

Martial 2231

Chapter 2231 , Escape

Dao Source Realm, Emperor Realm. A hurdle existed between the two Great Realms.

If one described the Spiritual Energy of a Dao Source Realm Cultivator as a wooden stick, then the Emperor Realm's would be an iron stick, the latter naturally better in terms of both strength and sturdiness.

The difference between First-Order Dao Source Realm, Second-Order and Third-Order was only the length and thickness of each wooden stick.

If you want to transform your wooden stick into an iron stick, then you would have to cross a severe hurdle.

Yang Kai was now stuck somewhere in the middle of that hurdle and had not fully crossed it yet, but because he was able to produce Emperor Intent, it was as if his wooden stick had been plated with a layer of iron, receiving some capital available only to Emperor Realm cultivators, yet his strength was very different from that of a true Emperor.

However, this was enough.

Apart from him, who else in this world had managed to release Emperor Intent as only a First-Order Dao Source Realm? Even the renowned Ten Great Emperors of the Star Boundary had not managed such a feat.

Being able to produce Emperor Intent will naturally be of great benefit to his future growth.

Yang Kai was still watching the battle fixedly. The scene was unbearable to the others who received great impact on both their vision and Souls, but for him, it was just like a breeze that he didn't need to pay too much attention to.

As soon as the impact reached his Soul Avatar, it would be resolved by the Seven Coloured Soul Warming Lotus and had no negative effect on him at all.

Time passed slowly.

Yang Kai's harvest grew bigger and bigger as the battle between the two Masters seemed to have reached a fever pitch with Zhou Dian letting out raging howls from time to time in unbridled anger. Yi Quan's face had also turned grave and was not as relaxed as before. Brandishing his sword, he unleashed his Secret Techniques while fighting all out with Zhou Dian.

With Yang Kai's cultivation, his eyes were simply incapable of telling who was the stronger one in the fight or who had the upper hand, only feeling that the two of them were fighting on equal ground.

However... From Zhou Dian's increasingly agitated voice, it seemed things were starting to look bad for him.

But this was only to be expected. From what he heard earlier, Yang Kai deduced that Zhou Dian and Yi Quan had once fought two thousand years ago, and at the time, Zhou Dian should have been injured while Yi Quan came out the victor.

Now, two thousand years later, while both of them must have grown, Yi Quan had obtained an Emperor Grade Soul-type artifact, so he had an even greater advantage than before.

It was only logical that he could overpower Zhou Dian.

But... it was difficult to tell who would be victorious!

Yang Kai estimated that this fight may last for half a month to a whole month.

But he was quite happy to see this situation because he would have plenty of time to continue watching and learning.

Right at that moment, however, Yang Kai furrowed his brows. He could keenly sense an irregular fluctuation of energy in the air.

His face sank, but when he turned to look at Bai Lu and Yuan Fei, he discovered that both of them were unresponsive.

At first, he thought it was just his own imagination, but when he was about to continue focusing on watching the fight, Yang Kai suddenly realized something. With a sudden change in his expression, he shouted to the front, "Senior, watch out!"

Before he could finish shouting, another figure suddenly appeared in the middle of the fierce battlefield.

It was a tall and mysterious figure wrapped completely in a black cloak, making it impossible to distinguish their body type. And, the person was wearing a strange mask that looked extremely terrifying.

The person appeared without warning, and even Yi Quan and Zhou Dian had not detected traces of this Master's arrival. If not for Yang Kai having cultivated the Dao of Space and reaching a high proficiency in it, he too may not have detected the intruder.

Even though the other party was acting secretly, Yang Kai was still able to keenly catch the traces of spatial fluctuations from when this Master arrived.

But his warning came too late.

As soon as the masked person appeared, they arrived at Yi Quan's side and launched their palm towards him.

Yi Quan's face changed dramatically and he retracted his longsword, stabbing it to the side in an attempt to parry the attack.

He had already inserted his full strength into this attack.

Above the blade, energy surged like a tsunami that could seemingly swallow both heaven and earth.

The masked person's blow was immediately blocked.

But Zhou Dian took this opportunity to attack. With one thrust of his halberd, he broke through Yi Quan's defences and stabbed a hole right through his shoulder.

"Wu..." Yi Quan grunted as he shot backwards. Regaining his footing, he reached out to hold his shoulder in an attempt to relieve his injury.

But how could he instantly diffuse the full force of a blow from Zhou Dian so easily? The shock clearly injured Yi Quan quite severely and his Spiritual Energy was escaping from the wound, flowing out into the world.

"Sir!" The faces of Bai Lu, Yuan Fei, and the other Monster Race Masters changed dramatically as they all cried out in alarm, their figures flickering as they wanted to go up to him and help.

But Yi Quan raised his hand to stop them. With a slightly dark gaze, he eyed the masked intruder who had just appeared, his expression fluctuating.

Zhou Dian did not seem to have expected this masked person to appear here either and took advantage of Yi Quan's surprise to launch a sneak attack. If this person had not interfered, then it would have been simply impossible for him to hurt Yi Quan like this.

Zhou Dian was not happy about this, as he felt as if his fight had been tainted. Even so, Zhou Dian did not dare to show any disrespect and cupped his fists, "Lord King, why have you come?"

"To assist you!" The masked man responded in a slow and hoarse voice like scraping metal which was hard to listen to.

"But subordinate..." Zhou Dian seemed like he still wanted to argue.

The masked man interrupted him directly though, "No need to say more. Take him back to the palace, I'll take over from here!"

He had no choice but to obey the Lord King's order, so Zhou Dian grit his teeth and shout, "Yes!"

With that, he glanced helplessly at Yi Quan before speeding towards Yang Kai.

Yi Quan turned his head slightly and looked at Yang Kai, only making a single, simple remark, "Run!"

Yang Kai also reacted quickly. Even though the changes in the scene before him were extremely abrupt, he had already vaguely understood everything in a short amount of time.

This masked man was undoubtedly Zhou Dian's master, and also the person who issued the order to capture him.

If this person could order Zhou Dian to do his bidding, then he would obviously be a Third-Order Emperor Realm Master as well, and from the appearance of this person and the methods he used to sneak attack Yi Quan, his strength was probably a notch higher than Yi Quan's.

With this person holding Yi Quan back, Zhou Dian would have no more opponents.

How could Yang Kai hesitate? When Yi Quan told him to run, he teleported a thousand metres away in a flash.

At this moment, he had no choice but to expose his cards.

In front of a Third-Order Emperor Realm like Zhou Dian, Yang Kai could not think of any other way to escape other than using Space Principles.

And, while Yang Kai was fleeing, Bai Lu and Yuan Fei stood side by side to block Zhou Dian's advance.

When they saw their enemy approach, both Masters let out a deep cry and revealed their true forms in a flash of light.

Roaring, Yuan Fei took the initiative to meet Zhou Dian head-on and block him.

Bai Lu, on the other hand, radiated a white light. It was not known what sort of mysterious Secret Technique she was using, but she was somehow able to envelop a thirty-kilometre radius in pure white light, making it impossible to distinguish between north and south.

"Anyone who blocks my path shall die!" Zhou Dian shouted furiously as he brandished his halberd.

Chi chi chi...

A sound cut through the void. Yuan Fei had not even come close to Zhou Dian when a stray attack knocked him far away, his life or death unknown.

The difference in strength between the two was too great. Yuan Fei was simply no match for Zhou Dian.

And, two cracks later, the white world also shattered.

Bai Lu's body reappeared, but the light surrounding her body had become extremely dim.

Zhou Dian turned into a stream of lights, crossing over both their heads and pursuing Yang Kai without even shooting them a glance.

"He's fast!" Zhou Dian was surprised at how far away the figure in front of him was.

He originally thought that a Master like himself would be able to capture Yang Kai with ease, but only now did he realize that this First-Order Dao Source Realm brat had some kind of extremely profound Movement Skill. Once his Movement Skill was used, this boy seemed capable of ignoring space and instantly moving from one place to the next. Yuan Fei and Bai Lu were also able to buy him a little time, which allowed Yang Kai to almost escape the range of his Divine Sense.

"Interesting!" Zhou Dian coldly snorted, increasing his already lightning-quick speed further.

On the other hand, Lian Yan, who had arrived with Zhou Dian, had also quietly escaped from Heavenly Monster Valley when he noticed things turning for the worse while everyone was still recovering from the shock.

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In Heavenly Monster Mountain, Yang Kai fled desperately using his Space Secret Techniques every so often in order to expand the distance and conceal his aura. He did not dare to go in a straight line either and constantly changed directions in an attempt to shake off Zhou Dian.

But it was all in vain. No matter how he moved, there was constantly a strong Divine Sense locked onto him.

He could feel it on his skin without even turning around. Yang Kai understood now just how terrifying a Third-Order Emperor Realm Master was.

The huge gap between Zhou Dian's cultivation and his own was not at all something he could offset by his mastery of Space Principles.

The distance between them grew shorter and shorter, and for the first time, Yang Kai experienced what despair was!

If he could not get rid of him even with his Space Divine Ability, then he had no idea how else to flee from this crisis.

The Soul Devouring Insects probably wouldn't be effective in this situation because Yi Quan had told him that they weren't strong enough yet. Yi Quan had even proved that by suppressing them earlier.

Zhou Dian was a Master at the same level as Yi Quan, so whatever Yi Quan could accomplish, Zhou Dian must be able to as well!

He may have a little bit of hope with the Soul Splitting Saber, but it wasn't much; after all, Yang Kai had not refined it yet and could not unleash its full power. His previous success in attacking Ban Qing was due to Ban Qing's lack of strength, and also the fact that Yang Kai was able to catch him off guard.

Yang Kai realized with some thought that he had no countermeasures left. It seemed like he could only surrender without a fight!

And, while his mind was racing, Zhou Dian, who was pursuing him, managed to close the gap to just thirty kilometres. At this moment, Yang Kai suddenly felt a powerful force breaking through the air behind him.

Looking back in a hurry, his face instantly turned blue.

Because he discovered that Zhou Dian had thrown his halberd towards him. Even though he had no idea what kind of mysteries could be hidden behind this attack, Yang Kai did not wait to find out and did his best to dodge it.

Chapter 2232, Captured

Xiu xiu xiu...

Yang Kai's figure flickered from side to side. With the addition of his teleportation ability, he was literally randomly appearing and disappearing.

But he still couldn't shake off the halberd that was hurled towards him.

The halberd rapidly approached Yang Kai.

At this critical moment, Yang Kai had no choice but to use his Spiritual Energy to furiously attack the halberd in an attempt to block it.

Hong...

A loud bang erupted as Yang Kai's body shook and his face instantly darkened. However, the double-crescent halberd was completely unmoved and continued flying towards him.

Yang Kai's desperate full-force attack was unable to even slow it down.

In the next moment, the double-crescent halberd landed not far away from Yang Kai's body, digging itself halfway down into the earth. At the same time it landed, a shockwave exploded with it as its centre.

In just one breath, a ten-kilometre radius was filled with an invisible pressure that was so strong and domineering that Yang Kai could not help but feel a sense of despair as he was unable to resist it.

He wanted to teleport away again but was helpless to do so under this mysterious pressure. At the time, even his thoughts seemed to become slower.

In his field of view, Zhou Dian's stalwart and tall figure walked over slowly, face as cold as ice.

In just a few moments, he arrived before Yang Kai and looked down at him contemptuously, coldly snorting, "Little brat, you've got some skills, but... that's all you have!"

With that, he flicked his wrist and a bolt of energy shot out from his fingertips into Yang Kai's body.

Yang Kai's body stiffened. Instantly it felt as if his power was completely sealed and he was unable to move in the slightest.

This was it!

Yang Kai's face turned ashen. Even though he knew he may not be able to escape under this Third-Order Emperor Realm Master's pursuit, it was only now that he finally realized how insignificant he was when he was really caught.

If not for his teleportation ability, he would have been captured almost immediately.

A Third-Order Emperor was not something he could fight against right now.

With a flick of Zhou Dian's hand, his halberd that was stuck into the ground flew back and was absorbed into his body.

This general of the Divine Ascension Country turned his head again and looked towards the direction of Heavenly Monster Valley, his expression fluctuating a few times before he heaved a sigh with endless regret. Hoisting up Yang Kai, he sped off towards the edge of Heavenly Monster Mountain.

He understood that since his Lord King decided to act personally, Yi Quan would have no chance.

The terror of his Lord King was something that even he, as someone who had followed him for so many years, was unable to comprehend.

If possible, Zhou Dian hoped that he would be the one to defeat Yi Quan, but he obviously would not get what he wanted this time.

But... What intrigued him even more was what secret Yang Kai held that drew his Lord King to leave the palace and take care of things personally. No matter how he looked at it, Yang Kai was nothing more than a Third-Order Dao Source Realm Junior with nothing out of the ordinary about him. If he had to say something, then this little brat's escaping Secret Techniques were quite impressive.

If he hadn't come after him himself and instead tasked Lian Yan with it, this brat would undoubtedly have slipped away already.

"Boy... Do you know what Lord King wants from you?" Zhou Dian suddenly asked.

Yang Kai was still feeling gloomy and answered in a frustrated tone, "I should be the one asking you that, right?"

But before he could finish speaking, his body stiffened and he revealed a painful look on his face. That was because Zhou Dian actually made a move in secret and shocked him, causing him soul-rending pain.

Realizing that he was currently under the eaves, Yang Kai didn't dare to act too arrogantly either and could only say, "This Senior, have you got the wrong person? I heard you were looking for some Star of Calamity, but take a good look at me. Do I look like it?"

"This General is only in charge of catching people, everything else has nothing to do with me!" Zhou Dian responded coldly, after a while adding, "Let me ask you, where is Ban Qing? You encountered him previously, didn't you? Why did he suddenly disappear?"

"Ban Qing? You're talking about that short, sneaky guy?" Yang Kai pretended to play dumb and randomly blurted, "He was killed by a Monster Race Master."

Upon hearing this, a cold light flashed in Zhou Dian's eyes as near tangible murderous intent leaked from his body, causing Yang Kai to shiver.

But very soon, he retracted the murderous aura and coldly snorted, "This debt will be settled sooner or later!"

He did not ask Yang Kai too much, nor did he suspect that Ban Qing had died at Yang Kai's hands as he felt that was simply impossible.

Only the Monster Race Masters here would be capable of killing Ban Qing.

An hour later, Zhou Dian took Yang Kai back to the place where he had set up camp.

At this moment, the Masters who followed Zhou Dian into Heavenly Monster Mountain had almost all gathered here. Yu Man, Yuan Qing, and even Lian Yan who had escaped from Heavenly Monster Valley earlier were present. Only Ban Qing was missing.

And, right next to these people, was a group of helpless and dispirited-looking people who had been captured and gathered here.

When they saw Zhou Dian return, all of them quickly saluted him.

“Take everyone and head back to the palace!” Zhou Dian gave an order and they gave a resounding response. When he said this, he casually tossed Yang Kai into the group of captured people.

Chen Mu Ji secretly gave Yang Kai a hand so that he wouldn’t fall to the ground, then he nodded lightly at him.

Yang Kai looked around and immediately saw his other ‘Brothers’ and ‘Sister’ in turmoil. When they met each other’s eyes, neither of them could help but laugh bitterly.

None of them had expected to be caught by the local cultivators here after just one month of entering the Divine Ascension Mirror World.

The group moved quickly, and within ten breaths of Zhou Dian’s order, they were already on their way to Divine Ascension City.

Along the way, Yang Kai did not dare to exchange information with the others and could only keep silent.

Even now he had no idea why he and the others were captured, and what that Star of Calamity that Ban Qing mentioned was...

But he could see that this was a very big matter, otherwise, there would be no need to send so many Masters. Even Zhou Dian’s masked Lord King had to come out himself.

Yang Kai vaguely felt as if he had dropped into a huge whirlpool and would not be able to get out on his own.

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A day later.

Heavenly Monster Valley.

Yi Quan sat cross-legged and adjusted his breathing, his face twitching slightly. Many Monster Race Masters were looking at him with worried faces, all scattered around on high alert.

Yesterday, Yi Quan fought with Zhou Dian first before getting sneak attacked by the strange masked man, consuming much of his strength.

In addition, he was also wounded by Zhou Dian during the masked man’s sudden appearance and ended up receiving many injuries from the battle after that.

If the masked man was strong enough to crush Yi Quan, then Heavenly Monster Mountain would have lost its Lord and would no longer exist!

Fortunately, it seemed as if the masked man's only purpose was to capture Yang Kai and had no intentions of eradicating Heavenly Monster Valley, so he only fought Yi Quan for a short while before retreating. Even so, the wounds Yi Quan sustained were not something that could be healed overnight.

While he was silently adjusting his breathing, Bai Lu's shout suddenly entered his ears, "Who goes there!"

Yi Quan opened his eyes in a flash and gazed straight ahead.

There, a white-bearded old man with absolutely no energy fluctuations around his body stood, appearing just like a mortal who had never cultivated.

Yi Quan had no idea where this old man came from, but upon his arrival, he immediately headed towards him.

The Monster Race Masters naturally did not stand idly by. Yi Quan was currently in a critical moment of recovery and could not be disturbed. Whether this old man was friend or foe, they could not let him approach any closer.

So, after shouting those words, Bai Lu's body shifted and rushed towards the old man in a stream of white light.

But what shocked her was that despite clearly intending to rush in front of and block this old man, when she came to a stop where she intended to, she actually found herself inexplicably just out of arm's reach of him.

Xiu xiu xiu...

Countless Monster Race Masters also moved to intercept this old man.

But none of them succeeded.

All the Masters who rushed towards the old man appeared not where they expected to, their eyes bulging wide as if they had seen something extremely terrifying in that brief moment.

None of them saw any signs of this old man doing anything, but all of them had failed to even stand in his way.

The old man seemed to be strolling casually, but in the blink of an eye, he had already arrived before Yi Quan and was gazing down at him.

"You..." Yi Quan frowned and muttered, observing the man seriously, a bewildered look appearing on his face, but a moment later, his eyes flashed a brilliant light as if he had recalled something and he called out in astonishment, "You are..."

The old man raised his hand slightly to stop Yi Quan before placing it lightly on Yi Quan's shoulder.

A stream of pure energy slowly poured into Yi Quan's body.

Even a person as strong as Yi Quan could not help but reveal a look of comfort as the heavy injuries on his body were being relieved under the nourishment of this power.

A short while later, the old man removed his hand.

Yi Quan was shocked to find that the injuries to his body were mostly healed, all he needed now was some time to condition himself and there would be absolutely no dark injuries left.

Rising to his feet, he cupped his fists respectfully to the old man in front of him and lowered his head, "Junior Yi Quan greets Senior, many thanks to Senior for his assistance!"

Once these words came out, the entire Heavenly Monster Valley turned dead silent.

Countless Monster Race Masters stared at Yi Quan in shock, unable to believe what they had just heard.

Yi Quan was undoubtedly one of the strongest Masters in this world, and also one of the highest-ranking; however, he had just called himself 'Junior' in front of this old human man.

Since that was the case, just what kind of seniority did this old man possess? Just who was he?

The Monster Race Masters were completely dumbfounded.

"If you recognize this old Master, then you should know why I am here," The old man finally spoke and looked seriously at Yi Quan, "Where is he?"

Yi Quan wore a look of shame and responded, "He was taken away!"

The old man raised his brow slightly, "Who took him away, and to where?"

"To Divine Ascension Country's palace!"

The old man nodded lightly and said, "It seems like I was still a step too late, but so be it, this old Master will just have to take another short trip!"

As soon as he said that, his body suddenly blurred and then faded away, completely disappearing three breaths later.

Yi Quan stood still in the same place with a look of awe on his face, but soon, he couldn't help letting out a loud laugh like roaring thunder, spreading throughout Heavenly Monster Valley, drawing the attention of countless Monster Race and Monster Beasts.

Chapter 2233 , Ugly Masked Man

None of the Monster Race Masters knew why Yi Quan was laughing so merrily.

Finally, unable to help herself, Bai Lu went up to him and asked in a soft voice, "Sir, who... was that old man?"

Of course, she could tell that the old man was an extraordinary person, but how could she not be aware of such an astonishing figure in this world?

Yi Quan looked in one direction and slowly said, "He is a survivor from the Holy War from ten thousand years ago!"

"The Holy War!" Bai Lu's tender body shook, her beautiful eyes filling with astonishment as she asked, "You mean to say, he is..."

Yi Quan nodded lightly, "With his protection, Yang Boy will be safe and sound." But when he said this, he frowned again, as if worrying about a different matter altogether.

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Divine Ascension City, inside the royal palace.

Three thousand metres below ground was the Divine Prison, and the environment inside was harsh enough that it was unbearable for people.

Although this was a place for prisoners, it was not used much because no one dared to break the law in the Divine Ascension Country. And, if they did, they would be killed on the spot, so there was simply no need to use this place.

Therefore, the Divine Prison was only a symbolic existence. Many people didn't even know whether it was just a myth or not.

And right at this moment, Yang Kai and several other people were confined in this Divine Prison, looking through the bars.

All around were voices of the other captured cultivators shouting their grievances.

But none of the guards cared.

Taking this opportunity, Yang Kai and the others quietly exchanged the information they had.

In fact, there was not much information to begin with, only that Zhou Dian had led his men into Heavenly Monster Mountain in order to catch the Star of Calamity, which basically meant catching all the cultivators training in Heavenly Monster Mountain. Naturally, Yang Kai and the others were not able to escape that disaster.

They all felt as if they were fish caught in a pond.

Since it had come to this, they could only put their hopes on Gao Xue Ting.

This time, it was Gao Xue Ting who led the team into the Divine Ascension World, but she left alone after sending everyone into Heavenly Monster Mountain. No one knew what she went off to do afterwards.

If she got the news, then she would definitely find a way to rescue them.

But with her strength as a First-Order Emperor Realm cultivator, she may not be able to succeed. Yang Kai could only hope that she was able to contact Wen Zi Shan outside. If Temple Master Wen entered the Divine Ascension World himself, then they might have some hope.

While he was thinking so, footsteps suddenly sounded from outside the cell. At the same time, an Emperor Realm pressure descended on them.

In an instant, everyone turned silent.

The footsteps kept advancing inwards, and when they reached a certain position, a man stopped and pointed his hand at the cultivators being held in the cell, "Lord King has given the order, bring him out."

From the voice, it seemed to be General Yu Man.

"Yes!" The guards following behind him hurried to open the cell door.

Yang Kai and the others all paled in unison.

This couldn't be helped as the person who Yu Man was referring to was the chief disciple of Azure Sun Temple, Xia Sheng.

Very soon, Xia Sheng's voice rang out as he seemed to be struggling, but after being taught a lesson from the guard, he behaved and resigned himself to fate.

A short while later, Yu Man took Xia Sheng away.

Yang Kai and the rest were unable to do anything even if they wanted to help him, so they could only pray for his safety now.

While they were waiting patiently, a quarter of an hour passed when footsteps emerged again.

Yang Kai quickly looked over, and what he saw caused his expression to sink.

He saw Xia Sheng with blank eyes, body shaking and spasming as if he had received great injuries. Under the lead of the guard, he returned to his own cell just like a walking corpse.

No one knew what he experienced, but everyone naturally felt sad to see him like this. Murong Xiao Xiao had even cried in grief.

She did not dare to call out to Xia Sheng either and just cried in silence.

Then, Yu Man returned again. This time, he stood in a certain spot and looked around for a while before pointing his hand and saying, "This one!"

Xiao Bai Yi paled.

Because the person Yu Man pointed at turned out to be him.

The guard opened the cell door again and took Xiao Bai Yi away.

After they left, Yang Kai hurriedly looked at Xia Sheng and called out to him quietly, but Xia Sheng was completely unresponsive as if he had lost his soul.

"Junior Brother Yang... Could something be wrong with Senior Brother Xia?" Murong Xiao Xiao asked in worry.

Yang Kai shook his head, "I have no idea, but from how he looks, Brother Xia seems to have endured some serious torture, or perhaps his Soul has become unstable. He should be fine after resting for a while though."

But what piqued his interest even more was what Xia Sheng had experienced that put him in this state.

If the power in his body had not been restricted, then he could have let out his Divine Sense to investigate, and he might get some clues. Unfortunately, he couldn't use any of his strength now and could only rely on his own observations and speculations.

He casually comforted Murong Xiao Xiao with a few words but deep inside, he was anxious too.

Looking around, no one seemed to be paying attention to this side, so Yang Kai quickly moved to a dark corner and sat down.

The seal inside his body was set by Zhou Dian himself, so he couldn't unlock it on his own. It would require a Master like Zhou Dian to help him.

However... Yang Kai had his Soul Devouring Insects. The power of the seal was also a type of Spiritual Energy, so it could still be fed upon by the Soul Devouring Insects.

As long as he could mobilize his Soul Devouring Insects, he would have hope of breaking the seal and restoring his strength.

As for what to do next, he could only take things one step at a time.

Time slowly passed by.

And, while Yang Kai was attempting to break the seal with his Soul Devouring Insects, Chen Mu Ji and Murong Xiao Xiao were taken away one after the other.

Without exception, they ended up just like Xia Sheng and Xiao Bai Yi before them. Yang Kai had no idea what they experienced, but they were all listless and the look in their eyes was hollow after they returned. They wouldn't respond even when people called out to them and it was clear they received a great impact on their Souls and were unable to stay conscious.

Yang Kai gradually realized that something wasn't quite right.

The number of cultivators that Zhou Dian and the others captured in Heavenly Monster Mountain was somewhere between seventy and eighty.

And, there were differing levels of strength among these cultivators, but the others were all safe. Only the ones from Azure Sun Temple were picked out.

This clearly wasn't some kind of coincidence! They were being targeted!

Was there some kind of noticeable difference between cultivators like them who entered the Divine Ascension Mirror World from the outside and the natives? Yang Kai could not help but wonder about this. If this wasn't the case, how could the fact that everyone else remained safe be explained? Why was it that only Xia Sheng and the others had to suffer?

But he couldn't figure it out even if he thought about it.

And, just as he was about to break the seal, Yu Man suddenly came to his cell and pointed at him, grinning, "Take him away!"

Just as before, the guard opened the cell and grabbed Yang Kai before walking out of the prison behind Yu Man.

Yang Kai was silent the whole way through but he was constantly looking around.

This place should be the royal palace of Divine Ascension Country. The palace was very luxuriously decorated but appeared very quiet. Not many people seemed to be living here.

Yu Man led Yang Kai around some turns in the palace and they quickly arrived before a large hall.

Once they arrived here, Yu Man stopped and turned to look at Yang Kai with cold eyes, "Go in yourself, the Lord King is waiting."

Yang Kai nodded and did not resist. After taking a few steps forward, he suddenly turned back to Yu Man and asked, "This Elder Sister..."

"Who are you calling Elder Sister?" Yu Man smiled charmingly. The guard next to her did not even dare to look at her, as if afraid his soul would be taken away if he did.

A look of fascination appeared on Yang Kai's face and there was astonishment in his eyes.

It wasn't that he did it on purpose, but his power was being restricted and he had fallen under the influence of Yu Man's Charm Technique.

But Yu Man did not dare to go on with this either. The Lord King was waiting inside and she would not be able to bear the consequences if she were to delay things.

In the next moment, Yu Man withdrew her charm.

Yang Kai's body jolted and he came back to his senses. Deep inside, he was cursing incessantly.

If his strength had not been sealed, then he would not have fallen to her temptation.

He went on, "This Little Brother wishes to ask, why did Elder Sister pick out all those people here? Is there anything different about them?"

Yu Man curled her lip, "I was just following orders."

"The Lord King's orders?" Yang Kai raised his brows.

"Know your place, little brat!" Yu Man's face suddenly turned cold, changing faster than the flip of a book.

Yang Kai said with nervous laughter, "I was just asking."

"Hurry and get inside!" Yu Man bellowed.

"Yes, yes!" Yang Kai answered repeatedly and stepped forward again.

In a short time, he arrived in front of the hall and entered through the door.

As soon as he entered the hall, Yang Kai could smell something fragrant enter his nose that caused his whole body to feel light and floaty as if he were walking on clouds.

And, looking up, Yang Kai could not help but feel surprised.

Because this hall looked no different than a woman's boudoir. The entire place was decorated effeminately with pink drapery, light red carpets, and gave off an elegant and noble aura.

As soon as he entered the hall, a pair of bright eyes looked towards him.

Yang Kai turned his head and looked towards that person.

There he saw, a dozen paces away from himself, a pink gauze curtain which vaguely revealed a lazy figure lounging behind it. The bright gaze had come from this person.

A powerful Divine Scene swept through Yang kai as if it wanted to pass through his Soul Avatar and dig through the secrets hidden deep within.

Yang Kai raised his brows, frowning, and thought for a moment before blurting out, "The masked man?"

He suddenly realized that the power fluctuations emanating from the person behind the curtain were exactly the same as that of the masked man's he sensed in Heavenly Monster Valley.

[This person is the Master who launched that sneak attack on Yi Quan?]

Yang Kai would never have thought that it would end up being a woman.

Even though he could not see her face, it certainly couldn't be bad with such an enchanting figure. Not to mention, her strength was also astounding.

Chapter 2234, Counterattack

"Masked man, huh..."

While Yang Kai was still shocked, a soft and pleasant voice came from behind the pink drapery which seemed to be able to penetrate his mind and soul, setting off invisible ripples that made Yang Kai's head feel jittery for a long time.

He took several deep breaths and concentrated to calm himself down once more.

"For you to call this Queen in such a way... is not unacceptable," the woman behind the curtain continued in an unhurried tone.

"Could Senior be the Lord... Queen of this Divine Ascension Country?" Yang Kai's brow furrowed.

"Indeed!" The other party admitted frankly, "But no one knows the true face of this Queen. Even Zhou Dian has never seen it."

Yang Kai was stunned at this, but very soon, he felt a bad feeling inside of him.

Even though her words did not reveal any important information, it gave Yang Kai an ominous premonition, as if she had just revealed a big secret in front of him, one he would need to pay a heavy price for.

Yang Kai could not help but laugh awkwardly, "Junior is honoured, but Junior wonders, why is Senior treating me so well?"

As he spoke, his mind raced, but he couldn't understand any of the critical points here.

"Because... this Queen must," The lazy figure lounging on the bed slowly sat up straight and beckoned to Yang Kai through the curtain, "Come closer!"

Yang Kai frowned, his eyes filled with iciness as he said dully, "Junior has no right to refuse, right?"

"You can try!"

Yang Kai sighed and could only approach her slowly.

And, as he walked forwards, he could clearly perceive a momentary unstable fluctuation in the woman's Soul, as if she was expecting, even longing for something.

The anticipation and longing were palpable enough to even destabilize the Soul of a Master of her level.

But Yang Kai was not naive enough to think that the other party had taken a fancy to him. If that was really the case, then she did not have to go to such lengths. With the strength she showed before, she could easily make him behave however she wanted.

If her eyes weren't on him, then it had to be something he possessed.

When he thought of this, Yang Kai's heart clenched.

When he reached the curtain, Yang Kai took a deep breath and lifted it up, looking inside.

There, a short distance away, the image of the woman's face was instantly imprinted into his eyes.

Yang Kai could not help but feel a little dizzy as the other party was indeed a country destroying beauty. It was a flawless face that seemed so perfect it should not exist beneath the Heavens.

But... the moment Yang Kai saw this face, he had a strange feeling that he had seen it somewhere before.

He carefully recalled the faces of all the Emperor Realm Masters he encountered, but Yang Kai found none that matched, making him feel quite puzzled.

When their eyes met, the woman's beautiful eyes burst with oppressive light that seemed to envelop Yang Kai.

Yang Kai's body froze in place and he felt as if he was about to fall into an abyss that would never end.

Horried, he quickly exclaimed, "Senior..."

But the woman did not pay him any heed to his protest and muttered excitedly, “You are the last one, so that thing must be inside your body. If I can obtain that treasure, then this Queen will be able to refine this world and truly become its Master! Be obedient and cooperate, and this Queen may spare your life, even ensure you a lifetime of glory and wealth, but if you dare resist, then this Queen will make you beg for death!”

At the last sentence, the woman’s originally beautiful face became extremely hideous and her tone became ghastly, as if she was on the verge of going mad.

On the other hand, Yang Kai listened to her with a bewildered feeling.

[The last person, a treasure to refine this world...] He had no idea what she was talking about at all.

He had the intention to resist, but under the influence of the other party’s Soul pressure, even thinking was starting to become difficult, much less moving his body.

The woman rose up, her tender body swaying as she moved in front of Yang Kai. Raising a jade finger, she pressed it directly onto Yang Kai’s forehead.

In the next instant, pure Spiritual Energy flowed into Yang Kai’s body through that finger.

Yang Kai’s body trembled and his eyes became dull. It felt as if his entire body had just been subjected to unbearable torture, endlessly shaking and spasming.

A heavy consciousness and confused thoughts were all normal reactions when one’s Soul was disturbed.

Yang Kai finally understood why Xia Sheng and the others would end up as they did.

They clearly went through the same thing. How could a Dao Source Realm cultivator be able to withstand the assault of a Third-Order Emperor Realm Master’s Soul? The fact that their Souls had not been completely extinguished was already a testament to their strength.

The woman went on, seemingly searching for something inside of Yang Kai, her expression ever-changing whilst Yang Kai’s mind was hazy, seemingly only half awake.

While in a trance, he heard the woman praise, “What pure Spiritual Energy. You really are special, boy. Even with just a First-Order Dao Source Realm Cultivation, you possess such immense Spiritual Energy. In time, you will become a great weapon!”

A short while later, the woman suddenly burst into a mad bout of laughter, “I found it! Hahahahaha, sure enough, it is the Soul Warming Lotus! The Soul Warming Lotus! This Queen did not see wrongly! And it has already reached the seven-coloured grade, fully capable of bearing the weight of the Mirror Soul... Wen Zi Shan, once this Queen has finished refining this world, this Queen will not let you off easy!”

As her words fell, a look of extreme ruthlessness blossomed in her beautiful eyes, her tender body transforming into a stream of light that shot straight into Yang Kai’s brows, entering his Soul Avatar as if she had turned immaterial.

If anyone saw this scene, they would definitely be shocked, because such a practice was filled with dangers. Two different Souls could not be fused easily and the slightest mistake when attempting to do

so could lead to the destruction of both Souls. Unless one had incredible control, even if they succeeded, they may still be contaminated by the other's mind and lose their sense of self.

But this woman obviously has extremely strong control and was not worried about Yang Kai's mind contaminating her Soul.

Shooting into Yang Kai's Soul Avatar, she headed straight for the Seven Coloured Soul Warming Lotus, landing at the centre of it in just an instant.

The pure energy enveloped her, and the gentle feeling of it could not help but make her moan.

The Soul Warming Lotus was a precious treasure that nourished the Soul, a unique existence in the entire Star Boundary.

The Soul Warming Lotus had been recorded in ancient texts, but it had only really appeared two or three times throughout all of recorded history.

If not for this coincidental opportunity, then it was simply impossible for the woman to know that Yang Kai had a Soul Warming Lotus inside his body.

Laughing with great pleasure, it seemed as if she was able to see a prosperous path ahead already stretched out in front of her.

However...

Just as she was about to refine the Soul Warming Lotus, a seven-coloured glow suddenly blossomed from the precious treasure, which turned into a seven coloured halo.

The halo seemed to have unstoppable force, and the impact on the woman's Soul Avatar caused her face to pale.

Her face changed and she cried out, resisting the rejection of the Soul Warming Lotus.

But before she could do anything, a loud buzzing noise suddenly reached her ears.

Stunned, the woman looked up, only to see a dense cloud of tiny insects in front of her, converging on her like locusts onto a field.

"Soul Devouring Insects!" The woman's face turned ashen as she shrieked, "How can there be Soul Devouring Insects here?"

In the next instant, she suddenly understood and hissed in disbelief, "That little brat was raising these Soul Devouring Insects in the Soul Warming Lotus? He must be insane! Insane!"

Hong hong...

As she finished speaking, the seven-coloured halo of the Soul Warming Lotus gushed at her again, and even with her strength, she was forced to retreat. She could not fight it at all, because this was the rejection of the precious treasure itself, an aura of rejection towards anyone but its Master.

The light on the woman's body dimmed a little. Seeing that the light was only growing more intense and the cloud of Soul Devouring Insects were becoming wilder by the moment, she shouted furiously and had no choice but to retreat.

A light flashed in the room and the woman's body reappeared; however, compared to her earlier calm, she now looked a little dishevelled.

Before she could regain her footing though, a sharp chill descended from the sky and struck her head-on.

This chill was so strong that it actually made her feel threatened.

Under the woman's shock, her tender body was shaken by an invisible force that struck her head-on.

With a muffled grunt, Yang Kai's body flew backwards.

Weng weng weng...

The cloud of Soul Devouring Insects flew out from Yang Kai's body and flew straight at the woman, enveloping her instantly.

To these Soul Devouring Insects, a Soul as powerful as this woman's was the most delicious meal in this world.

So, even without Yang Kai's intention, the Soul Devouring Insects began swarming the woman like crazy, wrapping her up in layers without any leaks in no time.

The woman did not dare to dally in this situation either. With a shake of her body, a barrier formed around her and stopped the Soul Devouring Insects from injuring her Soul.

Soul Devouring Insects were the bane of all Souls, so even with her powerful cultivation, this woman was unable to kill them. At most, she could suppress and prevent these Soul Devouring Insects from attacking her.

But this was not a long-term solution as even the barrier she formed to protect herself was made of Spiritual Energy. As the Soul Devouring Insects gnawed on it, its protection would grow weaker and weaker.

The woman had to constantly release her energy to maintain the barrier.

She turned her head again and looked gloomily at Yang Kai, her beautiful eyes fixing on the long blade in his hand. Suddenly, she shouted with horror, "Emperor Artifact! A Soul-type Emperor Artifact!"

The sharp, cold threat she felt just now had clearly come from this Emperor Artifact. It was only an artifact of this calibre that could cause such a reaction.

She could not help but sneer as she looked at Yang Kai, "You have some skills, brat, and plenty of strange treasures to help as well. You actually unlocked the seal right under this Queen's nose! That is enough to impress this Queen!"

Chapter 2235, Entanglement

“Heh heh heh...” Yang Kai struggled to stand and pointed his Soul Splitting Saber at the woman, the corners of his lips raising subtly, “Junior is honoured to receive such praise from Grandma!”

The woman’s face changed slightly upon hearing this and she called out in a cold voice, “What did you say?”

Looking smug, Yang Kai said with a derisive look on his face, “Still playing dumb even now? Does this Junior have to point out your identity... Grandma You!”

Once the words ‘Grandma You’ came out, the woman’s expression suddenly turned as cold as ice.

Yang Kai continued, “This Junior was also puzzled at first, finding your appearance somewhat familiar, but unable to figure out just where he had met you...”

“Then when did you realize it?” The woman did not seem to deny Yang Kai’s speculation and instead asked with interest, even ignoring the Soul Devouring Insects gathered around her body’s barrier.

“Things just fell into place,” Yang Kai grinned. “Of all the people imprisoned in the Divine Prison, why did you only pick out the cultivators from Azure Sun Temple? There was clearly some special reason. You either knew all of them or there was something different about the cultivators themselves. Since everyone here is only a Soul Avatar, there should naturally not be any differences between foreigners and natives. In other words, the reason you chose to see us was only because you knew we weren’t from this world, and you were probably trying to find something on us... En, as for what you are looking for, it was most likely the Soul Warming Lotus.”

“Earlier you also mentioned Temple Master Wen’s name and even put on a look of absolute irreconcilable hatred. The hideous look you wore at that moment...” Yang Kai smiled, “Was quite distinctive.”

It was only when he heard Wen Zi Shan’s name through his hazy consciousness that Yang Kai suddenly understood.

The woman in front of him was Grandma You, who was guarding the Divine Ascension Mirror. That was why he felt a bit of familiarity when he first saw her. Since Grandma You guarded the Divine Ascension Mirror year-round, she could naturally freely enter and exit it.

It’s just that Grandma You was supposed to be old and decrepit, while the woman in front of him was young and beautiful, so Yang Kai did not initially associate the two of them together.

“And so you recognized this Queen?”

Yang Kai jeered, “An old granny coming here and putting on the appearance of a beautiful woman is one thing, but you even have the nerve to call yourself ‘this Queen?’”

Grandma You laughed coldly, “Are you trying to provoke me? If so, your tactics are too childish.”

Yang Kai couldn’t help smiling wryly when he realized his intentions were seen through.

Yang Kai knew very well that when facing a Master like Grandma You, there was no hope of winning or even escaping unless he could somehow enrage her and cause her to expose some fatal flaw. While he might have some hope in the outside world, in the Divine Ascension World, Grandma You’s strength was

at its peak. As such, he jeered and taunted her, but he did not expect her to see through his plan so easily.

“Little brat, you’re quite sinister,” Grandma You nodded lightly at Yang Kai, praising him. “If my guess is correct, you used these Soul Devouring Insects to break the seal, correct?”

“So what if I did?” Yang Kai’s attitude suddenly became aggressive, waving his Soul Splitting Saber at Grandma You as he snapped, “You’d better choose wisely, Grandma. If you recognize these Soul Devouring Insects, then you should know how powerful they are. You’d best be sensible and let me out. Otherwise, I’ll definitely order them to devour you until even your bones are gone!”

The way he said it really sounded as if he was going to kill Grandma You right here.

“Hmph, if they had another hundred years to grow, perhaps this Queen would really have to worry, but now?” Grandma You sneered. With a wave of her hand, she shook off all the Soul Devouring Insects surrounding her.

Many of the Soul Devouring Insects were dazed from being shaken off like this and buzzed around like headless flies, but they soon recovered and wrapped around Grandma You again.

“Since we’ve come to this, then this Queen will get straight to the point,” Grandma You ignored the Soul Devouring Insects on her body and said to Yang Kai, “Be a good boy and erase your mark on the Soul Warming Lotus, give it to this Queen, and this Queen will surely not treat you badly.”

“Why should I?” Yang Kai snorted.

“What do you think?” Grandma You sneered.

Yang Kai looked helpless and dawdled for a long time before saying, “Let’s put that aside for now. Before that, I want to ask something.”

“What?”

“Grandma, how did you know I had the Soul Warming Lotus? It’s something I hid very well, something nobody has ever discovered before.”

Grandma You frowned, “It won’t hurt to tell you that this Queen has been guarding the Divine Ascension Mirror for more than two thousand years. Even though I am unable to make this treasure recognize this Queen as its Master, this Queen has still studied it greatly. When your Soul Avatar passed through the Divine Ascension Mirror into this world, this Queen was able to get a glimpse of the situation inside your body, and it was during that glimpse that this Queen discovered...”

“But you couldn’t confirm it, right? So, you didn’t even know if what you saw was real or not, much less whose body the Soul Warming Lotus was in. You did, however, know that after we entered the Divine Ascension Mirror, we would head into Heavenly Monster Mountain to train, so you ordered Zhou Dian to bring his men there and capture the so-called Stars of Calamity! And, after catching and bringing us here, you checked us one by one...” Yang Kai read out his speculations.

“That’s right! But this Queen thought that the Soul Warming Lotus would be on that brat Xia Sheng’s body, or at the very least, Xiao Bai Yi. I never expected it to be in the hands of you, the least powerful one. That was unexpected.”

Yang Kai nodded, expressing his understanding.

He understood why Xia Sheng and the others were the only ones brought out of the prison despite so many people being locked in there, and what Grandma You meant by him being 'the last one'.

After checking Xia Sheng and the others and finding no traces of what she was looking for, he was no doubt 'the last one' to be searched.

"One more question," Yang Kai suddenly said.

"Brat, you better not reach out for a yard after taking an inch!" Grandma You's face went cold.

Yang Kai grinned meaningfully, "Grandma, if you don't want to see me destroying the Soul Warming Lotus, then you better not speak to me like that. Also... You're getting old, so it'll do you well not to rage so much, it's bad for the body!"

He put on a very concerned look which sent Grandma You's anger soaring, but she couldn't do anything about it.

Glaring at Yang Kai, Grandma You said grimly, "You better know your place, boy!"

"I know it very well!" Yang Kai gritted his teeth. "I hope Grandma can cooperate with me too, or I'll really destroy it. In any case, my life will certainly be miserable if it falls into your hands, so I might as well make you suffer as well!"

With his constant threats, Grandma You really didn't dare to do anything to him.

The Soul Warming Lotus was an extremely precious treasure that would only appear maybe once every hundred thousand years, and even then it would only come by chance to a very lucky person.

If the owner of the Soul Warming Lotus died, the Soul Warming Lotus would not disappear either and would instead absorb all the Spiritual Energy of its owner, remaining in the world and awaiting the next lucky person.

When Yang Kai received the Soul Warming Lotus, it was only in its five-coloured form and it had retained the Spiritual Energy of its previous owner, which benefited Yang Kai greatly.

Even though the Soul Warming Lotus would not disappear because of the demise of its owner, using special means like Soul Self-Explosion, a cultivator could destroy their Soul and wipe it from existence.

Grandma You's strength far surpassed Yang Kai, even with the Soul Splitting Saber and the help of the Soul Devouring Insects, so how could Yang Kai escape if Grandma You really intended to capture him?

The reason why she did not make a move was that she was worried Yang Kai would self-destruct and take the Soul Warming Lotus with him out of desperation.

Previously, Yang Kai's power had been sealed and his Soul had suffered a shock from her technique. He was defenceless then and could only let her do what she wanted; however, Yang Kai had now regained his freedom and had the opportunity to self-destruct.

Grandma You stared deeply at Yang Kai for a while before she closed her eyes, taking a deep breath to calm herself, then reopening them.

“This is the last question, little brat. You better know your limits.”

“Of course!” Yang Kai grinned. “If Grandma cooperates with me, then this Junior will certainly not mess around.”

“That’s for the best!” Grandma You nodded.

Yang Kai suddenly looked grave as he solemnly asked, “Grandma... What are you planning to do with the Soul Warming Lotus?”

Hearing this, Grandma You frowned, face cold as frost, silently glaring.

Yang Kai said, “Surely it’s not just so you can nurture your Soul. From what Grandma said earlier, it seems you would be able to do something about Temple Master Wen if you had the Soul Warming Lotus, but how? Junior will put it another way...” In that instant, Yang Kai’s eyes became sharp, staring straight into Grandma You’s eyes as he muttered, “What is this so-called ‘Mirror Soul’? Why do you need the Soul Warming Lotus to refine it?”

The moment these words came out, a ferocious look immediately emerged from Grandma You’s pretty face as murderous intent faintly diffused.

“Grandma, we had a deal, are you going back on your word? If you’re going to do this, then Junior will also go back on his word. You can’t blame me for being unjust. Don’t cry after I destroy the Soul Warming Lotus!” Seeing her remain silent for such a long time, Yang Kai immediately pressed her.

Grandma You cackled in rage, “Do you really dare to? You can try it if you dare, this Queen will stand by and watch!”

She suddenly put on a look as if she was there to watch a good show. Yang Kai couldn’t help but scratch his nose and shook his head, “In any case, you shouldn’t force me, Grandma. I’ll really destroy it if I’m left with no choice!”

“Hmph! Puny little brat!” Grandma You cursed at him, upset.

Naturally, she wasn’t in a good mood as a Master being threatened by Yang Kai in such a way.

After a moment of silence, she gritted her teeth and said, “Little brat, you should know that between this Heaven and Earth, some artifacts can only appear by pure coincidence. Through days and years, they will form their own consciousness, eventually evolving into Artifact Spirits!”

Hearing her explanation, Yang Kai immediately perked up and listened intently, nodding, “I know about this.”

Liu Yan was one of those Artifact Spirits, so Yang Kai was familiar with this theory.

Chapter 2236, Sword from the West

“The birth of Artifact Spirits has much more to do with fate and coincidence than with the grade of the artifact itself. Of course, some say that the higher the grade of the artifact, the higher the chance of an Artifact Spirit emerging from it. Perhaps it is true; after all, it takes a long time for an Artifact Spirit to appear, possibly even tens of thousands of years, so if an artifact’s grade is too low, it cannot survive that long...” Yang Kai did not say a word as Grandma You went on, listening intently.

“And, this Divine Ascension Mirror... possesses its own Artifact Spirit!” When she said this, Grandma You stared deeply at Yang Kai.

“Is that the Mirror Soul that you speak of, Granny?” Yang Kai raised a brow.

“Indeed!” Grandma You nodded lightly, “This Queen has been studying the Divine Ascension Mirror for thousands of years since discovering it, but this Queen has never been able to refine it and use it for herself. But once, long ago, I chanced upon the will of this world, the Mirror Soul! Without subduing the Mirror Soul, it is simply impossible to refine this world, but how easy can it be to subdue such an entity? Even this Queen with her Soul Avatar cultivated to this level is unable to achieve such a feat. Forcibly collecting this Mirror Soul will only destroy my own Soul since the strength of the Mirror Soul... is something that even a Great Emperor level cultivator might not be able to accommodate.”

Yang Kai couldn’t help but feel roused and said, surprised, “So, you thought of using something else to carry the will of this world?”

Grandma You coldly snorted, “Is there any other way? But the requirements for this idea are also too harsh. Just how many divine objects are able to achieve this?” Speaking up to here, she suddenly gazed hotly at Yang Kai and said, “The Soul Warming Lotus you possess, however, is one such item.”

“So, that’s how it is!” Yang Kai nodded his head, enlightened.

“As long as this Queen can obtain the Soul Warming Lotus, this Queen will be able to use it as a carrier for this precious treasure. Together with the Mirror Soul of this Divine Ascension Mirror, this Queen can completely refine this world, and when that time comes, this Queen’s Soul will be able to soar up to the level of a Great Emperor. As for a petty little Wen Zi Shan...” She grinned from ear to ear and shrieked, “He would be worth nothing!”

“Grandma You, you have... quite a deep resentment towards Temple Master Wen,” Yang Kai said, exasperated.

“Don’t mention that bastard to me!” Grandma You suddenly burst out into a rage, “If it weren’t for him, this Queen would have been able to study this Divine Ascension Mirror quietly, and then this divine treasure would be mine in the end! But eight hundred years ago, he suddenly came to Azure Sun Mountain Range, beat this Queen, then demanded I hand over this treasure! This Queen couldn’t stand it!”

“Is that so...” Yang Kai said casually.

Grandma You glanced at him, gradually restraining the fury on her face. Her tone also began to soften as she said, “Boy, this Queen has told you everything you need to know, so the time has come for you to pass the Soul Warming Lotus to this Queen. Rest assured, this Queen only wishes to deal with Wen Zi Shan. After this wish is fulfilled, you may do whatever you wish.”

“Many thanks, Grandma You,” Yang Kai smirked before saying, “But this... is quite a difficult situation.”

Grandma You’s face turned cold as she watched Yang Kai grimly, gloomily snapping, “You mean to go back on your word, boy?”

“No no no...” Yang Kai denied immediately, “Only, even if I agree to this... Temple Master Wen would not. Isn’t that right, Temple Master Wen!”

At the last sentence, he suddenly turned his eyes towards a certain spot in the corner.

“What?” When Grandma You heard this, her face changed and shouted while looking around her, “Wen Zi Shan is here?”

She was like a mouse that had seen a cat, seemingly terrified of meeting Wen Zi Shan.

But in the next instant, she realized she had fallen for Yang Kai’s trick. There was no Wen Zi Shan standing anywhere and instead, Yang Kai had darted out while she was caught in a moment of panic.

“You damned brat!” Grandma You was furious, her pretty face turning ferocious and with a flicker of her body, she rushed out to pursue Yang Kai.

Even though Yang Kai used his teleportation ability, he was still unable to escape from Grandma You’s pursuit. Grandma You had already caught up with him as soon as he left the palace and blocked his path.

Grandma You pointed a finger at Yang Kai and a vortex of energy surged at her fingertip, seemingly containing a vast amount of power.

Yang Kai was horrified and his face changed.

But without thinking, he shouted, “Blossoming Lotus!”

With these words, a white lotus suddenly blossomed around his body.

Unlike the Blossoming Lotus Secret Technique he performed in the outside world, when he displayed this unparalleled Soul technique directly with his Soul Avatar, the lotus bud was directly exposed, allowing Grandma You to see it clearly.

“The Soul Warming Lotus!” Grandma You smiled happily when she saw this and her hands moved slightly.

Right at that moment though, the lotus flower bud shook slightly and then suddenly disappeared, turning into a stream of light that shot directly into Grandma You’s body.

“Nn!” Even someone as strong as Grandma You couldn’t help letting out a stifled grunt as her body shook.

In the next moment, her beautiful face lost its colour.

Because she could feel her strength being sapped rapidly, as if something inside her was eating away at it. And, following the dissipation of her Spiritual Energy, a flower bud blossomed around her, giving off an intoxicating fragrance.

Yang Kai was able to catch her off guard with this attack and did not dare delay in the slightest. Wielding his Soul Splitting Saber, he slashed it straight towards Grandma You.

Even though his opponent was slightly affected by the Blossoming Lotus Secret Technique, she was not defenceless, blowing a sudden gust of wind towards Yang Kai and forcing him back with a slight lift of her hand.

The difference in strength between them was too great, so despite using all the tricks up his sleeve, Yang Kai was still not Grandma You's opponent.

He cursed and dared not stay any longer. Teleporting away, Yang Kai instantly moved a few thousand metres and escaped straight out of the palace.

The sound of Grandma You's angry roar came from behind him.

Everyone was shocked silent in the palace. Zhou Dian, Yu Man, and Yuan Qing were all looking towards the source of the noise with shocked faces.

A few moments later, outside the palace, Yang Kai's body shot out like a shooting star.

He had no idea what he was going to do now, but he knew that if Grandma You caught him again, he wouldn't be as lucky as he was just now. When that time came, Grandma You would definitely suppress him with absolute strength and forcibly extract the Soul Warming Lotus from his body.

Now though, he could only take things one step at a time.

In the middle of these thoughts, an amazing pressure suddenly appeared from behind him and pressed down on his body like a mountain.

Yang Kai stumbled and almost fell down, and when he looked back, he saw Grandma You several dozen kilometres behind him, chasing after him at incredible speed as she hurled threats, "Little brat, this Queen will make you beg for a quick death!"

But how could Yang Kai pay her any attention? Pushing the Space Principles around him to his limit and running for his life was all he cared about right now.

But the difference in power was too great so his efforts were merely delaying the inevitable.

Even Zhou Dian was able to capture him, let alone Grandma You herself.

Even though both were Third-Order Emperors, Grandma You had been studying the Divine Ascension Mirror for thousands of years, so even if she was unable to refine it, she could still borrow some of its powers to enhance herself.

It was no more than three breaths of time before Grandma You's figure caught up to him.

From a short distance away, she laughed at him, locking onto him with her Divine Sense while using her Spiritual Energy to blockade the space around Yang Kai's body, making it impossible for him to teleport away.

This time, she obviously had no intentions of beating around the bush with Yang Kai and flew straight towards him, reaching out her hand to capture and suppress him.

Yang Kai's face turned black as he tried to think of some way out of this situation, but he was unable to come up with a way to resolve the crisis before his eyes.

The Soul Warming Lotus probably wouldn't be able to stop Grandma You, and it was also his last resort, so Yang Kai really did not dare to use it until the true critical moment arrived.

Seeing that he was about to be captured, Yang Kai prepared himself to fight Grandma You to the death.

But at that moment, there was a sudden change.

From the west, a stream of light arrived in a flash in front of Yang Kai.

A beautiful figure emerged and radiated cold murderous intent.

A peerless beauty with bitingly cold Sword Qi.

Looking at this person's beautiful back, Yang Kai's eyes lit up and he called out softly to her, "Elder Gao!"

This person was Gao Xue Ting who separated from them shortly after their arrival in this world!

For some reason, she suddenly arrived and stood in front of Yang Kai at the critical moment.

Yang Kai noticed that she was carrying a longsword that had a sharp blade and a staggering energy fluctuation.

It was an Emperor grade Soul-type artifact!

But from the appearance of this Emperor Artifact, it seemed to have just finished being refined...

But soon, Yang Kai realized that something was wrong and shouted, "Elder Gao, you are not her opponent, quickly run!"

Gao Xue Ting was only a cultivator at the First-Order Emperor Realm, so even though she had entered the Divine Ascension Mirror World four times, and her Spiritual Energy's cultivation was slightly stronger than that of her physical body, she was still no match for Grandma You. Her coming here would not help at all.

Faced with Yang Kai's shout, Gao Xue Ting was unmoved, simply standing before him calmly as she indifferently said, "Don't worry."

On the other hand, Grandma You obviously recognized Gao Xue Ting as well, her expression fluctuating a few times before she stopped and shouted, "Get out of the way!"

She seemed to be afraid to lay a hand on Gao Xue Ting, her expression twisted into knots.

But Gao Xue Ting ignored her and instead turned to Yang Kai and asked with concern, "Are you injured?"

Yang Kai shook his head, "I'm fine."

"Where are Xia Sheng and the others?"

"They're being held in the Divine Prison, but Brother Xia and the others are suffering from some shock to their Souls right now. Fortunately, they are not in any life-threatening danger."

“Good!” Gao Xue Ting was visibly relieved.

“Elder Gao, why did you come?” Yang Kai looked at her, surprised.

“I went to Heavenly Monster Mountain earlier, thinking I would check up on your training in secret, but on the way there I learned some unsavoury news and rushed back. Luckily I arrived just in time.”

Hearing this, Yang Kai showed a look of understanding.

Gao Xue Ting really did arrive just in the nick of time. If she had been just a step too late, Grandma You would have caught him.

Chapter 2237 , Great Emperor

Outside the palace, above a certain empty plain, Gao Xue Ting faced off against the Third-Order Emperor Realm Grandma You with just her First-Order Emperor Realm cultivation, yet she showed no fear.

Brushing her hair back behind her ear, Gao Xue Ting spoke calmly, “Grandma, how about we end matters here?”

Grandma You was slightly taken aback by her words, but she soon burst out laughing and shouted, “Little girl, who do you think you’re talking to?”

“You, of course, Grandma,” Gao Xue Ting remained as indifferent as before, “If you promise to end matters here, then the Temple Master may show some leniency and not give you any trouble, but if you insist on continuing this... Grandma, you and I have known each other for hundreds of years, and even if you never officially joined the temple, you still showed some affection towards us, so I do not wish to use ruthless measures.”

“Are you threatening me?” Grandma You’s face turned fierce and her voice became sharp.

Gao Xue Ting shook her head, “Grandma is my Senior, Xue Ting does not dare to threaten you, but Xue Ting has received orders from the Temple Master to bring these disciples into the Divine Ascension Mirror to train, so she must keep them safe. I will allow no one to hurt them, not even you... Grandma!”

“Hehehe...” Grandma You began to laugh, “Little girl, your strength isn’t much but your words certainly are big! What do you think you can do to this Queen with your puny abilities? If not for how well-behaved you’d been all these years, you think this Queen would even bother talking to you like this?”

“Grandma, do you still remember when Xue Ting would secretly bring you food when Xue Ting was small?” Gao Xue Ting suddenly brought up the past.

Grandma You’s face turned cold and she said in a cold voice, “What are you bringing that up for?”

A hint of nostalgia could not help but flash past her eyes, and her fierce expression softened slightly for a moment.

“Xue Ting sincerely hopes that Grandma can stop things here!” Gao Xue Ting sighed.

“Impossible!” The coldness reappeared in Grandma You’s eyes and she yelled, “This Queen has waited so many years and finally found a trace of hope. You want this Queen to give up with just a few words? That’s foolish nonsense!”

Gao Xue Ting frowned, “I don’t know what you’re waiting for, or what you’re hoping for, Grandma, but... Must you do this? It’s been eight hundred years, and even though you never did so formally, Gao Xue Ting has long taken you as a member of the temple, and also Xue Ting’s Senior. Xue Ting really... does not want to raise her hand against you!”

“Enough nonsense!” Grandma You’s patience had also run out and she raised her voice, “You either stand aside now, or this Queen will kill you right here and now. It’s your choice.”

Hearing this, Yang Kai’s face could not help but tense up.

Even though Gao Xue Ting was also considered a Master, he knew she was not the opponent to someone at Grandma You’s level. If he ended up dragging Gao Xue Ting into danger, it would definitely wrack him with guilt.

“Haa...” Gao Xue Ting suddenly sighed deeply and looked at Grandma You, saying, “Grandma, the Temple Master knew all along you were harbouring a grudge against him because of that battle back then. Even so, he still had me lead the team into this Divine Ascension Mirror at ease, not worried that you would bring them any harm at all. Why do you think that is?”

At these words, Grandma You’s face changed slightly and she thought about it with a frown.

Gao Xue Ting continued, “Over the years, many disciples who entered the Divine Ascension Mirror to train were killed by you, yet the Temple Master never held you responsible and instead accepted it naturally as a kind of tempering test for the disciples. One part of this is because you did not act personally. Even if you sent your subordinates out for them, you would only send cultivators at similar strengths to them, which can indeed be considered a type of test. Secondly, the Temple Master felt that he owed you; after all, you were the one who discovered the Divine Ascension Mirror. Even though he did take it by force, he did treat it as the most precious capital of the temple, repeatedly allowing his disciples to enter this place and train.”

“Wen Zi Shan feels that he owes this Queen?” Grandma You suddenly sneered. “He really feels that way despite having fed his conscience to the dogs? That’s simply laughable!”

Gao Xue Ting said, unmoved, “That is why the Temple Master has instructed us not to use this last resort unless there is no other choice! Because he sincerely hoped that you would guard the Divine Ascension Mirror.”

“What last resort?” Grandma You’s face suddenly tensed up as she stared at Gao Xue Ting with glaring eyes.

But Gao Xue Ting did not answer her, instead just forming a series of seals with her hands and saying, “Rest assured, Grandma. I have already informed the Temple Master of this matter through a Secret Technique. He should be waiting in the stone cavern at this moment. You can speak with him in detail when your Soul returns.”

With that, she pushed her palms forward and a light circle blossomed from them, gently shooting out straight towards Grandma You.

This light was clearly not some kind of attack and carried no threat with it, but Grandma You's face changed drastically the instant she saw it and she shrieked in terror, "No!"

As she screamed, she even turned around and ran, trying to flee.

But though she may be fast, the circle of light was even faster, and in an instant, it hit her and melted into her Soul.

The next moment, an inexplicable force rose up, and a strange vortex appeared above Grandma You's head, emitting a strong suction force as it sucked her away.

Naturally, Grandma You wasn't going to just stand there and take this, so in a fury, she let out a hysterical roar and released a surge of pure Spiritual Energy that shot towards Gao Xue Ting.

Gao Xue Ting's face changed.

Grandma You's desperate attack was clearly made with her full strength and not something she could take on with her power. She could only try to dodge it.

But just as she was about to move, a figure suddenly appeared in mid-air before her. It was an old man with an immortal temperament and an all-white beard. His entire being was inconspicuous, and if he did not take the initiative to show himself, no one present would have noticed him.

As soon as the old man appeared, he lightly waved his sleeve.

A soft power spread out, neutralizing the impact of Grandma You with ease.

"You..." Grandma You's eyes widened as she stared at the old man with a look of disbelief, as if she had seen a ghost.

But right at that moment, she could no longer resist the power from the vortex above her and her body was sucked into it amidst her unresigned roars. Immediately after, the vortex disappeared without a trace along with Grandma You's figure.

As Yang Kai watched this scene, thoughts were churning deep in his mind.

Wen Zi Shan must have left some kind of seal on Grandma You's body and had taught Gao Xue Ting how to activate it.

Once this Seal was activated, Grandma You's physical body would draw her Soul Back.

And that is what led to this scene. After being hit by the Secret Technique, the Third-Order Emperor Realm Grandma You was simply unable to remain in the Divine Ascension World.

Even though this was only Yang Kai's guess, it couldn't be far off; after all, the physical body and the Soul are inextricably linked. The only thing that could draw Grandma You's Soul out of this world so forcefully would be her true body.

While Yang Kai was speculating, Gao Xue Ting was staring at the old man who suddenly appeared before her with a look of suspicion on her face.

She released her Divine Sense to probe this old man, but when it came in contact with him, she was shocked to find that as far as she could tell, he didn't exist! In other words, her Divine Sense was unable to detect any traces of him.

This discovery caused Gao Xue Ting's face to turn serious in an instant.

Even against Masters like Grandma You and Wen Zi Shan, she would be able to detect a trace of her opponent's presence with her Divine Sense, so the situation here with this old man was a first for her.

There was only one explanation for this strange phenomenon... the cultivation of this old man must be even higher than Grandma You and Wen Zi Shan's!

Since those two were already Third-Order Emperor Realm Masters, the only existence which was higher than them had a special name in both worlds, Great Emperor!

There was actually a Great Emperor within the world of the Divine Ascension Mirror!

Wen Zi Shan had never told her such a thing, so perhaps even he was unaware of this fact.

Gao Xue Ting stood in awe and quickly bowed, "Junior Gao Xue Ting greets Senior!"

"En!" The old man nodded lightly.

"Senior... Are you perhaps partners with Grandma?" Gao Xue Ting asked.

Yang Kai looked at Gao Xue Ting with a bewildered face and suddenly realized that the icy cold Elder Gao actually had such a cute side to her too.

If he was with Grandma You, then he wouldn't have needed to help her just now. He would have subdued her a long time ago. Why would he give her the chance to perform the Secret Technique?

"No," the old man shook his head slowly.

"Junior offers her sincere thanks for Senior's life-saving grace. I just don't know if Senior..." Gao Xue Ting asked tentatively. Even though she did not feel the slightest hostility from this old man, his astonishing cultivation made it so she did not dare to show the least bit of carelessness, lest she accidentally anger or upset him.

If she did, then even Wen Zi Shan would not be able to save her.

"This old master came here..." As the old man spoke, he turned his gaze towards Yang Kai and said solemnly, "For him!"

"For me?" Yang Kai had a stunned look on his face.

Gao Xue Ting was also slightly taken aback, turning unconsciously towards Yang Kai, wondering what was so special about him that a Great Emperor had personally come to find him.

As far as she knew, Yang Kai was entering the Divine Ascension Mirror for the first time and did not even know about its existence before then. So, it was unlikely that these two had met each other before.

After settling her thoughts, Gao Xue Ting asked, "May I ask Senior what he needs from him?"

The old man smiled amiably and said, "Rest assured, this old master will not trouble him in any way. I simply need a few days of his time to help this old master with a certain matter. I will send him out from here after it is done."

Gao Xue Ting raised her brows in surprise, "Out from here... Senior, what do you know?"

Clearly, the fact that the old man mentioned getting out from this place revealed some extraordinary information.

The old man smiled and said, "This old master can take a slight peep at the outside world, so I also know about you and the other outlanders!"

Yang Kai was shocked at his words!

Yi Quan knew about the Divine Ascension World because of Wen Zi Shan's drunken ramblings; however, this old man was able to spy on the outside world with his own ability.

That confirmed that the strength of this old man had already reached the Great Emperor Realm. It was only with this kind of strength that one's Divine Sense would be able to break free of the bonds of the world and see beyond its borders.

Chapter 2238 , Tian Yan

"You need not worry about his safety, this old master will not hurt him. I simply wish to borrow his power," The old man patiently explained to Gao Xue Ting. After that, he looked towards the palace and continued, "Your disciples are still inside. Though their Souls are not too damaged, they have still suffered from some shock. It would be best to bring them out of here as soon as possible so they may recuperate."

"Many thanks to Senior for the reminder!" Gao Xue Ting hurriedly said.

"En," The old man nodded lightly. Then, he turned his gaze to Yang Kai and said in a kind voice, "Little Friend, come with me!"

Then, with a wave of his hand, Yang Kai immediately felt a soft power wrapping around him and he flew involuntarily to the old man's side before he quickly sped off with him in one direction.

Gao Xue Ting opened her mouth as if she wanted to say something, but there were already no traces of Yang Kai and the old man. They had already disappeared in a breath's time.

Gazing at the direction in which they disappeared, Gao Xue Ting faintly wrinkled her brow.

She knew that the old man had no need to lie to her with his exceptional cultivation and strength, and if he really did have any hostile intentions, he could have crushed her to dust with just a finger. However,

he had taken away Yang Kai so inexplicably that Gao Xue Ting still couldn't help but worry. She had no idea what sort of power Yang Kai had that this old man needed to borrow, or what he wanted to accomplish by doing so.

After thinking about it for a while, she knew she was powerless to solve the matter, and she didn't even have any way to track down the old man's whereabouts, so she could only head to the palace first and save Xia Sheng and the others, deciding to send Wen Zi Shan a message with a Secret Technique and have him find a way to retrieve their Soul Avatars from the outside.

.....

Travelling along at lightning speeds, the wind from the outside blew past as the ground seemed to recede at a blinding pace.

Yang Kai looked astonished.

This old man beside him was indeed a Great Emperor level Master! Before now, Yang Kai had only heard of the existence of Great Emperors but had never seen one himself.

[Of course... Yang Yan might be a Great Emperor, maybe...]

But even if Yang Yan was a Great Emperor, her strength was not very high during the time they spent together. It was only after she returned to the Star Boundary that her cultivation would gradually restore itself.

He had never really seen a Great Emperor's true strength before.

But today, his long-awaited wish was fulfilled.

Grandma You's Third-Order Emperor Realm desperation attack was little more than a gentle breeze before this old man. Simply not worth mentioning.

And at this moment, while bringing Yang Kai along with him, they were actually moving several dozen times faster than Yang Kai could, even when using Space Principles...

Yang Kai could not even see the scenery where they passed.

He was deeply shocked to realize just how high above the understanding of ordinary cultivators a Great Emperor's power was.

On the way, Yang Kai kept silent and did not ask the old man what he planned to do. That was because it was meaningless even if he asked him that now. He would naturally know when the time came

As the other party was not hostile, he had no need to think about running away, instead just silently trying to feel the Emperor Intent and Emperor Pressure permeating from the body of the old man so as to quench his own will.

He did not speak, and it seemed the old man did not take the initiative to do so either, only busying himself with hurrying along, even revealing a somewhat relaxed expression as he flew.

After a long day, the old man brought Yang Kai to a certain mountain valley.

It was only after arriving here that the old man finally slowed down.

Yang Kai looked around and found that this mountain valley was covered by a fog so dense that you would not be able to see your fingers in front of you. And, this fog was clearly no ordinary fog as it felt as if he was tossing a stone into an ocean when he released his Divine Sense into it.

A few moments later, the two landed on a flat piece of land in the middle of the mountain valley.

The soft power that had been wrapped around Yang Kai slowly dissipated.

After Yang Kai regained his freedom, he began looking around himself.

Soon, he realized that this was seemingly the only place in the mountain valley not covered by the thick fog. The area wasn't very large, and the only thing he could see was a simple wooden house with around thirty or so burial mounds in front of it, a wooden headstone erected on each one of them with a name inscribed onto it.

Yang Kai was stunned.

Even though he knew that there must be no corpses buried beneath these mounds, he still had the inexplicable feeling that many powerful Masters were lying here.

He swept his eyes over each of the names one by one, but he didn't recognize a single one of them.

The names were written in characters that resembled flying dragons and soaring phoenixes, each stroke containing a kind of power that he couldn't help but feel moved at the sight of.

"Little Friend, what should I call you?" The old man suddenly spoke while gazing amiably at Yang Kai.

Yang Kai quickly cupped his fists and introduced himself.

"So, it is Little Friend Yang! A pleasure meeting you," The old man nodded lightly.

Yang Kai said solemnly, "May I ask for this Senior's name?"

The old man was silent for a moment before he said, "This Old master is called Tian Yan!"

Yang Kai saluted him once more.

After Tian Yan answered him, he pointed to the graves in front of him and said, "Little Friend Yang, do you know who these people are?"

Yang Kai said with a solemn expression, "Even though Junior does not recognize any of their names, Junior knows that these Seniors must have history shaking achievements that bring glory to the present, Masters with amazing cultivation and skills."

"Heh..." Tian Yan smiled. "You are not wrong, but do you know... how they died?"

Yang Kai shook his head blankly.

In fact, he was also wondering about that. Tian Yan was such an amazing Master and he seemed to be guarding this place. That simple wooden house was quite clearly the place where Tian Yan rested and meditated.

To have a Great Emperor level existence like Tian Yan guarding their graves, these departed Masters must be legendary figures.

But... If that was the case, then who was it that managed to kill them? Could it be that Tian Yan did it himself? Yang Kai did not think the old man looked like a bloodthirsty person.

Tian Yan said, "Long ago, this world's Martial Dao was far more prosperous than it is today. Third-Order Emperors were constantly emerging and many prosperous Sects contended with one another..."

Tian Yan did not answer the question from before and instead suddenly recalled the past.

Yang Kai did not dare to interrupt him either and instead quickly put on a focused mood and listened attentively.

"During that time, this old master was also just a Third-Order Emperor, the same as the woman you met today," Tian Yan went on. Yang Kai knew that he was referring to Grandma You.

"This world is very different from the outside world, but since it exists, it will also have its own Principles. Many Masters sought ways to become even stronger by controlling these Principles. Some sought common ground while others fought for different ideals. Those were joyous days..." A look of reminiscence emerged in Tian Yan's eyes.

When he heard this, Yang Kai suddenly had a bad feeling, as if there was going to be a big twist or something.

As he had expected, Tian Yan went on, "But when it suddenly appeared, the world changed immensely!"

"What was it?" Yang Kai asked in surprise. He couldn't imagine what on earth could cause this entire world to change and result in the deaths of the Masters who were buried here.

In other words, whatever had appeared had the power to destroy a world!

Tian Yan shot him a thoughtful glance and said, "A swarm of insects!"

Yang Kai's face changed and he suddenly recalled what Yi Quan told him previously, asking solemnly, "Soul Devouring Insects?"

Back when he was still in Heavenly Monster Mountain, Yi Quan told Yang Kai that the Divine Ascension Mirror's world was once nearly destroyed by Soul Devouring Insects, and warned him that should he have the chance to enter the Divine Ascension World again, he should under no circumstances bring his Soul Devouring Insects with him unless he could fully control them. He couldn't leave them behind when he left, either.

Yang Kai clearly remembered Yi Quan's serious expression and solemn tone when he said those words.

Combined with Yi Quan's words, Yang Kai realized what the old man was talking about.

"Indeed!" Tian Yan nodded. "No one knows where those insects came from, but they were so weak in the beginning that nobody paid them any mind; however, due to their special characteristics which greatly restrained those of this world, they continued to kill and devour while rapidly growing stronger.

Wherever they passed, life was extinguished and wails of despair could be heard throughout the land. All living beings were mere prey to them, and none could resist..."

"Families were destroyed one by one, cities swallowed up, and in less than a dozen years, they had grown to an almost unmanageable degree." When Tian Yan spoke of this past, a haziness filled his eyes. "By the time the Masters of this world realized how dangerous the situation had become, that swarm of insects had already grown to a level that no one could suppress!"

Yang Kai's face changed slightly.

As the owner of the Soul Devouring Insects, he had such a special group of insects with him. Yang Kai understood better than anyone else how these Soul Devouring Insects could harm this world.

He himself once envisioned that if the Soul Devouring Insects were given a certain amount of time, then they could definitely grow to dominate everything in this world.

But... that was just a prediction. Yang Kai had no idea if it would really work. However, from what Tian Yan told him just now, Yang Kai learned that this did in fact happen in the past.

Even without experiencing that scene, Yang Kai could almost imagine what a tragedy it was. The only thing left behind where the Soul Devouring Insects passed would be silence and death.

"They were too powerful, and their ability to suppress those of this world was too obvious. They continuously devoured the souls of Masters to grow stronger and stronger." Tian Yan took a deep breath and continued. "So, in a last-ditch effort, all of the world's Masters banded together to launch a decisive battle against the Soul Devouring Insects, both for themselves and for this world!"

Yang Kai could feel the blood in his body race. Even though Tian Yan did not describe the scene of that battle, it almost felt as if he could see dozens of Emperor Realm Masters bravely attacking the clouds of Soul Devouring Insects with their divine abilities.

That battle must have caused the colour to fade from Heaven and Earth.

That battle must have dimmed the Sun and the Moon.

That battle must have been... destined to be forgotten by the world.

Because after that battle... the Masters who fought it all died, leaving only their names recorded on their graves!

Chapter 2239, Seal

After more than ten thousand years, their names had already been lost to history. The people living and working peacefully in this world had no idea that such a thrilling battle once took place all those years ago.

Only a single old man guarded their uncrowned graves silently. Only these graves recorded the great achievements that they had made, and only here would their dedication to this world be recalled.

"I trust that you are able to envision the results of that battle." A look of sadness emerged on Tian Yan's face as he pointed to the graves.

Yang Kai stood in awe and bowed deeply to the graves.

Standing up straight, he then asked, "Then what about the Soul Devouring Insects? Were they able to be killed?"

Tian Yan shook his head slowly and said gloomily, "It is a shame, but though we had to pay such a great price, those Soul Devouring Insects... really could not be exterminated by the beings of this world."

Yang Kai's face changed greatly and he said, shocked, "Senior means that... those Soul Devouring Insects are still alive?"

Tian Yan nodded.

"How can that be?" Yang Kai suddenly felt sad. So many Masters here died in order to exterminate those Soul Devouring Insects, paying the ultimate price in the process, yet they were still unsuccessful in the end. Did that mean that even that sacrifice was not enough?

Thinking about that, Yang Kai was horrified and asked, "Then, where are the Soul Devouring Insects now?"

"Come with me!" As he spoke, the old man wrapped his power around Yang Kai again, and in a flash, they arrived in front of a dark altar. He waved his hand to disperse the fog here to reveal the altar and pointed to it with a sad look on his face, "The insects that plagued this world back then are all sealed here!"

There was no need for him to say this as Yang Kai could already tell.

Because when he first appeared here, the Soul Devouring Insects laying in his Soul Warming Lotus had already begun squirming uncontrollably, as if they wanted to break free from Yang Kai and fly out from his body.

At the same time, a buzzing sound came from the altar, forming a strange resonance with the Soul Devouring Insects in the Soul Warming Lotus.

Yang Kai's face changed.

"You really do possess Soul Devouring Insects," The old man looked at him with a complicated gaze. "It is also because of the commotion that this old master became aware of it. That is the reason I searched for you in Heavenly Monster Mountain, yet this old master did not expect that when he rushed there, you were already gone. However... this old master has been guarding this place for over ten thousand years and cannot be more familiar with the aura of the Soul Devouring Insects. When I felt their unique aura in the Heavenly Monster Mountain and asked the Monster King for answers, I swiftly pursued you to Divine Ascension City."

“Rest assured, Senior. These Soul Devouring Insects of mine are not powerful and will not cause any harm to this world. And... I will definitely take them away when I leave,” Yang Kai hurriedly said.

Yang Kai thought that Tian Yan brought him here because he wanted him to leave the Soul Devouring Insects here, and that was why he hurried to explain.

“Little Friend Yang, you misunderstand me,” Tian Yan slowly shook his head. “This old master does not want your Soul Devouring Insects. This world was nearly destroyed because of them, how could this old master want to leave more of these behind? I brought you here to ask you a favour.”

“What favour?” Yang Kai was confused.

“This old master hopes that you can... take them away as well!” As he said that, Tian Yan pointed at the dark altar.

The corners of Yang Kai’s mouth twitched and he said dryly, “Senior must be joking, these Soul Devouring Insects of mine are still quite weak, and given that I have had them for a long time, this Junior can still control them somewhat, but the Soul Devouring Insects that are sealed here... are beyond Junior’s control.”

The Soul Devouring Insects sealed here had even devoured several dozen Third-Order Emperor Realm Masters, how could Yang Kai dare to touch them? If he really put them into the Soul Warming Lotus, he would be dead without a burial in no time.

“They are not as strong today as they used to be,” Tian Yan said. “They have been sealed for ten thousand years without receiving any nourishment, so they have become quite weak. Little Friend Yang, since you are able to control your Soul Devouring Insects, then can’t you control these as well?”

Yang Kai laughed bitterly, “You evaluate me too highly, Senior... I could still control my Soul Devouring Insects in the beginning, but less than twenty days after entering this place, my insects have already begun to disobey my orders. After I leave this place, I will still have to find a way to...”

When he spoke up to this point, Yang Kai suddenly paused and fell deep into thought.

Seeing him like this, Tian Yan also could not help but be shaken and looked at him expectantly.

He had been guarding this place for ten thousand years, never once leaving Misty Valley, both to guard the graves of his departed friends as well as the Soul Devouring Insects.

But the Soul Devouring Insects have always remained a hidden danger to this world. If they could be sent out of here and dealt with once and for all, that would be something Tian Yan hoped for earnestly.

So, when he noticed the Soul Devouring Insects in the altar awakening, he immediately searched for the reason and found Yang Kai, thus bringing up this request.

After a long time, Yang Kai looked up with a glimmer in his eyes and asked, “May I ask Senior how powerful the Soul Devouring Insects sealed in here are today?”

Hearing this, Tian Yan answered cautiously. “According to this Old Master’s estimation, they are a little stronger than your Soul Devouring Insects, but not that much stronger.”

“Only that?” Yang Kai’s eyes lit up when he heard this, “If that’s the case, then maybe there is still a chance.”

“What do you mean by that?” Tian Yan asked, puzzled.

Yang Kai told him with a serious face, “Senior must also know that the world outside is very different from here. Even though the Soul Devouring Insects are completely lawless here, there are many ways to restrict them in the outside world. Junior has a treasure with him that is the bane of all sorts of Exotic Insects, such as these...”

“Such a thing exists?” Tian Yan was shaken.

“En,” Yang Kai nodded, “Junior had originally planned to use that treasure to subdue my Soul Devouring Insects after leaving here so that they will be obedient to my orders in the future. If the Soul Devouring Insects sealed here are not too strong, then it may not be impossible for Junior to subdue them as well.”

The treasure he mentioned was naturally the Insect Enslavement Bracelet left behind by the Insect Emperor.

This thing had a significant suppressive effect on Exotic Insects, so the Soul Devouring Insects would definitely be unable to resist its power. Of course, that is only provided that the insects themselves were not too strong. If they were strong enough to the point where they could even devour an Emperor Realm Master, then Yang Kai wouldn’t dare to be reckless either.

But after receiving Tian Yan’s answer, Yang Kai suddenly became somewhat eager to try.

“With the help of this treasure, we can indeed make an attempt,” Tian Yan had a cheerful expression. “This old master just wonders how sure Little Friend Yang is about this? It was merely an attempt for this old master to bring you here and bring you this request. If it is too dangerous, then let it be. It is no big deal for this old master to guard this place for another ten thousand years.”

Yang Kai smiled and said, “Junior is quite sure that this can work, but Junior will still need Senior’s help for this.”

Tian Yan said, “If there is anything you need, just tell me.”

Yang Kai said, “My own Soul Devouring Insects are fine. They are acting a bit unruly now, but they will bring no harm to me in the immediate future; however, if I am to take these Soul Devouring Insects here with me, then they will have to enter my Soul Avatar. Junior would like to ask Senior to please seal them a little in case Junior can’t suppress them.”

That was exactly the thing that worried him.

To take the Soul Devouring Insects away, he first had to take them inside him.

How could Yang Kai defend against them if they were to get riled up? What’s more, he still had to refine the Insect Enslavement Bracelet after he got out and could not be disturbed too much. If he wound up constantly struggling to suppress the new Soul Devouring Insects, then he wouldn’t be able to refine that Emperor Artifact at all.

But unexpectedly, Tian Yan suddenly showed a difficult expression when Yang Kai made that request.

Yang Kai asked, curious, "Is this matter difficult for Senior?"

Tian Yan looked at him and nodded lightly.

Yang Kai was surprised, "How come? Based on what Senior said, these Soul Devouring Insects have already become incredibly weak, and your cultivation is so strong..."

"With this old master's strength, it is easy to deter them for a while, but... this Old Master can't leave this world with you. Without following you, this old master will definitely not be able to restrict these Soul Devouring Insects."

Yang Kai's eyes went wide and he looked at Tian Yan in astonishment. He pointed to the altar and said, "But Senior, how did you seal them back then?"

The Soul Devouring Insects back then had to be ten thousand times more powerful than now, so if they could be sealed back then, why couldn't they be sealed now?

Yang Kai couldn't understand it.

Tian Yan said, "It is embarrassing to admit, but this seal is not the work of this old master."

Yang Kai raised his brows and said in surprise, "You mean to say... it was a combination of the efforts of all the people at that time?"

"You could say so." Tian Yan nodded lightly, "But there was another force included, otherwise, how could this seal have lasted for such a long time?"

"What force?" Yang Kai asked.

Tian Yan did not say anything but instead reached up and pointed towards the sky.

Yang Kai was confused at first, but then when he realized what he meant, he was shocked. "The Will of the World!? The Mirror Soul helped?"

Tian Yan said, "This world has its own will and its own laws. The Soul Devouring Insects brought great harm to this world and killed its inhabitants, which was intolerable to the World, so it used its own Principles to aid us, allowing us to seal the Soul Devouring Insects! After all, no matter how powerful we were, we were just food for the Soul Devouring Insects. Only with the help of the World itself, creating a layer of protection around us were we able to stop the Soul Devouring Insects from devouring us too."

When he explained it this way, Yang Kai immediately understood.

This seal was probably divided into two layers. The first layer was the Mirror Soul's will, which is also the Will of the World. The other was the combined power of many Masters. With the two powers combined, they were able to seal the Soul Devouring Insects for ten thousand years, and replicating such a feat would be impossible if either one was missing.

"Senior, could you help this Junior to communicate with the Will of this World?" Yang Kai asked with sparkling eyes.

Because he suddenly thought of Grandma You's plan at this moment.

The greatest reason that she wanted to snatch away his Soul Warming Lotus was so she could use it as a carrier to hold the Mirror Soul and refine this world.

If Yang Kai could communicate with the Mirror Soul, then he may be able to achieve that.

Once he succeeded, he would become the master of the Divine Ascension Mirror and would be able to enter it and train his Soul at any time in the future.

Chapter 2240, Little Fatty

But that was just a minor benefit. The key point was there were many Masters in the Divine Ascension Mirror, like Yi Quan, Bai Lu, Yuan Fei, Zhou Dian, Yuan Qing, Lian Yan... and even the Great Emperor in front of him, Tian Yan.

If he could refine a Flesh Incarnation Pill in the future, then Yang Kai would be able to summon a force that could sweep through the Star Boundary whenever he wanted!

Just the thought of it was enough to get Yang Kai's blood pumping!

Tian Yan kept silent, but there was a meaningful smile on his face.

When Yang Kai saw his expression, he understood that he must have overheard his conversation with Grandma You and knew that he possessed the Soul Warming Lotus and what he was thinking about right now when he mentioned communicating with the Will of this World.

Yang Kai couldn't help but feel awkward for a while.

After a short while, Tian Yan said, "It is not that this old master is unwilling to help you, but... your cultivation is too low. Unless this world takes the initiative to communicate with you, you will not be able to perceive it. It is impossible even if this old master tries to help you bridge the gap."

"Does it require the power of an Emperor, the power to communicate with Principles directly?" Yang Kai pondered.

Even though a Dao Source Realm cultivator had insights into Principle Strength, they were at best able to invoke or borrow this power to assist them. On the other hand, an Emperor Realm Master was able to exert direct control over Principles. As for the World Force that was controlled by the Mirror Soul, that was the highest Principle in this world, so to communicate with it, one needed to have the corresponding cultivation.

"That's right," Tian Yan nodded his head.

"Then... That's a shame." Yang Kai sighed a long sigh.

Tian Yan said, "You have the Seven-Coloured Soul Warming Lotus, so you may still have a chance. However... your own strength must grow a bit more. If you can really subdue the Mirror Soul like that

woman said and refine this world, then it may be a good thing for the inhabitants of this realm. This old master will wait in anticipation for such a day to come.”

Yang Kai raised his brows and cupped his fists, “Junior will definitely do his best!”

Tian Yan continued approvingly, “That day will come, but now, the first priority is to deal with these Soul Devouring Insects.”

“But Senior...” Yang Kai looked troubled, “If Senior can’t seal these Soul Devouring Insects, then Junior doesn’t dare to take them away!”

Tian Yan laughed, “Naturally, it is not possible with this old master’s power alone; however, if we can borrow the power of this world... It will naturally be fine to recreate the events of the past.”

Yang Kai’s eyes lit up when he heard this and said eagerly, “Then let’s not dally. Junior will leave it up to Senior.”

Tian Yan nodded lightly before suddenly sitting down cross-legged and entering a meditative state.

Yang Kai waited quietly in place. He knew that Tian Yan was trying to communicate with the Will of this World, the Divine Ascension Mirror’s Mirror Soul.

Tian Yan was a Great Emperor, so there should be a good chance of him achieving this.

In a flash, a Divine Sense as vast as an ocean spread out in all directions, flowing into the void, weaving in and out of the world itself.

Yang Kai felt as small as an ant before this pure and powerful Divine Sense and revealed a look of fascination as he stared in wonder.

This scene lasted for two whole hours.

Just when Yang Kai was starting to feel uncertain, Tian Yan suddenly opened his eyes with a flash of light and spoke, “Little Friend Yang, are you ready?”

At these words, Yang Kai livened up. He understood that Tian Yan had successfully borrowed the power of the World and quickly nodded, “Junior is prepared!”

Tian Yan followed up, “Since you have the Soul Warming Lotus, this Old Master will use it as the foundation to form a seal for these Soul Devouring Insects. But remember, though this Old Master has borrowed the World’s Strength and is supporting it with his own Spiritual Energy, this seal will only last for a short time once you leave this world. Before the deadline comes, you must deal with the Soul Devouring Insects properly, otherwise, the consequences will be unthinkable!”

“Junior will remember this!” Yang Kai nodded seriously.

The seal at the altar had remained indestructible for tens of thousands of years because it had been inside the Divine Ascension Mirror World this whole time, allowing the Mirror Soul to nourish and reinforce it with the World Force it controlled.

But if Yang Kai left here, the sealing power he took with him would be like a tree without roots, a river without a source. It was simply impossible for it to last long.

He had to subdue the Soul Devouring Insects before the seal was broken, or find a way to dispose of them!

Yang Kai made up his mind that if he ultimately could not succeed, he would exile these Soul Devouring Insects into the Void. With his mastery of the Dao of Space, creating a tear to the Void was a simple matter.

“Relax your mind!” Tian Yan shouted.

Yang Kai quickly sat upright and held his breath, concentrating.

In the next moment, he saw the dark altar suddenly melting away before his eyes and at the same time, a sharp buzzing sound emerged. As far as the eye could see, countless Soul Devouring Insects flew out from where the altar once stood.

Looking closely, these Soul Devouring Insects seemed even more violent and unruly than the ones Yang Kai possessed, and the aura they emitted was incomparably ferocious.

After all, these Soul Devouring Insects were once incredibly powerful. They had only become weakened after being sealed for ten thousand years. Even so, they were still much stronger than the ones Yang Kai himself possessed.

Yang Kai had no idea why, but once they were free, they all flew towards him as if something about him attracted them greatly.

Naturally, this scene caused Yang Kai’s scalp to tingle.

He was currently in his Soul Avatar form, so faced with this group of Soul Devouring Insects that were beyond his ability to control, there was no doubt he would be devoured in no time if he were to be surrounded by them.

Even his Conflagrated Knowledge Sea may not be able to restrain them.

But even though he was nervous, he didn’t avoid them.

At the critical moment, Tian Yan made his move.

Great Emperor level Spiritual Energy poured out, and at the same time, a bridge of light suddenly manifested, one end connecting to the distant unknown, and one end connecting to Tian Yan’s body.

The aura emanating from this bridge of light was so great and majestic that it seemed to be able to control everything between the Heavens and Earth.

And, as soon as this bridge appeared, the Soul Devouring Insects went silent for a moment, as if they were extremely afraid.

Tian Yan did not pause, his hands forming a series of seals as he merged his own strength with that coming from the light bridge, condensing a ball of light that slowly wrapped around the Soul Devouring Insects.

In less than ten breaths of time, only that ball of light remained in front of Yang Kai’s eyes.

And, once this was all over, the light around Tian Yan's body had also grown a little dimmer, as if communicating with the Will of the World had been extremely draining to him.

But he remained indifferent with a solemn face, reaching out to Yang Kai.

In response to that motion, the ball of light flew towards Yang Kai.

Yang Kai did not dodge, opening his mind to accept it.

A moment later, the ball of light melted into Yang Kai's Soul Avatar, and it was brought into the Soul Warming Lotus under his guidance, where it stabilized.

Yang Kai looked inside himself and soon found the ball of light inside the Soul Warming Lotus's petals contained countless Soul Devouring Insects sealed inside of it.

Even though they were sealed like this, Yang Kai could still sense a great threat from them, and he knew better than anyone that once the ball of light was broken, these Soul Devouring Insects would emerge and eat him from the inside out.

If that were to happen, no one would be able to save him.

"I'll teach you a set of techniques now, familiarize yourself with them and strengthen the seal!" Tian Yan's voice came after that.

Yang Kai nodded seriously.

Then, Tian Yan began teaching Yang Kai a sealing art in great detail.

Yang Kai learned it very quickly and mastered it in just under an hour, much to Tian Yan's praise.

After strengthening the seal with this method, Yang Kai suddenly had a strange look on his face and looked up in a certain direction.

A few tens of thousands of kilometres from Misty Valley in the direction Yang Kai was looking was a small city with a small population.

When Yang Kai looked over, a little boy who looked only about seven or eight with a delicate, chubby, and silly-looking face also turned his head abruptly towards Misty Valley.

A short while later, the little boy's face became very ugly as he muttered, "What a loss... Tian Yan, that old bastard, he really dragged this Little Master down with him this time. I shouldn't have responded to him, what a terrible loss..."

He muttered like that for a while but no one paid him any attention.

At that time, a girl with two pigtails suddenly came up to him and yelled fiercely, "Little Fatty, what are you doing? Hurry up and go out of town with this Young Lady! If we go any later, we won't be able to leave."

This little girl was also about seven or eight and had a kind of innocent look to her face which quite contrasted with her arrogant way of speaking.

“You actually called me... Little Fatty!” The little boy was fuming and clenched his fair and tender fist as he barked back, “You little girl! Do you have any idea who this Little Master...”

Peng...

Before he could finish his sentence, the little girl had jumped up and sent a fist right down onto his head, causing his neck to shrink down and eyes to go red.

“Stop that!” He shouted.

In response, he got an angry dragon fist to the face...

A short while later, the little girl strutted towards the city gate, dragging the Little Fatty along by the hand as he wore a resentful expression on his face. If one saw his face, they would notice two black and blue eyes...

Back in Misty Valley, Tian Yan looked cheerfully at Yang Kai and said, “Little Friend Yang, have you noticed something?”

Only then did Yang Kai come back to his senses and looked in surprise at Tian Yan, “Senior, you knew all along?”

Tian Yan smiled, “Little Friend Yang possesses an astonishing treasure like the Soul Warming Lotus, and the seal from before contained a trace of this world’s power. With the help of the Soul Warming Lotus, Little Friend Yang will naturally be able to easily detect the location of that person!”

When he heard this, Yang Kai quickly cupped his fists and said, “Many thanks, Senior!”

Tian Yan waved his hand and said, “This is all I can do to help. If you really wish to become the Master of this world, you will need to work hard. That person... is not so easy to talk to.”

“Junior understands. If the opportunity comes, Junior will definitely give it a try!”

“This old master also wishes for that day to come. When that time arrives, perhaps this Old Master will also be able to break through the constraints here and go out to the outside world to have a look,” Tian Yan showed a longing expression.

He and Yi Quan basically had the same idea; that they wanted to see the outside world with their own eyes.

Only Yi Quan was interested in it in order to seek out a higher Martial Dao, while Tian Yan wished to achieve it purely out of interest.