

The Gods 1921

Chapter 1921 - Memory of the Moon (5)

The blood beads fused into one bigger blood bead instantly and without any resistance whatsoever. When the profound energy holding them afloat ran out, they slowly fell toward the ground before scattering on the verdant grass.

For a long time, Xia Qingyue simply stood there with a dazed, unfocused look on her face. It was like her soul had departed her body completely.

Yun Che was almost as stunned himself.

What... what is going on here!?

Not only did the barrier that should've barred everyone except a direct descendant not work on Xia Qingyue, but her blood had merged perfectly with Yue Wuya's blood as well. That could only mean...

What am I thinking? That's just impossible! Xia Qingyue's birth father is without a doubt Xia Hongyi!

Yue Wugou was still a virgin when Xia Hongyi found her. Moreover, it was only in their third year together that they had Xia Qingyue.

It was just impossible for Xia Qingyue to be the daughter of Yue Wuya!

Did Xia Hongyi lie then? Was she already pregnant when he found Yue Wugou?

That made even less sense!

Xia Hongyi and Yue Wugou had married during the second year, conceived Xia Qingyue during their third, and Xia Yuanba during their fourth... the entire Floating Cloud City knew about this. They might have been able to fool one person or ten, but an entire city? Impossible!

It was at this moment Yun Che recalled the doubts Chi Wuyao had voiced to him some time ago:

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"He was way too indifferent toward Xia Qingyue's death... Xia Yuanba is the bearer of the Tyrannical Emperor's Divine Veins and a firm mind, yet he can barely control his pain after hearing the news."

"On the other hand, all I felt from Xia Hongyi was a flash of pain. In fact, I felt more shock and pity from him. He reacted how a person would when they heard of their neighbor's daughter's death."

"You are a father with only one daughter to your name. You know better than me how unusual his reaction was."

"He is no profound way fool or cold-blooded ruler, but he could be emotionally detached by nature. That is the only other possibility I can think of anyway. People like that do exist. Like a person who is born without an arm or a leg, some are born without the seven emotions and six desires that drive us all."

"However, his extreme reaction towards Yue Wugou's death contradicted that completely."

“Which brings us back to the question, ‘Why is a man this passionate reacting so coolly and rationally toward his daughter’s death?’ There was barely any sorrow at all.”

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“Do you still remember why Xia Qingyue was obsessed with cultivating the profound way?”

“Yes... long story short, she wanted to find her mother and reunite her family.”

“That is correct. Chu Yuechan told me the same thing... This tells us that she was a woman who cherished familial bonds deeply. At the very least, she was someone who gave it her all just to seek out a mother she barely remembered.”

“So why did a woman who values love and familial bonds so, so much... not visit her father even once after she married you and traveled to Frozen Cloud Immortal Palace?”

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Yun Che feigned indifference back then, but he wasn’t nearly as indifferent as he looked.

Today, her words had surfaced from his memories and mingled with the scene in front of him into a hot pot of utter confusion.

Xia Hongyi had acted unusually indifferent when he heard of Xia Qingyue’s death.

Yue Wuya had personally appeared to Xia Qingyue, a lower realm denizen despite being a god emperor.

If he had to make up an explanation for this...

The indifference was because they weren’t blood related, and the profound attraction was because they were?

However...

Even if Xia Hongyi wasn’t Xia Qingyue’s birth father, they had still lived under the same roof for sixteen years. How was it possible they were so indifferent toward each other that it was almost to the point of being strangers?

What was going on here? Where was the contradiction?

Did Xia Hongyi weave a lie that somehow fooled everyone? Or was the fusion of two bloods that should be utterly incompatible with each other just a coincidence?

Xia Qingyue had never spoken to him about this. Naturally, he didn’t know that she had been carrying a burden like this until now.

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It was at this moment that Yue Wugou opened her eyes. It was almost as if she had sensed her daughter’s distress.

She pushed herself into a sitting position and noticed that her daughter was staring mindlessly ahead. She hadn’t noticed her awakening or rising at all.

“Qingyue?” She called out softly.

Xia Qingyue twitched, and she finally returned to herself. However, there was still a bit of mistiness in her eyes.

“What’s wrong?” Yue Wugou asked concernedly after noticing her daughter’s abnormal reaction. “Were you thinking about his proposal?”

Xia Qingyue shook her head. She sat down beside her mother and watched her eyes. A while later, she finally asked in a very soft voice, “Mom, did you... sleep with Senior God Emperor before you encountered dad?”

“Of course not,” Yue Wugou answered without hesitation before shaking her head smilingly. “Wuya had wanted to leave everything until our wedding night. In his words, he wasn’t willing to ‘tarnish’ my name until then.”

“I told you this a long time ago, didn’t I? Why are you bringing it up again?”

Yue Wugou’s answer did nothing to chase away the mistiness in her eyes. Still staring into her mother’s eyes, she murmured almost unconsciously, “Really...? Not even once...?”

The abnormal reaction visibly startled Yue Wugou. Then, a bolt of realization struck her, her expression turned both panicked and painful at the same time. She gripped her daughter’s hands tightly and said in an urgent voice, “Please believe mom, Qingyue. I’ve never... I’ve never slept with him, not now, and definitely not before I knew your dad! Never!”

Yue Wugou’s suddenly disordered aura and terribly sorrowful voice finally brought Xia Qingyue fully back to the world. At the same time, she realized just how deeply she had wounded her mother with her words.

“Mom, no! That... that wasn’t what I meant—” She tried to explain herself.

“Qingyue,” Yue Wugou teared up as she tried to inject gentleness back into her voice, “I know I let your dad, you and Yuanba down. I don’t deserve to be called a wife or a mother for having abandoned all of you that day...”

“No! That’s not it!” Xia Qingyue shook her head with all her might. Her earlier daze had all transformed into panic and self-blame.

Yue Wugou watched her daughter with tear-stained cheeks. “The heavens have already pitied me once and united me and my grown-up daughter, and to think... that I dare to demand more. I cannot believe I was so engrossed in my selfish desires that I completely forgot about the harm it would bring to you.”

“Qingyue, I don’t have any regrets left in this life, not since the heavens allowed me to enjoy your company for the past couple years.” Yue Wugou caressed her daughter’s cheek gently. “Don’t worry. I will never force you to do something you don’t wish to do. Just the same, I will never allow a thing you don’t wish to happen to happen.”

“Mom, you got it all wrong! This really is just a misunderstanding!” Xia Qingyue shook her head again before grabbing her mother’s shoulders and staring into her eyes. “Listen to me, mom. You didn’t let anyone down, much less did anyone wrong your whole life!”

“Be it you, dad, or Senior God Emperor, you are all blameless victims. It is the villain who hurt you back then who is to blame.”

She had witnessed and felt the horrible tragedy that was her mother’s life. She also knew of the innumerable wounds, regrets, and pain weighing down her heart.

Her mother had become excessively sensitive and fragile from all the burdens, and she had just dealt a severe blow to her with her thoughtless murmurs.

Every tear dripping down her mother’s cheeks had splashed against her soul. Her mother’s nervousness, trepidation, absolute horror at the thought of having hurt her daughter, and the ensuing words that might as well be a vicious oath all made Xia Qingyue realize just how selfish her earlier stubbornness was.

“I asked you that question because I... want to tell you that...” she wiped away the tear stains on her mother’s face before continuing, “... I’ve changed my mind. I’ve decided to accept Senior God Emperor’s proposal.”

However, not only did Yue Wugou look consoled by her daughter’s reply, she unconsciously tightened her grip around her hands and said urgently, “Qingyue! I just told you you don’t have to force yourself to do something you don’t wish to do, much less for someone like me!”

“I’m not forcing myself to do this, and I’m definitely not... just doing it for mom.” Xia Qingyue shook her head and responded with a tearful smile of her own. “It’s just that Senior God Emperor was right. Without sufficient power, my special talents and ‘gifts from heaven’ will only bring me unending tribulations.”

“I still have no concept as to what a god emperor’s throne really entails, but I do know that the Moon God divine power is among the highest powers available in the world right now. It is something a normal person could not hope to obtain in a thousand lifetimes, and yet it was offered to me on a silver platter. It is both a much better gift from heaven, and exactly what I need.”

“I simply... don’t have a reason to reject it.”

“...” Yue Wugou watched Xia Qingyue’s eyes closely to see if she was forcing herself. “Do... do you really think that?”

“Mn.” Xia Qingyue nodded. “I know you’ve always held a deep-seated regret toward us. I know you can’t stand me suffering even the slightest bit of grievances or harm.”

“However, you really haven’t done anything wrong or let anyone down, mom. You left us not because you were heartless, but because fate is a cruel mistress. Out of all of us, there was no one who was more hurt than you.”

“Also, you and dad were properly divorced before you left. As a free woman, it is entirely up to you to choose whoever you wish to marry. You need not be held hostage by your own guilty conscience!”

Xia Qingyue’s smile grew a tad gentler. “As for me, you definitely don’t owe me anything. I am your daughter. You may not have raised me, but you still gave birth to me. I wasn’t able to do anything for

you when I was younger, so I would only be infinitely happy to help you accomplish one of your greatest wishes in life.”

The dam in Yue Wugou’s eyes broke down completely. “Qingyue... my daughter...”

Yue Wugou hugged Xia Qingyue tightly. She still couldn’t determine if her daughter was speaking from the heart or just making a compromise, but for the first time, she truly felt that she could pass away to the afterlife with no regrets.

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“Have... have you really come around to the proposal?”

The next day, Yue Wuya was overflowing with joy after hearing Xia Qingyue’s answer.

He himself was surprised by how glad and relieved he felt.

“Yes!” Xia Qingyue nodded solemnly. She looked so tranquil that even Yue Wuya, a God Emperor couldn’t pick up any particular emotion that stood out compared to the rest. “However, I have two requests.”

“Okay.” Yue Wuya nodded without hesitation. “Speak.”

“First...” Xia Qingyue’s expression grew even more serious as she took a pause. Her gaze also looked a bit evasive for some reason. “I... would like to formally become senior’s adopted daughter.”

Yue Wuya looked surprised by the request, but he quickly shook his head with a smile. “You underestimate me, Qingyue. You are Wugou’s daughter, so I will never harbor any lustful intent toward you. Your insurance is unnecessary.”

He thought Xia Qingyue had requested the adoption to protect herself from him.

“You’ve misunderstood me, senior.” However, Xia Qingyue’s expression remained as calm as ever, and her gaze as pure as the divine moon in the sky. “Senior’s favor unto me and my mother is as heavy as the mountains. My request is purely personal.”

“I realize that the request is fairly outrageous for a humble and meritless woman such as I... but I would be very pleased if senior accepts it.”

Her seriousness and the slight tremor in her voice stunned not just Yue Wuya, but also Yue Wugou.

“Okay... okay!”

Yue Wuya nodded strongly when he said the first “okay”, and he broke into a wide smile when he said the second. “Not now though. If you are to become my adopted daughter, then we must hold a grand ceremony to celebrate it! Maybe not one that requires invitations to be sent to the entire God Realm, but certainly one that will be remembered across the Eastern Divine Region! Hahahaha!”

He guffawed... and was again surprised by how happy he felt.

Xia Qingyue closed her eyes. A long time later, she continued, “As for my next request... please tell me who the one who hurt my mom so badly was, senior!”

Her late husband...

Her sect...

Her homeland...

Each time, she had been pained and powerless to change their fates.

This time though, she would not fail.

It was said that the crime of harming one's mother was bigger than the crime of harming heaven itself. When her mother passes away, and the divine power of the Moon God flows in her veins... vengeance shall be the only meaningful pursuit in her life.

Chapter 1922 - Memory of the Moon (6)

Xia Qingyue's second request killed Yue Wuya's laughter.

"Don't... don't tell her!"

Yue Wugou blurted out in panic before Yue Wuya could even say anything.

Yue Wuya shot the love of his life a consoling look before turning back to Xia Qingyue. "I can answer your question... but not now."

"Why?" Xia Qingyue asked.

Yue Wuya countered with his own question, "I love Wugou more than I love myself. What do you think I would have done the instant I figured out the mastermind's identity?"

Xia Qingyue: "..."

"I would have sought out that bitch and torn her to pieces with my own bare hands!" Yue Wuya's voice remained calm, but the latter half of the sentence was said with a slight gnashing of teeth. "Or at least, I wish... in reality, I have NOT claimed vengeance for Wugou even though it has been so many years. Why do you think that is?"

A long, stifling silence later, Xia Qingyue finally answered, "Is it because... the mastermind was someone even you cannot defeat, senior?"

"That is correct." Gravity entered both Yue Wuya's eyes and voice. "The villain possesses an incredibly powerful background and backing. Her strength and status are among the best of the best, but she also possesses a cunning and ruthless mind. The words good, evil, right and wrong don't exist in her dictionary, only interest does."

"Not only did she hurt your mother, she misled me into thinking that the Star God Realm was the primary suspect. I was overcome by fury and didn't investigate the matter as well as I should have, so I committed a grave mistake that worsened the deteriorating relationships between the Moon God Realm and Star God Realm even more... exactly as the mastermind wanted."

Yue Wuya clenched his fists soundlessly as he said this.

The observer, Yun Che, knew exactly what he was talking about.

Yue Wuya had thought that Xing Juekong was behind the attack on Yue Wugou, so he retaliated by doing the same thing to the Star God Emperor.

He had kidnapped what he thought was Xing Juekong's most cherished concubine, the mother of the Heavenly Wolf Star God Xisu and Jasmine...

And caused her to commit suicide.

Yue Wuya died at Jasmine's hands later on, so one might say that Jasmine had gotten the vengeance she deserved.

However, Qianye Ying'er was really to be blamed for the tragedies behind both Xia Qingyue's family and Jasmine's family.

"She is someone even I cannot harm. What can you do even if you learn about her now?" Yue Wuya said solemnly. "Plus, your cultivation, your cunning, your experience and your methods... there are several layers of heaven and earth between you and her."

"If I tell you her identity, you will have a clear but untouchable target. You will become full of hatred, but you will never be able to vent it. It will only destroy your focus, disrupt your cultivation, and set you back on your path of vengeance even more."

"Don't worry. I will naturally tell you the truth when you have inherited and adapted to my power."

He looked at Xia Qingyue with deep expectation in his eyes. "You are the bearer of the Heart of Snow Glazed Glass and the Nine Profound Exquisite Body, so it is only a matter of time before you surpass her. Keep your head low, gather your strength, and one day... you will be able to claim vengeance for all of us."

Xia Qingyue didn't get the answer she wanted, but she nodded deeply and didn't ask further questions.

At this point, Yun Che was gradually realizing that Yue Wuya hadn't just passed down the Purple Pylon Divine Power to Xia Qingyue.

There was also one thing that troubled him greatly.

Why did Xia Qingyue and Yue Wuya's blood mingle perfectly?

The timeline didn't match at all, and Yue Wugou herself had stated clearly that she and Yue Wuya hadn't slept together.

Was it... really just a mistake?

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Back then, in another space.

"Wh... what!? You plan to pass down the throne to Xia Qingyue? God Emperor, h-have you gone insane!?"

Golden Moon God Yue Wuji was so anxious that he blurted out the offensive words before he could stop himself.

"I have thought long and hard about this," Yue Wuya said. "Although the title of 'Moon God Empress' will give her some of the prestige she needs, she will still face considerable resistance. I will need your aid, Wuji."

"'Considerable resistance' doesn't even begin to describe how hard it will be!" Yue Wuji stepped in front of Yue Wuya with a look of utter puzzlement. "Xia Qingyue is the bearer of the Heart of Snow Glazed Glass and the Nine Profound Exquisite Body. I have no objections to you choosing her as the successor of the Purple Pylon Divine Power whatsoever."

"But the throne of God Emperor? This, I can neither understand nor accept!"

"What's so difficult to understand?" Yue Wuya countered. "The previous bearer of the Heart of Snow Glazed Glass founded the Eternal Heaven Realm itself! Moreover, it is said that the bearer will be protected by the heavens itself, the Moon God Realm's future may shine brighter than ever before."

"Even if I were to believe that the future you described will come true, and that the bearer of the Heart of Snow Glazed Glass will enjoy the protection of the heavens, Xia Qingyue... is still an outsider! An outsider!" Yue Wuji said harshly, "It is true that the king realm always comes first for a god emperor, but not even the most selfless God Emperor would just surrender eons of history and the king realm they've worked their whole life to improve to an outsider, would they!?"

That startled Yue Wuya into silence.

"Moreover, Xia Qingyue is... the daughter of Yue Wugou and another man!" Yue Wuji couldn't stop shaking his head and frowning deeply. "It would've been perfectly normal for you to loathe her, much less consider passing the throne to her!"

"..." For a long time, Yue Wuya couldn't say anything. Occasionally, bewilderment would flash across his eyes.

It was because Yue Wuji's reasoning... did make a lot of sense.

No matter how talented Xia Qingyue was, to pass the throne to her was to put the future of the Moon God Realm in the hands of an outsider.

Moreover, she was the daughter of Yue Wugou and another man. It would be perfectly natural for him to loathe her.

So why... did he still not feel like changing his mind?

"Wuji," Yue Wuya let out a quiet sigh, "The Heavenly Mystery Realm has prophesied that I will die in five years. Whether it will come true or not, I should be prepared for the worst, and in the short term she is the absolute best successor I could find."

"Anyway, I shall be preparing as much as possible for the announcement." He clapped Yue Wuji on the shoulder before continuing, "You will help me, right?"

Yue Wuji was going to speak some more, but he saw the look in Yue Wuya's eyes and knew that it was futile. A long sigh and a helpless nod later, he said, "Officially, you are my god emperor. Unofficially, you are my brother. Of course I would support your decisions no matter what they are. But..."

“That is all I need to hear.” Yue Wuya smiled. “You may begin preparing for, well, everything.”

“For the next period of time, I shall be guiding Qingyue’s cultivation personally. I will need you to take care of the major and minor matters of the Moon God Realm during this time.”

“I’m also going to invest all of the Moon Sea Jades that are meant for Xuange, and the Glazed Moon Pity Heart Plum that we had prepared to nurture the next Moon God Emperor, on Qingyue.”

Yue Wuji blanched.

“Knowing Xuange, he will not sit by and do nothing. He will also be an unstable element to look out for when Qingyue inherits the throne in the future. You must prepare for that as well.”

Shockingly, Yue Wuya’s determination to make Xia Qingyue the next Moon God Emperor had become even firmer after his argument with Yue Wuji.

It was almost as if someone had infected him with a mind-controlling parasite.

“... I understand.” Yue Wuji could only agree.

The world changed again, but this time Yun Che recognized the scene.

It was the capital city of the Moon God Realm, the day of the “divine moon in the sky”!

Xia Qingyue was meant to be made the Moon God Empress during this ceremony. It was also the place he and Xia Qingyue encountered each other once more.

She had just stepped out of her “prison” so that all of the attendees could memorize her name when suddenly... she learned that the late husband she thought to be dead for years was alive, and that he was in the Divine Moon City right now.

“Foster father, can Qingyue make one request?” She asked Yue Wuya while barely keeping her wild confusion and struggle under control.

“Could foster father please bestow the Vanishing Moon Celestial Palace upon Qingyue?”

“Hahahaha,” the Moon God Emperor let out a hearty laugh. “Qingyue, in all the years you’ve been here, this is the first time you’ve requested something from me. Great, this is simply great.”

“It won’t be too long before the entire Moon God Realm belongs to you, much less something as trifling as the Vanishing Moon Celestial Palace! But since you want it, then I’ll give it to you right now.”

“I thank foster father for granting my request.” Behind Xia Qingyue’s gratitude was even greater struggle and guilt.

“Foster father,” She spoke so quietly that her voice was almost indiscernible, “Qingyue has something to say. I beg that you remember this always.”

“In the future, no matter what happens, Qingyue... will never ever let down the Moon God Realm.”

“Qingyue, you...” Her sudden statement had puzzled Yue Wuya.

“Qingyue only wants foster father to forever remember those words... No matter what happens in the future, I beg that foster father remembers these words,” she continued very, very softly.

Yue Wuya remained puzzled, but he didn't press her since he had guests to attend to. He simply let out a happy chuckle and said, “Qingyue, with these words of yours, even if ‘that prophecy’ made by the Heavenly Mystery Realm happens tomorrow, I no longer have any regrets.”

When Yue Wuya left, and there was no one left in the Vanishing Moon Celestial Palace, Xia Qingyue's pain finally broke through her self control and leaked onto her features. She closed her eyes and couldn't come to a decision for a very long time.

“Should I send him a sound transmission and tell him everything now, or...”

Hesitation colored her gaze and her features as she whispered to herself. She felt as if she was standing on a crossroads of no return.

She recalled the choice her mother had to make back then. This one wasn't even close to being as difficult as her mother's choice or circumstances, but the pain was as raw as it was soul wrenching.

Her mind drifted back to the day she and Yun Che were wed...

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“... you've made it clear that you will leave for Frozen Cloud Immortal Palace, and that the only reason you married me is to fulfill that promise. Therefore, you don't have problems with me taking a concubine, right?”

“As you wish.”

“You promised! But oh, you're not allowed to find another man though! I, Yun Che may be a cripple, but I am still a uh... ahem! A man! You must promise me this as well!”

“Unreasonable man!”

“How is that unreasonable? A man's pride is bigger than the heavens especially when a woman is involved! Also, you are my wife, but you won't allow me to touch you, and you're plotting to leave me! Can you really look me in the eye and tell me you've fulfilled even one of your wifely responsibilities? Also, what I'm asking of you is but the most basic tenet between husband and wife. Are you seriously not going to oblige even that? Yes, you're only doing this for a promise. Yes, you're only repaying a debt that is owed. But what are they worth if there isn't even a sliver of sincerity in your gestures?”

“... fine. I promise I won't have an affair with another man, and that I won't do anything that will diminish your manly pride in any way. Are you satisfied now?”

“Hmph! Now we're talking!... Seriously though, you are just waaaaaaay too pretty for your own good. What am I to do if you see a reputable young master one day and fall to temptation ... hey hey hey I haven't finished talking yet!”

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“The wedding is fake, and the title is empty. However, what will it matter if the entire world believes it to be true? It is too unfair to him,” Xia Qingyue whispered to herself as tears streaked down her cheeks. “He is just starting to grow his fame in the God Realm. How can I be the one to cast him into the shadows and destroy his future?”

“Mother, foster father... Qingyue is unfilial... I can only atone for the rest of my life!”

Every word Xia Qingyue whispered pierced Yun Che’s heart.

Back on the Vanishing Moon Celestial Palace, Xia Qingyue had explained everything to him in a cool and collected tone.

He already knew then that Xia Qingyue had had to make a painful decision before pulling the stunt she did, but it was only now that he truly understood just how hard and painful it really was. On one hand, it was her mother’s final wish to be properly wed with Yue Wuya. She also owed Yue Wuya a huge favor, not to mention that there seemed to be some sort of strange blood relation between them. On the other hand, she promised him that she would remain faithful, and the wedding ceremony—even though it was fake—was going to hurt him deeply and throw his future into disarray.

In the end, she had chosen him and buried that heavy, heavy guilt and regret deep inside her heart.

She never let him carry even a shred of these burdens.

The scene sped up. He saw himself and Xia Qingyue escaping the Moon God Realm on the Vanishing Moon Celestial Palace, Qianye Ying’er intercepting them midway, him being implanted with the Brahma Soul Death-Wishing Mark, him begging for sweet release while she knelt in front of the Forbidden Land of Samsara...

After passing him to Shen Xi and returning to the Moon God Realm, Xia Qingyue knelt in front of Yue Wuya and awaited her punishment.

However, instead of the explosive rage and punishment she expected, Yue Wuya simply let out a helpless chuckle and said, “Can’t you at least try to ask for forgiveness or give me a shoulder rub or something, Qingyue? This stubbornness of yours is really nothing like your mother at all.”

At this point, it was clear that his affection, tolerance and doting on Xia Qingyue went far beyond what anyone would expect from a foster father.

Time passed. A year later, Yue Wuya’s death prophecy came true.

He had died in Jasmine’s hands.

He watched as the dying Yue Wuya fought to his last breath to transfer the Purple Pylon Divine Power to Xia Qingyue...

Unfortunately, his death came so quickly that he wasn’t able to pave the path he had prepared for Xia Qingyue to completion.

When he died, he spoke to Xia Qingyue not about his hopes for her and his expectations about the future, but... hate for Xia Hongyi.

Yes. He had never walked out of it. In his final moments, he shed tears he never shed in front of Yue Wugou... and passed away in hatred.

No one who hadn't witnessed this with their own eyes could imagine that a Moon God Emperor's life would end in such a tragic manner.

On the same day, Yue Wugou committed suicide in the name of love.

Yun Che watched as Xia Qingyue held Yue Wugou's body and cried uncontrollably.

The bronze mirror Yue Wugou had held to her chest became her memento of her mother.

Bearing guilt and regret toward both her mother and her foster father, and facing massive resistance from the Moon God Realm itself, Xia Qingyue became completely alone in the God Realm.

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Despite knowing that her decision would be rebuffed by everyone in the Moon God Realm, Xia Qingyue still buried her mother's body next to Yue Wuya's in the imperial tomb.

She then knelt in front of the tomb for three days and nights.

Yun Che watched every second of it without making a single noise or moving his gaze away even once...

If only he could have stood by her side back then. He could've shouldered some of the pain in her heart at least.

A long time later, Xia Qingyue finally rose to her feet. Suddenly, her body began spasming uncontrollably until she fell back to her knees.

A tremor was shaking up her previously dead eyes into utter chaos as well.

"... !?" Although it was just a memory, Yun Che almost felt like the unnatural spasm of Xia Qingyue's soul was occurring in his as well.

What... what on earth is happening to Qingyue?

She clutched her head tightly with both hands. The shaking kept growing more and more violent, and she seemed to be enduring a massive amount of pain.

What's going on... what's happening to her!?

Yun Che shouted inside his own soul sea.

It was at this moment the transient woman's voice spoke up:

"She has inherited the Purple Pylon Divine Power perfectly and in an unbelievably short amount of time thanks to her Nine Profound Exquisite Body. Her mind has also been greatly shaken by all the tragedies that have struck her. As a result, her Heart of Snow Glazed Glass began awakening rapidly as well."

"To have a heart like glazed glass is to be untainted by the filth of the world... she perceived the truth beneath 'nothingness' much sooner than you did, and even sooner than I had predicted."

"The truth beneath the... nothingness?" Yun Che looked around in confusion. "What... does that mean?"

“Since you began cultivating the World-Defying Heaven Manual, you too have gradually perceived the truth... haven’t you?” The woman’s voice answered.

“Me?” Yun Che exclaimed in surprise.

However, before he could ruminate on her words, the Xia Qingyue in the memory finally stopped shaking.

She slowly raised her head. She should’ve expended every tear that existed in her body, but they flooded her cheeks again in no time at all.

“You really are my father... you really are... my father...”

She could barely finish her sentence without sobbing in between.

Her outburst also caused Yun Che to fall into long, deep shock.

What on earth did she see?

“You really are my father,” she said. It could only mean one thing. Was Yue Wuya... actually her birth father?

That perfect fusion between two bloods wasn’t a coincidence after all!?

But... Xia Hongyi and Yue Wugou only had Xia Qingyue in their third year together... Yue Wugou herself practically swore to Xia Qingyue that she and Yue Wuya had never even slept together...

This was all undeniable “evidence”. It was why Xia Qingyue couldn’t be sure that Yue Wuya was her true father even though her hand had passed through a barrier that was only passable by a direct descendant of Yue Wuya, and their blood had fused together.

Were Yue Wugou and Xia Hongyi both lying, or...

“No wonder... you allowed me to get close to you and depend on you like your own... no wonder... you doted on me and forgave me no matter what I did...”

“I really was your daughter after all... I have received... so, so much love from you...”

“But I... could not call you father while you were still alive...”

“And I... have spoiled even both you and mom’s final wishes...”

The tears were unending, and each word was uttered with blood.

After Yun Che returned to the God Realm and met up with Xia Qingyue once more, the latter had described Yue Wuya and Yue Wugou’s death in a calm and indifferent manner. She didn’t shed a single tear or show a shred of sorrow, nor did she mention that Yue Wuya... was her true father.

The tears, the sins, the pain, the regret... she had buried it all in her bosom.

Suddenly, a terrible chill gripped Yun Che’s heart.

He abruptly realized that the father, the mother and the daughter... not a single one of them had died a good death.

It was almost as if they had been cursed by cruel fate itself.

The light turned dark, and the winds grew shrill. It was as if the world itself was weeping for her sake.

An indefinite amount of time later, Xia Qingyue's sobs finally slowed to a stop.

When she raised her head to stare at the space in front of her, her eyes were completely blank. It took yet another indefinite amount of time before they finally regained their focus.

It didn't stop there, however. Her eyes kept growing sharper and sharper until they resembled a pair of chilling knives.

"Mother," she said quietly, "the mortal coil has only afforded you bitterness and sorrow. May that be a sign that your and father's stay in the afterlife is filled with infinite bliss."

"As for the hate and vengeance you left behind, I shall claim them in your place!"

"Father, you weren't able to protect mother in this mortal coil. Be sure... never to lose her again in the afterlife."

"As for the Moon God Realm you poured your heart and soul into to protect, I shall protect it in your place!"

She slowly raised her hand and pressed a fingertip to where her heart was. Then, she declared in a voice as silent as the wind, "I, Xia Qingyue, hereby swear that I will spend the rest of my life fulfilling two wishes..."

"The first is to kill Qianye, and the second is to protect the Moon God Realm!"

"If I fail to fulfill even one of these oaths, may the world smite me, and samsara be forever denied to me!"

She stabbed the finger into her heart, drew out the blood and engraved the blood oath onto her parents' tombstones.

Yun Che felt the stab on his own soul, and couldn't stop shaking even a long time later.

Xia Qingyue had sworn to kill Qianye and protect the Moon God Realm.

However, he had saved Qianye from certain death...

And he had destroyed the Moon God Realm with his own hands...

Xia Qingyue literally had Qianye Ying'er's life in her clutches back then, but she had chosen to delay her vengeance by a thousand years for his sake.

The outcome of that choice was...

In the real world, Yun Che's body shook as if he was enduring a terrible snowstorm. Blood was dripping down his clenched teeth.

No one could imagine the kind of mental torture he was enduring right now.

Back in the soul sea, Xia Qingyue rose to her feet once more.

When she turned around, her tears shattered like stars, and the purple needles in her pupils gleamed sharp enough to sever the soul.

Despite his trembling and blurry vision, Yun Che still saw a completely different Xia Qingyue from the one a moment ago. The transformation had been as immediate as it was absolute.

In the next three years, The Moon God Realm welcomed a new Moon God Emperor who wielded the Imperial Moon Glazed Pearl and the former God Emperor's will, but no one accepted.

It would also bear witness to the new Moon God Emperor's meteoric rise and the results of her ruthlessness.

Chapter 1923 - Memory of the Moon (7)

After burying Yue Wuya and Yue Wugou, Xia Qingyue accepted the Imperial Moon Glazed Pearl from Yue Wuji and officially became the Moon God Emperor.

Xia Qingyue had almost no supporters, and practically everyone in the entire Moon God Realm rejected her. That was why her very first action as the Moon God Emperor stunned all of them.

When the Moon God Crown Prince, Yue Xuange abruptly took action against her, she had chosen neither endurance, false civility, nor heroic resistance. Her choice... was a purple light that smote the Moon God Crown Prince in one strike.

"The crime of defying your God Emperor is death!"

What reason did she have to execute the Moon God Crown Prince? That was it, and it applied to everyone!

It had only been nine days since Xia Qingyue inherited Yue Wuya's Purple Pylon divine power.

However, the power she emanated already shook the Moon Gods to the core.

Xia Qingyue's slash had cut away not just the head of the snake, but also Yue Wuji's hesitation. The Moon God who was second in power only to the previous Moon God Emperor threw his full weight behind Xia Qingyue ever since.

The Moon God Crown Prince's sudden death meant that the anti-Xia Qingyue faction had lost their core before they even officially rose in revolt.

After that, it was simply a matter of breaking them down one after another.

She consolidated her strength at every step, and she never failed to hit the nail in the end. The other Moon Gods came to respect or fear her greatly, but the key thing was that they all submitted to her eventually, and their submission equaled the Moon God Realm's submission. It wasn't like that there were no voices of resistance at all, but what did they matter when none of the powers that mattered supported them?

The civil strife of the Moon God Realm had ended in less than two years.

It was an unimaginably short period that no one thought was possible until she did it.

Chi Wuyao's ability to master the human heart and control any situation had come from tens of thousands of years of accumulated experience.

However, Xia Qingyue hadn't been a leader for even a single day prior to her ascension.

Although she had inherited the key memories of the previous Moon God Emperors when she accepted the Imperial Moon Glazed Pearl and so knew the Moon Gods and Moon God Divine Envoys like the back of her hand, the skill she displayed and the feats she had achieved were, to put it bluntly, impossible.

Not even Chi Wuyao could've done better without using her Nirvana Devil Emperor Soul.

The awakening of the Heart of Snow Glazed Glass... the truth she had perceived behind nothingness...

What in the world had happened to her? What did she see?

Three years passed in the Recollection of Nothingness. It was around the time Yun Che had returned to the God Realm.

As a result of Huo Poyun's betrayal, he was exposed the moment he returned to the Snow Song Realm.

Xia Qingyue did two things the moment she heard the news. First, she lured the Eternal Heaven God Emperor to the Snow Song Realm. Then, she personally stopped Qianye Ying'er in her tracks.

Things at the Snow Song Realm had gone better than expected, but Zhou Xuze would've saved Yun Che even if Mu Xuanyin hadn't been strong enough to cut off Luo Guxie's arm. Qianye Ying'er was by far the more dangerous element between the two, but Xia Qingyue had stopped her perfectly as well.

The consequences would've been unimaginable if either one of his nemeses had managed to get their hands on him... but she had treated it like it was nothing when she had spoken to him about it.

Some time later, they entered the Eternal Heaven God Realm and participated in the Eternal Heaven General Assembly to discuss measures and actions to be taken against the Crimson Calamity.

To Yun Che's astonishment, Xia Qingyue was already wary of Long Bai then.

"Send down the order to investigate the family massacre that has been happening in the Dragon God Realm recently, especially the time and location of the first incident... if possible, tell the men to do everything they can to search for energy traces at every crime scene. The more detailed the report, the better!"

"Just send down the order to investigate this incident with whatever resources we have. Everything else can wait until we have a result!"

At the Eternal Heaven God Realm, after their brief conversation, he saw her watching his departing back and letting out a long sigh:

"Countless priceless treasures, the Dragon Monarch's jealousy, and Qianye's venom... the entire universe may turn on him after the Crimson Calamity is over."

"What do I need to do to protect him?"

A breach appeared on the Wall of Primal Chaos, and the Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor returned.

All of the god emperors and realm kings were bending their knees and trembling in fear. Xia Qingyue had dropped to her knees as well, but that wasn't the only thing she did. She had hidden a Hidden Moon Floating Image Pearl just above her purple sash and concealed its presence perfectly with her Moon God divine aura.

No one had a clue that she was engraving the scene of the god emperors kneeling, and Yun Che speaking to the Devil Emperor with the pearl.

It was the scene in the first Illusory Glazed Imagery Jade.

After Yun Che returned to the Snow Song Realm, he reported that the Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor wouldn't be bringing a calamity upon the Primal Chaos. While the god emperors and realm kings were showering Yun Che with praise and calling him "God Child Messiah", Xia Qingyue was recording with another Hidden Moon Floating Image Pearl.

It was how the scene in the second Illusory Glazed Imagery Jade came to be.

Next, Xia Qingyue drove Qianye Fantian into a corner via a clever mixture of truth and lies and successfully turned Qianye Ying'er into Yun Che's slave. On the same day, right after Yun Che had left the Moon God Realm, the Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor had suddenly appeared before her.

The Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor had forcefully scoured Xia Qingyue's memories because she was curious about the woman who possessed both the Heart of Snow Glazed Glass and the Nine Profound Exquisite Body. Then, she said something that stunned Yun Che:

"Xia Qingyue, I have never seen such a sorrowful fate before in my entire life... even I, who have experienced the calamity of being banished outside the Primal Chaos, feel grief for you!"

"The most sorrowful part is that when you finally sensed it, you actually decided to comply with it?" The light in Jie Yuan's devilish eyes turned even gloomier, "Was it because you felt that you were simply unable to resist it, or..."

"Ah, do you really not understand or is it that you don't wish to understand? But because of you, I know a secret that I should not have known... Haha, this thing called fate is truly remarkable, truly remarkable indeed."

The Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor had left the Primal Chaos, the Crimson Calamity was over, and Xia Qingyue had fallen into the Abyss of Nothingness. However, Yun Che had no idea what the mysterious words the Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor had said to Xia Qingyue meant.

Not even a little.

The Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor then used the World Piercer to teleport Xia Qingyue away from the Moon God Realm. The next thing she knew, they had appeared in a world of infinite gloom and darkness.

The Northern Divine Region.

The Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor watched the lightless cage in front of her and spoke in a sorrowful, angry, yet helpless voice:

“I had meant Mo E no harm when I attended that meeting, but he set up a trap and expelled me and my clan out of the Primal Chaos. Despite this, I could find nothing but praise for the man in all the historical records I’ve seen... heh, what a joke.”

“If it wasn’t for Yun Che... if I didn’t care if Ni Xuan’s name was tarnished because of me... Mo E and Xi Ke’s power, will and descendants; I would’ve gladly wiped out everything that was connected to the god race from this world forever!”

.....

It was the scene in the fourth Illusory Glazed Imagery Jade. It had recorded the Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor’s monologue.

It was the parts that were left out from the recording that shook Yun Che’s mind, however.

“Looks like it is time for me to leave, as reluctant as I am to do so.” The Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor said seemingly to herself, “It is what both Ni Xuan and Yun Che desire... though, I do wish that there was another way.”

Back then, the Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor had only promised that she wouldn’t bring harm to the world. She never actually said that she would leave the Primal Chaos. For the longest time, Yun Che thought that the Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor had chosen to sacrifice herself after realizing the gradual destruction her mere presence caused across many realms, and for the sake of Hong’er and You’er.

He had no idea that the choice was made after meeting Xia Qingyue!

What on earth had she seen in Xia Qingyue?

“Leave?” Xia Qingyue questioned, “I don’t understand what you’re saying, Senior Devil Emperor. With your power, anywhere you go will automatically become your world.”

The Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor clarified, “I will be leaving the Primal Chaos permanently with my clansmen. This world no longer belongs to us, and even if it did, we would never be able to destroy it as long as ‘she’ is still around.”

An odd smile appeared on the Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor’s features. “To think that ‘she’ still exists in this world. What a...”

Unable to find a word to continue her sentence, the Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor ended it with the shake of her head before moving on. “I should’ve known the moment Yun Che used both light profound energy and dark profound energy at the same time... but then again, I still wouldn’t have guessed that possibility even if I had another million heads.”

“After all, who would’ve thought that the most impossible possibility would be the truth?”

Xia Qingyue didn’t ask who the “she” the Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor was speaking of was. She watched the devil emperor’s scarred face and asked, “Senior Devil Emperor’s benevolence will be remembered for eternity. However... if you don’t mind, I have one shameful request to make.”

“Oh?”

“When you speak to the world of your departure, I hope... you can tell them that your decision was spurred by Yun Che’s efforts.”

Yun Che: “!!”

The Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor watched her for a long time before breaking into a smile of mixed emotions. “I would’ve done so even if you hadn’t asked me. The rather well hidden Profound Imagery Stone you’re carrying on your person is for his sake, isn’t it?”

“It is very interesting that the interference that has been applied to you doesn’t involve your emotions. Very interesting indeed. It is a true shame that I don’t have nearly enough time left. I really would’ve liked to witness your ending with my own eyes.”

“Thank you for humoring me, Senior Devil Emperor.” Xia Qingyue bowed slightly in thanks before asking a very strange question, “Senior, is it possible for you to tell me what this... ‘interference’ on my person is?”

The Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor continued to shoot her a very strange look. “I won’t tell you out of pity for you. In fact, the later you learn about this, the better... though, it looks like you aren’t far away from perceiving the whole ‘truth’. If you are truly unfortunate, it may even dawn upon you in two or three years.”

Xia Qingyue: “...”

“You are already in a state where you should’ve realized something even if you haven’t yet perceived the whole truth. Or rather, you are intentionally shying away from it for fear that the truth will be cruel beyond your ability to accept.”

Xia Qingyue’s eyes trembled violently. A long time later, she asked in a quiet voice, “In the past, I never believed in fate. Today, I want to know... is it possible to defy this kind of fate?”

“Before that, you must ask yourself this: do you wish to defy it?” The Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor countered.

“...” Xia Qingyue didn’t answer.

“I am unable to answer your question,” The Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor continued. “As for your question to me, you may answer it after you’ve perceived the whole truth. I very much look forward to your choice.”

The Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor looked up at the dim void above her. “The world exists because of balance. Where there is existence, there is extinction. Where there is life, there is darkness. Just the same, fate has its own counterpart.”

“??” Xia Qingyue looked puzzled.

It was at this moment the Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor extended her hand toward Xia Qingyue. The World Piercer and a pitch-black slab slowly floated toward her.

“Senior?” Xia Qingyue exclaimed in astonishment. She didn’t stretch out her hands to receive the items.

“The World Piercer was Ni Xuan’s artifact. When we confirmed our love, he gave me the World Piercer, and I gave him the Sky Poison Pearl.” The Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor’s voice turned soft. “It is how me and my clansmen were able to survive outside of the Primal Chaos for time immemorial. It is the reason I managed to keep my sanity for several million years.”

“If love is a fortune, then it is unchanging until one’s end. If love is a wound, then the soul will hurt for ten lifetimes. If love is a tribulation, then not even gods or buddhas may survive it... you have witnessed my choice, Xia Qingyue. Let my World Piercer be the witness to your final choice.”

“I was going to give Yun Che this World-Defying Heaven Manual, but after you, I’ve decided to change my mind. He can perceive the whole truth after you’ve made your ‘choice’.”

There was a red flash, and both the Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor and Xia Qingyue vanished.

Yun Che could only stare at the infinite darkness in front of him feeling just as lost.

Chapter 1924 - Choice (1)

After obtaining the World Piercer from the Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor, the first place she teleported to was the Dragon God Realm.

The Forbidden Land of Samsara was sealed off by a barrier that had been set up by the Dragon Monarch himself, but Xia Qingyue never even made contact with it since she was using the World Piercer.

At the time, the Forbidden Land of Samsara had already become a wilted garden that had lost all of its holy light.

She soundlessly stepped toward the small residence where Shen Xi used to live.

It was impossible to miss. It was the only place with lush, brightly colored flowers.

At the center of the flower bush was a pool of blood. It had been many years since the blood was spilled, but it was still wet and shimmering with a bit of light profound energy.

“It wasn’t my misperception or delusion after all,” she whispered to herself. “Long Bai’s hatred toward him... far exceeded even the worst case scenario I had envisioned.”

“If the Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor hadn’t returned to the Primal Chaos, he might already have...” she closed her eyes for a moment to steady herself. Icy fear lurked inside her heart.

That’s right. If it wasn’t for the Crimson Calamity, Long Bai would’ve killed Yun Che already. At the time, no one had possessed the power to stop him.

“Thankfully, he has the Evil Infant to protect him now.”

It was her biggest consolation. The Evil Infant was without a doubt Yun Che’s greatest talisman besides Qianye Ying’er.

She slowly scanned the wilted garden with her spiritual perception. Immediately, her eyes locked onto a pile of shattered bamboo.

It was the bamboo house where Shen Xi used to live, and where she and Yun Che had become one. It was nothing more than a ruin now.

Xia Qingyue walked over to it and made a tapping motion with her finger. An intact piece of bamboo flew out of the pile and into Xia Qingyue's hands.

Engraved to its surface was a poem with exquisite handwriting:

“He

A strange cloud

Meets a bright smoke and saw the light

She

The first light of dawn

Chases away the wind of chaos and nurtures the strange cloud

Together

They slumber atop a bed of flowers as one.”

“...” Surprise crossed Yun Che's features. It was the poem he had recited thoughtlessly after he slept with Shen Xi for the first time. Shen Xi had glossed it over with a seemingly casual smile at the time, so he didn't think that she would engrave it onto a piece of bamboo.

It had most likely happened after he left the Forbidden Land of Samsara.

Was it her way of... remembering him?

He hadn't found this piece of bamboo when he and Qianye Ying'er entered the Forbidden Land of Samsara. What they found were two other, deeply buried, pieces of bamboo.

One of them had the word “Xi” engraved into it, and the other was “Yun”.

Xia Qingyue stared at the bamboo piece for a very long time. Then, she stored it instead of putting it back where it was.

Yun Che: “...?”

Xia Qingyue didn't linger for too long. She turned away and was about to teleport away when suddenly, the crimson divine light of the World Piercer faded, and she turned her gaze on Shen Xi's blood.

She raised her hand and made a clenching motion. A ray of purple light lifted a dozen or so blood beads into the air before they all vanished into her palm.

On the surface, the blood pool looked the same as before except it was “drier”.

“I pray... that I will never have to use this,” she whispered before truly vanishing from the Forbidden Land of Samsara.

She didn't leave a single trace behind.

.....

In the lower realm space to the south of the Southern Divine Region.

Xia Qingyue floated in space while watching a small planet that shone a dreamy blue light.

“A planet that’s mostly made up of water and with a similar appearance, aura and even spatial environment to the Blue Pole Star.” She whispered its name, “The Sky Water Star...”

“It is a good enough choice.” She closed her eyes before continuing in a dry voice, “Though... the purpose you were chosen for is most cruel and unfair.”

“I hope... that I am just worrying too much.”

.....

After the Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor left, and everything went to hell.

Yun Che saw Xia Qingyue searching for him like crazy after he was teleported away by the Void Illusion Stone. As soon as she was out of everyone’s perception, she immediately teleported away to a star region and scanned the entire space for him.

She repeated this at least dozens of times until finally, she reined in her impulse to continue with everything she had.

It was because she needed to save the World Piercer’s spatial divine power for something even more important than searching for him.

She teleported to the east of the Eastern Divine Region and arrived at her homeworld, the Blue Pole Star.

The purple light in her eyes grew so bright that her pupils looked like dark jadeite.

Power circulated throughout her entire body. She poured it all into the World Piercer in her hand.

“Spirit of the World Piercer... please... awaken!”

“One breath... two breaths... ten breaths... finally, the World Piercer let out a shrill sound that almost sounded like a person’s cry, and the crimson light that represented the greatest spatial divine power in the current universe enveloped the entire Blue Pole Star.

At the same time, a spatial passage that crossed nearly half of the Primal Chaos began to open slowly.

On the other side of the spatial passage was where the southern space of the Southern Divine Region and the Sky Water Star were.

However, when the crimson light fully enveloped the Blue Pole Star, the World Piercer’s cry suddenly grew weaker and strained, and the Heavenly Profound Treasure itself shook violently in Xia Qingyue’s hands.

Shui Meiyin once told Yun Che that awakening the World Piercer’s spirit from its slumber with a power of the primordial universe, then forcing it to use the World Piercer’s spatial divine energy would damage it greatly, especially since it was much weakened in the first place.

Even then, switching two planets across a distance that spanned nearly half of the Primal Chaos was still an almost impossible task. In Shui Meiyin's words, it might be a "miracle" that could never be replicated again.

Now that Yun Che was witnessing the scene with his own eyes... he realized that the price of the miracle wasn't just the heavy damage sustained by the World Piercer Spirit. Not even close.

The World Piercer Spirit's cry kept growing shriller until it became utterly soul-wrenching. If this planetary teleportation were to fail here, it would never be able to perform it a second time. Stealing herself, Xia Qingyue spat out a mouthful of blood right on the World Piercer.

At the same time, countless purple rays shone from her body as if she might explode there and then. It was so bright that it even pierced the World Piercer's crimson glow for an instant.

That was the purple flash Yun Wuxin had captured with the Eternal Imagery Stone.

Although the terrific purple flash had only lasted for an instant, the World Piercer's spatial divine power did grow much greater all of a sudden. At the same time, Xia Qingyue's aura deflated to almost nothing.

The star region shook, and the crimson light quickly faded into nothing. However, the watery blue planet in front of her was no longer the Blue Pole Star.

In the distance, the Sky Water Star looked extremely similar to the Blue Pole Star. In fact, Xia Qingyue herself had to confirm multiple times that she hadn't failed the planetary teleportation after all.

Then, the price of the planetary teleportation caught up with her. Her complexion turned deathly pale, and her body became so weak that she wasn't even able to withstand the spatial storm blowing her way. She wobbled unsteadily as blood quickly dyed over half of her purple robes red.

As the purple light in her pupils faded into almost nothing, she let out a weak whisper. "This... is an unforgivable sin... I can only... spend the rest of my life... repaying it... with him..."

Unable to hold on any longer, the World Piercer flashed a weak red and took her back to the Moon God Realm.

BANG!!

She dropped heavily to her knees the second she returned to her bedroom. Her purple robes had become fully drenched in blood at this point, and not a trace of its true colors could be seen anywhere.

She panted for a long time before she struggled back to her feet. Then, she activated a purple-colored profound formation beneath her feet and bathed herself entirely in purple light. It was something she had prepared a long time ago.

However, she didn't even get to recuperate for twenty hours before she was disturbed once more.

It was Lian Yue approaching her at high speed, and she had ordered her not to disturb her unless she had new news regarding Yun Che.

Her blood-drenched clothes shattered into pieces inside the profound formation, revealing her flawless skin for an instant before it was replaced by a new set of purple robes.

Lian Yue then reported that the Eternal Heaven God Emperor and the Dragon Monarch were travelling to the Blue Pole Star together.

She opened her eyes. The purple gleam in her pupils had come back to life.

As the profound formation faded and she rose to her feet, she ordered, "Summon Yue Wuji to me now! Tell him that we will be departing immediately!"

Disaster had struck much too early.

She used the vestiges of Purple Pylon Divine Power she just regenerated to hold her body together. Right now, the worst thing she could do was to reveal her weakness.

Yun Che had no idea that Xia Qingyue was this weakened when he met her again outside "the Blue Pole Star".

After that, the Blue Pole Star was destroyed, and Xuanyin perished in battle. Yun Che had once again escaped in a manner that didn't fall into her plans, but she no longer had the strength to search for him like she did before. She had no choice but to return to the Moon God Realm.

"I need to be in seclusion for a while. Before I come out of seclusion, all matters, big or small, will be decided by Yao Yue and Wuji. Unless the matter is of grave importance, you must not disturb me."

"Yes," Jin Yue responded as obediently as ever.

As Jin Yue watched Xia Qingyue's departing figure, she became absent-minded for a long while.

She did not know if it was just a misperception, but she sensed that Xia Qingyue seemed to be extremely exhausted... so, so exhausted that even she could hide it no longer.]

The scene changed again. In seclusion, Xia Qingyue woke up from her dreams with tear stains streaked across her face.

"No... it can't be real... it can't be real!" She sobbed while pressing a palm to her forehead. Yun Che almost couldn't believe how tormented she sounded.

What on earth... did she dream?

"It's just... a dream."

She told herself this after she wiped away her tears.

However, the dreams didn't end there. They happened again, and again, and again...

Each time, she would dream the same dream. Each time, her dream grew clearer and clearer.

Her anxiety growing to unmanageable levels, Xia Qingyue ended her seclusion prematurely despite not having fully recovered her profound energy or her internal injuries.

She was greeted by the sight of Jin Yue after she stepped out of the barrier. Her faithful attendant had been guarding outside the whole time. She was asking Jin Yue about the latest happenings when Jin Yue suddenly let out a surprised cry.

“Master, your... mirror is... cracked.”

She looked down. A long, thin crack had appeared on the bronze mirror Yue Wugou had left behind.

For a long time, she simply stared at the bronze mirror without doing anything. Finally, she held it in her palm, opened it, and... felt as if a lightning bolt had struck her. Her entire body turned stiff, and her pupils contracted visibly.

Once upon a time, the bronze mirror had contained the profound images of four people. They were Xia Hongyi, Yue Wugou, the young Xia Qingyue and young Xia Yuanba.

However, there were only three people left in the bronze mirror. Her young self was conspicuously missing.

“Coincidentally”, the long, thin crack had passed through the location where her profound image should be.

It was a merciless reflection of the cruel dream she had refused to believe.

Wisps of purple light surged around her hand as she slowly tightened her grip. She wanted to destroy the bronze mirror then... but she ultimately couldn't bring herself to do such a thing. In the end, she let out a long sigh and said,

“Jin Yue,” she folded the bronze mirror shut and tossed it into the hands of a surprised Jin Yue. “Please destroy it for me.”

She was far away by the time she finished her words. It was as if she couldn't bear to watch it be destroyed.

“Ah?” Jin Yue caught the mirror, but Xia Qingyue was already gone. For a long time, the woman looked completely lost.

When the line between dream and reality had disappeared, Xia Qingyue could fool herself no longer.

There was only the lonely wind to accompany her as she knelt in front of Yue Wuya and Yue Wugou's grave.

“It was me... I... was the one who killed you...”

Again and again, she mumbled things that no one except her could truly understand.

“The world exists because of balance. Where there is life, there is destruction. Where there is life, there is darkness. Just the same, fate has its own counterpart...” she whispered what the Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor had said to her back then. “That was the answer to my question after all.”

“No wonder... you said that my fate was the most sorrowful you had ever seen.”

Tears dripped onto her palms as she held her hands before herself.

“I never thought... I would come to loathe my own existence so, so much...”

“When I damned the Sky Water Star to save the Blue Pole Star, I thought that I no longer deserved to live like a human... but to think... that I actually am less than a human... I’m just... a tool... a wish... a medium...”

“Heh... hehe...” She was chuckling, but it was more painful and terrible to look at than when she was crying her heart out.

Tool?

Wish?

Medium?

Yun Che watched and listened blankly.

What... is she talking about!?

Chapter 1925 - Choice (2)

There was a small flash on her tear-stained palms, and the World Piercer appeared.

She slowly raised it as the Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor’s parting words to her before she left the Primal Chaos rang inside her mind:

“You have witnessed my choice, Xia Qingyue. Let my World Piercer be the witness to your final choice.”

She knelt there for an entire day and night.

When the howls of the wind quieted and took away the terrible chill covering her whole body, she rose back to her feet once more. The tears, the grief, the sorrow; everything had been buried back into her soul once more.

She spoke as she faced the World Piercer, “I have made my choice, senior.”

“I have already let down my parents, my sect, Yuanba... I cannot let him down as well, especially since he and I were husband and wife. If nothing else, he will be the one person in this world that I can face with a clear conscience.”

“However, I am obeying not the fate I’ve been subjected to, but my own wishes!”

The World Piercer vanished from her hands. She had just gone through the biggest collapse of her life, and yet her eyes now shone with unprecedented clarity and determination.

“When the ‘ending’ approaches, I will naturally defy fate in my own way! Before that though...”

The World Piercer vanished, and she turned her gaze toward the north. Her deep, purple pupils reflected the distant blue sky.

“I loathe this lamentable fate, but... I can’t reject that sorrowful ‘wish’.”

“Yun Che, you are now in the Northern Divine Region, and you no longer have any weaknesses or attachments. All you have left is the hatred that will drive you to grow faster than ever before... until you return, I shall pave the path for you little by little.”

“All I hope is that you will stand at the pinnacle of this world when you return. Take back everything that is yours, and be so strong that no one can ever hurt you or destroy you anymore...”

“If nothing else, it will make the end I am soon to meet... worth something.”

.....

The Moon God Realm looked like it had entered a period of hibernation after that, but it was really the complete opposite.

The Eternal Heaven Realm was doing everything in their power to search for Yun Che, and it looked like the Moon God Realm was doing the same thing. At the very least, the frequency of people going to and from the Moon God Realm had increased drastically. However, their task wasn't to find Yun Che, but to gather intel.

The secrets of the Moon God Realm weren't the only things Xia Qingyue had inherited from the core memories of the past Moon God Emperors. She also inherited all of the intel they had gathered on the other realms.

The fact the Moon God Realm knew about the Brahma Monarch Realm's hiding of the Primordial Seal of Life and Death showed just how powerful their intel gathering power really was.

Normally, these secrets were used to intimidate or control a target during a time of necessity, and only then. Yue Wuya himself barely used any of them during his time as the Moon God Emperor. However, Xia Qingyue utilized all of them to bury many hidden mines across the entire Eastern Divine Region.

.....

After discovering that the Glazed Light Realm was the one who hid Yun Che, she had exposed the truth of her own accord, dealt a harsh punishment to Shui Qianheng, and took Shui Meiyin away.

At the bottom of the Moon Prison, she showed Shui Meiyin the world Piercer and explained everything. Then, she made Shui Meiyin promise her two things. One, she wanted her to become the World Piercer's new master by gradually building up affinity through her Divine Stainless Soul. Two, she wanted her to claim everything she had done for Yun Che as her own.

“Meiyin, death is my best choice and ending. My view on everything can change except this one thing.”

“I want him to hate me forever. That way, he won't grieve over my death or suffer a hole in his soul... I'm sure you don't want to see that happen either, do you?”

“You don't need to be sad for me. If nothing else, I have you to remember everything I did, to keep him company, and to enjoy his truest, best self in my place.”

After Yun Che killed the Eternal Heaven Guardians and turned Zhou Qingchen into a devil at the God Realm of Absolute Beginning, Xia Qingyue had visited the place to investigate the traces he left behind.

However, she didn't leave immediately after she was finished. Instead, she flew to the Abyss of Nothingness and stood at the edge for a very long time.

Right before she left, a small smile crossed her lips.

It was because she had found her best resting place.

.....

It was the day of Yun Wuxin's eighteenth birthday, and the day Yun Che and Chi Wuyao met with Zhou Xuzi and Zhou Qingchen.

A great distance away, Xia Qingyue watched as Yun Che brutally murdering Zhou Qingchen right before Zhou Xuzi's eyes. His savage grin and his hateful roars were expressions she had never seen on Yun Che before.

In the end, Zhou Xuzi departed in hate, and Yun Che in blood and unconsciousness. Right after that, Chi Wuyao's consciousness brushed against her.

Without hesitation, she teleported back to the Moon God Realm with the World Piercer and whispered to herself, "It looks like the legendary Devil Queen of the Northern Divine Region's infamy is well deserved. I should not need to worry overly much with her around."

.....

Time moved forward again. The entire Northern Divine Region was shaking on the day Yun Che was crowned the Devil Master, leader of the devil race and a power above even their king realms.

Xia Qingyue had teleported there to witness the scene with her own eyes. The dark barrier of the Soul Stealing Sacred Region couldn't stop the spatial divine power of the World Piercer as a matter of course.

From a great distance away, she took in the pitch black robes engraved with dark red devilish patterns, the long, dark hair that danced demonically with the wind, the devilish light of the Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor's Eternal Calamity of Darkness, and the pair of black abysses capable of instantly devouring one's soul on his face.

The three king realms bowed their heads, and the dark profound practitioners worshipped him as their god... he had become the unparalleled king of the Northern Divine Region in just three years.

"This is what you should've been, Yun Che."

Her smile was faint yet beautiful. "The massive risk undertaken to witness this moment was worth it after all."

She couldn't stay for too long because the dark profound energy in the environment was continuously eroding her own. Finally, she turned away and said, "I look forward to the day of your return."

Without this recollection, Yun Che would never have known that she had purposely teleported to the Northern Divine Region to witness the moment he became the Devil Master of the Northern Divine Region.

.....

"Master, our spies in the Western Divine Region have reported confirmation regarding the suspicions you have of the Dragon God Realm," Lian Yue reported her findings to Xia Qingyue.

"Give me the specifics."

“There has been an undertaking to search for ‘light profound energy’ over the past few years. Officially, the Dragon God Realm is looking for someone with an affinity for light profound energy so that the Dragon Queen may raise them as a successor. The real reason for the undertaking is unknown, however. It has been several years since the undertaking began.”

A short silence later, Xia Qingyue instructed, “Tell the spies investigating this matter to cease operation and shift their focus to the Dragon Gods’ movements instead.”

“Yes, Your Majesty.”

After Lian Yue left, Xia Qingyue whispered to herself, “It looks like Shen Xi may very well be still alive... and Long Bai doesn’t know where she went.”

There was only one spot of destruction in the Forbidden Land of Samsara.

No matter how powerful Long Bai was, it was impossible for him to have killed Shen Xi in one hit.

Her spies’ reports greatly supported the theory that Shen Xi was still alive as well.

.....

Time passed again, and they approached the fourth year since Yun Che entered the Northern Divine Region... it was also around this time the curtains of war were drawn.

Many overt or covert efforts to build momentum for the war were made before the fateful day. While the Eternal Heaven Realm was announcing the crowning of a new crown prince, a dark cloud of fury had gathered atop the sky of the Northern Divine Region. They accused the Eternal Heaven Realm of destroying the star realms of the Northern Divine Region with the Void Cauldron.

“It’s all moving so fast,” Xia Qingyue whispered while staring at the dark clouds to the north.

The day was coming far, far sooner than she had predicted.

“You have experienced true hell itself. Neither you nor the Devil Queen will allow you to fail. I shall believe that this is not a step made in haste and thoughtlessness, and pave the first step of your path for you.”

.....

In the God Realm of Absolute Beginning.

Xia Qingyue dripped a drop of Shen Xi’s blood onto a patch of grayish land.

Not far away, the Azure Dragon God was moving in this direction.

The blood slowly faded into the ground, but the weak light profound energy remained.

She teleported to another space with the World Piercer and repeated the motion.

This time though, she took out the bamboo piece she had retrieved from the Forbidden Land of Samsara, picked up a rock, and engraved the character “Xi” lightly on the ground. She made sure that her handwriting looked as close to the real thing as possible.

After the deed was done, she teleported to yet another space.

She teleported fifteen times across the God Realm of Absolute Beginning and dripped a total of sixteen drops of blood on the ground. She had measured the distance just so that Long Bai would take some time to search for the next drop of blood, but not so long that he would give up and abandon his search.

On the final site, she engraved a short message stating that she would return in a couple of months.

It didn't take a smart person to figure out that this whole setup was a distraction of sorts, but Xia Qingyue was certain that Long Bai would fall for it anyway. Considering his twisted obsession with Shen Xi, he could be 99% certain that this was a distraction, and he still wouldn't let go of that 1% possibility.

That was all she and Yun Che needed.

After confirming that the Azure Dragon God had discovered the first wisp of light profound energy and left in a hurry with her own eyes, Xia Qingyue finally disappeared from the God Realm of Absolute Beginning.

.....

The Southern Divine Region, at one of Nan Wansheng's palaces to the west of the Southern Sea God Realm.

Xia Qingyue watched as a girl even she almost couldn't detect deposited a soul crystal into the clothes of one of Nan Wansheng's personal maids.

The soul crystal contained a message that basically claimed that the Brahma Monarch Realm was hiding the Primordial Seal of Life and Death.

"Heh heh heh, to think that they actually want to use me to block a spear heading their way... However, I will definitely let them use me."

"After all, who can resist the allure of 'eternal life'... Hahahahahaha!"

The hidden girl left amidst the mad cackle.

Xia Qingyue herself had departed the place.

"Is she the rumored Seventh Witch, Hua Jin? She too deserves her infamy," Xia Qingyue whispered to herself. "I guess I don't need to do anything here."

"Her ability to conceal her presence is practically unparalleled in this world, but she's still a dark profound practitioner. Normally, she would be leaking dark profound energy quite obviously... is this the power of the 'Eternal Calamity of Darkness' Senior Devil Emperor spoke of? It looks like the core powers of the Northern Divine Region have all undergone a massive change thanks to him."

"The Eastern Divine Region will never see this coming."

"And this method... can only come from Qianye." A complicated look flashed across her features before she disappeared once more.

On cue, she began detonating the hidden mines she had buried long ago.

“Show this blood-drenched sword to the Bright Heart Realm King, and he will know that the murderer of his youngest son is the Outstanding Sun Realm King.”

“Give this soul crystal to Luo Changsheng, and that to Luo Shangchen. Do not leave any trace behind.”

“The shame of the Divine Martial Realm King Wu Sanzun is engraved in this. Use it to make him close his realm for three months. Remind him that we will destroy his reputation if anyone so much as takes a step out of the Divine Martial Realm during this time.”

“Take these seven Poison Ivy of Absolute Beginning and scatter them across the seven seas of the Nine Brilliance Realm. The ensuing turmoil should keep them busy for a time.”

.....

The darkness' very first step of their invasion was to trample the Eastern Divine Region.

It had been an unbelievably smooth step because the greatest threat, the upper star realms had been unnaturally silent. Not all of them were motionless, but it was definitely enough to swing the tides of war in the devil people's favor.

When they had massacred the Eternal Heaven Realm, not a single one of the neighboring upper star realms had come to their rescue either.

Yes, it was the result of Chi Wuyao and Yun Qianying's many efforts.

However, neither of them knew that there was a third, invisible force working with them all this time. It was the main reason why their invasion had progressed impossibly smoothly, and their losses had been kept to a nigh impossible minimum.

Even the biggest and most unpredictable element of them all, Long Bai, had been lured away to the God Realm of Absolute Beginning.

The absence of their leader was the main reason why the Dragon God Realm, no, the entire Western Divine Region had chosen to do nothing even when both the Eastern Divine Region and the Southern Divine Region had fallen.

Chapter 1926 - Ending

When the invasion finally began, the entire northside of the Eastern Divine Region became drenched in chaos and blood.

Xia Qingyue returned to the Moon Prison once more, but it would be the last time she met Shui Meiyin.

“Sister Qingyue.” Shui Meiyin walked up to her with trembling eyes. She must've felt something already.

Xia Qingyue summoned both the World Piercer and the slab engraved with the World-Defying Heaven Manual into existence. Then, she pushed them gently into Shui Meiyin's hands.

“Starting now, you are the new and only master of the World Piercer. Please pass him this incomplete piece of the World-Defying Heaven Manual as well.”

Shui Meiyin obediently received them before asking, “Is Big Brother Yun Che coming?”

Xia Qingyue replied, "The war happening in the north seems huge, but it's lasted just a tad too long. It's clearly a distraction for their core strength to penetrate the south without being detected."

"His powers have transformed dark profound practitioners so that they're no longer leaking dark profound energy at every moment, but the profound practitioners of the Eastern Divine Region still know nothing about it. This gap in intel is all the Northern Divine Region needs to deal a grievous blow to the Eastern Divine Region."

"The moment is very near. That is why you should leave now."

"Understood." However, Shui Meiyin didn't teleport away immediately. She watched Xia Qingyue with her lips parting and closing as if she wanted to say something, but didn't know how to start.

Xia Qingyue shook her head smilingly. "Don't try to change my mind. If anything, you should be happy... that I will finally be free from my bindings."

"But... but..." Shui Meiyin's hands shook uncontrollably.

"Give him the four Illusory Glazed Imagery Jades when the time is right, preferably after they occupy the Eternal Heaven Realm. The Eternal Heaven Projection is the perfect tool to publicize the truths inside them. They will destroy the Eastern Divine Region's fighting spirit and morale, and shake up the Western Divine Region and Southern Divine Region as well."

"After you leave, I will spread the news that you've escaped in full force. Then, everything will be perfect."

Tears slowly slid down Shui Meiyin's cheeks, but the girl could only nod her head slowly and firmly. "It will... be done."

"As for everyone in the Moon God Realm... please continue watching over them after I'm gone," Xia Qingyue continued smilingly. "I have already sent away all of the core powers of the Moon God Realm. Yue Wuji will eventually guide them to that space where no one can detect them."

"I will surrender the Moon God Realm perfectly to him. There won't be any death or destruction since no one will attempt to resist. Adding that to my death, nothing overtly terrible should happen to the Moon God Realm."

"When decades... centuries have passed by, and he stands at the pinnacle with all of his hatred spent, please persuade him to return the Moon God Realm to Yue Wuji. Show him that you're the one who saved the Blue Pole Star and everything, and he will naturally accept any request you make of him. Well, you don't have to do this exactly as I tell you. I'm sure that someone as intelligent as you will come up with a better way than me to explain things; a better method that will lead to a better outcome."

Shui Meiyin stared into Xia Qingyue's eyes and responded with the utmost gravity, "Don't worry, sister Qingyue. I'll definitely... definitely fulfill our promise."

She failed, however.

It was because Yun Che had given neither her nor the Moon God Realm even the tiniest chance to salvage things.

After Shui Meiyin left, and her “escape” was discovered, Xia Qingyue had chased away Jin Yue for “letting Shui Meiyin go on purpose” in a fit of fake anger, dispatched Lian Yue to search the nearby star realms, and sent Yao Yue to the Glazed Light Realm...

The Moon Gods and Moon God Divine Envoys were kicked out one after another as well. To an outsider, it was as if she had completely lost her mind.

When everything was done, she returned to her bedroom quietly.

Things went exactly as she had predicted. The dark profound practitioners who had slipped to the southside of the Eastern Divine Region without being noticed soon bared their fangs and ambushed countless unsuspecting star realms.

As for the Eternal Heaven God Realm, right after Zhou Xuze had teleported the resistance force he just mustered to the northside of the Eastern Divine Region, the great dimensional formation was destroyed, and a terrible figure cast his terrifying shadow onto its soil.

That marked the true beginning of the devilish calamity. The entire Eastern Divine Region became caught up in great chaos.

Meanwhile, Yue Wuji was making his way to Xia Qingyue’s bedroom.

It was utter chaos outside, but for some reason the Moon God Emperor was doing nothing at all. Too anxious to even salute his god emperor, Yue Wuji blurted the moment he barged through the door, “God Emperor, countless Eastern Divine Region star realms including the Eternal Heaven Realm itself are being ravaged by the devils right now! We need to summon all of the Moon Gods and Moon God Divine Envoys back to us and head to their rescue right now!”

“Even if we’re not saving the Eternal Heaven Realm, we still need everyone to defend our realm! The devil people have clearly plotted this for a long time, and their prowess exceeds every expectation. They may very well invade us at any moment!”

He was already confused by Xia Qingyue’s unusually big fuss at Shui Meiyin’s escape earlier, but her inaction toward this inferno at her doorsteps confused him even more. He was absolutely brimming with anxiety right now.

“Wuji.” In sharp contrast to the Golden Moon God’s panic, Xia Qingyue’s voice remained as cool and lonely as a cold moon. “I have something to give you.”

“...?” Yue Wuji was about to ask what it was when moonlight of infinite purity pricked his pupils and shocked him to silence.

It was because Xia Qingyue was holding the artifact of inheritance and the heart of the Moon God Realm, the Imperial Moon Glazed Pearl.

“Yue Wuji,” Xia Qingyue said slowly, “starting now, you are the new god emperor of the Moon God Realm.”

“...” Yue Wuji’s knees buckled visibly. He had been one weakness away from dropping to his knees.

Still in utter shock, he took a step backward and blurted, “God Emperor, what... what are you saying?”

“This is not a joke.” Xia Qingyue pushed the Imperial Moon Glazed Pearl to Yue Wuji while gathering a soul imprint at her fingertip. Then, she shot it into his forehead.

The soul imprint contained the location and information of a distant lower realm space.

“After you have received the Imperial Moon Glazed Pearl, you will immediately send a sound transmission to the Moon Gods and Divine Envoys and guide them to this space. You will travel in the fastest and stealthiest method possible, no one is to take a single step out of the space after everyone has entered it. Don’t worry. When the time is right, someone will meet up with you and take you back to the outside world.”

At this point, Xia Qingyue’s meaning became absolutely clear. Unable to accept his God Emperor’s decision, Yue Wuji shook his head and asked for clarification, “Forgive me for saying this, but are you telling us to abandon our realm?”

“That is exactly correct.”

He got confirmation instead of the explanation he wanted.

“There is no stopping the Northern Divine Region since the moment they successfully ambushed the Eastern Divine Region. We will lose, and the Moon God Realm will be trampled if we fight them head on. Therefore, this is the only way to preserve the Moon God Realm.”

“You are gravely mistaken, God Emperor!” Yue Wuji replied strongly, “The Moon God Realm has occupied a corner of the Eastern Divine Region for hundreds of thousands of years. We have nothing to fear from the devil people! Even if their momentum is truly unstoppable, we are still honor bound as Moon Gods and members of a king realm to become the vanguard that will challenge their might first!”

“If we abandon our star realm without even putting up a fight, the Moon Gods are sure to become the laughingstocks of the entire Primal Chaos when the devil people are wiped out!”

Xia Qingyue was completely unsurprised by Yue Wuji’s outburst. She let out a soft sigh before replying, “Everything you said is correct, but... I no longer have the time to give you a proper explanation. All I ask of you is to remember one thing.”

The purple light in her pupils shone through Yue Wuji’s pupils and into his soul. “I owe the late Moon God Emperor a great favor that may not be repaid with ten thousand deaths. I have even sworn a vicious oath to protect the Moon God Realm right in front of his grave. I will never betray the Moon God Realm. I know this escape seems utterly shameful, but trust me when I say that every other option is absolutely worse for the Moon God Realm.”

“...” Yue Wuji wanted to speak more, but forget questioning the validity of her statement, he couldn’t even form words at the look in Xia Qingyue’s eyes.

There was one thing he was absolutely certain of though. Xia Qingyue would never betray the Moon God Realm.

“This dark calamity is far crueler than you can possibly imagine. Even now, it has already become impossible to predict the fates of the king realms of the Eastern Divine Region. I am sure you will understand my meaning in the very near future. But for now...”

She watched him with both a god emperor's authority and a deep pleading, "You haven't accepted the Imperial Moon Glazed Pearl yet, so I am still your God Emperor. As my subject, you are not to disobey my orders... Moreover, once you've accepted the Imperial Moon Glazed Pearl, the future and especially the safety of the Moon God's lineage will be in your hands. As the Moon God Emperor, you must protect the Moon God's lineage at all costs. Understand?"

A long, long silence later, Yue Wuji finally dropped to his knees and clasped his hands in front of him.

"Wuji... shall obey his God Emperor's commands!"

When his trembling voice finished, he very slowly held the Imperial Moon Glazed Pearl in his hands.

Xia Qingyue turned away and whispered in a nigh imperceptible voice, "I leave everything to you... uncle."

"... !?" Yue Wuji abruptly looked up and locked his gaze onto her back.

Her whisper had been so soft that he wasn't sure if he had imagined what she said.

"Now go. There will be time for hesitation and delays later."

Yue Wuji left as commanded.

Starting now, Xia Qingyue was no longer the Moon God Emperor. She was just Xia Qingyue.

She left her bedroom, floated above the Divine Moon City, and watched the live projection of the massacred Eternal Heaven Realm in silence. She watched its blue skies being dyed red, its soil choking under heaps and heaps of bodies, the Eternal Heaven Great Ancestor being forced to show herself to defend her realm only to be killed in a humiliating manner and more... She bore witness to the end of an eastern region king realm.

The Divine Moon City was unusually silent tonight. The crescent moon in the sky was also so clear and bright that it painted the city in a beautiful silver sheen.

For a time, it felt like the peaceful moment would never end until suddenly, coldness flooded her gaze.

It was because she sensed Qianye Ying'er's aura radiating from a nearby star realm.

They're here already...

His hatred for me is so intense he can't wait even a moment longer...

Moonlight enveloped her body, and the purple robes that made her the Moon God Emperor fell away. An instant later, they were replaced by a red dress.

In that moment, the moon itself felt like a pale imitation of her beauty.

"I cannot choose my beginning, but at least... I can choose how my story ends!"

She opened her palm, and the Purple Pylon Divine Sword shone a deep purple.

She raised her arm, but she stared not at her sword, but the red sleeves wrapped around her slender arm.

For a moment, her red sleeves reflected in her purple eyes... After the dreams, she had come to realize that red was the very first color of her life.

An item slowly slid down her sleeves, but she immediately caught it with her aura and moved it to her hand.

It was a marriage contract... the very same one she had “destroyed” before his eyes.

The wedding contract fell open on her hand.

Blue Wind Floating Cloud... Xiao Che Qingyue...

It was the same handwriting, the same pair of names.

“Why are you real... when everything else is fake...”

Her fingers clenched tighter and tighter as she whispered.

Suddenly, she folded the marriage contract and placed it back within her sash.

Her eyes turned chilly, and a great power surged from her body. She then flew toward the star realm where Qianye Ying'er's aura was emanating until her figure had shrunk completely into nothing.

She saw Yun Che and got ready to burn her life force to kill Qianye Ying'er.

However...

RUMBLE—

In that moment, Yun Che sealed off all of his senses.

Once upon a time, the scene of the Moon God Realm crumbling into cosmic dust had made him laugh to the point of insanity.

Today, he dared not even watch or listen to it.

“Is fate... really that... inexorable...”

The memory of her soulless whisper and colorless face rang in his soul sea.

After everything he had seen from Xia Qingyue's Recollection of Nothingness, Yun Che dared not even imagine how she felt when the Moon God Realm she swore to protect crumbled to nothing right before her eyes...

The Recollection of Nothingness finally ended.

Everything that happened afterward was a memory they both shared. To reexperience them was a kind of torture beyond anything Yun Che could describe.

In the real world, his body was twitching, his teeth were chattering, and his face was covered in tears. No matter how many times he clenched his teeth, the tears wouldn't stop flowing.

“Do you regret learning everything?”

His consciousness had returned to the real world before he knew it, but the transient voice still rang clearly in his mind.

Chapter 1927 – Genesis

“...” Yun Che didn’t reply. He couldn’t.

“You still have one chance. I can wipe away all these painful memories for you,” she continued slowly.

“You can choose to forget it all, or to retain just your hatred and indifference toward her.”

“That is what Xia Qingyue wants as well.”

“...” The only answer she got was the tormented twitching of his body, and the sound of his endless tears dripping against his clothes and the ground.

It hurts...

My heart... my soul... my beliefs... it feels like something is cutting them all into tiny pieces...

The pain will not end...

High above the sky, four women were watching him silently with sorrowful, heavy or complicated expressions on their faces. [1]

He was curled up like a prawn, and every part of his body was convulsing in pain. But for whatever reason, he couldn’t even squeeze out a howl to relieve even a little of the pain.

They never imagined that they would see him like this after he became the great emperor of the universe.

Yun Che had been sitting here for over two weeks already, but there wasn’t a single moment where he wasn’t twitching in pain.

They didn’t know what Yun Che was going through. They could only watch him in silence and accompany him this way.

“Xia Qingyue...” Chi Wuyao let out a small sigh before looking at the sky. “Her plans were pretty much perfect. What really exposed it all wasn’t flaws in her plan or a twist of fate, but the deep-seated obsession Yun Che had pretended didn’t exist until he finally found something that could validate it all... He never forgot about Xia Qingyue. He had always hoped that it was all fake. When the opportunity finally came by, he did everything in his power to prove it was true...”

“He pretended to not care about what I told him back then, but the truth... was the complete opposite.”

Shui Meiyin was pressing her face against Mu Xuanyin’s shoulder and sobbing uncontrollably. Yun Che’s painful appearance had hurt her just as much.

The secret could no longer be kept, so she could only confess everything to them.

Qianye Ying’er abruptly moved toward Yun Che. She had been silent and unmoving this whole time, but it looked like she couldn’t keep herself still any longer. A hand immediately caught her wrist, however.

“Do not disturb him.” Mu Xuanyin’s low, cold voice rang behind her ears.

“...” Qianye Ying’er closed her eyes and pushed down her rising aura little by little.

Turning away so she couldn’t see Yun Che’s tortured appearance any longer, she murmured seemingly to herself, “Why am I the one who lived?”

Chi Wuyao glanced at Qianye Ying’er before taking her hand into her own. It felt cold enough to chill her heart.

“The fact that you are thinking this way proves that you are no longer that sinful Brahma Monarch Goddess you were... the past cannot be changed, but the future can.”

Qianye Ying’er: “...”

Chi Wuyao continued while brushing her fingers gently against Qianye Ying’er’s palm. “It may take an unimaginable amount of time and atonement, but as long as you keep living, you will find a way to forgive yourself one day.”

“You were the one who supported him during the darkest moments of his life. Now and in the future, he cannot live without you either... Of this I am certain, and you should believe it as well.”

Qianye Ying’er lightly shook Chi Wuyao’s hand away, and she didn’t turn back around to face her. She said in a slightly hoarse voice, “Who do you think I am... I am not as fragile as you think.”

“I have committed enough sins that even ten thousand deaths wouldn’t be enough to atone for them. You think I will brood just because of one person? Don’t... make me... laugh!”

Chi Wuyao smiled a little at Qianye Ying’er’s reaction before turning her gaze back to her man. Then, she let out a long sigh inside her mind.

Does it hurt? Good.

It is what you deserve...

Everything she did for you, everything she sacrificed to save you...

It may hurt like ten thousand swords skewering your soul, but that is still preferable to never knowing the truth, isn’t it?

.....

Yun Che didn’t know how much time had passed while he was experiencing the Recollection of Nothingness.

It had been a long, real and cruel dream.

He didn’t know how long he had suffered in the whirlpool of pain either. When his mind finally regained a bit of clarity though, he said in a trembling but impossibly determined voice:

“No...”

The voice had asked him if he wished to remove his memories of Xia Qingyue. This was his answer.

"I thought you might say that." The woman's voice had been unfeeling this whole time, but now it was tinged with what felt like a small sigh.

Yun Che adjusted his breathing and slowly opened his eyes.

His eyeballs were covered in broken blood vessels. It almost looked like his eyes were drenched in blood.

A bit more clarity entered his mind, and he continued in a horribly raspy voice, "You said you will tell me everything."

"Her interfered with fate... the reason she chose to end her own life... Tell me... tell me!!"

"As you wish."

The woman assented. She didn't try to evade the question or delay the inevitable.

The bright light bearing down on him disappeared once more, and his consciousness reentered the infinite grayish world.

When the woman spoke up again, it felt like her voice was growing increasingly distant and transient:

"A long time ago, the Primal Chaos was just a body of chaos. It took a long time before it gradually split into two different extremes, namely Yin and Yang."

Yun Che: "??"

"Another immeasurable amount of time passed, and the first ever living being was born at the center of the two bodies."

"It was the genesis of life in the Primal Chaos. All life that came after her knows her as—the Ancestral God."

"Wait!" Yun Che chose this moment to interrupt the voice. "I want to know what happened to Qingyue, not the genesis of the Primal Chaos!"

"And yet we must speak of it if I am to explain her existence and fate properly."

"..." The reply stunned Yun Che and threw his barely organized thoughts into disarray once more.

Qingyue's fate is...

Tied to the genesis of the Primal Chaos!?

He had heard every word as clear as day, but they made zero sense whatsoever when strung together into a sentence.

So he gathered his focus and silently waited for the voice to speak some more.

"As time passed, she who was later known as the Ancestral God grew more and more self-aware and intelligent. She was the one who created language, profound energies, profound arts and more... however, the more complete her consciousness became, the more she became filled with infinite loneliness."

“She was nurtured from the Primal Chaos. Both her power and her life were tied to the two extreme bodies of the Primal Chaos. As long as she continued to exist, the life force of Primal Chaos would all be concentrated on her person, and it would never be able to give birth to a second life.”

“Finally, the Ancestral God decided to eliminate her own existence and transform the Primal Chaos from a universe of one life, into a universe of infinite lives. Therefore, she changed its structure and created functioning laws.”

“When everything was ready, she eliminated herself and scattered her life force and power across all of the Primal Chaos... before she was eliminated completely, she engraved part of her memories and power into eight special life fragments.”

“And so the Primal Chaos welcomed a whole new era, and countless lives were born all over the universe. The first of them had come from the eight life fragments themselves. Four life fragments landed at the north of the Primal Chaos and birthed the four Devil Emperors, and the other four landed at the south of the Primal Chaos and birthed the four Creation Gods. That was how the Gods and Devils first came to be.”

“It marked the beginning of the Era of the Gods.”

These so-called ancient secrets weren't very secretive, to be honest. The God Realm had detailed records of them, and Yun Che had heard them from the Golden Crow's Soul when he was still in the lower realms.

However, the voice's next words turned everything on its head.

“Although the Ancestral God's life and power were gone, her consciousness hasn't faded with them. In fact, it was perfectly spread throughout the entire universe.”

Yun Che: “!?”

“It was because she wanted to witness the fruits of her labor with her own senses. She wanted to know what kind of world the place she had bestowed her life, her power and her laws upon, would ultimately become.”

“More time passed... a hundred years, a thousand years, ten thousand years, a hundred million years...”

“Some races thrived in their environment and became stronger. Some did not and were wiped out. Some planets were created and turned into star regions, and some were destroyed for one reason or another...”

“Guided by the laws she created, the universe itself spawned or refined many more laws and rules to better maintain and balance itself.”

“Above the mortal realm, the higher lives who ruled over the two extreme bodies of Yin and Yang gradually came to reject one another. One of them was the god race, and the other was the devil race.”

“The Ancestral God was spread throughout the universe. She had witnessed every progress that was made during the Era of the Gods; every minor and major change that happened during this time.”

“Before she knew it, an impossibly long time had passed since she had created this world. Even so, she didn’t eliminate her own consciousness because she had become attached to the world she created.”

“She wanted to continue watching and enjoying the myriad expressions of life. She wanted to bear witness to all of the unpredictable changes of time.”

“One day, the fuse that would end the Era of Gods was ignited.”

“Upon discovering the taboo union between the Creation God of Elements Ni Xuan and the Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor Jie Yuan, the Heaven Punishing Divine Emperor Mo E decided to exile the Heaven Smiting Devil Emperor from the Primal Chaos with the Heaven Punishing Ancestral Sword... as a result, the relation between the god race and the devil race became utterly irreconcilable.”

“Mo E passed away much earlier than his expected lifespan due to excessive usage of the Heaven Punishing Ancestral Sword. Not long after he passed away, the seeds of hatred that were buried since time immemorial finally bloomed in full force.”

“Unlike all of the major or minor conflicts of the past, this war was an uncontrollable conflagration like nothing the Primal Chaos had ever seen...”

“Godly powers erupted all across the Primal Chaos. Countless innocents were killed, and countless spaces were destroyed. More importantly, the aura and laws of the Primal Chaos were twisted or destroyed little by little.”

“To the Ancestral God, this great war was nothing more than an interesting experience. Whatever happened to this era—change, destruction, rebirth—it was all just the consequences of the choices made by the lives who lived it... Not only did she not lament the end, she even looked forward to the new era that would be born from this great war.”

“However, at a certain point of time during the end of the war, she suddenly noticed an unnatural disturbance.”

“The energy of the primordial universe, the spirit energy of the divine way, and the devilish aura of the dark... amidst this turbulent space, they were all flooding in a certain direction.”

“The Abyss.”

“It was only then she noticed that flaws and cracks had appeared on the laws she had bestowed upon the Abyss.”

“The... abyss?” Yun Che whispered unconsciously.

“The basis of existence is balance,” the woman’s voice explained. “Where there is existence, there is extinction.”

“The Primal Chaos you know is but one half of the original Primal Chaos.”

“The half you exist in is called the World of Existence. The other half you know not is called the World of Extinction.

“The Ancestral God named it—the Abyss.”

Chapter 1928 - Rebirth of the Ancestral God

The Abyss...

The two words immediately reminded him of the most mysterious and terrifying phenomenon in the world... the Abyss of Nothingness.

As if sensing Yun Che's thoughts, the voice answered, "It is what is commonly known today as the Abyss of Nothingness."

"The Abyss of Nothingness will return everything to nothingness one day," Yun Che muttered. "And the power that does it is the energy of extinction?"

"You are more or less correct," she answered. "In the beginning, the energy of existence and energy of extinction both existed in the same universe. Naturally, the Ancestral God was unable to eliminate herself or create new life."

"One of the biggest modifications the Ancestral God did to the Primal Chaos was to separate the energy of existence and energy of extinction into two distinct bodies and isolate them completely. That is how Primal Chaos became split into two worlds: the current universe, and the Abyss."

"The God Realm of Beginning exists not to connect the two worlds together, but to act as a barrier that pushes them even further apart."

"After the Ancestral God had disappeared, life populated the World of Existence, but nothing was born in the World of Extinction. In the memories the Ancestral God left behind to her descendants, it was mentioned that the World of Extinction and the energy of extinction lies behind the Abyss, and that not even true gods or devils are able to survive it. Anyone or anything that falls into the Abyss will be annihilated completely."

A pause later, the voice sighed. "Was her decision to separate extinction and existence the right one? Had she succeeded in building a new balance for the Primal Chaos, or had she simply torn down its natural balance; the best state it should've been? That wasn't something the Ancestral God herself could say at the time. Looking at the development and prosperity of the current world though, it wasn't a bad decision at the very least."

"Continue," Yun Che tried to urge the voice to get on with it. His heart was burning with the desire to know what all this had to do with Xia Qingyue.

Also, as muddle-headed as he was right now, he had come to realize that the voice speaking to him in his soul sea...

Was none other than the existing will of the Ancestral God herself!

Everything she told him thus far was something only the Ancestral God herself would know.

He never imagined that he would one day interact with the one existence that was loftier than even the Devil Emperors and the Creation Gods; the true highest existence in the entire Primal Chaos.

The reason he could interact with her... was it because he cultivated the World-Defying Heaven Manual, the Ancestral Divine Art she left behind?"

“Space will crumble, power will fade, life will fade, and light will dim... there is no such thing as true permanence in this world. All things, even the powers and laws left behind by the Ancestral God herself will fade away one day.”

“The baptism of time and the negative impacts of the great war between gods and devils... the laws bestowed upon the Abyss break down very quickly the moment the first flaw appears, and the Ancestral God’s will quickly found that out first hand. When she attempted to check the Abyss, she discovered in surprise that the Abyss had somehow detached itself from her laws.”

“Not even her will was able to enter the Abyss anymore.”

“Normally, the Ancestral God would never interfere with the happenings of the universe. Everything that happened was the choice of the era, and she is but an indifferent observer to it all. It wasn’t like she could interfere anyway. She had eliminated her own existence and left only her will behind after all.”

“However, the Abyss is an entirely different story, especially since it has broken free of her laws.”

“She was the creator of the Abyss, so she knew better than anyone what it contained. If the energy of extinction within it were to spiral out of control and spill into the World of Existence, anything and everything would be destroyed.”

Yun Che: “!!”

The voice’s claim stunned him, but he wasn’t really too worried. Records dating back to the Era of the Gods were obviously limited, but as far as he knew no one had ever found anything abnormal regarding the Abyss of Nothingness since as the latter stages of the great war between the gods and the devils until now.

Moreover, all records regarding the Abyss of Nothingness basically described the same thing: that it was an impossibly empty, silent pit that seemed almost frozen in time unless someone were to throw something into it. At which point, it would transform into a ruthless maw that devours everything.

“The Ancestral God thought long and hard after detecting that the Abyss had come free from the laws she had bestowed upon it. In the end, she arrived at a decision.”

“She decided to rebirth herself into the Primal Chaos.”

Yun Che was stunned yet again.

“The Primal Chaos was no longer hers, so she wouldn’t have an infinite amount of ancestral origin power to call upon even if her rebirth was a success. That said, she would have enough power to restore the laws on the Abyss and restrict it once more.”

“This was the only way to avert that worst outcome. The Ancestral God has developed a deep love for all that is living, and she couldn’t bear to see it return to the lifeless state it was in, back at the beginning of the Primal Chaos... even though the very creatures she was trying to protect were conducting an extinction event of their own at that moment.”

“Rebirth... of the Ancestral God?” Yun Che muttered the five words that would shock even an ancient True God to speechlessness. “Have you... has she succeeded then?”

“The rebirth of the Ancestral God cannot be easy, of course. Both reforging her essence and restoring her Ancestral Sacred Body required an incredible amount of energy of the primordial universe and... a thousand reincarnations.”

A thousand reincarnations... it was yet another set of words that absolutely exceeded anyone’s imagination.

“Unbeknownst to everyone, the Ancestral God’s rebirth began before the war of the gods and devils had even ended, and whilst the energies of the Primal Chaos were still flowing into the Abyss.”

“On her first cycle, she was born to the god race. She gradually awakened as a True God as she grew older, and she should’ve led a long life if she wasn’t born in the middle of a most terrible war. She died when she was just six thousand years old.”

“On her second cycle, she was born to the devil race. She only lived four thousand years for the same reason.”

“On her third cycle, she was born a princess of the sea race, but she still suffered a similar fate despite belonging to neither the god race nor the devil race. She perished in one of the skirmishes between the Gods and the Devils.”

“On her fourth cycle, she was born an Illusory Spirit Many-colored Finch. She saw the world in a completely different manner through a completely different set of eyes... however, she still perished in the war between the gods and devils, and her own race became fully extinct.”

.....

Yun Che couldn’t truly imagine how powerful the True Gods and True Devils were, but he could definitely imagine what a tragedy it was to be stuck in a war that had gone completely out of control as a mortal.

“Every life where she died in accordance to fate’s will is considered to be a complete cycle.”

“Sometimes, she was a man. Sometimes, she was a dragon. Sometimes, she was a phoenix, an eagle, a butterfly, an insect, grass, a tree, a flower...”

“No matter what she became in her next life, she always inherited the Ancestral God’s full memories and will. She witnessed and experienced everything with perfect self-awareness.”

“Later on, the cornered devil race unsealed the Evil Infant, caused the Myriad Tribulations, and finally ended their great war in mutual destruction. When there were no more gods or devils in this universe, the mortals who survived traveled to their realms in search of their inheritances and kickstarted a new, godless era.”

“That is the era that you know today.”

“Meanwhile, the Ancestral God was still continuing her one thousand cycles of reincarnation.”

“At this point, the energies of the Primal Chaos were still draining away into the Abyss, but the speed at which they were drained was also growing slower and slower. It looked like it was simply a matter of

time before it came to a complete stop. Generations come and go much more quickly in this godless era, and countless events occurred in just the short span of a million years.”

“The average lifespan of a living being has also shortened tremendously, though this was a great boon to the Ancestral God. It meant that she would be completing her cycles much faster than she had initially anticipated..”

“Ten cycles... a hundred cycles... six hundred cycles... nine hundred cycles...”

“Finally, she completed her nine hundred and ninety ninth cycle... and it had taken her less than ten percent of her predicted time to reach it.”

“The shorter it took for her to be reborn to this world, the lower the chance the Abyss would go out of control before she was ready. This was without a doubt the best possible outcome.”

“The Ancestral God began her last but most important cycle of them all.”

“If she is able to complete this cycle, her ancestral divine powers and her Ancestral Sacred Body will be fully reborn.”

“Moreover, she has borrowed a bit of the current universe’s aura to be reborn in this world, meaning that her new self will be nothing like the Ancestral God she used to be. She will become an independent existence who is friendly to the Primal Chaos and will not distort the existing rules and laws in any way.”

“Moreover, her final cycle of life must be a true, complete cycle. Unlike her previous nine hundred and ninety nine cycles, she will not be inheriting the Ancestral God’s will or memories. She will begin as a whole new individual with her own independent will.”

“As for her Ancestral Will and Memories, they will be sealed within her Ancestral Soul. They will only awaken when she has reached the end of her lifetime.”

Yun Che listened in silence, but the shock in his heart was comparable to that of a sea storm.

If the Ancestral God completes her final cycle of life, she will become reborn in this world. Until that happens, the Ancestral Will was supposed to be dormant. However, Yun Che had no doubt that the voice speaking to him was the Ancestral Will herself.

Did this mean that the Ancestral God had completed her final cycle of reincarnation already?

Was the reborn Ancestral God existing in this universe right now!?

“On her one thousandth cycle, the Ancestral God was born to a small, average city of a lower realm planet.”

“Her mother passed away in depression not long after she was born, so her father had to raise her alone. She had plenty of relatives, but they all looked at her with indifference when she had her back turned toward them.”

“Her childhood wasn’t bleak in the slightest, however. Her father loved her dearly, and she grew up with a childhood friend.”

“He was her nephew. Though, he was actually a year older than her.”

“...” Yun Che’s soul abruptly tensed.

Wait a second...

“Living together allowed their relationship to develop to the point where they were practically inseparable. However, when they neared the age of cultivation, it was discovered that her nephew had broken profound veins. He became a cripple whom everyone took pity or looked down upon.”

“!!!” This time, every string in Yun Che’s soul was trembling like a leaf.

“When they were younger, her nephew wouldn’t allow her to suffer even the tiniest of grievances. If anyone dared to touch even a hair on her person, he would flail his frail arms and fight them with death in his eyes. At the time, he possessed the brightest eyes in the entire world.”

The voice’s tone grew gentler without knowing. “However, his eyes were never the same after he learned that he was a cripple.”

“That was why she began cultivating even though she wasn’t of the right age yet. He had protected her when she was younger, so it was her turn to protect him for the rest of his life... that was what she had sworn to herself. In the norm, she also grew attached to him to the point where she would grow anxious and began searching for him when he left her sight for even a short moment...”

“Deep love wasn’t the only reason she wanted to protect him. She had also become so dependent on him that she couldn’t imagine living without him.”

“Time passed, and they reached adolescence. However, they remained as inseparable as ever. He was sixteen years old, and she fifteen that year. It was the day of his wedding.”

“Wait... wait!” Yun Che couldn’t maintain his cool any longer. His soul was shaking, and his mind felt as befuddled as it was lost. “The Ancestral God’s last cycle... she... she is...”

Chapter 1929 - Real Dream

“In this life, her name... is Xiao Lingxi.”

Since the moment Yun Che realized that he was speaking with the Ancestral God herself, he had been treating her like the highest being in the entire universe, which she was. He hadn’t dared to release the spiritual pressure that he naturally imposed upon others in the norm, nor had he dared to interrupt her too many times.

He might be the unparalleled great emperor of the Primal Chaos, but he was smaller than an ant compared to the Ancestral God.

The world existed because the Ancestral God created it. The reason she went through a thousand reincarnations to come back to life was to eliminate a hidden threat to the Primal Chaos as well. Both her existence and her purpose deserved his greatest respect.

However, when the Ancestral God began talking about her final cycle of life, every sentence she spoke had invoked a sense of déjà vu. The more she spoke, the stronger the feeling became until finally, when the name “Xiao Lingxi” resounded clearly inside his soul sea, the calm he just barely mustered was

completely washed away into nothingness. He was so shocked that his soul sea world grew turbulent in response to his emotions.

Xiao... Ling... Xi...

It was the single most familiar name in his life.

Ling... Xi...

My Lingxi... she's... the Ancestral God's reincarnation...?

No...

She...

The Ancestral God!?

He might never feel this much shock again in his life. His soul sea had transformed into a storm made of towering sea waves and innumerable giant vortices. He felt like his consciousness was spun round and round in one of these vortices until he lost all ability to think completely.

He had grown up together with Xiao Lingxi. There was no one who knew her better or was closer to her than him.

She was sweet-tempered to the point of being weak, but that was only in regards to matters that didn't involve him. Otherwise, she could be tough, bold, and even outright reckless at times. At the very least, no one would connect her with the word "mighty".

Her profound talent was extremely mediocre. She cultivated hard to protect him when they were younger, but she quickly lost the motivation to continue after his profound veins regrew, and he reached a point where he no longer needed her protection. She had never had any interest in cultivating after all.

She would rather be a normal girl in a small city who, besides taking care of her father, Yongan and Yongning in the norm, quietly looked forward to his next return home.

Many times, she had compared herself to Yun Che's harem of women and believed herself wanting.

In reality though... Yun Che could exaggerate his wildest delusion a thousand times over, and he still could never imagine that his childhood friend, Xiao Lingxi was the reincarnating Ancestral God herself...

The one God who created the Creation Gods, the Devil Emperors and even the Primal Chaos itself!

It was at this moment that an extraordinarily gentle soul energy wrapped around his person. It gradually quelled his soul sea and returned clarity to his mind.

"This is probably quite the difficult surprise for you to swallow," the voice said in a mild tone. "You were her childhood friend, and now her official husband after you completed a wedding with her."

"..." Yun Che still couldn't form a coherent sentence.

As his mind became clear once more, he began to recall all the inexplicable happenings around Xiao Lingxi.

She could read the World-Defying Heaven Manual, a text that was written in the language created by the Ancestral God herself, the Divine Text of Absolute Beginning. The World-Defying Heaven Manual itself was the Ancestral Divine Art left behind by the Ancestral God.

The reason he could never truly consummate his marriage with her... was it because the level of their existences were so far apart that a union was simply impossible, or because the Ancestral God set up some sort of restriction that prevented anyone from contaminating her during her final cycle?

Xiao Lingxi...

The Ancestral God...

Yun Che was already trying his best, but he still couldn't truly reconcile the true names.

Suddenly, he noticed something and asked that question that had fully formed in his mind a while ago, "You... are the Ancestral Will of the Ancestral God, right?"

"That is correct," the woman's voice replied.

"You said that the Ancestral Will and Memories will fall aslumber during the Ancestral God's final reincarnation." Yun Che forced his soul to calm down before continuing, "So why... are you awake right now? Lingxi is still present, so her cycle is still ongoing. Shouldn't you be asleep right now? Why are you—"

His words suddenly caught in his throat. Despite being inside the soul world, he could clearly hear his heart's wild beating.

He had a faint idea what the voice was going to say next.

"It's because this last cycle has already ended in failure. Even the near-complete Ancestral Sacred Body has been greatly undone. The reason for that..." she said quietly and gently, "you have already guessed the answer."

"Was it because of... me?" Yun Che murmured.

Not only did she fail her last cycle, her Ancestral Sacred Body was... greatly undone!?

"It all happened on the day you were getting married... on that day, she woke you up very early in the morning, dressed you in the wedding clothes she had sown herself, and watched you drink the morning porridge she had cooked herself..."

Before he knew it, when the woman's voice grew so soft and distant that he couldn't hear her anymore. Then, a new scene had unfolded inside his soul sea:

"Little Che, wake up! You need to get out of bed now!"

"Mm... it's still so early. Just let me sleep in a little longer."

"Little Che, wake up! Today's the day you're getting married to Miss Situ, and it's almost time already! Quickly!"

.....

“Little Che, I made this porridge for you. You have a weak constitution, and it’s going to be a long morning, so... you should finish everything.”

“Phew, I’m done... I wonder if I can still eat your meals after I get married, Little Aunt.”

“Heehe, don’t forget that the governor’s daughter is marrying into your family, not the other way around. If you want, I can prepare your meals every day just like before.”

“Of course not! Didn’t I promise you yesterday that I’d never forget about you even after I marry Situ Xuan? We’ll spend just as much time with each other as we used to, and I’ll always be there whenever you call for me!”

“Good boy! Still... you’ve really become a big boy, haven’t you Little Che?”

.....

“Big brother! Big brother!! I’m here... wow, your wedding clothes are pretty impressive... So er... how does it feel to get married? Why do I feel like you’re not very excited?”

“To be honest, I am not excited. It was something my parents decided before I was born, and I’ve only met Situ Xuan a couple of times. I don’t even quite remember how she looks, which is why I barely care about the wedding at all... you on the other hand, are unusually excited given the time of the day. It’s not just because of my wedding, is it?”

“Hehe... I do have some good news to share. The day before yesterday, my father invited a friend of his—a teacher from New Moon Profound Palace—over to his house. He was hoping to ask for a favor and drop me into New Moon Profound Palace. But after his friend saw me, he said that someone of my talent should just join Blue Wind Profound Palace directly!”

“Oh! That’s amazing! That’s something the entire Floating Cloud City should celebrate!”

“Hehehe! I was so excited I haven’t slept for the past two days. When I join Blue Wind Profound Palace and become even stronger than before, I’m sure no one will ever dare to bully you again!”

“Your entrance to Blue Wind Profound Palace is what we really should celebrate. I bet the entire city will rejoice on the day you... officially enter... Blue Wind... Profound... Palace...”

.....

It was the “dream” he had seen many years ago. In this “dream”, the person he was getting married to wasn’t Xia Qingyue, but Situ Xuan. Moreover, Xia Yuanba had had a powerful body, extraordinary talent, and a pair of eyes that shone with divine light. And...

Why... why do these images and voices feel so real...

These memories...

Ugh...

Suddenly, his soul world began shaking violently. It looked like it might collapse into itself.

An infinite amount of images and voices intermingled chaotically in his mind, and his heart beat so hard and fast that it felt like it might implode at any moment. His consciousness was fading, and his memories were blurring. It felt like a billion sticks were stirring up his soul sea.

He wanted to scream and struggle, but he wasn't able to make even a single sound.

Lingxi...

Yuanba...

Situ Xuan...

Xia Qingyue...

.....

Qing... yue...

.....

Suddenly, the turmoil in his soul sea came to a complete stop.

Then, his mind and his memories became clear like never before.

Even his dreams had become as clear as yesterday.

However, some things were growing the opposite. His old memories kept blurring more and more despite his mad struggles to keep them. In the end, he could only watch them depart his mind and even his soul completely.

He stared at the gray world in front of him blankly and unmoving.

"Do you recall them now?" The woman's voice spoke once more. "The true memories that were hidden beneath the nothingness."

"..." Yun Che couldn't say a word. He felt like he had suddenly fallen into an unwakeable dream.

"The baby your foster father, Xiao Ying did everything in his power to save wasn't the daughter of Xia Hongyi, Xia Qingyue, but the daughter of the governor of Floating Cloud City, Situ Xuan."

"Just the same, the man who was so grateful toward Xiao Ying that he publicly declared that his daughter would wed Xiao Ying's son wasn't Xia Hongyi, but Situ Nan... naturally, your fiancée was also Situ Xuan, not Xia Qingyue."

"The Xia Yuanba in your memories was his true appearance until an extraordinary change overtook him when you were sixteen years old."

"Nngh..." Yun Che let out low moans from time to time. He was suffering not from pain, but a kind of confusion, separation, misalignment, and distortion that no word in his dictionary could properly describe. All he could say was that it felt absolutely unpleasant.

All of his memories regarding Xia Yuanba before he was sixteen had been altered. The Xia Yuanba in his memories now matched the Xia Yuanba in his dreams perfectly: a powerful physique, extraordinary talent, and a pair of eyes that seemed capable of seeing through one's soul.

Just the same, all of his memories regarding Xia Qingyue before he was sixteen had been cut out from his mind completely. They were already unnaturally shallow in the first place, but now he remembered them like he would an unforgotten dream: unreal and prone to vanishing at any moment.

Moreover, memories of Situ Xuan had replaced them. The amount of times he met with Situ Xuan during the first sixteen years of his life could be counted on one hand, but each one was as clear and heart-wrenching as yesterday.

He could even remember every sneering word she said, every disdainful look she shot him, every playful bit of malice she wore on her face.

In every memory where Xiao Lie told him about the story of Xiao Ying saving a female baby, the baby had always been the governor's daughter.

In his memories, Xia Yuanba didn't just have a powerful build, but also a domineering behavior to match. He had feared nothing and no one.

And in his memories, Xia Yuanba... was the only child Xia Hongyi had ever had!

"Where's Qingyue... where's Qingyue!?!!" He frantically searched through the absolute mess he called his memories, but no matter how hard he tried everything relating to her before he was sixteen... was just a transient, unforgotten dream.

"Don't you understand yet?"

Yun Che's appearance put a small sigh into the Ancestral Will's voice. "Before you were sixteen, before your wedding day to be exact, Xia Qingyue... never existed."

Chapter 1930 - Artifact of Fate

"What do you mean... that she never... existed?" Yun Che somehow found the strength to squeeze the words out of his throat.

The Ancestral Will explained, "On the day you were to marry Situ Xuan, someone poisoned the morning porridge she cooked for you. Although it was just a lowly mortal poison, it was absolutely fatal to someone with broken profound veins and a weak body like you."

"You were dead before the wedding ceremony had even begun."

"This was an irreparable blow to her especially since she believed that she was the one who had caused your death. Sadness, self-blame, pain, despair..."

"Her soul was burdened with so much sorrow that it began to fracture under its weight."

"As a result, the Ancestral Will—yes, it is I who am speaking to you right now—was awakened... or more accurately, forced out of my slumbering state."

Yun Che: "..."

The Ancestral Will's voice grew distant again, and a very familiar scene appeared in his soul sea.

Red curtains, burning red candles, a familiar layout... It was his room in the Xiao Clan back then. It was the day he and Xia Qingyue (Situ Xuan) got married, and one of the greatest turning points of his fate.

Turning point...

He had been reborn in the Azure Cloud Continent after he was poisoned to death on his wedding day. When he jumped down Cloud's End Cliff on the Azure Cloud Continent, he revived again in his dead body with the memories of both lifetimes...

It was the greatest mystery of his life. He had never found an answer to it.

Even after he stood at the peak of the universe, he still had no idea what had truly happened to him back then.

When he had returned to the Azure Cloud Continent, he had been shocked to find that it was the Azure Cloud Continent from many years ago. The amnesiac Su Ling'er had also turned back into a girl.

Even more confusing was the fact that the young Su Ling'er had regained her memories with him at a later time. It proved that his life in the Azure Cloud Continent wasn't a dream after all.

Could the real reason behind all these inexplicable mysteries be...

Be...

In the scene, he was lying lifelessly on his bed in his wedding clothes. His eyes were open, but glassy and utterly colorless.

Beside him, Xiao Lie was pressing his hands against his heart and doing everything in his power to drive out the poison inside his body. His grandfather's lips were blue, and his face a deathly pale complexion. He was trying his best to remain calm, but the pain gathered in his eyes was enough to make anyone avert theirs.

Xia Yuanba broke into a run toward the exit while roaring that Profound Palace mentor's name again and again. Xiao Lingxi was kneeling on the ground, clutching his cooling palms in a death grip and crying her heart out.

Light suddenly dimmed at this moment.

The scenes faded into black the voices faded into black, everything faded into blackness until all that was left was a girl's despairing figure and sobs.

"To think that sorrow really can shatter one's soul... is this the power of a human's emotions?"

The crying girl slowly looked up in a daze. "Who... are you?"

"I am another you, and you are another me... you sensed me the moment I appeared, didn't you?"

"... save Little Che." At first, her murmur was soft as the wind. Then, as the scattered lights in her eyes narrowed into a beam of hope, she pleaded louder and hastier like a drowning person who found a straw to cling onto. "Save Little Che! Save Little Che!!"

“The death of a mortal is as insignificant as the scattering of a speck of dust in the universe. It doesn’t deserve a reaction from you, much less this level of sorrow.”[1] The illusory voice resounded in the colorless world. “Your soul has crumbled, and I have awakened. This cycle has failed, and our stainless sacred body will not be complete.”

“No matter. There is no gain, but there is no loss either. You may as well reawaken your will now, experience this mortal plane as your mortal self, and postpone the completion of your reincarnation to the next life.”

“Now, let our wills merge together once more. When you have returned to your true self, this insignificant memory will be buried in a universe of other memories. You won’t feel any sadness toward his death any longer.”

“No... No!!”

The Ancestral Will approached, but what she got was firm rejection. [2]

Xiao Lingxi subconsciously pulled away from her own Will. The emotions she radiated were fear and determination.

She was the Ancestral Will before this life after all. Her current self couldn’t comprehend it, but she could still vaguely sense the kind of existence she was. That was why she was afraid. She was afraid that she would treat her identity as Xiao Lingxi and even the person she cherished the most, Xiao Che as nothing if she accepted her.

“Save him... save him... save him...”

She pleaded in a whisper again and again. She pleaded with her other self to save Yun Che.

A long sigh resounded in the colorless world.

“How is my (your) will so powerful despite being a newborn...”

“Once upon a time, I (you) was an existence who overlooked everything and everyone in the world. The extraordinary emotions of mortals have always been interesting to see, but that was all. To think... that my (your) emotions would burn this bright when I (you) was reborn as a mortal...”

“Save him... please save him!” She kept repeating the same thing again and again. “You can save him... you definitely have a way to save him!”

“The cycle of life and death is difficult to defy. It is one of the basic laws I (you) have established during the creation of the world. That being said, there is some wriggle room to this law.”

“I (You) have not completed our reincarnation, so I (you) cannot reverse his death directly. However, I (you) can reverse the wheel of time of this world to the point where he is still alive.”

“This way, it will be as if he has never died in the first place, thus circumventing the laws I (you) have put in place.”

“However, you (I) should be well aware of the price of doing so.”

“It doesn’t matter, nothing matters anymore...” The girl muttered while shaking her head strongly. Her soul was still in shambles, and it was incapable of fitting anything besides the desire and determination to save Yun Che. “I just want him to come back to life... I just want my Little Che to come back to life.”

“Your will is my will, especially since the will sitting in your (my) mind is the strongest will you (I) have ever had since the beginning of your (my) existence. I won’t be able to defy it.”

“You (I) are free to act as you wish without care for the consequences, but you must be aware that he is just a mortal; an incredibly fragile mortal even by mortal standards. He is almost incapable of weathering any danger as long as he is stuck with a body that is unable to cultivate.”

“Unless he is protected by sufficient power, anyone can drive him into a dead end just like today.”

Xiao Lingxi: “...”

“You may be able to save him today, but are you really going to save him again, and again, and again? Every time you use this method to save him, your already incomplete Sacred Body of Nothingness will be damaged more and more, not to mention that the amount of damage done will only increase with each repetition.”

“Moreover, he won’t live to see his one hundredth birthday given the state of his body. What will you do then?”

The girl’s eyes grew unfocused once more. However, a strange divine light gathered in her pupils almost instantly.

“In that case, give him part of your (my) Sacred Body of Nothingness. Give him the power... to protect himself from anything.”

“Ai—” Yet another long sigh resounded throughout the colorless world before the voice continued. “The Sacred Body is born from the nothingness of Primal Chaos. It is also the Ancestral Body that only belongs to I (you). To grant even a sliver of it to a mere mortal? What a ridiculous notion this is.”

“However, you (I) can only obey what you (I) desire.”

“Well... it is possible to grant him a Sacred Body of the mortal level, but you should know that my (your) current condition won’t even allow me (you) to manifest my (your) strength, much less gift him my (your) powers directly.”

“Even if it can be done... he still doesn’t have the profound veins to bear our power, or any power at all. Without power, anyone can take his life whether he has a Sacred Body or not. In that sense, the only good the Sacred Body will do for him is to extend his lifespan.”

Xiao Lingxi whispered while staring at the black nothingness in front of her. “There exists countless lives and endless fates in this world... why must his fate be so unfair?”

“He was born a cripple, scorned and treated with indifference because of his disability, and now he was killed when he was but a young man...? Why must my Little Che suffer such a fate!?”

A long silence later, the voice asked, “You (I)... wish to rewrite his fate?”

“He will have a Sacred Body, and his fate will be rewritten!”

Her voice sounded unusually low and slow. She seemed to be awakening her memories, because Yun Che had never seen such eyes on Xiao Lingxi until now.

Not to mention that the declaration she made was something only the Ancestral God herself possessed the right to declare.

“The Sacred Body will grant him the ability to accept any form of power including the laws of nothingness that a mortal should never be able to contact. He will gain power beyond this maximum limit of this godless world in just a very short time.”

“Altering his fate will ensure that he will always survive tribulations no matter how dire they are. He will be blessed with a luck so great that all of the world’s greatest opportunities and fortunes will fall on him alone...”

“You (I) can do it... I know that you (I) can do it.”

The voice responded, “Fate is the one thing no one should ever interfere with. It is one of the most basic, but most important laws I (you) have established since the creation of the universe.”

“It is because the smallest interference with the lowliest mortal may result in an unimaginably huge change in the future.”

“Luck is a component of fate, and so is balanced by the strictest of laws. It cannot be created out of nothing even by me (you).”

“If you (I) must alter his fate, the only thing that I (you) may attempt at my (your) current strength... is the Chain of Fate.”

“The Chain... of Fate...” Xiao Lingxi whispered as she attempted to identify its concept with her blurry knowledge.

“All living things in the current universe already have their fates fixed. Therefore, the Chain of Fate can only be applied to a new life, which means that life must first be created before his fate may be changed. You may address this creation; this medium that will be created to change his fate as the ‘Artifact of Fate’.”

“However, this new life is still a life of its own. Its fate will be impossibly unfair and cruel due to the unbreakable laws of the balance of fate. Will you (I) continue on this course despite knowing this?”

The girl closed her eyes without any hesitation and said, “I told you already. I only want him to come back to life. I only want him to lead a peaceful life and never have to suffer such a pitiful fate anymore. Nothing else matters... nothing.”

“Very well. The price is huge, but it will be done.”

“One cycle of reincarnation is necessary to create the Sacred Body of Nothingness. The Mirror of Samsara hasn’t yet regained its strength, so I (you) must awaken it by force to make this work.”

“He will reincarnate on this same planet... that continent named ‘Azure Cloud’ seems like a good destination.”

“While he reincarnates on the Azure Cloud Continent and goes through the necessary life to fully accept the Sacred Body, I will pause the wheel of time of the entire world [3]besides the Azure Cloud Continent. During this time, I will also create the ‘Artifact of Fate’, rationalize its existence, and alter all the karma involved.”

“Thankfully, Floating Cloud City is just a small city with a small population and few connections to the outside world. Fixing its karma of cognition should be relatively simple even considering my (your) incomplete and weakened powers. It should be done within five years.”

“When his life cycle is complete, and he returns to the body of ‘Xiao Che’, I will reverse the time of the Azure Cloud Continent back to what it was before, and restart the wheels of time once more.”

Tears continued to slide down the girl’s cheeks, but the shattering behind her eyes wasn’t as bad as it once was. She murmured, “This way, my Little Che will return, and he won’t be as humble or fragile anymore.”

“So, what will be the ‘Artifact of Fate’ you wish to tie to his fate?”

Xiao Lingxi replied slowly and dazedly, “I’m his little aunt, so I can never be his wife. However, Situ Xuan doesn’t deserve to be his wife, so... I want this person to replace Situ Xuan and be his wife instead. She would need to have a good deal of talent and willpower; a cool exterior on the outside but a soft heart on the inside. I want her to be able to protect him before he grows to full power and be capable of eliminating or blocking any and all danger toward him.”

There was another long silence before the voice spoke, “There exists an extraordinarily refined wisp of energy of the primordial universe in this tiny Floating Cloud City. It may even be the purest primordial energy in the current universe.”

“It is currently resting in that youngster named Xia Yuanba. Should the primordial energy be allowed to fuse completely with his body, he would gain the ‘Divine Body of Great Rage’, a body that is never-before-seen in this godless world.”

“One-tenth of the energy has already fused with his body. The rest shall be taken away from him and bestowed upon the ‘Artifact of Fate’.”

“Xia Yuanba’s talent originated from his mother, the woman named ‘Dong Xue’ by Xia Hongyi, but was really a God Realm woman named Yue Wugou. Her Divine Stainless Body is a miracle in the current universe, and she would’ve had a great future if not for the twist of fate that caused her to fall to this small city and made her the wife of the mortal, Xia Hongyi.”

“My (your) current strength is insufficient to create life out of nothing. For the ‘Artifact of Fate’ to subsume Xia Yuanba’s primordial energy perfectly, her blood must take after Xia Yuanba’s mother, Yue Wugou. As for the father...”

A short pause later, the voice continued, “Xia Hongyi is ultimately just mortal. His bloodline is too weak and murky. If the Artifact of Fate were to be born from his blood, it will only diminish the energy of the primordial universe she has subsumed.”

“If it wasn’t for her sorrowful fate, Yue Wugou would never have been separated from her original lover, the Moon God Emperor Yue Wuya. He possesses one of the more revered bloodlines of the current universe, the Moon God bloodline. His blood will be an excellent choice to create the Artifact of Fate.”

“In a sense, the creation of the Artifact of Fate will fulfill their lifelong wish, even if the method is most questionable.”

“The ‘Artifact of Fate’ will be born in Floating Cloud City. To her knowledge, she is the daughter of Xia Hongyi and Yue Wugou. However, she will feel a bloodline resonance far stronger than is normal when she is close to the blood she is created from.”

“If one day she encounters Yue Wuya, the resulting bloodline resonance may expose the truth. Hopefully, the distance between these two worlds is far enough that it won’t happen too soon.”

“The northern Frozen Cloud Immortal Palace is a sect left behind by a denizen of the God Realm. It will be the Artifact of Fate’s sect so that it may grant them [4]the opportunity to make contact with the higher plane.”

The shape of the “Artifact of Fate” was already formed while the voice was speaking.

She would be the daughter of Yue Wugou and Yue Wuya. She would believe that Xia Hongyi was her father and become a disciple of Frozen Cloud Immortal Palace. She would steal Xia Yuanba’s energy of the primordial universe as her own and marry Yun Che as his wife...

“She will believe that Xia Hongyi is her father, so her surname will be Xia as a matter of course.”

“Xia Hongyi is a man of single-minded love, and his love for Yue Wugou has never faded even though she has been gone from his life for many years. In that case, the Artifact of Fate shall be named...”

“Xia Qingyue (Xia’s Love For The Moon).”

“Xia Qingyue...” The girl whispered the name. “She will protect Little Che well... right?”

“There is no such thing as absolution even for an Artifact of Fate. I (you) may have created her, but I (you) have no control over what she ultimately becomes. He and her final futures are even more unpredictable.”

“However...”

“He will be blessed by great luck as long as the Chain of Fate remains unbroken. He will keep obtaining fortune most people cannot even dream of having, and combine that with his Sacred Body of Nothingness, he will reach the point where he surpasses every living being in the universe in a very short amount of time.”

“She, on the other hand...”

“Fate automatically seeks balance, and since they are tied together by the Chain of Fate, his great fortune will be her great misfortune. Everything she cares about shall suffer the cruelest of fates.”

“As a sister, her sibling will face the threat of death again and again.”

“As a disciple, her sect will face the threat of destruction.”

“As a daughter, her parents will meet a terrible end.”

“As a parent, her children will die an early death.”

“And as a ruler, the land she governs will dissolve into dust.”

“Her misfortune is Xiao Che’s fortune. That is how the Chain of Fate is. That isn’t all. She is a creation of nothingness, so it is only a matter of time before she sees through the veil and realizes the truth of her being.”

“He may have grown to the point where he no longer needs the ‘Artifact of Fate’ to protect him, but she will never be able to forgive herself. She may choose to end her life so that misfortune won’t befall those she cares for any longer.”

“An unimaginable cost, and the cruelest Chain of Fate... will you still do this?”

This was her last time asking.

The light in Xiao Lingxi’s eyes remained unchanged. She said slowly and firmly, “The memories of the Ancestral God seem so close yet so far. Therefore, I cannot ascertain what I would’ve done as her. But right now, I will save him... even if I have to bury the entire world to do it.”

“This is the final Will, the never-changing Will.” The voice grew distant, and cracks began appearing on the pitch-black world. “At the cost of six hundred cycles of samsara, your (my) Will shall be done.”