

Refining 1481

Chapter 1481 – Set Up

Returning to Li Zhouyi's palace, after waving away the servants, Qin Yu sat down at the table. His body suddenly trembled and sweat appeared on his forehead under the black robe. He had wanted to pour himself a cup of tea, but found that his fingers were shaking so much that when he lifted the teapot, most of the tea spilled on the table.

Laughing bitterly to himself, he tipped back his head to drink the hot tea. He then let out a long breath, and only then did he feel his stiff body relax.

The glowing light ball that woman gave him...shattered!

Not long ago when Qin Yu stepped out of the Imperial Palace, the most terrifying thing was not knowing what had been happening so far. However, there was no doubt that Qin Yu had unknowingly, without making any preparations at all, arrived at the gates of hell.

It was not the first time that Qin Yu found himself in such a precarious situation that put him on the border of life and death, but this time, it was different from all his previous experiences. He did not notice anything, which also meant that he was unable to resist such terrifying power. If it was not for that glowing light ball, Qin Yu would probably have become a dead man.

Getting so close to death, yet being unaware of it...it was Qin Yu's biggest source of fear today.

After being silent for a long time, Qin Yu took another deep breath, suppressing the fear and apprehension in his eyes.

Now that he was safe and sound and had returned to Li Zhouyi's palace, this meant that his identity had not been exposed. That is to say, he was out of harm's way for now and did not have to worry too much.

And now that Qin Yu had passed the test completely, that woman would contact him soon to fulfill her original promise. At least, Qin Yu would know what he would be facing next.

Another matter was...the Ice Flame!

Judging from the degree of caution in the Imperial Palace, it was easy to infer that whatever was happening next was extremely critical. A matter like this was definitely incredibly dangerous as well.

Qin Yu only did this because he owed that woman too many favors. Furthermore, given the disparity in strength between both of them, he was unable to refuse anyway, so he had to agree. To be honest, he was extremely unwilling to go through these dangers.

He had to increase his strength! There were many shortcuts in front of him now, so he had to try them.

His eyes flashed quickly before he got up to push the door open. To him, the West Desolate was like an extremely vast and deep sea. If he wanted to find prey to kill, he had to seek help. Seeing how important he was to Li Zhouyi, he knew that Li Zhouyi would not refuse to help.

The Darkness Ruler had successfully passed the Imperial Palace's 'identity confirmation'. Li Zhuoyi was happy, because this was a very critical moment. If Qin Yu made any mistakes, Li Zhuoyi would plunge into an abyss with zero chance to rise again.

Therefore, at this moment when Qin Yu requested an audience with him, he smiled and nodded, "Please come in, Darkness Ruler."

Qin Yu walked into the great hall and cupped his hands, "Greetings, Your Highness."

"Please rise, Darkness Ruler." Li Zhouyi looked pleased. "The identity confirmation process is really exhausting. I have a treasure that was given to me by His Majesty a few years ago; I will give it to you today and it will protect you if you are ever on the verge of death."

He clapped his hands, and Border Cliff Saint walked out from behind, his eyes full of envy. "This scale comes from a mythical beast in the West Desolate. Its defensive power is astonishing – it can resist a Half-King's power. Its value is immeasurable, and for His Highness to give it to you, you must know how much he values you. I hope Your Excellency works hard and lives up to His Highness' expectations of you."

Qin Yu looked at the scale. Its whole body was transparent, with layers of fluorescent waves surging continuously on the surface. Vaguely, a sound like the roaring of the Yangtze River, could be heard.

"Thank you, Your Highness!" Qin Yu took the scale with both hands. Even though it was not a part of his plan to have received this, since it was given to him, there was no reason to refuse it. It could block a blow from a Half-King...just this alone would make this object Qin Yu's strongest life-saving trump card!

However, this was a trump card that could only be used once. The most important thing now was still for him to improve his own strength. Qin Yu raised his head, looked at Li Zhouyi and said solemnly, "Since Your Highness has given me such a valuable treasure, it must be because you want me to work hard for you. This is an honor for me. Today, I came to ask for one thing. If Your Highness is willing to help me, it would increase our chances of success!"

Li Zhuoyi's eyes lit up, "Darkness Ruler, please tell me what it is!"

"Your Highness, when I entered the Imperial Palace today for the identity confirmation process, I found something that I need in someone else's body..." Qin Yu made some changes to the story as he told Li Zhouyi about the Ice Flame.

"A red mole near his eyebrows..." Li Zhuoyi frowned slightly, looking at Border Cliff Saint.

The latter pondered for a moment and asked Qin Yu more about this person's appearance. Then, his face turned ugly as he said, "Your Highness, if my guess is correct, the person that Darkness Ruler is talking about is Ning Xiao from the Eldest Princess' palace."

"Eldest Princess..." Li Zhouyi repeated to himself and furrowed his eyebrows. Fear flashed in his eyes.

Qin Yu continued, "Your Highness, this person's Ice Flame is extremely important to me. It can help me improve my abilities in a short amount of time, so no matter what, Your Highness, you have to help me!"

He had to show his firmness on this matter.

Li Zhouyi was silent for a while and replied slowly, "I can help you, but this matter will be dangerous. He is not just powerful, he is the top True Saint in the capital city. It will be difficult to kill him. And the Eldest Princess...she is the Third Prince's twin sister. Because of what happened in the fragmented area, she is extremely resentful towards me and if word gets out that I helped you, it will endanger me as well."

Li Zhouyi's face was full of annoyance and unwillingness, even a little self-mockery. Back then, Li Zhouyi was in his heyday. Even though he was not at the same level as the Eldest Princess, he also had no need to be so fearful of her. Yet today, he had fallen from grace, and he was in a precarious situation. If the Eldest Princess found out about this and attacked him, he would be powerless to resist.

Border Cliff Saint coughed lightly, "Darkness Ruler, trying to kill Ning Xiao is very risky. If you really insist on doing this, you must make a comprehensive plan to ensure that nothing goes wrong... His Highness' power has been reduced greatly by the Imperial Palace; the remainder can only be used to defend himself."

It was of course just a euphemism to give Li Zhouyi face. At the same time, it was also a reminder to Qin Yu to think about whether or not it was necessary to take such a huge risk.

In fact, if it was not for the fact that the Ice Flame would help Qin Yu improve his strength which would then increase the success of their plans in the future, Li Zhouyi would definitely not have agreed to this.

Under the black robe, Qin Yu's eyes swept across both of them and his tone was as firm as steel, "I must get the Ice Flame...as for the plan, I can only trouble Your Highness to help me collect information as soon as possible."

Feeling the conviction conveyed in Qin Yu's words, Li Zhouyi gritted his teeth and ordered, "Border Cliff Saint, I will leave this matter in your hands. You must find a way to get all the information about Ning Xiao and his comrades, and then hand over a summary to the Darkness Ruler."

Li Zhouyi continued to say, "However, let me make it clear that you must only take action once you are extremely sure that you will succeed...otherwise, I hope that you will understand if I choose to not help you."

Evidently, if Qin Yu did not have the confidence to pull this plan off, Li Zhouyi would prevent it from happening...Qin Yu was not alone now, and all his actions would determine his future. Of course he would not act recklessly.

Qin Yu cupped his hands and said, "Okay, I understand." He looked at Border Cliff Saint and continued, "I would appreciate it if you collected the information for me as soon as possible."

If it was really an impossible task, he would not force it. Since he now knew about the Ice Flame's existence, there would always be more opportunities in the future. Acting blindly and hastily would get him killed if he was not careful!

The facts had proven that the status of a prince was indeed unimaginably high. Even Li Zhouyi who was in a desperate situation could still mobilize his power.

All the information regarding Ning Xiao was then collected as quickly as possible, gathered, and arranged in a jade slip. Border Cliff Saint then personally passed it to Qin Yu.

“Darkness Ruler, I have collected all the information about Ning Xiao and put it inside this jade slip...I hope that Your Excellency will not forget the reminder that His Highness gave you before. Do not be stubborn if the task is too difficult.”

It was a sincere warning!

Qin Yu was Li Zhouyi's only hope of rising in power now, and Border Cliff Saint's fate was deeply intertwined with Li Zhouyi's. Everyone knew that Border Cliff Saint was the Sixth Prince's trusted aide.

If Li Zhouyi prospered, so would he. But if something bad happened to Li Zhouyi, Border Cliff Saint would also suffer with him.

“Border Cliff Saint, please do not worry. I know my limits.” Qin Yu took the jade slip and after confirming that there was nothing wrong with it, he used his divine senses to probe it.

After a while, his fingers exerted a little force, and with a soft ‘pop’, the jade slip was turned to dust.

Opposite him, Border Cliff Saint's eyes flickered slightly, looking slightly more at ease.

The small details revealed a lot about a person's personality. From this, it could be seen that the Darkness Ruler was a cautious man and when carrying out tasks, he would definitely take everything into consideration as well.

After pondering for a moment, Qin Yu suddenly opened his eyes and said, “There is one thing that I need Border Cliff Saint to help me confirm.”

Border Cliff Saint asked, “What is it?”

“Please help me find out if that master and servant pair that are involved with Ning Xiao right now are from Seascap City...if you are unable to find out about this, please confirm it with Hundred Saint.”

“Okay!” Border Cliff Saint did not ask any more questions before turning to leave. He knew what Qin Yu was referring to, since he was the one who had written down the contents in the jade slip.

The woman from Moon Brothel...why was there a need to check her background? Hmm...something's not right, the Darkness Ruler came to the capital city through Seascap City, could there be a connection between both of them?

Border Cliff Saint moved very quickly. After all, no one knew when Qin Yu would take action, so things had to be completed in the shortest possible time.

Hundred Saint was not easy to contact. After all, his lineage had always been quite powerful in the capital city. With Li Zhouyi's current situation, rashly investigating his subordinates was likely to create misunderstandings. This might lead to unpredictable consequences.

However, Border Cliff Saint was a smart man and knew how to be flexible. After all, there were many people that served Hundred Saint, so he could try to get in touch with someone else.

Very quickly, he found out that the woman in Moon Brothel was favored by Ning Xiao. She was indeed from Seascap City. In fact, this was also the woman that Hundred Saint brought to the capital city.

“Yun Qing...” Qin Yu mumbled to himself before raising his head to say, “Please arrange a meeting with her as soon as possible.”

Border Cliff Saint frowned, “Darkness Ruler, are you sure?”

Qin Yu replied, “If all goes to plan, Ning Xiao will be seeking death himself...if he takes the initiative to attack me first but then gets killed in the process, I think there would not be any trouble.”

“I have to report this matter to His Highness.”

“Of course. Please let His Highness know that I am very confident.”

Not long after Border Cliff Saint left, Li Zhouyi came down in person and talked privately with Qin Yu for a long time. After a few moments of silence, he finally nodded and agreed to the plan.

“Darkness Ruler, please remember what you promised me. Do not cause any accidents...otherwise, I won’t be able to save you!”

“Your Highness, please do not worry.”

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Leaving Moon Brothel, and re-entering Moon Brothel.

This was something Yun Qing experienced personally during this time. She had thought that the black-robed guest’s intention was to bring her out of Seascapes City. She was ready to commit herself to this person.

There was some confusion in her heart, but not much unwillingness, and in the bottom of her heart there was even a trace of anticipation and joy. The conflict that happened in Seascapes City made her realize that this black-robed guest was a strong and empathetic person.

For a woman who worked in a brothel, this was already the best choice, and she did not dare to ask for more.

However, it seemed that the heavens were playing a joke with her. After the incident in the Capital Border Area, Hundred Saint suddenly disappeared, and in order to cut off all connection with Qin Yu, Yun Qing was sent into the capital city’s Moon Brothel.

When her heart was sour and unsure, not knowing what fate lay ahead for her, she received her first guest.

When she saw the black robes, she was stunned. She was unable to even move her lips to talk, and her eyes were about to fall out of their sockets.

Qin Yu was slightly embarrassed.

Of course!

If a beauty looked at one from a distance with a mixture of excitement, disbelief and a bit of sadness in her eyes, anyone would feel slightly uncomfortable!

“Cough!” Coughing lightly to break the silence, Qin Yu did not want to play along with this as time was tight.

Furthermore, his feelings had not reached that point yet...other than Yun Qing’s face, which looked exactly like Feature’s, he did not really feel any attraction at all.

“Lady Yun Qing, I have come here today to ask you for a favor.”

He got straight to the point. Yun Qing took a deep breath to stabilize her thoughts before she bowed, “You have helped me a lot; if there is anything you need, I will definitely try to help as well as I can.”

Qin Yu replied, “I want to kill someone and I need you to put on an act with me. This might be a bit risky, but I will definitely repay you in full.”

Yun Qing lifted her head, with firmness in her reddish eyes. “Even though I am just a prostitute, I know what it means to repay someone’s kindness. Yun Die and I would have already suffered an accident and been turned into bones in Seascape City’s lake if it were not for you. So...you don’t have to explain too much, just tell me what it is, and I will help you.”

Qin Yu felt a little touched internally but immediately calmed himself down. Looking at this stubborn face in front of him, he was reminded of Feature.

After being silent for a while, he said slowly, “If that’s the case, let me thank you in advance.” Qin Yu then got up and quietly left Moon Brothel.

He raised his head and looked at the splendid night above him...there were nine suns in the Great Desolate, but the night sky had no moon. It was just a vast and endless sea of bright stars that filled the sky.

Under the black robes, killing intent flowed in the depths of his eyes.

Whether Yun Qing was true to her word or not, Qin Yu believed that he had judged her correctly. Now that the set up was complete, he just had to wait for Ning Xiao to jump in and give his head up!

Chapter 1482 – Taotie

There were 3,000 cultivation methods and 7,000 daos in this world.

If we use viciousness and brutality as the standard and make a top-down ranking, Ning Xiao had always believed that the Taotie Method he cultivated would be at the top.

This so-called Taotie Method used swallowing power. Of course, it did not swallow mindlessly. There was also a set of strict standards. Only devouring capable cultivators could bring benefits and enhance his strength.

From Ning Xiao’s point of view, the most difficult part about cultivating this method was to stick to the limits. Getting manipulated by this skill would cause him to gradually lose his mind. The ‘Taotie’ would take over his will and swallow everything in its way, eventually causing him to die.

The reason was very simple. There were many capable cultivators that met the standards, but could not be touched.

Such as the Eldest Princess!

Her scent made Ning Xiao almost crazy. He had no doubt that if he could swallow this noble princess, he would be able to break through the boundaries and enter the Ruler level.

That was the realm that Ning Xiao had always dreamed of and pursued, but he had served the Eldest Princess for a hundred years and never dared to take any action.

Not to mention that it would be seeking death to do so, what awaited him would be endless pursuit from the West Desolate's Royal Family!

Ning Xiao was able to live peacefully to this day with his current cultivation base because he always reminded himself to stay calm.

However, not long ago, Ning Xiao found a similar scent on another woman...no, to be precise, that scent gave him an even stronger desire to swallow.

And this time, he was very lucky. This woman did not have a royal status like the Eldest Princess, nor did she have someone powerful to rely on. She was just a pretty woman from a brothel...this woman was called Yun Qing!

With Yun Qing's looks, it would not take long for her to win the favor of high-profile customers in the capital city. That is to say, if he delayed devouring her even more, he would get into trouble if he tried to do so later on.

But now, everything was just right. She had just entered the capital city's Moon Brothel and was still relatively unknown to people. As long as he paid a high price to buy her and take her away, he could do whatever he wanted to Yun Qing.

Thinking of this, Ning Xiao was so excited that he started trembling. The carriage stopped and he looked out. His eyes fell on Moon Brothel's elegant gatehouse, and a smile appeared at the corner of his mouth.

In order to avoid looking suspicious, Ning Xiao forcibly suppressed the urgency that he felt. He had visited Moon Brothel several times and expressed his 'fondness' for Yun Qing several times. Today, he was going to pretend to hesitate before agreeing to pay the price to buy Yun Qing.

Taking a deep breath, Ning Xiao stepped out of the carriage, feeling the excitement roll like a tide in his heart. But soon, Ning Xiao felt as if cold water had been poured on him – Yun Qing had been bought by someone else!

He looked at the middle-aged man who had an apologetic smile on his face. His eyes were cold as knives as he slowly asked, "Who is it?"

Locked onto by these terrifying eyes, the middle-aged man's smile remained unchanged and his tone was calm and gentle, "As you know, Moon Brothel has always placed great importance on our guests' privacy, so we cannot tell you who it is."

Ning Xiao was silent, but killing intent soared in his heart. He wished to tear this middle-aged man into pieces.

But he did not dare to!

This person seemed to be a mere clerk who worked in Moon Brothel, but he was backed by a faction of the Royal Family. Even the Eldest Princess would not dare to offend these people.

Taking a deep breath, Ning Xiao cupped his hands and said, "You must know about my origins...Yun Qing is a woman that I value very much. If you can tell me who it is, just take it as me owing Moon Brothel a favor."

This was his promise. As someone who worked under the Eldest Princess who was now highly favored, he believed that this man would understand the weight of his promise.

In particular, he entered the Imperial Palace not long ago, which was a secret that the upper class of the capital city knew about.

"I..." The middle-aged man hesitated for a while, and then said, "Then please send our regards to the Eldest Princess."

Ning Xiao's eyes lit up. "Definitely!"

The middle-aged man smiled and said, "The one who bought Yun Qing was Border Cliff Saint, who works for the Sixth Prince. They just left a moment ago."

Ning Xiao cupped his hands before turning to leave, frowning with gloom in his eyes.

Sixth Prince...

Even though he knew the Sixth Prince was no longer favored, he was still one of the Desolate King's sons. Unless the Imperial Palace ordered it, no one could do anything to him.

The Eldest Princess suffered from an accident because of the Third Prince, and thus she was at odds with the Sixth Prince. Ning Xiao's status as the Eldest Princess' trusted aide would only sow discord between himself and Border Cliff Saint.

The thoughts turned quickly in his head, before Ning Xiao took a deep breath and exhaled.

I can't be bothered anymore!

In any case, Yun Qing must be his.

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In front of Li Zhouyi's palace, Border Cliff Saint sat in the carriage and suddenly raised his eyebrows, feeling slightly surprised. He originally thought that the plan was too simple. Unexpectedly, it was working.

Looking back at the carriage that followed his one, Border Cliff Saint really could not understand. She was just a pretty girl from a brothel – how could she have such great magic power?

"Ning Xiao greets Border Cliff Saint!" A calm voice came from the outside.

Border Cliff Saint kept his composure and stepped off the carriage. He saluted, "It's you, Saint Ning Xiao. What's the matter?"

In his calm voice, there was coldness and alienation.

It was very normal. Everyone in the capital city knew about the feud between the Eldest Princess and the Sixth Prince.

In the capital city, the Eldest Princess was one of the top three people that wanted to see Li Zhouyi be doomed.

Ning Xiao was her trusted aide. Now that he was in front of Li Zhouyi's palace and blocking Border Cliff Saint's carriage...no matter how one looked at it, he definitely had bad intentions!

Ning Xiao could clearly feel Border Cliff Saint's coldness and he was silent for a while before he said, "Border Cliff Saint, are you the one who took Yun Qing away?"

Border Cliff Saint frowned with a gloomy expression on his face, "What a good Moon Brothel, learning how to play on different sides now. They really think that His Highness can be bullied at will!"

Although Ning Xiao did not reply, his reaction gave an answer.

Ning Xiao cupped his hands and said, "Border Cliff Saint, please calm down. I am here today not on the Eldest Princess' orders. I have no malicious intentions."

He took a deep breath and said solemnly, "To be honest, it was love at first sight with Yun Qing. I intended to buy her today, but I did not think that I would be too late. After learning about this, I chased after you until here, hoping that you would be generous and give Yun Qing to me. Of course, to show my sincerity, I am willing to pay three times the price that you bought Yun Qing for."

Border Cliff Saint frowned with suspicion on his face, as if he did not expect such a situation, "Saint Ning Xiao, are you being serious?"

Ning Xiao's heart rejoiced, and his voice became even more sincere, "Yes, everything that I've said is true, and there is no deception at all. Please grant my wish, I will definitely remember this in my heart!"

Border Cliff Saint pondered silently, looking like he was tempted by Ning Xiao's suggestion.

Just when Ning Xiao was about to continue speaking, a voice suddenly sounded, "Border Cliff Saint, I'm the one who asked you to bring back Lady Yun Qing for me; you are not qualified to make the decisions for me."

Ning Xiao's face changed slightly and he raised his head to see the man in a black robe walking out of Li Zhouyi's palace. His eyes suddenly became gloomy.

It was him!

Border Cliff Saint coughed lightly, looking slightly embarrassed. "Darkness Ruler, it's just a woman from a brothel, she's not worth mentioning at all...why don't you just give her to Saint Ning Xiao?"

While saying that, Border Cliff Saint gave Qin Yu a side glance and motioned him to nod in agreement.

Ning Xiao suppressed his emotions and said with a smile, "Darkness Ruler, we met on that day at the Imperial Palace."

After a slight pause, he continued, "If you are willing to give me Lady Yun Qing today, I promise I will return this favor in the future."

His words sounded very sincere.

Qin Yu laughed coldly in his heart. How are you going to return this favor? Are you going to return a corpse to me?

As if I would believe you!

Of course, even if everything that Ning Xiao said today was true, Qin Yu still would not agree to his request. Unless this guy was willing to hand over his Ice Flame – maybe then Qin Yu would consider agreeing.

However, obviously, this was not something that was going to happen. So the plan had to continue.

Under the black robe, Qin Yu's cold voice sounded, "I'm sorry but Lady Yun Qing is mine. I don't have the habit of selling my women in exchange for favors."

He then turned around to leave. "Border Cliff Saint, I don't think His Highness would want to see Saint Ning Xiao outside his palace. Aren't you going to see him off?"

"Darkness Ruler!" Ning Xiao shouted, "I hope that Your Excellency will think carefully about this again and not make an impulsive decision that you will regret!"

Qin Yu's voice became even colder, "I will never regret my decision."

Ning Xiao gave him a death stare and his robe started to move even though there was no wind, and a terrifying aura burst forth!

Qin Yu raised his eyebrows, really appreciating the fact that Ning Xiao was boldly making a move here. Attacking a prince's palace...for this crime, even killing him would not cause any trouble!

But obviously, Ning Xiao was not an idiot. His emotions leaked out for a while, but he remained calm.

He sneered and turned around to leave, his silhouette disappearing quickly.

The carriage entered the palace and after the servants were dismissed, Border Cliff Saint laughed bitterly and said, "Darkness Ruler, it seems that Ning Xiao is really going to make his move. I am going to ask you again, are you sure that your plan will succeed?"

Qin Yu replied, "Do not worry, as long as he falls into my setup, he will surely die!"

Border Cliff Saint exhaled, his eyebrows still filled with worry. "I hope this is the case. I have to report back to His Highness, I will take my leave now."

Watching Border Cliff Saint leave in a hurry, Qin Yu glanced at his own residence. His eyes flashed as he stepped into it.

Yun Qing and Yun Die were both sitting in the courtyard. When they saw Qin Yu coming in, they hurriedly stood up and greeted him.

"Welcome, our guest..."

Before they could finish speaking, Qin Yu interrupted, "To outsiders, you will be known as my women. Be careful not to seem too distant, otherwise people will be suspicious...my surname is Qin, you can call me Mister Qin in the future."

"Okay," Yun Qing and Yun Die respectfully bowed.

Qin Yu nodded his head, "What both of you have to do is now over; just stay here with peace of mind. I still have things to take care of, so I will leave first."

He stood up to leave. It was not that he was unwilling to say a few more words to the two beauties, but Yun Qing's face that greatly resembled Feature's always made him feel uneasy.

Furthermore, why would she be so sure that Ning Xiao would fall for their schemes? It seemed that Yun Qing was hiding some secrets.

He entered another room and waved his sleeves, blocking the outside world from listening in.

Taking a deep breath, he said, "Now, it's time for you to come out and give me an explanation."

Chapter 1483 – The Barbarian Clan's Treasure

The room was silent.

Given that he was talking to himself, this silence seemed to be taken for granted.

Beneath the black robe, Qin Yu sneered as he gritted his teeth, "So you really believe that I don't dare to pick it up? Don't push me, otherwise we can split up. It may not end well for me, but it won't for you either!"

Buzz –

A small buzzing sound could be heard. Following that, Qin Yu's chest grew hot and his flesh felt like it was being cut open by a red hot knife. He was like a candle melting under the heat.

Pieces of light fragments flew out and gathered in front of him. As this happened, the air in the room seemed to be thoroughly sealed. In the next moment, blinding light could be seen. After the light dimmed, the delicate figure of the Ruler appeared in front of Qin Yu.

"You brat. What did you just say? I did not hear you clearly. Say it again."

Looking into the Ruler's unfriendly eyes, Qin Yu coughed lightly, "Since you are here, I will go straight to the main point and not waste any more time...after all, I bet that secretly appearing in the West Desolate's capital is not easy even for you."

Men needed to be tough at some times but soft when the time came...this was what it meant to judge the situation!

"Hmph!" The Ruler snorted, "I don't have much time. So ask what you wish to know."

Qin Yu could not be bothered and took a deep breath, "What did I come to the West Desolate to do?"

The Imperial Palace's reaction was enough to confirm the importance of this thing. Interfering was already dangerous. Moreover, Qin Yu had to follow her orders. If he did not even know what was going on and interfered, he might as well offer his head up.

The Ruler said slowly, "The nine areas of the Great Desolate have a long heritage. It has been ruling since ancient times but this does not mean that there is nothing outside of these nine areas. With the four directions, north, south, east and west, the Barbaric Clan rules the areas outside of the Great Desolate. I want to remind you that the Barbaric Clan and the Great Desolate are mortal enemies and they cannot exist together. There is no chance of reconciling...the only thing they can do is to keep on killing and reducing the power of Barbaric Clan to keep them suppressed."

Murderous intent flew between her words.

Qin Yu's heart froze. How horrifying was this Barbaric Clan that they could be enemies with the Great Desolate...and from what she said, it seemed like even gathering all the power in the Great Desolate, the most they could do was to suppress them but never get rid of them completely.

But this didn't seem to have anything to do with what he asked, Qin Yu frowned, "I will remember that about the Barbaric Clan. Please continue."

The Ruler looked at him, "The western area beyond the West Desolate is the Western Barbarian Land. A long time ago, it gave rise to an extremely powerful Ancient Barbarian Nation. They were very powerful and kept attacking the West Desolate, causing a lot of bloodshed. In the end, after a difficult and cruel battle, the Desolate Area finally defeated and destroyed the Ancient Barbarian Nation. They paid a huge price. The Western Barbarian Land then entered into its weak state and until now, they have been suppressed and unable to fight back.

"Now, the place that you are going to go to is the remains of the Ancient Barbarian Nation...or rather, it is the grave of the strongest and last king of the Ancient Barbarian Nation. Back then, the nation was extremely strong and gave birth to a strong national fortune. It was infused into a treasure from the Barbarian Clan and was meant to help the Barbarian King reach the King Realm. After the Ancient Barbarian Nation was destroyed, the Barbarian King was killed. However, this treasure containing the national fortune went missing. It is rumored to be in the grave."

Qin Yu's eyes lit up, "Your target is this treasure!"

The Ruler rolled her eyes elegantly as she mocked, "It is so obvious. Do you have to say it like that?"

Qin Yu ignored her attitude as he felt a pressure on his chest and a bitterness in his mouth. The grave of the last king of the Ancient Barbarian Nation. Just by the name, it showed how dangerous it was going to be. Other than Blood Flag, there were other people from the West Desolate. Because of what Qin Yu was about to do, they would become his opponents.

If he wanted to get the Barbarian Clan's treasure, complete the Ruler's task without anyone noticing, and get away safely...this sounded impossible. It may be slightly exaggerated to say that there was no chance of survival but it was just slightly...the chance of success was literally zero!

The Ruler ridiculed, "Why? Are you afraid?" She paused, "I haven't told you what is truly scary. The tomb of the Barbarian King lies deep within the Western Barbarian Land. Although the West Desolate

has been expanding in recent years, it is still very far. After entering the Western Barbarian Land, you will not be able to teleport. If your route is exposed and the Western Barbarians start to hunt you...I suggest that you commit suicide. You don't want to fall into their hands alive."

His hair stood as he heard this!

Qin Yu gritted his teeth, "I don't understand why you are telling me this? Are you trying to scare me off? I admit that you have scared me. So how about we retreat?"

The Ruler said blandly, "You want to try?"

Qin Yu was speechless.

Although she said it emotionlessly, he could sense the threat behind it.

And she was for real!

Qin Yu knew without a doubt that if he said he did not want to do it, she would immediately report him to the West Desolate and he would die.

"Cough! Please don't worry, I am just joking...since I already promised you, I will do my best."

The Ruler smiled brilliantly, "I believe you." She winked, "So what do you want to ask? Hurry."

Qin Yu replied, "Regarding the tomb of the Barbarian King, what can you warn me about?"

The Ruler shook her head, "With regard to that place, I don't know much. Only some very vague information about the Western Barbarian Land...for example, the king was called Santado, which means Abyss Night."

She paused and looked at Qin Yu, "And this is the reason why you were brought to the Desolate Area. I don't think I have to say more."

Qin Yu seemed to be thinking, "So you are saying that the tomb of the late Barbarian King contains a horrifying dark energy..."

The Ruler nodded, "It seems so for now, but I can't confirm anything."

Qin Yu's mind calmed down. Since the West Desolate knew of the existence of this late Barbarian King and the treasure, they must have done their verifications. This was why Li Zhouyi would think of him and use the 'Darkness Ruler' as the last straw.

Unless the previous Desolate Emperor had been lying to Li Zhouyi...if not, the reliability was quite high.

This meant that once he entered the tomb of the late Barbarian King, Qin Yu's Darkness Ruler version had a higher chance of surviving.

Crack –

A soft sound could be heard from the Ruler's body. Her figure grew blurry. She yawned and looked tired, "Okay, if there is nothing else, I will leave first."

"Wait!" Qin Yu rushed to say, "Regarding Yun Qing, did you find anything out?"

The Ruler frowned, "What do you mean?"

"Very simple! How could you be sure that Yun Qing would be able to lure Ning Xiao to fall into the trap? Is she hiding some secret?"

Was it really a coincidence that the two faces were completely identical? Or was Yun Qing related to Feature! Initially, Qin Yu thought that it was the first one. But after the situation with Ning Xiao, he could not help but think it was something else.

Taking a deep breath, Qin Yu said, "Regarding Feature, I asked you before and told you that she was a very important friend of mine. So I hope that you can tell me the truth and not hide anything!"

Looking into his glowing eyes, the Ruler yawned once more, "You are thinking too much. I don't know Feature, but Yun Qing seems to be hiding a secret...as for what it is, unless you want to sleep with her, there is no need to know.

"Or maybe, after you sleep with her, you will naturally find out what she is hiding. So there is no need for me to waste time on this. I am tired...that is all."

Pak –

With a soft sound, the Ruler's delicate figure disappeared like a bubble.

Qin Yu looked disappointed. He had been hoping to get an answer from the Ruler. Feature...did she really disappear completely from his life without any trace?

He looked gloomy and his chest felt stuffy. His future seemed dull and difficult. He felt both empty and sore.

The feeling was not good.

Maybe he was thinking too much!

Taking a deep breath, he suppressed his emotions before breathing out. When Qin Yu lifted his head again, his expression was calm.

Since there was nothing to do about Feature, he would not waste energy.

"Western Barbarians..."

As Qin Yu spoke, he suddenly recalled Jiang Chengzi, the general from the west border who he knew because of Hundred Saint.

He had once mentioned that the Western Barbarian Land kept having movements and was in a stalemate with the border army...could this have something to do with the tomb of the Barbarian King? And also the treasure from the Barbarian Clan?

Infused with the national fortune from the powerful Ancient Barbarian Nation, although the Ruler did not go into detail, it must have something to do with breaking through realms and improving one's cultivation.

Although she was a woman, the more Qin Yu interacted with her, the more he could feel.

She was a very strong person!

Even just how she managed to enter the imperial capital of the West Desolate without being detected was astounding.

If someone so powerful was trying all methods and means to get the treasure from the Western Barbarian Land...and the reaction from the West Desolate's Imperial Palace. Could it involve an even higher level...Half-King?

Even though he had not been in the Desolate Area for long and had limited information, through his interaction with Hundred Saint and what he had just learnt, the King realm was the highest level.

Like Di Shitian, who oversaw the channel. The look of the celestial dome was deeply imprinted into his memory.

"If I can get the treasure..." A thought suddenly sprung up in Qin Yu's head before he pushed it down.

He knew very clearly that if he took the Barbarian Clan's treasure, the most likely outcome would be that he would explode!

People knew themselves and their limits. Of course, although Qin Yu suppressed his greed, it would still depend on the situation.

If he really got the chance...then he could only apologize to the Ruler!

Chapter 1484 – Boiling Mountain Fantasy

Strong cultivators were like rain in the Desolate Area. Numerous cultivators were born but the number that perished was also astounding.

Some were buried in the wilderness and their Great Dao returned to heaven and earth. Some were gathered and collected in the same place.

Although the number that perished outside were the majority, the number that were collected was quite large as well.

The place where they were gathered was called Boiling Mountain Fantasy. It was one of the best places for cultivation in the West Desolate.

Boiling Mountain Fantasy contained numerous Great Dao fragments that formed after many cultivators perished. After special treatment, they represented endless opportunities for cultivation.

These opportunities were called – epiphanies!

As if in a misty drizzle or an early winter morning...the initial journey would be foggy. Then all of a sudden, everything would look clear.

To cultivators, especially those who managed to reach the shore and form their own Great Dao, if they were able to see their route, they would know which way to work in.

With every step and footprint, they would strengthen their cultivation, increase their power, and reach the door of the next level.

The importance could be imagined!

So Boiling Mountain Fantasy was also known as the 'Leaping Dragon Gate' to the Ruler realm. Just stepping into it meant getting the chance to try for the Ruler realm.

And now, there was a rumor going around in the small circle of high ranking people in the imperial capital – the Boiling Mountain Fantasy was about to open!

Anyone who was qualified would have a chance to get a place and try. If they succeeded, it meant that their side may give rise to a Ruler.

Even if there was a slim chance, it was worth fighting!

The Desolate Area gave rise to numerous strong cultivators. Saints were considered strong, but Rulers were able to rule over a large territory.

For example, City Governor Chen Yuanshen from Seascapes City. Even if he was able to hide his abilities, he would at most be a Ruler.

This was enough to show that a Ruler in the Desolate Area was able to dominate a region and become the controller.

Everyone would try to get cultivators of the Ruler realm. Li Zhouyi and even that princess would have to pay respects.

In the high end places in the imperial capital, businesses boomed. At night, outside some high level mansions, the traffic was lively. Qin Yu got a token from the Imperial Palace. This token meant that when Boiling Mountain Fantasy was open, he would be able to enter.

Li Zhouyi personally came over and after a moment of silence, "What is going to happen soon involves some secrets, and for the time being, I cannot tell you. The opening of Boiling Mountain Fantasy is advance payment. Darkness Ruler, you must make use of this opportunity."

He lifted his head and his eyes were sharp, "So we will hold off on the thing regarding Ning Xiao. Boiling Mountain Fantasy takes priority."

Under the black robe, Qin Yu frowned. This must be how it felt like when a plan is unable to keep up with changes.

He had prepared to continue with the rest of the plan. He was just waiting for Ning Xiao to die and then he would be able to obtain the Ice Flame.

Who would have expected that the Imperial Palace would announce the opening of Boiling Mountain Fantasy. He knew what this place was about and could understand why Li Zhouyi was acting this way.

In his opinion, Qin Yu entering Boiling Mountain Fantasy would definitely bring gains. Comparatively, this was a lot safer and surer than killing Ning Xiao and obtaining the Ice Flame.

Moreover, Boiling Mountain Fantasy was not something Li Zhouyi expected either. Otherwise he would have mentioned it before and wouldn't have had to personally come down right at the last moment.

Hearing the silence under the black robe, Li Zhouyi said softly, "Darkness Ruler, I know that you are indignant but we still have a chance to kill him in the future. Promise me that you will enter Boiling Mountain Fantasy and not do anything else!"

Qin Yu put his hands together, "Yes Your Highness."

Li Zhouyi walked away satisfied. After getting Qin Yu's reassurance, he did not think that Qin Yu would lie to him. After all, the 'Darkness Ruler' came from the fragmented area and everyone wanted to kill him. If he did not want to die, he had to work together with him!

As for whether Qin Yu would try to gain from both in and out...Li Zhouyi was scared but he believed that Darkness Ruler was not stupid. If he was really beyond redemption, there would always be a way to drag him down as well!

The room fell silent and Qin Yu sighed lightly. Was he going to let go just like this?

Buzz –

As if sensing Qin Yu's thoughts, Furnace shook and sent out a strong dissatisfaction.

Qin Yu lifted his hand to rub his forehead, "I know that you are not willing. Neither am I...although I promised not to do anything, if Ning Xiao comes up to me, there may still be a chance."

Qin Yu narrowed his eyes as he thought for a while. Now, he could only see if Yun Qing was attractive to him.

Seemingly because he was unhappy, the Darkness Ruler sent all his servants away and entered Yun Qing's yard in a solemn mood.

The next day, Yun Die carried a pile of ruined clothes and walked out of the place blushing.

Very soon, the news of the Darkness Ruler staying the night with both master and servant spread through the palace.

Two hours later, a maid who was responsible for transporting miscellaneous items in and out of the palace hurriedly threw a pile of torn clothes beneath some rubble.

After a moment, someone dug through the rubble and took the ruined clothes away.

.....

Ning Xiao looked at the ruined clothes in front of him. He reached out and brought them to his nose, taking a deep breath.

He closed his eyes and his body trembled. His face seemed to redden as he was suppressing his anger.

After a few moments, Ning Xiao opened his eyes and a flash of violence shone in them, "I found you."

He pondered for a while before getting up and walking out. Soon, he came to a large hall. He bowed, "Please announce that I am here to meet Eldest Princess."

The guards outside the hall threw him a cold and severe glance before one of them left to pass on the message.

Very soon, he returned, "Please!"

Ning Xiao straightened his clothes before quickly entering. He did not dare to look around but quickly knelt on the floor, "Greetings Eldest Princess!"

"You may rise." An emotionless voice could be heard. The Eldest Princess was a beauty but her aura was very cold, like an ice statue. Her eyes were like the deep sea, calm with no waves.

Ning Xiao stood up but continued to look down, showing sufficient respect. This was not just because of her high status but also out of fear of her.

"What is it?"

Taking a deep breath, Ning Xiao replied, "Eldest Princess, I found a girl a few days back. Her body contains a power that will help my cultivation. However, the Darkness Ruler, who is with the Sixth Prince, got her first..." As he said this, he paused as his vision was obscure, "Boiling Mountain Fantasy is about to open. I hope that you will be able to help me kill the Darkness Ruler in it."

He did not dare to hide this. The truth was that only if the Eldest Princess was willing would he then be able to find out everything.

The palace was silent and Ning Xiao remained emotionless. However, his emotions were fluctuating.

Beads of sweat appeared on his forehead before gathering together and rolling down the side of his face. With a soft 'pik', they landed on the ground.

"It seems like you found the target to satisfy the conditions to swallow...the Art of Taotie is indeed a very intricate cultivation method."

The princess' calm voice was like thunder and Ning Xiao paled as he heard her. He fell to the ground with a 'plop'.

"El...Eldest Princess..."

He never thought that the secret he had struggled to guard was already known by her.

The Eldest Princess looked at him. Within the depths of her indifferent eyes, there was a flash of coldness, "All these years, you have always been looking at me with greed...if it were someone else, they might have already killed you. But I will not."

"You are very smart and know what I want to do. So I will help you and give you a chance to kill the Darkness Ruler. But remember, you only have one chance. If you can't kill him, don't return."

.....

Without doubt, Boiling Mountain Fantasy was in the imperial capital. But its exact location was still unknown.

Every time Boiling Mountain Fantasy opened, it would pull its targets in. The entire process was silent and there would not be any unusual movement.

The way it pulled people in was through the tokens.

Buzz –

The token in Qin Yu's hand suddenly buzzed and there was movement in the air. It was like a huge mouth swallowing him.

He completely disappeared.

Soon, Border Cliff Saint rushed over. His face could not help but light up in admiration when he rushed over and discovered that the room was empty.

Boiling Mountain Fantasy...it was a pity that he was not qualified to enter.

He was suddenly thrown into darkness and after a few moments, there was light once again. Qin Yu found himself in a foreign world.

He activated his divine sense. But very soon, he realized that it was as if he had fallen into mud.

The air around him was shifting violently like an invisible giant net getting pushed by the catch within it.

Today, Qin Yu was this 'catch' and his divine sense was the one pushing against this giant net.

Qin Yu frowned slightly but remained calm. He found out more about Boiling Mountain Fantasy.

'Fantasy'...

This meant a lot. This place really existed, but at the same time, it seemed to be nothing.

Or more accurately, it was both virtual and real. But more importantly...this was a cultivation holy land!

When Qin Yu had activated his divine sense and caused the surrounding air to shift, he could sense numerous movements. They could not be seen by the naked eye but could be sensed. They were like stars shining in the deep dark sky.

Without a doubt, every star represented the death of a strong cultivator. They were made up of their Great Daos.

Qin Yu finally understood why Boiling Mountain Fantasy was known as the peak cultivation holy land and could help cultivators gain epiphanies.

The reason was simple. Just by infusing divine sense into these stars, one would be able to resonate with the Great Dao fragments...Boiling Mountain Fantasy was created to gather all the broken Great Daos of numerous strong cultivators...the word 'numerous' was not an exaggeration – there really were a lot.

To use more of a cliché, there was always one that suits you.

Once you found the star that contained the Great Dao that suited you. It would 'burn' and help you light the path.

This was the root of the epiphany!

Qin Yu was full of admiration for the person who built Boiling Mountain Fantasy. As long as Boiling Mountain Fantasy remained, the West Desolate would always have plenty of resources and could help numerous people become Rulers.

After all, even though only ten percent of people may benefit from the opening of Boiling Mountain Fantasy on each occasion, over time, the number of people would still be astounding!

Chapter 1485 – Taotie Projection

Should he cultivate here...

Nonsense, of course he should!

Although what Qin Yu really wanted to do was to cut off the head of the person that was going to come knocking.

Qin Yu had no guarantee of whether this head was really going to come. After all, no matter how much effort one put in, things may not go as one wished.

In the end, he had to be prepared!

If he could not kill him, then using the Boiling Mountain Fantasy to light up his cultivation path would be a huge gain as well.

At this moment, there was a strange feeling erupting from within Qin Yu.

It was Stone Pagoda!

Buzz –

The air in front of him vibrated and Stone Pagoda's illusion slowly formed. His body was vibrating and he was a lot weaker than in the past.

It was as if within the Boiling Mountain Fantasy, there was an invisible shield preventing external energy from entering.

Qin Yu frowned, "What are you doing?"

If Stone Pagoda forced his way in, he must have found something out. Qin Yu still valued this guy who knew almost everything because he ate too much.

"I found something that you can try. Although I am not certain yet, if it succeeds..." Stone Pagoda did not complete his sentence but the delight in his voice was apparent.

Talking in a secretive manner but not clearly stating the meaning was an extremely annoying thing.

Especially at a time like this!

Qin Yu glared at him but he could not be bothered to waste energy arguing with Stone Pagoda. He was going to let Stone Pagoda do whatever he wanted.

He crossed his legs and sat down, fully activating his divine sense. It was like a torrent sweeping over the entire place.

Amidst the huge shift, bright stars 'emerged' and 'communicated' with Qin Yu's divine sense.

But soon, Qin Yu was annoyed to find out that because he was on the True God Path, his Great Dao was created by Furnace...so the success rate of this kind of 'communication' was very low.

More importantly, even if he managed to gain something, he had only just begun to understand his Great Dao and did not have a full comprehension. There was no way to illuminate the road ahead using this method.

To put it simply – Qin Yu’s realm did not qualify to enter the Boiling Mountain Fantasy. His power did not match this place and severely restricted the cultivation effects.

This was a slightly embarrassing situation.

Sighing, Qin Yu was about to open his eyes and stop his divine sense when his expression suddenly changed.

His divine sense swept through like a torrent and in a particular twisted space, it locked onto a certain ‘star’. Compared to the ones around it, it was slightly dimmer and smaller. It was obvious that its original owner was not that powerful.

Or perhaps when its owner died, the Great Dao was brutally destroyed and only a small part of it remained unharmed.

The truth was...the latter!

Because at this moment, Qin Yu sensed the scent of time through this dim and small ‘star’.

It was...the Time Rule!

Space Dao was the symbol of True Saints heading to the shore. Whereas Time Rules were the key to opening the gate to the Ruler realm.

Qin Yu was also at the beginning stage when it came to Time Rules – he had just begun to take control and then did not progress beyond that.

It was not that he did not wish to improve, but he could not find a way to improve his cultivation.

But this star seemed to be giving Qin Yu a chance. Although he could not use the Boiling Mountain Fantasy to illuminate his Great Dao route, if he could utilize this star with the Time Rule, he might be able to gain something.

He was going to do it!

Boom –

Qin Yu’s divine sense burst out and surged in all four directions before congregating in one. It all concentrated on that dim star.

The dim and small star suddenly lit up. It started to absorb and expand...removing the ‘outer coat’ that was covering it!

It worked!

Qin Yu smiled.

.....

Just when the 'star' was activated and the Time Rules started to flow, a straight long line formed from far away and extended in Qin Yu's direction.

Ning Xiao was rushing!

He could sense the 'stars' appearing in the air around him.

There were a few among them that suited him well.

Ning Xiao believed that if he stopped and used his divine sense, he would definitely be able to gain something.

For a cultivator, being able to ignore this kind of temptation was extremely rare.

But Ning Xiao did it!

Firstly, it was because he had an immensely strong will so he was able to remain calm.

Secondly, it was because...Yun Qing's attraction was much stronger!

He was very clear about his goal. He had to kill the Darkness Ruler. Li Zhouyi could hardly protect himself and Yun Qing would fall into his hands. After he swallowed Yun Qing, everything would be worth it!

And now, he was rushing to kill the Darkness Ruler.

Whether he would succeed...Ning Xiao was certain that the Taotie Projection he learned was not just a glutton.

.....

Qin Yu could sense that his control over Time Rules was becoming clearer at an increasingly fast rate.

This feeling was strange. It was as if he had inherited the power from the original owner of this 'star'.

And this cultivator who had died had an extremely intricate and profound knowledge of Time Rules.

Not any ordinary Saint would be able to cultivate Time Rules to this level.

This also meant that the cultivator this 'star' belonged to was at least at the Ruler realm.

Without a doubt, this was Qin Yu's chance. But he knew clearly that if Ning Xiao swore not to give up on Yun Qing, it meant that he must be rushing here now. Qin Yu believed that Ning Xiao would not give up this chance to kill him.

Just like how Qin Yu wanted to increase his power before they started heading to the Tomb of the Barbarian King, Ning Xiao must be thinking the same. Qin Yu did not know how far or near Ning Xiao was. He might even appear in the next second and cut off Qin Yu's chance.

Hurry!

He had to hurry!

There was no reason, but the urgency that filled him seemed to be hinting at something...Qin Yu chose to believe his instinct.

Woosh –

Qin Yu opened his eyes and lifted his hand. As his finger fell, there was a strange feeling in the air. It looked the same as previously, like nothing had changed. Yet at the same time, an unknown change seemed to have occurred.

Boom –

The time 'star' was burning. The flame on its surface suddenly soared, and then it melted and disintegrated at a faster speed. It combined what it contained and entered Qin Yu's body.

Time passed slowly and finally this time 'star' slowly used up every last bit of its energy and disappeared.

Hoo –

A violent wind blew and the air in front of Qin Yu seemed to collapse inwards, causing violent twisting in the air.

This was the strange phenomenon that occurred with the disappearance of the time 'star'.

When the 'stars' around it completed shifting and filled the blank space, the place returned to normal.

Coincidentally, Ning Xiao saw this strange sight!

He knew what this meant and his expression shifted. He looked jealous and his expression slowly turned to anger and greed. Successfully finding a target and absorbing a star was the ideal situation that all cultivators entering the Boiling Mountain Fantasy wanted.

This suggested that they had already gained the most crucial thing – lighting up the path for their Great Dao!

But this was not an issue. He just had to kill the Darkness Ruler and swallow him using the Taotie Projection. Then everything that person had would be his.

And his original motive was to kill him!

A murderous glare flared in his eyes. In the next moment, Ning Xiao's expression changed greatly...because as he barged in, he could sense that within the space there was a calm but astounding change.

That was...time!

As a peak True Saint, he had been dreaming of becoming a Ruler for many years. Ning Xiao had tried to break through numerous times but had always failed. However, he had accumulated a lot of knowledge.

He knew what Time Rules meant to the Ruler realm...the reason why Rulers were called Rulers, and were able to control a large territory and were named the mighty towering giants was because they could control time. The surroundings of wherever they were would be their territory and they could control everything with their will!

Space was easy; time was difficult to get!

This door had stopped so many people from being able to break through. These people would be stuck at the peak of the True Saint realm and be unable to improve.

And now, Ning Xiao could clearly sense the Time Rules that had yet to dissipate from the air.

Coupled with the residual breath and what he had just witnessed, it was not difficult to guess what happened just now – just before he came, the Darkness Ruler had ‘lit up’ a star and gained the Time Rule!

The flame of jealousy burned strongly in his heart and filled his entire being. His eyes reddened. The heavens were so unfair. He had tried for so many years but never saw the chance to break through.

Yet today, he personally witnessed the Darkness Ruler ‘light up’ a star and gained the Time Rule inheritance.

Why? Just why! He could not take this! He was extremely furious!

“Die!”

With a roar, Ning Xiao touched his forehead. The conspicuous ‘little red dot’ between his eyebrows grew like a red bubble. With a ‘pop’, it broke.

Boooooom –

A roar sounded through the air. An ancient aura with an intense desire to devour could be felt.

Behind Ning Xiao, the illusion of a giant beast appeared. Its eyes, which were filled with greed, were locked on Qin Yu.

All of a sudden, the illusory beast opened its mouth and the area in front of it fell into darkness...it was as if the entire world was about to be swallowed!

And this was the rumored ancient beast, Taotie. Its stomach could form a part of the world and it could swallow and absorb all kinds of creatures.

Ning Xiao cultivated the Taotie Projection and with every person he swallowed, he could get a portion of Taotie’s power and summon Taotie’s illusion.

Even if it was just an illusion, it was rumored to be a frightening existence that was able to swallow the world. It was still extremely horrifying.

Ning Xiao was not a Ruler but had the fighting power of a Ruler. It was because of this that he was extremely confident and dared to enter Boiling Mountain Fantasy to kill Qin Yu.

Now, as Taotie’s Projection appeared, those below the Ruler realm would not be able to escape...the Darkness Ruler was sure to die!

Chapter 1486 – Devour

The world was shrouded in darkness. In the moment that the Taotie Projection appeared, a violent and murderous intent suddenly poured out from the bottom of his heart, raging like a wave.

At this moment, it was as if Qin Yu had met his lifelong enemy. A strong animosity surged within him that was so strong, he could not hide it. It came from the Abyssal Titan.

It was the bloodline from the ancient peak hunter that he had obtained back in the Abyss!

This murderous intent and intense animosity persisted through endless time and space. It was as if even after all these years, both parties could not settle their grudges.

The bloodline belonging to the Abyssal Titan was currently extremely agitated and the emotions rushed through Qin Yu, trying to gain control of his body.

But at this moment, Qin Yu got a reminder from Furnace. The Taotie Projection swallowed everything in this world and was a good opportunity.

No matter how strong one's fort was, breaking it down from the inside was always easier than attacking from the outside. This strategy was appropriate.

Should he let go of everything and fight, or listen to Furnace's reminder? Qin Yu hesitated. He then took a deep breath and suppressed the movements from the Abyssal Titan's bloodline.

Boom –

The next moment, the air around Qin Yu's body shook violently and turned into an invisible torrent, quickly surrounding him. In a flash, he entered the mouth of the Taotie Projection.

He was thrown into darkness!

Ning Xiao frowned slightly and he looked slightly stunned. Although he had never doubted that he would be able to kill the Darkness Ruler, the ease at which he had been devoured by the Taotie Projection without resisting was unexpected.

After all, he could sense a strong threat from the Darkness Ruler, if not for this, he would not have used his most powerful skill and immediately summoned the Taotie Projection.

There must be something wrong!

Perhaps, the Darkness Ruler was still hiding some kind of hidden skill...as he thought of this, Ning Xiao stopped frowning and the corners of his mouth turned up in a mocking look.

As a cultivator who was able to use the Taotie Projection, Ning Xiao knew extremely well how powerful it was. Even a strong Ruler would be controlled by Taotie's will and be completely digested after getting eaten.

It meant that no matter what the Darkness Ruler was planning...it was a stupid decision to willingly get swallowed by the Taotie Projection.

He was dead!

.....

The stomach of the Taotie Projection was a world by itself. In this world, darkness and death were an eternal melody.

Under the black robe, Qin Yu's face paled. He could clearly sense the control from Taotie's will. It felt as if a mountain had fallen and crushed his chest. Every time he breathed, it was extremely painful and difficult.

In addition, his internal cultivation was affected. He felt like a 'frozen' statue.

Meanwhile, the frightening power from the darkness continued to attack him and enter his body.

They were like endless needles tearing through his flesh. Once the flesh was split, it would then open its mouth wide and devour recklessly.

Of course, it did not only eat flesh but also a cultivator's power, soul, and life.

Qin Yu could very clearly sense all of this happening within him. At the same time, he was also bearing the anger and struggle from the Abyssal Titan's bloodline.

Being devoured by the Taotie Projection seemed to be the bottom line for the Abyssal Titan. The Abyssal Titan's bloodline was precious and was not willing to remain silent.

Getting pushed from in and out...and right at this time, Furnace was not doing anything!

After getting swallowed into the Taotie Projection, it fell silent and cut off all connection with Qin Yu.

Qin Yu frowned as his face turned solemn. If not for the fact that he knew Furnace would not hurt him, he might have believed that this was a plot targeted against him.

But if Furnace was not betraying him, then how long was it going to remain silent for? Qin Yu could still bear with it now, but he knew that he would not be able to for long.

And Furnace...what was it doing?

Time slowly passed and Qin Yu felt as if he was turning into a stone and almost could not hold on any longer.

Buzz –

A vibration could be felt from within him. The silent Furnace seemed to be waking up from its sleep. In the next moment, Furnace appeared and its body seemed to be transparent, clearly showing its insides. Jet-black and red colors swirled around each other, rapidly rotating and forming a black and red vortex.

Furnace had swallowed both the Fire of Eternal Night and the Inextinguishable Flame!

Buzz –

Buzz –

Furnace vibrated consecutively and the black and red colors swirled around faster. A formless aura was released.

.....

In Boiling Mountain Fantasy, Ning Xiao was standing under the Taotie Projection and waiting for the Darkness Ruler to die. His expression suddenly changed. He felt movements from the Ice Flame, which he had gained control of. It felt as if it was being summoned by something!

What was going on?

Without waiting for Ning Xiao to think further, or do a check, he suddenly groaned and looked both stunned and horrified!

The white-colored flame came out of his body from his mouth, nose, eyes and ears. It gathered together, forming the shape of a white snake and flew towards the Taotie Projection.

Ning Xiao's first thought was – backlash!

No matter what cultivation method, there were none that was completely safe. Especially the Taotie Projection that Ning Xiao trained in. It was extremely dangerous.

If he was not careful, he would get affected by the gluttonous spirit and lose control of his mind and will. He would turn into a gluttonous killing monster.

His face paled and horror filled his eyes. Ning Xiao was so scared that his soul seemed to leave his body. He knew that if the Taotie Projection really had a backlash, he would not be spared.

But thankfully, Ning Xiao soon found out that things were not as he imagined. Instead, there was something within the Taotie Projection that had summoned the Ice Flame!

Ning Xiao's eyes lit up as he paled. He recalled how the Darkness Ruler willingly allowed himself to be devoured. He must have caused this!

He did not have time to wonder how the Darkness Ruler found out about the Ice Flame within him and how he managed to summon it. Ning Xiao frowned and stretched out both hands to grab the white snake. It was the appearance of the Ice Flame. Back then, it was this white flame snake that he had obtained.

The reason why Ning Xiao was able to remain safe when he learned the Taotie Projection was firstly because he was cautious and had a strong will. Secondly, he was smart and would never touch someone he would not be able to handle.

But actually, the existence of the Ice Flame was a crucial factor. Because of this flame, Ning Xiao was able to maintain clarity of his mind and remain calm, reducing the influence from the Art of Taotie.

So even Qin Yu would not have known that his summoning of the Ice Flame was a deathly move to Ning Xiao that was like removing the root of the issue!

If he succeeded, Ning Xiao would lose the Ice Flame and be unable to resist Taotie's influence, eventually self-destructing.

“Come back!”

As he growled, Ning Xiao grabbed onto the white snake. However, after being controlled for so many years, the obedient snake suddenly seemed to go crazy. A piercing chill was emitted from its body and a

layer of frost appeared on the surface of Ning Xiao's hands. 'Crack crack', soft cracking sounds could be heard and his whole body was covered.

At the same time, numerous white flames came out from his body and flew into the Taotie Projection.

"Ahhh!"

Ning Xiao let go and shouted. The layer of ice over his body broke. He stared at the Taotie Projection with a murderous intent.

He could sense that the reason why the Darkness Ruler was able to forcefully steal the Ice Flame was because he was in the Taotie Projection.

This projection was summoned from Taotie's essence. Taotie's essence existed within him and was connected to Ning Xiao.

Now, as he did not know what was going on, if he wanted to keep the Ice Flame, Ning Xiao would have to disperse the Taotie Projection. Then, the summoning of the Ice Flame would get cut off.

But...Ning Xiao did not dare!

It was mentioned earlier that there were still huge flaws in the Art of Taotie. It seemed like he was in control of summoning the Taotie Projection, but if Ning Xiao were to destroy it, he might face a huge backlash.

At that time, he would be sure to die!

He was uncertain and gritted his teeth as his eyes filled with violence. You want the Ice Flame? Then I will let you have it. It is not easy to control.

Ning Xiao had spent many years trying to control it and finally managed to. He had plenty of knowledge in this area.

I will use your life to pay!

As long as the Darkness Ruler was affected by the Ice Flame, Ning Xiao would do his best to spur the Taotie Projection and the Darkness Ruler would be sure to die.

Ning Xiao lifted his head and stared at the Taotie Projection, "Darkness Ruler, since you want the Ice Flame, I will give it to you!"

He opened his mouth and gave up on resisting. The Ice Flame poured out of him like a river.

A complete snake formed in a flash and flew into the Taotie Projection, disappearing in the darkness.

Hoo –

Ning Xiao was breathing heavily and his chest was heaving violently. His whole body was like a steamer. His skin turned red and beads of sweat rolled off him.

In the moment that he lost the Ice Flame, he could sense the greed from the...Art of Taotie!

He seemed to be able to hear the greedy breaths of Taotie.

It was at this moment that Ning Xiao realized he had already gone astray, as well as the importance of the Ice Flame. Once he lost the Ice Flame, he did not need long before getting affected by Taotie's greedy will and completely losing himself!

Thinking of this, the killing intent in Ning Xiao's eyes became stronger as he stared at the Taotie Projection. He spat out mouthfuls of blood.

As he vomited blood, the blood vibrated and turned into large swathes of blood mist, flying straight into the Taotie Projection.

Boom –

The Taotie Projection growled as it obtained the blood mist. The aura of violence and destruction rose into the sky in an instant.

“Die! Die! I want you to die!” Ning Xiao cried out miserably. He looked fierce as black scales appeared on his flesh.

.....

The white snake flew in and entered straight into Furnace. It merged with the black and red vortex, causing it to become a black, red and white vortex.

Buzz –

Furnace vibrated violently as it continued to expand and contract. Qin Yu could sense that it was transforming.

A low, repeated knocking sound could be heard coming out of Furnace. It was as if there were countless invisible hammers that were constantly beating and molding.

At the same time, there seemed to be a change in Qin Yu's Great Dao...before he could feel what was different, a wave of destruction was set off in the pitch black stomach of the Taotie Projection.

A horrifying energy surrounded Qin Yu. It was like a high-speed rotating blade cutting him into countless pieces.

Furnace had succeeded. Qin Yu had no reason to suppress himself anymore. He struggled to lift his head and a 'crack' could be heard from his bones.

In the next moment, with a loud roar, the frightening Abyssal Titan appeared!

It was over ten thousand feet tall with eyes like a scorching sun. Divine light surged within it like countless thunderous explosions.

The Abyssal Titan looked like it had in the past, but its aura seemed to have undergone an astounding transformation.

It was more ancient, more threatening...like a Ruler high up above that could pluck the stars just by raising his hand!

Chapter 1487 – Fight

The Taotie Projection's eyes were bulged wide open and bloodshot. It was vicious and ruthless. Throwing its head up towards the air, it gave a deafening roar. Every scale on its body suddenly turned scarlet red.

Kaboom!

A thunderous, low-pitched rumble came from its abdomen and the terrifying energy from the Taotie was activated to its peak.

Right at that point, there was a 'boom' that came from within the body of the Taotie Projection. Its belly enlarged and bulged out of its body.

The Taotie Projection cried painfully.

Boom!

Another massive explosion came. The enlarged belly of the Taotie Projection could no longer withstand the violent forces in its body and the bloodstained scales started to crack and peel off its body.

At the same time, flesh from its abdomen shot outwards like projectiles and a large hand suddenly reached out of its body. It grabbed onto what was left of the body and then forced its way through it.

The Abyssal Titan had managed to forcibly break through in such a violent and disgusting method!

No...it wasn't just breaking through. The other hand of the Abyssal Titan grabbed onto the other side of the gaping wound of the Taotie Projection. With a roar, it ripped the body of the Taotie apart, splitting it through the wound.

"Ah!"

Ning Xiao threw his hands up to his head and cried painfully. Blood gushed out of his nose, mouth and ears.

Slap!

A clear sound snapped the air like a bubble bursting and the Taotie Projection disappeared.

The ground shook violently as the space shifted. The Abyssal Titan's massive body that stretched to the sky fell onto the ground heavily.

Crack crack –

This was the sound of Ning Xiao's bones and flesh breaking. His body felt like a balloon and it started to grow quickly. Listening to it carefully now, this was the sound of his bones stretching and breaking.

A scary creature that was drenched in blood and did not have any skin used Ning Xiao's body as a medium to grow.

It was...a real Taotie!

It was not perfect yet but it was very greedy. The flesh and blood of its body possessed a destructive will that wanted to devour everything.

Roar –

The Taotie turned to the sky and roared. It glared menacingly at Qin Yu and a wild killing intent circled in its eyes.

Stomping down, it dashed forward at an astonishing speed, arriving before the Abyssal Titan in an instant. It did not hesitate nor slow down to size up its opponent before the two large creatures clashed against each other.

It had abandoned its devouring power and the original Taotie knew that its strength had not been enough to harm the Abyssal Titan. This was evident from it destroying its own projection and coming out to the world.

An angry roar boomed through the area like thunder. Every clash and attack caused the surroundings to shake and twist violently, distorting the earth.

.....

A young man wearing a silver robe sat cross-legged and calmed himself down. However, there was an undeniable sense of excitement between his eyes that he could not hide.

He had found a suitable star for himself!

Without wasting any time, the silver-robed young man channeled all his divine sense into this 'star'.

Buzz buzz –

There was a slight vibration that originated from within the star. A look of ecstasy crossed the young man's face. It was going to be ignited.

Once he succeeded, his cultivation path would be lit up by this opportunity and he would have the chance to break through to become a Ruler.

All of a sudden, the ground started to shake and it became more violent after a while. The space around him also started to vibrate.

The silver-robed young man's face changed. With the disturbance, the connection between the star and him was severed.

What was worse was that as the Boiling Mountain Fantasy trembled, the stars started to shift. The young man was about to lose the star.

"No!"

He cried in rage and the silver-robed young man spat out blood. He could only watch blindly as the space in front of him shifted more drastically.

"Who! Who is it!"

The silver-robed young man was fully outraged and he shot into the sky as he shouted in the direction of the disturbance.

His eyes were bloodshot and his fists, hidden beneath his robe, were clenched tight. He swore to himself that regardless of who caused this disturbance, he would die!

Cutting off a man from his road to wealth was similar to killing his parents. To the silver-robed young man, interfering with his 'star' was akin to spoiling his entire opportunity in the Boiling Mountain Fantasy.

Such a grudge was far worse than cutting off his road to wealth. The hatred and anger in his heart was immeasurable!

Very soon however, the agitated silver-robed young man's face turned pale. The part of Boiling Mountain Fantasy he was in was shaking very violently and terrifying waves of force kept washing over. He felt like a mini boat that could capsize any moment.

The anger and killing intent in his heart was washed cleanly away under the menace of the forces. In the end, he stood trembling on the ground in fear.

The young man was also on the list of people to enter the Tomb of the Barbarian King. Yet, he was actually a substitute. When the Imperial Palace confirmed that there was an imposter in the crowd, he was taken in to fill the space.

He actually came from a good background and he did not want to hop into the dirty waters here. However, for all the high ranking folks in the Imperial Palace, the Tomb of the Barbarian King was a well known place. Boiling Mountain Fantasy opened soon after...as the best cultivation ground in the West Desolate, it was virtually a straight path to the realm of the Ruler. Being on the name list was incredibly precious and not everyone had this opportunity.

Eventually, the young man reluctantly accepted the opportunity to be a participant...but now, everything was ruined! Before he could even pick a fight with them, he might accidentally be dragged into the mess and be killed.

He wanted to cry but he had no tears. The young man could only turn and leave dejectedly.

At this point, in many other different locations, other cultivators were doing what the young man did. They retreated backwards and cursed to themselves. They were so unlucky. Why did they enter Boiling Mountain Fantasy with these two idiots?

Boiling Mountain Fantasy was the best cultivation ground for Saints in the West Desolate. Everyone who entered here were pressed for time to cultivate and they did not want to waste a single second.

But these two cultivators came to Boiling Mountain Fantasy to fight each other. They disturbed the calm waters and caused these cultivators to suffer.

The most pitiful thing was that these two idiots were stronger than them.

They weren't just slightly stronger but much stronger, so much so that the cultivators did not dare to take revenge. They could only shake their heads and leave.

Since they could not pick a fight, they could only hide away. Thankfully, Boiling Mountain Fantasy was large enough...their only wish was that they will be able to find treasures in the time remaining.

.....

Blood Flag was also affected.

He frowned and his eyes narrowed as he looked in the direction of the disturbance. He could roughly make out the two figures who were fighting in the distance.

In fact, Blood Flag was more invested in the fight than anyone else and he arrived at the location of the fight.

There was a thin layer of blood light that covered his body and protected him from the terrifying suppression and ripping forces in the air.

This proved how strong Blood Flag was. He licked his lips and his eyes darkened but there was a small fire igniting in them.

Killing powerful cultivators was tempting to him. This was not only driven by his twisted mind but also it was a way for him to improve himself. The more he killed and the stronger his victims were, the greater his gains.

In the end, Blood Flag left after thinking about it carefully.

The reason why was simple. Blood Flag did not have absolute confidence of killing the two men. They obviously had a strong bloodline. Furthermore, they were going to head to Western Barbarian Land soon. It was not a good idea to be injured right now.

Blood Flag turned and left decisively. The space shifted and he disappeared in a flash.

In fact, he did think of being the fisherman who would benefit from the two at odds with each other right now. However, by the time he arrived there, the two had already noticed him.

It was alright for a little peek but if he really wanted to be the last to benefit, the two creatures would ally together to attack him first.

No one here was stupid!

Blood Flag had made a mistake this time. Taotie's mind and consciousness was already devoured by its desire to kill, it lost any form of reasoning already.

Its only desire was to kill the Abyssal Titan...it had to kill this ancient enemy of his!

On the other hand, although the Abyssal Titan's bloodline was almost burning, Qin Yu had maintained a thread of his consciousness.

He had been worried when he sensed Blood Flag's arrival. Ning Xiao had been much stronger than he expected and Qin Yu had not been prepared for Blood Flag's arrival too.

Thankfully, Blood Flag left on his own accord.

It was easy for Qin Yu to guess why Blood Flag left. At the same time as he felt relieved, he could not help feeling wary of Blood Flag. Only until he was certain that Blood Flag had truly left did he feel at ease.

It was a lucky thing that Blood Flag had been scared away by his own cautiousness or Qin Yu would be in trouble.

However, this also made Qin Yu more wary. The fight had caused too much disturbance. Since Blood Flag came to the scene this time, he could come again soon.

As such, he had to finish the battle as soon as possible and kill Taotie quickly!

Qin Yu could feel a change happening inside the Abyssal Titan's body now.

No, it should be explained as the body traits of the Abyssal Titan was morphing along with Qin Yu's Great Dao as the furnace completely refined the Ice Flame.

It felt like a new Great Dao had been formed for the massively large Abyssal Titan.

Qin Yu did not know what this meant but he knew for sure that the Abyssal Titan was stronger now!

Boom!

There was a loud sound as the two beasts suddenly separated. Like a kite whose string was broken off, the Taotie's body flung backwards without control.

Boom!

The ground shattered beneath the Abyssal Titan's feet as it took off towards the Taotie and threw a heavy punch at it. The Taotie cried painfully and its body was thrown into the air before it was blasted away.

In the next moment, a blanket of darkness filled the air. Abyssal Titan rose into the air and his body blocked off all light. Then, it slammed heavily onto the ground like a mountain that dropped from the heavens.

Kabam!

A deafening explosion caused the world to crumble apart beneath him.

Chapter 1488 – Stealing Essence

A large crater was created in the earth once all the dust had settled. Taotie's body lay in the middle of the crater where a massive wound gaped open in its chest. Its body was still and it no longer struggled.

Streaks of red aura were gushing out of its body and they dispersed into the air.

The Abyssal Titan stood up straight and it roared towards the sky. He stretched his arm forward and closed his fingers into a tight fist.

Bam!

Space was already condensed into a violently oscillating compound. Now, it shrunk and collapsed inwardly. A trace of crimson red color appeared in the vibrating space and it felt like the aura that came out of the Taotie's body!

Roar!

A ferocious roar filled with anger rang through the ears of the Abyssal Titan. Soon, a large illusion was formed from the crimson red between the collapsed space.

It looked like the body in the crater and it was a perfect mirror image of the Taotie that had been killed.

In fact, this was the real Taotie!

As an ancient creature that could devour the heavens and earth, it could still survive even if its physical body was destroyed.

If there was a good opportunity, he will gain a second chance and revive himself... This was similar to how Ning Xiao had suffered the backlash from the Taotie Projection and his body was used as a shell to allow the Taotie to grow.

Even though it was not complete and it could not sustain this way of living, it might gain a chance of surviving if it could kill the Abyssal Titan and devour this large entity.

The core of how the Taotie could revive again and again was the Taotie Essence. This was the red substance floating in the air that was attempting an escape. Naturally, the Abyssal Titan would prevent this.

To the Taotie, Ning Xiao's death was just a lost shell that he had stolen. It was nothing too major.

However, the Taotie could not lose its essence. Even a slight diminishing of its essence would mean a loss of a part of its strength forever.

As such, the moment it sensed the Abyssal Titan going for its essence, the Taotie directly summoned its will.

For the Taotie whose real body was destroyed and whose will was scattered all over the land, it was a huge burden for him to call upon and summon its will forcefully.

In other words, even if the Abyssal Titan stopped now, the Taotie had already suffered a heavy injury... The difficulty if it wanted to revive itself again would be immense.

However, the Abyssal Titan refused to stop!

Qin Yu could sense that the bloodline belonging to the Abyssal Titan had been activated. He fully desires the Taotie Essence in front of him.

He could sense that the desire from the Abyssal Titan was not driven by the adrenaline of the fight but it came internally from its bloodline. Qin Yu had an easy explanation for this, if he could obtain the Taotie Essence, he could refine it and the Abyssal Titan would become much stronger!

Leaving it alone after seeing it would be a waste and Qin Yu knew that he did not want another battle with the Taotie. The slight hesitation in Qin Yu's eyes slowly turned into determination.

It used to appear that the bloodline of the Abyssal Titan was not important for him but today's battle had proved otherwise.

The Abyssal Titan could contest against an ancient creature, the Taotie. This proved its potential.

After all, for the two creatures to be rivals, they would have to have roughly the same strength.

Otherwise one of them would have been killed cleanly very quickly and the grudge between them would not have deepened and lasted for so long

Perhaps, there would be an unexpected gain from stealing the Taotie Essence... For Qin Yu, the upcoming Tomb of the Barbarian King and his uncertain future were huge motivating factors and Qin Yu did not want to waste any opportunity that will help him increase his powers.

He will give it a try... glancing at the dead Taotie, Qin Yu only wondered how strong its indestructible will could be?

The Abyssal Titan roared and made a trial by stretching its claws and grabbing forward. After the refinement by the furnace, the Great Dao it possessed buzzed lightly before it unleashed its full strength.

Crackle crackle!

The Abyssal Titan's massive body that could support the heavens grew bigger quickly as his muscles and flesh stretched.

In the blink of an eye, a dark golden circle appeared deep within its eyes, revealing a majestic feeling.

The space was being destroyed.

After the great collapse, there was endless destruction before small bits of darkness started to appear. Like ink that dripped into water, it started to disperse rapidly and pure darkness quickly expanded in the area.

The Taotie Essence was escaping using space as a medium of transport. All of a sudden, the red streaks were pulled back forcefully. Like fish caught in a wide net, they struggled desperately to escape the grasp but to no avail.

A low roar came from the Taotie and anger and hatred could be heard from its voice. Its eyes were bloodshot as it glared at the Abyssal Titan. Boundless killing intent and hatred poured out of it.

Qin Yu's heart clenched and he felt as though he was thrown into an endless well of ice cold water. His body felt like it was being frozen alive. The Taotie's mouth sprung wide open and it bit down fiercely. A clear snap could be heard where the red colored essence was trapped within the darkness.

A whistling sound came as the darkness was sucked into the Taotie's mouth. In a short period of time, the essence had managed to escape its grasp.

He had failed!

Qin Yu was upset at things ending this way and there was a thick sense of unease overwhelming his heart. He had offended this Taotie already and as a creature that could never die, who knew when this ancient creature's grudge would turn into something more dangerous for him.

But this was the truth now.

Everyone needed to make choices and they had to take on the consequences of their choices.

Roar!

The Abyssal Titan roared in anger and its body stiffened as its muscles on both arms bulged. Because of the excessive use of force, the scales that lined its body started to rip apart, revealing gaping wounds. However, this did not stop the Taotie Essence from escaping.

There seemed to be no other choice...

At this point, Qin Yu suddenly thought about the East Sea Sword!

However, the moment this thought jumped into his mind, he dismissed it. Regardless of whether the East Sea Sword would be able to get the Taotie Essence, what was he going to do if he succeeded?

With his current state, how long will he need to refine his Great Dao again after shattering it?

If West Desolate noticed something amiss in the meantime, what was he going to do if they sent someone after him?

Even if he managed to succeed and did not reveal anything wrong, how was he going to go to the Tomb of the Barbarian King?

He could not be rash!

Qin Yu breathed in deeply to calm himself down. He had already achieved his goal today by getting the Ice Flame and it would only be a pity to give up on the Taotie Essence.

As for the hatred from the Taotie... Qin Yu would not concern himself with future events. Perhaps, this ancient being would no longer be a threat to him in the future.

Many things of this world were a wonder. Qin Yu had just made his decision to abandon the Taotie Essence when things changed.

The source of the change was Stone Pagoda!

When Qin Yu entered Boiling Mountain Fantasy and had not ignited the time 'star' yet, he had informed Qin Yu that he would be doing a trial.

Stone Pagoda went missing after that. After that, Qin Yu condensed his energy and accepted the gift from the time 'star'. Then it was the fight with Ning Xiao and the great battle against the Taotie.

He had been so busy concentrating on his tasks that he forgot about Stone Pagoda.

In fact, Stone Pagoda had not run away after witnessing the great battle with the Taotie... Instead, it succeeded!

It was only when the Taotie will descended and threatened to take away all the Taotie Essence with it that Stone Pagoda finally decided to show himself.

Buzz-

At that moment, Boiling Mountain Fantasy had been fully wrecked after the onslaught from the darkness and the Taotie Essence. The space suddenly jerked violently.

It felt like a large stone that dropped into the pond, causing ripples through its surface. These shock waves moved very quickly and they swept through the land in the blink of an eye.

What was more terrifying than its speed was the overwhelming pulverizing force that it carried!

One by one, Qin Yu started to sense stars appearing. They appeared in different ways and took on different physical traits. Light from the stars combined together to form a tight chain that enveloped the Taotie will and correspondingly, the Taotie Essence in its mouth!

Stone Pagoda appeared on top of the chains and he exclaimed excitedly, "It succeeded, it actually succeeded!"

It seemed like he had not been expecting this either.

The look of astonishment in the Abyssal Titan's eyes was quickly replaced by excitement and adrenaline. It roared enthusiastically and stomped down, its mountain-like body rose into the air and it pounced at the tightly trapped Taotie will.

The curved claws of the Abyssal Titan stretched out, grabbed the Taotie will and yanked it towards him forcibly. The Taotie will wriggled tirelessly but the Abyssal Titan mercilessly consumed it.

A cold light reflected off his sharp teeth as he chewed. There was a tingling sound that sent chills down a spine before the Taotie will was swallowed.

Roar.

The Taotie roared in anger and its eyes turned bloodshot and it seemed like it was about to cry blood.

A terrifying aura burst from his body like an erupting volcano as it struggled to escape the bind that it was in.

The 'stars' that appeared shone even brighter and they started to shake slightly as the Taotie struggled.

Stone Pagoda yelled, "Hurry, I can't hold on for long!"

The Abyssal Titan stretched his arms forward and grabbed another handful of Taotie will, stuffed it into his mouth and gulped it down.

He was not going to stop!

The cries from the Taotie grew more desperate and angry. Cracking sounds could be heard from the stars.

Clang-

The first star shattered, followed by the second and the third... the tight bind was slowly beginning to break apart!

The hatred from the Taotie will ran very deep and it continued to glare at the Abyssal Titan. The two streaks of red Taotie Essence vanished in the blink of an eye.

Kaboom-

Boundless waves of forces was in a frenzy and it swept across the land as shock waves similar to tsunami. With the battlefield as the center, the shock waves spread out in a circular manner and covered all the land.

This was the harm done to Boiling Mountain Fantasy from the large amount of stars being destroyed!

Chapter 1489 – Drooling From Greed

This was probably the first time in history that the Boiling Mountain Fantasy had ended so abruptly.

With the mass destruction of 'stars', the entire Boiling Mountain Fantasy range entered an unstable state.

As such, all cultivators were forced out of the Boiling Mountain Fantasy.

It was rumored that a great wave of anger overflowed from the cultivators that day and they cursed out loud.

The battle between the Abyssal Titan and the Taotie had shocked many people, and this news traveled far and wide throughout the land.

Although no one could be absolutely sure, the early closure of the Boiling Mountain Fantasy must be related to their battle.

As such, the murderous intent shared across the crowd was confused on one thing – they had to find the perpetrator!

.....

Li Zhouyi was currently in his palace. He paced back and forth with a stiffened expression. Others may not know, but he was aware of the truth.

Ning Xiao was dead!

He knew very well that this was related to the Darkness Ruler.

However, Boiling Mountain Fantasy was a vast and wide world. After the cultivators entered it, they scattered in all directions and the chances of any of them meeting each other were very low.

Furthermore, cultivators who entered Boiling Mountain Fantasy would focus their attention on improving their cultivation. No one would bother each other.

As such, many years had passed since the last severe incident that happened in Boiling Mountain Fantasy.

What was the Darkness Ruler trying to achieve by doing such indiscriminate things? Or did Ning Xiao refuse to give up? Although the outcome was already decided, this question continued to puzzle Li Zhouyi.

Border Cliff Saint had been waiting outside. He entered the hall and bowed, "Your Highness!"

Li Zhouyi asked, "How is it?"

Border Cliff Saint replied, "The Darkness Ruler's aura is stable and he is alright."

Li Zhouyi's tightened chest could finally relax. With his current circumstances and the tight timeline, he could not find another talent quickly.

If the Darkness Ruler was injured, it would ruin the journey to the Tomb of the Barbarian King!

And that would not be the worst outcome...

Sighing deeply, Li Zhouyi stepped forward and ordered, "Without my permission, no one shall be allowed to enter!"

Border Cliff Saint bowed.

In his room, Qin Yu's eyes flung open. He cupped his hands together and said, "Greetings Your Highness."

Li Zhouyi asked "Darkness Ruler, does anyone else know what happened in Boiling Mountain Fantasy?"

There was a slight pause from the black-robed man before he replied, "No."

This was already a confession.

Although neither of them said it explicitly, they knew what had happened.

Li Zhouyi's expression relaxed a bit. Firstly, no one knew about Ning Xiao, and next, Qin Yu had been very frank with him.

He gave a deep sigh and said, "What happened?"

Qin Yu replied, "After I entered Boiling Mountain Range, I was focusing on my cultivation. Somehow, Ning Xiao discovered my location..."

Thinking on his feet, he made some modifications to the story and 'perfected' it.

Li Zhouyi heaved a sigh of relief. It appeared that it was Ning Xiao who initiated the battle. This also meant that the Darkness Ruler could be controlled and he did not have any rebellious thoughts.

While the Sixth Prince did not fully trust Qin Yu, he did not grow more suspicious of the Darkness Ruler because he did not think the Darkness Ruler would initiate the battle.

Without the Sixth Prince's support, the Darkness Ruler was a lone wolf who required help. How would he have been able to pinpoint where Ning Xiao was in Boiling Mountain Range?

On the other hand, if Ning Xiao had the Eldest Princess' help, he could easily find out where Qin Yu was with some preparations.

Li Zhouyi frowned and his expression grew more serious as he said, "It is not possible for Ning Xiao to have acted alone and it is highly possible that the Eldest Princess helped him. She will easily be able to deduce that it was you."

As he explained, his expression grew darker.

As mentioned before, the number of available spots for the Boiling Mountain Fantasy was extremely limited and those who could obtain the right to enter were either extraordinary talents, unique individuals, or those with a strong background.

Regardless of the reason, triggering any of them would bring about severe consequences. The current state of the capital was somewhat like an angry pot of oil – everyone wanted to find someone to pin the blame for the Boiling Mountain Fantasy incident on. If it was revealed that Qin Yu was related to it...Li Zhouyi knew that he would be hammered by people from all sides like he was a broken drum!

That feeling was extremely sour.

Looking at Qin Yu's expression, it was easy to guess his current thoughts. A flash of light came from under the black robe and he calmly said, "Don't worry Your Highness. Even if the Eldest Princess knows, she will not reveal anything."

Li Zhouyi looked at him.

Qin Yu explained, "Compared to exposing you, the Eldest Princess will not want to take the risk and bear the consequences once everything is exposed."

These words were confusing and puzzling but the logic was clear.

Li Zhouyi slowly nodded his head.

.....

The pretty face of the Eldest Princess had a flash of coldness in it and her body appeared as cold as jade. "It was the Darkness Ruler." Her voice was clear and calm and it seemed like she did not have any feeling towards Ning Xiao's death.

This was the case even though Ning Xiao had been chosen to enter the Western Barbarian Land to take the treasure of the Barbarian Clan.

One of the young men below her rose to his feet. His demeanor appeared somewhat unordinary and he was calm even in front of the Eldest Princess.

"Cultivating Taotie arts is a forbidden technique and it is not a pity that he died. The only pity is that our plans are ruined...Your Highness, you will have to make additional preparations for the Western Barbarian Land."

The young man scanned the Eldest Princess' indifferent attitude and his voice deepened, "Since you have determined that the Darkness Ruler did it, should we use the chance to...the Sixth Prince has enemies on all fronts now and we only need to stir up the wind and he will fall from grace forever."

The Eldest Princess shook her head, "We can't do that."

The young man said, "Wise thinking, princess. It is necessary for us to tighten the net around him so that he will not spoil your plans in the future."

The Eldest Princess stared at him solemnly.

There was silence in the hall.

Frowning slightly, the young man pondered for a while before saying, "I am willing to head to the Western Barbarian Land on behalf of Ning Xiao. However, my father may not agree to this."

The Eldest Princess said, "I will settle that." She paused before continuing, "Ye Wangu, I want you to return to the capital alive."

The young man smiled and his eyes sparkled radiantly with confidence, "By Your Highness' command, I will definitely return!"

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The capital was in a frenzy because the matter was still unsolved. Although many people were suspicious because of Ning Xiao's death, there was no evidence and no one could challenge the Eldest Princess.

After all, she was one of the top candidates for the highly contested seat...no one wanted to provoke her. Perhaps she would be able to leap over the branches and soar to the sky like a phoenix. Who would want to be enemies with such a high flier?

Someone tried to ask the Eldest Princess for more information privately but he was turned away and returned empty-handed. However, everyone was still filled with rage...everyone whose chances were spoiled were waiting for the perpetrator to show himself.

They believed that the person was in the group, and this group would leave the capital today!

There wasn't any send off event and everything was conducted secretly. Those cultivators that were selected gathered at an ordinary residence in the capital.

The earth here had been dug to build a fortress with deep layers that were hidden from the public. There was a Teleportation Portal within the fortress. At this point, light gray markings on the Teleportation Portal were lighting up as energy was channeled into it.

Buzz buzz –

The space vibrated violently and a deep, crushing aura was released from it. Many faces among the crowd started to harden.

At this point, the number of people who knew where they were heading was fewer than a handful.

Qin Yu was one of them.

He was probably the one in the group with the best understanding of how dangerous this journey was going to be.

Tomb of the Barbarian King, the treasure of the Barbarian Clan...it was a powerful treasure that could greatly help a Half-King!

There were many powerful cultivators in the Desolate Area but Half-Kings were still very influential.

Every new Half-King would raise the strength of his own country immensely and even enhance the country's influence in the entire Desolate Area.

This was why the West Desolate treated this event with great importance!

Because they knew of its capabilities, they were prepared for any unexpected changes and were very calm.

As such, Qin Yu saw the new face.

Ye Wangu!

This name seemed powerful and his strength was probably going to be a surprise too. After all, he was the one who took the place of Ning Xiao.

Although his gaze never lingered on Qin Yu, Qin Yu was sure that they shared similar animosity.

Qin Yu also sensed the sinister aura from Blood Flag...before he even left the capital of the West Desolate, he already had two powerful enemies.

It seemed that this trip to the Tomb of the Barbarian King was not going to be smooth.

Qin Yu did not feel fearful or uneasy because of this. Instead, there was just a sense of deadly calmness that was driven by confidence in his own strength.

The destruction of the Boiling Mountain Fantasy caused a storm of rage to fly through the cultivators and they were determined to find the perpetrator and vent their anger on him.

In fact, the perpetrator was drooling greedily.

The first reason was the time star, next it was the Ice Flame, and lastly, he had obtained the Taotie Essence.

Because of this, Qin Yu's Time Dao had improved immensely. He could use it at critical moments to deal a decisive blow to his opponent.

After Furnace obtained the Ice Flame, it refined it and strengthened Qin Yu's Great Dao. It completed an unbelievable but wonderful transformation.

The Taotie Essence also raised the Abyssal Titan's strength. Qin Yu could feel the titan's bloodline thickening.

This was only what Qin Yu obtained from himself directly...although he did not have much evidence, his intuition told him that the greatest reward from the Boiling Mountain Fantasy was Stone Pagoda's trial.

However, Stone Pagoda still said that he required more time to prepare for this and he did not inform Qin Yu of when he would complete his trial.

Qin Yu believed that Stone Pagoda would be able to give him a huge surprise in the near future.

This brat was reliable and Qin Yu did not waste his trust on him!

"Once the Teleportation Portal has been activated, you must all enter it quickly...remember, everything that happens next is a top secret in the West Desolate; you must never reveal it at all!"

The deep voice cut Qin Yu's thoughts off. He sucked in a breath and followed behind the crowd. When he stepped into the Teleportation Portal, there was a great jerk from space. All of a sudden, everything around him was shattered like a mirror that had been smashed on the ground.

Chapter 1490 – A Fight Begins

In the Northern Camp.

As energy poured out of the Teleportation Portal, the space shifted and figures started to appear one by one. After looking at their surroundings, their expressions changed.

“The Northern Camp!”

“Why are we here?”

“Could it be that the Northeast Desolate Area will be involved with what we are about to do next?”

As Qin Yu heard the commotion occurring around him, he frowned. That woman clearly mentioned that this was related to the Tomb of the Barbarian King.

She would not be hiding things from him. Unless something changed?

“Silence!”

The cold command came from a general clad in armor. His eyes were as sharp as eagles and they felt chilly.

Once the crowd fell silent, the general said, “Don't worry. You guys came from the capital and the first stop is definitely the Northern Camp. You will stay here for a day before you are told your next mission.”

The expressions of those present relaxed slightly and some even had a flicker of excitement. They were finally going to get information about the mission.

Actually, although the capital had done a great job in keeping the mission top secret, most people had already deduced some things about the mission.

This mission was very important!

The opening of the Boiling Mountain Fantasy was the best evidence of this.

There were definitely going to be risks but investments and rewards would normally go hand in hand with each other. The more risky this mission was, the greater the rewards would be.

The group left the area and gathered at a round tent where they would be briefed about the mission. Surprisingly, it was Madame Wu from the Imperial Palace who was going to brief them.

Qin Yu's eyes narrowed. It seemed that this plain-looking old woman had a much higher standing in the Imperial Palace than he originally imagined.

“Everyone here has met me before. I will get to the point. Your mission in heading towards the Western Barbarian Land is to obtain a treasure for the West Desolate...”

The rest of her explanations were similar to what the Ruler told Qin Yu before. However, she hid some details.

One of which was the Tomb of the Barbarian King.

Another one was how valuable that treasure was.

If the Ruler knew about this, Qin Yu did not believe that the West Desolate would be ignorant of these facts too.

The cover up of the details only meant that the West Desolate knew more than they offered and they weren't willing to tell the group this...they were obviously trying to rely on the crowd to obtain the treasure in the Tomb of the Barbarian King but they purposely hid such important information. No matter how he looked at this, it seemed like a stupid decision.

Was this the intelligence of the Imperial Clan of the West Desolate?

They left the round tent and had a day of rest before they headed off again. The long distance travel via the Teleportation Portal was also tiring for the cultivators.

Although two consecutive days of teleportation would not cause them much harm, since they were about to enter the Western Barbarian Land, they had to be in their peak conditions.

The next day, the group were gathered together again and they headed to the Northern Camp via the Teleportation Portal in the middle of the four border armies.

Very soon, they realized that there were going to be new joiners. It was not appropriate to call them new faces because they recognized most of the new joiners. These men were all famous!

“Main General Ye Qin!”

“Main General Ye Ziling!”

“The two main generals of the Guard Division in the capital are going to join us!”

“There is the Night Demon Sect Master too!”

Aside from these three, there were two that the group did not recognize. But since they all came together, it meant that they were powerful men on the same rank with each other.

Five Rulers!

More accurately, they were five Rulers at the peak of their realms.

Qin Yu jumped in realization as he saw the five Rulers. So this was the true situation...after all, the grand treasure of the Tomb of the Barbarian King could help a Ruler at the peak of his realm break through to the Half-King realm.

Once they got their hands on it, their best option was to use it immediately. Otherwise, were they going to bring it back to the West Desolate and split the spoils? What dreams!

Furthermore, the West Barbarians were not idle and they would notice changes in the Tomb of the Barbarian King.

Sighing deeply, Qin Yu wore a bitter smile under the black robe. The mission was tough enough but there were now five mountains crushing him. Ignoring all other difficulties, Qin Yu was not even sure whether he would be able to survive a fight against any one of the five Rulers.

Stealing the treasure of the Barbarian Clan right beneath their eyes and completing the task given by the Ruler...the hopes of this seemed incredibly small.

It was so extreme that a slight mistake would cost him his life!

His mind spun quickly and he recalled the suspicion in his heart previously.

The West Desolate knew of the secret in the Tomb of the Barbarian King and the wisest choice was to send strong men to steal it.

Even if the West Barbarians were strong, they were suppressed for so many years. Their number of powerful men in the King Realm would only be a handful.

Against a group of powerful cultivators, the success rate of the operation would be high...gaining an opportunity to cultivate a Half-King was worth it.

Qin Yu was not sure of why the West Desolate chose to do it this way but it was possible that there were some restrictions. Perhaps the Tomb of the Barbarian King had a constraint around it and the West Desolate had no choice but to send a group of Saints.

Things did not seem to be that simple. The five Rulers present meant that cultivators of the Ruler realm could enter the tomb.

Why did they need a group of Saints?

After all, no matter how strong a Saint was, he could not compare to a Ruler.

Even someone like Qin Yu, an extraordinary individual among Saints, would not be confident against any Ruler among the five if he had to fight to the death.

Every one of them was a top cultivator in the Ruler realm!

With the West Desolate's power, it could have pulled out any Ruler, not just the five in front, to form an elite team.

What was the reason for their actions?

Qin Yu's mind spun quickly but he did not have enough information and he was stuck. However, there was a great sense of unease in his heart...something felt very wrong about this.

All of a sudden, Qin Yu recalled that Madame Wu purposely omitted a critical piece of information during her briefing for the mission yesterday. Did the West Desolate have another plan?

"Everyone, don't think too much about this. The five Rulers are here to follow you and protect you against any threat from the West Barbarians. You guys will still participate in the treasure hunt."

"This mission is very important. If we successfully obtain the treasure, everyone will be rewarded. His Majesty will be very generous with the rewards."

The main general of the Northern Camp said in a low voice, "I hope that everyone will return safely."

Ye Qin and Ye Ziling bowed towards him.

The group followed along and even Blood Flag, the rebellious individual, dared not show any disrespect.

Zhou Wu was the main general of the Northern Camp and was well recognized as one of the top five generals in the West Desolate. He was very respected as an elite in the military and he had the Desolate King's trust.

"Let's go!"

With Zhou Wu's command, the group stepped into the Teleportation Portal. A buzzing sound came as the space contorted and swallowed each figure.

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Where there were people, there would be deals. This was true regardless of what kind of deal it was and what they were dealing.

The West Desolate had suppressed the West Barbarians for so many years. After so much fighting, each party had stained their hands with so much blood.

It was not an exaggeration to say that this was a grudge that grew as deep as bones!

However, despite the merciless fighting between both sides, there were shadows in the dark who continued their deals.

The West Barbarians wanted luxury and leisure goods from the West Desolate while the West Desolate wanted treasures found only in the territory of the Barbarian Clan.

For instance, there was a type of demon called 'Jie' in the Western Barbarian Land. They were tamed and raised by the West Barbarians and they were a main source of meat.

The 'Jie' itself was not valuable but when its stool landed on a particular type of wild grass in the Western Barbarian Land, it would undergo a reaction to form a medicinal herb.

The West Desolate used this medicinal herb to create mists that were powerful enough to cause confusion even among the bravest West Barbarians. It was a common weapon that they used in battles.

There were many events in the past where the West Desolate purposely started a fight with the West Barbarians to loot these medicinal herbs. Once they obtained the land from the West Barbarians, they tried to make these herbs themselves.

It was a pity that all of these trials resulted in failure. Not only was it rare for the herbs to be formed, the domesticated 'Jies' would go crazy and attack the people.

Somehow, it seemed like the 'Jies' would regain their wild nature once they were away from West Barbarians.

This was one example. The Western Barbarian Land was a region in the Desolate Area that was filled with cruel, bloody killings. But it was actually a treasure trove.

All of this spurred the interactions between both sides...although the higher ups of both sides knew about the transactions, they merely closed one eye to it. Sometimes, they would even avoid the locations of these transactions during the war.

Today, under the blanket of darkness provided by the night sky, there was a large scale transaction ongoing near the West Border Army.

A valley was surrounded by steep stone walls on all sides but the winds still howled through the area. Like the cry of a being about to die, the sound felt very chilling.

There were many participants from both sides, and among them were some at the Ruler realm who tried their best to suppress their aura and not reveal themselves. After all, although the transactions were somewhat public knowledge, they still had to be concealed.

Both parties were cautious of each other and they observed their surroundings intently to make sure that no one would ambush them.

The wind howling managed to overshadow most of the sound in the valley. Both sides were familiar with each other and the items were quickly verified, allowing the exchange to proceed smoothly.

The heightened wariness of the people in the valley relaxed a little.

If nothing went wrong, this would be a mutually beneficial deal and everyone would disperse and head their own ways.

Right at that moment, someone from the West Desolate camp suddenly attacked. He was striking to kill!

The smile on the leader's face vanished and he was beheaded.

Dead silence filled the valley.

The assassin landed on the ground and bounded towards the other camp at the speed of light. He started to scream excitedly, speaking in the language of the Barbarian Clan.

Although not everyone in the West Desolate understood the mysterious Barbarian Clan language, they could pick up vague words.

Mission...plan...attack...no one shall be spared...

These barbarians came here with an evil plan!

"Attack, kill them!"

The shouts boomed like thunder and those from the West Desolate dashed forward furiously and determinedly. They wanted the first mover advantage.

On the other hand, after the assassination, the West Barbarians seemed much slower in their reactions and they suffered heavy losses in an instant.

They shouted angrily, seeming as though they wanted to give an explanation. However, the smell of fresh blood had already filled the air and there was no way for them to reconcile.

Very quickly, the valley became a mad killing ground!

Bang bang –

Two dazzling signal fireworks shot into the sky at almost the same time, bursting into a bright red array. They looked like two blood red flowers that had blossomed.

Honk honk –

The army horns blared and the two camps at the border overlooking the Western Barbarian Land were activated.

Like a big tide that washed over the land, soldiers streamed out of the camps.

Jiang Chengzi stood up straight as he overlooked a dark and vast plain. His eyes were cold and he held an icy rock in his hand.

One of the assistant generals behind him could no longer hold it in and he cupped his hands and asked, “General, the people in the valley are citizens of the West Desolate. Should we not send troops to save them?”

Jiang Chengzi shook his head, “As scavengers for the empire, it is already their greatest honor to have been able to sacrifice their lives for the empire.”

He was silent for a while before he calmly waved his hand dismissively.

The assistant general’s face fell. With a low grunt, his body flew into the air. Before he could fly away, a brilliant flash of sword light lit up the sky and there was a sharp cutting sound before his body was split into two.

Blood dripped onto Jiang Chengzi’s armor. His expression remained hostile and he coldly ordered, “Drag him away.”

A while later, another soldier rushed into the room and whispered a few words to Jiang Chengzi.

Jiang Chengzi nodded lightly and waved his hand, “The West Barbarians have broken the agreement by attacking the West Border Camp. Relay my orders: the frontlines will go and suppress the West Barbarians. We will leave only after we have taken the heads of ten thousand West Barbarians.”