

F.D Emperor 1421

Chapter 1421 Reunions (IV)

"Are you sure about this?" Yu Cai asked. "They are asking for more than 25 spots — even more than us." The Dao Opening Sect planned to send 11 candidates: Wang Wei and one member from the nine clans and one from the sectarian faction.

Wang Wei calmly looked at the projection before him: "It's okay. These people from the temple haven't realized that a large number means they will have a target on their backs."

"Hmm, the demon race probably won't stay and watch as their enemies cultivate 25 new Paragons," Yu Cai nodded.

"Not just the demon race — the other Overlords won't stand for it too," Wang Wei added. "We have the second largest number and are responsible for the ceremony, so we will also be a target. Be prepared."

"Won't you be there?"

"I'll do my best to protect everyone, but I have my own plans, and something tells me this trial will not be simple," Wang Wei acknowledged.

"In that case, we should prepare ways to protect our investment," Yu Cai nodded. All the people chosen are talents, meaning it's one thing to lose them if they fail the Paragon Tribulation, but something else if they die before even having a chance at the tribulation.

"By the way, how much of the Holy Dragon Water do you want me to buy?"

"By as much as possible until the temple tries to take advantage of us," Wang Wei replied before further elaborating. "Take things slow in the initial discussion to avoid appearing too desperate. Then, after we've bought a large quantity, they'll try to raise the price to an absurd level — you can stop then."

"Alright, I understand."

Wang Wei nodded, "I know you're wise, and I shouldn't have to tell you, but I decided to do so just in case. Don't get involved in the dispute between the demons and the Innate Demon Gods."

"No, no, you don't have to worry about me," Yu Cai replied. This kind of decision is a hot dragon lung; he would not touch it with a foot-long pole. His greatest desire is to do a good enough job as sect master, then he can use the sect's luck to become a Paragon.

"That's good to hear. Oh, I forgot to ask you: are you entering the trial?"

"No, my foundation is not deep enough, so I'll wait until the lock is gone and I'm more prepared before attacking the Paragon Realm," Yu Cai replied.

"It's a good choice to be cautious. If the situation didn't call for it, I would also like to take more time," Wang Wei admitted. They soon ended their conversation since Yu Cai was busy, and Wang Wei had a feeling more of his old friends would come to visit. However, the next visitor was quite unexpected.

"You're Hua Xue, right? The Demon Suppressing Emperor's wife?" Wang Wei asked.

"That's...That's right."

"Weren't you captured with her?"

"No, she hid me before they took her away," Hua Xue replied.

"Have you been hiding ever since?"

"That's right."

"Hmm, you're either quite lucky or quite capable," Wang Wei commented. He sipped his tea. "And you're here for?"

"I...I received a letter from Wa'er: she asked me to ask you for help."

"The chances of Hong Wa sending that letter undetected is almost zero, meaning the Qin Dynasty allowed her to send the news. Are they trying to lure me into saving her, turning the incident into a contradiction between the two Overlords?" Wang Wei calmly analyzed.

"You don't need to worry about her," Wang Wei said. "In the future, the Qin Dynasty will have no choice but to negotiate with me, and I'll ask for her return as part of the deal. She'll probably lose her Human and Heavenly Emperor Position by then, but she'll be alive."

Hua Xue opened her mouth and closed it as she did not know what to say.

"Before then, you can stay in this sect and wait for her return."

Hua Xue mustered the courage: "How long will that take?"

"This is a waiting game, so we're talking thousands of yuan epochs — if not more."

"But what if something happens to her beforehand?"

"Then that's her fate," Wang Wei replied calmly but coldly.

"The fact I'm even willing to help is a testament to my good nature," Wang Wei said. "Most people would not even offer you asylum."

"But —"

"You're a smart woman," Wang Wei cut her off. "So you should understand the complexity of confrontation between two Overlords. Do you think my friendship with your wife is enough to fight the Qin Dynasty for her?"

Hua Xue was silent.

"The fact I'm even willing to help is a testament to my good nature," Wang Wei said. "Most people would not even offer you asylum."

"I...I understand."

Wang Wei summoned Wang Qi to settle this woman while he was left to his thoughts. 'If she were an Emperor, I would have given her a chance at the trial, and in the unlikely chance she could become a Paragon, she could have attacked the Qin Dynasty and caused them trouble.' Without their ancestors, Qin would have suffered from the attack of a Paragon. Sadly, Hua Xue was just a Dao Ancestor.

'After losing her Human and Heavenly Emperor Position, Hong Wa's potential will be drastically reduced and probably not worth any investment,' Wang Wei analyzed. 'However, isn't this an interesting story? After having her talent forcefully taken, she grew rapidly and avenged the people who made her suffer.' Wang Wei smirked.

'Normally, a faction such as the Qin Dynasty is too powerful for such a story to occur, but the upcoming catastrophe will reshuffle the board, and Great Qin is not immune to this reshuffling. So, maybe there is a chance for Hong Wa after all.'

All Wang Wei needs to do is save Hong Wa and invest a little in her start-up, and she may contribute enormously to the downfall of one of his competitors. 'She is still worth investing in.'

Wang Wei waved his hand to summon someone: the sealed Wrath. He looked her in the eyes: "I have an opportunity for you to save your master's descendants. Do you want to hear it?"

"What opportunity?" Wang Wei explained the Mortalhood Trial to her, along with the danger.

"I'll take it," Wrath said without hesitation. Although she was only an Emperor and her chances of becoming a Paragon on that trial were slim, she still wanted to try. After all, she was close to the Empyrean Realm; hence, it was not completely impossible.

"Excellent choice," Wang Wei nodded before calling someone to situate her. After dealing with Wrath and Hua Xue, he had the urge to recruit some talents from the lower dimension. So, he used his talisman to contact two people: Xiao Songxi and Yang Guowei.

"You look terrible," Wang Wei said as he looked at the disheveled Yang Guowei.

"And you look tired," he added to Xiao Songxi.

"Did you contact us just to mock us?" Yang Guowei asked.

"I'm not that bored," Wang Wei replied. "I came with an offer."

"You want to recruit us?" Xiao Songxi asked.

"That's why I like talking to smart people," Wang Wei said. "For you, Yang Guowei, I offer you two choices: be somewhat free and become a Guest Elder of the Dao Opening Sect, or offer your service to me and become an official member with all the perks."

"Can you save my mother?" Yang Guowei asked immediately.

"What's wrong with her?"

"She handed her soul to the Undead Phoenix, and once he died, the backlash almost killed her. I tried my best to save her, but her soul was severely damaged, and only Paragon Tier resources can save her."

"I would have to see her to say for sure, but it doesn't appear to be something that a few pills cannot heal," Wang Wei nodded.

"So, you'll help me?"

"Depends," Wang Wei replied. "If you choose the first option, I'll provide you with a platform to get the pills you need. If you choose to serve me, I can get the pills from my resource reserve and lend them to you."

"I choose the second one," Yang Guowei said. Although his pride hurt to serve as someone who was once his equal and competitor, none of that mattered in the face of saving his mother. Additionally, Wang Wei has long become a legend that has far outpaced everyone in his generation.

"Good, come to the sect, and we will sign the contract," Wang Wei nodded. Whether it is Yang Guowei or Xiao Songxi, both have the potential to become peak Paragons if cultivated correctly, so it was worth investing in them.

Wang Wei ended the conversation with Yang Guowei and focused on the former ruler of the Baishe Clan.

"Something tells me you have something else in mind for me," Xiao Songxi said.

"Why didn't you join the sea or demon race?" Wang Wei asked. The Sea Race is divided into one top lineage, with one Primal and the rest who choose to join the demon or the Innate Demon Gods.

"I've had close experience with how the Sea race sees foreigners like myself," Xiao Songxi sneered. His former experience is why he would rather suffer as a loose immortal than cozy up to either of these factions.

"Understandable," Wang Wei nodded. "Do you remember how you asked if you could get a second chance at becoming an Eternal if you made a big enough sacrifice?"

Xiao Songxi's eyes squinted. "I do."

"Well, I have a way to test this out, and I want your cooperation for this experiment," Wang Wei revealed. He wanted to know if he could use his new mastery of the [Existence Blueprint] to give people a second chance at walking the Eternal Path, and his experiment would start with Xiao Songxi.

"You told me this process would require the sacrifice of a Paragon," Xiao Songxi replied.

"Yes, and I'm prepared to pay all the costs for the experiment," Wang Wei nodded.

"I can agree, but I have a few requirements," Xiao Songxi replied after a brief contemplation.

"I'm all ears."

"My request is simple — it's about my family," Xiao Songxi added. "Whether this experiment is a success or not, I want you to care for my family."

"That can be arranged."

"Both my family must be Emperors," Xiao Songxi continued. "It's fine if my mother is an ordinary Emperor, but my sister must receive the best training — you must do your best to train her into an Eternal."

Wang Wei groaned softly: "I can do my best, but you should understand that such a thing is not guaranteed."

"I just want it in writing that you will try your best," Xiao Songxi added.

"That's fine by me," Wang Wei nodded. Eternal Emperors were not as difficult to cultivate as in the lower dimension due to the vast and varied resources available in the upper dimension. So, he can use his authority to give Xiao Songxi's sister the best resources, inducing rare things that can change her talents.

"Good, I'll come sign the contract to make it official."

Chapter 1422 Reunions (V)

Xiao Songxi nodded in satisfaction with the contract's content and signed it without hesitation. "I'll be in your care from now on, Lord Wang Wei."

"No problem," Wang Wei nodded. "Go and prepare for the trial. You won't enter with the Dao Opening Sect but with the group of loose cultivators lucky enough to raise the ticket price."

The Dao Opening Sect had many people, and Wang Wei did not want others to put a target on them, meaning he wouldn't bring Xiao Songxi or Yang Guowei directly with him. He also reckoned that other factions would do the same.

"No problem, but can I ask you for a small favor?"

"Depends on what it is."

"It's nothing major," Xiao Songxi said. "I just wanted to know if it was possible for you to allow me to see my family in the lower dimension."

Wang Wei immediately shook his head: "Before the lock is gone and that person is dealt with, direct communication from the upper dimension to the lower is impossible."

"Is that so?" Xiao Songxi felt it was a shame, but this was not something he or anyone else could change. Wang Wei had someone take care of him while he waited for his next guest, which was Mongke, Dulgun, and three other barbarians.

"You don't look too good. Is the injury still an issue?" Wang Wei asked.

"I may have gone a little overboard during that fight," Mongke smiled wryly, and Dulgun snorted coldly at him.

"I may be able to help," Wang Wei said. "Hold on." He pinched a few hundred acupoints in Mongke's body, and suddenly, all the healing pills he previously took started to take effect, and his aura grew at a steady pace.

"This!" Everyone was shocked except for Wang Wei. He did not just hit random acupoints but directly affected Mongke's [Existence] to enhance the effect of all the Existence Healing Pills he previously took. Such divine application was made easy with his newfound ability to see people's blueprints.

"There is still time," Wang Wei said. "If you use the best Time Acceleration Array, you may be able to return to your peak before the trial."

Mongke sighed deeply, "I guess I'll add this to the list of the things I owe you." Wang Wei just smiled.

"Let's get back on topic," Mongke continued. "I came for the trial, especially to know whether it will be effective for pure body refiners like myself."

"The records we have said it works for body refiners, but it's not the primary target. I guess whatever resources this trial has are mostly for Qi practitioners, and a tiny percentage are for body refiners."

"So, it won't be a waste of my time?"

"Probably not, and even if there are no resources, it is still a place where you can cultivate normally."

"That's true," Mongke nodded. He was on the fence about this trial, primarily due to his injuries. Now, he only saw the benefits with no disadvantages. The Barbarian Clan paid in full without using their connection with Wang Wei to ask for a discount. Mongke quickly returned to the clan to heal before promising Wang Wei they would reunite at the trial.

The next person who visited Wang Wei was Hong Meiling or his future wife's future disciple. She came to complain that someone had looted the Origin Seal Continent's treasury of all its Existence Healing Pills. Wang Wei promised her and the continent as many places as they wanted but ultimately decided on up to five members. Wang Wei had a few decades of peace before his next guest, allowing him to improve his injury.

'What a strange combination,' Wang Wei thought when he saw Tong Ruobing, Mu Lei, and Yin Gen together. However, a quick reminder of their factions, and he knew why they were together. Wang Wei was about to welcome them with a smile when he noticed something.

"Don't you have to explain yourself?"

"I knew I couldn't hide it from you," Tong Ruobing sighed before raising her hand to release a golden light—she had a first-level Golden Body of Merit. It made sense since she was the Heavenly Queen in the lower dimension and had significantly developed Talisman Dao for the entire lower dimension. So, it was only a matter of time before she could condense this body, and with the help of her faction, this time could be accelerated.

"I didn't know," Tong Ruobing explained. "I was enthralled by a project, and the association purposely did not tell me about the ceremony."

Wang Wei looked her in the eyes, and it seemed she was telling the truth. Regardless, he still said: "Even if I am the Chosen One, the responsibility of saving the world falls on everyone's shoulders. I will not sacrifice my life or happiness while you lots sit and watch. Understand?"

"I understand," Tong Ruobing nodded, feeling uncomfortable that she was spoken to like a child who had made a mistake. Regardless, she understood the situation and kept quiet.

"Good, now that you are, there is a way for you to do your part," Wang Wei continued. "Where is the blood from that Abyss Creature?"

"Hmm."

"Is something wrong?"

"I've handed it to the association," Tong Ruobing responded. Wang Wei looked at her, having figured out a few things with this brief exchange. "That blood is one of the keys to our liberation, so tell your association to prepare to sacrifice it."

"Don't worry; we understand when to consider the overall situation."

"That's good. Well, for what purpose do I owe this visit? I'll tell you in advance that I will not be giving any discounts."

"I know very well how cheap you are," Tong Ruobing sneered. "I'm here about our Dao Path Tablet. Is it in your hands?"

"If you're talking about the copy I got from Blood Dragon, then yes, it's in my hands," Wang Wei nodded.

"The copy?"

"That's right."

Tong Ruobing glanced at him, unable to decipher whether he was telling the truth. "What about the original? Where is it?"

"Probably in the hands of the Southern Chu Dynasty," Wang Wei responded. "By the time the Barbarian race and I raided Shu Ren's treasury, they had already plundered a lot."

"And you expect me to believe that you — of all people — allowed them to take your treasure without fighting back?" Tong Ruobing asked.

"I didn't have a choice, did I?" Wang Wei countered. "They have the new Paragon, Jimin, as their backers, and more importantly, these bastards seem to have some connection with Great Qin. I was planning to deal with them later, but they were not exactly at the top of my priority list."

Tong Ruobing frowned at this news; it revealed much but could also be a trap since it came from this unreliable bastard. "Well, thank you for telling us this news." She decided the association needed more extreme means to locate their treasure. Ultimately, it would not matter whether it was in the hands of the Dao Opening Sect or the Great Qin Saint Court — their association was prepared to wage war to get it back.

"I'm glad I could help," Wang Wei said with a smile. "Is that all you wanted to inquire about?"

"That's it."

He nodded before focusing on the two quiet body refiners. "Long time no see, guys."

"Yes, it's been a while," Mu Lei replied, but the taciturn Yin Gen only nodded.

"More than 10,000 Yuan Epoch," Wang Wei reminisced. "Well, we can talk later — let's focus on business first. Are you guys representing the True Essence Lineage?"

"That's right."

"Hmm," Wang Wei muttered. The True Essence Lineage was created by the Body Ancestor from the Myriad Emperor World. During the Golden Ear, they were on track to become one of the Overlords, but they made a powerful enemy on the verge of annihilating them. The Body Ancestor, a peak Paragon at the time, made the ultimate sacrifice to protect his lineage by allowing them to turn his potent fleshly body into a Primal Tier Puppet. With the puppet, the lineage survived their catastrophe. However, the Body Ancestor's soul entered reincarnation, and to this day, they have never found him. Since that event, the True Essence Lineage's luck seemed to have depleted, and they never became one of the Overlords. "What brings you to see me?"

"The elders sent us to check whether this trial has any effects on pure body refiners," Mu Lei stated.

"You're the second person who asked me this question," Wang Wei replied before telling them the same thing he had told Mongke.

"If what you said is true, it may not be worth investing too much in this trial," Mu Lei commented.

"That's for you to decide," Wang Wei shrugged. "However, if you want, I can allow you to exchange the ticket with your famous Concentrated Essence Dew."

Mu Lei glanced at him. Concentrated Essence Dew was the best resource to help body refiners open the Gate of Flesh, so he understood why Wang Wei would want access to it.

"I can relay this news to the elders and let them decide," Mu Lei said.

Chapter 1423 Reunions (VI)

'Is the True Essence Lineage about to rise?' Wang Wei contemplated. With two talents like Mu Lei and Yin Gen, it's not out of the ordinary to say their faction is about to flourish. 'It seems that Grand Dao has curved the development of pure body refiners after the second True Transcendent, so it's not guaranteed they will rise. Hopefully, Grand Dao will be less strict with them; otherwise, their fate will be the same.'

If Grand Dao doesn't relent, the best that will happen to the True Essence Lineage is that their faction will come close to a transcendent faction but fail to reach that level truly — just like they did in the Golden Era.

'If I want to understand enough about [Essence] to build the fourth gate, the knowledge of the sect might not be enough. So, I should start investing in the True Essence Lineage,' Wang Wei planned. 'The most direct way to what I want would be to find out where the Body Ancestor's soul was reincarnated. His disappearance could be an accident during the reincarnation process or the secret machination of the Yama King or someone else. Once I become a true [Earth Emperor], I may be able to find out and exchange that information for all their knowledge.'

Wang Wei nodded in satisfaction; he knew how to treat their lineage in the upcoming catastrophe. He waved his hand to send a talisman to Yu Cai about acquiring the Concentrated Essence Dew; this thing could be essential for his next plan.

'I'm tired of drinking tea and wine, so let's change the meeting location,' Wang Wei thought before walking out of his room. There was a small pond in his backyard, and he decided to fish. The pond only looked small on the surface but had an entire dimension full of different creatures. In just a few hours, Wang Wei caught a few rare Sea and Demon races.

"This is too easy and not as fun as I thought," Wang Wei complained. "In that case, let's make it interesting." He pointed at the pond, and his Dao of Fate and Luck enveloped it. With a grin on his face, Wang Wei threw his fishing rod into the pond. The thin line disappeared from the pond and appeared in the Blue Dress Universe in the Limitless Exchange Hall's territory.

No one saw this thin rod line as it penetrated the defense of the best Empyrean Lineage of that area and hooked itself into a scroll.

"Caught something?" Wang Wei yanked the rod to pull out the scroll. "A sword technique? It's quite decent for an Empyrean Technique." Although this thing was useless to him, it was better than nothing. Wang Wei cast his rod a second time, but his luck was not so good, and he only caught a bottle of Emperor Pills.

"Now, this is how fishing should be done," Wang Wei nodded. He deactivated his luck to ensure his catch would indeed be random. Time passed, and soon, his next guest arrived.

"The famous Infinite Sword Emperor, Jian Wushuang," Wang Wei said without looking back. "No, Sword Empyrean — I'm surprised." Jian Wushuang did not acquire much merit in the lower dimension and only proved the Dao by working for the Rebellion. So, the fact he could become an Empyrean in just 10,000 Yuan Epoch was somewhat of an anomaly.

"Who dare call themselves famous before you," Jian Wushuang said with a smile before sitting beside him. Wang Wei glanced at him and knew why his cultivation was so fast — the destiny of the Ultimate Sword Path. Even though his father was the chosen one, this bastard has been doing his best to tap into that destiny, trying to become the chosen one. Although he failed, he still benefited immensely in the process.

"Who is this beautiful lady?" Wang Wei asked, glancing at the woman accompanying him.

"That's Lady Su Li; she's the most talented descendant of the Seven-Strike Sword Sage," Jian Wushuang introduced.

"It's an honor," Wang Wei saluted. "I've heard countless praises about the Sword Sage from my ancestor."

"I very much doubt that," Su Li replied rudely. The Sword Path League has 3 Primals, also known as the 3 Sword Sages, but the entire league has a bad relationship with the Dao Opening Sect because Yan Hai holds the title of the greatest swordsman in the world and the Sword Grand Dao Source position.

"I can see you're not very good at political speech," Wang Wei commented, and Jia Wushuang smiled wryly.

"I'm just direct," Su Li replied.

"I guess there is nothing wrong with that. Here — check your luck," Wang Wei handed them each a rod. Although they were confused, they accepted his offer. Wang Wei caught a healing paste that worked only in Tier 3 and below. However, his two guests were quite lucky. Jian Wushuang caught a sword talisman with a strike close to a Paragon, while Su Li caught an Empyrean Artifact that was once a Paragon Artifact.

"Compared to me, you're quite lucky," Wang Wei nodded.

"This is?" Jian Wushuang asked, trying to control the shock in his voice.

"Think of it as a meeting gift," Wang Wei smiled. "Let's get to business. Did you guys just come here to say hello?"

"No, we have official business," Jian Wushuang said. However, he did not follow up with his words; in fact, his expression became subtler, as if he was trying to tip-toe around whatever subject he was about to bring up.

"Well?" Wang Wei asked.

"It's like this: our league noticed the destiny for the Ultimate Sword Path changed owner."

A hint of worry and anger flashed in Wang Wei's eyes but disappeared at the same speed they appeared. "That's right." Jian Wushuang noticed the brief change in his atmosphere and chose his words carefully.

"The Sword Emperor is now the holder, correct?"

"Get to the point," Wang Wei said.

"Our league is wondering how much is she attached to that destiny?"

Wang Wei stopped handling the rod and looked at him: "You want to exchange that destiny with the Sword Emperor?"

"That's right," Jian Wushuang admitted.

"Why would you want to do that?"

"Isn't that obvious?" Su Li butted in.

"The destiny of the Ultimate Sword Path could be the key that raises our league to the next level," Jian Wushuang added.

"You have a point," Wang Wei nodded. However, his intuition told him something fishy was going on. The Sword Path League did not want that destiny only for the sake of their faction's rise; Wang Wei felt there was some kind of secret behind all of this.

"But, why are you telling me this? Shouldn't you wait for the ancestor's return and discuss it with her?"

"Well, you know how bad our two faction's relationship is," Jian Wushuang added. "So, I was wondering whether you could be a mediator."

"Because of our friendship, the best I can do for you is to pass on the message. As for being a mediator? Forget it." There was nothing to gain in this transaction, and Wang Wei guessed his ancestor would not accept this trade, so what was the point in getting too involved.

"We will compensate you," Su Li said.

"I'm not a swordsman, so I doubt most of the things you can offer will entice me."

Su Li was about to say something, but Jian Wushuang raised his hand to stop her. "If I may ask, is your father alive?"

Wang Wei's eyes suddenly turned dangerous: "What's it to you?"

"If he's alive, we may be able to track him down," Jian Wushuang quickly replied.

"Oh?"

"Our league holds the destiny of Sword Dao. With the right price, we can track anyone who has ever called themselves a swordsman and is a citizen of the Eternal Ascension World."

A twinkle flashed in Wang Wei's eyes: "How effective is your search?"

"We may need your help, but as long as he is alive, we can track him down even in other Chaos Worlds."

"That is quite the effect," Wang Wei muttered. This was an offer worth thinking over. "As much as I want to find my father, I also don't want to appear as if I have sold my ancestor for my own benefit. So, you need to come up with something truly exceptional for me to become your mediator."

"This is what we are prepared to exchange for that destiny," Jian Wushuang replied before transmitting the information directly into Wang Wei's mind.

"That is an offer that could tempt her," Wang Wei nodded. "I agree to your conditions, but beware that I do not guarantee success."

"We understand this," Jian Wushuang nodded. The League knows of their terrible relationship with Yan Hai, so they were more than satisfied with someone of this level of influence and power acting

as the mediator. Otherwise, their only option would be to fight the Dao Opening Sect to get what they want.

"Good." The next step was to sign a binding contract to finalize this deal. Wang Wei then arranged accommodations for those two and the other swordsmen from the league that were coming at a later date.

Chapter 1424 Reunions (VII)

Wang Wei glanced at the departed swordsmen. 'Interesting,' Wang Wei thought. 'Who would have thought this little trial would have become the key for the members of my generation to reach the top of the Eternal Ascension World and take power.'

This trial will create countless Paragons from his generation. Once they have the power, it's only a matter of time before they start leading their respective faction — especially since the upcoming catastrophe will force them to grow at an exponential rate.

'However, this is not necessarily a good thing,' Wang Wei thought. The people in his generation are too young, meaning their foundations are not deep enough. Wang Wei could foresee a few of them dying in the upcoming Paragon Tribulation.

'This trial has become a destiny tipping point of this world,' Wang Wei thought as he looked at the sky. 'This is a sign that Heavenly Dao has recuperated enough power and is preparing for the catastrophe. However, isn't celebrating a little too early?' Supreme Unity has just lost a great deal of power, meaning they had time to plan their next move. But Wang Wei did not believe for a second he would give up after planning for so long.

'I may not have as much time as I anticipated,' Wang Wei concluded before returning to his fishing.

Sword Path League's accommodating mountain:

Jian Wushuang thanked the elder who brought him here and immediately stepped up his own formation. He contacted the league and reported the situation.

"All these negotiations and planning are too tedious," Su Li commented. "We are swordsmen. If we want something, we should use our swords to take it."

"Are you suggesting we fight the Dao Opening Sect?" Jian Wushuang asked speechlessly.

"Why not?" Su Li rebutted. "We have already designated them as the greatest threat in the upcoming calamity, so why not ally with others to eliminate them."

Jian Wushuang looked at her incredulously: "This is why the League Master didn't pass the position to you."

"He's just afraid of my direct and efficient operating mode," Su Li countered. Jian Wushuang shook his head. "Did I say something wrong?"

"The Destiny Sword Monarch sacrificed his life to peek at the future, and this is the plan you could devise based on the information he provided?"

"What's wrong with my plan?"

"According to him, Wang Wei's former actions will turn into the power of destiny that will protect the Dao Opening Sect in the upcoming catastrophe, meaning, of all of us, they are indeed the most significant threat, but they are also the ones most likely to survive."

"Hence, why must we eliminate them?"

"Do you remember what the prophecy said about the Origin Seal Continent?" Jian Wushuang asked instead of explaining.

"Without Empress Wu, the Origin Seal Continent will be the first to be destroyed," Su Li replied.

"What else?"

"There is a 90% chance that the Empress will be the next transcendent of the world," Su Li said with a frown. "What does this have to do with the Dao Opening Sect?"

'Damn it, are swords and killing the only thing in this woman's head?' Jian Wushuang complained. "What else?"

"The Origin Seal Continent has a deep karmic bond with the Dao Opening Sect. There is a 70% chance that the bond is a marriage bond. However, this should be nonsense since everyone knows the Empress will not fancy anyone."

Jian Wushuang's lips twitched. "Had you paid attention in the meeting, you would have remembered someone mentioned Empress Wu had a love fate line. Adding the fact that Wang Wei's wife is a perfect copy of her, it's not easy to put two and two together."

Su Li was silent.

"The Origin Seal Continent is weak, but as long as the Dao Opening Sect or Buddhism protects them, it should be enough for Empress Wu to grow to her full potential and return the favor."

"And if we attack the Dao Opening Sect, the Origin Seal Continent will not stand by, meaning we would have to face 6 Primal Paragons — one of which is Empress Wu, who everybody knows to bet on in one-on-one fight, and Sword Empress with the highest attack potency."

"Tell me, in what world is this a good strategy?"

Su Li's face was calm and stoic before she responded: "Ultimately, all of these nonsense plans and schemes are because we are too weak."

"You have never said truer words," Jian Wushuang nodded. "However, before you grow to the level where you can dominate everything with your strength alone, don't repeat these stupid and naive things."

Su Li stared at him and snorted coldly before walking to one of the rooms. Meanwhile, Jian Wushuang massages his temple, demonstrating his frustration. After returning to the sect and league, his talent, ambition, and the fact that he technically survived the Outlaw Trial garnered him a great deal of attention, resources, and power.

However, Jian Wushuang was plagued by the legacy of his ancestor — the founder of the Sword Casting Villa. According to the record, the Sword-Casting Emperor had a smooth sailing life for

most of his cultivation journey, but everything changed after his rematch with the Battle Maniac Emperor.

Since that defeat, all his luck seemed to have run out, and he suffered tribulations after tribulations, drastically changing his personality. The Sword Casting Emperor eventually became the Sword Casting Paragon, but he seemed to have reached the limit of his talent and destiny.

As a last-ditch effort, he started focusing on his title — casting swords. His talent was subpar for the profession of Weapon Refining. Still, the Sword Casting Emperor somehow defied his fate as a last act of defiance and became one of the greatest Weapon Refiners of his era. It's with this ability that he established the Sword Casting Pavilion as one of the core factions of the Sword Path League despite not having a Primal or Peak Paragon.

Unfortunately, the Sword Casting Emperor's personality was genuinely shit, leaving his descendants in a terrible situation during the Seven Moon Era. So, when Jian Wushuang was trying to rise to power in the league, he suffered much resistance due to his ancestor's legacy. As a last result, his faction suggested he used a marriage alliance to close the gap with the other factions.

Jian Wushuang vehemently denied this request. After what happened with Daiji, he forsaken women and love entirely. Unfortunately, some things are beyond his control. His elders talked to the League Master, and without his consent, Jian Wushuang was suddenly stuck with Su Li.

Most of the time, the girl is easy to get along with. She's a proud and powerful swordswoman, and using this commonality, the two can spend years discussing and training with each other. Jian Wushuang's problem is when they talk about different topics.

Su Li's personality is one-dimensional; she only cares about swordsmanship and strength. This personality blends into every aspect of her life, making conversation with her unbearable when it concerns anything other than swordsmanship or cultivation.

'At this rate, I will start drinking,' Jian Wushuang complained. He now understood why so many swordsmen loved to drink. Many troubles that cannot be solved with the sword can be cured with a bottle.

'If only I could have an easy life like Ji Lanfang.' Jian Wushuang and Ji Lanfang are known as the Qilins of the Sword Path League. Technically, there is a third, but the Golden Sword Emperor is considered an outcast in his own faction.

Back to the topic, while Jian Wushuang pursued political power and was more ambitious, Ji Lanfang was more of a pure swordsman, focusing more on his skills and pursuit of the Dao. So, when the league suggested marrying him to a more powerful faction or something along these lines, Ji Lanfang directly rejected them.

'No point in complaining since this is the path I've chosen,' Jian Wushuang sighed. He really didn't know what to do with Su Li. On one hand, he truly needed her help to establish himself, but on the other hand, he could not stand her unless they were talking about swordsmanship.

'Would things be different after I became a Paragon?' Jian Wushuang contemplated. This was unlikely since Su Li's ancestor was a Sword Sage, meaning that this marriage would hang over his head until Jian Wushuang could also become a Primal.

'Maybe I can choose another partner?' He groaned after thinking about this. Firstly, he wanted no partner, and secondly, choosing another partner might cause trouble in the league and ruin his opportunities instead of increasing them.

'I may have to suck it up,' Jian Wushuang thought as he walked to a mediation room. 'Maybe it won't be so bad. Maybe I can learn to love her. Better yet, maybe I can change her.'

He shook his head and sighed. 'Let's not think about this now.' He summoned his sword and started to meditate. He could not increase his cultivation, but there was still room for his strength to improve, starting with increasing his synchronization with his Dao Proving Artifact.

Although Jian Wushuang chose the path of political power, that did not mean he had abandoned his Sword Dao. On the contrary, he understood the necessity for strength even more.

Chapter 1425 Reunions (VIII)

Wang Wei raised his head to look in the direction of the Tianwei Peak or the sect master's personal mountain. 'Normally, when I contact him, he answers immediately. Did something happen?' He sent a talisman to Yu Cai after the league people left but never received any response.

'I guess I'll wait.' Wang Wei focused on this newfound hobby. During his long life, he has tried many hobbies, including drinking tea and wine, cooking, playing chess, wood carving, and a few others, but he never truly kept them. He's hoping fishing will stick.

'While this is fun, I feel the view is not up to par,' Wang Wei thought. He was a man of action, so after finding a problem, he dealt with it. He contacted Wang Qi with a screen floating next to him.

"Are you busy?"

"A little, but what do you need?" Wang Qi asked.

"I need someone to rebuild my garden from the Heavenly Emperor Palace," Wang Wei said. He loved that garden and spent much time there, especially when receiving guests.

"That's not a problem," Wang Qi nodded. "Do you want only the garden built or the palace as well?"

"Just the garden." While the palace was beautiful and a symbol of power and luxury, he preferred the calm and simplicity of his [Transcending Fate Mountain].

"Noted. Do you want an exact replica, or would you mind making some improvements?"

"Hmmm," Wang Wei contemplated. "Show me your improvement design first; if I like it, I'll approve it."

"As you wish."

Wang Wei had to wait more than a year before he met Yu Cai, and during this time, he had already approved Wang Qi's new design, and his garden was ten percent done.

"Did something happen?" Wang Wei asked as he pulled an Emperor Artifact from his pool.

"There are a few matters that may require you to decide," Yu Cai replied truthfully. "However, we can deal with your matter first." Wang Wei glanced at him. Based on his being so supportive and caring, it appeared Yu Cai was about to throw a hot potato that was his responsibility to him.

"Alright," Wang Wei nodded. "After the first defeat of the seven moons, Heavenly Dao purposely opened the secrets of Heaven and Earth to the world. Did our sect take that opportunity?"

"We did," Yu Cai nodded. "The people from the Observing Destiny Hall would not miss such a chance." Wang Wei glanced at a mountain in the distance surrounded by an ethereal mist of fate and truth.

"What did they see?" he asked.

"They saw you," Yu Cai replied.

"Me?"

"Yes, they saw the prosperity and possible downfall of the sect all leads to you."

"That would explain why you guys gave me so much power, and barely no one resisted," Wang Wei commented. Yu Cai smiled wryly but did not add anything to this conversation.

"If the other factions were not stupid, they should have taken that opportunity," Wang Wei continued. "Is there a way for us to find what they detected?"

"Hmm, that's a tricky question," Yu Cai replied. "We have a few key spies in their midst, and if we sacrifice them, we might be able to get some information. The question is whether it's worth sacrificing them for this news."

"That is indeed the question," Wang Wei agreed. He was interested in whatever secrets the Sword Path League hid but hesitated whether it was worth sacrificing such key assets. These spies might serve a better role later in the catastrophe, so sacrificing them now might not be worth it.

"Let's take things slowly for now," Wang Wei decided. The league's secret might be useful, or it might be something only significant to them. So, Wang Wei chose to wait, and maybe, there will be a better chance to discover the truth later on.

"Alright, what trouble have you encountered," Wang Wei asked.

"As you know, all the clans have a main branch and countless side branches," Yu Cai said.

"Unfortunately, I've encountered some trouble with the Yan Clan. I don't know if you know this, but

one of their branches — the Sword Branch — has enormous power in the clan because they have inherited part of the ancestor's sword talent and were even trained by them. The only reason they haven't become the main branch is their lack of numbers."

"I've heard about them," Wang Wei nodded. Red Mask has been lazing in the past few years. "What seems to be the problem?"

"It's regarding the spot for trial," Yu Cai explained. "The main branch has chosen their candidate, but the Sword Branch vehemently denies the choice and wants someone from their branch."

"Isn't our sect's motto about meritocracy? Have their candidates battle it out, and the most powerful one will have the spot," Wang Wei responded casually.

"They did that, and the Sword Branch won," Yu Cai said, his voice containing a hint of carefulness. "However, Patriarch Yan Duyi has used some clan and sect rules to ensure his branch received the spot and denied the battle's result. Now, the Sword Branch has been pressuring me to decide on this matter, and I don't know what to do."

"What did the Great Elder say?"

"She said she was too close to this problem and allowed me to handle it."

"She probably knew you would come to me and wanted to see how I would deal with this situation." Yu Cai smiled wryly after hearing this. He thought the same but he couldn't exactly say anything to the Great Elder.

"So, what do you think I should do?"

"Did Yan Duyi break any rules?" Wang Wei asked.

"His actions, while shameless, were within the rules," Yu Cai replied. That's one of the reasons he couldn't do anything.

"Since that's the case, the spot will stay with him."

"Then, what about the Sword Branch?"

"Tell them that their candidate can disguise as one of the loose cultivators to enter," Wang Wei said. "Now that I think about it, I might need someone to do some dirty jobs for me. Although I have Yang Guowei and Xiao Songxi, I worry about their strength. Tell the Sword Branch that if their candidate agrees to work for me, I'll compensate them."

"I'll relay the message," Yu Cai said excitedly. This issue was resolved, and even the Sword Branch disagreed with this decision; the trouble was no longer his to bear.

"If they agree, provide them with the best disguise method, including the best method to hide from divination and such. I'll need you to provide the same for my two men."

"No problem," Yu Cai said without hesitation. As the sect master, his greatest power was controlling the sect's resources, so it was easy for him to achieve. Not to mention, the laws said that Primal Seeds have almost unlimited access to the sect's resources.

"You said you had issues you wanted me to deal with. What are the others?" Wang Wei asked.

"It's about the Divine Faith Heaven," Yu Cai said. "They are not happy that we ban them from the trial, and they have spent a delegate to discuss this matter."

"Oh."

"...Well, do you want to see them?"

"Yes, send them in," Wang Wei nodded calmly, and Yu Cai basically ran away to notify the guests. Soon, an elderly man with long gray hair and a white beard that reached his knees, gold eyes, and divine aura approached Wang Wei, followed by Divine Zhu behind him.

"Salutation, Prime Seed Wang Wei. My name is Divine Lei, and it's an honor to meet you."

"You are the most polite god I've ever seen in my life," Wang Wei said without turning to face his guest or inviting them to fish with him.

"I understand my young apprentice here was rude to you before, and we came with gifts and apologies." Divine Lei motioned to Divine Zhu, and he flew forward, cupped his hands, and bowed: "I apologize for the way I acted on our first meeting. I was too excited and acted out of character."

"Do you think this is because I got my feelings hurt because you were rude?" Wang Wei asked. "You're a god, and I expect some level of arrogance and rudeness when dealing with you lots."

The tension immediately intensified.

"The issue is you stole from me," Wang Wei added.

"Young Primal, We —"

"There is no need to deny it — I know you did it," Wang Wei said calmly, and Divine Lei sighed.

"We understand how you feel, but you should also understand what that civilization means for us Gods," Divine Lei said softly.

"Then why not build your own?" Wang Wei argued. "The moment you saw them, you had access to my idea. You could have built your own civilization, but you still captured my people and stole every aspect of my idea."

Divine Lei's lips twitched. Who would want to go through all that trouble when there was a more straightforward approach?

"Again, we apologize and will compensate you for your loss."

"The mortal civilization will affect the world in ways you brainwashed gods cannot fathom, so I doubt your compensation is with much in hindsight."

Both Divine Lei and Zhu's complexion turned ugly.

"I will accept your compensation since I don't spit out things that are in my stomach," Wang Wei continued. "But this is far from over."

Divine Lei relaxed his gritted teeth and took a deep breath to calm down: "What do you want? What can we do to gain access to the trial?"

"I understand the greater implications of blocking you from attending this trial, so I won't do that," Wang Wei uttered, making these two breathe in relief. Sadly, their relief was brief.

"The ticket price for your faction will be three times that of everybody else."

"What? That's outrageous!"

"Incense, despite its flaws, is incredible power when you purify it to the limit. It does wonders for healing [existence], so I doubt you lack the resources," Wang Wei said blandly. "So, take the offer or leave."

"You!" Divine Zhu said while taking one step forward. Divine Lei stopped him by putting his arm before him. "We will buy it."

"Happy to do business with you."

Divine Lei looked at Wang Wei's back: "I hope you don't regret today's decision." However, Wang Wei did not answer him; it was as if he was nothing but air. Divine Lei snorted coldly before flying away with his apprentice.

"The Divine Faith Heaven, huh," Wang Wei muttered. He was not targeting these guys because of what happened with the mortal civilization. Although Wang Wei holds grudges, he knows when to put his personal feelings aside for the greater good of the sect. He targeted them for entirely different reasons, which involved his future wife.

According to his calculations, he theorized that the Origin Seal Continent would be the first faction to bear the brunt of the upcoming faction. That's because Wu Hong has the greatest potential and must be tested first, and her faction has the weakest foundation.

Wang Wei doesn't want anything to happen to his future wife or her faction, so he decided to nudge Destiny to target the weaker Overlords. The decision was between the Limitless Exchange Hall and the Divine Faith Heaven, and unfortunately, the latter had offended him, so he chose it.

"It's unfortunate for you, but who made you weak and offended me," Wang Wei muttered. He was already thinking about how he would feed on the carcass of the Divine Faith Heaven and how he should share the spoils with his future wife to increase her faction's foundation.

'I should control myself,' Wang Wei warned himself. No matter what, the Divine Faith Heaven is an Overlord, meaning their destruction will not be a simple thing. In other words, celebrating prematurely was not a wise move.

Wang Wei looked in the distance. 'Most of the Overlords have contacted me, leaving Buddhism, Taoism, the Myriad Clan Union, and the Limitless Exchange Hall. I don't have any connection to the hall, so I wonder whether they will try to contact me.'

Chapter 1426 Reunions (IX)

Yan Duyi slowly approached with what he called his patriarch smile. Anyone who didn't know better would think he was approachable, and those who knew him could tell by his smile that he was in business mode. "Come test your luck," Wang Wei said.

Yan Duyi was perplexed by this strange request, but he still followed. He threw the rod into the pool, and a few seconds later, he detected something and pulled.

"A Samsara Talisman that can temper the mind — it seems fate is telling you something," Wang Wei commented.

"Is the young master dissatisfied with my actions?" Yan Duyi asked.

"Not particularly; it also helped you not break the rules," Wang Wei said casually. Yan Duyi used his patriarch's supreme power to make the decision, and the rules stated that no one could override that power, even the sect master. He also paid many sect merit points to guarantee his lineage's spot.

"Do you think I shouldn't have done it?" Yan Duyi said.

"Why are you here?" Wang Wei asked instead of answering.

"I came to thank you for preserving the rules."

"Don't beat around the bush and say what you truly mean."

Yan Duyi was briefly quiet: "I heard you were wise and wanted your council."

"Oh? What's on your mind?" Wang Wei did not care whether Yan Duyi was telling the truth or whether he was here to test him. However, he did not mind playing these political games to ensure his power within the sect.

"I know what I did was correct, but everyone else is saying or insinuating that I did something wrong, and I cannot understand why," Yan Duyi explained.

"You do understand why — you just don't want to admit it."

"What do you mean?"

Wang Wei put the rubbish catch inside his space ring before continuing: "Let me ask you: do you think Ancestor Yan Hai wishes to turn the Yan Clan into a Sword Clan?"

"...It has been her dream for many years. We have many records of her saying she wants to do so, not only for herself but to show off to the Sword Path League. Unfortunately, fate seems to have denied her wish."

"True," Wang Wei nodded. Instead of inheriting the Yan Clan's swordsmanship talent, the Yan Clan — at least the branch in the upper dimension — have inherited Miscellaneous's talent for professions. After seeing Yan Clan's development, Wang Wei now understood that Yan Liling was not an anomaly, just a manifestation of the upper dimension Yan Clan's talent.

"But do you think that will remain the same forever?" Wang Wei asked.

"What do you mean?" Yan Duyi questioned with a frown.

"The Human Fiendgod Bloodline has opened a crevice on whatever blockade fate has placed on the ancestor's dream," Wang Wei explained calmly. "Although she chose [Origin] as the core of the

bloodline to ensure the other branches have endless possibilities, the Human Fiendgod Bloodline will exponentially increase the number of people with swordsmanship talent. "Once that is established, it is only a matter of time before the Sword Branch becomes the Yan Clan's main branch. You're fighting a losing battle, and you know it."

Wang Wei glanced at him and saw the unwilling look on his face, and secretly shook his head. The Human Fiendgod Bloodline is only the first part of this process. Once Yan Hai becomes a Half-Step Transcendent, it's a foregone conclusion that the Yan Clan will become a Sword Dao Clan.

"Think it's unfair?" Wang Wei asked.

"I wouldn't say such naive words," Yan Duyi replied.

"Then, you're wiser than I gave you credit for," Wang Wei nodded.

"Thank you for your guidance, but I won't stay long." Yan Duyi bowed politely and swiftly left. He had many things to think about. Wang Wei did not stop him as he knew another guest would appear soon. As expected, an elderly man with gray hair, a long white beard, pure black robes, a sword tattoo above his left eye, and a force and sharp aura soon arrived.

"You're Yan Chi, right? Come and see if your luck is better than your patriarch."

Yan Chi was a quiet man, so he followed Wang Wei's instructions without much of a word. "A bag of glittering metal sand? If I remember correctly, this is a great material to use for your Proving Dao Artifact when it's transforming into a Paragon Artifact — it seems you're a lucky individual."

"Primal Seed, I need to know what kind of mission our branch's Qilin Son will face if he accepts your proposal?"

"There are too many people participating in this trial, many of whom are our enemies," Wang Wei replied truthfully. "Although I'm confident the Paragon Tribulation will root out most of them, I can't leave it to chance regarding certain targets. That's where your Qilin Son comes in." Yan Chi contemplated the pros and cons of accepting this mission.

"Are you aware of all the protective measures Yu Cai will provide him?"

"Yes."

"Then, why are you hesitating?"

"Yan Jie is a Peak Seed that we spent a great deal of effort cultivating; we can't send in a suicide mission."

Wang Wei looked at him: "Are you sure you're cultivating a future Peak Paragon?"

"What are you insinuating?"

"How many true life and death battles has Yan Jie experienced? I'm not talking about trials that guarantee his rescue once he's truly in danger. I'm talking about a true battle with no safety net and one wrong move, and he's dead."

Yan Chi had no rebuttal. The Dao Opening Sect closed its mountain throughout this entire Seven Moon Era, meaning its talented disciples only trained with trials perfectly curated inside the sect. Additionally, these disciples were cuddled more due to the era's political climate since the sect could not afford to lose many geniuses.

So, although he did not want to admit it, Wang Wei was correct — Yan Jie was only a false Peak Seed without having experienced true life and death battles with no safety net.

"I know what to do," Yan Chi said. He realized Yan Jie needed to partake in this trial and do an excellent job with the Primal Seed's task, and this is not just for his future but also to prevent Yan Duyi from attacking his Peak Status because of his lack of experience. Yan Chi has already seen the lengths that Yan Duyi is willing to go to preserve the main branch, so he won't give the latter any more ammunition to suppress their Sword Branch.

Wang Wei calmly watched Yan Chi leave. "Besides my future wife faction with only one voice and the Qin Court, the Dao Opening Sect is considered one of the most united factions of all the Overlords. If that's considered united, how complex is the political situation in those other factions? Especially the Grand Sect Alliance — its structure is so bloated that I'm baffled how they haven't imploded from the inside yet."

Wang Wei shook his head, deciding not to focus too much on that. He took a break from fishing and helped with building the garden. Once the construction finished, he enjoyed his peaceful life in this marvelous garden until his next guest arrived.

"Your garden is more beautiful than it used to be," said an ethereal voice.

"Who is this if it isn't the lovely and angelic Shi Qian," Wang Wei smiled. "It's been a while. How are your parents?"

"They're doing well, showing a little too much affection for my liking, but overall, they are happier than before," Shi Qian replied. Wang Wei did not invite her to fish but to a small pavilion in the garden where he served tea.

"I didn't think I would see you," Wang Wei said. The Light Race is doing alright for itself as their clan had a few Paragons, but they were nothing extraordinary and cannot be considered peak lineages. Once they hear the news, they might send a candidate, but Wang Wei did not think it would be Shi Qian, even if they were familiar.

"I 'm not here to represent the Light Race," Shi Qian said, having understood the implications of his words.

"Oh?"

"The Limitless Exchange Hall," she explained.

"Interesting. I was just wondering about you guys, thinking how I didn't have any acquaintances connected to them," Wang Wei smiled. Shi Qian sighed. In the hall, she is not mediocre but also not excellent. After reuniting with her parents, she was satisfied with life, and cultivation became less of a priority. If not for the constant danger of the cultivation world, Shi Qian might have retired from the world and lived in isolation with her parents.

"I am indeed here because I know you," she admitted.

"On what business exactly?"

"The hall wants to know if you would lower the price," Shi Qian stated. "As you know, we have a lot of people, but resources are scarce. Many of our members want this opportunity, and we are spreading ourselves thin trying to buy tickets."

"To be honest, I made the price so high because of your large numbers," Wang Wei admitted. "You should understand we cannot allow you to train so many Paragons."

Shi Qian said, "I knew this would happen, and I told them that." She shook her head: "Is there any way we could come up with a deal of some sort?"

Chapter 1427 Reunions (X)

"You guys have no rare resources, and your only advantage is your vast number, and that has nothing to do with me," Wang Wei commented. "However, because of our friendship, I can allow their hall to exchange the tickets with things of equal value."

"That's good enough for me," Shi Qian said excitedly. The Existence Healing Pill is rare enough, so it will benefit the Limitless Exchange Hall immensely if they can replace them with things of equal value.

"Don't get ahead of yourself," Wang Wei added. "The deal is only for your hall's inner members."

"That's still alright," Shi Qian said after a brief hesitation. Any cultivators not associated with a faction can be considered part of the Limitless Exchange Hall, as they can come and receive missions and rewards. However, the hall has internal members that they cultivate at a young age, similar to other sects or families — those are the inner members. Of course, outer members with enough talent can also become inner members, but they will forever bind themselves to the hall.

"I'm glad we could come to an understanding," Wang Wei smiled. The two chatted for a few hours before Shi Qian left. With this deal, she secured a spot for the trial and increased her status in the hall, so she left with happiness in her stride.

'Is there a way for me to turn the Limitless Exchange Hall into the sect's cannon fodder for the upcoming catastrophe?' Wang Wei was greedy, so he did not want to just survive the catastrophe but to do it with as little loss as possible, and if he could turn the hall into his own personal mercenary group, such a thing would be possible.

'This idea is a long shot, but it's not out of the realm of possibility,' Wang Wei contemplated. 'The greatest value of the Limitless Exchange Hall is the trust of all loose cultivators.' The Overlords have tried to limit the hall's power by establishing similar groups catering to loose cultivators. With their abundant resources, the Overlords should have run the hall out of business, but unfortunately, loose cultivators have one thing in common — a distrust and hatred for sects or clans. So, this approach had little impact and was ultimately considered a failure.

'If I can eliminate one of both of their Primals and install a puppet of my own, it's possible to use that trust to access the loose cultivator base. Then, I can slowly turn them into cannon fodders with the lure of strength, power, and resources.'

Wang Wei frowned. This plan sounds feasible except for the part about training a Primal as a puppet. Wang Wei is confident of one day being a Primal, but he also understands this is a process that will take time. Furthermore, becoming a Primal and cultivating another Primal are two entirely different things.

'I still have a second spot for the revised Lord's Shadow Technique,' Wang Wei's eyes lit up. The technique the Shadow Ruler gave him allowed the cultivation of two shadows. 'I was keeping it for when I reunite with Wang Ju, but I have a feeling she may not need it.'

Wang Wei looked in the distance. Shi Qian was a good investment for the puppet, given their former relationship, but Wang Wei had already detected her lack of ambition or even the desire to improve. 'I'll observe her for a while, but it's probably best to choose another candidate.'

Wang Wei continued his peaceful life: he enjoyed his beautiful garden, fished, and healed his injuries. His next guest was a beautiful woman in a red dress with phoenix designs and a handsome young man with a third-eye marking on his forehead and a confrontational aura. Even the woman had an air about her as if she came to fight.

"You're as noble as I remember," Wang Wei praised.

"And your mouth is as sweet as ever," Huo Fenghuang replied. "I'm just telling it as it is," Wang Wei rebutted. "Look, my garden is brighter just because of your presence."

"Tone it down — don't forget you're a married man."

"Haha, who knew you had a sense of humor," Wang Wei laughed. "Come, have a seat. And who is this young man staring at me with daggering eyes?"

"That's Wang Fuxuan," Huo Fenghuang introduced.

"Oh, a distant relative."

"I'm not your relative," Wang Fuxuan said coldly.

"Quite the animosity, isn't it?" Wang Wei said calmly.

"He's the most talented genius of the Wang Clan in this generation, and his pride does not accept your fame and prestige has surpassed his," Huo Fenghuang said casually.

"You!"

"Best talent, you say? Let's see," Wang Wei glanced at him up and down: "Peak Everlasting Empyrean, 10th Heaven of the Adult Fiendgod Realm, Limit Indestructibility, Five-Root Dao Foundation, Emperor Taboo Battle Realm, but a failure of the Empyrean Taboo Battle Realm despite coming close. A soul compared to 92% Paragon and a Paragon Tier Willpower — he's not bad indeed."

Wang Fuxuan looked at him with clenched hands. As soon as Wang Wei started speaking, he tried to hide all his information, but it was pointless. Those calm gray eyes seemed to be able to see all his secrets, and that idea chilled his back.

"I warn you that you weren't comparable to him, but you didn't believe me," Huo Fenghuang said. Wang Fuxuan glanced at her and immediately calmed down, entering a peaceful state, not perturbed by his emotions. It's almost as if his previous reaction was on purpose.

"Not bad. Although still inexperienced, he has potential," Wang Wei praised. Wang Fuxuan's age was probably hundred times his, but it was true that the latter's experience paled compared to Wang Wei's measly 10,000 Yuan Epochs.

"So, what brought you here?" Wang Wei asked.

"I came here for two reasons: one personal and one official," Huo Fenghuang said. "Let's start with the official. Our union would like to make a deal with you."

"I'm listening."

"One of our people once attended the Mortalhood Trial, and so we would like to trade our information for an increase in quota and a price decrease," Huo Fenghuang stated directly.

"You've caught my attention," Wang Wei said. "Is this information detailed enough, or are you selling the most basic information I can probably deduce myself?"

"Although we will keep a few secrets to keep an edge, the information is detailed enough."

"That's good to hear," Wang Wei nodded. "How many spots do you want, and how much are you willing to pay?"

"The same as the demon race — 25 spots, and we will pay two pills per ticket."

"It seems the union's information network has its means," Wang Wei stated as he gave her a knowing glance. The contents of his deal with the demon race should have remained secrets, but there appeared to be a leak somewhere.

"We have our methods," Huo Fenghuang replied calmly.

Wang Wei did not dwell on this news for now. "I have no issue with the 25 spots, but the price has to be four pills."

"Let's agree to 3 pills and not waste time."

Wang Wei chuckled: "I like your directness. Well, fine by me." The two then created a contract and overviewed the fine print before each signed it, with their respective lineage's luck as a guarantee.

"So, what was the personal objective you mentioned?"

"I want to fight you," Huo Fenghuang said seriously, catching Wang Wei slightly off guard. "Why do you want to fight me?"

"I know I'm not your match, but that doesn't matter," Huo Fenghuang admitted directly. "I met a promise in the lower dimension to follow your footsteps all my life, even if you leave me far behind. I want to fight you to see the gap between us."

"Interesting," Wang Wei commented before looking at her genuinely. "Huh? Even more interesting."

"What did you see?" Huo Fenghuang asked. She has always been proud of her Heavenly Eye as she had pushed that technique to new heights. However, when she looked at Wang Wei, all she saw was a gray fog. She could not read any information whatsoever, so she wanted to know if he could read her.

"Although your cultivation is only 71%, and you have just barely opened the Gate of Power and achieved Limit Indestructibility, your Battle Realm seems to have reached 9-fold. More importantly, you've already found your path to the Taboo Battle Realm."

"You can even see this?"

"It's quite an ingenious approach. By fusing your Five Bloodlines to create a brand new creature — a brand new bloodline — your original bloodline will not only sublimate but, in the process, a new characteristic will be added to your [Existence], allowing you to tap into higher power.

"How did you think of this?"

Huo Fenghuang was briefly quiet before she sighed deeply: "It came to me while I was playing with my Grandmist Wheel. I created five species with my bloodline, and in the process, I thought of truly fusing them into a new and better life form."

"It seems fate has smiled upon you," Wang Wei nodded. "I have to say, I didn't expect that out of all the others from the lower dimension, you would become the one with the highest prospect."

"Oh?" Those words may not mean much to someone else, but Huo Fenghuang knew Wang Wei was not the kind of person to praise others for nothing — well, unless he's trying to con you.

"All of them seem blinded by this trial's opportunity to turn them into Paragons as swiftly as possible that they neglect to establish a solid foundation," Wang Wei shook his head. The Taboo Battle Realm cannot be achieved after missing the cultivation realm — at least, Wang Wei hasn't learned of a way to make up for it.

Many of the people in his generation are incredible talents, and if you give time to learn about the Battle Taboo Realm and spend many years researching, a few should succeed.

"You can't blame them," Huo Fenghuang said. "They live in the end of this era where they feel powerless while also realizing the importance of becoming a Paragon. It also did not help that you, of the same generation, were leagues ahead."

"Cultivation was never a race but a journey with the same destination," Wang Wei said wisely. "If they haven't figured that out, maybe I over-inflated their potential."

"It's easy for you to say since you're ahead of everybody and setting up impossible-to-achieve standards," Huo Fenghuang sighed.

"I never knew you thought so highly of me," Wang Wei said with a smile.

"Don't start with your cheekiness," Huo Fenghuang rebutted. "Are we going to fight or not?"

"Why not?"

"Excellent," she uttered. "And don't hold back. I want to see the gap."

"No problem."

Chapter 1428 Reunions (XI)

The battle lasted a few hours, meaning Wang Wei did not use his full power until the end. He used his 10-fold strength and taught Huo Fenghuang a few things in the process, and in the last attack,

she showed her the Taboo Battle Realm. After this battle, Huo Fenghuang left with a changed mindset.

A small part of her was also in a hurry to become a Paragon, but after that battle, she was prepared to leave that trial without success. She understood the importance of foundation, so her priority had been to reach that level of power before becoming a Paragon.

Wang Wei was satisfied with Huo Fenghuang's mindset to the point of personally escorting her out of the sect when she heard she was not staying. As for Wang Fuxuan? Wang Wei did not care much. The upcoming era will make Primal Paragons more common, meaning Wang Fuxuan has a higher chance of achieving that level. However, it won't matter unless he can catch up to the older generation and start his transcendence journey simultaneously with everyone.

Wang Wei slowly flew back to his mountain, saluting a few disciples and elders who recognized him in the process. As soon as he sat on his pavilion, he took out the information talisman from the Myriad Clan Union and received the information.

'Hmm?' Wang Wei thought as he focused on two valuable pieces of information. The first was one of the most valuable things of the Mortalhood Trial: their entrance token. The token is rare but allows anyone to participate in the trial, even if it's not summoned. Wang Wei could foresee how many people and factions will compete for these tokens. After all, they are basically a guarantee to train a Paragon at the fastest speed possible.

The second valuable piece of information was a small sentence stating that there had been circumstances where anomalies occurred in the trial, forcing them to operate differently than normal.

'With my luck, there is an 80% chance that this anomaly will appear during this trial,' Wang Wei groaned to himself. He massaged his temple, feeling a headache coming. 'Forget it. As long as I accomplish my objective, I can leave.' After learning about the All-Heaven Fate Calamity Prophecy, he has already decided to be more low-key and start acting from the shadows. Whatever shenanigans destined to happen in the trial will have nothing to do with him, as he will not show himself much publicly. His priority is currently the lock, so in the worst-case scenario, he'll abandon everything and return home.

"Red Mask," Wang Wei called out, and about ten seconds later, a shadow knelt before him.

"Do you have any orders?"

"Our deal with the Innate Demon God was leaked. Check if it's from our side or theirs," Wang Wei stated.

"As you wish."

"...Is there something?" Wang Wei asked, wondering why she was still here after dismissing her.

"This may be out of line, but I would like to congratulate the lord for improving his mood and becoming less depressed."

"Is it that obvious?" Wang Wei smiled. Huo Fenghuang's visit was an unexpected pleasure. Although he never mentioned it, Wang Wei feared that he would one day outpace everybody that he knew, and the first sign of that was how much ahead he was compared to people of his generation. This fear is one of the reasons he grew even more attached to Wu Hong, as he knew she could not only keep up with him but also push him to pursue her.

Huo Fenghuang's current state showed him that some of his generation could follow him far into his cultivation journey, and maybe until the end, and that fact brought him a great deal of dopamine.

"I appreciate the well-wishes," Wang Wei nodded, and in response, Red Mask bowed before dissipating into the shadow. "This is a great time to fish. Maybe my luck has improved," he muttered before flying to his little pond. As he was surrounded by all the wonderful flowers of his pond, and the beautiful artificially created starry skies above his head, Wang Wei felt peaceful and forgot the worries of his life.

...

"Finally, back to my peak," Wang Wei said as he opened his eyes. He clenched his fist, feeling the sense of power and control he had lost for a while. "Now, what should I do with the previous meat puppets? Well, they are an excellent way to commit crimes without leaving traces. No, some people might recognize them as people who were once prisoners of the sect." If Wang Wei wanted to use these meat puppets, he'd need to change their appearances first, or they may be traced back to the sect and eventually to him.

"Now that's decided, let's meet our guests," Wang Wei muttered. He was in deep meditation since he was close to recuperating, so his guests had to wait until he was available. "Hmm, let's start with Buddhism."

A strange-looking monk flew over to meet him. He's described as strange because his head is that of a child, but his body is that of a muscular man. No matter what angle someone looked at him, he looked strange.

'Some kind of rejuvenation technique?' Wang Wei commented. 'Not just that. It seems to be a technique derived from the [Past, Present, and Future Buddha Scroll] that uses Time Dao to achieve rejuvenation. What an interesting technique.' "Donor," saluted Monk Pure Child.

"To what do I owe this meeting?" Wang Wei was curious since he thought Buddhism had no reason to see him. He had already decreased their ticket price to 3 pills, and if the latter only wanted to pay his respect, he didn't have to wait and could have just sent a note.

"Donor, I have two messages from the Mother Buddha." Wang Wei immediately became serious and listened attentively.

"First, she said a few Nexuses of Destiny are approaching, and she wanted to warn you in case you haven't detected them."

Wang Wei nodded as he felt this way. Many major events were about to happen, and he was in the center of a few, if not all of them. He was aware and prepared for the worst.

"Second, she said you don't need to be in a rush since you have plenty of time. Not yuan epochs, but plenty of time nonetheless," Monk Pure Child said.

"I see. Is that all?"

"That's all, donor."

"Well, thank you for delivering the message." Pure Child bowed before leaving.

"Plenty of time, huh? That's good to hear." One of his fears is that Supreme Unity's comeback was sooner than expected. However, the latter's strength appeared to be at an all-time low in the Eternal

Ascension World. This was good news for Wang Wei since now it was less likely for Supreme Unity to do something to the world while he was participating in the trial and unavailable.

'The only worry left is Time Eater,' Wang Wei thought. He asked Qiyuan to watch over the latter, but he didn't know how reliable this ancestor of his is. All signs indicate he was pretty reliable, but he operated under the same assumption as Maitreya and paid with his life.

'Ancestor, don't blame me; blame my trauma,' Wang Wei said before sending a talisman to Tong Ruobing, asking her to leave her Golden Body to supervise Time Eater's seal. He also granted the Golden Body the power to summon Sage Lin Qi's spirit if necessary.

"Excellent," Wang Wei muttered, feeling more at ease. "Let's meet the next guest."

A woman with an eye patch on her right eye flew over, and her aura was immediately off. She had the peaceful and nature-like aura of all Taoist Priests, but there was also an underlying blood aura that hadn't been thoroughly washed off. Additionally, her right eye had its own dark and creepy aura.

"I thought you would have died in that civil war," Wang Wei said.

"I thought the same too," Zhen Buyi replied. "However, here I am, alive and better than ever."

"Alive, yes, but better than ever?" Wang Wei looked at her eye patch; he could feel a terrifying curse in that thing.

"A small price to pay to survive that war," she responded. The Civil War and Buddhism-Taoism War were brutal, but there were many payoffs, including the fact that Zhen Biyu was now one of the core members of the surviving Taoism Factions. Now, she only needs to become a Paragon to solidify her position, and once the ancestors return, she will be immensely rewarded for her services. The reward should pave the way for her path to a Peak Paragon at the minimum or a Primal at the best.

"Well, I'm glad you're doing well. Come, sit." Wang Wei served her tea, and as soon as she sipped it, she felt it became easier to contain the curse in her eyes.

"Thank you," Zhen Biyu said sincerely.

"No problem, but you should be more careful of that curse, or it will corrode your other personality."

Zhen Biyu frowned. Her other personality was the primary source of her cultivation talent, so she could not let anything happen to it. "I'll be more careful from now on."

Wang Wei nodded: "I'm guessing you're here to represent Taoism. What did they want?"

"I'm here simply to check whether our previous leader's actions will not affect our relationship with the Dao Opening Sect."

"The fact I didn't ban you or charge you more than the others showed our feelings," Wang Wei replied calmly.

"That's all we hoped to hear."

Chapter 1429 Reunions (XII)

As Wang Wei watched Zhen Biyu depart, he suddenly remembered he hadn't implanted Dao Seeds into his chosen Taoist and Buddhist Avatars. A few of his future plans require a deep understanding of these two religious/spiritual beliefs, but he does not want to spend millions of Yuan Epoch studying them, so the Dao Seed is his best approach.

'I can choose one of their participants from the trial, but the issue is Buddhism,' Wang Wei thought. He did not believe his method could be hidden from Maitreya, even after improving it by including his knowledge of [Existence Blueprint].

'Maybe be above board about the truth, and she might understand and allow it,' Wang Wei thought. He ultimately decides to do it and allows Maitreya to choose how to respond once she discovers it. 'How she responds will also reveal much about her personality.' Maitreya is currently on their side, but a part of Wang Wei still remained vigilant that everything was a facade.

He checked his Message Talisman and knew he still had two more guests, and he was slightly surprised by the second group. 'Interesting. I wonder why the Grand Sect Alliance wishes to see me.' Despite his curiosity, Wang Wei still saw the Great Qin Court as a small power move.

So, two people flew into his mountain. The first person looked slightly similar, but Wang Wei could not place where he knew him. 'Where will I know a small and weak Dao Ancestor? More importantly, why is the Qin Court using him as a guide to meet me?' This person must have some connection with him, but he couldn't immediately recognize him.

Wang Wei did not dwell on it too much as he looked at the person behind, who was probably the true representative of this meeting. This man was the embodiment of a scholar with his clothes, feather fan, and official hat.

'The Qin's Prime Minister,' Wang Wei thought. Red Mask has already handed him all the essential information he needed about all the Overlords and their current leader and political structure. So, he knew much about Prime Minister Zu Chenghuang, including the fact he was married to a Qin Princess who was a direct descendant of Ying Zheng.

"Lord Wang Wei, I wonder if you remember me," said the little Dao Ancestor.

"Who are you?" Wang Wei asked.

"I am Ji Honghui from Great Zhou."

"Oh, the traitor," Wang Wei suddenly remembered. During his Supreme Outlaw Trial, the Great Zhou Dynasty's crown prince wanted revenge for his brother, Ji Song, so he schemed with one of the ancestors to destroy the dynasty. Ji Honghui was at the core of that rebellion and successfully ascended once freed from his burden as a guardian.

Wang Wei didn't remember him because his mind was occupied during the trial, and he did not pay much attention to what happened to Great Zhou since it did not affect him much.

Ji Honghui was embarrassed but was also thick-skinned and would not let such words affect him. "Yes, that's me."

"How did you get entangled with the Great Qin Dynasty?"

"I have rebuilt Great Zhou, and we are an affiliated dynasty of Qin," Ji Honghui explained.

"Never thought of you as the ambitious kind, but I guess I didn't know you well enough to make such an assumption," Wang Wei nodded. "I reckon you're here for the court." He looked at the Prime Minister.

"Yes, this Prime Minister Zu Chenghuang — he's here to represent Great Qin." After saying these words, Ji Honghui stepped aside and moved behind the Prime Minister.

"Young Master Wang Wei, it's a pleasure to meet you."

"The pleasure is all mine," Wang Wei replied calmly. "But I need to stop you here. I can tell you act like a scholar, meaning you will speak in circles before you get to the point. I don't have time to waste here, so let's be as straightforward as possible."

"You're just as the report stated," Zu Chenghuang smiled. "Very well. I'm here to alleviate the tension between our two factions."

"Then you can start by releasing Hong Wa."

"Young master, you're wise enough to know that's impossible," Zu Chenghuang calmly replied, and Wang Wei just looked at him. "Mis Hong Wa is our great guest, and we are even granting her one of the spots for this trial."

"Oh?" Wang Wei muttered before a look of realization flashed in his eyes. "So, the Minor Heavenly Emperor Title is not enough, so you want to raise her into a Paragon and have her take all the risk of raising the title to a higher level — that's not a bad plan, but aren't you afraid of losing your asset?"

"We are not."

Wang Wei glanced at him: "Your calm demeanor tells me that Ying Zheng has realized he can no longer hide what his Transcendent Path is to the world, so he decided to be more upfront, direct, and aggressive."

'Dong Tian did not do justice to the pressure of conversing with this man,' Zu Chenghuang contemplated quietly, but his facial expression remained the same. "We are powerful and have been preparing for a long time, so it makes sense to be more confident and aggressive."

"True."

"So, you can understand how important she is to us," the Prime Minister continued.

"Alright, since you don't want to release her, what else can you do to alleviate the tension between us?"

"The fact you charge us seven pills per ticket and limit our numbers to 5 is unfair, so —"

"No talking in circles."

"Ah, yes. We will offer you a Life Dragon Protection Talisman in exchange for being treated fairly."

"Oh?" Wang Wei was immediately interested; this particular talisman was a unique resource of the Great Qin Saint Court created using their deep understanding of Luck Dao. Upon activation, the talisman will release protection around a person's [Existence], and for an extended period, no damage can affect the [Existence]. It's the perfect talisman for the Paragon Immeasurable Tribulation.

"Are you sure about this?" Wang Wei asked. The value of that talisman was numerous times that of what the Qin Court would have to pay for the trial's participants, even if they had a 20-place quota.

"Like I said, we are trying to build bridges," Zu Chenghuang stated.

"I have to say — I'm surprised," Wang Wei said as he leaned back on his chair to get a better look at the man before him. "I thought your dynasty's approach toward me would be less friendly."

"It seems you may have some misunderstanding about us or our emperor," Zu Chenghuang replied calmly.

"Maybe you're right." Wang Wei had to admit he had some hidden animosity toward Ying Zheng because he's also from Earth and the Prehistoric World; he always felt this man had invaded his territory despite the fact the latter was here before him.

"Well, I have no reason to object to this deal," Wang Wei agreed. "However, I'll say it beforehand: Don't give me a shoddy product or one of those talismans that have an extremely short duration."

"That would contradict our intention to make peace, wouldn't it?"

"I just wanted to be clear," Wang Wei stated. "And I have one more requirement."

Zu Chenghuang frowned: "Go ahead, but please do not go too far."

"It's nothing that important. I just want you to establish a meeting between Hong Wa and her wife. You can be in charge of the entire operation, and I won't interfere, but make sure nothing happens to Hua Xue."

"That can be arranged," Zu Chenghuang agreed without an issue. They need to give Hong Wa enough hope so she does not compromise their plans, and this meeting can help immensely.

"Excellent. Let's get everything in writing," Wang Wei nodded before proceeding with the next step of signing a binding contract. Once everything was established, he did not escort them out but calmly watched them depart.

'That bastard Ji Honghui is truly unfortunate,' Wang Wei thought while shaking his head. After hearing some of Qin's greatest secrets, this guy will not live for long. Under normal circumstances, Zu Chenghuang might be merciful and only erase his memory, but sadly, the information he learned involved Ying Zheng's Path of Transcendence. Although Qin has decided to be bolder, that does not mean a little Dao Ancestor ant can spy on their secrets.

'Forget him,' Wang Wei thought as his mind shifted to something more substantial. 'I forgot about the Yama Kings. These bastards despise me, so I doubt they would feel any less about Ying Zheng. So, unless he plans to make an enemy out of them, it's futile for him to pursue the Earth Emperor Position. However, it's another story if he uses Hong Wa as a proxy.'

If Hong Wa is this valuable to Great Qin, it might be impossible to save her and turn her against them. 'There is also the fact that she was the perfect experiment subject to test whether his transcendent path was feasible.'

Hong Wa already has three of the positions, so Ying Zheng only needs to grant her the third using Shu Ren's Nether Hell and experiment on her to deduce a feasible transcendent cultivation technique.

'Ying Zheng has become a greater threat in the race for transcendence,' Wang Wei summarized with squinted eyes.

Chapter 1430 Reunions (XIII)

Wang Wei invited his next guest, and the leading person was an old acquaintance; it would be better to describe him as an old opponent, one of the few worthy ones he had in the lower dimension. Wang Wei slowly watched as the two flew over to his small pavilion, and he glanced at the introducer.

"You're weak," Wang Wei said.

"Indeed," Chu Luo sighed deeply. In the lower dimension, they were once the two once most powerful geniuses of that era, but slowly, he had to watch as Wang Wei surpassed and reached heights he could never fathom.

Wang Wei looked at him. Chu Luo's cultivation was only 63%, not even an Empyrean. However, with a single look, Wang Wei could guess the reason such a genius could not even reach the peak of the Emperor Realm.

"Do you regret your decision to ascend early?" Wang Wei asked.

"Not at all," Chu Luo replied firmly. After ascending, he discovered his parents were undercover agents for the Grand Sect Alliance serving in the Rebellion. Things went horribly wrong in one mission, and they were severely injured. Chu Luo's cultivation is so low because he had no merit and world source from the lower dimension since he ascended early and because he had to support his parents' healing and cultivation.

The Grand Sect Alliance is the biggest faction, meaning they have the most elite members of all Overlords and the second-highest number of people after the Limitless Exchange Hall. Chu Luo's Creation Dao brought him much benefit in the alliance, but it did not help that he was not a Dao Overlord. As such, he was treated decently but not enough to develop his potential fully.

"That's good to hear," Wang Wei nodded. It appeared Chu Luo's filial piety was still a core of his personality. Wang Wei condensed a fishing rod and said: "Go fish on that pond. Consider what you catch as a gift from an old opponent." Chu Luo was confused but still politely accepted the gift.

Meanwhile, Wang Wei focused on the second guest. "You're a member of the Crystal-Eye Clan?" he asked when he saw this man had no eyeballs but two pure blue gems in his sockets.

"That's right."

"I thought your kind was extinct," Wang Wei commented. The crystal in this race's eyes had a variety of functions, including weapon refining, soul tempering, and even acquiring divine abilities upon absorption. So, cultivators did what cultivators do — they hunted this race to extinction for their eyes.

"We surrendered to the alliance to preserve our race," the man replied. Although his voice did not change, Wang Wei could swear he saw a hint of anger and hatred flashed in these deep blue gems. He motioned the latter person to sit beside him as he served tea.

"And who are you exactly?" Wang Wei asked.

"Vice-Alliance Leader Lei Shi."

"You're the invisible one," Wang Wei realized. The alliance is ruled — on the surface — by a council composed of the Alliance Leader and 7 Vice-Leaders. In this generation, one of the Vice-Leader rarely showed his face, making many people curious. Now, he understood why the latter remained invisible.

"That's me," Lei Shi nodded calmly.

"So, why are you here? I don't think I have any reasons to associate with your alliance?" These meetings were never about paying respects to him, so he was baffled by what they wanted since

Wang Wei did not place any restrictions on the alliance despite the rocky relationship between the two factions.

"There is a delicate matter we would like to negotiate with you," Lei Shi said carefully. "You have captured one of our wanted fugitives, and we would like to discuss the possibility of you returning him to us."

"Your fugitive?" Wang Wei was genuinely baffled.

"Empyrean Black Heart."

"Him? Since when was he your prisoner?" Wang Wei asked strangely.

"He stole something crucial from us, and you know how pride and face are the most important to factions on our level," Lei Shi stated. "So, we buried the news while trying to capture him as soon as possible. Unfortunately, he was slippery and always evaded our efforts."

"Is that so?" Wang Wei commented.

Lei Shi looked at him, trying to glean any information from his facial expression, but to no avail. Regardless, he continued with his objective: "We understand you're the one who captured him, so we're prepared to reward you for handing him over."

Wang Wei sipped his tea. He did not believe a single word out of this man's mouth. The previous Grand Sect Alliance might have been able to hide such a significant event, but that was simply impossible in the Seven Moon Era. Furthermore, as soon as this man named Empyrean Black Heart, Wang Wei had an inkling of what they were after — the Desire Heart Palace.

'The question is whether the Grand Sect Alliance has any connection to the Desire Heart Palace or wanted Black Heart because they are desperate for a transcendent path and thought they could peek at the palace's secrets through him.'

Wang Wei leaned more toward the latter since all the information he knew about their leader — Dugu Baitian — he did not seem like the kind of person who would submit to anyone. No, he would not serve under anyone. After all, this was a man whose name can be translated literally as the [Lone White Heaven]; such pride, arrogance, and ambition will not submit to anyone.

"It's not impossible for me to trade with you," Wang Wei said, and he meant it. After acquiring his blueprint technique, he checked Black Heart's situation, and the resolve scared him a little. His intuition told him something was there, but he saw nothing, no matter how carefully he looked. Ultimately, he concluded the power used by the Heart Desire Palace was not something his current self could peek at; this also meant Black Heart was now a hot potato, and Wang Wei wanted to throw it to someone else.

"I'm glad to hear this," Lei Shi stated, not hiding his excitement. "Our alliance has prepared a handsome reward for your cooperation."

"Slow down your excitement," Wang Wei raised his hand. "I'm willing to exchange, but it cannot be now."

"What do you mean?" Lei Shi asked, his demeanor suddenly changing.

"It's just like I said, I still need him for something, so I cannot hand him over now," Wang Wei reiterated. He still wanted to recheck Black Heart after becoming a Paragon. More importantly, if he traded him now, the Grand Sect Alliance would only treat him as an Emphyrean, and their reward wouldn't be much. However, once Wang Wei reveals his status as a member of the Heart Desire Palace and the fact they need him for their transcending path, he can get a higher price.

"Young Master Wang Wei, why make this harder than it has to be? Black Heart has no value in your hands, so why not exchange it for some rare resources?" Lei Shi said calmly, but his voice contained a slight coldness.

"Are you worried about your lost treasure?" Wang Wei replied calmly. "You can tell what it is, and I'll fetch it for you."

"This involves our alliance' secret, so we cannot do that."

"Aren't you guys worried I'll take the treasure after you reveal its existence? Well, you don't have to since I'm willing to hand it over directly now to facilitate a better relationship for our future trade."

Lei Shi's lips twitched: "It would be in our best interest to take Black Heart back and retrieve our treasure ourselves."

"It seems this treasure is more valuable than I thought," Wang Wei commented. "How about this: although a bit invasive, I'm willing to sign the highest binding contract to erase my memories of all knowledge about this treasure. This should satisfy you, correct?"

"This!" Lei Shi was momentarily speechless, but Wang Wei only smiled:

"Have you realized your eagerness has revealed too much information?" he stated. Lei Shi took a deep breath, calming himself down. He seems to be contemplating or weighing something.

"Don't even try to use your eye ability that can twist people's will," Wang Wei warned. "Otherwise, your fate will be the same as your clan brethren." Lei Shi felt a chill down his spine, followed by a tinge of pain in his eyes.

"What do you want?" he asked directly.

"Like I said, I'm not opposed to selling him, but you have to wait after the trial and pay something that truly reflects his value." Wang Wei has already calculated Black Heart's value to the alliance was comparable to a few rare Paragon Resources, and if he pushed it, maybe even some valuable information about transcendence. However, he also had to sell it before the catastrophe since his value would deteriorate with more transcendent-related things appearing.

"Are you sure you want to do this?"

"Is this supposed to be some kind of threat?" Wang Wei laughed.

"Very well," Lei Shi said as he took a deep breath. "I will relay your requirements, and we will contact you in the future." Lei Shi stood up and left with Chu Luo, who did not forget to thank Wang Wei for the gift. He fished out a pill that was excellent at breaking the Empyrean Realm bottleneck.

With this pill and the reward for introducing the alliance to Wang Wei, Chu Luo had enough resources to reach the Empyrean Peak. Unfortunately, he'll miss the trial, meaning he'll still be behind his peers.

'It may not be such a bad thing that you're currently behind,' Wang Wei thought as he watched them fly away.