

Sect Master 721

Chapter 721: Branch

Gu Yue Family and Lu Family are both dominant families in Great Wind City. In all aspects, Gu Yue Family is second only to Lu Family. In the world of cultivation, there is no place for those who are content to live a peaceful life as good people. Meng Zhang doesn't believe that Gu Yue Family is willing to forever remain subordinate to Lu Family, meekly accepting their position as the second power for a thousand years. If there is powerful external support, would Gu Yue Family not covet the position of the city lord of Great Wind City? If there is an opportunity to replace Lu Family's status, would Gu Yue Family not be tempted?

Although Taiyi Sect has a close relationship with Gu Yue Family, Meng Zhang has had many dealings with them before. However, after achieving the status of Primordial Spirit True Monarch, this is the first time he has contacted Gu Yue Family with a specific purpose in mind. Despite becoming a Primordial Spirit True Monarch, Meng Zhang has not become arrogant or careless. He continues to act with caution and thoughtfulness.

Before taking action, Meng Zhang specifically sent a message to Daoist Master Luo Ye, asking for her help in gathering deep-level intelligence about Gu Yue Family.

Furthermore, he did not place all his hopes on the black market. Instead, he assigned An Moran, an elder of the Secret Hall from Taiyi Sect, to contact the intelligence system of Jade Sword Sect and try to obtain assistance from them.

Don't assume that Jade Sword Sect, being a Sword Cultivator sect, is a group of straightforward and naive Sword Cultivators. Even if Jade Sword Sect is powerful, it would not have survived in the Cultivation World until now if that were the case. Any sect that wants to survive and grow in the Cultivation World cannot avoid the dark side.

Within Jade Sword Sect, there are also cunning and malicious individuals, like old foxes skilled in calculation and schemes. With a history of over two thousand years, Jade Sword Sect is second only to Azure Origin Sect within Jiuqu League. Over the years, Jade Sword Sect's influence has extended covertly to all aspects and corners of Jiuqu League and even deep into the edge of the Middle-Earth Continent.

Most Hall Masters of Taiyi Sect's branches are cultivators at the Foundation Building stage. After these Hall Masters advance to the Gold Core stage, they often pass the Hall Master position to other Foundation Building stage disciples and take on the role of elders. However, within Taiyi Sect, there are a few branches where the Hall Master position is held by a Gold Core stage elder.

Even after forming a Gold Core, An Moran did not resign as the Secret Hall Master and continued to be responsible for all affairs of the Secret Hall. In fact, as the number of Gold Core stage cultivators in Taiyi Sect increased, there were more outstanding individuals among the Foundation Building stage disciples. Some Foundation Building stage disciples serving as Hall Masters found it difficult to suppress other elite Foundation Building stage disciples within their own branch. As a result, Taiyi Sect has started to gradually adjust the positions within the sect. For instance, An Moran's elder sister, An Xiaoran, after forming her Gold Core, still held the position of Hall Master in Pill Hall while also being a Gold Core elder. Taiyi Sect has now become a subordinate of Jade Sword Sect, wholeheartedly serving the interests of Jade Sword Sect. Naturally, Jade Sword Sect will offer some benefits to Taiyi Sect. Setting aside the deepening of the exchange and cooperation between the two sects, the sharing of information and intelligence is a very natural thing.

Meng Zhang and Elder Beast Fury collaborated to kill two Primordial Spirit True Monarchs from New Beast King Mountain, and later, Meng Zhang also wiped out a group of Lu Family cultivators, including Lu Haosheng. This served as a reliable proof of allegiance to Jade Sword Sect.

In the eyes of the higher-ups in Jade Sword Sect, Meng Zhang is considered a reliable ally. As long as Meng Zhang's requests are not too excessive, Jade Sword Sect will try to fulfill them. Moreover, Meng Zhang's plan to use Gu Yue Family to replace Lu Family aligns with the interests of Jade Sword Sect, so there is no reason for them not to support it.

The exchange between Taiyi Sect's Secret Hall and Jade Sword Sect is not just for the current mission, nor is it solely for gathering intelligence about Gu Yue Family. Although An Moran is silent and not good with words, he is skilled in handling matters. With his abilities, he should be able to gain a lot from these exchanges.

Before getting any response from Jade Sword Sect, Meng Zhang's old friend, Daoist Master Luo Ye, came to visit first. It had been many years since they last met, and Meng Zhang had already become a Primordial Spirit True Monarch, which made Luo Ye Daoist Master quite emotional.

Fortunately, Meng Zhang is not the kind of person who puts on airs, nor does he act like a high and mighty Primordial Spirit True Monarch. He still treats Luo Ye Daoist Master with the attitude of an old friend and warmly welcomed her.

After receiving Meng Zhang's message, Luo Ye Daoist Master mobilized her resources and used the black market channels to gather the information Meng Zhang wanted to know. When she came to visit, she not only brought this information but also had important matters to discuss with Meng Zhang.

According to Luo Ye Daoist Master, Gu Yue Family has an extraordinary background and is a complex cultivation family. The branch of Gu Yue Family in Jiuqu League is only one part of the entire family. There are other branches of Gu Yue Family in Dali Dynasty and even on Middle-Earth Continent.

Due to time constraints and the lack of seamless cooperation between various branches of the black market, Luo Ye Daoist Master couldn't obtain detailed information about the true roots of Gu Yue Family. However, she collected the most information about the branch of Gu Yue Family in Jiuqu League.

Shortly after Jiuqu League was established, one branch of Gu Yue Family moved here. After thousands of years of development, they, along with Lu Family, established the foundation of Great Wind City.

From the information collected, Great Wind City's Gu Yue Family can be considered a decent Gold Core family. However, in the eyes of true powerhouses, they are not particularly outstanding. Even a newly promoted Primordial Spirit like Meng Zhang could easily overpower Gu Yue Family.

Additionally, Luo Ye Daoist Master managed to gather some information about the branch of Gu Yue Family serving in Dali Dynasty through the contacts between various black market branches. It seemed that this branch had gained the trust of the royal family and had many members holding high positions. The overall strength of the family was much stronger than the branch in Jiuqu League, making them one of the important cultivation families in Dali Dynasty.

As for the information about the branch of Gu Yue Family on Middle-Earth Continent, Luo Ye Daoist Master had not yet received any reports from her subordinates.

After listening to the information brought by Luo Ye Daoist Master, Meng Zhang was quite surprised. He had heard that Gu Yue Family had an extraordinary background, but he didn't expect the extent of their involvement to be so extensive. Dali Dynasty is a major adversary of Jiuqu League, and Jade Sword Sect decided to break away from the league because Azure Origin Sect was unwilling to go to war with Dali Dynasty and other similar actions. Moreover, if there is a branch of Gu Yue Family serving Dali Dynasty, it raises significant questions about the trustworthiness of the branch in Great Wind City.

Chapter 722: Told

If there is any collusion between the Gu Yue Family in Great Wind City and the branches of the Dali Dynasty, this would be a hidden danger within the Jiuqu League sooner or later. Taiyi Sect, even if closely related to the Gu Yue Family, must draw a clear line on this matter of right and wrong early on to avoid being implicated.

While Meng Zhang was pondering these matters, suddenly, a thought crossed his mind. Considering the information that even Luo YeDaoist Master could obtain, there was no reason why sects like Azure Origin Sect and Jade Sword Sect wouldn't know about it. Gu Yue Family could stay peacefully in Great Wind City without being removed as internal spies by the Jade Sword Sect, which means there must be something she didn't know in between.

In front of an old friend, Meng Zhang didn't conceal her thoughts much. Luo YeDaoist Master, being from the Dark Alliance organization, had a special knack for reading people.

She roughly guessed Meng Zhang's thoughts and quickly explained, "There seems to be no close interaction between the various branches of the Gu Yue Family. The branch in Great Wind City has never colluded with the Dali Dynasty. They have always guarded their territory there and never engaged in any wrongdoing."

Though the Dark Alliance had strong intelligence capabilities and knew many deep secrets of the Cultivation World, Luo YeDaoist Master was only a high-ranking member in the organization, not truly at the top level. Her authority was limited, and she couldn't access all sorts of highly classified information freely.

Furthermore, Luo YeDaoist Master and her disciple Jue YingDaoist Master were not power-hungry individuals. In the Dark Alliance, they didn't actively seek power or aim to gain more authority. As Gold Core Daoist Masters, their status was decent, but their actual influence was limited, and they had access to only a moderate amount of resources.

Luo YeDaoist Master had never hidden any of this from Meng Zhang. Every time Meng Zhang sought her help, she and Jue YingDaoist Master had always gone out of their way to assist with all their heart. So far, Meng Zhang had greatly benefited from their assistance.

Meng Zhang speculated that there were deeper secrets within the Gu Yue Family. Although Luo YeDaoist Master couldn't provide further information, what she had just said was enough to make him cautious and act carefully.

After discussing the matters concerning the Gu Yue Family, Luo YeDaoist Master brought up another issue. This matter was an internal affair of the Dark Alliance, but it was closely related to Meng Zhang and the entire Jiuqu League.

Throughout its existence, the Dark Alliance operated in secrecy, participating in Cultivation World affairs through black markets and other clandestine organizations. The Dark Alliance respected the various dominant powers of the Cultivation World in each region and never directly engaged in or disrupted the ruling order.

Similarly, the various branches of the Dark Alliance did not actively align with other forces. However, the basic principles the Dark Alliance had adhered to were now facing serious challenges. Within the territory of the Dali Dynasty, the influence of the Dark Alliance still existed, with black markets operating in various locations.

The Dali Dynasty allowed the existence of the Dark Alliance's influence for its own purposes. The power of the Dark Alliance, especially its hidden strength, was highly coveted by the Dali Dynasty. Many years ago, the Dali Dynasty had established various connections with its internal Dark Alliance through various means, gradually infiltrating their influence into the organization.

Dark Alliance is a massive force with numerous branches, but the organization is bloated and unwieldy. Whether in terms of its organizational structure or the limited power at its core, Dark Alliance is destined to struggle to control each of its branches. Especially in recent years, the power of Dark Alliance's branches in various regions has grown significantly. Some remote branches have even shown faint signs of independence.

However, until now, no Dark Alliance branch has dared to openly declare independence. One reason is that all the branches fear the power at the core, especially the top experts of the Dark Alliance headquarters, who have the strength to sweep through any branch. Another reason is that each branch requires the reputation of Dark Alliance. With this reputation, they can gain numerous benefits and operate more conveniently.

Inside the various Dark Alliance branches, factions abound, making the situation exceedingly complex. The Dark Alliance branches within the territory of the Dali Dynasty have been completely infiltrated by the Dynasty. While they may not have an official affiliation, they are, in practice, entirely under the control of the Dali Dynasty, becoming a sharp blade in the Dynasty's hands.

Interestingly, for some reason, the Dark Alliance headquarters has not intervened in the situation. According to Luo YeDaoist Master's speculation, the headquarters might either be deceived by the branches and unaware of the true situation, or they have secretly reached an agreement with the Dali Dynasty, tacitly allowing this state of affairs to exist. Given the intelligence capabilities of the Dark Alliance headquarters, the first possibility seems unlikely.

The Dali Dynasty's influence over the Dark Alliance branches in its territory not only grants them more powerful dark forces but also enables them to infiltrate other Dark Alliance branches. It's evident that the expansion of the Dali Dynasty is directed towards the territory of the Jiuqu League.

Before launching a full-scale war against the Jiuqu League, the Dali Dynasty has already employed many means to penetrate the Jiuqu League's internal affairs and influence various aspects of it. According to Luo Ye, Daoist Master, some cultivation forces within the Jiuqu League have already established connections and even colluded with the Dali Dynasty.

Meng Zhang finds this situation unsurprising. In the Cultivation World, any cultivation force with some history and foundation knows the importance of leaving themselves a way out when facing a crisis. Even Taiyi Sect has placed hidden pieces like Maple Leaf Mountain City within the Grand Crossing Cultivation Circle.

Though Taiyi Sect currently follows the Jade Sword Sect loyally, presenting the image of a faithful subordinate, when push comes to shove and they have no other choice for survival, Taiyi Sect would not hesitate to abandon the Jade Sword Sect.

Dali Dynasty has always held a hostile attitude towards cultivation sects and has even extinguished many of them during its rise to power. Even those cultivation sects that have allied with the Dali Dynasty, with a few exceptions, have not lived easy lives. The Dali Dynasty is extremely harsh toward the cultivation sects under its rule, demanding excessively, and at the slightest disagreement, they would annihilate the entire sect.

Dali Dynasty's reputation precedes it, and unless there is absolutely no other choice, hardly any cultivation sect would willingly choose to submit to the Dali Dynasty.

Chapter 723: Proposition

But when it truly comes to a life-and-death situation, with no other choices left, many cultivation sects would bow their heads for the sake of survival. Comparatively, instead of being directly exterminated, they might choose to seek refuge with the Dali Dynasty and endure it for a while, which is also an acceptable option.

As the Dali Dynasty's military forces are at their peak, having just defeated the Three Sects Alliance, the Jiuqu League is facing internal divisions at this critical moment. In contrast, regardless of the relative strengths of the two sides, the state of the Jiuqu League gives them a lower chance of victory.

If possible, Meng Zhang would secretly establish a connection with the Dali Dynasty, leaving a path for the Taiyi Sect to retreat. However, this idea has been kept deep in his heart and hasn't been revealed to anyone.

Currently, Taiyi Sect is still under the protection of Jade Sword Sect. If they act recklessly, it will only bring disaster to the Taiyi Sect.

The main point Luo YeDaoist Master wants to address is not about certain cultivation forces within the Jiuqu League secretly collaborating with the Dali Dynasty but rather the future of the Dark Alliance branch within the Jiuqu League.

After the Dali Dynasty gained control of its own Dark Alliance branch, they utilized their resources and power to expand towards other Dark Alliance branches in the surrounding regions. The Dark Alliance branch located across the Severing Mountain Range actively chose to join the Dali Dynasty, playing a significant role in the Dali Dynasty's war against the Three Sects Alliance.

Now, the Dali Dynasty continues its expansion and sees the Jiuqu League as its next target for conquest. The Dark Alliance branch within the Jiuqu League must make a decision.

The Dali Dynasty has already sent envoys to the high-ranking members of the Dark Alliance branch on this side, proposing favorable cooperation conditions. If the Jiuqu League's Dark Alliance branch willingly joins the Dali Dynasty and cooperates in the conquest of the Jiuqu League, there will be significant rewards and benefits in the future.

However, within the Jiuqu League's Dark Alliance branch, there are conflicting factions and differing opinions, making it difficult to reach a decision in the short term. Despite their considerable strength, they cannot act decisively due to the internal disagreements.

Luo YeDaoist Master's faction maintains close ties with the Dark Alliance headquarters and has always followed their commands. However, regarding the matter of the Dali Dynasty, the headquarters has not given clear instructions and only advised them to act according to the situation and prioritize their self-preservation.

While one faction is eager to join the Dali Dynasty as allies, another faction firmly insists on maintaining their independence and refuses to bow to the Dali Dynasty. This conflict within the Dark Alliance causes headaches for Luo YeDaoist Master and her disciples.

Luo YeDaoist Master also worries that if the Dark Alliance delays its decision for too long, news of their collaboration with the Dali Dynasty might leak. In that case, sects like the Jade Sword Sect might take preemptive action against the Dark Alliance branch to eliminate potential internal threats.

Meng Zhang agrees with Luo YeDaoist Master's concerns. Many of the rules in the Cultivation World apply only to peaceful times and are not suitable for the current tense situation. Regardless of what choice the Dark Alliance branch makes or which side they lean towards, it would be better than their current appearance of neutrality with internal conflicts.

Meng Zhang, having known Luo YeDaoist Master for many years, has interacted with many cultivators from the Dark Alliance branch. He has some understanding of their strength.

This faction possesses considerable power and can achieve many things if they act proactively. Whether they succeed or fail, there are many ways they can preserve themselves. However, if they delay making any decision, they will miss valuable opportunities.

Luo YeDaoist Master has come to see Meng Zhang this time to seek his opinion and to act as a mediator between her own faction and the Taiyi Sect. In the current changing situation, the Taiyi Sect needs friends, and Luo YeDaoist Master's group, urgently requiring external support, is a perfect match.

Luo YeDaoist Master hinted at her intention, and Meng Zhang readily agreed, hoping that the two sides could form an alliance quickly and face the future together.

Meng Zhang also knows that if it weren't for his timely achievement of the Primordial Spirit, even with a good relationship with Luo YeDaoist Master, he might not be considered for such significant alliance matters by those behind Luo YeDaoist Master.

As for seeking Meng Zhang's opinion, she carefully pondered the matter. Even though Taiyi Sect currently aligns with the Jade Sword Sect camp, and the Dali Dynasty can be considered their enemy, Meng Zhang does not show any bias based on Taiyi Sect's stance.

He suggests that the high-ranking members of Luo YeDaoist Master's faction should engage in more contact with the Dali Dynasty, understand their strength, reputation, and test their bottom line, striving for more favorable conditions.

In Meng Zhang's mind, given the current struggle between the Dali Dynasty and the Jiuqu League, if the Jiuqu League doesn't possess any hidden cards, it seems that the Dali Dynasty has a slightly better chance of winning. Since Taiyi Sect is currently part of the Jade Sword Sect camp, if Luo YeDaoist Master's faction joins the Dali Dynasty, the two sides can exchange information and take care of each other.

Although they belong to different camps, the two sides can complement each other and become each other's escape route.

Within the Dark Alliance branch, there must be intelligent individuals who can form an independent faction. Meng Zhang has never expected to hide his thoughts from others. Being secretive not only appears petty but also makes it difficult to gain trust. Therefore, Meng Zhang openly shared his ideas and thoughts with Luo YeDaoist Master.

Meng Zhang was candid about his proposal, acknowledging that although it was somewhat self-interested, it would benefit everyone and not harm the interests of Luo YeDaoist Master's faction.

After a lengthy discussion between Luo YeDaoist Master and Meng Zhang in Taiyi Sect, they reached various agreements before parting ways. Luo YeDaoist Master took Meng Zhang's words back to her own faction's high-ranking members.

However, after Luo YeDaoist Master left, Meng Zhang hesitated about contacting the Gu Yue Family. He needed to know the relationship between the different branches of the Gu Yue Family in Great Wind City and whether the Great Wind City branch had sided with the Dali Dynasty.

Since Luo YeDaoist Master couldn't provide detailed intelligence, Meng Zhang pinned his hopes on An Moran, hoping that he could gather useful information from the Jade Sword Sect.

An Moran didn't disappoint Meng Zhang and succeeded in establishing contact with the Jade Sword Sect. Taiyi Sect was open about their intentions, clearly stating their desire to connect with the Gu Yue Family, overthrow the Lu Family's rule, and gain full control of Great Wind City.

In the eyes of the Jade Sword Sect, as long as the Jiuqu League hasn't completely collapsed, the Gu Yue Family won't betray them voluntarily. The numerous branches of the Gu Yue Family are mostly in a competitive relationship with each other, which can sometimes be fierce and even cruel.

Taiyi Sect wants to rally the Gu Yue Family to bring down the Lu Family and control Great Wind City, which is a significant matter. They need to be prepared, as some Taiyi Sect high-ranking members worry that if the Gu Yue Family succeeds, the defeated Lu Family might seek help from True Monarch Azure Mist, escalating the conflict and possibly triggering a civil war within the Jiuqu League.

However, Meng Zhang chooses to trust the Jade Sword Sect. He believes that the Jade Sword Sect will not let the newcomers face the wrath of the Azure Origin Sect, no matter what their considerations are.

Even though Meng Zhang doesn't want an internal war within the Jiuqu League at this time, he won't let these concerns hinder his actions.

After extensive discussions with the high-ranking members of Taiyi Sect, Meng Zhang personally contacted the Gu Yue Family cultivators. He chose Gu Yue Huaidie, an old friend from the Gu Yue Family, as the first person to meet.

Gu Yue Huaidie, as the Gu Yue Family's strategist, holds a high position within the clan and has significant influence in many matters. Convincing her would make subsequent actions much smoother.

Meng Zhang is also aware of Gu Yue Huaidie's secret as a Diviner. He doesn't intend to use this secret to threaten her, but there might be ways to use it to his advantage.

Taiyi Sect and the Gu Yue Family have a close relationship, with many commercial exchanges between them. Taiyi Sect disciples easily made contact with the Gu Yue Family to arrange a meeting.

Shortly thereafter, Meng Zhang secretly arrived at the Gu Yue Family's branch outside of Great Wind City and met Gu Yue Huaidie in secret. Before achieving Primordial Spirit, he could meet with the high-ranking members of the Gu Yue Family openly. Now, as a Primordial Spirit True Monarch, he had to act covertly and surreptitiously, which was quite ironic.

Chapter 724: Unexpected

When Gu Yue Huaidie saw Meng Zhang, her feelings were very complicated. When they first met, Meng Zhang was just a small Foundation Building cultivator. Gu Yue Huaidie had some interactions with the senior members of the rebuilt Taiyi Sect and took care of Meng Zhang deliberately.

She could never have imagined that the junior she once looked down upon in the Foundation Building stage would one day become someone she had to look up to.

Over the years, Gu Yue Huaidie's cultivation base had greatly improved, and she was now a cultivator in the Late Gold Core stage. However, her progress was nothing compared to Meng Zhang.

In the Cultivation World, strength was revered. Although Gu Yue Huaidie was Meng Zhang's senior, when facing a Primordial Spirit True Monarch like Meng Zhang, she still showed great humility and paid her respects.

Meng Zhang didn't accept Gu Yue Huaidie's bow and gracefully avoided it, wearing a warm smile on his face. He no longer addressed her as a senior but as an equal, calling her "Heart Butterfly Daoist Master."

The meeting took place at a secret Gu Yue Family outpost outside Great Wind City. This place was rarely visited, and generally, no one would disturb them.

Regardless of their past relationship, now that Meng Zhang had become a Primordial Spirit True Monarch, he was a significant figure in the entire Jiuqu League. Gu Yue Huaidie had to be cautious when dealing with him, and their relationship would probably never be the same as before.

After some small talk and catching up, Meng Zhang gradually steered the conversation to the topic he was interested in. He casually mentioned that there was another Gu Yue Family within the territory of the Dali Dynasty, seemingly enjoying the favor of the royal family. Both branches share the same surname, "Gu Yue", and he wondered if there was any connection between the Gu Yue Family in Great Wind City and the one in the Dali Dynasty.

Gu Yue Huaidie had faced similar questions before. While she couldn't reveal the core secrets of Gu Yue Family, she shared some general information with Meng Zhang. She explained that the Gu Yue Family had numerous branches spread across Middle-Earth Continent and even into Jiuqu League. These branches often competed fiercely with each other, and some even held more bitter rivalries than enemies.

However, despite the competition, they would never collude or betray their main family. Gu Yue Family had a good reputation in this regard. The Great Wind City branch of Gu Yue Family and the one in Dali Dynasty had no prior connection or collusion. They were independent entities, and there were no hostilities between them.

Still, if one side showed respect and goodwill, the other side wouldn't deliberately cause trouble and might even provide some assistance due to their common ancestry.

Meng Zhang listened attentively to the explanation, gaining a deeper understanding of Gu Yue Family's situation. He mentioned that Jade Sword Sect advocated a full-scale war against the Dali

Dynasty, making them the most resolute faction within Jiuqu League. Thus, it was not suitable for Taiyi Sect, which now belonged to the camp of Jade Sword Sect, to get too close to Gu Yue Family to avoid being suspected of having a biased stance.

Gu Yue Huaidie chuckled at Meng Zhang's response, finding him too naive and not fully understanding the intricacies of the Cultivation World's intrigues. But she quickly restrained her laughter since Meng Zhang was now a Primordial Spirit True Monarch and deserved her respect.

Meng Zhang, not one to hold back, continued to ask, and Gu Yue Huaidie eventually decided to reveal more. She believed that Meng Zhang was extraordinary and carried a significant secret from the first time she met him. Her instincts led her to take care of him, and their pleasant cooperation in the Endless Sea of Sand further solidified their relationship.

Now that Meng Zhang had achieved the Primordial Spirit True Monarch level, Gu Yue Huaidie saw him as someone worth investing in. She explained that some cultivation forces within Jiuqu League, including the leaders, were interested in establishing a connection between the Great Wind City branch of Gu Yue Family and the one in Dali Dynasty. This would serve as a potential route to communicate with the high-ranking members of the Dali Dynasty and secure a retreat if the situation changed.

Upon hearing this, Meng Zhang was surprised and almost couldn't believe what he was hearing, as it was something he had never expected. It turned out that the Jade Sword Sect, the faction that had always been the most resolute about going to war with the Dali Dynasty, wanted to establish contact through Gu Yue Family. If Gu Yue Huaidie wouldn't deceive him at this moment, Meng Zhang had to doubt her intentions.

That was the Jade Sword Sect, the one that had been clamoring for a full-scale war with the Dali Dynasty many years ago. While there were cunning individuals among Sword Cultivators, generally speaking, they were straightforward and reliable in the Cultivation World. Though often referred to as "sword maniacs," they had much stronger credibility compared to other cultivators.

Meng Zhang couldn't help but feel astonished that these bold Sword Cultivators would collude with their enemies. He almost wanted to recite the Three Character Classic out loud in response.

Under the strong demand of Jade Sword Sect, the Great Wind City's Gu Yue Family would attempt to contact the Dali Dynasty's branch. However, the Great Wind City branch of Gu Yue Family would not easily submit to other branches.

Although Gu Yue Huaidie didn't explicitly state what the competition was about between the various branches of Gu Yue Family, she explained that it was of great importance. Only when they were in dire straits, facing the threat of family extermination, would they actively seek compromise and withdraw from the competition. Therefore, until Jiuqu League was completely defeated by the Dali Dynasty, the Great Wind City's Gu Yue Family would remain loyal to Jiuqu League and not betray it.

Meng Zhang couldn't read Gu Yue Huaidie's thoughts with his Mind Reading ability. She not only mastered powerful soul-locking techniques but was also a Diviner. However, based on his personal feelings, he believed that Gu Yue Huaidie was probably not lying. Perhaps she exaggerated some parts of her speech to demonstrate the family's stance and gain Meng Zhang's trust, but overall, she was more trustworthy.

After hearing Gu Yue Huaidie's words, Meng Zhang gave up his original plan. He had intended for Gu Yue Family to replace Lu Family and take complete control of Great Wind City. However, since Gu Yue Family was now involved with so many other cultivation forces, including Jade Sword Sect, in contacting the Dali Dynasty, making them replace Lu Family would draw too much attention.

Gu Yue Family should remain low-key now to avoid attracting unnecessary scrutiny. Nevertheless, since they were already here and had a good conversation, Meng Zhang didn't conceal his intentions and revealed his original plan.

To his surprise, Gu Yue Huaidie responded positively to Meng Zhang's plan. She clearly stated that Gu Yue Family was very interested in reaching a higher level. With the imminent major change in Jiuqu League, Gu Yue Family needed to strengthen its power to adapt. If they could completely control Great Wind City, it would provide Gu Yue Family with additional leverage for the future.

Regarding Meng Zhang's concern about drawing attention and inviting the interference of True Monarch Azure Mist from Azure Origin Sect, Gu Yue Huaidie had a counterargument. Many cultivation forces within Jiuqu League sought to establish a connection with the Dali Dynasty through Gu Yue Family, preparing their retreat routes. In such a situation, most of them would naturally accept Gu Yue Family's actions.

As for True Monarch Azure Mist, Gu Yue Huaidie believed that even if he intended to interfere, Jade Sword Sect would not let him have his way. Even without Jade Sword Sect's involvement, Meng Zhang should be able to handle True Monarch Azure Mist himself. After all, as someone who could deal with the two Primordial Spirit True Monarchs of New Beast King Mountain, Meng Zhang was considered a formidable expert among the Primordial Spirit True Monarchs.

Gu Yue Huaidie's words were quite flattering to Meng Zhang when discussing these matters. It was apparent that she was a discerning individual.

Although Meng Zhang had deliberately concealed his involvement in the deaths of the two Primordial Spirit True Monarchs of New Beast King Mountain and the subsequent takeover by Old Beast King Mountain, Taiyi Sect, as the beneficiary of these events, could easily deduce Meng Zhang's role in the matter. Moreover, Gu Yue Family's mysterious background and access to unknown powers and secret information were all normal in the Cultivation World.

Since Gu Yue Huaidie stated that replacing Lu Family was feasible, Meng Zhang naturally hoped that Gu Yue Family would take action quickly. Meng Zhang was not a forgiving person, and apart from the benefits, considering Lu Family's involvement in the conspiracy against the two Primordial Spirit True Monarchs of New Beast King Mountain, whether intentional or not, Meng Zhang would not let them go.

Meng Zhang's support for Gu Yue Family to replace Lu Family made Gu Yue Huaidie quite happy, and they discussed how to proceed. From Gu Yue Huaidie's words, Meng Zhang could clearly sense that Gu Yue Family had long prepared various plans against Lu Family. It seemed that Gu Yue Family had long been dissatisfied with being the second-best for many years.

Previously, Gu Yue Family and Lu Family had worked harmoniously together, coordinating their efforts to manage Great Wind City efficiently. Who could have imagined that Gu Yue Family had harbored ambitions and wanted to replace Lu Family?

Lu Family was powerful and had the support of True Monarch Azure Mist, making it impossible to challenge them in the past. However, now that Meng Zhang, a Primordial Spirit True Monarch, had directly intervened, Gu Yue Family naturally seized the rare opportunity to make a move.

As long as True Monarch Azure Mist didn't interfere, Meng Zhang wouldn't act directly. Still, he could provide assistance in all aspects to Gu Yue Family.

Meng Zhang only had a general discussion with Gu Yue Huaidie. Specific details of the plan would need further deliberation between Gu Yue Family and the cultivators of Taiyi Sect.

Originally, upon hearing that even Jade Sword Sect wanted to establish contact with the Dali Dynasty through Gu Yue Family, Meng Zhang also had the same idea—hoping that Gu Yue Family could help Taiyi Sect establish connections with the Dali Dynasty. After all, with so many factions harboring ambitions and actively securing their retreat routes, Taiyi Sect gaining one more such ally wasn't a big deal.

However, when the words were about to come out, Meng Zhang instinctively felt something was off. Although he couldn't figure out the problem at the moment, he decided to hold back from speaking. This matter wasn't urgent, and there would be opportunities in the future. It was better to consider it carefully before taking action.

Chapter 725: Launch

Helping the Gu Yue Family replace the Lu Family and control Great Wind City comes with many benefits. Recently, Meng Zhang has devoted a significant portion of his thoughts to this matter. He has delegated the specific details of the work to the high-ranking members of the Taiyi Sect. In the following period, the Gold Core Daoist Masters of the Taiyi Sect have had several secret meetings with the high-ranking members of the Gu Yue Family to formulate various plans.

The Gu Yue Family has also harbored the intention of replacing the Lu Family, but due to various reasons, they knew it would be difficult to achieve. At best, it could result in mutual destruction, so they refrained from taking action. However, they have never ceased to gather information and conduct various investigations regarding the Lu Family.

Unknown to the Lu Family, the Gu Yue Family has long been aware of the family's secrets and the information about their powerful members. They have prepared targeted countermeasures. This time, with the assistance of the Taiyi Sect, the Gu Yue Family aims to overthrow the Lu Family, marking the first comprehensive involvement of the Taiyi Sect in the internal power struggles of a Gold Core force since its establishment.

Although Meng Zhang has assigned the specific tasks to his disciples, he regularly inquires about the progress. After cultivators enter the Primordial Spirit stage, even the spiritual energy provided by a Third Rank Spirit Vein cannot meet their cultivation needs. Apart from refining and absorbing rare Heaven and Earth Spiritual Objects, cultivators in the early stage of the Primordial Spirit can also enter the Nine Heavens to collect Nine Heavens Refined Essence.

Of course, the quality and quantity of Nine Heavens Refined Essence required by cultivators in the early stage of the Primordial Spirit far exceed those of Gold Core stage cultivators. Once their Cultivation Base reaches the mid-stage of the Primordial Spirit, Nine Heavens Refined Essence can no longer meet their cultivation needs. At this point, cultivators need to enter extraterritorial voids to seek various opportunities hidden within.

Although Meng Zhang's combat strength is not weak, he has only recently entered the Primordial Spirit stage. He only needs to enter the Nine Heavens to collect Nine Heavens Refined Essence, which is sufficient for his daily cultivation needs.

After achieving the Primordial Spirit stage, Meng Zhang has only gone to the Nine Heavens twice. Many things that were incredibly difficult for Gold Core stage cultivators are now simply within the reach of Primordial Spirit stage cultivators.

The Nine Heavens, while not a smooth path for cultivators in the Primordial Spirit stage, also has its difficulties and dangers. However, generally speaking, as long as one does not act recklessly, Primordial Spirit cultivators are less likely to encounter troubles in the Nine Heavens.

During these two visits to the Nine Heavens, Meng Zhang's gains were extremely abundant. He fearlessly ventured into many dangerous areas that were previously inaccessible and even dared to fight and kill many formidable cloud beasts he used to avoid. Long ago, Meng Zhang brought back many cloud beast cubs from the Nine Heavens, attempting to cultivate and breed them among the disciples. Unfortunately, due to the peculiar environment of the Nine Heavens, once they left, these cloud beast cubs perished one after another. Even those that managed to survive lost many of their cloud beast characteristics, becoming little different from ordinary demon beasts.

After numerous attempts, the Taiyi Sect gradually gave up on this matter. In fact, many sects in the Cultivation World have entertained the idea of cultivating and breeding cloud beasts, with some renowned for their beast-taming techniques. However, despite their efforts, they ultimately gained nothing from it.

During the last encounter, Meng Zhang killed the True Monarch Qiu Wanli of the New Beast King Mountain and obtained his storage magic tool. Back at the Taiyi Sect, upon inspection, besides the usual items, there were precious Heaven and Earth Spiritual Objects, as well as some records related to the beast-taming technique that Qiu Wanli had researched.

Due to injuries from the past, Elder Hu Jing's Cultivation Base suffered a great loss, causing her combat power to plummet. Since then, she had remained within the sect, rarely going outside. Apart from patiently nurturing junior disciples, she devoted herself to studying the art of beast-taming.

In the past, Meng Zhang acquired some rudimentary beast-taming techniques from the Taiyi Sect's heritage. Hu Jing used them as a foundation for her practice and later encountered fortuitous events that provided her with more profound insights into the technique. Subsequently, the Taiyi Sect launched expeditions to various places, collecting diverse inheritances, including valuable beast-taming techniques.

Hu Jing gathered multiple inheritances and diligently researched them, hoping to create a unique legacy for herself. Especially after suffering severe injuries and having her path destroyed, she invested most of her energy into this pursuit.

Meng Zhang took pity on this junior disciple and looked after her. He not only advised the other disciples to meet her needs and collect materials related to the beast-taming technique but also bestowed any valuable items he obtained upon her.

The beast-taming technique of New Beast King Mountain had its origins in Old Beast King Mountain, though its foundation was weaker. However, after the efforts of the elders within the sect for many years, it had developed its distinctive features.

After receiving the records Meng Zhang gifted her, Hu Jing was overjoyed and quickly immersed herself in studying them, forgetting about everything else.

At present, although Taiyi Sect only had Meng Zhang as a Primordial Spirit True Monarch, the cultivation of Gold Core cultivators had already been put on the right track. They could produce Gold Core cultivators continuously, ensuring that the strength of this tier of experts would not diminish. In this situation, the issues faced by a small number of Gold Core cultivators would not significantly affect the overall situation of the sect.

Originally, Meng Zhang thought he wouldn't need to directly intervene in the action to overthrow the Lu Family. However, to minimize losses and swiftly end the conflict, both the Gu Yue Family and the Taiyi Sect's high-ranking members hoped that Meng Zhang would eliminate the Lu Family's most powerful combatants.

After confirming their whereabouts, Meng Zhang quietly made his move. There was hardly any commotion, but he managed to eliminate the three Gold Core stage cultivators that Lu Family regarded as their hidden trump cards.

After Meng Zhang took action, the Gu Yue Family and the Taiyi Sect, following their well-prepared plans, launched a sudden attack on all the Gold Core cultivators of the Lu Family and their important strongholds.

Suddenly, what was once a peaceful Great Wind City turned into a battleground with wars breaking out all around.

Having completed his mission, Meng Zhang flew to the sky above and quietly overlooked Great Wind City below. He no longer intended to act against the Lu Family cultivators but would instead monitor the development of the situation. If the True Monarch Azure Mist of the Azure Origin Sect

personally intervened, he would intercept and prevent them from influencing the situation in Great Wind City.

The combined strength of the Gu Yue Family and the Taiyi Sect was far superior to that of the Lu Family. With a well-planned surprise attack catching the unprepared Lu Family off guard, they were at a disadvantage.

The most potent cultivator of the Lu Family had already been eliminated by Meng Zhang, and while there were still skilled individuals remaining, they were finding it challenging to resist the enemy's long-prepared attacks.

However, Lu Family had ruled over Great Wind City for many years as a Gold Core family with abundant resources and numerous hidden cards. Even if they missed the initial opportunity, it would not be easy for the enemy to take them down in a short period.

Following the betrayal and attack from the Gu Yue Family, Lu Family activated the contingency plan they had prepared long ago and swiftly launched a counteroffensive.

Chapter 726: Subversion

Families like the Lu Family have long had numerous contingency plans for various unexpected situations. Although the Lu Family absolutely did not expect the Gu Yue Family to launch their attack at this time, they have never truly trusted the Gu Yue Family.

In Great Wind City, the Gu Yue Family is officially subordinate to the Lu Family, but in reality, they are quite independent and fundamentally different from other families. In the past, both families relied on each other for support to form a strong alliance. While they appeared very close and reliable allies on the surface, the Lu Family has never let their guard down when it comes to the Gu Yue Family.

Even though the Gu Yue Family is highly skilled in gathering intelligence and made thorough preparations in advance, many unexpected situations arose after their true attack began, necessitating Gu Yue Family's intervention to handle them one by one.

To assist the Gu Yue Family, the Taiyi Sect mobilized its elite members. More than half of the Gold Core cultivators were deployed. Taiyi Sect cultivators disguised themselves and concealed their identities. While such disguises were hardly convincing and were more like deceiving themselves, it served the purpose Taiyi Sect needed. As long as the Taiyi Sect cultivators didn't openly appear on the battlefield, everything that happened would be seen as internal strife within Great Wind City, limited to the war between the Lu Family and Gu Yue Family, with Taiyi Sect being unrelated.

Formalities and reasons often hold little significance, but sometimes they can unexpectedly play crucial roles.

The Lu Family fought desperately to resist the enemy's ambush and simultaneously sought external reinforcements through various means. The higher-ups of the Lu Family were decisive. Upon discovering the collusion between the Gu Yue Family and Taiyi Sect to create chaos, they knew the situation was dire and immediately resorted to their final trump card. They used a secret method to contact their powerful ally, the True Monarch Azure Mist, seeking his assistance.

Great Wind City is located on the edge of the Jiuqu League and is thousands of miles away from the league's headquarters, Jiuqu City. Without prior preparations, it would take a considerable amount of time for True Monarch Azure Mist to travel from Azure Origin Sect to Great Wind City. Even if he intended to intervene, by the time he arrived, the situation would have drastically changed. However, being a Primordial Spirit True Monarch from a major sect like Azure Origin Sect, he might possess some unknown means.

The Gu Yue Family and the Taiyi Sect's allied cultivators were fiercely attacking various strongholds of the Lu Family. Some of the weaker bases fell without much resistance before the mountain protection grand formation was fully activated. However, the crucial strongholds of the Lu Family promptly activated their mountain protection grand formation. These bases, situated atop Third Rank spirit veins, were holding out with the assistance of Third Rank defensive grand formations.

The Gu Yue Family possessed capable Formation Masters and had prepared Third Rank Formation Breaking Talismans in advance. On the side of Taiyi Sect, they sent expert cultivators in formations, such as Deep Earth Spirit Generals and Wen Qiansun, to aid in the assault. However, in the Cultivation World, the defenders protected by defensive grand formations held many advantages.

For the allied forces of the Gu Yue Family, victory was still a long way off. Meng Zhang stood in midair, observing the battle below for Gu Yue Family and the Taiyi Sect, acting as their ultimate trump card and last resort.

In the distant sky, a column of flying ships approached Great Wind City from the west. Meng Zhang could sense that these ships were not allies of the Gu Yue Family since their actions were swift and covert. These forces were likely either attempting to support the Lu Family or take advantage of the situation and plunder Great Wind City. Meng Zhang took action to prevent them from approaching the city easily, using his Primordial Spirit True Monarch's imposing aura to scare away these forces.

Meng Zhang refrained from killing, both due to his current identity and to adhere to the unspoken rules of the Cultivation World. Primordial Spirit True Monarchs, especially those from righteous sects, refrained from wantonly attacking lower-level cultivators to avoid triggering a brutal massacre. Hence, in Cultivation World, Primordial Spirit True Monarchs who valued their reputation refrained from openly slaughtering low-level cultivators.

However, this didn't mean that Primordial Spirit True Monarchs were weak and easy targets. Cultivators who provoked higher-level cultivators were seeking death in the Cultivation World.

After the Gu Yue Family launched their attack, more flying ships from various factions approached Great Wind City one after another. Meng Zhang recognized several of them, such as the Crane Song Sect, Fire Cloud Sect, and Yellow Lotus Sect East River Branch. He quickly drove them away.

Shortly afterward, a figure flew towards Great Wind City from high in the sky. From a distance, Meng Zhang recognized the figure as the loose cultivator He Luo True Monarch, a notable figure within the Jiuqu League.

He Luo True Monarch, much like True Monarch Profound Wind, was a loose cultivator who later joined the Jiuqu League. He held a position similar to that of the former Jin Li True Monarch within the Jiuqu League. Though He Luo True Monarch's cultivation base was in the early stage of Primordial Spirit, it was still advanced and formidable.

In recent years, Azure Origin Sect dispatched several Primordial Spirit True Monarchs to different regions of the Jiuqu League to strengthen their control. He Luo True Monarch was stationed in the northern part of the league.

He Luo True Monarch rushed to Great Wind City in such a hurry, presumably in response to news of the turmoil in the city and came to handle the situation. True Monarch Azure Mist couldn't make it to Great Wind City in time, so he probably entrusted this matter to He Luo True Monarch.

Since achieving the Primordial Spirit, Meng Zhang has not engaged in any major battles with other Primordial Spirit True Monarchs except for the previous fight with the two Primordial Spirit True Monarchs from New Beast King Mountain. Especially the opportunity for a fair one-on-one confrontation, he was quite interested in it.

Without caring about He Luo True Monarch's attitude, Meng Zhang coldly said, "Your seniority means nothing before me. If you want to pass through here, show me your skills."

He Luo True Monarch knew that words wouldn't resolve the issue, so he stopped talking and simply acted. With a wave of his hand, his flying sword unsheathed, and a grand waterfall of sword energy descended from the sky, aiming fiercely at Meng Zhang.

He Luo True Monarch, as a seasoned Primordial Spirit True Monarch, had brought out a Fourth Rank flying sword. Although Meng Zhang didn't possess any Fourth Rank magic tools, he fearlessly met the attack head-on.

Launching the Great Divine Ability Twin Forms Towards Heaven Sword, black and white sword energies intertwined and clashed with the Fourth Rank flying sword.

He Luo True Monarch suddenly produced a token, and fiery threefold true flames manifested out of thin air, rushing towards Meng Zhang one after another.

Meng Zhang activated the Sun Moon Treasure Pearl above his head, emitting a brilliant light that fixed the threefold true flames in mid-air.

Both Meng Zhang and He Luo True Monarch immediately displayed their Divine Abilities, showing no mercy towards each other. The two Primordial Spirit True Monarchs fought fiercely in the high sky not far from Great Wind City. Since they were both members of the Jiuqu League, they restrained the power of their attacks to limit the battle's impact and avoid affecting a wide area.

Meng Zhang's interference blocked Lu Family's most significant reinforcements, preventing external support from approaching Great Wind City. Thus, the Lu Family was left to fend for themselves against the joint forces of the Gu Yue Family and Taiyi Sect. Lu Family, with their backs against the wall, couldn't hold out for much longer. Their rule over Great Wind City was on the brink of being overturned.

Outside Great Wind City, Meng Zhang and He Luo True Monarch's battle intensified. He Luo True Monarch was much older than Meng Zhang, having achieved Primordial Spirit True Monarch status long before Meng Zhang even began struggling for survival. He Luo True Monarch's cultivation base was astute, and he had accumulated considerable experience from numerous encounters, which allowed him to easily bring out two Fourth Rank magic tools.

Lacking any Fourth Rank magic tools but relying solely on his Great Divine Ability to confront his opponent, Meng Zhang inevitably began to fall behind.

Though He Luo True Monarch gradually gained the upper hand, he grew increasingly wary of Meng Zhang. Despite only having achieved Primordial Spirit recently, Meng Zhang's understanding of the Heavenly Dao was not inferior to that of He Luo True Monarch.

Meng Zhang's main cultivation path, Yin Yang Grand Dao, ranked among the highest-level innate Grand Daos in the world. In terms of level, it surpassed the Water-Fire Grand Dao by far.

The sky first darkened, then suddenly lit up. "Heaven and Earth Yin-Yang Transformation" was the name of the cultivation method Meng Zhang was currently focused on, and it was also the name of a Dao Technique that he derived from it.

A Dao Technique allowed one to mobilize the power of the Grand Dao and influence the rules of heaven and earth with a particular spell. Having recently comprehended this Dao Technique, Meng Zhang was now using it for the first time in battle.

The Dao Technique of the same name as his primary cultivation method displayed tremendous power. The Yin-Yang power emerged in the sky, and chaotic streams of black and white energy swept through, forcefully suppressing the water and fire elements.

Under the impact of the Yin Yang Grand Dao's power, the Water-Fire Grand Dao's strength began to falter and retreat.

The contest of Grand Dao powers was straightforward, relying on each side's comprehension of the Grand Dao and their accumulated understanding of the Heavenly Dao. It had little to do with True Essence, magic tools, or other factors.

Chapter 727: Return

During the intense battle between Meng Zhang and He Luo True Monarch, as the power of Grand Dao clashed fiercely, various anomalies appeared in the sky, affecting an area of several hundred miles. The nearest city, Great Wind City, with its large population, experienced the most significant impact.

Both mortals and cultivators in the city sensed that something was amiss. They felt a sudden chill, followed by intense heat, and then a surge of cold, repeating several times. Weaker mortals were left seriously ill after the event, and even cultivators suffered because their True Essence circulation was affected by the stimulation of their meridians.

The sky within several hundred miles fluctuated between brightness and darkness, as if flickering lights were dancing. Black and white Qi surged, sweeping across the entire sky. The heavens and the earth trembled violently, causing many people to feel dizzy and disoriented.

The battle between Meng Zhang and He Luo True Monarch finally came to an end. The power of water and fire Grand Dao was forcefully suppressed by the power of Yin Yang Grand Dao, and He Luo True Monarch suffered a severe blow, trembling violently as he spewed out a mouthful of blood. Without looking back, he turned and flew away.

Meng Zhang stood quietly in midair, with no intention of pursuing the victory. Their cultivation bases were not significantly different, and chasing after He Luo True Monarch would be futile. Although Meng Zhang had narrowly won the exchange, he was far from leaving his opponent with no strength. Moreover, after executing that attack, Meng Zhang himself felt unwell.

Of course, He Luo True Monarch, wounded by the power of Yin Yang Grand Dao, would need some time to drive out the invading force from his body.

After Meng Zhang drove away He Luo True Monarch, no other cultivators attempted to approach Great Wind City. Azure Origin Sect had already stretched its limits in mobilizing He Luo True Monarch. True Monarchs were not easily available, and it wasn't like pulling out a cabbage from the ground; there were not more to be plucked.

Without He Luo True Monarch's interference, the internal conflicts in Great Wind City continued. With no external forces disturbing them, Gu Yue Family and Taiyi Sect joined forces and finally eradicated the Lu Family cultivators within the city. The Lu Family's strongholds inside and outside the city fell one by one, and the cultivators who held their ground were mostly killed on the spot.

After Gu Yue Family and Taiyi Sect took action, other cultivation families in Great Wind City closed their doors and refused to step outside. They didn't dare to intervene in the conflict between the two giants, Gu Yue Family and Lu Family.

Gu Yue Family and Lu Family were the two powerhouses in Great Wind City, and other cultivation families didn't dare to get involved in their disputes. Now that Lu Family was eliminated, and Great Wind City was under Gu Yue Family's control, they began pacifying the various cultivation families and merchants within the city.

The Lu Family cultivators in Great Wind City had colluded with dark path cultivators, intending to demonize the entire city and bring calamity to Jiuqu League. Gu Yue Family stepped in, overcame all obstacles, and completely annihilated the Lu Family, averting the disaster.

Gu Yue Family promised not to make unnecessary trouble. They would only hold accountable those Lu Family cultivators who had conspired with the dark path. Any other cultivators who had a special relationship with Lu Family before could voluntarily confess their wrongdoings to Gu Yue Family, and Gu Yue Family wouldn't pursue them further.

With Great Wind City under control, Gu Yue Family had much work to do in terms of consolidation, but with their capabilities, they were sure to handle it well.

Meng Zhang didn't hurry to leave and continued to stand in midair, patiently waiting. True Monarch Azure Mist wouldn't easily give up after losing this round. Meng Zhang needed to wait for some time to ensure a smooth transition for Great Wind City.

Several days later, a sword light flew from a distance and stopped not far in front of Meng Zhang, revealing the figure of an old man.

"I pay my respects to True Monarch Fei Guo," Meng Zhang took the initiative to salute. Though both were Primordial Spirit True Monarchs, there were distinctions between them, especially in age and seniority.

"You did well in handling this matter. You don't need to stay here any longer. That old man Qing Lan has been convinced by me and won't interfere in Great Wind City's affairs," True Monarch Fei Guo didn't waste time and got straight to the point.

He didn't explain how he convinced True Monarch Azure Mist to let go, but considering his Sword Cultivator style, it was likely through a convincing sword duel.

Since he was no longer needed there, Meng Zhang bid farewell to True Monarch Fei Guo and immediately left the place, flying back to Taiyi Sect.

Taiyi Sect had played a significant role in this matter, especially Meng Zhang, in helping Gu Yue Family take control of Great Wind City. Taiyi Sect's contribution was immense, and Gu Yue Family wouldn't overlook their efforts.

With Gu Yue Family's cunning and tactful approach, they wouldn't shortchange Taiyi Sect in terms of the rewards and benefits they deserved.

This time, Meng Zhang's assistance in helping Gu Yue Family gain control of Great Wind City brought huge benefits. It also showcased his strength, making Jade Sword Sect pay more attention to him and consider him a crucial player in countering Azure Origin Sect.

By winning the situation in Great Wind City, Meng Zhang not only avenged the previous ambush by Lu Family and New Beast King Mountain but also demonstrated his capabilities, making Azure Origin Sect wary of him.

At the level of Primordial Spirit True Monarchs, staying low-key was no longer feasible. If one kept retreating and appearing weak, others would keep pressing and encroaching.

After Gu Yue Family took control of Great Wind City, the situation quickly stabilized, and trade and commerce gradually resumed. However, the relationship between Jade Sword Sect and Azure Origin Sect deteriorated further.

Although they hadn't yet completely torn their faces and erupted into open conflict, their respective affiliated forces began to clash, and the struggle between the two camps became more apparent.

In the aftermath, several cultivation forces in Jiuqu League changed hands or were expelled from their original sects. These changes were partly a result of Azure Origin Sect's retaliation for what happened in Great Wind City and partly due to Jade Sword Sect's proactive actions.

Fortunately, apart from the major battle between Meng Zhang and He Luo True Monarch, subsequent conflicts between the two camps mostly remained at the level of Gold Core Daoist Masters and below, with no Primordial Spirit True Monarch-level showdowns.

These conflicts occurred at locations far from Great Wind City and Demon Wind Gobi, so neither Meng Zhang nor Taiyi Sect got involved.

After helping Gu Yue Family establish control over Great Wind City, Meng Zhang returned to Taiyi Sect.

He primarily focused his energy on his own cultivation. Seeing the imminent transformation of Jiuqu League, he understood that every increment in strength would provide him with an additional advantage in the future. Having recently entered the Primordial Spirit stage, Meng Zhang had many tasks to catch up on promptly.

In the midst of cultivation, Meng Zhang calmed his mind and rethought the matters involving Gu Yue Family and Dali Dynasty. He had a faint suspicion that Jade Sword Sect had not kept secrets from him despite knowing that Gu Yue Family could communicate with Dali Dynasty. They had willingly provided Gu Yue Family's information to Taiyi Sect and allowed him to contact Gu Yue Family's cultivators.

Gu Yue Huaidie had informed him that Jade Sword Sect's intentions to contact Dali Dynasty were most likely genuine. However, their communication with Dali Dynasty might not be driven by a surrendering mindset. Based on Jade Sword Sect's style, Meng Zhang came up with a bold conjecture.

He believed that Jade Sword Sect might be fishing, using Gu Yue Family to lure in those forces with wavering determination, seeking to collaborate with Dali Dynasty. When the day of war with Dali Dynasty arrived, those forces might become Jade Sword Sect's targets to display their power and prestige.

Thinking about this, Meng Zhang felt a chilling sensation. Although he lacked evidence to prove his speculation, for safety's sake, he would have to act with even greater caution in the future. Even if he desired to contact Dali Dynasty, strict confidentiality was a must, ensuring no leaks of information.

After Meng Zhang returned to the sect and cultivated for some time, Jiuqu League experienced a few local conflicts but eventually returned to peace. While Jade Sword Sect and Azure Origin Sect continued their antagonistic stance, the tense atmosphere had eased.

Just when everyone thought Jiuqu League would gradually regain tranquility, a major event occurred in Yellow Lotus Sect. The long-missing Saintess of Yellow Lotus Sect suddenly returned. When she left, she was a Gold Core Daoist Master, but now she had become a Primordial Spirit True Monarch, making her one of the top cultivators in Jiuqu League.

True Monarch Mountain Peak, which had been pressing Yellow Lotus Sect step by step, was about to encompass the entire sect. However, the return of the Yellow Lotus Sect Saintess not only disrupted their plans but also presented new challenges.

As a Primordial Spirit True Monarch, the Yellow Lotus Sect Saintess had the qualifications to confront True Monarch Mountain Peak head-on. She was younger than True Monarch Mountain Peak and had gained the trust of the disciples in her sect. Growing up in Yellow Lotus Sect Main Altar, she represented the authentic lineage of Yellow Lotus Sect.

Consequently, many members of Yellow Lotus Sect, who had previously leaned towards True Monarch Mountain Peak, now changed their stance. Some directly returned to the Yellow Lotus Sect Saintess' side, while others observed from the sidelines, waiting to see the outcome of the conflict between True Monarch Mountain Peak and the Saintess.

Yellow Lotus Sect, which was almost unified before, was now divided again, and it seemed that reuniting would be a distant prospect.

For both Azure Origin Sect and Jade Sword Sect, this situation was favorable. Previously, True Monarch Mountain Peak had almost controlled the entire Yellow Lotus Sect's influence. When approached by Azure Origin Sect and Jade Sword Sect to join their camp, True Monarch Mountain Peak didn't give a clear answer, instead opting to be opportunistic and play both sides.

A divided Yellow Lotus Sect was evidently more in line with their interests. They not only watched the sect's division but also added fuel to the fire, creating conflicts.

This news alarmed Meng Zhang, who was deeply focused on cultivation. Unexpectedly, Xu Mengying, that woman, had also become a Primordial Spirit, not allowing him to bask solely in his glory. Back when Meng Zhang and Xu Mengying joined forces to kill Yellow Lotus Sect's Cult Master Xu Huanshan, Meng Zhang gained heavenly merits, entering an enlightened state and comprehending the Grand Dao of Heaven and Earth. As the instigator, Xu Mengying gained even greater benefits than Meng Zhang did. It was not entirely surprising that she achieved the Primordial Spirit stage.

Although the two had been temporary allies and shared a common enemy in True Monarch Mountain Peak, time had passed, and the world had changed. Whether they could continue being friends remained uncertain.

While True Monarch Mountain Peak, their mutual enemy, still existed, Meng Zhang had already led Taiyi Sect to join Jade Sword Sect's camp.

Yellow Lotus Sect hadn't yet chosen a side, but as the situation in Jiuqu League developed, Yellow Lotus Sect would eventually have to align itself with one camp.

What choice Xu Mengying would make was unknown to Meng Zhang. Strong cultivators who reached the level of Primordial Spirit True Monarchs wouldn't easily be swayed by others' words. With Meng Zhang's abilities and position, he would find it difficult to influence Xu Mengying's decision.

However, the upheaval in Yellow Lotus Sect provided Meng Zhang with an opportunity to resolve an old matter and make up for past regrets. Following the Yellow Lotus Sect Saintess Xu Mengying's bold confrontation with True Monarch Mountain Peak, and after Yellow Lotus Sect fell into disarray once again, Meng Zhang personally led a large group of Taiyi Sect disciples and headed into the Endless Sea of Sand, directly toward Feihong Mountain.

For many years, most of the Endless Sea of Sand had been occupied by Yellow Lotus Sect's East River Branch. Despite Taiyi Sect's growing strength, they had been unable to reclaim this territory due to True Monarch Mountain Peak's protection.

When Feihong Mountain fell, and Flying Swan Sect was destroyed, Meng Zhang sheltered some remnants of Flying Swan Sect, helping them rebuild their sect and become a member of the Hanhai Dao Alliance. The newly rebuilt Flying Swan Sect was only a minor Foundation Building sect with limited power.

However, now was the time for this weak sect to play a vital role. The Foundation Building stage Sect Master of Flying Swan Sect, leading a group of Qi Refining stage disciples, claimed to reclaim their mountain gate and subdue their ancestral grounds. They marched fiercely into the Endless Sea of Sand.

As the leader of the Hanhai Dao Alliance, Meng Zhang, of course, couldn't watch idly while members of the alliance were bullied. The various cultivation forces in the Hanhai Dao Alliance were closely united, almost like a big family. As the patriarch, Meng Zhang had to step forward for the family's members.

Not to mention Taiyi Sect's cultivators, even Meng Zhang as a Primordial Spirit True Monarch, had no resistance from Yellow Lotus Sect's East River Branch. True Monarch Mountain Peak, who stood behind East River Branch, was currently preoccupied with the situation caused by Xu Mengying and had no time to spare.

With True Monarch Mountain Peak absent, who could stop Meng Zhang?

Fortunately, Meng Zhang was reasonable in his actions and didn't kill East River Branch's cultivators. Taiyi Sect's cultivators could restrain their hatred and murderous intentions, focusing mainly on deterrence and attempting to avoid direct conflict.

East River Branch lacked prestigious and powerful figures after the disappearance of the former Grand Elder, Daoist Master Smiling Lotus. Faced with an unbeatable enemy, no one within East River Branch could step forward to lead resistance, nor could anyone make a decisive decision to lead everyone to retreat.

Chapter 728: Reclamation

Yellow Lotus Sect East River Branch was in complete chaos from top to bottom, but Taiyi Sect was not idle.

Several fleets of flying boats arrived from Demon Wind Gobi, each carrying elite teams of Taiyi Sect cultivators.

Meng Zhang, with a stern expression, personally flew to the sky above Feihong Mountain and displayed a powerful Great Divine Ability, allowing the cultivators of East River Branch below to witness its might.

Meng Zhang didn't target Feihong Mountain but instead cast his spells into the empty sky. With a show of force, he demonstrated his immense power.

The immense power of the Divine Ability completely shocked the cultivators below, even the staunchest resistance faltered in the face of the True Monarch's might.

Although East River Branch had occupied Endless Sea of Sand for many years and reaped some benefits, most of the gains went to Mountain Branch due to True Monarch Mountain Peak's exploitation. East River Branch's benefits were limited.

In essence, Endless Sea of Sand was like a money tree for True Monarch Mountain Peak, and East River Branch was just managing it on their behalf.

Meng Zhang didn't utter a single harsh word; he simply stood calmly in the high sky, putting immense pressure on the cultivators below.

East River Branch had a way out; they still held a large territory outside of Endless Sea of Sand. In this situation, they finally chose to retreat.

The high-level members of East River Branch quickly issued orders for their disciples to abandon everything and evacuate Endless Sea of Sand at the fastest speed.

Immediately, Endless Sea of Sand descended into chaos as East River Branch cultivators were busy with the evacuation.

Taiyi Sect's objective was not to engage in a full-blown battle with East River Branch but to reclaim Endless Sea of Sand.

Eliminating East River Branch completely had no benefits, and it would only invite severe retaliation from True Monarch Mountain Peak.

Given the urgency of their retreat and being under the watchful eyes of Taiyi Sect cultivators, the East River Branch cultivators didn't have the opportunity to cause significant damage to the spirit fields or mineral veins. They couldn't even carry away many valuable resources, which ended up being taken over cheaply by the Taiyi Sect cultivators.

As long as the East River Branch cultivators withdrew voluntarily without causing destruction, Taiyi Sect cultivators would not make things difficult for them. After a courteous farewell, Taiyi Sect smoothly took control of a large portion of Endless Sea of Sand.

Endless Sea of Sand was vast, and many of its territories had low value, making it unattractive to East River Branch. Lacking manpower, East River Branch had brought in many small families, sects, and even loose cultivator groups to manage these unclaimed territories, earning benefits for the East River Branch.

Now, with Endless Sea of Sand changing hands, these small forces had to realign themselves.

Once Taiyi Sect had complete control of Endless Sea of Sand, they would scrutinize these small forces. Those deeply involved with East River Branch would be politely asked to leave, while those willing to accept Taiyi Sect's rule and without rebellious intentions could stay and continue as Taiyi Sect's vassals.

If these forces met the requirements, they might even join the Hanhai Alliance.

Most of the smaller forces in the Cultivation World were like grass on the wall. Choosing between Primordial Spirit sects and Gold Core sects required little consideration.

Taiyi Sect, with its ever-growing strength, was on the rise, and any small force that became their vassal would receive incredible opportunities.

Endless Sea of Sand was so vast that Taiyi Sect couldn't directly exploit all of it. Having these small forces under their command would be beneficial, especially if a large-scale war broke out, where these forces' cultivators could serve as cannon fodder.

Reclaiming the territory of Endless Sea of Sand was only the first step; there was much heavy work ahead in pacifying and managing these small forces and developing the directly-controlled territories.

These tasks could be handed over to Taiyi Sect's disciples, as Meng Zhang had no interest in focusing on such details.

To the east of Endless Sea of Sand, there was another territory not belonging to Taiyi Sect but to Fire Cloud Sect. Behind Fire Cloud Sect stood a mid-level Primordial Spirit cultivator named True Monarch Profound Wind. Meng Zhang had no intention of offending such a formidable individual.

Especially now when True Monarch Profound Wind's allegiance was uncertain, both Azure Origin Sect and Jade Sword Sect were desperately trying to win him over.

Fire Cloud Sect was insignificant, but True Monarch Profound Wind was not to be underestimated.

The territory occupied by Fire Cloud Sect didn't affect the overall situation much, so Meng Zhang tolerated its existence.

Taiyi Sect's current territory was unprecedentedly vast. Nearly two-thirds of Endless Sea of Sand was now under their control, making them possibly one of the most extensive sects within the Jiuqu League.

To the north, the desolate Deadly Sea of Sand theoretically also belonged to Taiyi Sect. After the fall of True Monarch Tian Zhu and the Fifth Rank Earth Spirit, Deadly Sea of Sand lost its powerful guardians and happened to be adjacent to Taiyi Sect's territory, falling naturally into their hands.

Deadly Sea of Sand was vast and almost entirely uninhabited due to being a forbidden area for living beings. The Demonic Cultivation and Ghost Cultivation groups that were once hidden in Deadly Sea of Sand had been thoroughly cleared out.

Previously, the sand monsters that once dominated Deadly Sea of Sand and were rampant have been mostly eliminated. There might still be small groups of sand monsters roaming in some remote corners, but they pose little threat and are not significant. Without the Fifth Rank Earth Spirit producing Ling Marrow, and with the sand monster nests already cleared out long ago, the value of Deadly Sea of Sand has become very limited. Taiyi Sect hasn't fully developed and utilized Demon Wind Gobi, let alone a desolate place like Deadly Sea of Sand.

Apart from Taiyi Sect disciples frequently going to Deadly Sea of Sand for training, few external cultivators venture here. Some members of Taiyi Sect's leadership proposed setting up an arrangement in Deadly Sea of Sand to turn it into a training ground for Taiyi Sect disciples. After several transformations, the danger of Deadly Sea of Sand has greatly diminished, and even Refining Qi stage cultivators can survive there.

In the midst of Taiyi Sect's rapid growth, many cultivators are busy with various tasks. Nevertheless, preparations for utilizing Deadly Sea of Sand have begun gradually. Taiyi Sect's higher-ups have a long-term vision and are willing to invest resources in nurturing their younger disciples. Deadly Sea of Sand can provide significant training opportunities for lower-level disciples if used appropriately.

After reclaiming Endless Sea of Sand, Meng Zhang initially worried that True Monarch Mountain Peak would respond aggressively. However, after staying in Endless Sea of Sand for some time, he noticed that True Monarch Mountain Peak didn't react. It seemed they were silently swallowing this loss. Meng Zhang understood that the situation at Yellow Lotus Sect might not be favorable for True Monarch Mountain Peak at the moment, with internal troubles and external threats. Compared to that, the internal strife at Yellow Lotus Sect was relatively insignificant.

Given the complex situation, Meng Zhang didn't have the mind to settle old scores with True Monarch Mountain Peak. He voluntarily returned to Taiyi Sect's mountain gate and resumed his cultivation.

Since reaching the Primordial Spirit True Monarch stage, Taiyi Sect seemed to be thriving, continually cultivating Foundation Building stage cultivators within its ranks. Moreover, every now and then, a cultivator would break through into the Gold Core stage. Although the success rate of breaking through to the Gold Core stage was not high, the gradual accumulation had already restored Taiyi Sect's Gold Core Daoist Masters to their former glory, and their numbers were slowly but steadily increasing.

Upon reaching the Primordial Spirit stage, Meng Zhang's cultivation speed had slowed down. He could no longer make daily breakthroughs like before, where it felt like there were no bottlenecks.

At the Primordial Spirit stage, besides absorbing Nine Heavens Refined Essence to replenish his essence, energy, and spirit, he had to spend a great deal of effort comprehending the Grand Dao of heaven and earth to master its power.

The strength of a Primordial Spirit True Monarch was most crucially and directly reflected in their control of the Grand Dao's power. The richness of True Essence and the strength of the Primordial Spirit were secondary.

Therefore, the Primordial Spirit stage was unique, and there would occasionally be instances of challenging higher-level opponents. A cultivator at the early stage of the Primordial Spirit could contend with someone at the mid-stage with more powerful Grand Dao's power.

This was why Meng Zhang, not long after becoming a Primordial Spirit True Monarch, could openly defeat an experienced Primordial Spirit True Monarch. His extraordinary talent allowed him to have a deep understanding of the Grand Dao of heaven and earth while achieving the Primordial Spirit stage.

With the scriptures left by Taiyi Sect's seniors, Meng Zhang was well aware of the key areas to focus on during the Primordial Spirit stage of cultivation. For a cultivator, magic tools were crucial. Despite reaching the Primordial Spirit stage, Meng Zhang didn't even possess a Fourth Rank magic tool, and he wasn't in a hurry to obtain one. Ordinary Fourth Rank magic tools wouldn't benefit him much. He needed a magic tool that perfectly complemented his main cultivation technique, one that could amplify his Grand Dao's power - that would be of great use to him.

Fourth Rank magic tools were already scarce in the Cultivation World, and a Primordial Spirit True Monarch having 1-2 Fourth Rank magic tools would be considered good. To find one that met Meng Zhang's criteria would be even rarer.

Meng Zhang didn't pursue other Fourth Rank magic tools but instead spent a lot of effort nurturing and tempering his natal magic tool, the Yin Yang Spirit Gourd. This natal magic tool was highly compatible with his main cultivation technique, and if it could advance to the Fourth Rank, it would undoubtedly play a tremendous role.

The disputes at Yellow Lotus Sect continued. Neither True Monarch Mountain Peak nor the Saintess Xu Mengying could overpower the other, and they were stuck in a prolonged confrontation. This situation was not favorable for Yellow Lotus Sect and caused significant harm to the entire sect. However, True Monarch Mountain Peak and Xu Mengying were powerless to change the situation and could only continue to fight each other. In this circumstance, True Monarch Mountain Peak viewed Xu Mengying as their number one enemy, focusing all their energy on her.

Even losing such a large territory as Endless Sea of Sand to East River Branch couldn't distract them from this rivalry.

Chapter 729: Friendship

After reclaiming the vast territory of the Endless Sea of Sand, the Taiyi Sect's prestige soared to new heights. As for the actual benefits they gained, they were countless. Let alone anything else, just the Flying Hong Mountain alone, possessing a Third Rank spirit vein, had become a fully matured territory after years of development and construction. It could serve as a solid foundation for the sect without any problem, and it was not inferior to Taiyi Sect's current mountain gate, the Hundred Grass Slope.

With the possession of the Third Rank spirit vein, Taiyi Sect could already support dozens of Gold Core Daoist Masters. As the territory expanded, the need for manpower also surged. The number of Taiyi Sect disciples kept growing rapidly, but it couldn't keep up with the pace of the sect's expansion, leading to a shortage of manpower.

However, this was a happy problem. Compared to those sects with small territories and insufficient resources, Taiyi Sect's members definitely wouldn't complain about having too large a territory.

The more resources the sect harvested, the more disciples it could support, and the better treatment the disciples received. Over the years, Taiyi Sect had seen a continuous emergence of talented young geniuses. Besides their natural aptitude, it was also due to the abundance of resources invested in their cultivation. Even slightly less talented disciples could make significant progress in their Cultivation Base as long as they had enough resources.

Currently, Taiyi Sect's disciple count wasn't excessively large, and the resources obtained from various channels could basically ensure good treatment for all disciples. Whenever Taiyi Sect recruited new disciples, not only were the local youths enthusiastic to join, but many loose cultivators from other regions, young people who had recently awakened their spiritual roots, also scrambled to join. Their enthusiasm stemmed not only from Taiyi Sect's renowned reputation but also because of the various benefits enjoyed by its disciples.

Taiyi Sect had repeatedly raised the entry threshold for direct disciples, yet they still managed to recruit a large number of disciples. It was evident that becoming a Taiyi Sect disciple was a very tempting prospect.

After reclaiming the Endless Sea of Sand, Meng Zhang became low-key once again. Since True Monarch Mountain Peak couldn't spare any attention, he had taken advantage of the situation. Now it was better to leave things as they were and avoid further provoking that guy, preventing him from turning around and causing trouble for Taiyi Sect.

Currently, the intense battle between True Monarch Mountain Peak and Xu Mengying, the Saintess of the Yellow Lotus Sect, was a sight many people wanted to see. If unnecessary, it was best not to disturb them, allowing them to fight until both sides were heavily injured.

Meng Zhang's peaceful days of cultivation at the Taiyi Sect's mountain gate, Hundred Grass Slope, didn't last long before they were interrupted by a visitor. Luo Ye Daoist Master, after her last visit to Meng Zhang, actively followed his advice and persuaded the seniors in her faction to initiate contact with the Dali Dynasty.

In fact, there were sensible people among the upper echelons of her faction, with strategic vision surpassing Meng Zhang. The decision to establish contact with the Dali Dynasty had been on their minds for a while.

Luo Ye Daoist Master's persuasion was only icing on the cake and helped to push things forward. Leveraging the connections and influence of the Dark Alliance, it didn't take much effort for them to make contact with the high-level members of the Dali Dynasty, and they had made significant progress in this regard.

Luo Ye Daoist Master's visit to Meng Zhang this time was not just to inform him but also for other purposes. Her faction had shown a clear trend of aligning with the Dali Dynasty, and this sentiment prevailed among the Dark Alliance factions in the Jiuqu League.

The majority of cultivators in the Jiuqu League's Dark Alliance faction had reached a consensus and voluntarily moved closer to the Dali Dynasty. While a few cultivators left in anger, most of them saw the potential benefits and advantages of joining the Dali Dynasty.

The Dali Dynasty's envoy had recently made a secret visit to the Dark Alliance's faction, engaging in negotiations and bargaining with the faction's high-level cultivators. While disagreements existed, they managed to reach agreements in many aspects. The trend of the Dark Alliance's faction aligning with the Dali Dynasty was already irreversible.

The Dark Alliance faction has already decided to align with the Dali Dynasty, and currently, the two sides are only temporarily unable to reach an agreement on some details. Luo Ye Daoist Master believes that they will eventually reach a consensus and compromise; it's just a matter of time.

The negotiations between the Dark Alliance faction and the Dali Dynasty are undoubtedly the highest level of secrecy within the Dark Alliance faction. Even with Luo Ye Daoist Master's

position, she cannot be privy to all the details. However, she has a relatively clear understanding of the general progress of the negotiations.

Luo Ye Daoist Master made this special trip to bring the latest news to Meng Zhang. While her actions might be seen as a betrayal of her organization based on their personal friendship, this time, she represents her faction and has a request for Meng Zhang.

Luo Ye Daoist Master told Meng Zhang about the process of contacting the Dali Dynasty and then made her request. Her request was not simple; she asked Meng Zhang to assist in killing a Primordial Spirit True Monarch. Before Meng Zhang agreed, she couldn't disclose specific details.

If Meng Zhang is willing to help, he will gain the friendship of Luo Ye Daoist Master's faction. Although Meng Zhang and Luo Ye Daoist Master have been good friends for many years, this is just a personal relationship. If their respective organizations were to clash, their relationship might become complicated.

Over the years, they have helped each other multiple times. Luo Ye Daoist Master has already done significant favors for Meng Zhang using her personal influence. If Meng Zhang agrees to help Luo Ye Daoist Master this time, he will receive assistance from her faction in the future.

Though Luo Ye Daoist Master has never revealed the specific power of her faction to Meng Zhang, the fact that they have a prominent position within the mighty Dark Alliance indicates their strength rivals that of Primordial Spirit major sects.

Currently, Taiyi Sect may seem powerful as Meng Zhang has ascended to a Primordial Spirit True Monarch, but he knows that the enemies they will face in the future will be even stronger. Throughout, Meng Zhang has actively sought allies, especially Primordial Spirit True Monarchs, which he desires most.

Although Luo Ye Daoist Master didn't disclose specific details, she implied a few things to Meng Zhang. This time, her faction has been planning for a long time, and she is quite confident about it. The danger involved should not be significant.

Meng Zhang chose to trust his old friend Luo Ye Daoist Master. Making connections with her faction and taking some risks was completely worth it.

After entering the Primordial Spirit stage, Meng Zhang has participated in two battles with satisfactory results. This boosted his confidence, and he is not afraid of Primordial Spirit-level

battles. Having actual combat experience has accelerated his absorption of the knowledge of his predecessors.

Having agreed to help, Luo Ye Daoist Master finally felt relieved. Caught between her organization and her old friend, she sometimes felt conflicted. Now that Meng Zhang has agreed to assist, accepting friendship from her faction, it is the best outcome.

As for the specifics of the assassination, not even Luo Ye Daoist Master is entirely clear. The high-ranking members of her faction have kept this matter well-protected, and Meng Zhang will only be informed before the operation begins.

Since Meng Zhang has agreed to this task, he will not hesitate anymore but will readily follow their arrangements.

By agreeing to assist, Meng Zhang is now considered a friend of Luo Ye Daoist Master's faction. Since they are friends, they should help each other. Meng Zhang also made a request, hoping that Luo Ye Daoist Master could secretly introduce him to the Dali Dynasty's envoy.

Luo Ye Daoist Master hesitated for a moment and then readily agreed.

The precarious situation in the Jiuqu League is apparent to anyone with eyes. The mighty Dali Dynasty lurks nearby, and internal conflicts plague the Jiuqu League, putting it on the brink of fragmentation.

Even if the Jiuqu League doesn't break apart, uniting all its members to resist the Dali Dynasty is far from guaranteed to yield significant results. In its current state, if the Dali Dynasty launches a full-scale invasion, it's uncertain how long the Jiuqu League can hold out.

Given Taiyi Sect's current allegiance to the Jade Sword Sect, if any secret contact with the Dali Dynasty were to be exposed, it would likely trigger a furious attack from the Jade Sword Sect.

Meng Zhang is cautious in his actions, not wanting to give the Jade Sword Sect any reason to act against him. Through Gu Yue Family, he considered contacting the Dali Dynasty, but he couldn't trust them and abandoned that path.

Apart from that, Taiyi Sect itself has no direct connection with the Dali Dynasty. If Meng Zhang wanted to secretly contact the Dali Dynasty under the watchful eye of the Jade Sword Sect, it would indeed be challenging.

Now, using the channel provided by the Dark Alliance faction within the Jiuqu League to contact the Dali Dynasty's envoy seems both secure and reliable.

By having prior communication with the Dali Dynasty, if the battle situation turns unfavorable, they can smoothly switch sides.

While such actions as colluding with outsiders and betraying one's faction may sound shameful, when compared to the survival and continuation of the sect, they become insignificant. Adaptability and following the prevailing trends are the keys to survival for most sects in the Cultivation World.

As long as the prevailing culture and dynamics of the Cultivation World remain unchanged, even Primordial Spirit-level sects can't avoid such practices.

Chapter 730: Contempt

Originally, Meng Zhang unexpectedly took the initiative to contact the Dali Dynasty so quickly. Chasing after them is not for trade; voluntarily going to their doorstep, they might not necessarily attach great importance to you. However, after learning from Gu Yue Family that many forces in the Jiuqu League have begun secretly contacting the Dali Dynasty, Meng Zhang also became a little anxious. Especially when Gu Yue Huaidie revealed that the Jade Sword Sect was also secretly contacting the Dali Dynasty.

Meng Zhang believed that the Jade Sword Sect might be pretending and trying to lure unstable sects and families out in the open. But what if Meng Zhang's judgment is wrong, and the Jade Sword Sect is genuinely leaving a way out for themselves? It's difficult for Meng Zhang to accurately determine the sect's intentions. It's always good to think things through and make more plans.

Before this, Meng Zhang planned for Taiyi Sect to stay in the Jade Sword Sect's camp, while the Dark Alliance branch would join the Dali Dynasty, enabling both forces to communicate covertly and take care of each other. But facing the mighty Dali Dynasty, it became increasingly challenging for Jiuqu League to resist.

At this point, Meng Zhang decided to change the original plan and contact the Dali Dynasty in advance. Joining them requires careful consideration of timing. Before the Dali Dynasty officially launches an attack on the Jiuqu League, contacting them and expressing the willingness to surrender is a better option compared to waiting until the Dali Dynasty has them cornered.

Luo YeDaoist Master didn't stay long at Taiyi Sect; she left on her own initiative. Besides bringing back the message that Meng Zhang agreed to help, she also offered to help Meng Zhang establish a meeting with the Dali Dynasty's emissary.

Meng Zhang patiently waited for Luo YeDaoist Master's response within the sect's mountain gate. During this wait, Elder Beast Fury from Beast King Mountain sent a trusted disciple to visit Meng Zhang at Taiyi Sect, along with a letter from Elder Beast Fury.

As a member of the Three Sects Alliance, Old Beast King Mountain had dominated the Crossing Severing Mountain Range for many years. Later, it lost its foundation to the Dali Dynasty and suffered significant casualties among its disciples. The grudge between the two was deep, and there was almost no room for reconciliation.

Jade Sword Sect, as the most resolute resistance force within the Jiuqu League, continuously called for an all-out war with the Dali Dynasty. The remaining cultivators who migrated to the Jiuqu League from Old Beast King Mountain immediately aligned themselves with Jade Sword Sect. To Jade Sword Sect, Old Beast King Mountain was the most trustworthy ally in their fight against the Dali Dynasty.

Having fought side by side with Elder Beast Fury last time and secretly helping him clear opponents from New Beast King Mountain, Meng Zhang had built a good rapport with Elder Beast Fury.

Although the merged Beast King Mountain had limited contact with Taiyi Sect due to its association with New Beast King Mountain, Elder Beast Fury was still willing to maintain a good relationship with Meng Zhang and communicate through letters from time to time.

However, Elder Beast Fury's injuries sustained during his last battle against True Monarchs Li Ruiming and Qiu Wanli hadn't completely healed. Despite winning the battle and killing his opponents, he had still suffered damage to his vitality.

With Elder Beast Fury's current state, each time he expended a large amount of vital energy, it affected his lifespan. Considering his limited remaining lifespan and the situation after his death, Elder Beast Fury was now busy cultivating good relationships and making connections with nearby Primordial Spirit True Monarchs.

After his death, Beast King Mountain would undoubtedly receive care from the Jade Sword Sect. However, Beast King Mountain couldn't rely on Jade Sword Sect for every little thing; otherwise, it would make them gradually resentful, and their relationship would weaken.

For Beast King Mountain to continue its heritage, it primarily relied on its own strength. Only in desperate situations would they turn to Jade Sword Sect for help. By deliberately cultivating a good relationship with Meng Zhang, Elder Beast Fury hoped that Meng Zhang would take care of Beast King Mountain in the future.

In the letter sent by Elder Beast Fury this time, Meng Zhang was invited to attend a gathering. In three months, several Primordial Spirit True Monarchs would convene in the northern part of the Jiuqu League. Apart from discussing cultivation and exchanging knowledge, they would also conduct some trades and share resources.

Of course, at the level of Primordial Spirit True Monarchs, most trades were based on bartering goods rather than being interested in spirit stones and the like. Elder Beast Fury knew that Meng Zhang recently achieved Primordial Spirit level and had been eager to integrate into the circle of Primordial Spirit cultivators. Upon hearing about this opportunity, he sent someone to inform Meng Zhang.

Participating in the gathering had no particular threshold; as long as one was a Primordial Spirit True Monarch, they could generally attend. Despite being an outsider, Elder Beast Fury joined the circle of Primordial Spirit cultivators around Jiuqu League earlier than Meng Zhang.

Firstly, Elder Beast Fury had reached the Primordial Spirit level many years ago and was an experienced Primordial Spirit True Monarch. Although he came from Crossing Severing Mountain Range, he had many familiar acquaintances in the Jiuqu League.

Furthermore, after Elder Beast Fury arrived in the Jiuqu League, he actively and enthusiastically integrated into the local circle of Primordial Spirit cultivators. Relying on some old connections, his actions were relatively smooth, and he was readily accepted by the local Primordial Spirit cultivators.

Meng Zhang's desire to integrate into the local circle of Primordial Spirit True Monarchs stemmed from not wanting to be isolated and hoping to have channels and opportunities for exchanging ideas with fellow daoists. After receiving the letter, Meng Zhang asked the visiting disciple from Beast King Mountain to convey his gratitude to Elder Beast Fury and clearly expressed his intention to attend the upcoming gathering.

After seeing off Elder Beast Fury's trusted disciple, Meng Zhang felt eager and expectant about the gathering three months later.

After more than half a month, Luo YeDaoist Master returned to Taiyi Sect's mountain gate. She informed Meng Zhang that the private meeting between Meng Zhang and the Dali Dynasty's emissary had been arranged.

Subsequently, Luo YeDaoist Master led Meng Zhang away from Taiyi Sect's mountain gate and Demon Wind Gobi, arriving at a secret base of the Dark Alliance. In this location, Meng Zhang met the Dali Dynasty's emissary.

The emissary's name was Wen Dong, a genuine Primordial Spirit True Monarch. Wen Dong True Monarch had a refined appearance, elegant manners, and an air of scholarly refinement. At first glance, he seemed no different from an ordinary scholar in the mortal world.

Luo YeDaoist Master didn't dare to treat Wen Dong as an ordinary scholar; she respectfully greeted him before briefly introducing him and Meng Zhang to each other.

After the introduction, Luo YeDaoist Master voluntarily withdrew, leaving the space to the two Primordial Spirit True Monarchs for their discussion.

"You are Meng Zhang, the Sect Master of Taiyi Sect. Indeed, you are a talented individual with outstanding demeanor," Wen Dong politely remarked, getting straight to the point.

Wen Dong had probably heard from Luo YeDaoist Master about Meng Zhang's intention to join the Dali Dynasty. He didn't beat around the bush and directly presented a long list of demands for Taiyi Sect and Meng Zhang.

These requirements were far from simple; they treated Taiyi Sect as mere subordinates of the Dali Dynasty. According to Wen Dong's demands, when the Dali Dynasty launched a full-scale attack on the Jiuqu League, Meng Zhang was to lead Taiyi Sect to cooperate with the Dali Dynasty, sweeping away the surrounding forces that remained loyal to the Jiuqu League in the north.

The location of Taiyi Sect within Jiuqu League would essentially become the rear area for the Jiuqu League. Once that place fell into chaos, the Jiuqu League would be surrounded on all sides, vulnerable to attacks.

Taiyi Sect was expected to obediently follow orders and act according to Wen Dong's commands. Afterward, they would be allowed to join the Dali Dynasty as a sect practicing cultivation under its banner.

Wen Dong's demands were numerous, but he didn't offer any promises in return. While it was fine for Taiyi Sect to affiliate with the Dali Dynasty, Wen Dong didn't mention anything about Taiyi Sect's status or the treatment they would receive within the Dali Dynasty.

In the Cultivation World, there were rumors that the Dali Dynasty was extremely strict with its affiliated cultivation sects, almost to the point of being harsh. How a cultivation sect treated its affiliated subordinates had certain rules. Some were strict, while others were lenient. But the Dali Dynasty's treatment of its affiliated sects was far beyond excessive, as it treated them like servants, without any regard or care.

Meng Zhang had contacted the Dali Dynasty early on to secure a retreat for Taiyi Sect. He wanted to strive to improve Taiyi Sect's position and treatment within the Dali Dynasty.

However, Wen Dong's demands were just one-sided requests without any offer in return. How could Taiyi Sect comply? If they acted, they would probably be completely wiped out by the Jade Sword Sect.

The Dali Dynasty didn't provide any cooperation or support. Did they expect Taiyi Sect to confront the Jade Sword Sect alone? That would mean Taiyi Sect sacrificing itself in vain.

Meng Zhang had initially thought that Wen Dong proposed such harsh demands for the sake of negotiating later. However, when he began to speak, Wen Dong interrupted him, indicating that there was no room for discussion, and Taiyi Sect must unconditionally comply with the demands.

Now Meng Zhang finally understood that Wen Dong didn't consider Taiyi Sect at all; he treated them as cannon fodder. Indeed, all that rush to contact the Dali Dynasty was a bad move.

When he first heard about the negotiations between Wen Dong and the Dark Alliance branch from Luo YeDaoist Master, Meng Zhang thought that Wen Dong was a reasonable and more communicative person. Now, upon meeting him in person, he realized that this man was arrogant and dismissive, showing no regard for Taiyi Sect or himself.

It made sense; the Dark Alliance branch itself was formidable, with the support of the Dark Alliance headquarters behind it. Even if the Dali Dynasty was powerful, they couldn't afford to underestimate such a force.

Since the Dark Alliance branch was so powerful, it was only natural for them to enjoy some preferential treatment. In comparison, Taiyi Sect, despite being a Primordial Spirit sect in name, had far less historical background and heritage. Furthermore, Taiyi Sect had only Meng Zhang as a Primordial Spirit True Monarch. The Dali Dynasty had no shortage of such Primordial Spirit sects and, therefore, didn't pay much attention to Taiyi Sect.

Of course, those who come offering themselves willingly are dispensable. Wen Dong's contempt for Taiyi Sect and Meng Zhang was evident in the numerous excessive demands he presented.