

Refining 161

Chapter 161 – Tyrannical Strength

No matter the day, the desert seemed to stretch to the ends of the world. The sun hung high above, its terrifying burning heat splashing down unto the coverless world below. The only sight one saw was endless yellow sand without any other color in view, nor was there any life. Howling winds rose and howling winds fell, the sand sweeping into the air to block out the skies, forming towering yellow mountains of sand, one after another. These sand mountains were scattered all over the depths of the desert. No matter how strong the winds blew, from the day they were formed, they never collapsed afterwards. They didn't even move a single inch, as if some invisible strength was holding them all in place.

Until one day, a star fell down from the skies, smashing a horrifying crater deep in the desert. A sand furnace appeared in the world and was broken apart by the meteor to reveal a sand-yellow palm-sized bead. It seemed like jade but wasn't, and it shined with an extraordinary luster. As the round bead was born, all over the desert for thousands of miles around, the giant mountains of sand collapsed as if they couldn't bear their own heavy weight...

Qin Yu opened his eyes, digesting the memories contained in the soul. An earth-attribute bead floated silently within his dantian. The willow branch gently swung, sprinkling down shining verdant light as if it were cheering with joy.

Water, wood, fire, earth, the only one remaining of the five elements was...gold. His soul still had plenty of strength remaining, so it wouldn't be too difficult to refine the metal element spiritual object. Qin Yu swallowed some pills to restore his strength. He wanted to refine the metal element spiritual object in a single go. From then on, he would have all five elements together!

But it was at this time that someone knocked on his workroom door. Qin Yu frowned, a thoughtful look in his eyes. With his current status, if someone dared to disturb him even if they knew he was deep in seclusion, the only one who would do so were those from the royal palace.

The door opened. Chief Manager Wu personally accompanied Old Sea and another person. Old Sea was silent and didn't seem happy at all. A young seafolk bowed, "Greetings, Honorable Ning. Soupman has extended an invitation. If I have disturbed you, I ask you to be open-minded." The tone was courteous and calm, with just the right amount of embarrassment.

Qin Yu nodded and said, "Alright."

Old Sea was here so he obviously knew about it. Since Old Sea hadn't stopped the man, then there was no need to worry too much about it.

"Thank you Honorable Ning. The carriage is outside. I will be waiting there. Please, take your time to tidy up." He bowed and left.

Clearly he wanted to give Qin Yu a chance to ask some questions.

Old Sea directly said, "The situation has changed." He hesitated and said, "Little friend Ning, if possible then I would ask you to give your best effort in this. I cannot speak too much of the secrets involved, but once you enter the royal palace you will naturally know of them."

“But, even if you cannot, then little friend need not be worried. With your current status in the minds of the sea races, no one would think of moving against you.”

A helpless feeling flitted across Qin Yu’s heart.

So it was like this...

Although he didn’t reveal his thoughts, he had already expected this.

At this time, Qin Yu stepped out of Sea Spirit Pavilion. He still wore his black robes, but this time an additional purple jade pendant hung from his waist. This item had the ability to repair itself, so even though it had been broken quite badly that day, it had restored itself.

Several carriages were neatly lined up in an arrangement that represented the emblem of the royal palace. Countless seafolk watched with awe, but as they saw the black-robed figure appear, all of them suddenly understood. No wonder the royal family was being so courteous. If they were willing to wait so calmly here, it could only be for this honored person.

The surrounding seafolk came to a stop and bowed.

Qin Yu nodded in return. He stepped into a carriage, and with a shout, it started to move.

The royal carriages rode down the street, unimpeded the entire way. When they passed through Prosperity Square, Qin Yu’s thoughts stirred and an inexplicable feeling rose up in him. He pushed open the window and looked towards the empty square. The altar was no longer there, but he could still sense the aura that it exuded. It was as if during the process of the sea spirit baptism, without him knowing, an inkling of a connection had formed between him and the altar.

Before the carriage reached the royal palace’s main gates, it took a detour to the side, following the palace walls until it drove into a side entrance. Faintly, one could hear the ringing of a bell. Then that inexplicable connection to the altar vanished along with it.

There was one other person in the carriage; he was the one who had spoken to Qin Yu. This person cupped his hands across his chest and said, “Honorable Ning, we are entering the palace, so please forgive me for any disturbances.”

Qin Yu nodded. He leaned back in his soft seat and closed his eyes. He could hear the sound of the window closing shut. They paused from time to time; the inspections were quite strict. It was only around an hour later that they came to a full stop.

“Honorable Ning, please.”

Stepping down from the carriage, there was a large blue dwelling in front of him, the color so deep that it seemed almost black. The entrance was not wide or obvious and even seemed a bit cramped, but the aura it emitted was imposing.

Qin Yu looked around several times. The style of this dwelling was quite different from the usual preferences of the capital city which tended towards artistic curves and sublime architectural techniques. The dwelling looked normal from the outside, but one could feel a strange surging in their soul. It was silent like a mountain, but once it exploded, it could tear apart all.

Obviously, this place was far more complicated than it seemed.

“Grandmaster Ning, Soupman is awaiting within. I am not allowed to enter so I can only bring you this far.” His voice was calm and respectful.

Qin Yu nodded. He walked in front of the dwelling. Then, as if sensing his arrival, the thick and plain front door quietly swung open.

His gaze fell into the courtyard and his eyebrows flew up as astonishment lit up his face. Of course, this was only for an instant before he regained his composure and walked into a completely unexpected...mansion!

That was right, this was a mansion. Only such a word could describe what he was seeing. In Qin Yu’s entire life, this was the most extravagant dwelling he had ever seen, bar none.

Gold tiles spread across the floor, creating a road.

Spirit stones were piled up into mountains.

Gold bars were inlaid everywhere and used to decorate the corners.

All that filled his eyes was the color gold. Countless treasures were laid out everywhere, all of them reflecting the golden light, making everything even more brilliant and blinding.

Gold and silver circulated through the common mortal world, and correspondingly spirit stones circulated in the cultivators’ world. Because of that, gold and silver rarely entered the eyes of most cultivators. Qin Yu never expected that this Soupman would have such strange and bizarre tastes, but seeing the radiant golden light spilling from all over, he couldn’t help but acknowledge that there was a certain heroic and dauntless aura emanating from this, as thick as syrup.

Naturally, this boldness was really bold. Aside from the gold, just the sea spirit treasures used as decoration were all amazingly expensive.

Qin Yu’s thoughts raced. During the sea spirit teacher competition, he had stolen away a great deal of wealth from Wu Zetian and numerous seafolk. He thought he was a rich man after that, but it was only now that he understood what the peak of wealth was like.

He didn’t know what kind of person this Soupman was that he could utilize such a horrifying amount of resources. But as he thought about this, the light in his eyes changed to reveal admiration.

“Honorable Ning need not be envious. I look upon all this every day and yet none of it is actually my own.” Soupman smiled and walked over. He wore a loose robe, looking the spitting image of a wealthy village landlord. He clasped his hand over the head of a nearby gold beast statue. “Everything here belongs to His Majesty. If there is something here that truly belongs to me, it might only be this gold.”

He turned and asked, “Honorable Ning, what do you think about all this gold? I just happened to be born with a preference for this type of thing.”

Qin Yu looked around. “It looks great.”

Soupman laughed out loud. “Every time a guest comes here, they don’t dare to say much at all. I fear they probably all think it’s strange. When I ask them this question, all I ever hear is a bunch of useless flattery. In truth, it’s just like Honorable Ning says: it looks great!

“It seems that Honorable Ning and I share a bit of fate together. If there is a chance in the future, we should get to know each other some more. However, the reason I asked Honorable Ning here today is because there is a matter I need to trouble you with. I hope that Grandmaster Ning can try his best.”

Like this, he changed to the main topic.

Facing his bright eyes, Qin Yu nodded. “Okay.”

Soupman waved his hand. The two settled down around a table set beneath a glowing purple coral. Of course, the chairs and table were also carefully forged from gold. He took out a box from his chest and placed it on the table. “Honorable Ning, please take a look first.”

He opened the jade box. There was a bit of life-maintaining nutrient fluid within, and what floated on the surface was something similar to a part of a tree root. The surface layer was a bit withered and it seemed extremely common. But, the aura contained within left Qin Yu shocked as a dignified expression crossed his face.

When it came to sea spirits, he naturally didn’t understand them. But, after his soul became stronger, his senses also became far sharper. Although this was only a tiny section, Qin Yu could still feel a formidable strength, one that was overbearing and unsurpassed, as if it could look down upon the world with disdain.

It was only a tiny amount – but, he couldn’t ignore it.

Qin Yu lifted the jade box and carefully observed it. He thought carefully for some time before placing it back down. He asked, “Soupman, what request do you have?”

When Qin Yu didn’t ask any extraneous questions, Soupman nodded in satisfaction. “Honorable Ning likely has some thoughts already. I want to know, does Honorable Ning have any confidence in restoring the vitality of this thing?”

Qin Yu fell silent.

Restoring the vitality wouldn’t be difficult, but what was difficult was that this sea spirit seemed to have absorbed too much tyrannical strength. It was quite powerful in itself, and perhaps it might have been able to neutralize this tyrannical strength, but there was simply far too much of it, so much that it surpassed its capacity. Purely restoring its vitality would only be dealing with the effects of the problem, not the root cause. It would soon be ruined once more by that tyrannical strength.

The only solution was to increase the power of the sea spirit, so it became far, far stronger. Then, its ability to withstand this strength would increase, allowing it to transform that tyrannical strength into its own. But, with a sea spirit of this quality, wanting to increase its strength was naturally incomparably difficult.

Soupman lightly smiled. “If Honorable Ning has any needs, I can satisfy all of them. I hope that Honorable Ning can try.” These words clearly didn’t plan to leave Qin Yu any way to refuse.

Qin Yu slowly said, "I can try my best."

"Thank you, Honorable Ning!" Soupman rose up. "I will accompany you there."

They passed through a shining gold corridor and a transmission array appeared in front of them. Soupman took out a jade card and the array gradually lit up. They stepped into it and fierce fluctuations began to spread out. Space twisted and the two disappeared.

After several breaths of time, their field of vision was restored. Everything was dim and dark, as if they were beneath the earth. Burning torches illuminated the surroundings, but it couldn't disperse the cloying dark.

Across from them was a giant tightly shut stone door, with countless strange runes cut into it. It looked as if stars were twinkling on its surface. Just by glancing at it, one's chest would feel tight and heavy, as if a peerless vicious beast was hiding behind the stone door!

Soupman's smile didn't change. He stepped out from the array formation and pointed a finger.

"Honorable Ning, the sea spirit is behind that stone door. Please prepare yourself." He lifted his hands and touched the void. Layers of ripples spread out, falling onto the stone door like a series of knocks. After a time, the runes began to shine and the stone door slowly opened.

Chapter 162 – Heaven Hiding Seal

Bang –

At this moment, an angry invisible river seemed to rush out from the stone door. Qin Yu took a deep breath. Before his black robes could even flutter they were pasted back against his body. A wild aura tumbled about like a massive grinding pan. It spun constantly, capable of grinding a person to pieces and blowing them up.

Soupman had a tranquil expression. He covered his eyes, a trace of worry flashing through them. Then he turned and smiled, "Honorable Ning, there shouldn't be a problem, right?"

In truth, Qin Yu's initial thought was that he had been exposed in that instant. But, he immediately changed his mind. If this person wanted to kill him he wouldn't need to go through so much trouble. As Qin Yu heard Soupman's casual tone, his lips moved and he wasn't able to prevent himself from 'kindly' asking about Soupman's family.

Just by standing outside the door, the aura was actually so terrifying; it was easy to imagine how terrifying it would be once he stepped it. Qin Yu's cultivation wasn't weak either and his Demon Body was considerably potent. Still, he didn't have any inclination of entering. So, he thought about it and asked in a soft voice, "What do I do if there's a problem?"

Soupman smiled brilliantly. "If there's a problem then you certainly must overcome it. The young should march forwards without fear. Moreover, I believe that Honorable Ning's strength will not leave me disappointed." He slapped his forehead. "I almost forgot. After Honorable Ning enters, you must only use your own strength to resist it. Do not borrow the help of any items, otherwise things will become much more troublesome."

As for what kind of trouble it was, Soupman didn't explain further. Looking at his wide smile, this 'trouble' wouldn't be small at all.

Qin Yu's expression nearly broke. He cursed several times inwardly before he turned and smiled, nodding all the while.

He took a deep breath and stepped towards the stone door. It was like swimming against a flowing river. A powerful strength struck against his body, separating from both sides.

Qin Yu stood at the entrance and calmed himself. Then, he stepped in. Once he did, the feeling suddenly changed. It was like he began in a rapid river but had fallen into a raging sea. The wild churning waves brought with them an annihilating strength, causing Qin Yu to pale.

Behind him, the stone door quietly closed. Only darkness remained.

Outside the stone door, Soupman's smile disappeared. After a long time, he self-deprecatingly laughed. "Hah, I really must apologize to my old mom. Even though she has been gone for so long, she is still mentioned by others. However, I have no other choice. As the saying goes, in the sea, the seafolk cannot help themselves."

He fell silent once more. Then, a dignified look gradually lit up his eyes. He muttered in a quiet voice, "Honorable Ning, no matter how much you may curse at me, from here on out...I really must depend on you..."

...

Royal palace.

No one was within the grand hall.

On the dragon throne, the Sea Sovereign had a serene appearance. He looked out the window, seemingly at peace.

"Your Majesty, Soupman has delivered Honorable Ning in."

"Mm."

"Your Majesty..." The voice sounded out again. It was heavy and helpless and even trembled a little.

The Sea Sovereign looked away. "This Solitude knows that you all are worried, but worrying cannot resolve the issue at hand." He smiled. "If worrying could preserve my life, then it would be fine if you wanted to cry until the heavens fell...but in the end, it is useless."

"This official knows that the situation is incredibly dangerous right now. Has Your Majesty made no arrangements?"

The Sea Sovereign lightly said, "Things have occurred too suddenly. Just like you, this Solitude has made no preparations. But even so, you need not panic. After all, you knew and this Solitude knew that this day would eventually arrive. The necessary arrangements have already been made. If things cannot change, then you will carry them out."

"I obey...Your Majesty!" The voice quieted down.

The Sea Sovereign let out a breath, feeling a bit helpless, feeling a bit moved, but most of all feeling calm at heart. He had lived for a long, long time, far surpassing the lifespan of most living beings in this world. He had reached the peak of authority and had enjoyed all there was to enjoy. In truth, he had no regrets if he were to die.

It was just that in his heart, there was a little bit of unwillingness.

Honorable Ning...

As he thought of the sea spirit baptism that lasted almost 10 hours, a bit of anticipation flashed in his eyes. But, his gaze immediately returned to tranquility.

...

This was a land where the pitch black darkness was so deep you couldn't even see your own hand in front of your face. That darkness was like the world's most viscous ink, and at the same time you had to face a wild barrage of aura coming from all directions. In such an environment, those who lacked willpower and determination wouldn't be able to last long at all. Their spirits would soon break.

Bang –

Bang –

The ringing was incomparably clear. This wasn't a sound that transmitted through the ears, but came from an outside strength bombarding the body, reverberating through one's flesh and blood and bones. Qin Yu coughed and spat out a mouthful of blood. His chest felt much better afterwards.

After passing through the stone door, the wild strength shut off all directional senses. It was hard for him to tell just which way he was going. He could only constantly move forwards towards the source of that wild strength.

The closer he got to the source, the more potent the strength became. At first he was able to resist it, but now he was starting to become injured. The darkness continued up the road without end. If things persisted like this, he had no idea how long he would be able to last.

But thinking about it, Qin Yu wasn't too worried. Old Sea had said that with his status, and before anyone had seen through his disguise, there wouldn't be anyone that would move against him. If he said this, it shouldn't be lies. Thus, if Soupman had brought him here then with his strength he should be safe.

He paused, catching his breath even as the wild barrage continued. Then, he continued forwards.

Two hours.

Four hours.

Six hours.

In the blink of an eye, a day passed.

Within the grand hall, the Sea Sovereign shook his head and sighed. It seemed that he had thought too much about this. The great Dao was truly heartless. He was destined to die and there were no more paths left for him to take.

After determining that his death would come, this ruler that seemed to wield the highest power in the world wasn't afraid or panicked. Instead, a happy smile curved up the corners of his mouth. This was because even facing the world, he had managed to last all these years. When he thought of this, even with his status he couldn't help but feel pride.

Outside the stone door, Soupman's complexion paled. He muttered to himself, "How could this be...how could this be..." His eyes suddenly popped open and he began violently coughing. Without any time to care about these things, he took out a black spirit shell from his chest and made a call.

"Cough cough...your Majesty...the Companion Vine's...strength...cough cough...has there been any changes...?"

Soupman's voice sounded throughout the grand hall. On the dragon throne, the supreme Sea Sovereign suddenly stiffened. But this lasted for only a moment before he composed himself. His voice was dignified as he said, "Mm, it seems a bit stronger than before."

Soupman's round face twisted as if he was about to cry at any moment.

What sort of cultivation did His Majesty possess? Although he had sensed only a slight increase, the actual situation was likely several times worse than expected. According to his judgment of the information he had obtained, Honorable Ning should have been able to arrive safely. But now it seemed that...

The grand hall was deathly silent.

Right now, everyone who had the qualifications to speak to him were frozen in place, horrified expressions covering their faces.

Angry growls suddenly sounded out. "Soupman, you have harmed His Majesty, you have harmed His Majesty!"

The final hope, and also the most likely hope, had been destroyed like this.

Even the high ranking courtiers were unable to withstand such a dramatic contrasting change. They lost their minds and started to roar!

Soupman stared at the ground in a daze. His Majesty's condition wasn't good right now, so an oversight was understandable. But, how had he himself not discovered that the strength of the Companion Vine had increased? He looked up and stared at the shut stone door. He suddenly raised his hand and a rune from the stone door flew out, landing in his palm.

"Heaven Hiding Seal, this is actually the Heaven Hiding Seal...Your Majesty, this servant is sorry, this servant is sorry!" Soupman fell to his knees and cried.

In the eyes of outsiders, this person was a terrifying money-grubbing schemer. But right now he was crying like a heartbroken child, his tears flowing endlessly.

The questioning roars came to an abrupt end.

No one ever imagined that someone had managed to come here first and lay a trap ahead of time, placing His Majesty into a dangerous spot.

This was Soupman's dereliction of duty. But all of them had the authority to come to the stone door, and many of them had come more than once. Yet, none of them had discovered anything.

Strictly speaking, everyone had made a mistake!

"I ask Your Majesty to pass down punishment!"

On the dragon throne, the Sea Sovereign frowned. When he heard the 'Heaven Hiding Seal' mentioned, he seemed to awaken. A faint smile appeared on his face. "Rise. This was not your mistake. After all...who could ever imagine it?"

He looked up straight towards the entrance of the grand hall, his eyes as deep as an abyss. "When the throne changed that year, it was this Solitude who single-handedly protected them. And now, it seems that I only have myself to blame, otherwise how could I suffer such a counterattack. In the end, this Solitude was too arrogant. I didn't expect his arrangements to come this far."

Soupman stood up, tears still streaming down his face. A terrifying aura surged all around him. He turned and walked out along the path of torches. His steps were heavy and fast.

Puff –

Puff –

Heads exploded one after another, blood dying the stone walls and pooling onto the ground. Countless cries of panic and sorrow filled the air as countless people slumped dead in their own pools of blood, some of them lost in horror and confusion. A slaughter was being carried out, and the sounds were clearly reflected through the spirit shell and into the grand hall. But whether it was the Sea Sovereign or the other high ranking courtiers, all of them were calm and unperturbed.

For something like this to occur, there were surely traitors within. In order to avoid spreading the news and to gain as much time as possible to set up arrangements, he could only use this brutal method and kill every possible suspect.

In truth, the saddest one here should be Soupman. After all, the guards here were all direct descendants he had personally raised and trained. After a long time, the last miserable cry sounded out. Soupman fell to his knees and lifted his hand to slam his head.

Bang –

The void suddenly shook and his entire body was sent flying away. He tumbled several times, looking extremely distressed. He wailed, "Your Majesty, why would you rescue me? Let this servant of yours die. Only by dying can my pain be lessened!"

In the grand hall, the Sea Sovereign withdrew his hand. His eyebrows were furrowed together as if he were resisting something. He slowly said, "You old thing, you should know it isn't easy for this Solitude to make a move. If you don't want this Solitude to immediately die, then shut up and wait for orders.

This matter is not your mistake, and moreover, it isn't your turn to die. This Solitude needs you. When this Solitude returns to the heavens, this Solitude needs you to assist the new emperor in stabilizing their rule!"

Soupman kneeled. "This servant is willing to offer his life in sacrifice!"

"Please command us, Your Majesty!"

The Sea Sovereign was silent for several breaths of time. Then, a cruel and callous voice echoed through the hall. "Inform all princes and princesses to enter the palace; no one can be absent. Inform the various legion generals to come to the palace to receive orders. Inform the Ministers of Wind and Rain to draft the royal transfer documents. Inform Magnate Turtle to enter the palace and serve!"

A dense and sharp aura flowed from the grand hall. The air suddenly turned cloudy and cold, as if it would soon freeze. It seemed that in the final moments of his life, this Sea Sovereign who had been quiet for so many years was finally about to bare his fangs. He was ready to eliminate all factions that dared to try and shake his dominion.

"Order the Dark Night Division to begin the extermination. This Solitude's time is limited, so there is no need to investigate anyone. Within a day, in the capital city and 36 great cities, this Solitude wants blood to soak the earth red..."

He suddenly stopped.

His Majesty who was overflowing with cold killing intent, whose rising aura seemed to shake the heavens, had frozen where he was, utterly stunned.

"Your Majesty!"

"Your Majesty, what is wrong!?"

"Do not frighten this old servant, please, Your Majesty, awaken!"

After a brief moment of silence, Soupman and the others shouted in fear and alarm. The backs of their clothes were instantly drenched in a cold sweat.

If His Majesty really died here, they feared that a terrifying wave would follow right behind!

"This Solitude...is fine." These words seemed to lift them from hell to heaven. All the high ranking courtiers cried with joy.

You almost scared these old servants and officials to death. Your Majesty, please don't do this to us again! This situation doesn't necessarily have no hope for a favorable turn!

All sorts of voices echoed in the grand hall.

The Sea Sovereign's expression was strange. After a long silence, he said, "The orders from before, temporarily halt them..."

Chapter 163 – The Terrifying Vine

The darkness was like a swamp that wrapped around in endless layers. Caught within, it was so deep that it left one unable to struggle; they could only be eventually swallowed and finally reduced to bones. No, perhaps it would be broken bones, because the overwhelmingly tyrannical strength rolling out from here was enough to tear a corpse to shreds and grind it into countless fragments.

Thinking of such a miserable fate, Qin Yu loudly gasped for breath. He clenched his teeth in the darkness before slumping to the ground. His chest heaved up and down like bellows. The only thoughts in his heart were that the words Old Sea said weren't trustworthy and that Soupman was a bastard. He roared out curses in his heart.

It was only after a long time that he managed to restore some strength. Within the dim rays of light, he looked up.

This huge underground space was covered by crawling vines. Their sturdiness surpassed his imagination. The parts that occasionally stood upright were like ancient towering trees. Countless roots were born from the vines. They drilled into the earth, drawing in nutrients. But, it would be impossible for these vines to grow to such a scale merely by relying on that.

Qin Yu's lips twitched. The root-like section that Soupman had shown him had really been taken from here. It must have been hard for that old bastard to find such a tiny section from this colossal thing.

Bang –

There was a sudden loud noise. In the distance, a thick vine burst apart and an overbearing strength rampaged outwards. It tore the surroundings to shreds with branches and leaves fluttering everywhere. The explosion created a chain reaction and several small-scale explosions followed suit. The vine was like a living creature as it crept up and rapidly grew.

After several breaths of time, all traces of the explosion vanished. The broken leaves and branches were also reabsorbed, making it seem as if everything just now had been an illusion.

But it wasn't an illusion in the end...

Qin Yu's complexion paled. If he were placed there, even with his potent Demon Body he feared he would have been torn to pieces by that explosion...Soupman, you old bastard! Of course, Qin Yu was able to guess that this situation wasn't too related to Soupman to begin with. However, he was simply unable to offend the one who he believed was involved with this, so he could only vent his complaints on Soupman.

Right now, this vine was filled with a tyrannical strength, making it like an unstable volcano. The merest outside stimulation – such as running into it or stepping on it – was likely to cause an explosion. He looked up towards the thick jungle of vines and decided he absolutely could not step within.

But if he didn't do anything, even if he managed to leave here the royal palace wouldn't give up on him. Qin Yu thought it over and finally forced out a smile. Whatever. He might as well give it a try, otherwise that old bastard Soupman really might leave him to fend for himself here.

Divine sense reached out from his body and carefully swept around. When he didn't notice anything strange, he took out the Silence Stone and held it in his palm. Then, he flipped his hand and a foot...no, 1.2 feet of sea blue light blossomed.

The deep blue light shined onto some branches of the vine. It slightly trembled in response, and just as Qin Yu panicked that a dreadful strength would gush out and was about to draw backwards, the vine actually retreated on its own initiative. Then, like currents of water, countless vines gave way, forming a straight channel that led deep within.

Astonishment lit up Qin Yu's eyes. He never imagined that this vine would have a basic level of intelligence and would be able to feel the little blue lamp's strength. Did it open a channel for him so that he could go straight to the root for treatment?

Indecision clouded his face. Qin Yu took deep breaths for a long time and then walked forwards. He had certainly prepared himself. If any problems occurred he would instantly use the Blood Escape Art.

Luckily, the vine seemed to know that this matter concerned its life and death. Occasional sounds of erupting thunder sounded in the distance, but after being covered by layers upon layers of branches and leaves, Qin Yu wasn't affected at all.

He smoothly made his way forwards.

But Qin Yu was still startled. The underground space was larger than he imagined and the size of the vine was even more terrifying than he first thought. Soon, a large black stone appeared in his line of sight. Well, rather than being called large, it was more appropriate to call it a hill. A network of roots wrapped around it in endless layers and all the vines extended out from here; this was clearly the main root.

Qin Yu was silently shocked. It was hard to believe that these vines were formed from a single plant. But, these exposed roots and the dry cracks all over its surface emitted the aura of passing years. This plant must have survived for a long, long time.

Thinking about it, Qin Yu walked over to the black stone. He opened his hand and allowed the light of the little blue lamp to shine on a thick root. He was aware that the little blue lamp possessed an incredible promoting ability towards the growth of sea spirits, but what happened still caused him to jolt up.

He saw that beneath the deep blue light, the root suddenly trembled and began to grow at a speed visible to the naked eye. The withered surface broke off in pieces. After a few breaths of time, the root had swelled into a circle, and even the surrounding roots began to wriggle in growth.

On the black, hill-sized stone, the network of roots began to sway and twist about like a living creature. This scene was particularly macabre and left one feeling a chill in the depths of their heart.

Pa –

Five fingers closed together and the blue light was hidden away.

Qin Yu had a dignified expression.

Rumble rumble –

With a loud rumble, the entire underground space shook. The thick vines seemed to be angrily shouting. But, what happened afterwards was unexpected. A vine as thick as an arm drilled out from the ground and delivered a black fruit to him.

The fruit was about the size of a child's fist. The surface was a hard shell, but after carefully smelling it, there was a faint fragrance. Qin Yu had a strange look in his eyes. What was the meaning behind this? Did it want to make a transaction with him? He reached out a hand and plucked the fruit. Investigating it a little, he was left shaken.

This common black fruit contained a preposterous strength; it could be called a bomb! But, the strength within was stable, as if it had just achieved a suitable balance. As if...it could be absorbed.

Of course, if he were to directly inject magic power, the delicate balance inside would collapse and this black fruit would transform immediately into a truly terrifying bomb.

The vine continued to rage around, as if saying: you have received my thing, so hurry and give me the blue light, otherwise I will be angry!

Qin Yu's eyes flashed. He slowly said, "You should be able to understand me. I can help you, but with such a fruit, just one is not enough."

Whoosh –

Whoosh –

With the sound of breaking air, ten vines shot into the air, each one dangling a fruit.

Indeed...it was quite understanding!

...

A night passed. When the little blue lamp's light vanished, there were now 36 black fruits in Qin Yu's storage ring. This seemed to be everything, or perhaps it was the vine's bottom line. No matter what Qin Yu said, he couldn't obtain any more.

Of course, it hadn't received nothing from that investment. The black stone was no longer visible beneath the endless thick roots wrapping around it. The roots had nearly doubled in size, and as for the roots that had been directly shined upon by the little blue lamp, they were so thick that it would take several people holding hands to wrap around them. The surface of the roots seemed to be cast from metal.

Rumble –

Rumble –

This was the shaking of the vine branches. Although they didn't seem to have changed much on the surface, they actually grew far more tenacious within and became more resilient with a higher bearing capacity.

The tyrannical strength that had flooded out was now thoroughly sealed away. Although this didn't completely fix the problem, at least for a good period of time there wouldn't be any issues.

Qin Yu put away the little blue lamp and lightly said, "I have fulfilled my promise. It's about time I leave."

Bang –

Vines erupted, shooting in from all directions, instantly weaving together into a giant cage around Qin Yu.

Qin Yu frowned. His expression didn't change. "Believe me. If I have a method to save you, I have a method to destroy you as well. Our transaction ends here today. When you have more black fruits you can exchange, I will come back. Of course, you may not believe me, but you will only have one chance to do so."

A long silence followed. The vine seemed to be contemplating his words, or it could be ignoring him. Qin Yu's aura gradually turned icy. He lifted his hand to reveal a pill.

It was a dirty brown color, like the color grass would be after it died.

Qin Yu spoke quietly, a chilling aura floating about him. "This pill originates from a human alchemist cultivator; it is named Hundred Mile Desolace. It doesn't have much use. Its only function is to infect spiritual plants. It needs just a single touch to infect, and once that happens the poison will duplicate without end, until it is completely uncontainable.

"Oh, for example, if I used it here. As long as I crushed this pill and blew it around, you would soon feel uncomfortable. Then, this discomfort would rapidly spread, gradually leaving you unable to breathe. The stabbing pain would be like blades cutting you to pieces. You would gradually decay into nothing, until you eventually fell to the ground. Before you died you might kill me, but believe me, you would die too."

This pill came from Grandmaster Daoist Wuyuan who practiced the dao of poison, and the effect wasn't exaggerated at all. After all, if he didn't have such a card in his hand he wouldn't have dared to take out the little blue lamp to rescue this vine, especially when it clearly had a level of intelligence.

The vine responded. The vines that wove into a giant cage began to rub against each other. A series of low and deep sounds fused together in the air, forming strange syllabic words.

"...You...keep...your...word..."

Beneath his black robe, Qin Yu's eyes were cold. "You may not believe my words if you want."

"...Good..."

The vines retreated, revealing a way out. Qin Yu took several steps out and stopped. "Concerning today's events, I hope that no one else ever finds out. Otherwise, our agreement will become invalid." He spoke without turning his head, as if everything was in his control. He walked further and further away until his figure was swallowed up by the dark.

Whoosh –

There was the sound of breaking air. Qin Yu stopped and clenched the poison pill tight in his palm. When he saved the vine, it had been because he had no other choice, otherwise the royal palace would never have let him go.

Thus, while Qin Yu knew that there would be trouble, he still did it. But, if he was really backed into a corner, he didn't lack the courage to make a final stand with his life on the line.

Whoosh –

The darkness was torn apart. A thick vine stopped in front of him, emitting a faint light. Then, it fell to the ground. Qin Yu thought for a moment and stepped onto the vine. The tyrannical strength that bombarded him from all around seemed to be blocked by a shield, vanishing.

The vine shuttled through the darkness, racing towards the entrance.

Qin Yu's tense heart relaxed a little. The vine had possessed sufficient wisdom to judge its own situation.

Right now it was safe, but it would inevitably absorb more and more of that tyrannical strength. Just like a dam that had been reinforced, if the water it blocked rose higher it would eventually be unable to withstand it.

Qin Yu was the only one who could save it.

Thus, it used this sort of action to compensate for its past behaviour and express its good intentions.

That was enough.

Chapter 164 – Illusion

The vine was extremely fast. The originally difficult and long path here was now reduced to a short time. After a moment, the stone door was in sight. Then, as if it were restricted for some reason, the vine stopped far away. Qin Yu stepped down and glanced at it.

The vine hadn't left; it seemed as if there was something else it wanted. It had delivered him here and it didn't have any dark intentions either, so his gaze was calm. After several breaths of silence, the end of the vine split apart, and a light black chip emerged.

Qin Yu's eyes flashed. He didn't sense anything sinister. So, after a brief hesitation he reached out and took the black chip. At this time his complexion changed, because after that black chip touched his skin, it simply dissolved and drilled into his flesh and blood. His eyes turned cold, but in the next moment he was startled. He looked thoughtfully at the vine and then shut his eyes, sensing the additional memories now circulating through his soul.

These memories were a series of strange, incomplete sounds. Though Qin Yu didn't understand what they meant, he still felt an inexplicable tremor pass through him.

As if some invisible dignity was leaving his soul trembling, awe emerged from his most basic instincts.

But soon, Qin Yu discovered that this trembling wasn't because of awe, but because something was gushing out from his soul.

Shua –

A sea map began to unfold above his head. Islands dotted the billowing waves, and at this time light seemed to pour out from the islands, making this sea map look like the starry skies. Those syllables stirred in his soul, gradually turning into an impulse. So, Qin Yu raised his hand and after a brief hesitation, he pointed to somewhere in the sea.

Hum –

There was a loud shaking. The light above the islands instantly vanished from sight.

It was like it had been extracted out, completely exhausted.

A brief spell of vertigo passed through him, followed by clarity. Then, images began to appear.

In the boundless blue sea, a great sun hung high above the splashing waves, sunlight sprinkling down and reflecting against the clear waters below. This was a rare day of good weather. A giant ship shuttled across the waters. A man who was tanned nearly black by the breeze and sun shouted out to workers to pull up a fishing net from the sea. As the fish fell onto the ship's deck, they all opened their mouths to reveal blinding white grins.

At this time, in the great vault of heaven below the great sun, space suddenly twisted and was broken through from the inside. A beam of light shot straight down, crashing into the sea. It pierced through the seawater, forming an unfathomable hole. The surrounding seawater was pushed aside, unexpectedly unable to fill this empty space. Thus, the opening grew larger and larger until it reached a shocking several thousand feet.

A terrifying shockwave spread outwards, raising up dreadful waves that blotted out the skies. In an instant, the beautiful weather turned into an apocalyptic scene. The fishermen were all thrown off of the ship. Their faces were full of abject horror as they tried to grab onto objects around them.

A man who seemed to be the captain began to shout out commands. He forced himself up and loudly shouted as if guiding everyone to continue dodging. But all of a sudden, another giant wave struck. The boat violently quaked once more. A turtle was sent flying out from the sea and ruthlessly struck the man's head, leaving him bloodied.

Then, the images stopped.

There was another brief bout of vertigo before it scattered. Qin Yu opened his eyes, his gaze darkening. He checked himself and found that everything was normal, without the smallest loss. His thoughts stirred and the sea map appeared once more. However, those illuminated islands were restored to how they were originally. Was everything just now...an illusion?

Mm, it should have been.

Perhaps it was because of those strange syllables...looking at the vine in front of him, it seemed that it wanted to use this thing to impress Qin Yu. But unfortunately, if nothing went wrong, he wouldn't return here again.

He felt no guilt. He cupped his arms across his chest and said, "Goodbye."

Rumble rumble rumble –

The vine quickly retreated, soon vanishing without a trace.

He arrived in front of the stone door. And as he was hesitating, unsure of what to do, the stone door seemed to sense his aura and slowly open.

Soupman was standing on the other side. He seemed surprised but even more excited. He cupped his hands together and said, "Honorable Ning, I owe you a favor today. I will be sure to repay it in the future."

Qin Yu walked out. Listening to the sound of the stone door close, he forced a smile. "Soupman, I hope that you never look for me again."

"I know that today Honorable Ning was wronged. But, please believe that everything you have done will be repaid." Soupman's smile seemed to have another meaning. "It looks like Honorable Ning doesn't have a favorable impression of me. Well, let me lead you out of here."

Qin Yu nodded. When they walked towards the transmission array, he could smell blood in the air; it hadn't yet dispersed. A brief light flashed in his eyes but his expression didn't change, nor did he ask why.

Hum –

The transmission array flashed and the two of them disappeared from sight. When they reappeared they were once again in that magnificent 'golden gilded' mansion. Four beautiful seafolk women were gracefully standing there, each one holding a tray covered with a red cloth. It was unknown what was beneath them.

Soupman's smile widened, but there was a bit of reluctance behind it. He lifted a finger, "Honorable Ning, please choose one; consider it a thank you gift for today."

Qin Yu didn't refuse. He looked around and pointed towards the leftmost woman. "I'll take that one."

The corner of Soupman's eyes twitched. "Ning...Honorable Ning has good eyesight." He waved his hand dismissively and the other three women bowed and drew back. He lifted the red cloth from the tray to reveal a translucent crystal box within a thumb-sized bead inside. There was the phantom of a giant snake roaring within.

"In this crystal box is the inner core of a deep sea snake monster. Because it refused to accept the authority of the royal palace, it was suppressed and killed 30 years ago. This snake monster possessed an extremely high cultivation and touched upon the edge of a flood dragon transformation. If it succeeded, it would have been able to wander freely through the sea region and would have been far more difficult to kill."

Soupman sucked in a deep breath. He tore his eyes away from it and waved his hand, "Take it, take it, it's yours now!"

Qin Yu had a helpless expression. He thought about who could give a gift and do so with such an expression; there probably wasn't anyone that could be so shameless. Of course, he wouldn't refuse. He could tell from Soupman's complexion that this snake monster's inner core was very precious.

It was definitely at the Nascent Soul rank!

While he didn't know how he could use this inner core...well, it was best to just take it first.

Soupman watched with wide, blinking eyes as Qin Yu reached out a hand and then brought it back. The inner core and the crystal box both vanished from sight. Instantly, he felt his heart wrench and found it hard to breathe. His face paled and he weakly waved. "Just leave..." He couldn't say the following words, but Qin Yu could guess them: before I go back on my promise...

This Soupman was indeed like the rumors said he was; he regarded wealth as importantly as his life. Qin Yu suddenly rejoiced that he had casually accepted the gift just now. If he had done anything like modestly declining once or twice, he feared that Soupman would really have kept the inner core. Qin Yu looked at Soupman's pained expression, cupped his hands together, and turned to leave.

He hadn't wanted to stay in the royal palace for too long from the start. Moreover, who knew what would happen in this situation? This old bastard might renege on his promise.

Sure enough, that person knew how to make good use of people. That lofty and untouchable ruler of the sea races had assigned Soupman to guard the treasury, and by doing so it would be difficult for the treasury to not grow richer with every passing day.

While Qin Yu complained, he was also somewhat happy. Although he had suffered some troubles, he did receive a harvest and most importantly he didn't expose his identity. Even now, Qin Yu only considered that terrifying underground vine to be a powerful force hidden below the royal palace; he had never associated it with any person. Otherwise, if he knew the truth, he would have realized he had been too optimistic.

The doors to the mansion opened and Qin Yu stepped out. Before he could even smile, he stiffened. Outside, he encountered the young man who had brought him here. The man respectfully bowed and then turned, quickly walking away. "Grandmaster Ning, I will send you back." This man seemed to faintly understand something. Unconsciously, there was a bit more veneration in his voice.

Qin Yu nodded. Without saying anything he stepped into the carriage. After several breaths of time, it began to slowly move.

...

Outside the mansion stood a noble figure. She was a beautiful young girl with delicate scales shining between her eyebrows. Her name was Sea Lushy: Sea representing the great sea, Lushy representing all the verdant lush growth in the sea.

"Princess, Soupman has invited you in." A young maid came out and informed her in a respectful tone.

The princess nodded, but after taking several steps towards the mansion, she paused again. She looked at the gradually departing carriage and turned towards it, gently frowning.

Thinking a little, she turned and whispered something into the ears of a court lady.

The court lady revealed an embarrassed look.

The princess had a light expression. "I'm not ordering you to do anything, I'm just a bit curious."

The court lady rolled her eyes; she was familiar with the princess's character. If she didn't mean this then she shouldn't have said it, but now that she said it, the court lady could only brace herself and do it. She quietly dismissed herself and hurried away. She thought of waiting for a good time to make arrangements, and she definitely couldn't stir up trouble.

The carriage drove out of the royal palace and into a large street. The sounds of a radio shell transmitted through the air, coming into the carriage through a window that hadn't been fully closed.

“According to news that this station just obtained, the Array Symbol Family’s Southern River Office is being investigated for evasion of taxes by the Taxation Department. At this time, the Southern River Office has been sealed away and all related materials confiscated. It is reported that the Southern River Office evaded a tremendous amount of taxes and is facing imminent punishment. This station will continue reporting on this news for you. This spiral station reports the newest and fastest news, make sure to subscribe...”

The young seafolk man in the carriage smiled and explained, “This sort of matter happens every year. There are always rich and powerful families and companies that do this. Though they earn a massive amount of wealth every year, they still want to smuggle goods and avoid taxes. It seems that this time they are really in trouble.”

The young man didn’t gloat at all and he spoke with a light and unusual calm, perfectly in sync with his bearing. But, the explanation itself was superfluous and thus suspicious, so while no matter how naturally the young man spoke, this could only be a cover up.

Qin Yu thought about the rich smell of blood he encountered when he left the underground space. Although it had been cleaned up, it had still been extremely thick.

Many people should have died.

He nodded, completely expressionless beneath his black robes.

When it came to the internal affairs of the sea races, especially those that concerned the dangerous royal palace, he didn’t want to be involved in the least.

Soon, he arrived at Sea Spirit Pavilion.

After stepping off the carriage, the young man didn’t say anything more. He cupped his hands and boarded the carriage before leaving. It was just that before the carriage went too far, the young man pushed open the curtains and looked at the black-robed figure, a bit of annoyance in his eyes. He seemed to realize his own overreaction just now. He bitterly smiled and comforted himself. Honorable Ning should be very tired at this time, so he shouldn’t have realized anything.

Chapter 165 – Great Gift

There were already people waiting outside of Sea Spirit Pavilion. The moment Qin Yu stepped down from the carriage, a group rushed forwards to welcome him. The one leading them was Chief Manager Wu, and even Clearwood was there. He didn’t know whether it was an illusion or not, but when he glanced at her, he seemed to sense a feeling of relief coming from this icy woman’s eyes.

Besides these familiar people, there was also a man and woman. They had an elegant and impressive bearing, and looking at the wary young man and woman behind them, it wasn’t hard to guess who they were.

They nodded to each other. Chief Manager Wu seemed to sense that this wasn’t a good place for him to speak; he tactfully stepped to the side.

The Qing Family Patriarch spoke in a warm and courteous tone. “Greetings, Honorable Ning.”

That wise and virtuous Madame Qing only smiled gently, allowing all attention to be focused on her husband.

Qin Yu cupped his hands across his chest. "Patriarch Qing need not be so polite. I had the intention of paying a visit some time ago, but because there were too many matters I needed to attend to I've been delayed until now."

The Qing Family Patriarch smiled widely. "There is no need to speak so seriously Honorable Ning, since we are the ones who came to visit."

These words weren't too overly excessive.

Noble Court Avenue was a small group of peak powers located in the capital city. Even so, there were 37 families that were housed there, and while the Qing Family was one of them, they had been in decline these past years and didn't possess their former prestige.

As for Honorable Ning, he was the third ranked Purple Card, a legendary Spiritual Bestower, and also someone who had lasted almost an unprecedented 10 hours in the sea spirit baptism. And above all, he had appeared from nowhere with no roots at all. All the masters in Noble Court Avenue were wracking their minds and expending all efforts to establish relations with him. If they could meet him, even if it were only paying a visit, they would even bring their little sisters and daughters and allow him to freely choose from them.

Ever since the conclusion of the sea spirit baptism, the Qing Family had received many secret greetings; all of them wanted to have a chance to talk with Honorable Ning through them. The conditions they set forth were very attractive, but without exception, all of them were rejected. Although the Qing Family didn't have some hero in their family that had great wisdom or great courage, they were still able to stay in the top circles of powerful officials, and thus they did possess some sight and judgment.

After exchanging pleasantries, as the host, Qin Yu invited the Qing Family into Sea Spirit Pavilion. The seventh floor was full of workrooms but was also built for housing and entertaining guests. Qin Yu had come here several times before, but there was a change. While it wasn't too obvious, the style and quality of the surroundings had risen to another level.

It was clear that after the competition ended, Chief Manager Wu had personally come here and quietly redecorated.

Qin Yu didn't care much. He offered his guests a seat and a maid came to deliver tea and snacks. She glanced over at him with excitement, her small ears burning red. Thinking of it, if Honorable Ning had some time off from work and had any interest in her, she definitely wouldn't refuse him.

They chatted a bit before coming to the main subject.

The Qing Family Patriarch coughed. "Honorable Ning, Leon and my little daughter love each other, and me and my wife both approve of them. Now, the two of them aren't young anymore; it's about the age for marriage. I wonder if Honorable Ning has any objections regarding this?"

The two youths sitting in the corner instantly became the focus of everyone. As they noticed everyone looking towards them, they both flushed red.

Qin Yu smiled. "I fear that if I don't approve of this matter, Leon will revolt and abandon me as his teacher." His words left Leon a deep red. Leon seemed to want to say something but couldn't get the words out of his mouth. He was a bit embarrassed, but even more overjoyed. His teacher made a joke about him to show how close they were. Other people likely weren't close enough for his teacher to ever speak to them like this.

The Qing Family Patriarch smiled. "Since it's like this, I wonder whether Honorable Ning can manage their wedding?" While he tried to maintain a calm expression, a bit of worry appeared in his eyes.

To Leon and to the Qing Family, depending on whether or not Qin Yu decided to help manage the wedding, it would have a completely different meaning. One choice meant that they had a backer and the other meant that the situation had changed and their status would be shaken.

Qingqing was already aware of the intricacies behind this event. She gently pulled on Leon's sleeve. He hesitated for a moment before standing up and bowing deeply. "Teacher, if possible, please preside over your disciple's wedding."

Chief Manager Wu and Clearwood both looked on with smiles. But what happened following this surpassed their expectations and left shock flashing in their eyes.

There was a brief silence from beneath the black robe. "I'm afraid that I won't have the chance to preside over your wedding..."

The Qing Family Patriarch and Madame Qing's hearts sank. Their smiles started to falter.

Qingqing's eyes widened and she was slightly flustered.

Leon's lips flapped open. He slowly said, "It...it was this disciple...who was rash...teacher...teacher must have some...important matter..."

Qin Yu smiled and waved his hand. "Leon is my only disciple and I had already noticed his relationship with Qingqing from the start. If the two of them can walk down the same road together, I am of course happy for them. But, it's just that I have an extremely important matter to attend to and I cannot take time out to attend your wedding. However, as your teacher and as your elder, I shouldn't be lacking in gifts."

He turned around. "Chief manager, I remember that during the gambling, Wu Zetian bet a dwelling in the capital city. Have you obtained it yet?"

Chief Manager Wu's heart skipped a beat as he imagined a faint possibility. He couldn't help but stare at Leon, blatant envy thick in his eyes. He respectfully said, "The title deed is in hand. This is a courtyard that was recently built and the decorations and furniture within are nearly unused. It is located on the east side of the capital city near Noble Court Avenue; it is a very good area."

Qin Yu nodded. "That should save some trouble. Leon, teacher will give this dwelling to you and Qingqing as a wedding present."

This hand was more than amazing.

The Qing Family was considered a family with deep coffers, but it was actually impossible for them to casually give away such a large dwelling. It had to be known that Wu Zetian had spent more than ten

years constructing that courtyard and both the interior and exterior decorations were all top quality goods. All in all, while it wasn't worth more than 100 million spirit stones, it was almost that amount.

The Qing Family Patriarch and Madame Qing were shocked. They quickly declined, saying that even with these two juniors getting married, it still wasn't worth such a generous gift.

Leon and Qingqing also didn't dare to accept.

Qin Yu smiled and shook his head. "It's just a dwelling. I only fear that I won't live there and letting it idle away would be a waste. Leon, what do you think?"

Leon was just about to refuse, but he suddenly remembered that beneath his teacher's black robes, he was hiding his status as a human. He wasn't an idiot, otherwise he wouldn't possess such great talent as a sea spirit teacher.

Teacher, he...perhaps he was going to leave.

Yes, this had to be it.

As he thought of this, he was inexplicably flustered and also a bit sorrowful. He hesitated again and again before kneeling and pulling Qingqing down too. "I thank teacher for the generous gift."

Qin Yu flicked his sleeves and lifted the two up. "Chief manager, Manager Clearwood, after this period of seclusion I might leave the capital city for some time. I will have to ask you two to take good care of Leon for me."

Chief Manager Wu's heart stirred. He had heard from Old Sea already, but it seemed that Honorable Ning really did have thoughts of leaving the capital city. He nodded with deep veneration. "Rest assured, Honorable Ning."

Clearwood seemed a bit distracted. She only nodded a little, not saying much.

Being startled, the Qing Family Patriarch and Madame Qing hadn't noticed anything amiss at this moment. In their excitement, their earlier worry and unease had vanished. With this generous gift, even if Honorable Ning couldn't attend the wedding for some reason, it was still enough to indicate how valuable Leon was. In the future, as long as they managed this well and maintained a relationship with Grandmaster Ning, then the rise of their Qing Family would only be a matter of time.

After obtaining a satisfactory answer and knowing that Honorable Ning planned to go into seclusion for another period of time, the Qing Family Patriarch and Madame Qing stood up and bid their farewells. Qingqing also left with them. This was one of the traditions of the sea races; just before a young man and woman were married, they wouldn't meet in private again.

Leon stayed behind. He was silent, his head drooping down.

Chief Manager Wu didn't seem too surprised that Qin Yu would be leaving. He took out three storage shells and placed them on the table. "Honorable Ning, the first one is the complete earnings from the earlier gambling. The second is 20 million spirit stones from my master. There are also some soul strengthening treasures on the way, but they haven't yet reached the capital city. The third is Old Sea's gift to you."

He didn't know which day Honorable Ning would leave on, so he certainly needed to clarify everything before then. After handing over these three storage shells, he was visibly relieved. Carrying so much wealth on him had left him anxious and on high alert all the time, and at least with this the four sea mantis swordsmen would also be able to relax.

Qin Yu nodded and received the three storage shells. He casually asked, "Where's Old Sea?"

Clearwood answered, "Teacher's injuries may have stabilized, but in order to make sure there are no lingering damages, he needs to rest for a period of time."

And as everyone thought she had finished speaking, this cold and frigid woman suddenly asked, "Honorable Ning, are you really leaving?"

Chief Manager Wu frowned. Although everyone had guessed this, it wasn't too polite to blurt it out loud. But as he saw Clearwood's eyes, he seemed to realize something. A strange expression came over his face and he castigated her choices in his heart.

Qin Yu was surprised. He nodded; it wasn't like there was anything to hide. Old Sea was a very astute person so he had likely guessed this and told Chief Manager Wu when passing the gift over to him.

"You can't stay here?"

"I can't." Qin Yu smiled. He seriously said, "There are some matters that are waiting for me to resolve. Although the capital city is good, it isn't the home I must return to."

Clearwood's complexion dimmed. She nodded and didn't speak further.

Qin Yu had told her and Chief Manager Wu that he needed to return home; it was likely that only Leon knew just why his teacher had to leave. He was far too dazzling a figure now and an incident could occur at any moment. This was especially true with random invitations from the royal palace.

He had been alright this time, but what about next time? Or the time after that? There would eventually be a day when great mishap would occur. He was cautious about these things, so how could he not understand this point?

So, he needed to leave.

Once Chief Manager Wu and Clearwood left, Qin Yu looked at his depressed disciple. "It's fine, I have to leave sooner or later. Leaving safely is the best possible outcome. You should be overjoyed for me."

Leon's eyes glistened and turned a little red. "Teacher, will we ever see each other again?"

Qin Yu thought for a moment and shook his head. "I don't know. But what I do know is that you, Leon, will surely become a truly great person in the future. Brat, you can do it! Qingqing is a good girl, so don't disappoint her. Go, I have to enter seclusion. Before I leave I will bid you farewell."

Leon straightened himself and bowed. He took several steps back and left.

Qin Yu sighed.

It wasn't that he was too worried, it was just that the situation was forcing him to do this.

When he left Soupman's mansion, he never imagined he would encounter Princess Lushy. He thought this disguise was perfect, but that little girl was already suspicious of him.

That's right. While she had managed to maintain a tranquil demeanor, she couldn't hide the flash of insight in her eyes from Qin Yu.

With her status, wanting to find recordings of him was extremely simple. While those couldn't prove anything, as long as she had just a bit of evidence it would only be a matter of time until he was exposed.

Thus, Qin Yu could not wait. He immediately had to go into seclusion and refine the last of the five-element spiritual objects, and then leave the capital city before his identity was exposed.

Chapter 166 – Those on the Road

Sea Spirit Pavilion announced that Honorable Ning would be entering seclusion once more. As for the special edition Supreme Books that were signed previously, those would be delayed for an indefinite period of time. Of course, this condition was already written into the agreement when it was signed, so even though there was an indefinite extension period, Sea Spirit Pavilion wouldn't need to compensate their customers.

If any other sea spirit teacher dared to be so capricious in their actions then perhaps all of these agreements would be cancelled in an extremely short period of time. However, in this case, there was actually only a very small number of people who did so.

This was because those people who had unhesitatingly spent a great amount of wealth to sign the special edition Supreme Book had done so to develop relations with Honorable Ning. As for waiting...that didn't matter at all!

...

In the royal palace, within that grand hall, the Sea Sovereign wrinkled his eyebrows. He seemed to be lost deep in thought with a puzzled expression often appearing on his face. After some time, a respectful voice sounded from outside. The Sea Sovereign finally spoke up, lightly saying, "Enter."

The hall doors were pushed open and several high ranking ministers excitedly walked in. The one leading the pack was Soupman.

"Everything is fine, everything is fine!" He fell to his knees. "Your Majesty, this old servant is so glad to see you..."

Before his voice fell, there was a loud bang that sounded out like a bell. Soupman tumbled backwards several times before crashing into the ground. The floor trembled but the hall itself wasn't damaged in the least.

Soupman violently coughed and crawled back up to his feet. His round and smiling face was now a mess. "Your Majesty, are you still angry about what happened before?"

The Sea Sovereign waved his hand. "It was an accident. This Solitude lost control of his strength momentarily." But as he looked down upon alert figures of the officials below, he couldn't help but notice a trace of awkwardness in their eyes.

“Congratulations Your Majesty!”

The awkwardness was only temporary; everyone soon began to smile.

The Sea Sovereign said, “This time, it could be said that misfortune has turned into a blessing.”

“What does Your Majesty mean?”

“If there isn’t an accident, then this Solitude should be fine for the next 20 years.”

These words left several of the ministers overjoyed. Soupman shook with excitement. “This old servant knew that Honorable Ning had the skills. At least the thank you gift I gave him wasn’t for nothing.”

“Your Majesty, may I ask whether or not you know how Honorable Ning achieved this?”

The Sea Sovereign hesitated for a moment before shaking his head. “Everyone here should already be aware that the Companion Vine is of one body with this Solitude. Even so, it had always rebuffed this Solitude. This is normal, because in the end, this Solitude is the one dragging it to its death. However, even though that is the way things are, this Solitude still has a faint link to it. Honorable Ning used some method to increase the Companion Vine’s strength in a single day so that it has a greater capacity to contain power.”

Soupman’s eyes flashed. “If that’s so, then we cannot allow him to leave.”

“Of course! If Honorable Ning has the ability to strengthen the Companion Vine, then he cannot take half a step away from the capital city!”

“This might be rude and unreasonable, but for His Majesty’s sake, it must be done.”

“Immediately assign people to watch him...I hope that Honorable Ning will understand why we do this.”

The high ranking officials began to speak one after another, each more and more imposing and daring than the last. In their opinion, as long as they could maintain their Majesty’s safety, nothing else mattered.

Honorable Ning...he did have an extraordinary status, but so what?

...

Deep beneath the sea, giant whales shuttled through the waters. Each one was covered in thick and heavy scales, and when their mouths occasionally opened, they would reveal rows of sword-sharp teeth that would slice and crush the mouthfuls of shrimp and fish that entered.

Within the sea region, killer whales were one of the most fierce and dangerous races. They were born with the inherent ability and nature to slaughter. There were few people that dared to provoke a single killer whale, much less these five that moved together. As their giant bodies cast a shadow beneath them, countless seafolk fled in a horrified panic.

On the backs of the killer whales were halos of light. The light was able to push away the water, forming small enchantments similar to the one that surrounded the capital city.

In the center, on the back of the largest killer whale, there were several buildings set up in the enchantment. Their appearance was similar to several Thousandcraft Houses, and for some unknown reason, there wasn't the least bit of shaking.

A girl that looked to be around 11 or 12 years old was sitting there. She had a pair of deep blue eyes and was as beautiful as a calm sea. At this time, she was pursing her lips, looking extremely bored.

“Seventh Aunty, it’s really too boring to just hurry along like this. How about we stop for a day and take a look around?” As if she were afraid that she would be instantly refused, she raised her hand and said, “I promise that I will absolutely listen to your words and I won’t stir up any trouble at all.”

The one called Seventh Aunt was a strong and sturdy woman. Yes, that was right, a woman. Although using the term ‘strong and sturdy’ might seem rude, it was a truly appropriate description. She had dark skin and a body that was like an iron tower. In fact, she even seemed sturdier and larger than some of the guards that stood in the distance.

As the woman heard this, she smirked. “Little brat, did you forget what happened last time? Just keep yourself from moving about; there are only a few more days of travelling left. Once we reach the capital city, I promise that you can play however you want. How about it?”

Her soft and gentle voice was a shocking contrast to her appearance. If one closed their eyes, they would think of a young lady holding an umbrella beneath the misty rain...in other words, well, it was best to keep one’s eyes closed.

The young girl seemed a bit disheartened. She quietly muttered to herself, “Whatever, it was just a little accident; who thought I would have such bad luck?” She blinked her eyes pitifully, seemingly completely like a spoiled child.

However, the woman had already learned from what happened last time. No matter what the young girl said or did, she wouldn’t budge in the slightest. The young girl was well known for being an impish devil that had a way with words. Since she couldn’t argue, the woman finally decided to change the subject. “Miss, we are going to the capital city for official business this time. You should already have heard of Honorable Ning’s reputation. Madame has repeatedly stated that it is not good to be waiting for so long.”

The young girl shrunk her head back with a bitter expression. Since this other person was able to even cause her mother to move, there was simply nothing she could do. But what a pity, she had heard that the blue lotus flowers in this part of the sea region were an astonishingly beautiful sight; who knew when she would next be able to come back here?

She couldn’t help but feel increasingly disappointed about this, and correspondingly, her dissatisfaction with this Grandmaster Ning began to grow. No matter how she thought about it, he was the reason why she would miss out on this chance. She groaned – she would definitely remember this!

After a brief moment, she started to laugh out loud as she thought about how unreasonable and ridiculous her thoughts were. Moreover, with that Honorable Ning’s status, he wouldn’t fear her at all. It was exactly the opposite; she would have to carefully flatter him.

But after thinking about it a little bit more, she didn't find it funny anymore. She looked around in a bored daze before suddenly asking, "Seventh Aunty, do you think we will meet that person again?"

This question came from nowhere and without any explanation. But the woman had heard it countless times already, so many times that it seemed that her ears would be grinded to nubs by it, so she knew what the young girl meant. She casually tossed out a few words, saying that the sea region was endlessly vast, and the chances for two random people to meet once more were so low as to be negligible...

The woman's complexion turned serious and she earnestly said, "If you're destined to meet then you will!"

...

At the same time.

If there was a pair of eyes that looked down from the highest heavens, then they would discover that with the capital city as the center, in an almost opposite direction from the five killer whales, there was a worn out troop heading towards that extinguishable sun below the sea.

They clearly didn't have the momentum and valor of the five killer whales. The sea wolves trudging along had dark looks and a weary appearance, but they still struggled to run. Each sea wolf carried a rider on their back, and each rider wore armor and had an indifferent expression.

A massive dark shadow waded in from the depths of the sea, and its malevolent eyes locked onto the group. But at this time, the person riding on the front sea wolf suddenly looked up, and that massive dark shadow stopped in its tracks. It cried out once before fleeing far away.

This wasn't unusual at all, because the eyes of that person were far too dreadful. A cold wind seemed to blow out from them, drifting into the heart like a winter storm, invading the soul and causing one's heartbeat to nearly stop and blood to almost freeze.

The man lifted a hand and the troop stopped. The riders sat up, their sharp eyes sweeping the surroundings. A vicious aura began to spread out from their bodies. Without a doubt, they were the sharpest and most dangerous warriors.

The leader slapped the clearly larger sea wolf he was riding. It turned and ran over to the carriage that the 36 wolf riders were guarding. Then, the leader respectfully said, "Vice Priest, should we rest here for some time or should we hurry along?"

The man was visibly tired but his eyes remained firm and stoic, as if with a single word from the man in the carriage the entire troop would continue on without any complaints.

After several breaths of time, a calm voice sounded out from the carriage. "Rest for two hours."

The leader lifted a hand and made a signal. The 36 wolf riders immediately scattered. Some began to feed their mounts, some hugged themselves and fell asleep, and some remained on high alert.

"Xue Zheng, how long until we arrive?" The Vice Priest asked.

The leader bowed. "According to our current speed, it will be at most four days."

The Voice Priest's voice remained tranquil. "I know that you are all tired, but if it is possible, please be a little quicker."

A bit of worry seemed to cross Xue Zheng's stony face. He shouted out, "Yes!"

Xue Zheng turned and said, "Rest time has been reduced to an hour!"

It was clear that he held a high level of respect amongst the wolf rider troop; no one objected to him.

For an hour, the 36 wolf riders divided themselves into three groups that would take turns resting. This was to ensure that they would remain nearly at full defense for the rest of the time. Besides their leader, no one knew why they had been suddenly transferred to this mission to escort the Vice Priest to the capital city in the most secretive manner possible.

But, it was clear that this was an extremely important mission.

Soon, the troop continued on their way. Within the carriage, besides the Vice Priest, there was also a woman in white robes. Her limpid eyes seemed full of worry.

"Vice Priest, I wonder if something is wrong with grandfather's decision this time. The Saint Flower isn't in too good a condition now, and if we leave the altar I fear that..." She hesitated as she spoke.

The Vice Priest bitterly smiled and the wrinkles on his forehead seemed to increase. "Dongdong, I know you are worried, but the Saint Flower's condition grows increasingly worse with time. If we don't grab hold of this chance, then I fear it will truly wither away before long."

Panic flashed in the eyes of the girl named Dongdong. It was true: the problem with the Saint Flower had reached a crucial point.

The Vice Priest tried to comfort her. "Don't be afraid, I have carefully discussed things with the priests. Honorable Ning's strength can be trusted. If he helps, the Saint Flower can definitely emerge from this danger."

Dongdong's eyes brightened. "Really?"

"Mm." The Vice Priest nodded. "If it weren't for this reason, how could the priests take such a risk?"

He calmly smiled. As he saw the girl clearly relax, he gently sighed inwardly.

Honorable Ning really might be the legendary Spiritual Bestower, however, the Saint Flower was in the end an extraordinary case. No one knew for certain whether or not this was possible.

But the Saint Flower really couldn't wait any longer.

The problem was far more serious than anyone knew!

The wolf riders raced forwards. This troop came from the most wild and unruly tribe of the old dynasty, one that had even contested with the capital city. Now, they continued to move forwards, carrying hope in their hearts.

Chapter 167 – The Accident After Gathering the Five-element Spiritual Objects

The focus within the capital city suddenly shifted to the dignified and solemn Noble Court Avenue. Today, it was a scene of joyful festivity, as flowers in purple and red covered the streets, scattered all over.

The Qing Family's daughter was being married off today.

There were roomfuls of guests as honored figures gathered from all over. The line of carriages which came to extend congratulations and offer presents stretched from one end of the street to the other. Countless young ladies from other families felt their hearts burn like acid even as they felt deep pangs of envy.

It had to be known that even though the people who lived on Noble Court Avenue were all impressive figures, they still couldn't casually set up such a tremendous scene. At the very least, the Qing Family couldn't. Today's extra celebrations had been a unanimous decision decided by all the households living on Noble Court Avenue.

It wasn't because they respected the Qing Family, but rather because of that high and lofty mysterious figure who stood behind the groom, that mystical great person who stood upon the highest clouds. This was their way of expressing their goodwill and respect towards him.

When the Qing Family first announced that Honorable Ning would be absent from the wedding, this caused the thoughts of countless people to shake, and it even gave some of them a sudden pleasant surprise. But soon, the gift list was revealed to the public, causing all of their thoughts to be grinded to dust.

There was no one on Noble Court Avenue who didn't know about Wu Zetian's dwelling. It had been in construction for over ten years and it was obvious how high the costs had been. Now, that dwelling which had been barely occupied, was now on the top of the gift list.

This sufficiently indicated just how highly Honorable Ning regarded his disciple.

No...in the eyes of the various households of Noble Court Avenue, and even in the opinion of the entire capital city, this had already surpassed the category of being highly regarded. Rather, it was a close intimacy, even considering him as a nephew!

Otherwise, how could he give out such a great present!

Thus, this created the scene of the Qing Family's happy celebrations soaring to the heavens.

The capital city all watched with envy.

"Congratulations, congratulations!"

"For the Qing Family to obtain such a dragon-like son-in-law, that is the envy of all others!"

"A perfect match, a perfect couple!"

The Qing Family Patriarch widely smiled. He was finally able to vent all the grievances that had slowly gathered in his chest in these past years. His appearance seemed much younger as he greeted all the arriving guests.

“The groom has come!”

It was unknown who had shouted this, but countless seafolk turned around. They saw the grand escort caravan arriving. Chief Manager Wu brightly smiled as he cupped his hands together towards everyone around him.

Leon had a worried look. It was only when he arrived at the Qing Family residence that he regained his composure. He quietly knelt and bowed to the Qing Family Patriarch and finally called him father.

The Qing Family Patriarch brushed his beard and laughed, affectionately pulling Leon upwards as they exchanged some words. The bride was soon brought to the front door by her mother.

Madame Qing wiped away her tears. She said in a quiet voice to her daughter. “From now on, it will be the two of you. I hope you live happily ever after.”

Leon took hold of Qingqing’s hands. As he looked at her red dress and her soft hands, his heart raced with excitement. Gratitude bloomed from the depths of his heart, and in a voice that only he could hear, he whispered to himself, “Teacher, do you see? I finally married Qingqing. Thank you!”

...

High above were clouds, and beyond that lay the starry skies. The starry skies divided the daytime. Countless years ago, on some dark night, a meteor raced past the horizon, dragging a beautiful tail of flame in its wake as it crashed into the earth. The ground collapsed, instantly torn apart to reveal a fathomless canyon. The terrifying impact force exploded outwards, ripping everything to shreds. The wild waves swept out, swallowing all for over a thousand miles. After an unknown period of time, perhaps because rainwater gathered here or perhaps because an underground river had burst open, a current of water gradually appeared. It continued to expand, until one day, this shattered land became a giant lake swamp. Mist gradually rose up, covering the lake swap. As lives were swallowed up one after another, this place slowly became a danger zone that people rarely ever visited. Thus, in the depths of the canyon, where a giant rock was being eroded by endless streams of water, the meteor finally came to a peaceful pause after a long journey through the starry skies. Over time, the eroding water slowly washed away at the giant stone. It became smaller and smaller, until eventually it was the size of a thumb. One day, the earth shook and rumbled and the stone was thrust towards the surface. As it appeared, the sound of splitting air sounded out, clearly audible for hundreds of miles.

Dantian sea –

Lotus seed, willow branch, crystal, round bead – four spiritual objects floated outside the Golden Core, resonating with each. At this time, the four spiritual objects cried out together, cheering in joy. At this time, between the lotus seed and round bead, space suddenly shook. A thumb-sized metal stone suddenly appeared.

Weng –

An endlessly sharp aura erupted. It was like 10,000 swords slashing out together, capable of splitting apart the world!

Whoosh –

The light of black water surged out!

Whoosh –

Blue divine light sparkled!

Whoosh –

Red flames ignited!

Whoosh –

A halo of yellow earth suddenly rose up!

Ever since obtaining the Five Element Sword Diagram, Qin Yu had pursued this path with a fervent obsession. He underwent great hardships, and after experiencing countless twists and turns, perils, and nearly dying numerous times, on this day he was finally able to gather all of the five-element spiritual objects within him.

Qin Yu opened his eyes. Though he remained calm, he still couldn't help but shake with joy. The five-element spiritual objects were not just treasures, but a massive good fortune, an incredible lucky chance. Now everything was ready to go. Once he used the Great Divided Heaven Sutra to split his Golden Core into magic power sources of the five elements, he would finally be able to cultivate the true Five Element Sword Diagram. He could imagine the rise in his strength, and it also represented his limitless potential in the future!

Good fortune lays within disaster, and disaster lurks within good fortune.

This was a very, very old saying, so old that no one knew whether it was some wise sage who had struggled to come up with it, or whether it was some bad luck idiot who had randomly mumbled it.

But today, Qin Yu suddenly thought that this saying...was too bad luck!

Perhaps there was some dark will in the universe that didn't want to see Qin Yu obtain such a good fortune. Thus, it inadvertently began to move, slowly pushing things along a certain direction. Like this, a change would occur without warning. This change would roar out, tearing apart all guises and exposing everything to the world.

Within the dantian sea, outside of the Golden Core, the evenly distributed five-element spiritual objects suddenly lost control. Or, it could be said that this was their instinctual will, something that couldn't be stopped. Thus that white gold, black water, blue wood, red fire, and yellow metal, began to spin around. They were like five isolated islands that were suddenly linked together.

Then....

White metal flowed into black water.

Black water rushed into blue wood.

Blue wood ignited red fire.

Red fire submerged yellow earth.

Yellow earth drilled into white metal.

Qin Yu had no idea just what was occurring. His instincts first told him that this change was a good deed, but for this to occur in the sea race's capital city, this good deed might turn into calamity, one so great it might even push him beyond redemption.

His soul erupted with all its strength as he tried to prevent the five-element spiritual objects from changing. But, reality showed that all his efforts were futile. So, he could only stare helplessly on as the strength of the five elements began to spin faster and faster, recklessly rushing through his body like a great raging river.

This great river gradually released a great strength. From five directions, it tore at the Golden Core atop the Great Dao base, wanting to transform part of its strength into its own. Sweat gushed out, instantly turned the black robes soaking wet. Qin Yu's eyes fiercely flashed open as he repressed a roar in this throat.

Within his dantian sea, the Golden Core trembled!

This was also another change beyond all expectations. In a flash, countless thoughts raced through Qin Yu's mind. He didn't know what would happen if his core was divided, but if he continued to resist, his Golden Core would be torn to shreds. At that time...things would really go beyond control.

He clenched his teeth and decisiveness flashed in his eyes. Qin Yu lifted a hand and slapped a palm against his forehead.

The palm landed between his eyebrows. When it did, a loud sound emerged from his dantian sea.

Like a bead had broken.

Like this, on the Great Dao base, that Golden Core which shined with a radiant golden light broke to pieces. It shattered into five equal fragments, and with a whistle, they flew out and were completely swallowed by the white metal, black water, blue wood, red fire, and yellow earth.

Qin Yu's body turned rigid. As his Golden Core broke apart, all of his aura was suddenly emptied out, completely restrained. Even so, the magic power still in his body began to wildly revolve according to the Great Divide Heaven Sutra's law formula.

Hum –

Hum –

The five-element spiritual objects trembled as they began to fuse together with the pieces of the Golden Core. They were undergoing their most essential transformation at this moment, but, this transformation required a gargantuan amount of heaven and earth strength.

Thus, at this time, Qin Yu's rigid body became like a black hole, crazily swallowing in all of the heaven and earth spiritual energy from all around him.

The capital city had been built here, so it could be understood that the land here was extraordinary. Deep below the earth, seven great spirit veins connected together, providing a source of spiritual strength so abundant that it transcended common sense. It was also because of this that when the

amount of heaven and earth spiritual strength became thinner somewhere, it was that much more obvious.

Within Sea Spirit Pavilion, numerous sea spirit teachers look up towards the same direction. Then as the scope of influence began to rapidly expand, countless seafolk frowned, some with faces of surprise, as they looked towards Sea Spirit Pavilion.

Rumble rumble –

The sound of crashing water began to sound out. This was the flow of heaven and earth spiritual energy. If a person could see the revolution of spiritual energy, they would discover that a massive vortex had appeared with Sea Spirit Pavilion at its center. This vortex was pulling the surrounding spiritual strength into a single point where it vanished without a trace.

Whoosh –

Whoosh –

Sea race powerhouses flew to Sea Spirit Pavilion with serious expressions on their faces.

Chief Manager Wu welcomed them. He cupped his hands together, “Everyone, Honorable Ning is currently in seclusion and cannot be disturbed at this moment. I ask for your understanding.”

Many seafolk seemed to finally understand. If it was that person, then everything could be explained. After all, Honorable Ning had fierce methods and everyone in the capital city had seen them. While the current scene was excessive, if it was due to Honorable Ning then it wasn’t anything too out of the ordinary.

But, just what was Honorable Ning doing?

More and more seafolk began to arrive. They gathered in rows outside of Sea Spirit Pavilion and watched with wide eyes, waiting to see what was about to happen.

And of course, they weren’t left disappointed. In the eyes of all present, that incomparably fierce Honorable Ning gave them an expected surprise.

Rumble rumble –

The vortex of spiritual strength became increasingly large. Strong gales blasted through the air and left robes flapping in the wind.

Chief Manager Wu’s eyes narrowed. He thought inwardly that Honorable Ning was truly extraordinary; creating such a ruckus was as simple as wiggling his fingers. After today’s events, Sea Spirit Pavilion’s reputation would become that much more glorious. Hehe, and if this was wrapped into a story and spread out, it would be the best advertising. Moreover, it was the genuine truth that could be verified by all those present today.

Chief Manager Wu chuckled at his own quick wits. But soon, he couldn’t maintain his smile any longer, because as more time passed, the wind seemed to...become larger and larger...

Looking at the wild winds and gradually trembling Nine Layer Building, Chief Manager Wu was left utterly dumbfounded.

His only thought was that before there could be any extra limelight, this entire place would be broken apart!

Chapter 168 – Lousy Luck

A sea spirit teacher commented with a stunned expression, “Chief...Chief Manager Wu...what is going on...?”

Chief Manager Wu paled. He thought, if you ask me, just who the hell am I supposed to ask? If it were anyone that dared to touch his Nine Layer Building then he would have already personally gone and beaten them up into a pulp. But right now, the person doing this was Grandmaster Ning. Even if he were to completely wreck Nine Layer Building, he could still only watch on as it happened. Moreover, he would have to stop anyone from getting close.

But just what was going on!?

“Chief manager, things are beginning to grow out of control. The situation has already affected the several surrounding stores and buildings. If this continues, I fear that...” Someone from Sea Spirit Pavilion rushed over, followed by many others with ugly complexions. They began to argue with each other in a low voice; it was clear they had already experienced some troubles along the way.

Chief Manager Wu waved his hand dismissively. “Tell them as long as their losses can be verified, they will all be recompensed by my Sea Spirit Pavilion!”

After obtaining this guarantee, the crowd suddenly calmed down. Still, there were many people with long faces, especially two shop owners who had stores with long lines of inherited history. Their storefronts had been passed down from generation to generation and maintained this entire time. Although they couldn’t compare to the shininess of newly built storefronts, their background history and style weren’t something that money could buy.

Now it was all destroyed!

But no one argued back and no one asked anyone to stop what was going on. It was clear that today’s events involved Honorable Ning, and judging by the current situation, it was something extremely important. If they managed to offend Honorable Ning then they really wouldn’t have anywhere to cry.

Clearwood had gone to invite Old Sea. When he arrived, the crowd calmed down once more. The numerous sea race powerhouses cupped their hands in respect upon seeing him.

Old Sea had a light and pale demeanor. He greeted everyone as he walked to the base of Nine Layer Building. He narrowed his eyes and looked around.

Hua la la –

Several windows were torn out by the howling wind. They came crashing down, eliciting alarmed cries from the crowd. The people parted as they tried to dodge, but there were those unlucky ones who were struck in the head. Blood flowed out as they were all left in a pitiful state.

Old Sea's lips twitched and a look of helplessness flashed in his eyes. Little Friend Ning, you're already dazzling enough, so if you really wanted to leave the capital city you shouldn't have done something so eye-catching.

But as he thought of the news that was just released from the royal palace, a complex look appeared in his eyes.

The sea races had an old saying – dig a pit and jump in and it will only get deeper. In his opinion, Qin Yu's actions were proving this.

...

If one could rank things like loyalty, flattery, and dog-like devotion, then Soupman would be ranked amongst the best, even amidst the giant royal palace. At this moment, he was standing in that grand and opulent hall, conversing with that Sovereign of the Sea. He would often deliver lines of praise so sickly sweet that it left others embarrassed for him, but he still maintained a serious expression the entire time, as if he were having a personal heart-to-heart talk...one couldn't help but admit that if one's flattery skills could reach such a level, it was quite amazing.

The Sea Sovereign smiled in anger. He waved his hand and scolded, "Is this how you show your respect towards this Solitude? Hurry up and screw off! Go and manage this Solitude's money; if a single coin is missing, there will be no forgiveness."

Soupman smiled obsequiously and slapped his chest, his huge meaty body waving around. "Your Majesty need not worry, you should already be aware of my methods. If a single person dares to touch even just one coin of yours, I will make sure they lose everything."

This master and servant relationship had been formed even before the time when the throne had changed. As such their relationship was far closer than others could imagine, and it was also the reason why they could speak so freely to each other.

At this time, the Sea Sovereign's eyebrows drew up. His gaze turned outside the hall.

Several breaths later, Soupman also sensed something. A surprised look came over his face. "It seems that it's coming from the direction of Sea Spirit Pavilion."

The Sea Sovereign nodded. "It is that Honorable Ning."

Soupman was like a cat that had its tail stepped on. He leapt up and cried out, "What, what? It's something related to Honorable Ning? What has happened to him?"

The Sea Sovereign shook his head. "I cannot see the specifics."

Soupman cupped his hands together, turned around, and ran away. "Forgive me Your Majesty, this old servant of yours needs to go and have a look. No matter what it is, nothing can happen to Honorable Ning!"

These words weren't because he cared for Qin Yu.

...

On the edge of the capital city, in a small courtyard, Guard Captain Meng Li had settled his new love interest Xiao Qing here. These past few days he had been enjoying his sweet time with his new lover, every day a day of joy and pleasure. Of course, he couldn't bring Xiao Qing back home to his family because there was a ferocious mother tiger there, thus it was best to keep her hidden here.

Meng Li had just enjoyed a good romp with Xiao Qing. He was lying back on his bed, enjoying the attention she was placing on him. He chuckled and slapped her butt and said, "Go and prepare some washing water for me. I have some official business to deal with in a bit and I smell too much."

Xiao Qing smiled. She stepped off the bed, draped on some robes, and walked out. Guard Captain Meng Li seemed to be enjoying her presence still, but his mind had already switched to other recent events.

Suddenly, there was a sharp scream from outside. Meng Li sat up. His very first thought was that the mother tiger back home had finally found him and he immediately prepared himself to flee. But outside, there was only the voice of Xiao Qing and no one else, nor did he hear the sounds of the courtyard door being pushed open. His eyes began to blaze with anger; was there someone who dared to steal a look at his woman!?

He rushed out. Xiao Qing was slumped on the floor, sobbing with a frightened look. Her legs were splayed apart, making her nudity all the more visible.

Meng Li shouted out, "Baby, what happened? I will take responsibility for you!"

"M-m-m-m-master...a...sword...f-f-flew...away..."

Xiao Qing pointed at a nearby well as she spoke, completely scared.

Meng Li frowned. Could there have been some sort of treasure hidden in the well? If it could fly away...it was clear that it wasn't something simple at all. And most importantly, if it flew away from the well in his residence, no matter how he thought about it, this meant it was his!

As he thought about how a treasure sword had been hidden in the well for such a long time and yet he hadn't known about it, Meng Li wanted to slap himself senseless. But, it was far too late to beat himself up about it. He shouted in breathless anger, "Which way did it fly towards!?"

"Th-th-there..." Xiao Qing lifted a hand and pointed.

Whoosh –

Meng Li shot up into the skies. As he adjusted his pants, his eyes glowed with a bloodthirsty light. If anyone dared to take his treasures, he would chop them up!

...

Qin Yu was now extremely worried. His Golden Core had shattered, but because of the Great Divided Heaven Sutra he didn't feel any pain; it was only that his soul consciousness and body were temporarily isolated from each other. It was also because of this that he could clearly feel the chaos being stirred up outside. A foreboding feeling gradually rose within him and yet he wasn't capable of stopping it.

Within his dantian sea, the five-element spiritual objects had fused with his Golden Core. A strange transformation occurred within them, causing their desire for spiritual energy to reach the peak in a

short period of time. Even though the vortex of spiritual energy was fierce, it still couldn't satisfy their desire. Thus, in his dantian sea, the five spheres of light that were colored white, black, blue, red, and yellow started to tremble in instability, like five volcanoes that could erupt at any moment.

Qin Yu didn't doubt that the strength of these five volcanoes was more than enough to reduce him to pieces, as well as cause a massive fireworks show for the seafolk casually watching for fun outside.

He had put so much hard work into gathering these five-element spiritual objects, but in an instant his joy had turned to sorrow. Not only were his plans completely turned upside down, but he had been forced into a perilous situation...just what was going on!

He suppressed his chaotic thoughts. His divine sense stirred and a storage shell opened up. The mountain-sized pile of spirit stones began to fly out, filling the entire workroom. The pure spiritual strength contained within seemed to be drawn out by something as it surged outwards. Every spirit stone only contained a limited amount of spiritual strength, but with millions of them gathered together, it was enough to form a raging flow of spiritual strength. This new energy joined together with the vortex of heaven and earth spiritual energy outside and then started to rumble into Qin Yu's body.

This method of absorbing spiritual strength was overly exaggerated. Even though Qin Yu possessed a potent mortal body, he still found it difficult to withstand. Traces of red began to pour out from his pores. But even with this new and crazier flow of energy, the five spheres of light within his dantian sea remained dissatisfied. Their cries were like thunderous roars. Spiritual strength...they needed more spiritual strength!

Qin Yu bitterly smiled. Could it be that in the end he would be blown apart by the five-element spiritual objects he had refined inside his body? This was far too ridiculous.

His thoughts raced and he gnashed his teeth. If he were to really die here, he was sure his death would be ranked amongst the top ten most horrible ways of dying in the cultivating world.

Rumble rumble –

Within the storage shell, over 300 million spirit stones rushed out at once, submerging Qin Yu beneath them.

In the human world, spirit stones were the size of a finger. The sea races were wealthier, so their spirit stones were about 50% larger.

If dozens or hundreds were gathered together, it wasn't much at all. But when hundreds of millions were joined together it was enough to form a real spiritual stone mountain. Right now, what Qin Yu was doing was creating this mountain in his workroom.

A terrifying pressure instantly arrived. The sound of breaking bones rang out from within his body. He didn't feel any pain because his soul consciousness had been separated, but watching his own mortal body suffer such devastating damage wasn't something to be happy about either.

The workroom walls and floor began to emit creaking moans. Qin Yu sighed inwardly. He knew that he had walked by the riverside for too long, and it was finally time to wet his feet.

This was simply...lousy luck!

...

Chief Manager Wu could sense the gloating expressions on many faces. He sensed one pair of eyes flicker to him and in the next moment someone else would glance at him. One didn't need to be a genius to know that these were all well-known figures in the sea spirit community. Sea Spirit Pavilion's reputation had drastically risen in these past days, soaring over and dominating all other competition and influences, so they had long since been jealous!

Humph, envy, this was envy.

You want to see my embarrassed and shamed expression? I, Old Wu, will not let any of you succeed.

Thus, he took a deep breath, and then took another deep breath. He maintained a tranquil demeanor and his lips even curved up a little, as if he were happy.

As if he already knew about today's events.

Yes, this was the sort of image he wanted to project.

The scope of the spiritual strength vortex increased again, forcing the crowd back even further. The wind associated with it became even more terrifying. The normally incomparably magnificent and dignified Nine Layer Building seemed to be completely stripped down. It looked a bit distressed now, even a bit inelegant.

Not too far away, a sea spirit teacher worriedly whispered, "Please don't destroy my workroom, there are still many things I haven't taken out..."

Before he could finish speaking, he was silenced by Chief Manager Wu's fierce gaze. As for his remaining words, he quickly swallowed them back down and lowered his head.

Chief Manager Wu coughed. "Everyone can rest assured! When our Sea Spirit Pavilion was constructed, we already took enough precautions to ensure everyone's safety. The outside facade might be ruined, but the main body of the building will be fine."

This wasn't a false boast at all, thus Chief Manager Wu was naturally calm and fully confident in his words.

But that was the way things were. What happened next occurred without any indication at all.

Kacha –

Kacha –

As if a giant tree was breaking, as if mountains were collapsing, as everyone watched, the seventh floor of the Nine Layer Building suddenly fell apart!

Chapter 169 – Incredibly Rich

When Chief Manager Wu spoke just now, his voice wasn't too high but it wasn't too low either. His intention was to inform all those looking on that his heart was still and others shouldn't try to take pleasure in any misfortunes that might happen. So, when the seventh floor was destroyed and started

to cause the chain collapse of the entire Nine Layer Building, many of those people turned to him with unabashed taunting gazes.

This slap back was simply far too loud! Hehe, look, everyone look, Chief Manager Wu's face could actually turn such a color that it's actually greener than green iron! Incredible! Wonderful!

"My sea spirits, my materials!" The sea spirit teacher who fell silent suddenly shouted out loud, his entire face deathly pale before he fainted to the ground. Although the other seafolk around him weren't so fragile, their complexions were actually extremely ugly. To a sea spirit teacher, their workroom was their most important holy ground, a place more valuable than a home in their heart. Now, they could only watch helplessly as their workrooms were utterly ruined; how tragic was this?

Countless bitter eyes looked up. They wanted to speak, hesitated, but then...they simply stopped. It wasn't just that they were speechless, but all their thoughts came to a complete halt and it was difficult for them to think of anything else.

Pika paka –

If there was a series of sounds that echoed out, it was the jaws of all the seafolk dropping together and of all their eyes popping wide open. They were all left in a trance-like daze. It was unknown how long passed before someone suddenly managed to sputter out in a high-pitched voice, "Spirit...spirit stones..."

What nonsense. Of course those were spirit stones!

As countless people cursed inwardly at this person, they also regained their composure. They watched the raging flood of spirit stones gush out from the destroyed seventh floor and groaned in their hearts. One could show off their wealth, but did they have to do so in such a cruel and exaggerated way that no one else could live around it?

Gulp –

The sound of everyone gulping occurred in unison, actually causing a loud resonating sound. Many eyes turned blood red, filled with a blazing heat. Everyone here had seen spirit stones before, but 99.999% of them had never seen so many of them together. It was simply a giant spirit stone mountain!

Chief Manager Wu's lips twitched as he thought about how the Nine Layer Building that had been built with so much effort and that had been kept in great condition by him all this time, had been blown apart by such a giant mountain of spirit stones. He howled in sorrow in his heart: Honorable Ning, Honorable Ning, why do you have to cause such a scene all the time? I have never offended you!

Old Sea had an extraordinary status and had long since left the crowd. In a teahouse that hadn't yet been affected by the chaos, he steeped a pot of tea and looked on from afar. As a great expert, he had to have the demeanor of a great expert. No matter what happened, it was necessary to maintain the aura of restrained control at all times.

Because of this, he couldn't watch the fun from up close. Oh well, saying things like this seemed a bit unfair to Little Friend Ning. But, the situation was caused by him, and that was the truth...cough cough, well, returning to the subject, while he was a bit disappointed that he couldn't enjoy the scene up close, he still maintained a calm and breezy expression.

But at this moment, Old Sea's great expert demeanor was broken apart as he spat out a mouthful of tea. He waved dismissively at a grumbling teahouse owner who he had sprayed with tea, and then rushed over to the teahouse railing and leaned out as far as he could. It took several breaths of time before he finally managed to regain his composure. He muttered to himself, "In the past I was known as Lingdao the Curse God, and I was able to travel freely through the capital city for all those years, arguing with annoying young masters. But compared to Little Friend Ning, the difference is too great, it is far too great!"

Clearwood had an awkward expression. "Teacher..." She didn't want to speak up, but with so many people here, if they heard him it would be far too shameful.

Old Sea straightened his clothing. With his calm and tranquil appearance, it was like nothing had occurred just now. He faintly said, "Little Friend Ning must have a reason for his actions. We'll find out as we look on."

He responded as if Clearwood was asking for advice just now.

This adaptability left Clearwood quietly admiring her teacher. She looked up at the spirit stone mountain and an inexplicable thought appeared in her mind: he is so rich that even if he desperately ate for his entire life, he wouldn't be able to eat too much of it...

As she thought of this her face blushed red and she lowered her head. However, her eyes were a bit darker than before.

The capital city landmark Nine Layer Building was breaking down. The earth shook and shivered and dust rose up everywhere. However, everyone simply narrowed their eyes and stayed, without any intent of leaving. They looked up at the spirit stone mountain and all of them had the same thought in their hearts: fall, fall, fall for me!

But what left everyone disappointed was the fact that the spirit stone mountain was extremely firm. It hung in midair and yet not even a single spirit stone fell down. If they could obtain such a spirit stone mountain, even just a part of it, then they could live the rest of their lives in peace and security.

While some people were disappointed, there were those whose disappointment gave way to greed, and then the eyes of those people started to become dangerous. The capital city was where sea races from all over gathered and there was no lack of ruffians and thieves. Although it was risky to try and steal something in public, if one considered the risk to reward ratio, it seemed...they could also give it a go.

Old Sea's eyes turned icy cold. "Some people are mesmerized by those spirit stones so deeply that they are now seeking their own death."

He waved his hand. Several cultivators turned and departed from below the teahouse.

Chief Manager Wu was stunned momentarily but soon recovered his wits. He rapidly responded and issued a series of orders. The guards of Sea Spirit Pavilion rushed out, forming a wall that blocked the crowd.

Conflict broke out without warning. Three seafolk pushed away the guards and rushed towards the spirit stone mountain, naked greed shining in their eyes.

“Block them!”

Chief Manager Wu roared.

Four sea mantis swordsmen leapt up. Their dazzling sword lights wove into a net that covered the three seafolk.

Puff –

Puff –

There was the sound of flesh and blood being torn apart. Dark red flowers blossomed on the earth and the smell of blood wafted up. But, this was only one part of the crowd; in another area, other people also took action.

Moreover, these were masters!

The four sea mantis swordsmen were extremely strong and when they joined together, their sword light net was incredibly powerful and terrifying. But, when two concealed seafolk joined forces against them, they were actually dragged into a prolonged battle that left the four swordsmen worried.

These two people cooperated with a tacit understanding with each other. But, one could see from the details of the battle that they weren't companions, but rather two strangers that had temporarily decided to join forces and attack together.

For a time, serious casualties and injuries were sustained by the Sea Spirit Pavilion guards!

Chief Manager Wu entered the crowd, his face pale white. With Sea Spirit Pavilion's reputation and Honorable Ning's status, there were actually still so many powerhouses that had decided to attack. If someone told him that this wasn't some hidden plot, he would never believe it.

There were some people that wanted to take advantage of this opportunity to harm Honorable Ning!

Just who was it?

Bluesky Tower and Earthfault Spire might be strong, but they were still business with assets, so they wouldn't do something so obvious. Otherwise, if anyone were to ever find any clues leading back to them, that would lead to their imminent demise.

Chief Manager Wu's heart chilled. Could this be related to the invitation from the royal palace not too long ago? The more he thought about this the more possible it seemed. Sweat began to drip down his forehead. If this really involved matters related to the royal family, then things had become truly troublesome.

“Teacher!” Clearwood said, clearly flustered.

Old Sea sucked in a deep breath. Just as he was about to say something he suddenly looked up towards the end of the street.

A brigade of royal palace guards surged forth like a tide, led by Soupman. At this time, Soupman's complexion was dark and heavy, dreadful enough to make one shiver.

“Go! Capture them alive!”

Whoosh!

The onlookers retreated in startled panic.

The tide of the battle immediately shifted to the other side!

The royal guards were all elites. While their individual strengths might not be too high, they were capable of joining forces and utilizing battle formations that gave them a horrifying killing strength. The fourteen seafolk that were in battle were violently killed one after another. The two masters that were facing off against the four sea mantis swordsmen were immediately surrounded. They seemed to know that escape was hopeless, thus they began to wildly attack the royal guards.

Soupman rode atop a seahorse. He watched the two masters without expression, as if he were looking at two corpses.

Puff –

Puff –

The vicious flood-like surge of royal guards began to draw back together, revealing two torn corpses slumped in pools of blood.

“In the streets of the capital city, there are actually those who are willing to attack someone who holds a Purple Card. It looks like someone desires to overturn the heavens!” Soupman swept his eyes around as he slowly spoke. “I am right here. I want to see just who is willing to make a move.”

As a result, no one dared to make even the slightest sound.

Countless seafolk were deathly pale, their eyes filled with fear. No one imagined that things would devolve to such a point. As they thought about how people just tried to harm Honorable Ning in full public view, as well as Soupman’s arrival and what he said, they all felt a chill rise from the bottom of their hearts. They quickly suppressed any thoughts they had.

Old Sea quickly walked forwards. He cupped his hands across his chest. “Soupman,” He lowered his voice, “Why did you kill them off?” With Soupman’s character, if he wanted to take them alive, he could easily do so himself. In the face of his abilities, those two masters weren’t anything at all. When he said, ‘capture them alive’, it was actually a reminder for those two masters that they were to prepare to end their own lives.

Soupman lightly said, “Sea Lingdao, there are some matters that you shouldn’t know about, so don’t pry any further.”

Old Sea frowned but didn’t say anything in response. This was because these words were already sufficient warning. Yes, it seemed that Little Friend Ning had been involved in that matter. He looked up at the spirit stone mountain and a trace of helplessness appeared in his eyes. He thought about how Qin Yu had wanted to leave the capital city, and how that hope seemed unlikely now.

And in the environment where the air was filled with the rank smell of blood and where countless seafolk were pacing around in fear and alarm, a short black sword broke through the air.

Soupman's eyes instantly turned cruel and vicious as a terrifying aura revolved around him. When he looked up, the air itself seemed to freeze. But in the next moment, he furrowed his eyebrows. He could feel a faint aura emanating from that black short sword.

So, it was Honorable Ning's treasure.

He immediately restrained his aura and transformed back into a common-looking man. The black short sword drilled into the spirit stone mountain.

Meng Li gasped for breath. As he saw the black short sword enter the spirit stone mountain from afar, he felt as if someone kicked him in the chest. He felt beyond aggrieved. His intuition told him that although he had chased after this treasure sword with so much effort, it was unlikely he would ever retrieve it.

While he didn't recognize Soupman, with so many royal guards around and the smell of blood filling the air, there was definitely some important matter occurring here. He took several deep breaths and fell to the ground. He grabbed the closest person and asked, "What happened here?"

He asked several questions and after understanding what had occurred, the bitterness from Meng Li's eyes completely disappeared.

Honorable Ning, it was actually Honorable Ning. It was over...he had thoroughly lost the treasure!

To the thrifty and hard-working Meng Li, this was an attack that was hard to recover from. He took a deep breath and then took another deep breath.

Strong men don't cry, strong men don't snifle!

Wu wu wu wu –

You are so rich, so why do you still take my treasure sword!

Wu wu wu wu –

Give me back my sword!

Buried deep beneath the spirit stone mountain, the black short sword drilled through right to Qin Yu's side. It could feel the crazy and urgent desire for spiritual strength coming from its master's body. Although the wild flow of spiritual strength had seriously damaged Qin Yu's mortal body, so much that blood flowed from all over and flesh split apart, if Qin Yu didn't obtain enough spiritual strength to supplement himself, he would surely die.

If Qin Yu died, the black short sword wouldn't die. But it didn't know when it would ever find such a reliable master again. After all, following Qin Yu hadn't been so bad, and had actually been quite good.

Thus, the black short sword floated up between Qin Yu's eyebrows. Then, with a slight poke, it stabbed between Qin Yu's eyebrows.

A dark red bead of blood seeped out.

Chapter 170 – Light Column Soaring to the Heavens

In truth, no one knew what sort of oil poured on the fire the return of the Hundred Nether Sword today would be, and how it would completely detonate the situation.

Between Qin Yu's eyebrows, the image of a black sword appeared in the blood bead, making the red several degrees darker. Then, this blackness was like ink that slowly spread out.

It turned into a black hole the size of a palm, a connection leading to somewhere unknown. A cold yin aura flowed out, and one could faintly hear the howling of wind and the cries of the dead.

At the edge of the capital city in the small courtyard, Meng Li's little lover Xiao Qing was cleaning herself down. Indeed, this place was as haunted as the rumors said; she absolutely could not live here any longer. Once her master returned, she would beg him to hurry and switch to a different dwelling.

Just as she was imagining what sort of methods she should use to persuade Meng Li and how great her future dwelling would be, she suddenly fell to the ground before the smile could appear on her face. Deep choking sounds came from her throat as if someone was gripping it, and breathing became extremely difficult.

Kacha –

Kacha –

A surface layer of ice appeared in the bucket of hot water she had been using to clean herself, and began to condense at an alarming rate. In the courtyard, within the deep well, the icy cold water started to tumble about as if it were boiling.

Bang –

A black column of light shot towards the skies. It was like a great invisible hand that stabbed into the heavens above the capital city. But, what was strange was that it didn't rip apart the spells above the capital city. Rather, the moment they touched, the beam vanished from sight.

Beneath this black column of light was a bleak and desolate area on the edge of the capital city. A gray mist covered it, making it difficult to see what was occurring within. Now, this mist started to seethe and roil. Phantoms of powerful sea monsters condensed, and they reared their heads back and roared out loud.

The entire capital city was shaken by this sudden change. Countless seafolk looked up towards this dark and bleak place, and their complexions began to gradually pale. There were some older seafolk that started to mutter to themselves in a quiet panic, "Sea Mausoleum...it's the Sea Mausoleum..." They thought back to the calamity that occurred in the capital city that year, where 100,000 seafolk had died a miserable death and the smell of blood had covered the earth.

This wasn't considered a secret. The people that lived in the capital city had some awareness of it. Fear began to spread like a plague, racing through the seafolk like a wildfire.

At the entrance of the royal palace, the copper bell began to ring.

The Sea Sovereign's eyes darkened. His pupils were like profound vortexes spinning around. A boundless aura ascended from his body and the phantom of a flood dragon appeared in the skies above the royal palace. Its body was 10,000 feet long and its golden scales were tinted purple. Winds and clouds were

stirred up as the flood dragon phantom danced amongst them. It flashed in and out of sight as the cries of a dragon rang out intermittently. A terrifying dragon's glory spread out like a tide with the royal palace at the center.

From all around the capital city, the panic that gripped the people began to subside. They knelt down where they stood, prostrating themselves towards the royal palace. In the great calamity which occurred that year, it was the Sea Sovereign who had bravely stepped forwards, sacrificing a thousand years of his life to seal away the Sea Mausoleum.

Below the Nine Layer Building, Soupman's complexion was pale. He whispered, "Your Majesty..." His face distorted and he roared out loud, "What is going on, what the hell is going on!?"

Your Majesty! With his condition he could not make a move, otherwise once his true strength was revealed, heavenly tribulation would arrive imminently. He looked up towards the skies above the capital city and as he thought, black clouds had begun to appear. A deep and dignified aura gushed out from them, the glory silencing all life in the world below.

This was the will of the world!

If His Majesty had chosen to cross tribulation during that year, then perhaps he might have had a slim hope of survival. But today...concealing himself from the heavens would surely trigger the anger of the world and there would be no chance of escaping from the heavenly tribulation that would follow.

Soupman wanted to stop him, but he knew that with His Majesty's personality, there was no way he could stop him from taking action.

"Fuck, fuck, fuck..." Soupman jittered with nervousness. As he looked at the black clouds above his head he repeatedly cursed, his gaze fierce and wild.

Without warning, a life and death catastrophe had appeared in front of the eyes of the people of the capital city. They could only watch with wide eyes, filled with panic and completely helpless, and wait for it to descend upon them.

Even in the royal palace, that most powerful ruler in the world had already prepared himself to die and seal away this Sea Mausoleum calamity once more. His gaze was faint without the least bit of fear, because ultimately he was the ruler, and this was his duty and responsibility.

Time slowly flowed on. But, what was strange was that while all this commotion occurred, the apocalyptic tragedy that should follow the appearance of the specters didn't occur. Besides that black column of light impacting into the heavens and the ear-splitting rumbles outside, the capital city remained as calm as it was before.

The Sea Sovereign frowned.

At this time, the doors to the hall were shoved open and two distressed-looking officials rushed in. They waved their arms around, shouting, "Please stop Your Majesty, please stop! We have just investigated the situation and found that the spells around the Sea Mausoleum are still revolving!"

The spirit shell in Soupman's chest rang out. He placed it to his ear and listened for several moments. Then, the suffocating despair that filled his chest completely vanished. He looked up at the anxious Old

Sea and nodded, quietly saying, "There are no problems with the Sea Mausoleum's spells." He put away the spirit shell and looked up at the black column of light, somewhat perplexed.

Soon, this news was transmitted to all areas as fast as possible.

Everyone had the same question that Soupman had.

Since the spells around the Sea Mausoleum were fine and intact, just what was going on right now?

The spirit stones were drawn in by an invisible strength and not a single one of them fell down. Slowly, that spirit stone mountain became a ball and no one could see the figure wrapped up inside.

The black hole between Qin Yu's eyebrows suddenly trembled and then...a raging black river surged out!

Outside the Nine Layer Building, Soupman's pupils shrank. He kept his eyes closely glued to that giant sphere of spirit stones. As the vortex of spiritual energy raged and roared, the common people might not notice anything else about it, but to Soupman, it was as dazzling as a star in the dark night.

"The Sea Mausoleum's aura..." He slowly opened his mouth, his eyes as sharp as swords. "Sea Lingdao, just what is Honorable Ning doing?"

As a Purple Card, possessing a formidable soul was necessary, so Old Sea also sensed the arrival of that sudden aura. His complexion changed. There had been a change with the Sea Mausoleum and then the black column of light had shot up into the skies. Now, the aura of the Sea Mausoleum had appeared here. If anyone told him this wasn't related, he wouldn't believe them at all.

Old Sea took a deep breath and shook his head. "Ever since returning from the royal palace, Ning Qin has been in seclusion. I have no idea just what he is doing. But, I firmly believe that he would absolutely never try to break the Sea Mausoleum's spells. I can guarantee that!"

Soupman's complexion darkened. He coldly snorted, his eyes flashing with indecisiveness. If it were anyone else that had been involved with the changes to the Sea Mausoleum he would have already moved to suppress them. Anyone who tried to harm His Majesty must be destroyed!

But it had to be Ning Qin.

As he was considering what to do, the spirit shell in his chest rang out once more. The Sea Sovereign's voice sounded out, "Continue watching."

Old Sea's heart relaxed but his expression remained as serious as before. Looking at that giant sphere of spirit stones, he forced a smile.

Ning Qin, Ning Qin, you really stirred up a mess this time!

From the black hole, the raging black current submerged Qin Yu and then began to fuse into his pores. The potent spiritual strength contained within surpassed the limits of his mortal body, and his skin began to tear, like a ceramic doll that was being broken apart. Fresh blood came out, but before it could flow it was shaken into mist by a powerful strength.

Paka –

Paka –

Flesh and blood started to disintegrate!

The Hundred Nether Sword floated before the black hole. Only when the raging black current flowed through it would it be able to pour this energy into Qin Yu. As the sword saw Qin Yu's battered and horrible appearance, it subconsciously began to shake. In comparison, it would be incomparably nourished. The spectral aura carried by the black current was cleanly devoured by it. It was like the sword was watching Qin Yu being tortured while enjoying a fine dining meal.

Of course, no matter what, the Hundred Nether Sword would never acknowledge this. It only did this in order to help its master pull through this disaster. Otherwise, if it didn't absorb the spectral aura within the black energy, its master would not be able to absorb it. Yes, this was definitely the reason.

The Hundred Nether Sword was instantly filled with a proud righteousness!

Within Qin Yu's dantian sea, the Sea Mausoleum's strength, the spiritual energy vortex, and the spirit stones all gathered together, the three of them superimposing upon each other and finally satisfying the demand for energy that the five elemental magic power sources needed.

White, black, blue, red, yellow – five different colored spheres of lights swallowed up an immense amount of spiritual strength and gradually began to stabilize. But as the fusion continued, the amount of spiritual strength absorbed became increasingly more.

Even with Qin Yu's potent Demon Body, he gradually became unable to withstand this. The collapse of his flesh and blood quickened and even his bones began to shake and groan, with fissures appearing through them. A fog of blood gushed out, slowly covering him. The spirit stones around were dyed red and some of the blood fog even entered the black hole.

Roar –

There was a restrained roar that transmitted from the black hole, carrying with it endless thirst and desire. Then, from that raging black current, a fierce claw reached out, grasping towards Qin Yu as if it wanted to drag him down!

The Hundred Nether Sword cried out and it chopped down like a bolt of black lightning. The claw that extended from the black current was instantly cut off and disintegrated before being reabsorbed into the black hole. A voice of anger and unwillingness roared out. But, with another sharp cry, the Hundred Nether Sword issued a stern warning. The roar gradually died down before vanishing.

The swordpoint swerved towards Qin Yu. The Hundred Nether Sword seemed to be thinking. If the sword could make an expression, it would surely be making a face full of distress and grievances.

If it didn't take action then Qin Yu would surely die here. But if it did take action, it would lose a great portion of the strength it had laboriously saved up, and even the amount it ate today wouldn't be able to cover the losses. This was surely a horrible business deal resulting in losses.

Aiya, why in the world were there always so many troubling dilemmas? Oh whatever. As a sword that knew compassion, that had a conscience, that had a sense of justice and a sense of gratefulness, it simply couldn't watch Qin Yu die and not try to save him. Of course, it would definitely mark this down and would try to slowly get compensation for this in the future.

Buzz –

The Hundred Nether Sword lightly trembled. Black mist gushed out from the surface of the blade, and it tumbled about as if it had a mind of its own. Slowly, then quickly, it condensed into the phantom of an altar. If people saw this pitch black altar, they would realize that it was similar to the altar used to pray to the sea spirit in Prosperity Square, just outside of the royal palace.

Of course, this similarity referred to the aura and other similar characteristics, not just surface appearances.

The blood fog was drawn in and began to quickly settle and precipitate in the depths of the altar. Then, within the black phantom altar, a cross-legged figure appeared. Countless threads shot out from the altar and drilled into the surrounding spirit stones. Like the roots of a great tree, spiritual strength was absorbed and poured into the altar where it was then transformed into a potent life energy. And this life energy was then poured into the figure deep within the altar.

Thus, Qin Yu's ripped skin, torn flesh, and cracked bones, began to crazily grow and regenerate at this moment. But before these wounds could fully regenerate, they were ripped open once more. Still, it was at least enough to maintain his body and prevent him from completely collapsing in on himself.

The demonic path – cruel, vicious, tyrannical, slaughter-mad. As the top body tempering method within the demonic path, the Demon Body naturally followed this spirit. The more it could withstand destruction, the more its potential could be stimulated. So, in the process of breaking down, regenerating, and breaking down again, the Demon Body strengthened itself with every round, becoming increasingly durable.