

Emperor 4321

Chapter 4321: Crossing

“Everything is withering?” The group carefully observed the surroundings and felt something similar akin to the start of autumn.

“Try again, be meticulous.” Li Qiye smiled.

Wang Weiqiao immediately let his mind roam free, sensing every inch of the land and everything above - each blade of leaf and the individual grain of sand.

The others realized that the sect master was teaching Wang Weiqiao. They also did the same thing and copied him.

As they moved forward, they got a better idea of the devastation unleashed upon this place. This prompted Li Qiye to sigh.

During the olden days, the land was fully blessed and empowered. In fact, even the heavenly corpses falling down didn't affect this place.

The culprit was a dark existence wanting a piece of the pie - the blood and flesh of the living beings in the nine worlds. Thus, the members of Heavenguard remembered their mission and launched an offense against this being.

The ambush was successful but they paid a heavy price - absolute destruction. Nonetheless, they accomplished their mission and fulfilled their promise. The current remnants weren't enough to tell the world of their sacrifice.

As generations passed, they have forgotten about these heroes. Nevertheless, this wasn't their goal in the first place. They never cared about their reputation and image - only their creed.

“The dao is a journey of the self, no one else matters.” Li Qiye gently stroked the soil and said.

Once they were near the farthest reach, he asked the group again: “Feel anything yet?”

“No, still nothing.” Elder Hu stopped focusing and smiled wryly.

The youths shook their head as well. They tried to feel the land but couldn't grasp anything. They certainly sensed some ripples but nothing concrete, unable to catch this ephemeral moment.

“There is something... struggling underground. It seemed to be suppressed or under supervision.” Wang Weiqiao responded.

“You have mediocre talent but remember, persistence can potentially be more useful than peerless aptitude. Most geniuses die an early death.” Li Qiye smiled.

“I understand.” Weiqiao respectfully replied. He knew that his talent was as bad as can be. Nonetheless, he was set on searching for the dao until the very last breath.

“We're here.” At this time, Li Qiye stopped and looked ahead.

The youths saw that they were very deep into the mountain range now. This place was covered with mist and fog. Dust specks engulfed the sky.

Of course, this wasn't actually dust but rather tiny spatial fragments. Space still hasn't fully healed since the calamity.

They finally got close to the broken peaks previously seen from a distance. The broken half filled up the nearby valleys and ravines.

Time had polished the cracking points. Nonetheless, there were still clues of the power necessary to break them all.

The group stood at the base of one peak and in front of them was a ravine. It had accumulated enough water to become a lake. This water was cloudy and even had a touch of black, akin to dried blood.

Instead of the normal refreshing feeling one would get when coming across a lake in the wilderness, this lake emitted a suffocating feeling as if there was something dirty below.

"So there's a place like this here." Elder Hu has never gotten this far before. After all, it was considered ominous so few dared to come.

"Do whatever you all want. If it's meant to be, there will be a harvest. Otherwise, no need to force the issue." Li Qiye told the youths before sitting down in front of the lake.

Elder Hu didn't know what he wanted to do but still told the disciples to leave: "Come with me."

Only Wang Weiqiao remained with Li Qiye.

"Master, what are you doing?" He saw Li Qiye performing a hand seal.

"I'm helping lingering souls find peace since they are worthy." Li Qiye answered before starting to chant. His mantra echoed in the air.

His goal was to ferry the warriors who died protecting this place. Their soul and intent couldn't leave since they still wanted to protect the nine worlds after death. They have lingered here for eras now.

This obsession became their prison. They needed someone else to cross them to the other side.

Thus, Li Qiye came in order to grant them eternal rest. He was the only one who could do so. Another priest or monk would find this impossible regardless of their power and technique.

Sure, a true master could purify the souls but that couldn't be considered saving them. For example, the butterfly monarch was a supreme existence who could forcefully remove these souls from the land.

Alas, she knew that only Li Qiye could deliver salvation to these men.

Meanwhile, the ward was rocked by exciting news.

"The young lord is participating this time!" A master from a small sect with a strong information network said.

"Who? The young lord of Dragon?" Listeners became emotional.

“Yes, it’s different this time. I think someone from the capital of Lion’s Roar is coming too.” The master added.

“Could it be.... The behemoths want to emphasize the conference again?” Everyone talked about this topic.

“Do you think anyone else is coming? Maybe someone even stronger?” Another speculated.

“I thought that Deer King and the others would be in charge, I can’t believe that the young lord is coming.” An elder said.

“As far as I know, there is a big shot from Dragon already here at the ward, this conference will be quite something.” One sociable cultivator had access to more information.

“We need to prepare gifts right now.” Numerous sect masters began planning, hoping for a chance to please these big shots.

This was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. It could change their future and improve their sect’s prospects.

Chapter 4322: Young Lord

They hurried off and prepared the best gifts possible in order to please Dragon.

Another interesting piece of news came during their preparation.

“I heard Gao Qixin’s entry to Dragon is confirmed.” An elder spoke to his friend: “Deer King is the one doing the introduction. A big shot will be taking him in, not just as an outer but rather, an inner disciple.”

“He’ll become an inner disciple of Dragon?” The small sects were shaken again.

“Maple Ravine is set for the future then, it’ll definitely prosper.” One sect master became jealous.

“Yes, given his talent, he could become someone important in the future, maybe a protector or even an elder.” Others shared the same sentiment.

The members of the small sects always had dreams of joining the behemoths. It would completely change their fate.

The small sects didn’t consider this poaching and in fact, encouraged it, hoping to ride the chosen disciple’s coattails.

In reality, this disciple could completely forget about their previous sect. Nonetheless, the sect’s neighbors would need to think twice before doing anything foolish. All in all, the benefits couldn’t be overstated.

“Send gifts to Maple Ravine, we need to try and have an audience with Young Noble Gao.” The small sects changed their plan because this was a more doable approach.

They compared Gao Qixin to Deer King, thinking that this had even more potential. Deer King started as an outer disciple and had limited authority. Nonetheless, the smaller sects certainly feared him. Both the Du and Eight Demons have benefited from his protection and help.

On the other hand, Gao Qixin had the potential of becoming a protector or elder in Dragon. Building a good relationship with him right now was of utmost importance.

A while later, one of the rumors was confirmed.

“The young lord of Dragon has arrived!” Most were shocked because they didn’t expect him to come so early.

“I’m sure there are more big shots coming.” A sect master speculated.

The young lord’s arrival was too sudden and made everyone think that the conference this year was somehow special.

“Hurry, we need to greet him properly!” The disciples of the ward became as busy as can be.

Other small sects also dropped everything in order to join the ceremony. Thus, the base of the mountain range became bustling.

Numerous cultivators lined up outside in order to wait for the young lord. This was especially true for those from Dragon.

They wore ceremonial robes and stood in orderly formations. They were clearly trained well and intimidated everyone nearby.

“What an impressive display.” The youths were in awe after seeing so many people.

“We’re talking about the young lord of Dragon. It’s an honor to see him in person.” A sect master explained: “See that group over there? They’re outer disciples. If they somehow gain his attention, they might be able to become inner disciples instead and fly through the ranks.”

“It’s more than that. He’s the son of Peacock Monarch, his bloodline is extremely prestigious. He’s definitely the frontrunner for the successor position.” An old man from a small sect quietly said.

“Really? The future ruler of Dragon?” Listeners shuddered as a result.

“Yes, he has the crystal dragon bloodline. The current sect master of Dragon has high hopes for him.” A sect master said.

“So his chance of becoming the next sect master is rather high...” It didn’t take long before people forget about Gao Qixin and focus on the young lord instead.

This young lord’s official title was Crystal Dragon. His father was Peacock Monarch, the current sect master of Dragon.

Dragon was the second strongest sect in Southern Desolace. Some believed that it was catching up to Lion’s Roar in recent times due to the latter’s gradual decline. Joining his banner would guarantee a bright future.

“Deer King is right there.” Someone shouted and the crowd stared in that direction.

A middle-aged man walked out of the ward. His eyes were bright and he had a rather tiny antler growing from his head. There was a noteworthy aura exuding from him.

“Deer King.” Members of the smaller sects greeted him right away.

He was famous in this region, starting as a wild deer and eventually ending as an outer disciple of Dragon. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that he could decide the fate of the smaller sects.

Walking behind him was none other than Gao Qixin. The youth walked proudly with his chest arched forward, looking quite spirited. After all, his dream of joining Dragon has come true.

With the help of Deer King, Gao Qixin might be able to make a good impression on the young lord. That would truly pave the way for success.

“Rumble!” Suddenly, explosions came from the horizon. Banners started becoming visible.

This group traveled with the might of a celestial legion. The area shook violently as a result.

The inexperienced youths became aghast after seeing this incredible display of power.

“So this is the style of a great power...” One of them took a deep breath and tried to calm his shaking knees.

Chapter 4323: Dragon Saintess

“Boom!” A great elephant appeared before them.

The troops alone were intimidating enough and put everyone to shame. This elephant was even more impressive, capable of changing the landscape just by moving. Its aura could be felt far ahead.

“...” The youths had a hard time keeping their composure while feeling this aura.

“The young lord has arrived, kneel three times and kowtow nine times.” Deer King shouted an order to the crowd.

Many got on their knees without hesitation but others didn't feel the same way.

Three kneels and nine kowtows signified the highest ceremonial gesture. The former group was willing to do so because he was the young lord of Dragon. Not all felt the same way. They believed that this worship rite was reserved for their ancestors or supreme cultivators. They didn't mind just kneeling and bowing; the full rite was just too much.

“What are you waiting for?!” Deer King's expression soured.

If he could get all the small sects to do this, it would result in a magnificent spectacle. The young lord would love it so this was his chance to curry favor. Those who didn't follow the order antagonized him.

“It is fine to keep it simple for the young lord's arrival. No need to mobilize everyone, others will only laugh at us.” An elegant voice could be heard as a young woman appeared with a maid behind her.

Eyes lit up after her appearance. She wore a green dress and had a dual-bun hairstyle kept together by phoenix pins. She was as pure and transcendent as a lotus flower, capable of soaring above like a phoenix. Her voice was mysterious yet pleasant.

Her beauty was simplistic and timeless, having no need for thick makeup and jewelry.

The maid standing next to her was none other than Miss Ming who had backed Li Qiye up before.

“Saintess.” Deer King didn’t dare to be impudent so he bowed.

“Saintess?!” The audience took a deep breath.

“She’s the saintess of Dragon?” An old sect master whispered.

“That’s her, I didn’t expect to see her here.” An elder who had seen her before responded.

“Saintess.” The crowd bowed to greet her.

“So she’s the one in the rumor, she’s been staying at the ward.” A clan master commented.

Most had no idea that she was already here and in charge of the ward. They assumed that Deer King and his peers had administrative responsibility for this conference. This has been the case for a while now - outer disciples being in charge.

However, she didn’t show herself so they didn’t know about her presence.

“Wait, so the saintess is that new sect master’s backer?” A youth became startled.

“Maybe.” A friend answered as she stared at Miss Ming.

“How did he manage that?” Another found this unfathomable.

“No wonder why he dared to kill Eight Tiger Demon. What’s so special about him?” One more became jealous.

The saintess was a prestigious character, only slightly inferior to the young lord of Dragon. Moreover, she appeared friendly on top of being a beauty. To be in her good grace was the greatest fortune, hence their jealousy towards the sect master of Little Diamond.

Gao Qixin was trying to climb up the young lord’s branch. Alas, the crowd preferred to be in Li Qiye’s shoes instead.

After the greeting ceremony, the front curtain of a white canopy placed on top of the elephant’s head was pulled to the side, revealing a sitting youth.

He looked spirited with lightning eyes. There were faint dragon roars around him. Something bulged out of his hair - obviously a dragon horn signifying his noble blood.

He was indeed a top genius. Alas, he paled when compared to his father - Peacock Monarch. The latter was a once-in-a-thousand years genius and has become a top cultivator in the current generation.

“I hope you’re doing well, Junior Sister Jian.” He smiled at the saintess.

They were martial brother-sister but weren’t from the same branch. The young lord’s cultivation came primarily from his father while the saintess, Jian Qingzhu, belonged to a major demon branch in Dragon.

In the present day, her seniors were weaker than the dominating Peacock Monarch. However, her lineage wasn’t inferior in the slightest.

An ancestor of hers was Sacred Luan, a great bird demon who eventually evolved into a phoenix. This played into her being the current saintess of Demon.

"It's been a long trip, Senior Brother, please come in." She slightly nodded and stuck to formality.

The young lord looked around and the crowd became frightened of his pulsing eyes. They immediately lowered their head, not daring to meet his gaze.

Both he and the saintess were untouchable existences due to their power and background. They had no choice but to be subservient and respectful, one step short of prostrating on the ground.

"Only a bunch of nobodies?" He lost his enthusiasm after surveying the crowd.

Today, he wanted to show the great powers his supreme style by taking over the conference. Alas, there were only tiny sects participating. The whole thing became pointless, akin to a dragon posturing before a bunch of ants.

Of course, none dared to challenge his contemptuous attitude. Offending him meant death and potentially sect destruction.

"You're a little early, Senior Brother. Others will soon arrive." She said.

Chapter 4324: The Heir Of Lion's Roar

Putting his contempt aside, the smaller sects certainly found the young lord's arrival exciting. Moreover, the saintess herself was here in person.

The conference became grander than before, a sign of Dragon treating it more seriously. This became a main topic for the crowd.

They wondered the reason behind this. Were these two youths here on their own accord or under orders? Was there something special about this conference?

In the next several days, the larger sects send experts and even grand characters to the conference. It could be due to the appearance of these two youths.

Soaring Feather School, Flow Gate, Ice Immortal Peak... These top powers sent disciples and even those from the last generation to the conference.

This made the ward far livelier than before, completely packed with carriages. Those from the great powers always traveled with great fanfare.

Normally, the yellow rooms were packed because weaker sects were the primary audience of the conference. The higher-level rooms had fewer visitors until today.

The administrative disciples working at the ward lost their haughty attitude as well. They enthusiastically greeted the newcomers.

After all, they were just outer disciples and now, the big shots from their sects were finally coming.

The members of the smaller sects became nervous and fearful. The newcomers were powerful and overbearing. They needed to be careful lest they invite unnecessary trouble. Thus, though the place became exciting, it also became far more dangerous.

Another piece of information was leaked by an unknown person - the arrival of the heir of Lion's Roar.

This news shocked both the weak and great powers alike.

"The heir?" A listener shuddered.

This news erupted like unexpected thunder. Though the conference was started by the Supreme Monarch, Lion's Roar rarely sent big shots after the conference's decline.

Some believed that Lion's Roar was on a downward slope and that Dragon was catching up. Nonetheless, it was still the behemoth in Southern Desolace.

This went beyond the appearance of the young lord and saintess from Dragon. Lion's Roar's heir's influence exceeded both.

After all, that young lord only had a strong possibility of succeeding. As for the chosen heir? It was only a matter of time.

"So he is an actual crown prince?" A youth asked, not aware of Lion's Roar's political system. After all, it was too distant and out of reach.

"The crown prince can be the heir, but not always. Lion's Roar doesn't have a strict hereditary tradition. An actual crown prince might not become the next ruler." A sect master explained.

"Ah, I see." the youth understood.

A member of a larger sect chimed in: "The current heir is a member of the side branch, not the main royal branch."

"A member of the side branch can still be the successor?" This surprised the listeners.

"Lion's Roar has a different system than most. The heir just needs to have the bloodline of the Chi. In fact, the current heir has only been decided recently. He has gained both the recognition of the royal clan and the approval of the Ancestral Divine Temple." The guy went on, willing to divulge more information.

"He already got the temple's approval?" A sect master became startled: "Then he will really become the next ruler of Lion's Roar."

The temple's seal of approval meant that this heir's status was absolute. It didn't matter that he wasn't the son of the current king.

"He'll be in charge of the entire region." One youth murmured.

The young lord of Dragon couldn't compete with this. He might not become the successor of Dragon. Plus, Dragon was still inferior right now.

Lion's Roar has been in charge of Southern Desolace for eras. Therefore, the small sects became emotional.

They could finally see the future ruler of the land - truly an honorable privilege.

"This branch, if climbed successfully, will give a lifetime of benefits." An elder said.

Nonetheless, this could be the hardest task. Many were willing to think about pleasing and bribing the young lord of Dragon. This wasn't the case for the future ruler of Lion's Roar.

Chapter 4325: Billowing Fog

It has been a long time since the ward had this many visitors. Of course, this was still far from being comparable to its golden years.

The first was personally presided over by the Supreme Monarch. The subsequent ones had the presence of top masters working together. The greatest visual phenomena and auras in the world were seen here.

Nonetheless, this was still a momentous event relative to the conference's current state.

However, the newfound excitement was interrupted by something strange tonight in Myriad Sect Mountain.

"Boom!" Earthquakes alarmed everyone in the ward.

"What's going on?!" They woke up and got out of bed, feeling the constant explosions and quakes.

"Something big is happening." They rushed out of their rooms.

Some personally flew; others rode beasts, treasures, and banners. They wanted to see what was going on deeper into the mountain range.

Everything intensified to its limit before black fog billowed out of the source. One could hear screams and roars along with various noises of battle.

"What the hell?!" The black fog scared the hell out of the spectators. They hurriedly rushed back to the ward.

"Clank! Clank! Clank!" Warning gongs were struck.

All the buildings in the ward lit up and sent out rays, eventually forming a massive barrier. It served as a dam to stop the billowing fog.

"Boom!" The ward was being affected from within. Something sealed seemed to be awakening deep in the mountain range.

"What is that?" Everyone became startled. The young ones from the smaller sects felt their legs trembling and turned pale from fear.

The ghastly noises from the fog scared the hell out of them. Nonetheless, the presence of so many top cultivators made them feel safe enough not to turn and run. Alas, they didn't know that these cultivators were frightened as well.

“Don’t be afraid, the Supreme Monarch had left behind a suppressive power at the ward. It has been blessed by countless sages, no evil can get through.” An expert roared, giving himself courage along with everyone else.

This gave the mass enough hope because sure enough, the barrier was stopping the fog from expanding.

“Yes, the Supreme Monarch erected a divine altar here, it will automatically activate against any evil that dares to show itself.” An expert from a great power revealed.

The crowd thought that the barrier must have come from this so-called altar.

“I see, there’s a divine altar here.” Many heaved a sigh of relief.

The Supreme Monarch was the ultimate being in their mind. They believed that her altar could destroy gods and devils regardless of how strong they were.

“But what is it though?” A minor from a small sect still asked while staring at the fog.

“It might be an evil artifact.” Her sect master whispered.

“They sound like the wailing souls of evil creatures after death.” An expert could hear the cries and speculated.

“Perhaps. There might be darkness buried beneath this land.” A big shot of a great power added.

“Rumor has it that during the great calamity, darkness descended to destroy the world. A mighty cultivator from Heavenguard Mountain retaliated and destroyed this darkness. Unfortunately, the mythical sect went down as well. Could this fog be the previous darkness?” An elder said.

“Didn’t you just say that the darkness was destroyed?” A youth questioned.

“Who knows what actually happened, it’s just a legend. But if we are to believe it, then there might be darkness still buried underground. It’s finally surfacing after countless eras.” The elder shook his head.

“I hope not...” The youth turned pale and said: “Wouldn’t that mean the end of us here? Shouldn’t we start running?”

“Where do we run?” The elder continued: “That darkness wanted to destroy the entire world. Insects like us will die no matter where we are.”

The young ones from the weaker sects were horrified. One of them suggested: “Maybe we should leave the ward first.”

“Stop being nervous? Look, the barrier stopped the fog already.” A disciple from a great power snorted: “Plus, when the altar of the Supreme Monarch fully activates, it’ll annihilate this thing.”

His confidence successfully put the crowd’s mind at ease.

Nonetheless, it was a sleepless night for many. When they woke up, they saw that the fog was still only billowing deeper in the mountain range, unable to get through the barrier. It seemed that the latter was truly effective.

Another development happened in the morning. This one was favorable.

“The heir has arrived!” Listeners heard this and felt much better.

The heir was obviously powerful and with him here, everything should be fine. Moreover, if the situation were to deteriorate somehow, he could summon many experts from Lion’s Roar.

“Why didn’t we receive any command about a reception?” One youth questioned. No one knew about his arrival at all.

“His Highness is keeping it simple, traveling in a regular outfit.” An elder heard about this from somewhere.

“Really?” This surprised both the members of weak and strong sects.

This was due to the previous precedence - the arrival of the young lord from Dragon. All the sects had to come out and kneeled. He also brought a powerful battalion along too.

Chapter 4326: Plan

Though the heir of Lion’s Roar traveled without fanfare, his reputation still eclipsed the young lord of Dragon.

Though Lion’s Roar was on a path of decline, its status in the south was still unshakable. Dragon couldn’t replace its position in everyone’s heard just yet.

Therefore, the heir’s arrival became the main conversation topic in all the camps. No one from the small sects had seen him before. Alas, the majority spoke of him with reverence.

Meanwhile, the young lord of Dragon initiated a meeting regarding the black fog.

“The darkness is emerging to destroy the world. It is our responsibility to stop it.” His voice echoed across the ward: “Deliberation is necessary in order to activate the divine altar and seal it once more into the depth of the mountain range.”

Everyone heard him clearly.

“This is correct.” A young sect master felt optimistic about this command.

After all, the activated barrier could destroy the fog, saving all the sects in the southern region.

“The altar is created by the Supreme Monarch herself, I don’t think the young lord alone has enough power to activate it.” An expert from a great power quietly said.

A peer from a different sect replied: “That’s why he sent out the message earlier, he wants everyone to lend their power for the activation.”

“He’ll use this to build his reputation too.” A disciple from a prestigious clan commented.

“Shh, stop talking.” A senior shushed him right away.

The disciple couldn’t help but speak: “I’m just stating facts. Dragon has been challenging Lion’s Roar for a while now, especially after Peacock Monarch’s rise and matchless nature...”

The disciple was correct. Under his leadership, Dragon became a force to be reckoned with while coming straight for Dragon's Roar.

Now, the young lord of Dragon wanted to lead the crowd. This seemed rather understandable.

"He has to beat the heir if he wants to lead Southern Desolace." A fellow clan member responded: "This is the perfect opportunity since both of them are here. A mountain can't have two tigers. The young lord took the initiative to start, wanting to prove that he's superior..."

"Enough!" The senior scolded: "It'll be problematic if others hear this conversation."

Ultimately, the young lord's decision was analyzed in secrecy by virtually every sect present.

"So the young lord and saintess of Dragon came first, then the heir of Lion's Roar came too, I think this won't be so simple." An elder from a small sect speculated.

"Right, they never sent any big shot here before. So is the conference viewed as a contest for the two behemoths?" The sect master replied.

The smaller sects' information network was far lacking compared to the upper echelon. Nonetheless, they still caught wind of the current contest between the two behemoths. This could decide their fate so they tried their best to ask for more information.

"It's best not to comment. All I know is, when immortal fights, mortal suffer." An old elder whispered: "Just watch quietly and don't pick a side, otherwise, we'll be dead without a burial. We're nothing more than air in this contest."

Older cultivators usually exercised prudence and didn't dare to be reckless. After all, the countless smaller sects in the south were mere insects compared to the behemoths.

All in all, the sudden meeting stirred plenty of speculation and gossip. Nonetheless, all sects still participated on time.

Both the small sects and the great powers needed to give Dragon face. As for the former, this wasn't an actual choice. They had to participate lest risking an early death.

At the major field in the ward, the representatives of the great powers sat on top. The ones from the small sects have arrived long ago but waited below.

Of course, they had no say in this matter and were only present to add to the atmosphere.

The saintess of Dragon was here early as well, standing next to the main seat. She had ordered disciples to arrange the various logistics of the meeting.

Though she wasn't as famous as the young lord, she was still highly praised. This was especially true among the young generation where she had many male fans.

Most importantly, she was polite and attentive to all sects. Her non-discriminating conduct was well-received.

"Crystal Dragon Young Lord has arrived!" A powerful cultivator roared.

A battalion from Dragon entered the field. A fierce aura made everyone gasp but then, they remembered to start cheering and clapping.

The young lord walked powerfully onto the stage and only stared at the crowd with disdain.

“His aura is insane.” Putting his attitude aside, both his fans and haters had to admit that he was mighty.

He climbed up the platform and sat down on the main seat. He then waved his hand and said:

“Gentlemen, no need for formalities.”

Everyone else sat down and stared at him. He didn’t speak right away.

“The heir of Lion’s Roar isn’t here yet.” Someone in the audience noticed something and whispered.

All the sects have gathered for this meeting initiated by the young lord of Dragon yet the heir wasn’t here. This made people more sure about the unspoken contest between Dragon and Lion’s Roar.

“Gentlemen, I summon everyone here for an important matter.” The young lord didn’t wait for the heir and continued: “Darkness has emerged from the deeper in the mountain range. We must work together to suppress it.”

Others exchanged glances. They already knew that he wanted to use the altar. However, activating it seemed improper when the representative of Lion’s Roar wasn’t here. After all, it was built by the Supreme Monarch of Lion’s Roar.

“Your plan is correct, young lord.” Deer King was the first to speak up for his master: “The darkness knows nothing of mercy. We are willing to follow you as you take the vanguard against the storm.”

If his master could become the next ruler of Dragon, his status would soar as well.

Gao Qixin didn’t miss this chance either. He stood up and said: “Young Lord, you are insightful and benevolent, only thinking about the wellbeing of the world. Maple Ravine wishes to represent the smaller sects of Southern Desolace in support of you.”

It wasn’t easy for him to enter Dragon so he wanted to flatter the young lord for a brighter future. Some of the smaller sects voiced their support.

Alas, a few thought differently and became worried. They didn’t want to get involved in this political struggle between Lion’s Roar and Dragon.

In the case of war, those who picked a side would be the first to suffer. Thus, they refrained from saying anything.

Gao Qixin at least had a backer right now in Dragon. They, on the other hand, had no roots and joining this mess was too risky.

Chapter 4327: Who Opposed?

Deer King and Gao Qixin acted as representatives of the smaller sects without questioning them. The rest didn’t have the chance to voice their stance since it was too late.

To refuse right now was to blatantly insult the young lord, risking punishment from Dragon. Thus, even those who wanted to remain neutral couldn't say anything.

The young lord smiled while seeing the lack of opposition. Of course, he didn't actually care about these smaller sects. Their plan and strategy didn't take these sects into account in the first place.

Nonetheless, this was a great starting point thanks to Deer King and Gao Qixin. He was awfully pleased.

"We appreciate your noble intention, Young Lord. Soaring Feather School will share the burden." A girl sitting on the top platform spoke. She wore a phoenix dress and had plenty of treasure ornaments covering her with their radiance.

This beautiful noble was none other than the daughter of Soaring Feather School Master. She was quite powerful after learning her father's art.

Her school was a great power in Southern Desolace. Though it couldn't compare to the behemoths, it still wielded ample influence. Thus, her words carried far more weight than Deer King or Gao Qixin.

"Soaring Feather is indeed a pillar of the world." The young lord has been waiting for this.

Everyone knew that Deer King and Gao Qixin merely tried to flatter him. Now, Soaring Feather School's attitude was considerable support.

He alone had no chance of activating the divine altar. However, if he could somehow garner the support of the other great powers, he would become the leader of the young generation and surpass the heir of Lion's Roar.

More minor powers voiced their support afterward. This didn't matter in the grand scheme of things outside of adding to the young lord's momentum.

"I don't like this." A youth from a small sect whispered.

The young ones were smart enough to know that they were merely being used as stepping stones by the young lord. Their only value was to make the meeting more official and exciting.

Because of this, they could be used and abandoned, completely helpless to the young lord's whim. This was not a pleasant feeling to have. Alas, their seniors remained stoic and stopped them from acting out.

"Flow Gate will also toil for this great cause. We shall help you activate the divine altar." The young lord of Flow also revealed his stance.

Flow Gate was about as strong as Soaring Feather, being the second great power to support Crystal Dragon Young Lord.

Putting aside Dragon's ambition of taking over the south, everyone could see the young lord's desire of becoming the leader of the young generation.

After all, his father was mighty and overshadowed the experts of Lion's Roar. As the saying goes - with a distinguished father, the son is sure to do well. He didn't want to fall behind, wanting to make a name for himself by surpassing the heir of Lion's Roar.

"We shall support you, Young Lord." Weaker great powers began to voice their support as well.

Nonetheless, many still chose to be neutral. Though Dragon and the young lord had all the momentum right now, Lion's Roar has been the leader for too long. Thus, its authority remained in the heart of these cultivators. Dragon couldn't replace it just yet.

"Perfect, I appreciate your help, gentlemen." The young lord had achieved his goal today despite the neutral group. He had enough great powers on his side to activate the altar without a problem.

He laughed and continued: "We shall be remembered today for our contribution to the world. Gentlemen, I propose a toast, we shall activate the altar tomorrow."

His plan has been carried out perfectly and the heir of Lion's Roar was still nowhere to be found. His mood couldn't be any better.

On the other hand, some of the neutral parties found this quite strange. The young lord's goal was obvious for all to see yet Lion Roar's heir was nowhere to be found.

Did the heir want to give up already? Did he think that he was inferior before actually trying?

"No, we can't activate the altar!" However, someone rudely interrupted his gloating moment.

The voice wasn't particularly loud. It's just that this was a crucial moment and someone actually stepped up to oppose the young lord. It erupted like thunder in the listeners' ears.

"Who is it?!" The majority searched for the speaker.

At first, they all assumed that the speaker was none other than the heir of Lion's Roar. He was the only one with enough authority and influence to challenge the young lord.

Alas, they saw that it was an old man with a hatchet hanging on his waist.

The majority didn't recognize him. They scanned his cultivation and found him to be extremely weak.

"Who is he?" This confused everyone - a nobody daring to oppose the young lord? How suicidal.

"Wait, I know, he's from Little Diamond, right?" An elder from a small sect quietly said: "The least-talented cultivator in that sect, Wang Weiqiao. He had joined for a century now and is still weaker than a novice."

"Is he insane?" This frightened the audience.

"He can be suicidal all he wants but he'll drag his sect down with him like this." One sect master said.

The small sects were afraid of being dragged into this mess and kept a distance from Weiqiao, acting as if they didn't know him. What the latter had done was verbally slap the young lord in the face. The consequence was rather obvious for both him and his sect.

Chapter 4328: Opposition

"Who are you?" The young lord's eyes turned cold and flashed intimidatingly. His aura came crashing down with the force of a tsunami.

It smashed Weiqiao with the force of a million pounds, intending on forcing him into submission.

Weiqiao trembled due to his weak cultivation. Alas, he was still someone chosen by Li Qiye so the pressure couldn't take him down.

His bones started creaking, on the verge of crumbling. Death seemed imminent. The only thing that remained calm was his heart and unwavering gaze.

He was not afraid at all despite waves of intense pain flowing through him. He stood proudly with his spine unbent, arching his chest to meet the aura directly. Getting down on his knees was unacceptable. His unshakable dao heart was the thing propping up his faltering body.

"Wang Weiqiao of Little Diamond Gate." He enunciated properly in spite of the pain.

"Hmph." The young lord uttered coldly: "State your intention." His aura then intensified.

Weiqiao staggered backward as a result, feeling as if there were a thousand mountains pushing down on him. It nearly broke his spine and forced him to bend forward.

Such power was unbearable for someone of his shallow cultivation. He felt as if his internal organs and bones were being crushed.

Beads of sweat dripped down his forehead and moistened his robe. Nonetheless, the only thing on his mind was to stand proudly, never yielding regardless of the outcome. His face turned red then purple as a result.

Members of the small sects gasped, wondering if they could withstand this aura. The young lord alone could destroy their sect with a single hand wave.

However, everyone was utterly impressed with Weiqiao for not getting down on his knees. The guy was nothing more than an insect compared to the stronger cultivators in the crowd.

They thought that he would give up right away instead of lasting this long. Some even wanted to cheer for him for accomplishing something so extraordinary.

Alas, they didn't dare to vocalize their support lest they offend the young lord.

"We can't activate the divine altar." Weiqiao uttered each word.

"This is not your place to speak, impudent fool. Kick him out!" Deer King roared, not wanting this nobody to ruin the atmosphere.

It also showed their inability to maintain the order of their own territory. This would ruin the young lord's favorable impression of him or worse, he might even be considered responsible.

"Leave." Gao Qixin stood up and ordered.

Weiqiao continued onward: "The conference allows everyone to participate, I am an invited participant, you can't expel me."

"Hmph!" The young lord's expression soured. Everything was going according to plan until now.

Deer King and Gao Qixin could tell that he was annoyed. They had to do something soon.

“So you prefer the hard way instead!” Gao Qixin roared: “Babbling nonsense and disrupting order, kicking you out isn’t enough.”

Members of the small sect found him detestable. Not long ago, he wanted to befriend Li Qiye. Now, he climbed on the branch of the young lord, looking like a sycophant.

“The correct punishment is death.” Deer King said, wanting to finish this as fast as possible.

“Very well.” Gao Qixin became murderous and said: “Death is the punishment for your impudence.”

Having said that, he reached for Weiqiao.

The smaller sects didn’t try to stop this due to the risk of offending the young lord and Dragon.

The great powers didn’t do so either. Their experts thought that Weiqiao was only an insect. No need to make the young lord unhappy over such an insignificant being.

Qixin nearly reached the target but in this split second, ripples appeared in space. His hand was repelled and the force made him stagger backward.

This development caught everyone off guard. Who stopped Gao Qixin and went against the young lord?

“Who?!” Both Gao Qixin and Deer King couldn’t believe it.

“Why not let this fellow daoist speak?” A pleasant voice answered them. The one who saved Weiqiao was none other than Jian Qingzhu who was sitting on the top platform.

Chapter 4329: I’m Here

The crowd exchanged glances of confusion. Jian Qingzhu was the saintess of Dragon and in theory, she should be supporting her senior brother.

Wang Weiqiao was blind enough to oppose the activation of the altar and go against the young lord’s plan. Death was the expected outcome for this insignificant being. It wouldn’t affect anything at all.

Strangely enough, she stopped Gao Qixin and gave the stage to Wang Weiqiao instead.

Despite being confused, the weaker cultivators didn’t dare to comment on this issue. As for the members of the great powers, their curiosity has been piqued.

Some remembered that Li Qiye, the sect master of Little Diamond, had climbed up her branch. This might be the reason why.

“This doesn’t make any sense. Why would the saintess antagonize the young lord over this tiny sect?” One sect master whispered.

The smaller sects themselves understood how valueless they were. She should be focusing on Dragon’s goals instead of helping Little Diamond.

“Yes.” Gao Qixin lowered his head. He naturally wanted to work for the young lord but didn’t want to offend the saintess either.

“You’re too kind, Junior Sister.” The young lord spoke without showing any emotion.

Qingzhu then spoke with a friendly tone: "Fellow Daoist, why do you insist that we mustn't activate the altar?"

Her amicable attitude earned her a favorable impression from the small sects. They have been oppressed so far and endured disdain. No one from a great power would show them any respect, let alone a saintess like her. Nonetheless, she still addressed Weiqiao respectfully as "fellow daoist".

"My master is ferrying lost souls in the mountain, he is in total control. He'll send all of them to the other side eventually so there is no reason to activate the altar. It will only disturb him." Weiqiao elaborated.

"Are you talking about Young Noble Li?" She asked.

"That's right."

"Nonsense." The young lord uttered coldly: "The darkness is an ominous sign, a disaster. What is this crap about ferrying souls?"

"Yes." Deer King chimed in right away: "Fellow Daoist Wang, the young lord is toiling for the sake of the world and its inhabitants. Leave now, don't be unreasonable."

Weiqiao shook his head and said: "I am not talking rubbish, my master is indeed ferrying the souls. Just wait a bit and they'll disperse. There is no darkness."

"Ridiculous!" Deer King raised his voice: "I'm sure this so-called ferrying is nothing more than a ruse. You must have some devious plans with the darkness, that's why you wish to prevent the young lord from activating the altar."

"That's a baseless accusation." Weiqiao retorted.

"Then why do you insist on stopping us when the darkness is right outside? You're afraid that when the young lord subdues it, your devious plan will be revealed. I see, your sect must have been the one to summon the darkness in the first place!" Deer King sneered.

"Deer King speaks with logic." Gao Qixin jumped in: "Myriad Sect Mountain has been fine all these years. I believe that this whole event is because of Little Diamond's attempt to summon the darkness and borrow its power."

Some actually thought that Gao Qixin was making some sense. The conferences have been uneventful in the past. Now, black fog came out of nowhere and Wang Weiqiao mentioned his master ferrying lost souls and to not activate the altar? This was too much of a coincidence.

Assuming that Little Diamond was guilty, they would definitely want to prevent an activated altar.

"We need to investigate this just in case some are conspiring with the darkness against Southern Desolace." The golden daughter of Soaring Feather said seriously.

"Dragon shall protect Southern Desolace at all costs." The young lord said heroically: "We shall annihilate anyone who dares to harm this land."

He spoke with righteousness as if he was the leader already. Wang Weiqiao and Little Diamond served as great stepping stones to build up his prestige and reputation.

If Little Diamond was actually conspiring with the darkness, he would be able to lead and destroy it. But on the other hand, even if it wasn't, he could still destroy it and gain further reputation. This tiny sect could be destroyed without posing any risk.

"I agree." The young lord of Flow stated his stance.

The other great powers didn't say anything whether they agreed with him or otherwise. Little Diamond wasn't worth their effort.

"What evidence do you have? My master is doing no such thing." Weiqiao strongly denied.

"I'll capture you first for an interrogation." Gao Qixin knew just what to do.

"Clank!" He summoned an iron chain and threw one end towards Weiqiao.

The latter's expression changed. He immediately leaped backward but Gao Qixin was far stronger. The chain flew around him and left him no room to escape.

"Clank!" Suddenly, someone else grasped the chain and pulled hard.

"Ahh!" Qixin bellowed in pain as blood gushed out of him. His arm had been ripped out of the shoulder from the sheer force.

"?!" Deer King and the others shouted.

"The likes of you dare to bully my disciple?" The newcomer spoke.

A person walked out of the black fog - none other than Li Qiye.

"Master!" Weiqiao was glad to see him.

"The new sect master of Little Diamond." Those from the small sects recognized him.

"That's him?" Members of the great powers found him to be too ordinary, not a master capable of ferrying lost souls.

"Are you insane?! How dare you harm someone during the conference? Surrender now!" Deer King roared.

"Is that so?" Li Qiye approached the stage with a relaxed demeanor.

"Young Lord, he must be the mastermind behind this! Please, avenge me and exterminate his clan!" Gao Qixin shouted, enraged after losing his arm.

"You deserve death for saying this." Li Qiye smiled.

"The young lord is right here! He'll exterminate..." Gao Qixin bellowed.

Chapter 4330: Deer Crushed

Gao Qixin didn't think that Li Qiye would dare to kill him in public, especially not in the young lord's presence. That would be suicidal.

"I see." Li Qiye teleported in front of him and raised him up in the air by his throat. The crowd had no idea how he did it; they only saw Gao Qixin's face turning red.

He kicked his legs and struggled but it was useless.

"Ss-save me!" He finally uttered two words and asked for help, feeling the presence of death looming.

"Stop!" Deer King unleashed a palm strike of the lightning affinity. He was indeed an expert from Dragon.

The powerful strike caused dust and stones to fly everywhere. He was clearly far stronger than masters of minor sects.

"Is he suicidal?" One of them shouted.

The conference was presided by the young lord of Dragon on top of numerous experts. However, Li Qiye still dared to attack Gao Qixin - a new member of Dragon. Deer King alone should be able to kill him.

"Boom!" Li Qiye simply used his other hand to stop the incoming palm strike.

"Crack!" At the same time, he strengthened his grip and wrung Gao Qixin's neck.

The victim's eyes were wide open with unwillingness and disbelief. He has just become a member of Dragon; his future was so bright. Alas, death stopped him from enjoying his potential.

The scene became silent right away. Some spectators' jaw nearly dropped to the ground, especially the smaller sects and members of Little Diamond.

This was nothing short of a challenge of war against Dragon. Mediation became impossible.

The consequence of opposing Dragon was obvious for the smaller sects - destruction. They thought that Li Qiye had sealed both his fate and his sect's.

"I wonder why so many have this blind confidence when going against me?" Li Qiye chuckled, tossed Gao Qixin's corpse to the side, then wiped his hands.

This left the audience speechless. He was still feeling so nonchalant in spite of what he had done before the young lord.

"Xin'er!" The master of Maple Ravine screamed. It wasn't easy for his sect to groom such a capable genius.

Gao Qixin was going to be an inner disciple of Dragon. This made their sect's future awfully bright. Alas, all of their efforts were in vain because of Li Qiye.

"Deer King, please, uphold justice and avenge Xin'er!" He begged Deer King for help.

All eyes were on Deer King now, waiting for his next move.

Of course, Gao Qixin was introduced to the sect by Deer King. There was no way Deer King would take this sitting down.

“Enough of this!” He was furious and channeled his vitality. The initially small antlers on his head grew larger and became awfully sharp.

“Crackle!” Lightning crackles could be heard as black clouds appeared above the pair of antlers. Lightning bolts could be seen by the spectators.

“He has one foot in the myriad-form realm now.” Weaker sect masters became startled.

As for members of the large sect, they weren’t affected in the slightest. Myriad-form wasn’t considered a top cultivation realm in their sect. Many top youths were already in this realm.

However, it should be said that Deer King didn’t have as high of a starting point. This was impressive in that sense.

“Villain, today is your last!” He lowered his head and aimed his antlers forward, thrusting energy blades of the lightning affinity at his foe.

Alas, when they got close enough, Li Qiye easily clasped them.

“What?!” The spectators, both weak and strong, couldn’t believe it. They thought that this was an unfair fight due to the gap in cultivation.

However, Li Qiye easily stopped the attack with his bare hands.

“Goo-!” Deer King crazily roared and released his fate palaces. They poured out dao power and vitality into the antlers.

Lightning bolts coursed through the pair and assaulted Li Qiye. This was an attempt to break free from his grip. Unfortunately, the shaking antlers couldn’t break loose. The lightning bolts were useless as well.

“You brought this on yourself.” Li Qiye smiled and added a bit of force.

“Crack!” He easily broke the antlers.

“Nooo!” Deer King let out his last word because Li Qiye went on to split his head into two halves. His brains splattered everywhere as a result.

Some of the youths in the crowd had never seen such violence before and became nauseous. Female disciples of the small sects closed their eyes, no longer wanting to see the corpse.

Silence and astonishment took over the stage. Various emotions could be seen on faces. For example, the young lord’s expression became quite ugly.

“It’s over, a storm is coming.” The leader of a small sect nearly pissed in his pants.

He and his peers thought that Li Qiye had done messed with the beehive. Their sects might be in trouble as well.