

## Sect Master 621

Chapter 621: Going through a strategic pass

Luo Ye Daoist Master handed the Soul Bead to Meng Zhang and told him that he could now go find Daoist Master Black Fox to report the mission.

When they were in the treasure repository earlier, the Soul Bead was taken directly by Luo Ye Daoist Master, and Meng Zhang only glanced at it briefly without examining it closely. Now, he held the Soul Bead in his hand, carefully observing it, but still couldn't see any changes.

Seeing this, Luo Ye Daoist Master thought Meng Zhang was a little worried and explained to him carefully. She had invited a senior expert this time, who made a small modification to the Soul Bead without causing any harm. With Daoist Master Black Fox's insight, it would be impossible for him to detect any issues. The hidden danger within the Soul Bead would only erupt at least several decades or even centuries later.

With Luo Ye Daoist Master's explanation, Meng Zhang was completely at ease. They had already delayed for so long, and it was not appropriate to continue postponing.

After bidding farewell to Luo Ye Daoist Master, Meng Zhang, along with the Extreme Sword Spirit General, flew directly towards Dongyuan City. Upon entering Dongyuan City and arriving at the entrance to the black market, Daoist Master Black Fox's subordinates, who were arranged there, immediately came forward and took them directly to meet Daoist Master Black Fox.

Apparently, Daoist Master Black Fox was truly anxious. He didn't even bother with pleasantries and immediately got to the point, asking about the success of their mission.

When Meng Zhang took out the Soul Bead, Daoist Master Black Fox couldn't even care about basic courtesy and snatched the Soul Bead from Meng Zhang's hand, staring at it intently. Meng Zhang didn't mind and let Daoist Master Black Fox inspect it carefully.

After a long while, Daoist Master Black Fox finally recovered. With the Soul Bead in his hand and his objective achieved, he realized he had been a little rude and awkwardly smiled, explaining to Meng Zhang that it was due to the excitement of finally obtaining the treasure that he had momentarily lost his composure. He apologized and asked for Meng Zhang's understanding.

Both the master and disciple needed to express their gratitude to Meng Zhang. They would never forget Meng Zhang's great kindness and generosity.

Daoist Master Black Fox continued to praise Meng Zhang with endless flattering words, but Meng Zhang was starting to feel a bit fed up with it. Daoist Master Black Fox was experienced and tactful in dealing with people. He had just lost his composure upon seeing the Soul Bead, but now that he had calmed down, he quickly resumed his cunning demeanor.

He informed Meng Zhang that the Void Nether Stone needed by the Taiyi Sect was being transported from the south and would take some time to arrive. He requested Meng Zhang to be patient and wait for it.

Meng Zhang had just obtained a batch of high-quality Void Nether Stones from the treasure repository, so he wasn't as eager for the ones Daoist Master Black Fox had promised. However, Void Nether Stones were valuable and hard to come by in the Jiuqu League, so it would still be a good thing to acquire more of them.

While talking to Meng Zhang, Daoist Master Black Fox discreetly glanced at the back of Extreme Sword Spirit General. The Void Nether Stones they obtained from the treasure repository couldn't be stored in a magic tool, so Meng Zhang had cast a sealing spell on them and had Extreme Sword Spirit General wrap them in a package and carry them on his back.

Daoist Master Black Fox may not know the exact treasures Meng Zhang obtained, but he could guess that Meng Zhang had gained a lot from this venture. Daoist Master Black Fox had his own magnanimity. As long as he obtained what he needed and achieved his goal, he could accept that Meng Zhang benefited a little. After all, it wasn't him who suffered any loss.

He and his master belonged to two different types of people. Although Daoist Master Black Fox held a considerable position within the Dark Alliance, his loyalty to the organization was limited, and he prioritized his own interests. He had engaged in activities such as misusing his authority for personal gains.

The treasures in the treasure repository belonged to the Dark Alliance and were not Daoist Master Black Fox's private property. To use the organization's resources to win over Meng Zhang and accomplish his personal goals, what could be better than that?

Meng Zhang had no interest in continuing to tangle with the old fox. He made some perfunctory remarks and took the initiative to bid farewell.

After a preliminary inspection, it was confirmed that the Soul Bead in Meng Zhang's possession was in good condition. Daoist Master Black Fox was very enthusiastic towards Meng Zhang and left his contact information, expressing his desire to keep in touch in the future.

Having attempted to achieve this for centuries, hiring several teams and paying a heavy price without success, Daoist Master Black Fox was extremely impressed with Meng Zhang. He truly wanted to establish a good relationship with him. Meng Zhang's identity as the Taiyi Sect Master aside, the most crucial factor was that Meng Zhang handled this matter extraordinarily well.

Having such a capable individual as a friend could prove useful in the future. Especially with Daoist Master Black Fox's influence within the Dark Alliance, Taiyi Sect's activities in the Jiuqu League should become much smoother with his support.

As for the altered Soul Bead, when it would be exposed was not a concern for Meng Zhang at the moment. According to Luo Ye Daoist Master, Daoist Master Black Fox would be unable to see through its secrets, and the hidden danger would erupt much later.

Meng Zhang bid farewell to the warm-hearted Daoist Master Black Fox and, along with Extreme Sword Spirit General, didn't linger outside but flew directly back to Taiyi Sect's mountain gate, Hundred Grass Slope.

Meng Zhang hadn't been away from the sect for long, and nothing major had happened in his absence; everything was normal.

The most important task within the sect, repairing the Mother-Child Transmission Disc, was being carried out under the command of Deep Earth Spirit General in an orderly manner.

Meng Zhang's most concerned senior disciple, Niu Dawei, hadn't come out of seclusion yet and was still cultivating in isolation.

Meng Zhang and Extreme Sword Spirit General took out all the gains from this trip.

After a modest exchange of words, they divided all the spoils. At the insistence of Extreme Sword Spirit General, Meng Zhang took the lion's share.

They each kept the items they needed, and the remaining abundant resources were exchanged within the sect at extremely low prices, enriching the sect's treasury significantly.

The twelve golden nuts were left untouched as Meng Zhang couldn't trust any Third Rank Alchemist. Instead, he kept them to be consumed directly.

As for the large Sun Gold Crystal, Meng Zhang handed it to Shocking ThunderSpirit General, asking him to use it to refine a magic tool when he had spare time.

Shocking ThunderSpirit General, who was currently busy repairing the Mother-Child Transmission Disc, took some time out to carefully examine the Sun Gold Crystal. As a professional tool refiner, his discerning eye surpassed Meng Zhang's.

He informed Meng Zhang that the outer part of the Sun Gold Crystal was Third Rank spiritual material, while the core was Fourth Rank spiritual material. Such materials were challenging to handle.

However, with such high-grade spiritual materials, careful research might enable Meng Zhang to refine an exceptional magic tool.

Chapter 622: Greatly is form the core

The matter of refining magic tools requires careful consideration. Currently, Shocking ThunderSpirit General's main focus is still on repairing the set of Mother - Child Transmission Disc.

During the process of repairing the Mother - Child Transmission Disc, a great thing happened. Delicate WaterSpirit General, originally a Third Rank Alchemist and Second Rank tool refiner, experienced significant improvement in her art of tool refinement during the process. She advanced to become a Third Rank tool refiner.

Of course, because the water refinement technique is relatively niche, there are not many magic tools that can be refined using it, and most of them are relatively special and niche magic tools. Delicate WaterSpirit General, as a Third Rank tool refiner, certainly cannot compare to Shocking ThunderSpirit General. After all, the fire refinement technique is currently the mainstream in the Cultivation World.

However, no matter what, having an additional Third Rank tool refiner in the sect is a tremendous benefit. Moreover, the water refinement technique is not without its merits; it has advantages in certain aspects that the fire refinement technique lacks.

At present, Taiyi Sect has already excelled in most aspects of the Hundred Arts at the First and Second Rank levels. Alchemists, tool refiners, spiritual farmers, Talisman Masters, beast tamers, and others are flourishing. But at the Third Rank level, there are still significant shortcomings.

Especially in the most crucial aspect of Alchemy, the sect only has Delicate WaterSpirit General as a Third Rank Alchemist. However, she prefers to travel outside rather than stay in the sect to practice alchemy obediently, making it challenging for Sect Master Meng Zhang to force her too much. He can only persuade her carefully to produce more elixirs.

The water refinement technique is a special alchemy technique, and there are not many elixir recipes that use this method. Among the Third Rank elixirs Delicate WaterSpirit General masters, the focus is on elixirs for restoring True Essence and healing injuries, as well as some special and niche elixirs.

The Water Element Elixir, which enhances Cultivation Base, is scarce in materials. Even if Delicate WaterSpirit General wants to refine more, it is impossible to achieve. Third Rank Alchemists across the entire Jiuqu League are limited, and most of the elixirs they refine are consumed within their own forces. The number of Third Rank elixirs that can flow into the market is small, and the quality is not high. However, whenever Third Rank elixirs, especially those directly enhancing Cultivation Base, appear on the market, they will trigger a fierce scramble.

With Taiyi Sect's current channels and financial resources, they cannot obtain enough Third Rank elixirs to supply all Gold Core Daoist Masters in the sect. The Third Rank elixirs Meng Zhang obtained from the treasure vault this time are the most they have acquired in recent years.

Fortunately, Taiyi Sect is in a unique situation, as the four Guardian Spirit Generals do not need elixirs that enhance Cultivation Base much. With only a few other Gold Core Daoist Masters in the sect, Taiyi Sect's overall strength can barely support them.

The Pill Hall Master of Taiyi Sect, Zhang Yingying, is already old and has exhausted her potential. Breaking through to the Gold Core stage in this lifetime is virtually hopeless, let alone becoming a Third Rank Alchemist.

Shi Changqing, the Second Rank Alchemist who was once highly regarded from the Shi Family, died several years ago when his lifespan was depleted during meditation.

Meng Zhang has high expectations for his disciple, An Xiaoran. She cultivates the superior technique "Fusang Sutra," which not only possesses tremendous power but is also very suitable for alchemy. With her aptitude and foundation, achieving the Gold Core stage is something to look forward to.

Once she becomes a Third Rank Alchemist, it will be possible to completely solve the issue of Taiyi Sect's elixir supply.

In the blink of an eye, Meng Zhang has been back at Taiyi Sect for ten years. After so many years of effort, the Mother - Child Transmission Disc set has finally been completely repaired. This Mother - Child Transmission Disc, which cost a great deal of manpower and resources to fix, carries the hopes of many in Taiyi Sect.

During these ten years, the batch of Void Nether Stones that Daoist Master Black Fox promised Meng Zhang had already been delivered to Demon Wind Gobi and reached Taiyi Sect's hands. Furthermore, due to Daoist Master Black Fox's intention to establish good relations with Meng Zhang, he used his power to take good care of Taiyi Sect's business in the Jiuqu League.

With the repair of the Mother - Child Transmission Disc and the presence of the Void Nether Stones, the next step was naturally to conduct some testing. Deep Earth Spirit General personally placed the Mother - Child Transmission Disc's mother disc at the Hundred Grass Slope of Taiyi Sect's mountain gate. Meng Zhang and several Guardian Spirit Generals took turns trying it out by leaving the Hundred Grass Slope with a set of the child discs, then carefully placing the child disc and activating it while consuming Void Nether Stones.

They succeeded in teleporting back to the Hundred Grass Slope without encountering any issues. Then, they activated the mother disc and teleported back to where they placed the child disc. The initial successful test boosted everyone's confidence.

They took the child disc to places farther away from the Hundred Grass Slope, starting from ten li and increasing to one hundred li, five hundred li, one thousand li, and finally reaching ten thousand li. No matter how far they were from the Hundred Grass Slope, as long as they activated the Mother - Child Transmission Disc, they could successfully teleport back and forth instantly.

Of course, the farther the teleportation distance, the greater the consumption of Void Nether Stones. When they attempted teleportation over a distance of ten thousand li, they temporarily stopped as Void Nether Stones were too precious, and they didn't want to use too many.

Although Taiyi Sect now has a stock of Void Nether Stones, there is no stable source to obtain more. Even if Daoist Master Black Fox wants to be on good terms with Meng Zhang, he won't easily provide such precious resources as Void Nether Stones. Even with his connections and abilities, transporting Void Nether Stones from the south to the Jiuqu League is not an easy task.

Until they secure a stable source of Void Nether Stones, Taiyi Sect can only use them sparingly, using only a few for the tool refiners to refine magic tools while carefully preserving the high-quality Void Nether Stones for future use.

Using the Mother - Child Transmission Disc to mobilize forces across vast distances is an essential strategic matter. After repairing the Mother - Child Transmission Disc, the mother disc was placed in Taiyi Sect's mountain gate at Hundred Grass Slope, and the child disc was carefully kept by Meng Zhang.

Two more years passed, and Taiyi Sect had another major good fortune. Meng Zhang's personal disciple and the eldest disciple of the Sect Master, Niu Dawei, finally formed a Gold Core and successfully emerged from seclusion. On the day Niu Dawei formed his Gold Core, the spiritual energy in the sky surged, auspicious clouds gathered, and brilliant rays of light illuminated the surroundings.

Niu Dawei's successful formation of the Gold Core not only meant that Taiyi Sect had one more Gold Core Daoist Master but also held significant significance no matter how it was described. After years of hard work in building up Taiyi Sect, witnessing it gradually rise, and now even the eldest disciple becoming a Gold Core Daoist Master, Taiyi Sect finally had capable successors, and Meng Zhang felt that he had not let down his master and senior brother's expectations.

With a heart full of joy, Meng Zhang's entire body and mind relaxed completely. Above his spiritual heart, it felt as if a layer of mist had been swept away, leaving it clear and pure. Unexpectedly, Niu Dawei's formation of the Gold Core had even contributed to Meng Zhang's own cultivation. Of course, this progress was not without reason; it was the result of his years of reciting scriptures and contemplating the Dao.

#### Chapter 623: Celebration

With a clear understanding in his Dao heart, Meng Zhang seemed to faintly see a path, a path that could lead to the Primordial Spirit realm. No wonder Taiyi Sect's inheritance explicitly stated that reciting the Dao scriptures and carefully comprehending the Dao secrets would aid Gold Core cultivators in breaking through to the Primordial Spirit realm.

Although Meng Zhang's current cultivation technique was incomplete, and he wasn't clear about many breakthrough points, his comprehension of the Dao secrets helped him gradually find the direction towards the Primordial Spirit realm. The road ahead was undoubtedly rugged, but at least he had glimpsed the direction, a major breakthrough he had never experienced before.

After Niu Dawei successfully formed his core, he followed the usual practice of not rushing to exit seclusion. Instead, he focused on consolidating his cultivation base and mastering some Gold Core

stage spells and Divine Abilities to become a genuine Gold Core cultivator. Meng Zhang didn't disturb him and let him continue his seclusion.

Niu Dawei's achievement of becoming a Gold Core Daoist Master added pressure on the Second Senior Sister, An Xiaoran, and the Third Senior Brother, An Moran. An Xiaoran reduced the time spent on pill refinement and devoted more energy to cultivation. An Moran began cultivating assistants to help him handle Secret Hall affairs, and he also paid more attention to his cultivation.

With another Gold Core Daoist Master in Taiyi Sect, especially one who was the Sect Master's eldest disciple, the whole sect was filled with excitement. Taiyi Sect's development was thriving, producing countless outstanding talents, and its overall strength was continuously rising.

Among the various sects in the Jiuqu League, Taiyi Sect, as a Gold Core-level sect, had now gained recognition and occupied a certain position. It dared not compare itself to the Primordial Spirit sects but had established a respectable status among the Gold Core sects.

Three years later, the original Pill Hall Hall Master Zhang Yingying died during meditation. At Meng Zhang's persuasion, his second disciple, An Xiaoran, took over the position of Pill Hall Hall Master.

At Meng Zhang's cultivation base, everything related to Foundation Building was clear and well-understood. An Xiaoran's personality and foundation wouldn't benefit from solely immersing herself in cultivation. Assuming the role of Pill Hall Hall Master, although she seemingly had to deal with many tasks that would distract her from cultivation, it actually created a balance that would promote her progress.

With An Xiaoran's alchemy techniques, she outperformed everyone in the sect except Delicate Water Spirit General. Moreover, An Xiaoran practiced mainstream fire-based alchemy, allowing her to refine a wider range of elixirs. She could almost produce all common elixirs.

Her appointment as Pill Hall Hall Master earned the unanimous respect of everyone in the sect.

Of course, when she took on the position of Pill Hall Hall Master, An Xiaoran made it clear that when the time came to advance to the Gold Core stage, she would hand over all Pill Hall affairs to someone else. Meng Zhang readily agreed, but he asked her to nurture the sect's alchemists so that there would be capable successors.

The previous Pill Hall Hall Master, Zhang Yingying, had a mediocre cultivation base and weak combat power. She was among the first alchemists of Taiyi Sect. As more outstanding alchemists



emerged in the sect, she found herself lagging in terms of alchemy techniques. Nevertheless, her greatest contribution to the sect was establishing Pill Hall and cultivating many outstanding young alchemists. Without her support, these successors would not have been able to surpass their predecessors.

At this point, even the usually proud and arrogant An Xiaoran couldn't help but admire her. Now that An Xiaoran had taken over as the Pill Hall Hall Master, besides ensuring the daily supply of elixirs for the sect, she also took on the responsibility of nurturing alchemists within the sect.

Returning to the sect for a few years, Meng Zhang had seen no news from the Dark Alliance and no action to reclaim the "Dark Thorn Secret Canon." Regardless of whether the higher-ups of the Dark Alliance were unaware of this matter or for other reasons, since it was the case, it was undoubtedly advantageous for Taiyi Sect. Meng Zhang kept silent on this matter and, along with the Gold Core cultivators, especially the Guardian Spirit Generals, secretly researched the secret canon.

The four Guardian Spirit Generals were experienced and discerning seniors. Once they wholeheartedly immersed themselves in the research, significant progress was quickly made regarding the "Dark Thorn Secret Canon." They gradually comprehended most of the Dark Alliance's secret techniques. They removed the excessively distinct or excessively bloody and cruel parts, extracting the essence of the useful portions. Led by Extreme Sword Spirit General, they began compiling a secret canon that suited Taiyi Sect's actual situation.

Five years after Niu Dawei formed his core, he finally exited seclusion. Meng Zhang received him immediately and offered him plenty of guidance. Then, Niu Dawei calmly accepted the congratulations from everyone in the sect. It was a significant event for Taiyi Sect, with the Sect Master's eldest disciple forming his core, and it couldn't be simply overlooked.

Under Meng Zhang's orders, Taiyi Sect held a grand celebration for the Gold Core stage to celebrate Niu Dawei becoming the new Gold Core Daoist Master of Taiyi Sect. The scale of this celebration was immense. Not only were all members of the Hanhai Dao Alliance invited, but invitations were also sent to many other cultivation forces within the Jiuqu League.

Old friends like Lu Family and Gu Yue Family from Great Wind City were naturally invited, and so were the new business partners, trade partners, and friends that Taiyi Sect had made over the years.

Having been part of the Jiuqu League for some years now, Taiyi Sect had gained some reputation, although it was relatively new compared to many other members. With this celebration, Meng Zhang formally declared Taiyi Sect's presence to all members of the Jiuqu League and displayed the sect's strength.

By the time of the celebration, many guests from various places had arrived at Taiyi Sect's mountain gate, Hundred Grass Slope.

The Hanhai Dao Alliance, an organization created by Meng Zhang, had developed rapidly over the years. Those members who were initially hesitant had completely submitted to Taiyi Sect after so many years, becoming obedient frontline troops for Taiyi Sect.

With the further development of the Demon Wind Gobi, not only were more resources produced, but the population also increased significantly. Taiyi Sect enjoyed the benefits, and these frontline troops were also rewarded accordingly.

The members within the alliance quickly recovered their vitality, and Taiyi Sect gained more and more disciples.

Apart from occupying such a vast area in the Demon Wind Gobi, Taiyi Sect also owned a sizable territory in the barren land of the Endless Sea of Sand. Developing such a vast territory would require a considerable amount of time and effort for Taiyi Sect alone.

In addition to opening doors of convenience to the alliance members and encouraging them to join the development efforts, Taiyi Sect also launched some measures to attract cultivators from the Jiuqu League.

Numerous cultivators with diverse backgrounds, including neglected illegitimate children of powerful clans and loose cultivators without much future prospect, came to Taiyi Sect's territory.

As long as they paid a certain price and were willing to pledge allegiance to Taiyi Sect, they could be allocated a certain area to establish their own family or even sect.

The membership of the Hanhai Dao Alliance increased, and Taiyi Sect gained many useful subordinates.

Of course, how to discern and control these newly joined cultivators and newly established forces was another challenging problem.

Chapter 624: Scenery

As the Hall Master of the Secret Hall, An Moran now shouldered more responsibilities. The members of the Secret Hall, from An Moran himself to the ordinary spies, became extremely busy, handling numerous tasks. Even Meng Zhang, as the Sect Master Daoist Master, had to lower his stance at times and personally participate in various screening tasks.

Screening the spies of various forces was a given. However, there were also many hidden cultivators with unknown origins or ulterior motives, which added to the workload. Meng Zhang instructed the Secret Hall to record each of these cultivators in detail and deal with them later, trying to maximize their usefulness.

The original mountain gates of many Hanhai Dao Alliance members were in the Endless Sea of Sand. After obtaining the much better conditions in the Demon Wind Gobi and the territories rewarded by Taiyi Sect, they no longer valued their original mountain gates. Except for some sentimental forces, many of them either sold or rented their original mountain gates to the new arrivals of various cultivators.

In the Cultivation World, there were numerous cultivators who had nowhere else to go and no place to settle. Likewise, there were many cultivators who wanted to establish their own family or sect. Although the Endless Sea of Sand was relatively barren, it still allowed humans to survive, and basic cultivation conditions were met. Thus, more and more cultivators poured into the area.

Some of these cultivators were so impoverished that they could not afford any rent. They willingly became vassals to the Hanhai Dao Alliance members and accepted their exploitation. These Hanhai Dao Alliance members were, in fact, vassals of Taiyi Sect, so having additional vassal forces was not a bad thing.

Over the years of development, both the Demon Wind Gobi and the Endless Sea of Sand had given rise to many new cultivation forces. As the news spread, cultivators from Jiuqu League, Yuantu Great Prairie, and even the Crossing Severing Mountain Range traveled far and wide to come to Taiyi Sect's influence area, seeking new opportunities.

With Meng Zhang's current strength and Taiyi Sect's current power, as long as these newcomers weren't being hunted by Primordial Spirit-level sects, Taiyi Sect had the ability to offer them protection. Of course, this protection was not free. Afterward, they would have to repay Taiyi Sect and even the Hanhai Dao Alliance with devoted service, acting as their loyal subjects.

Unless the situation was too unfavorable, Taiyi Sect would open its doors widely, welcoming them and allowing them to establish their presence within Taiyi Sect's territory.

During Niu Dawei's Gold Core celebration, many guests with diverse backgrounds attended, and the atmosphere was complicated. Many forces from the Jiuqu League gave face to Taiyi Sect and sent envoys to congratulate them.

Since achieving the Primordial Spirit stage, Jin Li True Monarch had reduced her focus on cultivation. Due to the deliberate efforts of Azure Origin Sect, she had grown closer to the Primordial Spirit True Monarch of Azure Origin Sect, especially True Monarch Azure Mist. She spent less and less time in the Endless Sea of Sand and was mostly in the Jiuqu League.

Azure Origin Sect intentionally promoted Jin Li True Monarch, this newly promoted Primordial Spirit True Monarch, giving her a high position and actively involving her in various affairs of the Jiuqu League, granting her increasing power.

As a result, Jin Li True Monarch began to immerse herself in various matters of the Jiuqu League, finding new enjoyment and gradually becoming deeply involved.

In the current high-level ranks of the Jiuqu League, Jin Li True Monarch holds a significant position and considerable power. She can lead many matters according to her own wishes, and her influence has expanded to various aspects within the league. Although Jin Li True Monarch has Taiyi Sect as her vassal, she doesn't have reliable direct subordinates.

Her disciple, Jin Qiao'er, is not interested in Jiuqu League affairs and spends most of her time practicing within the sect's mountain gate. Being a newly-promoted Primordial Spirit True Monarch, as long as she hints at accepting new followers, countless cultivators would voluntarily come to her side.

Jin Li True Monarch only slightly changed her previous policy of excluding strangers, and she quickly gathered a group of cultivators to serve her. Even Azure Origin Sect took the initiative to introduce some powerful cultivators to assist Jin Li True Monarch in handling various tasks.

Meng Zhang does not comment on Jin Li True Monarch's choices, nor does he interfere with her actions. As long as Jin Li True Monarch continues to protect Taiyi Sect, Meng Zhang is satisfied.

In reality, as Jin Li True Monarch's power and involvement in Jiuqu League affairs grow, Taiyi Sect benefits from various conveniences. Even if Jin Li True Monarch doesn't intentionally show favoritism or specially care for Taiyi Sect, various aspects of the Jiuqu League tend to treat Taiyi Sect with more respect and consideration due to Jin Li True Monarch's influence.

Taiyi Sect has developed smoothly over the years and its influence has penetrated deep into Jiuqu League. Much of this can be attributed to the advantage they gain from having a powerful Primordial Spirit True Monarch. As her vassals, it is preferable not to offend them if possible.

During Niu Dawei's core formation celebration, Meng Zhang personally visited Jiuqu League and handed a formal invitation to Jin Li True Monarch. Though busy, she sent her cultivators as representatives to congratulate Niu Dawei and presented a generous gift.

Since Jin Li True Monarch gained power in the Jiuqu League, her income, both overt and covert, has increased significantly. Many times, she does not have to do anything herself as numerous cultivators send her large quantities of spirit stones.

In response to Jin Li True Monarch's status, even Azure Origin Sect, the top power in Jiuqu League, sent envoys to congratulate her. However, Jade Sword Sect remained aloof and turned a blind eye to everything related to Jin Li True Monarch.

When the envoy from Azure Origin Sect appeared at Niu Dawei's core formation celebration, almost all the guests couldn't help but take a closer look at Taiyi Sect. Many forces began contemplating how to further develop relations with Taiyi Sect.

Niu Dawei's core formation celebration was grand and joyful, surpassing any previous celebration in Taiyi Sect's history. Cultivators from outside rushed back to participate, and even Yang Xueyi, who usually presided over Jiuqu City as an elder of the Jiuqu League, temporarily entrusted affairs to a Foundation Building disciple and personally returned to join the celebration.

As the core formation celebration came to an end amidst an exuberant atmosphere, the members of Taiyi Sect felt a sense of fulfillment and pride.

#### Chapter 625: Return

Niu Dawei's core formation celebration ended in great splendor. The various guests left one after another, and even the Taiyi Sect disciples on duty outside the sect reluctantly departed. Yang Xueyi was also planning to leave but was asked by Meng Zhang to stay.

In the "Dark Thorn Secret Canon," there were instructions for crafting several special talismans. Yang Xueyi, who inherited the legacy of the Purple Gold Sect, possessed profound cultivation and extraordinary insights, making her a rare Third Rank Talisman Master. With her involvement, the research and adaptation of the "Dark Thorn Secret Canon" would be significantly accelerated.

During these years, nothing significant happened in the Jiuqu League, and Yang Xueyi's disciples who stayed behind were capable of handling routine affairs. Therefore, she decided to remain in the sect and not rush back.

Two years later, with the collective effort of Taiyi Sect's Gold Core cultivators, they produced materials to train the Secret Hall cultivators. According to Meng Zhang's plan, Taiyi Sect intended to establish an entirely new system for cultivating Secret Hall operatives.

Especially for assassins and spies with special missions, they should be selected as young talents, trained from childhood, and endure harsh training to unleash their extraordinary potential. This was a long-term and resource-intensive task, requiring careful consideration and planning, and it would take time before seeing the results.

While Meng Zhang was occupied with strengthening the Secret Hall, an elder who had left the sect many years ago returned.

Zheng Chao, the former War Hall Master, left the sect shortly after core formation and headed west to the Demon Wind Gobi. Although he had passed on the position of War Hall Master to a disciple, as a Gold Core elder and former Hall Master, he had a significant role in guiding the development of War Hall.

Fortunately, during these years, Taiyi Sect had not engaged in external conflicts, and the new War Hall Master was competent in managing the daily affairs of War Hall. Thus, Zheng Chao's prolonged absence did not lead to negative consequences.

Zheng Chao had been away from the sect for many years, and during the initial years, he occasionally sent messages using transmission talismans to report his safety. However, later on, there was almost no news from him. If not for the well-preserved soul lamp kept in the sect, the higher-ups would have suspected something unfortunate had happened to him outside.

When Zheng Chao returned after many years, he brought with him some unsettling news. A significant change that would completely alter the situation in the western Demon Wind Gobi was unfolding.

It turned out that Zheng Chao, who was always eager for combat, had gone directly to the western Demon Wind Gobi after leaving Taiyi Sect. Delicate Water Spirit General had traveled deep into Demon Wind Gobi in the past and brought back various intelligence, including information about the Sea Clan's invasion. The monsters in Demon Wind Gobi were steadily retreating, and the Sea Clan was on the verge of overwhelming them.

Meng Zhang was concerned about the situation in the western Demon Wind Gobi potentially affecting Taiyi Sect, so he ordered the disciples to strengthen monitoring of the area. However, due to the rampant monsters and presence of Third Rank beasts in the area, ordinary disciples could only observe from a distance and were unable to venture deep into the region.

After Zheng Chao's core formation, he took the initiative to head westward to the western Demon Wind Gobi, and Meng Zhang was quite pleased with this decision. Zheng Chao's cultivation base and combat experience were outstanding, and as long as he didn't get surrounded by the monstrous beasts, his safety should not be a problem.

Zheng Chao didn't disappoint Meng Zhang's expectations. Not only did he successfully explore the western Demon Wind Gobi, but he also brought back crucial intelligence at a critical time. In front of Meng Zhang, Zheng Chao recounted his experiences over the years.

After leaving Taiyi Sect, Zheng Chao went directly to the depths of the Demon Wind Gobi and arrived at the western coast. At that time, due to the unfavorable situation on the front lines, the monsters in Demon Wind Gobi were in constant retreat. They not only lost a large area along the coast but also faced the relentless pursuit of the Sea Clan, which had advanced deep into the Demon Wind Gobi.

The western coastal area of Demon Wind Gobi had long become the domain of the Sea Clan. Although their combat strength was greatly reduced after coming ashore, they still had the power to overwhelm the monsters.

Upon arriving, Zheng Chao quickly clashed with the stationed Sea Clan. He was never one to shy away from conflict and had a penchant for aggression, often taking the initiative in battles. What started as small skirmishes soon escalated into a series of continuous large-scale wars.

During the Sea Clan's siege, Zheng Chao fought his way through, becoming more formidable as he continued to battle. He circled the western coastal area, inflicting significant damage on the Sea Clan.

In the later stages, Zheng Chao even ventured into the sea, conducting guerrilla warfare and causing havoc. This angered the higher-ups of the Sea Clan, leading them to mobilize significant forces to hunt him down.

Zheng Chao mastered the essence of guerrilla warfare, retreating when facing stronger opponents and attacking when encountering weaker ones. Instead of falling victim to the Sea Clan's pursuit, he

inflicted heavy casualties on his pursuers, and he even had some extraordinary encounters in the sea.

Hearing Zheng Chao's account, Meng Zhang couldn't help but feel envious of his adventures. Who was the true transmigrator? Everything Zheng Chao experienced seemed like something only a transmigrator would enjoy.

Zheng Chao's actions caused considerable destruction to the Sea Clan, drawing their attention and diverting some of their forces, which indirectly alleviated the burden on the side of the monsters. Unfortunately, Zheng Chao was alone, and his abilities were limited, so he couldn't have a significant impact on the overall situation.

As the Sea Clan gained overwhelming advantages over the monsters, they could mobilize more forces to pursue Zheng Chao. With his exceptional combat experience and keen senses, Zheng Chao realized that the situation was unfavorable and immediately fled back to the mainland, escaping towards the eastern Demon Wind Gobi.

On his way back, Zheng Chao witnessed the Sea Clan making swift progress, and the monsters were suffering heavy defeats. According to his assessment, the complete annihilation of the monsters was imminent. The Sea Clan had conquered a large area of the western Demon Wind Gobi, bordering directly with Taiyi Sect.

The Sea Clan was notorious for its ferocity and aggression, even more difficult to deal with than the monsters. If Taiyi Sect couldn't make targeted arrangements promptly, they would inevitably find themselves in a passive situation facing this new neighbor.

After listening to Zheng Chao's narrative, Meng Zhang asked him numerous questions, primarily concerning the specific strength of the Sea Clan. Although Zheng Chao had ventured into the sea before, he hadn't delved too deep, so his knowledge of the Sea Clan's forces mainly pertained to their deployments in the nearby waters and on land.

On his return journey, Zheng Chao had carefully investigated the situation. From what he knew, the Sea Clan's strength surpassed Taiyi Sect's current power by far, especially considering the vast numbers of their army. Even if Taiyi Sect mobilized all its elite cultivators to form a large army, it would still be challenging to directly confront the Sea Clan.

#### Chapter 626: Plan

Upon hearing Zheng Chao speak of the Sea Clan's formidable strength, Meng Zhang's expression turned dark. According to Zheng Chao, the extinction of the demon beasts was now inevitable. Next in line to face the Sea Clan would be the Taiyi Sect.



It remains unclear whether the Sea Clan, after defeating the demon beasts and occupying the western side of Demon Wind Gobi, would halt their expansion. Since the Sea Clan is not a benevolent group, Taiyi Sect must prepare for the worst. If the Sea Clan continues to expand, Taiyi Sect's current territory will be their next target.

Seeing Sect Master Meng Zhang's displeased expression, Zheng Chao said some comforting words. Over the years, Zheng Chao had ventured into the sea and though he had limited achievements, he did gain some knowledge. The Sea Clan, despite their strength, seemed to have their own troubles. Zheng Chao didn't know the specifics of the issues the Sea Clan faced, but he knew it significantly impacted their power and prevented them from fully committing to invading the land. Otherwise, the demon beasts in Demon Wind Gobi would have been crushed by the Sea Clan long ago.

In addition to the forces already in use, it would be difficult for the Sea Clan to call for reinforcements from the sea. However, even with their current strength, the Sea Clan already posed a considerable threat to Taiyi Sect.

Long ago, when Meng Zhang heard about the situation in the western part of Demon Wind Gobi from Delicate WaterSpirit General, he had a rough idea. He wondered if Taiyi Sect could provide assistance to the demon beasts in the west, bolster their strength, and help them resist the Sea Clan's invasion. The rapidly expanding Sea Clan would eventually become a major enemy of Taiyi Sect. While the enemy of an enemy may not become a friend, there could be potential areas of cooperation. When faced with strength, the weaker parties should find some common understanding.

As for the longstanding enmity between the Human Clan and the demon beasts, Meng Zhang didn't care. In the face of the greater interests of the sect, all other considerations were secondary.

Delicate WaterSpirit General had also attempted to make contact with the demon beasts, but they were driven away and even attacked. These demon beasts were inflexible and extremely hostile to humans, refusing any normal interaction with the outside world.

Although Third Rank demon beasts possessed intelligence comparable to humans, they seemed unwilling to communicate and understand reason. Delicate WaterSpirit General's goodwill was met with an unresponsive attitude.

Considering the behavior of these demon beasts, how could Taiyi Sect help them or provide assistance? It was likely that any supply convoy sent by Taiyi Sect would be attacked as soon as it approached the demon beasts' territory.

Since assisting the demon beasts seemed unfeasible, Meng Zhang had to think of alternative approaches. However, apart from the high-level complaints and discussions about "different races," he couldn't come up with any other viable solutions.

Meng Zhang had even considered the idea of launching an offensive against the Sea Clan with a large army of cultivators. But after weighing the factors, he had to abandon this plan. Taiyi Sect was still recovering from the losses of the previous major battle. Their main current objective was to infiltrate Jiuqu League and establish a commercial network there. Sending a large army of cultivators could result in indiscriminate attacks from the demon beasts.

Thus, Meng Zhang decided to temporarily put aside the actions against the Sea Clan and focus on strengthening surveillance. The information brought back by Zheng Chao made Meng Zhang realize that this issue could not be further delayed, and a solution must be devised as soon as possible.

Taiyi Sect currently enjoys the protection of Jin Li True Monarch and is a member of Jiuqu League. Even if the Sea Clan is powerful, they won't be able to wipe out Taiyi Sect. However, with a powerful neighbor like the Sea Clan, Taiyi Sect will face numerous troubles in the future. Even if large-scale battles don't break out, small conflicts are likely inevitable.

Taiyi Sect is currently vigorously developing Demon Wind Gobi, and at this time, the most dreaded scenario is to face external interference. Meng Zhang also considered seeking help from the high-ranking members of Jiuqu League to eliminate the threat posed by the Sea Clan. However, after careful consideration, he decided against it.

Asking for help might be easy, but paying the price could be substantial. There are no free lunches in the world, and Jiuqu League's high-ranking members might not entirely rely on the cultivation forces within the league. Many members, including Taiyi Sect, hope to gain various benefits from the league but are reluctant to have the high-ranking members interfere in their internal affairs.

Currently, Taiyi Sect is a member of Jiuqu League in name only, and due to its remote location in Demon Wind Gobi and the backing of Jin Li True Monarch, it enjoys a high degree of independence within Jiuqu League. Meng Zhang is not willing to draw the attention of Jiuqu League's high-ranking members to Taiyi Sect, nor does he want the influence of Jiuqu League to penetrate into Demon Wind Gobi. He is especially against giving the high-ranking members any reason to interfere in Taiyi Sect's internal affairs.

Meng Zhang has decided to rely on Taiyi Sect's strength as much as possible to deal with the threat posed by the Sea Clan and seek help from Jiuqu League only as a last resort. Jin Li True Monarch would not easily involve herself in such disputes involving at most Gold Core-level cultivators.

The Sea Clan's ability to occupy vast oceans suggests that there may be Primordial Spirit True Monarch-level existences behind them. Furthermore, Zheng Chao had clarified that, for some reason, Fourth Rank Sea Clan finds it difficult to directly intervene in land conflicts. If Jin Li True Monarch were to take action first and use force against the Sea Clan, it might provoke the Fourth Rank Sea Clan and escalate the conflict.

Facing the current situation, Zheng Chao proposed a well-thought-out plan. Taiyi Sect should seize the opportunity of the demon beasts' defeat and take the initiative by sending a large army of cultivators to occupy the demon beasts' territory before the Sea Clan does. They can establish a defensive great formation there to keep the Sea Clan at bay. This way, Taiyi Sect can not only take the initiative but also ensure that most of the battles occur in the demon beasts' territory and avoid damage to their own land.

Meng Zhang had some doubts about Zheng Chao's aggressive plan, wondering if it was appropriate for Taiyi Sect to take the initiative given the Sea Clan's strength. Zheng Chao explained that precisely because the Sea Clan is powerful, Taiyi Sect must take the initiative and strike first. In the demon beasts' territory, there exists a Third Rank spirit vein. If Taiyi Sect can occupy that area first and set up a defensive great formation using the power of the spirit vein, they can withstand the Sea Clan's advantage in strength and even have a chance to win against them despite being weaker.

In reality, Meng Zhang had already been drawn to this plan. He asked a few more questions to see if Zheng Chao had thoroughly considered everything. As a Sect Master who has undergone many years of experience, Meng Zhang is very mature in handling major affairs that could impact the sect's future. He does not make hasty decisions but instead convenes the high-ranking members of the sect to discuss the matter together.

#### Chapter 627: Initiates an Attack

Soon, the upper echelons of the sect were summoned to the sect's main hall. After a brief discussion, everyone agreed to Zheng Chao's plan of taking the initiative to attack.

On one hand, this decision was influenced by Meng Zhang's inclination towards it. Given his authority within the sect, no one would directly oppose or contradict him.

On the other hand, Taiyi Sect was currently on the rise, growing stronger day by day. The leaders of the sect not only had ambitious aspirations but also a strong desire for expansion beyond their borders.

Even though Zheng Chao clearly informed everyone that Sea Clan's strength surpassed that of Taiyi Sect, it didn't dampen their enthusiasm for seizing the territory of the demon beasts.

The multiple victories in external wars had brought Taiyi Sect to its current position. Every cultivator within Taiyi Sect had undergone blood and fire, forging them into resilient individuals. From the top to the bottom, they were not only unafraid of battle but also embraced it with eagerness, at least not fearing war.

Since everyone agreed to launch an offensive and occupy the territory of the demon beasts, gaining a strategic advantage over the Sea Clan, Meng Zhang wasted no time and immediately began preparations.

Timing was crucial; the sooner they acted, the greater their advantage. They needed to catch both the Sea Clan and the demon beasts off guard.

Taiyi Sect's current territory was vast, and that didn't even include the Endless Sea of Sand. Just on the side of Demon Wind Gobi, there were many strongholds.

During regular times, the number of disciples stationed at the Hundred Grass Slope, the main gate of Taiyi Sect, accounted for less than 30% of the total number of disciples. Among them were mostly newcomers, those undergoing training, or low-ranking disciples with modest cultivation bases.

The majority of Taiyi Sect's disciples were scattered throughout the expansive territory, responsible for maintaining control. Especially in recent years, with the significant development of Demon Wind Gobi, an increasing number of external cultivators had flooded in, causing disorder and a decline in security. Thus, Taiyi Sect needed to dispatch patrol teams to various places, strengthening surveillance and maintaining peace in their domain.

Additionally, Taiyi Sect was fully engaged in opening up commercial routes in Jiuqu League, and many outstanding disciples had been sent there.

Taiyi Sect had numerous flying boats and mounts in its territory. However, it would still take time to gather all disciples from various places.

If they mobilized cultivators from the entire Hanhai Alliance to participate in the war, it would take even more time.

Fortunately, Taiyi Sect's Gold Core cultivators were currently within the sect, and the situation wasn't too bad.

Since time was of the essence and they couldn't afford to wait for all disciples to assemble, Meng Zhang and the sect's high-ranking members decided to send out a group of Gold Core Daoist Masters as the vanguard. The remaining leaders would gradually gather the disciples as reinforcements.

Apart from mobilizing Taiyi Sect's strength, they also needed to conscript the Hanhai Alliance's forces for this endeavor.

Over the years, the members of the Hanhai Alliance had benefited from following Taiyi Sect. Now, it was time for them to repay the favor.

Meng Zhang, accompanied by four Guardian Spirit Generals and Zheng Chao, who was familiar with the western side of Demon Wind Gobi, set off swiftly as the guide.

A team of six Gold Core cultivators is enough to handle any situation. Even if the expedition encounters difficulties, they have the ability to retreat safely.

Niu Dawei, the senior disciple temporarily remaining at the sect, began mobilizing Taiyi Sect as the acting Sect Master, ordering the elite cultivators of Taiyi Sect who were outside to return immediately.

Simultaneously, a messenger was dispatched to all members of the Hanhai Alliance, issuing an urgent conscription order.

Niu Dawei's reason for mobilizing Taiyi Sect and the Hanhai Alliance cultivators to participate in the war was the impending massive invasion of demon beasts deep within Demon Wind Gobi. Taiyi Sect needed to concentrate its forces to resist the invading beasts.

As for the details of seizing the demon beast territory and resisting the Sea Clan, he did not reveal them to the public.

Though Niu Dawei's time as a Gold Core cultivator was relatively short, he already possessed a minimum combat strength expected of a Gold Core cultivator.

After gathering various cultivators and forming a grand army, Niu Dawei would lead this army, along with Wen Qiansun, Hu Jing, Yang Xueyi, and others, to embark on the expedition.

Jin Qiao'er from Qiaoshou Sect would be responsible for guarding Taiyi Sect's territory and dealing with any troublemakers or disturbances that might arise.

As a rising force, Taiyi Sect did not carry the inertia of long-established sects. The orders and communication channels within the sect were smooth, resulting in a highly efficient mobilization.

Although the member forces of the Hanhai Alliance might be slightly less efficient, they dared not slack off or hesitate when faced with the strict orders from Taiyi Sect's envoys, and they acted immediately.

Having established the Hanhai Alliance for many years, Taiyi Sect's authority had deeply rooted itself within each member force. Once the order for mobilization was issued, the entire Hanhai Alliance moved swiftly.

Taiyi Sect was now like a high-speed war machine. Once activated, it erupted with formidable power.

In Taiyi Sect's territory, flying boats began taking off, carrying personnel and supplies from various places in Demon Wind Gobi towards Taiyi Sect's main gate, the Hundred Grass Slope.

Facing Taiyi Sect's sudden large-scale actions, cultivators from all parts of Demon Wind Gobi felt uneasy and began discussing the situation.

Upon receiving the message from Niu Dawei, Jin Qiao'er wasted no time and led a group of Qiaoshou Sect cultivators, rushing from the Northern Desert towards Demon Wind Gobi. Instead of going directly to Taiyi Sect's Hundred Grass Slope, she started patrolling various areas of Demon Wind Gobi.

Taiyi Sect's mobilization efficiency was high, and in just 2-3 days, the elite cultivators scattered throughout Demon Wind Gobi had mostly gathered at the main gate.

The assembly speed on the side of the Hanhai Alliance was slightly slower, as the cultivators from various member forces had not fully gathered yet.

According to the original plan, Niu Dawei and Wen Qiansun would jointly lead the grand army of the Hanhai Alliance cultivators, while Yang Xueyi and Hu Jing would be in charge of the grand army composed of Taiyi Sect cultivators.

The gathering point for the forces of the Hanhai Alliance was not at the Hundred Grass Slope but at a frontier stronghold located about two thousand miles west of it.

Although their cultivators had not completely assembled yet, Niu Dawei was prepared to depart and meet up with them.

At this moment, an unexpected visitor proactively arrived at their doorstep.

"Someone from Beast King Mountain wants to see me?" Niu Dawei was momentarily stunned upon hearing the communication from his disciple.

"Which Beast King Mountain? New Beast King Mountain or Old Beast King Mountain?" As soon as he spoke, Niu Dawei already had a good idea of the answer.

Old Beast King Mountain was far away in the Crossing Severing Mountain Range. Only New Beast King Mountain, a member of the Jiuqu League like Taiyi Sect, would have any dealings with them.

As expected, the one seeking an audience with Niu Dawei was Qiu Mingze, the representative of New Beast King Mountain on this side of Demon Wind Gobi.

#### Chapter 628: Beast King Mountain

When it comes to Beast King Mountain, there's a distinction between the so-called New Beast King Mountain and Old Beast King Mountain, with a story in between.

Originally, Beast King Mountain was situated on the other side of the Crossing Severing Mountain Range and was the most powerful sect within the Three Sects Alliance. The sect boasted numerous Primordial Spirit True Monarchs, a large number of Gold Core Daoist Masters, and countless Foundation Building cultivators. Its strength was unparalleled in the Crossing Severing Mountain Range, making it a dominant force in the region.

Many years ago, a major internal rift occurred within Beast King Mountain. A group of cultivators broke away from the sect, fled the Crossing Severing Mountain Range, and journeyed northward for thousands of miles until they reached the territory controlled by the Jiuqu League.

At that time, the Jiuqu League had just been established and was in need of more forces to join and strengthen its overall power. The Beast King Mountain cultivators who arrived there established their own sect called Beast King Mountain and joined the Jiuqu League, gradually becoming a significant pillar of the alliance.

To distinguish the two different Beast King Mountains, outsiders referred to the one on the Crossing Severing Mountain Range side as Old Beast King Mountain and the one within the Jiuqu League as New Beast King Mountain.

Of course, both Beast King Mountains claim to be the true orthodox sect, labeling the other as shameless traitors who betrayed the sect.

The New Beast King Mountain within the Jiuqu League has grown and prospered over the years, steadily increasing in strength. Among the remaining forces in the Jiuqu League, besides the Azure Origin Sect, the Yellow Lotus Sect, Four Seas Chamber of Commerce, and Beast King Mountain are the most powerful.

After the internal division, the Old Beast King Mountain of the Three Sects Alliance suffered a significant decline in strength and could no longer maintain its position as the leader of the alliance. They view the New Beast King Mountain as the primary cause of their decline and harbor extreme animosity towards them. If it weren't for the presence of the Jiuqu League, they would have likely engaged in a major conflict long ago.

The relationship between the Three Sects Alliance and the Jiuqu League is complex, involving both competition and cooperation. Besides the Old Beast King Mountain, the other two sects of the Three Sects Alliance maintain a relatively decent relationship with the Jiuqu League.

However, the New Beast King Mountain finds itself in a tricky situation and has always remained low-key within the Jiuqu League. Despite their considerable strength, they have no aspirations for dominance or supremacy.

Nevertheless, this situation changed in recent years. With the Three Sects Alliance embroiled in a bitter struggle against the Dali Dynasty, the Old Beast King Mountain was no longer a threat to the New Beast King Mountain. Seizing the opportunity, the New Beast King Mountain shed its



previous low-key approach and began actively participating in various affairs within the Jiuqu League.

With the disappearance of the Yellow Lotus Sect's Cult Master and the sect internally divided, the New Beast King Mountain rose to prominence and showed signs of replacing the Yellow Lotus Sect's position. As a Primordial Spirit sect, apart from the powerful Azure Origin Sect, other forces within the Jiuqu League find it challenging to directly contend with the New Beast King Mountain.

Beast King Mountain's cultivation techniques heavily rely on the taming of demonic beasts. In the Cultivation World, there is even a rumor that over half of the abilities of Beast King Mountain cultivators come from the tamed demonic beasts.

Old Beast King Mountain has a long and ancient heritage, with a vast number of demonic beasts cultivated over many years. After the establishment of New Beast King Mountain, they have been diligently trying to compensate for their lack of resources by actively taming various demonic beasts. Demon Wind Gobi, a paradise for these creatures, has long captured the attention of New Beast King Mountain.

However, when True Monarch Tian Zhu was in control of the Deadly Sea of Sand, New Beast King Mountain dared not fully invade the area. They could only send some Foundation Building cultivators to establish small outposts at the edge of Demon Wind Gobi. These outposts were used to observe the behavior of the demonic beasts and secretly hunt some of them.

Due to the harsh conditions and significant danger in the region, these small outposts became filled with frustrated and disillusioned New Beast King Mountain cultivators. Later, when the demonic beasts from Demon Wind Gobi invaded the Endless Sea of Sand, triggering multiple large-scale battles, the outposts of New Beast King Mountain were unable to stand alone and were eventually abandoned. The stationed cultivators returned to their sect.

When the news of True Monarch Tian Zhu's death spread, and Jin Li True Monarch aligned with the Azure Origin Sect, joining the Jiuqu League, Taiyi Sect occupied a large part of Demon Wind Gobi. With the protection of Jin Li True Monarch, New Beast King Mountain found it challenging to easily intervene in the area.

After Taiyi Sect officially became a member of the Jiuqu League, New Beast King Mountain took the initiative to send envoys and negotiate with Taiyi Sect to obtain access to the demonic beast resources in Demon Wind Gobi. Although Taiyi Sect had the protection of Jin Li True Monarch, they couldn't easily offend a Primordial Spirit sect. Therefore, Meng Zhang gave face to New Beast King Mountain and agreed to their request.

Consequently, New Beast King Mountain reestablished their presence in Demon Wind Gobi and gradually gained access to the demonic beast resources. They did not take excessive advantage of Taiyi Sect and occasionally provided them with benefits.

In these years, the two forces coexisted peacefully, though there wasn't much interaction between them. Qiu Mingze is the main person representing New Beast King Mountain in Demon Wind Gobi. Despite being just a Foundation Building cultivator, Niu Dawei couldn't underestimate him. When Qiu Mingze sought an audience, Niu Dawei postponed his schedule to meet him personally.

Qiu Mingze originally intended to request an audience with Taiyi Sect's Sect Master, Meng Zhang. But since Meng Zhang had already departed, he settled for meeting Niu Dawei, a senior disciple of the Sect Master.

Qiu Mingze's words sounded pleasant, emphasizing that Taiyi Sect and Beast King Mountain were both members of the Human Clan and allies within the Jiuqu League. Therefore, they should stand together against the invasion of demonic beasts. Beast King Mountain was willing to send a team of cultivators to assist Taiyi Sect in repelling the invasion.

However, Niu Dawei did not believe a word of Qiu Mingze's speech. Though he didn't possess Mind Reading Divine Ability, he was sure that Qiu Mingze had ulterior motives. Instead of outright agreeing, Niu Dawei expressed concerns about the powerful invading demonic beasts and how Taiyi Sect would be held responsible if there were casualties among the Beast King Mountain cultivators during the battle.

While not explicitly stated, Niu Dawei's tone subtly conveyed a sense of looking down upon the strength of Beast King Mountain. The outpost of New Beast King Mountain in Demon Wind Gobi consisted mostly of Foundation Building cultivators, and facing a horde of Third Rank demonic beasts led by a powerful force, they would likely be unable to contribute significantly and might suffer unnecessary losses.

Chapter 629: ...

Niu Dawei did not outright reject the goodwill of Beast King Mountain. Instead, he expressed concern, fearing that there might be casualties among the cultivators of Beast King Mountain during the upcoming battle.

Qiu Mingze first thanked Niu Dawei for his concern, then casually mentioned that some of Beast King Mountain's Gold Core Daoist Masters were traveling nearby in the Demon Wind Gobi. They had heard about the impending invasion of Demon Wind Gobi's demonic beasts into the Human

Clan's territory and were filled with anger, developing a shared animosity toward the invaders. They were willing to lend a hand and help Taiyi Sect resist the invasion of the demonic beasts.

Qiu Mingze's words made Niu Dawei internally vigilant. It seemed that Beast King Mountain had planned this move in advance. It was too coincidental that their Gold Core Daoist Masters happened to be in the vicinity of Demon Wind Gobi when such a significant event was unfolding.

Although Niu Dawei was unsure of Beast King Mountain's intentions, he believed that they would not side with the demonic beasts or the Sea Clan. If Beast King Mountain were to collude with the demonic beasts or harm Taiyi Sect secretly, neither the Azure Origin Sect nor the Jade Sword Sect would spare them.

Beast King Mountain and Taiyi Sect had no past grievances, nor did they have any conflicts. If there were no enormous benefits involved, Beast King Mountain would not risk a confrontation with Jin Li True Monarch and take any actions against Taiyi Sect.

Niu Dawei speculated that Beast King Mountain had long coveted the numerous demonic beasts in Demon Wind Gobi. With their strength, it wouldn't be challenging for them to monitor the situation deep within the Demon Wind Gobi and discover any major changes that occurred there.

As Taiyi Sect was the landlord of Demon Wind Gobi, it would be difficult for Beast King Mountain to take significant actions there without passing through Taiyi Sect, considering the rules of Jiuqu League and the general rules of the Cultivation World.

Beast King Mountain's proactive visit was likely aimed at joining forces with Taiyi Sect to combat the demonic beasts and gather more demonic beast resources, perhaps even taming some powerful demonic beasts.

Although Niu Dawei inferred that Beast King Mountain did not harbor malicious intent toward Taiyi Sect, he refrained from giving an immediate answer. He asked Qiu Mingze to wait a little longer as he needed to consult other elders in the sect.

Qiu Mingze showed no impatience and patiently waited for Niu Dawei's decision.

Niu Dawei gathered the other three Gold Core Daoist Masters of the sect - Hu Jing, Wen Qiansun, and Yang Xueyi - to discuss the situation and his conjectures. The group generally agreed with Niu Dawei's assessment that it would be challenging for Taiyi Sect to refuse Beast King Mountain's request for help.

Hu Jing, who had expertise in Beast Controlling techniques, had some reservations as she had planned to use the opportunity to tame potential powerful demonic beasts, increasing Taiyi Sect's strength. However, the presence of Beast King Mountain cultivators vying for the same resources posed a challenge to her plans.

After the discussion, Niu Dawei intentionally delayed meeting with Qiu Mingze to buy some time. With the sect's preparations underway, they dispatched a team of Taiyi Sect cultivators led by Niu Dawei and Wen Qiansun on a Third Rank transportation flying boat toward their western base.

In a location about two thousand miles west of the Hundred Grass Slope, there was a Second Rank spirit vein with a mountain slope called Yellow Clay Slope. This place was relatively close to the territory of the demonic beasts, and Taiyi Sect had developed it into a robust forward outpost over the years.

As they arrived at Yellow Clay Slope, they found a noisy scene. Cultivator teams from various factions within the Hanhai Alliance were gathering there. Niu Dawei's presence as a Gold Core Daoist Master exerted enough authority to command the crowd.

Taiyi Sect had not engaged in external battles for some years, and some factions within the Hanhai Alliance had become lax, especially the newer ones. Niu Dawei's team was small in number but highly skilled and disciplined.

Niu Dawei's squad acted as supervisors and messengers.

This team of cultivators conveyed Niu Dawei's orders in succession, urging the cultivators present to organize their formations. Among the cultivators from various major factions present, many had experience operating under the command of Taiyi Sect cultivators. Particularly, a group of Foundation Building cultivators had participated in several previous external battles under Taiyi Sect's leadership.

Using these Foundation Building cultivators as the backbone, Niu Dawei and Wen Qiansun began to integrate and assemble a large and imposing army of cultivators. Meng Zhang attached great importance to the Hanhai Alliance organization, as the cultivators of each member were considered the best cannon fodder. Taiyi Sect periodically dispatched cultivators to the member sects to organize training, including formation arrangements and coordinated combat.

Now, with a vast army of over five thousand cultivators and more reinforcements still arriving, their quality varied, and their combat capabilities were uneven. Nevertheless, their sheer numbers and imposing formations exuded an intimidating aura.

Although the cultivator army was successfully formed, they couldn't immediately charge into battle. They needed some time for training to establish their initial combat strength.

At this moment, the group of cultivators sent by Beast King Mountain had arrived at Yellow Clay Slope. Behind two Third Rank warships in the sky, there were over twenty Second Rank flying boats. The flying boats landed gracefully under everyone's gaze. The cultivators poured out and quickly assembled into a powerful formation in front of Yellow Clay Slope.

Beast King Mountain sent fewer cultivators compared to Taiyi Sect, with only around eight hundred individuals. However, these eight hundred cultivators displayed an exceptionally strong presence, appearing battle-hardened and powerful. At the Gold Core Daoist Master level, Beast King Mountain dispatched four individuals, while Taiyi Sect had only Niu Dawei as their Gold Core Daoist Master.

The four Gold Core Daoist Masters from Beast King Mountain did not approach Niu Dawei's group to speak but remained with their own team. Qiu Mingze came forward to liaise between the two sects, as he was well-versed in the situation in Demon Wind Gobi, and Taiyi Sect respected him as an intermediary.

Niu Dawei and Wen Qiansun were impressed by the arrogance of the Primordial Spirit sects. Nevertheless, they recognized that Beast King Mountain's team of eight hundred cultivators was of higher quality, with a significant number of Foundation Building cultivators, surpassing Taiyi Sect's hastily assembled army.

If the two sides engaged in battle, Taiyi Sect's cultivator army would likely be unable to hold out for long and would be easily defeated. Although the real elite cultivators of Taiyi Sect were not present at this moment, and this army was essentially a cannon fodder unit formed by subordinate forces, the vast disparity in strength still made Niu Dawei and Wen Qiansun feel embarrassed.

Originally, Niu Dawei had planned to spend some time training the newly formed cultivator army. However, Qiu Mingze was eager to take action and volunteered to lead the vanguard. Taiyi Sect, being the landlord of Demon Wind Gobi, could not allow guest forces to lead the charge.

More importantly, Niu Dawei and Wen Qiansun were worried that Beast King Mountain's cultivator army would seize all the benefits if they advanced first into the depths of Demon Wind Gobi. Waiting for them to finish, Taiyi Sect might not even get any leftovers.

As a result, Niu Dawei abandoned the idea of training the army and decided to take action immediately, marching together with Beast King Mountain's cultivators toward the west of Demon Wind Gobi.

Once this massive army of cultivators entered the territory of the demonic beasts, conflict, or even a full-scale battle, would be inevitable.

Regarding Meng Zhang's group, the six Gold Core Daoist Masters left the Hundred Grass Slope and headed deep into Demon Wind Gobi. According to Zheng Chao's intelligence, the demonic beasts had been completely defeated, and the Sea Clan was chasing them, intending to exterminate them.

The retreating demonic beasts had gathered at their last stronghold, preparing for a final confrontation with the Sea Clan. Taiyi Sect's decision to take the initiative in this battle had another consideration.

The dying struggle of the demonic beasts probably wouldn't hold off the Sea Clan for long. The retreating demonic beasts would likely head east and soon enter Taiyi Sect's territory. If that happened, these rampaging demonic beasts would inevitably cause trouble in Taiyi Sect's territory.

Taiyi Sect needed to act preemptively and block all the calamities from entering their territory. Meng Zhang's group of six Gold Core Daoist Masters didn't plan to go to the final stronghold of the demonic beasts. Their presence there wouldn't be significant, and even if they helped the demonic beasts resist the Sea Clan, it wouldn't have much effect.

Instead, within the depths of Demon Wind Gobi, there was a place called Red Rock Valley, which possessed a Third Rank spirit vein and abundant resources, serving as the former headquarters of the demonic beast coalition. Years ago, the Sea Clan had attacked and captured Red Rock Valley, resulting in the death of most defending demonic beasts, while the rest retreated eastward.

After seizing Red Rock Valley, Sea Clan stationed a limited number of forces there, but the demonic beast coalition had not been entirely eradicated. As most of Sea Clan's forces were engaged in the main battle against the demonic beast coalition, the defensive strength at Red Rock Valley was quite limited.

Zheng Chao's plan was for Taiyi Sect to seize Red Rock Valley during the ongoing battle between the Sea Clan and the demonic beasts. Then, they would establish a Third Rank mountain-protecting great formation above the Third Rank spirit vein.

With the Third Rank mountain-protecting great formation as a support, Taiyi Sect could effectively defend against the Sea Clan, even if their strength was inferior. This would prevent the Sea Clan from expanding further eastward with ease.

Taiyi Sect occupying Red Rock Valley meant gaining control over a new Third Rank spirit vein and obtaining abundant resources. Moreover, it would also serve as a thorn in the Sea Clan's rear, greatly diverting their attention and main forces.

If Meng Zhang's group acted quickly and seized Red Rock Valley before the demonic beasts were completely defeated, they could trap the Sea Clan's main forces between them and the demonic beasts.

Even if the demonic beasts didn't actively cooperate with the Human Clan, they would still play a significant role in helping to contain the Sea Clan's power.

Chapter 630: Surprise attack

In order to avoid stumbling into the battleground of the Sea Clan and the demonic beasts, Meng Zhang and the other five individuals did not advance in a straight line. Instead, they took a big detour and entered deep into the Demon Wind Gobi from the side.

Although this added a considerable distance to their journey, the six Gold Core Daoist Masters traveled at full speed and quickly reached their destination.

When they arrived outside Red Rock Valley, the Hanhai Daoist Alliance had just completed their mobilization, and cultivators from various factions were not yet fully assembled.

At this moment, they were unaware of the situation at the rear and were only acting according to the pre-established plan.

When Zheng Chao had escaped from this place, even in the midst of fleeing for his life, he had the foresight not to forget to investigate the situation of Red Rock Valley for future use.

He had some knowledge about the surroundings of Red Rock Valley. On normal days, there was a Sea Clan army stationed here, led by two or three Third Rank Sea Clan commanders.

The intelligence level of the Sea Clan was much higher than that of the demonic beasts. While in the sea, their combat talents were even more remarkable.

Cultivators had developed a splendid cultivation civilization and created a sophisticated and strict system known as "cultivation hundred arts" throughout their long history.

Similarly, the Sea Clan possessed its own unique civilization. Although they did not have the concept of "cultivation hundred arts," they also refined elixirs and manufactured weapons.

Regarding formations, the Sea Clan had a completely different system from cultivators but had a mysterious heritage of their own.

After occupying Red Rock Valley, they knew that this place was of vital importance. Naturally, the Sea Clan would manage it well and maintain tight defenses.

Red Rock Valley served as a crucial supply depot for the Sea Clan. Most of the resources needed for frontline operations were gathered here and then distributed to the front lines.

Injured Sea Clan members from the great battle were also sent here for recuperation.

To defend this place, the Sea Clan not only stationed a large number of soldiers and Third Rank experts but also set up a Third Rank defensive great formation.

The Sea Clan's formation system was born in the sea and was best deployed in places with abundant water vapor. Even if they were away from the sea, it was still preferable to be in the vicinity of rivers and streams with ample water vapor to unleash the maximum power of the formation.

However, the Demon Wind Gobi, as its name implied, was an extremely arid place with a scarcity of water vapor.

Red Rock Valley was a rare oasis within the Demon Wind Gobi and originally had a large lake nearby. However, during the previous battles to conquer this place, the lake had suffered severe damage and had almost turned into a ravine.

The Sea Clan did not have enough time to repair the surrounding environment and could only forcefully set up their defensive great formation.

Even without the advantage of favorable terrain, they could still manage to extract some utility from the great formation.



The demonic beasts had been completely defeated and were continuously retreating, unlikely to launch a counter-attack.

For the Sea Clan, this was merely a habitual reinforcement of the defense of important areas. They didn't actually believe that any enemies would come to attack this place.

When Meng Zhang and the six Gold Core Daoist Masters arrived at Red Rock Valley, the defenses here were actually quite weak.

With no time for thorough reconnaissance, they had to move swiftly. The key to this plan was speed. They must seize Red Rock Valley before the Sea Clan could react and establish a preliminary defense system.

The six Gold Core Daoist Masters did not conceal their presence and boldly approached Red Rock Valley from the high sky.

Six blurred figures streaked across the sky as Meng Zhang led the group, appearing above Red Rock Valley.

Before the group even reached their destination, one of them fiercely struck downward with their sword.

Although it takes time to slowly gather spirit materials, and there hasn't been much free time, the Shocking Thunder Spirit General hasn't been able to create a new magic tool for Meng Zhang. However, he has strengthened Meng Zhang's original magic tools.

Both the Fierce Yang Sword and the Shadow Killing Sword have been infused with precious spirit materials and greatly enhanced in power, becoming more handy to use.

Sensing the approaching enemies, the Sea Clan in Red Rock Valley has not reacted yet, and the defensive great formation set up here has spontaneously activated.

A water curtain surged into the sky, blocking the path of the group.

The sword shadow transformed into a blazing sun, heavily colliding with the water curtain, creating intense ripples.

The people following Meng Zhang all took action, vigorously attacking the defensive great formation in front of them.

The term "Sea Clan" is a general term, and within the Sea Clan, there are many completely different racial groups.

Among them, the superior races, due to their extraordinary talents and strong collective strength, naturally become the rulers and nobility of the Sea Clan.

The Sea Clan army attacking the Demon Wind Gobi this time is led by three major superior races.

The Merfolk Human Clan has a half-human, half-fish appearance, with a human upper body and a fish tail below. They often appear as handsome men and beautiful women, seemingly not posing much of a threat.

In reality, the Merfolk Human Clan not only possesses strong innate spell talent but also has extremely high intelligence, being renowned as the wise individuals within the Sea Clan. In the Sea Clan's army, they often serve as strategists.

The Sea Patrolling Yaksha race has a blue-faced, fierce, and terrifying appearance, with a huge and oppressive figure. They possess divine strength and robust physical bodies, and are fierce and ferocious in character.

In the Sea Clan's army, the Sea Patrolling Yaksha serve as the brave and valiant generals, the vanguard charging forward fearlessly.

If the Merfolk Human Clan and the Sea Patrolling Yaksha race are considered the nobility of the Sea Clan, then the True Dragon race is the true royal family within the Sea Clan, the supreme existence.

So far, no members of the True Dragon race have appeared on the battlefield. Only the joint forces of the Merfolk Human Clan and the Sea Patrolling Yaksha race have been enough to defeat the demonic beasts that have dominated the Demon Wind Gobi for thousands of years.

Meng Zhang and his six companions have chosen a perfect time to attack Red Rock Valley.

As the assault on the demonic beasts approaches its final stage, the Sea Clan forces and strong individuals originally stationed in Red Rock Valley have mostly been mobilized to the frontline for the final extermination.

Now, only a small number of Sea Clan troops remain in Red Rock Valley. The only Third Rank expert present is a Sea Patrolling Yaksha.

This Sea Patrolling Yaksha had charged too recklessly during the previous battle, resulting in serious injuries that forced him to retreat for healing. He was currently in seclusion in Red Rock Valley, overseeing the area.

With the impending demise of the demonic beasts, the Sea Clan is now considering how to deal with the aftermath. They would never have expected an enemy to suddenly launch a surprise attack on Red Rock Valley at this time.

Meng Zhang and his companions' surprise attack happened to strike at the Sea Clan's weak spot, catching them off guard.

Although the Sea Clan set up a Third Rank defensive great formation in Red Rock Valley, firstly, the great formation was not suitable for this environment, limiting its power significantly. Secondly, there were not enough people to operate the great formation, so its power couldn't be fully utilized.

When the six Gold Core Daoist Masters took action, it was like a storm of fierce attacks. Within moments, the defensive great formation began to crumble.

The Sea Patrolling Yaksha, who was still in seclusion healing, was alarmed and hurriedly came out to the outside.