

Martial 3221

Chapter 3221, Guilty Conscience

“Palace Master, you want us to move out?” Ye Hen was surprised. After what happened to Thousand Leaves Sect back then, the Sect only had around two or three hundred members left out of its previous thousands and their strengths varied greatly. If not for the care given by Yang Kai all these years, the Sect would have fallen apart a long time ago. Instead though, the cultivation of his disciples advanced by leaps and bounds over the years while he, the Sect Master, had also advanced to the Emperor Realm.

“You have two other choices, Sect Master Ye,” Yang Kai said and raised one finger, “The first choice is for Thousand Leaves Sect to fully merge with High Heaven Palace. From then onward, there will be no more Thousand Leaves Sect, only Thousand Leaves Peak will remain, and you will become its Peak Master. While we discussed this before, that was then, and this is now. If you choose this option, the other Peak Masters won’t have complaints anymore.”

Ye Hen’s expression changed slightly. If he chose this option, Thousand Leaves Sect would truly be gone forever, so he hesitated before asking, “And, the second choice?”

Yang Kai responded, “I will send you back to Thousand Leaves Sect’s original foundation. Manager Hua passes through the area every time she travels to the Southern Territory and I’ve heard that nobody is occupying that place at the moment, but it is a little worn out. Sect Master Ye, you will only need to instruct your disciples to do some minor repair works and you can move back in immediately. As for safety issues; there is no need to worry. You are already in the Emperor Realm and have enough strength to protect yourself and your disciples. Combined with the Heaven Grade Puppets, I’m sure not many would come looking for trouble. In addition, I am still a High-Rank Guest Elder of Azure Sun Temple so I will call on Azure Sun Temple to ask that they take good care of Thousand Leaves Sect. That will give you some space and time to grow stronger.”

Ye Hen was moved by those words and gratefully said, “Many thanks for your kindness, Palace Master Yang.”

Knowing that Yang Kai had done all he could, Ye Hen held no resentment towards him. Rather, choosing to discuss this matter so frankly and openly was the greatest respect Yang Kai could give to Ye Hen. With Yang Kai’s current strength, he was perfectly capable of kicking them out without a word.

[Will I still have the opportunity to exact my revenge if I leave this place and return to Thousand Leaves Sect?] His disciples had made rapid progress in their cultivation over the years and even he had broken through to the Emperor Realm. Those achievements were thanks to the excellent cultivation environment of High Heaven Palace and the continuous supply of cultivation resources that High Heaven Palace provided. On the contrary, they would need to start over from scratch if he chose to return to the Southern Territory. Even if Azure Sun Temple protected them from danger, where were

they going to obtain their cultivation resources? Thousand Leaves Sect excelled at refining puppets, but refining those puppets required a lot of materials too.

More importantly, would his disciples be willing to go back to the Southern Territory with him? Having stayed here for a few decades now, those hundreds of Thousand Leaves Sect's disciples had long since gotten used to life here. To put it bluntly, this was a paradise. It was easy to change from a lifestyle of frugality to one of luxury, but it was difficult to do the reverse. Who would willingly return to a barren place that even birds and beasts avoided after living in such a wonderland?

"Sect Master Ye, you can take your time to think it through. This matter is not urgent enough that you need to rush with your reply." Yang Kai sighed when he saw the troubled expression on Ye Hen's face.

Patting Ye Hen on the shoulder, he stood up.

"I don't need to consider it any further." Ye Hen suddenly piped up.

Yang Kai turned to look at Ye Hen.

In response, Ye Hen stood up and respectfully cupped his fists, "This Ye Hen is willing to lead all of Thousand Leaves Sect's disciples and submit under High Heaven Palace. I have but one requirement."

Yang Kai grinned, "Let's hear it."

"When the time comes, Palace Master, please allow me to lead the disciples of Thousand Leaves Peak to Flowing Shadow Sword Sect to seek justice!"

Flowing Shadow Sword Sect was the Sect that destroyed Thousand Leaves Sect back then, and even if it was instigated by others, they were responsible for carrying out the act. Ye Hen had been painstakingly cultivating for so many years just to be able to set foot into the Flowing Shadow Sword Sect and avenge his dead disciples.

"If you can agree to this condition, I am willing to serve High Heaven Palace faithfully.

"Good, how can I not agree to that?" Yang Kai chuckled, "You and I talked about this back then. What I said then still stands. If you want to get revenge with your own hands, you need to work hard on your cultivation. Flowing Shadow Sword Sect is not an easy opponent."

Ye Hen nodded in acknowledgement. Throwing his sleeves back, he placed his hand on his chest and bowed in the utmost formal manner, "Peak Master of Thousand Leaves Peak, Ye Hen, greets the Palace Master!"

Although he had always addressed Yang Kai as 'Palace Master', it had a different meaning now. From now onward, those originally in Thousand Leaves Sect would truly belong to High Heaven Palace; moreover, their puppet refining and puppet controlling methods would also become part of High Heaven Palace's heritage.

Despite Yang Kai's reluctance to let Ye Hen leave and interest in integrating them into his Sect, he had still spoken the truth. The two to three hundred disciples of Thousand Leaves Sect were occupying an excellent Main Peak, and the other Peak Masters were indeed making some noise about it. If they had been one of their own, it wouldn't have mattered as much; however, they were outsiders who were

occupying a good spot purely because they had arrived earlier. Fortunately, that concern was no longer valid.

Yang Kai informed Ye Hen that more people would be assigned to Thousand Leaves Peak in a few days. With such a large Main Peak, it would be a waste not to house at least two thousand people.

He had a relaxed expression as he returned from Ye Hen's place.

Upon entering the main hall of High Heaven Peak, a maidservant immediately stepped forward and reported, "Palace Master, Senior Ji is here."

"Brother Ji? Is something the matter?" Yang Kai was stunned.

The maidservant covered her mouth to hide her smile, "Not Sir Ji Ying, but Lady Ji Yao."

Yang Kai was walking inside when he paused mid-stride. Feeling a little guilty, he asked, "What is her purpose for coming here?"

An incident had occurred in the Cultivation Technique Pavilion of Ice Heart Valley previously, and Yang Kai thought back on the memory of that incident at this moment, still feeling Ji Yao's attitude at the time was confusing. They had shared such an intimate moment together, and yet, she had acted as though she was unaffected and nothing unusual had happened afterwards.

The good news was that she warned him not to let Su Yan know about the incident. If not, he would have worried about whether she would blackmail him with the information. Seeing as she had warned him not to reveal anything though, it meant that she would not leak the secret either.

He had been so busy since his return that he had completely forgotten about what happened that day. Hence, he couldn't help feeling a little apprehensive when he heard that she was here. [Ji Yao's emotions seemed a little out of control that day. She couldn't have regretted her actions and came here to settle the matter with me, right? If that's the case, then I most likely will be humiliated.]

The maidservant replied, "I don't know. After Lady Ji Yao came, she went inside immediately and told me to inform you to visit her as soon as you returned, Sir."

Yang Kai scratched his neck and looked uncomfortable. Glancing at the maidservant, he asked again, "What expression did she have on her face when she arrived? Was she angry?"

The maidservant had a strange look on her face, "No. Lady Ji Yao has always been cold, so I don't know if she was angry."

"Can't you even tell whether or not she is angry?" Yang Kai glared at her.

The maidservant hurriedly lowered her head, "I really don't know."

"Forget it. Forget it." He waved his hand dismissively, "You can go back to your work."

The maidservant obeyed his command and scuttled away as if to escape.

Afterwards, Yang Kai paced back and forth in the main hall. He simply could not figure out Ji Yao's purpose in coming here. It stood to reason that it would be rather awkward to meet right now. Not knowing her intentions, he hesitated to head inside.

He paced back and forth a few more times. At one point, he walked to the entrance of the main hall, ready to ignore her. She would not be able to stay in High Heaven Palace forever, so waiting it out until she left would save him from embarrassment. Then, he thought about it again. [I'm not the one who should be feeling embarrassed. It should be her instead, and she isn't even scared. I'm a man, so what am I afraid of? The one who suffers the most is her anyway.]

Turning around, he gallantly and spiritedly walked inside, holding his head up high. It took him a long while to finally locate Ji Yao in one of the rooms.

It was Su Yan's room, which was built on a cliffside. The balcony faced a bottomless canyon with clouds and mist rolling around below.

When he pushed open the door and entered, he saw Ji Yao standing next to the guardrail. She was looking out at the setting sun. The afterglow of the sunset enveloped her, dyeing her whole body in golden light. A breeze blew past and her hair was gently lifted while her robes fluttered around her, making it seem like she could float away at any time.

Ji Yao did not turn around, as if she had not sensed his presence at all.

Yang Kai closed the door behind him and walked over to her. Standing next to her, he glanced at her side profile. Her snow-white skin, her slender neck, her proud peaks, and her demure posture revealed an enchanting kind of style.

"Junior Sister Yao, you came." He chuckled and rubbed his hand together,

Without understanding her current attitude, he did not dare to be too presumptuous. When men and women shared such an intimate moment, a man should feel as though he had taken advantage of the woman. Thus, he felt a little like he was in the wrong.

"I came to take something." Ji Yao turned to look at him.

"Take what?" he asked curiously.

"Some changes of clothes for Little Junior Sister," she replied.

Yang Kai stared at her in a daze. A long while later, he realized that she was not planning to say anything else, "That's it?"

She gently nodded.

Yang Kai didn't know whether to laugh or cry in response, "Do you need to personally come here for something like that?"

As a cultivator, everybody had a Space Ring; furthermore, they would have prepared several sets of spare clothes in their Space Rings normally. He himself had some in his Space Ring, and he was certain Su Yan did too. Hence, there was no need to come here on purpose just to get some spares.

"Am I unwelcome here?" She raised an eyebrow at him.

"No! Of course not. That's absolutely not it. Why would you be unwelcome here?" He denied vehemently.

She lifted her chin and said, "Then, go and find some for me. It's not appropriate for me to rummage through Little Junior Sister's personal effects."

"En, just wait for a moment." While speaking, he turned around and walked into the room. He walked over to the closet and began searching through it. Su Yan was not particular about the clothes she wore, and with her beauty, she would still look gorgeous regardless of what she wore.

There were not many clothes in the closet to begin with, so Yang Kai just stuffed them all into an empty Space Ring. Turning around, he discovered that Ji Yao had followed him in. She was sitting sideways on the bed and being so quiet that it was strange.

He handed the Space Ring to her, "It's all here. Go back and tell her that she can cultivate in Ice Heart Valley without feeling burdened. Just let me know if she needs anything. I will send somebody over to deliver the items."

"Good." She took the ring from him with her bare hand and placed it on her finger. Then, she raised her hand to admire it. She was acting as if he had gifted the ring to her.

"Junior Sister, is there anything else?" Yang Kai asked.

"No."

[If there's nothing else, then why are you still sitting there!?] He had a speechless look on his face. Even so, he could not bring himself to kick her out. He didn't know if he was imagining things, but it felt like their encounter this time was different from all their previous encounters. He felt like he was constantly making blunders and mistakes; thus, he couldn't wait to send her away as soon as possible, so that he was not stuck in anxiety all the time.

"Is there something wrong?" She looked up at him with bright eyes.

"Of course not," He scratched his head. [There's nothing wrong with me. You are the only one who has a problem.]

"If you have something to attend to, you can leave. You don't need to mind me."

"Haha..." The corner of Yang Kai's mouth twitched in response. [You are a guest here. How can I leave my guest alone?]

Chapter 3222, Miserable

In the early morning of the next day, Yang Kai woke up and yawned. There was a tender body in each of his arms, and a strange smell lingered in the room. Last night was another crazy one!

He gently disentangled himself from between the two soft forms and got out of bed to open the window with a wave of his hand. A light breeze blew in, blowing away the lingering fragrance.

Those movements of his caused both Shan Qing Luo and Xue Yue to wake up. Shan Qing Luo was thick-skinned so she sat up and stretched in a seductive manner, her exotic curves exposed for all to see. Staring at Yang Kai, she smirked and asked, "Are you satisfied now?"

Yang Kai grinned meaningfully. Walking over, he groped her chest, "You make it sound like you suffered a loss. I don't even know who was wilder last night."

She snorted, "Don't come to me for the time being. I'm going to cultivate in retreat to break through to the Dao Source Realm. Big Sister is already in the Second-Order Dao Source Realm. If I don't work harder, I won't be able to keep up with you guys anymore." While speaking, she reached out and pinched Xue Yue's cheeks, "Stop pretending to be asleep and quickly get up."

Xue Yue blushed when her cover was blown and had no choice but to get up; however, she was not as bold as Shan Qing Luo so she grabbed a blanket to cover her chest

Shan Qing Luo stretched out a hand to tickle Xue Yue, "What's wrong? It's not like we haven't seen them before. Why are you being so shy?"

"Luo'er, stop teasing me." Xue Yue was blushing furiously. Although she wasn't as shy as Little Senior Sister, she wasn't as unrestrained as Shan Qing Luo either. She secretly snuck a glance at Yang Kai and saw him standing there buck-naked, watching them with a smile on his face. He had no intention of stopping Shan Qing Luo's antics; thus, she blurted out in shame, "You two always go overboard now that Big Sister isn't here! I'm going to tell Big Sister about this!"

"Wow! How dare you tattle on us!?" Shan Qing Luo gritted her teeth and lunged over to pull the blanket off Xue Yue's body. Then, she used both hands to tickle Xue Yue to the point where she started begging for mercy. At the same time, she called out to Yang Kai, "Husband, how can you dominate the world if you can't even keep your woman in line? Little Sister is in need of some discipline. What are you still waiting for?"

Yang Kai considered it seriously for a moment and nodded, "That makes sense." Approaching them, he grinned savagely as he ravaged Xue Yue with Shan Qing Luo's assistance. Needless to say, Shan Qing Luo could not escape from the devil's clutches either, and by the time the battle had been settled, it was midday.

The two women helped Yang Kai dress as he sat in front of the mirror with one helping him straighten out his clothes while the other combed his hair.

Xue Yue busied herself with her task while talking, "Husband, since Luo'er is entering retreat, I will too. You better not sabotage our efforts in the near future. It will be bad if our cultivation cannot keep up with you and Big Sister."

"Good," Yang Kai nodded. Although he would miss making love with them, they needed to continue scaling the path of the great Martial Dao. Both Shan Qing Luo and Xue Yue had just arrived from the Star Field, so it was the perfect time for them to improve at an explosive speed. If they missed this chance, it would affect their futures, so he warned them, "Work hard on your cultivation and don't be afraid to ask if there is anything you don't understand. There are many in the Emperor Realm within the Sect, so teaching you should not be a problem."

“En.” Xue Yue nodded.

Shan Qing Luo suddenly pursed her lips and smiled, “Big Sister went to Ice Heart Valley, Ning Chang went to Medicine Pill Valley, and Little Sister Yue and I are going to cultivate in retreat. Husband, you are probably going to be a lonely man for some time. Didn’t you mention we have another Sister? Moreover, a member of the Dragon Clan at that. Why don’t you bring her over? That way, you’ll still have somebody taking care of you when we are not by your side.”

“About her...” Yang Kai murmured, “We’ll see.”

Zhu Qing’s affairs were a little tricky. Her very existence was related to the reputation of the Dragon Clan, so they would not let her go so easily. Furthermore, he caused a huge stir on Dragon Island previously and indirectly contributed to the death of an Eighth-Order Great Dragon. The Dragon Clan not being hostile to him was the best outcome he could hope for, so how could they allow Zhu Qing to join High Heaven Palace on top of that? The only way he could bring Zhu Qing here was if he had enough power to subdue all of Dragon Island.

Once Yang Kai was properly dressed, he walked out of High Heaven Peak and saw Hua Qing Si waiting outside. Hua Qing Si greeted him with a grumbling expression, “It’s one thing when you were constantly absent from the Sect in the past, but now that you are back, why is it still so hard to meet you!”

“What’s wrong?” He asked.

“Take a look.” She handed him a jade slip.

He took it from her and investigated the contents with his Divine Sense. Then, he couldn’t help gnashing his teeth, “Why are so many people filing complaints?”

To which she replied, “Well, there’s not enough to go around. Those teachers that arrived from Fire Dragon Palace are having an extremely difficult time these days. They practically don’t even have the time to rest, much less cultivate.”

“Why would they have no time to rest?” He was stunned.

Rolling her eyes at him, she stated, “Let me show you around and you’ll understand why immediately.”

While speaking, Hua Qing Si flew into the sky and led him to a Spirit Peak nearby. The cultivators living on this Spirit Peak seemed to be from Shadowed Star and numbered about a thousand in total. Currently, a long queue was stretching out in front of a palace situated at the top of the Spirit Peak. There were at least two hundred people waiting in line. From time to time, a cultivator would walk out of the palace with a look of sudden enlightenment. Every time somebody walked out, the person at the front of the line would enter the palace. Then, the cycle would repeat.

The corners of Yang Kai’s face twitched as he pointed to the palace below them and asked, “Is that the place where their teacher lives?”

“En.” Hua Qing Si looked a little apprehensive just looking at the situation, “The cultivators you brought have just arrived, so they are not used to the Star Boundary yet. It’s only natural that they run into some problems in their cultivation. Whenever they run into a problem, they come looking for their respective teachers to seek guidance. But, there is only one teacher on each Spirit Peak. Look at the line outside

the palace. Where would these teachers find the time to rest? This is only a Spirit Peak with a population of around a thousand people. Those with even more living on them have it even worse. Though those with a population of only a few hundred have it slightly better, they are still very busy. A few of the teachers have already come to me, saying that they can't bear life here any longer. Even if they suffer some punishment, they want to return to Fire Dragon Palace immediately. They have asked me to contact Palace Master Li."

"Ignore them."

Hua Qing Si said, "I've managed to suppress them for now. But, how well can they teach our disciples with that kind of mentality? If they don't teach them properly, it will affect the futures of our disciples. Palace Master, you really need to look for a way to alleviate this situation."

"En. I was already planning to do that."

She said, "Ice Heart Valley has a pretty good relationship with us. Can't we get some help from Ice Heart Valley?"

"Forget about Ice Heart Valley. I've considered it before, but all the disciples of Ice Heart Valley only cultivate Ice Attribute Secret Arts and Techniques. It's too specific, which makes them unsuited to be their teachers."

"What do we do then?"

"I have my own plans," Yang Kai replied, "But, before more teachers arrive, I need you to appease the ones here already somehow. Let's give them a monthly salary every month. We'll stop making them work in vain."

"I had that idea too. I was just about to report it to you."

"Use your own judgement regarding this matter. If that doesn't work, discuss it with Manager Bian. You are free to decide how much pay is suitable. You don't need to ask me for my opinion on this."

"Fine, fine," Hua Qing Si sighed helplessly. She had never met a Palace Master like him before. He simply couldn't wait to let go of all the power in his hands, seemingly happiest acting as an arm-flinging shopkeeper.

After separating from Hua Qing Si, Yang Kai went to Spirit Pill Peak, met with Ji Ying, and took out a number of items with him. A short while later, he appeared in front of the Space Array.

"Palace Master!" Bian Yu Qing, who was meditating by the side, hurriedly came to greet him.

He waved her away gently, indicating for her to go back to what she was doing, before walking over to the Space Array, activating it, and disappearing.

In the Southern Territory, Yang Kai leisurely appeared in a quiet mountain valley located at the back of Spirit Sword Peak in Azure Sun Temple. He swept his Divine Sense around and confirmed that nobody had seen him; then, he flew straight towards Spirit Sword Peak.

He was a High-Rank Guest Elder of Azure Sun Temple, and Spirit Sword Peak was the Spirit Peak where he lived. It was also the place he had chosen for himself and was located far away from the other Main Peaks, which made it easier for him to conceal the Space Array.

Flying over to Spirit Sword Peak, he took out an Elder's Jade Token, opened the protective Array, and walked straight in.

Two young and beautiful women were feeding fish in front of a pond. The big red koi carps were swimming in the pond and competing for food, causing the two girls to giggle.

Yang Kai was a little dumbfounded by the sight. Looking around him carefully, he was certain that he was not in the wrong place. [This is definitely Spirit Sword Peak. Since when did I have two maidservants?]

Both girls did not have high cultivation and it wasn't until Yang Kai had gotten very close that they noticed that there was somebody else present. Startled, the girl on the left dressed in red jumped up and shouted, "Who are you!?"

Yang Kai laughed and looked back at them and asked, "Who are you?"

"We are disciples of Azure Sun Temple. Who are you?" The girl in red looked at him warily.

On the contrary, a thoughtful look flashed through the eyes of the other girl, who was dressed in green. Seemingly realizing something, she tugged at her friend's sleeve before bowing elegantly, "Greetings, Elder Yang!"

[Elder Yang!?] The girl in red froze in shock. There was only one Elder with the surname 'Yang' in the entire Azure Sun Temple, so she immediately composed herself and bowed.

"Rise." Yang Kai waved his hand and beckoned them to stand. Then, he asked curiously, "Why are you here?"

The girl in green replied, "Elder Gao assigned us this mission. She said that Elder Yang doesn't live here all year round, so she wanted us to stay here and tend to this place."

"Senior Sister Gao..." Yang Kai nodded, "So that's how it is."

The girl in green continued, "We didn't touch anything on Spirit Sword Peak. We kept everything as it was. We only clean the palace and feed the fish. Please understand, Elder Yang."

He smiled, "Many thanks for your hard work, both of you."

The two girls seemed overwhelmed by his praise. The person in front of them was an Elder of the Sect. Moreover, he was an Emperor Realm Master. With their humble statuses and low cultivation, the gap between them was as vast as the space between the Heavens and Earth. Nonetheless, the person in front of them was being so friendly that it made them very emotional.

By the time they came back to their senses, Yang Kai had already stepped into the hall.

"So that was Elder Yang." The girl in red looked at Yang Kai's disappearing back with a look of admiration, "He looks very young."

The girl in green stated, "I heard that Elder Yang may be the youngest Elder we've ever had here. It's said that he only spent a hundred years cultivating."

"Seriously!?" The girl in red was visibly stunned. Although their cultivations weren't high, they knew that it was not easy to become an Emperor Realm Master. To achieve that Realm within a hundred years was simply unthinkable.

"Elder Yang is said to have come from a Lower Star Field," The girl in green clearly had more information. After saying that, she exclaimed out loud.

"What's wrong?"

"Elder Gao told me to let her know as soon as Elder Yang returns. I almost forgot." While speaking, she hurriedly took out a communication artifact.

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“En. I was already planning to do that.”

She said, “Ice Heart Valley has a pretty good relationship with us. Can’t we get some help from Ice Heart Valley?”

“Forget about Ice Heart Valley. I’ve considered it before, but all the disciples of Ice Heart Valley only cultivate Ice Attribute Secret Arts and Techniques. It’s too specific, which makes them unsuited to be their teachers.”

“What do we do then?”

“I have my own plans,” Yang Kai replied, “But, before more teachers arrive, I need you to appease the ones here already somehow. Let’s give them a monthly salary every month. We’ll stop making them work in vain.”

“I had that idea too. I was just about to report it to you.”

“Use your own judgement regarding this matter. If that doesn’t work, discuss it with Manager Bian. You are free to decide how much pay is suitable. You don’t need to ask me for my opinion on this.”

“Fine, fine,” Hua Qing Si sighed helplessly. She had never met a Palace Master like him before. He simply couldn’t wait to let go of all the power in his hands, seemingly happiest acting as an arm-flinging shopkeeper.

After separating from Hua Qing Si, Yang Kai went to Spirit Pill Peak, met with Ji Ying, and took out a number of items with him. A short while later, he appeared in front of the Space Array.

“Palace Master!” Bian Yu Qing, who was meditating by the side, hurriedly came to greet him.

He waved her away gently, indicating for her to go back to what she was doing, before walking over to the Space Array, activating it, and disappearing.

In the Southern Territory, Yang Kai leisurely appeared in a quiet mountain valley located at the back of Spirit Sword Peak in Azure Sun Temple. He swept his Divine Sense around and confirmed that nobody had seen him; then, he flew straight towards Spirit Sword Peak.

He was a High-Rank Guest Elder of Azure Sun Temple, and Spirit Sword Peak was the Spirit Peak where he lived. It was also the place he had chosen for himself and was located far away from the other Main Peaks, which made it easier for him to conceal the Space Array.

Flying over to Spirit Sword Peak, he took out an Elder’s Jade Token, opened the protective Array, and walked straight in.

Two young and beautiful women were feeding fish in front of a pond. The big red koi carps were swimming in the pond and competing for food, causing the two girls to giggle.

Yang Kai was a little dumbfounded by the sight. Looking around him carefully, he was certain that he was not in the wrong place. [This is definitely Spirit Sword Peak. Since when did I have two maidservants?]

Both girls did not have high cultivation and it wasn’t until Yang Kai had gotten very close that they noticed that there was somebody else present. Startled, the girl on the left dressed in red jumped up and shouted, “Who are you!?”

Yang Kai laughed and looked back at them and asked, “Who are you?”

“We are disciples of Azure Sun Temple. Who are you?” The girl in red looked at him warily.

On the contrary, a thoughtful look flashed through the eyes of the other girl, who was dressed in green. Seemingly realizing something, she tugged at her friend's sleeve before bowing elegantly, "Greetings, Elder Yang!"

[Elder Yang!?] The girl in red froze in shock. There was only one Elder with the surname 'Yang' in the entire Azure Sun Temple, so she immediately composed herself and bowed.

"Rise." Yang Kai waved his hand and beckoned them to stand. Then, he asked curiously, "Why are you here?"

The girl in green replied, "Elder Gao assigned us this mission. She said that Elder Yang doesn't live here all year round, so she wanted us to stay here and tend to this place."

"Senior Sister Gao..." Yang Kai nodded, "So that's how it is."

The girl in green continued, "We didn't touch anything on Spirit Sword Peak. We kept everything as it was. We only clean the palace and feed the fish. Please understand, Elder Yang."

He smiled, "Many thanks for your hard work, both of you."

The two girls seemed overwhelmed by his praise. The person in front of them was an Elder of the Sect. Moreover, he was an Emperor Realm Master. With their humble statuses and low cultivation, the gap between them was as vast as the space between the Heavens and Earth. Nonetheless, the person in front of them was being so friendly that it made them very emotional.

By the time they came back to their senses, Yang Kai had already stepped into the hall.

"So that was Elder Yang." The girl in red looked at Yang Kai's disappearing back with a look of admiration, "He looks very young."

The girl in green stated, "I heard that Elder Yang may be the youngest Elder we've ever had here. It's said that he only spent a hundred years cultivating."

"Seriously!?" The girl in red was visibly stunned. Although their cultivations weren't high, they knew that it was not easy to become an Emperor Realm Master. To achieve that Realm within a hundred years was simply unthinkable.

"Elder Yang is said to have come from a Lower Star Field," The girl in green clearly had more information. After saying that, she exclaimed out loud.

"What's wrong?"

"Elder Gao told me to let her know as soon as Elder Yang returns. I almost forgot." While speaking, she hurriedly took out a communication artifact.

Chapter 3224, How Do You Want to Die

Upon entering the hall, Yang Kai walked around and found that the place was indeed kept neat and tidy. He slid his hand over a tabletop and saw that there was no dust at all. It could be seen that the two girls had earnestly taken care of this place. Then, he turned around, sat on a chair, and pondered for a moment. When he looked up again, the two girls walked in and bowed in greeting.

“By the way, wasn’t there another old man living here? Where did that old man go?” He asked, looking at them.

Yang Kai was referring to Tian Yan, who had arrived from the Divine Ascension Mirror after creating a new body for himself. Back then, Tian Yan received help from Yang Kai to create his physical body with the Flesh Incarnation Pill. Yang Kai originally thought that he could gain a Great Emperor as his support, but reality turned out differently. Tian Yan was indeed a Master comparable to a Great Emperor in the Divine Ascension Mirror World, but that was only limited to when he was in the Divine Ascension Mirror. When he later created a new physical body, he needed to start all over again. He was equivalent to a newborn baby simply because the Heavenly Way could not be deceived. The Heavenly Way couldn’t produce another Great Emperor out of nothing.

At the time, Yang Kai had not understood the situation clearly. It wasn’t until his talk with Yang Yan that he finally understood. The world was a bottle that could not contain Tian Yan’s existence; thus, Tian Yan had to start cultivating all over again. Wen Zi Shan initially wanted to choose another place for him to stay, but Tian Yan insisted Spirit Sword Peak would be fine.

Afterwards, Yang Kai went to the Frozen Earth with Zhu Lie, entered the Revolving World, took a trip to the Western Territory, entered Dragon Island, and returned to Heng Luo Star Field. More than ten years had passed in a blink of an eye. He didn’t see Tian Yan anywhere upon his return to Spirit Sword Peak; there were only these two girls in front of him on this Spirit Peak. Thus, he couldn’t help but feel a little suspicious.

“Senior went on a trip,” A clear voice suddenly rang out from the outside.

Yang Kai lifted his head to look in the direction of the voice and saw a tall figure stepping in. That person wore a clean, white dress and had her hair tied up in a bun above her head. It made her seem neat and tidy, and also somewhat heroic.

Standing up, Yang Kai cupped his fists with a smile, “Senior Sister Gao, it has been a long time since we last met. You are as beautiful as ever.”

He was not surprised to see Gao Xue Ting appearing here so quickly. The reason she ordered those two girls to stay here was to take care of Spirit Sword Peak and also to monitor his movements. She would definitely be notified as soon as he returned.

Zheng...

A clear sound rang out while at the same time, a cold light flashed as a longsword slid out of its sheath. Gao Xue Ting strode forward and rested the sword on Yang Kai’s shoulder and smiling coldly, she sneered, “Tell me! How do you want to die!?”

The two girls next to them cried out in surprise. They never expected Gao Xue Ting to lose her temper the moment she ran into Yang Kai. [Why is Elder Gao pointing her sword at Elder Yang? Could there be some sort of long-standing grudge between them?]

They wondered if they should report this matter to the other Elders; however, both of them had low cultivation and humble statuses. How could they have a method to contact the other Elders?

The smile on Yang Kai's face stiffened as he swallowed nervously, using two fingers to pinch the sword blade and gently remove it from his shoulder before he asked, "Senior Sister Gao, what are you doing?"

"How dare you return so shamelessly!?" Gao Xue Ting coldly snorted, unmoved by his words.

His expression twitched slightly, "I don't understand what you mean. Please enlighten me, Senior Sister."

"You want to know why you deserve death?" She looked at him expressionlessly, "Fine! I will let you die knowing the reason why! Let me ask you this; are you or are you not an Elder of Azure Sun Temple!?"

"Of course, I am!" He quickly nodded in response before exclaiming in shock, "Could it be possible that I've been kicked out!?"

"If you claim to be an Elder, then why didn't you show up for more than ten years!?"

"It has only been slightly more than ten years... It's not that long..." Yang Kai touched his nose weakly, "Besides, I'm just a High-Rank Guest Elder. It doesn't make any difference to the Temple whether I'm here or not."

"A High-Rank Guest Elder is still an Elder! You ran away the moment the Temple ordained you and failed to send word ever since then. Do you still hold the Temple in your eyes!?"

"Nope!" He shook his head flatly at those words.

She was taken aback by his answer. It would seem that she never expected him to respond in such a manner. A look of disappointment appeared in her eyes, and she slowly retracted her sword.

He smilingly added, "I keep the Temple in my heart!"

He even patted his chest while speaking.

She glared at him immediately, "Enough with your antics. If you don't give me a reasonable explanation for your absence, I will ask the Temple Master to revoke your status as a High-Rank Guest Elder; after all, it doesn't make any difference to the Temple whether you're here or not."

[Why use my words against me!?] He looked speechless. Even so, he could only smile at her, "Senior Sister Gao, as you know, I have High Heaven Palace in the Northern Territory. There were a lot of matters to take care of. Moreover, it is not convenient to come and go. The North and the South are separated by millions and millions of kilometres, so it takes years just to make one round trip. It's not too much to come back every ten years or so, right?"

She scoffed, "I told you this a long time ago. You don't need that High Heaven whatever in the Northern Territory. Just settle down here at the Temple. A great force isn't something a person can support all by himself." Nevertheless, her tone had softened considerably.

Even he knew that a great force was not something that a person could support all by themselves. If it was in the past, he could still have given up on High Heaven Palace; however, he had just brought more than a hundred thousand people over from Heng Luo Star Field, and they were all gathered in one place. How could he abandon them now? He had to take responsibility for them since he brought them here.

Yang Kai signalled the two young girls, who were watching the excitement by the side, with a look and sent a transmission to them at the same time. After that, he nodded and bowed, "Senior Sister, please calm down. Let's sit down and talk."

Gao Xue Ting turned around and took a seat. Her longsword that was glimmering with a cold light was put away too, which made him sigh with relief.

Soon, the two girls served a fragrant and steaming pot of tea.

"Senior Sister, have some tea. I'm afraid this place is crude, and I don't have much to offer."

She glanced sideways at him, "Are you looking down on Spirit Sword Peak? This is the place you chose for yourself. If you are not satisfied with this place, you can settle down at my place, Purple Bamboo Peak. I have a lot of empty space anyway."

"Uh... how could that be appropriate?" Yang Kai wanted to slap himself on the mouth for saying the wrong thing; thus, he hurriedly changed the subject, "I believe I heard you say something like Senior Tian Yan is out on a trip. What did you mean by that, Senior Sister?"

"It means exactly what I said."

Yang Kai was stunned and asked, "Did the Temple send somebody to protect him? Won't it be dangerous for Senior to wander around outside on his own?"

Yang Kai was quite worried. Although Tian Yan had the foundation of a Great Emperor, he had to start his cultivation over from scratch after creating his body. Only slightly more than ten years had passed since then, so his cultivation couldn't be that high yet. The Star Boundary was unlike the Star Field, there were Masters everywhere. If Tian Yan encountered heinous individuals during his journey, it might lead to his demise. It would be the greatest joke if a Great Emperor was killed by a cultivator in the Origin Returning Realm.

"It's what Senior himself wanted, so who could have stopped him? As for being in danger... You don't need to worry about that either. When Senior left this place three years ago, he was already in the Saint Realm."

"What!?" Yang Kai was utterly taken aback. He nearly suspected that he had heard wrongly.

In the Martial Dao, the Saint Realm was the seventh Great Realm, following the Initial Element Realm, the Qi Transformation Realm, the Separation and Reunion Realm, the True Qi Realm, the Immortal Ascension Realm, and the Transcendent Realm. Moreover, there were nine Minor Realms in each Great Realm before reaching the Immortal Ascension Realm. Following that, the Transcendent and Saint

Realm both had three Minor Realms. Every cultivator had to spend a lot of time and effort just to progress forward a single Minor Realm, one step at a time. Even Yang Kai spent thirty to forty years to advance through those Realms.

But how long had it been since Tian Yan created his body? Only a few years or so had passed, yet Tian Yan was already in the Saint Realm three years ago. In other words, he spent less than ten years cultivating to reach the Saint Realm. Now that three more years have passed, his cultivation was undoubtedly even higher.

Thinking about it though, it made sense. Tian Yan was not an ordinary cultivator. He had the heritage of a Great Emperor, so it was only natural that he had a faster cultivation speed. Most cultivators would normally encounter bottlenecks, but not him.

“Although Senior’s cultivation isn’t that high, don’t forget what he is best at. It’s unlikely that he will encounter any dangers even if he wanders around outside.”

Yang Kai nodded in response. Tian Yan was born in the Divine Ascension Mirror World with only a Soul Avatar; as such, he was unmatched in the application of the Spiritual Energy and Soul Secret Techniques. On this point, even the Serene Soul Great Emperor was no match for him.

Tian Yan’s physical cultivation was certainly not that high, but if it was supplemented with the strange Soul Secret Techniques he had, he would be able to fight with people several Great Realms higher than himself.

“Senior sure is courageous,” Yang Kai laughed.

Gao Xue Ting explained, “The outside world is unfamiliar to him, so it’s only natural that he doesn’t want to cultivate blindly. Besides, it’s beneficial for him to go around and see the world.” She glanced sideways, and her tone turned cold, “What about you? What have you been doing?”

[Why did she turn the topic of conversation back to me again!?] Yang Kai felt rather speechless. Even so, he nonchalantly replied, “It’s better to traverse the world far and wide than to sit at home and study all day. Haha...”

“Shut your mouth!” She shouted.

In response, he sat up straight in a proper manner.

“Pfft!” The two girls by the side snickered loudly. However, they immediately lowered their heads again when they saw Yang Kai’s resentful glare.

The two quickly became silent and looked away with looks that screamed, [We didn’t see anything. We didn’t hear anything.]

“Take out those things!” Gao Xue Ting suddenly stretched out her jade white hand.

He asked blankly, “What things?”

She sneered, “Stop acting dumb. You took so many of the Temple’s spirit flowers and exotic herbs with you back then. You couldn’t have forgotten about the task you were given, right?”

“Oh! That’s what you mean!” He finally understood the situation and added confidently, “How could I have forgotten the task you assigned to me, Senior Sister Gao? I completed it diligently. Here, have a look.”

After saying that, he took out a Space Ring and pushed it to her. While she was investigating the contents, he said, “The main reason I was delayed in the Northern Territory for so long is that I was refining these items. Then, I cultivated in retreat for a while.”

“So many!” A hint of consternation flashed through Gao Xue Ting’s eyes. This Space Ring was filled with nothing but Emperor Grade Spirit Pills that Yang Kai had gotten from Ji Ying.

It was true that he had taken a lot of spirit flowers and spirit herbs away with him back then. That was the task the Temple had given to him; refine Emperor Grade Spirit Pills. Therefore, he did not forget to prepare the Spirit Pills in advance before coming here. Looking at her reaction, it would seem that he safely passed this challenge.

“You still had the energy to cultivate after refining so many Spirit Pills?” She glanced at him in surprise, thinking that the Spirit Pills had all been refined by him. The look she gave him immediately alerted her to something though. Something was different about him. Thus, she studied him carefully and murmured suspiciously, “Your cultivation...”

He grinned meaningfully, “Senior Sister Gao, you really have good eyes. I can’t hide anything from you.” Pushing his Emperor Qi slightly, the aura of his cultivation was revealed.

She was immediately shocked by what she saw. [Second-Order Emperor Realm! This brat is actually a Second-Order Emperor! How is this possible!?!]

Chapter 3225, Unable to Conceal the Truth

After meeting again after more than ten years, Yang Kai was now in the Second-Order Emperor Realm, the same as her!

Gao Xue Ting couldn’t believe it. Nonetheless, she had no choice but to believe it. The Second-Order Emperor Realm’s aura could not be faked. [Still... Isn’t his cultivation speed a little too fast?]

She could still remember the first time she saw him. It was when the Four Seasons Realm was about to open and he arrived at the Temple with a Bustling World Token to exchange for an entry spot. At the time, Yang Kai had only been in the First-Order Dao Source Realm. Several years later, he returned from the Shattered Star Sea having broken through to the Emperor Realm. And now, only a few more years had passed since then, but he already experienced another breakthrough.

She was in the Second-Order Emperor Realm, hence she knew how tough it was to break through to the next Minor Realm in the Emperor Realm. There were many Emperor Realm Masters in Azure Sun Temple, but most of them were only in the First Order. On the other hand, there were only three

Second-Order Emperors. Excluding her, the other two were Vice Temple Master, Qiu Ran, and Grandma You, who guarded the Divine Ascension Mirror.

Meanwhile, Yang Kai was a rising star who actually managed to catch up to them. Judging by the current situation, he would surpass them one day. It was only a matter of time.

The other disciples who started at the same time as Yang Kai, such as Xia Sheng, Xiao Bai Yi, and Murong Xiao Xiao, had only just stabilized their cultivation in the First-Order Emperor Realm, so who knows when they would be able to break through to the Second-Order? In comparison to Yang Kai, the so-called genius disciples were simply mediocre.

An old saying popped up in Gao Xue Ting's head at that moment, 'Every generation produced new talents, and the new generation would eventually replace the old!' The smiling young man sitting in front of her was a star that was gradually rising into the sky, one that would bloom with a dazzling light one day and cover the entire Star Boundary in its radiance as long as nothing unexpected occurred.

"Not bad," She praised indifferently. However, she thought differently in her heart. [How is that 'not bad'!? It's practically a miracle! I seriously have no idea how he cultivates or what kind of Secret Art and Secret Techniques he uses.]

"Senior Sister Gao, how many Elder Contribution Points can I redeem with these items?" Yang Kai asked.

Putting the Space Ring away, she responded in a detached manner, "Emperor Grade Spirit Pills are hard to come by. Converting so many Emperor Grade Spirit Pills into Elder Contribution Points should garner you a large profit but I don't know the exact amount. Senior Brother Qiu is in charge of this matter, so you will need to discuss this with him."

"What are we waiting for? Let's go see Senior Brother Qiu!" He stood up.

"You sure are in a hurry," She glanced at him suspiciously.

He quickly stated, "Not really. It's just that this is the first time I've contributed to the Temple. Of course, I want to know how valuable this contribution is. Motivation only comes after achievements, right?"

"Fine. I'll go with you to meet Senior Brother Qiu. Let's have him give us an exact number." She stood up as well.

"Senior Sister, after you!" He gestured with his hand.

Walking to the entrance of the palace, she suddenly paused mid-step and turned around to look at him in a mixture of confusion and suspicion.

"Why are you looking at me like that? Is there something on my face?" Yang Kai asked in bewilderment.

"Something's not right." Gao Xue Ting shook her head slowly, "Tell me honestly. How did you return?"

"What do you mean by 'how did you return'? I returned like normal," Yang Kai's expression remained calm as he spewed nonsense with a straight face.

"If you returned like normal, why didn't the disciples on guard duty report anything? If you came from the outside, you would have needed to pass by Purple Bamboo Peak. Why didn't I notice anything?"

To which he promptly replied, "I am proficient in the Dao of Space. It only takes a few rounds of teleportation for me to arrive. That's probably why you failed to notice my presence."

"Is that so?" She glanced at him with a look that said she neither believed nor doubted him. Nevertheless, she did not question him any further and simply flew up into the sky.

Staring at her back, Yang Kai touched his nose absent-mindedly. [Did I mess up somewhere?]

He couldn't figure out what possible mistakes he had made. In the end, he could only fly after her, but to his surprise, he saw her making a turn and flying in a different direction before he could catch up to her.

"Senior Sister Gao, are you going in the wrong direction?" Yang Kai shouted from behind. Although he rarely stayed in Azure Sun Temple for long, he knew that Spirit Jade Peak, the place where Qiu Ran lived, was not in this direction. However, Gao Xue Ting ignored him as she flew towards a certain spot before landing in one of the mountain valleys.

Seeing where she landed, Yang Kai's heart clenched tight and his speed increased significantly.

Gao Xue ting silently stood in front of a Space Array inside a cave in the mountain valley. Walking into the cave nervously, Yang Kai called out softly but did not receive a reply; thus, he grit his teeth and exclaimed, "Wow! What is this? Why is there an array here!?"

She turned to look at him, "You still dare to pretend!?"

He innocently replied, "What are you talking about, Senior Sister Gao? Pretending? Me? About what?"

She sneered, "This is the back mountain of Spirit Sword Peak. Are you saying that you don't know about the things that are in your territory?"

He protested, "I don't know about this!" Looking at her, he continued, "Do you not believe me? I really know nothing about this. As you know, I rarely live here. How am I supposed to know about what happens in this place?"

"Do you really not know?" She asked.

"Yes, I really don't!" He maintained a serious face.

Then, she nodded and turned to look ahead, "It looks like a Space Array. Moreover, it hasn't been many years since it was arranged. We don't know who set this up nor where this connects. Junior Brother, please stand guard for me. I will inspect it."

"Uh..." He didn't know how to dissuade her, so he could only nod in agreement, "Okay. Be careful, Senior Sister."

She immediately walked onto the array and took out some Source Crystals. Placing them on the surrounding grooves, she released her Emperor Qi and activated the array; however, there was no response at all.

Yang Kai lowered his head guiltily. This was naturally the array he arranged and no one could activate it without his special token. For that reason, he was not worried that she might suddenly be transported to the Northern Territory.

Despite trying for a time, Gao Xue Ting failed to activate the array and in the end, she could only walk off it.

Yang Kai spoke up at that moment, "It looks like the array has been in disrepair for a long time. It probably lost its functionality, making it useless. We should just leave it be."

She shook her head, "There might be other activation methods that we don't know about. Besides, we don't know where this array leads to. This place is deep within the Temple so we cannot leave this threat lying here. If somebody uses this array to sneak inside our borders one day, we won't be able to notice their arrival at all."

Zheng...

A clean sound rang out, and a cold light flashed as Gao Xue Ting drew her sword and pushed her Emperor Qi.

Yang Kai's brow twitched in response to her actions and he called out, "Senior Sister, what are you planning to do?"

"What does it look like I'm planning to do? I'm destroying it, lest it keeps us on edge all the time." While speaking, she lifted her sword to cut the array.

"Wait!" Yang Kai shouted.

She turned to look at him, "What is it?"

Scratching his face, he anxiously said, "Don't be so reckless, Senior Sister. This is a Space Array after all. Although we don't know where it connects, it might lead to a vast source of treasure. If you destroy the array just like that, won't you also be cutting off all connection with that opportunity?"

"Then, what do you think we should do?"

He put his hand on his chest and bowed, "Although I am not talented, I am proficient in the Dao of Space. Please let me study this Space Array. I might be able to learn a thing or two about it."

"How long will you need to study it?"

"A month or two?"

"Hmm."

"Or, twenty to fifty years?"

"Hmm?"

He explained, "I can't really say. I can only say that I will do my best."

She waved her hand dismissively, "There's no need for so much trouble, let's just destroy it. Stand aside, Junior Brother, this array looks quite firm so I don't think I can hold back"

"Senior Sister Gao..." He pressed his palm against his forehead, feeling a little desperate to cry but unable to shed any tears.

“Do you have something else to say?” She looked at him with an expression that seemed to be asking if he had any last words. It was as though the sword was not about to cut the array but him.

He lowered his head, “Senior Sister Gao, do you know something?”

She scoffed, “That depends on what you want me to know.”

“Haaa...” He sighed, knowing that he couldn’t hide it anymore, “How did you find out?”

He believed that he had concealed the Space Array very well; moreover, Spirit Sword Peak could only be accessed by those that have enough authority. Unless they searched every inch of this place, it should have been impossible to discover.

Gao Xue Ting simply replied, “You have always been elusive and hard to track, so it’s difficult not to become suspicious of your actions. Besides, our Temple Master is an idle and bored person. During the past ten years that you were away, he searched every last step of Spirit Sword Peak. Did you think a single Array could block his search? He has a more advanced Spirit Jade to control the Arrays in his possession. Speak. Where does this Array lead to?”

He lowered his gaze. His expression was wooden, “The Northern Territory.”

“High Heaven Palace?” She raised her eyebrows.

He nodded at those words.

“As I expected! It’s a Cross-Territory Space Array!” She coldly snorted, “Did you arrange it?”

He smilingly said, “Yes.”

“Why did you have to be so sneaky about it?”

“I wasn’t being sneaky about it. I was just waiting for the right time to tell you about it,” Yang Kai declared.

Needless to say, she did not believe him. If she had not confronted him face-to-face like this, the ‘suitable time’ he mentioned would never have appeared. Even so, she could understand why he did what he did. The existence of this Spirit Array was too shocking and not something that could be leaked to the public easily.

“Why can’t I activate it?” It wasn’t the first time Gao Xue Ting had tried to activate the Space Array; in fact, both she and Wen Zi Shan had tried to activate it when he first discovered it, but nothing they did worked.

“It can only be activated if you have one of my specially refined tokens.” Now that it had been discovered, there was nothing left to hide. Azure Sun Temple had always been generous to him. The main reason he kept everything such a secret was that he was afraid of being used as her errand boy.

The people of Azure Sun Temple knew that he was an Emperor Alchemist and had long wished for him to keep refining Emperor Grade Spirit Pills for them; however, he had no time to focus on Alchemy and would hide in High Heaven Palace to live a leisurely life. Unfortunately, Gao Xue Ting could come to him anytime and anywhere now that the Space Array has been exposed.

“What token? Show me.”

“Is it okay if I don’t show it to you?” Yang Kai looked at Gao Xue Ting weakly.

Gao Xue Ting stretched out her hand, indicating that she was not going to give up until he showed it to her. Thus, he had no choice but to take out a token. She quickly reached out and snatched it from him and began studying it. She did not sense anything strange about it, but it did seem to give off some subtle Space Principles. She vaguely understood that the Space Principles sealed within were the key to activating the Space Array.

After a while, the token was put away into her Space Ring.

Seeing this, Yang Kai’s face twitched visibly, but he didn’t dare to raise any objections.

Chapter 3226, Stingy Qiu Ran

“Let’s go.” After putting the token away, Gao Xue Ting turned around and walked out. When her back was facing Yang Kai, an almost imperceptible smile drew up the corners of her lips.

Meanwhile, Yang Kai stood in place and sighed for a long while before striding out to catch up to her.

The reason he had admitted to setting up the Space Array so readily was that the other party had already discovered it a long time ago. It was meaningless to continue playing dumb. Besides, he came here to borrow some manpower for High Heaven Palace so it would have been exposed soon anyways. Instead of continuing to cover it up, it might be better to reveal his hand now.

As for whether Gao Xue Ting would go to the Northern Territory to ask him to refine Spirit Pills in the future, it was practically a done deal. In any case, he had Ji Ying so he could just push everything onto him.

Spirit Jade Peak was the place where the Vice Temple Master of Azure Sun Temple, Qiu Ran, lived. When Yang Kai and Gao Xue Ting arrived, Qiu Ran was meditating. He walked out of his room after being notified of their presence and met them in the hall.

Yang Kai got up and bowed, “Greetings, Senior Brother Qiu.”

On the other hand, Gao Xue Ting remained sitting. They were one big family and often met each other anyway so there was no need for her to be so reserved.

“What a rare guest. Junior Brother Yang, when did you return?” Qiu Ran looked at Yang Kai expressionlessly. Stretching out a hand to dismiss the formalities, he sat on the main seat in the hall.

Yang Kai chuckled, “I just got back and immediately came to visit you, Senior Brother Qiu. It has been many years since we last met. I’m glad your noble bearing is still the same.” While speaking, he sat down too.

Qiu Ran lifted his brow in response, "I am not worthy of your praise. Junior Brother Yang, you are an extraordinary man, but we don't see much of you. If you failed to return any longer, I'm afraid this Old Master would have forgotten that you were a part of the Temple in the first place."

[Those words are practically identical to what Gao Xue Ting said just now.] Yang Kai wanted to roll his eyes. Nevertheless, he maintained a smiling face on the surface, "I apologize, Senior Brother. I am greatly indebted to Azure Sun Temple and have never forgotten the Temple nor my Senior Brothers and Senior Sisters."

Qiu Ran did not respond. He simply glanced at Gao Xue Ting, who quietly nodded lightly in response. It seemed as though they were having a secret conversation via Divine Sense Transmission.

Soon, Qiu Ran's expression brightened. Nodding, he spoke up, "It's good if you have us in your heart, Junior Brother. You should also pay attention to your safety when going out. Regardless of the circumstances, you are still an Elder of Azure Sun Temple. You represent the Temple, so you must never do anything that can harm the reputation of the Azure Sun Temple."

"I will remember that." Yang Kai nodded solemnly.

Qiu Ran said, "Good. If there's nothing else, you should leave. I still have other things to do."

[What? Are you kicking me out already? I haven't even gotten to the main point yet.] Yang Kai looked stunned and quickly looked at Gao Xue Ting, desperately trying to signal her with his eyes. However, Gao Xue Ting looked down and simply sat there doing nothing.

[How heartless! How dare you cast me aside once you no longer need me!? I shouldn't have given you that token!] Since she refused to help him, he could only rely on himself. Putting his hand on his chest, he bowed and said, "Senior Brother, this Junior Brother has something to report."

"What is it?" Qiu Ran raised his eyes and looked at Yang Kai.

Yang Kai explained, "When I left, I took a large amount of spirit herbs from the Temple with me. Senior Sister Gao asked me to refine Spirit Pills for the Temple's use with them and, fortunately, I did not fail my mission."

"Oh?" Qiu Ran raised his eyebrows at those words, "Does that mean you have refined the Spirit Pills?"

"Yes!"

"Show me."

Only then did Gao Xue Ting speak up, "It's all with me." Removing the Space Ring from her jade finger, she handed it to Qiu Ran.

Qiu Ran took the Space Ring from her and swept his Divine Sense through it. His expression immediately became one of astonishment. [So many!? Moreover, they are all Emperor Grade Spirit Pills and high quality too!]

He had known that Yang Kai was an Emperor Alchemist and had agreed to allow him to take those spirit flowers and exotic herbs back then, but he never expected Yang Kai to bring back such a large amount of Emperor Grade Spirit Pills just ten years later.

[Having our own Emperor Alchemist sure is nice.] Qiu Ran was already calculating whether he should give Yang Kai more spirit herbs. As long as they could be refined into Emperor Grade Spirit Pills, what was waiting for ten more years?

“Hmm. Not bad,” he said indifferently. [I can’t praise him too highly; otherwise, it will be difficult to ask him to refine Spirit Pills again.]

Yang Kai said, “It’s my job to contribute to the Temple.” Pausing for a moment, he rubbed his nose and asked, “Senior Brother, how many Elder Contribution Points can I exchange these for?”

Qiu Ran replied, “I will need to make careful calculations before I can give you an exact number.”

“Then, I ask that you please calculate it for me quickly, Senior Brother.”

He blinked at Yang Kai, “Are you in a hurry?”

“Not really.” Yang Kai made a fist and awkwardly coughed into it, “Of course, it would be wonderful if you can give me an exact number now, Senior Brother.”

Qiu Ran frowned at those words and studied Yang Kai. He did not know what Yang Kai was up to. Nonetheless, he was counting on Yang Kai to continue refining Spirit Pills for them in the future so for that reason, he needed to give Yang Kai some motivation. Thus, he nodded and said, “Fine. I will calculate it for you right now.”

“Many thanks, Senior Brother!” Yang Kai looked elated.

Qiu Ren said nothing to that. Taking out all the Emperor Grade Spirit Pills from the Space Ring, he placed them on the table in front of him. It was naturally impossible to store Emperor Grade Spirit Pills in ordinary bottles. Each Emperor Grade Spirit Pill was stored in a container of appropriate Attribute, which would ensure that their medicinal efficacies were not lost in short order. There were jade boxes, gold boxes, silver boxes, wooden boxes, and so on and so forth, covering a range of different types of Spirit Pills. Soon, the table was filled with containers. They were spread out over several layers and looked to be at least 200 to 300 in total.

Gao Xue Ting also came over, mainly because she had never seen so many Emperor Grade Spirit Pills in one place before. It was a very strange and rare sight. If they wanted to get any Emperor Grade Spirit Pills from the Temple, they had to ask an Alchemy Grandmaster to refine it for them. Not only did they need to collect their own materials, but they also needed to offer up a large sum as a reward. Sometimes, they might even have to wait in line when the Alchemist was busy.

To put it bluntly, the Emperor Grade Spirit Pills that Yang Kai brought out were almost equal to the sum of the Emperor Grade Spirit Pills that the Temple had acquired in the past five hundred years. Qiu Ran and Gao Xue Ting were both extremely happy and shocked inside but showed no signs of their emotions on their faces.

“There has never been such a precedent before, but Emperor Grade Spirit Pills are rare, so I will now convert them into Elder Contribution Points for you.” While speaking, Qiu Ran opened a wooden box with his hand and studied the Spirit Pill inside carefully. He nodded and said, “This pill can be categorized as Mid-Rank. After deducting the cost of the materials, I will price it at 800 Elder Contribution Points. Is that alright?”

Yang Kai did some swift calculations in his head. He once heard from Gao Xue Ting, You Kun, and the others that Elder Contribution Points were somewhat difficult to obtain at Azure Sun Temple and on average an Elder would acquire about 5,000 to 6,000 points at most. On the other hand, entering the Divine Ascension Mirror World required 2,000 points per entry.

Elder Contribution Points could be redeemed with Source Crystals but could only be redeemed up to 2,000 points per year, which was just enough to enter the Divine Ascension Mirror once. Moreover, the redemption ratio is 1:1,000. In other words, it took 1,000 High-Rank Source Crystals in exchange for 1 Elder Contribution Point. If one wanted more Elder Contribution Points, they could only help Azure Sun Temple out with various tasks. For example, Gao Xue Ting received some Elder Contribution Points when she led the team of disciples to the Four Seasons Realm.

If the 800 Elder Contribution Points were converted into High-Rank Source Crystals, it would be worth 800,000 High-Rank Source Crystals. Furthermore, that was after the deduction of the costs of materials. Since the materials for the Spirit Pills were provided by Azure Sun Temple, it was cheaper than if the materials had been bought from external sources. At any rate, Yang Kai was one of the Elders of Azure Sun Temple so it was a matter of course for it to be slightly below the market price.

Although Yang Kai could reluctantly accept the value given, he brazenly asked, "Could you give me a little more?"

Qiu Ran replied, "As the Vice Temple Master of Azure Sun Temple, I am in charge of all matters concerning the Temple's finances. All I ask for is fairness for all. If you feel that it is too little, you can ask Junior Sister Gao for her opinion."

There was no need to ask as Yang Kai was well aware of the situation. Nevertheless, he said, "Won't you make it 1,000 points? Let's round it up to a whole number."

"800!" Qiu Ran completely ignored Yang Kai. After saying that, he stuffed the jade box into his Space Ring without another word.

"Serves you right for failing to find a dual cultivation partner," Yang Kai muttered under his breath in dissatisfaction.

"What did you say?" Qiu Ran looked up at Yang Kai.

"Nothing, nothing. Senior Brother Qiu, please do continue."

Snorting, he picked up another jade box, opened it, and nodded with a smile, "An Emperor Grade High-Rank Spirit Pill. 1,000 Elder Contribution Points." He stuffed the jade box into his Space Ring and picked up another one.

He briefly evaluated each jade box and swiftly determined the value in terms of Elder Contribution Points. A High-Rank Spirit Pill was valued at 1,000 Elder Contribution Points, a Mid-Rank Spirit Pill was 800 Elder Contribution Points, and a Low-Rank Spirit Pill was only 500 Elder Contribution Points. The numbers slowly added up. Yang Kai could feel a bubbling feeling of joy in his heart while, occasionally, he would explain the benefits of various Spirit Pills from his perspective as an Alchemy Grandmaster, the difficulties of refining a Spirit Pill, and how time-consuming the process was. It was all done in hopes of convincing Qiu Ran to give a higher valuation.

However, Qiu Ran was strict and impartial. He completely ignored Yang Kai, which made the latter so irritated that his teeth itched.

“Please wait, Senior Brother. Although this Spirit Pill is Mid-Rank, the pill fragrance is strong and the veins are clear. You can tell at a glance that it has almost reached the High Rank. Don’t you think it’s too unfair to only give it 800 points?” Yang Kai suddenly raised his hand.

Qiu Ran asked, “Then how much do you think should be given?”

Yang Kai replied in a serious tone, “Since it is between Mid-Rank and High-Rank, we can give a slight discount and value it at 900 points. This way, it’s a win-win solution for everybody, right?”

Qiu Ran chuckled softly and pushed the jade box in front of him to Yang Kai, “Junior Brother, your words make sense. Why don’t you help me evaluate the goods instead? That way, I can take a break.”

[I wish I could. But, what’s the point of evaluating it? I still need your approval anyway.] Thus, Yang Kai smiled and said, “What are you saying, Senior Brother? I’m just trying to explain the truth as it is. I don’t mean to overstep my boundaries.”

“Hmph!” Qiu Ran’s expression became frosty as he stuffed the jade box away, “700 points!”

“Wait!” Yang Kai was shocked, “Why did it become 700 points!? It was 800 points just now!”

“600!”

Yang Kai immediately stopped talking lest the price get lowered even further. Then, he turned to look at Gao Xue Ting for help, hoping that she would speak up on his behalf; however, this woman was actually looking up at the roof as though there were flowers growing there.

Yang Kai’s face twitched in response, and he secretly gritted his teeth. [You are both so ruthless! I wonder who it was that said ‘all he wanted was fairness’. All a bunch of lies! An abuse of authority!]

An hour later, Qiu Ran finished doing an inventory of the items and concluded, “The total comes to 156,300 Elder Contribution Points. Did I make a mistake in my calculations?”

“No!” Yang Kai lowered his head weakly. That number was identical to the one he had calculated in his head.

Gao Xue Ting expressionlessly murmured, “Congratulations, Junior Brother.”

Yang Kai snorted at those words. [I was oppressed and underpaid by this stingy Qiu Ran. What is there to be congratulated about?]

Nevertheless, if these 150,000 over Elder Contribution Points were converted into High-Rank Source Crystals, it would come up to more than 1.5 billion High-Rank Source Crystals. That was an extremely shocking number. There were many Elders in Azure Sun Temple, but nobody had managed to accumulate more than 10,000 Elder Contribution Points at once so far. Compared to those people, Yang Kai could be said to have become rich overnight.

Chapter 3227, Borrow Some Manpower

Qiu Ran put all the Emperor Grade Spirit Pills away again. Stroking the beard on his chin, he pondered for a moment before asking, "Junior Brother, how do you intend to spend this vast amount of Elder Contribution Points?"

Having too many Elder Contribution Points was not a good thing. According to the rules, the Elder Contribution Points could be used to redeem anything and everything that could be redeemed in Azure Sun Temple. For example, various cultivation resources or advanced Secret Arts and Secret Techniques. However, Yang Kai had too many Elder Contribution Points, so many it frightened Qiu Ran. If he were to exchange them for materials, the treasure accumulated within the Temple's storehouse would be greatly reduced all at once.

Naturally, that was not what Azure Sun Temple hoped to see. If Yang Kai were to completely exchange his Elder Contribution Points for supplies, then the other disciples would have to tighten their belts when cultivating for the next while.

Yang Kai had a plan in mind for a long time, so when he heard the question, he immediately replied, "Senior Brother, as you know, I have founded High Heaven Palace in the Northern Territory. I recently took in some disciples, but unfortunately, the foundation of High Heaven Palace is not broad enough and its heritage is insufficient. Therefore, I would like to ask the Temple to allow me to copy some Secret Arts and Secret Techniques to bring back. I don't know if that is allowed. Of course, I can use my Elder Contribution Points in exchange for them."

Qiu Ran said, "You are an Elder. It's not a problem if you copy some Secret Arts and Secret Techniques. As long as it's not something especially important, you won't need to use any Elder Contribution Points."

[At least there's something good out of this!] Yang Kai felt happy. [With how stingy Qiu Ran was with me just now, I thought he was intentionally targeting me. It looks like I misunderstood him.]

Yang Kai nodded, "Of course, the more Secret Arts and Secret Techniques the better. I would also like to get some of the precious ones."

Qiu Ran advised, "You can discuss this with Junior Brother Di. He is in charge of the Cultivation Technique Pavilion. He knows best what needs Elder Contribution Points and what doesn't."

The 'Junior Brother Di' Qiu Ran was referring to was none other than Di Rong. Yang Kai wasn't as familiar with Di Rong as he was with Gao Xue Ting, but they could be considered friends who had drunk together and suffered punishments together. They were not strangers to each other.

"Good!" Yang Kai nodded.

"Is there anything else?" Qiu Ran looked up at Yang Kai.

Yang Kai said, "In addition, I want to borrow some manpower from the Temple."

"Borrow some manpower?" Qiu Ran frowned, "What do you mean?"

Yang Kai explained, "The disciples I recently took in at High Heaven Palace don't have very high cultivation, so they need someone to help guide their cultivation and answer questions they might have. Therefore, I would like to borrow some manpower from the Temple to serve as their teachers. Of course, I won't be asking for free. I can use my Elder Contribution Points to offset their compensation." This was the main purpose of his visit this time. The one hundred teachers from Fire Dragon Palace had been complaining for many days now, so he had to gather more manpower as soon as possible.

"Although there is no precedent for this, it shouldn't be a problem. Junior Sister Gao, what do you think?" Qiu Ran turned to look at Gao Xue Ting.

Gao Xue Ting spoke up, "It's not like it's impossible. He isn't an outsider after all; however, how many people do you want to borrow and what cultivation do they need to have, Junior Brother?"

"Two hundred people," Yang Kai replied.

"En."

"Dao Source Realm?"

Puhh...

Qiu Ran had just taken a sip of tea and spurted it out upon hearing those words. He quickly put down his teacup and patted at the water stain on his chest. Looking at Yang Kai in amazement, he exclaimed, "Junior Brother, you want to borrow two hundred Dao Source Realm cultivators!?"

"You heard correctly, Senior Brother. I would like to borrow two hundred Dao Source Realm instructors."

Gao Xue Ting was similarly astonished, "Why do you need so many Dao Source Realm disciples?"

These people were going to High Heaven Palace to teach. Since they were teachers, it would definitely be one teacher to a group of students. If one teacher was to teach two hundred people, then two hundred teachers would be teaching forty thousand people. [High Heaven Palace has forty thousand disciples!?!]

"Didn't I tell you just now? I want them to be teachers."

She frowned, "How many disciples did you recruit at High Heaven Palace?"

Yang Kai sniffed lightly, "More than a hundred thousand..."

Both Qiu Ran and Gao Xue Ting were completely stunned. They almost thought that they had misheard Yang Kai. Exchanging a glance with each other, Qiu Ran asked Gao Xue Ting using his Divine Sense, "How many did he say just now?"

Gao Xue Ting replied, "I heard him say more than a hundred thousand. What did you hear him say, Senior Brother?"

[So it really was more than a hundred thousand! We weren't mistaken!] The corners of his brow twitched, "Why did you take in so many disciples!?"

The key point to what Yang Kai had said was that these disciples' cultivation was not high. The strength of a Sect did not lie in the number of disciples, but whether they had enough powerful Masters.

Azure Sun Temple only had about eight thousand disciples, but it was still one of the top Sects in the Southern Territory. On the other hand, High Heaven Palace had more than one hundred thousand disciples. [It's more than a hundred thousand people! It's not like they are a hundred thousand chickens. Can he even feed so many people!? Besides, what's the point of taking care of a hundred thousand people with low cultivation!? There has never been any Sect with so many disciples before. It's completely unseen and unheard of!]

"I had no choice," Yang Kai smiled bitterly. It was inconvenient to explain the situation to others. It was enough if his own people knew about it. If people from Azure Sun Temple learnt that those disciples had been brought over from a Lower Star Field, Azure Sun Temple would surely try to snatch some of them.

[With more than a hundred thousand disciples, two hundred teachers really isn't much...] Qiu Ran forcefully composed himself and asked, "Junior Brother, do you know how many Dao Source Realm Masters are in Azure Sun Temple?"

"No, I don't." Yang Kai shook his head. Although he was qualified to know, no one had told him before, so how could he have known about that?

"352." Qiu Ran offered an extremely accurate number, "Leaving aside the disciples in the Dao Source Realm who oversee various properties, there are only 289 who remain in the Temple." The implication behind his words was: 'What is the Temple going to do if you take away two hundred Dao Source Realm disciples all at once!?'

Yang Kai nodded at those words, "289. The heritage of the Temple is truly not to be taken lightly. It's perfectly capable of fulfilling my needs. I ask that you carry out my request, Senior Brother."

Qiu Ran almost failed to stop himself from cursing. He even wondered if Yang Kai was doing this on purpose. Those 289 people in question had duties to perform in the Temple as well. They were not idlers with nothing to do. While deploying some people was not a problem, two hundred was simply too many. Besides, Qiu Ran was certain that Yang Kai was deliberately playing dumb despite being well aware of this point. Taking a deep breath, he stated, "Two hundred Dao Source Realm cultivators is impossible. I can lend you thirty at most."

Yang Kai opened his eyes wide and said, "Thirty!? What am I going to do with thirty?" [Thirty is nowhere near enough people to fill in the gaps!]

"Take it or leave it." Qiu Ran turned around and picked up his teacup. Just as he was about to take a sip, he suddenly remembered that he had just spat into his tea mere moments ago. Thus, he put it down again in anguish.

"Please don't do this, Senior Brother. We are all one family aren't we? We can talk things out. Is it because you don't have the authority to decide on this matter? If you can't make the call on this matter, I can always go and negotiate with the Temple Master instead."

Qiu Ran shook his head, "It's useless even if you approach the Temple Master over this matter."

"Good, I'll lower the amount I'm asking for. One hundred and eighty people." Yang Kai took a step back.

Qiu Ran was expressionless, "Forty."

"One hundred and seventy."

"Fifty!"

"One hundred and sixty. That should work, right? Senior Brother, please don't be so unreasonable. I'm only asking them to be teachers and they will be paid for their work. I won't let them work for nothing."

"Sixty!" Qiu Ran glanced sideways at Yang Kai, "It looks like High Heaven Palace is quite well off, Junior Brother. Not only can it feed more than a hundred thousand disciples, but it can also afford to pay salaries for two hundred Dao Source Realm teachers. Junior Brother, you truly are a capable man."

"I am also living on a tight budget to support my Sect. Senior Brother, you are also somebody who is in charge of a Sect so I'm sure you can understand my pain. One hundred fifty. I really can't go lower than that anymore."

"It's precisely because I understand how hard it is that I'm willing to be more considerate of you. Seventy people. I can't go any higher than that."

The two of them had a lively back-and-forth conversation, each responding to the other in quick succession. It was similar to haggling at the market, making Gao Xue Ting stare at them speechlessly. [The two of you are talking about tens to hundreds of disciples in the Dao Source Realm. Can you please be a little more serious about it?]

After a battle of wits and courage, Qiu Ran adamantly refused to budge from eighty people. He would not give even a single one more.

Yang Kai slapped the table furiously, "Senior Brother, don't force my hand!"

Qiu Ran calmly adjusted his sleeves, "Calm down, Junior Brother. Giving you eighty Dao Source Realm disciples as teachers is really the Temple's limit. How can you say that I am forcing your hand?"

"You really can't give me more?" Yang Kai showed a fierce look as if he had a deep grudge against Qiu Ran.

Qiu Ran slowly shook his head.

"Fine." Yang Kai pointed a finger at Qiu Ran, "Since that's the case, I don't want any teachers anymore. Not a single one."

Qiu Ran was surprised by this declaration, but suddenly had an ominous premonition wash over him.

Meanwhile, Yang Kai spread his arms out, "Senior Brother, please convert all of my 150,000 plus Elder Contribution Points into High-Rank Source Crystals. I currently need to feed more than a hundred thousand disciples and we are sorely lacking in cultivation resources so we need to use Source Crystals to make up for that deficit. Please support me, Senior Brother."

Qiu Ran's expression instantly turned black and he had to struggle intensely to stop himself from cursing out loud. What he feared the most really came true. While he was calculating Yang Kai's Elder Contribution Points before, he had felt that there were far too many of them, that was why he wanted

Yang Kai to spend some of them. Unfortunately, he did not expect to arrive back at square one after taking such a big detour.

If all those Elder Contribution Points were to be converted into High-Rank Source Crystals, it would amount to over a billion High-Rank Source Crystals. It wasn't that the Temple couldn't afford such an expenditure, but what would happen after that? Besides, the Temple still needed to trouble Yang Kai to continue refining Emperor Grade Spirit Pills for them in the future. If he continued being stubborn here, it would only anger Yang Kai further and make things more difficult.

"Cough, cough..." Qiu Ran formed a fist and coughed into it, "Junior Brother, let's not get agitated. I'm sure we can reach a middle ground. Aren't we still in the process of negotiating?"

Yang Kai laughed. Leaning back into the chair, he crossed one leg over his knee and said, "One hundred forty teachers in the Dao Source Realm. Senior Brother, it's up to you."

Qiu Ran replied with a sour expression, "That's too many."

"Is that so? But, I don't think it's too many." Yang Kai secretly thought to himself. [Li Jiao was really quite agreeable. I only needed to ask him to send some Dao Source Realm teachers over, and he arranged for it immediately. On the contrary, Azure Sun Temple is being so fussy about it. They are acting as if I'm trying to kidnap their people or something.]

"Please reduce it by a bit more."

Yang Kai resolutely declared, "Senior Brother, please help me exchange my Elder Contribution Points for Source Crystals."

Qui Ren's expression darkened even more.

Unable to stand this farce any longer, Gao Xue Ting spoke up, "Why don't we do this instead, Junior Brother Yang. One hundred Dao Source Realm disciples, plus three hundred Origin Kings. Since your disciples' cultivation is not that high, the Origin Kings should be able to teach some of them too; after all, not everybody needs the guidance of a Dao Source Realm Master."

Yang Kai glanced at her, knowing that she was right. In any case, a hundred Dao Source Realm instructors were not far off from his original estimations. The reason why he asked for two hundred people was so that Qiu Ran had room to bargain.

Three hundred Origin Kings was quite a large number, and if Yang Kai divided them among all the Spirit Peaks, he would have two to three per Spirit Peak. Although some of those who came from the Star Field were also Origin Kings, they had their hands full with their own cultivation at the moment and did not have the time to guide others. Therefore, the current situation at High Heaven Palace would surely improve with the help of these four hundred additional teachers.

Still, Yang Kai pretended to consider it for a long time before saying, "Since Senior Sister Gao has spoken, then I will back down out of respect for her. However, the number of Origin Kings is a little lacking. Let's increase it to four hundred instead." After saying that, he glanced at Qiu Ran.

Qiu Ran gritted his teeth and snarled, "Fine!" [He backs down in respect for her, but not for me? How outrageous!]

Yang Kai immediately broke into a grin and cupped his fists, "Many thanks, Senior Brother Qiu."

Chapter 3228, Elders Meeting

Now that the matter had been finalized, Yang Kai didn't want to drag things out any longer so he urged, "This matter is urgent. Senior Brother, please choose the suitable candidates for this task as soon as possible."

Qiu Ran raised his hand and said, "There's no hurry."

Yang Kai exclaimed in surprise, "Senior Brother, don't tell me you are going back on your word?"

Qiu Ran snorted, "How can I go back on my word after making a promise with you? But, I've already mentioned this before; there is no precedent to this matter. Let me ask you this. How many Elder Contribution Points should be used each month in exchange for each Dao Source Realm disciple that you want to borrow?"

Yang Kai suddenly became alert, "Senior Brother, don't you dare try to ask for more than is reasonable!"

Qiu Ran replied, "I can't decide on this matter alone. I will need to gather the Elders to discuss this matter and come up with a suitable plan. I also need to inform the Temple Master about this."

[Fair enough.] Upon hearing those words, Yang Kai nodded in agreement, "That makes sense."

Qiu Ran and Gao Xue Ting immediately took out their respective communication artifacts and notified the other Elders of Azure Sun Temple. Not long after that, several figures flew in from the outside, all of whom were familiar faces. They were the Elders of Azure Sun Temple, including the newly promoted Elders, Xiao Bai Yi and Murong Xiao Xiao.

The disciples of Azure Sun Temple were eligible to become an Elder as long as they reached the Emperor Realm. Although it could be said that it was just a title that came with no real authority, an Elder was still an Elder. Their status was completely different from that of a disciple and the treatment they received was different too.

Yang Kai greeted each of them with a bow. Xiao Bai Yi was as cold and aloof as usual, a man of few words. On the other hand, Murong Xiao Xiao smiled brightly and approached Yang Kai to chat.

Yang Kai asked about Xia Sheng and learned that he was still guarding Spirit Lake Palace and rarely returned to Azure Sun Temple.

"Senior Brother Xia mentioned that he is greatly indebted to you for what happened last time. If he has the chance, he wants to invite you to Spirit Lake Palace for a drink."

"What happened last time..." Yang Kai was lost for a moment but quickly realized that Murong Xiao Xiao was referring to the incident at the Southern Swamp where the Demon Cave was encountered. The Palace Master of Hundred Flowers Palace, Hua Yu Lu, was a friend of Xia Sheng. At the time, Xia Sheng

had entrusted Hua Yu Lu to Yang Kai. Fortunately, Yang Kai lived up to Xia Sheng's expectations, and nothing happened to Hua Yu Lu.

Yang Kai just smiled and waved his hand dismissively, "It's nothing. He doesn't need to feel indebted to me."

At that moment, Qiu Ran stood up. The entire hall fell silent as everybody turned to look at him. He spoke with a helpless expression, "The Temple Master said he couldn't come, so he left it to us to discuss and resolve this matter."

Logically speaking, a matter involving hundreds of disciples in the Dao Source Realm was no trivial matter and Wen Zi Shan should have been present for it. Unfortunately, he was an extremely lazy person and generally paid no attention to the affairs of the Sect, leaving everything to Qiu Ran. Therefore, it was no surprise that he was absent today too.

Everybody seemed to have expected this outcome. You Kun even declared forcefully, "Who cares if the Temple Master doesn't want to come? It won't make a difference whether he is here or not. We might as well discuss it on our own."

No Elder of any other Sect would speak of their own Temple Master in such a manner. Azure Sun Temple was the only exception. It was the perfect example of what it meant by the saying 'the apple didn't fall far from the tree'.

Everybody else nodded in agreement while Qiu Ran looked heartbroken, secretly cursing in his heart, [This isn't right!]

Nothing else was said as everybody took their respective seats. On the other hand, Yang Kai looked around and cupped his fists, "Then, I will take my leave."

Qiu Ran quickly stated, "This matter is about you. There's no need to leave. Sit down and listen."

[Ha... I can't leave,] Yang Kai turned around and sat back down. He was similar to Xiao Bai Yi and Murong Xiao Xiao. They were Elders in name and not authority; however, Xiao Bai Yi and Murong Xiao Xiao were actual Elders of Azure Sun Temple while he was just a High-Rank Guest Elder. For that reason, his seat was placed at the back, right next to Murong Xiao Xiao, even though he made significant contributions to the Temple.

Under normal circumstances, Xiao Bai Yi and Murong Xiao Xiao would not have been qualified to participate in discussions like these yet, mainly because they were still inexperienced. Nevertheless, the reason they were called here today was to listen and prepare themselves for the future; after all, it was only a matter of time before they held great authority within the Temple and decided on matters pertaining to the disciples' future.

Qiu Ran cleared his throat. First, he talked about how Yang Kai had brought a large number of Emperor Grade Spirit Pills and received a correspondingly large amount of Elder Contribution Points in exchange. It made all the Elders in the hall study Yang Kai in surprise. They also had envious expressions on their faces.

[More than 150,000 Elder Contribution Points...]

That was a number that had never been seen before. Even if they entered the Divine Ascension Mirror World once a year, they would only need to spend 2,000 points a year. His Elder Contribution Points of more than 150,000 were enough to last him for sixty to seventy years.

However, there was no point in feeling envious. Emperor Grade Spirit Pills were not something just anybody could refine. It simply strengthened their belief that Emperor Grade Alchemists were capable of making a fortune. [He obtained 150,000 Elder Contribution Points out of nowhere, just like that. How long will it take for him to spend them all?]

Meanwhile, Yang Kai sat there in an easy-going manner, his expression calm and indifferent. Unbeknownst to them, the truth was that he was having a secret conversation with Murong Xiao Xiao via Divine Sense transmission.

After the amazement wore off, somebody immediately thought of the concerns that Qiu Ran had previously been worried about and questioned how Yang Kai planned to spend his Elder Contribution Points.

In response, Qiu Ran explained Yang Kai's wish to borrow one hundred Dao Source Realm and four hundred Origin King disciples from the Temple. The results had already been negotiated and decided upon. Seeing that he had finalized the decision, the others had nothing much to say about it either. What they wanted to discuss at present was how many Elder Contribution Points those five hundred people should earn as a salary each month. Luckily, Yang Kai was not an outsider. Everybody maintained a fair and impartial stance when discussing this matter, and they soon came to an agreement in less than an hour.

Yang Kai was required to pay 10 Elder Contribution Points per Dao Source Realm per month and 3 per Origin King per month. A quick calculation showed that he had to pay a total of 2,200 Elder Contribution Points per month or 26,400 Elder Contribution Points per year. With more than 150,000 Elder Contribution Points, he had enough to last for almost six years. This result was within his ability to bear, so he had no objections to it when Qiu Ran asked. In that way, the decision was finalized immediately.

Six years should be more or less enough time for those disciples from the Star Field to become familiar with the Star Boundary. It should also be enough time for some of those in the Origin King Realm to advance into the Dao Source Realm. By having the experienced ones guide the inexperienced ones and imparting their cultivation knowledge to those below them, it would eventually form a virtuous cycle.

What's more, he could just ask Ji Ying to produce more Emperor Grade Spirit Pills for him to exchange for more Elder Contribution Points if he ran low; therefore, it was nothing to him.

"It's rare for us to get together like this, so let's discuss the matter regarding the Southern Territory Martial Gathering that will be held next month." Qiu Ran took a few sips of tea from his teacup, placed it down, and continued, "The Southern Territory Martial Gathering was originally held every five years. Unfortunately, as everyone knows, certain events occurred several years back. Demon Caves appeared and numerous Demon Spirits were revived, which left everyone living in fear. All this time, our fellow cultivators in the Southern Territory have been hunting down and killing those Demon Spirits who escaped. As a result, the Martial Gathering has been delayed for several years. Now that the dust has finally settled, we cannot be careless about the Martial Gathering that is finally being held again after more than a decade."

“Martial Gathering? What Martial Gathering?” Yang Kai turned to look at Murong Xiao Xiao and asked via Divine Sense.

Murong Xiao Xiao replied, “It’s a tradition in the Southern Territory that is held every five years. It is jointly organized by Azure Sun Temple, Orthodoxy Temple, and Heavenly Martial Holy Land. These three Sects jointly fund the event and arrange for various valuable prizes. Star Soul Palace will also present some gifts. All the cultivators in the Southern Territory below the Emperor Realm are eligible to participate in the event. It is categorized into three levels, namely the Dao Source Realm, the Origin King Realm, and the Origin Returning Realm, where the younger generation competes for rankings. There are both individual rankings and Sect rankings. The prizes will be handed out according to the rankings. It is also a means for the Sects and Families to test the results of their disciples’ cultivation. In any case, every Sect attaches great importance to this event, especially the top three Sects in the Southern Territory. Nobody is willing to rank poorly; therefore, every Martial Gathering is very lively as many Masters gather around.”

“Wow! There’s something like that?” Yang Kai was surprised.

She pursed her lips and said with a smile, “Senior Brother, you have not been in the Southern Territory for long, so it’s only natural that you have never heard of it. The last Martial Gathering was hosted by Azure Sun Temple. I, Senior Brother Xia, and Senior Brother Xiao all participated in that competition.”

“How were the results?” He asked with interest.

Murong Xiao Xiao answered shyly, “Azure Sun Temple ranked slightly higher than the other two top Sects in the Sect ranking. In the individual rankings, Senior Brother Xia lost to Wu Chang by a slight margin, coming in second. On the other hand, I only made the top ten.”

Yang Kai comforted her, “Victory and defeat are part of life. Don’t mind it, Junior Sister.”

“The three Sects take turns hosting the Martial Gathering. Last time, it was us. This time, it seems like it’s Orthodoxy Temple’s turn.”

“By the way, Senior Brother Qiu mentioned that the Southern Territory has been hunting down Demon Spirits in recent years. What’s the current situation?” Yang Kai was very familiar with the Demon Spirits. He, Hua Yu Lu, and others could be said to be the culprits of the entire incident. During their trip to the Southern Swamp, a Demon Cave had appeared. Gong Yue, the former Patriarch of the Gong Family from the Heavenly River Valley was taken over by a Demon Spirit, succumbed to demonification, snuck into Azure Sun Temple, and opened another Demon Cave, releasing thousands of Demon Spirits.

It was just that Yang Kai had been anxious to find Zhu Qing and went to Frozen Earth in search of her right at the beginning of that incident. He had then gone through an arduous journey just to return not long ago. More than ten years had passed in the blink of an eye, and Yang Kai had lost track of how this situation had played out afterwards. Besides, Star Soul Palace was leading the efforts to eradicate the Demons, so there was nothing for him to worry about with them in charge.

When Murong Xiao Xiao heard his question about the Demon Spirits, she couldn’t help turning pale in response as if recalling something extremely horrifying as she whispered, “Many people died.”

Demon Spirits were difficult to guard against. They were invisible and nearly impossible to track. It was something Yang Kai had experienced personally back then. Gong Yue's cultivation was not weak, but even so, a Demon Spirit managed to invade his body without any warning whatsoever and corrupt his mind. The most frightening thing was that Gong Yue had succumbed to it without realizing anything was wrong. The Demon Spirit had distorted his heart and mind so that he would release thousands of Demon Spirits and bring chaos into the world even if he had to die at the hands of Azure Sun Temple.

Murong Xiao Xiao claimed that a lot of people died, which probably meant that the death count was truly horrendous. It was hard to imagine the situation in the Southern Territory for the past ten years.

At that moment, Qiu Ran announced loudly, "If that's the case, this matter is settled. I will stay and guard the Temple while this trip will be led by the Temple Master himself. The accompanying Elders are as follows... Luo Chen!"

A fair and baby-faced man stood up in response, cupping his fist and shouting, "Yes!"

Yang Kai murmured in surprise, "The Temple Master himself will be going? Isn't that honouring Orthodoxy Temple a little too much?"

Although the Southern Territory Martial Gathering was not small in scale, it only involved those below the Emperor Realm. Yang Kai initially thought that only a few Elders would lead the delegation, so who could have known that even Wen Zi Shan himself would attend?

Murong Xiao Xiao smiled and replied, "Star Soul Palace will send someone over every time the Martial Gathering is held, so the Temple Master is simply going for the sake of formality."

"I see." Yang Kai nodded lightly. [It's not out of respect for Orthodoxy Temple, but for Star Soul Palace. That explains everything; after all, even the people from Star Soul Palace are attending. It will be outrageous if Wen Zi Shan doesn't attend. It's just a formality anyway. It's no big deal.]

Qiu Ran called out again, "Gao Xue Ting!"

"Yes!" Gao Xue Ting stood up and bowed with her hand on her chest.

"Xiao Bai Yi!"

"Yes!"

Chapter 3229, Unwilling? Very Good!

"Murong Xiao Xiao!"

"Here!"

"Yang Kai!" Qiu Ran looked at Yang Kai, along with the various gazes of other people, stunning him as he pointed at himself and asked, "I'm going too?"

Qiu Ran was sour-faced as he asked, “Were you not listening during our discussion just now?”

How could Yang Kai have heard anything? He had been chatting away with Murong Xiao Xiao. Azure Sun Temple probably sent Xiao Bai Yi and Murong Xiao Xiao to give them some experience. Although they had participated in the Martial Gathering before, they had participated as disciples. Now that they were Elders, the situation was no longer the same. Sending them out would allow them to gain more experience and get to mingle with those from other Sects. That way, they would not be caught unprepared should a situation arise where they needed to lead a team in the future.

[But, why do I have to go along with them?] Including Yang Kai, Qiu Ran had named a total of five people. [It’s an event for those below the Emperor Realm. Is there a need for five Elders in the Emperor Realm to lead the delegation? Aren’t they making a big deal out of nothing?]

High Heaven Palace was still facing many issues at the moment, and the disciples had yet to be completely settled in. Hence, Yang Kai was reluctant to join the Southern Territory Martial Gathering. He pondered for a moment and said, “Senior Brother, please forgive me. Unfortunately, I have something else...”

Gao Xue Ting cut in, “Don’t forget that you are also an Elder of Azure Sun Temple. It’s bad enough that you didn’t bother showing your face around here for so many years. You should go on this trip if you can make it; otherwise, people might forget that an Elder like you even exists in Azure Sun Temple.”

Emperor Realm Masters were the cornerstones of a Sect. They were a stabilizing force and a measure of influence. Thus, the number of Emperor Realm Masters in a Sect was directly related to the Sect’s standing in the world. One more or one less would make a huge difference.

Gao Xue Ting obviously meant that he should make an appearance more frequently to remind others about the existence of an Emperor Realm Master like him in Azure Sun Temple.

Having this pointed out, Yang Kai could only nod in agreement, “Alright then. I will go on this trip.”

You Kun laughed loudly, “Junior Brother, don’t look so displeased. You should know that the Martial Gathering is where many Emperor Realm Masters from many Sects will gather. There will be various meetings and auctions held in private. You might even stumble across a cheap and rare find if you go. Why else do you think the Temple sends so many Elders there?”

Although that was certainly an aspect to be considered, Yang Kai was a relatively wealthy person who could afford to feed more than a hundred thousand disciples, so why would he need to stumble across a cheap and rare find? Nevertheless, he smiled and nodded, “Good, it is as Senior Brother says.”

“Then, this matter is settled. You may leave to start your preparations early. We will set off in one month.”

After finalizing several matters, everybody began to disperse.

Meanwhile, Yang Kai stopped Di Rong to inform him that he wanted to visit the Cultivation Technique Pavilion to copy some Secret Arts and Secret Techniques. Di Rong naturally agreed to the request and personally led Yang Kai there.

After working hard for the entire day and forking out some Elder Contribution Points, Yang Kai left the Cultivation Technique Pavilion feeling satisfied. He was in no hurry to leave though and instead called on several Elders that he was more familiar with and hosted a banquet on Spirit Sword Peak.

He did not dare to invite Gao Xue Ting over of course. It wasn't that he was disrespecting her, but after the drunken debacle last time, Yang Kai had been left traumatised. That woman was usually pretty upright and magnanimous, but she became a different person when she was drunk. It was an unbearable sight to behold.

After what happened last time, Qiu Ran even punished all the Elders involved by deducting a large sum of Elder Contribution Points. Only Yang Kai had gotten away scot-free since it was his first offence. How could he dare to invite her again after that? Yet for some reason, Gao Xue Ting showed up and sat down at the table. Everybody looked at each other and kept all the wine away in tacit agreement; thus, that meal was a rather bland affair.

Yang Kai remained in Azure Sun Temple for two more days, and on the third day, one hundred Dao Source Realm and four hundred Origin King Realm disciples gathered on Spirit Sword Peak to report for duty. When Yang Kai appeared before them, a loud mixture of voices greeted him as the disciples bowed respectfully, "Greetings, Elder Yang."

He swept his Divine Sense over them and clasped his hands behind his back, nodding in satisfaction. All five hundred of them were lively and spirited. In terms of cultivation, the Temple had done a thorough job selecting them. Whether they were men or women, each one of them was an elite. Rather, it should be said that the aptitude of the cultivators taken in by Azure Sun Temple was excellent to begin with.

Qiu Ran and Gao Xue Ting stood to the side, and after Yang Kai gave his greetings, he turned to the five hundred disciples and said, "I'm sure you've heard from the Vice Temple Master about this matter. I am inviting you to High Heaven Palace in the Northern Territory to become teachers. I hope you will do your best in your task and know that I will not allow your services to go unrewarded."

"Yes, sir!" Everyone promised.

Yang Kai turned his head to the side, "Do Senior Brother Qiu or Senior Sister Gao have anything to say?"

Qiu Ran stepped forward, "No matter what you are about to see later, you will take it with you to your graves. You are not even allowed to tell your fellow Sect members. If you are caught leaking information to others, you will not be forgiven."

"Yes!" The group of disciples couldn't help feeling suspicious. Why would Qiu Ran give them a warning like that?

On the other hand, Yang Kai knew that it must have something to do with the Cross-Territory Space Array. It seemed that the Temple valued this Cross-Territory Space Array more than he thought and were trying to keep it a secret. Yang Kai, on the other hand, couldn't care less about the matter as it had already been exposed after all. In any case, it would not work unless he activated it himself or they had one of his Transmission Tokens. Otherwise, nobody could even think about activating it.

"Let's go!" Qiu Ran waved his hand, leading the way. The rest followed behind him and it didn't take long for them to arrive at the cave at the back of the mountain. Yang Kai made all five hundred disciples

enter the cave in groups of ten and stand atop the Space Array. There was no other choice as the space within the cave was too small, and the scale of the Space Array he arranged was not large enough. Teleporting ten people at a time was the limit.

Qiu Ran and Gao Xue Ting watched eagerly from the side. It was clear that they wanted to get a good look at how the Space Array worked. Yang Kai found it amusing and did not try to hide anything from them. Instead, he asked Gao Xue Ting to take out the token he gave her and actively taught her how to activate the Space Array.

Five hundred was neither many nor few, so it took just less than an hour to teleport all of them. When Yang Kai appeared in High Heaven Palace with the last group of people, the great hall was already full of people. Gao Xue Ting had also followed along. Not everyone could get the chance to teleport from the Southern Territory to the Northern Territory in an instant. Besides, she was very curious about the High Heaven Palace that Yang Kai had established. She wanted to come and take a look at the place in person.

Upon receiving the news, Hua Qing Si hurried over to greet Gao Xue Ting with Bian Yu Qing in tow. The two parties got together and talked for a moment before Hua Qing Si led the five hundred teachers away with her. They would soon be assigned to Spirit Peaks to alleviate the pressure on those teachers from Fire Dragon Palace.

Meanwhile, Gao Xue Ting did not leave immediately. Since she was already here, she decided to have a tour of the place. Yang Kai personally accompanied her and led her around High Heaven Palace. Although she seemed calm on the surface, she was shocked to the core inside. There were two main reasons. Firstly, the number of disciples in High Heaven Palace was exactly as Yang Kai had described, more than a hundred thousand in total. People were bustling about on every single Spirit Peak. It was hard to imagine where he managed to recruit so many people.

Secondly, she was shocked by the number of Masters inside High Heaven Palace. She could distinctly sense the aura of many Emperors, two or three among them were even in the Third Order. It was just that their auras were different from ordinary Humans. Their Monster Qi was extremely dense, clearly indicating they were Monster Kings.

She knew that Yang Kai had Monster Kings working under him as back when he brought Ying Fei to the Southern Territory, it had caused quite a commotion. She was just surprised to see that he had more than one Monster King working under him. Aside from those Monster Kings, the Head Manager and Second Manager that she met previously were both Emperors. Moreover, there were some other Emperor Realm Masters concealed on other Spirit Peaks too.

High Heaven Palace's heritage was clearly not something a newly established Sect should have. If it truly managed to train and raise all its disciples, who else but the Great Emperor Sects could compare to them?

Moreover, there were many natural Spirit Arrays in this place. She might not be proficient in the Dao of Spirit Arrays, but she was at least capable of identifying them. The Spirit Arrays covering the Spirit Peaks were extremely exquisite and were clearly arranged by a Grandmaster.

Curious, she questioned Yang Kai about it only to learn that he had an Emperor Array Master working under him! She was so shocked that her jaw unconsciously dropped. It would be interesting to see her reaction when she learnt that there was also an Emperor Artifact Refiner and an Emperor Alchemist working in this place as well. In particular, that Emperor Alchemist was a Legacy Disciple of Wondrous Pill Great Emperor.

Gao Xue Ting stayed in High Heaven Palace for two days before leaving. She had to admit that what she saw during her stay here had shocked her greatly. She initially thought that it was a ridiculous notion and waste of time for Yang Kai to establish his own Sect; thus, she had persuaded him to give up on his Sect and remain in the Temple instead. But now it seemed that she had been ignorant back then. High Heaven Palace was in no way inferior to Azure Sun Temple. Furthermore, being an Elder at Azure Sun Temple could not compare to the status of being the Palace Master of High Heaven Palace.

When Yang Kai saw her to the Space Array, Gao Xue Ting suddenly turned around and told him, "Junior Brother, I've thought about it. Since High Heaven Palace and Azure Sun Temple are connected by a Space Array, it's convenient to travel back and forth between both places. Why don't we exchange goods and supplies? If you can send the specialties of the Northern Territory to the Southern Territory, and vice versa, I'm sure we can profit by a large margin."

Yang Kai sneered in his heart. [I've been doing this for a long time. I don't need you to advise me.]

Nevertheless, cooperating with Azure Sun Temple wouldn't hurt since the existence of his Space Array had been exposed. Although Violet Source Chamber of Commerce was good, the Azure Sun Temple was not weak either. The ability of Azure Sun Temple to collect materials would not be too inferior.

Thus, he nodded, "I was planning to discuss this matter with Senior Brother Qiu. When you get back, you can briefly inform him about it and, if the Temple is interested, I'd be happy to cooperate."

"Senior Brother Qiu will definitely agree to a cooperation." Gao Xue Ting said, knowing Qiu Ran had no reason to refuse a win-win situation, "You should return to the Temple as soon as possible once you finish settling matters here. Then, you can discuss it with Senior Brother yourself."

"I got it."

She then warned, "You better not be late. Don't forget about the Martial Gathering."

"I know. I know."

She glared at him before activating the Space Array and leaving. After watching Gao Xue Ting leave, Yang Kai turned around to leave, but to his surprise, the Space Array behind him rippled and when he glanced behind him, he saw a new figure standing there.

"Brother Li." Yang Kai grinned. The person standing there was none other than Li Jiao who had probably come through the Space Array in Fire Dragon Palace. The two Sects were not that far apart, so there were no side-effects from the teleportation and Li Jiao was able to respond immediately upon hearing Yang Kai's voice, "Brother Yang."

"How did it go?" Yang Kai asked.

Li Jiao sighed in response, "I have done as you asked, but Mi Qi was unwilling to accept your suggestion."

Yang Kai's eyes brightened, "Unwilling? That's good. Very good!"

Li Jiao smiled bitterly. How could he not understand what Yang Kai meant? He had tried to persuade Mi Qi before so as not to give Yang Kai an excuse to make an example out of the latter. Unfortunately, persuasion was completely useless when it came to something like that. If Li Jiao had said any more, the situation would have turned hostile immediately so he just sighed again.

[Things are going to get very rough for Mi Qi soon. I hope Yang Kai doesn't go overboard.]

Chapter 3230, Just You Wait and See

"Brother Li, you must be tired from the long journey. Why don't you go back to Fire Dragon Palace to rest? I will take care of the rest."

Li Jiao felt a little grateful to hear those words. He knew that Yang Kai was not planning on bringing him to Full Sky Sect out of consideration for his friendship with Mi Qi; otherwise, he could not justify standing by the sidelines and watching Yang Kai attack Mi Qi. Nevertheless, Li Jiao cupped his fists and spoke up after considering it carefully, "Many thanks for your concern, Brother Yang, but although I may not be of much help, I would still like to accompany you."

His friendship with Mi Qi wasn't that deep to begin with, and after their last encounter, it had completely fallen apart. In the future, Fire Dragon Palace would need to depend on High Heaven Palace if it wanted to strengthen its position in the Northern Territory; therefore, it was best if Li Jiao took a firm stance now. Besides, how could his life and death relationship with Yang Kai compare with his casual friendship with Mi Qi? It was easy to distinguish which one was more important and more meaningful.

Yang Kai glanced at Li Jiao and smiled, "It would be impolite for me to refuse your kind intentions, Brother Li. Wait a moment, I will gather some people. Please join me when I leave for Full Sky Sect later."

"Good," Li Jiao nodded.

Then, Yang Kai left.

Standing on the spot and pondering for a while, Li Jiao said something to Bian Yu Qing, who was standing to the side, then turned around, stepped onto the Space Array again, and disappeared.

A short while later, several figures rushed over speedily and landed in the hall. Yang Kai glanced around and did not see Li Jiao anywhere. Surprised, he asked, "Where did he go?"

Bian Yu Qing replied, "Palace Master Li said that he is going back to Fire Dragon Palace to gather some more people to cheer you on, Palace Master."

"How thoughtful of him," Yang Kai smiled and glanced back at the three figures behind him. They were none other than the three Monster Kings.

Although the number of disciples in High Heaven Palace exceeded a hundred thousand now, and there were many Emperor Real Masters among them, the only ones that could actually fight were the three Monster Kings.

Hua Qing Si, the Head Manager, was not suitable for fighting and killing as it would be a disaster if something unexpected happened to her. Bian Yu Qing was the Second Manager and was currently guarding the Space Array and could not leave her post either. The rest included Ji Ying, Nanmen Da Jun, and Hou Yu, who while being Emperor Realm Masters, were not good at combat. They were only capable of producing excellent results in their respective craftsmanship fields. It was not suitable to bring them out with him on this occasion. Ye Hen might have broken through to the First-Order Emperor Realm, but it would not matter much whether he came along or not when it came to something like this. Thus, Yang Kai decided against bringing Ye Hen with him. It was enough to have the three Monster Kings follow him.

He was just about to set off with Ying Fei and the others when he heard the sound of clothes fluttering behind him and the sound of something speeding through the air so quickly that it cut through the wind. Turning back, he saw Liu Yan standing at the door of the hall, pouting as she glared at him angrily.

[How could I have forgotten about her?] He slapped his head and beckoned to her, indicating for her to come over. Only then did she break out into a smile. She picked up her skirt with one hand, skipped over to him, and held one of his large hands.

Subsequently, the five of them stepped onto the Space Array and disappeared in a flash of light.

In the meantime, Li Jiao was working efficiently inside Fire Dragon Palace. Under his command, eight Emperor Realm Masters and two hundred Dao Source Realm disciples had gathered together, standing just outside the Space Array and waiting.

Chang Sheng, the Vice Palace Master, was in a dishevelled state. His clothes were in disarray, and his hair was a mess. He looked like he had just crawled out of bed. He was a Second-Order Emperor Realm Master, so he did not need any sleep; however, it was easy to guess what he had been doing just by looking at the distinct 'marks' on his face. While straightening his clothes, he asked puzzledly, "Palace Master, where are we going?"

[Why have we gathered in front of this Space Array? And, a Space Array connecting directly to High Heaven Palace at that. We can't be attacking High Heaven Palace, right?] Many people were frightened by the speculation in their hearts.

High Heaven Palace was not to be trifled with. Who in the Northern Territory did not know about the three Monster Kings in High Heaven Palace? Furthermore, there was a Sect Defending Array arranged by the Emperor Array Master, Nanmen Da Jun. With just these few people from Fire Dragon Palace, they would definitely not come out victorious. Seeking Passion Sect was a lesson to be learnt from. Fire Dragon Palace was no better than Seeking Passion Sect in any way.

“Why are you asking so many questions? You’ll know when the time is right,” Li Jiao snorted coldly. He deliberately refused to give them a clear explanation because many of the Emperor Realm Masters in the Northern Territory had connections with each other. The Elders of his Sect, who were in the Emperor Realm, that had gathered here were friendly with many of the Elders from Full Sky Sect, so Li Jiao was worried that information might leak to the enemy as a result if he explained the situation to them at this time.

Chang Sheng looked sheepish after being rebuked and did not dare to say anything more.

A brilliant light flashed suddenly, and five figures appeared on top of the Space Array. Before they could identify who these newcomers were, a terrifying wave of Monster Qi spread out across the surroundings. It horrified the people of Fire Dragon Palace and caused their expressions to change drastically. Upon a closer look, they realized that it was Yang Kai; thus, their expressions turned serious and they secretly let out a sigh of relief. [It looks like the Palace Master isn’t going to attack High Heaven Palace. That’s good, that’s good]

Looking at the three figures standing next to Yang Kai, the Fire Dragon Palace members couldn’t help feeling surprised. Although they had never met these people before, they could guess from the Monster Qi that these three were none other than the famous Monster Kings.

However, there was also a seven-or-eight-year-old little girl that looked like she was a statue carved out of the finest jade accompanying this group. Her presence and identity confused them greatly. [Could this little girl be Yang Kai’s daughter? But, we’ve never heard of him having a daughter with anybody. No way; is she his illegitimate daughter?]

Many glanced at each other with strange expressions.

“Brother Yang!” Li Jiao cupped his fists.

Everybody else followed suit and greeted, “Greetings, Palace Master Yang.”

Yang Kai swept his gaze over them and immediately felt his spirits lifting, “An impressive army!”

Excluding Li Jiao, there were eight other Emperors and two hundred Dao Source Realm Masters. Going by the situation back at Azure Sun Temple, Li Jiao had most likely deployed all the cultivators in Fire Dragon Palace that were in the Dao Source Realm and above.

Li Jiao smiled, “Brother Yang, I can gather more people if you think that this is not enough. But, their strength...”

“No need,” Yang Kai had not planned to bring many people with him in the first place. The fact that Li Jiao could mobilize so many Masters under his command to help out was already a pleasant surprise in itself. Gathering more would only be superfluous. Why would he want people who were weak?

“En... Shall we set off then?” Li Jiao asked.

Yang Kai nodded in response.

“Move out!” Li Jiao shouted and flew into the air, the others following behind him.

The flight speed between an Emperor Realm Master and a Dao Source Realm Master was vastly different, with the former undoubtedly being much faster. In consideration of those Dao Source Realm cultivators, the Emperors swiftly summoned their flight type artifacts and allowed the others to board and ride along together with them.

In an instant, all kinds of flight type artifacts, such as flying boats, flying swords, flying shuttles, and flying chariots, turned into streams of light that flashed across the sky like a meteor shower. Similarly, Yang Kai summoned his Flowing Clouds Shuttle and led the three Monster Kings and Liu Yan inside. Then, he followed behind Li Jiao and headed in the direction of Full Sky Sect.

Full Sky Sect was quite far from Fire Dragon Palace, so despite flying non-stop for two whole days, Yang Kai's group had yet to reach their destination. Nevertheless, the Emperor Realm Masters of Fire Dragon Palace seemed to have noticed some clues by now. No matter how they thought about it, their flight route seemed to be heading for Full Sky Sect. Many of them had been to Full Sky Sect before, so they could not be mistaken about the direction. After communicating with each other via Divine Sense, they felt extremely apprehensive and pushed Chang Sheng to raise the question.

Chang Sheng did not refuse this duty. He was the Vice Palace Master of Fire Dragon Palace, so it was only natural that such responsibilities would fall on his shoulders. As such, he flew over and landed on Li Jiao's flying artifact. Cupping his fists, he bowed and asked, "Palace Master, are we going to Full Sky Sect?"

"Yes."

He was astonished, "Palace Master, may I know why we are heading there?"

Li Jiao replied, "To help Palace Master Yang subdue Full Sky Sect." At this time, there was no point trying to hide it anymore. He would need their strength later after all so he did not want them falling into confusion when the moment arrived.

"Ah!" Chang Sheng panicked and exclaimed anxiously, "Palace Master, please rethink your decision. We can't do this!"

"Why not?" Li Jiao looked at Chang Sheng expressionlessly.

Chang Sheng explained, "High Heaven Palace rose to power very quickly. A few years ago, its reputation spread far and wide because it destroyed the Seeking Passion Sect. Their prestige might have gone down a bit since they have been silent for the past few years, but if we assist High Heaven Palace in conquering Full Sky Sect, High Heaven Palace will become the number one Sect in the Northern Territory!"

"And? What of it?" Li Jiao thought to himself. [Even if High Heaven Palace doesn't subdue Full Sky Sect, its current heritage is still unrivalled by the other Sects.]

Chang Sheng looked solemn, "Palace Master, may I ask how Fire Dragon Palace compares to High Heaven Palace?"

"We are inferior!" Li Jiao spoke the truth. He had seen Yang Kai's ability with his own eyes. He even suspected that Yang Kai alone could wipe out Fire Dragon Palace. Needless to say, Fire Dragon Palace was greatly inferior. Besides, there were also the three Monster Kings.

“Indeed, we are inferior. Fire Dragon Palace is already no match for High Heaven Palace, so what would happen to Fire Dragon Palace’s standing in the Northern Territory if High Heaven Palace were to subdue Full Sky Sect? Seeing as we are so dependent on them, Fire Dragon Palace will not be safe any longer.”

Li Jiao looked at Chang Sheng and asked seriously, “In your opinion, what should we do instead?”

Chang Sheng solemnly answered, “We should cooperate with Full Sky Sect to resist High Heaven Palace. If two top Sects join forces, I’m sure even we can match High Heaven Palace in strength. At least, we can prevent one Sect from dominating the entire Northern Territory.”

Li Jiao simply looked at Chang Sheng without saying anything.

Chang Sheng was a little baffled by Li Jiao’s response, “Did I say something wrong?”

Li Jiao patted Chang Sheng on the shoulder and sighed, “I don’t blame you for having that mindset. It’s Human nature after all. It’s just... there are many things you don’t understand.”

Putting aside the fact that Yang Kai had saved him on multiple occasions, Li Jiao was personally not willing to make an enemy of Yang Kai. [Who says we can win against High Heaven Palace if we join hands with Full Sky Sect? That’s impossible. Yang Kai has the backing of the Dragon Clan. Who would dare provoke him if they knew? It might be different if it was just a casual association, but Yang Kai is married to a Ninth-Order Dragon!]

“Palace Master...”

“Haa... You never spoke a word about this, and I did not hear anything either. Go back and tell them to stuff their hearts into their stomachs. I don’t need you to do any fighting either; I only need you to cheer loudly when we get there.”

Chang Sheng’s expression twitched at those words, “Palace Master, do you mean to say that Palace Master Yang can wipe out Full Sky Sect with just those few people?”

“Are you saying they can’t?”

He shook his head, “It’s not that I am underestimating Palace Master Yang and the others. The cultivation of the three Monster Kings is obvious and no one in Full Sky Sect can be their opponent in a one-on-one fight. However, laying siege to a city is different. Leaving aside the fact that there are many Masters in Full Sky Sect, the Sect Defending Array alone cannot be broken that easily. Once the array is activated, even the three Monster Kings will be helpless against it for a time. Isn’t that right?”

“Helpless?” Li Jiao couldn’t stop himself from chuckling as he waved his hand, “Well, just wait and see.”

Chang Sheng was stunned. He could not understand why Li Jiao had such confidence in Yang Kai. It was Full Sky Sect they were talking about, one of the top Sects in the Northern Territory. Its Sect Defending Array would not be broken so easily. Nevertheless, there was nothing else he could say if Li Jiao was so adamant about it. In any case, Li Jiao had already said that they were only there to cheer Yang Kai on, not to get into a fight, so they wouldn’t face any danger. Thus, Chang Sheng bowed and left to convey Li Jiao’s message to the rest. Upon hearing these orders though, the other Emperor Realm Masters looked at each other in confusion.