

Bai Xiaochun sighed, both sympathizing with Nightcrypt and admiring his readiness to give and take.

"No wonder he became a spy. He's really quite extraordinary." Even just thinking about that girl's face left him sighing. Before long, he was in Nightcrypt's immortal's cave, which was located alongside several other Inner Sect disciples' immortal's caves. It was a simple cave, which led Bai Xiaochun to understand even more clearly how rough a life Nightcrypt had in the sect. It was only about ten percent as large as Bai Xiaochun's cave in the Spirit Stream Sect, and didn't even have an antechamber, let alone a lake or a pill concocting workstation. It was nothing more than a stone chamber with a bed and a meditation mat. "How did he survive such misery?!" he thought. Shaking his head, he sat down cross-legged to meditate. Outside, the sun was setting. Back in the Spirit Stream Sect, the sect would begin to quiet down at around this time, as disciples settled down to rest for the night. But the Blood Stream Sect was different. As evening fell, Bai Xiaochun could hear screams echoing out in the air. Apparently, disciples took advantage of the darkness to fight each other with renewed vigor. According to sect rules, disciples weren't supposed to kill each other, but other than that, anything was permitted. As such, the darkness of night was when the true brutality of the sect shone through. Bai Xiaochun was having a hard time adjusting to an environment that was so different from the Spirit Stream Sect. Taking a deep breath, he refrained from stepping outside, and even carefully set up some traps at the entrance of the immortal's cave. Only then did he settle down cross-legged again to ponder his next step. On the way to the Blood Stream Sect, he'd made more inquiries of imposter Nightcrypt, and came to learn that the relic of eternal indestructibility was located on the middle finger of the huge hand, which was called Middle Peak. The upper finger of Middle Peak was where the grand elder resided, and was a place forbidden to Inner Sect disciples. After all, all four of the mountain peaks were set aside for Foundation Establishment experts only. Inner Sect disciples like Nightcrypt were restricted to the area on the back of the hand. As for the upper finger area, it couldn't even be accessed by the ordinary elders and Dharma protectors. That was one reason why imposter Nightcrypt had never been able to even get close to the relic, and also why he wanted to reach Foundation Establishment. Only then would he be able to pick one of the four mountain peaks to reside upon. "Foundation Establishment is the first step," Bai Xiaochun thought. "I'll pick Middle Peak and then proceed to step two, which is becoming a Dharma protector. It's too bad I can only pretend to be at Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment. Reaching Earthstring Foundation Establishment would be too much of a stretch. Otherwise I could become an elder. "After becoming a Dharma protector, I need to become the grand elder. That's step three, and also the final step. At that point I'll be able to get access to the relic of eternal indestructibility, which is beneath the immortal's cave of Middle Peak's grand elder." Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath. He knew that reaching his goals was going to take some time. To rise up from being an ordinary Inner Sect disciple all the way to the position of Middle Peak grand elder would be a long path to walk. However, there was nothing impossible about it. Having set his goals firmly in mind, Bai Xiaochun closed his eyes and began to practice cultivation. Ignoring the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation for the time being, he focused on the Undying Live Forever Technique's volume of the Undying Heavenly King. He was very curious to see if cultivating the technique here would be any different than doing so in the Spirit Stream Sect. The instant he unleashed the Undying Heavenly King, his body shivered. Back in the Spirit Stream Sect, practicing the Undying Heavenly King led to a terrifying wastage of vital energy. Without precious materials and a vast supply of medicinal pills on hand, it was almost impossible. But when he cultivated it here, blood qi rose up from the ground and poured into his body, rapidly replenishing his vital energy and enabling him to cultivate the technique even more quickly. The next day, a tremor ran through him, along with a pulsing sensation. He could already tell that he was stronger than before. His eyes snapped open, and they shone with delight. "This place is like a paradise!" He ran his hand along the ground, which was like running it

along the Undying Skin of the giant. His heart swelled with excitement. "The Undying Live Forever Technique really is extraordinary. This giant didn't cultivate it to the absolute peak, which was why he died. Even after dying, though, his fleshly body has remained behind for countless years after his death. It didn't rot or anything, and actually ended up becoming the foundation of a sect. "That just goes to show you how incredible the Undying Live Forever Technique is!" With that, he continued his cultivation. Time passed. Four days went by, in which Bai Xiaochun would go out when it was light to familiarize himself with the Blood Stream Sect. As he did, he would get more information from imposter Nightcrypt, and began to commit the faces of the Inner Sect disciples to memory. He also worked on his own facial expression, getting it to look more and more ferocious. Soon he realized that emanating a murderous aura required a bit of talent, which he immediately began to work on. He also rehearsed his laugh until it sounded far more sinister and terrifying than before. However, Nightcrypt had already progressed as high as an Inner Sect disciple could go, and was only a step away from Foundation Establishment. As far as most people were concerned, he was almost as powerful as a Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment cultivator, and was someone none of the other Inner Sect disciples would dare to provoke. Days passed, and no incidents occurred. One day, Bai Xiaochun was cultivating the Undying Heavenly King in his immortal's cave, when his expression suddenly flickered. Looking up, he put on the most ferocious and sinister look he was capable of. Eyes shining with piercing light, he looked out of the entrance of the immortal's cave. Before long, a voice could be heard outside. "Junior Brother Nightcrypt, it's me, Zhao Wuchang. Please come out for a moment." Bai Xiaochun immediately asked imposter Nightcrypt about Zhao Wuchang, and learned that he was one of the other disciples who had gone to the Fallen Sword World. Continuing to look as cold and sinister as possible, he emerged from the immortal's cave radiating a murderous aura. A few meters away from the entrance was a middle-aged man. "What do you want?" Bai Xiaochun said coolly. He vaguely remembered Zhao Wuchang as being one of a group of Blood Stream Sect disciples who had ambushed him, then had been scared off after he started killing them. Zhao Wuchang's face was deathly pale, and at the same time, fierce and sinister. He very much resembled a wolf that was ready to pounce at any moment. He looked Bai Xiaochun up and down, then gave a perfunctory smile and said, "Junior Brother Nightcrypt, I trust you've been well since the last time we saw each other. "I'm not here for anything particularly important. Those of us who failed in the Fallen Sword World are getting together to exchange information and discuss how to reach Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment. Since you're back too, Junior Brother Nightcrypt, I figured I might as well invite you to come as well." Zhao Wuchang, as well as everyone else who had failed in the Fallen Sword World, were all in a very awkward position. They were stuck between the Inner Sect and Foundation Establishment, and had no hope of reaching Earthstring Foundation Establishment. As such, they were left with no other option than to pursue Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment. Unfortunately, Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment required a Foundation Establishment Pill, and to get a pill like that in the Blood Stream Sect required a disciple to pay a bitter price. Therefore, the survivors of the Fallen Sword World had formed an alliance, and Zhao Wuchang had come here with the express purpose of asking Nightcrypt to join them. "Oh really?" Bai Xiaochun replied. After a moment of thought, he nodded. Getting into this group would get him access to more information, which would surely be of help in the days to come. Seeing that Bai Xiaochun had agreed, Zhao Wuchang laughed, and then led him through the sect to the location of the gathering. As they walked along, he looked over occasionally at Bai Xiaochun, and mused that this Nightcrypt seemed quite different from the Nightcrypt he remembered. His murderous aura was more powerful, and the sinister look in his eyes even more profound. "Nightcrypt might not have succeeded with Earthstring Foundation Establishment," Zhao Wuchang thought, "but escaping Bai Xiaochun alive was no easy task." Although they kept a healthy distance between them as they walked along, they chatted a bit about some random matters. When they were about halfway to the gathering, all of a sudden, the sky began to rumble as if with thunder! A blood-colored mist pulsed out into the area, surging like waves on the ocean. Up above, several Foundation Establishment cultivators who had been flying past stopped in place and cleared a path, expressions of respect on their faces. Bai Xiaochun looked up in shock. Not too far off in the distance, within the blood mist, a blood-colored palanquin appeared. It was fully thirty meters tall, and was surrounded by a host of vengeful spirits who emitted soundless screams. Carrying the palanquin on their shoulders were eight three-meter-tall gargoyle-like ghosts

who emanated black mist. Their skin was green, and they radiated fluctuations similar to a Foundation Establishment cultivator, along with sinister coldness. On either side of the blood palanquin were rows of palace maids wearing blood-colored gowns. They were beautiful, but completely expressionless, and carried burning lanterns in their beautiful hands. They almost seemed to be clearing a path for the blood palanquin as it made its way through the mists. It was really an astonishing sight. Even Bai Xiaochun was completely shaken, and his immediate reaction was to assume that a patriarch was coming. However, he quickly realized that seated inside of the blood palanquin was a young woman. She wore a crimson gown, and her long hair rustled in the breeze. It was impossible to see her face because she wore a blood-colored mask, which was decorated with a plum blossom! Her chin rested on her hand as she gazed off into the distance. As for her cultivation base, it was in the Foundation Establishment stage, and the pressure from the spiritual power that emanated off of her contained traces of multiple Tideflows, which caused the blood mist to seethe and churn. That meant that this young woman had reached Earthstring Foundation Establishment! Bai Xiaochun's eyes went wide with envy. He hadn't been able to go around in such style in the Spirit Stream Sect! The fact that Blood Stream Sect Foundation Establishment cultivators got such treatment left him gasping. When Zhao Wuchang saw Bai Xiaochun staring at the blood palanquin, his heart flip-flopped. "Hey! Do you have a death wish?" he whispered. "Bow your head! If you're not careful, Young Lady Xuemei will dig your eyes out!! She reached nine Tideflows in the Lone Hell Pocket Realm!" If he wasn't interested in Bai Xiaochun joining his alliance, he would never have said anything. "Young Lady Xuemei?" Bai Xiaochun suddenly recalled Xu Baocai mentioning a Chosen from the Blood Stream Sect with that very name. Bowing his head, he looked around to see all the other Inner Sect disciples in the area doing the same.