

# The Heavens 1471

## Chapter 1471: Righteous Jin Yunshan!

In almost the exact same instant that Meng Hao was reaching out to grab the mirror shard, rumbling sounds could be heard outside of the desert as Bai Wuchen, Sha Jiudong, the Sect Leader, and Jin Yunshan, four Potentates of Planet Vast Expanse, all attacked together!

Their combined attack caused intense, rumbling pressure. This was not the power of one attack, but numerous attacks combined. A mad tempest sprang up that, although it couldn't be said to be Transcendent, it was very close!

A slashing force like that wasn't capable of shaking the entire sea of ghosts, but it was so sharp that it could slice right through it.

The combined attack of the four powerful experts was like a blade slicing through bamboo, pushing ever closer toward the desert area.

Meng Hao ignored the rumbling sounds, and slowly closed his hand. The mirror shard flew toward him, shrinking down at the same time, until it was the size of a finger.

It looked ordinary, like nothing special at all. However, it was possible to detect that this object far exceeded even the most precious of treasures: it held faint traces of the aura of Transcendence.

As soon as Meng Hao touched it, he could sense what were apparently faint pulses of sealing power on the mirror shard, causing him to smile thoughtfully.

This mirror shard had numerous uses, and whoever acquired it would have to research it deeply to ascertain them. Except for Meng Hao. To him, uses which could be determined by means of research were all incorrect as far as he was concerned!

Only Meng Hao could use the mirror shard for its intended purpose. After all, the shard had once been part of the copper mirror, and that copper mirror... recognized Meng Hao as its owner!

Even though he had lost the mirror, and the parrot had erased its mind, that couldn't change one important fact.... Meng Hao was the master of the copper mirror during this era!

Neither Heaven nor Earth could change that.

Meng Hao looked at the mirror shard, gathered his divine sense, and then performed an incantation gesture with his left hand, pushing down onto the shard.

As he did, he forced a drop of blood out of the tip of his finger. When it merged into the mirror shard, his mind trembled, and he felt as if his consciousness were inside of the shard itself. Everything around him was rumbling. However, it was in this moment that he suddenly realized that there were certain fluctuations which he could sense, somewhere outside of the necropolis.

They were very faint, but they were there. Meng Hao instantly recognized that they were... the fluctuations of the copper mirror, and the aura of the parrot!

He shivered, and began to breathe deeply. He tried to issue a calling, but the mirror shard wasn't powerful enough. A few tests all failed.

“Only one shard isn't enough. If I can collect all the shards, though, I will definitely be able to summon the mirror!” His eyes shone with a bright light. Taking a deep breath, he ceased his attempts to call out to the copper mirror, and instead looked around quietly.

Gradually, his eyes began to shine brightly as he realized that within the starry sky of the Vast Expanse, there were eight locations which all had auras that tugged at him!

One of them was the copper mirror itself, which was the furthest away from him. It was so far that its specific location was difficult to determine. As for the other seven locations, he could sense exactly where they were, even the ones which were far away.

“I found one of the mirror shards in the Mountain and Sea Realm,” he murmured. “At that time, my cultivation base wasn't strong enough to detect the location of the other shards.” Using his divine sense, he was able to stare directly at... the closest of the mirror shards.

It was so close, he was almost right on top of it.

“No wonder she knew about the mirror shard,” he thought. “So that’s how it is. She actually has one of the other shards!” His eyes glittered brightly as he realized that the nearest of the other seven mirror shards was right here on the third land mass, within the sea of ghosts, in the hands of... Bai Wuchen!

Almost in the same moment that he sent his divine sense into the mirror shard, rumbling sounds filled the air as four people appeared, shooting toward him like lightning.

They attacked with full power, blasting through the sea of ghosts and appearing near the desert and Meng Hao. As Meng Hao turned around to face them, they saw the mirror shard in his hand.

In the moment that Bai Wuchen realized what had occurred, her pupils constricted, and she shot toward him, energy surging.

“Please don’t take offense, Ninth paragon...” the Sect Leader said with a sigh. Clasp hands, he began to stride forward.

Sha Jiudong didn’t say anything, and as for Jin Yunshan, those veins were still bulging out, and his face was expressionless.

The Sect Leader was behind Bai Wuchen. Next to him was Sha Jiudong, and furthest in the back was Jin Yunshan. They were like four powerful arrows shooting toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao wasn’t too surprised to see all of them attacking. If he were Bai Wuchen, and was able to sense the mirror shard in the necropolis, then he would have made plenty of preparations, including a way to force the other peak 9-Essences Paragons to help.

“I’m not sure what you want these mirror shards for,” he said coolly, “but I have to thank you for saving me the trouble of finding yours.” His expression was the same as ever as he faced the four incoming Paragons. He waved his hand, causing the sea of ghosts to scream as they merged into a tempest that spread out to meet his four attackers.

Earlier, the group of four had attacked and dispersed only one part of the sea of ghosts which had been blockading the area. Now they were facing an attack from the combined power of all the ghosts, which was a force that was completely different than before.

As the sea of ghosts surged toward them, icy coldness froze up everything in the area. But then, a bright glimmer appeared in Bai Wuchen's eyes. She grabbed out into the air and, all of a sudden, her own mirror shard appeared in her hand!

It was a bit bigger than the shard Meng Hao had acquired. As soon as it appeared, Bai Wuchen spit out some life force Essence aura onto it, then raised it above her head.

The mirror shard flickered brightly, shining with light that could shake Heaven and Earth. Everywhere it passed, the ghosts shivered, then suddenly stopped in place, blank expressions on their faces.

In the blink of an eye, the light had swept about in all directions, causing all of the ghosts to stop moving.

Blood sprayed out of Bai Wuchen's mouth. Obviously, using the mirror shard in that way came at a heavy price. However, a moment later, she was charging toward Meng Hao again.

The Sect Leader began to stride forward silently, as did Sha Jiudong and Jin Yunshan. The entire group of four passed the motionless ghosts to head directly toward Meng Hao.

It almost looked like a scene in which Meng Hao was the guardian of the third land mass, and these four were invaders who had entered the place after untold hardship, and were now attempting to kill Meng Hao to win their prize.

"That's not how to use the copper mirror shard," Meng Hao said, his expression the same as ever. He looked up, clenching his right hand into a fist which he then punched out at Immortal Bai Wuchen.

He immediately resorted to the Devil-Butchering Fist, which contained the embodiment of the God-Slaying, Self-Immolation, and Life-Extermination fists within it. One massive fist strike shook Heaven and Earth, leaving everything trembling.

A huge boom rang out, and Immortal Bai Wuchen trembled. Blood oozed out of the corners of her mouth as she was shoved backward. However, Meng Hao was also forced back, his face flushed. As for Sha Jiudong, he transformed into a windstorm which then hurtled violently toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao snorted coldly, raising both hands up into the air. At the same time, he transformed into an azure roc which shot forward to meet Sha Jiudong. Massive booms echoed out as Sha Jiudong emerged from the sand, staggering backward several paces. Meng Hao also fell back, blood oozing out of his mouth. Then he looked up at the Sect Leader, who had mixed emotions on his face as he stabbed his finger toward Meng Hao's forehead.

That finger attack was like the might of Heaven, causing incredible pressure to weigh down. However, in that same moment, Meng Hao performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, unleashing the Essence of the Eight Hex, space. Instantly, it was as if a separate world had been erected.

The Sect Leader's finger clearly landed onto Meng Hao, and yet Meng Hao didn't move a muscle. In contrast, the Sect Leader flew backward, face flickering as he waved his sleeve. As he dodged the Essence of space, he prepared to make another attack, when all of a sudden Jin Yunshan let out a piercing cry and shot violently toward Meng Hao.

Everyone assumed that he was just about to attack Meng Hao. But then, he suddenly spun in place. As he neared Meng Hao, he reached out toward the Sect Leader and then jerked his hands apart.

It was none other than his Heaven Ripping magic!

A boom rang out, and the Sect Leader frowned. His hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture, causing powerful ripples to spread out in defense. The sudden change in the tide of battle was so startling that the Sect Leader had no choice but to suddenly back up. Sha Jiudong was also prevented from attacking, and Immortal Bai Wuchen was taken completely off guard.

"Jin Yunshan, are you crazy!?!?" she roared in rage. What she had offered Jin Yunshan earlier was so incredible that she had been certain he would be incapable of resisting.

"Nine Essences Redistillation Fruits might be rare in the Vast Expanse," Jiu Yunhan said, "and if you had actually pulled one out and handed it over, I might have been impressed. But you only offered a lead on how to get one. Your information might be completely accurate, and maybe I really could find that Nine Essences Redistillation Fruit eventually, but... I'm not that kind of person! I've always been righteous, and I already made an agreement with Fellow Daoist Meng to cease hostilities. I take my promises seriously, so how could I possibly go back on my word!?" Jin Yunshan stuck his chin out, looking incredibly proud.

The truth was, he was cursing inside.

“You fool, Bai Wuchen,” he thought as he stood there next to Meng Hao. “Unless you’re absolutely certain of being able to kill Meng Hao, then, well fudge, considering his crazy personality, do you think he would ever let me get that Nine Essences Redistillation Fruit? In the cultivation world, promises are the least trustworthy of all things. I don’t know why the other two agreed with you. The Sect Leader has the Vast Expanse School, and Sha Jiudong is stubborn. But I, Jin Yunshan, am not easily fooled!”

Chapter 1472: That's Not How To Use That Mirror Shard!

Immortal Bai Wuchen’s countless machinations hadn’t taken into consideration the indescribable level of fear Jin Yunshan felt because of Meng Hao.

Deep within his heart, he didn’t possess even the shred of a desire to provoke Meng Hao the lunatic.

It was as he had just said. If Bai Wuchen had actually offered him a Nine Essences Redistillation Fruit, he would have helped her immediately. However, a mere piece of information, no matter how certain it was, could not make him do anything to offend Meng Hao.

He had hesitated for a moment, a bit earlier. However, Meng Hao’s complete and utter calm despite the sea of ghosts being taken out of action left Jin Yunshan in a dilemma. Gritting his teeth, he had trusted his intuition regarding Meng Hao, and switched sides.

Nobody, not even Immortal Bai Wuchen, would have been able to guess that Meng Hao had frightened Jin Yunshan so deeply that he would do something like this. Meng Hao couldn’t help but look over at him in surprise.

Jin Yunshan looked askance at Meng Hao and said, “What are you looking at? Fellow Daoist Meng, don’t tell me you think I’m the backstabbing type? We had our agreement to cease hostilities, and my word is my bond. Nor will I flip out and lose my temper. When I say I’ll do something, then I’ll do it.”

He seemed quite proud, and he couldn’t conceal the bit of derision that had seeped into his tone.

Immortal Bai Wuchen’s face darkened, and Sha Jiudong sighed. The Sect Leader smiled wryly as he looked at Jin Yunshan.

Jin Yunshan cleared his throat as he continued to look over at Meng Hao.

“Fellow Daoist Meng, if you need direct assistance from me, we can discuss the matter. For the time being, I won’t get in the way of the other Fellow Daoists.” Jin Yunshan laughed heartily, then flew off to the side, acting as though he wouldn’t get involved no matter what happened.

He had chosen to switch sides, but there were different ways to switch sides. As long as he didn’t help Meng Hao fight, then Bai Wuchen and the Sect Leader, and even Sha Jiudong, wouldn’t be able to say anything.

Because of the current situation, he was now vastly more important to Meng Hao than before, and might even be able to determine whether Meng Hao survived the catastrophe which had struck him. Of course, Meng Hao would have to pay a price for that. On the other hand, if Bai Wuchen wanted to avoid a complete failure in her plan, she would also need to pay a price.

According to Jin Yunshan’s calculations, things might even develop in such a way that he wouldn’t help either side at all, but would still end up profiting from both sides. The best part of it all was that he would avoid doing anything whatsoever that Meng Hao might be offended by.

Having reached these conclusions, Jin Yunshan smiled proudly.

Immortal Bai Wuchen snorted coldly, ignoring Jin Yunshan and turning to the Sect Leader and Sha Jiudong.

“Fellow Daoists, as for the promises I made, I can swear a Dao oath that they are true!” As soon as the words left her mouth, the Sect Leader nodded, and Sha Jiudong’s eyes glittered with red light.

The three of them then once again went on the offensive. They shot toward Meng Hao, Bai Wuchen in the lead, with the other two coming from the opposite sides, completely locking him down.

Meng Hao’s expression was calm as he looked at his three attackers. Even as they bore down on him, he pushed his hand out, and numerous mountains began to descend. Even as the mountains blocked his three opponents, Meng Hao’s hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture. The Eighth Hex appeared. Then the Seventh, and the Sixth. They flew out in rapid succession. As Bai Wuchen and the other two dealt with the mountains, Meng Hao unleashed all of the Hexes down to the First.

“Eight Hexes, combine!” he said, eyes flashing. He performed an incantation gesture, and then waved both hands out in front of him. Instantly, the eight Hexing magics combined, transforming into numerous threads which became a huge net. That net then shot toward the group of three.

The Sect Leader frowned, performing a double-handed incantation gesture that caused the sky to grow dark. At the same time, a shocking mountain peak appeared, descending from the Heavens to hover above the Sect Leader's head.

“Cauldron Mountain Conjury!” he said in his ancient voice. Waving his hands, he caused the mountain to begin to grow rapidly, until it seemed to supercede Heaven and Earth. At the same time, it shot directly toward Meng Hao.

Meanwhile, Sha Jiudong began to spin in place, transforming into a raging sandstorm, inside of which could be seen a two-horned head. The head's eyes were crimson, and it let out a piercing shriek as it shot toward Meng Hao.

Immortal Bai Wuchen's eyes flickered. Hands flashing with an incantation gesture, her Essence power erupted out, causing all color in the world to be masked as fog billowed out.

Boundless, endless fog turned the entire world into a place of fog that sought to bore into every pore in Meng Hao's body.

Three peak 9-Essences cultivators were all attacking simultaneously, a majestic sight that caused Heaven and Earth to shake violently. Meng Hao was powerful, but not even he was a match for three peak 9-Essences experts. Blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth as he staggered backward. Killing intent gleamed in Immortal Bai Wuchen's eyes as she suddenly reached out and performed an incantation gesture, causing a mirror shard to appear.

The shard flickered dazzlingly, and a piercing beam of light suddenly shot out from it, stabbing through anything and everything as it headed toward Meng Hao.

Rumbling echoed out, and simultaneously, Meng Hao teleported, retreating a significant distance, where he stared at them coldly. At the same time, Jin Yunshan powered up his cultivation base, as if to remind Meng Hao of his presence. As long as both sides were relatively evenly matched, it was to his advantage to remain just as he was.

Meng Hao looked at him with an enigmatic smile, then turned away. From the beginning of the fight down to this moment, he hadn't shown the slightest sign of being ruffled, as if the battle was something he didn't even care about.



“I have to say that this is Meng Hao’s first time fighting three peak 9-Essences cultivators at one time,” he said coolly, referring to himself by name for the first time. “What a precious opportunity.” He shook his head. “But now, it’s time to end this farce.”

He looked over at the Sect Leader, no killing intent in his gaze whatsoever; he could tell that the man was holding back. As for Sha Jiudong, however, he seemed to be attacking with as much madness at Immortal Bai Wuchen, and yet there were clues within his magical techniques regarding his true attitude.

Not even he wanted to push things to the extreme in this situation.

Immortal Bai Wuchen laughed coldly. “How arrogant! Let me tell you, if you don’t hand over that mirror shard, you will die beyond the shadow of a doubt!”

Her right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and the mirror shard glittered again.

“That’s not how to use that mirror shard,” Meng Hao said coolly. It was his second time saying such a thing. The first time, Immortal Bai Wuchen hadn’t paid attention, but to hear him say it a second time left her heart pounding.

She wasn’t the only one. Both the Sect Leader and Sha Jiudong were starting to wonder why Meng Hao was so calm when facing all three of them in battle.

Even Jin Yunshan’s heart was starting to pound.

He waved his sleeve, and his own mirror shard appeared there in his hand. It floated up, radiating scintillating light, as if it were the most precious treasure in the entire world. “Let me show you the correct way to use a shard from the copper mirror.”

Chapter 1473: Because It’s Mine!

Meng Hao looked at his own mirror shard, his gaze somewhat tender as he recalled the copper mirror itself. He sent some divine will into the shard, and then, utilizing the same method he had used to control the copper mirror, caused a bright light to shine out of it that vastly exceeded the light from before.

It was like a tiny sun there in his hand, and it completely eclipsed the light from the mirror shard held by Immortal Bai Wuchen, becoming the most radiant thing in the entire world.

All other light became darkness in comparison, colorless and black. Everyone who could see the mirror shard was completely shocked by what was happening.

Bai Wuchen's eyes widened. After working with her mirror shard for so many years, she had come to understand some of its properties, and was profoundly aware that the brighter it shone, the more power and pressure it would unleash.

Her heart began to pound, although on the outside, she attempted to maintain a calm front. However, before she could do so for very long, she saw that, unexpectedly, the mirror shard that Meng Hao held in his hand... was beginning to melt!

"What...?" Immortal Bai Wuchen's mind began to spin. What was happening exceeded even her powers of imagination. She could never have guessed that the mirror shard would actually melt. She continued to watch in amazement as the melted mirror shard fused into Meng Hao's right hand, spreading out to cover it, forming... a gauntlet!

It was pitch black, and appeared to part of a set of armor. There was something threatening about it, and it virtually burst with an aura of manic violence.

It was an aura that could shake Heaven and Earth, and at the same time, it seemed elated, as if it had been suppressed for countless years. Now that it could be out in the open, it was like a buried treasure which had finally been revealed to the light of day, to shine in all its glory.

Bai Wuchen stared in shock, as Meng Hao's previous words continued to echo in her mind.

"Have I been using it wrong?" she thought, her mind reeling. There was no time for her to contemplate how to react. Even as she prepared to steel herself and take action, her own mirror shard suddenly began to tremble, almost as if it were about to slip out of her control.

"This... this is impossible...." she said, her face ashen. She had studied the mirror shard for countless years to figure out how to use it in the way she did, and had always assumed she was using it correctly. But now, after seeing Meng Hao turn his mirror shard into a gauntlet, her mind was in chaos. "How... how did you...?"

Before she could finish speaking, Meng Hao calmly waved his hand. Rumbling sounds echoed out as the mirror shard hovering around Immortal Bai Wuchen, the mirror shard which she had possessed for countless years, suddenly began to shake. Then, it transformed into a beam of light as it severed its own connection to her and shot over to Meng Hao's side.

"NO!" she screamed. It was like an invisible fist slamming into her. Her face went pale white, and she coughed up a mouthful of blood. She simply couldn't accept what was happening. This was her precious treasure, her chance to return home, the object of all her hopes, something she had studied for years and years. In fact, in the past she had even been able to use the mirror shard to detect the presence of other mirror shards that were close by. But now... she found that everything she had come to understand about the shard had been mistaken.

The feeling she was experiencing was like that of raising a child to adulthood, only to find out later that the child was not even related by blood. Then that child ran off with its true family....

Bai Wuchen had even been able to sense the joy within the mirror shard, as if it were reuniting with a relative after years of wandering alone.

"Why is this happening?!?!" Bai Wuchen asked, glaring at Meng Hao with bloodshot eyes. Her hair was disheveled and she seemed to be slipping into a state of madness. Then she could only watch as her own mirror shard melted, merged into Meng Hao's arm, and became a vambrace that covered his entire arm!

It was pitch black and radiated mysterious light, along with a shocking aura. Upon seeing the armor for the first time, Bai Wuchen, along with everyone else, was completely shaken.

The vambrace was covered with complicated, abstruse designs and cloud-like patterns. Based on the shocking aura of the armor, it almost seemed as if Meng Hao's arm had somehow become connected to the world in some mysterious way.

As all of this happened, the ghosts which had been immobilized began to awaken. As they lifted their heads and looked at Meng Hao, they saw the armor he was wearing, and began to drop to their knees to kowtow.

The world went silent. All eyes were fixed on Meng Hao, or more accurately, on the armor which covered his arm and hand.

The Sect Leader took in a deep breath as he sensed the danger they were now in. Sha Jiudong's pupils constricted, and the madness in his eyes was fading into a bright glow.

Only Immortal Bai Wuchen seemed incapable of accepting the sudden turn of events. Moments ago, she had held the upper hand in the battle, and had her mirror shard to rely on. But then, everything changed.

It was at this point that Meng Hao answered Bai Wuchen's question.

"Because it's mine," he murmured. He looked down at the armor, and his gaze softened. The flicker of reminiscence could be seen in his eyes. When his words echoed out, Bai Wuchen heard them, and a tremor ran through her.

"That's impossible!!" she shrieked, breaking the calm silence that had filled the area. She couldn't accept what was happening, and as such, she lurched into motion, unleashing her cultivation base. The power of nine Essences exploded out, creating a mist that spread out to cover the entire world, then rumbled down toward Meng Hao.

She refused to yield, not even at this point, not even when her mirror shard had been taken by Meng Hao. She would still risk everything!

"Sect Leader. Fellow Daoist Sha. Please help me one last time!" Her tone was shrill, even pleading. The Sect Leader sighed, then stepped forward, transforming into a beam of light that shot through the Essence mist created by Bai Wuchen.

Then there was Sha Jiudong. He gritted his teeth, then began to spin in place, becoming a tempest that also merged into the mist. The shocking combination of all three of these powerful experts became a destructive attack that bore down on Meng Hao, causing everything in the area to quake violently.

Meng Hao looked up, eyes flickering. His desire to fight suddenly skyrocketed, and he blurred into motion, appearing directly in front of the group of three.

Then, he clenched his hand into a fist, whereupon cloud-like ripples began to spread out. The fist seemed slow, but apparently, Bai Wuchen and the others simply couldn't dodge it. It was as if... the instant he punched out, the blow had already landed onto the Essence mist!

The mist rumbled as though a stormwind had blasted through it. It began to seethe, and booms could be heard. The mist was swept away, evaporated, revealing Bai Wuchen, who coughed up a mouthful of blood. At the same time, Meng Hao took another step forward, unleashing another fist strike at the Sect Leader.

He didn't actually strike the Sect Leader himself, but unleashed the power of the fist right in front of him. A boom could be heard, and a massive blast of wind surged out, causing the Sect Leader's face to flicker. At first he thought he might be able to use some divine abilities to fight back, but then he simply sighed with the realization that there was little to be done now. Instead, he took advantage of the force of the blow to fly backward, leaving the way open for Meng Hao.

Meng Hao strode forward again, turning to look at Sha Jiudong in the sandstorm. Sha Jiudong chose to do the same as the Sect Leader, and quietly backed up, sighing with the realization that he simply couldn't fight back.

After the Sect Leader and Sha Jiudong retreated, Meng Hao appeared in front of Immortal Bai Wuchen herself, and once again threw out a punch.

Massive rumbling filled the air as the blow slammed into her torso. Cloud-like fluctuations emanated off of the armor, and Bai Wuchen coughed up a mouthful of blood, then tumbled backward like a kite with its string cut, cracking sounds filling the air the entire time. She was unable to stop at first, and coughed up more blood as she continued to fall back. Then, she finally came to a stop 3,000 meters away, where she looked up, face pale. Finally, she coughed up a third mouthful of blood.

Her aura was in chaos, as though something inside of her was reversing her flow of qi and blood. She held nothing back in an attempt to control the force, but that only resulted in more blood oozing out of the corners of her mouth.

The Sect Leader's eyes went wide, but he said nothing. Sha Jiudong subconsciously edged backward a bit, his eyes filled with shock.

As for Jin Yunshan, he sucked in a deep breath, and couldn't help but think to himself that he really had made the right decision earlier.

"Like I said earlier, this farce is over," Meng Hao said coolly. He waved his sleeve, and the howling ghosts in the area began to swirl around him. They transformed into an invisible vortex which spread out in all directions. 50 kilometers. 500 kilometers. 5,000 kilometers. 50,000 kilometers. 500,000 kilometers.... It eventually stretched out so far in every direction that it seemed endless.

Meng Hao was in the very center, like a divine being within the world.

The pressure radiating off of him exploded out, supplanting the pressure of Heaven, covering the entire world. The sea of ghosts also emitted pressure, which combined with Meng Hao's, causing the ground to quake, as though the entire world, as if all Heaven and Earth, were prostrating in worship to Meng Hao.

Jin Yunshan's face fell, and he backed up, rotating his cultivation base. The Sect Leader sighed, clasped hands, and bowed to Meng Hao. Then he made a grasping motion, causing a bag of holding to appear, which he placed down onto the ground and then backed up. After retreating a certain distance, he rotated his cultivation base to protect himself from the intense pressure.

Sha Jiudong also sighed, then produced a bag of holding, placed it onto the ground, and backed up.

Their stance in the matter was clear. Not only had they held back earlier during the fight, they now also offered compensation. In their estimation, Meng Hao would not push the matter to the bitter end.

Chapter 1474: A Long, Long Path....

They were correct. Meng Hao had his way of doing things, and after glancing at the Sect Leader and Sha Jiudong, he nodded slightly, waved his sleeve, and collected the two bags of holding. Then he looked over at Bai Wuchen.

Her lips were still smeared with blood, and her face was ashen. She stood there trembling, a bitter expression on her face as she looked, not at Meng Hao, but off into the distance. Her mood couldn't be lower.

She had been completely and utterly defeated. All of her plans, all of her preparations, were like nothing when it came to Meng Hao's spectacular power.

Although she didn't want to admit it, she knew deep in her heart that what Meng Hao had said was no lie. The mirror shard really did belong to him. If it didn't, then the shard, which she had studied so deeply for so many years, would never have undergone the fantastic transformations it just had.

She also understood even more deeply that her defeat had resulted in her losing not only the mirror shard, but her path home.

“I can’t go back now...” she murmured bitterly. “Not unless I Transcend.... But Transcendence is so difficult. I won’t even be able to succeed with all nine of the altars here in the necropolis. Even using Patriarch Vast Expanse’s Dao altar might not work.” The entire reason she had been able to coerce the Sect Leader into helping her was by offering him a clue about Patriarch Vast Expanse’s Dao altar.

She knew that because of the techniques she cultivated, Transcendence would be especially difficult for her, far more difficult than it was for the average person. Most importantly, she had been waiting far longer than anyone else. She was one of the first people to descend to Planet Vast Expanse from the Vast Expanse Society.

She had been inside the starry sky of the Vast Expanse for far too long. She wanted to go back, to return home, to leave this place. The power of the mirror shard, and the Transcendent will it contained, led her to the conclusion that it could cut open the Vast Expanse. Furthermore, the more mirror shards she could collect, the more likely it was that, even without a Transcendent cultivation base, she could still leave the starry sky of the Vast Expanse.

“I just want to go home....” she murmured bitterly. “I just want to leave here, to go back to my home outside the Vast Expanse....” The Sect Leader stood there quietly, and Sha Jiudong sighed inwardly. Mixed emotions could be seen on Jin Yunshan’s face.

“Outside the Vast Expanse?” Meng Hao asked suddenly, looking over at her.

“What is outside of the Vast Expanse? A world like the starry sky inside?” It was a question Meng Hao had pondered ever since his experience under the surface of the first land mass of the necropolis. In the visions he had experienced, he had gone outside of the Vast Expanse, and had seen nothing but desolate emptiness. It was empty, devoid of life. There was nothing there except the five enormous pillars.

There definitely hadn’t been any Vast Expanse Society!

Back then, Meng Hao had begun to wonder if the supposed origin of the Vast Expanse School, the so-called Vast Expanse Society, might be... nothing more than a sham. In that case, perhaps the world outside of the Vast Expanse, the place where Transcendent cultivators could go to... was also a sham.

“Outside the Vast Expanse is my home,” Bai Wuchen said quietly. “It’s a flourishing place that the Vast Expanse can’t even compare to. Outside, there is no mist, only a dazzling starry sky, and one planet after another after another, filled with life.

“Immortal spirit aura is thick and abundant there. What we have here can’t even compare. Here, we are like poor beggars!” Although her words were simple, as she spoke, her eyes shone brightly. In Meng Hao’s mind, he could almost imagine the celestial utopia she described, and although it was completely different from what he had seen outside the Vast Expanse, his eyes glittered nonetheless. As he looked around, he realized that the Sect Leader, Sha Jiudong, and even Jin Yunshan all seemed to be lost in their memories, just like Bai Wuchen was.

Meng Hao’s scalp began to tingle. Inside of him was the remnant of the true Ninth Paragon’s soul, which he had long since Soulsearched. At that time, he hadn’t found any memories regarding what was outside the Vast Expanse. It was as if those memories were sealed, and could not be accessed.

“What exactly is outside the Vast Expanse?” he thought. “Is it like Bai Wuchen described, or is it like what I saw?” His eyes flickered as he once again looked over at Immortal Bai Wuchen. Despite the fact that she had tried to kill him, she still cut a very lamentable figure.

She wanted to return to her home, just like Meng Hao wanted to return to his....

He sighed and looked away, transforming into a beam of light that shot off into the distance, accompanied by the ghosts.

Meng Hao had accomplished his goal in coming to the necropolis; he had acquired the copper mirror shard. In fact, he had actually acquired two of them. There was now no reason for him to stay behind. He would leave the necropolis and return to Planet Vast Expanse. Then he would follow the tug of the mirror shards he possessed to find the other six!

“Once I find them, I can call out to the copper mirror, and summon it back from wherever it is!” The glow in his eyes shone brighter and brighter as he passed from the third land mass into the second, and then finally reached the first. He crossed the bridge of flesh and blood, went through the perimeter region, and finally, stepped into the teleportation portal that was the exit. There, he stopped and looked back.

As he gazed out at the distant ninth land mass, he could just barely make out that enormous throne, and the blurry figure sitting upon it, who seemed to be looking at him.



With that, he turned and stepped into the teleportation portal.

After Meng Hao left, the Sect Leader and the others stood there silently for a moment, completely shaken. Having been defeated, Bai Wuchen's only hope of returning to her home now rested with Transcendence. After revealing the information she had promised to the Sect Leader and Sha Jiudong, they proceeded to seek enlightenment on the Transcendence Daises of the second and third land masses. When the time came, they would seek to survive the apocalypse on the third land mass using the turtle shell.

The paths being tread were different, and thus the choices were also different. To Meng Hao, the Transcendence Daises in the necropolis were useless at the moment. Only after he successfully formed the Ninth Hex could he return, then try to make it to the ninth altar. Then, he could dispel the mists, and use the power of the altar to combine the nine Hexes.

As for the Sect Leader and the others, their cultivation bases were already at the pinnacle, which left them with only a single direction to follow: Transcendence. It might be difficult, but as long as the slightest possibility of success remained, they would not give up.

Back on the half-planet, Meng Hao stepped out of the teleportation portal, his hair floating around him. A thoughtful expression could be seen on his face as his third eye closed, reverting into nothing more than a violet mark on his forehead.

Then, he flickered into motion, returning to his secluded meditation facilities in Ninth Paragon City. There, he extended his right hand, causing the two mirror shards to float up in front of him.

Next, he sent some divine sense into the shards, and was immediately able to sense seven different locations in the starry sky of the Vast Expanse. One of them was the copper mirror, the position of which he couldn't lock down definitively. However, the other six locations were quite the opposite; he could determine exactly where they were.

He tried summoning the copper mirror. While it was true that two mirror shards were more powerful than one, they still weren't powerful enough to succeed in that. He would definitely need more shards.

"My clone is already on the right track," he thought. "The moment he enters the Dao Realm, he'll be able to fully form the first of the nine sealing marks." His clone's experience in the Vast Expanse Shrine had actually changed Meng Hao's plans. However, he still wasn't completely certain about the matter, and needed to wait until the first sealing mark was complete before making a final decision.

“Since that’s the case, there’s no reason for me to stay here in the Vast Expanse School.” Eyes flickering with bright light, he decided to leave. He would journey into the starry sky and follow the pull of the copper mirror shards, to collect the remaining six.

“A long, long path....” he thought. He could sense that the six mirror shards were scattered in a variety of locations throughout the starry sky of the Vast Expanse, and that it wouldn’t be easy to gather them together. It wasn’t something that could be accomplished in a short amount of time either.

After a moment of thought, a profound look could be seen in his eyes. He sent out some divine will, which was immediately detected by his subordinates, the 7-Essences and 8-Essences Paragons.

Meng Hao wasn’t sure how long he would be gone, and there were many responsibilities to be handled while he was gone, including matters regarding the expansion of the Ninth Sect, as well as things pertaining to his clone. After making the relevant explanations and arrangements, he left.

A beam of light shot up, leaving the lands below, leaving Planet Vast Expanse, and entering the starry sky. There, he looked out at the Vast Expanse, his eyes flickering. Based on the tug he felt, he headed in the direction of the nearest mirror shard.

Before, it would have been very, very difficult for Meng Hao to attempt to track down all of the mirror shards. However, his cultivation base was now strong enough to fight with the peak of 9-Essences, and he also had two mirror shards that could transform into armor. With all that, he was confident that... other than a Transcendent cultivator, it would be easier to find a phoenix feather or a qilin horn than to find someone who could cause problems for him in a fight.

As his true self was leaving, his clone was sitting cross-legged in the Ninth Sect. After taking 1st place in the Vast Expanse Shrine, he had been named the Legacy disciple of the Ninth Sect, and was given a mountain peak which was superior in all terms, including the view and the amount of spiritual energy.

The entire mountain belonged to Meng Hao, and was protected by numerous restrictive spell formations. No one could possibly enter without his permission. Other than Meng Hao and Yan’er, the only people on the mountain were various servant cultivators who had been assigned to work for him.

Meng Hao's performance in the Ninth Sect's Vast Expanse Shrine, and the matter with the Tenth Heaven, had already become somewhat of a legend. Furthermore, all of the disciples of the Ninth Sect had come to view him with complete awe and reverence.

Even all of the Chosen felt that way.

In the few days which followed the event, a constant stream of visitors came to pay respects. At first he met them individually, but soon there were simply too many, and he finally announced that he would be going into secluded meditation to restore his cultivation base. After that, he entrusted outside affairs to Yan'er.

Yan'er had no option other than to accept the arrangement. In the following days, all her time was taken up with receiving visitors from the sect. At first she was excited about the matter. After all, Fang Mu's rise to prominence meant that she instantly had a completely different status in the sect. Now she understood what it was like to be extremely popular.

She also was able to accept countless gifts, so many that they couldn't fit into a single bag of holding.

However, her mood gradually soured as she realized that the majority of people coming to visit her Master were female cultivators. Furthermore, it seemed like each one was prettier than the last, and all of them were making discreet inquiries about her Master.

Chapter 1475: Marriage Alliance!

"A bunch of fawning sycophants!" she thought. "Hmph! I can't believe so many girls like my Master, that old fogey. As his disciple, I definitely have to keep things under control!" Yan'er took her mission very seriously. She was often less than polite to the female disciples. She would accept their gifts, but when it came to their veiled inquiries about her Master, she didn't even respond.

The more charming and pretty the girls were, the more hostile Yan'er got. Oftentimes, after such a female cultivator left, she would look miserably down at her own body, and even stare at her face in the mirror. Then she would stamp her foot and stalk over to Meng Hao's secluded meditation facilities to yell at him from outside.

It was on one particular day that she stood there, fists on her waist, cursing Meng Hao. "Master, why don't you act like the old man you are!?! Look at you! Don't you have anything better to do than challenge the Vast Expanse Shrine? Do you know how many manly visitors you've had recently, all throwing themselves at you? Well, do you?!"

Meng Hao opened his eyes, looked out at the infuriated Yan'er, and smiled, somewhat curious about what she had just said.

“Manly?”

“Yeah. Manly women. Stout and sturdy, each and every one of them, all pimply-faced too. Women are supposed to have lovely voices right? But not them. If you want, I can bring them all over to see you here.” With that, she glared at the door of the meditation chamber. If Meng Hao dared to agree to such an offer, she would probably bite his head off like a vicious tiger.

A strange expression could be seen on Meng Hao's face. Clearing his throat, he yelled, “Get back to cultivating. I've taught you a lot of divine abilities and Daoist magics. There's the Dao of Reincarnation, the Heavengod Magic, and the Mountain Consuming Incantation. You never got them down right, so stop wasting time and get to work, alright?”

Then he closed his eyes and went back to meditating.

Yan'er snorted dramatically. Seeing that her Master was just going to continue on with cultivation, she stamped her feet and glared at the door one more time, then turned and walked away.

“Bad Master! Stinky Master! Crotchety old fogey! Shameless fossil!! Hmph! Mountain Consuming Incantation? Heavengod Magic? Dao of Reincarnation? I mastered all of those a long time ago. He's just coming up with excuses!” As she muttered to herself, she walked past the mastiff, who was sleeping just outside of the courtyard. When the mastiff heard her muttering, it opened its eyes, listened for a moment, then quickly closed its eyes and pretended to continue sleeping.

Time passed. Eventually, the number of disciples coming to visit began to decline. Just when Yan'er was about to breathe a sigh of relief, though, people from cultivator clans outside of the Vast Expanse School started to show up. There were quite a few of them, many of whom offered gifts in the form of beautiful servant girls. Yan'er was about to go mad, even more so than before.

Most intolerable was that, unexpectedly, there were some people who came to propose marriage alliances....

On one particular day, the 7-Essences Paragon who had helped Meng Hao during his tribulation brought a group of people to Meng Hao's mountain peak. Among that group was another 7-Essences Paragon. As the two Paragons chatted, they were followed closely by a young woman.

She carried herself gracefully, and was spectacularly beautiful. Although she had a somewhat arrogant look to her, she didn't seem too pleased to be here. However, she followed along as the two Paragons led her up the mountain.

"Yan'er, hurry and call your Master out," said the Ninth Sect Paragon, smiling. To him, Meng Hao was a very important person, and since Yan'er was his disciple, it was only natural that he speak respectfully to her.

Yan'er wasn't too pleased with the situation. She looked at the two Paragons, then the young woman, and her heart began to pound. Of all the women she had seen recently, this girl was definitely the most beautiful.

Furthermore, her cultivation base was extraordinary, being in the early Ancient Realm.

For some reason, Yan'er started getting nervous. She nodded and ran over to Meng Hao's secluded meditation facilities, only to find that he had already emerged. If anyone else had come to visit, he would have refused to see them, but this particular Paragon had been of significant help during his tribulation, and he definitely couldn't refuse him.

Taking Yan'er with him, he headed to the audience hall, where the Ninth Sect Paragon laughed heartily upon catching sight of him.

"Fang Mu, please offer formal greetings to Paragon Streamcloud from the Third Sect."

The Paragon from the Third Sect looked closely at Meng Hao, obviously measuring him up. Then he smiled. Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever as he clasped hands and bowed.

After all the introductions were made, everyone sat down and began to chat. The beautiful young woman occasionally looked over at Meng Hao, her expression one of contempt, although she did a fairly good job of covering it up.

Yan'er sat next to Meng Hao, her dislike for the young woman growing by the moment. Then she heard the visiting Paragon explain that this girl was one of the Vast Expanse School's Holy

Daughter-designates, and that he wanted her and Meng Hao to become Daoist partners. Yan'er couldn't control herself. Her mind spinning, she subconsciously blurted, "No way! My Master doesn't need a Daoist partner!"

As soon as the words left her mouth, she suddenly shivered, and her face drained of blood. She looked over at Meng Hao and immediately dropped to her knees to kowtow, heart filled with regret. She had no idea why she had suddenly blurted what she had, and was suddenly very nervous that she might have angered her Master.

"Master, my... my mistake...."

The Ninth Sect Paragon frowned, but before he could say anything, Paragon Streamcloud snorted, and his eyes turned cold. As for the Holy Daughter-designate, the scorn in her eyes deepened.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever. The arrival of these two Paragons hadn't ruffled him at all, and as for the matter of Daoist partnership, it was nothing surprising. His clone was incredibly famous in the Vast Expanse School, and was considered a Chosen among Chosen, the future pillar of the sect.

It was to be expected that people would propose marriage alliances and Daoist partnerships.

However, after hearing Yan'er's reaction, he couldn't hold back from smiling. He looked over at her, his expression warm, then flicked his sleeve to indicate that she should cease kowtowing.

"What mistake?" he said softly. "I never said you made any mistake." When she saw the kindness in his gaze, her heart shivered, and strange, warm emotions suddenly flooded through her.

With that, Meng Hao turned to the two Paragons, clasped hands and said, "Seniors, I'm indebted to you for the kindness you've shown. Truly, I'm very touched. However, I, Fang Mu, truly have no need of a Daoist partner."

"This...." The Ninth Sect Paragon frowned and looked over at Meng Hao. However, he could tell that his mind had been made up, and the Paragon had no desire to try to force the sect's most important Chosen to do anything. Then he looked over at Yan'er, and recalled the warmth in Meng Hao's gaze, and suddenly everything clicked. A strange expression appeared on his face.

Paragon Streamcloud's expression was very grim. He, Paragon Streamcloud, had already shown plenty of respect to this Fang Mu, and besides that, the young woman he had brought from his clan was a peerless beauty. Despite all that, Fang Mu unexpectedly refused the offer.

Pressure instantly began to weigh down in the room. Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever, but Yan'er looked frightened.

With a cold snort, Paragon Streamcloud turned and clasped hands to the Ninth Sect Paragon. Then he flicked his sleeve and turned to leave. As for the young woman, she ceased any attempt to conceal the scorn on her face. As she turned to leave, her expression was one of disdain.

Just as she was about to walk out the door, she looked back and muttered, "Illicit Master and apprentice romance. How utterly disgusting."

Chapter 1476: Of Course!

The words "illicit Master and apprentice romance" immediately caused Yan'er to shiver. Her face was completely ashen as she staggered backward a few steps.

The second half of what the young woman had said, "utterly disgusting", was like a hammer blow to the pit of Yan'er's stomach. Her mind was reeling; it was as if her most secret and hidden feelings had suddenly been dramatically revealed to everyone, as though things which had confused even her were now being proclaimed loudly for everyone to hear. It made Yan'er feel as if Heaven and Earth were suddenly spinning in reverse. She even coughed up a mouthful of blood.

"You..." she said, her vision swimming as she visibly shook. She simply didn't know what to say.

In the instant that the words left the young woman's mouth, a grim expression overtook Meng Hao's face. He rose to his feet, and suddenly, incredible pressure exploded out, engulfing the young woman.

At the same time, Meng Hao took a step forward. When his foot landed, lands shook and mountains were rocked. The Holy Daughter-designate's face fell; she had assumed Meng Hao was a soft and warm person, but in the blink of an eye, he had become like a vicious wild beast. His gaze, his energy, the pressure radiating off of him, made her feel as if she were about to be torn to pieces. Instantly, she began to tremble inwardly, and her scalp felt as if it would explode.

Paragon Streamcloud also frowned, and extended his hand as if to block Meng Hao's way. However, in that exact moment, Meng Hao looked over at him and said, "Do you truly dare to block my way?!"

One gaze and one sentence from the mouth of an Ancient Realm cultivator was being used to threaten a 7-Essences Paragon. Anyone who saw this happening would find it inconceivable. It was an act of utter conceit, of complete audacity. It was like a praying mantis trying to stop a war chariot!

However, in that instant in which Meng Hao looked at him, Paragon Streamcloud felt something strange and mysterious rumbling inside his mind. It was something threatening, although it wasn't coming from Meng Hao's cultivation base. He felt a sensation of deadly crisis that caused all the hair on his body to stand on end, as though Meng Hao's gaze contained some mysterious, unfathomable power. It was the kind of power that one felt when one's superior was staring you in the eye.

It was very natural, completely lacking pretense and affectation, as though the person staring at him truly was the most powerful of experts. Even Streamcloud, a 7-Essences Paragon, felt like a weakling!

Even as his mind was sent reeling by a single glance Meng Hao's words entered his ears. They should be words that could be considered the biggest joke in the world. And yet, although Streamcloud got the feeling that this person was completely mad... he also felt thoroughly shaken.

"How is this even possible!?" he thought. His mind was in chaos, and he felt so ashamed he was about to fly into a rage. Anyone with his position would feel the same way in such circumstances. However, even as his eyes flickered with coldness and he prepared to do something to Meng Hao, the Ninth Sect's 7-Essences Paragon snorted coldly and stepped forward to block his path.

A boom rang out, and the two of them backed away from each other. The Ninth Sect's Paragon then spoke in a coldly sinister voice that echoed out in all directions.

"Fellow Daoist Streamcloud. What exactly did this disciple of your Third Sect mean just now? We're in the Ninth Sect at the moment, so you had better be prepared to give us a good explanation!" The Ninth Sect's Paragon was infuriated. The fact that no marriage alliance had been formed didn't really matter. This disciple couldn't possibly have said what she had said by accident; it was clearly an intentional insult. Whether or not what she said was true, Fang Mu had an illustrious name and position, yet she had openly condemned him, and had used vile and biting words to do so.



The Ninth Sect Paragon's heart burned with rage, and he bitterly regretted taking the initiative to invite Paragon Streamcloud for a visit.

Meanwhile, Meng Hao looked away from Paragon Streamcloud and strode up to the Holy Daughter-designate, who was edging backward. The pressure weighing down on her only continued to grow more intense. With a muffled squeak, she began performing an incantation gesture to try defend herself. As for Meng Hao, his face was extremely grim as he reached his hand back and slapped the girl across the face.

A smacking sound rang out, and the girl screamed. A huge welt rose up on her cheek, and she even flew off the ground from the force of the blow.

Before she could land, Meng Hao's fury at her insult caused him to unleash another slap. Another smacking sound rang out from the other side of the girl's face. Blood sprayed out of her mouth, and she screamed again. By now her face was in a sorry state, and completely spattered in blood.

"Get the hell out of here, NOW!" he roared, eyes flickering with killing intent. Despite how vile the young woman's words were, with his true self out of the sect, Meng Hao knew that if he killed her, it would start a war between the Third and Ninth Sects.

However, it wouldn't do to just let things drop, so even as the words left his mouth, he crushed the young woman's Dao heart, planting a seed of fear inside of her.

Paragon Streamcloud tried to stop it from happening, but the Ninth Sect Paragon prevented him. Their clash caused a huge boom to echo out, after which the Ninth Sect Paragon's face turned very grim, and he echoed Meng Hao's words.

"Get the hell out of here, NOW!"

The Ninth Sect's power had been rising ever since Meng Hao became the Ninth Paragon, and its forces were tougher. A cold gleam could be seen in the eyes of the Ninth Sect Paragon, and he followed up with, "If I hear any word of this spreading, or hear about you defaming the name of the Ninth Sect's qilin son, then our two sects will definitely be having a war."

Paragon Streamcloud could merely chuckle coldly. There was little else to say, considering that everything that had just occurred resulted from an insult on the part of his own clan member.

Glaring spitefully at the young woman, he grabbed her and then shot off in a beam of prismatic light.

After they were gone, things were peaceful and quiet again. The 7-Essences Paragon hesitated for a moment, smiling wryly at Meng Hao. Then he looked over at Yan'er, who stood there head bowed, speechless.

After a moment of thought, he looked back at Meng Hao and said, "Fang Mu, you have an apprentice with a lot of latent potential there. You know, in all my years of cultivation, I've never had my own personal disciple. What do you say if I take the girl as my apprentice?"

His words caused Yan'er to shiver.

Meng Hao shook his head, his gaze resolute. "Many thanks for your good intentions, Paragon."

The Paragon looked at Meng Hao and sighed inwardly. Without another word, he turned and left.

The mountain peak was very quiet now, except for the whispering of the wind. Meng Hao walked over to Yan'er and bopped her head. Expression warm, he said, "Why are you so upset? She ran her mouth and so I slapped her a couple times. It's over now. My murderous aura crushed her Dao heart, and she won't ever dare to make irresponsible remarks ever again. If you still feel like venting, then focus on your cultivation, and you'll be able to go take care of her yourself one day."

Yan'er bowed her head. Placing her hands on her cheeks, she looked up at him through fluttering eyelashes, embarrassed and unsure of what exactly to say.

"Master, I..." She knew that she should say something, she just couldn't find the words.

Meng Hao smiled and bopped her on the head again. "Alright, alright. Why don't you go prepare some spirit fruit, Master is getting a bit hungry."

Then he headed back toward his secluded meditation facilities.

Yan'er stood there for a moment, a blank expression on her face. Finally, she stamped her foot. Rubbing the sore spot where he had bopped her head, she hurried off to prepare some spirit fruit.

Before long, dusk had fallen. Gradually, the light faded from the sky, and the moon rose. Moonlight flowed across the landscape like water, and although everything looked like it usually did, there was a lonely beauty to it that usually wasn't seen.

Yan'er had just arrived at Meng Hao's secluded meditation facilities. When she placed the spirit fruit in front of him, he opened his eyes and smiled at her. Seeing the confused blankness in her expression, he couldn't help but sigh.

"Yan'er," he said softly. She seemed to be in such a daze that she didn't even hear him.

"Yan'er!" he repeated, even louder this time.

"Huh?" she replied, looking up at him.

He sighed again. After a moment of silence, he stood and walked to the doorway, where he looked up at the night sky, and the moon.

"Yan'er," he said softly, "do you remember when you were young, and I brought you here to the sect?"

"I remember..." she said, recalling the scene. She remembered that back then, she had suspected her Master of being a fraud, a belief that had persisted for some time even after arriving in the sect. Now that she thought back to the matter, she couldn't help but smile. As the moonlight fell upon her young face, she seemed even more beautiful than ever.

Meng Hao looked at her, and then said, "Master is going to tell you a story."

His gaze was soft, and seemed to contain many memories, memories from a time long before young Yan'er had even been alive. That was because he was about to tell her a story that came from far, far back in the stream of time.

"Once upon a time, there was a place called the Mountain and Sea Realm, where there was a heavenly body known as Planet South Heaven...."

“On Planet South Heaven there was a place called Mount Daqing....”

“... That young man joined the Reliance Sect, and met a Chosen there named Wang Tengfei.”

“... And that was the first time he ever saw her. At that time, she was Wang Tengfei’s fiancée.”

“... That roc was so huge that when it flew, it filled the sky. It created a huge windstorm that swept her up along with him. They ended up inside a forbidden volcano together....”

“In the Violet Fate Sect, they became fellow disciples....”

“On the day he got married, she stood next to his wife looking at him, thinking that he didn’t notice her....”

“Later, she left with her Master Pill Demon, and went to the Kunlun Society....”

“In the Windswept Realm, she damaged her own soul to help him. She paid the ultimate price, and yet had no regrets....”

“He came to the Kunlun Society and saw her corpse. Then he used a timeshift magic to find her soul. On that day, his heart broke....”

“He searched for her in the Eighth Mountain and Sea, but was unable to find her.... However, he knew that he owed her the debt of a lifetime....” Meng Hao told Yan’er the entire story. It took a long, long time. He spoke through the entire night, and it wasn’t until the sun began to rise that he finally finished.

At the beginning, Yan’er listened a bit absent-mindedly, but the longer the story went on, the more pain she felt inside, although she wasn’t sure why. It was as if there was something slowly awakening in her heart.

When Meng Hao finished the story, she simply sat there with a blank expression on her face. A long time passed....

Then she looked up and quietly asked, “Master, what was the name of the girl in the story?”

Meng Hao looked off into the sunrise and replied, “Her name was... Chu Yuyan.”

“Is there more to the story?” Yan’er asked.

Meng Hao sat there quietly for a moment, then nodded. “Do you want to hear it?”

Yan’er shivered, and didn’t say anything for a while. However, the confusion gradually faded from her eyes. Soon she looked like she always did, simple and carefree. She finally turned back to him and shook her head. “I don’t want to hear it now. But one day... if I do want to hear the rest of the story, will you tell it to me, Master?”

“Of course!”

Chapter 1477: Provoking the Ninth Sect

In the starry sky some distance away from Planet Vast Expanse, were three spinning vortexes. They maintained their position there, fixed for all eternity, radiating pulses of mysterious light.

The pulses of light were primarily dim and gray, as if they represented an aura of death. However, occasionally one could see radiant flashes of brightness meandering between the three vortexes.

Meng Hao’s true self hovered outside of the three vortexes, hair floating about him. He was miniscule in size compared to them, and yet his energy was mighty enough that he could stand as their equal. In fact, the vortexes even vibrated with hostility.

According to what Meng Hao could sense, this was one of the locations that housed a copper mirror shard. He opened his third eye, and instantly the fog that made up the vortexes was lifted, revealing the true nature of what was beneath.

He saw that inside the three vortexes were three worlds. There were no cultivators, only dangerous, deadly terrain and numerous beasts the likes of which he had never seen before. There were also a few extremely brutal auras which were comparable to the 9-Essences level.

The most shocking and powerful fluctuations came from the second portal. Some sort of ancient entity inside, the master of the place, who was at the peak of 9-Essences.

Closer examination revealed the source of those fluctuations: it was an enormous, planet-sized... basilisk lizard!

All of the lands of that world apparently existed on the surface of that basilisk, and according to what Meng Hao could sense, the copper mirror shard was inside its body!

His eyes glittered as he transformed into a beam of light that shot directly toward the giant basilisk in the second vortex.

Moments later, shocking booms echoed out into the starry sky.

Meanwhile, back on Planet Vast Expanse, Meng Hao's clone was once again deep in secluded meditation. Yan'er was back to her old self, with no confusion or blankness because of what had occurred. She was as lively and energetic as ever, and continued to reject all of the female disciples who came to meet her Master.

However, when she was alone at night, she would look up at the moon and think about the story her master had told her about Chu Yuyan. The story stirred her heart, and gradually, was causing a resonance to form with her past life.

Time passed. Meng Hao's clone received fewer and fewer visitors, finally giving Yan'er some time to practice cultivation. However, the fact that Meng Hao was the first person to summon the Tenth Heaven in the Vast Expanse Shrine incited challenges from the Chosen of the other sects.

Their method of issuing their challenge was simple. Instead of going to the Vast Expanse Shrines in their own sects, they came to the Ninth Sect.

In the Vast Expanse School, there was no rule preventing disciples from doing that. In fact, such things had occurred before in the past. However, it wasn't common, and usually only happened under special circumstances.

After all, challenging the Vast Expanse Shrine in a rival sect was like knocking on someone's door and then kicking them in the shin. It was essentially a blatant provocation.

However, the fact that Meng Hao had summoned the Tenth Heaven instigated a huge stir. The Chosen who qualified to be in the top 10 in all the other sects were only able to maintain their silence for a short time before exploding into action. Then, they marched into the ninth land mass... to challenge the Ninth Sect's Vast Expanse Shrine.

From the very first day, the sound of bells began to ring out. Virtually every day following that, the same thing occurred; the bell toll of the Vast Expanse Shrine filled the air.

The Chosen from the other eight sects took turns. It started with the Third Sect, who sent eight people over. Each one of those eight fought their way into the top 100, and two of them made it into the top 10. The highest spot attained was only 4th place, but that was still in the top 10.

Next came the people from the Fourth Sect. Then the Second Sect, and the Fifth.

The result of having the Chosen from all those other sects challenge the Ninth Sect's Vast Expanse Shrine was that of the top 30 spots, only six were held by disciples of the Ninth Sect!

But then the Sixth Sect came, after which the Seventh and Eighth Sects arrived. Then, those six spots became five.

The situation was still somewhat tolerable, but then the First Sect came, hell-bent on coming out on top. After their efforts, only four spots within the top 30 belonged to the Ninth Sect. In addition to that, numerous Heavens were summoned.

Although no one summoned the Tenth Heaven, only the Sixth, it was still a shocking development.

Of course, no one was able to take the 1st place spot from Meng Hao, but directly beneath him in the top 30 were numerous powerful experts from other sects. To the disciples of the Ninth Sect, it was a great humiliation, almost as if their sect were being trampled beneath the feet of others.

It all led to quite an uproar. There were many arguments, and soon anger boiled over to the point that small-scale conflicts erupted. However, the overall situation couldn't be changed. Chosen from the other eight sects didn't seem to care at all about their own Vast Expanse Shrines, and were instead obsessed with challenging the one in the Ninth Sect.

Gradually, months went by. Roughly nine hundred of the top 1,000 spots in the Ninth Sect came to be occupied by disciples from other sects. The Ninth Sect was left with only about one hundred spots.

The sect itself was powerless to do anything to stop the situation, short of physically preventing the other Chosen from coming. However, if they did that, it would seem like they were nervous, even fearful of the challenges being issued by the other sects' Chosen.

Considering how powerful the Ninth Sect was at the moment, they would never deign do that. The Chosen of the Ninth Sect wouldn't agree to something like that; they had their pride, after all.

Because of the challenges from the other Chosen, and the fact that their spots on the Vast Expanse Shrine were continuing to shrink, the Ninth Sect slipped into a state of frenzy.

Virtually all of the Chosen, and even the ordinary disciples, went all-out in their practice of cultivation. They took more outside missions and participated in more trials by fire. Only by increasing the levels of their cultivation base could they earn higher spots. As they grew stronger, it was without hesitation that they went on to re-challenge their own Vast Expanse Shrine.

It was as if all of the Chosen in the entire Vast Expanse School had picked the Vast Expanse Shrine in the Ninth Sect to be their joint trial by fire. Only by having their names on that list could they be truly illustrious.

The trend didn't stop. A year later, the battleground among Chosen expanded to include the top 2,000 spots.

After another year, it was the top 3,000 spots.

The disciples of the Ninth Sect were fuming, and conflicts broke out constantly. During the three years which had passed, people often came to pay respects to Meng Hao and ask that he do something.

But Meng Hao was in secluded meditation and wouldn't take visitors. The disciples of the Ninth Sect could understand that, but it didn't stop the Chosen from the other sects from virtually going crazy. That was especially true of those who held spots in the Ninth Sect's top 3,000. As for the few hundred from the Ninth Sect who remained in that group, their madness also increased.



Rumors even started to spread that Fang Mu had only been trying to get famous. People claimed that what had happened three years before was a mere fluke, and that now he didn't dare to show his face.

At first, such rumors were only whispered here and there. But after two years passed, and the other sects occupied ninety percent of the top 10,000 spots on the Ninth Sect's Vast Expanse Shrine, the rumors raged like wildfire.

It got to the point that the entire Vast Expanse School was talking about the matter.

“What happened with Fang Mu that year was a quirk, that's all. He's been in secluded meditation for five years and has never come out. Obviously, our challenge has him scared and hiding!”

“Even if it wasn't a fluke, I heard that after he summoned the Tenth Heaven, he experienced a Tribulation. He probably got seriously injured...”

“I got my hands on some verified information that Fang Mu was injured so badly his cultivation base won't make any progress within a hundred years! In fact, it's even regressing!”

More and more rumors spread. The disciples of the Ninth Sect were so protective of Fang Mu's name that it even led to blows on some occasions. However, the Ninth Sect was only one of nine sects, so no matter what they did, it was impossible to sway the opinions of the Chosen of the entire Vast Expanse School.

Eventually, most people came to believe the rumors. At the same time, it became completely commonplace for the cultivators of the other sects to come to the Vast Expanse Shrine in the Ninth Sect to earn their name.

Another five years passed. Meng Hao had been in secluded meditation for ten years. The conflicts over the Ninth Sect's Vast Expanse Shrine had reached a boiling point. Of the top 30,000 names, only 4,000 belonged to the Ninth Sect.

Their own Vast Expanse Shrine had been occupied by others, leaving the disciples of the Ninth Sect feeling completely humiliated and in a state of madness. Shockingly, it reached the point where the top 10... contained only two Chosen from the Ninth Sect!

Other than Meng Hao in 1st place and another Chosen in 5th place, the rest of the spots were taken by Chosen from other sects!

The humiliation and the conflicts worsened.

And yet, the Paragons of the Ninth Sect and all the other sects didn't stop any of it from happening. As long as the conflicts didn't get too out of hand, then it was viewed as a way for the overall power of the Vast Expanse School to increase. That was especially true of the disciples of the Ninth Sect, who had produced far more Chosen in the past ten years because of that pressure.

Increasing numbers of disciples came to Meng Hao's mountain to try to persuade him to do something. At one point, more than 10,000 disciples all went at the same time.

Yan'er was very annoyed by everything that was happening. Her cultivation had advanced by leaps and bounds in the past ten years, and although she wasn't even close to catching up to Meng Hao, she was in the Dao Seeking stage, very close to her Immortal Tribulation.

One day when meditating, she was forced to open her eyes because of the cacophonous clamor outside the mountain.

"Eldest Brother, please come down from your mountain!!"

"Eldest Brother, the Ninth Sect only has a few thousand spots in the Vast Expanse Shrine's top 30,000. Please come down!!"

"Eldest Brother, rumors are flying everywhere. People are accusing you of things. Eldest Brother... Come down from the mountain! Our frustration has been building for ten years, and we need your help to vent it!!"

Yan'er frowned. During the past ten years, she had watched in frustration as the other sects continuously challenged and provoked the Ninth Sect. She had asked her Master about the matter, but he didn't seem to care much. Furthermore, in recent years he had come to approach a critical juncture in his cultivation, and told Yan'er not to bother him about the matter any more.

"So annoying!" she thought. "What's wrong with these people, don't they have their own Vast Expanse Shrine to challenge? What's the point in showing off in the Ninth Sect?" With a cold

harrumph, she walked out of her room to go console all of the fellow disciples who had come to pay respects to her Master.

As soon as she walked out, though, she frowned. Among the people who had come to visit, there were many unfamiliar faces. There were even Chosen from other sects, who by this point had begun to treat the Ninth Sect as if it were their own home, and were staring at her with cold smiles.

#### Chapter 1478: The Third Mirror Shard

The disciples of the Ninth Sect had originally wanted to join forces and kill the people from the other sects, but Ninth Sect's leadership, including its Paragon, had prevented that from happening.

In the final analysis, the Ninth Sect was part of the group of nine sects that made up the Vast Expanse School, not an independent entity. It was true that the Ninth Sect's expansion and growth in the outside was a terrifying thing to the other sects, and the sheer number of cultivators who made up their forces there was fear-inspiring.

But in the end, the Ninth Sect... had not split off from the Vast Expanse School to be independent.

Also, the Ninth Sect was actually benefiting from the matter with the Vast Expanse Shrine. Not only did the Ninth Sect have more disciples in the rankings than any other individual sect, but the way the disciples fought even harder because of the humiliation also led to spectacular results.

Most importantly, the disciples of the Ninth Sect had become completely united. The fighting and scheming which had once gone on between them was now mostly a thing of the past, and they were completely unified against the outside forces.

It wasn't that the other sects didn't realize this. They were also benefiting from the current situation, and were content to let things play out.

Of course, the main reason... was that the Vast Expanse School's 9-Essences Paragons still hadn't returned after ten years. Except for Meng Hao, who was out searching for the copper mirror shards, the rest were still inside the necropolis.

Because of all of these varied reasons, as long as the cultivators from the other sects didn't violate any of the Ninth Sect's rules, they were allowed to set up camp in the Ninth Sect.

Of course, that stipulation didn't apply to everyone, only to the people who held a spot on the Ninth Sect's Vast Expanse Shrine. It was essentially an unwritten rule, and it ensured that if the Ninth Sect's disciples wanted to drive away the intruders, they simply had to occupy all the spots on their own sect's Vast Expanse Shrine.

Currently, Yan'er had just emerged from the mountain where Meng Hao was secluded in meditation. When she saw the numerous cultivators from other sects looking at her coldly, her expression was calm. Then she looked at her fellow disciples of the Ninth Sect, smiled, and proceeded to placate them, reminding them that her master was at a critical juncture in his secluded meditation.

The disciples who had come to beg Meng Hao to emerge were just as zealously devoted to him as they had been ten years ago. Regardless of the rumors flying about, they felt exactly the same way. That, coupled with Yan'er's placating words, ensured that they quickly calmed down. However, it was at this point that a cultivator from one of the other sects walked out from the crowd, a cold smile on his face.

"Well, you certainly have a way with words, girl. You have a measly Dao Seeking cultivation base, and yet you managed to placate all these people. Well let me tell you, to the rest of us, all you're doing is intimidating people in the name of your master, like the fox who exploited the tiger's might to cow the jungle.

"Since your master doesn't dare to leave his mountain, do you dare to challenge the Vast Expanse Shrine?"

"Or how about this, what if we hurt you? Then will your master dare to stick his head out of the turtle shell he's hiding in?" The cultivators from the other sects started laughing sarcastically. The disciples of the Ninth Sect bristled with rage, and it seemed like a fight might break out at any moment.

Ten years ago, Yan'er might have gotten mad, but she was different now. She had grown up, and therefore, her response to the provocation was to laugh. At the same time, her gaze turned icy cold. These cultivators from the others sects weren't in the Immortal Realm, but rather, the Ancient Realm, and yet when she spoke to them, she seemed completely indifferent to that.

"When I was younger," she said calmly, "there were many things about life I didn't understand. Once, I took a trip to a local bazaar, and was kidnapped by a cultivator from the Eighth Sect, who wanted to use me as a cultivation vessel." When Yan'er began to speak, the cultivators from the

other sects were wondering what her point was, and they frowned slightly, but continued to stare at her coldly.

“In the Eighth Sect, the cultivator who had kidnapped me slapped me across the face, which hurt quite a bit. My master then requested that the Ninth Paragon interfere. He ended up slaughtering quite a few members of Patriarch Chi Feng’s clan, as well as other powerful experts who had stood by mocking me. Back then, I didn’t really understand everything that was happening, but later on I realized that among the people killed were cultivators of the Ancient Realm and the Dao Realm. There were even Dao Lords. Oh. There was a Dao Sovereign too.” She smiled slightly. At this point, complete silence prevailed.

“Because of what happened, my Master felt a bit useless, like he couldn’t even protect his own apprentice. That was why he chose to challenge the Vast Expanse Shrine, to make a name for himself, and to ensure that no one would ever dare to bully me, his apprentice.

“The result was that he took first place in the Vast Expanse Shrine, and summoned the Tenth Heaven.” Although she was smiling as she spoke, her words caused the eyes of the surrounding cultivators to go wide. Before this moment, none of them had known that the reason Fang Mu challenged the Vast Expanse Shrine was because his apprentice had been bullied.

The disciples from the other sect looked on with flickering expressions. Although they had been willing to open their mouths earlier, the truth was that they really were scared of Meng Hao.

“Oh right. There was one time when a Paragon from some other sect, I forget which one, brought a girl from his clan here to visit. She said something to offend me, and regardless of the fact that a Paragon was present, my Master slapped her twice across the face, and even crushed her Dao heart.

“So if you really want my master to come out and destroy you, then go ahead. I’m standing right here. I won’t even dodge your blow.” She smiled a beautiful smile, but when the cultivators from the other sects saw it, their hearts began to pound.

She stood there a moment amidst the silence, then spoke once again in a powerful voice, “If you don’t have the guts to do that, then please screw the hell off!”

With that, she turned and headed back to the mountain.

After Yan'er left, the disciples of the Ninth Sect laughed mockingly at the other cultivators, then slowly dispersed. The cultivators from the other sects had extremely unsightly expressions on their faces as they also left.

Many people bore witness to the event, even Meng Hao, who was watching from within his secluded meditation facilities. After the matter concluded, he closed his eyes and paid the matter no further heed, continuing on with the same thing he had been doing for the past ten years: extinguish his Immortal Soul Lamps, one by one.

By this point, he had extinguished about ninety percent of them. There were now only ten that remained lit. However, without the right circumstances, it wasn't a simple task to accomplish.

As for his true self, acquiring the third mirror shard hadn't gone very smoothly. Not only did the giant basilisk lizard have battle prowess comparable to Meng Hao's true self, it was also exceedingly crafty. Eventually, it had swallowed Meng Hao, whereupon the battle between them was fought via their souls.

After ten years, the soul battle was still raging.

Back on Planet Vast Expanse, Meng Hao's clone murmured, "Soon enough. My true self should be able to suppress that basilisk within a few more months, and acquire the third mirror shard."

With that, he immersed himself in the task of extinguishing his Soul Lamps.

A few months later, out in the starry sky of the Vast Expanse, rumbling sounds could be heard in the second of the group of three vortexes. A massive howl of pain then echoed out, along with an explosive burst of energy. Within the vortex, the huge lizard's body was twisting and turning as sounds like that of thunder echoed out from inside of it.

Before long, the basilisk roared, spitting out a burst of qi that became a windstorm. The vortex distorted, and a figure appeared.

It was none other than Meng Hao's true self. Black armor covered his arm, and within his hand, a mirror shard was melting. It fused into the armor, which began to expand, growing even stronger than before.

The basilisk glared at Meng Hao, then roared again as it fell back in retreat. Even after ten years, it had failed to crush Meng Hao. In the end, had been injured and defeated, and robbed of its mirror shard.

As the basilisk watched Meng Hao's energy rise, a glint of fear could be seen in its eyes.

"You got the treasure, why haven't you left yet!?" the basilisk asked, its voice ancient, and its divine will so powerful that everything in the area shook.

Meng Hao's true self glanced over at the basilisk, an arrogant gleam in his eyes. The basilisk was strong, stronger even than the Sect Leader and Bai Wuchen. Of all the peak 9-Essences experts Meng Hao's true self had ever faced, this lizard was by far the strongest.

Were that not the case, it wouldn't have taken him ten years to get the mirror shard.

After the mirror shard fused fully into the armor, Meng Hao faced the basilisk, his eyes glittering.

"If you wish," he said, "you can leave this place and be my servant for a thousand years."

The basilisk stared in shock, then began to laugh, killing intent swirling in its eyes. "Say that after you Transcend, and maybe I might just agree."

Although it feared Meng Hao, he did not possess battle prowess equivalent to a Transcendent cultivator, so the idea of being his servant for a thousand years was laughable.

Meng Hao didn't seem offended. He gave the basilisk a profound look, and smiled slightly.

"Fine, it's settled. I'll come back for you later." With that, he turned and shot off into the distance. The lizard looked at him with disdain, turning a deaf ear to his words. After Meng Hao left, it closed its eyes and went back to sleep.

Meng Hao's true self sped through the starry sky, using the three mirror shards to detect the fluctuations of the fourth, which he immediately headed toward.

Meanwhile, back on the ninth continent of Planet Vast Expanse, in the Ninth Sect, on the mountain which belonged to Meng Hao's clone, Yan'er was preparing to face her Immortal Tribulation.

Her Tribulation was different from Meng Hao's. It was not monumentally shocking, but was more like the Tribulations faced by everyone else. Meng Hao didn't help her; he simply stood off to the side watching.

Lightning crashed constantly as Yan'er completely transformed from mortal to Immortal. As it happened, she became even more beautiful, and her aura became more otherworldly. Meng Hao was shocked as he realized that her appearance now reminded him even more of Chu Yuyan.

The Immortal Tribulation lasted for three days. In the end, the Tribulation Lightning faded away, and Yan'er emanated Immortal qi. Her Immortal meridians were fully opened, and as she hovered in midair, she looked like a celestial goddess. Finally, she turned to Meng Hao and smiled.

"Master, I've achieved Immortal Ascension. Aren't you going to give me a gift?"

Meng Hao smiled and shook his head in amusement. Although he looked young physically, the air he exuded made him seem profoundly ancient. His gaze was soft as he pulled out the gift he had prepared, and yet Yan'er shook her head in refusal. A crafty glint in her eyes, she said, "I don't want any magical items or medicinal pills or techniques. I just want to see my Master... see you... once again on top of a mountain, smiling at me."

Meng Hao was taken aback as he realized that he wasn't sure if he was looking at Yan'er or... Chu Yuyan.

Chapter 1479: Stepping On All the Sects Shrines!

Meng Hao stood there silently.

When he saw Chu Yuyan's soul, he had decided to pay the debt he owed her by means of a Master and apprentice relationship. But now he wasn't sure if that was the right decision.

He couldn't pretend to hold any feelings in his heart other than his thirst for revenge for the Mountain and Sea Realm. He desired the Mountain and Sea Butterfly, and desired to unearth the secrets which were buried within the starry sky of the Vast Expanse.



The only thing he wanted for Chu Yuyan was to protect her, and to give her... the best of everything.

He had no desire to see her hurt, and only wanted her to be happy.

Therefore, he stood there silently, which in turn caused Yan'er to start to get nervous. She gnawed on her lip, wondering if she had said or done something wrong. Unsure of what to do, she also just stood there, looking at Meng Hao, the seemingly young old man....

Meng Hao was a bit in a daze. Time passed. Soon it was dawn. A few days ago, some disciples had challenged the Vast Expanse Shrine, and although no one made it into the top 10, the Ninth Sect Chosen who occupied the 13th and 17th places were supplanted. That in turn caused conflicts to break out between the Ninth Sect disciples and the disciples from the other sects. As a result, an even larger group of disciples from the Ninth Sect came to Meng Hao's mountain, to ask him to do something.

“Eldest Brother, please come down from your mountain!!”

“Eldest Brother, come down from the mountain....”

“Eldest Brother... please come down!!” More and more such calls filled the air. There were tens of thousands of disciples gathered around Meng Hao's mountain, all hoping to catch a glimpse of him, that dazzling figure from ten years ago. They had come here in good faith, filled with ardor and hope.

In recent days, increasing numbers of slanderous and salacious rumors about Fang Mu had been spread, until everyone in the Vast Expanse School was talking about them. Despite that, the disciples of the Ninth Sect did not waver in their devotion to him. They felt insulted and enraged, and they only hoped that their Eldest Brother... would make a vicious counter-attack.

As their voices grew louder, Yan'er bowed her head, looking more upset than before. But then Meng Hao's absentmindedness faded away, and he looked softly at her. He reached out and, just as he had when she was a child, he bopped her head.

“Alright,” he said, smiling.

Her eyes widened as she looked up at him. Then she saw his smile, and it was like looking at the bright, blue sky. Her eyes began to shine, and she began to jump up and down in excitement.

“Master, Master!” she exclaimed excitedly. “I know exactly what you should do. Why don’t you go back to the Vast Expanse Shrine and summon the Tenth Heaven again?” She was hoping that such an act would be a powerful blow against the cultivators from the other sects.

“What would be the point in that?” Meng Hao asked, shaking his head. Then he swished his sleeve and began to walk down the mountain.

Yan’er followed on his heels. “What do you mean? What are you going to do, Master?”

In the years that had passed, Yan’er had grown much more mature. In public, she was a responsible adult who could take charge. But in front of Meng Hao, she was like a little girl.

Meng Hao didn’t answer her question. After stepping off the mountain, the crowd of tens of thousands of disciples outside saw him, and instantly exploded in excitement. At once, a huge cheer echoed out.

As for the cultivators from the other sects, they had originally assumed that this day would be like all the others, in which Fang Mu remained hidden away. But then they saw who had just emerged, and their hearts trembled.

Meng Hao’s fame was such that, despite the passage of ten years, he was just as impressive as before. The disciples from the other sects felt their minds spinning, and they began to pant. Without any hesitation, they produced jade slips which they used to inform the other top Chosen from their various sects of what was happening.

Within moments, the news of Meng Hao coming down from the mountain spread like a blast of wind through the Ninth Sect. Countless disciples from the Ninth Sect, after ten years of stifling pressure, were thrown into excitement. After ten long years, many of them had begun to grumble inwardly at Meng Hao, but now that vanished, and they all dropped what they were doing and flew out to see him.

“Eldest Brother came down off the mountain?”

“Eldest Brother left the mountain!!”

“Hahaha! The day has finally arrived! Eldest Brother came down from the mountain, and now he’s going to crush everyone!”

More and more people began rushing toward the area from all directions. The crowd quickly grew from tens of thousands to a hundred thousand. Then a million. Then several million....

Beams of light shot toward Meng Hao’s mountain in seemingly endless fashion.

The Chosen from the other sects that weren’t in the area were also notified via jade slip, and began to pant, their eyes shining brightly. For ten years they had been provoking the Ninth Sect. For ten years they had been trying... to force Meng Hao to do something. That was the only chance they had to potentially destroy the legend that he had created.

“Fang Mu! He’s finally come off the mountain!” In the location in the Ninth Sect which had been occupied by the First Sect, a gray-haired young man could be seen. He took a deep breath, and his eyes began to shine brightly. More and more people emerged, clustering around him as he flew up into the sky.

In the location where the Second Sect had set up camp, a woman could be seen. She rose to her feet, looking like she wanted to fight. Blood boiling, she shot up into the air. “After ten years of waiting, you’d better not disappoint me, Fang Mu!”

Chosen from all of the outside sects were in an uproar. All of them wanted to go out and challenge Meng Hao to a fight immediately.

“Ten years ago you created a legend. Now that ten years have passed, I’m going to destroy that legend!”

“I worked myself to the bone for ten years, and now I’m completely prepared. I’m definitely going to surpass Fang Mu!”

“Everyone says that Fang Mu is injured. This time is definitely my opportunity to shine!”

The entire Ninth Sect was boiling. Countless cultivators were gathering around Meng Hao’s mountain as he stood there, looking out at the crowds with a light smile. Finally, he clasped hands and bowed deeply to everyone.

Before he could say anything, everyone shouted out, “Eldest Brother!”

The sound of their voices was like a shockwave that caused the Heavens to shake.

Yan’er stood next to Meng Hao, glowing with excitement.

Meng Hao looked around at the crowds, and the Chosen from the other sects, who stood a bit further away. Smiling, he said, “Yan’er, you just asked me what I’m going to do...? I’m going to take you sightseeing!”

When Yan’er heard that, she looked surprised. But before she could respond, Meng Hao waved his sleeve and flew up into the air. Instantly, his voice rang out for all to hear.

“Fellow Daoists,” he said, eyes glittering, “please come with me to the Eighth Sect. The Seventh Sect. The Sixth Sect.... In fact, we will go all the way to the First Sect. I’m curious to see what their Vast Expanse Shrines look like.” This was his gift to Yan’er, and also a breakthrough he had to make after taking his Soul Lamps to the pinnacle.

In response to his words, the disciples of the Ninth Sect went quiet, but then, they let out a Heaven-shaking, Earth-shattering roar.

Everyone was screaming and hollering in excitement. Even the Ninth Sect’s 7-Essences Paragon chuckled as he looked on from his position on his mountain.

“Well, if that’s your plan, then allow me to help out a bit,” he murmured. “These kids have been bottled up for far too long as it is.” Shaking his head, the Paragon smiled and waved his hand. Instantly, massive rumbling could be heard as a gigantic spell formation appeared.

Teleportation power began to emanate out, and Meng Hao flashed into motion, shooting toward the portal. Yan’er followed close behind, bolstered by the power of Meng Hao’s cultivation base.

At the same time, the excited disciples of the Ninth Sect took to flight toward the portal. The disciples from the other sects stared in shock for a moment, their faces a bit ashen after the words Meng Hao had just uttered. However, they also took to flight toward the spell formation.

Rumbling echoed out as the teleportation power activated. Everything shook, and the group vanished. When they reappeared, they were on the eighth continent, above the Eighth Sect.

The sudden arrival of so many people shook the whole Eighth Sect. Eighth Sect disciples looked up in surprise as Meng Hao addressed the Eighth Sect.

“I am Fang Mu of the Ninth Sect. I’ve come today to challenge the Eighth Sect’s Vast Expanse Shrine!”

Even as his voice continued to echo back and forth, and before any of the disciples of the Eighth Sect had a chance to react, Meng Hao and Yan’er flew toward the Vast Expanse Shrine. The Eighth Sect had no means or method to stop them. After all, Chosen from all the other sects had challenged the Ninth Sect’s Vast Expanse Shrine on countless occasions over the last ten years.

Yan’er followed Meng Hao excitedly through the crowds of countless Eighth Sect disciples as he headed directly toward their Vast Expanse Shrine. Soon, they were standing at the foot of the mountain.

Meng Hao looked over at Yan’er and said, “Yan’er, would you like to come with me?”

Yan’er’s jaw dropped, and her heart began to pound so hard she felt like she was hyperventilating. She simply stood there, in a daze. She had merely said she wanted to see her Master standing on top of a mountain. She had never even guessed that he would bring her here. But then she remembered how he had just said he would take her sightseeing.

“I... I...” she stammered.

“Don’t want to go?” he asked.

“I do!!” she cried, worried that he might not take her after all.

He laughed heartily, then turned and began to walk toward the Vast Expanse Shrine. Yan’er followed. With his protection, even a place as dangerous as a dragon’s pool or a tiger’s den would be safe for her!

As Meng Hao led Yan'er up to the Eighth Sect's Vast Expanse Shrine, over a hundred million disciples from the Ninth Sect began to cheer. As for the disciples of the Eighth Sect, they didn't look very happy. Soon, the sound of a tolling bell could be heard. It rang once. Twice. Three times. Four times... it didn't stop!

As the bell tolled, Meng Hao took Yan'er up the mountain. 10,000 steps. 30,000 steps. 70,000 steps. 90,000 steps.... All the way to 100,000 steps!

The Vast Expanse Shrine rumbled as the First Heaven was summoned. Then the Second Heaven. And the Third Heaven.... It was like the same scene that had played out ten years ago, something so incredible it was difficult to put into words. Everyone was thoroughly shocked as, in the time it takes a single incense stick to burn... all ten Heavens were summoned!

Bells tolled in all the sects. The world was shaken. Meng Hao stood with Yan'er atop the Tenth Heaven, and the mountain breeze stirred their hair as they looked out at the clouds. As for the Baptism of the tolling bells, the benefit to Yan'er was beyond description.

However, she didn't care about any such good fortune. Her face was flushed as she stood next to her Master, looking out at Heaven and Earth. The feeling left her intoxicated.

"Yan'er," he said softly, "look at the clouds, the mountains, the sky, and the land. Remember this image. However grand your vision is, that is how grand your future can be. It is also how grand... your heart can be.

"We cultivators cultivate, not the body, but the heart!"

Chapter 1480: Challenging all the Sects!

As Meng Hao and Yan'er stood atop the Tenth Heaven, they were one with the wind. Meng Hao's softly spoken words entered Yan'er's ears and melted down into her heart, where they would remain forever.

It was very likely that no matter how many years passed, Yan'er would think back to this moment, remember standing next to her Master, and think about the words he had spoken to her.

Cultivators cultivate, not the body, but the heart.

As she looked out, she saw the sky stretching out over the lands. She saw how Heaven and Earth were connected, and she saw the endlessness stars. All of that came to be imprinted onto her heart.

Other than the words spoken by Meng Hao there above the Tenth Heaven, the only sound was that of the gently murmuring wind. It was as if the whole world had slowed down, and the two of them were the only ones in existence, Master and apprentice....

It was a moment that seemed to last for ages....

Eventually, the exultant cries of the disciples of the Ninth Sect rose up from below. The world was trembling, and the disciples of the Eighth Sect... looked as ashen as if they were dead.

As for the Chosen who had come from the other sects, they could hear their own hearts pounding in their chests.

“He... he said that he’s going to visit all of the Vast Expanse Shrines in all of the sects?” They exchanged glances, their faces as pale as death.

“Dammit, who said Fang Mu was injured? He... he’s not injured at all! He’s basically taking his disciple sightseeing!”

The Eighth Sect could do nothing more than stew in their bitterness. The cheering of the Ninth Sect grew more intense, until finally, everyone began chanting, “Eldest Brother! Eldest Brother!”

Then, the spell formation appeared again, and the power of teleportation shook everything. Meng Hao’s face fairly glowed as he chuckled and said, “Alright, let’s go to the Seventh Sect!”

Yan’er took a deep breath and nodded meekly. Meng Hao swished his sleeve, and the two of them led countless cultivators toward the enormous teleportation portal.

The disciples of the Ninth Sect rose up into the sky, clamoring in excitement. The hosts from the Eighth Sect remained in place, bitterness and other mixed emotions on their faces as they watched the Ninth Sect vanish.

Despite the fact that the Ninth Sect was now gone, they had left behind a legend. A myth! The disciples of the Eighth Sect were stifled. Their Chosen were left gasping for breath. On their own

Vast Expanse Shrine, the name 'Fang Mu' could be seen as clear as day. They could well imagine that, in future days to come, people would try to take back 1st place, but would fail.

That name would remain there in the Eighth Sect for all eternity....

That was the gift Meng Hao was giving to Yan'er, and also his response to the ten years of challenges issued by the other sects.... If you come challenge the Ninth Sect's Vast Expanse Shrine, well then... I will go to your sect and take 1st place on yours!

I will strike back with extreme prejudice, cleanly and efficiently!

Rumbling could be heard above the seventh continent, within the Seventh Sect. The teleportation portal appeared, and countless disciples from the Ninth Sect descended. Meng Hao's voice once again rang out.

"I am Fang Mu from the Ninth Sect, here to challenge your Vast Expanse Shrine!" His voice joined the ringing of the bells, which still hadn't faded away. Then, he led the exuberant Yan'er onto the Seventh Sect's Vast Expanse Shrine.

The disciples and Chosen of the Seventh Sect were shaken as more bells began to ring. From the 1st step to the 100,000th, from the First Heaven to the Tenth, everything happened just as before. Heaven shook and the Earth quaked. The disciples of the Seventh Sect looked on with pale faces. At the same time, Yan'er gained indescribable good fortune. She was thoroughly Baptised, and her cultivation base even increased dramatically.

Once again, she was able to look out upon Heaven and Earth, and as she did, cracking sounds emanated out from within her, which came from her explosive cultivation base growth. Because of the Baptism and the other good fortune, she was advancing by leaps and bounds.

What was happening this day was certain to be indelibly recorded within the annals of the Vast Expanse School. It even surpassed the miracle of Meng Hao summoning the Tenth Heaven in the Ninth Sect.

On this day, Meng Hao accomplished something the likes of which had never occurred within the history of the Vast Expanse School. He... reached the pinnacle of every single Vast Expanse Shrine in all of the sects. He took first place, and summoned the Tenth Heaven!



And he didn't do it alone either; he took his apprentice with him.

On that day, countless individuals came to learn of Yan'er, and innumerable disciples came to envy her with utmost jealousy.

And yet, all they could do was that, envy her. Meng Hao took her from the Seventh Sect to the Sixth. After summoning the Tenth Heaven there, he went to the Fifth Sect. The Fourth Sect. The Third Sect. The Second Sect....

He didn't tarry or delay. He summoned the Tenth Heaven in one shrine after another. Because of the good fortune she received, Yan'er's cultivation base became more boundless, more profound, and in fact even exceeded that of a Chosen.

In the Vast Expanse Shrine of the First Sect, the Tenth Heaven appeared once again. Heaven and Earth trembled, and the world shook. Countless disciples felt as if thunder were crashing in their minds. They could do little more than pant at the unforgettable, history-making events which were unfolding.

"Nine sects... and all of the Tenth Heavens...."

"Fang Mu. Fang Mu! He fully deserves to be... the number one Chosen of the Vast Expanse School!!"

"It's too bad his cultivation base isn't in the Dao Realm. If it were, I'd love to see how far he could get on the Transcendence Path. After all, the Vast Expanse Shrine is for those below the Dao Realm. Only the Dao Realm... can walk the Transcendence Path!"

"The benefits his apprentice Yan'er received from the Baptism of the tolling bells is impossible to even imagine!"

The entire Vast Expanse School was shaken and in an uproar. The disciples of the Ninth Sect couldn't stop cheering. From the moment they flew to the Eight Sect... all the way to the First Sect, they continued to shout out at the tops of their lungs.

"Eldest Brother Fang Mu!" The sound echoed out without stop.

On this day, Meng Hao caused an unimaginable stir. Not only were countless ordinary disciples in the Vast Expanse School shocked, even the Dao Realm experts, the Dao Lords, and the Dao Sovereigns were all amazed by the miracle which he had pulled off.

When the Tenth Heaven appeared in the First Sect, Paragons from all of the nine sects came. They were all in the 7-Essences level, and yet they were all equally shaken. Although Meng Hao was vastly below them, they had to admit that, in terms of latent talent and future potential, this Fang Mu... had long since surpassed them. If things went smoothly for him, then he would one day stand among them as peers, or even exceed them.

“A future Paragon!” murmured the 7-Essences Paragon from the First Sect. His words instantly gained the approval of all of the other 7-Essences Paragons from the other sects.

Even Streamcloud from the Third Sect had to concede this point.

He truly was a future Paragon!