Master Teacher Pavilion?

“We have to proceed carefully,” Yang shi advised Zhang Xuan worriedly. “The others might attempt to pull something off after seeing that the situation is so skewed in our favor.”

As descendants of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers, it was unlikely that Ancient Sage Yan Qing and the others would go against their principles within the sacred Temple of Confucius. However, nothing was certain given that the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn was at stake.

Not to mention, the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe and Beast Tribe were waiting patiently for a chance to strike. There was no doubt that they would attempt to pull something off if a window of opportunity surfaced.

Knowing what Yang shi was worried about, Zhang Hongtian harrumphed coldly. “They won’t make a move for the time being. Only those beneath the Sempiternal realm are able to enter the Prime Hall and Subordinate Halls. No matter who acquires the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn, he won’t have the strength to assimilate it!

“They will have no choice but to bring the Great Codex of Spring of Autumn out. Once the artifact is brought out of the Prime Hall, that will be when the true fight starts! As important as the slots seem to be, all it does is lend credibility to one’s possession of it. In the end, it still boils down to the prowess of the Ancient Sages to determine the final allocation of the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn!”

1764 Auctioning Slots

“That’s true...”

The other Ancient Sages of the Master Teacher Pavilion fell silent.

What Zhang Hongtian had said was the simple truth.

Rules and promises might still carry their weight in small skirmishes, but when the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn was at stake, who would care about such intangible things?

It went without saying that the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe and Beast Tribe had not given up on the codex. The reason that they had not complained despite only being allocated a single slot was because there was no need for them to do so.

As long as one of their personnel got in, they would have an eye within the Prime Hall. With that, they would be able to uncover who had successfully obtained the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn and attempt to snatch it once that person left the premises!

Once the Ancient Sages got involved, all of the Sempiternal realm candidates would be rendered utterly powerless. As such, everything eventually boiled down to the prowess of their Ancient Sages!

“Forget it, let’s just settle it when the time comes. For now, let’s distribute the slots!”

In order to avoid panic, the Ancient Sages of the Master Teacher Pavilion had communicated through telepathic zhenqi.

“Since these slots were earned through Zhang Xuan’s hard work, I think that we should respect his decision no matter what he decides on!”

“Un!”

The crowd nodded in agreement.

As Ancient Sages, given that they had contributed nothing toward acquiring those slots, they felt too embarrassed to impose any demands on Zhang Xuan.

...

Zhao Ya walked over to Zhang Xuan and informed him telepathically, “Teacher, I am unable to contact Zheng Yang and the others. However, based on the accounts of those who have met them, it seems like they have encountered their own fortuitous encounters. They are currently in those minor dimensions and are unable to leave at the moment, so I don’t think they’ll be able to make it here any time soon!”

She had tried to contact Zheng Yang and the others, but there had been no response. So, she had tapped into her information network as the court chief of the Glacier Plain Court, and fortunately, she had managed to uncover some intelligence regarding them.

After all, those juniors of hers were no longer nobodies whom one could simply overlook. They had already become renowned powerhouses of the Master Teacher Continent!

“They won’t be able to make it here anytime soon?” Zhang Xuan repeated with a frown. Waving his hand lightly, he said, “Forget it. I’ll ensure that they don’t miss out on anything even if they don’t enter the Prime Hall, so it doesn’t matter whether they enter the premises or not.”

It went without saying that Zhang Xuan would distribute whatever he obtained from the Prime Hall among his students, regardless of whether they were with him at the time or not. This was similar to how he had given one of the Bodhi Fruits to Yuan Tao even though he did not enter the Hall of Lull.

As long as he was around, he would make sure that his students got a share of everything good within the Prime Hall!

“Teacher, I don’t think that I’ll be able to enter either. My body has already reached the level of an Ancient Sage, and I can feel a powerful repulsion from the seal of the Prime Hall. Even with the Prime Amulet, it doesn’t seem likely that I’ll be able to bypass the seal...” said Yuan Tao, walking over.

“I see...” Zhang Xuan nodded contemplatively.

Even though Yuan Tao had not successfully achieved a breakthrough to Ancient Sage, there was no doubt that his physical body had reached a level comparable to Ancient Sages. At the very minimum, he could already be considered as a Half-Ancient Sage. Due to this, it was little surprise that he was being repelled by Kong shi’s seal.

“So, there’s only me, Ruoxin, Zhao Ya, Ruyan, and Qiqi at the moment... Adding up the other two from the Master Teacher Pavilion, there will only be seven of us...” Zhang Xuan quickly calculated in his heart. “That means that we still have four additional slots...”

Zhang Xuan took a look at the crowd among the Master Teacher Pavilion, and he swiftly shook his head.

It was not that he looked down on those geniuses, but it was likely that they would not be able to do much even if he gave those slots to them. In the end, the slots would only go to waste.

“How is it? Have you chosen your personnel yet?” Seeing that Zhang Xuan was still deep in thought after such a long time, Ancient Sage Yan Qing urged him with a slight hint of impatience in his tone.

“I have already chosen the people whom I want to bring with me. However, I think there’s no particular reason for us to use so many slots, so I have decided that I’ll auction the four of the slots that we have. Feel free to bid for them, and the slot will go to the one who bids the highest. How does that sound?” Zhang Xuan announced as he shot a sweeping gaze at the other three major powers.

“He’s intending to auction the slots?”

“Is that fellow off his rockers? Everyone is trying to claim those slots for themselves, but he’s actually intending to sell them off just like that?”

“Is this for real? We might be able to get a chance to enter the Prime Hall!”

A huge commotion broke out amid the crowd.

The announcement that they had just heard was simply too flabbergasting.

Not only were the Ancient Sages of the other three powers stunned, even the Ancient Sages of the Master Teacher Pavilion also felt a little light-headed from the abrupt declaration.

It had not been to claim so many slots, and this was an extremely advantageous situation for them. Yet, that young man was actually thinking of auctioning them off.

Was it really good for him to do this?

“This is a little...”

One of the Ancient Sages could not take it any longer, so he opened his mouth in hopes of dissuading Zhang Xuan from his reckless move.

“There’s no doubt that my senior has his own reasons for making such a decision.” Yang shi swiftly spoke up in Zhang Xuan’s defense. “Let’s just believe in him. That’s also what we decided on just a moment ago, isn’t it?”

“Senior?”

Catching that peculiar words in Yang shi’s response, the remaining Ancient Sages shot bewildered glances at him.

They had met Yang Xuan shortly after their awakening, and there was no doubt that the other party was the most talented master teacher in recent millennia. The fact that he had advanced to Ancient Sage shortly after entering the Temple of Confucius spoke volumes about his potential. Yet, he was actually addressing an Aureate Body realm lad as his senior.

“Indeed,” Yang Xuan said with a nod.

He swiftly erected a barrier around him with his will in order to keep away any eavesdroppers before sending a telepathic message to the other Ancient Sages. “To be honest with you, his identity is a little unique. Even as an Ancient Sage, I’m deeply honored to be given the privilege of addressing him as my senior. Pardon me as I say this, but it isn’t convenient for me to reveal his identity to you at the moment. However, rest

assured that I'll fill you in on the details once we return after dealing with everything here!"

"His identity is a little unique?"

The Ancient Sages looked at one another with intrigued gazes.

Just what kind of identity could it be that even an Ancient Sage would view it as the greatest honor to address that young man as his senior?

Even though they were curious at those words, they could tell that Yang Xuan was unwilling to speak, so they could only suppress their inquisitive minds. They chose to trust Yang Xuan's judgement and fell silent.

It was also at around this moment that Ancient Sage Yan Qing and the others finally recovered from the shocking news.

"You are going to auction your slots?"

"That's right. We have simply too many slots with us at the moment, and this isn't a good thing for us. For one, being the dominant party will easily draw the envy and fury of others. Thus, I'm intending to take out four slots to auction as a show of goodwill, as well as to balance the scales," Zhang Xuan said with a chuckle. "As long as you are able to fork out a greatest sum of money here, you can be certain that the slots will be yours!"

"Let's begin bidding then!"

"We must claim at least one of the slots by hook or by crook for the Beast Tribe!"

Hearing that it was possible to obtain the slots through an auction, the Ancient Sages of the three powers glanced at one another before nodding.

Even though the final allocation of the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn mainly depended on the Ancient Sages, it would be advantageous to them if more of their descendants could enter the Prime Hall.

For one, if their descendants just so happened to obtain the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn, they would be able to simply turn tail and run.

The life force of Ancient Sages was frighteningly resilient. Even if they were unable to defeat their enemies, escaping alive was still something that they would be able to pull off.

As such, this was an opportunity that they did not want to miss out on.

“Alright, I’ll determine the starting bid of the first slot. It’ll be... twenty, thirty, no... fifty droplets of Ancient Sage bloo...” said Zhang Xuan, raising his fingers.

Great Sage artifacts were not of much use to him anymore, and it was unlikely that those present had too many Ancient Sage artifacts. Even if they did have a couple, it was unlikely that they would be willing to take them out. More importantly, given the current limitations of his cultivation, it was also questionable whether he would be able to assimilate it.

The reason that he had succeeded with the Infernal Black Saber was because it had been at Half-Ancient Sage when he tamed it.

As for Ancient Sage Zi Yu’s inkstone, it was because the artifact had dulled over the long course of its existence, causing it to become much weaker than most Ancient Sage artifacts. On top of that, as a non-aggressive weapon, it was much easier to control.

Any sentient being that had successfully made a breakthrough to Ancient Sage was bound to be haughty and egoistical, and this included artifacts. Even with Zhang Xuan’s means, the chances of him taming a fully-fledged Ancient Sage artifact was slim.

Rather than to obtain something that was impractical for him to use at the moment, it would be much more beneficial for him to acquire Ancient Sage blood.

After all, it would become an invaluable resource to fuel his breakthroughs!

Before Zhang Xuan could finish his words, a telepathic voice suddenly arrived by his ears.

“Zhang Xuan, Ancient Sage blood is a very broad term. Similar to spirit stones, it’s also divided into various tiers,

depending on the strength of the Ancient Sage. Naturally, the higher the tier of the Ancient Sage blood, the more precious it is.”

It was from the old ancestor, Zhang Hongtian.

“Tiers of Ancient Sage blood?” Zhang Xuan was silent for a moment before nodding in agreement. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

He had not really thought of it before, but it did make sense for there to be varying tiers to Ancient Sage blood. After all, the blood of a veteran Ancient Sage was bound to harness much more energy than the blood of a nascent Ancient Sage.

“Just like Great Sage, Ancient Sage is also divided into four different realms. The higher the realm of the cultivator, the more valuable their blood is. In fact, the difference can easily differ by a hundredfold! You have to ascertain the quality of the Ancient Sage blood, or else you could make a huge loss!” Zhang Hongtian advised.

“I see...” Zhang Xuan nodded in response. “May I ask what the four realms of Ancient Sage are?”

1765 The Four Realms of Ancient Sage

“The realms have never been officially fixed, but there’s a standardized way of classifying the strength of an Ancient Sage through their difference in strength and special characteristics. I think you should be able to use it as a reference,” Zhang Hongtian said.

“After achieving a breakthrough to Ancient Sage, a cultivator will be able to pass down the unique traits of their bloodline to their descendants, similar to our Zhang Clan. The reason that our clan members wield the power of the Time Quintessence is because we had an ancestor who had once reached such a realm. As such, the term used for the first realm is ‘Bloodline Continuance’. This serves as an indicative sign as to whether one has achieved a breakthrough to Ancient Sage yet or not.”

“Bloodline Continuance...” Zhang Xuan repeated the term as he nodded in response.

That did make sense.

Most likely, Yuan Tao, the Infernal Black Saber, and Vicious were at this realm. The Otherworldly Demon Ancient Sage that he had crushed with the Book of Heaven’s Path back at the Seer Guild was likely at this realm as well.

They formed the bottommost layer of the Ancient Sages.

“The second realm is the highest level that the seventy-two Sages, with the exception of the Ten Apostles, reached in their lifetime. As such, it eventually came to be known as the Great Philosopher realm,” Zhang Hongtian explained.

“Great Philosophers? That’s the name of a realm as well?” Zhang Xuan was stunned.

“It’s just a term that we use, so there’s no need to be too fixated on the name,” Zhang Hongtian remarked. “As for the third realm, it’s known as Blood Reincarnation. As long as

those who have reached this realm haven't come to the end of their lifespan yet, even if one severs their head and minces their body, they will still be able to come back to life with a single droplet of blood. It's because I have reached this realm as well that I was able to survive much longer than the other Ancient Sages and am able to stand my ground against them.”

Zhang Xuan widened his eyes in surprise.

Until that moment, he had thought that all Ancient Sages were capable of Blood Reincarnation, but it seemed like that had been a misunderstanding on his part.

Those who were able to pull off Blood Reincarnation were the top existences even among the Ancient Sages.

“What about the final realm?”

“The final realm is a level that no one on the Master Teacher Continent or Hundred Schools of Philosophers, other than Kong shi, has been able to reach. It's said that a person who has reached the final realm will be able to shatter the void, similar to how an envoy of the immortals tears through space to descend to the mortal world. As such, the final realm is known as ‘Dimension Shatterer’ or ‘Immortal's Envoy’! I'm still a long way off from reaching that realm, so I'm also not too sure what the realm encompasses,” Zhang Hongtian said.

“Immortal's Envoy?” Zhang Xuan's eyes widened in astonishment.

He had heard this term before!

The first time that he met Vicious in an underground cavern, the latter had told him that he had reached the level of an Immortal's Envoy. Back then, he had not understood the different levels of cultivation, so he had not paid much attention to it. Who would have thought that Vicious had actually reached the very pinnacle of Ancient Sage!

In other words, even though Vicious did not seem to be anything much, the truth was that he had been one of the strongest people on the Master Teacher Continent during his lifetime!

It was no wonder that even Kong shi had ended up being cornered by him at one point in time back at Chen-Cai. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

“Then... what realm has Ancient Sage Yan Qing reached?” Zhang Xuan asked.

He could not help but recall Old Geezer Yu saying that Ancient Sage Yan Qing possessed the highest cultivation among all those gathered there. If so, just what level had he reached?

“He’s at Blood Reincarnation realm as well, just like me. It’s just that he’s a single cultivation stage stronger than me!” Zhang Hongtian replied. “However, he hasn’t reached the pinnacle of Blood Reincarnation either. Without the sustenance of the Aeon of Ancient Sage, it is hard for one to advance any further in this realm!”

Zhang Xuan nodded in realization as he understood the crux behind Zhang Hongtian’s words. “In other words, I should ask for the blood of Blood Reincarnation realm Ancient Sages?”

“That’s right. The blood of Ancient Sages who have reached such a realm will be the most valuable!” Zhang Hongtian replied.

“Got it!” Zhang Xuan nodded.

Their conversation was through telepathic communication, so their exchanges were swift. All in all, it barely took up a few seconds. Shortly after they ended their conversation, the White Overlord spoke up. “Fifty droplets of Ancient Sage blood? Very well, our Beast Tribe will be taking it!”

Its voice had a ferocious edge to it, reminiscent of an imposing conqueror gazing down upon the world.

“White Overlord, please hold it for a moment. I haven’t finished yet. The fifty droplets of blood that I want have to come from Blood Reincarnation realm Ancient Sages!” Zhang Xuan added with a composed smile.

“You want fifty droplets of blood from Blood Reincarnation realm Ancient Sages? You greedy little swine...” Hearing those words, the White Overlord nearly exploded from rage.

A heavy silence also swiftly settled upon the crowd.

Ordinarily speaking, fifty droplets of ordinary Ancient Sage blood could be considered an astronomical sum. Yet, that fellow actually wanted all fifty droplets to be from Blood Reincarnation realm Ancient Sages.

“You’re dreaming!”

“Who would be so foolish to fork out such a ridiculous price?”

“Even for an entrance slot into the Prime Hall, this isn’t worth it at all...”

...

The quiet mutterings of the Ancient Sages could vaguely be heard.

It was true that an additional slot would put a power in a more advantageous position, but even so, fifty droplets of Blood Reincarnation realm Ancient Sage blood seemed too hefty a price to pay. It did not seem to be worth paying the price for it.

Seeing the hesitation among the crowd, Zhang Xuan interjected quietly with a confident smile, as if everything was in his grasp. “I’ll leave it to you to ponder over whether it’s worth the price or not. The Great Codex of Spring and Autumn is the greatest artifact that Kong shi left behind. If you obtain it, what will Blood Reincarnation realm Ancient Sages count for?”

“This opportunity will only come once. If you miss it, it will be gone for good. Of course, if none of you want the slots, that’s perfectly fine with me. I am only proposing this auction as a show of goodwill to the other three major powers. If none of you are interested in it, I will just arrange more personnel on my side!”

Since he had already set the price of the auction, he would have to make sure to stand his ground. Otherwise, once he

started lowering the price, the others would push him to go further.

“This...”

The crowd fell silent after hearing Zhang Xuan’s words.

It was true that the blood droplets of Blood Reincarnation realm Ancient Sages were invaluable, but the value of the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn was immeasurable. Whether the price was worth an additional sliver of hope or not, that was a decision that they would have to make.

Breaking the contemplative silence, Ancient Sage Yan Qing said, “Our Hundred Schools of Philosophers will be buying the first slot!”

“He’s buying the slot?”

The crowd quickly turned their shocked gazes over.

On the other hand, Ancient Sage Yan Qing flicked a jade bottle toward Zhang Xuan without any hesitation.

Catching the jade bottle, Zhang Xuan pried open the lid, and a gush of energy immediately flowed out from within. All in all, there were fifty droplets of Ancient Sage blood.

He shot a glance at Zhang Hongtian and saw a slight nod from the latter. That was verification that the blood droplets were indeed from Blood Reincarnation realm Ancient Sages. Smiling in delight, he stowed the jade bottle into his storage ring before turning to address the crowd. “Alright, the first slot goes to the Hundred Schools of Philosophers! Moving on, the second slot costs sixty droplets of Blood Reincarnation realm Ancient Sage blood!”

“Sixty droplets? Why did the price suddenly increase so steeply?”

“Wasn’t it fifty droplets a moment ago?”

“It’s the exact same slot, so how could he increase the price just like that?”

As if water poured upon burning oil, a huge uproar broke out amid the crowd.

They had thought that the second slot would be the same price, which was also why they had taken their time to make their decision. Who could have known that the fellow would hike up the price by twenty percent in a heartbeat?

“You can choose not to buy it; I’m not forcing you into anything. However, I would just like to say that our Master Teacher Continent has seven slots at the moment and the Hundred Schools of Philosophers have three. In contrast, both the Beast Tribe and Otherworldly Demonic Tribe only have one slot each,” Zhang Xuan said with a confident smile. “Ultimately, it’s just a question of how much you want the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn.

“Besides... the two remaining slots will be even more expensive. The more limited a commodity is, the pricier it’ll be, don’t you agree?”

“Sixty droplets? So be it then! I’ll be taking it...” the White Overlord spat through tightly clenched teeth.

No one could have known that the prodigy who had managed to obtain the Prime Amulet and five cruxes would actually be a crooked businessman.

This was exactly the type of person whom no one would ever want to deal with!

Before the White Overlord could finish his words, Old Geezer Yu had interjected. “If it’s sixty droplets, we want it as well!”

1766 Entering the Prime Hall

“Old Geezer Yu, are you intending to fight with me over the slots?”

Enraged by Old Geezer Yu’s actions, the White Overlord’s hair stood on end, as if preparing to pounce on the other party.

Sixty droplets of Blood Reincarnation realm Ancient Sage blood far exceeded the price it was willing to pay. It was with great difficulty that it had chosen to pay this price, and yet, someone actually wanted to fight with it over the slot!

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“Like the young man has said, it’s an auction. It’s a fair competition, isn’t it?” Old Geezer Yu scoffed coldly. “If you are willing to fork out a higher price, go on then. In any case, I’ll just have you know that I’ll be taking down this slot!”

“There are still two more slots remaining, aren’t there? Why don’t you go for those two instead?” the White Overlord roared in fury.

“Do you take me for a fool? While we of the Spirit Tribe have plenty of experts in our ranks, we aren’t fools who will allow ourselves to be taken advantage of!” Old Geezer Yu harrumphed coldly. “Besides, Zhang shi has already said that the highest bidder will be able to obtain the slot. Since you have bid sixty, I’ll bid sixty-five then!”

“You!”

The White Overlord’s body trembled in rage, but there was nothing that it could do.

Since it was an auction, it went without saying that the artifact would go to the highest bidder. It couldn’t possibly be so domineering as to stop others from even bidding!

“I’ll offer sixty-six droplets then!” the White Overlord spat coldly.

“Sixty-seven droplets!”

“Sixty-eight droplets!” The White Overlord really wanted to tear the other party apart.

“Seventy droplets!” Old Geezer Yu continued raising the bid nonchalantly.

“You... Very well! I’ll bid seventy-five droplets!” Unable to take it any longer, the White Overlord roared in utmost fury. “Old Geezer Yu, try pushing your luck any further, and I swear I’ll get you right here and right now!”

“Heh, is that so? Alright then. Since you have already put it out like this, I’ll let you for this one then!” Seeing that he had successfully raised the price to seventy-five droplets, Old Geezer Yu chuckled softly before falling silent.

He could already tell that the White Overlord was already at the limits of its patience. If he continued provoking the latter any further, the latter might really make a move on him.

Of course, given his strength, he did not fear the White Overlord. However, the destructive prowess of a berserk beast was not to be underestimated. Furthermore, the experts of the Master Teacher Pavilion and Hundred Schools of Philosophers were also in the vicinity, so it went without saying that it would be a terrible idea to come to blows with the Beast Tribe.

“Here!”

Seeing that Old Geezer Yu was not competing with him any further, the White Overlord harrumphed coldly before tossing a jade bottle over to Zhang Xuan.

There were exactly seventy-five droplets of Ancient Blood within the bottle, and they were all from Blood Reincarnation realm Ancient Sages.

Due to the larger physique of those in the Beast Tribe, they were able to offer up more of their blood than the smaller human and Otherworldly Demon cultivators. However, as their breakthroughs were highly reliant on their bloodline and

talents, it was much harder for them to advance their cultivation. As a result, the number of Blood Reincarnation realm Ancient Sages that they had was significantly lower than that of the humans and the Otherworldly Demons.

It had been difficult for them to save up those seventy-five droplets of blood, and giving them away like that pained them greatly.

“Alright, the second slot goes to the Beast Tribe. As for the third slot, the starting bid will be one hundred droplets of Ancient Sage blood!” Zhang Xuan announced with a smile.

“One hundred droplets?” Old Geezer Yu’s face stiffened upon hearing the price. Blood rushed up into his head as he cursed at the young man furiously. “Why don’t you go screw yourself instead!”

Just a moment earlier, the price had only been sixty droplets, but all of a sudden, it was nearly doubled...

You are doing it intentionally, aren’t you?

He had thought that the third slot would only cost seventy droplets of Ancient Sage blood at the very most, which was also why he had chosen not to compete with the White Overlord over it. Yet, who could have known that this fellow would actually be so immoral!

“The Hundred Schools of Philosophers have three slots at the moment, and the Beast Tribe has two. You are the only one with only one slot. Do you want the slot or not? I don’t mind keeping it for myself!” Zhang Xuan replied coolly. “Also, I can give you a heads up that I am indeed screwing with you, but what are you going to do about that? Take it or leave it!”

It was such a good opportunity to mess with the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe, so there was no way that he would let it slip through his fingers.

In any case, he had already gotten what he wanted. It did not matter to him whether Old Geezer Yu took the deal or not.

“You...” Old Geezer Yu felt as if his blood vessels were going to explode from sheer rage.

“Let’s agree to his request for the time being.” Another Ancient Sage of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe sent a telepathic message to Old Geezer Yu. “In any case, a human master teacher won’t be able to use the Ancient Sage blood of our Spirit Tribe. At the very most, we’ll just have to find an opportunity to assassinate him and get our Ancient Sage blood back after he leaves the Prime Hall!”

The Ancient Sage blood of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe was permeated with killing intent. It would be difficult for even Sempiternal realm cultivators to come close, let alone assimilate it into their bodies!

Since the humans had no way of using their Ancient Sage blood, it would not hurt them to give it away for the time being. With the prowess of their Spirit Tribe, they would eventually be able to assassinate that darned fellow and get their blood back!

Hearing those words, Old Geezer Yu’s livid expression finally alleviated a little. “Fine, one hundred droplets for a slot, is it? I’ll give you two hundred droplets for the third slot and fourth slot!”

“You want to buy the third and fourth slot?”

“That’s right. Given the price you have set, you need not dream about others buying any more slots. Since that’s the case, you might as well sell them to me for the same price!” Old Geezer Yu said.

Since they would eventually get the Ancient Sage blood back, it did not matter how many droplets he gave the young man.

Zhang Xuan pondered for a brief moment before nodding in agreement. “Sure!”

Just as Old Geezer Yu had said, it was unlikely for the Hundred Schools of Philosophers and the Beast Tribe to take out any more blood droplets to purchase the slots. Since that was the case, he might as well sell the last two slots to the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe.

Since any Otherworldly Demons who entered the Prime Hall would eventually end up being taken down by him, he did not

mind selling them a few more slots.

“Here!”

With a flick of his wrist, Old Geezer Yu sent two jade bottles into Zhang Xuan’s grasp.

Catching the two bottles, he inspected their contents and confirmed that there were a hundred droplets in each of the bottles. Thus, he nodded in contentment.

“You must be wary.” Seeing through Old Geezer Yu’s malicious intentions, Zhang Hongtian sent a telepathic message over to warn Zhang Xuan. “If the Otherworldly Demon Ancient Sages have left a sliver of their will in their blood, they would be able to attempt a Blood Reincarnation and attempt to destroy your soul!”

Upon reaching the Blood Reincarnation realm, every single droplet of blood that the Ancient Sage possessed represented the potential to sprout a new life. Even though it would be a lot of trouble for the droplet of blood to return to its peak, it was still well within its means to slay an Aureate Body realm cultivator.

“I understand!” Zhang Xuan said with a smile.

Earlier, when he pried open the bottle, he had already infused his Heaven’s Path zhenqi in to destroy whatever will the other party had left inside. As powerful as Otherworldly Demon Ancient Sages were, it was still impossible for them to stand against the Heaven’s Path zhenqi with just a sliver of their will.

In an instant, he had already eradicated whatever threats were within the blood droplets.

Without any will to drive a reincarnation, no matter how much vitality the blood harnessed, it was unlikely that it would be able to sprout into a new life. At the very least, it would take tens of thousands of years before a new spirit sprouted within the droplets of blood.

By then, he would have already used up the two hundred droplets of blood.

“If you face any difficulty dealing with the blood droplets, I’ll be able to help you!” Zhang Hongtian said.

“Thank you, old ancestor, but I’m able to handle this,” Zhang Xuan replied.

Seeing that all of the slots had been distributed, Ancient Sage Yan Qing stood forward and announced, “Since all of the slots have been distributed, let’s prepare to set off!”

Zhang Xuan nodded in agreement.

Just as they had agreed on, he gathered the candidates chosen by each power before taking Little Amulet out. Little Amulet flew into the air and shrouded all of the candidates with its power. Following which, the group swiftly made their way into the Prime Hall.

Meanwhile, Zhang Xuan swiftly scanned the candidates chosen by the other powers. The two slots of the Beast Tribe had gone to a white fox and a red leopard. They seemed to be related to the White Overlord in one way or another.

As for the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe, they had dispatched three Sempiternal realm consummation experts. They wore impassive expressions, and they were reserved with their words. It was difficult to gauge exactly how powerful they were.

The Hundred Schools of Philosophers had brought in another expert who seemed to command a fighting prowess comparable to Yan Xue.

All in all, except for Zhang Xuan, all of the candidates who had been chosen to enter the Prime Hall were at Sempiternal realm consummation. They were all the strongest existences beneath Ancient Sage.

“Let’s go in!”

Weng!

As soon as Little Amulet came into contact with the seal of the Prime Hall, it immediately fused in, and the crowd vanished from sight.

1767 The Final Assessmen

Seeing that the crowd had vanished, Ancient Sage Yan Qing turned to the master teachers behind him and telepathically ordered, “Prepare for battle!”

“Un.”

The master teachers nodded in response to his words. All of them had grim expressions on their faces.

As soon as their descendants left the Prime Hall, the battlefield would be passed on to them.

Seeing that the Ancient Sages of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers were huddled tightly together, seemingly ready to battle at any moment, the Ancient Sages of the other three powers also quickly got into formation, ready to make a move at any moment.

“Yang shi, I’ll need you to arrange for those who haven’t reached Ancient Sage to leave this area,” Zhang Hongtian instructed.

“Yes!” Knowing that any Great Sage cultivators who remained in this area would only become meaningless sacrifices in this battle, he quickly made his way over to Ren Qingyuan’s side and issued some instructions.

From that point onward, it would be the battlefield of the Ancient Sages.

Thus, the cultivators of the Master Teacher Pavilion and the Hundred Schools of Philosophers began making their retreat. Similarly, the Great Sage cultivators of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe and Beast Tribe also began making their retreat.

Soon enough, only the twenty or so Ancient Sages were left within the massive square, staring at one another tensely.

It was a very fragile moment of peace that they were maintaining. Once the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn

emerged, this peace would shatter into countless fragments, and a battle of unbelievable proportions would break out.

It might seem like there were a lot of Ancient Sages in the square, but they were already the final powerhouses in the world. Who knew how many of them would be able to remain alive at the end of this conflict?

“Zhang shi, this is something that my senior entrusted to me earlier. He told him to relay it to you.”

While the Ancient Sages were eyeing one another tensely, Yang shi walked over to Zhang Hongtian’s side and passed him a jade token.

“Zhang Xuan told you to give this to me?” Knowing that the ‘senior’ whom Yang shi was talking about referred to the descendant known as Zhang Xuan, Zhang Hongtian was stunned for a moment. He reached out to take the token and lightly tapped his finger on it.

Following which, he felt information surging into his consciousness.

“This is... the flaws in Old Geezer Yu’s cultivation?” Zhang Hongtian narrowed his eyes in shock.

The information that he had just received detailed the various weaknesses and loopholes in the battle techniques that Old Geezer Yu practiced. All in all, there were over thirty of them. As long as he exploited even a single one of them properly, he would be able to slay Old Geezer Yu once and for all!

“H-how did he manage to gather such crucial information?”

Zhang Hongtian’s first thought was that the information was nonsensical. After all, if it was that easy to uncover the flaws in an Ancient Sage’s battle techniques, they would not have been such difficult opponents to deal with.

However, as he simulated those flaws in his mind based on his hundred or so clashes with Old Geezer Yu in the past, he swiftly realized that they were indeed true!

There was no stronger weapon that he could hope for to deal with Old Geezer Yu other than this!

It was a well-known fact that it was nigh impossible to slay a Blood Reincarnation realm Ancient Sage unless another Blood Reincarnation realm Ancient Sage laid out an all-encompassing trap to corner them. Of course, that was easier said than done.

However, with so many flaws, he was confident that he would be able to corner and kill Old Geezer Yu. From that, it could be seen just how valuable the information was!

“That lad really never fails to surprise me,” Zhang Hongtian remarked.

His curiosity regarding that descendant of his only seemed to deepen with time.

The lad had single-handedly obtained the cruxes of five outer dimensions and even the Prime Amulet. He had placed the slots that the four major powers were dying to lay their hands on up for auction. More importantly, he had been completely devoid of fear in the face of an expert of Old Geezer Yu’s caliber, and he had even collected the flaws relating to him...

Yang shi hesitated for a moment before saying, “Actually, when you were severely injured twenty years ago and needed a purer Zhang Clan bloodline to recover, my senior was the one who offered his bloodline up to you so that you would be able to survive!”

Back then, Old Ancestor Zhang Hongtian had been so severely injured that he had fallen straight into a coma. As he had swiftly gone into hibernation after his condition stabilized, he had not heard the full details of his treatment.

As Yang shi was the one who had arranged the treatment, he was extremely clear about the details.

“What you are saying is that... his blood is flowing through my veins?” Zhang Hongtian was taken aback. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

“That’s right.” Yang shi nodded in response.

“No wonder I felt a close sense of intimacy toward him...”

Zhang Hongtian widened his eyes in realization.

Previously, he had thought that it was weird how he had felt an inexplicable feeling of affinity with that descendant of his.

This perfectly explained it.

His bloodline was pure enough to save me. Yet, despite having his bloodline stripped from him, he was not only able to survive but still possesses talent that ordinary men are unable to compare to. It seems like there's no need to worry about the future of our Zhang Clan anymore! Zhang Hongtian thought.

Having lived for so many years, it had been a long time since anything was able to pique his curiosity. However, at that moment, he felt like he wanted to know the person known as Zhang Xuan a little better.

...

Hu!

Having entered the Prime Hall, Zhang Xuan was oblivious to the happenings outside, and he did not know the thoughts that were running through Zhang Hongtian's mind as a result of the jade token that he had given the other party. Instead, with an intense jolt, he suddenly found himself standing in the midst of a spacious hall.

This hall was obviously much grander than the other Subordinate Halls, and the spiritual energy that suffused the area was much more concentrated. The paintings on the wall had an extremely high level of artistic conception, and it felt like the figures depicted in them would come to life at any moment.

These paintings are still at a lower level than the Canvas of Four Seasons. It doesn't seem like there's any Aeon of Ancient Sage in there! Zhang Xuan shook his head in disappointment.

While the paintings were exceptional works, they did not have a sliver of the world sealed within them, so they did not have any Aeon of Ancient Sage in them. As valuable as they were, they did not appeal to him anymore.

The three Otherworldly Demons were just about to reach out to collect those paintings when a spear suddenly shot ahead of them, blocking their way.

“Gentlemen, hold your footsteps. I have something important that I would like to discuss with you...” Zhang Xuan looked over with a smile.

He had only dared to sell the slots to them because he was planning to get rid of them as soon as they entered the Prime Hall. Otherwise, they would remain an eyesore.

While the three of them were plenty formidable, it would not be too difficult for him, Zhao Ya, Luo Ruoxin, and the others to eradicate them.

“You...” Not expecting Zhang Xuan to turn against them as soon as they got into the Prime Hall, the faces of the three Otherworldly Demons darkened. They glanced at one another and uttered, “Flee!”

One of them took out a jade token and crushed it.

Hula!

A brilliant outburst of light enveloped the three of them before swiftly darting into the distance.

“Freeze!”

Seeing that the Otherworldly Demons were planning to escape, he raised his finger and sealed the space all around him.

Kacha!

However, the burst of light tore apart the frozen space with ease. In an instant, the three Otherworldly Demons had already vanished from sight.

“It’s an artifact left behind by the Ancient Sages!” Zhang Xuan narrowed his eyes.

It seemed like Old Geezer Yu knew that he would make a move on the Otherworldly Demons, so he bestowed upon them a powerful life preservation artifact so that they would be able to protect themselves.

If he had brought out the Infernal Blacksaber, he might have been able to slay them easily. However, even though he had managed to bring the Infernal Blacksaber into the Prime Hall, he was worried that he might trigger the restriction if he attempted to use it in the premises. As such, he was intending to keep it as a trump card for the most desperate of moments.

“Forget it! There’s no need to rush into getting rid of them now!”

With everyone on their guard, it would not be as easy for Zhang Xuan to eradicate them. However, he did not think that this would pose much of a problem. With the Little Amulet in hand, there was no way that the others would have a chance of obtaining the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn.

While harboring such thoughts, Zhang Xuan turned to Yan Xue and said, “Since they have escaped, do you want to have a talk with me instead?”

Hu!

Before he could finish his words, the same burst of light erupted around Yan Xue and the others, and they vanished from the spot.

Zhang Xuan was silent for a second before he turned his gaze to the two remaining beasts. Before his eyes could even meet those of the two remaining beasts, they had already growled in a fluster. “Don’t look at us! We’ll leave, alright?”

Hula!

Similarly, the two beasts disappeared from the spot.

“...” Zhang Xuan.

“...” The remaining crowd.

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“Forget it!”

Zhang Xuan was rendered speechless by their reactions. He did not think that those fellows would flee so quickly as if he was some kind of frightening monster.

It was true that he had intended to get rid of the Otherworldly Demons; it could possibly spell the end of mankind if they, by any chance, managed to acquire the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn. However, for Yan Xue and the beasts, he had really intended to just have a chat with them!

On the other hand, seeing the stifled look on Zhang Xuan's face, Zhao Ya and the others could roughly guess what he was thinking, and slight smiles crept onto their faces.

“It's not that they are afraid; they simply want to avoid any unnecessary complications. As candidates chosen to enter the Prime Hall, they have only one mission—obtain the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn,” Luo Ruoxin explained.

Understanding this point as well, Zhang Xuan nodded in agreement. He turned to the crowd behind him and said, “Zhao Ya and Ruyan, these paintings are valuable treasures. Grab them.”

“Yes!” Zhao Ya and Wei Ruyan nodded before swiftly going around the room to keep the paintings.

“Cough cough... Zhang shi, these are treasures left behind by Kong shi. Isn't it a little disrespectful to simply take them away like that?”

The two master teachers who had followed along looked at him with speechless looks on their faces.

To actually strip the Prime Hall bare shortly after their arrival... was it not a huge act of disrespect toward Kong shi?

“So, your intention is for us to...” Zhang Xuan looked at the two master teachers and questioned.

“Shouldn’t we at least pay our respects to Kong shi first before taking those paintings?” one of the master teachers remarked with a reddened face.

It was Zhang Xuan’s turn to be rendered speechless.

In the end, what the master teacher was picking fault at was that they had not paid respects to Kong shi before taking the painting.

Shaking his head, Zhang Xuan instructed, “Forget it, let’s continue!”

Zhao Ya and the others moved swiftly, and it did not take long for them to clear all of the paintings in the room.

“Let’s proceed ahead!” After stowing all of the paintings, Zhang Xuan flicked his wrist and took out the Prime Amulet. “Little Amulet, where is the location of the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn?”

“It’s located at the very center of the Inner Hall,” Little Amulet replied.

“Lead the way!” Zhang Xuan instructed.

Little Amulet nodded before swiftly flying ahead.

The Prime Hall was almost like a labyrinth; there were many split roads that confused one’s sense of direction. Nevertheless, under the lead of Little Amulet, Zhang Xuan’s group swiftly flitted ahead.

They encountered quite a number of treasures along the way, and Zhang Xuan did not hesitate to throw them into his storage ring. As a result, it was almost as if the Prime Hall had suffered a locust infestation. Not even ordinary sculptures were spared from Zhang Xuan’s plundering!

The two master teachers could not help but shake their heads helplessly. They had not expected the young prodigy to be so greedy, and they found themselves wondering if it was the correct decision to be coming together with him.

If Kong shi knew that he had such a junior, he would probably die of rage!

“Why are there no decent treasures here? Is Kong shi that poor?”

In contrast to the others who were awed by the Prime Hall, Zhang Xuan was collecting the treasures all around with a grumpy look on his face.

It was not that the items he had collected was devoid of value—any of the paintings, zithers, brushes, and so on that he had collected could definitely be sold for an astronomical sum on the Master Teacher Continent. However, there was nothing that came close to comparing to the treasures that he had collected in the Subordinate Halls.

The two master teachers clutched their stifled chests, as if trying to resuscitate their halted heart.

Those words were simply much too heretical, such that they could only act as if they had not heard them at all.

Proceeding ahead, they swiftly arrived at a particularly vast atrium.

“This is the place,” Little Amulet said as it fell onto one of the stone tablets by the entrance.

Weng!

It was as if something had been awakened by that action. The towering sculpture that stood at the very center of the atrium began to slowly turn its body around.

As the face of the sculpture came into sight, gasps of disbelief sounded all over the room.

It was Kong shi!

“Those who have cleared the preliminary trials, I welcome you to the Prime Hall. However, if you wish to acquire the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn, there’s one last trial that you’ll have to overcome.”

The voice of the sculpture was light, but it seemed to soak right into one’s soul as if the nourishing breeze of spring.

Obtaining the Prime Amulet and cruxes of the outer dimensions and entering the Prime Hall were all trials for the

candidates. Those who were able to get that far were indubitably the most talented geniuses of the world. However, they would still have to prove their qualification to inherit Kong shi's inheritance through one last trial.

“Right ahead of me is a walkway filled with Illusory Formations, Slaughter Formations, and all kinds of inner demons. If you are able to overcome it and walk to the end of the walkway, you'll find the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn within your reach, and you'll gain a chance to assimilate it. Even if you are unable to succeed, rest assured that you won't face any danger. However, you'll be teleported out of the Prime Hall, and you won't have another chance to gain my heritage.”

As the sculpture spoke, it raised its finger and pointed in front of it.

Zhang Xuan turned to look and saw that there was a walkway at the center of the atrium. It seemed to extend into the distant horizon, almost as if there was no end to it.

“Each person only has one attempt. You can choose to head there alone or together; there's no restriction on how many people can challenge the walkway at once,” the sculpture explained.

Zhang Xuan turned to Little Amulet and asked, “How does the walkway work?”

In the brief look that he had taken at the walkway, everything appeared completely normal to him. He could not find any traces of formations or the like in it. If so, it was likely that the trial was on an entirely different level than what he had encountered previously.

“This was specially left behind by Kong shi to test later generations. I'm not too sure about the details,” Little Amulet replied awkwardly.

“... Alright then.” Knowing that it was within Little Amulet's blood to become utterly useless during crucial moments, Zhang Xuan shook his head and sighed deeply.

Activating his Eye of Insight, he took another look at the walkway.

However, he was still unable to discover anything. There were no energy disturbances within the walkway at all.

“Teacher, I’ll give it a try first,” Zhao Ya said as she stepped forward.

“Be careful!” Even though the Kong shi sculpture had said that there would be no danger, Zhang Xuan still could not help but worry a little.

“Un!” Zhao Ya nodded.

She walked up to the walkway, and without any hesitation, she took a step into it.

Weng!

A white ray of light descended upon Zhao Ya, causing her to freeze on the spot. It seemed like she had been cast under some kind of illusion, rendering her immobile.

Some time later, a cold aura burst forth from her body. In an instant, she suddenly seemed to have become the monarch of the ice, and powerful energy raged around her, threatening to tear down the entire walkway.

Unfortunately, even though Zhao Ya was powerful, the walkway was even more so. No matter how powerful the attacks that she threw toward the walkway were, they did not faze it in the least.

After looking for a moment, Luo Ruoxin suddenly remarked, “It seems like Zhao Ya’s Pure Yin Body has been activated once more...”

Zhang Xuan quickly took a closer look at Zhao Ya, and he found that the latter was indeed growing stronger by the moment. By that point, she was just a single step away from reaching Ancient Sage, and it seemed like she was ready to achieve a breakthrough at any moment.

Shrouded by the icy aura of the Pure Yin Body, she looked like a proud goddess commanding an imposing presence, graceful and eye-catching.

Every move that she made seemed to be in harmony with the world, bringing out indescribable elegance in her actions.

As time ticked by, her unique constitution was gradually being awakened further, becoming even more wholesome than before.

Hu!

Just as Zhang Xuan was just about to take a closer examination to determine the source behind Zhao Ya's sudden awakening, another ray of light suddenly shrouded the latter. Following which, she vanished from the spot, as if someone had teleported her away.

“Failed!” Kong shi's voice filled the atrium.

“She failed?” Zhang Xuan was taken aback for a moment before nodding in realization.

The sculpture had said earlier that those who failed the trial would be teleported right out of the Prime Hall. From the looks of it, it seemed like Zhao Ya had been teleported away.

“Teacher, allow me to go next!”

Seeing that her senior had been teleported away, Wei Ruyan stepped forward and volunteered herself.

Just like Zhao Ya, she swiftly plunged into the midst of an illusion. As time went by, her unique constitution began to further awaken, and concentrated poison aura drifted around her. At the same time, her cultivation surged furiously as well.

While she did not manage to achieve a breakthrough to Ancient Sage, there was a transformative advancement in the quality of her zhenqi. It seemed like she was only a single step away from overcoming her bottleneck.

However, before she could do so, she was teleported out of the Prime Hall as well.

Following which, Luo Qiqi and the other two master teachers also volunteered to head over.

Zhang Xuan pondered for a moment before saying, “Let's go together!”

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Since it had been shown that the trial posed no danger, there was no need for them to waste any more time. Their priority at the moment should be to clear the trial as quickly as possible and find the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn.

The others nodded in agreement, and the group of five began making their way toward the walkway together.

Hula!

Walking up to the walkway, Zhang Xuan suddenly felt a warm flow of energy embracing him. Following which, the sight before him was swallowed up by a flash of light, turning everything completely white.

By the time his sense of sight returned, he was standing before a lofty mountain.

Or to be more precise, it was a mountain formed of countless books piled up on top of one another. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

The mountain pierced right through a dense layer of clouds, obscuring the mountain peak from view. At the same time, there was not a clear path in sight that seemed to lead one to the peak.

Other than the enormous mountain of books, the other thing that caught Zhang Xuan's attention was the line of characters flickering in and out of existence in the air.

"Reach the top and clear the trial. Surrender, and you shall be gifted a reward based on your progress." Kong shi's voice sounded quietly in the area.

"I see!" Zhang Xuan mumbled under his breath as he took a deep breath.

Even though everything before him appeared to be incredibly lifelike, judging from what had happened to Zhao Ya and Wei

Ruyan earlier, it was likely that they were in an illusion.

In other words, his physical body was still in the walkway; it was only his consciousness that had been transported to this humongous mountain of books.

Focusing his attention, Zhang Xuan began driving his zhenqi through his body before leaping up.

Hu!

Contrary to his expectations, instead of soaring into the air, he plummeted back to the ground.

It seems like I won't be able to rely on flight to get to the top. Then again, it would be too easy if I could simply fly to the top, Zhang Xuan thought.

Zhang Xuan took a look at the mountain of books once more, only to see that there was no paved path that he could walk on. Staring at the steep incline ahead of him, he reached out in an attempt to climb his way up, but to his surprise, he found an immense pressure crushing him.

As if struck by lightning, he found his entire body turning numb. At the same time, his hand was injured by thorns of some sort, and it was bleeding profusely.

“This...” Looking at his injuries, Zhang Xuan's face turned livid.

He had been thinking that it would be relatively simple for him to climb his way up even though there was no paved path for him to walk on. Who could have known that there would be such an obstacle as well?

It was as if a Sempiternal realm consummation expert was continuously assaulting him! Under such circumstances, how could he possibly get to the mountain peak?

Zhang Xuan circled around the mountain and tried climbing from various different points, but it was the same outcome every single time. Barely after climbing half a meter up, he was pushed back down by a crushing pressure. Bewildered, he paused contemplatively on the spot.

“Is the crux of the trial not climbing up forcefully?”

If he was not supposed to climb up, how could he get to the peak?

No wonder Zhao Ya and Wei Ruyan had ended up failing the trial. It was indeed not as easy as he had thought.

“Since it’s a mountain of book, I should study and find out what they are first. Perhaps, they might contain some clues in them...”

Zhang Xuan turned his sights toward the books, and with a thought, hundreds of books were immediately collected into the Library of Heaven’s Path. With a tap of his finger, invaluable knowledge gushed into his mind.

These books covered a diverse range of topics, be it cultivation techniques, battle techniques, culture, geography, astronomy, divination... It seemed as if the mountain of books before him encompassed the knowledge of all of the occupations on the Master Teacher Continent.

Hulala!

Barely after assimilating the knowledge into his mind, Zhang Xuan suddenly noticed several steps appearing on the mountain of books, and he was stunned.

He had walked around the area for quite a while earlier, and he was certain that he had not seen the steps there previously. Why would they appear after he had browsed through hundreds of books?

Could it be that... he could pave a way to the top through reading the books there?

“Let me give it a try!”

With such a thought in mind, Zhang Xuan immediately swept his gaze across the mountain of books.

Hualalalalalala!

Countless books materialized in the Library of Heaven’s Path. In less than five minutes, Zhang Xuan had already collected tens of thousands of books.

With a light tap of his finger, knowledge surged furiously into his head. Barely a moment after he digested the knowledge, the mountain before him suddenly tremored, and another flight of stairs warped into appearance. They gradually stretched toward the top of the mountain peak.

“It’s indeed the case...”

Realizing that the crux of the trial was actually to read, a glint flashed across Zhang Xuan’s eyes.

Had it been any other cultivator, even if he could use his Spiritual Perception to read multiple books at once, his consciousness would probably be muddled as a result of the sudden influx of knowledge into his head. However, that was not the case for Zhang Xuan.

All it took was a glance for Zhang Xuan to collect the books and one touch for him to imprint the wisdom harnessed within them into his memories.

The current Zhang Xuan was like a supercomputer. While other cultivators were struggling to memorize and comprehend the content of the books lying amid the massive mountain of books, all he had to do was conduct a simple copy and paste.

Hulala!

Walking onto the stairs, Zhang Xuan continued collecting more books around him, and knowledge flowed ceaselessly into his mind.

As the number of books that he had read stacked up, the flight of stairs gradually rose higher and higher. He slowly walked up the stairs step by step.

With time, he soon realized that an additional step would appear for every hundred books that he read.

To be honest, Zhang Xuan was probably the only one who could read in such a manner. If anyone else attempted to read and assimilate the content of the books like him... even an Ancient Sage would have already been driven mad by that point!

Walking on, Zhang Xuan soon found himself completely shrouded in the clouds. All he could see was the flight of stairs. It was as if the entire vast world had vanished, leaving behind his lonesome silhouette.

“I have already read so many books, but I haven’t reached the mountain peak yet... Any other cultivator who attempted to read so many books would probably have suffered a mental breakdown by now!” Zhang Xuan muttered in complaint.

Based on his deduction, it was likely that the flow of time in here was different from the external world.

Even with the cheat code known as the Library of Heaven’s Path, it had still taken him nearly half a day to get so far. Had it been anyone else, they would have taken several centuries or even a millennium in order to get that far!

To spend several centuries reading books and doing nothing else... the monotony was surely enough to erode anyone’s sanity, including that of an Ancient Sage!

Hu!

Reaching this point, Zhang Xuan realized that the rate at which newer steps were being conjured had slowed down. It had roughly been a hundred books to a step previously, but the ratio had changed to a thousand books to a step now.

The trial was already tough enough as it was. To have the difficulty suddenly raised tenfold partway through would probably deal a crushing blow to any cultivator who had managed to get that far.

Of course, this change in difficulty did not make much of a difference to Zhang Xuan. To him, it was only a difference of reaching the peak faster or slower.

Carrying on, Zhang Xuan continued reading for another half a day. By the time the day came to an end, the trial had already reached the point where he had to read over ten thousand books in order to conjure a single step.

Zhang Xuan knew that he was nearing the end, so he gritted his teeth and persisted.

Sure enough, the mountain peak eventually came into sight.

“A path through a mountain of books with perseverance as the key... It seems like Kong shi’s trial is one on mental resilience and diligence,” Zhang Xuan remarked as he heaved a sigh of relief. “Knowledge is the key to greatness. The more one reads, the higher one will climb.”

As much as this was a trial, it was also advice that Kong shi was leaving to the future generations.

He wanted to tell his successor that what would lead to the peak of cultivation was not just talent but knowledge and culture!

Only a knowledgeable person would be able to attain a deeper understanding of cultivation and the world. Only a cultured person would have a mind vast enough to accept changes. These were the keys that were required for one to climb to greater heights.

The seventy-two Sages, for example, were highly talented individuals who were personally groomed by Kong shi, having been imparted with the most powerful of cultivation techniques and battle techniques right from the start. In terms of starting points, there was no question that they were far ahead of Kong shi.

Yet, despite being granted such favorable conditions, none of them came close to matching Kong shi’s accomplishments or strength.

There was only one possibility for this. In terms of knowledge, they were far beneath Kong shi. It was the scope of their mind that had limited their advancement.

Back when Kong shi established the system of Lower, Middle, and Upper Nine Paths, it might seem as if it had contributed little to his personal development. Yet, it was such challenges that had opened his eyes to the world, allowing him to accept new changes and adapt accordingly. Such were the soft skills that a cultivator needed to rise to greater heights.

Kacha!

As such thoughts flowed through Zhang Xuan's mind, all of a sudden, a sound reminiscent of an egg cracking apart or a seedling breaking out of the soil echoed in his head.

“My Soul Depth has exceeded 29.99?”

Zhang Xuan clenched his fist tightly as a brilliant light shone from his eyes.

1770 The Ultimate Treasure

Previously, Zhang Xuan's Soul Depth had already reached 29.99, a mere nudge away from making the final breakthrough to Ancient Sage.

He had been planning to diligently cultivate beneath the Bodhi Tree so that he could make a breakthrough soon. Yet, who could have known that his Soul Depth would leap up right to 30.0 while he was reading all those books?

30.1!

30.2!

30.3!

...

Zhang Xuan's Soul Depth leaped all the way up to 31.9 before slowly coming to a halt.

In a very short period of time, his Soul Depth had been raised by 2.0.

Boom!

With the sudden increment of his Soul Depth, Zhang Xuan felt as if a storm had been whipped up in his head. All of his senses suddenly grew incredibly sensitive, and he felt like a countryside bumpkin entering a vibrant city for the first time in his life, witnessing the vibrant reds and greens, the delightful dances and cheerful songs. It was as if he was seeing a side to the world that he had not known existed.

The cultivation techniques and battle techniques that he had never been able to make sense of before filled his mind and clicked together logically. It was as if the puzzles that had bewildered him for a long time had suddenly become no different from child's play.

Not only so, he could also vaguely sense the existence of the Aeon of Ancient Sage in the surroundings. If he wanted to, he

could even tap on it and utilize it to temper his body, raising his level of existence.

With such an ability, his chances of achieving a breakthrough to Ancient Sage were tremendously enhanced!

“It’s no wonder they say that only those who have reached 30.0 in their Soul Depth will have a chance to push for a breakthrough to Ancient Sage...” Zhang Xuan nodded in realization.

Previously, his parents had told him the various conditions required for one to make a breakthrough to Ancient Sage, and one point that they had been particularly focused on was Soul Depth. From the looks of it, that was indeed the case.

If one compared the bottleneck to Ancient Sage to tightly sealed gates, the breakthrough of one’s Soul Depth to 30.0 would be equivalent to opening a crack in the tightly sealed gates. As long as one accumulated sufficient energy, one would be able to force the gates open and enjoy the beautiful scenery on the other side.

In other words, if he reached Sempiternal realm consummation, with the Ancient Sage blood droplets that he had gathered so far, he could push for a breakthrough to Ancient Sage in one shot.

With this, the pressure that Ancient Sages exert won’t be able to faze me anymore! On top of that, I’ll be able to disguise myself convincingly as an Ancient Sage as well! Zhang Xuan thought with a smile.

His thoughts had grown much more lucid than before, and his mind felt invigorated. All of the negative emotions that he carried with him seemed to have been swept clean.

“Continue!”

Taking a deep breath, Zhang Xuan continued collecting the books all around the mountain into the Library of Heaven’s Path and converted them into his knowledge.

It did not take him too long to arrive on the mountain peak.

There was nothing unique on the mountain peak except for a stone altar. He walked up to it and placed his palm on it.

Hong long!

Once again, he was devoured by a brilliant burst of light and vanished on the spot.

By the time he came to, the mountain of books had already disappeared without a trace. Instead, he found himself lying on top of a leaf, floating in the middle of an ocean.

Amid the rocking of the ocean currents, he sat up and scanned his surroundings. The blue sky seemed to meld right into the ocean water, leaving the horizon a little blurred. No matter which direction he looked in, there did not seem to be any end to the vast ocean.

This rendered Zhang Xuan completely confused. He had no idea where he was, and he did not know where he should head to.

“A path through a mountain of books with diligence as the key, sail through the ocean of learning with a paddle of hardship,” Zhang Xuan murmured.

Rather than getting flustered, he seemed to experience an epiphany. “This seems to be the so-called ocean of learning...”

It was a mountain of books earlier, and only when one studied would the steps leading to the endpoint appear. It was likely that the same principles applied to the ocean of learning as well. If he did not learn, the leaf would not move, and he would never get to shore.

A light ocean breeze blew across the ocean, producing a crisp sound reminiscent of an orchestra ensemble.

The surface of the water rippled, as if a beautiful, blue painting.

Beneath the water, one could see countless fish moving around in a certain pattern. They seemed to be simulating some kind of formation.

Gazing upon them, Zhang Xuan found his attention slowly immersing deeper into them.

With a pair of sharp eyes, everything in the world could enhance one's wisdom. Observing the vastness of the world, scrutinizing the free movements of the fish—the entire ocean encompassed great knowledge that seemed to fuse together with whatever he had studied previously on the mountain of books.

With the slight bobbing of the leaf, Zhang Xuan's heart gradually grew quieter and quieter.

All kinds of knowledge flowed into his mind, and as if a dry sponge, he greedily devoured the wisdom.

Some time later, Zhang Xuan's body jolted, and he stood up.

Painter, demonic tunist, blacksmith, beast tamer, spirit awakener, physician, formation master... All of the knowledge that he had learned from those occupations assimilated together impeccably, reaching the level of 9-star.

At that moment, even without any special exceptions, he would easily be able to meet the nine 9-star supporting occupations prerequisites, thus making him a true 9-star master teacher.

In fact, in terms of comprehension in these occupations, he might have even reached a level comparable to Kong shi, far exceeding the typical geniuses of those guilds.

Despite the massive influx of information, his mind did not grow befuddled. Instead, it was growing clearer and clearer as everything that he had learned formed links with one another, bringing greater clarity to his web of knowledge.

Hu!

Zhang Xuan went on to learn many other occupations, and just as a feeling of omniscience was starting to set upon him, there was another burst of light that filled his vision with utter whiteness.

When he finally regained his sight once more, he found that he had returned to the walkway. He felt as if he had been gone for at least ten days, but his consciousness told him that he had only been gone for a minute or two!

The disparity in time between his consciousness and experience left him feeling a little dazed for a moment as his mind struggled to make sense of this anomaly.

It felt like he had just woken up from a transient dream.

He turned around to scan his surroundings once more, only to see Luo Qiqi and the other two master teachers standing on the spot. Their bodies were trembling intensely, as if placed under immense pressure. Even though their eyes were wide open, it was apparent that they were not conscious.

“Where is Ruoxin?” Zhang Xuan pondered doubtfully.

Of the other six people whom he had come in with, Zhao Ya and Wei Ruyan had failed the trial and had been teleported out. Luo Qiqi and the remaining two master teachers were still facing the trial, but for some reason, Luo Ruoxin was nowhere to be seen. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Could it be that... she had failed the trial and had been teleported out?

Just as Zhang Xuan was still trying to make sense of what was happening, Kong shi's voice sounded in the air once more.

“You have cleared the trial. Proceed to the end of the walkway, and you'll reach the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn. If you are able to assimilate it, you'll be qualified to inherit my heritage.”

Hearing that voice, Zhang Xuan hesitated for a brief moment before heading to the end of the walkway. “For the time being, I should obtain the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn before deciding on my next move...”

Having been tempered by the mountain of books and ocean of learning, his Soul Depth had already reached a level comparable to the Ancient Sages. The pressure exerted on him by the walkway could no longer faze him.

Soon enough, he reached the end of the walkway.

Similar to the entrances of the Prime Hall and Subordinate Halls, there was an invisible seal that prevented any unauthorized cultivators from heading any further in.

With a flick of his wrist, Zhang Xuan took out Little Amulet and placed the latter against the seal. The seal slowly crumbled, and he swiftly made his way through.

A majestic hall came into sight, at the very center of which was a marble stand with a book placed flat above it. A radiant glow was shining from it.

There were two massive characters written in ancient script on the cover of the book—Spring Autumn. Time seemed to be flowing through the book, making it feel as if it was an artifact that existed in the past or the future. It felt like an artifact that existed in the crevices of time.

“So, this is the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn!” Zhang Xuan’s eyes lit up as he clenched his fists.

He was just about to make his way over to the book when a human silhouette suddenly entered his field of view. A hand reached out for the book on the marble stand and picked it up.

Upon getting a closer look at the human silhouette, Zhang Xuan froze. “Ruoxin...”

1771 Luo Ruoxin

The person standing before the marble stand and taking away the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn was none other than Luo Ruoxin, who had vanished without a trace earlier!

Zhang Xuan did not think that she would have already made her way there!

Should it not have been impossible to get there without the Prime Amulet?

How did she manage to get in there earlier than him?

More importantly... it was due to his possession of the Library of Heaven's Path that he had been able to browse through so many books quickly. Was Ruoxin capable of such a feat as well?

Hong long long!

Before Zhang Xuan could make sense of those doubts, along with the picking up of the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn from the marble platform, the entire Temple of Confucius began trembling intensely. It was as if the cornerstone holding the entire place together had been removed, such that the entire dimension was beginning to tear apart.

Huala!

The first to bear the brunt of the blow was the Prime Hall. A flood of devastating energy gushed into the room, tearing down everything in its path.

However, standing by the marble platform, Luo Ruoxin seemed to be completely unfazed by the flood of energy.

A brilliant burst of light shone out from the book. The book attempted to flee from her grasp, but no matter how it struggled, it was unable to break free.

Amid the intense trembling, the surrounding space distorted, causing the seal on the Prime Hall to break apart.

“The Great Codex of Spring and Autumn is finally out!”

“Quick! Someone must be trying to assimilate it!”

“Who obtained it? Is it that Zhang Xuan or my descendants?”

Roars echoed all around the area as many silhouettes charged into the Prime Hall.

They were the Ancient Sages who had been camping outside the Prime Hall.

Previously, they had been kept out due to the seal that Kong shi had placed around the Prime Hall, so they had no choice but to wait patiently outside. However, the fact that the Prime Hall was on the verge of collapse meant that someone had already gotten to the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn.

This was a clear sign that it was their time to make a move, and the ultimate outcome of this battle was banking on them.

“It’s that young lady!”

“She is... Luo Ruoxin?”

Seeing the figure holding the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn, the crowd was stunned.

They had thought that it would be the master teacher named Zhang Xuan who obtained the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn. Yet, contrary to their expectations, the one who eventually obtained it was actually the seemingly inconspicuous young lady following behind him, Luo Ruoxin!

“Little lass, you won’t be able to assimilate it. Why don’t you hand it to me instead?”

Seeing the tremendous power pulsating from the book, the eyes of the White Overlord reddened in excitement. Unable to curb its desire any longer, it raised its claws to strike Luo Ruoxin.

“Be careful!”

Zhang Xuan was completely caught off guard by the happenings. He had not expected the seal to break down to the extent that even Ancient Sages would make an appearance.

In an instant, his face turned incredibly livid.

His first reaction was to dash forward to save Luo Ruoxin, but as he did so, he saw the eyebrows of the young lady coldly shooting up.

Hong long!

Devastating torrent of energy burst forth and surged into the heavens. Shockwaves rippled into the surroundings, forming a protective barrier around her.

Peng!

The claws of the White Overlord fell upon the protective barrier, but they did not even leave a mark on it.

“This is... the strength of an Ancient Sage?” Zhang Xuan narrowed his eyes in shock.

The strength that Luo Ruoxin was displaying was something that only Ancient Sages were capable of pulling forth. Not only so, she was even stronger than the White Overlord!

Tzzzzzz!

As soon as Luo Ruoxin brought out the strength of an Ancient Sage, it became clear that the struggling Great Codex of Spring and Autumn was gradually being stripped of its strength to oppose her.

“This is bad. She’s on the verge of assimilating it. We can’t let her succeed!” Ancient Sage Yan Qing roared in horror.

The next moment, a massive halberd darted through the air to strike down Luo Ruoxin.

Its strength pierced right through the fabric of spacetime, causing everything to seemingly slow to a halt. A gigantic dimension rift was forcefully torn open, and it swiftly expanded to over ten thousand li.

That was an attack from a Blood Reincarnation realm Ancient Sage, one of the strongest experts in the world. With just a wave of his hand, he could easily summon devastating destruction.

Before this might could even come close, Zhang Xuan, who was in close proximity to Luo Ruoxin, felt as if the bones within his body were on the verge of being crushed. His body, which had been tempered by the Empyrean Heavenly Flame, seemed to be as brittle as a child's toy.

He felt his life slowly creeping to an end when Luo Ruoxin suddenly raised her hand.

A warm glow swiftly shrouded him and escorted him out of the battlefield.

Tzzz!

Following which, the halberd crashed right down upon Luo Ruoxin.

Without the slightest change in her expression, the young lady grasped the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn tightly in one hand while raising her other hand toward the halberd.

Pointing her finger toward the immensely destructive weapon, she tapped lightly.

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The halberd was halted on the spot. Ancient Sage Yan Qing's face reddened as the halberd flew out of his hand. Fresh blood spurting frenziedly from his mouth as he was furiously knocked backward.

"This..." Zhang Xuan narrowed his eyes.

All along, he had thought that Luo Ruoxin's cultivation was around the same level as his. He did not think that she would actually be an Ancient Sage, and an incredibly powerful one at that!

With a single tap of her finger, she was actually able to send Ancient Sage Yan Qing, who was known to be the strongest Ancient Sage of the current era, flying. Could it be that she had already transcended the level of Blood Reincarnation, achieving the little-known Void Shattering realm?

If that was the case... what was her true background?

Huala!

While Zhang Xuan was still figuring out what was going on, the space behind the young lady tore open like a ripped sheet of paper, causing a humongous dark abyss to appear.

“She’s going to escape! If we don’t stop her right now, the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn could very well become hers!” Ancient Sage Yan Qing cried anxiously.

There were still a couple of Ancient Sages in the area who were hesitating after seeing how Luo Ruoxin easily halted the White Overlord’s attacks. However, knowing that they would really lose the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn if they did not make a move, they immediately charged forth to join the fray.

Huala!

Old Geezer Yu concentrated his zhenqi and created a pair of phantasmagoric hands in the air. Those pair of sinister hands swiped viciously toward Luo Ruoxin.

Ancient Sage Yan Qing took up his halberd once more, and with a powerful spin, he tossed it forward with astounding momentum.

A cold glint flashed across the White Overlord’s eyes as it channeled all of its strength and swiped down. In that moment, it felt as though even time had stopped.

All of the Ancient Sages from those three major powers made a move simultaneously in an attempt to stop Luo Ruoxin. In an instant, it felt as if the world had regressed back to the state of chaos before creation. The surrounding light distorted from the sheer concentration of energy that had gathered in the area, plunging the entire Temple of Confucius into darkness.

Ancient Sages were already the most powerful existence in the world, and more than a dozen of them were making a move simultaneously. This was a force that could even knock down the entire Master Teacher Continent!

“Have you asked my permission before doing this?” a furious shout echoed by the side.

Following which, a barrage of sword qi flooded forward, hindering the movements of the Ancient Sages.

“Zhang Hongtian, don’t be a fool! She isn’t from the Master Teacher Pavilion!” Ancient Sage Yan Qing bellowed in rage as he twisted the halberd to fend off the barrage of sword qi.

The halberd collided with the tip of Zhang Hongtian’s sword, and Zhang Hongtian was forced to retreat several steps as his face turned ghastly pale.

It was unfortunate, but he was still slightly lacking against the strongest expert of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers.

“She’s the person whom one of my descendants loves, and that makes her a part of our Zhang Clan as well!” Zhang Hongtian replied coolly as he raised his sword once more, indicating his determination to protect Luo Ruoxin.

However, no matter how strong he was as an individual, there was no way that he stood a chance against the collaboration of so many Ancient Sages, especially since Ancient Sage Yan Qing alone was much stronger than him.

Si la!

The combined prowess of the Ancient Sages continued steadily advancing toward Luo Ruoxin. All Zhang Hongtian succeeded in doing was stalling for a little more time.

At this moment, Luo Ruoxin was still holding the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn tightly, seemingly attempting to assimilate it. The situation was truly not in her favor. No matter how powerful she was, there was no way that she could survive the simultaneous assault of so many Ancient Sages.

“Ruoxin...”

Realizing the grave danger that the young lady was in, Zhang Xuan roared in fury. He immediately summoned the Ancient Sage corpse, Infernal Blacksaber, and Vicious to help, but before he could make a move, a burst of saber qi suddenly shot over from the distance.

This saber qi reflected the brilliance of the sun and the moon, and it was the final straw that resulted in the utter collapse of the surrounding space.

“Milady, I have completed the arrangements as requested. I’ll help you keep them at bay for the time being!”

Hu!

The missing Wu Chen appeared before everyone.

1772 Wu Chen's True Identity

“Help fend them off for a while; I’ll assimilate the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn in the meantime.” Luo Ruoxin nodded as she channeled her energy frenziedly into the book in her hand.

Wu Chen nodded, and without any hesitation, he continued striking out saber qi in order to stop the advancing Ancient Sages.

Boom boom boom!

As the attacks of the Ancient Sages fell on Wu Chen’s saber, one could see his face visibly turning paler and paler. The saber qi that he dealt out gushed forth like the rapid tides of a river. Even though he was forced back again and again, astonishingly, he actually managed to fend off all of their attacks single-handedly.

There was not the slightest shockwave that harmed or interrupted Luo Ruoxin.

“Strong...” Zhang Xuan was struck dumb by Wu Chen’s outburst of strength.

A battle of this level was not something that he could interfere in anymore.

Just that... Wu Chen had only just achieved a breakthrough, had he not?

Why was he able to easily obstruct the attacks of so many powerful Ancient Sages, a feat that even Old Ancestor Zhang Hongtian had failed in?

Furthermore, throughout the entire collision, his face had only turned slightly pale. It did not seem like he had sustained any significant injuries.

If so, just how powerful was Wu Chen actually?

Was he a Blood Reincarnation realm Ancient Sage as well?

It was already amazing that Luo Ruoxin was able to defend against Ancient Sage Yan Qing's attack with just a wave of her hand, but to think that Wu Chen was able to do so as well...

In an instant, he felt as if he was seeing a completely different side to them.

He knew that the two of them had been keeping secrets, but this was not what he had expected at all.

“He's finally appeared. Set up the formation!”

Ancient Sage Yan Qing did not seem to be surprised by Wu Chen's feat at all. Instead, his eyebrows shot up as he swiftly issued several commands.

Weng!

In an instant, blue light poured into the surroundings, forming innumerable stars that surrounded the entire Temple of Confucius.

Wu Chen's face immediately darkened upon seeing that formation. “This is the ultimate treasure forged by the seventy-two Sages, the Heavenly Palace Constellation Blueprint! You actually brought it here?”

“We brought the Heavenly Palace Constellation Blueprint here today to prevent you from getting away. You can be certain that today will be your death date!” Ancient Sage Yan Qing sneered coldly.

Huala!

Under the cover of the light from the constellation, the ripped space behind Luo Ruoxin slowly began to mend. It did not take too long before it reverted back to normal.

Zhang Xuan also sensed that the surrounding space was swiftly freezing up, so he quickly whipped out the Dragonbone Divine Spear and pierced the surrounding space. However, he found that the space had turned incredibly hard. Even with his current strength, he was unable to break it open.

Within the sealed space, it felt like Ancient Sage Yan Qing was a giant who wielded the ability to control anything that happened. He raised his finger and tapped it lightly.

Huala!

A star descended from the sky and smashed right for Wu Chen.

The star did not appear to be too large, but it descended with devastating momentum. Shockingly, it was even stronger than the attack that Ancient Sage Yan Qing had executed with his halberd. Even before reaching its target, one could already feel the star's intent to annihilate everything in its path.

“Break!”

Facing the ridiculous might of the descending star, Wu Chen's complexion turned incredibly awful. He cut his finger lightly with the saber in his hand and fed his blood to his weapon.

The saber immediately emanated an eerie glow as its prowess heightened significantly. It was just a simple pierce, but the surrounding space collapsed along with its movements.

The saber struck the descending star and sliced it in two without any hesitation.

Deng deng deng deng!

At the same time, the impact of the collision caused Wu Chen to retreat eight steps, and blood trickled down the corners of his lips. His face also turned ghastly white.

It was apparent that even though he had managed to stop the star, he had overexerted himself in the midst of doing so.

Seeing that Wu Chen was able to withstand the might of the descending star, a hint of astonishment flashed across Ancient Sage Yan Qing's eyes. However, he soon sneered coldly and raised his finger once more. “Let's see how many you can defend against!”

Huala!

Yet another star descended from the sky.

Knowing that Luo Ruoxin was in a crucial moment in assimilating the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn, Wu Chen did not dare back down. Taking a deep breath, he retracted his saber and fled.

“I can’t afford to hold back at a time like this...”

This time, Wu Chen did not use the saber. Instead, he flicked his wrist and whipped out two skeletal arms drenched in his blood before charging right toward the star above him.

As soon as the skeletal arms appeared, a powerful aura exploded into the surroundings. The higher Wu Chen flew, the larger the skeletal arms seemed to become. In the blink of an eye, they had already become so large that they seemed to cover the entire sky. It seemed like as long as he was given sufficient time, those two hands could easily cover the entire world.

Kacha!

The skeletal arms tore right through the descending star, smashing it into dust.

Furthermore, the skeletal arms did not stop at just crushing the star. They continued surging into the sky, and the tremendous might that they harnessed caused the entire starry sky to shudder. It seemed like even the artifact was unable to withstand the pressure coming from the skeletal arms!

“Incredible...”

“If even the skeletal arms are so powerful, I can’t imagine how powerful that person was when he was still alive!”

Zhang Hongtian and the others were bewildered by the impressive prowess that Wu Chen had brought forth.

As Ancient Sages, they could feel the overwhelming strength of the blueprint very clearly. Even if they used their full prowess, they would still be unable to break apart the spacetime restraints imposed by the blueprint, let alone destroy the descending stars!

Yet, a single grasp of those two skeletal arms could make the entire blueprint shudder. Did that not mean that their prowess

had exceeded the Blood Reincarnation realm?

“This aura...”

Contrary to everyone’s bewilderment, Zhang Xuan’s body jolted as soon as he sensed the aura coming from the skeletal arms.

He felt a familiar sensation from those two skeletal arms.

“It belongs to Vicious...” Zhang Xuan narrowed his eyes in astonishment.

The right skeletal arm in the air was lacking a phalange, and the familiar aura that he was feeling confirmed his deduction. There was no doubt... it was Vicious!

Why would Vicious’ arms be in Wu Chen’s possession?

Furthermore, the strength that they possessed was peculiarly great. Even after recovering the upper body, the Vicious in the Book of Heaven’s Path did not wield such great power.

All of a sudden, many doubts flooded into Zhang Xuan’s mind. He was unable to make sense of the situation.

Spurting a mouthful of blood, Ancient Sage Yan Qing bellowed, “What are you waiting for? Are you intending to back out at this crucial moment?”

He had been sustaining the blueprint with his own energy, so the attempt to break the blueprint had caused his zhenqi to suffer a major backlash.

“Of course not!”

Old Geezer Yu, who had been watching the commotion from the side, swiftly made his way over with the Ancient Sages of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe.

“This...” Zhang Xuan staggered in shock.

He dared not believe what he was seeing.

From their conversation, it was obvious that Ancient Sage Yan Qing of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers was in a partnership with Old Geezer Yu!

In other words, the Hundred Schools of Philosophers had defected to the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe!

What the heck was going on here?

Other than Zhang Xuan, Zhang Hongtian and the others were also looking at one another in a daze.

In terms of resentment, the hatred that the Hundred Schools of Philosophers harbored for the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe was definitely nowhere beneath that of Master Teacher Pavilion's cultivators. Why would they actually collaborate with the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe?

Hula!

Old Geezer Yu flicked his wrist, and a straw garment materialized in the air. The skeletal arms that were tearing apart the blueprint suddenly halted, as if their strength had been neutralized by the straw garment.

“Quick, kill him!” Old Geezer Yu bellowed.

On the other hand, Wu Chen's face darkened. He bit his finger, and fresh blood spurted onto the skeletal arms. However, the skeletal arms remained completely motionless, as if they were hibernating.

Wu Chen attempted to control the skeletal arms, but they refused to budge at all. He clasped his fists tightly and roared at Old Geezer Yu in the air. “Bo Yu, you traitor! How can you collaborate with the Hundred Schools of Philosophers? Aren't you afraid that I'll decapitate you?”

“Heh! You'll have to escape from here alive in order to kill me...” Without the slightest fear, Old Geezer Yu chuckled softly. “Besides, you should also know that the person who wants to claim your life isn't me but Sovereign Chen Ling! Isn't that so, Sovereign Chen Yong?”

“Sovereign Chen Yong? Could it be...” Zhang Xuan's body stiffened upon hearing those words. His eyes were marred with disbelief as he muttered, “Wu Chen is actually... Sovereign Chen Yong from the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe?”

1773 The Number One Expert of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe

Sovereign Chen Yong was one of the Three Sovereigns of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe, and he was the most authoritative and powerful of them. Most of the major decisions regarding the tribe were made by him, thus building his reputation as the number one expert of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe. How could he be the youth who had been addressing him as ‘Young Master’ all this while?

If they really were the same person, then... what was the identity of Luo Ruoxin, whom he addressed as Milady?

In that instant, Zhang Xuan’s body turned ice cold. He did not dare consider that possibility.

He had heard from Yang shi in the past that the strongest Otherworldly Demon Emperor had come to the Master Teacher Continent, but his whereabouts had been a mystery to all. Who would have thought that the other party had actually been by his side, serving as Luo Ruoxin’s subordinate?

“Sovereign Chen Ling...”

Even though Wu Chen already knew the answer in his mind, his face still warped upon hearing those words. He clenched his fists with burning rage.

The Three Sovereigns had known each other for many years, and it was indeed true that there had been many internal conflicts in the past. However, to collude with outsiders to deal with him, that could pretty much be considered a betrayal!

With such thoughts in mind, Wu Chen raised his head to look at Ancient Sage Yan Qing and spat, “It seems like the proud Hundred Schools of Philosophers has decided to lower itself to collaborate with Sovereign Chen Ling!”

“Accepting Sovereign Chen Ling’s request will not only allow us to eliminate the strongest Otherworldly Demon Emperor, it will also bring us three hundred years of peace. What do we have to hesitate over?” Ancient Sage Yan Qing replied calmly, unfazed by Wu Chen’s questioning.

“Three hundred years of peace?”

“Sovereign Chen Ling has already promised our Hundred Schools of Philosophers that as long as we are able to get rid of you, the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe will not launch an attack on mankind within the next three hundred years,” Ancient Sage Yan Qing replied. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

“I see.” Wu Chen nodded silently

That explained why the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe and Hundred Schools of Philosophers were collaborating with one another despite the deep-seated hatred between them.

As the strongest and most influential Sovereign, his death would inevitably cause a significant loss in power and chaos among the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe. It would take at least three hundred years for Sovereign Chen Ling to calm down the chaos and assume supreme control over the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe.

In other words, Sovereign Chen Ling needed those three hundred years as well.

However, just because the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe had agreed to three hundred years of peace did not mean that the Hundred Schools of Philosophers and the Master Teacher Pavilion would not make use of the opportunity to eliminate the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe.

“So, back at the Harvest Valley City Seer Guild, you were already prepared to ambush me, weren’t you?” Sovereign Chen Yong asked once more.

“The Seer Guild’s barrier would have concealed the auras of the Ancient Sages, and there’s no doubt that you would have been prompted to make a move when Vicious’ upper body was

on the line. We were certain that we would be able to kill you easily, but who could have known that someone would foil our plans?” Bo Yu harrumphed coldly as he shot a glance at Zhang Xuan.

The reason that there had been multiple Ancient Sages in the Harvest Valley City Seer Guild back then was because they had been biding their time for the chance to destroy Sovereign Chen Yong. Yet, who could have known that it would end up drawing Zhang Xuan in as well?

Not only so, the latter had even successfully killed an Ancient Sage expert as soon as he made a move, thus scaring the others off.

“This...” Hearing those words, Zhang Xuan widened his eyes in realization.

That explained why the Hundred Schools of Philosophers had chosen to steal Vicious’ upper body so openly. In the end, it was part of their ploy to draw Wu Chen to them!

Given that Wu Chen had Vicious’ arms, he would have sensed the presence of the upper body as well once it was released from Sage Kui’s sculpture. That was no doubt that he would have been compelled to make a move.

If not for Luo Ruoxin, Wu Chen would have made a move on him when he attempted to seal Vicious’ upper body in the Book of Heaven’s Path.

Otherwise, as the strongest Otherworldly Demon Emperor, there was no way that he would have lowered himself to the extent of addressing an insignificant character like him as ‘Young Master’!

“In other words, you had already reached a deal before you headed to the White Creek Mountain in search of the Prime Amulet,” Wu Chen remarked.

Back then, he had realized that there was an Otherworldly Demon among the group of four who had entered the ancient domain on White Creek Mountain. Sensing that something was amiss, he had bid farewell to Luo Ruoxin in order to investigate the matter. Soon, he had found out that the other

two Sovereigns had launched an invasion against mankind, so he had quickly passed an order commanding the Otherworldly Demons to halt their assault.

Before he could uncover anything substantial, the Temple of Confucius had emerged, so he had been left with no choice but to put aside his investigation and rush over.

“Indeed.” Ancient Sage Yan Qing nodded in response.

“Very well!” Having asked everything that he wanted to know, Wu Chen closed his eyes. A moment later, his eyes suddenly shot open, and a massive vortex could be seen spinning in his irises, reminiscent of a deep abyss. “I commend you for having the guts to scheme behind my back. However, if you think that you’ll be able to kill me that easily, you’re too naive!”

Boom!

As those words reverberated in the surroundings, the youth slowly began to grow taller, and the killing intent that he emanated became more and more concentrated. In just a few breaths, he had assumed the form of an Otherworldly Demon. He wore a regal crown on his head, and he was dressed in a flowing robe embedded with soaring dragons. His every single movement exuded the aura and authority of a true monarch.

“He truly is Sovereign Chen Yong...” Zhang Hongtian remarked as the sword in his hand twitched uncontrollably.

He had never met the strongest Otherworldly Demon Emperor before, but he had heard many rumors about him. Just from the sheer intensity of the aura emanated by the Otherworldly Demon before him, there was already little doubt that he was truly Sovereign Chen Yong.

Zhang Hongtian was far from the only one who was surprised by such a development. The faces of the other Ancient Sages also tensed up as they eyed the situation warily.

It had been many years since Sovereign Chen Yong last made an appearance, but his reputation still struck fear deep into the hearts of those who had heard of him.

In the upper echelon of the Master Teacher Continent, there was no one who had not heard of the devastating prowess that the strongest Otherworldly Demon Emperor commanded. Even though they had reached the zenith of the world as proud and lofty Ancient Sages, they instinctively understood that the Otherworldly Demon standing before them was not someone that they could defeat with just a simple numerical advantage.

On the other hand, watching as Wu Chen reverted to his original form, Zhang Xuan fell eerily silent.

He was confident in his Eye of Insight. Even though he was unable to use the Library of Heaven's Path on Wu Chen, he was certain that he would have been able to see through his disguise if he was an Otherworldly Demon. However, he forgot one thing—Luo Ruoxin's disguise amulet.

Having used the disguise amulet personally, he knew of its incredible prowess. It served not only to disguise one's appearance and aura but even one's bloodline!

If Wu Chen had used it to disguise himself as Yang Shi, it was likely that not even the Ancient Sages of the Master Teacher Pavilion would have been able to see through his disguise.

This explained why no one had been able to find the strongest Otherworldly Demon Emperor despite the extensive search that had occurred after receiving reports that he had infiltrated the Master Teacher Continent!

As for why the Master Teacher Pavilion and the Hundred Schools of Philosophers were aware that Sovereign Chen Yong had gone over to the Master Teacher Continent, it was likely due to the tipoff from the soul oracles who were serving the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe.

In just a few moments, Zhang Xuan had already managed to make sense out of the entire situation.

Most likely, one of the soul oracles serving Sovereign Chen Yong had sensed the latter's departure, so he had discreetly sent the message over to the Jiang Clan. The Jiang Clan had then forwarded the news to the Hundred Schools of

Philosophers, which prompted them to swiftly set up an ambush.

All that remained a mystery to him and continued frustrating him was Luo Ruoxin's identity. Just who in the world was she, and what role did she play in the greater scheme of things?

“We have never thought that it would be easy to eliminate you. However, regardless of the price we have to pay, we're determined to put you to rest today!”

Seeing that Sovereign Chen Yong had reverted to his true form, Ancient Sage Yan Qing knew that a huge battle was about to break out. He quickly swallowed two pills and recovered from the internal injuries that he had sustained earlier before raising the halberd in his hand, his eyes glazed with killing intent.

The Ancient Sages of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers quickly raised their weapons and let loose a war cry.

After all their planning, this was the very moment that they had been waiting for. This decisive battle would eventually decide the fate of the world.

“The Hundred Schools of Philosophers want to kill me, and even my own tribesmen wish for my death... Hahaha!”
Sovereign Chen Yong glanced at the crowd before bursting into hearty laughter.

He turned to Zhang Hongtian and the other Ancient Sages of the Master Teacher Pavilion and asked imposingly, “What about the rest of you?”

“My father and brothers have been killed by the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe, and I have already sworn to devote my life to getting rid of each and every one of you. Sovereign Chen Yong, since you are the highest leader of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe, you have to pay for the sins your tribesmen have committed!”

“Hahaha! It seems like the heavens aren't blind after all! To think that the great Sovereign Chen Yong would fall into our hands. Even if I lose my life here, I'll make sure to drag you

down with me today so as to console the spirits of my dead brothers!”

“You were the one who killed my spouse many years back. If I can exact vengeance for her today, my life won’t have been in vain!”

...

The Ancient Sages of the Master Teacher Pavilion stepped forward as killing intent bubbled from their bodies.

1774 The Prowess of the Strongest Otherworldly Demon Emperor

The grudges between the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe and mankind had continued for tens of thousands of years.

Be it the Otherworldly Demons or humans, most of them knew of kin and friends who had been slaughtered in cold blood by the other party. It was a grudge that ran so deep that there was no way that it could be resolved with simple words or sheer compassion.

It had not been easy for them to corner the highest leader of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe, so there was no way that they could let go of this opportunity to bring him down!

Sovereign Chen Yong understood this as well, so he was not surprised by the reaction of the Ancient Sages of the Master Teacher Continent. Instead, he lowered his gaze specifically to Zhang Hongtian and asked, “What about you?”

“Our Zhang Clan has fought with the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe for countless years. My father, grandfather, and many generations of ancestors have lost their lives under the blades of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe. The hands of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe are drenched in the blood of our Zhang Clan. In my lifetime, I have always looked down on dishonorable scum who gang up on others. However, this is no fair duel but a battle for vengeance! I believe that not even Kong shi would disagree with our actions!” Zhang Hongtian roared as he drew his sword and gazed at the towering silhouette above him.

Hearing that even Zhang Hongtian was going to join in the battle, Zhang Xuan could not help but exclaim, “Old Ancestor Hongtian!”

Completely surrounded by enemies and the blueprint, it would be impossible for even the almighty Sovereign Chen Yong to escape from such a situation.

He did not harbor any goodwill toward the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe, but Wu Chen had been with him for a very long time. He had felt betrayed when he found out who Wu Chen was, but he could not accept seeing the other party lynched by the crowd.

Knowing what Zhang Xuan was going to say, Zhang Hongtian waved his hand decisively. “Don’t waste your compassion on the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe. This is a luxury that we cannot afford!”

It was not to say that the Otherworldly Demons were absolutely evil, but the difference in their stances made it impossible for them to co-exist. More than a fight for supremacy, this was a fight for survival.

Without Sovereign Chen Yong, the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe would be like a pile of scattered sand. Their prowess would be significantly lowered, and they would be powerless against mankind.

This was the perfect moment to get rid of the threat that had loomed over them for many years!

It was precisely due to this that the Hundred Schools of Philosophers had willingly mobilized so many Ancient Sages, such that even the fight for the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn was a secondary concern to them.

“Very well. What about the rest of you?”

Seeing that the three powers had chosen to collaborate against him, Sovereign Chen Yong finally laid his gaze upon the Beast Tribe.

“We don’t intend to get involved in this conflict. Our aim lies only with the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn!” the White Overlord replied coldly.

“Back away if you don’t intend to get involved in this conflict. My saber has no eyes to care for you lot. Remain in the sphere

of battle and risk losing your life!” Sovereign Chen Yong sneered coldly.

He flicked the saber in his hand, and a choking sound echoed in the air. Following which, a powerful aura burst forth from him, leaving the crowd feeling as if an endless abyss was standing before them.

Disguised as Wu Chen, he had only been able to tap into the strength that master teachers were able to utilize. However, having reverted back to his original form, he was finally able to use the Slaughter of Zhenqi of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe, drastically raising his fighting prowess.

“Kill him!”

Sensing that Wu Chen’s aura was about to reach its peak, Ancient Sage Yan Qing knew that it would be even more difficult to kill him if they continued dawdling. Thus, he raised the halberd in the hand and charged forward.

“Go!”

Bo Yu’s phantasmagoric claws sliced apart space to tear everything before him.

The offense of the two powerful experts warped into two black and white streaks, darting through the air as if a comet racing across the sky.

“Show me what you’re capable of!” Sovereign Chen Yong roared as he raised his saber and sliced across the air.

Si la!

A black rift appeared in the space sealed by the blueprint and collided with the two incoming attacks. As if struck by a powerful swing of a bat, both the halberd and the claws were sent flying into the distance.

Sovereign Chen Yong made use of this opportunity to press on. With another swing of his saber, he successfully kept the attacks of the other Ancient Sages at bay before swiftly flitting forward in an attempt to decapitate Ancient Sage Yan Qing.

This attack wielded such compelling strength that not even the Blood Reincarnation realm Ancient Sage Yan Qing was able

to avoid it.

Weng!

Just as death was about to fall upon the strongest expert of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers, a sword flashed through the air, surpassing the limitations of time and space and appearing in an instant.

If Sovereign Chen Yong continued his attack, even if he succeeded in killing Ancient Sage Yan Qing, he would also sustain severe injuries in the process of doing so. Thus, he changed the trajectory of his saber to defend against the incoming attack.

Ding ding ding ding!

The sound of metallic reverberations echoed loudly in the air. Zhang Hongtian's movements were sharp but fluid. As if a complex dance, his movements appeared to be unintentional and changed swiftly, making it hard for one to read the trajectory of his attacks. At that moment, he felt like a Sword Immortal.

This was the first time that Zhang Xuan had witnessed a battle of such caliber, and he could not help but swallow a mouthful of saliva.

As expected of the strongest experts of the Master Teacher Continent, every single of their attacks seemed to sway the very laws of the world. It was fortunate that he was a safe distance away, or else he could have very well been torn to shreds.

Sovereign Chen Yong's strength had far surpassed his imagination. Despite being severely outnumbered, his movements remained calm and calculated. There was not the slightest hint of panic in his actions.

Peng!

The battle grew more and more intense, and finally, with a deep moan, a silhouette plummeted from the air.

An Ancient Sage had fallen!

“It's a Great Philosopher realm Otherworldly Demon...”

Zhang Xuan recognized the corpse. He was one of Old Geezer Yu's subordinates, an Ancient Sage 2-dan Otherworldly Demon.

"This is good..."

Knowing that a corpse of that level was hard to come by, Zhang Xuan stepped forward to flick it up using the Dragonbone Divine Spear.

Hula!

Into his storage ring the corpse went!

Boom!

Barely after collecting the corpse, an Ancient Sage from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers met his end and plummeted to the ground.

Shortly after, an expert of the Master Teacher Pavilion fell as well. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Zhang Xuan had no hesitation collecting the corpses of Otherworldly Demons, but he was unwilling to touch the corpses of those from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers and the Master Teacher Continent.

After all, he was a master teacher himself, so the least he could do was respect his peers.

That being said, while he did not collect their corpses, he did manage to collect the Ancient Sage blood that poured down throughout the course of the battle.

As the battle grew more and more intense, the rate at which the Ancient Sages were dying grew faster and faster.

In less than ten minutes, less than half of the Ancient Sages who had joined the fray remained standing.

However, Sovereign Chen Yong had also sustained severe injuries. Blood was dripping down his arm, and his face had turned rather pale.

Ancient Sage Yan Qing and Zhang Hongtian also had glaring wounds on them, and they were panting heavily. They were not in a good condition at all.

On the contrary, it was Old Geezer Yu who had sustained the lightest injuries.

It was not that he was the strongest of the three, but being the most cunning one, he had hidden from all of the frontal attacks coming from Sovereign Chen Yong, using the other two as a shield.

“As expected of the number one expert from the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe. You were able to bring so many of us down despite facing all of us simultaneously,” Zhang Hongtian remarked with a hint of awe in his voice.

He had thought that he could already be considered one of the strongest experts in the world, but who could have known that there would be someone who was so much stronger than him existent in the world?

“You aren’t weak either. But if that’s all you have, your wish to claim my life today is nothing more than wishful thinking!” Sovereign Chen Yong replied imposingly with his saber in hand.

“Humph! Even at the cost of my life, I’ll drag you into the grave!” Zhang Hongtian spat coldly.

“Give it a try then!” Sovereign Chen Yong scoffed.

He raised his saber to continue the battle, but all of a sudden, the entire blueprint around them start shaking intensely.

Hong long long!

The world seemed to be slowly unraveling as a ray of white light pierced through the blueprint. Gradually, a gigantic alter flickered into appearance.

The light was surging toward Luo Ruoxin, who was in the midst of assimilating the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn.

“It’s a success!” Sovereign Chen Yong’s eyes lit up in agitation.

The reason that he had chosen to stay behind and fight was to prepare this artifact in order to help Luo Ruoxin. Seeing that the plan had finally succeeded, he could not curb his excitement any longer.

Si la!

As the light from the altar shone upon Luo Ruoxin, it seemed like the bottleneck on her Ancient Sage cultivation had been released once more. Tremendous energy coursed through her body like rapid tides as she grew stronger and stronger.

Under the assault of such imposing strength, the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn was finally tamed.

1775 Farewell

Hu!

As soon as the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn was tamed, it disappeared from the young lady's palm, as if having been stowed away.

Tzzzzzzz!

With the furious surge in Luo Ruoxin's strength, the blueprint that had sealed the surrounding space was placed under great strain, such that huge cracks were starting to surface all around.

Those cracks crept all around the place, revealing pitch black rifts that resembled the doors to the netherworld.

As those cracks began appearing, an overwhelming suction force poured forth from them to tug at the young lady, seemingly trying to drag her away.

The young lady frowned. With a wave of her hand, the altar in the sky flew over and landed beneath her feet. Standing atop the altar, the suction force that was pulling her away finally alleviated slightly, allowing her to stand her ground for the time being.

“Zhang Xuan...”

Steadying her figure, the young lady looked around the room before finally halting her gaze on Zhang Xuan.

Looking at the silhouette on the altar, Zhang Xuan's body suddenly froze. Her silhouette slowly fused together with another one in his memories, and he suddenly felt a splitting headache assaulting his mind.

“You are... You are the Spirit God of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe?”

The silhouette that he had seen back in the Qiu Wu Palace and the dimension of four seasons had seemed strikingly familiar

for some reason, but he had not been able to figure out why. To think that it would actually be Luo Ruoxin!

She was neither an expert of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers nor the transmogrification of an expert of the Beast Tribe. Rather... she was the highest god of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe!

How could that be?

At that instant, Zhang Xuan felt a crushing pressure on his heart, seemingly squeezing the life out of his breath.

Shaking his head in disbelief, he asked, "Didn't you tell me that you aren't an Otherworldly Demon?" "Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

He could not understand Luo Ruoxin's fervent desire to hide her identity, but he was willing to wait for the day that she could come clean. Nevertheless, he had been afraid that they would be standing on opposite ends eventually, so he had asked her if she was an Otherworldly Demon and if she intended any harm toward mankind.

Back then, she had said that she was not an Otherworldly Demon and that she did not intend any harm toward mankind.

Was that all a lie?

He would not have minded no matter who Luo Ruoxin was and which power she was affiliated to, but he could not stand being deceived and made use of by the one he loved.

Seeing Zhang Xuan's frenzied state, Luo Ruoxin's eyes reddened.

A rare hint of panic could be heard in her voice as she anxiously tried to explain herself. "I am not an Otherworldly Demon, and there's a reason why I am the Spirit God of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe..."

However, before she could finish her explanation, the dimension rifts all around suddenly widened, and the suction force dragging her away intensified. She was beginning to lose control of her body.

As the energy from the darkness roared furiously, the entire Temple of Confucius began shaking nonstop. Even the Master Teacher Continent had begun trembling.

It was as if the end of the world had just begun.

“My current strength has exceeded what this world is able to endure, so I can’t stay here any longer. Otherwise, the entire Master Teacher Continent will come to ruin...” Watching the gradual devastation happening all around, Luo Ruoxin shook her head. Lowering her head slightly, she murmured, “Goodbye, Zhang Xuan. I was happy to meet you... Really, really happy...”

Hula!

The darkness descended upon the altar and began devouring the young lady’s silhouette.

As if falling into a pool of ink, Luo Ruoxin looked as if she would disappear at any moment.

“Ruoxin... Why? You haven’t explained anything to me yet. What is going on?”

Seeing that the darkness was going to pull her away very soon, Zhang Xuan quickly whipped out the Infernal Blacksaber, and stepping atop it, he dashed right to her side.

He reached out and grabbed her hand, intending to pull her out from the darkness. Alas, no matter how he tugged, she would not budge at all.

The darkness before him seemed like an endless abyss. Those who fell into it, even if they were Ancient Sages, would not be able to escape.

“Zhang Xuan, it’s fine. Don’t waste your strength. Each world has its own rules. If I forcefully remain here, I’ll only bring calamity to this world,” Luo Ruoxin said as she grabbed Zhang Xuan’s hand tightly. “Please, trust me. I have never said a single lie to you...”

Her gentle touch and soothing voice filled Zhang Xuan’s cold body with warmth. There were many doubts in his mind, but he wanted to trust the young lady before him. All their

experiences and the time that they had spent together, he did not believe that they were all lies.

With a slightly choked voice, he asked, “How do I find you in the future?”

He knew that this phenomenon signified her departure, and the very notion of parting with her eternally was one that was too painful for him to bear.

If she left one day, he would devote his entire life to searching for her!

“We’ll meet again when fate allows us to. Otherwise, my presence will only harm you...” With slightly moist eyes, Luo Ruoxin looked at the young man standing before her and muttered, “Farewell... the man I love!”

Hu!

The next instant, the young lady was devoured by the darkness and disappeared from sight.

“No!” Zhang Xuan howled desperately as he dashed forward furiously.

He was intending to barge into the crack in space as well, but to his horror, he felt as if he had rushed into a wall and was pushed back.

“This can’t be! I can’t allow this to happen!” Zhang Xuan roared as he flicked the Infernal Blacksaber furiously at the cracks.

Ding ding ding ding!

Sparks flew all around.

Even though Luo Ruoxin had been dragged into the black cracks so easily, he found them even more resilient than Ancient Sage artifacts. No matter how he exerted himself, he was unable to faze it in the least.

It was as if the Infernal Blacksaber was a blob of cotton candy knocking against a metal wall; it did not leave the slightest mark.

Hu!

Shortly after Luo Ruoxin entered, the crack grew smaller and smaller before vanishing eventually.

“No!”

It was as if Zhang Xuan had lost himself. He flung his sword frantically, but no matter how powerful the Infernal Blacksaber was, it could not open the crack once more. It was as if everything that had just happened was just a mere illusion.

“Master, there’s no point slashing anymore.” A voice sounded in Zhang Xuan’s mind. “Your girlfriend must have come from a higher world. Unless your strength reaches the mark, you won’t be able to overcome the dimension barrier!”

Taking a deep breath, Zhang Xuan drove his soul energy and calmed himself from his irate state. Clenching his fists tightly, he asked, “You said that Ruoxin came from a higher world?”

The one who had just spoken was none other than Vicious.

In terms of understanding of the Master Teacher Continent, Vicious was definitely more knowledgeable than him.

“Indeed. While I was still alive, I noticed that there’s a dimension that’s even more stable than the Master Teacher Continent, and the lifeforms that exist there are even stronger than us. It’s likely that our Spirit Tribe originates from one of those worlds but was exiled to the Master Teacher Continent,” Vicious replied.

It seemed like he had regained some of his memories.

“However, the barrier between the two worlds is extremely powerful, requiring one to wield tremendous strength in order to break it apart. Back then, even with my strength as a Void Shattering realm Ancient Sage, I was still unable to tear the barrier down.”

“Not even a Void Shattering realm Ancient Sage is able to tear the barrier down? Doesn’t that effectively mean that no one is able to do it?” Zhang Xuan gritted his teeth in astonishment.

Void Shattering was the highest realm that an Ancient Sage could reach. If even experts of that caliber were unable to

achieve this feat, who else would be able to do it?

“Even though I was unable to do it, it doesn’t mean that no one else is able to! If I’m not mistaken, it’s likely that Kong shi succeeded in doing it in the past!” Vicious said.

“Kong shi?”

“Indeed. Based on the history of the Master Teacher Pavilion, Kong shi disappeared before his lifespan was up. Given his strength, there’s no one who could have posed a threat to him. If he needed to, he could have gone into hibernation or used any external means to extend his lifespan. How could he have just disappeared without a trace?”

“This...” Zhang Xuan fell silent.

He had never thought too deeply about Kong shi disappearance before. However, the emergence of the black dimension rifts that swallowed Luo Ruoxin and the knowledge that there were higher worlds above the Master Teacher Continent sprouted some thoughts in his mind.

Perhaps, just like Luo Ruoxin, Kong shi’s strength had surpassed the limits of the world, and left with no choice, he had been forced to depart from the Master Teacher Continent.

Due to that, his disappearance had been quiet and abrupt, such that it was not even recorded in history.

“If Kong shi reached such heights, I will surely be able to as well,” Zhang Xuan muttered through tightly gritted teeth.

No matter what, he was determined to find Luo Ruoxin once more. Since Kong shi had been able to shatter the dimension barrier and reach a higher world, he would surely be able to do the same!

“Since Milady has left, I’ll take my leave!”

The silence in the air was suddenly shattered by the hearty laughter of the number one Otherworldly Demon Emperor.

Luo Ruoxin’s previous outburst of strength had completely destroyed the blueprint, thus creating an opening for Sovereign Chen Yong to escape.

1776 The Arrival of the Two Sovereigns

“Where do you think you’re going?” Ancient Sage Yan Qing bellowed as his halberd warped into a flowing ray of light, darting in Sovereign Chen Yong’s direction.

At the same time, Zhang Hongtian charged forth, piercing toward Sovereign Chen Yong like a sharp sword. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

There was no denying Sovereign Chen Yong’s strength, but his might had severely diminished after the intense battle with the others. In his current weakened state, he knew that he could not afford to simply disregard Ancient Sage Yan Qing and Zhang Hongtian’s attacks anymore, or else he might really meet his end. Thus, he turned around and protected himself with a powerful swing of his saber.

The two sides collided with one another, and all three experts spurted out fresh blood as they were sent flying.

At that moment, they were running on fumes. What was fueling them was just a streak of resolute determination.

Enduring his injuries, Sovereign Chen Yong stood up and coldly spat, “Have no doubt that I’ll exact vengeance for what you have done today...”

It seemed like he suddenly sensed something else, and he quickly turned his sights away from Ancient Sage Yan Qing and Zhang Hongtian. He flicked his saber, and a pitch-black spatial passageway appeared before him. With a leap, he attempted to dash right in.

If he was allowed to slip through the spatial passageway, it would be as good as allowing a fish back into the ocean. It would be nigh impossible find him once more.

Gritting his teeth furiously, Ancient Sage Yan Qing raised the halberd in an attempt to seal the spatial passageway, only to see the escaping Sovereign Chen Yong coming to an abrupt halt. As if a fish being thrown ashore, no matter how he struggled, he was unable to move.

“Sovereign Chen Yong, why are you in such a rush to leave?” A voice echoed through the air. “As old friends, don’t you think that it’s rude for you to snub us?”

Following which, two towering silhouettes walked over from the depths of the void.

Those two men wore clothes with a similar design to Sovereign Chen Yong’s, just in a different color. They each wore a crown on their head, and the killing intent that they emanated was as black as ink. It was as if they were the manifestation of the netherworld itself.

“Could they be the other two Sovereigns?” Zhang Xuan narrowed his eyes on astonishment.

From their clothes and the strength that they emanated, it was apparent that they were the other two Sovereigns plotting to kill Sovereign Chen Yong—Sovereign Chen Ling and Sovereign Chen Xing!

They had also left the otherworldly battlefield to participate in the operation to eliminate Sovereign Chen Yong!

From the looks of it, it seemed like they had been hiding in the vicinity all along. It was just that they did not dare appear until the Spirit God finally departed.

Seeing the other two standing before him, Sovereign Chen Yong spat, “The Spirit God is aware of our actions. If you kill me, there’s no way that she’ll let you get away scot-free!”

He gathered all of his strength and forcefully broke free of his restraints. Raising his saber, he hacked it down with all his might.

Huala!

The might of the saber was tremendous, easily tearing apart the fabric of space. However, it was clear that the severely

injured Sovereign Chen Yong was insufficient to put up a fight against the other two Sovereigns.

With a simple flick of his finger, Sovereign Chen Yong blocked the saber and flicked it away.

“Sovereign Chen Yong, there’s no need to be agitated. We only want to have a talk with you. How crude would it be to come to blows over everything? Moreover, isn’t it clear that you would be utterly powerless even if we wanted to kill you? The Spirit God might oppose our action of claiming your life, but having returned to her Spirit God Palace, there is nothing she can do! Besides... the gods have no emotions. You can’t possibly be so naïve as to think that a god would actually stick her neck out for you.” Sovereign Chen Ling’s lips crept up as he gazed down on Sovereign Chen Yong in pity.

“She’s just making use of you to acquire the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn. Do you honestly believe that she actually values you?”

“You...”

Knowing that he would not be able to escape with the other two Sovereigns around, Sovereign Chen Yong calmed himself down and straightened his back. Carrying himself with an inviolable disposition, he coldly said, “I have never mistreated either of you. Why do you want to betray me?”

“Why do we want to betray you?” Hearing those words, Sovereign Chen Ling laughed coldly. “You should ask yourself the same question! Why are you so obedient to the orders of the newly-appointed Spirit God? The past Spirit Gods only required us to tribute master teachers to bestow upon us endless treasures. On the other hand, what has the current Spirit God given us? Furthermore, who are you to stop us from launching an attack on mankind? Do you know what that means? Do you really want our tribesmen to die guarding that godforsaken land?”

Sovereign Chen Yong was taken aback. He did not expect that to be the reason behind the betrayal. With a cold harrumph, he spat, “You dare to question the commands of the Spirit God?”

He had thought that Sovereign Chen Ling's betrayal was because of the latter being forced to assume a secondary position in the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe. Who would have thought that the dissatisfactions actually originated from the Spirit God!

The reason that the Spirit God had stopped them from launching an attack was because she did not wish to see harm come to the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe or mankind. The tables were gradually turning, especially with Zhang Xuan's appearance. Yet, Sovereign Chen Ling actually thought of her actions as a limitation?

"Of course not. Who am I to question the judgement of the Spirit God? However, if you meet your end, I will be the strongest Otherworldly Demon Emperor of the Spirit Tribe. I will become the very oracle of the Spirit God, and my words will become her decree! The Spirit God might be powerful, but traversing across the dimension barrier is no easy feat. Even the gods suffer a tremendous backlash trying to do so. Otherwise, she wouldn't have been forced to recuperate in the Master Teacher Continent for half a year!" Sovereign Chen Ling sneered coldly.

"Rest assured! After you meet your end, I'll report to the Spirit God that you were killed by the Hundred Schools of Philosophers and Master Teacher Pavilion. I rushed over as quickly as I could, but it was already too late by then. Before your death, you passed your position as the highest leader of the Spirit Tribe over to me, instructing me to lead the entire Spirit Tribe. I'll use your life to fuel the Spirit Tribe's motivation and unite them against mankind!"

"You..." Sovereign Chen Yong glared at Sovereign Chen Ling coldly.

That fellow had already planned out everything!

He had been thinking that his subordinates would exact vengeance for him if Sovereign Chen Ling and the others killed him, but from the looks of it, all along, Sovereign Chen Ling had been planning to pin everything on the Hundred Schools of Philosophers and the Master Teacher Pavilion. Not

only would he be spared from the backlash, he would also be able to provoke the resentment of the Spirit Tribe and use them to further his ambitions!

Hearing those words, Ancient Sage Yan Qing's face warped in horror. "Sovereign Chen Ling, have you forgotten the promise you made me?"

He had thought that killing Sovereign Chen Yong would inflict severe damage upon the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe, causing them to scatter apart and possibly descend into anarchy. Yet, contrary to his expectations, the belligerent faction was not that of Sovereign Chen Yong but Sovereign Chen Ling!

If Sovereign Chen Yong died, it was likely that the situation would run out of control!

"Don't worry, I'll surely abide by my promise. However, whether you'll really get three hundred years or not, that is something that we will have to discuss further..." Sovereign Chen Ling laughed heartily.

If it was mankind that had obtained the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn, the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe would probably have had to lie low for some time. However, since the ultimate treasure had been obtained by the Spirit God, and the Ancient Sages of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers and Master Teacher Pavilion had sustained severe injuries...

Was it not the ideal chance for their Spirit Tribe to launch a counterattack?

"What do you mean by that?" Ancient Sage Yan Qing roared furiously as he raised his halberd menacingly.

The other Ancient Sages also swiftly grouped together, fearing that the two Sovereigns would make a move on them.

Just a single Sovereign Chen Yong was enough to wreck their forces. If the other Sovereigns made a move on them, they would truly be in a perilous situation.

Seeing the wary look on Ancient Sage Yan Qing's face, Sovereign Chen Ling knew that if he said the wrong things at this moment, there was a good chance that the Hundred Schools of Philosophers would go all out to drag him down

with them even at the cost of their lives. “I don’t mean anything by that. Since we are allies, there’s no way I’d make a move on you. If I did, I would suffer a backlash from the vow I made. Rest assured, we’ll discuss the future plans between our races once I’m done getting rid of him!”

He knew that the most important thing at hand was not to fall out with mankind but to kill Sovereign Chen Yong and consolidate his power.

Only when he had the entire Otherworldly Demonic Tribe under his control would he be qualified to consider whether they should battle or respect the agreement.

With an eerie smile, he turned toward Sovereign Chen Yong and said, “Farewell. You have been a difficult opponent to deal with, but it’s time for you to meet your end!”

With a cold harrumph, he raised his palm and thrust it forward.

It was as if someone had flipped the world upside down. A strength powerful to the extremities crushed the surrounding space, compressing everything in its way to Sovereign Chen Yong.

1777 The Final Card

“Humph! If you thought that I would go down without a fight, you thought wrong!”

Seeing that the other party had decided to sever their ties once and for all and make a move on him, Sovereign Chen Yong raised his saber, and a pitch-black flame engulfed his entire weapon. It was as if he had summoned the Heavenly Flame Ordeal.

The strongest battle technique of Sovereign Chen Yong,
Herald of the Celestial Flame!

A flash of a saber carrying unparalleled sharpness and the destructive might of a Heavenly Flame; there was nothing in this world that could withstand its might!

“Heh!”

As if knowing that Sovereign Chen Yong would make this move, Sovereign Chen Ling sneered coldly. Raising his palm, he exerted immense pressure upon Sovereign Chen Yong, compressing the surrounding air to the point that it almost felt tangible to the touch.

Respected as the number one Otherworldly Demon Emperor, Sovereign Chen Yong wielded strength that far surpassed the others, such that a collaboration between Sovereign Chen Ling and Sovereign Chen Xing would not even faze him.

However, at that moment, due to his severe injuries, his strength was not even close to a tenth of his peak. As powerful as Herald of the Celestial Flame was, its might was severely diminished due to his weakened prowess.

As Sovereign Chen Ling’s palm strike collided with his saber, the flames were extinguished, and his saber flew away to somewhere beyond his reach.

Peng!

As if a cannonball, Sovereign Chen Yong was slammed forcefully to the ground. His face paled, and fresh blood spurted out of his body.

To be honest, it was a miracle that he was still alive given the injuries that he had sustained after the fight with the twenty Ancient Sages. There was no way that he could possibly stand up against an expert whose strength was near his level in his current state.

“Hahahaha!” Seeing that his attack had worked, Sovereign Chen Ling’s eyes glowed in exhilaration. “Sovereign Chen Yong, you have been in a position of dominance for so long. Did you ever think that you would land in such a state?”

As he spoke, he walked toward Sovereign Chen Yong a step at a time. Placing his feet triumphantly upon the chest of the defeated Sovereign Chen Yong, he burst into hearty laughter.

This was a man who was renowned for being peerless. He commanded might far surpassing anyone around him, and there was no one who did not fear him. Yet, he had still ended up beneath Sovereign Chen Ling’s feet, suffering a fate worse than death!

Suppressed under Sovereign Chen Ling’s feet, Sovereign Chen Yong was unable to move at all. With a livid expression on his face, he turned to the other Sovereign and said, “Sovereign Chen Xing, I have treated you with kindness. Are you certain you want to collude with him against me? If he’s able to turn his back against me, the same fate could very well befall you another day. As long as you help me tide through the difficulties today, I can overlook what has happened today, and everything will go back to what it was...”

“I...” Hearing those words, Sovereign Chen Xing fell into deep contemplation.

He had always played a neutral role in the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe. To be honest, he would never have chosen to betray Sovereign Chen Yong if he had any other choice.

Seeing that Sovereign Chen Xing was actually hesitating, Sovereign Chen Ling exclaimed in fury. “Sovereign Chen

Xing, from the moment that we decided to ally with one another, you stepped onto a path of no retreat. If he recovers to his peak, both you and I will be goners!”

Sovereign Chen Xing was a person of astounding strength and wits. However, if there was one flaw to be picked about him, it would be that he was too indecisive.

They had already gone so far, so how could they possibly turn back? It was far too late for that!

“I’m sorry, Sovereign Chen Yong! The terms that Sovereign Chen Ling has offered me are simply too great for me to reject...”

Recalling the means of Sovereign Chen Ling and the terms that the other party had offered him, Sovereign Chen Xing hesitated for a brief moment before raising his palm to deal the killing blow against the floored Sovereign Chen Yong.

It was a strike that harnessed incredible prowess. If Sovereign Chen Yong failed to dodge it, his head would be burst into bits, and he would die on the spot.

As Sovereign Chen Xing’s palm swiftly approached Sovereign Chen Yong’s head, the latter did not seem to panic in the least. On the contrary, with a look of resignation on his face, he shook his head in disappointment.

“As much as I don’t want to acknowledge your betrayal, do you really think that I would get so careless, especially after the Spirit God went to the extent of warning me about my circumstances?”

“What?”

Seeing the look on his face, the two Sovereigns immediately felt a bad premonition. Sovereign Chen Ling bellowed, “Quick, kill him!”

They had no idea what Sovereign Chen Yong was up to, but they knew that it would be foolish to grant him the time that he needed to turn the tables on them.

However, before the palm could even strike its target, both Sovereign Chen Xing and Sovereign Chen Ling suddenly felt

a stabbing pain assaulting their chests. Lowering their heads, they saw two skeletal arms piercing through their chests from their backs.

Vicious' arms! Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Those two skeletal arms should have been restrained by the straw garment! The two Sovereigns knew that Vicious' arms were the greatest trump card of Sovereign Chen Yong, so they had specially prepared the straw garment to block them. Yet, who could have known that the skeletal arms would still be able to break free of the restraints to impale their hearts!

“You...”

Feeling their hearts being crushed by the skeletal arm, the two Sovereigns felt their strength receding by the ebbing tide. Their bodies jolted from the impact before their knees fell to the ground.

As Blood Reincarnation realm Ancient Sages, they were capable of reviving as long as a droplet of blood remained. However, that would require an immense amount of time and a huge accumulation of energy. Given how the two arms had crushed the source of their vitality in an instant, even if they were to survive the ordeal, their strength and lifespan would surely be severely compromised.

“The straw garment is an artifact left behind by Vicious himself, and it should be able to control his body. How could it...” Feeling his life force swiftly draining from his body, Sovereign Chen Ling was still unable to believe what was going on.

The straw garment that Bo Yu had brought out should have been able to control the consciousness sprouted in Vicious' body parts. It was something that Vicious had left behind in order to ensure that his body would eventually fuse together as one, thus allowing for his revival.

They had tested the artifact before and verified its effectiveness. It should have been able to keep the two skeletal

arms under control, so why was Sovereign Chen Yong still able to move them?

Struggling to his feet, Sovereign Chen Yong spat coldly as he panted heavily. “The consciousness sprouted within the skeletal arms has already been cleaned by the Spirit God and replaced with mine... I knew that the two of you were biding your time around the area, and I was waiting for this opportunity to deal with you two...”

By default, the various body parts of Vicious would eventually sprout their own consciousness, but through the means of the Spirit God, the consciousness in the skeletal arms had been wiped away and replaced with his own.

As such, not even the straw garment was able to bring the arms under its control.

When he heard earlier from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers that they had conspired together with the other two Sovereigns to kill him, he knew that the two Sovereigns would surely make their way over personally in order to ensure his death. Otherwise, there was no way that they would have been able to rest in peace.

As such, he had intentionally acted as if the skeletal arms were placed under the control of the straw garment in order to lower the two’s wariness and unleash this unexpected blow on them!

When he asked Sovereign Chen Xing for his help earlier, he had, in truth, been giving the latter one last chance to make his choice. However, since the latter had chosen to betray him, there was no need for him to stand on ceremony.

“You b*stard, I’ll kill you!”

Sovereign Chen Ling did not think that his plan would be foiled like that after all of the schemes that he had concocted. Overwhelmed with rage, he gritted his teeth and gathered all of the strength in his body.

Boom!

He forcefully jolted the skeletal arm out of his body before raising his palm to strike Sovereign Chen Yong.

Alas, before his palm could land on the other party, his figure suddenly vanished. It seemed as if he had leaped into a spatial passageway.

“Sovereign Chen Yong, I have underestimated you. I might have failed to kill you this time around, but I’ll have plenty of opportunities to do so in the future. Just wait and see...” His voice gradually grew fainter and fainter before turning completely silent.

Everyone had thought that Sovereign Chen Ling was going to make a move, but who could have known that he would flee instead?

“I... Wait for me...”

Seeing how his comrade had fled without him, there was no way that Sovereign Chen Xing would dare remain in the area. He quickly turned around and fled as well.

With the departure of the duo, Sovereign Chen Yong’s body wobbled weakly before falling back to the ground.

At the same time, the two skeletal arms that he had driven to assault the two Sovereigns seemed to have lost all strength and plummeted to the ground as well. At that moment, he looked incredibly frail.

Despite the imposing airs that he had put on earlier, the truth was that he had already completely depleted himself. Had those two Sovereigns been any more courageous, he would have lost his life there and then!

There was absolute silence for a moment before Ancient Sage Yan Qing and the others flew over to Sovereign Chen Yong’s side.

“Sovereign Chen Yong, you don’t stand a chance against us in your current state. End your own life and preserve your dignity!”

The two Sovereigns might have escaped, but they were still around.

“You want me to end my own life?” Surrounded by so many Ancient Sages, Sovereign Chen Yong knew that there was no

way that he would be able to leave alive. A look of resignation flickered across his face as he sighed deeply. “Who could have known that I would lose my life like this?”

Raising his palm, Sovereign Chen Yong prepared to strike his hand on his forehead.

At this crucial moment, Zhang Xuan rushed over and bellowed, “Hold it!”

1778 Sovereign Chen Yong Mustn't Die!

Zhang Xuan clasped his fist respectfully and asked, "Will you allow me to speak first?"

One of the Ancient Sages harrumphed coldly. "This is a matter among the Ancient Sages! Who do you think you are to interfere in our discussions?"

He was already growing impatient with this impertinent young man.

Putting aside how he had exploited them earlier by selling them the slots at exorbitant prices, just the fact that he had personally brought the Spirit God of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe into the Prime Hall to steal the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn was enough for him to be branded as an unpardonable criminal of mankind!

The Great Codex of Spring and Autumn was a treasure left behind by Kong shi, and the fate of mankind banked on it. Yet, it had fallen into the hands of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe, thus placing the fate of mankind in jeopardy.

After sinning so terribly, he still had the cheek to interfere in their affairs and save Sovereign Chen Yong. Filled with rage, he turned to the young man and hollered at him.

Huala!

Barely after those words were spoken, a saber flashed across the air. Alarmed, the Ancient Sage hurriedly backed away, but even so, he was still cut by the edge of the blade. Fresh blood trickled down from his arm.

Turning back to look, he saw the young man wielding a saber that emanated a sinister light from its blade.

"Am I qualified now?" Zhang Xuan remarked coldly.

"You are courting death!"

As a proud Ancient Sage, there was no way that he could stand being assaulted by a junior many generations younger than him, not to mention that the junior was a mere Great Sage!

Were it not for the fact that he had sustained severe injuries from the fight with Sovereign Chen Yong earlier, there was no way that an artifact that had barely reached Ancient Sage could possibly have harmed him!

Ancient Sage Yan Qing raised his hand to calm down the raging Ancient Sage before turning to Zhang Xuan with a deep frown. “What do you intend to say?”

He did not expect the young man to be so extreme as to harm one of his comrades over something as minor as this.

“Sovereign Chen Yong mustn’t be killed just yet!” Zhang Xuan said.

“He mustn’t be killed?” The Ancient Sage who had just been injured by the Infernal Black Saber flew into a rage after hearing those words. Flinging his sleeves, he roared, “Do you know how many experts of mankind he has killed over the years? As a master teacher, how can you plead for mercy for him instead of avenging your comrades? Zhang Hongtian, is these the kind of principles that your Zhang Clan and the Master Teacher Pavilion pass down to juniors?”

Zhang Hongtian was not so shallow as to be provoked by the Ancient Sage’s words so easily, but the slight frown between his brows showed his incomprehension toward the actions of his descendant.

As long as Sovereign Chen Yong was around, the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe would only grow stronger and stronger. He was the figure who held the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe together, and it was under his leadership that countless humans had been killed across many battlefields over the years. It had not been easy for them to acquire this opportunity to get rid of Sovereign Chen Yong, and there was no way that they were going to allow this opportunity to slip through their fingers so easily.

If they allowed this tiger to return to his mountain, there was no telling how many more humans would be killed once he recovered from his injuries.

This descendant of his had displayed keen discernment in his judgement thus far, so why would he suddenly become so foolish when it came to this matter?

“Please don’t drag the Zhang Clan and the Master Teacher Pavilion into this matter. This is my individual decision, and it has nothing to do with them!” Zhang Xuan replied sharply.

There were several major reasons that he was determined to save Sovereign Chen Yong, and the greatest one was Luo Ruoxin. The latter had been serving as Luo Ruoxin’s subordinate for a period of time, so if anyone in this world had a clue as to how he could get to her, it would definitely be Sovereign Chen Yong!

If Sovereign Chen Yong died there, his final clue would effectively be severed. This was something that he could not allow to happen.

“Individual decision? As a mere Great Sage, do you think that the decisions you make can sway the minds of us Ancient Sages?” another human Ancient Sage scoffed in response to Zhang Xuan’s words. “Do you think that you are worthy of standing in our midst just because you have an Ancient Sage weapon? You really think too highly of yourself!”

“You’re right. There’s no way I would be qualified to speak to you all just because I have an Ancient Sage artifact...” Zhang Xuan swept his gaze across the Ancient Sages around him before raising the Infernal Blacksaber once more.

Si la!

The saber sliced through space and time, arriving right before Old Geezer Yu in an instant.

“The heck!” Old Geezer Yu cursed indignantly.

Screw you! Even if you wish to establish your strength and make others value your opinion, you don’t have to use me as a punching bag. There are so many other people that you can hack, so why me?

How the heck did I offend you?

Feeling deeply stifled, Old Geezer Yu swiftly darted to the side.

While he was the least wounded, he had still sustained a fair amount of damage, causing his strength to be lowered to around thirty percent of his peak. Nevertheless, he was not an opponent that the Infernal Blacksaber, which had achieved a breakthrough to Ancient Sage not too long ago, could compare to.

Dodging the attack, Old Geezer Yu was just about to counterattack when his body suddenly froze. He felt himself being overwhelmed by a powerful aura.

“Sovereign Vicious?” Old Geezer Yu narrowed his eyes in horror.

Even though the aura was devoid of killing intent, as an Otherworldly Demon, he could instantaneously recognize it as his ancestor, Vicious, who had fought on equal grounds with Kong shi.

Due to the Zhenqi of Slaughter that the Otherworldly Demons practiced, the suppression exerted through bloodline was exceptionally powerful. This was also why the hierarchy was extremely rigid in the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe.

Puhe!

In the blink of an eye, the Infernal Blacksaber had already struck one of the flaws in his cultivation. His face turned pale, and fresh blood spewed out of his mouth. His body swiftly retreated into the distance before smashing heavily into the ground.

“Is such strength enough to qualify me to speak to you all?” Zhang Xuan asked coolly.

Old Geezer Yu was an Ancient Sage 3-dan Blood Reincarnation realm expert whereas the Infernal Blacksaber was an artifact that had just barely reached Ancient Sage. Under normal circumstances, it would have been impossible for the latter to injure Old Geezer Yu.

However, through Vicious' suppression and exploiting the flaws in Old Geezer Yu's cultivation, not to mention that the latter had sustained severe injuries in the fight with Sovereign Chen Yong, Zhang Xuan managed to pull the assault off.

"... Fine, we'll acknowledge your strength. You are indeed qualified to speak with us. However, I expect you to come up with a sufficiently convincing reason that can persuade us!"

Even though Zhang Xuan's movements were swift, the Ancient Sages were still able to notice that something was amiss. It was clear that the young man had some trump card other than the Infernal Blacksaber, and the two of them put together were enough to wound even Bo Yu. On that basis, it was clear that he was qualified to speak on equal terms with them.

Zhang Xuan looked over and said, "I don't know about the matter of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers collaborating with Sovereign Chen Ling and Sovereign Chen Xing to deal with Sovereign Chen Yong. However, I believe that you should have felt Sovereign Chen Ling's belligerence earlier. Do you really expect him to hold up to the end of his promise? Just think about it. Had Sovereign Chen Yong not injured him, do you think that you could trust him not to have made a move on the rest of us?"

The crowd fell silent upon hearing those words.

To be honest, if not for Sovereign Chen Yong's trump card, it was very likely that Sovereign Chen Ling would have broken his promise and made a move on the rest of them.

Perhaps... that fellow might even have planned that from the very start. He had been biding his time till both they and Sovereign Chen Yong were severely injured so that he could kill two birds with one stone.

If they had lost their lives there, the Master Teacher Continent would have effectively lost its final layer of protection. There were still Ancient Sages who did not go to the Temple of Confucius for both the Hundred Schools of Philosophers and the Master Teacher Continent, but they were insufficient to pose a threat to the other two Sovereigns.

“Sovereign Chen Ling is someone who could betray even his own tribesmen. Do you think that he would have any qualms breaking his agreement with you? I know that you have probably taken some precautions to prevent him from reneging on his deal, and you might also see this as an ideal opportunity to assassinate Sovereign Chen Yong and unravel the unity of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe...

“If you had succeeded earlier without sustaining any wounds, it would indeed have been a good thing. You would have been able to exploit the temporary chaos amidst the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe from the loss of their highest leader to deal a decisive blow. However, that might not necessarily be so given the current state of affairs. Just imagine what will happen if Sovereign Chen Yong dies, and Sovereign Chen Ling returns to tell the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe that he was ambushed and killed by us, and that he was nearly killed too while trying to save him... If he were to do so, he will be able to swiftly build solidarity among the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe and unite them. I believe that you should be able to see the consequences of that even if I don't elaborate further!” Zhang Xuan said.

“This...” Ancient Sage Yan Qing fell into deep contemplation. Indeed. If Sovereign Chen Yong really died there, Sovereign Chen Ling could make use of that impetus to unite the entire Otherworldly Demonic Tribe. That would effectively place mankind into even deeper danger.

1779 You Owe the Master Teacher Pavilion an Explanation

After a long moment of contemplation, Ancient Sage Yan Qing turned around and asked, “What do you suggest then?”

“It’s very simple. Not only must we not allow Sovereign Chen Yong to die, we should also help him recover from his injuries. After that, we should take him back to the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe and help him exact vengeance! Sovereign Chen Ling and Sovereign Chen Xing might be weaker than him, but as two of the Three Sovereigns, it would be naive to assume that we would be able to deal with them easily... If we can turn this into an internal strife among the Otherworldly Demons, mankind will be granted some breathing space, and perhaps, an opportunity that we can exploit will arise!” Zhang Xuan said.

They were speaking through telepathic communication, and Ancient Sage Yan Qing had also isolated space in advance. As such, Sovereign Chen Yong was unable to listen to the contents of their conversation.

“Sovereign Chen Yong is currently filled with hatred for the other two Sovereigns who have betrayed him. He will probably think of murdering them even in his dreams. If we can make use of this opportunity to get him to sign a non-aggression agreement with us, it will be to our benefit to have him re-establish control over the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe!” Zhang Xuan continued.

“There’s some sense to what he’s saying!” Zhang Hongtian nodded in agreement.

Since it was possible for them to sign an agreement with Sovereign Chen Ling, there was no reason that they could not sign an agreement with Sovereign Chen Yong.

Given Sovereign Chen Yong's influence in the clan, if he agreed to work with them, it was likely that the effects would be far better.

“You are right. It's true that we should indeed spare Sovereign Chen Yong for the time being. However, there are some matters that I think you have failed to consider in your plans!” Ancient Sage Yan Qing said.

“Firstly, once Sovereign Chen Yong recovers, his strength will far surpass ours. If he turns against us, the Master Teacher Pavilion and the Hundred Schools of Philosophers will barely be able to defend ourselves. Secondly, he's extremely skilled in warfare. Furthermore, he has fought with the forces of mankind for many years and has even snuck into the Master Teacher Pavilion headquarters before, so he has a very clear idea of our military might. If we spare him, he could potentially become the greatest threat to mankind!

“Last but not least, the injuries that we have sustained are simply too great. We don't have sufficient Aeon of Ancient Sage to support us, and our lifespans are reaching their limit. We won't be able to protect mankind for much longer...”

In truth, the Hundred Schools of Philosophers had also considered such a possibility. They knew that ambushing Sovereign Chen Yong would not solve the matter once and for all, and greater trouble could arise due to it.

However, they did not see any other path.

Ten thousand years ago, when the Aeon of Ancient Sage vanished from the world, the human Ancient Sage cultivators could only go into hibernation in order to protect whatever they had for as long as possible.

In other words, of their group, even the youngest Zhang Hongtian was already 10,500 years old. If they did not sustain injuries that were too severe, they might still be able to live for a while longer. However, given the current states that they were in, it was likely that they would only be able to fight two more good battles before finally meeting their end.

To make matters worse, they had failed to obtain the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn. It could be said that mankind was in its weakest state in the past tens of thousands of years.

There was no doubt that Sovereign Chen Yong was far more capable than the other two Sovereigns, both in terms of fighting prowess and military warfare. Mankind might be in its weakened state, but it would at least stand a chance with those two as its opponents. If they let Sovereign Chen Yong off, it could very well spell their doom.

The expressions of the Ancient Sages in the area turned livid as they lowered their heads.

It could not be helped that the lifespan of mankind could not come close to matching that of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe. These were the cards that mankind had been dealt, and they could only try to make the best out of it.

With the limitations of their lifespans and the absence of Aeon of Ancient Sage... so long as they were unable to produce newer Ancient Sages steadily, it would only be a matter of time before they were slowly ground to death.

“This is a very simple problem,” Zhang Xuan said. “I can just plant an irresolvable lethal poison in his body. If he dares to renege the promise that we have made and attacks mankind, that poison will ensure his death. The other two Sovereigns will already be dead by then, so mankind won’t be in so much danger even if mankind doesn’t have any Ancient Sages remaining then. Furthermore, Yang shi has just made a breakthrough, and it was likely that more Ancient Sages will emerge in time. There’s no need to worry too much about security!”

Even though the Canvas of Four Seasons contained the Aeon of Ancient Sage, there was a limit to how much was in there. It might not even be enough for his parents, himself, and his disciples to achieve breakthroughs, so it was not convenient for him to share it with others.

“What kind of poison could still be effective on Blood Reincarnation realm cultivators?” Ancient Sage Yan Qing was stunned.

Blood Reincarnation realm cultivators were able to create a new life through even just a droplet of blood. Be it their physical body or soul, they were already completely free of impurities, thus making it nigh impossible to afflict them with poison.

Were there still poisons in the world which could affect experts of such caliber?

“You need not worry about that. Since I’ve made such a claim, it goes without saying that I am confident!” Zhang Xuan chuckled softly.

Ordinary poison would indeed be ineffective against experts of Sovereign Chen Yong’s caliber, but the Heaven’s Path zhenqi was extremely fine and could dive into any single part of the body. If needed, it could even divide itself and hide in every single droplet of blood in a cultivator’s body, thus making it extremely difficult to guard against it.

With zhenqi that could destroy their vitality within their body, even Blood Reincarnation realm cultivators would have a huge headache trying to cope with it.

As long as they were unable to rid themselves of it, they would forever be controlled by it.

There was a moment of silence before Ancient Sage Yan Qing finally relented with a nod. “We are willing to believe in you, and we can deal with Ancient Sage Yan Qing as you have suggested. However, don’t you think that you owe mankind an explanation as well?”

“Me?”

“You brought the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe’s Spirit God into the Prime Hall, allowing her to successfully assimilate the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn, thus causing this opportunity to slip through the fingers of mankind. It’ll be impossible for you to keep this matter under wraps, and the escaped Sovereign Chen Ling and the others have already started spreading the news around. If you don’t offer an explanation, all of the master teachers and humans in the world would view you as an outsider. You will find no place

for yourself within the Master Teacher Pavilion anymore!” Ancient Sage Yan Qing said.

Zhang Xuan fell silent. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

He had been unaware that Luo Ruoxin’s true identity was the Spirit God. However, there was no one in the world who would believe or accept such an explanation.

The Great Codex of Spring and Autumn was the ultimate treasure that Kong shi had left behind for the later generations, but it had ended up being obtained by the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe. Just because of that, it would be impossible for others to forgive him.

Once the news spread, it could be foreseen that the master teachers and humans all over the world would begin viewing him in hostility. No matter how he tried to explain himself, he would be an outcast.

To have the Spirit God as one’s girlfriend... there was no one who would believe that he was completely unaffiliated with the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe!

Even if he could explain everything perfectly to them, they would only question him on the things he had not done. He had grabbed Luo Ruoxin’s hand back then, so why did he not snatch the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn back from her?

No matter how great a contribution he had made in the past, this was an error fatal, bad enough to turn him into the sworn enemy of the whole of mankind. He was already cornered, and it was unlikely that he would be able to make a comeback.

Taking a deep breath, Zhang Xuan spoke resolutely. “I’ll give the Master Teacher Pavilion and the world a satisfactory explanation!”

“That would be for the best...” Seeing that the young man had caught his drift, Ancient Sage Yan Qing nodded before falling silent.

He could not be bothered to make a move on a mere Aureate Body realm cultivator.

Zhang Xuan drove his Heaven's Path zhenqi into Sovereign Chen Yong's body and concealed it all around. At the same time, he took out some pills to help him recover from his injuries.

However, the injuries that Sovereign Chen Yong had incurred were simply too heavy, such that it had shaken his very foundation and longevity. Ordinary pills were not of much use to him.

“Thank you for saving my life, Young Master... Death is no longer something that scares me, but before I meet my end, I must drag those two down with me!”

Sovereign Chen Yong did not know the content of their conversation, but he knew that it was Zhang Xuan who had pleaded on his behalf. Thus, he stood up and clasped his fist in gratitude.

He had not paid too much heed to Sovereign Chen Ling and Sovereign Chen Xing in the past, but who could have known that it would be his greatest ever blunder?

Since he was able to return alive, he was determined to make them suffer his wrath and pay the price for their actions.

“There's no need to stand on ceremony!” Zhang Xuan replied.

Following which, he looked at Sovereign Chen Yong questioningly and asked, “What's your relationship with Vicious?”

1780 Zhang Hongtian vs. Bo Yu

Sovereign Chen Yong was able to use his blood to drive Vicious' skeletal arms, and that only pointed at a single possibility. He shared the same blood origin as Vicious.

“He's my grandfather!” Sovereign Chen Yong replied without hiding anything.

“Grandfather?” Zhang Xuan was taken aback.

He did not think that their relationship would actually be so close. He had thought that they would be many generations apart.

Vicious was an expert who had lived tens of thousands of years ago, yet Sovereign Chen Yong was still alive despite being his grandson. The longevity of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe was truly frightening.

“The Spirit God told me that you have already gathered much of my grandfather's body parts, Young Master, and she instructed me to coordinate with you on this matter. Since that's the case, I'll give this pair of arms to you. Even though it's insufficient to allow my grandfather to return to his peak, it should be sufficient for him to recover to the Blood Reincarnation realm!”

With a flick of his wrist, the two arms on the ground flew over to Zhang Xuan's side.

“Thanks!”

It was true that he was collecting Vicious' body parts. Since Sovereign Chen Yong was willing to give the arms to him, he had no intention of standing on ceremony.

He took out a Book of Heaven's Path, and before long, the arms had already fully fused with the Vicious sealed within the book.

Sensing the perfect fusion of the arms with the body, which meant that Vicious did not go into hibernation as a result of the conflicting wills among the body parts, Zhang Xuan asked doubtfully, “You have removed the consciousness inside the arms?”

“The Spirit God helped me to remove the consciousness within the skeletal arms and replaced it with my own will. Since I’m giving them to you, Young Master, I dare not to leave my own consciousness within,” Sovereign Chen Yong explained. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Having witnessed the young man’s unbelievable talent and his relationship with the Spirit God, Sovereign Chen Yong dared not to disrespect him.

As Sovereign Chen Ling and Sovereign Chen Xing had not had much contact with the Spirit God, they were not clear of just how powerful the Spirit God was. However, there was no way that Sovereign Chen Yong could be unaware of it.

If the Spirit God truly released her powers, the entire Master Teacher Continent would be destroyed!

How could a person who could catch the eye of the Spirit God possibly be average?

In view of that, Sovereign Chen Yong would not give up on any opportunity to establish goodwill with the young man. Besides, the young man had also just saved his life.

“Thank you.” Zhang Xuan heaved a sigh of relief.

Vicious was one of his greatest trump cards at the moment, and it would be a pity if Vicious fell into a coma as a result of conflicting wills. As long as Vicious obtained sufficient energy, he would be able to recover to his peak soon enough!

With a tap of his finger, a jade bottle was brought into the Library of Heaven’s Path. It was filled with the Otherworldly Demon Ancient Sage blood that he had gathered thus far.

Vicious swiftly took in the Otherworldly Demon Ancient Sage blood, and the next instant, incredible energy was surging through his body.

“Reinforce your cultivation,” Zhang Xuan instructed before closing the Book of Heaven’s Path and stowing it back into the Library of Heaven’s Path.

“Right, Young Master! This is the straw garment that my grandfather left behind. If you assimilate it and fuse it together with his body, it’ll quicken the process which my grandfather is able to develop his flesh and blood at!” Sovereign Chen Yong said as he pointed at the artifact above.

“It’ll help Vicious develop flesh and blood?” Zhang Xuan’s eyes lit up upon hearing those words.

According to Vicious, the fastest way to quicken his revival was to devour the flesh and blood of master teachers. As such, while some parts of Vicious’ body had already developed flesh and blood, others like the upper body remained as skeleton.

Naturally, Zhang Xuan would not resort to such means, so he had put off the matter so far.

If the straw garment was really able to help Vicious develop blood and flesh, that would enhance Vicious’ fighting prowess significantly.

Zhang Xuan leaped up and reached out for the straw garment.

Upon seeing Zhang Xuan’s actions, the face of Old Geezer Yu, who was in the midst of recuperating from his injuries, darkened. “What are you doing? That’s a property of Sovereign Chen Ling!”

However, before he could finish his words, a burst of sword qi suddenly surged in his direction.

Puhe! Puhe!

Two bloodied holes were torn through his body as fresh blood spurted frenziedly from his mouth.

“Zhang Hongtian, what the heck are you trying to pull?” Old Geezer Yu roared in fury.

The person who had just made a move was none other than Zhang Xuan's predecessor, Zhang Hongtian!

It was just a moment ago that they had put aside their differences to deal with Sovereign Chen Yong together. Why would the other party suddenly make a move on him?

"What am I trying to pull here? Nothing much, really. It was with no other options that I collaborated with you to deal with Sovereign Chen Yong, but don't you think that it's about time for us to resolve our personal grudges?" Zhang Hongtian scoffed coldly as he raised the sword in his hand imposingly.

He did not want to hinder the plans of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers earlier, so he had no choice but to temporarily work together with the Ancient Sages of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe. However, with the matter regarding Sovereign Chen Yong resolved, it was about time for them to resolve their grudges.

"You want to kill me? Do you think that I'm afraid of you?" Old Geezer Yu stood up and roared. "However, let's make things clear first. If you lose, you'd better obediently step aside and allow us to leave!"

It was not that he chose to foolishly linger around the area after the end of the battle, but with the Ancient Sages of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers and the Master Teacher Pavilion eyeing them warily, they dared not to make a move recklessly.

Since Zhang Hongtian was intending to resolve their personal differences, it would be good if they could settle the both of them together.

Old Geezer Yu knew that the humans would attempt to make a move on them after dealing with Sovereign Chen Yong, so he had intentionally held back a little during the battle earlier. As such, the injuries that he had sustained were significantly lighter than Zhang Hongtian's. If they faced one another in a battle, it was hard to tell who the ultimate victor would be.

"I'll agree to your request!" Zhang Hongtian nodded. He turned to the crowd and said, "Today, I'll be settling the

personal grudges between me and Old Geezer Yu. If I lose by any chance, it will be due to my own weakness. I'll have to ask you not to exact vengeance for me and allow him to leave!"

"Brother Hongtian..." Ancient Sage Yan Qing frowned.

He did not think that the other party would abruptly make such a decision, and he did not think that it was a good idea either given the state that Zhang Hongtian was in.

"My mind is made up!" Zhang Hongtian waved his hand resolutely.

This was not a spontaneous decision from his side. He had been thinking about the matter for quite a while.

With the severe injuries that he had sustained in the battle with Sovereign Chen Yong, he had realized that he would not be able to look over the Zhang Clan for much longer. It was long overdue for him to entrust the responsibility to the newer generations to shoulder.

He had a very favorable view of the current head of the Zhang Clan, and he believed that the Zhang Clan would prosper under his leadership. As someone whose time was nearly up, the last gift that he could offer the Zhang Clan was to remove one of the threats lurking around it.

With this, he would be able to face his predecessors and brothers who had died protecting the Zhang Clan and mankind. This would be the final sacrifice that he made for mankind.

Having made up his mind, Zhang Hongtian slashed out a deluge of sword qi toward Old Geezer Yu, engulfing the latter in devastating attacks.

"Humph!"

Seeing that Zhang Hongtian's might had dwindled significantly due to his injuries, Old Geezer Yu heaved a sigh of relief. Concentrating his zhenqi on his arms, a pair of phantasmagoric claws overlapped with his hands.

Ding ding ding ding!

The two Ancient Sage experts began clashing with one another.

As Blood Reincarnation realm experts, they had many tricks up their sleeves. For the moment, they seemed to be equally matched with one another.

“Brother Hongtian overexerted himself in the battle against Sovereign Chen Yong earlier, and he has sustained significant injuries in the battle as well. I fear that he won’t be an opponent for Old Geezer Yu,” one of the Ancient Sages of the Master Teacher Pavilion remarked worriedly.

“Old Geezer Yu is incredibly cunning. By going on the defensive, it’s apparent that he’s trying to stall for time till Brother Hongtian runs out of stamina before launching a counterattack. Should we step in and help him?” an Ancient Sage from the Hundred Schools of Philosophers asked.

The movements of the two Ancient Sages were sharp and ingenious, and it seemed as if they were equally matched with one another. However, the Ancient Sages could easily tell that Zhang Hongtian’s strength was far beneath what he was usually capable of, and he would only continue growing weaker throughout the course of the battle. If it continued, even his life would be threatened!

In comparison, Old Geezer Yu was much more energetic. He had been flitting around the area, finding opportunities to slip blows in.

“Rest assured! Brother Hongtian will not lose!” Yang shi chuckled softly.

“He won’t lose?”

The other two Ancient Sages who had been speaking a moment earlier were slightly perplexed by those words.

As veteran Ancient Sages, it was apparent to them that Zhang Hongtian was in a disadvantageous position. Yet, as an Ancient Sage who had made a breakthrough not too long ago, how could Yang shi be so certain that Zhang Hongtian would win?

Yang shi noticed the doubt in their voices, but he did not explain himself. Instead, he turned his gaze toward the young man in the sky, who was in the midst of assimilating the straw garment.

Earlier, that young man had given Zhang Hongtian a jade token filled with the flaws of Old Geezer Yu's cultivation. With such knowledge, Zhang Hongtian's victory was practically guaranteed!

1781 Zhang Hongtian's Death

Just as Yang shi had guessed, the reason that Zhang Hongtian dared to challenge Old Geezer Yu and even agreed to his conditions was because he knew the flaws in the latter's moves.

It might seem as if he was in a disadvantageous position, but in truth, he was also looking for an opportunity to inflict a critical hit and kill Old Geezer Yu in a single strike.

Endless sword qi warped into many dragons that swept across the sky, forcing Old Geezer Yu to swipe his phantasmagoric claws upward.

“This is the moment!”

Seeing that there was an opening in Old Geezer Yu's movements just as Zhang Xuan had said, Zhang Hongtian immediately concealed his sword in the midst of the soaring dragons to direct a jab toward Old Geezer Yu's blind spot.

Flowing Water Hidden Sword!

This was said to be a technique that had been created by a hopeless romantic sword genius in the Zhang Clan. After his spouse was killed by his enemies, he had spent many years perfecting this move in order to exact vengeance. He had known that his strength lay in maneuvering and concealing himself amid water, making it nigh impossible for his enemies to grasp hold of him, so he had waited patiently for the moment to pierce through his enemies' throats with a swift stab.

The technique that Zhang Hongtian was using to conceal his sword amid the dragons was similar.

“Break!”

As expected, Old Geezer Yu did not notice the sword. His phantasmagoric claws continued clawing fervently at the

incoming sword qi, warding them off.

Weng!

From the midst of one of the dragons, a long sword bolted forth, growing larger and larger in Old Geezer Yu's eyes.

But it happened that he had just pushed his speed to the limit, thus maximizing his momentum, rendering him powerless to dodge or protect himself.

Puhe!

The sword pierced right through Old Geezer Yu's throat, and devastating might poured forth to destroy the vitality within his body.

"Y-y-you... How could you have known that there's a hundredth of a second intermission at the end of this technique of mine?" Old Geezer Yu's eyes were widened in disbelief.

He dared not believe that he was going to lose his life just like that!

For the past ten thousand years, the two of them had fought on multiple battlefields, and they were already familiar with one another's techniques. It was true that Zhang Hongtian had always been slightly stronger than him, but even though Old Geezer Yu was unable to win against the other party, he had never faced any problem protecting himself.

But at that very moment...

The battle technique that he had just executed consisted of him launching swipes in quick succession with his phantasmagoric claws. On the seventeenth swipe, due to a trauma that he had sustained in the past, there would be a hundredth of a second opening in his movements. However, as the technique was simply too swift, the peers that he had cultivated with and even Sovereign Chen Ling were unaware of this opening.

How did Zhang Hongtian know about this opening of his and even sharply grasp the timing to breach his defenses?

"You have lost!" Zhang Hongtian uttered coldly as he raised his eyebrows imposingly.

Boom!

Endless sword qi exploded within Old Geezer Yu, causing his body to burst apart.

Tzzzzz!

A book swiftly flew over to devour the splattered flesh and blood of Old Geezer Yu.

Zhang Hongtian raised his head, only to see that Zhang Xuan had successfully tamed the straw garment and was looking over, clasping his fist. “Congratulations, old ancestor!”

“It’s due to your credit that I was able to kill him!” Zhang Hongtian chuckled heartily.

However, as soon as the tension left his body, his body collapsed weakly to the ground.

He had managed to kill Old Geezer Yu, but he had completely depleted himself in the midst of doing so.

“Old ancestor!”

Alarmed, Zhang Xuan rushed over and desperately infused his Heaven’s Path zhenqi into the body of the other party.

However, as if a sack filled with holes, Zhang Hongtian’s body was no longer able to retain energy.

“How could this be?” Zhang Xuan panicked.

He quickly took out a couple of grade-9 pills and fed them into Zhang Hongtian’s mouth.

His Heaven’s Path zhenqi had rarely failed him, and there were many times when he had brought others back from the gates of hell. This was the first time that it was proving to be completely useless.

Zhang Hongtian was the final Ancient Sage of the Zhang Clan, and Zhang Xuan was extremely fond of his personality and temperament. He could not allow anything to happen to him!

“Allow me to take a look!” Ancient Sage Yan Qing flew over and helped Zhang Hongtian up. Placing his finger on the latter’s pulse, he lowered his gaze contemplatively for a moment before shaking his head. “I’m afraid that he has

already reached the limit of his lifespan. There's nothing that you can do that will help him anymore."

"How can this be? He's the youngest of you lot! How could he have reached the end of his lifespan first?" Zhang Xuan refused to believe what he was hearing.

Zhang Hongtian was known as the most talented expert of his era, having reached Ancient Sage in his five hundreds. Even though ten thousand years had passed since then, he had spent most of his time in hibernation. In terms of lifespan, he should be able to outlive all of the other Ancient Sages!

How could he possibly have reached the end of his lifespan ahead of the others?

"He expended most of his blood essence in the battle with Sovereign Chen Yong earlier. In order to ensure that Old Geezer Yu is dead through and through, he went all out and overexerted himself. At this very moment, he's already completely dried out. There's nothing that you can do to save him."

The Ancient Sages gathered there knew that they did not have too long to live, but Ancient Sage Yan Qing still could not help but sigh in desolation upon seeing that another person of his era was going to meet his end.

Ancient Sages were able to reattach severed limbs and revive themselves from a mere droplet of blood, but they were unable to break free from their destiny and outlive the limits of their lifespan.

No matter how powerful a cultivator was, once they reached the limits of their lifespan, they would be reduced to a pile of dirt. No matter how nobly or humbly they had lived, this was the ultimate fate that awaited all life.

Even though Zhang Hongtian was comparatively younger than the Ancient Sages gathered there, he had gone all out in every battle that he had been in, causing a severe deficiency in his body's vitality. In fact, if not for the blood transfusion twenty years prior, he would have already met his end.

In a way, it was a miracle that he had lasted so long and even fought two good battles.

Zhang Xuan turned to Yang Xuan and exclaimed anxiously, “Yang shi, aren’t you able to transfuse bloodlines? Move my blood to the old ancestor. Perhaps, it might save his life...”

Looking at the flustered Zhang Xuan, Yang Xuan shook his head with bitter helplessness and said, “Senior... you have already transfused your blood to him once. Your blood won’t be effective on him anymore...”

“But...” Zhang Xuan wanted to argue the matter, but he was interrupted by Yang shi.

“Birth, ageing, affliction, and death; this is the natural cycle of life. Not even Ancient Sages are able to break out of this cycle. Back in its prime, the Zhang Clan was famed for its Nine Great Ancient Sages, and there was no one who didn’t look up to it. But as time went by, each of them turned into a tablet on top of an altar, becoming legends of the past that others recall now and then!”

Hearing those words, Zhang Xuan fell silent.

“There’s no need to grieve over me!” Zhang Hongtian looked at his descendant with a faint smile on his face. “The reason I held on for so long is because I’m the only Ancient Sage left in the Zhang Clan. If I had died, the entire clan would have fallen into decline... I’m really glad that you have appeared. With your ability, you would even be able to stand your ground against me. I have no more worries!”

“But...” Zhang Xuan’s eyes reddened.

“Life and death are part of the world’s natural cycle. From the moment that the Aeon of Ancient Sage vanished from the world and I decided to go into hibernation, Zhang Hongtian was already dead. The only reason I’ve been clinging on to life was to prolong the survival of the Zhang Clan and mankind!” Zhang Hongtian said deeply.

“Your appearance has liberated me of the responsibilities I shouldered. I can finally rest without any worries. This is not a sorrowful occasion but a happy one. The only remaining

concern I have is you. You are only an Aureate Body realm cultivator at the moment, but you will have to carry the entire Zhang Clan and perhaps even mankind as a whole. The path ahead of you will be fraught with even more difficulties than mine.”

As Zhang Hongtian spoke, he took a look at his surroundings and chuckled weakly.

“Alright, my friends. May we meet again in our next lives and fight together as brothers in arms! I’m feeling a little tired right now, so I’ll take my leave...”

And so, Zhang Hongtian closed his eyes one last time.

1782 Zhang Xuan Falls Into a Coma

“Brother Hongtian...”

Looking at the corpse before them, everyone was rendered silent. Grim looks could be seen all around the room.

This was especially for those from the Master Teacher Pavilion. They were incredibly silent.

They had fought together for almost ten thousand years, and they had known that such a parting would come from the very start. However, when the time eventually came, they still felt a little empty inside.

“Even those as powerful as Ancient Sages aren’t able to escape the laws of time!” Ancient Sage Yan Qing shook his head and sighed.

“Aren’t Ancient Sages existences who have exceeded the heavens? Why are they still controlled by the laws of the world?” Zhang Xuan asked.

As beings who were reputed to have exceeded the heavens, he found it incomprehensible that they were still limited by the laws of the world, incapable of controlling even their own life and death.

“Ancient Sages have exceeded the heavens, but only in the own laws they have comprehended,” Ancient Sage Yan Qing explained. “Brother Hongtian comprehended the law of swordsmanship, and his level of mastery even exceeded the heavens themselves. However, in other aspects, such as his own lifespan, he did not overcome the limitations of the world.”

Hearing those words, Zhang Xuan was stunned for a moment. “Swordsmanship? You are saying that... as long as one is able to surpass the heavens in single field, one will be qualified to become an Ancient Sage?”

He had heard bits and pieces about the prerequisites to pushing for a breakthrough to Ancient Sage from his father, Sword Saint Xing. However, Sword Saint Xing was only at Great Sage 4-dan Sempiternal realm, and the things that he knew were based on rumors passed down through the generations. It was inevitable that what he knew was limited compared to the top expert of the Hundred Schools of Philosophers.

“That’s right. Only those who have comprehended a law that surpasses the heavens will be able to ascend as Ancient Sages,” Ancient Sage Yan Qing replied.

“Isn’t time the field of specialty of the Zhang Clan? Why didn’t the old ancestor use his comprehension of time to push for a breakthrough to Ancient Sage?” Zhang Xuan asked once more.

The bloodline of the Zhang Clan harnessed the Time Quintessence.

Since that was the case, if Zhang Hongtian had pushed for a breakthrough using the Time Quintessence, would he not have been able to lengthen his lifespan and overcome the limitations of time?

“The temporal laws across various dimensions are all connected to one another in one way or another. This includes not just the Master Teacher Continent and the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe’s otherworldly battlefield but also higher worlds such as the one the Spirit God resides in. Even those who have grasped Time Quintessence would not have understood the temporal laws of the Master Teacher Continent. To truly overcome the heavens in this field is nigh impossible! Even Kong shi failed back then, let alone those who came after him!” Ancient Sage Yan Qing said with a bitter smile.

Time was one of the most fundamental laws of the universe. Even if the world collapsed, the Five Elements were extinguished, and space ceased to exist, time would still continue ticking by.

How could such a powerful rule possibly be mastered and controlled that easily?

If Kong shi had truly been able to comprehend temporal laws, he would not have vanished into the annals of history.

“You’re right...” Zhang Xuan nodded in agreement.

He was able to make use of the powers of his bloodline to influence the flow of time and hasten his movements, but he was unable to change the very essence of time.

“The essence of time is simply too difficult to comprehend. If I was able to comprehend it, perhaps I might still have been able to do something to save Old Ancestor Hongtian!” Zhang Xuan sighed deeply.

All of a sudden, his mind jolted. As if an earthquake had happened, the Library of Heaven’s Path in his mind began shaking intensely.

“This is bad...” Zhang Xuan narrowed his eyes in horror.

Before he could do anything, his vision turned dark.

Putong!

He collapsed to the ground.

“Senior!” Yang shi rushed forward.

Ancient Sage Yan Qing swiftly stepped forward to examine Zhang Xuan’s condition before frowning in bewilderment. “It seems to be some kind of deficiency in his soul?”

As a Great Sage cultivator, considering how Zhang Xuan had not been assaulted or attacked, how could an injury just appear in his soul all of a sudden? What in the world had happened?

“I specialize in the field of souls. Allow me to take a look!”

The Ancient Sage of the Jiang Clan stepped forward.

He quickly extended his soul energy toward Zhang Xuan, but before he could probe into Zhang Xuan’s body, his own body began to tremble. He hurriedly retreated a few steps backward as his face turned ghastly pale

“What happened?”

Seeing the state that the Ancient Sage of the Jiang Clan was in, everyone became perplexed.

“There’s some kind of peculiar energy protecting his soul. I’m unable to probe any deeper into his body!” the Ancient Sage of the Jiang Clan said.

“Some kind of peculiar energy is protecting his soul? Just what kind of energy is able to keep even you out?” Ancient Sage Yan Qing frowned in incomprehension.

As an Ancient Sage who specialized in the field of souls, it would be impossible for Ancient Sages of the same cultivation realm to ward off his probing. Considering how Zhang Xuan was unconscious, it was unimaginable for him to be able to be able to ward off the Jiang Clan Ancient Sage’s probing and even injure him.

“It seems to be...” The body of the Ancient Sage of the Jiang Clan stiffened as he spoke. “It seems to be the power of the heavens!”

“He’s protected by the heavens?”

Hearing those words, the crowd widened their eyes in astonishment as they turned their gazes toward Zhang Xuan once more.

To think that a Great Sage cultivator would actually be protected by the heavens.

What the heck was going on?

“Yang shi, I’ll leave you to protect him. If anything happens, liaise with me right away. Meanwhile, I’ll lead the others to reinforce the surrounding space. Without the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn and Kong shi’s seal keeping the place intact, the entire Temple of Confucius has already fallen into the void of spacetime. If we don’t drag it back soon, we’ll all be goners!” Ancient Sage Yan Qing said worriedly.

The stars had already vanished from the sky, indicating that they were no longer on Master Teacher Continent. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

“Yes!” Yang shi nodded.

“Alright, let’s get to action!” Ancient Sage Yan Qing said as he swiftly led the Ancient Sages away.

While the emergence of the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn and the major battles that had consequently broken out had damaged the Temple of Confucius significantly, it was still a sacred land left behind by Kong shi himself. As descendants of Kong shi’s lineage, they could not allow anything to happen to it.

As the crowd left, Yang shi lowered his gaze to the unconscious Zhang Xuan and frowned in concern. “Senior, just what has happened to you?”

...

Completely unaware of the happenings outside, at that very moment, Zhang Xuan was in a semiconscious state. It felt as if his consciousness had been stripped from his body.

Vaguely, he seemed to see a familiar silhouette ahead of him. She was looking at him with worry in her eyes.

“Ruoxin...” he muttered weakly.

“Don’t worry, I’m fine,” the young lady said. “You have to take care of yourself. Remember to keep my gift with you at all times. You mustn’t separate from it even for an instant.”

“You mean... the pendant? I have been keeping it close to me...” Zhang Xuan replied weakly. He tried to stand up, but his body felt heavy as though someone had filled it with lead.

Prior to entering the Temple of Confucius, Luo Ruoxin had given him a pendant. She had said that it was something given to her by her father, and it would save him during a crucial moment.

While he found her words inexplicable, he had made sure to keep it close to him at all times.

“That’s good... Zhang Xuan, I have to leave now. The artifact in the library is my final gift to you. Make use of it well... I’ll be waiting for you...”

Gradually, Luo Ruoxin’s voice and silhouette seemed to grow fainter and fainter, as if she would vanish at any moment.

“Library...? You... You know of the existence of the library?”
Zhang Xuan’s body stiffened upon hearing those words.

The Library of Heaven’s Path had always been his greatest secret, and he had never told anyone about it. All along, he had thought that Luo Ruoxin was oblivious to its existence, but who would have thought that she actually knew about it?

“Farewell, Zhang Xuan!”

With a bitter smile and longing in her eyes, Luo Ruoxin’s silhouette dissipated.

...

“No... don’t go!”

With a shout, Zhang Xuan’s body shot upright. It was only then that he noticed that it was all a dream.

“Teacher, you’re awake!”

Turning toward the voice, he saw Zhao Ya, Zheng Yang, and the others standing not too far away with concern rippling in their eyes.

His parents, the Xingmeng Sword Saints, were in the room as well.

Swiftly scanning his surroundings, Zhang Xuan asked, “Are we... out of the Temple of Confucius?”

1783 Finale at the Master Teacher Pavilion

Zhao Ya, Wei Ruyan, and Luo Qiqi had entered the Prime Hall with him, but due to them failing the trial, they had been teleported outside. Even though Zhang Xuan had not known where they went, he had been confident that they would not face any danger, so he did not worry too much about them.

As for Zheng Yang, he had not seen the young man ever since he entered the Temple of Confucius. However, based on what Zhao Ya had said, it seemed like he had stumbled upon some kind of fortuitous encounter.

The foreign surroundings around him and the fact that they were all gathered together likely meant that they had already left the Temple of Confucius and were currently somewhere else.

Wang Ying stepped forward and worriedly explained, “Un. We returned to the Master Teacher Pavilion with the other master teachers. Teacher, you have been unconscious for three days now...”

“Three days?” Zhang Xuan was taken aback.

He suddenly recalled his hazy conversation with Luo Ruoxin during this long sleep, and he quickly brought his consciousness into the Library of Heaven’s Path. To his surprise, however, he found that its massive doors had closed upon him. He tried pushing on the doors, but they would not budge at all.

It’s probably in the midst of an upgrade... Zhang Xuan thought calmly.

He had also been knocked out the previous time that the Library of Heaven’s Path underwent an upgrade, so he was not too worried.

The previous time, the upgrade had finished before he awoke, so he had been able to access it as soon as he was up. However, it seemed like he had roused from his sleep prematurely, so he probably would not be able to access it till the upgrades were finally complete.

Knowing that it would likely take a while longer, Zhang Xuan decided not to bother with it for the time being. Instead, he began to assess the crowd before him.

“Not bad. It seems like all of you have grown quite a bit in the journey through the Temple of Confucius,” Zhang Xuan complimented.

All of his students had reached Great Sage 4-dan Sempiternal realm consummation. Overwhelming energy surged through their bodies, and it seemed like they were ready to achieve a breakthrough at any moment.

So, in the very end, Zhang Xuan was back to being the weakest among them all.

Just thinking about the matter left him feeling rather stifled.

Sighing deeply, he turned his gaze toward his parents, and soon, his eyes lit up.

He had reserved two Bodhi Fruits for their consumption so that they would be able to push for a breakthrough in their Soul Depth, but it seemed like the two of them had encountered some kind of fortuitous encounter yet again and successfully made a breakthrough in their Soul Depth!

At their current level, it did not seem that they were far away from reaching Ancient Sage.

“I have a collaborative sword art here that the two of you should try practicing. I believe that it will be of some help to you in overcoming your current bottleneck!” Zhang Xuan pondered for a moment before tapping his finger lightly.

A cultivation technique manual was imprinted right into the minds of the Xingmeng Sword Saints.

He had browsed through innumerable books back on the mountain of books, thus granting him the knowledge required

to further improve the Xingmeng Sword Saints' collaborative swordsmanship. While it was still a distance away from surpassing the heavens, it would indubitably bring the Xingmeng Sword Saint a step closer toward a breakthrough.

As long as they cultivated it diligently, they would gradually become stronger and stronger. Eventually, a day would come when they finally stepped across the boundary to become full-fledged Ancient Sages, granting them the strength to imposingly lord over the entire world.

“Zheng Yang and Wang Ying, I'll give these two Bodhi Fruits to you together with this heart tempering cultivation technique. Cultivate it well!” Zhang Xuan turned to his students and entrusted the last two Bodhi Fruits to them.

His Soul Depth had already surpassed the threshold required for an Ancient Sage, so the Bodhi Fruits were no longer of any use to him. Rather than hoarding them, they would be put to better use with his students.

“This tree root is one of the cruxes of the six outer dimensions of the Temple of Confucius, and it possesses incredible spirit enchantment capabilities. Wang Ying, I want you to try to tame it. It'll be of immense use to you in furthering your abilities as a spirit awakener.

“Zheng Yang, I acquired this spear from one of the experts of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe. While it's inferior to my Dragonbone Divine Spear, it's still a Great Sage pinnacle artifact. It should boost your fighting prowess significantly...”

As Zhang Xuan had already tamed the cruxes of the six outer dimensions, it would be impossible for any other cultivators to claim possession of them. As soon as he left the Prime Hall, all of them had quickly left the area in pursuit of him and entered his storage ring.

“Lu Chong, I don't want you to think that I'm biased. Due to your powerful soul, you are able to raise your Soul Depth quickly, so the Bodhi Fruit isn't of much use to you. Instead, I'll give you the Seal of Souls. It's able to devour the souls of others and transform them into concentrated soul energy to nourish your body. I trust that you won't exploit its abilities for

malicious purposes. While Yuan Tao was the first one to undergo the Ancient Sage Ordeal, I believe that you are still the one most likely to first reach Ancient Sage!”

Zhang Xuan passed the Seal of Souls, which served as the mark of authority for the leader of the Soul Oracle Guild, over to Lu Chong.

If used well, the Seal of Souls could provide Lu Chong with an endless supply of concentrated soul energy. There was definitely no treasure better than this to a soul oracle.

As for the icy crystal, while it no longer harnessed any ice energy, it was still compatible with Zhao Ya’s Pure Yin Body, so Zhang Xuan gave it to her.

Similarly, the koi fish was given to Wei Ruyan, and the Five Monarchs were given to Yuan Tao.

...

After distributing his loot from the Temple of Confucius, Zhang Xuan entered the Canvas of Four Seasons. Not too long later, he returned with a slightly pale face.

“I have just sealed a portion Aeon of Ancient Sage into each of these paintings using my spatial art. Take one each,” he said as he distributed his paintings among the crowd. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Kong shi had been able to sever a portion of the world and seal it within a painting, sustaining it for tens of thousands of years without the slightest wear and tear. After reading countless books regarding painting back on the mountain of books, his comprehension of painting had also reached a similar level to Kong shi. With his current mastery, it was not too difficult for him to further sever the space within the Canvas of Four Seasons and distribute it.

With those paintings, even if he was not by their side, his parents and students would still be able to push for a breakthrough to Ancient Sage.

“Xuan-er, is there something wrong? I don’t know if I’m thinking too much, but it feels like something is weighing on your mind.”

Seeing her son unhesitatingly giving out the treasures that he had acquired with great difficulty back in the Temple of Confucius, Sword Saint Meng could not help but voice her concern.

It might just have been her imagination, but she vaguely felt that there was something amiss. Yet, she was unable to clearly put a finger on the matter.

It was true that the Zhang Clan had lost their final Ancient Sage, but Yang shi had already put the word out that anyone who dared to trouble the Zhang Clan would have to face his wrath.

Furthermore, her son’s weapon had also achieved a breakthrough to Ancient Sage. At the same time, Yuan Tao wielded strength comparable to nascent Ancient Sages.

In terms of fighting prowess, the Zhang Clan could be said to be even stronger than it had been before.

Of course, the loss of Zhang Hongtian, an Ancient Sage 3-dan Blood Reincarnation realm, was a huge blow to the Zhang Clan, but Yang shi and the Infernal Black Saber were Ancient Sages who did not have to go into hibernation and could move freely. Naturally, they were much more powerful deterrents than Zhang Hongtian despite their lower cultivation realms.

Without a doubt, the Zhang Clan was the greatest winner in the Temple of Confucius expedition, and it was pretty much guaranteed a bright future. Despite that, it felt like her son was in a rush to give out his possessions, as if he was running out of time...

“It’s nothing,” Zhang Xuan replied with a smile. He stood up and stretched his back lazily as he asked, “Did anyone from the Master Teacher Pavilion headquarters come over in the last three days?”

“Pavilion Master Ren from the Master Teacher Pavilion said for you to look for him after you awoke from your slumber,”

Sword Saint Xing said.

“I see... I’ll leave the rest of you to cultivate. Work hard and try to push for a breakthrough to Ancient Sage as soon as possible. Meanwhile, I’ll head over to the Master Teacher Pavilion headquarters,” Zhang Xuan said with a casual wave of his hand as he walked out of his room.

“Teacher, we’ll go with you,” Zhao Ya said.

For some reason, she felt a little unnerved as well, as if something bad was going to happen.

“None of you are to follow me!” Zhang Xuan instructed sternly. “No matter what happens, I want you to follow the directives of the Master Teacher Pavilion headquarters. Under no circumstances are you allowed to cause any trouble!”

“What’s going on?”

The crowd stared at one another in bewilderment, unable to comprehend what was going on. They could only watch in a daze as the young man’s silhouette vanished into a spatial passageway.

When Luo Ruoxin snatched the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn and was revealed to be the Spirit God, they had already left the premises of the Prime Hall. After that, they had been so worried about Zhang Xuan that they had hardly heard anything that was happening outside.

Just as they were wondering what was going on, a resounding voice echoed in the air, reverberating across the entire Master Teacher Continent.

“The head of the Zhang Clan, Zhang Xuan, has been found guilty of leading the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe’s Spirit God into the Prime Hall to steal the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn. While it was an unintentional lapse in judgement on his part, his actions have indubitably placed mankind in a perilous position. Out of sheer guilt, he chose to end his life at the Master Teacher Pavilion headquarters. May all master teachers and humans take this as a lesson to never be blinded by complacency. All it takes is a single error to plunge the whole of mankind into peril...”

“Teacher!”

“Xuan-er!”

Only at that instant did the crowd realize what was going on. Unable to believe what they were hearing, they dashed out of the room.

—

Whew, that’s finally another arc done. I’m thinking of having an AMA this weekend since we are already so many chapters in but haven’t really gotten to know one another yet. Anyway, I’ll post the details later on!

1784 Whisperings of the Night Clock Tower

Snow drifted quietly at the northernmost border of the Master Teacher Continent.

A decrepit clock tower stood in desolation in those snowy lands. Countless adventurers were gathered beneath that decrepit clock tower.

It was where one of the Six Major Subterranean Galleries, the Icysea Subterranean Gallery, was located. There would rarely be anyone around there, but after the Otherworldly Demons retreated from the Subterranean Gallery, the area had swiftly turned into a major trading post. Many experts would pass by the area on a daily basis.

Just like the other Subterranean Galleries, the Icysea Subterranean Gallery was suffused with concentrated killing intent due to the crimson moon that hung high in the sky, corroding all lifeforms that loitered in the area. However, many resilient plants that did not exist on the Master Teacher Continent still took root and germinated on that land despite the extreme conditions. Those plants served as valuable medicine, and they were also ideal catalysts for smithing top-tier weapons, making them incredibly valuable.

In order to find those plants, many adventurers were willing to risk their lives to venture into the Icysea Subterranean Gallery.

Due to the frequent skirmishes with the Otherworldly Demons in the past, the Master Teacher Pavilion had locked down the Subterranean Galleries, allowing only master teachers to enter the area.

However, with the retreat of the Otherworldly Demons, some of the stronger cultivators had begun venturing into those treacherous lands, hoping to scout the lands for rare resources. It did not take long for them to realize that the Subterranean Galleries were practically treasure troves. As valuable

commodities were brought out one after another, more and more adventurers began descending into the Subterranean Galleries in search of great fortune.

At that very moment, those who were standing beneath the decrepit clock tower were the cultivators who wanted to try their luck.

“The snowstorm is getting heavier and heavier. It’s times like this that the Icysea Subterranean Gallery automatically closes itself, making it impossible to enter the area. All we can do at a time like this is wait here till the sky clears!”

“It can’t be helped. The Icysea Subterranean Gallery is located in the midst of a snowy mountain, and it happens to be the coldest time of year. It’s simply too dangerous to travel around at a time like this.”

“Isn’t it boring to be sitting around here doing nothing? Why don’t we share interesting things that have happened recently so that we can open our eyes?”

“Brother Wu, you’ve just come here from the Master Teacher Pavilion headquarters, right? Is there any fascinating news?”

Upon hearing the name ‘Brother Wu’, the gazes of the crowd swiftly gathered on the middle-aged man seated at the very center.

That middle-aged man was dressed in the long robe of a master teacher, and the seven stars on his emblem gleamed conspicuously. His cultivation had reached Saint 4-dan Primordial Spirit realm pinnacle, putting him at the forefront of 7-star master teachers.

Noticing the gazes on him, Brother Wu allowed his gaze to wander across the crowd in a suspenseful manner before asking, “Do you know who the most talented master teacher of the current era is?”

“The most talented master teacher of the current era? It should be Feng Ziyi, right? I heard that his teacher recently achieved a breakthrough to Ancient Sage, and his cultivation has been surging ahead. He’s already a figure whom we can only look up to!”

“I think it should be Zhao Moxuan. I met him once, and he’s truly a prodigious individual. He’s able to comprehend and master anything swiftly, such that it doesn’t seem like there’s anything in this world that could possibly stump him!”

“I’ll put my vote on Jiang Feifei. Not only is she beautiful, her mastery as a celestial designer has also reached an unbelievable level...”

“What I heard is that...”

The question immediately provoked an intense debate among the crowd.

Those were figures whose names resounded far and wide on the Master Teacher Continent, and there were countless cultivators who looked up to them and viewed them as their goal.

Suddenly, someone amid the crowd added, “Have you forgotten... Zhang Xuan?”

“Zhang Xuan?”

That name caused the fervent discussion to wither into silence.

“I don’t deny that he’s the most talented master teacher in the past tens of thousands of years. Perhaps, the only person who could match him is Kong shi... However, he conspired with the Spirit God of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe to steal the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn, thus placing mankind in a dangerous position. That in itself is enough to disqualify him as a master teacher!”

“We can’t allow such a black sheep to sully the reputation of the Master Teacher Pavilion!”

“The story that I heard is rather different though. He didn’t conspire with the Spirit God. Instead, he was unaware of the other party’s identity and was duped into doing her bidding!”

“A teacher has to be held to the highest standards in terms of values, principles, and behaviors. Even if he didn’t know the true identity of the Spirit God before, he should have severed his feelings for her and stopped her after learning the truth. Yet, he remained completely idle, not even attempting to

snatch the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn back. That's more than enough to deem him as a traitor of mankind!"

"There's no point talking about that unworthy fellow!"

...

An uproar broke out amid the crowd, and the discussions were getting more and more heated by the moment.

"Hahaha!"

At this moment, a cold sneer suddenly echoed across the crowd, causing the decrepit clock tower to tremble intensely. It almost seemed as if the clock tower was about to collapse upon the crowd.

This abrupt occurrence swiftly caught everyone's attention as eyes darted toward the source of the sneer.

Surprisingly, the person who had just sneered was none other than the 7-star master teacher amid the crowd, Brother Wu!

At this moment, Brother Wu's eyes were filled with ice, and the smile on his lips had vanished without a trace. He rose to his feet and gazed down upon the crowd imposingly as he said, "Did you just say that Zhang Shi isn't qualified to be a master teacher? Who gave you the guts to utter such nonsense?"

A middle-aged man with a glaring scar on his face harrumphed in response. "A man who has let down the whole of mankind and ended his life before the Master Teacher Pavilion headquarters to repay his sins—do you really think that such a person is qualified to bear the name of a master teacher?"

It had been ten days since Zhang Xuan had ended his life at the Master Teacher Pavilion headquarters, and news had already spread all over the Master Teacher Continent.

"You're asking if he's qualified?" Brother Wu narrowed his eyes. "Let me ask you, do you know why we are able to enter the Icysea Subterranean Gallery at this very moment?"

"Isn't it because the forces of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe retreated from the Subterranean Galleries?" the scar-faced

middle-aged man asked.

The others nodded in agreement as well.

It was due to the Otherworldly Demons retreating that they dared to enter the area. Otherwise, they would probably lose their lives within moments after entering the premises. Even with treasures scattered all over the Subterranean Galleries, no one would be so foolish as to place themselves in a certain-death situation. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

“Retreat? Hah!” Brother Wu sneered coldly. “In the past tens of thousands of years, the Otherworldly Demons have been driven back several hundred times, but the ordinary populace has never been allowed to approach this area before. What makes this time so different?”

“This...” The scar-faced middle-aged man was rendered speechless by that question.

In the battle over the years, due to supply issues and heavy death toll, both sides had retreated from the Subterranean Galleries at some point in time. However, the Master Teacher Pavilion had never allowed people into the premises. Could there be something different about the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe’s retreat this time?

“Brother Wu, do you know something about this matter?” one of the cultivators amid the crowd asked.

“A month ago, I happened to receive an order to the Master Teacher Pavilion headquarters to handle some matters, and I overheard this rumor!” Brother Wu seemed to descend into memory lane. “It’s true that the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe has retreated, but they were gathering their soldiers together in preparation to launch a decisive attack. All in all, there were more than a hundred thousand soldiers!”

“A decisive attack consisting of over a hundred thousand soldiers?” The crowd was astonished.

They were all aware of the tremendous might that the Otherworldly Demons wielded. If they were to face so many

enemies at once, it was very likely that they would face unimaginable damage. It was questionable whether the Master Teacher Continent would be able to sustain such damage or not.

“Wait... That’s not right. If they have truly gathered that much military power, why is there no movement from their side at all?”

Finding those words logical, the crowd quickly turned their gazes back to Brother Wu, wanting to see what he had to say.

Considering how treacherous the situation had been back then, it was unthinkable for them not to have heard of it at all.

“Of course, there are no movements! That’s because a master teacher single-handedly charged into the group of a hundred thousand and killed them all!” Brother Wu spoke with a respectful gleam in eyes.

“That person is the one who foiled the ploys of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe, forcing them to lie low and dare not invade. He’s the one who fixed the seals and turned the Subterranean Gallery from the netherworld into new lands that we can explore!”

“A person single-handedly killed over a hundred thousand Otherworldly Demons?”

“I heard that even the weakest of the Otherworldly Demons was at Saint 3-dan...”

Unable to take it any longer, someone in the crowd asked, “How did he manage to do it? Brother Wu, who in the world is that fellow?”

“It’s the person whom you said is unqualified to become a master teacher...” Brother Wu clenched his fists tightly together. “Zhang Xuan!”

1785 The Truth of His Identity

“Zhang Xuan?”

“It’s actually him...”

Silence filled the area, and countless lips trembled in disbelief.

Due to someone working in the background to spread the matter between Zhang Xuan and the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe’s Spirit God in the Temple of Confucius, within three days, everyone on the Master Teacher Continent knew of the matter.

There was no one on the Master Teacher Continent who did not scorn him. In their eyes, he was a master teacher who had failed to shoulder his responsibilities, thus opening a window of opportunity for the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe.

As such, most thought that the judgement of the Master Teacher Pavilion was fair, and they had celebrated upon hearing the verdict.

However, no one knew that the current peace and prosperity enjoyed by mankind, such that even ordinary cultivators could descend into the Subterranean Galleries, was due to the work of the individual whom they loathed.

He had given his all for mankind, only to be forced by the very mankind that he had chosen to protect to commit suicide.

Just how despaired must he have been feeling when he ended his life?

“When Zhang Xuan committed suicide, his students barged into the Master Teacher Pavilion headquarters and pummeled every single 9-star master teacher present. Yet, not a single person dared to retaliate. Do you know why that’s the case?” Brother Wu questioned.

The crowd shook their heads.

“That’s because they knew that they wouldn’t enjoy the current peace without Zhang Shi. If not for Zhang Shi’s sacrifice, the Master Teacher Continent might already have been torn apart by war!”

“I don’t understand!” a middle-aged man amid the crowd suddenly said up. “Since the Master Teacher Pavilion knows of his contribution, why doesn’t it try to explain the matter and resolve the misunderstandings? Why did it go to the extent of forcing him to end his life?”

Hearing those words, the crowd quickly nodded in agreement.

Zhang Xuan’s immense contribution to mankind should have been enough to strike off any mistakes that he had made. Why did the Master Teacher Pavilion still go to the extent of pushing him over the edge?

“If I’m not mistaken, it’s likely due to the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe pulling some strings behind the scenes. It’s said that Sovereign Chen Xing and Sovereign Chen Ling were in the Temple of Confucius back then, and they ended up escaping. Most likely, they are the ones who have been spreading the rumors!”

At that point, Brother Wu sighed deeply before continuing.

“Due to the news spreading like wildfire, many master teachers were rallied to gather outside the Master Teacher Pavilion headquarters, and they demanded the headquarters to hand Zhang Xuan over. While Zhang Xuan had made great contributions to mankind, it’s also a fact that he had allowed the Spirit God to escape with the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn in hand. Had the Master Teacher Pavilion headquarters chosen to side with Zhang Xuan, it would have caused the world to lose confidence in their judgement, and it might have sown internal discord among mankind. In order to placate the riled master teachers, Zhang Xuan chose to end his life so as to offer a satisfactory explanation to the world.”

“If that’s truly the case, he’s a true master teacher!”

“To hold onto his faith and sacrifice himself bravely, that’s the mark of a true hero...”

“By ending his life, the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe will no longer be able to exploit the matter to rally the populace against the Master Teacher Pavilion. At the same time, the Master Teacher Pavilion will be granted some breathing space to reorganize their members and weed out spies hiding on the Master Teacher Continent. There’s no doubt that his choice has helped to avert a major crisis for mankind, but... this is simply too unfair for him! He has done so much for mankind, only to be met with such a bitter end eventually!”

“We are truly indebted to him...”

...

The crowd widened their eyes in realization.

This was simply human nature. On the very grounds that Zhang Xuan was a master teacher, everyone imposed higher moral standards on him. As soon as he made a mistake, regardless of whether it was unintentional or not, it was magnified manyfold and used as a weapon to crack a hole in his reputation.

Look, even a person of such character can be a master teacher! Don’t you think that the Master Teacher Pavilion has fallen over the years?

How can someone of such character be qualified to be a master teacher?

Yet, they failed to realize that master teachers were not puppets; they were fallible humans. They could not possibly be right all of the time, and they had their selfish whims as well.

The lofty reputation of the Master Teacher Pavilion had become both its greatest asset and its greatest weakness.

It was within their expectations for a master teacher to do good deeds, so their accomplishments were often left unnoticed. However, as soon as they erred, word would spread that ‘this master teacher has finally revealed the hideous personality that he has been hiding all along’.

This was similar to how if an absolute villain were occasionally carried out some good deeds, people would think

that the villain's personality was actually not as bad as it seemed.

This was the same situation that Zhang shi had faced.

To be in a relationship with the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe's Spirit God and allow the latter to take away the Great Codex and Spring and Autumn was an unforgivable failure for an esteemed master teacher. There was nothing that Zhang Xuan could have done that would absolve him of this crime. Had the Master Teacher Pavilion tried to protect him, they would have come under fire as well.

Cornered and left with no choice, Zhang shi could only end his life out of despair.

It might have seemed as if everything had been resolved, but this was actually a huge loss for mankind. The brightest star of mankind had truly fallen.

"Indeed. Zhang shi might have been young, but he accomplished what countless master teachers failed to achieve in their lifetime. He's the man I respect the most in the world, and I'm willing to devote my life to pursuing him!" Brother Wu nodded in determination.

"I didn't know about this. I thought that he betrayed mankind. Now that I know the truth, I'll do the same as well. I won't allow someone who sacrificed so much for mankind to have his reputation besmirched!"
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"Count me in as well!"

The crowd beneath the clock tower nodded in determination.

Since he was a good person, they could not allow him to be insulted even after his death!

...

In the Master Teacher Pavilion headquarters, Ren Qingyuan was troubled. "Yang shi, I don't understand. Why did Zhang shi choose this course of action? Why didn't he at least try to explain himself?"

He was truly unable to make sense of the situation.

This was a matter that could possibly be resolved by Zhang Xuan explaining himself, so why did he have to go to the extent of committing suicide?

“I asked the Xingmeng Sword Saints about this matter as well, and they told me that Senior had assimilated the blood of Ancient Sage Hongtian!” Yang shi said.

Hearing an unexpected response, Ren Qingyuan frowned in confusion. “He’d assimilated the blood of Ancient Sage Hongtian?”

“Ancient Sage Hongtian was a Blood Reincarnation realm cultivator!” Yang shi explained.

“Blood Reincarnation realm cultivator... Assimilating Ancient Sage Hongtian’s blood... Wait a moment. Could it be that...” Ren Qingyuan narrowed his mind as a thought came to his mind.

“That’s right!” Yang shi nodded. “The reason that my senior chose to end his life at the Master Teacher Pavilion headquarters is likely more than an explanation to mankind. He probably has some other motives in mind. As for the specifics, I’m afraid that I’m incapable of guessing his thoughts...”

“In other words... Zhang shi isn’t dead yet?” Ren Qingyuan clenched his fists in agitation.

He had thought that the young man had truly passed away, and he had grieved for so long. However, if the young man had truly assimilated the blood of a Blood Reincarnation realm cultivator, it was unlikely that he would die so easily.

“I’ll have to ask you to regard this matter with utmost secrecy. Do not speak of it before anyone else!” Seeing the agitated look on Ren Qingyuan’s face, Yang shi strictly warned him.

“Rest assured, I understand!” Ren Qingyuan hurriedly nodded.

“Good.” Yang shi nodded before falling silent.

Shortly after Ren Qingyuan left the room, Yang shi waved his hand, and he teleported into a unique folded space.

The flow of time in that folded space was noticeably different from that of the Master Teacher Continent. It was much slower, such that ten days in the outside world could translate into the passing of a single day within the folded space.

“You’re here...”

Upon seeing Yang shi, an Ancient Sage of the Master Teacher Pavilion awoke from his slumber and rose up.

Before long, a few other Ancient Sages flew over and gathered around him.

They were the few Ancient Sages who had survived the battle against Sovereign Chen Yong back in the Temple of Confucius. Ancient Sage Yan Qing was also among the crowd.

“You said that you had some matters you wish to inform us of. What is it?” Ancient Sage Yan Qing asked.

Back when they were in the Temple of Confucius, Yang shi had said that he had something to inform them of, but it had not been convenient for them to speak back there due to the confidentiality of the matter.

“What I want to tell you is Zhang shi’s true identity!” Yang shi bowed deeply before slowly raising his head.

“His true identity?”

The crowd frowned in bewilderment, unsure what Yang shi was driving at.

Was Zhang Xuan not a master teacher? What other identity could he possibly possess?

“That’s right!” Yang shi nodded. “To be honest with all of you, he’s not just a master teacher but also a... Celestial Master Teacher!”

1786 Descending into the Subterranean Gallery with Sovereign Chen Yong

“Celestial Master Teacher?”

Ancient Sage Yan Qing and the others felt hoarseness at the back of their throats as they widened their eyes in incredulity.

“Are you saying that young man is a Celestial Master Teacher... just like Kong shi?”

It was no wonder that they were skeptical after hearing Yang shi’s words. For tens of thousands of years after Kong shi’s passing, there had been no Celestial Master Teacher in the world. Yet, Yang shi was actually telling them that Zhang Xuan was a Celestial Master Teacher!

“That’s right!” Yang shi nodded. “He’s a master teacher who is acknowledged by even the heavens themselves!”

“But he...”

The lips of Ancient Sage Yan Qing and the others tremored nonstop. The shock that zapped their minds rendered them incapable of speech.

In terms of importance, it went without saying that a Celestial Master Teacher was far more important than the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn! It had not been easy for a new Celestial Master Teacher to appear among them, but they had actually cornered the other party to the point where he had to end his life.

If they had a choice, they would have rather died in his place!

“He single-handedly destroyed 110,000 Otherworldly Demons back in the Subterranean Gallery, and every single student that he has taught grew to be an incredible expert as well... I should have guessed it right from the start... Putong!” Ancient

Sage Yan Qing fell weakly to the ground as he stared blankly ahead of him.

Had he known that the other party was a Celestial Master Teacher, he never would have forced the other party to offer an explanation to the Master Teacher Pavilion. However... there was nothing that he could say that would have changed anything anymore.

“It’s fortunate that he isn’t dead yet... but where did he go?” Ancient Sage Yan Qing asked doubtfully.

The Ancient Sages present were aware that Zhang Xuan had assimilated Zhang Hongtian’s bloodline, so it was unlikely that whatever had happened at the Master Teacher Pavilion headquarters would have been able to kill him.

“I don’t know either...” Yang shi shook his head worriedly.

As soon as he heard that Zhang Xuan had committed suicide, he had rushed over in hopes of saving him. However, he had found that the other party’s corpse had vanished into thin air instead, and there was no trace of him around.

As such, the other party’s whereabouts had become a mystery.

“We have to dispatch our men to find him as soon as possible. Make sure not to reveal his identity as the Celestial Master Teacher for the time being. Unless he becomes an Ancient Sage, he will be in grave danger once the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe learn of his true identity!” Ancient Sage Yan Qing instructed.

Only an Ancient Sage would stand a chance against other Ancient Sages. To the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe, the emergence of a Celestial Master Teacher was something that was much more horrifying than the notion of the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn falling into the hands of mankind.

It was very likely that they might even send Ancient Sages to assassinate Zhang Xuan so as to eliminate the problem before it got any worse.

“Un!” Yang shi nodded.

He knew the importance of maintaining confidentiality over this matter, or else he would not have kept it to himself for so long.

“As long as he becomes an Ancient Sage and reveals his identity as the Celestial Master Teacher, whatever misunderstandings there are out there will swiftly unravel themselves,” one of the Ancient Sages remarked.

Due to Sovereign Chen Ling and Sovereign Chen Xing working behind the scenes, most of the populace had a terrible impression of Zhang Xuan. However, if he could reveal his identity, whatever doubts the others had of him would swiftly dissipate.

After all, who would dare question a master teacher who was acknowledged by even the heavens themselves?

“I guess that’s the only thing that we can hope for at the moment!” Yang Shi sighed.

...

The crowd gathered beneath the clock tower spoke with ardor, vowing to become spokespersons to cleanse Zhang Xuan’s reputation. Too caught up in the moment, they failed to notice two figures leaning in the shadows in the corner of the room.

They were a young man and an adolescent boy.

The adolescent boy’s face was slightly pale, and it seemed like he had sustained significant injuries.

The young man heard the words of the crowd, but he simply shook his head with a faint smile, not joining in at all. Instead, he turned his gaze to the adolescent boy beside him and asked, “How are you feeling at the moment?”

“Young Master, I’m fine. I won’t die just yet!” The adolescent boy shook his head as a glint flashed through his eyes. “I should be able to survive till the moment I catch those two traitors!”

The adolescent boy was none other than Wu Chen, as well as Sovereign Chen Yong!

Due to the schemes of Sovereign Chen Ling and Sovereign Chen Xing, he had ended up coming to blows with Ancient Sage Yan Qing and the others. Afterward, those two fellows had also arrived in person and attempted to end his life with their own hands.

Even though he had managed to survive the ordeal, he had also drained himself in the midst of doing so.

Were it not for hatred fueling his willpower, he might have succumbed already.

Hearing that Wu Chen was still able to hold on for the time being, the young man nodded. “Un, that’s good.”

“Young Master, what about you?” Wu Chen’s gaze was filled with worry. “Even though you managed to survive due to the Ancient Sage blood within your body, there’s no denying that your body has taken a huge blow due to that matter. It’ll probably take quite some time for you to recover from your injuries...”

The Young Master whom Wu Chen spoke of was none other than Zhang Xuan.

Even Blood Reincarnation realm experts would require a certain period of time and sufficient energy in order to heal up after they were killed. Considering that Zhang Xuan was only an Aureate Body realm cultivator who had assimilated some Ancient Sage blood, it was inevitable that his regenerative ability would be far inferior to that of true Blood Reincarnation realm cultivators. As such, the damage that he had incurred was much greater.

“I’m still feeling a little weak even after resting for ten days. In my current state, I won’t even be a match for Saint 1-dan cultivators. However, I think my injuries are almost healed up now. As long as my body recovers, it shouldn’t be too difficult for me to regain my cultivation,” Zhang Xuan replied with a bitter smile. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

He had not thought that the side effects of blood reincarnation would actually be so heavy.

However, with his Heaven's Path Divine Art and Heaven's Path zhenqi, he should be able to recover his strength swiftly once his injuries healed up.

Sovereign Chen Yong nodded before falling silent.

The 110,000 soldiers that Zhang Xuan had killed were all Sovereign Chen Ling and Sovereign Chen Xing's soldiers—all of Wu Chen's subordinates had obeyed his orders and retreated at his command. As such, while Wu Chen lamented the death of his tribesmen, he did not bear too much of a grudge against Zhang Xuan.

At the same time, he also knew that the young man was the one whom the Spirit God had chosen, and the young man was also the one who had stood up for him and saved his life at that crucial moment. Thus, he had a rather high opinion of the young man and was willing to follow his orders.

Zhang Xuan hesitated for a moment before asking once more, "Are you certain that the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe's Celestial Azure Altar is able to reach the Spirit God?"

The reason that he had chosen to end his life at the Master Teacher Pavilion headquarters was not because he wanted to escape trouble. Instead, he wanted to take this opportunity to infiltrate the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe and resolve the threat once and for all. At the same time, this was also a chance for him to uncover Luo Ruoxin's whereabouts.

Thus, as soon as his body recovered a little, he altered his appearances and had Wu Chen take him there.

"Un. That's how I communicated with the Spirit God previously!" Wu Chen nodded.

The Spirit God had already returned to her world, so the only way to communicate with her was through certain altars. However, the altars that could reach her required a much larger altar and a unique ritual, conditions that could only be realized back at the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe.

"That's a relief," Zhang Xuan said.

He wanted to confirm where Luo Ruoxin was before heading over to look for her. Since that was the case, the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe had become a place that he needed to visit.

“But Young Master, such a large-scale ritual will require the cooperation of many humans and even Ancient Sages. I fear that Sovereign Chen Ling and Sovereign Chen Xing have already proclaimed my death and prepared a death trap for if we dare approach,” Sovereign Chen Yong said.

If he had been at his peak, there would have been nothing for him to fear. However, in his current state...

If he was encircled by the forces of Sovereign Chen Ling and Sovereign Chen Xing, the only fate that awaited him was death.

“We’ll just have to take a step at a time and see.” Zhang Xuan shook his head.

It was meaningless to think too deeply into the matter. They would just have to count every step that they took and try their best to adapt to whatever came their way.

In any case, with their disguise ability, as long as they did not reveal their true identities, it should not be too difficult for them to infiltrate the royal palace!

While Zhang Xuan was chatting with Wu Chen, ‘Brother Wu’ suddenly stepped out of the crowd and said, “Comrades, the snowstorm has ended. We’ll be entering the Icysea Subterranean Gallery now. Is there anyone who wishes to travel together with us? My name is Wu Kuang, and I am a Primordial Spirit realm pinnacle cultivator. I’ll be able to guarantee your safety if you travel together with me...”

He was the strongest individual among the crowd. Considering that the threat of the Otherworldly Demons had vanished from the Icysea Subterranean Gallery, a Primordial Spirit realm pinnacle cultivator was indeed enough to guarantee the safety of them all.

Zhang Xuan took a look around and noticed that the snowstorm had indeed died down. Chilly air gushed into the decrepit clock tower, causing robes to flutter noisily.

“I wish to travel together with you!”

“Me too, me too...”

More than a dozen cultivators stepped forward with their eyes gleaming in excitement.

It went without saying that Brother Wu’s offer was invaluable. At the very least, they should be able to overcome most dangers under his protection.

“We also wish to travel with you...” Zhang Xuan and Wu Chen stepped forward as well.

1787 Mapleleaf Wolf

“The two of you as well?” Wu Kuang frowned.

While the armies of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe had retreated from the Subterranean Galleries, there were still quite a few Otherworldly Demons lingering in the area. Since this was called an expedition, it went without saying that they would face a fair amount of danger. A teammate that was too weak could potentially drag down the entire group.

Of the two men standing before him, the adolescent boy had a pale face, which indicated that he was severely injured, and the young man had a sickly look on his face. Judging from their strength, it seemed like they had not even reached Saint 1-dan yet. Without a doubt, they would be a huge burden!

“I don’t know why you wish to enter the Subterranean Gallery, but I would still like to offer you a word of advice. Don’t treat your life as a joke!” Wu Kuang advised.

“I am thankful for your kind advice, Wu shi, but the two of us have a compelling reason to enter the Subterranean Gallery. Don’t worry, we’ll just follow at the back of your group. As for the dangers that may come, we’ll bear them on our own so as to not drag you down!” Zhang Xuan replied with a kind smile.

To think that the day would come when an Aureate Body realm consummation cultivator like him would be looked down on by a Saint 4-dan cultivator... How stifling the situation was!

“If you are insistent on entering the Subterranean Gallery, then come along, but let me make this clear. Just as you said, I won’t be able to guarantee your safety!” Wu Kuang said before falling silent.

In the end, everyone had their own lives to live. He had already done his part by offering the two men his advice, but

they had still opted to tag along. Thus, if they really faced any danger, they could not blame them for not offering their help.

After all, no one there owed the duo anything. If they saved the two of them from danger, it would be out of the kindness of their hearts and not a duty.

“They are really courting death...”

“They must never have suffered any setbacks in their life, so they don’t understand what danger means!”

Seeing the two of them insisting on joining them on the expedition to the Subterranean Gallery, looks of disdain appeared on the faces of the crowd.

As cultivators who had not even reached Saint 1-dan, they were incapable of flight. If danger came knocking, they would not even be able to escape. It was utter foolishness to enter the Subterranean Gallery in their current state!

Shaking their heads in disapproval, the crowd walked out of the decrepit clock tower and began making their way toward a building in front. Barely after walking for a couple of minutes, several combat masters appeared and stopped them.

“I am 7-star Master Teacher Wu Kuang. This is my travel permit!” Wu Kuang said.

One of the combat masters took the travel permit and examined it thoroughly before nodding in approval. “Alright, you may enter. You only have three days inside. You must make sure to leave the premises within three days, understood?”

“Rest assured, I understand!” Wu Kuang replied with a smile before leading the crowd in.

While the entrance of the Subterranean Gallery had been opened to allow ordinary master teachers and cultivators to enter, they still had to present travel permits in advance. Otherwise, if anyone was allowed to enter the Subterranean Gallery, it could lead to chaos. No matter what, it was still a sensitive area, so the Master Teacher Pavilion still had to establish some level of access control.

The entrance to the Icysea Subterranean Gallery was within the building.

As soon as the crowd entered the Subterranean Gallery, the first thing that they noticed was the disconcerting killing intent that drifted all around them.

Wu Kuang led the group to a clearing before instructing them to rest. “This is your first time in here, so your body will require some time to adapt to the conditions here. Otherwise, if the killing intent corrodes your consciousness, it might lead to inner demons breeding within you!”

Killing intent was not a force that should be underestimated. Cultivators with weaker mental resilience were extremely vulnerable to it, and the slightest lapse in one’s guard could easily lead to irreparable trauma.

Even though most of the cultivators who had entered had reached Sainthood, they would still need some time for them to get used to the killing intent before it would be safe for them to walk around the area.

“Should we...” Seeing that the crowd was going to rest, Wu Chen turned his gaze toward Zhang Xuan to ask if they should proceed alone.

Even though they were injured and had not recovered their cultivation yet, killing intent of such a level could not pose a threat to them anymore. There was no need for them to waste precious time there.

“I understand what you are concerned about, but we can’t rush this matter. Even if we hurry there in our current state, there will be nothing that we can do. It’ll be better for us to slowly recover our strength while traveling; at the very least, it will be much safer this way!” Zhang Xuan said.

Even though the surrounding killing intent was disconcerting to humans, this was the kind of environment that Wu Chen had grown up in. He could recover far faster there than on the Master Teacher Continent.

Hearing those words, Wu Chen nodded in agreement.

It was indeed not advisable for them to rush over to confront Sovereign Chen Ling and Sovereign Chen Xing in their current states. Most likely, those two had already prepared some kind of trap for their return, so the least they could do was recover their cultivation before making a move.

Furthermore, remaining hidden was actually advantageous to the two of them. They would be able to keep track of Sovereign Chen Ling and Sovereign Chen Xing's movements and prepare countermeasures from the shadows.

The crowd sat down silently around the clearing as they struggled to get used to the uncomfortable killing intent around them. On the other hand, Zhang Xuan immersed his consciousness into his folded space and took out an artifact that stored spiritual energy. He discreetly absorbed the spiritual energy through his acupoints and refined it into Heaven's Path zhenqi.

The blood of Blood Reincarnation realm cultivators granted one the incredible regenerative capability to recover from any near-death state, but that did not mean that there were no side effects. For one, it would consume one's vitality significantly, thus reducing one's lifespan. This was also probably the reason that Zhang Hongtian had reached the end of his lifespan swifter than the other Ancient Sages despite his younger age and higher cultivation.

Despite the heavy price that he had to pay, Zhang Xuan still thought that it was necessary for him to make such a move. Firstly, it was the most effective method to calm the unrest caused by the loss of the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn. Secondly, it created a good opportunity for him to sneak into the land of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe, especially since they would lower their guard after hearing of his death.

Gugugu!

As spiritual energy gushed into his body, zhenqi swiftly accumulated within him, causing his cultivation to surge.

It did not take long for him to reach Sainthood, followed by 1-dan, 2-dan...

In less than an hour, he had already recovered to Saint 3-dan.

Sha sha sha!

While Zhang Xuan was still trying his best to recover his cultivation, he suddenly heard a series of scratching sounds from his surroundings. He immediately opened his eyes and gazed into the distance.

A frown emerged on Wu Chen's forehead as well. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

“What is it?”

As Zhang Xuan was unfamiliar with the environment in the Subterranean Gallery, he could only ask Wu Chen about the matter.

“It's a Mapleleaf Wolf. It's able to grow stronger through taking in the energy of the crimson moon. A typical Mapleleaf Wolf King can reach Saint 5-dan Leaving Aperture realm,” Wu Chen explained.

“Mapleleaf Wolf?” Zhang Xuan pondered for a moment before nodding.

Even though the environment in the Subterranean Gallery was extremely harsh, there were still plants and animals that thrived in such conditions. Zhang Xuan had never heard of a Mapleleaf Wolf before, but it did not seem like an opponent that they could easily deal with in their current state.

While Zhang Xuan was communicating with Wu Chen, Wu Kuang also seemed to have noticed something. With a loud exclamation, he rose to his feet. “Everyone, be careful. I can feel something coming in our direction!”

Huala!

Shortly after he said those words, a pack of eight wolves arrived at the clearing. They swiftly encircled the crowd, sealing off the escape routes.

The wolves were gray in color, but there was a clump of white hair on their forehead, reminiscent of a maple leaf.

Even though there were not too many of them, the ferocious auras that each of the wolves emanated still caused the faces of the crowd to pale in fright.

“Don’t bother struggling.” That cold bellow seemed to freeze the air. “Obediently become our fodder, and we can consider granting you a painless death!”

Following which, a wolf cloaked in snowy fur walked out from the pack. It had a pair of crimson eyes that seemed to reflect the savage acts that it had committed in its lifetime.

“A Leaving Aperture realm beast?” Wu Kuang’s body stiffened in horror.

The faces of the cultivators in the area paled as well.

They had never thought that their luck would be so horrid.

Their plan had been to swiftly gather a couple of valuable herbs growing within the Subterranean Gallery before leaving the area to sell their loot and earn their fortune. Yet, who could have known that barely after entering the Subterranean Gallery, before they could even adapt to the surrounding killing intent, they would actually be confronted by such powerful beasts?

Growing in an environment suffused with killing intent, the Mapleleaf Wolves were far more aggressive and tenacious than their master teacher counterparts, making them difficult adversaries to deal with. To make matters worse, there was also a Wolf King amid the pack!

Were they going to lose their lives when they had entered the Subterranean Gallery barely a moment prior?

“Prepare yourselves for battle!” Wu Kuang took a deep breath as he eyed the Mapleleaf Wolves around him warily.

With a flick of his wrist, he whipped out a sword and dashed right for the Wolf King!

Their only chance at survival was to kill the Wolf King as quickly as possible. As long as they took down the Wolf King, dealing with the other Mapleleaf Wolves would be within their means.

Seeing that a human dared to challenge it right from the get go, the Wolf King sneered coldly. “Wu!”

Disdain surfaced in its crimson eyes as it swiped its claws forward.

Bam!

Killing intent poured forth, filling the area with the stench of blood. Before Wu Kuang could even process what was going on, he had already been sent flying into the distance.

To think that even a 7-star pinnacle master teacher would be unable to withstand a single strike from the Mapleleaf Wolf King!

1788 A Shout to Drive Them All Away

The other members of the group shuddered in fear as regret covered their faces.

They had heard many rumors about how the Subterranean Galleries were littered with treasures, and that as long as their luck was not too bad, they would be able to make a killing just by entering the premises. With the fortune earned, they would be able to purchase sufficient resources to advance their cultivation. Never in their wildest dreams could they have expected to encounter such a powerful pack of wolves within an hour of entering the Subterranean Gallery, such that even the strongest among them, Wu shi, was defeated in a single blow!

If even Wu shi was no match for them, what in the world could they do about the Mapleleaf Wolves?

“We have to coordinate with one another to deal with those wolves. Otherwise, we might all lose our lives here...” one of the elders uttered through tightly gritted teeth as he took out his spear.

Infusing his spear with his zhenqi, he drove his spear forward as if a viper leaping forth for a kill.

His cultivation was only at Saint 4-dan Primordial Spirit realm primary stage, but he was able to bring out the imposing might of a spearmaster. Had it been any other occasion, he might have won himself the admiration of others.

However, in the eyes of the pack of wolves, the strength that he could summon was nothing.

Hula!

One of the Mapleleaf Wolves leaped forward. With a simple bite, the gray wolf stopped the spear in its track. At the same time, it swiped its claw forward toward the elder, and

gruesome lacerations immediately appeared on the chest of the elder.

“Luo Gong!”

Seeing that the elder had been injured, the middle-aged man beside him immediately whipped out his weapon and charged forth as well. At the same time, the remaining members of the crowd also realized what treacherous circumstances they were in, so they followed suit and executed their strongest moves without the slightest hesitation.

Peng peng peng peng!

The sound of popping rucksacks filled the air. The crowd that had charged forward were sent flying backward with even greater momentum, and they collapsed onto the floor cloaked in dust. Crimson blood oozed from the corners of their lips.

There was simply too great a disparity in their fighting prowess, and the fact that they were in an unfamiliar environment worsened the situation. As a result, the battle ended before it could even start.

Seeing how his group had been defeated with such ease, Wu Kuang despaired.

Had he known that this would happen, he would have ventured into the Subterranean Gallery alone. If so, he would have had no qualms turning tail and fleeing.

But in their current situation... it seemed like they were doomed to lose their lives.

Just as Wu Kuang gave up all hope, he caught sight of the duo whom he had been unwilling to bring along seated calmly by the side, not moving at all despite the onslaught of the Mapleleaf Wolves.

It was as if they were oblivious to the battle.

“They...” He wanted to rage at them for their nonchalance, but he eventually sighed instead and muttered, “Forget it. Given their strength, it would be futile even if they came over to help us...” “Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates,

better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

A severely wounded adolescent boy and a young man who had not even reached Saint 1-dan... Considering how even a 7-star pinnacle master teacher like him was unable to match the Mapleleaf Wolves, it would not have made any difference even if those two fellows had helped them.

“The energy harnessed within the body of a master teacher is much purer than ordinary human cultivators. I want this one. As for the rest, I’ll leave it to you to distribute them as you deem fit!” Seeing that their prey had finally given up on struggling, the Wolf King coldly issued its orders before making its way toward Wu Kuang.

Regardless of whether it was for the Otherworldly Demons or those of the Beast Tribe, the pure zhenqi that coursed through the meridians of master teachers was an invaluable tonic to further their cultivation.

Watching as the Wolf King slowly approached him, Wu Kuang knew that his fate was sealed, and he lowered his gaze melancholically. “I never thought that I, Wu Kuang, would die here in such a manner...”

He had thought that he would be able to achieve something big by coming down to the Subterranean Gallery, but before he could accomplish anything, everything had already come to an end.

He discreetly channeled all of his strength, intending to end his life together with the Wolf King, but before he could make a move, the ground abruptly shuddered. A deep voice sounded from beneath the ground, jolting everyone’s soul.

“Scram!”

Hong long!

The voice was extremely cold, reminiscent of a sharp gale in the midst of the winter solstice. The shout was filled with a menacing threat that caused the hair of the Mapleleaf Wolf King and its pack to stand in alarm. They subconsciously

retreated from the area, their massive bodies shuddering fearfully as blood trickled down their lips.

A mere bellow actually inflicted internal injuries on all of them simultaneously!

The Wolf King eyed the surroundings apprehensively, trying to find the expert who had just made a move on them.

However, the surroundings were completely empty. There was no one to be seen. A light breeze blew across the darkness as the Mapleleaf Wolves felt their blood slowly freezing.

The voice earlier had been deep, but it had seemed to stab right into their souls. It had felt as if they would be slaughtered right away if they dared make a move on those humans.

“Let’s go!”

Fearing that the expert would really make a move on them, the Wolf King anxiously ordered their retreat with trembling lips. Squeezing their tails between their legs, they turned around and fled as quickly as they could.

Those were just a bunch of human master teachers. As delectable their flesh might be, it could not possibly be more valuable than their lives.

Seeing the pack of wolves fleeing, Wu Kuang and the crowd glanced at one another with a mixture of apprehensive and relief on their faces before swiftly kneeling onto the floor and kowtowing profusely.

“Elder, thank you for saving our lives!”

Even though they did not know where the elder was, the fact that the other party had saved them likely meant that the other party could see their actions from where he was.

They continued kowtowing to express their gratitude for a very long time, but no one stepped forth in response to their actions. It was as if the elder was just a figment of their imagination, and they were simply thinking too much.

Seeing that there was no response at all, Luo Gong turned to Wu Kuang and asked, “Wu shi, what do we do now?”

Wu Kuang pondered for a moment before saying, “It’s impossible for us to fathom the thoughts of those true experts. Since he doesn’t wish to meet us, we should quickly take our leave!”

They had gone to such an extent to thank the elder, but the elder simply refused to appear. This showed that the elder was unwilling to reveal himself, and there was no point forcing the matter.

“Un!”

With the previous incident with the Mapleleaf Wolves, the crowd realized how treacherous the Subterranean Gallery could be even without any Otherworldly Demons in the area. They were unwilling to remain there for too long, so they swiftly got to their feet and began trudging forward.

They traveled for roughly an hour, and fortunately, they did not encounter any more danger. Sighs of relief subconsciously escaped from their lips.

“I know a place in here where we can find medicinal herbs,” Wu Kuang said. “We should hurry there, harvest the medicinal herbs, and leave this area. Otherwise, danger might come knocking on our doors once more!”

Since they had already gone down to the dangerous Subterranean Gallery, they could not possibly back away without obtaining anything.

The others nodded in agreement.

A middle-aged man suddenly stood out from the crowd and said, “Before moving ahead, I would like to say something!”

The crowd quickly turned their gazes over.

“During the encounter with the Mapleleaf Wolves earlier, those two over there remained completely still, not contributing anything at all. I suggest that we don’t take them to where the medicinal herbs are!” The middle-aged man harrumphed as he pointed his finger at Zhang Xuan and Wu Chen.

Earlier when the Mapleleaf Wolves attacked, they had remained seated on the floor as if they were sculptures. Despite that, they still had the cheek to follow them to harvest the invaluable medicinal herbs. Just how thick could their skin be?

“Indeed! We shouldn’t bring them along!”

“They are of no use at all. They will only be a burden if we bring them along!”

A couple of others nodded in agreement.

Since they were going to venture into perilous lands, it would be best for their group to be as powerful as possible. Those two fellows could not contribute anything at all, but they wanted to tag along with the group. Were they really going to split the medicinal herbs with those two useless buffoons?

Hearing the words of the crowd, a slight frown appeared on Wu Kuang’s forehead as he turned to the duo and asked, “Do you two have anything to say for yourselves?”

It was not that he wanted to abandon the two of them, but the way that those two had reacted in the face of the Mapleleaf Wolves was simply too disheartening. It would be unfair for the entire group to split the medicinal herbs with them, considering that they had done nothing of merit for the group.

Wu Chen was just about to speak up when Zhang Xuan interjected with a wave of his hand. “I don’t have anything to say...”

“What are you waiting for then? Scram!” the middle-aged man spat coldly.

“Well, take care of yourselves...”

Seeing that they were not welcome in the group, Zhang Xuan shook his head and walked away. At that moment, however, a powerful aura suddenly crushed down on the crowd. Right after, a massive bald eagle could be seen gliding swiftly in their direction.

1789 He Is the Hidden Elder!

Similar to the Mapleleaf Wolf King, the massive bald eagle was a Saint 5-dan beast. Its eyes were an eerie crimson, and its feathers were as tough as steel. They hung onto its body like Saint intermediate-tier artifacts. It would be difficult to even breach its defenses, let alone kill it.

“It’s a Bloodeye Bald Eagle!”

“Sh*t! We’re really doomed now!”

The crowd had never thought that they would be so unlucky as to encounter such a powerful enemy shortly after escaping from the Wolf King. With such a turn of events, they no longer waste any of their time making things difficult for Zhang and Wu Chen. Instead, they turned to the new foe with livid expressions on their faces.

The Bloodeye Bald Eagle enjoyed an even greater reputation than the Mapleleaf Wolf King. It was not that it was stronger than the latter, but it had the vicious reputation of torturing its victims before killing them.

In other words, even if it could kill its prey in a single move, it would choose to inflict minor wounds all over its prey to gradually weaken it until it finally died of blood loss. Without a doubt, this was an extremely vicious way of hunting, aiming to prolong the agony of the victim for as long as possible.

Furthermore, it was extremely agile and skilled at maneuvering in the air, making it difficult to avoid its attacks or escape from it. As such, most cultivators would rather encounter ten Mapleleaf Wolf Kings than be faced with this fellow.

Even if ten Wolf Kings encircled them, with sufficient luck, they might still be able to get away. However, against the Bloodeye Bald Eagle, their fates were pretty much sealed!

“We’ll just have to fight for our lives!” Wu Kuang said grimly as he clenched his fists so tightly that his fingernails sunk into

his palms.

It was as if they had brought the God of Misfortune along with them. Most adventurers were able to travel through the Subterranean Gallery relatively safely and return to the surface with many treasures in hand. Yet, who could have known that within less than two hours of entering the area, they would have already met with two waves of powerful beasts?

“We can only hope for the best...”

The crowd muttered as they whipped out their weapons and got into defensive positions.

The Bloodeye Bald Eagle could sense the anxiety among the crowd, and a hint of derision surfaced in its crimson eyes. With a flap of its massive wings, a furious tempest immediately whipped up in the surroundings. Countless rocks, both large and small, were swept into the air, and they shot toward the crowd like cannonballs.

Ding ding ding ding!

The crowd was caught off guard by the attack. They hurriedly brandished their weapons to deflect the incoming rocks, but they were only just able to stand their ground. Their hands were bleeding from the powerful impact against the rocks, and their arms had gone slightly numb.

Retreating a few steps back, despair could be seen reflected in the eyes of the crowd.

If the Bloodeye Bald Eagle was able to harness so much power with just a casual flap of its wings, it was likely that they would be completely helpless if they confronted it directly. They could not see any way that they could possibly make it out of the situation alive.

“It looks like we are really cornered now. We should have backed out when we had the chance,” Wu Kuang muttered in desolation.

They had been lucky enough to have a wandering elder save their lives the first time around, but they would be naively hopeful if they thought that it would happen again. After all,

experts of that caliber could not possibly be so bored as to follow their group around.

“At the very most, I’ll just implode myself. There’s no way I’ll allow a darned bald eagle to humiliate me...” Knowing the cruel tendencies of the Bloodeye Bald Eagle, Wu Kuang took a deep breath as he channeled all of his energy to his dantian, intending to kill himself together with the enemy. At the very least, he would be able to preserve his dignity that way.

However, before he could do it, the duo whom they had just accused of not contributing anything to the group suddenly walked out from the crowd.

Seeing that there were still two humans who dared oppose it, the ruthless eagle flapped its wings once more, intending to crush the wills of the two challengers. However, the silhouette of the young man of the duo suddenly flickered. In the next instant, the young man was already standing right before the Bloodeye Bald Eagle, directing a powerful kick right toward its face.

Peng!

The Bloodeye Bald Eagle shot right into the ground, tearing a long and narrow gorge along the hard floor.

Pilipala!

Even though the Bloodeye Bald Eagle was already grounded, the young man did not seem to have any intention of letting it off easily. He darted toward the Bloodeye Bald Eagle and launched a barrage of punches and kicks against it.

A short moment later, when the Bloodeye Bald Eagle finally recovered from the pummeling and stood up once more... it could have just been the crowd thinking too much about it, but they could have sworn that they saw deep tenderness in the crimson eyes of the beast that was known for its savagery.

Back when Zhang Xuan was dealing with the Mapleleaf Wolf King, his cultivation had only recovered up to Saint 3-dan, so it would have been difficult for him to match it in a proper fight. Thus, he could only scare it away with his soul energy. However, in the past hour of traveling, he had managed to

recover up to Saint 4-dan, which meant that Saint 5-dan opponents no longer posed any threat to him.

“Let’s go!” Zhang Xuan said nonchalantly before climbing onto the Bloodeye Bald Eagle together with Wu Chen.

After which, he turned to the crowd one last time and bade farewell. “We still have some matters to attend to, so we’ll be taking our leave now. If fate allows it, we’ll meet once more!”

The Bloodeye Bald Eagle began flapping its wings to rise into the air before gliding swiftly into the distance. It did not take long before the trio disappeared into the horizon.

“...”

“He’s actually that powerful?”

“I tried driving him away earlier...”

Everyone’s throat went dry as slightly dumbstruck looks surfaced on their faces.

All along, they had felt that the two of them had been dragging them down, but who could have known that they were actually powerful experts in disguise!

To be able to pummel a Saint 5-dan beast and tame it right away... what in the world was with that mystifying capability?

“If that’s the case, they’re likely the ones who drove the Wolf King away earlier!” Wu Kuang suddenly spoke up.

Hearing those words, the crowd was rendered speechless.

In truth, the very moment that they saw the young man make his move, they had already made sense of the situation.

Who else could the ‘elder’ who had saved them possibly be other than him?

Despite having saved their lives, they were actually so brazen as to demand that the other party leave their group. They were ingrates for treating their benefactors in such a manner.

All of a sudden, they felt deep regret for their actions.

...

Oblivious of the thoughts of others, Zhang Xuan sat down on the back of the Bloodeye Bald Eagle and told Wu Chen, “I’ll leave it to you to navigate the way. I need to cultivate a bit more in order to recover my strength.”

The urgent matter at hand was for him to recover his strength as quickly as possible.

Wu Chen nodded in agreement before relaying some instructions to the Bloodeye Bald Eagle.

Ten days later, the Bloodeye Bald Eagle lay weakly on the ground, too exhausted to even take a single step further. Thus, Zhang Xuan tamed a Saint 9-dan beast before moving on.

Five days passed, and Zhang Xuan tamed a Great Sage 2-dan beast to ferry them around.

Another five days later, Zhang Xuan relished in the immense might pulsating in his body and heaved a sigh of relief.

“My cultivation has finally recovered...”

A month had passed since he had ended his life at the Master Teacher Pavilion. Due to his humongous collection of treasures and the ingenious Heaven’s Path Divine Art, he had managed to cultivate back to his peak. Not only so, perhaps because his foundations were much more secure this time around, it seemed like his strength had been considerably enhanced.

The Library of Heaven’s Path still hasn’t opened yet? What’s going on in there? Zhang Xuan immersed his consciousness into the Library of Heaven’s Path, only to see its massive gates still tightly shut. A deep frown appeared in between his eyebrows.

The Library of Heaven’s Path had been upgraded in the past, but the longest downtime that he had experienced was only three days. He did not think that it would remain closed even after the passing of a month. This left him feeling deeply bewildered and worried.

Zhang Xuan continued studying the Library of Heaven’s Path for a moment, but he was unable to make sense of this

anomaly. Heaving a deep sigh, he decided to put this matter aside for the moment.

Forget it! Since the Library of Heaven's Path is closed at the moment, this is a good opportunity for me to push to Great Sage 3-dan Intuitive Impulse realm! he thought.

He had already accumulated enough to push for a breakthrough at any moment, but the very nature of the Library of Heaven's Path prevented him from attempting a breakthrough to the Intuitive Impulse realm. Since its doors were tightly shut, this might be best moment for him to attempt a breakthrough.

Closing his eyes, he flicked his wrist and took out a droplet of Ancient Sage blood.

Due to his massive accumulation, ordinary herbs and pills were of limited effectiveness to his cultivation. Ancient Sage blood seemed to be the only thing that he had at the moment that could allow him to swiftly raise his cultivation.

The Ancient Sage blood that he had taken out this time around came from an Ancient Sage 1-dan Bloodline Continuance realm cultivator. Tapping on it lightly, the energy harnessed within the droplet of blood swiftly gushed into his body through his acupoints. He channeled the energy around his body and turned it into his own zhenqi.

Hong long!

Without any hesitation, he began driving his zhenqi to its maximum capacity as he tried to tear down the bottleneck that limited him from reaching higher realms.

There were no specific cultivation techniques for one to follow to reach higher grounds for Great Sage, but having been through the mountain of books and ocean of learning, he had already gained a thorough understanding of the cultivation realms of Great Sage. He had simulated his future breakthroughs so many times that he could not have been any more familiar with them than he already was.

With everything required in place, in less than ten minutes, Zhang Xuan could already feel a mini explosion going on in

his dantian as it expanded once more. He had successfully surpassed the bottleneck of the Aureate Body realm to reach the Intuitive Impulse realm!

The first thing that he felt upon reaching that realm was a heightened sensitivity to his surroundings. It was hard to describe it, but it felt like if he focused his attention, he could simulate in his mind what would happen around him in the near future. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Knowing that the act of attempting to peer into the secrets of the heavens would cause a backlash from the Library of Heaven's Path, Zhang Xuan did not dare test the ability too much. Instead, he took out another droplet of Ancient Sage blood and swallowed it.

Intuitive Impulse realm primary stage!

Intuitive Impulse realm intermediate stage!

Intuitive Impulse realm advanced stage!

...

By the fourth hour, he had already reached Intuitive Impulse realm consummation!

Alright! After I reinforce my cultivation a little, I should be able to push for a breakthrough to Great Sage 4-dan Sempiternal realm! Zhang Xuan thought with gleaming eyes.

He was just about to take out another droplet of Ancient Sage blood and continue cultivating when he felt a jolt in his head. Alarmed, Zhang Xuan hurriedly immersed his consciousness into his mind in order to see what was happening. Standing before the Library of Heaven's Path, he saw a crack opening in between the tightly-shut massive doors.

After a month of rest, the Library of Heaven's Path had actually finished upgrading shortly after he achieved a breakthrough to Intuitive Impulse realm!

1790 Is This Book the...

Jiyaya!

Slowly, the crack between the two massive doors opened wider and wider. With a thought, Zhang Xuan's consciousness slipped right into the library.

He was extremely curious to see how the Library of Heaven's Path had changed after an entire month of downtime for the upgrade.

What was before his eyes were countless shelves and books that filled the entire area, extending all the way into the horizon—the same sight as always.

When he first went into the Library of Heaven's Path, most of these books were illusory in nature, similar to placeholders so as to prevent the shelves from appearing empty. However, at that moment, the shelves had been filled with countless real books that could probably fill a massive lake if thrown together.

In the year that he had spent traveling across the Master Teacher Continent, the number of books that he had read was probably far greater than what anyone else had read in their lifetime. In terms of scope and depth of knowledge, there was probably no one who could compete with him anymore.

This was especially so after he had been through the mountain of books. He had not spent too long there, but the books that he had read encompassed the various changes from the primordial era till now, thus enhancing his state of mind and wisdom.

“Hmm? There's an additional flight of stairs over here...”
Walking around the Library of Heaven's Path, Zhang Xuan noticed a certain change that sent his eyebrows shooting upward.

Even though the Library of Heaven's Path had a terribly high ceiling, it had appeared to be a single-story building to him so

far. Who would have thought that a flight of stairs would suddenly appear in the middle of the library? Could it be that there was something valuable above?

Zhang Xuan swiftly made his way to the staircase and began walking upward, but barely after taking a step, he staggered and nearly fell flat to the ground.

“The heck? This staircase is a fake?” Zhang Xuan’s complexion did not look too good.

The staircase before him was actually an illusion as well, just like the books that he had seen at the very start! Putting aside climbing to the next story, he could not even touch it!

To make a new staircase but not allow him to go up at all, what the heck was the Library of Heaven’s Path up to?

“Do I have to come across the real staircase in real life in order for this staircase to become tangible?” Zhang Xuan wondered.

Back when he first obtained the Library of Heaven’s Path, the books that were in there had been intangible, unable to be grabbed or read. It was only after reading innumerable books that he had managed to fill the shelves with tangible books. Could it be the same for the staircase?

Just that... he could understand the idea of reading books to fill the shelves, but how in the world was he going to find the relevant staircases to make it tangible?

“Forget it!” Unable to make sense of the situation, Zhang Xuan shook his head before moving ahead.

A moment later, he stopped again.

Other than the staircase, he noticed some changes in the internal structure of the Library of Heaven’s Path.

Unknowingly, in the depths of the library, a new silent chamber had appeared.

From the exterior, the chamber seemed to resemble the shape of a massive book.

“Reading Chamber?” Zhang Xuan read the words on the plaque hanging by the entrance of the chamber.

It was indeed true that most libraries had areas reserved for visitors to read their books quietly, but the Library of Heaven's Path never had such a thing before. Was this a new function that had come with the recent upgrade?

Would he be able to read books faster within the Reading Chamber or something?

Harboring such doubts in mind, Zhang Xuan pushed open the door and entered the premises.

Unlike the staircase, the door was tangible enough for him to open it easily with a push. As soon as he stepped in, he noticed something that made his face warp in astonishment.

“The flow of time in here is actually different from that outside?”

With his comprehension of the Time Quintessence, he could easily sense the difference in the flow of time within the Reading Chamber.

“The difference in the flow of time should be around one to ten!” Zhang Xuan analyzed.

A flow of time of one to ten meant that even if he cultivated within the Reading Chamber for ten days, only a day would have passed in the external world!

“However, since only my consciousness is able to get into the Library of Heaven's Path, I'll only be able to sharpen my battle techniques here. It won't benefit my cultivation!”

After relishing in the discovery for a moment, the downsides to the effects of the Reading Chambers slowly became apparent to him as well.

It was similar to the Blood Reservoir of the Zhang Clan in the sense that only his consciousness was able to access the Reading Chamber. As such, he could only temper his will, enhance his knowledge, and refine his battle techniques there. As for advancing his cultivation and such, as his body was unable to access this area, he would not be able to enjoy the benefits of the difference in the flow of time.

But again, it would not make much of a difference to him. In the first place, the Heaven's Path Divine Art did not take him too long to cultivate, so it was not too significant whether he was able to cultivate ten times faster or not.

Given the long lifespan of cultivators, whether one took six minutes to raise one's cultivation by a single stage or an hour to do so, it really did not matter.

At the very least, that was how Zhang Xuan consoled himself to assuage his disappointment at that revelation.

Shaking his head, Zhang Xuan was just thinking about how useless this ability was when he suddenly felt a surge of zhenqi flowing through his real body in accordance to his thoughts.

Wait a moment... Even though I'm unable to bring my body into this space, if I can still drive the zhenqi in my body from here, I should still be able to enjoy the benefits from a tenfold increase in my cultivation rate! Zhang Xuan thought in agitation.

It turned out that the Reading Chamber was not as useless as he had thought!

All in all, he had spent an entire month in order to recover from the damage that he had sustained from ending his life at the Master Teacher Pavilion headquarters. If the Reading Chamber had been open to him from the very start, there was a very good chance that he could have fully recovered within three days!

In fact, if he was able to use this ability in battle as well, even if his arm was severed, he should be able to regrow his arm swiftly within a second or two through the effects of the Reading Chamber.

"This isn't just an increase in my rate of cultivation... With this, I'll be able to fight more fearlessly in battle!"

Even someone who valued efficiency as much as Zhang Xuan could hardly complain about the speed of his breakthroughs through cultivating the Heaven's Path Divine Art. However, the same could not be said about injuries. While the Heaven's

Path zhenqi was able to heal most basic injuries, it was ineffective against internal traumas that shook his foundation. Such injuries tended to take many days to heal even for him.

For example, he had spent an entire month before he could make a full recovery this time. If someone had made use of this opportunity to assassinate him, there was no guarantee that he would have been able to protect himself.

But the very existence of this room significantly alleviated the threat.

The next time that he suffered any severe injuries, he would be able to swiftly recover and launch a counterattack!

Not only so, it seems like my thoughts are much clearer while cultivating in here. Somehow, the atmosphere is rather similar to that of the Temple of Confucius, Zhang Xuan thought with a satisfied smile.

Even though he had only been in there for a short while, he could already feel a vast amount of academic aura surging into his mind, allowing him to sort out his thoughts faster than before. He felt more refreshed than ever.

Closing his eyes, he focused his attention on reinforcing his Intuitive Impulse realm cultivation. Soon enough, he felt himself hitting a bottleneck, signifying that he was not too far away from pushing for a breakthrough to the Sempiternal realm.

It was no wonder that the Library of Heaven's Path had taken so much longer to upgrade this time around. The new functions that it had come with were indeed splendid. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

He had no doubt that the new capabilities of the Library of Heaven's Path would serve him well in his future journey.

Pushing the door of the Reading Chamber open and leaving the premises, Zhang Xuan was just about to return to his body when a thought suddenly surfaced in his mind, causing him to freeze on the spot.

“Wait a moment... Isn't the Reading Chamber shaped like a book? Is it possible that... it's the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn?”

The Great Codex of Spring and Autumn had indeed been tamed by Luo Ruoxin; this was something he had seen with his own eyes. However, shortly after Luo Ruoxin left, he had fallen into a coma, and the Library of Heaven's Path had begun upgrading.

It was common knowledge among the upper echelons of the Master Teacher Continent that the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn possessed the ability to sway temporal laws. Considering that the Library of Heaven's Path had suddenly been bestowed with such an ability, his thoughts could not help but wander in such a direction.

Thus, he quickly turned his gaze over to take a closer look at the newly-created Reading Chamber.

He had not noticed it before, but now that he was paying attention to the specifics, it did bear a resemblance to the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn that he had seen from afar back then.

Furthermore, the similarities did not just stop at the appearance but the aura that it emanated as well. However, the aura of the Reading Chamber felt significantly weaker than the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn that he had seen before, which was also why he did not make the connection right away.

Of course, he had not gotten into close proximity with the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn before, so he could not say for sure.

Could it be that... Ruoxin placed the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn into the Library of Heaven's Path, which triggered its upgrade? Zhang Xuan thought incredulously.

It was only at the very last moment that he had found out that Luo Ruoxin knew about the existence of the Library of Heaven's Path, and the realization filled him with bewilderment. Was it possible that she had intentionally placed

the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn into the Library of Heaven's Path and allowed the two of them to fuse together in order to form that room?

Such a thing seemed too unbelievable to be true.

But if it was true by any chance... just what in the world was her real identity?

To know about the existence of the Library of Heaven's Path and even be capable enough to trigger an upgrade in it... just what kind of secrets was she concealing from him?

Zhang Xuan stared blankly ahead with a dazed look in his eyes.

1791 A Long Awaited Reunion

Zhang Xuan could not help but recall the very first time that he had met Luo Ruoxin.

The moment that he had laid eyes on her, his heart had started beating swiftly. It was a feeling of inexplicable intimacy, as if he had known her for a lifetime. He had found himself descending into a spiral of fondness for her that he could not extricate himself from.

Holding her hand tightly, they had escaped from a horde of beasts and entered a cavern. However, due to an incompatibility between his body and soul, he had fallen into a coma shortly after...

Not much later, he had reunited with her at the Hongyuan Master Teacher Academy. He had attempted to use his Library of Heaven's Path on her, only to fall into a coma shortly after. When he woke up, he had found that his Library of Heaven's Path had been upgraded.

When he realized that he was unable to peer into Luo Ruoxin's identity through the Library of Heaven's Path, he had thought that it was because she possessed the Discarnate Constitution of Divination, so he had never bothered to ponder too deeply into it.

However, at that moment, he felt that things were not as simple as they seemed.

A thought surfaced in Zhang Xuan's mind. When she left, I grabbed her palm and felt a surge of warmth flowing through my body. I didn't think too much into it, but could it be that she placed the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn into my Library of Heaven's Path back then?

Luo Ruoxin had vanished into a dimension rift right before his eyes. In order to stop her from leaving, he had attempted to

hold onto her, but it was to no avail. Shortly after she disappeared, he had also fallen into a coma as a result of a jolt from the Library of Heaven's Path...

Could she have used that opportunity to gift the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn to him?

“Wasn't the reason that she descended onto the Master Teacher Continent to obtain the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn? Why did she pass it over to me?”

Luo Ruoxin's identity as the Spirit God had already been confirmed, and her motive for descending to the Master Teacher Continent was likely to procure the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn. Since that was the case... why would she place the codex with him after all the effort that she had put into obtaining it?

From the looks of it, it seemed like the prowess of the codex had diminished significantly from the first time that he had seen it. What did she do with the codex in the short period of time between taming it and passing it on to him?

Many doubts filled Zhang Xuan's mind, leaving him feeling deeply uncertain.

In the time that he had known Luo Ruoxin, the latter had refused to reveal her identity under the pretext that it was for his own good. He had indeed felt a little resentful toward Luo Ruoxin after realizing that she was the Spirit God, but at that moment, he felt that the secrets that she had been bottling up ran deeper than that. He had a strong feeling that she was not lying to him at all.

A secret that concerned the Library of Heaven's Path and the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn... Perhaps, it could be a matter that would even rattle the heavens themselves. As the saying went, the secrets of the heavens must not be spoken aloud. Perhaps, she actually had legitimate reasons for hiding her identity from him.

Regardless what her true identity is, I'll definitely find her and uncover the truth... Zhang Xuan thought determinedly before burying everything at the bottom of his heart.

He would require an immense amount of power if he wanted to come close to the truth, and the current him was simply way too weak.

At the very least, he would have to become an Ancient Sage and obtain the powers of a Dimension Shatterer realm expert. Otherwise, he would forever remain restricted by the dimension barrier around the Master Teacher Continent, unable to leave its confines.

Returning his consciousness to his body, Zhang Xuan took a deep breath and brought himself back to the present.

With his state of mind reaching a level comparable to Ancient Sages, he was able to control his thoughts and emotions precisely, which allowed him to remain rational at all times.

Seeing that Zhang Xuan was done with his cultivation, Wu Chen looked over and reported, “Young Master, we are about to come into the vicinity of the capital of the Spirit Tribe. It would be dangerous for us to fly over openly without understanding the current circumstances, so I suggest that we land for the time being!”

“Let’s land a little further ahead then.” Zhang Xuan nodded in agreement.

The beast that they were riding on at the moment was a Great Sage 2-dan beast, and to enter the capital atop such a powerful beast would surely draw attention to them. To be safe, it would be best for them to lie low and land in the vicinity.

With their disguise capabilities, they should be able to sneak in without any trouble.

So, they flew on for a little longer. Just as the capital appeared by the horizon, they had the aerial beast land on the ground. They swiftly altered their appearance before journeying over to the capital.

In the midst of their journey, a thought suddenly popped into Zhang Xuan’s mind, and he asked, “Right, Wu Chen. Can you show me a punch?”

“You want me to show you a punch?” Wu Chen was slightly taken aback by the request.

Nevertheless, he still executed a punch without much hesitation.

Due to the injuries that he had sustained, he was unable to draw upon his full strength. Nevertheless, a resounding sonic boom still rippled through the air, and a pitch-black rift appeared in the space ahead.

Zhang Xuan narrowed his eyes in astonishment, but it was not in response to the incredible strength that Wu Chen had exerted.

It was not without reason that he had asked Wu Chen to execute a punch. Rather, he had wanted to examine the capabilities of the Library of Heaven's Path after the most upgrade.

As he had hoped, the inspection capabilities of the Library of Heaven's Path had been enhanced as well.

During his time in the Temple of Confucius, he had realized that he was unable to see through an Ancient Sage's flaws just by looking at the other party's battle technique. Instead, he had to come into direct contact with the other party's blood essence in order to compile a book. However, as soon as Wu Chen executed his move, several books had immediately been compiled. Each of them detailed his flaws elaborately, and even more surprisingly... there were solutions for some of the simpler flaws!

The effects of this upgrade sure were incredible!

To be able to peer even into the flaws of Ancient Sages... this effectively meant that Ancient Sages were unable to conceal secrets from him anymore. With this, he would be in a better position to deal with them.

This very notion made Zhang Xuan's face redden in agitation.

He had thought that it was already amazing for the Library of Heaven's Path to conjure a room where time moved ten times faster, but to think that its inspection abilities would be enhanced immensely as well!

As long as he could use Vicious and the Infernal Black Saber carefully, even with the limitations of his cultivation, he

should be able to kill ordinary Ancient Sages with ease.

“Young Master...” Seeing Zhang Xuan staring at him with gleaming eyes, Wu Chen could not help but frown in confusion.

Pulling himself back from his thoughts, Zhang Xuan quickly shook his head and replied, “Ah, it’s nothing much!”“Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Naturally, the matter concerning the Library of Heaven’s Path could not be spoken of too lightly. Looking at Wu Chen, he asked, “Since the circumstances in the capital is uncertain at the moment, do you have any ideas as to what we should do? Should we head straight in and attempt to investigate the situation personally, or do you have any subordinates stationed in the area whom we could liaise with?”

Despite Wu Chen’s childish appearance, he was, in fact, the highest leader of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe, Sovereign Chen Yong. There was no way that he could have led the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe for so many years without wits. Since he dared to venture back to the capital, he was bound to already have a plan in mind.

“Young Master, I found myself a successor while I was journeying around the Master Teacher Continent. His character and aptitude are excellent, and he’s extremely loyal to me. I have already contacted him and informed him of our arrival, so we should see him very soon. Through him, we will be able to find out about the happenings within the capital and come up with a countermeasure to deal with those two b*stards,” Wu Chen replied.

“That’s good.” Zhang Xuan nodded in response.

Since the person whom Wu Chen was liaising with was his successor, he should be someone whom they could trust.

It would be meaningless for them to plan anything before they received concrete news about what was truly happening within the capital.

The two of them traveled forward a little longer before finally arriving at the meeting location that Wu Chen had agreed on with his successor. They waited for around an hour before they saw a towering Otherworldly Demon walking over from the direction of the capital.

This Otherworldly Demon had a dark body. As soon as he caught sight of Zhang Xuan and Wu Chen, he immediately made his way over and kneeled on the floor.

“Paying respects to Your Majesty!”

“Rise!” Wu Chen replied nonchalantly. With a wave of his hand, he constructed an isolation barrier around them before asking, “Did anyone see you?”

“I made sure that no one was following me before sneaking here,” the Otherworldly Demon reported.

Hearing that he had not been followed, Wu Chen heaved a sigh of relief before gesturing toward Zhang Xuan. “Good. Allow me to introduce to you. This young man here is my Young Master. If I meet with any mishap, you are to listen to him...”

“Yes!” Hearing that the great Sovereign Chen Yong, the highest leader of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe, was actually addressing another man as ‘Young Master’, the Otherworldly Demon was visibly taken aback for a moment before hurriedly turning his sights toward the young man.

When he saw the other party, his body subconsciously jolted a little.

Despite the unfamiliar appearance, the disposition and aura that the young man emanated left him with a feeling of *déjà vu*, as if he had met him somewhere before.

Just as he was trying to make sense of this feeling, he heard an astonished voice in his mind. “Liu Yang? What are you doing here?”

1792 The Capital of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe

Upon hearing that voice, the expression on the Otherworldly Demon's face froze. His body trembled a little as he hurriedly lifted his head.

“Teacher?”

That voice was simply too familiar! He had heard this voice in his dreams, day and night, so there was no way that he could possibly not recognize who it belonged to! Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

“It's me. Are you still doing well? How did you end up joining the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe? What are you doing here?”

There were countless questions running through Zhang Xuan's mind.

Even though the Otherworldly Demon before him had disguised himself very well, such that even the Zhenqi of Slaughter coursing through his body seemed authentic, the truth still revealed itself through his Eye of Insight. With a single glance, he could tell that the other party was the student who had left him in the Qingyuan Empire without bidding farewell, Liu Yang!

Due to the outstanding accomplishments of his other students, Liu Yang had been put into a position of immense pressure, such that he eventually left his side to seek his own fortune. Zhang Xuan had tapped into the connections of the Master Teacher Pavilion and those of his students to seek Liu Yang, but there had been no news whatsoever.

Who could have known that his student would actually end up being accepted into Wu Chen's lineage and be brought to the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe!

“Teacher, I’ll fill you in on this matter later. At the moment, Sovereign Chen Yong still doesn’t know of my true identity, so I ask you to help me keep it a secret,” Liu Yang replied through zhenqi telepathy.

“Un!” Zhang Xuan replied with a slight nod.

He could tell as much via the interactions between Liu Yang and Wu Chen, which was why he had chosen to communicate with Liu Yang through zhenqi telepathy.

Even though the two of them had only communicated with one another for a brief moment, the sharp Wu Chen still noticed some anomalies in their behavior. Swiftly directing gazes between the two, he asked, “Do the two of you know each other?”

“That’s not it. I was just impressed by the talent of your student, so I secretly asked him about some matters regarding cultivation,” Zhang Xuan said with a light smile.

“Matters regarding cultivation?” Wu Chen repeated with a slight hint of skepticism in his voice. Seeing that the young man was unwilling to talk too much about this matter, he shook his head before turning to Liu Yang to ask, “What’s the current situation within the capital?”

This was the matter that he was the most concerned about.

“Sovereign Chen Ling and Sovereign Chen Xing returned a month ago, and they announced that you had already been killed by the Ancient Sages of mankind. While trying to protect you, they sustained some injuries as well... By claiming that you had passed down your position to them, they took control of your armies and replaced many of the higher-ranking commanders with their own men. I fear that even if you return to the capital, you won’t be able to mobilize the armies and make them do your bidding!” Liu Yang said grimly.

Hearing those words, Sovereign Chen Yong’s face turned livid. Just as he had thought, those two b*stards had indeed attempted to devour his sphere of influence.

“What about those who have been replaced? Where are they at the moment?”

Those Otherworldly Demons were experts who were loyal to him. If he could find them, he might still be able to make a comeback.

“After they were relieved from their positions, they were all assassinated within a month’s time. I’m afraid that none of them are around anymore!” Liu Yang replied.

“They have been assassinated?” Wu Chen staggered a little upon hearing those words.

He had known that Sovereign Chen Ling was vicious, but he did not think that the other party would go so far!

He was truly callously weeding out everything that could potentially pose a problem to him in the future, not leaving any room for deviation at all.

Suppressing the rage boiling in his chest, Wu Chen asked, “How are the physical conditions of the both of them at the moment?”

He had managed to land a critical hit on the both of them when they attempted to kill him, thus causing them to be grievously injured. While their injuries were not as severe as his own, it was likely that their foundations had been rattled, so it would not be too easy for them to make a recovery!

As long as they did not return to their peak, he would still have a chance to turn the tables on them!

To put it bluntly, for cultivators at their level, what was more important was their individual strength rather than amassing armies and authority. As long as they could kill those two traitors and announce their return, those subordinates would have no choice but to obediently follow his orders whether they liked it or not!

“I wasn’t really able to uncover anything specific. It seems like their current physical condition is classified information...” Liu Yang shook his head.

Wu Chen was not surprised to hear those words. Both Sovereign Chen Ling and Sovereign Chen Xing were extremely scheming individuals, and locking down vital information regarding their weaknesses was the bare basics. If they were not capable of that much, they would not have come so close to killing him back at the Temple of Confucius.

“How many Ancient Sages have they managed to bring over to their side so far? You should at least have some idea of that, right?”

In fear of him returning to exact vengeance for their betrayal, the two of them would surely try their best to rally as many Ancient Sages over to their side as possible.

At the very least, that was what he would have done if he was in their position.

“Based on what I have heard so far, Lord Ji, Lord Huai, Lord Mang, and five other lords have joined their faction and come under their command!” Liu Yang replied.

“Lord Ji, Lord Huai, and Lord Mang? Humph!” Wu Chen flung his sleeves furiously.

Serving directly under the Three Sovereigns of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe were the Fourteen Lords, and Lord Ji, Long Huai, and Lord Mang were the strongest among them. They were all powerful Ancient Sages who had reached the level of Blood Reincarnation realm!

As they were feudal lords, they were usually stationed in their fiefdom and were rarely mobilized by the Three Sovereigns. Yet, who could have known that they would collude together with Sovereign Chen Ling and Sovereign Chen Xing!

“Eight Lords along with two Sovereigns, that means that they have ten Ancient Sages on their side... Your Majesty, you mustn't move recklessly. Otherwise, you will expose yourself to grave danger!” Liu Yang said anxiously.

Had Sovereign Chen Yong been at his peak, ten Ancient Sages would not have posed a threat to him at all. However, if he challenged them in his current state, the one who would be standing at the very end would not be him.

“I know!” Wu Chen said with his brow deeply furrowed.

He had returned for vengeance, but he knew better than to allow his emotions to get the better of him. With the enemy gathering so many Ancient Sages, barging over in his current condition would be no different from suicide!

Wu Chen was silent for a very long while before he abruptly remarked, “I’ll be making a trip over to the Primal Lodestone Mountain!”

“Primal Lodestone Mountain?” Liu Yang was perplexed.

Since they had traveled so far to get to the capital, why were they leaving all of a sudden instead of vying for authority with the other two Sovereigns?

The Primal Lodestone Mountain was one of the perilous zones of the otherworldly battlefield. Even at his peak, Sovereign Chen Yong would have hesitated before entering the grounds. Thus, his sudden decision to enter that area was incomprehensible to Liu Yang.

“Great perils lie in the Primal Lodestone Mountain, but it’s also where Ancient Sage Hao Xun is cultivating. Right now, I can only hope that he’s willing to help me. His strength is only slightly beneath mine when I was at my peak. Only with his help will we stand a chance at victory!” Wu Chen replied hesitantly.

There was no way he could defeat ten Ancient Sages with his current strength, so he could only seek other helpers to aid him.

“Ancient Sage Hao Xun? I’ve heard of him before, but I thought that he passed away three thousand years ago.” Liu Yang widened his eyes in astonishment.

“He didn’t pass away. It’s just that he chose to seclude himself in the depths of the Primal Lodestone Mountain and refuses to leave the area. Back then, his strength was nearly on par with mine, and given how many years have passed since then... he might even have surpassed the bottleneck of the Blood Reincarnation realm!” Wu Chen said.

“If he refuses to leave the area, I suppose that it won’t be easy to gain his support, right?” Zhang Xuan asked.

Given that Ancient Sage Hao Xun had chosen to seclude himself for three thousand years, it likely meant that he had already chosen to steer clear from secular affairs. Thus, no matter how powerful he was, it did not seem too likely that they would be able to obtain his assistance.

“We have to do it no matter how difficult it is. Otherwise, we’ll be bound for death!” Wu Chen shook his head.

There was no question that everyone in his lineage would be slaughtered without any mercy if he died. Thus, there was no other route for them to take. They had to grasp at any possible straws of hope that were within reach.

“Wu Chen is right. Where is the Primal Lodestone Mountain, and do you have any plans in mind that might allow us to convince him to help us?” Zhang Xuan asked.

The deaths of Sovereign Chen Ling and Sovereign Chen Xing were necessary if he wanted to bring long-term peace to mankind and find Luo Ruoxin. The fact that he had ended his life back at the Master Teacher Pavilion headquarters in order to sneak over to the otherworldly battlefield was more than enough to prove his resolve in making this happen.

“The Primal Lodestone Mountain isn’t too far away, located roughly a hundred thousand li away from here. Given so, it shouldn’t take us too long to go there and back. It’s just that Ancient Sage Hao Xun has an eccentric personality, so it won’t be too easy for us to bring him over to our side!” Wu Chen rubbed his glabella.

Having made up their minds, Zhang Xuan and Wu Chen swiftly bade farewell to Liu Yang before flying off in a certain direction.

1793 Ancient Sage Hao Xun

“This is the Primal Lodestone Mountain!”

Worried that they might catch the attention of the two Sovereigns, Zhang Xuan and Wu Chen did not dare open a dimension rift and teleport over. Fortunately, the Primal Lodestone Mountain was relatively close to the capital, so it only took them two hours to arrive at their destination.

Despite bearing the name of a mountain, a more exact term would probably be ‘abyss’. The abyss was dyed with the monotonous color of absolute darkness, and it covered all that they could see. A chilling and eerie air could be clearly felt from within.

“Allow me to give it a try!” Floating above the abyss, Wu Chen took in a deep breath and shouted, “Brother Hao Xun, Chen Yong has come to pay a visit to you!”

His voice manifested in the form of thin threads of zhenqi, which transmitted his voice into the depths of the abyss, echoing countless li below.

He shouted three times before something happened. Black clouds seemed to billow from the depths of the abyss, and slowly, rays of light began shooting up from the abyss, forming auroras in the sky.

As soon as the auroras surfaced, Zhang Xuan and Wu Chen immediately felt imbalance in their flight, and their bodies began to wobble nonstop. It was as if some power was interfering with the flow of their zhenqi, and it left them on the verge of plummeting from the sky.

Zhang Xuan’s eyebrows shot up. This is the power of magnetism!

He could sense that something similar to a magnetic field had been set up in the area, but this magnetic field was designed in a manner to produce destructive fluxes against zhenqi, thus causing cultivators to lose control of their powers.

“Humph!”

Wu Chen could not be bothered to disguise himself anymore. Reverting to his regal appearance, he emanated powerful, concentrated Zhenqi of Slaughter, allowing him to finally regain balance of his body. However, as he had not recovered from his wounds yet, the act of tapping into his strength caused his face to turn sickly pale.

At the same time, Zhang Xuan flicked his wrist and brought out the Infernal Blacksaber. By standing on the Infernal Blacksaber, he managed to steady himself for the time being.

The magnetic field was designed with the intent to throw one's zhenqi into chaos, but as a weapon, the Infernal Blacksaber did not have any zhenqi. Naturally, it was unaffected by the effects of the magnetic field.

Grand rays of light shot up from the abyss once more, and soon, a silhouette dressed in a black robe rose along with the rays of light.

“Brother Hao Xun!” Sovereign Chen Yong clasped his fist and greeted the other party.

Zhang Xuan also turned his gaze over to assess the other party.

Covered tightly by the black robe, the only thing that was visible of Ancient Sage Hao Xun was his blood red eyes. The aura that he emanated felt dense and immense, making it hard for one to gauge the limits of his prowess. In terms of strength, he was likely above even Old Geezer Yu and Zhang Hongtian.

It was no wonder that Wu Chen held the other party in such high regard.

“Sovereign Chen Yong, you should know that I have chosen to steer clear from the secular world. It makes no difference even if you pay a personal visit to me!” Ancient Sage Hao Xun remarked impassively as he hid his hands amid his black robe.

“I believe that you should be aware of the recent movements in the capital. Brother Hao Xun, I really require your help this time!” Sovereign Chen Yong said as he bent his back parallel to the ground.

Any cultivator could easily see that he was severely injured, and his life could come to an end at any moment. There was no need for unnecessary explanations.

“Sovereign Chen Yong, death is a natural process of life. Even a man as great as you will eventually meet his end. I’m honored that you were willing to pay me one last visit before the end of your life. If there’s nothing else, please excuse me!” Ancient Sage Hao Xun replied coldly.

With a step of his feet, the rays of light around him began to fade. It seemed like he would return to the darkness of the abyss soon.

Seeing that Ancient Sage Hao Xun was going to return to the abyss, Sovereign Chen Yong anxiously added, “Brother Hao Xun, I was betrayed by others, and my life is hanging by a thread. My only wish now is to eliminate my enemies before meeting my end...”

If not to ask for your help, who in the world would be so free to come and pay you a visit before their death?

Do I seem very close to you?

Ancient Sage Hao Xun shook his head in response. “It has been many years since I have been in a position of authority, and I no longer desire to come into contact with that mess...”

With a wave of his hand, the rays of light submerged back into the abyss, and Ancient Sage Hao Xun himself also began descending back into the dark abyss.

“Please hold on a moment!”

Just as the other party was about to disappear, Zhang Xuan suddenly called out. At the same time, he raised his hand and tapped his finger lightly.

The rays of light beneath Ancient Sage Hao Xun suddenly went berserk, and the magnetic field in the area abruptly changed its target and focused around the black silhouette.

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Crushed by the magnetic field, it was as if the abyss itself was repulsing his presence. As a result, Ancient Sage Hao Xun was spat out from the black abyss.

“What in the world... Who are you? Why are you able to control the power of magnetism?” Ancient Sage Hao Xun could hardly believe what had just happened.

The power of magnetism had never been an ability that cultivators were able to grasp. In order to achieve the impossible, he had spent more than three thousand years in the abyss before he managed to be able to achieve a basic level of control over this fearsome strength that even his peers greatly feared.

Yet, the young man was actually able to control the rays of light manifested through his power of magnetism and make them repulse him... How was this possible?

“I didn’t really control the power of magnetism. Instead, through the flaws of your body, I infused the power of magnetism in the area into your zhenqi and forcefully harmonized it with the surroundings!” Zhang Xuan explained calmly.

At the same time, with a flick of his finger, he placed the Infernal Blacksaber beneath his feet back into his storage ring. Surprisingly, even without the Infernal Blacksaber to prop him up, he was able to remain floating in the air without any problems, as if he was impervious to the effects of the magnetic field in the area.

Given how the Heaven’s Path zhenqi was able to imitate the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe’s Zhenqi of Slaughter, it was not too difficult for him to be able to alter it such that it was impervious to the magnetic field around him.

Earlier, when Ancient Sage Hao Xun launched his first attack, he had already swiftly analyzed the ability with his Library of Heaven’s Path and come up with a countermeasure against it.

“The flaws of my body? Harmonized my zhenqi with the surroundings?” Ancient Sage Hao Xun frowned.

“Indeed!” Zhang Xuan replied.

Taking a deep breath, he slowly raised his hands.

Huala!

The rays of light in the abyss swiftly rose up and gathered around him in the form of an aurora, making him look like a giant in the sky.

The properties of the Heaven's Path zhenqi could be altered at will, so naturally, he could change its properties to allow him to control the power of magnetism in the area. In his current state, the Primal Lodestone Mountain felt like a warm spring of energy to him, granting him the ability to bring forth fighting prowess far beyond his usual means.

“You are indeed able to control the power of magnetism!” Realizing that his control over the surrounding magnetic field was not as refined or strong as that of the young man, Ancient Sage Hao Xun's face warped in astonishment.

To think that despite devoting three thousand years of effort into comprehending the power of magnetism, he would actually lose to a young man who had only just arrived there!

Knowing that he had managed to catch Ancient Sage Hao Xun's attention, Zhang Xuan pressed his case forward. “If you are willing to help Sovereign Chen Yong's cause, I can impart the ability to control the power of magnetism to you!”

“This...”

As expected, Ancient Sage Hao Xun hesitated in the face of this offer.

For someone who had spent three thousand years living in seclusion on the Primal Lodestone Mountain to comprehend the power of magnetism, the offer that Zhang Xuan had made was truly seductive.

It was not on whim that Ancient Sage Hao Xun had chosen to seclude himself in this wretched land of desolation. It was out of his desire to pave a way to higher realms that he had attempted to comprehend the power of magnetism. If he could really gain the ability to control magnetic fields with ease, he was confident that his cultivation would surge, such that

advancing beyond the Blood Reincarnation realm would become a distinct possibility!

Even though Ancient Sage Hao Xun was moved by the offer, he did not rush into making a decision. Instead, he turned to Sovereign Chen Yong. “Who injured you?”

Since the enemy was someone who could reduce even the number one Otherworldly Demon Emperor to such a state, he would have to think twice before accepting this offer. As confident as he was in his strength, he never allowed his ego to blind the rationality of his decisions.

If he was not absolutely certain of victory, he would not put himself in the path of danger even if to obtain the method to control the power of magnetism.

“It was Sovereign Chen Ling and Sovereign Chen Xing. They conspired with the humans to assassinate me!” Sovereign Chen Yong replied.

“They are the ones who injured you?”

Hearing that the culprits were the other two Sovereigns, Ancient Sage Hao Xun’s complexion turned incredibly awful. “I’m afraid that I’m unable to help you in this matter. Please seek the assistance of others!”

1794 Assimilated by Magnetism

Neither of the two Sovereigns were weaker than him; in fact, due to their positions, they had countless protectors guarding them. Challenging the two of them was tantamount to suicide!

Even if he could acquire a technique to control the power of magnetism, he would need to be alive in order to enjoy the benefits of it!

“It can’t be that Ancient Sage Hao Xun is afraid of the two Sovereigns, can it?” Zhang Xuan asked with a faint smile.

“I don’t wish to involve myself in the power struggle within the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe, and I have no intention of putting myself in danger for the sake of it,” Ancient Sage Hao Xun replied with a calm wave of his hand. “If you think of me as a coward due to that, so be it!”

“Since you have already said so, Ancient Sage Hao Xun, it wouldn’t be appropriate for us to impose on you any further. However, before we take our leave, there is one thing that I would like to advise you on,” Zhang Xuan said with narrowed eyes.

“The power of magnetism is a unique force that naturally occurs in the world. I can understand the rationale behind having chosen to tap into this power in order to surpass your limitations and reach the Dimension Shatterer realm, but such an action is no different from attempting to devour the power of the heavens. Your soul and physical body will suffer backlashes as a result of your actions...

“If I’m not mistaken, you have remained within the Primal Lodestone Mountain for the past three thousand years not because you are unwilling to leave the area but because it has become extremely difficult for you to do so, right?”

Despite Ancient Sage Hao Xun's powerful front, he was actually in a very precarious position. His act of devouring the power of magnetism could be viewed as defying the will of the heavens. If he left the Primal Lodestone Mountain, there was little doubt that a heavenly tribulation would swiftly fall upon him.

As a result, despite being a proud Blood Reincarnation realm cultivator, he had ended up holing himself up in that wretched place, not daring to leave at all.

Ancient Sage Hao Xun widened his eyes slightly after hearing those words from Zhang Xuan, but he swiftly refuted them with a cold harrumph. "With my current strength, do you think that I would fear a mere heavenly tribulation? If I wish to leave, there's no one who can stop me, not even the heavens!"

It was true that he was frightened of the heavenly tribulation, but as long as he gave it his all, he was confident that he would still be able to get out of it alive. It was just a matter of how much he would risk losing as a result of it.

"I see... I'm glad to hear that you are confident. Pardon me for being a little naggy, but I would just like to offer you one last piece of advice. The power of magnetism is an incredible source of strength, but it isn't a good idea to fuse it into your bloodline. Otherwise, you expose yourself to endless trouble in the future. You won't be able to predict how your meridians and body will mutate as a result of that!"

Shaking his head, Zhang Xuan turned to Wu Chen and said, "Let's leave!"

"Leave?" Wu Chen was stunned.

The reason that he had gone all the way there was to recruit Ancient Sage Hao Xun to his faction. They had barely traded a few words and had not even settled on anything, but they were already going to leave the area.

Engaging the help of Ancient Sage Hao Xun was not a choice but a necessity to them. If they could not get his help, their chances of success would be extremely slim, perhaps even non-existent!

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While Wu Chen was still deep in thought, Zhang Xuan had already left the area. He hesitated for a brief moment before deciding to follow the young man.

Having entered the ancient domain at the White Creek Mountain with him, Wu Chen knew that the young man possessed extraordinary capabilities. The young man probably had his reasons for choosing such a course of action.

After flying for a moment, the young man suddenly came to a halt. Floating quietly in the air, he gazed in the direction that he had just come from.

“What do we do now?” Wu Chen asked with a deep frown.

“We’ll wait here. Who knows? Perhaps, Ancient Sage Hao Xun might just change his mind and join us!” Zhang Xuan replied with a mysterious smile.

Countless questions arose in Wu Chen’s mind.

Ancient Sage Hao Xun had just confirmed that he would suffer a heavenly tribulation if he left the Primal Lodestone Mountain, so why would he suddenly change his mind and risk going all the way there just to join their faction?

However, Wu Chen also knew that Zhang Xuan would not have said such words needlessly. Thus, he stood quietly beside the latter and gazed in the direction of the abyss.

...

“How did that fellow know that I’m assimilating the lodestones in the abyss into my body?” Ancient Sage Hao Xun murmured in bewilderment.

The reason that he had been able to grasp control over the power of magnetism was not because of his extraordinary talent but because he had spent three thousand years in the depths of the abyss assimilating lodestones into his body.

Lodestones were a type of magnet that emanated a powerful magnetic field of their own. If one could manipulate the magnetic field of the natural world, one would be able to wrestle control of the zhenqi of one's opponent, thus rendering the other party powerless.

“Forget it! There's no point mulling too much over what that young man said. I'm just a step away from fully assimilating the lodestones into my body, so I should hurry up and accomplish it before any more trouble comes knocking on my door...”

Unable to make sense of the young man's words, Ancient Sage Hao Xun decided to ignore it altogether. He dived back into the darkness of the abyss, and before long, he had already reached the deepest region.

There was a five-colored stone right before him that emanated brilliant light. It seemed like it was the source of the overwhelming magnetic power in the area.

Placing his palm on it, Ancient Sage Hao Xun took a deep breath before circulating his power through the lodestone, attempting to assimilate it.

He had spent a thousand years trying to get close to this lodestone and another thousand years attempting to place his hand on it. Right now, as long as he could infuse the lodestone with his zhenqi, he should be able to successfully assimilate it!

All that was lacking was this final step.

Once he succeeded, he would be no different from a mobile Primal Lodestone Mountain. He would not have to fear any heavenly tribulation, and he would be able to crush any opponents with ease.

Gugugugu!

As he pumped more and more zhenqi into the lodestone, his body became more and more compatible with the power of magnetism. Before long, the lodestone began to cave in to his strength, and it gradually assimilated together with his palm.

“Success!” Ancient Sage Hao Xun's eyes glowed in excitement as he quickly channeled his energy to facilitate the

assimilation process.

Tzzzzzzz!

As the five-colored stone became one with his hand, a brilliant light burst forth from his body, as if indicating his evolution to a higher being.

Feeling the power of magnetism coursing through his body, Ancient Sage Hao Xun laughed heartily in triumph. He attempted to drive his zhenqi to test out his new fighting prowess when his body suddenly stiffened. For some reason, the zhenqi in his body seemed to have been bogged down by some force, preventing him from driving it freely as he could before.

“What’s going on?” Ancient Sage Hao Xun narrowed his eyes in shock.

He quickly inspected his own body, and the next instant, his face flushed white in horror.

He found that his meridians had lost their previous suppleness. Instead, they reflected a metallic glint as if they were made of steel. The change in the property of his meridian made it extremely difficult for zhenqi to pass through them.

“It’s slowly turning into stone... Am I being petrified?”

This change was not limited to his meridians. His muscles and veins were starting to stiffen as well, and he could clearly feel his senses dulling. It was as if death was encroaching on him, slowly stripping him of his consciousness.

At that moment, there was no way that he could still be oblivious to what was going on.

While he attempted to assimilate the lodestone to convert the power of magnetism to his own, the power of magnetism had also discreetly been changing the structure of his body, wanting to convert him into a massive magnet!

In a sense, this was similar to how ferromagnetic materials would gain the properties of a magnet if they were exposed to a consistent magnetic field for extended periods of time.

Gradually, the insides of his body had been reconstructed without him noticing.

If he was a non-living being, such a change would not have made much of a difference. However, he was a living being! Once his body and meridians had all turned into stone, would he still be able to talk and battle? Would he still be able to retain his consciousness?

Even my soul is being assimilated by the power of magnetism, Ancient Sage Hao Xun thought in horror as cold sweat dripped from his forehead.

It was not just his meridians and body that were growing stiffer. Even his blood and soul were not spared! Was a powerful Ancient Sage like him going to meet his end just like that?

“Endless trouble, mutate... That young man must know something about this...” Knowing that he was already on the verge of death, Ancient Sage Hao Xun suddenly recalled the words that he had heard from the young man, and his fists suddenly clenched tightly together.

Not only did the young man notice that he was assimilating a lodestone, he even seemed to know the effects of doing so. If he wished to free himself from his current predicament, his best bet was to seek the young man’s help!

Boom!

Knowing that his life was already on a countdown, how could he possibly hesitate? He immediately flew out of the abyss and dashed in the direction that Zhang Xuan and Wu Chen had disappeared.

1795 He's My Young Master

As Ancient Sage Hao Xun flew, he felt himself gradually losing control of his stiffening body, and it seemed like he would fall from the sky at any moment.

Just as he was reaching his limits, the silhouettes of Sovereign Chen Yong and the young man came into sight. It was as if they had known that he would come for them, so they had chosen to wait on the spot.

“Please, save me!”

Feeling his internal organs swiftly turning into stone, Ancient Sage Hao Xun could not have cared less about his pride and hurriedly kneeled before the young man in horror.

Blood Reincarnation realm experts boasted great regenerative abilities, and they were able to come back from the dead. However, if they completely turned into stone, it would be futile no matter how powerful their regenerative ability was. The only possibility that he would face was death!

While Ancient Sage Hao Xun had chosen to retire from the secular world, it did not mean that he was ready to meet his end.

“I’m only a mere Intuitive Impulse realm cultivator, so my capabilities are severely limited. The only one who can help you at the moment is Sovereign Chen Yong. However, he’s bogged down by the vengeance of those who have betrayed him, so I’m not too sure whether he has the time to help you or not!” Zhang Xuan waved his hand calmly.

Since the other party had been unwilling to help them no matter how they pleaded earlier, they were not obliged to help him just because he was in need of assistance either.

“I...” Not expecting his words to come back and bite him so quickly, Ancient Sage Hao Xun’s face turned pale. He hesitated for a brief moment before exclaiming, “Sovereign

Chen Yong, as long as you are willing to save me, I'm willing to follow your orders!"

The situation was very clear. It would be utter death if he refused, but if he accepted, he might still have a chance at survival. If they succeeded by any chance, he would gain great wealth and power on top of that. The decision that he had to make was already very clear.

"Since you have agreed, I guess Sovereign Chen Yong should be able to spare some time to help you," Zhang Xuan replied.

Following which, he sent a telepathic message over to Wu Chen.

Hearing the telepathic message, Wu Chen's eyes widened in disbelief, "Is that really alright?"

Zhang Xuan nodded in response.

"Alright then..."

Taking a deep breath, Wu Chen flicked his wrist and took out a long saber.

Huala!

The saber tore through space and sliced down upon Ancient Sage Hao Xun's body. Due to the latter's stiffening body, a glaring laceration was inflicted on his chest before he could even react.

Fresh blood spurted out like a waterfall.

"What in the world are you doing?" Not expecting Sovereign Chen Yong to make a move on him, Ancient Sage Hao Xun narrowed his eyes menacingly.

"What else could he be doing? He's obviously trying to save you!" Zhang Xuan remarked impatiently. "If you don't trust us, we can leave right now!"

Hearing those words, Ancient Sage Hao Xun nearly plummeted from the sky.

Just who did I offend to have to deserve this saber strike?

Even though he was extremely stifled, he could only suppress his feelings and clasp his fist. “I beseech you to save me...”

“That’s more like it!” Zhang Xuan nodded.

He walked up to Ancient Sage Hao Xun and placed a finger on the glaring laceration on his chest.

As soon as the blood came into contact with his fingertip, a brilliant five-colored glow shone into the surroundings. It felt like something was being extracted from Ancient Sage Hao Xun’s body.

The light gradually grew more and more powerful. Under Zhang Xuan’s continuously rotating finger, it was soon weaved into the shape of a stone.

It was the lodestone that Ancient Sage Hao Xun had assimilated not too long ago.

As the five-colored light began to fade, Ancient Sage Hao Xun could feel his stiffened body slowly regaining its senses.

At the same time, the lodestone in the young man’s hand pulsated ceaselessly, emanating a terrifying intent. It was as if it was angered after realizing that someone had foiled its plan, and it wanted to wreak havoc. However, with the young man’s zhenqi wrapped around it, it was unable to do anything.

“This lodestone... has its own will?” Ancient Sage Hao Xun’s eyelids twitched in horror.

He had been with that lodestone for three thousand years, but he had never realized that it was a sentient artifact!

It was much more difficult to tame sentient artifacts than ordinary weapons. For sentient weapons, it was impossible to tame them with just one’s zhenqi.

“It didn’t possess sentience at the start, but as you attempted to assimilate it with zhenqi, it also instinctively used its own power of magnetism to assimilate it. As time passed, it eventually sprouted its own sentience,” Zhang Xuan explained.

“You never noticed it because it only started to fully awaken while you were completing the assimilation. The moment that

you are turned into a magnet would be the moment that it gains a body and a soul, thus marking your death...”

There had never been anyone on the Master Teacher Continent who had attempted such a feat, so it was inevitable that Ancient Sage Hao Xun had ended up overlooking the changes occurring to his body.

Naturally occurring treasures in nature like lodestones harnessed great power, but it did not mean that cultivators, including Ancient Sages, would necessarily be able to tap into their power easily.

Otherwise, the abyss of the Primal Lodestone Mountain would have been emptied out many years ago!

Of course, it might seem a little too coincidental that the lodestone had happened to awaken right after Zhang Xuan and Wu Chen had passed by the area. The truth was that the lodestone would have taken many more years to gain sentience, and the process that turned Ancient Sage Hao Xun into a magnet would have been a very gradual process... It was actually Zhang Xuan who had discreetly controlled the power of magnetism to spiritually enchant the lodestone.

This was a trick that he had learned from the Yellowsand Berserk Wood. As powerful as Ancient Sage Hao Xun was, he had still fallen for this little ploy in a moment of inattention.

It was true that Zhang Xuan’s action had forced Ancient Sage Hao Xun into a corner, but there was no doubt that such a situation would eventually have happened. He was effectively resolving a potential threat that would occur in the future.

Ancient Sage Hao Xun’s face paled in horror. He had never thought that he would almost lose his life at the hands of a mere rock.

“The power of magnetism is a unique force of nature. It’s not a power that one can master that easily,” Zhang Xuan remarked as he tightened his grasp on the lodestone in his hand.

The myriad of colors continued to seep out from Ancient Sage Hao Xun’s body and converge back into the lodestone in his grasp. The lodestone pulsed furiously, but it was to no avail.

When the final sliver of light was pulled out of Ancient Sage Hao Xun's body, Zhang Xuan heaved a sigh of relief. With the power of magnetism fully extracted from the other party's body, he would not be in any danger.

Alright, let me see if I can tame it...

It would be extremely difficult and dangerous for Ancient Sage Hao Xun to tame this lodestone under normal circumstances. However, if he could alter the Heaven's Path zhenqi to emulate the power of magnetism, he might just be able to tame the lodestone.

With that thought in mind, Zhang Xuan swiftly entered the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn within his Library of Heaven's Path and began driving his zhenqi into the lodestone.

Tzzzzzz!

The brilliant light within the lodestone was swiftly converted into a surge of energy, which gushed frantically into his body.

As Zhang Xun's consciousness was currently within the Great Codex of Spring and Autumn, he was cultivating at a speed ten times faster than usual. As a result, all Wu Chen and Ancient Sage Hao Xun could see was a brilliant curtain of light shrouding him, rendering them incapable of seeing what was truly happening.

"Is the lodestone trying to devour him?" Ancient Sage Hao Xun asked with a hint of worry.

It was just a moment ago that the lodestone had nearly converted him into its puppet. Could it have been furious at the young man for forcefully extracting it from his body, such that it wanted to exact vengeance?

If that was the case, what should they do? They had already witnessed the frightening prowess of the lodestone, and it seemed like they would suffer great damage if they charged in and saved the young man.

"This... I'm not too sure. However, since he was able to resolve the power of magnetism within your body, he might just be able to resolve the current quandary as well." Wu Chen was also a little bewildered by the current situation.

Given that the young man had been able to catch the eye of the Spirit God, it was certain that he possessed capabilities far surpassing the norm.

Hearing Wu Chen's words, Ancient Sage Hao Xun heaved a sigh of relief. He turned a perplexed look over and asked, "The young man... Is he the disciple whom you recently accepted?"

He had known Sovereign Chen Yong for quite some time, but he had never met this young man before. However, he had heard rumors that the latter had recently found himself a successor. Could this young man possibly be that successor?

But if the young man was truly Sovereign Chen Yong's successor, why did it seem like the young man was the one making the decisions? Furthermore, from the conversations between the two, it seemed like the young man's position was above that of Sovereign Chen Yong!

"Disciple? Brother Hao Xun, you are really thinking too highly of me. This young man is my Young Master!" Wu Chen hurriedly clarified the misunderstanding.

"Young Master?" Ancient Sage Hao Xun widened his eyes in disbelief.

1796 Ancient Sage Allfire

Sovereign Chen Yong's grandfather was the legendary Vicious, who had fought on equal terms with Kong shi. His name resounded throughout history, and he lived on as a figure whom none could hope to surpass.

As such, even though the two of them were Ancient Sages, there was a clear disparity in their standing. Even from a very young age, Sovereign Chen Yong had been guaranteed to become a future Sovereign of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe.

Yet, despite his esteemed standing, Sovereign Chen Yong actually had someone whom he addressed as 'Young Master'?

The very notion of that was ridiculous!

Who in the world could be qualified to have the highest leader of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe address him in such a manner?

"He's the lover of the Spirit God," Sovereign Chen Yong explained.

"The Spirit God?" Upon hearing that name, Ancient Sage Hao Xun subconsciously cowered back in fear.

The reason that the Spirit Tribe had remained as such a powerful force in the world was due to the existence and protection of the Spirit God. To actually be the lover of the Spirit God, that meant that the young man was a person of tremendous standing.

When Ancient Sage Hao Xun turned to look at Zhang Xuan once more, his eyes were filled with deference.

On the other hand, Zhang Xuan was currently in no position to bother about the gossip between the two. His entire heart and soul were devoted to assimilating the power of magnetism of the lodestone.

Great Sage 4-dan Sempiternal realm symbolized the indestructibility of one's physical body and soul. To reach that realm would require many years of cultivation and tempering, but through refining his body with the power emanated by the lodestone, he was able to slowly bring it toward a higher level.

Some time later, Zhang Xuan finally overcame the bottleneck limiting him. His muscles and soul emanated an overwhelming radiance that seemed to symbolize the inviolable authority of divinity.

Sempiternal realm!

Zhang Xuan had thought that it would take him a very long time in order to reach this realm, but who could have known that he would be able to tame the power of magnetism so quickly?

He did not rest right after achieving a breakthrough. Instead, he continued devouring the brilliant light around his body.

Considering how the lodestone was able to render even a Blood Reincarnation realm expert powerless, there was no questioning the immense energy that it harnessed. As energy continued to surge into Zhang Xuan's body, his cultivation grew at an astounding rate.

Sempiternal realm primary stage!

Sempiternal realm intermediate stage!

Within an hour, he had already reached Sempiternal realm consummation!

Gugugu!

Immense energy continued to billow within his body, but having reached his bottleneck, he found himself unable to absorb any more of it. Thus, he gradually opened his eyes.

He had finally reached the same level as his students and parents.

The breakthrough to the Sempiternal realm had vastly enhanced the strength that he could wield. With the Dragonbone Divine Spear in hand, even without the aid of the Infernal Blacksaber, he felt like he would be able to match

even Ancient Sage 1-dan Bloodline Continuance realm cultivators in a battle!

Of course, the greatest strength of the Ancient Sages lay in their superior grasp of a certain law, as well as their all-encompassing comprehension of the world. Their immense strength only played a minor role in their overwhelming fighting prowess.

Zhang Xuan knew that he was still a long distance away from being able to slay a true Ancient Sage.

As long as I can find the right impetus, I should be able to push for a breakthrough to Ancient Sage soon! Zhang Xuan thought.

His current greatest goal was to push for a breakthrough to Ancient Sage as soon as possible.

He had already met the prerequisite for his Soul Depth, and he was in possession of the Aeon of Ancient Sage. As long as he could achieve the comprehension of a certain law beyond the level of the heavens, he would be able to push for a breakthrough to Ancient Sage.

Only as an Ancient Sage would he have the strength to rise to the top of the world, deal with the enemies that stood in his path, and seek out Luo Ruoxin.

Knowing that he needed some time to reinforce his cultivation, Zhang Xuan halted his cultivation. With a wave of his hand, the brilliant light in the surroundings converged back to form the lodestone, but this time around, it had shrunk to nearly half its original size. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Zhang Xuan had cultivated for more than an hour in the Library of Heaven's Path, but in terms of real-world time, roughly eight minutes had passed.

“Your cultivation...” As the light dissipated, Wu Chen swiftly noticed the difference in Zhang Xuan's strength, and his mouth opened wide.

A breakthrough again?

Had he not long achieved a breakthrough to the Intuitive Impulse realm?

All of a sudden, Wu Chen felt a strong sense of defeat. It was as if all of the years that he had devoted to furthering his cultivation could not even compete with several minutes of effort put in by the young man before him.

While others strained their bodies and wore down their spirits in the hope of a chance of achieving a breakthrough, it felt like it was all child's play to the young man.

It was so terribly unfair!

How could any cultivator remain sane after witnessing such injustice?

Paying no heed to the duo, Zhang Xuan turned to Ancient Sage Hao Xun and said, "I have already resolved your trauma and removed the will within this lodestone. You should be able to use it just like any other artifact. However, it'll be best for you not to attempt to assimilate it. Otherwise, the situation will repeat itself!"

After saying those words, he tossed the lodestone over.

It was through three thousand years of nourishing from Ancient Sage Hao Xun that it had come to harness such immense power. Considering that Zhang Xuan had already benefited greatly from it, it would be inappropriate if he tried to claim the lodestone for himself.

"Thank you for saving my life!" Ancient Sage Hao Xun heaved a sigh of relief as he caught the lodestone. Following which, he turned to Sovereign Chen Yong and asked, "May I know what plans you have in mind at the moment? I'll follow your command!"

Since he had already promised to help them earlier, he would not renege on his promise, especially not after hearing that the young man was the lover of the Spirit God.

"Sovereign Chen Ling and Sovereign Chen Xing have managed to rally eight Ancient Sages." Sovereign Chen Yong

pondered for a moment. “We are too weak at the moment to deal with them, so I intend to pay a visit to Ancient Sage Allfire to have him lend us a hand!”

“Ancient Sage Allfire?” Ancient Sage Hao Xun frowned. “You are referring to that old ancestor of the Beast Tribe, right? If I recall correctly, you turned him against him when you attacked his tribesmen many years ago. If he sees you in your current state, he’ll kill you!”

Ancient Sage Allfire was not an expert of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe but an old ancestor of the Beast Tribe who lived in the otherworldly battlefield.

In terms of strength, Ancient Sage Allfire could be said to be even stronger than Ancient Sage Hao Xun!

However, Ancient Sage Allfire and Sovereign Chen Yong were on hostile terms with one another due to the war many years ago. It did not seem too likely that they would be able to convince Ancient Sage Allfire to help their cause; on the contrary, the latter might even add fuel to the fire!

“There are only so many Blood Reincarnation realm Ancient Sages living in the world. If I don’t ask for his help, there’s no way that we’ll be able to win the war.” Sovereign Chen Yong shook his head in exasperation.

He was confident that he could deal with the other eight Ancient Sages, but Sovereign Chen Ling and Sovereign Chen Xing were simply too strong for him to deal with in his current state. He would require the aid of experts of the same caliber in order to stand against them!

It would be meaningless for him to seek out the weaker Ancient Sages; they would be nothing but meaningless cannon fodder in the face of the two Sovereigns. He needed experts on the same level!

“Ancient Sage Allfire is from the Beast Tribe, is he?” Zhang Xuan asked curiously.

“His true form is a Fire Behemoth. In terms of strength, he doesn’t pale too much in comparison to me. Back then, as he posed a great threat to the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe, I

launched an assault against him and his tribesmen and drove them away. As such, there have been some conflicts between the two of us,” Wu Chen said.

If he had any other choice, he would not have chosen such a course of action. Given the history between them, there was a good chance that making such a move could backfire on them.

“Young Master, if I’m not mistaken, you possess extraordinary beast taming skills, right? Is it possible for you to...” Wu Chen glanced over with an expectant look in his eyes.

Back when his Young Master was still at the Aureate Body realm, he had already been able to tame Sempiternal realm consummation beasts with ease. Of course, Sempiternal realm beasts could not begin to compare to the powerful Ancient Sage Allfire, but given that it was his Young Master they were talking about, it seemed to be hopeful.

Instead of answering the question directly, Zhang Xuan asked with a frown, “How severe is your conflict with him?”

If an irreconcilable conflict existed between Wu Chen and Ancient Sage Allfire, there would be nothing that he could do about the situation either.

“It’s a racial conflict,” Wu Chen said as he scratched his head. “He intended to lead his tribesmen to conquer one of the territories of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe, but there’s no way I would accept something like that. Thus, with my strength, I defeated him and evicted him and his tribesmen, driving them millions of li away!”

Young and reckless then, he did not hold back at all against Ancient Sage Allfire. Not only did he drive the other party and his tribesmen away, he even inflicted severe wounds upon them.

“You drove them millions of li away? The entire tribe?”

Just by hearing the description, Zhang Xuan realized that this was a deep-seated grudge that was nearly impossible to resolve. Shaking his head helplessly, he said, “I’m afraid that I’m helpless before this matter as well!”

“This...” Hearing that even his Young Master could not do anything about this situation, Wu Chen gritted his teeth tightly and said, “If it comes down to it, I’ll just have to humbly seek his forgiveness. Once Sovereign Chen Ling and Sovereign Chen Xing are killed, I’ll offer myself up to him and allow him to do whatever he wants to me!”

1797 More Dragon Blood

Zhang Xuan frowned. “It doesn’t make a difference whether you offer yourself up to him or not. The Beast Tribe is particularly vindictive; this is not something that can be resolved just by apologizing!”

As a beast tamer, he knew that racial conflicts infringed on the very dignity of the Beast Tribe, and they were less than willing to compromise on such matters. In other words, this was not a conflict that could be resolved with an apology.

If Wu Chen had not been assaulted, with his prowess as the number one expert of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe, his promise might still have been of value to Ancient Sage Allfire. However, it would be a blessing if the latter did not make use of this opportunity to stab a dagger in his back, let alone support his cause!

“What should we do then?” Wu Chen was well aware of this, but he had been holding onto a sliver of hope that his Young Master might have a solution.

“There’s no other way around this,” Zhang Xuan said grimly. “For the time being, we need to find the blood essence of a Pureblooded Dragon of the Dragon Tribe!” “Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

“What?”

Wu Chen and Ancient Sage Hao Xun exchanged bewildered glances. The sudden leap in logic had caught them off guard.

“I don’t think that Ancient Sage Allfire has anything to do with the Dragon Tribe,” Wu Chen said.

It was true that the Dragon Tribe was famed to be the supreme leader of the Beast Tribe, and it was common knowledge that beasts who possessed purer Dragon Bloodlines were able to suppress those whose bloodlines were less pure.

However, this ability did not work against those who were not related to the Dragon Tribe, and Ancient Sage Allfire did not have the slightest hint of the Dragon Bloodline flowing through his veins. It did not seem possible to sway his mind just by procuring a bit of dragon blood.

Zhang Xuan's train of thought was truly hard to keep up with.

“The reason I need the blood essence of a Pureblooded Dragon isn't to suppress Ancient Sage Allfire but to remove the seal on the Dragonbone Divine Spear!” Zhang Xuan said.

If he wanted to use his Beast Pummeling Taming Method, he would have to possess superior fighting prowess to the beast that he wanted to deal with.

While he had improved quickly over the past few days, such that his cultivation had already reached Sempiternal realm consummation, he was still far from matching Blood Reincarnation realm Ancient Sages.

The fastest way for him to raise his fighting prowess at the moment was to release the seal on the Dragonbone Divine Spear, thus returning it to its peak strength.

There were two known ways that he could release the seal on the Dragonbone Divine Spear. Firstly, he would have to reach the Ancient Sage realm and nourish it with his Ancient Sage zhenqi.

Secondly, he had to find the blood essence of a member of the Dragon Tribe that possessed an even purer Dragon Bloodline than the Dragonbone Divine Spear.

The first method was something that was unlikely for him to do in the short run. It was true that he was just a step away from reaching Ancient Sage, but who knew when the impetus required for a breakthrough would come to him? It would not be reliable to count on that.

As such, the second method seemed much more viable and reliable. As long as he could remove the seal that Ancient Sage Ran Qiu had cast upon the Dragonbone Divine Spear, the latter would be able to swiftly regain its strength as a pinnacle Ancient Sage weapon!

With that, he would gain the strength to defeat Ancient Sage Allfire and force him into submission!

Of course, he could choose to tap into Vicious' strength as well. After assimilating the two arms, Vicious' cultivation seemed to be approaching the pinnacle of the Blood Reincarnation realm. However, brute strength itself was unlikely to be sufficient to make Ancient Sage Allfire submit to him.

Understanding the motive behind Zhang Xuan's instructions, Wu Chen shook his head and said, "Pureblooded Dragons, just like the Spirit God, are true gods. The Master Teacher Continent isn't strong enough to bear their powers..."

The Dragon Bloodline that was within the beasts of the Master Teacher Continent and the otherworldly battlefield was extremely sparse. In terms of purity, they could not even be considered wyverns or serpents, let alone Pureblooded Dragons.

It was precisely due to this that Zhang Xuan was able to suppress them easily through his Eight Notes of Heavenly Dragon.

All in all, it did not seem too likely for them to find the blood essence of Pureblooded Dragons.

At that moment, Ancient Sage Hao Xun suddenly spoke up. "I know where we can find what you need!"

Zhang Xuan immediately turned his gaze over.

"If I'm not mistaken, what you are looking for isn't the blood essence of a Pureblooded Dragon. Rather, what you require is the blood essence of a Dragon Tribe Ancient Sage in order to undo the seal on the Dragonbone Divine Spear, am I right?" Ancient Sage Hao Xun asked.

It was impossible to find any Pureblooded Dragons on the Master Teacher Continent, but it was still not completely impossible to find the blood essence of Dragon Tribe Ancient Sages around.

Zhang Xuan pondered for a moment before nodding.

Ancient Sages were already the top experts of the Master Teacher Continent. It should be possible to undo the seal on the Dragonbone Divine Spear if he had the blood essence of a Dragon Tribe Ancient Sage.

“If that’s the case, I know where you can procure some!” Ancient Sage Hao Xun said.

A thought suddenly arose in Wu Chen’s head as his complexion turned awry. “Are you possibly referring to...”

“Indeed. I am referring to that place!” Ancient Sage Hao Xun nodded. “A long time ago, the grandfather of Sovereign Chen Ling, Great Autarch Ying, slew an Ancient Sage Black Dragon. He harvested the blood essence from the Black Dragon and created a Blood Lake in his own sleeping chamber. Hoping to grow a new Black Dragon out of the Blood Lake and tame it, he used the blood essence of dozens of Ancient Sages to nourish it. However, for some reason, his plans failed. Shortly after Great Autarch Ying passed away, his sleeping chamber was sealed up, and no one was allowed to enter the premises. If I’m not mistaken, there’s a good chance that the Blood Lake is still there!”

There was no living being who was not drawn to the immense power of the Dragon Tribe. If one could tame a member of the Dragon Tribe, one’s fighting prowess would surely soar by leaps and bounds.

Sovereign Chen Ling’s grandfather, Great Autarch Ying, was someone who had lived in the same era as Vicious, and he had been infatuated with the idea of taming a member of the Dragon Tribe as his subordinate. He had devoted his time and effort into finding a Black Dragon who had inherited the bloodline of a Serpentine Dragon and had gone to great efforts to slay it. After that, he had spent a great deal of his fortune and resources to purchase the blood essence of other Ancient Sages to nourish it, hoping to spawn a hatchling of the Dragon Tribe. If so, he would have had an opportunity to tame it while it was still young.

However, it seemed like something had gone awry in the end, and his plans had eventually failed to come to fruition.

“These are only legends of the past,” Wu Chen said with a deep frown. “It has been so long that it’s impossible to verify their authenticity.”

It was true that this matter was recorded in the annals of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe, but it had happened tens of thousands of years ago, so it was questionable whether the matter was even true or not. It was too much of a risk to sneak into the capital and creep into Great Autarch Ying’s sealed sleeping chamber to seek the Blood Lake, which might not even exist in the first place.

“I think that there’s a good chance that it’s true. Before I came to the Primal Lodestone Mountain, I went to Sovereign Chen Ling’s palace to request for some Dragonscale Grass. As you know, the Dragonscale Grass is a medicinal herb that only grows in environments where a member of the Dragon Tribe has once lived before. Considering how Sovereign Chen Ling has no Dragon Tribe experts under his command but has plenty of well-developed Dragonscale Grass in his inventory, I think that the legend recorded in the annals could very well be true!” Ancient Sage Hao Xun countered.

The Dragonscale Grass was a medicinal herb that was nourished by the aura emanated by members of the Dragon Tribe. It had the effect of strengthening one’s physical body and purifying one’s bloodline, which made it highly valuable to those of the Beast Tribe. As such, it was an invaluable commodity.

Back then, Ancient Sage Hao Xun had searched many places for the Dragonscale Grass to no avail. Eventually, his search had led him to the palace of Sovereign Chen Ling, and he had finally found what he needed there. At the same time, this matter had cast some doubts in his mind.

Hearing the conversation between the two, Zhang Xuan turned to Ancient Sage Hao Xun and asked, “Is Great Autarch Ying’s bedroom located in the capital, near where Sovereign Chen Ling’s palace is?”

“That’s right!” Ancient Sage Hao Xun nodded.

Zhang Xuan fell into deep thought.

Wu Chen could tell that Zhang Xuan was moved by what Ancient Sage Hao Xun had said, and he anxiously advised, “Young Master, it wasn’t too long ago that Sovereign Chen Ling suffered a huge setback, so his guard is bound to be up at the moment. His palace will surely be heavily fortified, and there will be countless experts patrolling around its premises. It will be near impossible for us to enter the area!”

“You’re right. It will indeed be tough, but as long as we look closely, we should be able to find an opening that we’re able to exploit!” Zhang Xuan remarked contemplatively as he stroked his lower jaw.

“But...”

“For the time being, the two of you should seek out other Ancient Sages and see if you are able to bring them over to our side. Meanwhile, I’ll enter the capital to take a look. Rest assured, with my disguise capabilities, there’s no way that they’ll be able to catch me!” Zhang Xuan said.

The worst place that he could be at the moment was the capital of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe. Given the limitations of his strength, it would be best for him not to take the risk. However, if he could really find the Blood Lake and undo the seal on the Dragonbone Divine Spear, he could potentially gain the strength to subdue even Blood Reincarnation realm experts. Thus, this was a risk that he would willingly bear!

“Sigh... I guess there’s no choice then!” Seeing that Zhang Xuan’s mind was made up, Wu Chen decided not to say anything more.

The disguise amulet given to them by the Spirit God was extremely powerful, so it was indeed unlikely that anyone would be able to see through his disguise. Furthermore, after the incident at the Master Teacher Pavilion headquarters, Sovereign Chen Ling and the others probably thought that his Young Master was dead. His Young Master might just be able to use those two edges to his advantage and pull this off.

1798 Liu Yang's Experiences

Knowing that he would not be able to change the mind of his Young Master, Wu Chen worriedly advised, "Young Master, you have to be careful!"

If any harm came to this young man, the Spirit God might just destroy the entire Spirit Tribe with a wave of her hand.

While others might be oblivious to Spirit God's prowess, he was well aware of the destruction that she could potentially bring to the world in a fit of rage. Even when she first descended upon the Master Teacher Continent, the entire dimension had nearly collapsed due to her overwhelming aura. If she really bore malicious intentions against the Master Teacher Continent, no one would be able to stop her.

"Rest assured!" Knowing what Wu Chen was worried about, Zhang Xuan waved his hand. "I'll prioritize my own safety and won't take unnecessary risks. Meanwhile, try to get as many Ancient Sages as possible to our side. I'll be looking forward to the results of your search!"

In the search for the Blood Lake, it would be easier for him to hide himself the fewer people there were. With the mystical effects of the disguise amulet, together with Vicious and the Infernal Blacksaber, even if he was discovered somehow, escaping should not be too difficult for him.

Having decided on their next moves, they swiftly divided into two groups and parted with one another.

Zhang Xuan returned to the capital of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe and swiftly found Liu Yang.

As Liu Yang had been taken there by Sovereign Chen Yong, his current position in the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe was extremely awkward. The only reason that the two Sovereigns had not made a move on him yet was because he was one of the most notable figures among the younger Otherworldly Demons at the moment.

If not for the fame and popularity that he enjoyed, he would have already lost his life.

Sitting in a silent chamber, Zhang Xuan erected an isolation barrier around the area and asked Liu Yang, “What happened after you left the Qingyuan Empire?”

After his student departed from his side back at the Qingyuan Empire, he seemed to have suddenly vanished without a trace. Zhang Xuan had wondered many times whether he had fallen into a perilous position or gotten himself trapped in some perilous lands, but who could have known that he had found his way to the otherworldly battlefield and even become Sovereign Chen Yong’s successor?

Under the personal tutelage of the number one Otherworldly Demon Emperor, Liu Yang had managed to keep up with his other direct disciples, reaching Sempiternal realm consummation as well.

Liu Yang did not respond to his teacher’s question right away. Instead, he kneeled to the floor and kowtowed deeply. “Teacher, I have caused you to worry for leaving without bidding farewell. I deserve death for my actions!”

His teacher had done many things for him and was his greatest benefactor, but as a student, he had actually fled in the face of danger. That was truly an unfilial act from him.

“It’s good as long as you’re doing fine!” Zhang Xuan said as he hurriedly stepped forward to help Liu Yang up.

What Liu Yang had chosen to do was indeed wrong, but he could understand the feelings of his student.

Zheng Yang had become the Progeny of Combat and had a bright future ahead of him. Zhao Ya was the young court chief of the Glacier Plain Court, and she was on track to become one of the powerhouses of the Master Teacher Continent. The same went for Wang Ying, Yuan Tao, Wei Ruyan, Lu Chong... All of them had already found their own paths.

In contrast, he had nearly been put down by the Master Teacher Pavilion. The pressure that he had been under then was immense.

“Teacher, thank you for your benevolence!” Liu Yang was deeply relieved to hear that his teacher had no intention of blaming him, but he still did not intend to get up.

Instead, he began going through the events that had transpired after he left.

“Back when I left Qingyuan City, I thought that I was a good-for-nothing. Compared to the others, I had no particular strength, and I felt that my future was bleak. In a moment of inattention, I stepped into the lair of a powerful beast and was nearly killed. Pushed to a corner, I unintentionally drove the cultivation technique that you imparted to me in reverse, but I ended up releasing something reminiscent of the Otherworldly Demon’s Zhenqi of Slaughter!”

“You drove the cultivation technique in reverse?” Zhang Xuan was taken aback.

“That’s right!” Liu Yang nodded as he began driving his zhenqi.

As expected, Zhang Xuan felt concentrated killing intent crushing down on his body. It was an aura reminiscent of an Otherworldly Demon Emperor.

In terms of concentration, it was shockingly on par with even Sovereign Chen Yong himself!

Zhang Xuan’s eyes lit up. It’s possible for even the simplified Heaven’s Path Divine Art to bring out such prowess?

All along, he had thought that imitating the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe’s Zhenqi of Slaughter was a unique ability of the Heaven’s Path zhenqi. Who could have known that it was possible to emulate the same effects through reversing the circulation of the Heaven’s Path Divine Art?

Of course, this might also be something unique to Liu Yang. At the very least, Zheng Yang, Zhao Ya, and the others had cultivated the simplified Heaven’s Path Divine Art as well, but they had never brought forth such an ability.

“Through reversing the flow of my zhenqi, I managed to kill the beast in the end. However, I also sustained severe injuries in the midst of doing so. Fortunately, the intensity of my

killing intent ended up drawing Sovereign Chen Yong over. He noticed my talents and abilities, and he wanted to pass down his heritage to me!” Liu Yang fell into the passageway of memories as he recounted his previous encounters.

“I knew that your wish is to eliminate the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe. I thought that if I could get into their ranks, I might just be able to help your cause. So, I agreed to become his successor...”

Hearing those words, Zhang Xuan frowned.

The cultivation technique that Liu Yang practiced was the simplified version of the Heaven’s Path Divine Art. It had already enhanced his constitution and his talents, such that the potential within him would not lose out to anyone across the entire Master Teacher Continent!

It might have been a stroke of luck that Liu Yang managed to reverse the flow of the Heaven’s Path Divine Art and converted it into Zhenqi of Slaughter, thus receiving Sovereign Chen Yong’s appreciation. However... was all of this not too much of a coincidence?

For the highest leader of Otherworldly Demonic Tribe to suddenly chance upon a ‘highly talented Otherworldly Demon’ on the Master Teacher Continent, was this not something very suspicious?

Given that Luo Ruoxin and I parted in the Qingyuan Empire, and that Luo Ruoxin is the Spirit God and Sovereign Chen Yong is her subordinate... could it be her doing?

A thought came into Zhang Xuan’s mind, and he quickly asked, “Have you ever met Ruoxin while following behind Sovereign Chen Yong? I’m referring to Luo laoshi from the Hongyuan Master Teacher Academy.”

Liu Yang, Wang Ying, and the others had met Luo Ruoxin while she was still a teacher at the Hongyuan Master Teacher Academy.

If the two of them had met one another, he would surely recognize him.

“I haven’t seen Luo laoshi since leaving Qingyuan City...”
Liu Yang shook his head.

Zhang Xuan frowned upon hearing those words.

Could he have guessed wrong?

If Ruoxin was not behind it, was Liu Yang not really lucky to have met Sovereign Chen Yong albeit the odds?

“Then... have you heard of the Spirit God?” Zhang Xuan pressed on further.

“Teacher, you mean the Spirit God of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe? There’s no one here who hasn’t heard of the Spirit God!” Liu Yang replied.

“She’s the faith of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe, such that not even the Three Sovereigns dare to undermine her. Sovereign Chen Yong told me that he only found me through the guidance of the Spirit God. However, I have only heard rumors about the Spirit God so far, so I don’t really know too much about it!”

“The guidance of the Spirit God?” Hearing those words, a smile crept onto Zhang Xuan’s lips.

It seemed like he had guessed right.

Luo Ruoxin was indeed behind Liu Yang becoming the successor of Sovereign Chen Yong.

He was thankful to her for saving Liu Yang, but she should have met Liu Yang and known that he was a human. To bring him into the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe... what kind of intentions did she have in mind?

Zhang Xuan was getting more and more confused by the situation.

“Upon coming to the otherworldly battlefield, I realized that I could improve quickly by absorbing the power of the blood moon through driving my cultivation technique in reverse. Sovereign Chen Yong also treats me very well, going to the extent of conducting a ritual for me to raise my cultivation. As such, I managed to overcome the Great Sage bottleneck within a few months and reach my current level of strength!”

In the first place, as Liu Yang's body had been tempered by the simplified Heaven's Path Divine Art, his talent could be considered superior to most cultivators. On top of that, Luo Ruoxin had been caring for him from the side, and the number one Otherworldly Demon Emperor had been grooming him personally. It would be difficult for him not to become strong.

“As such, I managed to rise above the younger generation and make a bit of fame for myself in the capital. After that, Sovereign Chen Yong said that he had some matters he needed to leave for a while. Not too long later, Sovereign Chen Ling and Sovereign Chen Xing returned and proclaimed that Sovereign Chen Yong had been killed by the Master Teacher Pavilion. As a result of that, I'm also gradually being sidelined within the capital,” Liu Yang swiftly explained his current situation.

Considering that he had been brought there by Sovereign Chen Yong and was viewed as the latter's successor, if not for the popularity that he enjoyed in the capital and his wariness, he might have been killed already, just like the other subordinates of Sovereign Chen Yong.

Of course, it might also have been because he did not wield any actual authority that Sovereign Chen Ling and Sovereign Chen Xing did not view him as a threat. If he truly wielded military power, he would probably have been killed by now.

Nevertheless, Liu Yang still moved around warily, fearing to even step out of his house. He was afraid that the slightest carelessness would bring him into the very jaws of the enemies.

1799 Offering Pointers to Liu Yang

“Sovereign Chen Ling and Sovereign Chen Xing have already thrown their all in and no longer have a path of retreat, so your current circumstances are very dangerous. However, if you flee right now, they’ll place the title of a traitor above your head, making it impossible for you to return,” Zhang Xuan said.

Knowing the current situation that his direct disciple was in, he fell into deep thought, but he was unable to think of any better plan at the moment. Thus, he flicked his wrist and said, “This is the blood essence left behind by Blood Reincarnation realm Ancient Sages. Hurry up and assimilate it. This way, you’ll have an additional layer of protection even if they intend you harm!”

Liu Yang accepted the blood essence with gratitude. Without much hesitation, he took it and swallowed it.

The power of the blood essence immediately began billowing within Liu Yang’s body. At the same time, Zhang Xuan walked to the latter’s back and pumped surges of zhenqi into his body in order to facilitate the assimilation of the blood essence. Within a short hour, the latter had already fully absorbed the Ancient Sage blood.

After assimilating the blood essence, Liu Yang could feel his strength growing significantly. However, he was still some distance away from achieving a breakthrough to Ancient Sage.

“This is a portion of a land that I have sealed that contains Aeon of Ancient Sage. It should be able to help you in your breakthrough to the Ancient Sage realm. Also, I have a technique that allows you to cultivate your Soul Depth, and I’ll impart it to you right now. Try your best to reach Ancient Sage as soon as possible!” Zhang Xuan instructed as he took out a painting and passed it over.

The circle of Otherworldly Demons was fraught with treachery and danger. If Liu Yang wanted to survive in such a circle, he would have to quickly reach the level of an Ancient Sage!

The fact that Liu Yang's disguise had not been seen through by Sovereign Chen Yong was something huge. If he walked down this route, he might be able to achieve something amazing in the future.

If he could establish his standing in the current internal struggle or perhaps even gain dominance over this seemingly uncontrollable race, it would definitely be a cause for celebration for mankind. There would be no better outcome than that.

“Thank you, Teacher!” Liu Yang said.

Even though he had only been in the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe for several months, he had already undergone many different trials and calamities. He was no longer the headstrong and egotistical young man that he had once been.

He knew that despite how easily his teacher was taking those things out, they were actually incomparably valuable treasures that would cause countless cultivators to vie over any one of them. Even Ancient Sages would dive right into the fight as well.

Despite his unfilial actions, his teacher did not blame him at all. Instead, the latter even bestowed such invaluable treasures. This left him deeply ashamed of himself. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

As if seeing through Liu Yang's thoughts, Zhang Xuan said, “Everyone has their own encounters in life, so there's no need to envy others. Such emotions will only narrow the scope of your outlook and limit your state of mind, thus diminishing your future accomplishments.”

His voice seemed to pierce right into Liu Yang's soul, striking his core.

Negative emotions such as envy, hatred, and resentment would only unnerve one's mind, rendering one incapable of finding inner peace. In the worst-case scenario, one might even become a slave to one's own emotions.

Of his many disciples, Liu Yang was not a person who particularly stood out, and he had unwittingly gotten himself into deep trouble, which had created an inferiority complex. That was also the reason for him simply turning around and leaving, hoping that he would be able to find a world that belonged to him. Ultimately, his hope was just to stand proudly on equal terms with Zheng Yang, Zhao Ya, and the others.

Such emotions could be a powerful pushing force, tempering one to be more resilient than ever. At the same time, it could also push one into a corner, causing one to lose sight of one's surroundings.

Zhang Xuan had neglected this back when Liu Yang was still by his side, so he felt that he should voice this advice to the latter right now so that he would not stray down the wrong path.

"I understand!" Liu Yang said grimly.

"In order to become a true expert, your heart must be broad. The reason that Kong shi was able to rise above the others is due to the vastness of his mind, which allowed him to see past differences to encompass all beings within him. No one else has achieved the same state of mind as him, which is why he remains the most respected individual in the world, remembered even after tens of thousands of years!" Zhang Xuan said.

It was only after entering the Temple of Confucius that he realized just how powerful and great Kong shi truly was.

It was true that Kong shi's strength had remained unrivaled ever since his era, but the world remembered him not for his might but his teachings. Just from that, it could be seen just how respectable a person he was.

Zhang Xuan could see the knot in Liu Yang's heart slowly unraveling as he thought things through, and he heaved a sigh of relief.

The greatest weakness of this student of his was that he was simply too competitive. Be it consciously or subconsciously, he would always pit himself against Zheng Yang and the others, comparing who was better.

The relations among those of the same lineage should be built upon mutual support. There was no doubt that rivalry was a powerful force of motivation, but a relationship should never be built solely upon rivalry. Otherwise, if those feelings were to intensify and exceed a certain point, they could become toxic and breed resentment.

"I understand!" Liu Yang nodded in realization. Having let go of everything that had been bogging down his mind, he turned Zhang Xuan and asked, "Teacher, is there some reason that you chose to come to the capital alone?"

"I plan to head to Sovereign Chen Ling's palace to find some dragon blood!" Zhang Xuan said, not hiding anything from his student.

"Sovereign Chen Ling's palace?" Liu Yang frowned. "Teacher, even though I have never been there myself, I have heard of how guarded the place is. It's impossible for outsiders to enter the premises!"

"I understand that, but I have a compelling reason for needing to enter that place at any cost!" Zhang Xuan nodded.

There were too many things that he wanted to achieve that required greater power, such as resolving the threat of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe and looking for Luo Ruoxin.

To do that, unsealing the Dragonbone Divine Spear was definitely the fastest way to raise his fighting prowess.

From Zhang Xuan's attitude, Liu Yang could see that his teacher was determined to get into Sovereign Chen Ling's palace. He stood up, and with a deep frown on his forehead, he said, "Sovereign Chen Ling's palace has thirteen layers of defenses. Even soul oracles would have trouble entering the

area! As for attempting to barge in forcefully, it is questionable whether even an Ancient Sage would be pull it off or not. Furthermore, we don't have a clear idea where the dragon blood is stored. If Sovereign Chen Ling discovers your aim somehow, it will be far more difficult to find it!"

Without a doubt, barging in forcefully was not an option. First and foremost, his strength was severely lacking. While he would still be able to escape from Otherworldly Demon Ancient Sages with Vicious and the Infernal Blacksaber, it was a wholly different matter if he was charging right into their midst. Furthermore, considering that nothing could be confirmed yet, it did not seem wise for him to make such a reckless move.

"I have to sneak in first!" In truth, Zhang Xuan had been thinking over this matter, and he already had a rough idea in mind. "First and foremost, I head toward Sovereign Chen Ling's palace to check out the area!"

It went without saying that the first thing he had to do was gather some information about the place that he wanted to break into. As long as he could come close enough to trigger the Library of Heaven's Path, the rest would not pose a problem.

"Liu Yang, I need you to help me look around for any opportunity to enter Sovereign Chen Ling's palace. For one, he was severely injured by Sovereign Chen Yong not too long ago, so has he tried finding any physicians to treat him?"

Vicious' arm had plunged right into Sovereign Chen Ling, and that had shaken the very foundation of his cultivation. Even without any news about Sovereign Chen Ling, it was clear that there was no way that he could have recovered from such severe injuries so quickly.

In other words, there was a good chance that Sovereign Chen Ling was still seeking treatment and required the help of physicians.

This could possibly be a good chance for him to sneak into Sovereign Chen Ling's palace.

“I’ll go take a look!” Seeing that his teacher already had an idea in mind, Liu Yang turned around and left the room.

As the successor looked upon favorably by Sovereign Chen Yong, Liu Yang had already established his own intelligence network in the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe in the couple of months that he had been there.

In less than two hours’ time, he returned to the room.

“Just as you guessed, Sovereign Chen Ling’s palace is indeed recruiting. However, what they are looking isn’t physicians!” Liu Yang said with a bizarre look on his face, as if he could not believe what he had just heard.

“They aren’t looking for physicians? What are they looking for then?” Zhang Xuan frowned.

It had been his deduction that Sovereign Chen Ling was looking for physicians in order to receive treatment. Given the severity of his condition, it was unlikely that ordinary physicians would be able to treat him, so he would attempt to gather talents all around to diagnose him.

If that was the case, he could make use of this chance to sneak up.

“That’s right!” Liu Yang paused for a moment before continuing. “They are looking for appraisers!”

1800 The Arrogant Appraiser

“Appraisers?” Zhang Xuan’s eyebrows shot up.

He could understand why Sovereign Chen Ling would want to recruit physicians, poison masters, or even those with unique abilities, but appraisers...

What the heck was the other party up to?

The Master Teacher Pavilion had classified most occupations into the Lower, Middle, and Upper Nine Paths. In contrast, the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe did not have a clear classification for occupations, and there were no corresponding guilds. Nevertheless, they still had the heritages of occupations that were passed down from generation to generation.

Of course, it was nowhere near as detailed and thorough as the heritage on the Master Teacher Continent.

Appraisers served to identify artifacts and determine their value; they possessed no ability to cure or heal. Why was Sovereign Chen Ling bringing such people in?

Was there some kind of misunderstanding?

“I was skeptical about the news as well, so I made sure to verify the matter several times. Ever since Sovereign Chen Ling returned from the Master Teacher Continent, he has been cooping himself in the depths of his palace, but instead of rallying physicians, he has been bringing appraisers in instead,” Liu Yang said.

“Despite being severely injured, he didn’t seek the treatment of physicians. Instead, he went to look for appraisers... There’s something really amiss here!”

The more unnatural something was, the more likely that there were treacherous currents that lay beneath the surface.

The entire matter simply sounded too ridiculous to be true.

Just thinking about a couple of appraisers standing by the ill Sovereign Chen Ling's side, appraising his wounds...

"Wow, this injury sure is amazing. It must be worth at least eight hundred pinnacle spirit stones!"

"That isn't just it. Take a closer look at this injury... It's caused by an Ancient Sage who lived tens of thousands of years ago, and the injury has a unique mark on it. It must be worth ten thousand pinnacle spirit stones at the very least!"

"You want to buy a treasure like this with just ten thousand pinnacle spirit stones? Dream on! Even the injuries inflicted by an ordinary Ancient Sage are worth this much, let alone something of such caliber..."

...

"Cough cough." Zhang Xuan realized that his thoughts had unintentionally wandered too far away, so he quickly dragged himself back to reality.

Zhang Xuan shook away the miscellaneous thoughts in his mind and said, "No matter what his motive is, I should head over to take a look for myself..."

"Teacher, what do you have in mind?" Liu Yang asked.

"Since he's bringing in appraisers, I reckon that there should be some kind of examination grounds for the appraisers, right? I'll head over there to have a look!"

After Sovereign Chen Yong's 'death', Sovereign Chen Ling had officially become the highest leader of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe. As such, if he let out the news that he was recruiting appraisers, countless Otherworldly Demons would rush forward to fill the position.

Naturally, not everyone who applied for the job would be allowed to enter Sovereign Chen Ling's palace. There was bound to be some kind of exam to filter the capable from the mediocre. Since that was the case, it was a good opportunity for him to head over there and construct a new identity for himself.

“There’s indeed an examination for the appraisers. Allow me to take you there!” Liu Yang quickly replied with a nod.

“There’s no need for that. Your current identity is a little sensitive, and you’ll draw too many gazes if we head there together. It’ll be safer for me to head there alone, so you just have to point out the directions to me,” Zhang Xuan said.

“Alright then!” Liu Yang did not insist on the matter.

As the successor that Sovereign Chen Yong had chosen, Sovereign Chen Ling and Sovereign Chen Xing would definitely be keeping track of every single one of his movements. If he was seen walking around with another person, it would cause a fair bit of trouble.

Thus, Zhang Xuan discreetly left the silent chamber and began heading in the direction that Liu Yang had pointed out to him.

The destination was a market that sold treasures of all kinds. If one wanted to enter Sovereign Chen Ling’s palace, one would have to display true capabilities. It happened that there were innumerable rare and precious artifacts in the market, which made it an ideal location to hold the examination.

Disguising himself as an ordinary Otherworldly Demon, Zhang Xuan swiftly slipped into the crowd.

The market was bustling. While it was not as prosperous as the markets of major human cities, the treasures that were on display were truly exquisite. There were all sorts of precious herbs, skeletal frames of powerful beasts, and so on. Even Zhang Xuan had trouble naming some of the items despite the vast knowledge that he possessed.

It’s no wonder so many people are drawn to the Subterranean Gallery despite the dangers. These medicinal properties of these herbs are far superior to what we have on the Master Teacher Continent... Zhang Xuan nodded as he walked across the vendors.

It went without saying that Wu Kuang and the others did not choose to enter the Subterranean Gallery for fun and games. While plants were much sparser in that extreme environment, the very fact that they were able to survive in the face of such

dense killing intent already meant that they were extraordinary.

It was similar to how plants that could survive the arid heat of the desert tended to be far more resilient and tenacious.

However, while these things were invaluable to others, they meant nothing to Zhang Xuan. He simply spared them a glance before heading in the direction that Liu Yang had pointed.

“This thing is trash because I said so. Are you casting doubt over my judgement?”

Before Zhang Xuan could get far, he heard a particularly abrasive voice nearby. He turned around and saw an elder standing before a stall with his hands behind his back. The elder was glaring at the vendor with frosty eyes.

“Lord, I risked my life in order to obtain this Greenleaf Amber, and I even lost my arm due to that... I can swear on my life that it is true!” A middle-aged man flung his arms around anxiously.

Glancing over, Zhang Xuan saw that the middle-aged man had indeed lost his left arm, and the wounds had yet to recover.

“There’s no vendor who wouldn’t say that. They prepare a sob story for the artifacts that they have on display so as to give it some kind of amazing history, but I’ll have to ask you to spare me such nonsense. Such trickery won’t work on me!” The elder’s face remained utterly cold.

He flung his sleeves coldly and said, “In terms of appearance, Greenleaf Amber looks nearly identical to Lostdictum Grass. It’s clear that what you have here is a Lostdictum Grass, but you dare to pass it off as a Greenleaf Amber and hiked up its price... Shall I report you to the guards right now and have them put you away for selling fake medicinal herbs?”

Upon hearing those words, the middle-aged man’s face paled in fright. “I really am not selling fake medicinal herbs!”

“Since you need to make a living as well, even though this fake medicinal herb of yours is completely worthless, I’ll

spare you my compassion and buy it for two Great Yong coins!”

As he said those words, the elder flicked two coins toward the middle-aged man.

Great Yong coins were the standard currency distributed by Sovereign Chen Yong. Their purchasing power was limited, such that ten Great Yong coins was only equivalent to a low-tier spirit stone. Two Great Yong coins was pretty much nothing.

“Two coins? But my Greenleaf Amber is able to sell for at least two hundred thousand Great Yong coins!” the middle-aged man exclaimed in agitation.

True Greenleaf Amber was worth at least two hundred thousand Great Yong coins, but he was only being offered two coins. This difference was simply too huge!

“Are you doubting the words of our Old Master?” The servant standing behind the elder harrumphed. “I’ll have you know that our Old Master is an appraiser who has cleared Sovereign Chen Ling’s examination! Since he says that what you have over there is Lostdictum Grass, it can’t possibly be anything else. If you dare utter another word of complaint, I’ll have someone destroy your stall. Just wait and see if anyone dares step in and lend you a hand!”

Appraisers were not highly regarded in the world, but the word of an appraiser was golden in the market.

If an appraiser said that an artifact was authentic, it would be seen as authentic regardless of the truth. The contrary applied as well.

Due to the strict rules of the Appraiser Hall that allowed appraisers to only make three mistakes in their lifetime, no appraiser would dare make an appraisal lightly on the Master Teacher Continent. On the other hand, such a restriction did not apply in the otherworldly battlefield, thus making appraisers an existence whom no one dared offend.

“It seems like that fellow doesn’t wish to spend money and still wants to acquire that middle-aged man’s Greenleaf

Amber...” Zhang Xuan shook his head.

While he did not know too much about the medicinal herbs of the Otherworldly Demonic Tribe, as a physician, he was still able to see the spirit and medicinal properties of the herb with ease.

Based on the tremendous medicinal energy harnessed within the herb, it was definitely worth more than two Great Yong coins. Find authorized novels in Webnovel , faster updates, better experience , Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Clearly, the appraiser knew that as well, which was why he mislabeled it the Lostdictum Grass so that he could underhandedly snatch it.

To intentionally appraise an artifact incorrectly so as to purchase it at a lower price... such occurrences were, in fact, not too rare. He had often encountered such situations in his previous life, let alone here.

The crowd in the surroundings were also well aware of what was going on, but they dared not say anything about the matter.

They feared that the elder would resort to the same tactics on them, thus affecting their business and reputation.

“I happen to lack an identity at the moment, so I guess you’ll be the perfect candidate for me to impersonate...”

Zhang Xuan had been planning to proceed to the place where the appraiser examination was held when he heard this commotion. A smile crept onto his lips as he halted in his tracks.

He would require a verifiable identity in order to get into Sovereign Chen Ling’s palace. Since that fellow was openly bullying others, it would not weigh on his conscience to use him.