

Chapter 861: Little Seven

“Yes, that’s right. With the empire’s current technology, we are unable to refine those materials,” Ban Jiu explained helplessly while also clearly a bit embarrassed. He was a scientist, but he was actually unable to process these materials. He had actually studied the problem for several days before deciding to report his failure to Lu Yin.

“The melting point of those materials is simply too high, and they cannot be melted through conventional processes. In fact, only an Enlighter-realm expert can create temperatures high enough to melt them,” Ban Jiu explained.

Lu Yin nodded, as this was similar to what he had learned about the Scarlet Ancient Copper he had obtained from a sourcebox. Regular methods were not enough to do anything to these precious materials, and they would have to search for an alternate source of extremely high temperature.

Lu Yin could find an Enlighter without much problem, but it was not so easy to find one who had an innate gift of flames. However, simply having an Enlighter simulate a fire with their star energy should also work. It was a pity that Akira had not returned to Zenyu Star yet and that he was still stationed in the Greatwood Lavazone. For the moment, Lu Yin could not find any Enlighters.

“Pass down instructions for people to take note of any ancient tinders or any sourceboxes that emit high temperatures,” Lu Yin ordered.

Ban Jiu acknowledged the command and then left.

This news was unfortunate, as Lu Yin’s goal had been to use those materials to reinforce his universal armor so that he could upgrade it several more times. It seemed that he could only put those plans on hold for the moment.

If he could not upgrade his universal armor, then he could still upgrade other items, such as his cosmic ring. He had never thought of trying to upgrade his cosmic ring, but he should try this time around.

After thinking about it, Lu Yin entered the palace’s secret room, screened the Ghost Monkey off, raised his hand, and caused his die to appear. After tapping out, it gradually began to spin.

He did not intentionally put his cosmic ring aside, as it would be fine even if he rolled six pips: Possession at this time. In fact, he was even feeling a little bit of anticipation towards doing so. There had always been an unexpected harvest whenever he had rolled six pips, and whoever he Possessed, he would later be able to probe their thoughts and even borrow their line of sight, which was a very practical ability.

The die slowly stopped on one pip: Pilfer, and from the space channel dropped a ball of paper.

Lu Yin was aghast, as who would put paper trash in their cosmic ring?

He picked it up and slowly opened it, but it only contained a few delicate handprints, which had obviously come from children of varying sizes.

As soon as he saw the handprints, Lu Yin’s mind jolted, and his eyes went slack. A hazy memory appeared in his mind as a crisp child’s voice rang out in his mind.

'Second Bro, Second Bro, someone's bullying me!'

'Who? Who's so ballsy that they would dare to bully my Third Bro? Come on, let's go beat him up.'

'Big Sis, someone's bullying Third Bro.'

'What? How outrageous!'

'Big Sis, Second Bro, the other group has many brothers and sisters. What if we can't beat them?'

'Don't worry, just call for others.'

'Beat them, go and beat them. They only have seven, but we have thirteen!'

'Beat them! Even if we are seven, we'll still fight all thirteen of them.'

'How outrageous! How dare you gather a crowd and cause a scuffle? All of you, go and stand still as punishment. You seven, come over here! Look at you! All badly beaten up. Who's the leader?'

'Me.'

'Me.'

'Me.'

...

'Alright, since you're still talking about brotherhood, just stand still for three days. No eating, no sleeping, and no talking.'

...

'Big Sis, I'm hungry.'

'Third Bro, don't be scared, and don't let Master look down on you. Our Lu family's Three Elites are unyielding.'

'What "Lu Family Three Elites?" Then what about us four?'

'Right, what about us? Did we fight for nothing?'

'Right? Right? Not the Three Elites, but the Seven Elites.'

'Why don't we become sworn siblings? From now on, we are the Seven Elites, and we will all share the same fate.'

'Alright, let's become sworn siblings, and we'll all share the same fate. Let's combine our handprints.'

'Third Bro, you're the youngest, so from now on, you're Seventh Bro. Come, talk to your elders!'

'Big Sis, Second Bro, Third Bro, Fourth Sis, Fifth Bro, Sixth Sis, hello.'

'Good, Little Seven. Whoever bullies you from now, we'll all help you get revenge.'

'You'll be called Little Seven from now.'

'Little Seven, are you happy? You have so many older siblings watching over you, so nobody will dare bully you.'

'Your elder siblings will take care of you.'

...

'Little Seven, hurry and go! Relax, we won't die. We'll meet again one day, so hurry up and leave!' A sharp voice awakened Lu Yin.

Unbeknownst to himself, as his memories resurfaced, Lu Yin's eyes had grown hazy and filled with tears, but they had also declined like the tide. At this moment, Lu Yin's back was suffering from intense pain, and his seal had reappeared. His entire body was sprawled on the floor as he tightly gritted his teeth.

In his hand, he tightly clenched the ball of paper.

After some time, the seal on his back faded away, and Lu Yin looked as though he had been pulled out of the water due to the sheer amount of sweat dripping from his body. The ball of paper in his hand had also been soaked through by his sweat.

Whose memory had that been? Was it from the ball of paper? Or had it been Lu Yin's own memory? His die's one pip could pilfer something from anyone's cosmic ring. There were billions of cosmic rings scattered throughout the universe, and could Lu Yin really have acquired something that was related to his past? Could this be a coincidence, or...?

Lu Yin suddenly thought of Xuan Jiu. If there was something strange, then it had to be related to Xuan Jiu, as he had conducted a divination. Could that divination have been fulfilled just now?

Lu Yin was puzzled, and he rubbed his eyes. Had he actually been crying?

He walked out of the room and entered the courtyard, where he found Zhao Ran humming a tune as she sorted some flowers.

Lu Yin sat down on the stone bench and looked at the drenched paper in his hand while those various tiny voices replayed themselves in his head. Little Seven, Seven?

All along, Lu Yin had been very attached to the number seven, and he had encouraged people to call him Seventh Bro while elders were asked to call him Little Seven. He had always been very happy with this nickname. For some reason, whenever someone called him Little Seven, it felt as if they were saying that they would protect him forever.

"Seventh Bro, what happened to you?" The Ghost Monkey was puzzled.

Lu Yin refocused his thoughts and stored the ball of paper away. "Nothing much." That clump of memories had caused him to lose all interest in rolling the die any more.

"You seem rather down, so come on, share your thoughts! Let me be happy, haha." The monkey sniggered.

Lu Yin looked over at Zhao Ran, who was another person who had lost her memories. Zhao Ran was rather simple-minded, and while Lu Yin still thought about his past at times, Zhao Ran did not even think about it. She was just like what Xuan Jiu had divined for her: she was rotten goods.

“Ah, Your Highness, you’re here! Would you like to drink some scented tea? It’s made from flowers that were planted in our own home.” Zhao Ran happily greeted him.

Lu Yin forced a smile onto his face for the girl. “Alright.”

Zhao Ran became even happier, and she quickly brewed a cup for Lu Yin.

Lu Yin took a sip, and nodded at Zhao Ran’s expectant eyes. “It’s not bad. It’s a nice drink.”

“Thank you, Your Highness!” Zhao Ran felt encouraged and became very cheerful, and she suddenly started picking the flowers in a frenzy. After a while, the area was completely devoid of flowers, and the courtyard seemed to have become rather barren.

Lu Yin’s lips twitched slightly, and he silently left.

After half a day, Lu Yin had stabilized his emotions, and he decided to continue rolling his die.

At this time, his gadget beeped softly, and when Lu Yin looked at it, he was surprised to see that Hai Qiqi was calling him. This girl had not contacted Lu Yin in quite some time, as she had constantly been searching the Astral River for a way to get back to the Innderverse.

“How’s it going?” Lu Yin asked as soon as the call connected.

Hai Qiqi’s answered in an excited voice. “I’ve found a way into the Innderverse!”

Lu Yin’s eyes went wide. “What did you say?”

Hai Qiqi lost her impatience. “You’re deaf! I said, ‘I’ve found a way back into the Innderverse.’”

“Where?” Lu Yin asked urgently. This was not good news, because as soon as the Innderverse and Outerverse were reconnected, he would be in trouble.

Hai Qiqi sent him a set of coordinates. “Are you coming? If not, I’m going to go alone.”

“Hold up, just give me a few days, and I’ll meet up with you there,” Lu Yin hurriedly told her.

Hai Qiqi grew anxious. “Then hurry! If I wasn’t concerned that you’d be worried, I would have already left. Let me tell you—I can feel Father’s strength from here! He’s not dead yet!”

“I told you that it wouldn’t be easy for anything to happen to the Sea King. Alright, you just wait there, and I’ll head over soon.” Lu Yin then disconnected from the call. Hai Qiqi’s discovery had disrupted his plans. He had wanted to stick to his routine, join Aegis’s first level of management, use Aegis’s information to infiltrate the rest of the Outerverse powers, and then slowly nibble his way into the weaves of the central region step by step. However, this plan would have to be shelved for the moment.

If the Innderverse truly reconnected with the Outerverse, then there would be no point to anything he did. Any great sect or power from the Innderverse would bind his hands, and more importantly, the Sixth

Mainland might even invade the Outerverse from the path across the Astra River. At this time, they weren't just facing the Bloodburn Realm, but rather all three realms, and that difference between the two was significant.

He checked a star chart and found that the coordinates that Hai Qiqi had shared with him were rather far away. In fact, they pointed to a place called the astral cemetery that was on the border of Endless Weave. Lu Yin's eyes lit up when he saw this location.

Usually, no one would head to the astral cemetery, and it would be easier to hide oneself there.

Hai Qiqi was adamant about wanting to return to the Innaverse, and Lu Yin could not stop her from doing so. If a passageway truly existed, then he might really have to send her off. To prevent any accidents from happening, Lu Yin immediately summoned Huan Sha, the Imperial Cabinet, En Ya, and the rest. He gave them some instructions before chatting with Wendy Yushan for a while.

Finally, he called Starfox.

"Alliance Leader Lu, have you thought about what you would like to contribute?" Starfox asked casually. He did not believe that Lu Yin would be able to produce anything comparable to what the original creators had done by establishing Aegis.

Lu Yin answered in a low voice, "Aegis must be finding it tough to survive."

Starfox was puzzled. "What do you mean?"

Lu Yin continued, "On the surface, Aegis is one of the Outerverse's four great corporations. It possesses an endless amount of resources, has ties with countless powers, and is very stable. In reality, the greater an assassination organization's size, the more danger it faces as time passes."

"What is Alliance Leader Lu trying to say?" Starfox asked.

"If you don't mind me asking, why was there a calamity that targeted the Outerverse's assassins in the first place?" Lu Yin asked.

Starfox indifferently answered, "I don't have the idle time to be chatting with Alliance Leader Lu."

Lu Yin said, "Alright, then I'll be direct. An assassination organization cannot survive for too long, unless it's like an organization like Mafioso Planet that only deals with a small territory. Aegis cannot possibly do the same, and it will likely cause some powers to grow wary sooner or later and be targeted. I can allow this possibility to be delayed endlessly and perhaps even reduce it to nothing."

Starfox frowned. "I still don't understand where Alliance Leader Lu is going with this."

"I'm saying that I can request for Aegis to join the Hall of Honor and become one of its subsidiaries," Lu Yin said solemnly.

Starfox was stumped, but then he laughed. "Is Alliance Leader Lu joking? Let's not talk about the Hall of Honor not lacking for powerhouses. Even if they were truly willing to do such a thing, do you think that our Aegis will accept being supervised by the Hall of Honor? What a joke!"

"What if you can join the Hall of Honor, but not be monitored?" Lu Yin asked slowly.

Starfox's eyes flickered. "Alliance Leader Lu, can you explain?"

Lu Yin replied, "I, Lu Yin, with the status as one of the Hall of Honor's Chosen, can incorporate Aegis. Thus, from now on, Aegis will be my subsidiary. It will belong to the Hall of Honor, but it will listen to only me, Lu Yin, alone."

Starfox was confused. "What Chosen?"

Chapter 862: Astral Cemetery

"You can ask the other top management members if they've heard about it before," Lu Yin casually replied. Initially, he had not bothered too much about his new status as a Chosen, but after spending two days contacting Elder Lohar and chatting with Aden, he had finally come to understand what this status meant within the Hall of Honor.

The Honor Chosen represented inheritance. There were not many Honor Chosen within the entire Hall of Honor, and each one of them held a high status. They were able to use authority that did not even belong to them, and this was all because the Honor Chosen were the Hall of Honor's future.

Everyone in the Hall of Honor's upper echelons had once been an Honor Chosen, so to such youths, the Hall of Honor bestowed great authority. For example, the Honor Chosen could incorporate subsidiaries under themselves, and those powers would not be subject to the Hall of Honor's supervision, which was one of the more basic authorities given.

Just like the Inniverse's Ten Arbiters, each Honor Chosen had their own background, and each one had powers that submitted to them alone. Nobody interfered in their affairs because nobody dared.

This was the basic authority of an Honor Chosen, and once one became one of the Cosmic Five, their power would no longer be limited to just the Hall of Honor. They would be able to influence the entire universe.

On the other side of the call, Starfox transmitted Lu Yin's words to the Black Mask. At first, that old assassin was also puzzled, but then, he suddenly thought of something, and he immediately contacted Lu Yin himself.

Lu Yin had never expected someone within Aegis to have actually heard of the Honor Chosen title before, as he himself had not heard of this term before being given the title.

"I once saw this title in an ancient letter, and the person who penned it came from the Cosmic Sea. They wrote about the Hall of Honor's Chosen, and reportedly, the Honor Chosen are the Hall of Honor's heirs," Black Mask explained in a deep voice.

Lu Yin was astonished. "You know quite a bit. That's right, I'm one of the Hall of Honor's Honor Chosen. You can obtain authentication from the Hall of Honor itself."

"Is what Alliance Leader Lu said true? Can my Aegis become a subsidiary of the Hall of Honor, but not actually be subject to their supervision?" Black Mask asked. There was a certain fluctuation in his tone, which betrayed the fact that he found this condition rather alluring, especially to this old assassin who had survived the calamity that had nearly destroyed the Outerverse's assassins. This old man was able to understand the value of such a proposition.

Lu Yin replied, "On paper, you will belong to them as my subsidiary, and only I will have any authority to oversee Aegis. You can rest assured, as we will sign a contract."

Black Mask considered the matter and then said, "Very well, I agree. So long as the Hall of Honor recognizes Aegis's status, Alliance Leader Lu will be considered a member of Aegis's first level managers."

As someone who had avoided that ancient calamity and then gone on to establish Aegis, Black Mask was clearly not stupid. Lu Yin would have to first get the Hall of Honor to recognize Aegis's status, and only then would the old assassin be willing to allow Lu Yin to join the organization's highest managerial level. This was basically a way for Lu Yin to prove his status as an Honor Chosen.

Lu Yin naturally understood the man's intentions.

He ended his call with Black Mask and then immediately contacted Elder Lohar.

Lu Yin's status as Chosen had been granted to him by Yuan Shi, which meant that Elder Lohar did not know about it since Yuan Shi had not announced anything. However, there was no need for the old man to announce anything; so long as Lu Yin went to the Neoverse's Hall of Honor, there would naturally be a way to authenticate his status.

However, Yuan Shi had never expected Lu Yin to use his authority as an Honor Chosen while still in the Outerverse.

When Elder Lohar requested for Yuan Shi to verify Lu Yin's status, the ancient powerhouse felt a little helpless. "I've heard that this fellow cannot stand loneliness and that he can easily stir up trouble. It seems that that's really the truth."

Elder Lohar smiled wryly. "He wants to pull Aegis in as a subsidiary organization of the Hall of Honor, and it seems as though he is hoping to borrow their strength to act against the various weaves of the Outerverse and thereby unite them."

Yuan Shi was not at all surprised. He was not aware of Aegis, as he had been gone for far too many ages, and many people and powers had changed. In his memory, the Outerverse did not only have some Neo-Vestige Sect, Dark Phoenix family, and Millions City as its peak powers, as it had also possessed various other strong powers. But now, all of those other powers had vanished, so Yuan Shi did not particularly mind this Aegis.

"Unite the Outerverse? Interesting... That would be a good thing, as a unified Outerverse will be able to gather an even more powerful strength," Yuan Shi commented.

Elder Lohar was surprised, and he watched as Yuan Shi's image then vanished. After considering things for a long time, Elder Lohar made the decision to fully support Lu Yin.

Yuan Shi had not merely tossed the title of Honor Chosen to Lu Yin, as he had also spoken words of support for Lu Yin's dream of uniting the Outerverse. Elder Lohar could only imagine the shock he would give to those Innerverse forces if Lu Yin returned with the position of master of the Outerverse.

Or perhaps, whether Elder Lohar himself would be able to return to the Neoverse depended on that youth.

Elder Lohar's expression was resolute. He quickly called Lu Yin, and this time, the old man's tone was even more respectful, and it was completely unlike how an expert with a power level of more than 300,000 should speak to an Explorer. In fact, Elder Lohar's behavior made Lu Yin start panicking.

Elder Lohar personally used his position as an elder of the Hall of Honor to confirm Aegis as a subsidiary power of the Hall of Honor. And at the same time, he appointed Lu Yin as its supervisor.

The Hall of Honor was highly efficient, and after just half a day, Aegis underwent a complete change in status. From once being an Outerverse's assassination and mercenary group, they had become a part of the Hall of Honor. Although the organization's strength did not change, its status was completely different.

Even if the Innerverse and Outerverse reconnected, the Innerverse's great powers that wished to move against Aegis would now have to obtain the Hall of Honor's permission to do so.

When the Black Mask received the notification from the Hall of Honor, a dazed feeling went through his entire being.

In the past, they had been surrounded by the entire universe because they had grasped too many secrets due to their line of work while having no backing or background. These secrets were so deadly that some had even implicated important characters from the Innerverse. After all, some of their hits had been ordered by those Innerverse powerhouses, which was enough to lead to a purging of the Outerverse's assassins.

Now that Aegis had risen up in power again, the old assassin had become worried that a similar event would play out once more. Thus, he had not dared to reveal himself and had remained dormant. This was not only because he wanted to survive for a bit longer, but also because he was afraid of attracting those powers' attention once again.

But at this moment, the old assassin no longer needed to entertain such fears, as he had become someone under the Hall of Honor. Even if those great characters were overbearing, they would not dare to move against a subsidiary organization of the Hall of Honor.

"Alliance Leader Lu, welcome to Aegis." Black Mask appeared on Lu Yin's screen. Before, he had not spoken with Lu Yin while showing himself, but at this moment, he had revealed his entire being.

Black Mask looked like a very ordinary man, though he was slightly paler and thinner than the average. If Lu Yin did not pay attention, he would have thought this old man was a scholar. Who could imagine that this man was a terrifying assassin who had survived for tens of thousands of years, or that he had even founded Aegis.

By formally joining Aegis's top level, Lu Yin was informed of everyone who was a part of Aegis's first level management. Aside from Starfox and Black Mask, there was also another assassin with the appearance of a child. In total, there were three old assassins.

"When we first founded Aegis, there were five of us, but today, only three of us are left," Black Mask calmly explained.

Starfox had similarly appeared on the screen, and he looked at Lu Yin in a clearly uncomfortable manner. He felt that the induction of this person into their highest ranks would force Aegis to change its ways.

That child-like assassin had been kept back at the border by the Hall of Honor to aid in the defenses.

Once he understood Aegis's entire strength, Lu Yin was thrilled that he had not decided to fight them to the death. Black Mask's power level was over 300,000 while the child-like assassin's power level surpassed 200,000. Even Starfox might break through the 200,000 threshold at any time and become an Enlighter.

Without mentioning anything else, if Black Mask had wanted to kill Lu Yin back then, then he might not have survived.

He had been lucky.

Aside from meeting these three who formed the first level of management, Lu Yin was now also able to access the registry that listed everyone who was a part of Aegis's second level managers. In addition to that, he could also access the assassination and employment records tracking all the operations that Aegis had undertaken throughout the years, and this was what Lu Yin needed the most.

"What do you need these records for?" Starfox was curious.

Lu Yin glanced at the man. "Since I can, I want to, and I enjoy it."

Starfox felt stifled, and he directly disconnected from the call.

Lu Yin hastened to look for Hai Qiqi, and he shared his authority over Aegis with En Ya. "Whatever way you used Mafioso Planet's intelligence in the past, go ahead and do the same with Aegis's network. I want you to formulate a battle plan that we can use against the weaves in the central region to conquer them at the greatest speed possible."

En Ya grew excited, as she finally saw a hope of accomplishing the dream to unite the Outerverse under one banner. "Yes, Your Highness."

It wasn't just Aegis, as Thousand Eyes's intelligence network had also been handed over to En Ya, and her authority was now exceptional. However, Lu Yin had also left a backup and created checks and balances to En Ya's power. Huan Sha, and Wendy Yushan both had ways to counter En Ya's authority.

It was not that Lu Yin did not trust En Ya, but rather that she had been recommended by the alluring Madam Nalan. Truth be told, Lu Yin did not really have an understanding of the Nalan family.

Of the four great corporations of the Outerverse, Lu Yin had developed an understanding of Endless Borders, Amethyst Exchange, and Aegis. However, he still had not learned much about the Nalan family, which caused him to remain wary of them.

There was also Wei Rong, who still had not revealed himself. Nobody had dared to openly offer him shelter, but it was impossible that Wei Rong had given up on revenge.

Lu Yin had already communicated with Amethyst Exchange, requesting for them to inform him as soon as they learned of Wei Rong's whereabouts. Money was not a problem, as he was rich at the moment.

After settling all of his immediate affairs, he then boarded a spacecraft and headed towards the coordinates that Hai Qiqi had shared with him.

The Outerverse was peaceful at the moment, and even the pirates had disappeared.

In the past, Wei Rong had been worried that Lu Yin would use the pirates to reverse-infiltrate the weaves in the central region of the Outerverse, and he had ordered a purge of all pirates from the central weaves. This had caused many pirate crews to be annihilated, which was actually a good thing.

Ten days later, just as Hai Qiqi's patience was about to go over the tipping point, Lu Yin arrived at the astral cemetery located on the border of Endless Weave.

The astral cemetery lay between Southside Weave and Endless Weave's eastern border, so it was a fair distance away from where Mister Mu had pushed back the Outerverse's defensive line. The cemetery itself consisted of trash strewn about outer space, going as far as the eye could see. Nobody had ever cleaned this place up. This place could also be considered as Endless Weave's greatest junk yard, and all sorts of strange objects had been thrown here by countless people.

Many were searching the region along its outer edge. While dumpster diving seemed embarrassing, it was actually a hidden method to make a quick profit, and there were many contractors who would come to this place and pick through what they found.

However, those activities were limited to the outer edge of the astral cemetery. The further in one went, the more dangerous it became. Many broken technological items could explode at any moment, and there were also quite a few strange astral creatures that roamed about the area.

Lu Yin looked around and noticed that there were groups of rune lines that occasionally passed by. There were actually space-exploring creatures in this place.

He could not understand why Hai Qiqi had come to such a place.

Before long, Lu Yin found Hai Qiqi's rune lines, and he was surprised to see that the brat's strength had increased quite significantly.

It had been quite some time since the two of them had last seen each other.

Lu Yin looked at her with amusement in his eyes. "You must be very happy to see me."

Hai Qiqi nodded. "Very. Right, can you lie?"

Lu Yin was puzzled. "Why do you ask?"

"Which of your eyes sees me as happy?" Hai Qiqi blinked.

Lu Yin choked on his words and fell speechless before looking past Hai Qiqi towards the Astral River.

That energy barrier was still so magnificent, and it was impossible to know its height or depth. However, it had still isolated two regions of the universe.

“Where’s this passageway that you mentioned?” Lu Yin asked.

Hai Qiqi brought Lu Yin onto her collapsible spacecraft and headed closer to the Astral River.

Chapter 863: Shuttling Through The Astral River

It didn’t take long for the two youths to arrive at the edge of the Astral River, which was where it connected to the cemetery. Lu Yin’s gaze followed Hai Qiqi’s finger, but he saw nothing in the direction where she was pointing.

“Get closer and see.” Hai Qiqi was not in a good mood.

Lu Yin flew closer. Only when he was so close that he could almost touch the Astral River by reaching out did he finally see it. There was a vague gap in the wall of liquid energy swaying along with the Astral River, and it was impossible to see if one did not get close enough. Finding this opening along the boundless Astral River was even more difficult than finding a needle in a haystack.

Lu Yin gave Hai Qiqi a strange look. “How did you find this?”

Hai Qiqi’s tone was sad as she replied, “I told you, I felt Father’s strength.”

“Are you saying that the Sea King’s strength was transmitted to you through this passage?” Lu Yin was astonished.

Hai Qiqi nodded. “I have a unique connection with Father, and the strength that he stored in my body vanished the moment the Astral River isolated the Outerverse from the Innerverse. However, more recently, I’ve felt Father’s strength return intermittently. Thus, I simply tracked down the source of that strength to where it was most intense. Which is right here.”

Lu Yin instantly understood her explanation; the Sea King’s strength had essentially been a homing beacon, and Hai Qiqi had followed its signal back to this place.

“When did you first sense the Sea King’s strength?” Lu Yin asked.

Without hesitation, Hai Qiqi answered, “About four months ago.”

Lu Yin did some quick calculations, and he quickly realized that that time period coincided with the decisive battle at the border warfront against the invaders from the Sixth Mainland. During that battle, Ancestor Di and Mister Mu had both appeared. In addition, This place was very close to Endless Weave. Could this passageway’s existence actually be related to that battle at the border?

As he thought about it, Lu Yin moved closer to better observe that little fissure. There was one set of rune lines that obviously did not belong to the Astral River. Actually, there were two independent sets of intertwined rune lines, and one of them gave Lu Yin a sense of familiarity.

He slowly reached out and touched the fissure. At that moment, he saw Yuan Shi’s figure towering in space, and Lu Yin immediately pulled his hand back. His guess was right—this gap had been created during the battle between Yuan Shi and Ancestor Di, and it had been torn open by the aftershocks of the clash between those two powerhouses.

Only experts at that level could divert the flow of the Astral River.

“Eh? Have you poked it enough? I’m leaving. I was just waiting to say goodbye to you,” Hai Qiqi urgently said to him.

Lu Yin solemnly replied, “Do you really want to try returning to the Innerverse with this little hole? If you get stuck in the middle, you’ll die in the Astral River.”

Hai Qiqi looked at the fissure. The end of it could not be seen, and she firmly answered, “I have to go. Otherwise, who knows when the Outerverse will be reconnected with the Innerverse.”

Lu Yin did not know what to tell her, as Hai Qiqi had not wanted to be in the Outerverse from the very beginning. The moment the Outerverse had been isolated from the Innerverse, she had started searching for a way back home, and this search had gone on for nearly four years now. Her actions had long since become a stubborn belief that could not be changed.

“Have you ever thought about what the Sea King would say if he knew that you wanted to take such a huge risk to head back to the Innerverse? About how worried he’d be?”

Hai Qiqi looked straight into Lu Yin’s eyes. “If you don’t know how to give advice, then just don’t speak. Your words only make me want to head back to the Innerverse even more.”

Lu Yin had nothing to say to that. He truly did want to send Hai Qiqi back to the Innerverse, but he was also afraid that he would get stuck in the middle of this fissure and just die. Besides, even if they did safely return to the Innerverse, if the hole vanished after they arrived, then he would be trapped in the Innerverse and be similarly finished.

While Lu Yin was torn over what to do, Hai Qiqi’s expression changed. “Father’s strength has vanished.”

Lu Yin was surprised by this change, and he watched as Hai Qiqi moved to dash into the fissure. He quickly blocked her off and stopped her. “You’re crazy! When the feeling of the Sea King’s strength disappears, that might be the hole being filled and the passageway closing up. If you rush in there right now, you’re just asking to die.”

Hai Qiqi stared intently at the gap, clearly anxious.

Soon, she relaxed again. “Father’s strength has reappeared.”

Lu Yin’s eyes narrowed.

Hai Qiqi flung Lu Yin off and firmly said, “There’s no need to stop me. I’ve been observing this hole for more than ten days. Even though it’s slowly closing up, it will be able to last for at least a few more months. There’s nothing wrong with this gap, but Father’s strength comes and goes intermittently, which means that he might be in danger. I have to return to the Innerverse! You can leave first, as this is none of your business.”

Lu Yin’s head started to hurt. “What about waiting for another ten days?”

Hai Qiqi gritted her teeth and looked pointedly at Lu Yin.

Lu Yin continued, saying, “Another ten days. Let me observe the rate at which the hole is closing for another ten days. If it turns out to be like you said, then I’ll let you go. But otherwise, don’t even think of leaving.”

Hai Qiqi sarcastically retorted, "You don't believe me?"

Lu Yin did not deny the accusation.

Hai Qiqi snorted and glanced down at her gadget. "That time starts now. After ten days, don't even dream of stopping me. Otherwise, I'll tell Wendy that you've been taking advantage of me."

Lu Yin rolled his eyes, as he simply could not comprehend the way this brat's brain operated.

Lu Yin had asked for ten days not just to observe the rate at which the hole was closing, but also to check and see if anyone else had approached this area. If there was any possibility of someone else knowing about this hole, then Lu Yin would destroy it the moment that Hai Qiqi left, as he could not allow the Outerverse to be reconnected to the Innerverse at this moment.

The ten days quickly passed by, and Lu Yin observed the fissure this entire time. It proved to behave exactly as Hai Qiqi had claimed, and although the hole was not very big, the speed at which it diminished was slow. He did not observe it the way Hai Qiqi did; rather, he studied the two intertwining sets of rune lines' rate of dissipation as they were the force that had torn the Astral River apart. The fissure had been created by the aftershocks of Yuan Shi and Ancestor Di's battle, and once those two sets of rune lines vanished, the gap would similarly disappear.

According to what Lu Yin could observe, it would take the two sets of rune lines at least half a year to disappear. Thus, this hole would last for about that amount of time before vanishing.

"I'm leaving," Hai Qiqi said as she suddenly dashed towards the gap, scared that Lu Yin would stop her once again.

Lu Yin did not move. Instead, he simply watched her leave.

Although the Astral River was broad, it should not take more than half an hour to travel from the Outerverse to the Innerverse given the speed of Hai Qiqi's collapsible spacecraft.

Lu Yin was not worried about her making it through the tiny passageway, but rather about her safety in the Innerverse.

Now that the Innerverse was dealing with its own massive war against the Sixth Mainland, Lu Yin had spent the last ten days not only observing the hole, but also sharing the details of the Innerverse's situation with Hai Qiqi. He had repeatedly exhorted her to be careful, but just being careful would not keep one alive in the current Innerverse.

If Hai Qiqi ran into any Sixth Mainland cultivators, she would be in danger.

Lu Yin had not been worried about her safety in the past, as she carried a portion of the Sea King's strength with her back then, which meant that nobody even dared to touch her. She also had the impressive status of being the Sea King's Dome's little princess. However, at this time, the enemy was the Sixth Mainland, and the Sea King's strength would not deter anyone from the Sixth Mainland. Moreover, the entire Innerverse was enveloped within a turbulent energy, preventing everyone's attacks from exceeding a power level of 200,000.

Lu Yin was facing a dilemma of whether he should simply send Hai Qiqi on her way or at least accompany her to the Starfall Sea.

Suddenly, there was an intense flash of light from inside the fissure, and it was extremely dazzling.

Lu Yin's expression changed, and he immediately dashed in.

That light was from an Ultra Flash Tearbomb that he had given Hai Qiqi so that she could protect herself. If she had already used it, then that meant that she had already encountered danger.

The hole was not very large, but that was simply when it was compared to the entire Astral River. Its length was quite long since it had to traverse the entire width of the Astral River, and its cross section had a radius of about ten meters, which was enough for a personal spacecraft to pass through.

Lu Yin did not use a spacecraft. Instead, he simply donned his universal armor and charged straight in.

In the distance, a noticeable portion of Hai Qiqi's collapsible spacecraft was missing, as it had been destroyed by a tremendous attack. In front of the vessel, there was a sinister and terrifying eye that was tightly shut. Shockingly, there was a lone eyeball blocking the tiny passageway. This was from a strange creature native to the Astral River.

Everyone knew about the dangers of fishing in the Astral River, and even space-exploring powerhouses who fell in would find it difficult to survive. Thus, not many individuals had ever even seen the creatures that lived within the Astral River.

However, Hai Qiqi had just met one.

This strange fish had a massive body and a thick outer layer of scales, rendering all of Hai Qiqi's attacks useless against the great beast.

Fortunately, the flash bomb had scared it into tightly closing its eyes. Otherwise, it would have simply swallowed Hai Qiqi in one bite.

When Lu Yin arrived, Hai Qiqi was fiercely attacking the fish, but to no avail. The fish's eye was clearly about to open back up.

"Move aside!" Lu Yin barked. He held the Arrow of Valiance in one hand as he dashed past Hai Qiqi and stabbed the arrow in and out of the fish's eye. The creature trembled violently, and its body swayed for a moment before it quickly swam away. It had been injured by the arrow.

"What did you use to attack it?" Hai Qiqi was puzzled, as she had not been able to see the Arrow of Valiance.

Lu Yin stored it away in his ring. "Let's go. I'll see you through. Otherwise, you won't even reach the Inniverse."

"There's no need. You've started a grand project in the Outerverse, and things will be troublesome if you end up trapped in the Inniverse." Hai Qiqi nonchalantly waved a hand.

At that moment, the strange fish from before swam back and opened its mouth wide. It swallowed some of the liquified energy and swatted its tail.

Hai Qiqi was so frightened by its reappearance that she went pale.

That strange fish was as strong as an Enlighter, and it was not something that Hai Qiqi could deal with unless she triggered the Sea King's strength within her body.

Lu Yin laughed and looked up at the fish as he watched it swim further away. "Let's go, I'll escort you."

Hai Qiqi rolled her eyes. "Don't even dream of getting me to thank you, and you can simply forget about me giving my heart to you, as that's impossible."

Lu Yin could not even be bothered to acknowledge her.

Although the collapsible spacecraft had been damaged, it was still functional. Lu Yin and Hai Qiqi sat in it together as they traveled through the hole in the Astral Sea and headed to the Innerverse.

As expected, they saw all sorts of strange creatures along their way. This was the Astral River, and there was no reason to be surprised no matter what manner of strange creatures one encountered in this place. Hai Qiqi was focused on returning to the Innerverse, and thus, she held no interest in these strange beasts.

Half an hour later, Lu Yin saw open space once again; they had made it to the Innerverse. It had taken him four years, but he had returned to the Innerverse once again.

Hai Qiqi grew excited, as she had finally returned. She had been searching for a way back for four years, and she had finally succeeded.

At this time, close to the hole's opening on the Innerverse's side of the Astral River, a spacecraft exploded not too far away from where Lu Yin and Hai Qiqi were. There had been about a dozen people inside the vessel, and many of them died instantly since they were not able to survive in the vacuum of outer space. From their group, only four Explorers managed to survive.

From behind them, a spacecraft sped towards the survivors.

"Young Master, RUN! Hurry!" Among the four survivors, an older man grabbed a youth and threw him into the distance. The old man then dashed towards the approaching spacecraft by himself. "Sixth Mainland bastards, let's fight to the death!"

The other two survivors followed after the elder and hurried towards the approaching vessel.

That youth who had been flung away had bloodshot eyes, and he looked back, as if to deeply imprint this scene into his memory.

There was a miserable shriek, and when the youth turned back again, the sight he saw made his pupils shrink. Two of his companions had already been reduced to puddles of blood that were already turning dark as they floated through space.

The old man bellowed, "I'm an Enlighter! Who dares to act?"

A youth emerged from the spacecraft. There was a mocking expression on his face as he taunted the old man. "An Enlighter? Do you dare to use your full strength?"

The elder's face turned deathly white. Up above them, instead of the dark, endless expanse of space that normally existed, there was an unstable, boiling energy that emitted a threatening sense of fatal

danger. This was precisely the reason why the old man did not dare unleash his true power. Still, he could not feel resentful towards this oppressive energy, this was the same energy that protected the Innerverse. Without it, the Sixth Mainland would have long since slaughtered their way through the entire Innerverse.

Chapter 864: Returning To The Innerverse

“You’re just a bunch of trash waiting to die! So what if you’re an Enlighter? You’re just a crippled old fart who’s waiting to die before me.” The youth’s expression was sinister, and the phantom image of a gloomy, grandmother-looking figure appeared behind him, which was his imprint.

When he saw the imprint, the elder’s eyes opened wide, and he immediately took action.

The young man snorted as a martial print appeared in the center of his palm in response.

Martial prints were a unique power that existed within the Progenitor of Combat Territory, and they were able to rival the bloodlines of the Progenitor of Bloodlines. All of the cultivators in the Progenitor of Combat’s territory were able to cultivate these martial prints that integrated all of the battle techniques and arts that they had comprehended into this print or into their bodies to improve their power level. Besides that, they could also materialize these martial prints to suppress everyone around them, and this youth had clearly integrated his martial print into his palm.

There was a thump as the youth was forced back a dozen steps, and even a small crack had appeared in his martial print. The old Enlighter facing the youth had similarly taken a dozen steps back as a result of the clash.

By suppressing the strength of his attack and lowering its power level to beneath 200,000, the older Enlighter had ended up being severely injured. Additionally, the Sixth Mainland cultivators innately suppressed their Fifth Mainland peers, which caused the Enlighter to quickly fall to a disadvantage.

The elder had been severely injured to begin with, and his multitude of injuries began to surface as the confrontation with the youth dragged on. With a completely careless attitude, the youth approached the elder. “Invisible needles.” As the youth approached, the elder’s pupils shrank while countless delicate needles flew out from the youth’s palm and shot through the void. The elder tried his best to evade the attack, but the youth was already too close. The old man could not evade all of the needles, and he was struck several times.

These fine needles had been shot into the old man’s body in a strange manner, and they were also all smeared with a strong poison. As soon as they entered the old man’s body, extreme pain shot through his nerves.

The elder howled in pain and glared at the youth before unleashing his full strength. Suddenly, the Enlighter’s power level surpassed 200,000, and he revealed the full strength that an Enlighter should possess.

However, at that same moment, the boiling energy seething above everything was drawn down and covered the old man. In an instant, he was reduced to ash as he disappeared on the spot. It was as if his entire being had been erased by the mysterious energy.

The youth looked up above in apprehension, as this scene was not unfamiliar to him. If not for this terrifying sight playing out many times before, their Sixth Mainland would have long since entirely occupied the entire Inniverse. As he thought about it, the youth snorted. "Continue giving chase."

With a whoosh, a spacecraft dashed out of the small gap in the Astral River. After four long years, Lu Yin and Hai Qiqi had finally returned to the Inniverse once again.

Hai Qiqi was practically bubbling with excitement.

At the first opportunity, Lu Yin looked up to see the boiling energy suppressing the Inniverse that he had heard so much about.

What entered his vision was an endless and boundless amount of rune lines that were very unfamiliar and different from the rune lines that he normally saw. This suppressive energy's rune lines were not like what he saw from cultivators or their attacks. Instead, they looked like genuine runes.

Lu Yin had seen runes like these once before, at the top of the Astral Combat Academy's Dao of Purgatory's Sky Platform. When he had reached the top, he had seen similar runes, and that was also where his eyes had changed.

The Sky Platform was a leftover technological remnant from the Rune Civilization's ruins, and it represented the most orthodox aspect of Rune Technology. In that case, then what of these runes? Could this energy be derived from Rune Technology? Didn't that imply that the one who had battled against the Martial Progenitor was a remnant of the Rune Progenitor? Had it not actually been a remnant of Progenitor Chen as people claimed in the rumors?

If this was a remnant of the Rune Progenitor's strength, then besides limiting attacks to power levels of below 200,000, this energy was also suppressing cultivators' influence on this region of the universe.

Power level could be represented by rune lines, but rune lines did not necessarily represent power levels.

As he thought about this, Lu Yin hurriedly stored his universal armor away.

If he wore that armor, then as soon as someone attacked him, the amount of influence that the universal armor exerted upon the universe would surpass that of an attack with a power level of 200,000, and Lu Yin would be instantly finished.

On the Sky Platform, Lu Yin had already experienced the terror of the Rune Civilization. At that time, he had not faced an attack. Instead, he had faced something even more terrifying than an attack, as he had seen somebody be directly wiped out due to their rune lines being deleted.

"Qiqi, the Ultra Flash Tearbomb that I gave you absolutely can not be used here. Remember, definitely do not use it!" Lu Yin solemnly ordered Hai Qiqi.

Hai Qiqi was puzzled by Lu Yin's warning.

If evaluated purely by power level, then an Ultra Flash Tearbomb was definitely not as terrifying as an attack with a power level of 200,000. However, the instant an Ultra Flash Tearbomb was used, the influence that it exerted on the universe would definitely surpass that of an attack with a power level of 200,000. In other words, in the instant that the flash bomb was used, its rune lines would surpass those

of an attack with a power level of 200,000, which meant that using one was no different than chasing death.

Of course, all of these conjectures were based off of the premise that the roiling energy above them was created by the Rune Progenitor. It would be fine to use the flash bomb if the Rune Progenitor was not related to this suppressive energy.

However, Lu Yin was fairly certain that this energy was related to Rune Technology, which made it likely that it was also a part of the Rune Progenitor's strength.

"Lu Yin, look! There's someone up ahead," Hai Qiqi cried as she pointed in front of them.

When Lu Yin looked ahead, he saw that there was a space-exploring powerhouse close by, and judging by their rune lines, the person was in the Explorer realm. "Let's go and take a look. Right, for now, don't call me by my real name when we're in front of others. We can't let others know of our true identities, or else the Sixth Mainland might pass through that gap and invade the Outerverse."

Hai Qiqi understood the severity of the situation, and she quietly nodded, obediently accepting Lu Yin's request.

As the figure approached the two youths, it quickly became apparent that they were the young master who had escaped from the Sixth Mainland's pursuit.

Outer space was vast beyond description, but this youth had no place where he could rest. Whenever he looked back, he saw the enemy's spacecraft drawing closer.

Up ahead of him was a pair of cultivators: one male and one female.

The young heir looked desperate, as the only people who would willingly appear in this place were those from the Sixth Mainland.

This youth had not expected to narrowly fail in his escape, but even if he died, he was determined to not die in vain. At the very least, he would drag down one enemy to death with him. As his thoughts reached this point, he gritted his teeth and charged forwards.

Lu Yin saw the man in front of them start charging over, and he felt that this man seemed a little familiar. Lu Yin was able to sense that this Explorer's star energy had gone through two cycles, but the cultivator's power level had already surpassed 20,000. This person was no ordinary cultivator, and he was actually a Realmbreaker.

The young man charged at Lu Yin, and he was able to similarly sense that Lu Yin was an Explorer who had completed three cycles while Hai Qiqi was an Explorer who had completed two cycles. If these two were Inniverse cultivators like him, then he would not be afraid, as he was the heir of Starphant Mountain. He dared to face any peer within the same realm, and he would even dare to fight against Cruisers. However, his boldness had been diminished in the face of the Sixth Mainland's cultivators' onslaught.

The innate suppression that he suffered from facing them and their imprints meant that fighting against the Sixth Mainland's younger generation did not bode well for him, but so what? He carried an unyielding determination as he attacked the two youths.

“It looks like he’s going to hit us.” Hai Qiqi was puzzled.

Lu Yin moved forward, and the young master approaching them took out a long blade. Purple battle force then covered the youth, which was four lined battle force.

In the universe, there were very few who were able to comprehend battle force, let alone cultivate it to four lines, which was no simple feat. In the Astral Combat Academy, such a person would at least be on par with the Area Masters.

With a fierce bark, the shadow of a blade fell in front of them, and it carried a starry silver radiance with it alongside the purple battle force. The attack caused ripples to appear in the void, and this knife was enough to even make an ordinary Cruiser wary.

This young master had assumed the two people in front of him would definitely use their imprints, but the next thing that he saw caused him to doubt his senses.

His blade was caught. The bare hand of the young man before him had firmly grabbed a hold of the blade’s edge, and there wasn’t even a change in the young man’s expression. The young master’s full force blade thrust had not been enough to even force the youth back a single step.

With a loud crack, the blade fractured before shattering, its pieces scattering into space.

“Not a bad blade,” Lu Yin commented, as there was still a fragment of metal left in his hand.

The young master was stunned; how was such a thing possible? Could it be?

“Are you the disciple of an Imprinter?” he asked, sounding quite desperate.

Lu Yin looked past the youth and saw the chasing spacecraft slowly coming to a stop nearby. There were quite a number of rune lines aboard the vessel, and one person had even surpassed the Hunter realm. An expert had arrived.

The young master slowly turned around and closed his eyes. He had wanted to find a victim to drag down to hell with him, but he had even failed in that regard. He clenched the hilt of his shattered blade, unwilling to accept his fate.

Another youth exited from the spacecraft, and it was the person who had just killed the old Enlighter.

This youth’s gaze was arrogant, and he looked down at the young master before looking over at Lu Yin and Hai Qiqi. “Which realm are you two from? Show your imprint.”

After he spoke, the phantom image of the grandmother appeared behind him, which was his imprint.

Only Sixth Mainland cultivators had imprints, and this was the way Sixth Mainland cultivators verified their identities, as imprints could not be faked.

On the battlefield of the Innerverse, there was an unwritten rule that everyone from the Sixth Mainland followed. If they were unable to verify another’s identity, then they had to first reveal their imprints.

Everyone was waiting for Lu Yin to display his imprint.

Lu Yin blinked and replied, "You aren't worthy."

The young master was stumped.

That youth who had been pursuing the young heir was similarly stunned.

Hai Qiqi was surprised, as this sentence was full of ambition.

The youth's expression fell, and his lips twisted into a cruel angle. "So it's another Fifth Mainland native. I never thought that someone like you would actually still have the guts to openly appear in this area. For you to talk to me, Gui Bing, like this, you've got guts."

That young master looked over at Lu Yin in surprise. "You aren't from the Sixth Mainland?"

"Everyone, surround them! Don't let any of them slip away," Gui Bing ordered. He then charged at Lu Yin as his imprint grew clearer behind his back. He raised a hand, causing countless bizarre needles to shoot forward from his palm. They were all extremely delicate and were practically invisible if one did not focus on them. The youth's rain of needles contained at least a hundred of them, much like when he had attacked that Enlightener elder before.

The young master was petrified. "Hurry up and dodge!"

Lu Yin's eyes narrowed when he saw that over a hundred fine needles were approaching him. Each one's rune lines were equivalent to an attack with a power level in the several tens of thousands, but more importantly, each one was coated with a strong poison. This was a very malicious attack, as not even the average Cruiser would be able to withstand such an attack. However, this still was not enough to breach Lu Yin's defenses.

Lu Yin allowed the hundreds of delicate needles to strike his body, but right before they made contact, battle force shrouded his body, covering it with red lines and blue veins. This was eight lined battle force.

As soon as eight lined battle force appeared around Lu Yin, the young master was stunned. He himself had cultivated his battle force to four lines, which made him very clear on the increasing disparity between levels the further one progressed. Eight lined battle force was not something that he could even dream of obtaining. According to a conjecture made by one of his sect's ancestors, he would not be able to cultivate his battle force to eight lines even when he reached the Hunter realm, but this person had accomplished such a terrifying feat at such a young age.

Gui Bing was also surprised. Their Sixth Mainland did not care about battle force or domains, but that did not mean that they did not understand such techniques. Someone who was able to cultivate eight lined battle force was frighteningly strong.

Lu Yin did not give his opponent much time to consider this unexpected development. He instantly vanished from where he had been standing with Flash Step only to reappear right before Gui Bing the next instant, his hand already stretched out.

Gui Bing sneered as a peculiar imprint appeared in his palm. This was his martial print, and he similarly reached out with his hand towards Lu Yin.

With a thump, the youth's palm that contained his full confidence was suddenly engulfed by an intense pain. His palm was tightly gripped in Lu Yin's, and the martial print within his palm had been completely destroyed. He was being crushed in a head-on contest of strength.

The Sixth Mainland youth was stunned in disbelief. This was impossible! He was an Imprinter's disciple who had an Imprint, a martial print, and also innately suppressed Fifth Mainland cultivators. How had this battle turned out like this?

"Who- who are you exactly?" Gui Bing shouted in fear as he lashed out with a foot, attempting to separate himself from his opponent.

But his body was already not under his control. Lu Yin flipped and twisted him around mercilessly until the youth was forced into a half-kneeling position, whereupon he spat out a mouthful of blood. At this moment, the surrounding Sixth Mainland cultivators hastened to act, but they could offer no resistance against Lu Yin's domain, and they were directly crushed to death.

Chapter 865: Circumstances

Gui Bing was overwhelmed. "Who are you?"

Lu Yin frowned. This person was much weaker than Autumnfrost Qing, but he could still compare to a Fifth Mainland cultivator who was in the top twenty of the Top 100 Rankings. If the various suppression were taken into consideration, then this person could enter the top fifteen at least.

The Sixth Mainland's overall strength was much higher than the Fifth Mainland's.

A crack rang out as Lu Yin exerted some more force. Gui Bing's wrist snapped, and his body was flung away like a rag doll. He gritted his teeth tightly as beads of sweat dotted his forehead.

The young master was shocked. This powerhouse who he could not even hope to defeat was being trampled on before his eyes. This was inconceivable.

The innate suppression that the Sixth Mainland cultivators had on the Fifth Mainland cultivators had no effect on Lu Yin, and neither the imprint nor the martial print were enough to bridge the huge disparity between the two youths. For Lu Yin, only someone like Autumnfrost Qing, who was a direct descendant of a World Imprinter's family, could make the battle a little bit more interesting. Others were not enough to even allow him to warm up.

"Do you know who I am? My master is the Tong family's Granny Gui! An Imprinter! Your entire Fifth Mainland doesn't have many powerhouses at her level. Do you still dare to kill me?" Gui Bing threatened, his voice sharp.

Lu Yin arrogantly replied, "Sorry, but even if your master was before me, I'd still kill her if it came down to it."

He then saw that Gui Bing was trying to grab something from his cosmic ring, so Lu Yin exerted some strength through his arm and decisively shattered Gui Bing's heart.

Gui Bing had not expected Lu Yin to be so decisive, and his eyes went dull with regret. His vitality had completely drained away.

That young master watched on, dumbfounded. This person was efficient, ruthless, and incredibly powerful. However, he had not met this person before.

He tried hard to recall all of the Title Holders that he had heard of, but there was no such person among them. Could this person be someone who looked young but was actually from the older generation?

The Champions' Stage only granted titles to members of the younger generation. Although those of the older generations also received rewards for their contributions, they were not granted any titles. After all, many powerhouses from the older generation had power levels that surpassed 200,000 and had to fight while suppressing their power level. Thus, they could not correctly be evaluated within the current environment of the Inniverse. Hence, the Champions' Stage only granted titles to members of the younger generation.

With practiced movements, Lu Yin used Gui Bing's blood to unlock his cosmic ring and flip through its contents. His eyes lit up, as he had found quite a lot of good things within it. Lu Yin immediately knew what this person had wanted to take out, which was a specific needle. This needle was different from the others that the youth had used, and this needle's rune lines had reached the same as an attack with a power level of 200,000, which was the highest amount of strength that could be used in the Inniverse.

The youth had wanted to use this needle to sneak attack Lu Yin, but unfortunately for him, Lu Yin had been the one to come out on top.

Aside from the needle, the cosmic ring also contained many other items, and there were even close to 20,000 star essence inside. For a Cruiser, 20,000 star essence was quite a decent sum.

The young master swallowed his saliva as he watched Lu Yin casually pocket the spoils of his battle. "Junior Alfonso from Starphant Mountain pays his respects to Senior."

Lu Yin suddenly realized why this person looked so familiar. Back during the trial on Shenwu Continent, at the Tower of Resonating Light, Lu Yin had forced a bunch of trial takers to sign contracts promising a favor to him. After he had returned to the Great Yu Empire, he had used the favor from this Alfonso to help pressure the Ross Empire into withdrawing their troops from the Great Yu Empire.

"Starphant Mountain? From Chaos Flowzone?" Lu Yin asked.

"Senior has heard of my Starphant Mountain?" Alfonso's eyes lit up, and his voice betrayed his expectations.

Lu Yin grunted in acknowledgement. "Kind of. So why are you in such a miserable situation?"

Alfonso miserably answered, "Junior was too careless and was discovered by people from the Sixth Mainland. I even ended up dragging the elders in my sect into the issue. If not for Senior intervening, Junior would have died."

Lu Yin feigned ignorance and asked in a curious tone, "What Sixth Mainland?"

Alfonso was stumped. "Senior doesn't know about the Sixth Mainland?"

Lu Yin shook his head.

Behind, Hai Qiqi pursed her lips and rolled her eyes in contempt.

“I’ve been in seclusion for a hundred years and only just came out,” Lu Yin explained.

Alfonso was puzzled. Seclusion for a hundred years?

The Martial Progenitor had attacked the Inniverse more than a year ago in a universe-shaking battle. However, were there actually people who had managed to remain in seclusion through that monumental event? Although Alfonso did not quite believe Lu Yin, this person had saved his life and killed the disciple of one of the Sixth Mainland’s Imprinters in the process. Thus, he was definitely a part of the Fifth Mainland.

“Since Senior doesn’t know about the current circumstances, then Junior will give you a brief introduction.” Alfonso then used half an hour to explain the current situation of the Inniverse to the best of his knowledge.

Lu Yin thus learned that the Inniverse’s situation was even worse than what he had thought.

The Sixth Mainland’s invasion had rolled over the Starfall Sea without any substantial resistance. Then, they had torn apart the Astral River’s energy isolating the neighboring flowzone before slaughtering their way into the Chaos Flowzone.

The experts from the various great powers of the Inniverse had been drafted by the Hall of Honor to defend against the Sixth Mainland’s invasion. However, their efforts were useless. The Sixth Mainland had steadily advanced and covered the entire Inniverse step by step. Only when the experts from the Cosmic Sea and the Neoverse had joined in, along with other hidden powerhouses from various organizations, was the Fifth Mainland able to finally stall the invader’s momentum. The war had been troubling, but then, the Sixth Mainland’s Martial Progenitor had finally fought against the remnant spiritual force of one of the Fifth Mainland’s Progenitors.

Even though the Progenitors’ battle had caused the Inniverse’s energy to surge and transform its environment into one that did not allow anyone’s attacks to exceed a power level of 200,000, the Sixth Mainland had an unending supply of cultivators with power levels below 200,000. Within the younger generation, the Daosource Three Skies and the Realmings were all top-tier elites, and right behind them were the heirs to the Cosmic Imprinter families, World Imprinter families, and Imprinter families. Disregarding the younger generation, the Sixth Mainland also had numerous Enlighters. Even when these powerhouses suppressed their power level to beneath 200,000, the battle strength that they were capable of unleashing was more terrifying than the younger generation’s capabilities. After all, these suppressed powerhouses were still existences who surpassed the Fifth Mainland Enlighters.

For example, the Enlighter from Starphant Mountain who had been escorting Alfonso had been severely injured by an Enlighter from the Sixth Mainland.

Occasionally, the Sixth Mainland would have an Imprinter or even a World Imprinter attack. Even when they suppressed their power level to below 200,000, the might that they were capable of displaying was terrifying, and it was not something that the average person could imagine.

Even though the war in the Inniverse had devolved into complete chaos, the Inniverse was still slowly and surely being taken over by the Sixth Mainland. The Starfall Sea, Chaos Flowzone, Zhengyang

Flowzone, Soulseal Flowzone, and many more territories had all completely fallen under the control of the Sixth Mainland. The majority of the Innerverse had been completely occupied by the Sixth Mainland's forces, and quite a few Innerverse cultivators could do nothing besides hide. Once they were discovered, they were either killed or captured. In the latter case, they were treated as if they were the worst kind of trash.

Even more terrifying was the fact that the surging energy had not enveloped the entire universe; its effects were limited only to the Innerverse and half of the Cosmic Sea. The other half of the Cosmic Sea had not been covered by this suppressive energy. As a result, the Sixth Mainland had assembled its most elite forces to invade the Cosmic Sea and reach the Neoverse. If that invasion succeeded, then their top experts would no longer be suppressed by the boiling energy, and they would be able to unleash their full might. At that time, the entire Fifth Mainland would become the Sixth Mainland's territory.

The Ten Arbiters and many other powerhouses from the Innerverse had all gone to the Cosmic Sea to try to hold back the Sixth Mainland.

Lu Yin deeply contemplated this new information. He had originally thought that the Innerverse's circumstances would be slightly better, especially after hearing the Yu family elder's words and witnessing Yuan Shi's strength. However, it suddenly seemed that he had been too optimistic. According to what Alfonso had said, the Innerverse had been suppressed from beginning to end.

"The Title Holders who've gained titles from the Champions' Stage are all very powerful, but there are a lot more powerhouses from the Sixth Mainland," Alfonso admitted bleakly. They had never imagined that the Innerverse would one day be successfully invaded.

Lu Yin's eyes narrowed. Unless a Progenitor acted once again, the Innerverse, Cosmic Sea, and Neoverse seemed to all be doomed.

"How's the situation in the Cosmic Sea?" Lu Yin could not help but ask. He was a bit worried about Leon's Armada.

Alfonso shook his head. "I don't know, as all of the information I have is from half a year ago that I've updated with scattered bits of updates. Additionally, it's hard to tell the truth from fake news."

Hai Qiqi pursed her lips. "But you still said all that like it's true."

Lu Yin wanted to beat Alfonso up, as he had nearly been driven to extreme desperation.

Alfonso felt wronged. "Saying that we're unable to verify the truthfulness of this information is just to comfort ourselves. Right now, everything around us is under the control of the Sixth Mainland. All of the busier planets have statues of the Sixth Mainland's Imprinters, and they force everyone there to kneel and worship them. It's the same situation wherever you go, and the overall status of the Innerverse might be even worse than what I've described."

Lu Yin's eyes turned cold. The Sixth Mainland was forcing the Innerverse's cultivators to kneel down and worship the Imprinter statues to break their dignity and leave a stain that they would be forced to bear for the rest of their lives. With a single kowtow, their cultivation heart would be disrupted, and as time

passed, some people may even start wholeheartedly worshipping these Imprinters. Such vicious methods.

This was how the invaders were trying to enslave the Fifth Mainland.

“Just now, you mentioned that the Starfall Sea has also fallen into the Sixth Mainland’s hands. In that case, what about the Sea King’s Dome?” Hai Qiqi suddenly thought of this and asked in a rather desperate tone.

Alfonso shook his head. “I don’t know the details, but the Starfall Sea was the first place that the Sixth Mainland attacked when they invaded the Inniverse. They refer to the Starfall Sea as the Mara River, and it’s said that the Starfall Sea has fallen into the hands of the Grand Martial Realm’s Tong family. That family is a Cosmic Imprinter family, and they have multiple Imprinters among their ranks. Right now, nobody even dares to go to the Starfall Sea, as that would just be courting death. Ah right, that man from before was the disciple of the Tong family’s Imprinter, Granny Gui. He was called Gui Bing.”

“We want to head to the Starfall Sea. Do you know of any way to get there?” Lu Yin asked.

Alfonso was placed in a difficult position. “That... Senior, you really can’t go to the Starfall Sea right now. The Tong family’s power is overwhelming. Reportedly, even the Grand Martial Realm’s Realm is in the Starfall Sea. With that said, let’s head somewhere else.”

“To the Starfall Sea!” Hai Qiqi barked.

Alfonso had a bitter expression on his face. “If Senior insists on going to Starfall Sea, then there’s only one way. You must disguise yourself and hide among the captured miners that are headed for the Starfall Sea. From there, it may be possible to evade the Sixth Mainland’s investigation and enter the Starfall Sea. However, that’s really too dangerous a plan, so I beg Senior to please reconsider.”

After saying this, Alfonso bowed deeply. “If Senior does head into the Starfall Sea, could you do a favor for Junior? Starphant Mountain will forever remember your kindness.”

“Why are you acting like this? We even saved you, so don’t be unsatisfied with what you’ve already gotten.” Hai Qiqi was displeased by Alfonso’s attitude, and she was also anxious to head toward the Starfall Sea as soon as she could.

Alfonso thought about her comment and sighed. “True, Junior’s at fault. Junior will not bring it up again, so please do not blame me.”

Lu Yin did not ask any further, as he did not like creating additional trouble for himself. “Do you know where these captured miners are? It would be best if you could take us there.”

Alfonso was again caught in a dilemma. “Junior needs to rescue Astral-3’s people, and there’s no more time. However, Junior can draw up a star chart for Senior. It’s not too far from here.”

Lu Yin’s gaze trembled. “What did you say? Rescue Astral-3’s people?”

Alfonso nodded. “When the Sixth Mainland invaded, Astral-3 was unfortunately right in their path and was destroyed by the Sixth Mainland’s powerhouses. More than half of their students died, though the Headmaster took an Imprinter down with him at the end. The remaining students and mentors were all

captured, and they are currently serving out their sentences. Junior was headed there to rescue them, but along the way, I was discovered by Gui Bing.”

Chapter 866: Planet Amber

Lu Yin’s gaze turned steely. Someone wanted to use Astral-3 to lure out the Inniverse’s cultivators, which was a cruel plan.

He did not believe that Astral-3 had truly been destroyed, as Astral-9 was an ancient battleship that had been able to withstand Ancestor Autumnfrost’s finger. Still, that had been just one finger. Against the Sixth Mainland’s full invasion force, it was already impressive that Astral-3’s Headmaster had died together with an Imprinter.

Although there was a rivalry among the ten academy branches, they were still all a part of the same school in the end, and Lu Yin could not just ignore this situation.

“Let’s go together.” Lu Yin’s tone showed his determination.

Hai Qiqi did not decline. Although she had not been a student of the Astral Combat Academy, she had certainly heard of its reputation. Now that the people of Astral-3 were being used as bait, she wanted to rescue them as well.

“Really? Thank you, Senior!” Alfonso was delighted, and he bowed deeply to Lu Yin.

“Don’t call me Senior anymore—just call me Seventh Bro,” Lu Yin casually replied.

Alfonso nodded. “Seventh Bro.”

He felt like he had heard this name before.

In the past, Lu Yin had been famous throughout the Inniverse, and many people had recognized his face. Fortunately, he had altered his appearance before coming. Otherwise, Alfonso definitely would have recognized him.

After Lu Yin’s trio left the area, it took about half a day for news of Gui Bing’s death to reach Granny Gui’s ears.

As the Tong family’s Imprinter, Granny Gui was treated very well, but Gui Bing was her only disciple. She had even personally crafted the invisible needles for him, and she had raised him as if he were her own child. When she learned about his death, she became infuriated and left the planet, planning on personally seeking vengeance.

The Tong family’s forces had gathered in the Starfall Sea while the area outside of the Starfall Sea belonged to the Grand Martial Realm’s Flying Horse Manor.

Granny Gui immediately requested for Flying Horse Manor to seal off the route leading towards Chaos Flowzone, as she believed that the other party would attempt to escape in that direction before moving towards the Cosmic Sea. No matter how long it might take her, she was determined to find the person who had murdered Gui Bing.

Not too far away from the exit to the Starfall Sea was a yellow planet. It was colored yellow due to the ubiquitous dull sand, and fierce sandstorms constantly swept across its surface, connecting the sky and ground. These sandstorms had extremely high wind speeds, and the sand that constantly whirled through the air had enough force to pierce straight through an ordinary person. This planet was not very hospitable.

Life here had developed underground, and an entire city had actually been built underground.

This planet was known as Planet Amber.

When the nearby sun illuminated the planet, its temperature spiked.

On the desolate plains of sand that covered Planet Amber, a hundred iron pillars towering into the sky had been erected. Each one of them had a single person bound to it. They were all students and mentors of Astral-3.

There were more than a hundred pillars on the planet, but only around half of them had someone bound to them. The people who had once occupied the other pillars had all been executed, and the fresh blood that stained the sandy expanse was not only from these students and mentors of Astral-3, but also from those who had attempted to rescue them.

These steel pillars had already reaped the lives of hundreds of cultivators.

To the Sixth Mainland, occupying the Inniverse was simple, but unifying it was much more difficult. Countless cultivators in the Inniverse had hidden themselves, and they could attack the invaders at any time.

Even if just one Sixth Mainland cultivator died on each planet every single day, that would add up to a horrifying number of daily casualties.

This was also why the Sixth Mainland had constantly drafted more cultivators to the war effort, since their numbers were dwindling every day.

Of course, the Inniverse suffered similar casualties, and once anyone was discovered, they would be either maimed or killed outright.

The two sides had become locked in a war of attrition.

These metal pillars were constantly baking in the high temperature of the sun and had even become reddened while those who were tied to the pillars had their backs cooked.

Not only did they suffer from the burning heat of the poles, but they also had to face the devastating sandstorms that could appear at any moment. What's worse, the weather was worsening.

Those who qualified to enter Astral-3 were all talented youths, and each one had impressive backing. However, they were all in miserable states at this time.

On one metal pillar, Chilian Daynight's eyes had gone hazy, and all he saw was yellow. His body was occasionally scoured by the rough sand, but he had already become numb to such a sensation.

In the distance, a giant stone statue towered over the iron pillars. The statue had the likeness of a pretty, middle-aged woman taking an elegant pose. She appeared to be both graceful and pretty; however, this was the same woman who had massacred Astral-3, killed its headmaster, and destroyed the battleship that was the foundation of Astral-3. She was the one who had thrust all of them into this living hell. She was known as Madam Hong, and she was the head of the Sixth Mainland's Grand Martial Realm's Flying Horse Manor. She was a World Imprinter with a power level of more than 900,000.

Before this war, not even the Daynight clan's elders had ever seen such a terrifying powerhouse before. A power level of 900,000 was an unimaginably astronomical figure. Chilean Daynight did not even know if his clan's top powerhouse had such an impressive power level.

In the entire universe, as far as he was aware, it was possible that Madam Hong was second only to Progenitors.

As Chilean Daynight slowly turned his head around, he looked at Cang Shi, who was nearby. The young man's skin was chapped, and his blood had also almost completely dried up.

Around them, there were many other students approaching death's door, if not already dead, and the mentors were the same.

As a ringing sound rang out in the sky, multiple cultivators rose up from underground and blocked the devastating power of the yellow sandstorms. Soon after, other figures emerged from underground and slowly kowtowed to Madam Hong's statue.

This was a daily prayer routine. Its meaning was to pray for Madam Hong's protection and also to bless the Sixth Mainland.

The Sixth Mainland had erected these statues to both wear away at the dignity of the Inverse's cultivators and spread the belief that those of the Sixth Mainland were divine. They were attempting to establish this belief in the Fifth Mainland cultivators, and their methods were the most ordinary forms of cultural assimilation and daily brainwashing.

Right as countless people came out to pray, some other figures emerged from beneath the ground and slaughtered the nearby Sixth Mainland cultivators. Others flew towards the metal pillars in an attempt to rescue the survivors from Astral-3.

An Astral-3 mentor bleakly shouted, "Don't come! Run! Hurry up and run!"

"We Inverse cultivators are not afraid of death!" One person hollered back as he bravely charged towards a metal pillar and sliced at the ropes binding the student to it. From behind the charging man, a long blade slashed out, which the man quickly tried to block. However, the blade continued on undisturbed, slicing through the defending weapon, cutting three inches deep into the Inverse man's body, and causing fresh blood to drip down the pillar.

"You fools! Only you continue to resist us. Those great powers of your Fifth Mainland have all already been wiped out. You idiots, cast your lot in with us, and we will give you a way forward."

"What wishful thinking—we'd rather die than surrender!"

With a plop, a head was separated and landed on the sand.

The Sixth Mainland cultivator coldly looked down, and the imprint behind him seemed even more like the image of a deity.

The survivors from Astral-3 cracked their eyes open as they cried out in indignation.

The group of people that had tried to rescue the Astral-3 survivors were completely massacred to the last person. Their blood poured out and added another layer of red to the sandy ground, but that was all that they managed to accomplish.

From beneath the ground, two bright eyes opened wide. They belonged to another youth, and although she was pretty, a heavy murderous intent could be seen in her eyes. She was sitting cross-legged, and beside her was a long spear that had been embedded in the ground. It gave off a sharp chill.

“Young Mistress, we killed another group. These cultivators are like locusts, and we just can’t exterminate them all. They’re too stupid.”

The young lady responded in an icy-cold tone. “They are indeed stupid. The Fifth Mainland’s great powers were already preparing to retreat the moment we first invaded, and for some reason, they left these independent cultivators with no background behind to oppose us. No matter whether or not these people emerge victorious or are defeated, they can still whittle away at some of our strength. These people are nothing more than cannon fodder.”

“If that’s the case, then why are we baiting these independent cultivators to their deaths?”

“Realmling Bai Ling has stated that popular sentiment has a limit to its endurance. Once we push past that limit, there will be nothing left of these people’s will. Without resistance, there is only subservience. Once these independent cultivators are cowed by the continuous deaths, they will finally acknowledge their allegiance to us. After all, our numbers are not that much, and if we want to truly govern the Fifth Mainland and plunder its resources, we need to put forth some effort,” the young woman coldly explained.

Regardless of the time period, the ones with the worst fate were always at the bottom. They had passion and were not afraid of death, but they did not have the necessary ability to back up their passion.

Planet Amber had no barrier around it, and it would not ever be sealed off. This was the trap the Sixth Mainland had set to lure the Innderverse’s cultivators to be slaughtered. Not only did they not seal the planet, but there wasn’t even any sort of border control. Thus, anybody could enter the planet and attempt to rescue the survivors.

The Sixth Mainland had full confidence in their strength, and they were not afraid of anyone who approached to rescue the captives.

Lu Yin, Hai Qiqi, and Alfonso had arrived and hidden themselves in a corner of a nearby underground city that was not too far from the execution site.

This was Lu Yin’s first time seeing an underground city, so it was a very novel experience for him.

There was no sky above the city, and neither was there the familiar emptiness of outer space. Instead, thick stone hung above his head, and lights had been embedded in the stone to simulate the sky, complete with birds and random weather conditions.

There were no tall buildings in this city. Instead, they were all monotonously short. Each building stretched deep underground, and it was as if a normal city had been turned upside down.

Lu Yin had assumed that the underground city would be a dark expanse enveloped in an oppressive aura. However, after seeing it for himself, he felt that it was actually pretty decent.

“10,000 years ago, Planet Amber faced an arduous situation, as the natives reached the limit of technology that they could develop, and the conditions here also prevented people from cultivating. These people were truly like primitive natives. However, as more cultivators came to Planet Amber, it gradually became more and more developed. The technology that you see here was not developed by the original inhabitants of Planet Amber. Rather, they are technologies brought here by foreign investors.” Alfonso showed Lu Yin around the underground city and shared a bit of the planet’s history.

Hai Qiqi was curious. “You seem to know this place rather well. Do you plan to be buried here?”

Alfonso opened his mouth, but there were no words he could say, and his voice remained choked in his throat.

Lu Yin was also left speechless, as Hai Qiqi’s venomous tongue had appeared once again, and she could often stifle others with just her speech. If not for her background of being supported by the Sea King, she would have long since been strung up to be beaten.

The living conditions of those in the underground city were still decent, and the people were not as desperate as Lu Yin had imagined.

The Sixth Mainland’s invasion had nothing to do with these people, and as long as they offered their allegiance to the Sixth Mainland and provided them with resources, nobody would make life difficult for these ordinary people. They did not even know that the Inniverse was at war.

In another corner of the city, Alfonso used secret codes to successfully connect with a group of people.

Hai Qiqi opened her eyes wide and was very curious about everything. Although she was worried about the Sea King’s safety, she could constantly feel his strength after arriving in the Inniverse, so she knew that he was alright.

Those who got in contact with Alfonso were mostly Explorers, and there were more than ten such cultivators, as well as a few Cruisers. Unfortunately, not a single person who showed up had rune lines that could compare to Gui Bing’s from before. Lu Yin would rather hope for the Fifth and Sixth Mainlands to shake hands and cooperate than pin his hopes on these people’s chances of rescuing the Astral-3 survivors.

“Brother Alfonso, didn’t you say that your Starphant Mountain had an Enlighter who was going to support us?” someone asked. The crowd then looked at Lu Yin; could this person be the aforementioned person? No, he was too young.

Alfonso sadly answered, “I’m sorry, but our sect elder died.”

The crowd was stunned, and their expressions turned ugly. They were not stupid, and they knew that, without an Enlighter to assist them, they would not be able to save the survivors of Astral-3 on their own.

“What happened? Were you guys discovered?” someone asked.

Alfonso nodded. “It was Gui Bing.”

Another person angrily exclaimed, “Him again! That bastard’s pretty good at ambushing people and attacking with his poison needles. He’s caused many of our comrades to die miserable deaths.”

Chapter 867: Hong Ying

Alfonso wanted to share with everyone that Lu Yin had actually already killed Gui Bing, but right at that moment, someone else arrived. It was a middle-aged man, and he immediately said, “Everyone, we’ve discovered who the strongest powerhouse guarding the execution grounds is.”

Everyone looked at the newcomer expectantly.

He announced in a low voice, “Hong Ying.”

The expression of everyone within the crowd changed, and Alfonso’s face also went pale. “Hong Ying? The direct heir of Grand Martial Realm’s Flying Horse Manor who’s also Madam Hong’s disciple? That Hong Ying?”

The middle-aged man nodded helplessly.

The crowd grew desperate.

“Why is it her? She’s the Flying Horse Manor’s direct heir, but despite that, why didn’t she go to the Starfall Sea or the Cosmic Sea? Why did she stay here? And why does she have to be guarding the execution grounds!” someone bellowed in despair.

“Hong Ying is the disciple of a World Imprinter. She’s a Cruiser who’s completed nine cycles, and her crimson spear is invincible. Once, she went to the Starfall Sea’s Grayweed Continent where she killed two peak Hunters and badly injured Lan Baobao, who’s an expert in the Top 100 Rankings and received the title of Marquis. She has also killed Lan Yu and verbally challenged Arbiter Lan Si. She’s an extremely ruthless character.”

“There’s not just that—there are also rumors that this woman’s crimson spear is actually a power vessel itself, and that it’s unusually powerful to boot.”

“She’s one of the Grand Martial Realm’s most powerful existences and is second only to their Realmking. We’re doomed! With her around, just who can rescue those people from Astral-3? Our only hope is for an Enlighter to help. Only then will we have some hope.”

...

Lu Yin was surprised—Lan Yu had died? If he recalled correctly, Lan Yu was the younger brother of Lan Si, who was the Ten Arbiters’ Divine Fist. This Hong Ying was indeed ruthless, and she had even severely injured Lan Baobao.

Hai Qiqi cried out and urgently asked, "Lan Baobao was severely injured? Is she alright?"

Alfonso answered, "She's not dead, but her younger brother, Lan Yu, is."

Hai Qiqi's expression turned ugly. Lan Yu and Lan Baobao. Even though she had not liked Lan Yu, he had still died.

Hai Qiqi tugged at Lu Yin and pursed her lips. "Get revenge for Baobao, alright?"

Lu Yin patted her hand. "Alright, I promise."

The middle-aged man heard their words and looked at them in astonishment. "This is...?"

Alfonso finally had an opportunity to introduce his two guests. "This is a senior who I bumped into on my way here. If not for him, I would have died at Gui Bing's hands. That's right, Gui Bing is dead. He was killed by this Senior."

The gathered cultivators were shocked. "Gui Bing is dead?"

The middle-aged man looked at Lu Yin with a grave expression. "May I know how to address you?"

Lu Yin replied, "You can call me Seventh Bro."

The middle-aged man was momentarily stumped before a hint of dissatisfaction flashed through his eyes, though it was quickly concealed and he smiled. "So it's Seventh Bro."

He then looked at Hai Qiqi. "And this is?"

"Call me Sister Qi," Hai Qiqi said flippantly. She wasn't in a good mood at this moment.

The middle-aged man's eyes narrowed, and a few others were also quite disgruntled by the two people's attitudes. They felt that Lu Yin's duo were too impolite and that they should not behave in such a manner even if they had joined the rescue mission.

"Where does Seventh Bro cultivate? I don't believe I've met you before, and it doesn't look like you're very old either. Since you were able to kill Gui Bing, have you been granted a title?" someone asked.

Alfonso hurriedly replied, "Senior's age may not look like it, but he has just emerged from a hundred years of seclusion."

The crowd suddenly understood the situation.

"When will you guys move to rescue the survivors? I have no time to waste," Lu Yin indifferently said. He still needed to escort Hai Qiqi to the Starfall Sea before he could rush back to the Outerverse, as he did not want to end up trapped in the Innerverse.

The middle-aged man was not happy with Lu Yin's brusqueness, but since this person had killed Gui Bing, the man did not dare to offend Lu Yin. "We still have to wait for one more person. When he arrives, we'll have a greater possibility of saving them."

"Leave Hong Ying to me," Lu Yin said confidently.

The crowd was stunned.

Alfonso was a bit shocked as well. Even though he was confident in Lu Yin's power, Hong Ying's battle results were simply too overwhelming, and she was not on the same level as Gui Bing.

The middle-aged man laughed. "Seventh Bro is underestimating Hong Ying. Seventh Bro might be able to deal with her, but we're also afraid of holding Seventh Bro back. Let's wait for that last person to arrive. With everyone's cooperation and Seventh Bro's strength, the possibility of rescuing them will be much better."

It could only be said that this missing person was able to make them feel at ease. It was also obvious that this middle-aged man did not believe in Lu Yin's strength despite him trying to sound like he was praising Lu Yin.

Lu Yin frowned, though it was perfectly normal that these people would not trust him. Rather, it would be more abnormal if they believed that he could deal with Hong Ying after their first meeting. However, he really did not want to wait any longer.

"Seventh Bro, rest assured. The person we're waiting for will arrive no later than tonight. And with nightfall, the conditions of the rescue mission will become even more advantageous," the middle-aged man said.

Lu Yin nodded helplessly.

As the radiance of the ceiling stones dimmed, its change indicated that the day was about to come to an end.

Alfonso's voice rang out with delight. "They're here! That person is here!"

The crowd hurriedly stepped forward to welcome the person.

Hai Qiqi felt that the whole affair was quite strange. "Who could be this popular?"

Lu Yin's eyes narrowed as he looked into the distance. A sharp group of rune lines were quickly approaching them, and he was surprised to see that this person's power was not weak. They were actually quite close to becoming a Hunter.

Could these people have been waiting for this person? Although their power was not weak, they were still far from being a match for Hong Ying. If Lu Yin did not guess wrong, then Hong Ying was likely at the same level as Autumnfrost Qing, whose power could even surprise an Enlighter.

As the person drew closer, Lu Yin got a clear look and was surprised to see that it was Yan Hua, who was an expert from the Sword Sect.

This person had also participated in the contest on Planet Pyrolyte. Although Lu Yin had not really crossed paths with this person before, he had seen this person's fights on the network. Yan Hua's six lined battle force was especially eye-catching, and his battle style was swift and explosive, which had been very captivating to watch.

When they saw that Yan Hua had arrived, Alfonso and the others all moved forward to welcome him, all of them constantly mumbling something.

Through their conversation, Lu Yin was able to learn that Yan Hua had actually received a title: General Yan.

Titles were given from the Champions' Stage in the following order: General, Marquis, King, and Arbiter. Although General was the most common title, obtaining a title from the Champions' Stage meant that they had accomplished no simple task.

Before coming over, Lu Yin had Possessed a Sixth Mainland cultivator and bumped into Ling Que, who had received the title of General. There was a great disparity between Yan Hua and Ling Que's strength, but they had both been granted the title of General. This meant that either the disparity between General and Marquis was too great and that Ling Que did not qualify to become a Marquis, or that titles were not just about an individual's power and also took other aspects into consideration as well. Right, Lu Yin had also heard that titles depended on one's military contributions.

The crowd surrounded Yan Hua, and Alfonso moved back beside Lu Yin and apologetically said, "Senior Seventh Bro, I'm truly sorry to have made you wait so long."

Lu Yin curiously asked, "Is he powerful?"

Alfonso nodded and enviously answered, "His name is Yan Hua, and he's a disciple from the Sword Sect who wasn't very famous in the past. He's from the same generation as the Ten Arbiters, but his strength only slowly improved as time passed, so he was ignored by many people. However, when the Sixth Mainland launched their invasion, he relied on his Lightning Sword Technique to step into the Explorer realm and used it to entrap several Sixth Mainland Hunters on one battlefield, allowing many of his comrades to safely retreat. He made a huge contribution with that move and was granted the title of General Yan. Some said that he might not be inferior to the Sword Sect's strongest heir at the moment, Liu Shaoqiu."

Lu Yin was surprised to hear this story; an Explorer using his strength to trap several Hunters was not as simple as it sounded. Of course, trapping and defeating one's opponents were two different matters. However, since the opponents were Sixth Mainland cultivators, being able to trap them was already enough to prove that this Yan Hua's power could match up to the top few in the Top 100 Rankings.

It seemed like this person was a late bloomer.

It was no wonder why this group had been so adamant about waiting for Yan Hua to arrive before they were willing to move out. Since Yan Hua was able to stall Hunters, and more than one at that, then he might be able to stall Hong Ying for just long enough to allow them to rescue Astral-3's survivors.

The sky was covered with yellow sand, and the dark night sky seemed to be suffused with the color yellow. The wailing wind screamed as it blew past their ears, and it was even accompanied by the pungent stench of old blood.

In the distance, the sight of the irksome giant statue taunted them. When Lu Yin looked at it, he saw what Madam Hong, a World Imprinter, looked like. She was the one who had destroyed Astral-3, and this woman was someone on the same level as Ancestor Autumnfrost.

“Time’s up. Kill one person,” announced a tremendous voice that reverberated through the sky. Following it, a Sixth Mainland cultivator flew up. He was carrying a machete that he aimed at a student tied to a pillar. The executioner’s lips curled up into a cruel smirk, and he raised the blade that glittered with a cold light.

“Go!” Alfonso and the others charged out from beneath the ground as one unit as a thread of lightning shot through the void. It formed a sharp point that streaked over, and the Sixth Mainland cultivator who had been about to execute an Astral-3 student had his head sliced clean off.

On the ground, the Sixth Mainland people did not show any surprise. Instead, a cold arrogance appeared on their faces as they moved to fight against Alfonso’s group. In just a few moments, Alfonso and the rest were about to be utterly defeated.

The survivors from Astral-3 who were still tied to the pillars grew desperate, and some of them even hoarsely cried out, begging the would-be rescuers to escape.

More cultivators appeared all around them, and they were actually not all from the Sixth Mainland. Some were Fifth Mainland cultivators who had pledged their loyalty to the Sixth Mainland. These people had cast their dignity aside, and the Inverse’s defenders hated these traitors even more fiercely than the Sixth Mainland cultivators.

The middle-aged man was not weak, but even though he was a Cruiser, he was still suppressed by a Cruiser expert from the Sixth Mainland. Once his opponent’s imprint appeared, the middle-aged man was no longer even able to hold on to the weapon in his hands, and it was flung away.

Hai Qiqi leaped up, and her domain appeared in the shape of a turbulent sea. As the Sea King's daughter, she was on the same level as an Imprinter’s descendant. Although she was just an Explorer, her domain complemented her battle techniques from the Sea King’s Dome, which led to extraordinary battle prowess.

Lu Yin also moved out, and he effortlessly killed two Sixth Mainland cultivators. He then raised a hand, and with one wave, an intense gale swept out and caused all one hundred pillars to collapse. At the same time, everyone from Astral-3 who had been tied to the pillars were all released.

The Sixth Mainland cultivators were surprised, as these pillars had not been made from average materials, and even an Explorer would find it difficult to destroy them. There was an expert in this group.

From a hidden location, Yan Hua was also shocked at this development.

But before he could consider the situation any further, a crimson spear shot up from underground and pierced through a cultivator before fiercely stabbing at Lu Yin.

As soon as Lu Yin acted, Hong Ying had felt that something was amiss, as this person had caused her heart to palpitate.

Lu Yin’s eyes flashed, and he considered leading Hong Ying away from the battle.

At that moment, lightning flickered through the sky and formed swords of lightning that rained down into the ground, trapping Hong Ying. Then, the lightning swords became dazzling as the lightning

connected sky and earth. They had formed a prison isolating a small area, and its power was enough to cause the void to quiver and nearly split open.

Yan Hua had acted. "Everyone, retreat!"

As soon as they saw that Hong Ying was trapped, Alfonso and the others were delighted, and they all retreated immediately.

The Sixth Mainland cultivators hurriedly gave chase, but Yan Hua's Lightning Sword Technique rapidly flickered through the crowd, trapping and isolating many other Sixth Mainland cultivators.

Lu Yin's brows rose. This Yan Hua truly was not weak, and the flash of his Lightning Sword Technique was astounding.

Unfortunately, it was a pity.

The lightning swords that had trapped Hong Ying broke apart one by one until the entire trap exploded and the lightning dissipated in all directions.

Alfonso and the others' pupils shrank. Not good!

Yan Hua was surprised. Could he actually not trap her?

Chapter 868: Lu Yin Vs. Hong Ying

Hong Ying held her crimson spear aloft as she emerged. She calmly looked at Lu Yin and then at Yan Hua. "Petty tricks."

Yan Hua held his sword hilt tightly. His figure flashed forward, followed by the sound of booming thunder. His entire being had transformed into a blade that sharply stabbed forward. This was his most powerful attack: Thunder Strike.

Hong Ying snorted, and she did not even bother using her imprint. Her spear tip fiercely jabbed forward and pierced through the void to collide against Yan Hua's Thunder Strike. There was a tremendous crash reminiscent of lightning crashing into a wall and rebounding back. Yan Hua's sword body instantly crumbled apart, but in contrast, Hong Ying's spear penetrated through the lightning and went on to stab at Yan Hua's neck without any hesitation.

Everyone was overwhelmed, as the difference between the two was simply too great.

Just as the spear tip was about to stab into Yan Hua's neck, another hand pierced deep into the lightning as one finger tapped out. There was a bang as the spear ran into an overwhelming strength that forcefully redirected its strike into the ground.

The ground was rent asunder by the spear tip, and the underground city collapsed. The power of the spear seemed to burrow over ten thousand kilometers through the earth, and the fissure even extended into space.

The execution grounds fell completely silent as everyone stared on, petrified at what they had just witnessed.

Hong Ying gripped her spear tightly as her lips curled upwards, though she did not seem too surprised. She then slowly turned to face Lu Yin. "Who are you?"

Yan Hua panted heavily as he stared at the person who had just blocked the attack that had nearly killed him. He also wanted to know who this person was; although there had been a brief introduction when they had met earlier, he had actually not paid much attention.

Lu Yin clasped his hands behind his back. "Call me Seventh Bro."

Lu Yin's voice was not loud, but it reverberated through the sky above the execution ground. Everyone stared at him in awe, as he had just parried Hong Ying's spear.

Alfonso grew excited, as this was indeed his Senior. This person was actually able to block Hong Ying's spear!

That middle-aged man was also shocked; this person was actually this powerful?

Hai Qiqi reminded Alfonso, "Aren't we leaving?"

Alfonso said, "But what about Senior?"

"Just leave him alone. He'll be fine," Hai Qiqi nonchalantly replied. She was quite familiar with Lu Yin's strength. Even if people did not have to suppress their power levels to under 200,000 due to the cosmic phenomenon, she did not believe that Lu Yin would be in danger. He was just too cunning.

"You can go first. Leave this to me," Lu Yin said softly.

Yan Hua swallowed his saliva. "Sure?"

"Go," Lu Yin replied.

Yan Hua gave Lu Yin a long look before turning to leave.

The cultivators from the Sixth Mainland wanted to give chase, only to be stopped by Hong Ying. Her eyes had lit up, though her delicate face still appeared exceptionally indifferent in the dark. "I never thought that we would be able to bait out someone like you. Interesting."

Lu Yin smiled. "Bait? Are you sure that you're the fisherman? Be careful of being dragged under."

Hong Ying sneered. "Just you? You're not worthy."

Her spear tip danced about as she stabbed forward again. This time, her spear seemed to contain a strength as powerful as a thunderbolt, and it almost felt like it was pushing the space before it.

This spear was much more powerful than her previous attack. In Lu Yin's eyes, the shaft of the spear seemed to have grown wings, and it was clearly moving extremely quickly, but strangely enough, very slowly at the same time. Despite its apparent slowness, it did not give him any opportunity to dodge, and Lu Yin saw vague spear images appear all around him.

He could not evade this attack and would have to receive it head-on.

But Lu Yin had not planned on evading anything anyways. His eight lined battle force enveloped his hand as he raised it, his palm turning into a claw that then grabbed the spear tip. He did not meet force with force. Rather, his body continuously withdrew as he steadily dissolved the force of the spear attack.

Hong Ying was shocked, as her flying spear technique had actually been caught by someone. Also, this person had eight lined battle force, which indicated that he definitely was not a nobody. It seemed that she had caught a big fish. As she thought about it, an imprint appeared behind her, and Madam Hong's image hazily manifested. The power of Hong Ying's spear increased tremendously, and its strength was mysteriously reinforced.

Lu Yin frowned. He was using his eight lined battle force to reinforce his Skybeast Claw, but he was still unable to fully receive this attack. With a bang, the spear shaft was forced back by Lu Yin as he stepped forward. He then appeared right in front of Hong Ying before thrusting a palm forward. However, Hong Ying had expected this. Since Lu Yin was someone who could grab her flying spear technique, his physical strength definitely would not be lacking in any way, and such a person would naturally be adept at close combat.

Hong Ying reversed her spear, as she intended to use its shaft to strike Lu Yin. He did not evade the strike, and allowed the spear shaft to connect with his body as he used his Fatesand to block the attack. There was a loud thump, and the two youths were simultaneously shaken.

Hong Ying was astonished. "Fatesand? You actually have something like that?"

Lu Yin was astonished. "It looks like you have it too."

He then grabbed the spear shaft again. With his strength, as long as he grabbed a hold of the spear, Hong Ying would not be able to shake him off.

An enormous strength was transmitted through the spear shaft as it began vibrating before suddenly spinning in place, causing Hong Ying's palms to be worn down and start bleeding. Still, she did not release her hold on the spear. Instead, a second, very small spear suddenly appeared in front of her and stabbed at Lu Yin. He responded by once again using his Fatesand to block her attack. However, this was no ordinary spear, as it was actually also formed from Fatesand.

Lu Yin subconsciously grabbed it with his right hand, and Hong Ying's expression suddenly changed. She released her hold on the long spear and retreated at top speed. Standing in place, Lu Yin was puzzled; his left hand was holding the crimson spear while his right hand had seized the small spear formed from Hong Ying's Fatesand.

Hong Ying beamed. "You really like my weapon that much? Then I'll give it to you."

Lu Yin's heart skipped a beat, and in the corner of his eye, he saw the crimson spear suddenly erupt. It had changed from a physical weapon to a group of rune lines. Lu Yin reflexively tried to fling it away, but he belatedly discovered that the red tassels on the spear had come to life and entwined themselves around his palm, the knot even extending down his arm. What's more, they are emitting an incomparably burning heat.

Hong Ying sneered. This man had been seeking death by even daring to grab her power vessel. There had been other powerhouses who had tried to do so in the past with one of them even being an

Enlighter. However, without exception, all of them had ultimately been burned to a crisp by Hong Ying, as they had not been able to break free once they were entangled by the tassels.

Lu Yin tried to shake off the crimson spear, but no matter what he did, it would not separate from him. The tassel's heat was only increasing as time went on, and it had already reached a temperature that his physical body found difficult to handle.

"Seventh Bro, use your secret technique! This power vessel is not simple," the Ghost Monkey said.

Lu Yin had no choice, and he glanced deeply at Hong Ying before waving a hand and causing the crimson spear to vanish. When it reappeared, it was twisted around a random Sixth Mainland cultivator. That person did not even last for a second before his arm was turned to ash, and he wailed mournfully.

Hong Ying's expression changed drastically. "A secret technique! You actually have a secret technique?!"

Lu Yin had a cold expression. "You can go die."

He then tapped out, and the void congealed as his eyes went slack. This was the Dream Finger, and although it was not the Ninesuns Cauldron Transformation, this was the most powerful attack that Lu Yin could display at this moment. Even Enlighters would have to fear this attack from Lu Yin.

Hong Ying could not escape from the power of this finger, and it was very difficult to avoid it as well. However, the crimson spear actually flew back over and blocked the path between Lu Yin and Hong Ying. Lu Yin's finger instead tapped against the crimson spear, causing both the spear and Hong Ying to be blasted away, as the power of the finger had passed through the spear to also impact Hong Ying.

Hong Ying spat out a mouthful of blood, and her expression changed once again. This person was terrifyingly powerful; he had an unrivalled physical power, a secret technique, and even this frightening battle technique. Just where had he come from?

Lu Yin raised a hand, and the Skybeast Claw pressed down upon Hong Ying as he tried to finish off his opponent.

Hong Ying gritted her teeth, causing fresh blood to flow down her lips. She then hefted the crimson spear and stabbed out with it. Behind her, Madam Hong's imprint grew even clearer while, at the same time, a brand appeared on her spear, which was her martial print.

"flying spear technique." Hong Ying shouted as she stabbed at Lu Yin. Her movements were identical to her very first attack against Lu Yin, and countless spear images appeared all around him. No matter which direction he dodged in, he would have to face at least one spear. Even if he used his secret technique to divert the power of one spear, there would still be a second, and then a third.

In the past, when facing against Arbiter Zhenwu, Lu Yin had experienced the weakness of the Yu Secret Art, which was that it could not divert attacks without limit. Once the opponent noticed this detail, his Yu Secret Art would become useless.

At this moment, Lu Yin was facing that exact situation.

However, Lu Yin did not need to dodge, as Hong Ying's spear was equivalent in power to the palm that Autumnfrost Qing had unleashed through stimulating his bloodline. The rune lines were about the same, and after thinking about it, Lu Yin gathered all of his star energy into his right palm. "Ninesuns Cauldron Transformation: First Sun."

The resultant sun that formed above his palm illuminated the night sky and drew the attention of many.

Hong Ying's heart skipped a beat, and she was struck by an intense sense of unease. However, she could not retreat after unleashing her flying spear technique. Thus, she cried out as she committed her all to the attack.

In the distance, Alfonso and the others looked back to see a dazzling radiance light up Planet Amber. After the light shone out, a berserk aftershock swept across the region and sent them all flying forward.

If viewed from outer space, one would see that one half of Planet Amber had been surrounded by ripples of energy and that these aftershocks had even extended into outer space and started affecting the surrounding planets.

A spatial crack spread outwards and swallowed the ground. Coincidentally, it streaked past Alfonso's head, scaring him senseless.

The crowd from Astral-3 was overwhelmed; just who had launched that terrifying attack?

The execution grounds had been completely destroyed. The nearby Sixth Mainland cultivators had been caught up in the attack and had either died or hidden themselves so deep underground that they no longer dared to show themselves.

Hong Ying thrust her spear into the ground and slowly swayed, as if still dealing with the attack's aftermath.

Lu Yin stood in place and withdrew his hand. He then looked towards the crimson spear. Next to it, half of Hong Ying's body was horrendously twisted. Her hair was in disarray, and all of her orifices were bleeding. This last attack had severely injured her.

She collapsed onto the ground where she lay, panting heavily, occasionally spitting out a mouthful of blood, and staring at the sandy ground in disbelief.

She had been thoroughly defeated despite using her imprint, martial print, power vessel, and even her Fatesand. In spite of everything, she had still been defeated.

She was unwilling to accept her defeat, as there were very few from the Sixth Mainland within the same generation who could defeat her, let alone these Fifth Mainland natives.

"Who exactly are you?" Hong Ying stared intensely at Lu Yin with bloodshot eyes that had become scarlet. She looked rather sinister at this moment.

Lu Yin's eyes narrowed. "Dead people don't need to know."

Hong Ying sneered. She looked completely miserable, but her demeanor was still very arrogant. "Dead people? In this area of the universe, no one would dare to let me die. Where do you think you are? Still in your Fifth Mainland? Look at that statue!"

Lu Yin looked over.

At this moment, Hong Ying suddenly leaped up and fled towards outer space.

Lu Yin was stumped; was she trying to escape? He raised a hand, and the Skybeast Claw passed through the void, causing an ancient beast's howl to ring out as it shot towards Hong Ying.

However, Hong Ying tossed her spear aside in order to increase her fleeing speed.

That spear's red tassels came to life once again, and they twined themselves around the Skybeast Claw while releasing a scorching heat.

Lu Yin frowned. He leaped up to chase her down, but she turned around and sneered as she took out a power vessel. After that, her speed increased multiple times over, and she disappeared in the blink of an eye without leaving a trace behind.

"Seventh Bro, were you just tricked?" the monkey asked, its voice a little taunting.

Lu Yin had an ugly expression, as this woman had indeed fooled him. His accidental glance at that statue had given her enough of an opportunity to escape.

Ever since he had started cultivating, he had never encountered such a situation before. However, this time, a trifling lie had actually succeeded against him, which was quite embarrassing.

"Seventh Bro, there's no need to blame yourself. This is a disparity in intelligence. That woman is very smart, much smarter than you," the monkey said with a laugh.

Lu Yin was irritated, and he instantly screened the monkey off. That stupid monkey's words were really obnoxious. After all, Lu Yin had defeated Wei Rong, and he had just been careless this time around.

Chapter 869: Realming Bai Ling

The crimson spear fell from the sky, though all the red tassels had already vanished from the shaft.

This power vessel had been truly mysterious because of its tassels, but now that they were gone, it was just an ordinary weapon, though its materials might be a bit sturdier than normal.

Lu Yin felt slightly tempted to use his die's three pips to enhance the spear, but he ultimately decided against it. After all, this weapon was a power vessel made by a super powerhouse from the Sixth Mainland, and who knew it could be summoned back during a battle. Also, if Lu Yin kept it, could it be used by the enemy to track down Lu Yin? To Envoy-level powerhouses, he was still insignificant.

Left without a choice, Lu Yin broke the spear into two pieces and tossed them aside.

Before long, a large group of Sixth Mainland cultivators rushed over to Planet Amber, but they could not find any trace of Lu Yin and the others.

Hong Ying had been defeated. Among those of the Sixth Mainland, especially those in the Grand Martial Realm's circles, this matter raised quite a commotion.

Hong Yin had said that her opponent had been young and that he should be a part of the Fifth Mainland's younger generation.

If he was not from the younger generation, then her defeat would not have caused such a great commotion. After all, for those whose power levels were over 200,000, 300,000, and 400,000, even if they suppressed their power level to under 200,000, they would still be able to display an inestimable level of strength, and there would be nothing spectacular about such a person defeating Hong Ying. However, it was an entirely different story if she had been defeated by someone from the younger generation.

These youths had their own battlefield, and the two sides were also comparing the elites of their generation. If Hong Ying had been defeated by someone from the Fifth Mainland's younger generation, then that meant that a powerhouse who had received the title of Marquis at the minimum had appeared, and the rewards for beheading the Title Holders of the Fifth Mainland were exceptional.

In the Starfall Sea, on the mainland where the Tong family had made their base, Tong Zhan's eyes went wide, and a bizarre look appeared on his face. "Defeated Hong Ying? Very young? Interesting, aside from those few from Grayweed Continent, does this area of the Inniverse still have some interesting people? Hopefully it's not someone from the older generation, as that would be too boring."

On the other side of Grayweed Continent, the part that lay in the depths of the Starfall Sea, in a region that was surrounded by mountains, there was a stronghold where quite a few cultivators had gathered. They had banded together to resist the Sixth Mainland's invasion.

All of Grayweed Continent had been covered with the fires of war, and countless experts from the Sixth Mainland descended upon the continent, forcing it into a desperate situation.

Many cultivators voluntarily organized themselves into groups and united to resist these experts.

At this moment, within the mountain stronghold, multiple cultivators were staring up at the sky. Or more specifically, they were staring at a woman who was standing there with an indifferent expression.

Not a single cultivator on the ground dared to speak, and desperation was apparent in their eyes. Even the Enlightener elder within their group seemed to despair when he saw the woman in the sky.

"Let's act together, and perhaps some of us can escape."

"That's all we can do."

As the numerous cultivators below were planning their next move in hushed tones, their sounds grew louder and louder. Then, the sound suddenly visibly manifested in the air. The ambient sound waves had taken physical form, with the gathered cultivators' conversations becoming corporeal forms that merged together to form all sorts of creatures. Some looked like birds, others like bees, and others still like ants.

When they noticed this strange scenery, all of the gathered people backed away as one. They quickly discovered that any sound they made would become a new sound wave creature.

"It's the Grand Martial Realm's Realmling, Bai Ling. Once her martial print is used, everyone will be vanquished," a cultivator mumbled as they looked at the sky in fear. Suddenly, that person knelt down. "I surrender."

After the first person knelt down, several others consecutively followed suit.

The Enlighter elder was infuriated. "This is Grayweed Continent, our area! Don't be looked down upon by the enemy. Get up!"

In the sky, the girl looked down at all the cultivators below her without a single hint of emotion in her eyes. As they flickered with a certain chill, all of the strange creatures formed from sound simultaneously exploded, causing another strange sound wave to sweep across everyone on the ground.

All of these cultivators were stunned, and they felt as though they had lost consciousness and been petrified. None of them could move.

Even the old Enlighter was no different. So what if he was an Enlighter? So what if his power level had surpassed 200,000? Against this Realmking's attack, he also had no ability to resist.

Even if his power level was not suppressed and this Enlighter was able to act with his full strength, he still might not be the Realmking's match.

Realmking Bai Ling massacred all of the cultivators who had been in the mountain stronghold in one attack.

"Wrong again. Where are they hiding?" Bai Ling mumbled in a bizarre tone.

After some time, Bai Ling vanished, and a young man approached the outside of the stronghold. His face was pale, his eyes were cold, and his expression was similarly devoid of all emotions. He almost looked like a corpse, and there were two figures following behind him. Their motions were perfectly identical, and even their breathing was in sync. However, these two had no aura and were basically dead people.

"Late again, what a pity. With how they died, Bai Ling must have come here. How annoying, nobody said anything about this."

"To think that I, Corpse Looter from Justice Manor, can't even find someone who can talk. There are corpses wherever I go, which is puzzling. Could I be destined for corpses? Even though my innate gift allows me to control corpses, why is my fate so tied to corpses?"

"Is there even anyone here? Speak! How annoying. Everyone assumes that I can't talk, and people even say that I don't like the living and that only the dead can be my friends. Which idiot said that? How can corpses be my friends? Of course, I wouldn't mind if the dead could become my friends, but they need to at least be able to talk."

"How quiet. It's a little scary, and there're corpses all around. Will they come back to life?"

"Eh, talking is tiring, but with just these corpses around, if I don't talk, then there really will be no one else talking. How scary! If I had known that it would be like this earlier, I wouldn't have even come to this Fifth Mainland. Bai Ling is really annoying, and she couldn't even wait a moment. It would still be alright to leave someone behind for me to talk to. Who's talking? Oh wait, it's me..."

"Eh, Hong Ying was defeated? That's not good. That means that there's someone who can threaten us. That's troublesome, but they won't come to Grayweed Continent, right? That's scary. I better sneak away soon."

“Speaking of which, Bai Ling has been looking for that Ten Arbiters’ Divine Fist. Now that I think about it, if she can’t find him, and I end up running into him instead, then it’ll be even scarier. Is there anyone here? Speak, say something. There’s really no one.

“Why’s the sky dark? How scary.”

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That young man incessantly muttered to himself, but his face remained expressionless the entire time. Even if his words mentioned his fear, he showed no sign of fear on his face, and everything about him was unnerving.

In this silent mountain stronghold filled with corpses, only this man’s voice continuously rang out. Even after a long time, he still kept talking, and he did not repeat himself even once.

The Starfall Sea’s current greatest battlefield was Grayweed Continent, and countless cultivators of the Starfall Sea had fled to Grayweed Continent after being defeated. Currently, their plan was to have a decisive battle against the Sixth Mainland’s Grand Martial Realm here, and naturally, Grayweed Continent was going to be the battlefield.

Outside of the Starfall Sea, not too far away from Planet Amber, Alfonso and the others hid themselves on a certain planet, not planning on heading out in the near future.

The survivors from Astral-3 who had been rescued still had to nurse their wounds.

Lu Yin led Hai Qiqi away as they continued traveling to the Starfall Sea.

Yan Hua inquired after Lu Yin’s name, as he wanted to report Lu Yin’s achievements and contributions to the Champions Stage.

Lu Yin left behind the name of Seventh Bro.

A term of address like “Seventh Bro” was just too common in the universe, and even those who met Lu Yin in the past might not necessarily associate the name with him. After all, it had been more than four years since anyone in the Inniverse had interacted with him.

Lu Yin did not really want to head into the Starfall Sea since that place was too dangerous. Unfortunately for him, Hai Qiqi’s heart was set on returning home, and he could not allow her to go alone. Thus, he could only follow after her and protect her.

Still, the two had agreed that if they faced a truly dangerous situation, they would withdraw.

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An endless procession line extended out for thousands of meters. Lined up, miner after miner dressed in prison clothes were inspected before being sent aboard a spacecraft that was headed for the Starfall Sea.

Almost all of these miners were cultivators that had been captured by the Sixth Mainland. They wanted to surrender, but the Sixth Mainland did not care for them. Still, it would be too much of a waste to just

release these cultivators. Thus, they had been sentenced to the mines. As long as these prisoners mined enough ore, they would be able to win their freedom.

Although the Sixth Mainland had massacred cultivators without any hesitation, they only targeted those who resisted them. They were all still human in the end, and most people would not engage in wanton slaughter unless they were mentally disturbed, much like the Outerverse's assassin, Poisonmaster.

Lu Yin occasionally looked up to check his surroundings. From what he could see, there were not that many people from the Sixth Mainland standing guard over the crowd, but there were some experts nearby. They were stationed on the transport ship, and from the rune lines that Lu Yin could see, there was more than one Hunter among them.

The Sixth Mainland had no lack of Hunters, and it was not wasteful for them to dispatch such cultivators to supervise a bunch of captive miners.

Just one day ago, Lu Yin and Hai Qiqi had successfully sneaked into a group of captured miners. The Sixth Mainland would have never expected that someone would want to sneak in and join the miners all in order to enter the Starfall Sea, since that region was a death sentence to those from the Fifth Mainland.

Their gadgets had been hidden within a cosmic ring, which had in turn been hidden inside of Lu Yin's mouth. He now appeared to be a qualified miner, and he looked very down.

Behind him, Hai Qiqi tugged at his sleeve. "Let's steal this ship."

Lu Yin pursed his lips. "Don't come up with crazy plans. Do you even know how many Sixth Mainland experts are in the Starfall Sea? If we try to steal this, we'll be surrounded by countless experts long before we get to the Sea King's Dome."

"Don't we still have you?" Hai Qiqi pursed her lips reluctantly. Pretending to be a miner was very uncomfortable to her, particularly because she was a girl. The whole situation was almost unbearable to her.

Lu Yin was afraid that Hai Qiqi would start to act up, so he could only quietly caution her. "No matter how strong I am, there's a limit. Moreover, the Sixth Mainland does not lack for Enlighters, and even if those old farts suppress their power level to under 200,000, their power is still incomparable to an average cultivator. They will be as strong as Hong Ying at the very least. Do you want us to be surrounded by those kinds of people?"

Hai Qiqi had no choice, so she just scratched at her neck helplessly.

"I'm warning you not to mess around. Otherwise, if an Imprinter appears, we'll be in big trouble. That's someone on the same level as your father. Do you think that we can deal with your father, even if his power level is suppressed to below 200,000?" Lu Yin was not confident that the girl would behave, so he admonished her once again.

Hai Qiqi thought about it and then looked at Lu Yin with a serious expression. "I'll have to trouble you to pretend to be more wretched and not expose us then. Otherwise, we'll be doomed."

Lu Yin was left speechless. This brat's confidence in the Sea King was unbridled even to the end, and she was still looking down on Lu Yin.

But her attitude was also correct. People in different cultivation realms, even if they had similar power levels, would be able to display vastly different levels of destruction. Forget the Sea King; Lu Yin would be no match even for the most ordinary Envoy realm powerhouses who had suppressed their power level to below 200,000.

Those people had a different way of fighting compared to people like Lu Yin. Lu Yin even suspected that someone at Yuan Shi's level might have possibly broken through to some other realm or reached some sort of enlightenment. The reason behind this suspicion was that they no longer cultivated star energy, but rather something similar that was known as stellar energy. The universe that such people saw was different.

Before long, the spacecraft trembled as it headed towards the entrance to the Starfall Sea.

Chapter 870: Sea King's Shard

During the battle on Planet Amber, Lu Yin and the others had successfully rescued the survivors from Astral-3, and this incident had caused a great loss of face for Flying Horse Manor.

Madam Hong personally commanded all of the surrounding regions to be sealed off, especially the path leading towards Chaos Flowzone, all to prevent these bandits from successfully escaping.

However, she would never have imagined that Lu Yin would actually lead Hai Qiqi deeper into the Starfall Sea.

Hong Ying had been severely injured during the battle, so she was currently recuperating.

After treating her injuries, she had wanted to search for the group that had rescued those Astral-3 survivors and scrub away the humiliation that she had suffered. However, Madam Hong had ordered her to instead head to the Starfall Sea's Grayweed Continent and help the Tong family defeat the remaining Fifth Mainland cultivators there.

Hong Ying could only obey her master, leaving her with no opportunity to seek revenge.

Atop the seaweed that grew at the entrance to the Starfall Sea, all of the miners remained within the spacecraft and did not move about. They waited until the vessels' hulls were successfully coated and then headed into the Starfall Sea.

This was Lu Yin's second time coming here, and he had never dreamed that he would use such methods to return. He was entering in a similar fashion, but under a vastly different context.

The first time, their group had been chased here by Feng Mo, and they had been forced to participate in the contest to become the Sea King's son-in-law after fleeing to the Starfall Sea. This time, the two were sneaking in to evade the Sixth Mainland's pursuit under the guise of captive miners.

Could this very place be targeting Lu Yin? After all, each time he came here was under the pursuit of someone else.

Hai Qiqi was not too far away from Lu Yin. She wanted to go out and reminisce but was unable to do so.

At this time, a shrill alarm blared throughout the spacecraft, and the majority of miners were left petrified, as they did not know what was happening.

Lu Yin, however, did know; the sea's scouring current had arrived.

Sure enough, it did not take long for the spacecraft to start swaying, and all of the miners found something to hold on to. For most of them, this was their first time experiencing the Starfall Sea's current, and they were filled with fear at this unknown situation.

A short time later, the current abated, and the spacecraft returned to normal once again.

There were a few planets within the Starfall Sea, and just like the spacecraft's hulls, they were isolated from the water. However, whenever a current appeared, a powerhouse with a power level of more than 300,000 would have to take action to help the planet withstand the pressure.

Presently, after the Progenitors' battle had caused the Inniverse's cosmic environment to change, everyone was forced to suppress their power level to below 200,000. Thus, Lu Yin was wondering how the planets were currently withstanding the currents. Or, was it possible that they had all been destroyed?

Hai Qiqi had also thought of this detail, and her face paled.

She had grown up in the Starfall Sea, and she had even frequented some of the planets. In her heart, everything here was her home.

"Don't think too much. The Sea King's Dome holds a special status in the Starfall Sea, and nothing should have happened to it," Lu Yin comforted her as he walked over.

Hai Qiqi nodded, though she was still waiting nervously.

The Sixth Mainland did not forbid the miners from speaking to each other, as they simply did not care. In their eyes, these miners were not criminals, but rather just inferior people. They hoped to seduce the Fifth Mainland cultivators into betraying the Fifth Mainland and surrendering, but at the same time, the Sixth Mainland looked down upon those who did so. Hence, they avoided contact with the miners whenever they could, which gave Lu Yin and the rest space to talk.

He had already questioned quite a few of the miners, as he wanted to find out where they would be stationed within Starfall Sea. However, the miners did not know either.

Lu Yin had also tried to inquire about the situation of the Inniverse's various other regions, but he had learned nothing good. At the very least, in these people's eyes, the entire universe was already under the Sixth Mainland cultivators' control even though they did not know the details of the Sixth Mainland.

The Hall of Honor and the great powers of the Inniverse had not made any announcements about the Sixth Mainland either, only mentioning invaders. Those like Alfonso who knew about the Sixth Mainland had discovered the information on their own.

Although they did not understand the Sixth Mainland, the Inniverse cultivators knew that these invaders were a completely different breed of cultivators. In the eyes of the Fifth Mainland cultivators, once these invaders used their imprints, it was as if they had become a different species. It was similar to how the Inniverse cultivators were basically natives to the Sixth Mainland cultivators' eyes.

Most of the miners had come from the areas around the Starfall Sea. The universe was too vast, and although the area surrounding the Starfall Sea did not seem like a large area, hundreds of millions of

cultivators had been captured in that region. These cultivators had then been sent to mine for the Sixth Mainland while also being forced to hand over their battle techniques and arts.

When Lu Yin snuck it, the miners had been handing over their battle techniques, and it had to be said that the pair's luck was good. Otherwise, Hai Qiqi's status as a woman might not have passed through the inspection.

After some basic interaction, Lu Yin did not make any further inquiries, as he did not want to rouse the Sixth Mainland cultivators' attention. Besides, the miners did not have much information to share with Lu Yin. This group of people were like salted fish; even if Lu Yin hijacked the spacecraft, these people would not help him, and they would be nothing more than mere bystanders.

Without their gadgets to tell the time, Lu Yin did not know exactly how much time had passed. However, after around ten days, the spacecraft shuddered and finally came to a stop. They were then chased out of the spacecraft, as they had arrived at their destination.

Hai Qiqi's face went pale.

Lu Yin felt that something was strange. "What's the matter?"

Hai Qiqi softly answered, "This is the location of the Sea King's Dome."

Lu Yin was astonished. "Are you certain?"

Hai Qiqi's eyes danced about, and she looked terrified. The two of them continued following the group of miners as they disembarked from the ship.

Once Lu Yin got off, a familiar scene entered his eyes, and Lu Yin was surprised. They were indeed at the Sea King's Dome.

He was rather familiar with this place. He could still recall the unforgettable awe that he had felt back when he had first laid eyes on the Sea King's Dome. The conical mountain, the soft sunlight that illuminated the mountain, the impressive waterfalls cascading down, and the greenery that decorated the mountainsides were just as he remembered.

In particular, Lu Yin remembered the space behind the tall mountain that had rippled and given off a drumbeat that caused the void to shudder. He had even thought that he had been facing a divine mountain and been filled with awe.

However, what he recalled the most vividly was the rune lines that he had seen from the Sea King's Dome, as they had hurt his eyes to the extent where he did not even dare to look.

However, at this time, the Sea King's Dome that entered his eyes had changed completely. The mountain had been split into two sections, and the once impressive waterfalls no longer flowed. The sunlight was gone. The entire region around the Sea King's Dome had grown dim, and it was no longer awe-inspiring; rather, it looked more like a part of the underworld. Flames rose high into the air in all directions, and it was impossible to know what was burning. The green plants that had once dotted the mountainsides had all wilted away, and the buildings, the shopping areas, and auction houses had all disappeared as well.

It was an utterly bleak landscape.

When she saw it, Hai Qiqi shuddered. Her eyes went red, and it looked like her body was about to collapse.

Lu Yin hurriedly grabbed her hand. "Your father is fine. Don't you want to find him?"

Hai Qiqi suddenly returned to her senses, and she hung her head so that others could not see the tears in her eyes.

This was the first time she had left her home, and it had ended up lasting for a period of four years. During these four years, she had searched for a way to return home every day, and nobody could understand her struggles. Now, she had finally returned home, but this was what she was greeted by. This was the first time she had ever received a blow of this scale.

Fortunately, Lu Yin had reminded her of her father. Otherwise, the Sixth Mainland cultivators definitely would have noticed something.

Lu Yin's eyes filled with star energy, and he looked at the Sea King's Dome curiously.

This time, the Sea King's Dome did not radiate the magnificent rune lines that had stung his eyes before. Instead, there were only the rune lines of some Sixth Mainland cultivators and the miners. One person even approached the current peak power level of 200,000, and that person was either a peak Hunter, or an Enlighter who was suppressing their power level.

"Does the Sea King's Dome have any ore to mine?" Lu Yin led Hai Qiqi and walked with the human traffic as they softly spoke to each other.

Hai Qiqi's body trembled, and she responded in a grievous tone. "Sea King's Shard. It's a very rare mineral that Father discovered. Its characteristic is being very solid, and although it cannot be combined with other minerals, it can be used to manufacture weapons and armor that have a very high defensive capability. Many of our Sea King's Dome's experts use weapons that are made from Sea King's Shard, and it can reportedly withstand attacks with power levels of up to 500,000."

Lu Yin's eyes lit up, as this was good stuff. Coincidentally, it was also the kind of material that he was lacking. Sea King's Shard, huh? It was no wonder why the Sixth Mainland needed these miners to gather it for them.

As for it not being able to fuse with other minerals, Lu Yin did not care about that bit. The way he manufactured weapons and armor never required him to know how such things were done. All he had to do was get a rough outline of what he wanted and then leave everything to his die's three pips: Enhance.

"Can ordinary miners extract this Sea King's Shard?" Lu Yin asked curiously.

Hai Qiqi looked up at the tall mountain. "Sea King's Shard is hidden within ordinary stone, and it is not an entirely separate substance. A layer of stone has to first be peeled away, which is something that even ordinary cultivators can do."

Lu Yin nodded and looked up at the tall mountain. It seemed that this Sea King's Shard was only found within the tall mountain.

The Sea King's Dome had been thoroughly destroyed, and there was not a single part that resembled its previous majesty. In the distance, another giant statue had been erected, though this one was not of Madam Hong, but rather that of an old man. If Lu Yin guessed correctly, then this elder should be the Tong family's Elder, who was a Cosmic Imprinter.

The Starfall Sea was completely under the Tong family's control.

Not long after, Lu Yin and the others moved towards the tall mountain.

Hai Qiqi was suddenly stunned, and fresh tears flowed from the corners of her eyes, as she could not control her emotions at all.

Lu Yin hurriedly pulled her into his embrace before looking in the direction she had been staring. Then, his expression changed drastically.

In the distance, there were quite a few corpses hanging beside the sea, and there were so many that the number of corpses was uncountable. Some of the corpses had already dried to the point of beyond recognition, and when Lu Yin glanced over them, he did not recognize any of them. However, one of them felt rather familiar. He fell deep into thought before remembering. Back when he had left the Sea King's Dome with Hai Qiqi, an old man had appeared, and he had said that he appreciated Lu Yin and that he hoped their future would go against the current.

"Qiqi, who was that elder?" Lu Yin could not help but ask.

Hai Qiqi lowered her head as her face flushed red. She did not bother answering Lu Yin and merely walked forward in a numb fashion.

Lu Yin sighed, but he did not speak any further.

Soon, the group of miners arrived at the mountain. Nobody watched over them, and they were allowed to mine however they wished. However, they were required to mine a certain amount before they would obtain their freedom. Supposedly, every six months, a spacecraft would stop by to take away those cultivators who had won their freedom.

Hai Qiqi said nothing, and she apathetically began to mine the stones and break them open as she looked for Sea King's Shard.

Lu Yin stood guard next to her as he mined, just in case she lost control of her emotions.

Lu Yin picked up a piece of dark-green Sea King's Shard and held it in his hand, but it was only a thumb-sized piece. In this area, a piece of Sea King's Shard of this size was already considered exceptional, and Lu Yin had only spent a full day to dig up such a piece.

He exerted some force to pinch the material, but he could not leave any sort of mark on it. Lu Yin understood his own strength quite well, and if he had been squeezing an ordinary Hunter instead of this Sea King's Shard, the Hunter would have been pinched to death. On the other hand, this Sea King's Shard showed no reaction whatsoever.

Even though this material could not be combined with other materials, it was no different from the other materials that he had given Ban Jiu, as they all required extremely high temperatures to forge.

Hai Qiqi did not speak, and she only continued to apathetically mine the rocks. She had already found three pieces of Sea King's Shard.

Lu Yin had also found four.

The miners were required to turn in 1,000 pieces in order to earn their freedom. Given the average rate of finding one piece a day, it would take the average person about three years to accomplish this, which was not very long for the captive cultivators.

The mountain was massive, and even if Sea King's Shard was a scarce ore, if the entire mountain was mined out, then the amount of Sea King's Shard would form a small heaping hill. That much material would be enough to manufacture quite a number of weapons and armor, which would be enough to equip an entire army and make it practically invincible.

Lu Yin's eyes were fervent, as he did not know if the Sea King's Dome had ever equipped an entire team with items made from Sea King's Shard.