

Chapter 391: Altar

While the crowd was discussing the buildings' history, there was a rumbling sound as the ground tore open. The nearby buildings collapsed into dust, revealing a white floor beneath them.

Many cultivators ran over excitedly, thinking that they had discovered something, but they soon felt numb. "It's nothing but parasites! Be careful not to disturb them."

Everyone looked below their feet. Could there be nothing but parasites below the ground? That would mean that they were standing within a flood of the worms.

The thought horrified them all, and everyone rose into the air, no longer daring to touch the ground for fear of waking the parasitic worms.

Someone suddenly asked, "Do you think that the entire centipede might be filled with these worms?"

Everyone felt their backs go cold, as such a thing would be absolutely terrifying. Given how tough these worms' defenses were, even a Hunter would find it hard to escape from such a situation.

The centipede was so huge, so if it was completely filled with parasites, then it would be enough to inundate several planets. Such a number was a nauseating thought for any human.

Northgate Gang barked, "What are you afraid of? Our Northgate elder is outside. So what if this thing is nothing but parasites?"

The crowd relaxed. That was right—there was still that old freak outside whose power level was several hundred thousand. His attack could destroy the entire region at once.

Everyone carefully flew along, as they were all worried that some idiot would startle the worms and unleash a disaster upon everyone.

The further in they went, the greater the pressure they felt. Suddenly, someone ahead fell down and died instantly.

Everyone was terrified, and they all looked at Lu Yin, who was in the back of the group. Lu Yin squinted. "It's the same attack as before. There must be a pike up ahead."

The crowd stopped dead in their tracks.

Northgate Lie said, "Brother Lu, could we trouble you to warn us again?"

They looked at Lu Yin with expectation in their eyes, but he dispassionately shrugged. "I'm sorry, Brother Northgate. I used too much energy to unlock the previous pike, so I don't have much energy left."

Northgate Lie's eyes flashed. "Can we help Brother Lu recover some energy?"

Lu Yin looked up and surveyed the crowd. He estimated that there were about three hundred people here, so if he asked for 10,000 star crystals from each person, then he would get three million cubes, which was thirty star essence. He had borrowed fifty essence from Lulu, so with this move, he would be able to recuperate more than half of what he owed her.

He became emotional as he realized that he should have come up with this earlier. He could actually have charged an entrance fee instead of lockbreaking for free! There had been more than a thousand people who had passed by the pike earlier, so he could have easily cleared his debt to Lulu and even earned quite a decent amount for himself on top. What a pity that he had thought of it too late.

Lu Yin coughed before slowly saying, "Ah, everyone should know that lockbreaking takes a heavy toll on the body. I'll have to buy some supplements when I head out later, but I don't have any money."

He felt rather embarrassed. Had he been too blunt?

The monkey also felt embarrassed. "Seventh Bro, your greed has become a disease. You need be treated."

Northgate Lie smiled. Just as he guessed, this person liked money. It was fine since he was already aware of Lu Yin's preferences. He put on a thoughtful expression before asking, "How much does Brother Lu need?"

"10,000 star crystals per person. That shouldn't be too much."

"That's fine." Northgate Lie nodded and then tossed Lu Yin a Mavis Bank crystal card. "There's 300,000 cubes of star crystals in there. This is my Northgate Family's payment for all of the Northline Flowzone's juniors."

There were less than thirty people from the Northline Flowzone who had followed Northgate Lie, so 300,000 was more than enough.

Lu Yin looked at the others. "Everyone, as we continue on, there's a good chance that we'll encounter another pike, so the invisible attacks will become more frequent. Are you sure that you don't need me to warn you?"

No one in the crowd hesitated. 10,000 star crystals was quite affordable.

Lu Yin quickly collected all the money and felt rather refreshed. In the past, back in the Astral Combat Academy, he had wagered 20,000 star crystals with Craynor on their battle. To people from the Inniverse, this amount of money was basically loose change, though 100,000 would be too much. Lu Yin's experience with that broke guy, Ah Fan, had explained all this.

The Blaze Realm elder also tossed a Mavis Bank crystal card to Lu Yin that contained the payment for everyone from the Blaze Realm.

Lu Yin's breathing grew ragged. He had earned three million star crystals in an instant, and it had even been quite easy. Right, he should extort more later on and increase his profits even more.

Lu Yin felt like he had finally discovered the best earning opportunities in the future, as there was more than one way to earn money through lockbreaking. The true path to wealth lay here; anytime a Lockbreaker was needed was a business opportunity.

"Brother Lu, you've received our money, so please warn us in advance," Northgate Lie politely reminded him.

Lu Yin smiled. "Please rest assured, Brother Northgate, I will, I will." His face suddenly changed as he reached out with a hand that turned into a claw and pushed a young cultivator a hundred meters away aside.

The crowd was confused.

"Fortunately, I was in time. Brother, your 10,000 crystals were definitely worth it."

The cultivator who Lu Yin had pushed aside was stunned, only just now realizing that he had nearly died. He looked at Lu Yin with an appreciative gaze. Trading 10,000 crystals for his life was definitely worth it. Those in the crowd felt their hair stand on end, and they subconsciously moved closer to Lu Yin, not daring to stray too far away from him.

Lu Yin was pleased, as the situation was under his total control.

The further in they went, the more often the phantom pikes appeared, and Lu Yin's warnings rang out more frequently.

Gradually, people's expressions turned ugly since the warnings were just too frequent. Was it real or fake? No one could be sure.

"Look, what's that?" someone suddenly cried out.

They all looked up ahead and saw that there was a tall building that appeared to be a sacrificial altar from ages past.

Although there had been many buildings along the way, they had all been very normal and seemed to be common residences. This altar, however, was different, as it should be the one of the ancient civilization's most important areas. The altar meant that they were in the center of the region.

Everyone started to move faster.

Lu Yin suddenly barked, "Careful! The shortie up front, duck!"

A dozen people ducked at the same time to avoid a phantom pike.

Lu Yin was struck speechless by the scene. Were these people really that insecure about their heights?

Of course, there were also those who were more confident, and a man who was shaped like a piece of bamboo charged forward first, unafraid of death.

Northgate Lie's brows leaped up, and he intended to give chase, but he was also worried about the phantom pikes.

The skinny person had no misgivings at all, and he quickly pulled ahead of the crowd.

Many buildings had long since turned into dust in the area ahead of them, which made the distant altar and its surroundings even more conspicuous. There were many ancient buildings surrounding it, and they were much more impressive than the ones that they had seen before. If the earlier buildings were from a small tribe, then the buildings currently in front of them were from an ancient bustling city.

That bamboo-looking man excitedly charged forward and dashed towards the altar. He was from the Tempest Flowzone's Fire Scorpion Sect, and he was incomparably excited because he had accidentally overheard the ancient legend. He had specifically gone in a different direction from He Zhong and the others since he did not want He Zhong to take credit for everything. He Zhong, that fool thinks that he's the only one in the younger generation who knows about that secret. He doesn't even realize that there are others who are also aware of it.

The moment he saw the altar, he had charged ahead without a care for his life. He was risking everything for this slight possibility. If it was real, then his future would completely change. It was worth risking his life for such a chance. Death was not unwelcome, either, as having a dull future was even worse than death.

He quickly closed in on the altar.

Northgate Lie's eyes went wide, and he clenched both fists, wanting to charge across.

The skinny man stared excitedly at the altar. He saw the words and the design on it, as well as a numbing sight. There were five pikes stuck in the altar, and the man became so terrified that he did not dare to move any closer. There was a soft thump when his foot made contact with the ground, and at that moment, the entire city collapsed into dust.

Everyone stared on, dumbfounded, as none of them had imagined that such a thing would happen. Who could have expected an enormous, ancient city to disintegrate just because of a soft noise?

Northgate Lie was furious. "You asked for it!" He dashed up next to the skinny man and smashed him in the head. The man was still staring at the altar even as his eyes filled up with blood, and he slowly collapsed to the ground, dead in every sense of the word.

The others also rushed over and looked at where the city had been standing just a moment ago in pity. They felt no sympathy for the skinny man, since he had caused the city to collapse, robbing them of a chance to observe and study it in detail. It might have even been possible to get some useful information since they had seen some writing earlier, but now, the city had crumbled to pieces, and there was nothing for them to look at except the altar.

"Everyone, be careful and move back," Lu Yin warned as he pulled multiple people back. When they looked up, they finally discovered what the skinny man had seen before his death: five pikes. Beneath the weapons was a dried corpse, with its head, both hands, and both legs pierced through by a pike. It was obvious that the five pikes had pinned this person here and killed him.

Everyone quickly pulled away as they felt their backs turn cold. After spending so much time in the centipede, they all had an idea of how much time had passed by, since even the writing on the buildings had faded. But right now, they were looking at a desiccated corpse that must have existed for eons.

"A corpse from ancient times, and five pikes pinning it down. That's too cruel." The monkey was horrified.

Lu Yin narrowed his eyes and studied the altar. Who could have hated this person so much as to pierce him with five pikes, and to do so on an altar to boot. This had clearly been done to prevent this person from reincarnating.

Northgate Lie and the others silently stared at the corpse with flickering eyes.

There were also some words on the altar, and everyone tried their best to memorize the symbols.

At that moment, a crack appeared on the altar. It then disintegrated into dust just like the rest of the buildings. Everyone's hearts pounded heavily as they watched the dried corpse, but fortunately, the corpse did not turn to dust like everything else.

Such a corpse held great research value, but the five pikes pinning it down made everyone extremely unwilling to get closer. One pike alone was enough to kill everyone, let alone five.

"Eh? Look! There's something there!" Lily Anne cried.

Everyone watched as the altar disappeared, and the corpse was ripped apart by the five pikes. They saw that there were black words beside the left hand of the corpse.

Three of the pikes fell about a hundred meters away from the corpse.

The moment they saw the pikes, everyone's eyes lit up. Lu Yin, Northgate Lie, the Blaze Realm's powerhouses, and the experts who had hidden themselves all rushed forward to snatch them up. Since the three pikes had fallen some distance away from the corpse, there was no threat whatsoever. Only a fool would not try to grab them.

Suddenly, the centipede's body trembled as an aged voice rang out in everyone's ears. "Everyone is to immediately leave. All violators will be killed without question."

It was Northgate Taisui's voice. Since the united strength of the various powerhouses had stabilized the centipede's corpse, he would no longer allow anyone else to get a share of whatever was left inside the body.

Lu Yin and the rest paid no attention to those words, and they all continued forward to grab the pikes. The closest people to the three pikes were Lu Yin and Northgate Lie.

"Brother Lu, the Northgate family is willing to pay a high price for these, so please don't intervene!" Northgate Lie abruptly avoided a phantom pike as he shouted at Lu Yin.

Chapter 392: Trapper Qin Chen

Although Northgate Lie wasn't able to see the phantom pikes, he could still avoid them. It turned out that he had been concealing this ability.

"How much?" Lu Yin asked, though he did not slow down his mad rush towards the three pikes.

Northgate Lie was feeling anxious and had no time to say anything. He raised a hand to attack Lu Yin. Since he had reacted a tiny bit slower, he could only respond to Lu Yin by attacking. Lu Yin did not dare to act carelessly either, and he turned around to exchange palm strikes with the young Explorer. A terrifying gale swept out and blasted the ground apart, startling countless parasitic worms.

But at that moment, the two elders from the Blaze Realm rushed over and tried to rush past both Lu Yin and Northgate Lie to win the pikes.

Lu Yin and Northgate Lie pulled away from each other simultaneously as they each targeted one of the elders.

One of them anxiously shouted, “Northgate Lie, do you really dare to oppose the Blaze Realm?”

“Blaze Realm, do you dare to oppose the Ten Arbiters Council?” Lu Yin shouted.

The elder was furious, and he raised his hand, releasing a fire lion that was reinforced with four-lined battle force and causing the temperatures to soar.

In the distance, the rest of the crowd did not show any weakness as everyone rushed forward in a bid to take one of the three pikes.

From beneath the ground, the parasites squirmed and charged up, casting the battlefield into chaos.

Some hidden powerhouses suddenly revealed their concealed strength in an explosive burst. Aside from Lu Yin, no other Limiteer could even approach the area.

The intense battle caused the star energy in the area to turn chaotic, and in the distance, the five pikes trembled. Right after that, phantom pikes appeared one after another, killing a dozen people in a row.

Lu Yin seized the Blaze Realm elder’s arm, raised his hand that was covered with five-lined battle force, and then unleashed a Thirty Stacks palm strike.

When faced with Lu Yin, the two elders had to team up to stand against him. Now that this elder was alone, he was forced into retreating, but it was already too late. Lu Yin’s palm slammed into the old man’s back, and the elder spat out a glob of blood before dying.

The other elder was also defeated by Northgate Lie but not killed.

A phantom pike streaked forward, forcing Northgate Lie to hurriedly dodge it. When he looked up, he saw that Lu Yin had already made it to the three pikes and was about to pick them up.

Northgate Lie became very anxious.

Right when Lu Yin was about to collect the ancient weapons, danger suddenly surfaced. Before the two of them, a pair of emotionless, icy-cold eyes appeared alongside a ferocious wave of air that swept up from below, aimed straight at Lu Yin.

Lu Yin evaded with Flash, raised his leg, and then kicked out. There was a thump as his attack landed on a figure, launching him back a dozen meters.

Lu Yin focused his attention on the stranger, who was very strong.

Whoosh! The figure rushed forward again, completely disregarding Lu Yin’s attack.

Few people could disregard Lu Yin’s attacks. Even if he didn’t use any Overlaying Stacks, his raw physical strength was enough to overwhelm even an elite Explorer. However, this person seemed to be completely fine as he continued to battle with Lu Yin.

Lu Yin couldn’t believe what he was seeing. He used Flash again while preparing to use Overlaying Stacks with his kick this time.

The figure's eyes were cold, and he growled softly. The next moment, his eyes turned scarlet as he unleashed a punch.

Lu Yin squinted—he was a Corpse King.

Bang!

The violent collision released an explosive, thundering sound as well as a massive spatial crack that snaked through the battlefield like a lightning bolt, affecting quite a few cultivators. Even Northgate Lie, who had just rushed over, was stunned and instantly stopped in his tracks.

Lily Anne and the rest were overcome with shock upon seeing this terrifying battle. Where had this powerhouse come from?

The Corpse King was once again sent flying by Lu Yin's kick. As he flew away, he closed his eyes, determined to not let the others see through his identity. After this, he no longer tried to approach Lu Yin.

Lu Yin stared apprehensively at the Corpse King. Truthfully, he was a little afraid of the Neohuman Alliance, especially after he ran into the transformed, grey-eyed Corpse King whose strength had reached a new level. That confrontation had horrified Lu Yin, and it would definitely be bad for him if this Corpse King also mutated.

Cultivators died from mysterious deaths one after another as the phantom pikes continued shooting out incessantly, becoming more frequent by the second. Many people had already withdrawn from the area.

Northgate Lie was able to sense danger and quickly dodged a phantom pike. He panted heavily as he stared at Lu Yin with an unwilling expression. The next moment, Lu Yin waved his hand and swept all three pikes into his cosmic ring. He finally relaxed after successfully snatching them.

Deep underground, countless parasites surged up, and the trembling of the centipede's body also became more intense.

Lu Yin did not want to stay here any longer, especially since he could not guarantee that Northgate Taisui would not kill him.

"Seventh Bro, let's go! I've memorized it!" the monkey said. When Lu Yin had been trying to snatch the three pikes, he had instructed the Ghost Monkey to approach the corpse with his innate gift of shadow and record the black words down. Lu Yin had thought that it would be a fruitless endeavor, but the monkey had actually just finished writing down the last bit of writing.

Lu Yin glanced to the side. Eh, where are the words?

"Stop searching. I erased them." The monkey sounded excited.

"What for?"

"If someone else also knows them, then the information will become less valuable. Don't you understand the concept of scarcity?"

“No one noticed you, right?” Lu Yin asked. He completely approved of the monkey’s thoughts.

“Relax, these people will just assume that the words were destroyed by the battle. Other than me, no one else should have seen them.” The monkey was confident in its results.

“Let’s go,” Lu Yin barked as he rapidly retreated along their original path.

Northgate Lie shouted, “Brother Lu, you can’t hog everything for yourself! The Northgate family is willing to pay a high price for those pikes!”

Jared did not have the time to think about how Lu Yin had killed his elder, and he also called out, “Our Blaze Realm is also willing to purchase those things at a high price! We’ll also guarantee Brother Lu’s life and send you safely back to the Outerverse.”

“I...”

...

Many started to speak up as they all wished to obtain those pikes.

Lu Yin did not bother answering any of them as he continued his mad charge out, only turning around to look at the Corpse King. Oddly enough, the man had vanished without a trace.

Lu Yin felt a shudder go through his body, as the Neohuman Alliance’s Corpse Kings were craftier than any human.

The shaking ground intensified even further as the phantom pikes’ attack frequency shifted to a higher gear. Soon, more people began to die.

When Lu Yin ran at top speed, no one was able to keep up with him, not even Northgate Lie.

Before long, Lu Yin reached the joint where the leg and the main body met, and he saw that there were a bunch of people anxiously waiting around. He also saw the middle-aged Lockbreaker from before, who was nervously trying to unlock the pike.

When Lu Yin saw the scene, he was instantly delighted. Without his help, this bunch of people definitely would not be able to escape. Northgate Taisui had already taken care of the centipede's body, so he would no longer permit anyone else to enter. In other words, Lu Yin was the only person who could let these people out.

The middle-aged Lockbreaker was elated when he saw Lu Yin. “Mister Lu, please help me quickly get everyone out.”

Lu Yin looked back as the boundless white wave approached them. Sure enough, parasitic worms had also appeared in the other directions. Not only that, but it was even possible for parasites to emerge from all parts of the centipede’s body.

“Sure, but everyone needs to accept my condition first,” Lu Yin shouted.

“Tell us,” someone urgently said.

Lu Yin had a solemn expression. "Everyone needs to swear to change their appearance to look like me, Lu Yin, when they leave this centipede's body. No one can delay, and you will all have to rush to leave the Northline Flowzone as fast as possible."

These people weren't stupid and they all instantly realized that these conditions could only mean that Lu Yin had gotten ahold of something extraordinary that he was afraid the people of Northline Flowzone would seize. It was either that or he had offended someone. However, no one cared which one it was at this moment, and they all immediately agreed and quickly made their pledges.

Lu Yin moved up alongside the middle-aged Lockbreaker and started helping him unlock the pike.

Soon after, Northgate Lie arrived. As soon as he saw Lu Yin, he charged forward, only to be held back by the crowd. "Brother Northgate, no matter what happened back there, Lu Yin is currently opening a way for our predicament. Brother Northgate, please set aside your grudges for now!"

Northgate Lie frowned, and he tried to charge forward once again. No one could obstruct him from doing what he wanted.

But before he was able to move much further, he suddenly stopped and stared ahead of him in surprise. "What are you doing here?"

Lu Yin suddenly turned around, stopping his lockbreaking attempt to shift his gaze. Was there someone here who was able to stop Northgate Lie?

The others appeared similarly shocked. Northgate Lie was an expert on the Top 100 Rankings, but now, there seemed to actually be someone who could stop him, and the person was very young as well.

"Whatever grudges you have can be settled outside," the youth who had stopped Northgate Lie coldly replied. He appeared to be extremely ordinary with simple clothes and no weapons. There was nothing about him that seemed outstanding in any way; he looked like a regular person in every sense of the word. But his appearance was actually enough to cause Northgate Lie to hesitate.

Northgate Lie's expression turned solemn. "Do you think you can stop me? Qin Chen, you think too much of the Top 100 Rankings."

Behind him, many cried out in surprise. They had heard of this name before. Number eighty eight on the Top 100 Rankings: Trapper Qin Chen.

Lu Yin was stunned upon realizing that there was actually another expert from the Top 100 Rankings present. There were more than a hundred Weaves and Flowzones in the Human Domain, so logically, not every area would produce someone in the rankings. Even if the Outerverse's weaves were disregarded, the Inniverse still had more than a hundred Flowzones of various sizes. The chances of bumping into a Top Hundred expert was absolutely miniscule, but two of them had appeared here.

No matter what Northgate Lie said, he didn't act. If the rankings were meaningless, then no one would bother fighting over them. Since Qin Chen was ranked above Northgate Lie, then there had to be some truth to it.

Soon after, Lily Anne and the rest arrived. When they learned that there was another Top 100 Rankings expert blocking their path, they were similarly shocked, and no one dared to act rashly.

“Brother Lu, think carefully. Even if you leave the centipede, you’ll still be in the Northline Flowzone, and our Northgate ancestor is out there. Do you really think that you can escape?” Northgate Lie was not afraid of exposing himself, so he shouted threats at Lu Yin. This was the Northline Flowzone, and the mere existence of Northgate Taisui gave him a great deal of confidence.

Lu Yin did not reply.

In another direction, the Tempest Flowzone’s He Zhong’s eyes gleamed. What had Lu Yin obtained?

“Lu Yin, some things are not able to be taken away. It’s better to be accommodating!” Northgate Lie yelled again.

Lu Yin frowned. “Everybody, the flood of worms is about to reach this point, but there are some people trying to interfere with your path to survival. They’ll be able to leave on their own strength, but the majority of you won’t be able to escape, so good luck to you all.”

Lu Yin’s words caused many hostile glares to be directed towards Northgate Lie’s group. Even those who had previously chased Lu Yin now stood to block Northgate Lie from approaching him.

“Brother Northgate, discuss your grudges outside. You don’t want all of us to die here, right?”

“That’s right, Brother Northgate. Please give us some face.”

“Brother Northgate...”

...

Northgate Lie’s eyes turned cold. “Fine, I won’t act against you inside the centipede’s body. Brother Lu, it’s best to be smart. We’re still inside the Northline Flowzone.”

To Northgate Lie, him seizing the pikes and presenting them to his family was completely different from his family seizing them. However, he was unable to take them since Lu Yin’s stubbornness and foolishness exceeded his expectations. He could only give up. As he had said, this was the Northline Flowzone, and he was certain that Lu Yin would not be able to escape.

Lily Anne did not understand Lu Yin’s behavior; he was no fool. He definitely could not escape, so why was he refusing to hand the pikes over?

Qin Chen looked over at Lu Yin curiously. What exactly had this person obtained?

“Seventh Bro, are you sure that we’ll be able to escape? There’s an old freak with a power level of several hundreds of thousands waiting outside,” the monkey nervously questioned.

“We won’t be able to escape. But handing them over to the Northgate family is an entirely different concept than handing them over to Northgate Lie.”

“What do you mean?”

Lu Yin didn't bother explaining. If he could be that easily coerced to hand over those pikes, then no one would ever take him seriously in future. He wanted to let everyone know that he was no pushover. Even if he was walking along a futile path, he still wanted to try to find a way out of this predicament.

He could not count on Astral-10 to deal with an old freak whose power level was in the several hundreds of thousands, and he didn't want to reveal his relationship with Highsage Leon either. So, he only had one other option remaining. But before he used that, he would try his best to escape. Even if he ended up being caught, that old freak would need to put in some effort. He was doing all this to let everyone know that he, Lu Yin, would not be cowed by intimidation, that he was amenable to discussion but not coercion.

Chapter 393: It's Moving My Heart

The flood of worms quickly appeared, and the crowd of cultivators restarted their messy battle against the parasites.

The area around the pike had been unlocked before, so doing it for the second time was not nearly as complicated. After less than half a day had passed, Lu Yin opened up a path to the exit, though he found it a pity as he charged out. He had originally intended to collect exit fees, but that was no longer suitable in the present situation as he would incite the wrath of everyone present by doing so. If someone really died because of him, it would create an unnecessary feud, so it was just not worth it to try.

However, since he had found a new method of earning money, there were even more possibilities in the future. He was rather looking forward to it.

Northgate Lie actually didn't take any further actions against Lu Yin, though many were already growing curious as to what Lu Yin had obtained. However, no one believed that he would be able to escape with what he had found, and they all thought that it was only a matter of time before he was forced to give up whatever he had gained.

Some more time passed, and Lu Yin was the first to arrive at the broken leg's opening. He immediately boarded his personal spacecraft even as various Explorers charged straight out of the leg. Many Limiteers similarly boarded their spacecraft before exiting the centipede.

Neither Northgate Lie nor Qin Chen were that much slower than Lu Yin, and the two rushed out of the broken leg at around the same time. Northgate Lie was about to exchange some pleasantries with Qin Chen, but he was stunned to see that Qin Chen had transformed himself to look like Lu Yin.

Northgate Lie blinked, rather dumbfounded. "What are you doing?"

Qin Chen simply replied, "Goodbye." He then charged away from the foot at an even greater speed as he flew into the distance.

Northgate Lie was so stunned that he was rooted to the ground. It took him a while before he could react.

Lily Anne appeared from behind and asked, "Brother Lie, what happened?"

Northgate Lie's expression changed, and he suddenly charged at a nearby personal spacecraft that was flying into the distance. He forcefully stopped the vessel and looked within the cockpit. There, he saw Lu Yin, or to be more precise, another person who looked like Lu Yin.

Lily Anne was stunned. "What's going on?"

Northgate Lie grew furious as he stared at the person within the spacecraft. "Why did you make yourself look like Lu Yin?"

That person trembled as he answered, "Lu Yin's condition for helping us unlock the pike was for us to all vow to change ourselves into his appearance and immediately leave the Northline Flowzone."

Northgate Lie was shocked as he gazed outwards. Explorers were still flying out of the leg, and some of them had Lu Yin's appearance.

The most hilarious scenes were within a couple small-sized spacecraft, where there were multiple and sometimes a dozen people who all looked like Lu Yin.

Most cultivators had a conscience. Since these people had made a promise, they would follow through as long as it was reasonably feasible, which was the cause for the scene before Northgate Lie's eyes. It was a shocking scene that had never occurred before. For a few moments, Northgate Lie had no idea how to react.

Aside from Northgate Lie, the Cruisers who had been helping Northgate Taisui hold the centipede's body up were also stunned. Why were there so many "Lu Yins" flying around?

There were many people who had entered the centipede's body, and as they all charged out now, some joined up with others while others immediately left by themselves, like Qin Chen. The various cultivators sped towards the distance like runaway horses, all of them looking exactly like Lu Yin as they fled.

At this moment, the real Lu Yin had already flown quite a distance away. He turned around to look back while hoping that he would be able to escape. His escape attempt relied entirely on perfect timing.

However, his excitement did not last for long as his spacecraft suddenly stopped. No, it would be more precise to say that the entire heavens froze and that the void was being dragged back by an indescribably terrifying force. All the spacecraft within a zone of unknown size was being pulled backwards.

Lu Yin sighed when he realized that he would not be able to escape after all. That old monster with a power level in the hundreds of thousands wielded an unimaginable strength.

"Seventh Bro, just submit to your fate. Actually, those pikes aren't even that important. That corpse was pinned to death by those five pikes, but the pikes were never reclaimed, so you should already know that they aren't that important. Those words are the true treasure!" the monkey spoke helplessly.

Lu Yin sat in his spacecraft, quite relaxed. He knew that the monkey wasn't wrong, as the pikes were just weapons. He did not actually care about them, but there was one thing that was important—he did not want to be threatened. Surrender to his fate? Not necessarily.

The centipede's body was settled in the sky, not far from the Northgate family's home. The many powerhouses had used a planet as the foundation and built up a continent from nothing, all to hold the

centipede's body. At this time, there were over a hundred powerhouses standing high above, though they all remained silent.

No one knew which direction Northgate Taisui was looking at in this region that he controlled.

With Northgate Taisui at the center, the entire region of this part of the universe was like a giant whirlpool. As long as an object was within the heavens, it was pulled towards him - be it human, spacecraft, or even an astral beast or an astronomical phenomenon. Nothing could escape the strength of Northgate Taisui's pulling.

Even Enlighters such as Elder Northgate, Granny Chan, and Tie Sa were frightened, as they were simply not on the same level.

There was an explosion as a spacecraft exploded and the man inside returned to his original appearance due to panic. Northgate Kong simply waved his hand, and the man was flung back down. Then, another spacecraft exploded.

One after another, everyone in a spacecraft was captured, regardless of if they had altered their appearances or not.

Even the Explorers weren't able to escape. Every single individual who had entered the centipede's body could forget about fleeing.

Even the people and spacecraft who were traveling around the region's edge were pulled in along with the region's soldiers. No one was left out.

Everyone was forcibly set down on a nearby planet, and even Qin Chen had no choice but to comply. When he touched down, he looked at the heavens with an empty expression.

Jared sneered; Lu Yin had been overcome by greed. How could he expect to escape from such an old freak? He had been too naive.

During this excursion within the centipede's body, the Blaze Realm had suffered heavy losses as both of the elders escorting the group had perished. One had been directly killed by Lu Yin, and although the other would have survived, Jared had sent him on his way. Still, Lu Yin would be labeled as the murderer for both. From this point onwards, the hatred that the Blaze Realm held for Lu Yin would only increase. This was Jared's greatest harvest from this trip.

Northgate Lie stood next to Northgate Kong and focused on attentively looking at the people who had changed their appearances to match Lu Yin's.

One small-scale spacecraft's hatch opened, and a dozen people who looked like Lu Yin walked out. All of them had an extremely nervous expression, which made Northgate Kong's face turn darker by the minute. He then impatiently waved for those people to be taken away.

Everyone here was a captive, and Northgate Kong carefully examined them one by one. Normally, this sort of inspection did not require a family elder like him, but since Northgate Taisui had spoken, Northgate Kong had to personally handle the matter. Thus, his current bad mood.

There was another bang as another spacecraft split open, revealing nothing inside at all.

Northgate Kong frowned. No one? Where's the person?

On the planet filled with captives, a simple-looking man silently stared at the heavens. Beside him was a middle-aged captain, who was blowing out a smoke ring, and another dozen mercenaries.

"Brother, you're very calm. Not bad. Only with this sort of attitude will you be able to survive in the universe. This uncle here hasn't seen a youth as cool as you for a very long time." The middle-aged captain sighed as he looked at the silent man.

Nearby, Qin Chen glanced around.

"Actually, the universe is rather dangerous, but as long as your heart is as steady as a boulder, have the courage to face difficulties, and hold onto a sacrificial spirit, you'll be able to obtain your own territory some day." The middle-aged man spoke up again, this time more emotionally. As he spoke, the surrounding atmosphere suddenly became a bit heavier.

The silent man's expression never changed, and he just continued to stare at the heavens.

The captain blew out a smoke ring. "This uncle here has made many sacrifices for his comrades. Too many."

"Captain, we pledge our lives to serve you!" the dozen mercenaries around the captain shouted, which drew a great deal of attention.

Qin Chen frowned and glanced over at the group with an odd expression.

The nearby Jared growled, "Shut up!"

The middle-aged captain pursed his lips.

The simple looking male looked at Jared. "You shut up. He speaks well, and his words have moved my heart."

Jared was furious as he clenched his fists. "Kid, do you know who you're talking to? I'm from the Blaze Realm!"

"I'm from the Ice Domain." The man's lips curled up as Jared trembled in anger.

The middle-aged captain looked appreciatively at the simple looking man. "Little brother, do you want to join this uncle's mercenary group? I like you."

"Brother, there's a bright future for you if you follow the captain!" the surrounding mercenaries shouted together.

Qin Chen glanced over again. This time, he was speechless.

...

At that moment, Northgate Taisui turned around while in the space above the planet, and his gaze swept past all the powerhouses and looked towards the planet that was being used to detain the captives. The void around his body distorted, and although no one could see his appearance, his pair of

eyes seemed to appear in everyone's thoughts. They felt as if a boundless ocean of stars was oppressing them, which made their hearts pound wildly.

Finally, Northgate Taisui's gaze lingered on the simple looking man. "Reveal yourself, little brat." The man was captured even as Northgate Taisui was speaking, and the man's appearance changed. That man was actually Lu Yin.

Lu Yin was powerless. He had deliberately put on the universal armor when his spacecraft was captured and then sneaked onto a small spacecraft to blend in with the ten people who had his appearance to reach the planet. Despite all his efforts, he had still been discovered.

The moment he was captured, the middle-aged captain as well as all the surrounding people were stunned. Wasn't he Lu Yin? How did he sneak his way into their group?

Qin Chen's eyes narrowed; this person was interesting.

Jared was mad. So it was this bastard.

The middle-aged captain choked on his own spit; had he said too much just now?

In outer space, under the attentive gazes of countless others, a layer of star energy wrapped around Lu Yin's body, taking control of him just like a marionette.

The layer of star energy was there to ensure that he would not die in space, but it was also because Northgate Taisui was not aware of Lu Yin's abilities. Even without this protection of star energy, Lu Yin would not die, because his physical strength even as a Limiteer was sufficient for him to survive in space.

Northgate Lie sneered when he saw Lu Yin being captured. He had already warned Lu Yin that he would not be able to escape.

Lu Yin frowned. He had indeed been too rash.

Poison Flame's expression turned cold, as he had hoped that Lu Yin would actually escape, which would make it easier for their Blaze Realm to act. In the face of such huge gains, Lu Yin's titles and status was not enough to protect him.

"Alright, little fellow. As a representative of the Ten Arbiters Council, you witnessed my Northline Flowzone's Northgate Platform Contest, and our Northline Flowzone has treated you extremely courteously. But now, you've tried to leave without bidding farewell. That's going a tad bit too far," Northgate Kong said firmly and without any rush. Everything was now under control.

Lu Yin apologetically replied, "My apologies, Northgate Elder. This student has some urgent matters that I must attend to."

Northgate Kong nodded. "You may leave, but shouldn't you share with us what you managed to discover within the centipede's body? Little fellow, you're a sharp one, so there's no need for me to state the obvious. Relax, I won't let you leave empty-handed."

If not for Northgate Taisui, Astral-10 would be enough to ensure Lu Yin's safety. But now, Lu Yin didn't even feel tempted to contact Astral-10. His objective was clear from the start, and he knew that, at best,

he would only be able to keep one of the pikes. Even so, he would not allow himself to be threatened into handing them over. It had to be voluntary; this was his baseline.

“Elder Northgate, are you talking about the three pikes that were obtained from the centipede's body?” Lu Yin asked loudly.

Many were shocked, as it was indeed about the pikes.

Chapter 394: Coaxing, Not Coercing

Ever since people started to leave the centipede's body, news of what had happened inside started to spread. The most exciting news was about the invisible attacks from the pikes, as they were definitely exceptional.

Many also knew that Lu Yin had obtained three pikes, so they were not surprised at his words.

Northgate Kong smiled. “Little kid, speaking too much isn't good for you. Or, are you waiting for someone to take you away? You're looking down too much on my Northgate family.”

Lu Yin stoically replied, “Northgate Elder, I'm very curious about one thing. Although the pikes have an attack that seems to target one's spiritual force, it's only effective on the weak. You can ask Northgate Lie behind you; he was able to avoid its attacks. Such a thing isn't of much use to your Northgate family.”

“You don't have to worry about whether or not it's useful. Hand it over!” Northgate Lie shouted.

Lu Yin sighed. “I'm sorry Northgate Elder, but you're too late. I'm keeping one pike, and I already intend on giving the other two to specific people.”

Northgate Kong's face sank. “Kid, don't be too arrogant. Although your status might be a thorny issue, it's still not enough to render us helpless. It's naive to think that you can peacefully walk everywhere in the universe just through status.”

Lu Yin's status could cause those in the Outerverse to be apprehensive, but it had not yet reached a level where it could restrain the great powers of the Innaverse. When benefits reached a certain level, one had to weigh the pros and cons. For the Northgate family, the ancient objects in the centipede's body were extremely valuable, enough to warrant even offending the Lockbreaker Society and the Ten Arbiters Council. As long as Northgate Taisui was around, they were not afraid.

The Ten Arbiters Council would not clash with an old monster whose power level had reached hundreds of thousands just over a single Lu Yin. Even if Lu Yin died, someone would just cover up the truth as long as both sides could accept things. The Northgate family would merely have to pay some recompense to settle the matter, and it would be the same with the Lockbreaker Society.

The rules in the universe appeared to be fair, but some people would always be above such laws; it would only matter if it was worth it to do so.

Normally, no one would break the rules for a conflict within the younger generation, but things were different now. The pikes had survived through ancient times, and the Northgate family had to get a hold of them.

Lu Yin raised his gadget and activated the screen. "Elder Northgate, the identity of the person who I want to present my gift to is rather sensitive. Why don't you talk with him?" An elder appeared on the screen with black-and-white long hair mixed with a lock of grey. This was a symbol of the Nightking clan, and this person was one of the clan's elders: Nightking Yuanjing.

Recently, the Daynight clan had been keeping a low profile. This was because they were focused on the Astral Beast Domain and attempting to rescue the Third Nightking.

Lu Yin's initial information had been accurate, and they had indeed found the entrance to the Profound Void Realm. However, things were not that simple. Before they even entered that realm, they had realized that it would be extremely difficult to rescue the Third Nightking, as they had already run into all sorts of dangers. This matter gave Nightking Yuanjing and the rest a splitting headache. He had already been planning on contacting Lu Yin, even though he knew that Lu Yin really didn't know much. Still, he held some expectations.

However, before he could even try to reach out to Lu Yin, the youth had contacted him first.

Nightking Yuanjing was delighted when he saw Lu Yin. "Little Yin, where did you find the time to contact Grandpa Yuanjing?"

Nightking Yuanjing's appearance shocked Northgate Kong and the rest, and even Northgate Taisui looked over. The Nightking clan was not a group that their Northline Flowzone could provoke.

Many felt their hearts jump. Didn't Lu Yin have some kind of grudge with the Daynight clan? How did he have the contact information of someone in the Nightking clan?

Lu Yin was also elated to see Nightking Yuanjing. "Grandpa Yuanjing, Little Yin obtained three pikes from an ancient centipede's body, and I was planning on sending one of the pikes to Zhuo Daynight, but I wasn't able to contact her. Does Grandpa Yuanjing know where she is?"

Nightking Yuanjing's eyes lit up. "An ancient centipede's body? Little Yin, where's this ancient centipede's body?"

Lu Yin directed his gadget to a place in the distance, and the giant centipede's body entered Nightking Yuanjing's screen.

He was surprised. "It's really an ancient centipede's body!" Then, when he caught sight of Northgate Taisui, his eyes suddenly shrank, and he fell silent.

Northgate Taisui looked at the image of Nightking Yuanjing, and the distorted void around him regained its normalcy. Now, everyone could see the face of an ordinary elder.

Nightking Yuanjing was hesitant when he saw Northgate Taisui on his screen. "You look very familiar."

Northgate Taisui said in an old voice, "So it's an expert of the Nightking clan. You haven't appeared in a long time."

Nightking Yuanjing's eyes flickered, and astonishment appeared on his face. "Northgate Taisui."

Northgate Taisui laughed. "You're rather experienced for you to be able to recognize me."

Nightking Yuanjing exclaimed, "It's rumored that Senior Northgate Taisui only planned to emerge after breaking through and that he has not appeared for many years. I never thought that I would one day have the honor of meeting senior."

Northgate Taisui shook his head and forced a smile onto his face. "I'm just an old man, nothing to be excited over meeting." He then glanced at Lu Yin. "Kid, you're pretty capable since you've brought out the Nightking clan. My Northgate family isn't greedy, so you can keep one for yourself and gift the other to the Daynight clan. My Northgate family will buy the last one after you decide upon the price. How does that sound?"

Nightking Yuanjing looked at Lu Yin, and he was no fool, either. He knew full well that Lu Yin had used him to avoid a disaster, but he did not mind that. This was the prestige of the Nightking clan; even an old freak with a power level in the hundreds of thousands had to show the Nightking clan some respect.

Furthermore, they had also obtained a pike for themselves.

Nightking Yuanjing was rather curious to see if this pike could reveal some information about the ancient times since it had come from inside the ancient centipede's body. Also, the centipede's body was not something that the Northline Flowzone could monopolize.

Lu Yin relaxed, as his gamble had paid off; Northgate Taisui was also cautious of the Nightking clan. Lu Yin did not know if he should be delighted or worried, as the Nightking clan was way too overbearing. It would be very troublesome to be hostile with them, but he had already taken many steps towards being their enemy.

Currently, Lu Yin's emotions were very complicated. He had dragged Nightking Yuanjing out, causing the Northgate family to be afraid. He had accomplished his goals, but the Nightking clan was just too powerful, which caused him to worry about his future.

However, this was not time to ponder over such things. He pulled out a pike and generously tossed it towards Northgate Kong. "Since senior has spoken, this junior has no reason not to comply."

The corners of Northgate Kong's mouth curled up. Why hadn't this kid been this obedient a moment ago?

Northgate Lie's face sank, as this person's nature had completely changed. Someone who was just a puny Limiteer cultivator had managed to seize the initiative and even force their ancestor to personally speak up. The whole matter was too humiliating for their family.

Lu Yin looked at Nightking Yuanjing. "Grandpa Yuanjing, one of the other pikes is for Zhuo Daynight. Do you know where she is?"

Nightking Yuanjing smiled. "That brat has a wild temper, so I'm not sure myself. Why don't you keep it for now? You can personally give it to her during the Daynight Feast."

Lu Yin was confused. "The Daynight Feast?"

Nightking Yuanjing smiled. "It's an event organized by my Nightking clan. It's a grand party for the younger generation where they can interact and learn from each other. Zhenwu will also be present, Little Yin, and you can speak to him then. After all, you're all top elites of the younger generation."

Lu Yin's eyes flashed; even Arbiter Zhenwu would be at the Daynight Feast?

He could not decline, as this could be considered an invitation from Nightking Yuanjing, so he could not embarrass the Nightking Elder. However, he was a little apprehensive about visiting the Nightking clan, and concerns of being assassinated leaped into his mind. With the Nightking clan's might, no one would dare to raise any suspicions even if Lu Yin died. No, he had to think of another way. Highsage Leon could protect him, but Lu Yin did not want to reveal his relationship with the Pirate King, as that would destroy his reputation.

He ended his call with Nightking Yuanjing and turned to Northgate Kong with a smile. "Elder Northgate, how much is the Northgate family willing to pay for this pike?"

Northgate Kong looked at the pike in the youth's hand, and although he could not tell what the material it was made out of, there was a sharp, invisible energy around the ancient weapon. The aura could target an enemy's spiritual force, though its effect was not that great. At best, it could deal with an ordinary Explorer, as an elite Explorer would be able to completely avoid the attack. There was nothing written on the pike, so it was not as valuable as the Northgate family had anticipated. It was no wonder why this brat was being so upfront about things.

"Brother Lu, how much do you want?" Northgate Lie spoke up, as it was not appropriate for Northgate Kong to negotiate with a junior.

Lu Yin thought about it. "How much can you guys pay?"

"How much do you want?"

"You'll give me however much I want?"

"That depends on whether or not it's worth it."

"Then isn't that the simplest way? Just tell me how much it's worth."

Northgate Lie grew irritated. He was an expert on the Top 100 Rankings, but he was haggling with a money-pincher now. It was very awkward.

Northgate Kong tossed a cosmic ring to Lu Yin. "There's a hundred star essence in there. That should be enough." After that, he turned around and left without looking back.

Lu Yin's breathing grew a bit ragged. A hundred star essence! He hadn't ever seen so much money before. Combined with the amount that he had earned while within the centipede's body, as well as what he had from before, his total wealth currently amounted to about 150 star essence! If he exchanged this to star crystals, it would be worth about 15 million cubes, which was a rather substantial sum. It was to the extent where the money would burn a hole in his pocket.

That pike was definitely not worth that much, but Northgate Kong did not want his family to keep bickering with Lu Yin. He now realized that Lu Yin had gone to such lengths purely because he did not want to be threatened and did not want to set a precedent for the future. His Northgate family had been used as a stepping stone! They had severely miscalculated for them to have fallen into such a trap.

Lu Yin had only wanted to show this effect, where even a powerful old freak would not be able to threaten him. Now, anyone else who wanted to act against him would have to first open their eyes.

Unfortunately, this matter had also created a bit of animosity between him and the Northgate family. It would now be a bit difficult for him to smoothly gain control of the Northline Flowzone's younger generation. That was, unless he openly defeated Northgate Lie.

Lu Yin looked up and coincidentally exchanged glances with Northgate Lie. Northgate Lie now seemed to hold a grudge against Lu Yin. If the Northgate youth had managed to seize the pikes in the centipede's body, then this fiasco would not have happened. Even Northgate Taisui had appeared on the Northgate family's side, but he had not even been able to threaten a junior. It was just too embarrassing, and his family would blame everything squarely on Northgate Lie's head.

"Brother Lu, we'll meet again at the Daynight Feast. I would like to learn from Brother Lu's moves at that time," Northgate Lie said coldly.

Lu Yin smiled. "Alright. Then, until we meet again."

Northgate Taisui removed the spatial seal and allowed everyone to leave.

Many were still amazed at what they had just seen and cast admiring looks at Lu Yin. The youth had guts, and not even Northgate Taisui had been able to intimidate him.

Jared was even more shocked by Lu Yin upon seeing the final conclusion.

Qin Chen seriously sized Lu Yin up and down and then left. He would appear at the Daynight Feast as well, so they would definitely meet again.

There was another matter that was more awkward, as many people were left without a spacecraft, including the many Limiteers who had been captured by the Northgate family. Almost all the spacecraft had been destroyed, and now, everyone was looking for one.

Lu Yin was fine, though, since Lily Anne had contacted him at first opportunity and gifted him a spacecraft to show her goodwill.

Chapter 395: Graduation

Although Lu Yin had established some animosity with the Northgate family, he had also revealed his strength. Thus, there were still many who showed their goodwill towards him.

"Brother Lu, that pike should be useless for you since you haven't learned any pike techniques. Why don't you sell it to my Lily family?" Lily Anne seized the opportunity to ask him a question. She blinked as she looked at Lu Yin expectantly.

But Lu Yin shrugged in reply. "I'm sorry, but I want to keep it as a souvenir."

Lily Anne rolled her eyes. "Alright, my Lily family is well-off, so Brother Lu can contact me whenever you feel like selling it."

Lu Yin's eyes lit up. As long as he agreed, he would receive another hundred star essence. However, for the time being, he wanted to study the pike, as this rare weapon that could attack one's spiritual force was definitely worth looking into.

"Right, Miss Anna, the Northgate Platform Competition should have ended, right?" Lu Yin asked.

"Yes, the Northgate family has won. Brother Lu can report back to the Ten Arbiters now."

Lu Yin nodded in understanding and then steered his spacecraft towards Astral-10.

"Seventh Bro, why don't you sell the pike? You don't have much use for it, and it's at most a standard military-issue weapon from ancient times. Didn't you see that that old fogey, Nightking Yuanjing, didn't really care about it? The Daynight clan already has these kinds of weapons, and the Northgate family only wanted to buy it to facilitate their research into the centipede. Carrying this thing around is only going to draw the attention of people who are greedy for such things."

"I got it, and I don't need your reminders. Right, have you translated those words that were next to the corpse? What did they say?" Lu Yin asked.

The monkey rolled his eyes. "Do you think that I'm omniscient or something? Those are words from an unknown age, and it's even possible for several civilizations to have risen and fallen since that age. How can such a thing be translated that easily? This actually involves all sorts of secrets about the universe, hidden knowledge, exotic cultures, and..."

"Alright, alright, take your time."

News of what had happened in the Northline Flowzone quickly spread out. The network that now connected the entire Human Domain allowed the information to spread even faster than before.

News regarding Northgate Taisui, the ancient centipede's body, and the desiccated corpse pinned in place by the five pikes within the centipede's body all became sensational. Much of the information piqued a great deal of interest from countless other organizations, such as the Blaze Realm, Ross Empire, Sylvan Dragon tribe, the Beast Tamers Flowzone's First Grade Hall, Second Grade Hall, and more. Many powerhouses from the various great powers started heading towards the Northline Flowzone.

Although Northgate Taisui could suppress many, he still had to compromise with the other great powers since his family did not have the power or influence to monopolize the ancient centipede's body.

And within all of the news, Lu Yin stood out once again. He had seized three pikes and had even used the Nightking clan to back him up. This incident caused Lu Yin's reputation to climb even higher.

Among the publicly recognized geniuses who were regarded as true Ten Arbiters candidates, Lu Yin had jumped above them all to become the most well-known.

In a study within the Northgate family, Northgate Kong had an ugly expression as he stared at Northgate Lie. "We are very disappointed in you. You couldn't even handle a single Limiteer junior! All of the resources that this family has invested in you has been wasted!"

Northgate Lie replied in a respectful tone, "Although Lu Yin's a Limiteer, his power cannot be measured by conventional means. He definitely has the power to challenge experts in the Top 100 Rankings."

“There’s no need to quibble about such things. You’ll face the family’s punishments for not handling this matter appropriately.” Northgate Kong was impatient.

Northgate Lie raised his head. “Father, during this journey within the centipede's body, Lu Yin was not the only one who obtained something.”

Northgate Kong’s eyes gleamed as he looked at Northgate Lie. “What are you saying?”

Northgate Lie spoke slowly, “I saw a diagram inside the centipede's body and memorized it. No one else saw it either.”

He then used his star energy to draw the pattern of the diagram that he had seen in the centipede's body.”

He had destroyed the pattern himself just before Lily Anne and the others from the Northline Flowzone arrived, so he was definitely the only one who had clearly seen it.

Suddenly, the void distorted, Northgate Taisui walked out, and he took a serious look at the pattern. Northgate Lie lowered his head and stood to the side.

Even after a while, Northgate Taisui and Northgate Kong were not able to decipher anything. Northgate Taisui shook his head and sighed. “It’s too ancient, and all the related information has been long lost in the river of history, so it can’t be ascertained.” His body slowly vanished, but before he left, he said, “Not bad, junior. Come with me and demonstrate the power of my Northgate family at the Daynight Feast.”

Northgate Lie was elated, as the elder clearly wanted to personally mentor him. He looked at Northgate Kong.

Northgate Kong nodded. “Go on. Learn well from our elder. Every day that Lu Yin cannot defeat you is another day that he cannot control our Northline Flowzone’s younger generation.”

Northgate Lie solemnly nodded. He had previously been completely confident in his ability to defeat Lu Yin, and now, he would follow the elder. His goal was no longer limited to just Lu Yin, as he now wanted to target the higher positions of the Top 100 Rankings.

Although the Northline Flowzone was a small Flowzone, it’s area was still about the same as that of a weave from the Outerverse. Thus, it would take Lu Yin about a week to reach Astral-10 with the spacecraft that he had received since it had a normal speed.

If he still had that blackhole-grade Aurora, it would have taken him just a few hours to complete the same trip. Lu Yin once again felt that the fact that his blackhole-grade Aurora had been destroyed was a pity.

While traveling, he studied the pike. He hadn’t had much time to study it before, and he was only now able to earnestly examine it in peace.

It was cold to touch and was not light to pick up either. There were no words or diagrams on it, only darkened bloodstains which had gradually faded with time. The pike was made from unknown materials, and he felt a natural sense of suppression when holding it. Lu Yin exerted some force to bend

it and could tell that it was abnormally sturdy. Even with his strength, he found it unexpectedly difficult to break it. He had a feeling that he could only break it if he used Overlaying Stacks.

It was a weapon that was very suitable for Explorers.

“This pike isn’t very useful if you’re facing anyone who’s stronger than an Explorer. Does that mean that the corpse pinned down by the five pikes in the centipede's body was just an Explorer? But how can an Explorer’s body last for so many years without rotting? Even the words on the wall rotted away.” Lu Yin was puzzled.

The monkey replied, “It’s simple. Either these three pikes and those stabbed into the body are different, or an absolute powerhouse transformed something worthless into something extraordinary with their power. It could be that these pikes were used to crucify some powerhouse like pins and that that’s why the corpse didn’t decay through the eons. Think of it like how Seventh Bro can use chopsticks to easily kill an Explorer.”

There were only these two possibilities.

Lu Yin tightly gripped the pike, as the latter option was more likely.

He was not sure what sort of powerhouse one had to be to reach the level where their body would not rot even after countless ages, and what’s more, what sort of person would be able to kill such a powerhouse. The universe was so vast, and more than one civilization had been annihilated before. A great deal of information was tightly controlled by powerful organizations, and suddenly, Lu Yin was very interested in such information.

At that moment, his gadget sounded out a notification. It was one that could not be rejected, and it came from the Ten Arbiters Council.

Lu Yin looked down to see that Wen Sansi had personally sent him a message. It instructed Lu Yin to turn in a detailed report going over everything that he had experienced while in the Northline Flowzone.

Lu Yin knew that the Ten Arbiters wanted to learn more about the centipede's body, as well as Northgate Taisui. Lu Yin didn’t hesitate or make any attempt to hide any information. He wrote everything down and sent it to Wen Sansi.

“Right, Monkey, how long do you think that Northgate Taisui has lived for?”

“No idea. Those old freaks won’t move for ten thousand years and will seal themselves in cryostasis when they have nothing better to do. No one knows in which era they will reveal themselves again, and it’s even possible that he’ll still be around after your grandson is dead.”

Lu Yin frowned, as the beast’s words were vulgar.

“Northgate Taisui or the Third Nightking—who’s stronger?”

The monkey cried out exaggeratedly, “Seventh Bro, how can you compare Northgate Taisui to someone like the Third Nightking? You’re talking about the Third Nightking, someone who stands in the top three among the entire history of the Nightking clan. Although there’s no strict record of his actual power

level, it's safe to say that he definitely surpasses Northgate Taisui. They aren't even in the same league! Why else do you think Northgate Taisui fears Nightking Yuanjing? If Northgate Taisui could compare to the Third Nightking, then the Northgate family would have long since stepped into the level of a powerful organization."

From Northgate Taisui, one could sense a strength that could topple the universe. Lu Yin now understood what him revealing the Third Nightking's existence to the Nightking Clan implied. If the Third Nightking safely returned, then the Nightking Clan would dramatically rise in power.

"Are you sure that the Third Nightking won't be able to escape?" Lu Yin was feeling nervous again.

"I'm certain and sure. You must put your faith in that Void Wanderer elder and his perverse strength that's been polished through countless ages. Although his offensive power might not be that high, imprisoning one person is simple enough for him. Even the power of the entire Nightking Clan wouldn't be enough to haul him out. Also, do you really think that the other powerful clans in the Astral Beast Domain are just decorations?"

Lu Yin was still not reassured. The Daynight clan also had an ancient history, and who knew what strength they kept concealed. However, it was no longer up to him to decide this matter, so he could only leave it up to fate.

If the Daynight clan's Dayking bloodline knew that he had exposed information concerning the whereabouts of the Third Nightking, they would curse him to death.

Days later, Lu Yin finally arrived at Astral-10.

As soon as he arrived, he heard the news: Big Pao and Little Pao had broken through and become Explorers, successfully graduating from the Astral Combat Academy.

The two had been adopted by Astral-10 at a young age, and they had been the only ones who had stayed behind after the other students had abandoned Astral-10. Actually, given their talent, they could have made their breakthroughs much earlier, but they simply did not wish to leave. Now that Astral-10 had stabilized and had Lu Yin to oversee it, the two had decided that it was time for them to both become Explorers and roam the universe.

An academy was, after all, just an academy in the end. The universe was the soil that nurtured powerhouses.

Lu Yin met Big Pao and Little Pao at the trial zone entrance, as well as Xia Luo, Michelle, Hui Daynight, and the other students of Astral-10.

They were not too surprised to see that Lu Yin had returned, as they had already heard about the major events in the Northline Flowzone. Everyone had been shocked when they heard that Lu Yin had dared to negotiate with an old freak whose power level was in the several hundreds of thousands.

"Congratulations to both seniors for successfully graduating." Lu Yin smiled.

Big Pao tossed his hair back. "Graduation is a must, junior. Give me a while, and this senior will challenge the Top 100 Rankings. I'll clear a path for you."

“Alright, stop boasting. Even if we join forces, we still won’t be able to beat any experts even if they’re at the tail-end of that list.” Little Pao was speechless at his brother’s claims.

Big Pao rolled his eyes. “It isn’t boasting—it’s goal setting. This is important for our youth!”

Lu Yin smiled. “I look forward to the moment you two seniors step onto the rankings.”

“Haha, junior still has good taste! Rest assured, Senior’s Firesoul Gun is good at dominating the top from the bottom,” Big Pao joked.

“Dominating the top from the bottom? Seventh Bro, get away from him, this guy’s got a dirty mind!” the monkey shrieked.

“Where do you two seniors plan to go after graduation?” Lu Yin asked.

Little Pao replied, “The Chaos Flowzone.”

Lu Yin was shocked. “One of the eight Great Flowzones?”

Little Pao nodded, but he did not elaborate further. He smiled at Lu Yin. “Junior, we’ll entrust you with Astral-10. This place is like our brothers’ home, so we hope that you’ll protect it well.”

Chapter 396: Standard Gesture

Lu Yin nodded and glanced around at everyone else. The moment he saw Michelle, he became a little awkward. “Um, I’ll help you comprehend battle force.”

Michelle frowned. “It’s fine. I already did that.”

As soon as she said that, battle force appeared around her body. It had a similar appearance as Lu Yin’s when he first comprehended it. While it wasn’t enough to be considered one-line battle force quite yet, it was still undoubtedly battle force.

Comprehending battle force and not comprehending it were two completely different states, and this meant that Michelle was now much more powerful than before.

Recently, Lu Yin had improved by an exceptional amount, but the others had also seen progress of their own. Them entering the Astral Combat Academy indicated that they were talented, and most of them had already become Limiteers.

Among the various Astral Combat Academy branches, Astral-10 was one of the stronger ones overall. However, this was only thanks to their current students. The new students entering Astral-10 might not be lucky enough to receive guidance from the mentors.

After talking to everyone, Lu Yin was about to go look for Old Cai, but he was stopped by Xia Luo.

“Do you know where Silver is?” Xia Luo asked.

Lu Yin shook his head in denial.

Xia Luo could only reply, “It seems like he’s really gone missing.” As he spoke, he glanced at Lu Yin. “Will you go to the Cosmic Sea in the future, Lu Yin?”

Lu Yin was surprised. "Why?"

"Just curious," Xia Luo answered.

Lu Yin thought it over. "It's possible."

"If possible, please take me along when you do. I'd love to tag along," Xia Luo said.

Lu Yin nodded. "Sure. I'll let you know if it happens."

That was all Xia Luo wanted, and he walked away as soon as he received an answer from Lu Yin.

Lu Yin had no idea what the other youth was thinking, but Xia Luo had never shown any malicious intent towards Lu Yin nor harmed him in any way. More importantly, Xia Luo also had an ancient surname, but he was able to move around freely in the universe and had even entered Astral-10. That meant that his surname was legal. However, Lu Yin had researched his surname on the network before and had not been able to find any mention of any powerful Xia clan.

But that wasn't as important, as there were all sorts of organizations in the universe, and Lu Yin had no idea what kind of organizations actually existed in the universe. It would be impossible for him to guess at what Xia Luo's true identity was.

Lulu had not returned yet, but Lu Yin had already gathered enough money to pay off his debt. He hated owing people money, but since she wasn't back yet, he could only postpone it for later and return the money whenever he saw her again. It was only fifty star essence, and Lu Yin had recently discovered a new method that made getting rich just too easy.

"I'm back, Old Cai," Lu Yin respectfully called out as he entered the treasury.

Old Cai looked up. "You're even better at causing trouble than I thought."

Lu Yin was confused. "Causing trouble? I didn't do anything like that."

"Is that so? Unfortunately for you, I already heard about everything you did in the Northline Flowzone." Old Cai rolled his eyes.

Lu Yin was confused. "But I didn't really do much."

"Do you know what it means for Northgate Taisui to show himself?" Old Cai asked in a laid back manner as he stared intently at Lu Yin. "Unless there's a specific incident at a specific place, monsters whose power level is over 400,000 like him won't appear. However, once someone like that appears, they will be able to take complete control of the situation. Within the Northline Flowzone, there's only a single Northgate Taisui. He's the pillar of that flowzone, and the moment he appears, even organizations like the Blaze Realm and the Sword Sect have to concede to him, but you managed to make a profit off of him. That's even more amazing than you taking first in the Tournament of the Strongest."

Lu Yin had been aware that Northgate Taisui's appearance was cause for huge commotion, but he had been completely clueless as to just how big the commotion would be. "I just used my connection with the Nightking clan to stop them from threatening me. I didn't really do much."

Old Cai seriously replied, “The ‘how’ of the matter isn’t important. What’s important is the outcome. The guts, methods, and connections that you currently have are far above what a student is normally capable of. Right now, you are no longer some mere student in everybody’s eyes. Instead they see you as comparable to geniuses with great connections, like Nightqueen Yanqing. Do you understand what that means?”

Upon seeing Lu Yin’s confused face, Old Cai snickered. “It means that if someone attacks you, they won’t be attacking just you, but also everything that you represent. If someone makes the decision to attack you, you’ll definitely die without any chance of survival. Your enemies will approach the task of killing you with the same mindset they would if they were trying to kill Nightqueen Yanqing. They’ll take all kinds of unexpected variables into consideration.”

Lu Yin frowned. On his way to the Northline Flowzone, he’d been ambushed by a Hunter. Now, if someone attempted to kill him, it wouldn’t just be the average Hunter coming after him. Instead, peak Hunters such as Poison Flame might be sent out. Sending such people would basically guarantee that Lu Yin would not survive and that he would die without ever knowing what had killed him. He wouldn’t even have the chance to leak information about who or what had killed him.

Lu Yin had done everything he could, and he had even used Nightking Yuanjing to establish that he was not someone to be threatened. In other words, he’d actually been the one to push himself into a corner. If anyone chose to attack him now, then it was guaranteed to be fatal.

However, Lu Yin did not regret his actions in the slightest. The power that he had displayed went beyond the protection that his various statuses gave him. After word of what he’d done in the Northline Flowzone spread out, small-scale attacks on him would probably completely stop. There were pros and cons to everything!

Right now, what he lacked was absolute power, such as that rabbit’s lightning.

When he saw Old Cai’s bored face, Lu Yin’s eyes flashed, and he respectfully asked, “I’m from Astral-10. Might I ask, is there any way for the academy to protect me?”

Old Cai’s brows rose. “What do you mean? Are you asking us old folks to be your bodyguards?”

“Of course not. It’s just that this is the treasury, and I’d like to find some items to protect myself.” Lu Yin explained with anticipation.

Old Cai’s eyes narrowed as he licked his lips. “Items, eh? There are some in the treasury, but...” Old Cai started tapping the table with his right hand as his voice drawled off. With each tap, his thumb brushed against his index and middle finger. He’d then tap the table again and repeat the movement. It was so obvious that he wanted money, but he wasn’t doing it in an in-your-face way. Also, the light tapping sound had some sense of unpredictability to it.

Lu Yin stared at Old Cai’s fingers and grew excited; that movement was too cool! He remembered how he had asked for money in the past, but his attempts had all been incredibly uncouth, inelegant, and petty. Old Cai’s movements were incredibly sophisticated, but easily understood without appearing too crude. This way of asking money must have come from years of practice.

Lu Yin stared at him in a daze, already knowing what his greatest profit today was. It was this movement—this almighty movement that blatantly showed that he wanted money.

Old Cai was confused when Lu Yin kept staring at his right hand. He coughed. “Why are you zoning out, kid?”

Lu Yin froze. When he regained his senses, he could not help but say, “There’s so much that I need to learn from you, sir.”

Old Cai was completely lost.

It was only then that Lu Yin realized that Old Cai had been using what had happened in the Northline Flowzone to scare him. His words had all been said for the sake of coaxing money from him. The old man’s desire for money was no less than Lu Yin’s own.

“I managed to earn some money by selling the pike to the Northline Flowzone, and I’d like to donate it to the academy. Would you be willing to accept it, sir?” Lu Yin asked, speaking very carefully, as if he was afraid of destroying the sophisticated aura that Old Cai had established with the way he was asking for money.

Old Cai smiled, and his face became kind as he looked at Lu Yin. “So you’ve grown up now and know that you should repay your school? Good. Very good. Hand it over to me. The academy is planning on taking in new students, so we do need the money.”

Lu Yin grimaced and took out a Mavis Bank card even as he felt his heart bleeding. “There are one million star crystals in this card. Please accept it on behalf of the academy.”

Old Cai’s eyes lit up, but he did not act very excited. He continued to tap the table in a leisurely manner.

It was not enough, that was obviously what his actions meant.

“Is that your grandpa, Seventh Bro? It seems that greed for money must run in your family,” the monkey commented.

Lu Yin grew annoyed and blocked the monkey off before taking out another card. “There’s a million star crystals in this card as well. Please accept it.”

Old Cai started breathing faster as he grinned. However, he didn’t reach out and instead continued staring into the sky.

Lu Yin gulped, his expression becoming even worse than before. This old man must know that he had received a hundred star essence from the Northgate Family. Was this old fart trying to take it all from him? That was a hundred star essence! That was the same as ten million star crystals! What a jerk.

Still, Lu Yin was willing to part with money if it was a good investment. Since this old man had brought up the kind of troubles that Lu Yin might face in the future, that meant that he was already prepared to help him. However, the money that Lu Yin was offering Old Cai simply hadn’t met his expectations yet.

Lu Yin decided to throw caution to the wind. He took out thirty star essence and two million star crystals and offered them to Old Cai.

Old Cai grinned and looked over at Lu Yin in praise. "You're so loyal! What a good kid you are! The academy did well in nurturing you, and now, you've contributed back to the academy. It doesn't make sense for us to not treat you well. Take this." Old Cai tossed Lu Yin a strange-looking item. It was a cube about the size of a fist. It had a strange, jade-green bamboo frame, and there was a black metallic ball floating in the middle. The frame had three seals on it, as well as one that was open.

Lu Yin was rather surprised as he held the box. "What is this?"

"That's called a Money Bomb. Don't underestimate it, kid. Hold it tightly and open up that side while aiming it at your enemy. That thing has the ability to kill a Hunter in one shot. Of course, that's only if nothing goes wrong," Old Cai said in a mysterious manner.

Lu Yin's pupils shrank as he looked at the item in his hands. "This thing can kill Hunters in one blow?"

Old Cai proudly answered, "But of course! This is a special weapon of my own design, and I'm the only one who makes them in the universe."

Lu Yin suddenly had a feeling that he had been cheated.

"What, don't you trust me?" Old Cai became annoyed.

Lu Yin studied the Money Bomb. He really didn't trust this old man, but that was because this box was supposed to be something that could save his life. He had spent nearly fifty star essence on it. This was all? Lu Yin was a bit annoyed.

However, the money had already been spent, and from what he knew of Old Cai, there was no way he was getting his money back. Lu Yin had no choice but to stow the box away and bitterly say to the old mentor, "Thank you for this gift, sir."

Old Cai stroked his mustache. "A Money Bomb costs fifty star essence. Two would cost eighty star essence, and three for a hundred... You can have as many as you want. Make sure to buy them from me in the future, kid. Hahaha!"

Lu Yin skulked off in annoyance.

He had used up fifty star essence just like that, and Lu Yin couldn't help but aggrieved. He had expected that Old Cai would give him something to scare his enemies away, but he'd just gotten was this stupid little box.

As he walked around, Lu Yin felt increasingly frustrated, but he didn't dare to ask the old man for a refund. Still stewing in anger, he headed to the Sand Ocean.

Chapter 397: You Secret Art

Coco and Zora were in the Sand Ocean. As always, that giant syringe was rather attention-grabbing.

Lu Yin's appearance delighted Coco. "Brother Lu, you're back!"

Lu Yin smiled and nodded at her. "I heard that you dueled with some students from Shangwu Academy? How'd it go?"

Coco pursed her lips. "I can't beat them."

Lu Yin laughed. He was always put in a good mood when he talked to Coco; she was just too entertaining. "There's no need to get discouraged. Your strength lies in treatment, not battle." He suddenly paused. Is Coco's treatment actually useful?

Upon hearing Lu Yin's encouragement, Coco hefted her syringe. "Don't worry, Brother Lu. I'll be sure to take good care of my injured comrades."

Lu Yin forced a smile onto his face. "All the best. Work hard."

He greeted Zora and then headed deeper into the Sand Ocean to seek out the Sandmaster. It didn't take Lu Yin long to find him.

The Sandmaster held the Money Bomb in his hands and had a rather exasperated expression as he looked at the small box. "What is it that you want to ask?"

"This student would like to ask, if this thing is actually useful?"

The Sandmaster casually tossed the Money Bomb back to Lu Yin. "Yes, but be careful."

Lu Yin was puzzled. "What do you mean?"

The Sandmaster carefully considered his answer but replying, "If possible, don't use it. And if you must use it, then try to hide your identity. This thing isn't good for your reputation."

Lu Yin's heart fell, and the feeling that he had been swindled grew even stronger. "Elder Cai claimed that this Money Bomb can instantly kill a Hunter..."

The Sandmaster nodded. "It can, if used by surprise. However, a weapon is only a weapon, and a Hunter will not stay in place for you to attack him. Thus, you'd have to catch them off guard."

Lu Yin heaved a sigh of relief, as everything was alright as long as the weapon was effective. It turned out that he had not been duped. "Mentor, what's the problem with the Money Bomb's reputation?"

The Sandmaster muttered to himself, seemingly at a loss for words. Then he waved an arm. "You'll find out in the future. Alright, move along. This place has no more use for you." After that, he disappeared.

Lu Yin felt helpless. If the Sandmaster didn't want to talk about it, then he had no choice in the matter.

He soon left the neglected Sand Ocean. He didn't try to find anyone else and instead went to an area of Astral-10 that was filled with ruins. It was time for him to reach the peak of the Limiteer realm.

It had been some time since Lu Yin had broken through to the Limiteer realm. While others might find it difficult to reach the peak of the Limiteer realm, that was usually either because they had no money or their star energy absorption rate was too slow. Lu Yin had no such difficulties since he had the wealth and the will. Since his absorption rate was nine times the norm due to the Cosmic Art, he was guaranteed success so long as he had money to back it up. In the end, it was all about money. That was the primary resource that he always needed.

Lu Yin raised his hand in a familiar manner, causing his die to appear. He intended to roll four Pips: Timestop, enter the Time Stop Space, and then absorb all the star energy he needed in that place. While thinking about it, he tapped the die and watched it spin.

Strange, why did it feel like he had forgotten something?

As he watched the die slowly stop, Lu Yin's eyes shifted. Oh no, it's been a long time since I last rolled. I can't possibly roll six pips: Possession, can I?

The next instant, the scenery about him changed, and the scene that Lu Yin saw changed to a field of darkness that gradually filled up with balls of light. He had no words; he had really rolled six pips.

The die's Possession ability consumed too much money, greatly surpassing the other rolls. Lu Yin considered merging with a random ball of light, as the most important thing right now was to reach the peak of the Limiteer realm. But after thinking about it, Lu Yin decided not to. Since he was fated to roll Possession, he would submit to his fate.

Although it burned through an exorbitant amount of money, Possession was still very useful.

Lu Yin felt an intense attraction tug at his body as he looked at a ball of light in the distance. He did not hesitate and immediately merged with it. If the light was that aggressive in pulling him in, then it had to be perfectly fit for him. He hoped to Possess a powerhouse's body this time.

The scene before him transformed once again, and Lu Yin soon opened his eyes and looked around. Was he on a spacecraft?

But before Lu Yin could finish observing his surroundings, he was startled by a jumbled bunch of messages that he had just received. After looking at the incoming notifications, Lu Yin's pupils shrank, and his body went cold. He had Possessed someone from the Neohuman Alliance.

To be precise, this person wasn't just a part of the Neohuman Alliance, as the Alliance consisted of not only the Corpse Kings, but also other cooperative powers. This person was part of a powerful clan, the Specter Clan.

"Here," a hoarse voice spoke up from beside Lu Yin. He glanced over and saw that the voice came from a Corpse King. This Corpse King was actually at the level of a Hunter and was someone who had become a Mutant Corpse King. This person was able to trample over normal Hunters and could even challenge Enlighters.

In outer space, a spacecraft approached the spacecraft that Lu Yin was in. The incoming vessel looked rather peculiar, and it looked to be a special spacecraft from some power. A word was engraved on the side of the spacecraft: "Yōu."

Through the Possession, Lu Yin knew that the current operation had been jointly planned out by the Neohuman Alliance's internal Corpse King and the Specter Clan. Their goal was to confirm one thing: whether or not the Yōu Court that had marriage arrangements with the Sword Sect possessed a secret technique.

The Yōu clan was one of the seven great clans of the previous Court of Seven Names. However, many years ago, the clan with the ancient surname Yōu betrayed the Seven Courts and received the

protection of the Sword Sect. Throughout all these years, they maintained marital relations with the Sword Sect, such as the engagement between the current Sword Sect heir, Liu Shaoqiu, and the Yōu Court's little princess, Yōu Ye'er.

The Yōu Court was a part of the Yōu surname of the Seven Courts, and logically, they should have the Yōu Secret Art. However, the Neohuman Alliance had obtained secret information from an undisclosed source saying that the Yōu family of the Seven Courts had no secret technique. They had been sent on this current operation because the Neohuman Alliance wanted to verify whether or not the secret technique was in the hands of the exiled Yōu Court.

Lu Yin learned all of this through the reports that had been sent to the person he had Possessed. As it turned out, this person's identity was not simple. He held a rather high position in the Specter Clan and was qualified to stand beside this Corpse King Hunter as equals, even though the Specter Clan member was just an Explorer.

Lu Yin had received a dizzying number of messages in a short span, and they were all related to the Neohuman Alliance and the Seven Courts. Lu Yin had no thoughts of experiencing an Explorer's strength and only looked out at the starry sky in a daze.

At this time, the Yōu Court spacecraft came to a stop in the heavens. Then, an intense explosion rumbled out. The Neohuman Alliance's experts had begun assaulting the spacecraft, causing ripples to appear within the void. All of the attackers were space-exploring experts.

Within the spacecraft, Yōu Ye'er buried her head in Grandma Du's bosom, seemingly terrified.

Grandma Du had a determined expression. "These entrails of the Neohuman Alliance actually dare to attack the little princess! The Yōu Court and the Sword Sect definitely will not let them off."

The eyes of one of the Corpse Kings turned scarlet red as it ferociously charged towards Grandma Du, greeting her with a punch. She shouted as star energy surged around her, blocking the Corpse King.

Boom!

The shockwave shook the spacecraft, and Grandma Du spat out a mouthful of blood. Despite the fact that she was a Cruiser, there was still too large a disparity between her and the Corpse King for her to compete against its physical strength.

The Corpse King attacked again.

Grandma Du frantically pushed Yōu Ye'er aside. "Little Princess, RUN!"

The old woman valiantly clashed against the Corpse King as an indescribably terrifying luster surrounded her body. With her body at the center, the light shot out to engulf half of the spacecraft, including the Yōu Court's expert and the Corpse King. Everyone was immersed in Grandma Du's venom.

Even the Explorer realm Corpse King could not withstand her fatal venom, and everyone melted away.

Yōu Ye'er donned the universal armor and fled from the spacecraft as she sorrowfully watched Grandma Du's tragic death.

There was another blast as the second half of the spacecraft exploded.

Yōu Ye'er was sent flying by the shockwave and gazed back once again. There was no longer a Yōu Court spacecraft in the heavens; only a Corpse King remained, with grey eyes.

Hidden in a distant spacecraft, Lu Yin frowned. Grey pupils indicated that this person was a Mutant Corpse King, which meant that the Neohuman Alliance had sent two mutated Corpse Kings for this operation. One was even a Hunter, which showed that they regarded the Yōu Court as rather important. Even if it was just a suspicion, they had still sent out such formidable powerhouses. It was similar to the annihilation of the Great Yu Empire's Yushan family, where even the corpses had vanished.

Lu Yin felt some sympathy for the surviving girl.

With the numerous messages that the gadget on Lu Yin's wrist had received, he now knew why the Yōu family in the Seven Courts no longer had a secret technique. The Yōu family's secret technique could only be passed down to a single individual, which was vastly different from the Yu Secret Art that could be learned and cultivated by anyone with enough talent.

Lu Yin was still going through the messages as Yōu Ye'er, who was floating in space, stared at the approaching Mutant Corpse King with his grey pupils. She suddenly became very calm, a complete change from her previous terror.

"So many years have passed, and yet, you people still discovered it. That means that there's someone from your Neohuman Alliance inside the Seven Courts," Yōu Ye'er softly spoke to herself. She was obviously only around twelve and was a very young girl. However, the expression on her face and her placid tone was enough to cause even Lu Yin to tremble.

Lu Yin could not scan through the incoming messages anymore, and he intently stared outside the spacecraft.

In another place, that Hunter realm Corpse King's eyes went wide as he similarly stared at that point in space.

"Since you guys want to know so badly, I'll fulfill your desires. Understand at the price of your death." Yōu Ye'er raised her pretty face, revealing eyes that were as cold as the depths of hell. Ripples emanated out, causing Lu Yin to feel waves of cold wash over him. This was not a reaction to overwhelming power, but an instinctual response to an unclear and unknown threat, a threat to all living beings.

"Yōu Secret Art—Age Concealment," Yōu Ye'er calmly stated. The next moment, an unbelievable change took place before Lu Yin's eyes as his understanding of the universe was completely toppled; Yōu Ye'er grew up.

This brat had been only about ten years old before, but the moment she used the secret art, her body matured until she was a twenty-some year old woman with a gorgeous appearance and cold eyes. It was just like seeing a venomous flower bloom in the heavens.

This transformation shocked not only Lu Yin, but also the Hunter Corpse King beside him.

Yōu Ye'er's lips held a faint smile. "Shocking, isn't it? This is the Yōu Secret Art, which allows the changes of time to be hidden away. It's passed down singly within the bloodline, but this is what you want. Now die, along with this secret."

An elder suddenly appeared next to Yōu Ye'er.

The elder had appeared silently, almost as if he had always been there, existing forever.

At the elder's appearance, the Hunter Corpse King beside Lu Yin was overwhelmed. "Seven Courts' Yōu elder, Yōu Yifan."

The elder looked up and glanced at the hidden spacecraft off in the distance. He then lightly tapped against the void, causing the entire region of the universe to quiver.

The next moment, Lu Yin's vision turned to ash. The planets, natural phenomena, dark space, and everything visible vanished. This was a boundlessly terrifying strength, and it reminded Lu Yin of when he had encountered Northgate Taisui. This elder was an old freak with a power level in the hundreds of thousands.

Beside Lu Yin, the Hunter Corpse King's eyes turned grey, then green, before he leaped up in an attempt to escape.

Chapter 398: The Secret of Sky Platform

The elder disdainfully shook his head. "Green-eyed mutant. You won't escape." After that, both the Corpse King and the spacecraft, with Lu Yin still inside, all turned to ash, vanishing from the heavens.

Yōu Ye'er looked at the stunning scene with envy. "I don't know when I'll possess such strength."

The elder scolded her. "Stop being so wilful and disobeying the orders to hide the secret technique. If the Corpse King wasn't a Hunter but instead at the same level as me, then the secret would have been exposed."

Yōu Ye'er lazily stretched out, revealing her exquisite curves. "Grandpa Fan, do you know the feeling of being imprisoned by the secret technique? Ever since I inherited it, my body can no longer grow. It's very painful, and I need to be free from time to time."

The elder grunted. "Fortunately, the secret was kept this time. The Neohuman Alliance's strength in the First Flowzone has been weakened, so it should be some time before they can act again. Take this opportunity to get close to Liu Shaoqiu so that you can borrow the Sword Sect's protection."

"I don't want to be associated with those losers." Yōu Ye'er wasn't happy with the orders.

The elder put on a helpless expression. "The Thirteen Swords becomes stronger the further the cultivator goes. Although Liu Shaoqiu lost, few will be his opponent as soon as he becomes an Explorer. That Lu Yin and the person from the Technocracy are simply exceptions."

"Ok..." Yōu Ye'er begrudgingly answered.

In the distant Astral-10, Lu Yin suddenly opened his eyes. His forehead was beaded with cold sweat, as he had just experienced death at the hands of an old freak whose power level was in the hundreds of thousands.

He had never been that close to death before, not even when he had faced Northgate Taisui. He never imagined that he would meet such a freak so soon.

But more importantly, he had discovered an incredible secret.

The First Flowzone's Yōu Court had once been a part of the Seven Courts' Yōu family. They had betrayed the Seven Courts and sought refuge under the Sword Sect's wing, but the Sword Sect never found out that the Yōu family's secret technique was always in the hands of the Yōu Court. The elder who had appeared at the end was actually someone from the Court of Seven Names. In other words, the Yōu Court had never actually betrayed the Seven Courts. Otherwise, that Yōu family elder from the Seven Courts would have never appeared to protect the little princess.

Also, the Yōu Secret Art was passed down as a blood inheritance to a single individual each generation through their bloodline, and the current heir was the little princess. She should be called Yōu Ye'er!

That elder had destroyed an entire region of space with his boundless strength, and even the network communications had been crushed so thoroughly that not a single message could have been sent out. That elder had assumed that no one would learn of their secret, but Lu Yin had become one of the very few people who were aware of this secret.

In addition to that secret, he had also learned many matters relating to the Neohuman Alliance and the Specter Clan. The Specter Clan member who he had Possessed had been someone of a rather high level, and Lu Yin had been able to read through a great number of messages. He had not been able to properly digest everything at the time, but even just the portion of what he remembered would be enough to shock the universe.

Lu Yin panted heavily for a moment as he tapped on his gadget. He wrote down some coordinates, which were where the Neohuman Alliance's bases were located.

Right, there was also the Specter Clan's secret.

Lu Yin opened the network and tried to search for information on the Specter Clan, but he could not find anything in the results. He then used his Honor Points privileges to search again, but even then, he couldn't find any relevant information. The clan was very secretive, and almost no one knew anything about them. However, they had a distinctive feature, which was that all of their clan members innately had death energy within their bodies.

Lu Yin recalled what it had felt like when he was Possessing that person, but then grudgingly realized that he had been bombarded by too many messages. He had had no time to actually experience what it was like being an Explorer.

This Possession had revealed too many secrets to Lu Yin. He muttered to himself for half a day, wondering if he should divulge the locations of the Neohuman Alliance's bases, but he eventually decided not to. No one would believe him, and even if someone did, the Neohuman Alliance would

evacuate those bases long before they were searched. Lu Yin was certain that the Neohuman Alliance had spies within the upper echelons of humanity's great powers.

Even the Seven Courts had been infiltrated, let alone the great powers.

Lu Yin massaged his forehead. The more he knew, the greater the pressure he felt in his heart. The universe was just too vast, and there were countless diverse powers. The more he interacted with such powers, the more he realized how insignificant the Great Yu Empire actually was. It was truly negligible.

The Outerverse had seventy two Weaves, and he estimated that there were no more than a hundred Enlighters among those Weaves. And what about the Innerverse? There were even those old freaks whose power levels were in the hundreds of thousands. Beyond that, there was still the Cosmic Sea in the depths of the Innerverse, as well as the Neoverse that no one knew anything about.

The various powers were like the numerous stars in the night sky, and the human lifespan also increased the further one cultivated. The more unfathomable the universe was, the greater the desire for exploration and expedition.

However, the most urgent item on Lu Yin's agenda was to check how much money he had remaining!

Lu Yin apprehensively accessed his cosmic ring, and his heart sank, and he had to suppress the urge to curse. The star essence that he had received from the Northgate family as well as whatever he had saved up from before had all vanished. Even the million star crystals were gone.

Lu Yin wailed in anguish, as he was broke once again. It had happened too fast; he had merely watched one scene and that had wiped out all of his hard-earned money.

At the moment, he only had 100,000 star crystals and two million in universal currency remaining.

He still intended to reach the peak of the Limiteer realm, but it would have to be delayed again, and he had no idea how long he would have to postpone it this time. Although the money-making opportunity in the centipede's body had been good, he could not find such opportunities at a moment's notice.

As Lu Yin looked at his empty cosmic ring, he suddenly felt an urge to sell off all the secrets that he had just uncovered.

But there was no point in lamenting about the missing money. Lu Yin calmed himself down and headed for the trial zone entrance. He recalled that there were many mysterious places in the trial zones that the Ten Arbiters had reportedly once visited. Now, he wanted to give them a try as well.

After greeting the Trialmaster, Lu Yin first headed to the Dao of Purgatory's Sky Platform.

There was a saying in the Astral Combat Academy's trial zones—cross the Dao of Heaven's Ocean of Death and ascend the Dao of Purgatory's Sky Platform.

Lu Yin had unintentionally overheard this saying in the past, but he had not understood what it meant back then. In the Three Realms, Six Daos, there were only legends concerning the Ten Arbiters in the Dao of Heaven and the Dao of Purgatory. This made the Sky Platform and Ocean of Death exceed the other training grounds in terms of mystery.

This was not Lu Yin's first time in the Dao of Purgatory. When he had first entered the trial zones, he had chosen this Dao, and his first death had occurred here as well. He would always remember the Spear Mountain's Area Master, Frankfurt.

However, with how rapidly his power had grown, there was no longer any need to seek revenge, and Lu Yin's attitude had also changed. Finally, back at the Tilting Tower, he had already thoroughly embarrassed Frankfurt.

News of Lu Yin appearing in the Dao of Purgatory quickly spread, and as more Astral Combat Academy's students heard the news, many of them started heading to the Dao of Purgatory together. They knew that there was only one area in that place that could attract Lu Yin's attention—the Sky Platform.

Dao Bo had not returned to Astral-6, so Charon was currently representing Dao Bo in overseeing the Sky Platform. The moment Charon saw Lu Yin, his expression became as interesting as could be. His expression was sometimes fierce, sometimes respectful, sometimes remorseful, and sometimes panicked. It was very complicated.

Lu Yin laughed. "Senior Charon, we haven't met in a while. Are you making a movie?"

Charon swallowed his saliva and forced a smile onto his face. "Where has Student Lu found the time to come to the Dao of Purgatory?"

Lu Yin shrugged and pointed ahead. "Rumor has it that the Ten Arbiters ascended the Sky Platform in the past, so I want to give it a try as well. Senior won't deny my wish, right?"

Charon definitely would not. Even if Dao Bo were here at this moment, he would not be able to stop Lu Yin.

The Astral Combat Academy had nine trial zones, and Lu Yin was not concerned about any of the Realm Masters aside from Starsibyl. Of course, Lu Yin would not act arrogantly, as he would abide by the rules that must be followed.

Charon did not want to talk to Lu Yin any further, and he was eager to leave for fear that Lu Yin might reveal his private matters.

Lu Yin was rather interested in Charon. Or rather, he wasn't interested in Charon per se, but rather in the Unveiled Sword that Charon had unlocked from a sourcebox. It was rather valuable, especially after he had learned that even those pikes could be sold for a hundred star essence. Even if the Unveiled Sword was a bit cheaper, it would still be rather pricey.

The main value of the pikes lay in research, not the pikes themselves. The Unveiled Sword gave Lu Yin a very sharp feeling.

Lu Yin casually asked, "Senior, when will you show junior the power of your Unveiled Sword?"

Charon raised his brows. "There'll be an opportunity in future."

At this point, more and more students had gathered around them.

Lu Yin walked past Charon and then looked up above him. This was the Sky Platform.

The so-called Sky Platform was not made of stone steps like most people would assume, and it wasn't some dignified and serene stairway to heaven either. It was just a series of spheres that were lined from the sky to the ground, and it appeared to be very normal. The higher up one went, the blurrier their vision would become, and eventually, the void would become distorted.

The Sky Platform's name was derived from these spheres that resembled planets and the distorted void one saw at the top of the spheres.

Legend had it that sitting atop the Sky Platform would allow one to feel the strength of the ancient powerhouses. The higher up one climbed, the more clearly they would be able to sense it. Accordingly, one of the Ten Arbiters had reached the highest point of the Sky Platform, and their strength had undergone a huge and inconceivable transformation there. This was the legend of the Sky Platform.

Dao Bo had held control of the Dao of Purgatory for so long, but he had never been able to reach the top of the Sky Platform. At most, he would sit on a sphere to cultivate.

Each year, many students would receive Dao Bo's approval to try and climb to the top, but none of them succeeded, not even Starsibyl.

Lu Yin was now publicly recognized as the strongest student in the Astral Combat Academy. Hence, his challenging the Sky Platform had attracted everyone's attention.

"Who knows if Lu Yin will succeed. The higher up one climbs, the greater the chance of them vanishing. It's too strange."

"When Senior Dao Bo approached the top, he strangely vanished as well. No one knows what happened to him."

"My senior's second brother-in-law's cousin's younger sister doesn't know either," a fatty mumbled while those around him shot him unkind looks for spouting such crap despite not knowing anything.

...

Someone suddenly piped up, "Does anyone know which of the Ten Arbiters reached the top of the Sky Platform?"

No one replied, as even if they knew, no one would dare to speak about such a thing. It was taboo to randomly say the names of the Ten Arbiters.

Lu Yin walked to the bottom of the Sky Platform and looked up, observing where the void distorted at higher altitudes. He thought no further and stepped onto the first sphere, where he immediately noticed that his entire body suddenly felt different. An indescribable strength had appeared around him, one that was both invisible and intangible. It had no influence on his body, but for some inexplicable reason, it caused his heart to palpitate.

He muttered to himself briefly and then stepped onto the second sphere.

Just like that, one step at a time, he ascended to the higher spheres.

Everyone watched Lu Yin, and more students gathered—Feng Shang, Liu Xiaoyun, and even Starsibyl appeared.

The higher Lu Yin climbed, the more clearly he was able to feel this indescribable strength. It did not affect him in any way, but he did not know where this strength came from, and he couldn't even tell what it belonged to.

Even when he was facing Northgate Taisui or other old freaks such as that Seven Courts elder. Even though their power levels were in the hundreds of thousands and even though they were monstrously strong, their strength still had small signs and traces of where they had come from. But right now, the strength that surrounded Lu Yin was completely traceless, which made him feel a bit of trepidation.

Chapter 399: Changes In Both Eyes

Lu Yin didn't dare to be careless at this moment, and he released the star energy seal on his right arm to return to his peak state. He also released his domain and even activated his Cosmic Art.

With his strength fully revealed, the strange oppressive force he felt around him was inexplicably reduced. It was very puzzling.

By this time, Lu Yin had already reached the middle section of the Sky Platform, something that few students could manage. Those who had were all at least as strong as an Area Master.

Below the Sky Platform, people like Frankfurt, Tu Bo, Hart Phoenix, Uro, and Long Ze had appeared, and they were all staring up at Lu Yin.

Ascending the Sky Platform was a major event, and it was similar to someone crossing the Ocean of Death. Such an event would definitely attract a large audience.

As Lu Yin neared the peak, the vague strength increased once again, and the distortion of the void became even more noticeable, but it was now obvious that the distortion was not caused by that indistinct force.

After he climbed atop another sphere, the strange strength increased in intensity once again. Lu Yin felt like his entire body was being rejected, as if the void in this place was repelling him, as if the entire void wanted to erase his very existence. This sensation was probably why those other students had vanished; it must have been because of this strange strength.

Five-lined battle force suddenly appeared as a dark gold radiance blossomed around Lu Yin's body.

Many students cried out in surprise.

When Lu Yin's battle force appeared, the indistinct strength was reduced yet again.

The whole situation was very puzzling and strange, and this strange force made Lu Yin feel like he could be wiped out at any moment.

From when he had first started cultivating, Lu Yin had fought many battles and had even felt the enormous strength of that Seven Courts elder which was enough to annihilate the heavens themselves. But no matter how powerful someone's strength reached, they always needed a bit of time to actually obliterate another person. Although that period of time might be extremely short, there was still a sliver

of time that was needed. However, with this strange force surrounding him, Lu Yin had a feeling that the instant that he faltered, he would instantly vanish without any time to react.

“Seventh Bro, what’s this aura am I feeling? Are you at some incredible place?” the Monkey asked.

“This is the trial zones’ Dao of Purgatory, the Sky Platform.”

The monkey was lost. “The Astral Combat Academy’s trial zones?”

Suddenly, it shrieked, “The ruins of the Rune Technology civilization?!”

“You mentioned that’s what this place is.”

“No wonder there’s such a feeling here.”

Lu Yin’s heart skipped a beat. “What do you mean? Have you felt this sensation before?”

The monkey hurriedly replied, “Of course not! Anyone who dares to test the Rune Technology’s strength is looking to die.”

Lu Yin’s eyes narrowed, as the monkey was clearly lying; he had definitely felt this unique, indistinct strength before. This also meant that the strange strength came from the remnants of the Rune Technology civilization.

However, this wasn’t the time to investigate. He looked up and saw that there were only a few steps left before he would reach the peak.

Everyone below was anxiously watching on. Lu Yin’s current position was also Dao Bo’s limit. Dao Bo was able to reach this same place, where he was just a few steps away from the peak, but at that point, he always vanished from the trial zones, dying in an unknown manner.

Lu Yin took another step forward, and the strange strength increased once more. It was not yet threatening to Lu Yin, but its danger became very noticeable with this step. The feeling of rejection became even more intense, and now, a sense of danger appeared that made his back shiver. Lu Yin breathed in deeply before taking one final step. At the top of the platform, there was the distorted void while that indescribable strength attempted to dissolve his domain, his battle force, and his entire being.

Lu Yin’s eyes narrowed as an intense feeling of crisis welled up within his heart. He had a sense that he was about to be obliterated. There was no attack, but this feeling was very strong. He did not know how powerful that Arbiter had been when they were in the Astral Combat Academy, but since he was able to match the Divine Fist’s record, Lu Yin believed that he was no weaker than the Ten Arbiters when they had been at his cultivation.

The strange sense of crisis grew even more prominent. There were no marks on Lu Yin’s body and no external attack either, but his entire body started to become transparent.

Everyone held their breaths, as Lu Yin was about to vanish just like the others. They had witnessed this scene many times, and everyone who had failed had inexplicably vanished just like this.

Lu Yin was shocked. This shouldn’t happen. Was it possible that his strength still wasn’t able to match up to the Ten Arbiters’ of the past? How could that be possible? When that Arbiter had ascended to the top

of the Sky Platform, they had also been at the Limiteer realm, because no Explorers were allowed to enter the trial zones. Did this mean that his current power still could not match up to the Ten Arbiters' when they had been Limiteers? Exactly how strong had that Arbiter been? Was the Divine Fist's record a lie?

Lu Yin suddenly realized that no one would ever reveal all of their hidden trumps. The Divine Fist's record had been left for future generations to surpass, but they could only surpass what they believed to be the Arbiter's record—no one knew the true limits of his strength.

Through the Sky Platform, Lu Yin could acutely sense the invincibility of the Ten Arbiters. Everyone had underestimated the Ten Arbiters yet again; their true power was incomparable and immeasurable.

Lu Yin's body turned more and more transparent as his very existence was being erased. He was not yet qualified to ascend to the top of the Sky Platform.

However, right before Lu Yin completely vanished, his body suddenly solidified and that strange strength rapidly diminished.

The crowd could not understand what had happened, but they could see the result: Lu Yin had reached the top of the Sky Platform.

Despite the countless years that the trial zones had stood for, almost no one had ever reached the top of the Sky Platform, and there were only a few records of such students. Of the recorded successful students, only that one Arbiter had done it as a Limiteer. All of the others had actually been Explorers where they had been allowed back into the trial zones on an exception. Now, Lu Yin was the second Limiteer student who had ascended the Sky Platform since ancient times.

The moment Lu Yin ascended the Sky Platform, all of the Astral Combat Academy's headmasters opened their eyes simultaneously. At this moment, Lu Yin's name had been recorded down in the history of the Astral Combat Academy.

"A Limiteer who can actually ascend the Sky Platform. A genius from the heavens," an elderly voice spoke from Astral-6.

"The Sky Platform only exists for motivation and inheritance; it's not a test meant for Limiteers. All those who ascended in the past were Explorers, but two Limiteers have done so in recent years. The universe has indeed changed," someone from Astral-2 said.

"It's a good thing. The sooner the younger generation matures, the sooner us old folks can be at ease," a voice from Astral-5 replied.

"Maturing too quickly might not sufficiently polish their willpower. The Ten Arbiters Council is too overbearing and is possibly too impulsive," someone from Astral-9 said.

"It's fine. They're still young, and having some ambition is a good thing. This little fellow should go to the Ocean of Death next. Cross the Dao of Heaven's Ocean of Death, ascend the Dao of Purgatory's Sky Platform, keke," an aged voice from Astral-1 said.

"It's a pity that this child's from Astral-10. That old fogey doesn't even know that his own academy has produced a genius. What a pity," a voice from Astral-4 rang out.

...

Back in the Dao of Purgatory, Lu Yin relaxed. Right before his body had completely vanished, he had suddenly remembered the Stonewall Scriptures. Every time he bumped into an unsolvable problem, he would recite the Stonewall Scriptures, which would sometimes result in miraculous effects. This time, it had produced a miracle once more. The Stonewall Scriptures had seemingly opened a path for him by forcefully dispersing that strange force, allowing him to successfully ascend.

It was a pity that he had not been able to rely on his true abilities, which showed that he was still inferior to that Arbiter as a Limiteer, though he was not sure just how far behind he was.

Speaking of which, his current power was already rather abnormal. But despite his die, all the fortunate encounters he had experienced, and his bafflingly powerful body, he still could not match up to that Arbiter's strength from back then. He truly did not know how the Ten Arbiters had cultivated to reach such freakish strength.

Regardless of the methods he employed, Lu Yin had succeeded, and now, he felt as if he had ascended to another space. Half of his body was atop the Sky Platform while the other half was within the distorted void. The scene before his eyes was completely different, as he saw endless strange runes. It was as if the entire Dao of Purgatory had been divided into two.

This was the true state of the trial zones, the true form of the remnants that the Rune Technology civilization had left behind.

"Seventh Bro, what do you see? Tell me!" the monkey shouted. Lu Yin's upper body was atop the Sky Platform, so the monkey could not see what Lu Yin saw.

Lu Yin did not know how to describe what he was seeing; looking at it was one thing, but comprehending it was another matter entirely. He was perplexed, as he did not know what good came from ascending the platform. He would rather witness an ancient battle between powerhouses.

Countless stared up from below, dumbfounded. No one had witnessed that Arbiter ascend to the peak as everyone had been chased away, and no one even knew which Arbiter had succeeded. Lu Yin was the only person to succeed in recent years.

Many expected him to extract an ancient inheritance that would allow them to broaden their horizons. However, contrary to expectation, there was no activity whatsoever even after they waited for a long time.

"Why does it look like Lu Yin's been split into two halves?" someone mumbled.

The others continued staring, and the description seemed fairly quite accurate.

"Seventh Bro, your bottom half is exposed to those below! Don't you feel insecure?" the monkey shrieked.

Lu Yin stared at the endless runes in the heavens and wrinkled his brows. The more he saw, the dizzier he became, and the more tired his eyes felt. Two rows of clear tears involuntarily flowed down from his

eyes, and he closed them, not daring to open them again. However, the moment he closed his eyes, his body started vanishing, which frightened him into opening his eyes once again.

When he opened them for the second time, they felt so sore that he could not bear it anymore. It felt like someone was blinding him with a bright light.

He wanted to close them, but at the same time, he didn't dare to do so. He was not foolish, and he knew that there must be a reason behind the fatigue he was feeling. His eyes would not become tired for no reason with his current strength. Perhaps this was related to the reward of ascending the top.

Lu Yin continued to endure the strain, and he even widened his eyes as he desperately stared at the countless runes. He grew more light-headed, and he tried to recite the Stonewall Scriptures again, but it was ineffective this time.

Finally, he could no longer bear it and closed his eyes. His body instantly vanished from the Dao of Purgatory in the exact same manner as those failures from before.

Everyone below remained silent. Had he succeeded or not? No one knew, as no one had ever witnessed someone ascending to the top.

On Astral-10's trial zone mountain, Lu Yin suddenly opened his eyes and then reflexively closed them again as they were still too sore. What's going on?

"Brother Lu, how are you feeling?" He heard Coco's voice. Zora, Xia Luo, and the others were present as well, as they had all shown up to watch Lu Yin's attempt at the Sky Platform.

Lu Yin shook his head and closed his eyes. "I'm alright. I just need some rest."

Coco was worried. "Brother Lu, how are your eyes? Are you sick? Coco can give you a jab."

Still with his eyes closed, Lu Yin immediately gestured that he was fine. He quickly replied, "There's no need, Coco. I'm fine. I'm just a little tired, so I'll be fine after a nap."

"Oh." Coco acknowledged Lu Yin's words, but she still felt like it was a shame.

They all had a feeling that they should not disturb Lu Yin in his current state, so they all separated and left.

Lu Yin leaned against the trial zone mountain and tried to open his eyes. A trace of light entered his eyes, but there were also threads. Eh? Threads? Aren't these runes?

Lu Yin jumped in fright, and his eyes instantly went wide as he observed his surroundings.

Chapter 400: Second War King

Although Lu Yin could not see it himself, if someone else was looking at Lu Yin's eyes at this moment, they would see that they had changed. They were now deeper, like the vast starry sky, and they held an indescribable dignity.

Lu Yin looked around some more, and true enough, what he saw now was different. There were more lines, or perhaps they should be called runes. What had happened to his eyes? Before, even when he

used his domain, Cosmic Art, and the lockbreaking tool, he still couldn't see everything that he currently could. Yet, his transformed eyes were able to do it all on their own.

When normal people looked at space, it was just space. Cultivators were able to see the movement of star energy, and their perceptive ability became clearer the stronger they became. Lockbreakers were special in that they could control the flow of star energy and levy their sensitive perception of star energy to unlock sourceboxes. Domain users could also sense such subtle changes in star energy. When Lu Yin had first obtained the Giant Emperor's third eye, his vision had expanded. When he had first comprehended his domain, the combination of all three had allowed his senses to surpass what many could perceive, and his senses possibly even surpassing the great majority of Lockbreakers.

But all of that was different from what he currently saw: runes.

Lu Yin did not know what these runes meant. Could they be some deeper representation of energy?

Also, was there anything wrong with his eyes!

He felt an urge to ask the Trialmaster about this matter, but for some unknown reason, he also did not want to inquire too deeply about this matter. It was possible that some changes had occurred to his body but not to others, in which case there would be no benefit in revealing too many of his secrets.

Lu Yin rubbed his eyes and let out a heavy breath. He then looked around. I can't always see these lines when looking at things in the future. That's just unacceptable.

When he tried to withdraw the star energy from his eyes, the lines disappeared. Sure enough, star energy was the foundation of everything.

"Seventh Bro, what did you see when you ascended the Sky Platform?" The monkey was very curious.

"What do you think I saw?"

"How would I know?" The monkey rolled his eyes.

Lu Yin didn't bother replying. The stupid monkey only seemed to respond to threats, but the reality was that the monkey understood what he should or should not say. He would not bother concealing things that Lu Yin should know, and he would also not utter a single word about things that he himself should not know.

Xia Luo and the rest had left to give Lu Yin some time to rest. Indeed, he needed rest, and he truly wanted to find out if his eyes had any problems. From where he was resting, he could request the nearby Trialmaster for assistance if the problem persisted.

In another corner of the universe, there was a planet covered with layers of enormous cyclones that constantly roamed about. They formed a strong protective net, and there were powerhouses soaring beneath it. The weakest person in this group was an Explorer while the strongest, a man wearing a royal gown, was a Hunter.

They appeared to be almost like normal people aside from their exceptionally long legs, which caused each one of them to be over three meters tall.

This group of space-exploring powerhouses frantically looked at the skies, and their expressions were filled with expressions of unprecedented worry and terror.

Outside the safety net of cyclones, there was a long-haired youth with his hands in his pockets. He leisurely looked down and said, "This is your last chance. Accept the Ten Arbiters Council's authority in dealing with the trial, education, and oversight of the younger generation in the Cyclone Mainland."

Beneath the protective net of cyclones, the middle-aged man in the royal gown spoke in a deafening voice. "Alien, the Cyclone Mainland will never bow to any threats, and it has no wish to interact with the outside world. Please leave."

The youth raised his head arrogantly, and then rather grudgingly plucked at his hair with his fingers. "Honestly, I wouldn't normally handle matters in such a dirty manner, but who asked you to appear in my territory." The youth's figure then vanished. There was not the slightest change nor any sign of displacement in the immediate nearby space. It was as if that youth had never even been there.

The crowd beneath the protective net was stunned. Where did he go?

The next moment, the entire planet trembled. The cyclones that had revolved around the planet for countless years were stripped away, layer by layer, by some invisible strength. The middle-aged man wearing the royal gown squinted, and then suddenly stared at a section of the void in shock. He raised his hand to attack, causing the void to warp. The long-haired youth reappeared, but he didn't even look back, allowing the Hunter's attack to land.

However, the Hunter's attack vanished inexplicably right when it neared the long-haired man. It disappeared without a single trace, and not even a hint of a ripple could be seen.

All of the powerhouses of Cyclone Mainland were overwhelmed, and their expressions turned to that of shock.

The long-haired youth turned back around and smirked. "The Ten Arbiters cannot be harmed." He then raised a hand and aimed at the Hunter, who soon vanished from where he stood.

The crowd was stunned; what had just happened?

"I gave you guys a chance, but none of you knew how to cherish it. In that case, there's no need for you all to continue living," the long-haired youth leisurely commented. There was a faint smile on his face as he looked down at the giant planet.

Not long after, the planet that had tornadoes constantly roaming about it vanished from the universe. It was like a grain of sand had been plucked from a beach; there were no changes whatsoever.

The long-haired man seemed bored as he flipped through his gadget. Suddenly, his gaze froze, and he then laughed out loud. "Someone actually managed to successfully climb the Sky Platform. Interesting, I wonder if his eyes have been opened. Perhaps I'll no longer be alone on this path."

Lu Yin stayed near the trial zone mountain for two days. By then, his eyes no longer felt unwell, which was a relief.

During these two days, Coco and the others left him alone.

Big Pao and Little Pao had already left Astral-10 and were heading towards the Chaos Flowzone.

Once his eyes were feeling better, Lu Yin stepped away from the trial zone mountain and arrived at the trial zone entrance. He respectfully said to the Trialmaster, "Mentor, I would like to ask for some guidance."

The Trialmaster opened his murky eyes. "Go and get a teleportation stone first. Then you can ask me a question. One teleportation stone per question."

Lu Yin nodded, as this response was not unexpected. He headed towards the teleportation stone.

Currently, Astral-10 had three teleportation stones. One had been there from the beginning while the other two had been won by Lu Yin. No one else had managed to win a stone yet.

Xia Luo and the rest were powerful, but the chances of them being matched up against someone stronger than them in a ported battle was just too high. Lu Yin had also lost many times, to say nothing of Xia Luo and the rest.

Lu Yin's ported battle record currently stood at 134 victories to 108 defeats, and his best winning streak had been nineteen matches. His statistics were rather impressive, but that was in the past. Now, after two upgrading his body twice with the strengthening fruits, his power had undergone overwhelming changes. He wanted to raise his winning streak to thirty matches, since that was one way to gain the ability to challenge those on the Top 100 Rankings.

It was not possible to directly challenge the Top 100 Rankings whenever one wished, and that was because the opponent had the right to reject such challengers. The Astral Combat Academy even encouraged them to reject such challengers so as to preserve the authoritative nature of the rankings. If just anyone was allowed to challenge those on the list as they wished, then it would trivialize matters. The experts on the list would end up being pestered to death since there was no way they could kill everyone.

As such, in general, those who did not qualify would not have their challenges accepted. However, if such a challenge was accepted, then the results would still be valid. If Lu Yin had fought and defeated Northgate Lie, then Lu Yin would have stepped into the Top 100 Rankings.

Lu Yin had been thinking of this when he attempted to challenge Northgate Lie. Lu Yin wanted to enter the Top 100 Rankings, but he had let the matter slide after thinking about it. There were benefits that came with a greater reputation, but there were also disadvantages. Those targeting him would use a different level of power against him if he did so.

He had not been threatened by Northgate Taisui because he had revealed his rather powerful connections. If an enemy wanted to deal with Lu Yin, then they would now also factor in Nightking Yuanjing's influence, which meant targeting Lu Yin's connections. If he entered the Top 100 Rankings, then the powers targeting him would send even stronger forces, as people would be attacking not just his connections but also Lu Yin himself.

Being famous wasn't necessarily all beneficial.

As Lu Yin stepped within the range of the teleportation stone, the scenery around him changed as he started a ported battle.

It was no longer that difficult for Lu Yin to rack up a consecutive streak of fifteen matches, as long as his luck wasn't atrocious. At present, there were no more than a hundred people in the younger generation who could defeat him.

In his sixteenth battle, when his name turned red, his opponent was actually a Sentinel. Lu Yin was speechless and even felt like he was looking at a sprout.

At that moment, the young sprout's heart collapsed. He became stupefied once he saw that he was facing a red named opponent nicknamed "Seventh Bro." The Sentinel's senior had explained what a red name indicated, and had also shared the information with a voice full of dread and worship. Now, he had actually encountered someone with a red name. He cursed internally. What the- and then his death caught up to him.

Lu Yin released a breath since he had snatched another teleportation stone. Not enough. I have to keep going.

Seventeenth match, victory. Eighteenth, victory. Nineteenth, victory... Lu Yin quickly matched his previous win streak, but it still wasn't enough. Soon, he achieved twenty two straight victories. Twenty third, victory...

Boom!

The floating rock shattered, and the figure before Lu Yin disappeared. He looked up: thirtieth match, victory.

He had racked up a winning streak of thirty victories, which was one way to be qualified to challenge the Top 100 Rankings.

There were a few ways to qualify to challenge the experts on the ranking list, and achieving any one of them was enough. This meant that, right now, Lu Yin could challenge someone on the list, as long as he was confident enough to do so.

Of course, the opponent could still reject him, but the meaning behind the rejection was different now. To bystanders, rejecting a challenge from someone who was qualified to issue it meant that the ranker was afraid.

As long as one qualified, they could challenge any expert on the Top 100 Rankings at any time.

Lu Yin opened his eyes. Liu Shaoqiu would probably achieve his qualifications soon as well, as his strength was enough to ensure a streak of thirty victories.

Although there were many in the universe's younger generation, the differentiation between them was patently obvious. The Ten Arbiters would forever stand at the peak, followed by those on the Top 100 Rankings. It was possible for there to be hidden powerhouses, but there weren't that many of them.

Lu Yin was confident that only a hundred or so people in the young generation could defeat him. He estimated there were no more than a few hundred who could defeat Liu Shaoqiu, and they were too sparsely scattered throughout the universe.

More importantly, Liu Shaoqiu and Lu Yin were still just Limiteers. As soon as they became Explorers, even fewer people in the universe would be able to defeat them.

There were only two more matches left, and Lu Yin would win a teleportation stone if he won the next one, so he continued on and started another ported battle.

Just like the match before, the setting for this one was in the sky, and countless giant rocks floated in the backdrop. All around them, white clouds drifted by, making for a very beautiful scenery.

A mighty figure appeared before Lu Yin with the words “Second War King” boldly written above his head.

Lu Yin was shocked by this person’s nickname. War King? He remembered that one of the Ten Arbiters was known as the War King, but this person actually dared to call himself the Second War King. It was insane.

What was even more baffling was that Lu Yin’s opponent actually sat down on a rock and leisurely waved at him.

The meaning was evident—it was an invitation for Lu Yin to attack at will.

Lu Yin squinted and earnestly observed his opponent. With such boldness, this person was either someone who greatly overestimated his own strength or someone who was truly powerful. Which category did this person fall into? Lu Yin could not tell, because he could not feel any hint of danger aura from this person. In fact, he seemed like just a regular human, which was actually even more abnormal.