

Chapter 401 - 397: Auric Sea, Gateway Door

Tuo Bihan's dark expression became twisted, his eyes revealed a rare flame of rage as he stared at the San Emperor's group. His spiritual aura erupted in a ferocious explosion, causing the expressions of everyone present to change, even the San Clan's elders beside the San Emperor. They subconsciously took a step back behind their Emperor for safety.

"Grand Sage Tuo, there's no need for such anger, is there?" The voice of the San Emperor carried a unique charm of a King, someone who ruled over trillions for millennia. It was as if nothing could disturb his calm, that nothing could escape his gaze.

Tuo Bihan's eyes radiated intense spiritual light, but his spiritual aura and pressure wasn't capable of being released due to the Auric Sea's unique environment. After a while, he calmed his raging aura. It took him a few breaths to regain himself.

"How did you know about the Gateway?" He calmly asked. The Gateway Door was a unique opportunity for their juniors to explore the unknown, face a trial to obtain benefits that might elevate their talent or future potential. It was boundlessly important, but with the San Clan's actions, he was worried that the limited spots for the Spatial Entrance had been used. This was why he had erupted in rage after learning about the news of the other party.

San Emperor's misty veil remained unchanged. One of his companions stepped forward with a faint smug smile, "Is there anything that can escape His Majesty's notice. The Tri-Vision Starfield holds no secrets that the San Clan is unaware of."

"..." Everyone was silent. While the disciples were curious about what was happening, the leaders' expressions were unsightly and somewhat fearful. This was something that had been kept under wraps for so long in the most thorough fashion with the most hellish of Spirit Oaths that held absolutely no loopholes. They had even detained everyone who initially found the Gateway Door's entrance, leaving no hole for leakage.

While the Elemental Heaven Pavilion had told the Alchemist Association, the Association had already 'knew' about the matter beforehand. But as a neutral force, an Alchemic Organization, they didn't carry a hint of desire to risk the lives of their talented juniors to excavate materials that would inevitably make their way into their hands. After all, they were the richest force in the starfield.

Most materials discovered would be too volatile anyway to directly refine, likely forcing the others to send them these materials to refine into alchemical products suitable for cultivators. They had utterly no need to invest anything, so they acted as a mediator after the Elemental Heaven Pavilion discovered this fact. Tuo Bihan was entirely wrong with his original assumption that they wanted most spots, but he lacked that their ambitions were elsewhere and far away, not limited to just this starfield.

Still, they decided to send a few juniors for some reason...

Tuo Bihan scoffed at those words, but he didn't say anything else. His eyes flashed with radiant light as he inspected the Gateway Door, ensuring that the spatial entrance was still present. When he investigated its state, he was startled. It was still active and unsealed.

A wisp of joy was soon birthed within his heart. The spatial entrance was still usable. This could mean the secret realm belonged to a training grounds, trials, or a world realm meant for descendants. Either case, this relaxed his nerves greatly.

The San Emperor's voice resounded, "I have no intention of stopping you in sending your juniors in. I've only sent in a hundred myself, and after inspection of the Spatial Entrance, it only allows three thousand members maximum before it seals itself from allowing more."

Tuo Bihan, Qingye Yun, and Lin Ruyan's eyes brightened. They were unsure about the exact details of the Gateway Door yet the San Emperor seemed to have gleaned details beyond their own means. Even Tuo Bihan had investigated the Gateway Door but to no avail, only discovering the life-restriction formation that was present, preventing those of a certain age from entering.

Thus they could only narrow down that it was likely a trial, training ground, or world realm for descendants set up by an ancient expert. This left them excited. They had limited the spots because they couldn't determine how many would actually be allowed in, using the past standard used by ancient experts for trials.

They had seemingly sent just enough. This was a fated event, with the disciples of the Myriad Monarch Sect, Elemental Heaven Pavilion, and Alchemist Association being short by a hundred or so. This caused them to be extremely startled, their eyes only now revealing shock and disbelief as they simultaneously looked to the San Emperor.

Could he really know all the secrets within the starfield somehow?!

If he sent just enough to fill the gap with that intention, that would suggest a level of foresight into their intentions and awareness of the Gateway Door's limitations. This was truly concerning. But this still gave them a numerical advantage, so they soon calmed down. Even Tuo Bihan had to reassess the San Emperor, no longer considering him as 'just' a False Realm Lord.

"Enough, let's go." A voice sounded, one that didn't lack a single iota of charm in comparison to the San Emperor. Wei Wuyin flew beside Tuo Bihan, his silver eyes sweeping the three groups. "The longer we wait, the greater their advantage." When he spoke, the world listened.

Tuo Bihan took a breath and nodded, "Everyone, ready!" He turned to the disciples and shouted, causing their hearts that were still shaking due to the San Emperor's presence to harden abruptly. They were now tense and filled with anticipation.

Qingye Yun faintly smiled. While Qingye Ying's issue wasn't resolved by Wei Wuyin, the Alchemist Association was already his subordinate to the world. He, too, gave the orders to prepare for his limited numbers. Amongst these numbers were an ordinary looking female elf that wasn't particularly pretty. He glanced at her for a moment, but swiftly retracted his gaze.

Lin Ruyan could feel the shift, so she too acted. She organized her members as they readied themselves.

Tuo Bihan spoke, glancing at the idle San Emperor for a brief moment, "The Gateway Door is a spatial entrance that leads to a self-created man-made realm that likely houses its own unique environment. We can tell its habitable by living existences, but there are things we can't perceive: It's dangers and

reactions to individuals sent within. We do not know if it will bring you all to the same location or spread you far away. Whatever it does, you should seek out the aid of your companions if its within your ability.

"As for exiting the realm, every realm has numerous exits that lead outside. If its a trial, you might be brought out upon failure by an autonomous lifeform; if its a World Realm, then it's up to you to find the exit. As long as the entrance remains, there will be an exit. Furthermore, if ten years eclipses without any sign of your exit, I will rip open an entrance forcefully and send in a special Void Gate. Find it, then use it to escape." As a Realmlord, Tuo Bihan could forcefully send in non-animate objects if he was willing to lose a portion of his cultivation base.

"I won't tell you what you should do. Use your intelligence to figure it out, act as you will." Tuo Bihan said this solemnly, his eyes sweeping across the faces of all the Myriad Monarch Sect disciples. "With the dangers unknown, you could lose your life. If you wish to step away, no one will blame you or feel you're a coward."

"..." No one said anything in response, just revealing their steel-like gazes of determination.

With a proud smile, Tuo Bihan nodded. "Then, I'll open the Gateway Door." He turned away, facing an empty space that the others had hoarded around. With a breath, he used the palms of his hands to face the empty space.

Psssst!

A fizzling sound erupted suddenly. No one could see what Tuo Bihan was doing, but a reaction was happening.

Wei Wuyin's Celestial Eyes could see clearly what was happening, seeing that the Gateway Door was hidden behind the folds of space between this layer and the artificially created layer of the man-made realm. Tuo Bihan wasn't using Spatial Force to evoke this change, but actively emitting a form of invisible gravitational force that seemed to interact with the Gateway.

It was distorting the space present, forcing the Gateway to reveal itself. There was no wonder Gravity Emission Phase experts were present in vast numbers. But Tuo Bihan was a Realmlord, his level of Gravitation Forces were beyond their level. What they needed to accomplish with a unified effort, the San Emperor and Tuo Bihan could do alone.

It's likely that even if the Alchemist Association and Elemental Heaven Pavilion had arrived a hundred days sooner, they might not have enough power to bring out the Gateway Door. This was probably why Tuo Bihan panicked hearing they arrived a day earlier, even coming himself.

If he counted the Sixth Stage experts present, there were eight. There were three from the Myriad Monarch Sect, three from the Elemental Heaven Pavilion, and two from the Alchemist Association. It seemed at least eight experts were prepared to act in concert.

Fortunately, Tuo Bihan had taken it upon himself to act.

Psst! Psst! Psst!

The fizzling sound became even more apparent, but after a few moments longer, it revealed itself. The entire audience of disciples present were thoroughly shocked! They wondered why their leaders often referred to spatial entrances of realms as Gateway Doors, but when they saw it, they finally knew!

It was a door.

An actual door!!

It was roughly ten meters high and four meters wide, rectangular in shape and seemed to have black-colored handles that could be pulled towards them. It was misty white with faint ghostly silver light circulating through its edges. The door itself was greyish, leaning towards the lighter shade.

It faintly looked like a mixture of glass and wood, being semi-translucent with the natural marks of age that would be left on wood, but these marks glowed with faint multi-colored light. It was exquisitely odd, floating in mid-air as if it was connected to nothing but also everything.

"It seems like a door to the world..." A disciple couldn't help but say, baffled and awestruck by the sight of the door. This impression was the thought that emerged in the minds of everyone present, even Wei Wuyin felt the same.

With his Celestial Eyes, this was even more so. He could see that it was linked to a multi-diverse tunneling network that went into places unknown. But from this, he could tell that entering would likely mean that they would be randomly sent through one of these tunnels of space and arrive at different areas of the realm. This was soon confirmed as the tunnels started to become smaller, like human-sized tubes and split into exactly three thousand tunnels like a division of cells. Furthermore, roughly a hundred of these tunnels had become dim and lacked specks of silver light that dotted the others.

While he was the only one to discover this, his heart started to wildly beat, causing an intense physical pain throughout his entire body as if he was having a heart attack. He showed no outward expression change as he interacted with Kratos. But when he did, he felt a surge of intense emotions surge through his mind.

The screams of those within the Auric Sea...

They had become even louder, even more painful, even more hellish and unbearably savage.

The left side of his upper lips and lower part of his nose twitched, feeling extremely disturbed by this knowledge. Unable to do anything at present, he could only ask Eden to console Kratos' thoughts as he held back his urge to do something reckless.

"..."

Tuo Bihan let loose a long breath after retrieving his hands, "Go! The Gateway Door does not open in a conventional way, simply walk through. May your fortune be great, your gains bountiful." With these final words and inspection ensuring the passage safety, he glanced at the San Emperor who remained a silent existence. He had a faint feeling that this expedition might have more to it than meets the eye. If it wasn't for Wei Wuyin's words, he might have considered throwing away this opportunity.

But knowing the San Emperor had already sent individuals in only reaffirms that it was likely extremely beneficial and special, including safer than expected. He hoped Wei Wuyin could grasp whatever opportunities lay within.

The first young disciple soon moved!

Chapter 402 - 398: Selected Candidate

The first to take the courageous action of venturing first into the unknown, into the Gateway Door, was none other than Wei Wuyin. The hesitation that others felt in their hearts was absent from his own. When he moved, everyone's eyes fixated on his figure. There wasn't a single one present who didn't know who Wei Wuyin was nor what he had achieved.

Without the tension in the air from the two Realm Lords or the confusion about Lian Yu's fate, the mind's of everyone could now focus on Wei Wuyin. Almost all of the non-Myriad Monarch Sect members were shocked by his appearance, understanding the inherent dangers of venturing into an unknown Gateway Door.

There was a slight possibility that every last one of them might never return, dying in an unmarked area within a hectic and chaotic world that existed within. But Wei Wuyin was the Ascendant Emperor of Neo-Dawn, a figure that had both potential and abilities that made the legend of the King of Everlore seem distant and less impressive.

A less than fifty year old Emperor Alchemist who beat the Successor of the King of Everlore with an Alchemic Astral Soul in an overwhelming fashion. Furthermore, he could actually cultivate without the innate docility of Alchemical Energies, providing him a strong combat prowess. Those who observed his fight against the three Gold-Starred Beasts in the Grand Spirit Trials understood his impeccable foundation and strength.

They couldn't fathom why the Myriad Monarch Sect was allowing Wei Wuyin to venture into the Auric Sea's unknown Gateway Door. In fact, the elders of the Elemental Heaven Pavilion, Alchemist Association, and the two Envoys of the San Clan were extremely shocked that he was making the first move. Their original assumption was him coming along to expand his horizons, not to fight for opportunities.

With the Alchemic Dao supporting him and boundless potential, what reasons did he have to take such risks? But witnessing him soar towards the Gateway Door left all their minds fizzing with coherent thought, a byproduct of their disbelief.

Wei Wuyin didn't bother with these stunned and incredulous gazes. When he arrived by the Gateway Door, that wood-glass mixture of a door filled with various lights and mists, he couldn't help but temporarily pause his movements. His silver eyes shifted to the San Emperor's shrouded and concealed form, his eyebrows sunk by an unnoticeable degree.

The San Emperor had always been an inscrutable figure whose thoughts and intentions were unknown and uncertain, but Wei Wuyin observed a trend of irreversible decline from his Eye of Truth. This figure wasn't as impressive as many believed, and he felt an inkling into the truth of various events.

As he glanced away, the words 'Temporal Reincarnator' rose within his thoughts. He turned to the Gateway Door, realizing the bits of information that the Black Skeleton had left behind. The Gateway Door was a location that his Eye of Truth revealed to contain something he sought after, something he needed, but it didn't seem to be connected to the Heavenly Daos.

After a moment, his eyes focused as he shot into the Gateway Door, causing unexpected gasps to resound from several figures. Wei Wuyin's figure vanished, melting into the door like butter meeting flames. The visual was quite disturbing, causing numerous individuals to fear for his life.

"Go!" Tuo Bihan didn't want to waste time. He ordered them with a stern and irrefutable tone. If Wei Wuyin was fearless enough to venture inside, then they shouldn't have any fear that it's a death trap. After all, why would these elite experts of the starfield send their most precious member, their only chance at reaching the Mystic Ascendant Realm, to his death?

He urged with his hand gestures.

Qing Qiumu was similarly terrified by Wei Wuyin's melting form, but when she remembered their discussion long ago about risks and resolution, her emerald-eyes flashed with determination and strength. With a step, she turned into an emerald comet and shot into the Gateway Door, melting just the same.

"...!" Seeing such a gorgeous female elf enter and vanish in the same way, also from the Myriad Monarch Sect, the others became restless and even infuriated at their own cowardice. A hulking human youth from the Alchemist Association roared, his bald head and imposing figure left many in shock. He flew into the Gateway Door as if he was about to face his greatest enemy in existence.

This caused these other youths to soon gather their courage. Before long, numerous figures were flying into the Gateway Door, melting into it, and vanishing. With each new individual that entered, those observing from outside could see the dimming lights and dissipating mist from the Gateway Door. It seems it had a limit on how many it would accept, reaffirming the San Emperor's words of only allowing three thousand.

Long Chen's dark eyes flashed with a brilliant light. He turned to Lian Yu, grasping her hand tightly into his own. While he had exhausted himself somewhat, he was capable of recovering roughly ten percent of his astral force with a seventh-grade Essence Returning Pill.

Lian Yu felt the pressure exerted onto her hand, looking at Long Chen who was smiling consoling at her. "I'm fine," she asserted. She wasn't one prone to weakness and uncertainty, but had overcome her fair share of dangers. Despite her lacking cultivation base, merely being at the World Sea Phase, she had her own means to protect herself.

Long Chen nodded. Both of them soon flew out side-by-side. They entered the Gateway Door roughly at the same time, even holding hands while doing so. But their hands dissolved, and no one knew whether they would be together or separate. They were still unsure where this spatial entrance would lead them.

With numerous individuals entering the Gateway Door like a flock of soaring birds, everyone finally entered leaving only the elders and leaders. They were all lingering nearby, not having any intention of moving one single bit. They didn't know when their disciples would emerge, so they had to wait patiently.

The environment of the Auric Sea wasn't conducive for cultivation, having thin ambient essence, no solid ground, and a strange gravitational force that could bring any of these experts disastrous harm. Therefore, they lowered their astral force consumption and floated in meditative positions while absorbing what little essence they could to replenish what was lost.

Qingye Yun's eyes stared at the Gateway Door intently for a moment longer than others, his eyes betrayed a wisp of worry. But when he recalled the predictions and words of that Heavenly Seer, he glanced at the nearby San Emperor and felt reassured. According to the Heavenly Seer, the San Emperor would arrive after discovering the location of the Gateway Door.

This was why they had left early, and since the Alchemist Association originally had a partnership with the Elemental Heaven Pavilion, they had come along. But what he couldn't figure out was why the Heavenly Seer didn't wish for them to inform the Myriad Monarch Sect directly, allowing them to learn from their own network of information.

He frowned for a moment, but soon relaxed his brows. The thoughts of a Heavenly Seer wasn't something he could begin to comprehend.

When Wei Wuyin entered the Gateway Door, his surroundings started to shift instantly as he was encapsulated by multi-colored spatial light reminiscent of the entry curtain of a Void Gate. He felt as if he was traversing within a slim and narrow tube, but the speed was relatively slow.

With his Celestial Eyes, Wei Wuyin inspected the multi-colored spatial light and realized that he had entered one of the three thousand tunnels, currently being transported at an extremely fast speed somewhere. It felt completely contradictory to his normal visual experience. It was as if he was on a high-speed moving beast while protected and shielded by the trembling motions or surging winds that would occur.

This was a very peculiar feeling. He couldn't help but think about that shuttle in the picture, wondering if this is how it feels if he was onboard one of those things. A faint gleam of interest flashed within his eyes as he saw a curtain of darkly-colored light blocking his way.

He was sent directly through it, causing his surroundings to turn dark. He had originally thought this was the exit, but he found himself in disbelief as he felt a prick of discomfort surge into his meridians. His bloodline aura was completely contained, but this discomfort originated from the innate energies circulating throughout his body. To be specific, the innate elemental energies that he used to refine his body with.

As he felt this, his silver eyes started to become a mist of white, with an ever-shifting form in various states. At times it was as if his eyes contained endless rain, became as hard as steel itself, or danced with the beauty of flames within. These were only the beginning as other extraordinary sights emerged.

Ori yelped in excitement. He felt his Elemental Origin Intent erupt from his glabella, effusing from his eyes and coating the dark surroundings in white light. This white light started to twist and shiver until it became nine different colors, separating into nine forms of Intent.

Fire Intent, Water Intent, Wind Intent, Desolate Earth Intent, Steel Metal Intent, Life Meadow Wood Intent, Violet Lightning Intent, Inferno Blazing Magma Intent, & Absolute Zero Ice Intent.

These nine intents became wisps that circulated around Wei Wuyin's body with a trail of light, making them seem like fireflies in the dark. Wei Wuyin was startled as he felt an unknown power sweep itself upon his Intents and his body.

A monotone voice soon echoed out: "Candidate Discovered, Selected for Trial of Chosen."

This voice felt familiar to Wei Wuyin, startling him as he recalled a distinct figure, but he was given enough time to even ask a question as the multi-colored spatial light of the tube collapsed on him, causing him an incredible degree of pain before he vanished. The tunnel he inhabited had disappeared.

This incident happened to one more within the tunnel, similarly shocking them as they recognized the voice but was also sent away.

Chapter 403 - 399: Venturing Into The Unknown

"Yi!" A delicate cry resounded as a heavy thud followed, causing a groan of pain that would cause many men to feel pity and concern to resound. Within a land of ground and mountains, a crater was formed by a falling figure. A series of coughs could be heard from the crater as a soft, immaculate hand climbed out and grabbed the edge of the crater.

When the figure lifted itself up, they released a nearly indistinguishable sound of shock and disbelief. After pushing its head above the crater's edges, observing the sights before them, they quietly asked themselves: "Where am I?"

The figure's emerald eyes inspected the surroundings. A world filled with dirt-like sand, grey-colored and dry was revealed. The humidity of the environment was extremely uncomfortable, and the heat was almost unbearable. Just from touching the ground for a prolonged period caused sizzling sounds to originate from the tender and delicate hand of the figure.

"Ouch!" The figure pulled away, inspecting the singes on its hand. There was a light of surprise, considering the figure's refined and reinforced body would normally protect from basic heat. After a little bit, the figure exclaimed.

"I can't fly?!" A startling cry revealed the voice of a female. She soon discovered her ability to manipulate the surrounding ambient mana was nigh non-existent. She felt the ambient mana and realized it was absurdly thin, and it carried a unique quality that seemed to be depriving her spiritual energies to commune with it.

Without the ability to fly, she had to wrap her hands in astral force and lift herself out of the crater. As she did, her gorgeous figure was revealed to the world. A pair of ample, shapely breasts that swayed with every motion, slim figure, and long waist-length emerald hair. Unfortunately, there was a lack of external wind.

After trying to brush off the grey-colored dirt of her robe to no avail, she frustratedly ignored her uncleanliness. Wiping her nose, she looked at the sky to observe a single solar star that existed.

Her expression changed. "A solar star?! Is this the secret realm? Even world realms don't have solar stars..." She suspected she might've been transported away from the starfield, her expression changing into one of distress and concern.

This woman was Qing Qiumu. Her sharp ears and eyes trembled slightly as she licked her lips, realizing they were now dry. But despite that, whatever moisture she produced was swiftly vanishing from her lips, returning them to its dry state.

Frowning, she looked at her hands to discover they were drying out of surface moisture. Her eyes widened in fright, hastily using her astral force to shield herself with an emerald-colored ward. Only after doing this did she halt the dissipation of moisture, feeling relieved in her heart.

She couldn't help but be afraid of this unknown environment. Looking at the distance, she saw numerous mountains that were independent and very distant from each other. As for the rest? It was just a flat surface of grey dirt for as far as the eye could see.

She stepped forward, feeling the dirt as the first layer and solid ground beneath. Curious, she used her shielded hands to shift away the dirt and reveal a grey and dry ground that seemed to be corroded by endless age yet frighteningly hard. This confused her. After knocking lightly on it, pushing her fingers into it, her eyes revealed dense shock.

"This ground is harder than the Myriad Monarch Main Planet's..." In the starfield, there were various levels of durability and hardness, with continental flat earths being quite fragile. They were so fragile that Third Stage Astral Core Realm experts can shatter them, even the weakest of these experts could.

But the Myriad Monarch Main Planet's surface was extremely durable, even Third Stage Astral Core Realm experts would find it difficult to crush a hill. But this ground's particular hardness was far, far greater. She didn't even think Grand Imperial Sages, well the former Grand Imperial Sages, could cause anything more than a small crater with their full strength.

This sent her into shock as she turned to her crater, realizing she had penetrated the earth. Uncertainty emerged in her eyes, but she realized that she must've been protected by another energy that brought her here, likely causing the crater.

"How much strength is required to do that indirectly?" She wondered, considering whatever brought her here was some formation regulated by itself and not experts.

Rumble! Rumble!

Shaking soon resounded beneath her feet as her head snapped to the distance, her eyes squinted at the cloud of dust in the distance. It was getting bigger and bigger.

"...!" She, without hesitation, started to run!

"Ah!" Lian Yu's familiar voice yelled in shock as she smashed into the world. Similar to Qing Qiumu, she escaped from her crater with uncertainty written across her face. Inspecting her surroundings, she was accompanied by a grassy environment with powerful winds blowing her hair and into her eyes.

She forcefully squinted as she tried to fly. Unlike Qing Qiumu, she wasn't a Sky Ruler so had to use her astral force to stimulate and manipulate her innate wind energies to soar. But after two feet off the ground, she met an abrupt current of wind that sent her flying for several hundred meters, smashing into the grassy ground and scraping her arm in the process.

With a cry of pain, she felt her arm fracture into two pieces. She held it as she used her Echo Healing Arts, a practiced and swift action that betrayed her experience with suffering injuries. She stayed on the ground for a while, trying to acclimate.

Unfortunately, all she saw for as far as the eyes could see was a grassy plain. She looked at the verdant blades of grass and realized they flashed with traces of silver, causing her to inspect them closely. She tried to touch a blade of grass.

Pussh!

The edge of the blade of grass sliced into her finger, and a sudden burst of air within the wound caused her to profusely bleed out in a spurting squirt. She was startled, her eyes revealing abject horror as she hurriedly healed herself. It took her a full minute to stop the bleeding, her face paler than ash.

Unable to fly and unwilling to touch the grass, she stood in her location, unsure of what to do. After a while, she couldn't help but mutter out: "Long Chen...where are you?"

An ordinary looking girl was walking in an environment of falling snow. The white world was extremely beautiful, extremely cold. The falling snowflakes were clearly enlarged, one could see the various patterns at their giant form being nearly a thousand times larger. These snowflakes would touch the snow before dissolving into smaller snowflakes, more normal and transformed the ground into snow.

The girl was treading the snowy environment while using a black-colored umbrella to guard against the giant snowflakes, whose edges were like sharp blades as they stabbed into her umbrella and were deflected. The grating sounds of metal on metal kept sounding, and the black-colored umbrella had silver scratch marks on its surface.

The girl continued to walk, her feet covered in verdant green boots that pushed away the snow while keeping her afloat, not causing her to sink into the icy depths that reached an unknown distance.

"Grandfather was right, the Heavenly Seer truly can see into the future. If it wasn't for that, I might've already perished without these preparations." As she marveled at the amazingness of the world, feeling as if her horizons had been broadened, she felt a surge of happiness within her heart.

If this was true, then it's likely the rest was also true! Her steps seemed to grow lighter and faster as she trekked in this unknown environment, clearly traveling in one direction with absolute certainty.

If Wei Wuyin heard her voice, he would immediately recognize her as Qingye Ying, the Princess of Everlore!

After being transported away from the tunnel, Wei Wuyin was temporarily blinded by a surge of light that even his Celestial Eyes couldn't see through. It took several minutes of bright blindness before he felt something solid beneath his feet.

The blinding light soon vanished, revealing the world before him, and causing him to frown. As if wanting to confirm his theory, he lifted his head to observe the sky.

"Hexagonal-patterned sky..." Looking directly behind him, his eyes constricted somewhat as he felt a surge of disbelief and confusion. A thick silver pillar that seemed to pierce into the sky, touching the hexagonal patterns that littered the view above.

This sky with multiple hexagons that connected and formed itself was extremely familiar to Wei Wuyin, especially this thick silver pillar that seemed to transcend the sky into the world beyond.

With a sweeping gaze, he had found it. With a silent inhale, he exclaimed: "The Myriad Dao War Palace!"

Chapter 404 - 400: Impossible!

"Myriad Dao Palace..." Wei Wuyin felt a surge of curiosity and uncertainty within his heart as he stared at the distant palace. Just as he remembered, the palace gave off an ancient aura and was dilapidated, yet was grandly built and majestic as if it existed for a great ruler.

"What are these palaces?" Wei Wuyin knew that this palace and the two he had discovered were not the same. When he first entered the Myriad War Dao Palace, he had received one of his first Karmic Luck Value deductions, and it was the smallest one. He recalled the distinct feeling that he should offer assistance to a young boy that seemed to be on the run, chased by criminals for reasons unknown.

He had used his acute senses and higher cultivation base to discreetly follow the young man and found a spatial gateway in the form of an old doorway. The boy, however, was nowhere to be found. He interacted with it and was brought away to a location incredibly similar to his current situation. There was barely any difference.

He had piggybacked on that young man's karmic fortune and obtained two key fortunes himself—Saber Intent and Nascent Saber Soul, aka Element. When he recalled that incident, he remembered that the young man was actually someone he hadn't expected.

It was Lin Ming.

He started to slowly ruminate and pondered over the experience. When he first entered the Myriad Dao War Palace, he learned of the existence beyond the ninety-nine steps known as 'the Forge'. When he learned his Saber Intent, awarded the Nascent Saber Soul, the autonomous lifeform that seemed like a ghost had declared his talent and his lack of further tempering needs.

He was unable to venture back into the gateway again. He later traveled with Su Mei, roughly eleven years later, and discovered another gateway that was more well-known. But when he tried to enter, he was rejected and Su Mei freely entered. She had obtained her Darklight Cultivation Method within.

There were a few other events that happened during that time, such as finding Anu, but that was unrelated to the Palace's existence. Shockingly, when Su Mei had ventured within and saw a similar

scene, met a similar lifeform, the name had changed to the Myriad Creation Dao Palace. It seemed that, if the name wasn't arbitrarily changed per person, these two were different palaces.

It was likely the pagoda in Golden Milk City was destroyed, leaving only his entrance as a gateway. An old version and a newer version, with the new version restricting those who've previously entered the older version? He couldn't help but become a little lost in his thoughts.

"What's this Selected Candidate? What Trial of Chosen?" He muttered as he recalled the voice he had heard before being sent here. This entire situation seemed suspect. Who built the Myriad Dao Palaces? For what purpose? And what was this unique realm's purpose? A trial? To select a 'Chosen'? Or was each individual that entered the trial a 'Chosen'?

Scratching his head, he decided to ask the autonomous lifeform some questions. Deciding thus, he started to walk towards the ancient palace and saw the familiar ninety-nine steps that lead to its ancient doors. He wasn't sure if the door led to the so-called Forge.

As he stepped near, he was once again accompanied by the familiar blurring of his vision, causing him to evoke his Celestial Eyes, capable of perceiving far more than before. He saw faint rays of grey light exit from the slight openings of the ancient doors and start to take shape beside him. From the twisting and moulding of these rays of light, an old man formed.

He was short, bald, had an aged appearance with a bright smile that seemed to welcome all things in the world. But unlike before, this old man was grey-colored, not blue. It floated off the ground with ease, seemingly lacking any form of mass.

Wei Wuyin frowned slightly. His Celestial Eyes could see through many things, but that depended on his own cultivation base and relative strength. This old man, to his gaze, was composed of mana. This mana was extremely dense, visible, and refined in a way he'd never thought possible.

It even had a mental energy signature, indicating it was alive with sentient thought. Furthermore, this mental energy signature was fluctuating indicating a form of free-flowing thoughts usually seen in creatures who were observing and conceiving new opinions on others. It was an expression of creativity and independent thought.

When the old man saw him, it kept smiling like before, speaking: "Chosen Candidate, welcome. This is the Myriad Element Dao Palace, if you wish to validate your status as a Chosen Candidate, you must select your Core Element Dao." The old man spoke, bringing Wei Wuyin nostalgia.

When he first arrived at the steps of the Myriad War Dao Palace, he was asked to select his Dao to ascend the steps. He hadn't understood what 'Dao' meant, and the old man explained them.

The three Daos were Weapon, Material, and Mind. The Weapon Dao encompasses all forms of war; The Material Dao encompasses all things born from Celestial Bodies; the Mind Dao encompasses all things of enlightenment. At the time, he realized that this was too narrow, and thus the Material Dao and Ethereal Dao were far broader, more accurate.

The Material Dao, from his understanding, was everything born naturally within the world, given material substance. The Ethereal Dao, from his understanding, was everything conceived by lifeform's creativity or intent. It encompassed emotions, weapons of war, and desire.

The sword wasn't born from the world, but born from the intent of lifeforms to kill, to defend, to grow stronger. The will to battle or slaughter wasn't formed naturally, but by an innate intent for conflict and struggle, either due to one's pleasure or innate desire for strength.

The Mind Dao wasn't just regarding enlightenment, but the concept of sentient thought and consciousness, memories, and beliefs. It was far too broad of a subject to delve in effectively. He still didn't understand the principles of the Eden Dao, merely that it has the ability to interact with mental energies and sources, such as the Sea of Consciousness and Mind's Eye.

He experienced a momentary shock. "Could the Myriad War Dao Palace had been demolished and replaced because it was obsolete?" As this thought entered his mind, he felt there was a high likelihood of this being the truth, and it was later replaced by the Myriad Creation Dao Palace.

Wei Wuyin looked at the old man, who seemed to merely be patiently waiting for his selection. Smiling, he asked: "Are you going to pretend to be an autonomous lifeform or reveal yourself as a living creature with independent thought?"

When he said this, the old man seemed entirely unaffected. Unfortunately for him, Wei Wuyin could 'see' the mental fluctuations reveal similarities to 'shock'.

Wei Wuyin continued, "What is this place? What's the connection between the Myriad War Dao Palace and Myriad Creation Dao Palace?" When these questions was asked, the old man continued to remain unaffected, but its blaring mental energy surges betrayed its current thoughts.

"Do you remember me or are you and the others independent?" He kept rapidfire shooting off questions, using his Celestial Eyes to glean into its emotional state. Just as he was about to ask further questions, he felt his body tremble.

An eruption of spatial forces occurred nearby, causing him to turn his head behind him to the pillar. When he inspected it with his normal eyes, he saw nothing, but when he focused his Celestial Eyes to its maximum, he saw a male figure shrouded in mist arrive at the pillar. Similarly, they were blinded for a while.

'*Lin Ming?*' He instantly recognized this figure's form, realizing it was Lin Ming, the Blessed that had fought Zuhei until they were both grievously injured. The old man's mental energy fluctuations started to wildly flare up, causing Wei Wuyin to return to see it.

The old man kept his normal smile, but Wei Wuyin felt extreme shock from it. "I'm not the only Candidate?" Wei Wuyin asked, but when he did, something unexpected happened!

The perpetually congenial smile on the old man's face was wiped clean, revealing widened eyes and a wide-open mouth. Its expression was absolutely vivid.

"Can you see the other Candidate?" It asked, breaking away from its familiar monotone voice to reveal emotion and a free-flowing cadence.

Wei Wuyin nodded. "Not only can I see, but I also know who he is. Lin Ming, member of the Elemental Heaven Pavilion, and Successor of Divine King Han Xei's legacy." His words were deliberate, especially the last portion as he focused his silver gaze onto the old man's reactions.

And as he expected, the old man was startled into horror. "Wait! You're not his Successor as well? You should have a token of Elementus, one of nine. Do you not?" It asked, seemingly uncertain about the circumstances.

Lin Ming soon started moving, arriving at the steps of the palace, only a few feet away from him, but entirely unaware of Wei Wuyin. Furthermore, he observed rays of light surge out from the palace doors once more and arrived to greet Lin Ming. It formed the silhouette of an old man too.

Wei Wuyin could only glimpse into it as if he was looking at frosted glass even with his Celestial Eyes.

Realizing this, Wei Wuyin answered: "I've cultivated the Divine Element Form Method, but I do not have a token of Elementus nor have I received any legacy of the Divine King Han Xei outside of what was publicly available to most in my starfield."

The Divine Element Form Method was the Qi Cultivation Method the Divine King Han Xei had left behind to the world after reportedly being unable to find a successor who could cultivate five high-level Advanced Elemental Essences and merge them into Elemental Origin Energy.

He had accomplished this, but that was purely based on his own efforts and will, without an ounce of support from Divine King Han Xei.

But from the reaction of this old man, his initial assumption might be true: The Divine King Han Xei was linked to this realm. But from the mention of these Tokens of Elementus, it reminded him of the Knights of Elementus that Wu Yu mentioned as subordinates of the Divine King.

"..." The old man went silent. Its greyed eyes seemed to grow dazed as Lin Ming proceeded to choose a Core Element Dao and walked up the stairs, likely facing whatever trial to validate his qualifications as a Selected Candidate.

Then, the old man asked a question with extreme solemnity. "If you don't have a Token of Elementus, how did you cultivate Elemental Origin Intent?" This question was spoken with a tone several notches lower than before, causing a sense of oppression to rise in the air.

Wei Wuyin, however, was entirely unbothered by such elementary interrogation tactics. "I cultivated it myself," his answer was direct and simple.

"Impossible! IMPOSSIBLE! ABSOLUTELY IMPOSSIBLE!"

Chapter 405 - 401: A Fool In A Well

"Impossible! IMPOSSIBLE! ABSOLUTELY IMPOSSIBLE!" The old man seemingly went berserk, as if he had heard a piece of information that shattered his world view. This unique lifeform and that vivid reaction only reassured Wei Wuyin that this old man was an incarnation, and there was a legitimate lifeform behind it, likely an ancient expert.

But Wei Wuyin was entirely undisturbed by the explosive reaction, merely waiting.

After a good few seconds of the old man staring at Wei Wuyin like he was lying through his teeth, he finally seemed to calm down and those old eyes became extremely sharp and narrow. "When I first met you, you hadn't even formed Nine Intents, still at the Qi Condensation Realm. Two decades haven't

passed yet, but you have already formed Elemental Origin Energy and formed Elemental Origin Intent without a token. That just isn't possible!"

Wei Wuyin's eyes brightened, "So you do remember me!" He was entirely uncaring about the old man's shock regarding his talent, only focusing on his recollection of time and the first time they met.

The old man grunted softly, "How could I not? You birthed Saber Intent directly, a feat only capable by those blessed by the Saber Dao. You shouldn't be able to do the same with the Elemental Origin Intent, especially without a Token of Elementus."

Wei Wuyin chuckled, "Thanks for the compliment."

"..." The old man wasn't sure how to respond. He was accusing Wei Wuyin of lying but he was thanking him so genuinely?! There was a light of awe within his grey form, unsure how to proceed.

Wei Wuyin decided to take the reins of the conversation, "What is this Token of Elementus? Why are you so certain I can't form an Elemental Origin Intent without this token? Why do I have to choose a Core Element Dao? What even is that?"

"..." The old man remained silent.

"Take your time; I can wait." Wei Wuyin observed Ling Ming entering the palace doors, venturing in through what seemed to be a mirrored space that existed together but separately. He now realized that this was why he didn't find Lin Ming when he ventured into the Myriad War Dao Palace after him before, they were separated by this fold of space.

"Are you sure you don't have a token of Elementus? That you haven't received a portion of the Divine King's legacy?" The old man asked with a much calmer voice. It seemed he was trying to adjust to the likelihood of Wei Wuyin's odd existence.

Wei Wuyin nodded in confirmation.

"...Haaa..." A very real sigh was released from the old man, causing him to rub his bald head in agitation. As if determining something in his heart, he started to speak.

"The Divine King left three fated tokens to the outside world, hopefully allowing one or more successors to lay claim to it. Within the token is the secret to forming Elemental Origin Intent, integrating a myriad of elemental variation within, as well as a key to the caches he left behind. They contained numerous materials, extraordinary arts and spells, and alchemical products suitable enough to cultivate a Chosen Candidate.

"Three have been claimed, that's why the trial was initiated and the door was revealed. I assumed you had claimed at least one. Your Elemental Origin Intent is extremely high-grade, already integrating six high-level elemental Intents. In comparison to the other Successor, no, I guess you're not a Successor...Anyways, I felt you had the greatest chance to claim the Chosen Title.

"To think you're not a Successor, furthermore you've never obtained the secret to forming Elemental Origin Intent. This means you must have reached this level all by yourself, a feat that shouldn't be possible." The old man seemed to be tired as he spoke, feeling as if he had aged in such a short period of time.

"You've said that many times. Why is it 'not possible?' Explain." Wei Wuyin urged.

The old man heavily sighed, looking at Wei Wuyin. "Elemental Origin Intent requires one to comprehend nine different intents, then one has to merge each intent individually. Water and Fire into one, Water and Earth into one. Like this, then merge three into one, four into one, until they merge nine into one. This forms Elemental Origin Energy. But that doesn't give one 'Elemental Origin Intent'.

"To achieve that, one doesn't just have to merge nine into one, but return them to their origin, requiring a unique material called Genesis Essence, something that only the Tokens of Elementus contains within the current starfield. A resource that can only be extracted by the Ascended, held in objects beyond the Mortal Limits. Without the Tokens of Elementus, any mortal lifeform that came into contact with it would dissipate into nothing—there are no exceptions to this."

His words prompted Wei Wuyin to furrow his brows in thought for a long moment. Genesis Essence...

That particular name felt familiar yet also distant. He faintly recalled hearing about something extremely similar to this somewhere. He just couldn't pinpoint where or when.

"The Divine King had left behind these tokens for that reason, to allow those fated to them to obtain the chance to birth Elemental Origin Intent. If they are unable in the end, then the tokens would relocate after the obtainer's death, searching for another fated one. This is why unless you obtained a token, you can't birth Elemental Origin Intent. It would be going against the heavens." The old man finished his words, explaining why he reacted so violently and mentioned Wei Wuyin's low cultivation base.

Wei Wuyin was confused for a while until that last sentence. The old man was assuming heaven's will, but the Mortal Star Formation Tribulation, the very first Tribulation of a cultivator's life, instructed them in forming Intent suitable to their cultivation base. He could only assume that the method to form Elemental Origin Intent listed in the tokens of Elementus was an incomplete and flawed version of what Ori had obtained fully from the very heavens themselves.

This so-called Genesis Essence must be a forceful way to establish Elemental Origin Intent if one lacked the extremely high-level of comprehension required to grasp the fullest opportunities from the tribulation itself. It was another 'door' but not the perfect one. As they say, there was never one path to achieve anything.

While he couldn't be certain if the Astral Tribulations were regulated by the Heavenly Daos, the 'heavens' mentioned were simply the laws by which everything ran by.

He shook his head, turning to the old man with a look of a senior instructing a junior. "One must never believe only one path exists on the difficult journey of cultivation. Doing so will only narrow the mind, limiting one's view of the world. A frog in the well, so to speak. To say something is going against the heavens is the words of a fool, as the heaven's designs isn't something we as mortals can comprehend. When we can, when we can understand it, we'll be its equal."

"...!" The old man's eyes widened as he started to intensely tremble. As if Wei Wuyin's words had triggered something, he felt his mind explode. He felt a path opening in his mind, revealing his past assumptions and thoughts to be inherently flawed, limited in view, and extremely arrogant with the presumptions of his truths.

After a long moment, he looked at Wei Wuyin deeply. Then, his legs became clear as he stepped on the ground, clasped his hands, and bowed slightly. "Thank you."

Wei Wuyin casually nodded in acceptance, forming an assumption as to why the Tokens of Elementus might be flawed. He felt it was likely due to the Divine King Han Xei forming Elemental Origin Energy and challenging the tribulation, but he couldn't comprehend all of the information, forcefully devising another way to overcome this obstacle. He felt his guess was likely 90% correct, likely missing a small portion of the truth.

"Now, are you going to answer my questions?" Wei Wuyin asked, still curious about the connections of this place to the other palaces, who devised it, and why.

The old man felt shocked that such a young man could say such profound words yet be entirely unaffected. What type of heaven-defying experiences has this young man gone through? In the end, he decided to speak the truth.

As he spoke, Wei Wuyin's eyes grew wider and wider!

Chapter 406 - 402: A Being From Beyond

"The Myriad Dao Palaces was designed by Jiang Feilan for the explicit purpose of leaving behind a legacy for those fated, finding hidden talents away from the rabble of trash that nepotism might bring. This method was later adapted by others and then that Divine King, establishing his own Myriad Dao Palace to select a Chosen." The old man explained with a somewhat detached tone, as if this had very little to do with him.

But Wei Wuyin's heart started to race wildly after the very first sentence. "Jiang Feilan?" He couldn't help but blurt out in questioning. Wasn't this the same name of the Sacred Light Palace's Palace Master? Her beautiful naked figure couldn't help but pop into his mind.

The old man was surprised for a moment by Wei Wuyin's odd expression, but then he seemed to have recalled something with an 'Oh, right' type of expression. "It seems your current era doesn't refer to her by that name anymore. Jiang Feilan would be the Founder of the Sacred Light Palace, an Ascended of the Elven Race of her era."

"The Sacred Elven Queen?" Wei Wuyin frowned slightly, realizing that this figure was quite mysterious. He also knew that she wasn't just the only elf to ascend the Mortal Limits, reaching the Mystic Ascendant Realm, but she was the only female cultivator to do so within the starfield.

The old man lifted his eyebrows, then chuckled while shaking his head. "To think she would use such a pompous title." Despite the reproach in his voice, there was still a trace of respect within.

"Yes, likely her. The Myriad Dao Palaces originally intended function was to forge talents from the unnoticed, giving those less unfortunate in the world of cultivation a way to excel. Jiang Feilan had founded the idea, but numerous leaders of the cultivation world in the starfield had left behind Myriad Dao Palaces for similar purposes. The Myriad War Dao Palace and Myriad Creation Dao Palace are simply two Myriad Dao Palaces made by two experts of the same lineage, replaced after a period."

"I'm the overseer of the entire project and have been for thousands of years, regulating, enforcing, and dispensing of the rewards for all the Myriad Dao Palaces. To answer your question: that's the connection

and their origins." The old man's explanation was extremely enlightening, and answered a particularly gnawing thought in Wei Wuyin's mind.

He felt that it was strange that the Dao Palaces were the same in design yet had different names. There didn't seem to be any distinction. In fact, they seem to be connected. It also dispelled and uncovered the truth of his own speculation. The two Myriad Dao Palaces on the Myriad Yore Continent had been established by the same lineage, but the Myriad War Dao Palace was destroyed so that the Myriad Creation Dao Palace could be built.

This explained why he was rejected from a different Dao Palace.

"How many more are there?" Wei Wuyin asked, baffled by this.

"There are a total of one hundred and thirty-four Dao Palaces that I oversee, with many not receiving a new participant in centuries. Despite their inactive state, they can still be accessed as long as the individual meets the requirements set by the respective creator. Since many have placed racial, age, cultivation base, or bloodline limits, I can only imagine their existences have been largely ignored." The old man sighed, feeling as if it was a pity. The Myriad Dao Palaces was a wealth of ancient knowledge and resources, established during the golden age of the starfield.

"..." Wei Wuyin remained silent as his eyes flitted with a thought-provoking light.

The old man continued his explanation, "The Myriad Element Dao Palace similarly has a restriction, and that is to possess Elemental Origin Intent. Furthermore, it's slightly different from the others. It doesn't have dozens, hundreds, or thousands of different trials to be selected, merely nine. These nine trials are based on the Core Element Dao of the participant.

"Core Element Dao is the main central element used by the cultivator, typically their favorite or the one they have the most affinity with. While the Elemental Origin Intent and Elemental Origin Energy is about the combination of nine into one, one into the origin, that doesn't eliminate the main element of a cultivator's preference. In fact, Elemental Origin Energy is usually used to reinforce that particular element."

"I see. So if I'm partial to Fire Arts, then Fire would be my Core Element Dao," Wei Wuyin said absentmindedly, his silver eyes lost in thought.

The old man nodded, "Indeed. To use as an example: the Successor that has just ascended the steps selected the Wind Element as his Core Element Dao. Normally, this would suggest Wind Arts are his forte, and the essence of Elemental Origin is used to reinforce and strengthen his power in that regard."

Wei Wuyin briefly recalled Lin Ming's fight with Zuhei. If he were to analyze it, it truly does seem that he uses principles of wind as his main element, such as the condensation and propulsion of wind. He had condensed his powers enough to pierce through Zuhei's strong mortal body, and his movements were swift and light.

"What is your choice?" The old man finally asked.

Wei Wuyin thought long for a moment, recalling his own fighting style and his principles that he used mostly, coming to an interesting realization. Since obtaining his Elemental Origin Energy, there was never a particular element that he favored.

Furthermore, since entering into the grander world of the starfield, he had been using his Elemental Origin Energy in complete balance. He had no particular affinity to any element. Even the Metal Element that he'd used the longest didn't jump out at him, feeling just as important as the other eight.

He decided to ask Ori, "What is your favorite element?"

"Favorite...element?" Ori was noticeably confused. It was as if the question was extremely foreign to it.

Only then did Wei Wuyin realize how much of an idiot he was for entertaining the thought, laughing to himself in a self-mocking manner. How could he have a favored element? How could Ori? She was, by all means, equally all elements.

Her Natal Soul was constructed using Elemental Origin Energy, not Fire, Water, or whatever else energy, but Elemental Origin Energy. The manner by which she was born indicated her lack of preference by default.

He looked at the old man, this overseer of the Myriad Dao Palaces, with a faint smile. "I don't have one."

"...?" The old man was taken aback by that answer, unsure how to respond. "What do you mean by that?" His grey-colored body trembled slightly, clearly revealing his shock.

Wei Wuyin chuckled with heart, "Just as I said: I don't have a Core Element Dao. The concept of Elemental Origin Energy is to include all elements equally, integrating their myriad variations and aspects into a unified product, while simultaneously touching their origins. Choosing a Core Element Dao, to favor one element, is an unforgivable sin to the intent itself."

Wei Wuyin felt that it was no wonder the Divine King Han Xei had to resort to using forceful means to elevate and facilitate the birth of Elemental Origin Intent to his successors, likely even himself. From the very beginning, his and their foundation was shaky. If you didn't understand the greatest principle of Elemental Origin Intent, how can you hope to form it naturally?

"...!" The old man's body took a few steps back, causing heavy thuds to resound. His eyes widened in disbelief at Wei Wuyin's profound words. He was just an overseer, not even a subordinate of the Divine King, but he had seen numerous possessors of the Elemental Origin Intent due to the Divine King Han Xei's method. Not a single one had ever given such an answer, acting like Lin Ming.

They would simply think for a brief moment and pick one of the nine elements. After a long silence, he heavily sighed with indescribable emotions. Despite being tens of thousands of years old, having seen numerous things in this world, he felt his world view and understanding was being constantly challenged by Wei Wuyin.

Wei Wuyin frowned in deliberation for a moment before asking, "What do you know about the Auric Sea?"

"Hm?" The old man lifted his gaze, curious about Wei Wuyin's question. "Auric Sea? What's that?"

Wei Wuyin realized that the old man's knowledge wasn't updated, still referring to the Sacred Elven Queen by her real name, which suggests he had no outside information coming in. He was largely ignorant of things and events past a certain point.

"What are you, exactly?"

Facing Wei Wuyin's inquiry, the old man seemed to recall something, producing an animatedly forlorn expression on his face. Then, a hint of excitement flourished. "Me? Once upon a time, I was an Ascended! A being that exceeded the limits of my mortality! There was nowhere I couldn't go, no one I needed to fear. Revered by all mortals, I reigned over my kingdom.

"Unfortunately, I...my physical body was destroyed and my Mystic Soul was damaged. Without my cultivation, without my physical container, I was slowly dissipating from this world. My death was at hand, but! I found hope! Or I should say, he found me. I was found drifting by a Mortal Sovereign Alchemist, and he saved my Spiritual Form, giving me the opportunity to survive. So, I took it.

"I became this: a Spirtform. I, being without a physical body, merged with my Mystic Soul. While my cultivation had halted indefinitely, I regained a form of immortality. I agreed to serve for ten thousand years as the overseer of the Myriad Dao Palaces in exchange."

Wei Wuyin was listening completely to his retellings of events. As he heard more and more, the shock in his heart grew greater and greater. He blurted out, "You're not from this starfield?"

"Oh? Not many would jump to that conclusion, believing that I am some secluded expert. How did you come to this conclusion?" The old man was intrigued.

Wei Wuyin had noticed that the old man was entirely unconcerned with the state of the starfield or its myriad changes despite having individuals arrive to these Myriad Dao Palaces continuously. He had an open-source of continuous information if he wanted, but he felt disinclined to even try. He could believe this if there wasn't a time limit to servitude, but that suggests freedom at the end of it, so why remain willfully ignorant?

Furthermore, he was the first to refer to the King of Everlore as a Mortal Sovereign Alchemist, not the King of Everlore. This suggests the King of Everlore wasn't the first Mortal Sovereign Alchemist he'd met. To add, he said that he 'regained' his immortality.

This suggests the old man was originally an immortal to begin with. But from what he knew, Wu Yu had stated that he had a lifespan, but it was far, far longer than Astral Core Realm cultivators. This meant he had to have a cultivation beyond the First Stage of the Mystic Ascendant Realm. Before the King of Everlore, there were no Mystic Ascendants; the starfield wasn't capable of naturally producing them.

This was a heavy point driven by Wu Yu many times as he regarded his Solar Star as a core reason that the starfield could even produce fifth or sixth stage experts to begin with.

Moreover, the term 'Ascended' wasn't used in the starfield. In fact, his entire terminology from the beginning of their conversation suggested he was from another cultivation society. He was the first to refer to the Mortal Limits as the Mortal Limits. Wei Wuyin hadn't even read other experts use that term in their journals, mostly deciding to use it himself because it felt right.

After explaining all this to the old man, he received a gasp of astonishment. The old man even clapped his hands in applause, finding that Wei Wuyin's deductive skills were quite exceptional. The more he interacted with this youth, the more he, a member that had transcended Mortal Limits, couldn't help but be awed.

"What else do you want to know?" The old man seemed to find an outlet for his prolonged boredom, deciding to indulge Wei Wuyin's curiosity. And Wei Wuyin didn't hold back one bit!

They started to speak for hours...

Chapter 407 - 403: Collect 'Em All

"..." Wei Wuyin was digesting all this newfound information, sitting himself before the steps of the Myriad Element Dao Palace. He comfortably sat in the lotus position, his silver eyes brightening and dimming intermittently.

The old man, whose name was Wang Yutian, was quietly observing Wei Wuyin with sparkles within his eyes. *'This child is unfathomable. It's too unfortunate that I still have roughly two thousand years left on my service, otherwise I would take him as a foster son. Too unfortunate!'*

Wang Yutian had discussed numerous things with Wei Wuyin, including his origin and glorious life before this. Wang Yutian was thoroughly shocked at the nascent state of the starfield's knowledge of cultivation, especially considering there was a Mortal Sovereign Alchemist and numerous Ascended born here. This would normally suggest the rise of the starfield's society and culture, elevating its cultivation foundation, but it still lacked some of the fundamentals, essentially being completely blank of the world beyond the Mortal Limits.

Wei Wuyin didn't react too intensely, losing himself in the grandness of it all, but calmly accepted and dissected this information, even delving further with extremely precise questions. Wang Yutian had never seen someone with such a level of mental intelligence and stability before, especially when newly exposed to this information.

There were some cultivators amongst those within the Mortal Limit who would go insane or even kill themselves after hearing this. It was that intense. It was enough to provoke an existential crisis of self, and it was far worse for cultivators.

This was one of the reasons why, in his region, there was a rule that suggested that keeping certain aspects of cultivation, of the cultivation world, limited to descendants and mortals was preferred lest madness propagate without end. To clarify, unless a person reached a certain degree of cultivation, they would be kept largely ignorant of the grander world by design unless they were absolutely required to know to further their cultivation path.

But Wang Yutian didn't hold back with Wei Wuyin, disregarding that rule and revealing everything while holding nothing back. He expected Wei Wuyin to have a mental breakdown, even curious to see how he handled it, but he wasn't even shaking. In fact, Wei Wuyin calmly accepted this all as if it was unable to disturb his mind one bit.

This marvel was rare, nigh impossible to witness.

But how was Wang Yutian to know that Wei Wuyin had been exposed to the Heavenly Daos, the Bloodline of Sinners, the Calamities of Hell, traveled across time, and even observed the Yellow Springs due to the Celestial Eyes of Spiritual Divinity. He outran heaven's wrath, escaped from the purgatory of his own mind, and witnessed reincarnation.

He had long since shattered his Heart of Cultivation, deciding to live his life with a time limit, and had reforged it even stronger as his will to survive thrived within him, creating a new Heart of Cultivation that was nigh unbreakable.

There wasn't much that could shock or disturb him at this point to the point of insanity.

After a few more minutes, Wei Wuyin breathed out an air of turbid air as his silver eyes regained a light of normality. He slowly rose to his feet, looking at Wang Yutian with a faint smile. He clasped his hands and bowed, "Thank you."

This was a similar stance that Wang Yutian had taken after being educated by Wei Wuyin. The act of respect caused Wang Yutian to smile, his grey form floating a little higher with pride.

"It's good that you've come out fine after hearing all that," Wang Yutian nodded in approval. There were very few juniors that could match Wei Wuyin's mental fortitude and intelligence, even his insights were fresh to an old fox such as himself. It would be a real shame if he had fallen to insanity.

Wei Wuyin merely smiled at that comment, looking towards the steps of the Myriad Element Dao Palace that led to its doors. "I can't select a Core Element Dao, so what's next?"

"Hm?" Wang Yutian finally recalled his original purpose. The anomaly that was Wei Wuyin was truly distracting. He awkwardly chuckled, looking at the Myriad Element Dao Palace behind him. He said, "The Myriad Element Dao Palace has a forge within. Its purpose is for you to receive tempering in a single elemental state, strengthening that specific element's energies within you while bestowing the successors an armament, art, spell, and tool to use during the trial.

"But if what you say is true, that you're balanced and have no preference, then this might actually be extremely detrimental to you. I guess that so-called Divine King truly took a wrong step in his Dao, leading others down that flawed path. How amusing...how unfortunate." A light of melancholy emerged within Wang Yutian's eyes.

Wei Wuyin nodded, feeling that he was unwilling to follow such an incorrect path. Furthermore, he had a theory about those screams beneath the Auric Sea. If the Divine King Han Xei was responsible for this, Kratos nor any of his Astral Souls, especially Ori, would ever accept him taking anything from this man as a gift. They, and he, would only accept plundering.

He had always been a man of principles and morals, forged by his life experiences and those he respected. While he wasn't a saint, he still had his bottomline. The Auric Sea was far lower than this bottomline. Far, far lower.

A dangerous light flashed within his heart, reflected within his eyes with utmost clarity. When Wang Yutian turned back around, that light hid itself with impeccable speed, vanishing as if it had never emerged.

Ignorant of Wei Wuyin's thoughts, Wang Yutian said: "Well, you also don't have a Token of Elementus, so you're already behind. The trial would be extremely difficult to complete without one, unless you obtained one of the other six."

Wei Wuyin had discussed matters outside of the trial with Wang Yutian, so this information was new. "One of the six? There's nine tokens, three must've been obtained by Lin Ming. But what about the other six?"

"Well, I don't know much about the aspects of the trial, only the primary information such as the goal of each successor. There's three Tokens of Elementus in the outside world, and when all three have found someone, even the same person, it'll initiate the opening of the trial and its world realm. The successors would then be brought into the trial, forcefully if even one enters.

"The goal is to find and collect the other six tokens, including the three outside, obtaining all nine to obtain the core of the world realm. Afterwards, they would obtain the title of Chosen, a type of disciple for an established force. It's hard to describe because Chosens are so wildly different from region to region, so I can't tell you what that means for this region.

"Regardless, they would obtain the main legacy. That's it. For those who've obtained the tokens in the outside world, normally they would understand the massive rewards when I say it'll be roughly ten thousand times as valuable as any outside cache, but since you haven't found one, that must be incredibly meaningless to you." Wang Yutian's expression changed as he once more recalled Wei Wuyin's anomaly-like existence.

"The core? Of the world realm?" Wei Wuyin asked, his eyes brightening considerably with excitement.

Wang Yutian nodded, "the trial is hosted in a World Realm, a massive continent held within a spatial pocket roughly a tenth the size of your starfield. It's absolutely massive, even I'm startled by how large it is. I wonder what's keeping it sustained, especially considering the thriving cultivation society within." His careless comments had revealed vast information that no successor had ever heard before.

"Thriving? Are there any Mystic Ascendants there?" Wei Wuyin's eyebrows lifted in surprise.

Wang Yutian chuckled while waving his hands, "Nope. But there's some upper-phase Astral Core Realm cultivators present there. There's no way a world realm of this quality could give birth to an Ascended. Anyhow, the normal goal is to locate and acquire the other eight tokens held by others. There should be at least four held by guardians, the two held by competitors, and each leads to another cache that is only unlocked when the outside tokens arrive. I think that's what that so-called Divine King said."

Wei Wuyin furrowed his brows. Four guardians? Four competitors? Caches? This trial was quite complicated with obstacles. He can imagine that whatever awaited these Successors were likely life-threatening. If at peak design, there should be two other external competitors, two internal competitors, and four guardians that likely held their own trials with cultivation bases beyond the trial participants.

With the age restriction set, this was quite harsh.

"And this core? Is this the core of the world realm that stabilizes it?" Wei Wuyin asked.

Wang Yutian nodded, "It should be."

"I see. In that case, I'll enter this trial. All I have to do is collect all nine tokens, that shouldn't be too difficult, right?" Wei Wuyin smilingly said.

Wang Yutian looked at Wei Wuyin, feeling like his desire to collect the tokens wasn't aligned with others. A sense of foreboding entered his heart, but he swiftly abolished it. That doesn't concern him. He wasn't even here, merely an incarnation. Furthermore, he wasn't obligated to handle anything outside of his service.

"Since you haven't chosen a Core Element Dao, you'll be at a disadvantage. The internal competitors have already entered the palace, obtaining their high-grade arts, spells, and armament months ago. They've been thoroughly prepared. I can send you through without entering the Forge, but are you certain?" Wang Yutian could tell that Wei Wuyin was a genius in regards to Intent, but his cultivation base was extremely lacking.

Those internal competitors weren't at the Soul Idol Phase, but far higher, let alone those guardians. Their trials would definitely not be an easy task for a Soul Idol Phase Cultivator to complete safely. Furthermore, they've all obtained Elemental Origin Intent.

Wei Wuyin was unbothered and unconcerned, "I'm quite certain. Send me through. I'm quite curious about this world realm that's a tenth the size of my starfield and has such an advanced cultivation society." With a brilliant smile, he urged Wang Yutian.

"So be it." Wang Yutian didn't hesitate. He waved his grey arm and enshrouded Wei Wuyin in multicolored rays of light. After a bright flash, Wei Wuyin vanished. After he vanished, Wang Yutian smacked his forehead.

"I forgot to tell him about the tokens' ability to locate each other! Well, I'm sure he'll find...a token." Realizing he missed out on an important detail, he shrugged. Wei Wuyin didn't seem incapable. If his goal is to find all nine, then he'll be able to find at least one, right?

Even...if...the...world was massive...

...Right?

Chapter 408 - 404: Interference Beyond Time

"Was Senior Sister Lin exaggerating the dangers within the world realm?" A youthful young man garbed in white robes waded through a rain of dark-grey ash, protected by a thin film of astral force. When the dark-grey ash touched his astral ward, a faint sizzling sound of burning emanated from it. Fortunately, the ward was sufficient to protect him from the strange material.

Lin Ming had randomly arrived just like the others in a new environment. It was surrounded by an uncountable number of volcanoes that extended into the distance with a perpetual falling of burning ash. The sky was completely dark, without a faint ray of sunshine invading it. It seemed there was a congregation of numerous thick clouds up above, covering horizon to horizon, so as far as the eye could see.

Lifting his head, he could witness the bleak skies shift about, spewing out volcanic ash, not liquid. "This world is quite troublesome though," Lin Ming remarked as he kept trekking in a singular direction. When he first arrived, he learned that the ambient mana was extremely thin and contained an absurdly restrictive power within, making it nigh impossible to fly via Mana Manipulation.

As for using astral force, that was very dangerous due to the hazardous environment. The consumption of astral force was extremely high, especially with the constant falling of burning ash that threatened your safety. It had already been several hours since he started walking, yet he saw nothing but grey skies, volcanoes, and falling ash.

This left him helpless. He looked at his right hand, clenched within was a light green badge that emitted faint airy aura. It was currently emitting faint light, with a side of it protruding light into a certain direction. It was shaped like a thin triangle with esoteric characters and markings on its surface. On its surface was a depiction of a twister. This was one of the nine tokens of the trial, a Token of Elementus.

This was also the first token, the Zephyr Badge, that he'd obtained from his Senior Sister Lin after meeting her. It initiated his start onto the path of cultivation and brought him to such great heights with a promising future.

As he ensured the direction was the correct one, he once more recalled the troublesome aspects of this world. The volcanic ash wasn't very dangerous, but the ambient essence was similarly thin and lacking in substance. It made it very difficult to recover one's expended energies, like alone cultivate.

He wasn't sure why this was the case, especially when the environment was quite rich in quality. Regardless of whether it was the sizzling ash, the volcanoes, or the earth beneath his feet, they were byproducts of an enriched environment that surpassed the planets of their starfield. Despite that, the ambient essence was far too thin to support this type of hazardously rich environment.

It was a contradiction that left him stunned, unsure of where the issue lay.

"Oh?" Lin Ming's grey-colored brightened as he saw a large silhouette in the distance, seemingly to take the sharpness of tall towers and possibly a fortified wall. These were signs of civilization! His heart raced, feeling excited at the prospect of living beings existing in this world. Without hesitation, he sped up.

In that very area of civilization, walking amongst a crowd of tightly garbed humans, two figures cloaked by dark clothing were sitting within an eatery, with piping out tea placed before them. The sky was absent of falling ash. Instead, there were various tower-like buildings that acted as lanterns, brightening the bleak and grey environment.

There were hundreds of individuals walking the wide streets, and numerous individuals that seemed to be peddling unique and exotic wares that were unseen in the starfield.

One of these figures was quietly moving their mouth while the other was observing the crowd, running their thin, delicate, and jade-like index finger across the rim of their teacup. After a few rotations, that finger left the teacup and was placed into that figure's mouth, as if savoring the flavor that lingered.

Those nearby were all humans, lacking a single elf, demon, or beastman in sight.

The cloaked figure that was moving her mouth with a strange rhythm ceased, lifting their eyes to reveal a pair of blue eyes with bewitchingly feminine guile. As she moved, faint strands of blonde hair revealed itself, causing her to move them aside, hidden from view with a practiced motion.

"There's so much interference within this environment. The product of a Mystic Ascendant truly pushes my sight to its limits." The cloaked woman complained, pouting her soft lips as she brought the cup of tea to her lips to sip. The refreshing taste and warmth eased her frustration.

The other cloaked figure stopped her movements, turning their head to 'stare' at the cloaked woman.

The cloaked woman pouted her lips more, "It's not my fault. This environment is quite dastardly. Its already fortunate that I even calculated the two closest spatial tunnels and timings to transport so that we arrived a few miles away from each other."

If Wei Wuyin heard this voice, he would instantly recognize it as Ming Shufeng! The Heavenly Seer!

The cloaked figure looked away, finally speaking. When it did, it revealed their gender! A soft, strong, and feminine voice sounded out, "I don't blame you. I don't know much about this world either. I can't believe it's so massive, and the cultivation society is extremely advanced." She regarded the citizens, the merchants, the guards that patrolled the area, feeling their cultivation bases and feeling disturbed.

As long as they were mature of age, they were at the Astral Core Realm. Only some juniors and children were at the Qi Condensation, and there wasn't a single individual beneath the Sixth Stage. If this was revealed in the starfield, this location could mimic the environment of some elite organizations, high-tier clans, and the four hegemonic forces.

But even they didn't have so many Astral Core Realm experts walking about. Just from a casual glance, there were already a hundred, and this city was extremely large to begin with.

Ming Shufeng, too, felt a wave of disbelief within her heart. "Even I hadn't seen this. There must be over a hundred thousand Astral Core Realm cultivators in the city, and who knows what the city lord's strength is at." She sighed, realizing their goal will be somewhat difficult.

But the cloaked woman remained silent, merely looking at the crowd. Without warning, she stood up. "We need to move," the cloaked woman said suddenly as she started to leave the eatery after placing an astral stone on the table. Ming Shufeng was startled, but her eyes abruptly flared with bright golden light. It seemed she had obtained a faint glimmer of insight, her expression turned ash pale as she hastily followed along.

The cloaked woman looked at the sky, she murmured to herself in a voice only she could hear: "According to those journals, this should be the True Elemental Emperor's first stop, and his first deadly challenge that will test his limits. If what's mentioned is true, this will be my best opportunity to act."

Beneath her hood, a bright crimson light shone from both her eyes.

Chapter 409 - 405: Captured

Woosh!

A comet of light soared through the dreary skies, brightly lighting up the immediate environment before smashing heavily into the dirt-covered ground.

Boosh!

A crater formed, leaving a single figure present at its center. The impact had produced a dust cloud, covering the figure in grey-colored dirt. A series of coughs resounded, followed by an exclamation of surprise.

"Desolate Intent?" A familiar aura permeated the surroundings, causing Wei Wuyin to react with a tinge of surprise. He walked out of the dust cloud, covered in grey-colored dirt. The dirt seemed to be infused with Desolate Intent, capable of siphoning off the lively qualities and energies of living things, such as moisture or heat. It signified deprivation and absence, but also absorption and assimilation.

He touched his clothes, realizing the Desolate Intent infused dirt had stuck to him like a parasitic insect, attaching to the energies he emitted by default, such as his heat, moisture, life force, and gases. With a faint smile, his eyes flashed with a light of deprivation, grey and absent of lively qualities, causing the dirt to be siphoned of its desolate powers.

With a brush of his black clothes, he removed all the dirt. After handling this, he looked at his environment to discover a dirt-covered world with mountains that were few and far away from each other. These solitary mountains were quite interesting as he couldn't help but give them a second look.

He exited the crater, about to fly when he discovered the thin, extremely restrictive ambient mana. But he brushed this off, exerting the power of his Zenith Origin State, invoking a strong disruptive power that shattered the bindings that the mana was subjected to.

Instantly, the surrounding mana for hundreds of meters in all distances vibrated with an intensity of extreme happiness as they shrouded his figure. He floated off the ground, looking around at a greater height. As he got higher, he felt the power of desolation within the air become greater, more lethal and parasitic.

"If a normal cultivator tried to fly in these conditions, they would be hard-pressed to resist this power. They might be deprived of their innate energies, mummified without being

able to resist." As he lifted his hands, he realized that even if he descended, the power of desolation would continue to suckle away at his innate energies at the same degree of intensity.

"Peculiar," Wei Wuyin lightly commented as he absorbed the power of desolation, enriching his own innate energies after a brief revolution of his cultivation base. Unlike others, he could easily unravel this power and convert it into strength. This was the benefit of Desolate Intent.

He landed, no longer using his Zenith Origin State's enhanced Mana Control to prevent the restrictive power from affecting it, causing the ambient mana to briefly wail with a tremble before becoming thin and seemingly uninteractive once more.

"Even more peculiar," his Celestial Eyes roamed the world and inspected this strange power. It didn't only restrict the ambient mana but the ambient essence was being similarly restrained. But from what he could tell, be it mana or essence, its quality was far, far greater than a planet's.

He tapped his foot against the dirt, scraping the dirt to the side until he touched the ground hidden beneath. When he pressed his feet against it, his eyes brightened momentarily. "The crust of this continent here is extremely durable, far greater than the Myriad Monarch Main Planet."

This contradictory scene baffled him for a moment, but then he realized a possible theory. From his observations, it's possible that the current world realm was at a period of restriction, like a season. The restrictions don't just serve to thin the ambient mana or essence, but strengthen it. After the period is over, the enhanced mana and essence will give birth to a far greater environment.

"Ingenious!" He couldn't help but praise the design. If this was actually happening, then the creator was having the world realm cultivate in a similar way to weight training for mortal experts. But that also was curious, because there had to be an endless source of lesser energies to strengthen.

Just as he was marveling at the superb design and cunning of this world realm, he turned to observe a dust cloud growing in the distance. His silver eyes watched as the cloud appeared and approached, as if it was just conjured from nothing.

"Cultivators?" A wisp of interest flashed within his eyes, observing the cloud grow until it was fifty meters high, bulldozing its way towards him with a continuous rumble of fearsome stomps. This seemingly intimidating scene wasn't remotely moving Wei Wuyin's heart. Instead, he recalled that Wall of Heaven that had rushed at him, taking the crust of the continent, trees, all life in its path, and everything else with it.

The cloud of grey dust soon reached him, and with an eerily roaring sound, enshrouded his figure entirely. The cloud lingered, sounds of stomps and faint roars emitted from within. Soon, the cloud twisted and twisted until it formed a tornado that slowly bore through the grey-colored dirt and crust, disappearing from view.

The peaceful ambiance of the scene returned.

Meanwhile, hundreds of meters underground, Wei Wuyin was riding a large lizard-like beast that seemed to be a cross between an iguana and a mole, its razor sharp claws stabbed into the air and made a tunnel. He was currently bobbing up and down on its back, restrained by numerous black-colored shackles.

Boosh!

They penetrated a hollow layer and entered a circular tunnel, wide and linear, with a circumference of at least fifty meters. They fell heavily within, no longer digging through the air. The darkness of the tunnel was well-lit by torches that burned white.

Wei Wuyin looked up, seeing several lizard-like moles drop down from the hole that had just been made, encircling his lizard while a few humanoid figures tightly held chains in their hands, chains that connected to his shackles. After the seventh and last beast entered, the hole healed itself in a miraculous fashion as if it was never there.

"Interesting," he remarked as he observed the humanoids riding the digging beasts with practice and poise, seemingly trained and having done something like abducting individuals many times. They spoke in a tongue he was unfamiliar with, surprising him for a moment.

There were fifteen humanoid figures, with two to each beast, with the largest beast holding three, and the one steering such a beast seemed to be the leader. They weren't abnormally shaped by any means, having two arms, two legs, and a head, but they were all covered in grey-colored, tightly wrapped and

concealing clothing. This clothing exuded faint desolate power, but it seemed to repel and contain it rather than emitting it themselves.

"Protective wear?" Wei Wuyin kept thinking aloud, unable to contain his curiosity. When he spoke, the humanoid figure that held him to the lizard-like mole beast harshly tugged at his chains, causing him to feel an abrupt wave of dizziness.

He felt the shackles emanate the power of desolate and various restrictions, trying to absorb his innate energies and seeking to pacify him entirely. These were quite clever, but incredibly useless to those who harnessed Desolate Intent. He only felt mildly discomforted by its tightness.

The group of fifteen seemed to be exchanging words, discussing some matter. After the leader listened to their words, he gave orders and their expressions were varied and complex. The beast rider that controlled the one he sat on tugged at his shackles once more as they, and the only other partner they had, shot off with him in the direction of the tunnel.

The others traveled in the opposite direction at full speed, seemingly meant to do something else.

Wei Wuyin wasn't bothered by this, merely quietly waited for the completion of his ride as he calmly inspected the tunnel. The walls were smooth, extremely well-crafted. There were definitely various formations embedded on the surface, protecting and preventing physical and spiritual penetration except by those with the special means to do so.

He wouldn't have been able to sense this tunnel unless he felt the need to inspect hundreds of meters underground. After all, his Celestial Eyes couldn't observe so deep nor could his spiritual sense penetrate through solid material without forcefully doing so.

He imagined very few people would try to send their spiritual sense through this type of environment, simply the desolate power that was quite prevalent here would be a troublesome hassle to overcome.

He waited for a few minutes before he heard a faint clamor and sounds of activity towards the direction they were traveling. When he turned his head to see the commotion, his mind spiraled with awe!

Chapter 410 - 406: Human Captives

A whole new world!

These were the first four words that flashed through his mind as he witnessed the unfolding of the scenery. The tunnel ended, revealing a vast open space and environment with life, light, and activity. The chatter of adults, laughter of children, and vibrant steps resounded out without end. A grand city revealed itself before him.

As the lizard traversed further in, Wei Wuyin could see young children playing with a ball roughly the size of a watermelon. It was bouncy yet hard, and they were using their knees and elbows to move it with some skill. They seemed to be fond of playing near the entrances or exits of the city.

When these young children dressed in darkly colored rags saw the lizards, they whooped and hollered as they moved out of the way, discussing rather animatedly amongst themselves. They would even point at him and snicker, some would reveal desire on their young faces as if they wanted to be one of the two men that were currently escorting him.

These children revealed the racial origin of their group, likely the men that captured him as well. They had pointed ears, bright eyes, sharp edges to those eyes, and slender bodies. While there were some that had slightly thicker bodies, they were by no means fat.

They were elves.

Nearby, there seemed to be wooden caravans on iron wheels traversing the edge of the walls that led to the tunnel. They were likely transporting whatever was within to another part of this space. The elf performing this duty was whistling to himself in boredom.

Wei Wuyin looked at the grand scene, observing the astonishing sight before him with rapturous awe. The world was encapsulated in an earthen dome with curved walls, and at the center of this dome at the world above was a brilliant and radiant ball of light that mimicked a solar star. It even effused rays of heat alongside the light, seemingly containing a special power within.

After a brief inspection, Wei Wuyin figured out that the rays of light and heat dispersed the desolate power lingering on the lizard, the men escorting him, and himself. This was why life thrived so miraculously here.

"To think there is an underground city!" Wei Wuyin couldn't help but once more be shocked by the brilliant ways of civilization. While he had experienced the Beast-Taming Sect's internal mountain lifestyle and Eden Earth Sect's tree living lifestyle, he hadn't seen an underground city before. In fact, he'd never even heard of it before in the starfield.

The concept might have been theorized by numerous scholars, but it was hard to put into practice for numerous reasons. Mortals were too weak to sustain the needs of an underground city, and ambient essence grew thinner the lower you went, prompting cultivators to reject such a notion. While cultivators might burrow into large structures such as mountains and giant trees, they wouldn't venture underground. There were very few benefits to it.

But in this case, when he recalled the power of desolation that existed above, this might actually be the better, if not only, alternative.

The rider shouted out, causing the lizard to up its pace slightly as they ventured deeper into the city. Wei Wuyin was exposed to the indifferent glances of the fellow elven citizens of the city, the amused chatter of curious youths, as well as the unique architecture of the city.

The buildings were made of dark iron-like material, likely mined from nearby. There wasn't much wood present, but it wasn't entirely absent, which made him curious. This was an underground city, where did they obtain the wood from? As for the outside environment, it lacked a single tree in sight. Despite that, wood of various types were still present here and there.

"Trading?" His silver eyes brightened. It seemed there was evidence that other cultivation civilizations existed, and they might be entirely different from this one. One of the reasons mortals can't sustain underground cities was the lack of agriculture and food, making it very hard to survive within. However, from the relative healthiness revealed by the outer edges of the city, which were likely poorer from the rags on the children's bodies, food wasn't an issue here.

This intrigued him further, prompting him to want to learn about the city's development, history, struggles, innovations and compromises to ensure success. "An genuinely unique world, and its made by elves, not demons or beastmen of a specific lineage," he said as he lifted his head a little, causing the shackles and chain connected to his neck to rattle.

"Hoh!" The escort assigned to oversee him tugged at his chain, causing him to stumble a little. He couldn't help but wryly chuckle to himself. Who would believe that the Ascendant Emperor of Neo-Dawn, an Era-Defining Character, a Mortal Sovereign Alchemist, and powerful cultivator would be treated so viciously?

"Their spoken language is different as well," Wei Wuyin could hear the various conversations held by the inhabitants of the city. Their language was entirely different from the common language of the starfield, causing him to be baffled. It wasn't possible for this secret realm to exist prior to the Divine King Han Xei's existence, right?

Why was there a unique language here? The universally common language was used by most, if not all, races of humanoid species. It has been that way even before the King of Everlore, even before the Divine King Han Xei. So why was there a new language here?

But he realized that the characters inscribed on various buildings signifying their names were marked by characters he was familiar with. There was some variation to some noun characters, likely signifying new things he had never seen or heard of before.

He had to ride on this lizard for several hours, causing him to be awed by the sheer size of this city. He realized the entire city must span at least five hundred miles, and they were traveling rather slowly. "This might not be the only underground city...my spiritual sense scanned at least ten thousand miles of empty desolate land, and the tunnels from earlier seemed to branch in many directions. A network of cities underground?" His eyes brightened at the possibility.

But he soon revealed a pondering expression. "Why capture me, then?" That was a baffling question. They didn't seem lacking or needing labor. Furthermore, he saw working servants of the relatively rich citizens, but they didn't seem like slaves.

Furthermore, he hadn't spotted a single human here. It seemed unnecessary to bring him here to kill him. The environment above could accomplish that and dissipate his bones into grey-dirt, and he couldn't be a special case, no? Was it just coincidental timing?

"Their practiced fashion betrays the truth of that. They arrived near me and came directly towards me. Their objective was clear: Capture." He murmured to himself, causing the chain-holder to tug at his chains again. He pouted, looking at the chains as his patience was nearing its end.

Just as his patience was about to reach its limit, the lizard stopped before a beige-colored citadel with a light tower that reached a mile high, startling him as he strained his neck to look up. The citadel was quite familiar to his own civilization, elevated slightly higher than the other buildings beneath it.

Its fortified walls of iron-like structure seemed extremely durable. It truly lived up to its name as a stronghold. The half-oval gate made from iron started to tremble as it opened up, revealing activity of numerous elves in grey clothes, similar to his captors.

"They're soldiers?" He immediately realized that, despite being an underground city that likely establishes their main resources in ores, this city's soldiers didn't wear metallic armor, deciding on a lighter attire. These grey clothes seemed suitable in resisting the ambient desolate power.

If that's the case, then perhaps the iron would decay or rot in the face of that power, so it wasn't a tangible option. This theory of his was quite keen, and if he mentioned this right out the bat to these citizens, they would be startled by his deductive prowess.

He was brought into the citadel by his captors. They trekked with purpose, arriving at an open space that housed a large iron cage. It was square with thick iron bars where one's finger could barely poke through. This startled him as he noted that there were humans in this cage!

His captors spoke to each other, and the one that kept tugging at his chains grabbed him and brought him to the cage. Wei Wuyin analyzed the cage, realizing the restrictive formations placed on the cage, and its highly durable nature.

The humans inside weren't lacking. They were all at the Astral Core Realm, and they numbered at least three dozen. When he swept a glance at some of their curious faces and defeated expressions, he was startled to realize he couldn't recognize a single one, their clothes or aura.

They were all natives of this world realm!

That or they were a part of the San Clan's hundred. With that in mind, while the guard was unlocking the cage, Wei Wuyin said to those within: "Do any of you understand me?" This caused all the humans to react, seemingly suggesting they all spoke his language.

"Interesting," he muttered. "Do any of you recognize me?" His appearance was unchanged, and it had spread wide and far through his starfield, so they should know him if they originated from there, especially if they were geniuses. When the human captives looked at him, some shook their heads while others just ignored him. But there wasn't a single one that seemed to recognize him.

"Oh? Why should they know of you? Are you very important amongst Ganshus?" A soft, powerful and authoritative voice sounded out from behind him. His captor stiffened, immediately stopping his attempts to push through Wei Wuyin the now-opened cage entrance.

The elf soldier hurriedly turned around, giving a salute that seemed military. It was with his index and middle finger extended, his pinkie and wedding finger touching one's palm, and thumb tucked between the pinkie. He pressed this to his glabella with the back of his index and middle finger, palm facing outwards. He shouted something indistinguishable to Wei Wuyin, likely a greeting.

"Ganshus?" Wei Wuyin turned around, curious if it was a new human captive that had just arrived. But he was startled to see a woman, an elven woman! She could speak his language!

She had sleek, waist-length black hair with light grey highlights. It was placed into a boho ponytail, suggesting that her hair was even longer. The sharp contours of her eyes was accompanied by a

beautiful pair of dark green eyes with grey flecks giving them a bewitching yet strong appearance. Her nose was a little longer than average but it paired well with her heart-shaped face and thin lips.

She was a beauty, and she wasn't of the paler white-ish shade, being light bronze instead. This coupled with her perky bosom that was perfect for an adult hand and slim figure covered in tight-fitting grey clothes gave her an exotically sexy aura.

Wei Wuyin's eyes shone brightly as he chuckled with excitement. "An elf that speaks my language; what a pleasant surprise."

The elven woman seemed to find Wei Wuyin's interest and words amusing, smiling with both her lips and eyes. "Oh? Is it? So you must be very important."

Wei Wuyin's brows lifted, "What makes you so certain?"

The elven woman inspected Wei Wuyin up and down, finally revealing a sweet grin. But this grin caused the soldier standing next to him to tremble as if he was about to soil himself with fear.

"You think your status will make us treat you differently? Return you from whence you came?" She replied with questions of her own.

This caused Wei Wuyin to figure out a little about the situation. He looked at the human captives and realized why they were still alive, why they were brought here, and it wasn't to be slaves or killed; it was to be sold.