

## Unfathomable 581

### Chapter 581

'I've come all the way here but I'm not sure if what these people are planning will work, or at least not if I don't give them a nudge in the right way.'

After having a conversation with Sun Shen, the Moon Lily faction leader, he had a general idea of what was happening. In short, the Sun Lily faction along with three others wanted to wait it out while the Moon Lily wanted to ask for help from outside. For now, it was four against four with two factions withholding their vote.

'I guess his plan is to present me to the other factions that are withholding their vote, it could work in theory but this leaves a lot up to me. Not like everyone has bought into the whole Golden Dragon persona, some still think that my sect had just been lucky or that we had help from the Azure Emperor.'

His side actually needed to get both of those factions that didn't vote on their side or at least keep one from voting. If both continued to withhold the vote or if they each gave theirs to another side then nothing would be done. From what Sun Shen had told him the only person that could push a decision with equal votes was the Patriarch.

'Apparently, this guy's position isn't cemented so he usually doesn't favor any side out of fear of a backlash.'

Usually, the most prominent elder from one of the ten factions would be chosen as their leader. There was a strong right and left side leaning with these factions with only two being mostly neutral. This time around the Patriarch was chosen from one of these more neutral factions that had a more shaky footing. They were down on the totem pole and knew that sooner or later the leader would be replaced by a new one.

'It's a bit strange to be in a sect with a somewhat democratic approach to everything but even in this case, the one with the stronger first is right. Even the leader that is supposed to be the strongest can't go against the mob. If he starts provoking those cultivator nuts with decisions that go against them, something drastic could happen.'

Zhang Dong believed that factions like the Sun Lily could do something to reel their leader in. They would probably not go against him directly as that would put their whole power structure at risk. Instead, they would probably go after the faction the man came from or for people that he was close with. They could do this by making their lives harder or outright assassinations at night.

Even if the Patriarch knew who did it they wouldn't be able to move without proper evidence. Otherwise, the whole sect could collapse into a civil war, it was a balancing act between everyone to keep them from going ballistic. No one's bottom line could be affected out of fear of everything collapsing.

'This might have been what became of my sect if I didn't come back. It's disheartening but sometimes a leader that can overpower the opposition is needed.'

His might couldn't be challenged and everyone inside of his sect knew this. No one had been stupid enough to attempt a coup yet, the only ones that were from the Huo Clan were close but abandoned

their desires after he arrived. This was thanks to Huo Qiang who didn't pose a threat to Zhang Dong in the first place. He didn't have any wish to become Patriarch and didn't push for a switch in power. It was his father that was luckily below his son in strength that attempted this and thus was never successful.

'They really like their tranquil places don't they?'

The trip to the discussion was quite interesting. First of all he was given a large crane to sit on, it was quite majestic and an interesting way to travel considering he had already been used to flying or doing it on a sword. The ten valleys where the factions had their headquarters all pointed to a center plane, there he could now see a large palace surrounded by a marsh.

In this marsh, he could see many various birds walking around. There were cranes but also pink flamingos strutting around and hunting for some food. When he squinted he could feel that the water they were walking in was filled to the brim with spiritual energy and it was the same for the fish and frogs living in it. These various colorful birds radiated a queer power, they weren't strong but packed with extraordinary qi.

'Do they eat those birds or perhaps use their eggs for something in particular?'

He wasn't sure but it wasn't strange to use things like eggs to make pills or special dishes. Cooking was one of the great professions as well. A chef could produce something that was on the level of alchemical pills with the only drawback being that food spoiled a lot faster than pills did.

'The pastry that they offered with the tea was quite rich in spiritual energy, it would have probably helped a lesser cultivator to jump a large realm or a few smaller ones...'

There were a few things that this sect exported, perhaps the baked goods were something they kept within the ten great factions. Nevertheless, he didn't come here to make any deals for cookies or cakes. What was on the line was the early end of this war and him potentially getting the Dao of the Emerald Phoenix Emperor. While he didn't actually think that would be happening any time soon if he could gain the trust of these people that option could open up in the near future.

'It would be nice to end this war faster but confronting the last boss without my troops could be suicide.'

Zhang Dong had gotten a lot stronger than before but he couldn't just one-shot an emperor-level threat. While he thought that at this point in time he could beat them in a fair one-on-one confrontation this didn't mean that he would get one. This opponent was very similar to the cultivators that lived here and these experts were very guarded.

First, they would throw their underlings to test out the waters before engaging. If the Emerald Phoenix Emperor concluded that Zhang Dong was someone that he couldn't handle directly, he just wouldn't. Either they would retreat or use other means to get ahead, this by using a powerful treasure or tiring the foes out by having them fight multiple strong opponents at once.

This approach of course could be copied by Zhang Dong but he wasn't willing to sacrifice the people from his sect as easily as the other Patriarchs did. However to everyone involved this wasn't really a strength but a big weakness. A general couldn't feel bad for their soldiers when out on the field of

battle. They needed to take into account losing a few to save the many, sometimes sacrifices needed to be made.

Zhang Dong on the other hand put himself in danger multiple times. Over and over again he would put his nose into places that he shouldn't. Considering that he was the leader of a massive sect now he should have enough people to do it for him. His biggest weak point was that compassion for the lives of others, even now he put himself in a spot that he could easily be trapped in.

Only with the system aiding him in an assured escape would he actually be able to escape from a place filled with nascent soul masters and powerful formations. There was always a possibility of enemies working against him. Perhaps when he arrived at the meeting place his brother would be there to capture him and along with the ten grand elders here, he would probably be able to.

'Doesn't seem like he is here though, lucky me...'

Of course, his fame that was rising was still new and he wasn't taken quite as seriously as some might think. Thanks to this no one expected him to be brought to this assembly with the Heavenly Crane Sect on the line.

"Welcome sect brothers and sisters, we have gathered here today to contemplate the future of our Heavenly Crane Sect, last time we weren't able to come to a consensus but now that some events have unfolded we must be prepared to make a final decision. Will we send our warriors to deal with this scourge or will we wait?"

Finally, all of them were there. The place might have been a palace on the outside but inside it was another lovely garden filled with tranquility. There was a shallow stream of water connecting to a middle pond at which the Patriarch was sitting. Behind him were two men wearing masks and radiating tremendous amounts of energy. To Zhang Dong's knowledge, these two were called left and right guardians and could potentially be the way of moving these people.

'So that's the two... they are indeed at the cusp of the nascent soul level, well perhaps if I'm lucky I won't need to do anything, let me wait for Sun Shen to make his speech.'

The ten grand elders and leaders of their factions were seated on the ground with everyone else behind them. Each faction besides the leaders could bring two other people. The Moon Lily side that he was with decided to bring him and Sun Shi along. This of course raised a few brows as no one knew who he was and why he wasn't turning his head down when looking at their leader, Tao Guan.

He could feel some of the piercing gazes falling on his face. The two guardians that were next to Tao Guan were of course trying to get a feel of his power level. Their spiritual sense that was prodding at his cultivation was bounced away. As he was playing the Golden Dragon he needed to act for his position. In this large open space, only Tao Guan was at his level of status, if he turned his gaze away it would mean weakness. This was known by everyone and thus they were weary of a person that would dare to do this.

"Leader Shen, would you be so kind to introduce your friend, I'm sure every leader is eager to know."

"I was about to, Leader Zhong. I just didn't want to interrupt the Patriarch's speech."

The two old men looked at each other and sparks started flying. It was clear to Zhang Dong that the two men hated each other's guts whenever talking about the Sun Lily faction Sun Shen always did have a frown on his face. It was some kind of long-lasting grudge that most didn't even remember why it started.

'I guess this is it, better have that system window open just in case...'

## **Chapter 582**

"I'm sure everyone here has heard about the hero of the west."

"You mean Long Dong, the brother of the Azure Emperor? What does he have to do with any of this... It couldn't be?"

"Yes, that's right, may I present to you, Long Dong, the Golden Dragon of the west."

'Huh, I think my title is becoming longer...'

Zhang Dong didn't flinch as he was being examined by everyone in this open-air meeting place. There was a gentle wind passing by that made the flowy robes that everyone else was wearing quite enchanting. He on the other hand remained in battle-ready robes that wouldn't constrict his movements in any way.

"You are the honorable Golden Dragon?"

"Yes, that is true."

"You must excuse us for such a welcome. If everyone knew about your arrival, then we would surely prepare a banquet..."

"Oh no that's fine, things like that don't really matter."

Tao Guan the Heavenly Crane Sect Patriarch was giving him a bright smile that made him look like a gentle grandfather. In his mind however, there was probably chaos brewing and this Zhang Dong knew. This was quite the strange occurrence where a sect leader from a new up-and-coming powerhouse appeared before them without any preparation.

They were caught with their pants down and no one really knew how to react to all of this. Most of the elders were looking with spire and Sun Shen and Sun Shi that brought him over. Normally such a move would be discussed between all of the elders and the Moon Lily faction knew it. It was as if they were going behind everyone's backs and trying to force a decision to be made.

"With all due respect to the Golden Dragon but I don't think he or even the Azure Emperor should be looking into our problems, Sun Shen what is the meaning of this?"

Leader Zhong from the Sun Lily faction burst out with anger while pointing his finger at the other old man. However, he didn't take the bait and remained calm even when accused and scoffed at by some of the other faction leaders.

"I have only brought the Golden Dragon because he wished to present us with an offer that would be beneficial to us all."

“You mean to your Moon Lily faction! Do you wish to become the next Patriarch!”

“Leader Zhong, those are baseless accusations! Also, you don’t think that we don’t know of your own desire for that position!”

“That’s right, you think we don’t know what you are doing Zhong?”

“How dare you speak to the leader in such a way!”

This time Sun Shi was the one to start the shouting match. He was joined by the allies from other Lily factions while the opposition did the same. In a matter of seconds, the peaceful conversation turned into a shouting match between old men and women. Zhang Dong could only raise his brow at how badly this place was being run, the Patriarch truly didn’t seem to have much pull in this place. No one from his sect would dare to start something like this in his presence out of fear.

‘Having a good backing and personal power does really help but even when he is letting them speak those two seem angered...’

What he was more interested in was the two guardians that were behind the Patriarch. Sun Shen had informed him about the duo of experts; apparently, they had a peculiar story. First of all, they were twins just like the two others that came before them. They had a long-lasting history with the whole sect and were in a sense a weapon that only the Patriarch could use.

He didn’t get the full story but he could put it together by himself. Twins were always chosen for this position from the ten great factions. They would have to abandon their family and swear allegiance to the Patriarch instead. Those two would then be taught a peculiar martial art that could only be used by people of similar features.

With this technique, they could boost their power above a regular nascent soul master but on the flip side, they would be a bit weaker if they ever fought by themselves. It was some kind of dual cultivation method that blended the twins into a singular fighter. Zhang Dong could feel that their souls were quite attuned to each other, it wasn’t just their bodies. It was as if they had become one with each other, one being that could use two bodies.

‘If they can’t make a decision, then should I really go through with it or just wait...’

While the Lily factions continued to fight with each other he listened in and continued to feel them out. While he wanted to use this sect to help him take on the Phoenix Emerald Empire it wasn’t something that he couldn’t live without. Now that he made the trip here and set a teleportation spot it wouldn’t be hard to return. Just like with the demonic island he could just set up a teleportation gate for his people and move in without asking anyone. Bringing a forward force over with this replica medallion was also an option.

There was a lot of chaotic energy among these people. Each group was looking out for themselves and unwilling to give up on any of their current power. A large part of them still considered waiting for a good strategy but he knew that they would not be able to push back against the enemy. The only thing they would be able to do was to buy some time for Zhang Dong to get stronger.

Perhaps if he was a less compassionate person then this would have been a good plan. While he farmed the northern water empire the east side of the empire would probably last out for a few years. Even

though the Emerald Phoenix Empire was strong they would probably lose a percentage of their forces and use up some treasures to get through the defensive array that was in this area.

He could even lay a trap and wait for his enemies to celebrate. When they were at their highest point and convinced of their power he could bring them down a peg. Within all those years he would have probably been able to bring forth more nascent soul masters and perhaps even defeat the other emperor. Then equipped with a new Dao he would have a better chance at victory than before.

‘That could be the best option but a lot of these people will die and lose their homes in the process, at this point they can still be saved...’

“Silence!”

Finally, after a long tiresome back and forth the two guardians stepped forward. Their aura burst through the entire area and smacked everyone in the face. Even the faction leaders had to turn their heads away for a moment as it was too much for them. Only two people were able not to look away, which were the sect Patriarch and Zhang Dong.

This was noticed by the people gathered here and put them in a bad position. First of all, it showed that the name Golden Dragon wasn’t boisterous. Second, they all knew that only masters of a certain level could just shrug off the twin’s suppressive Qi. Thirdly, this put them in a bind as now they were rude in front of a powerful master that could very well be on the level of the Azure Emperor but without confirming this claim further they wouldn’t be convinced yet.

“Please forgive my people, they are under a lot of stress lately, you are probably aware of the situation at our borders.”

“Yes I am but I don’t think that you are taking it as seriously as you should.”

He could see Zhong gritting his teeth after looking up. There were probably various reasons that he would be against this type of meeting. One of the larger ones was probably because it made his sect look weak. Inviting an outsider like this without properly discussing everything was also something that went against sect rules. It was as if his faction wasn’t taken seriously in this decision that Sun Shen had made.

The others that were against engaging with the other empire were probably of the same mind. If it weren’t for Zhang Dong’s high cultivation level he would have probably been removed from this meeting place already. Only thanks to the way that he presented himself and his current fame could he stand tall and on the same level as the other Patriarch.

There was a limit to what he could do however if he was rude and pushed too much even these people here would attack him. They still didn’t know his full capabilities and only if he showed them what he was made of would they actually listen. Otherwise, he would need to return later with an army which they could not deny before forcing an agreement.

“I wish to not be rude to the Emperor’s Brother but these are our sect’s problems. The Azure Emperor has already refused his aid or did the honorable Golden Dragon arrive at the behest of the Emperor to offer aid?”

“No, my brother has nothing to do with it.”

Why the Patriarch didn't use any rude words he did imply the standing of the Azure Emperor to be above Zhang Dong's. It somewhat carried an implication that they wouldn't move for someone like him that had not yet been tested by them. Rumors could only carry him this far without any proper information; they couldn't take him as seriously as the Azure Dragon.

"But my brother isn't all-knowing, he does not know the gravity of this situation and it seems that neither do you, the Emerald Phoenix Emperor is an expert not below me or my brother and you won't be able to stop their forces, at least not by yourself..."

"Honorable Golden Dragon with all due respect, our sect has survived for thousands of years..."

"Will that mean anything when the Emerald Phoenix Empire arrives at your doorstep and crushes your people? Do you really think that these feeble defenses that you have will last you more than a few years? What after that, will you run with tails between your legs to my brother or me to save you?"

"Y...you..."

The Patriarch was stunned by the way Zhang Dong was speaking but he needed to get a point across. This was that the longer they kept to themselves and didn't do anything the faster they would come to ruin. The only way out would be sending the bulk of their forces out to the warning zones because as it was now, their numbers and experts would be slowly diminished until the enemy arrived at their main sect grounds. Before that could happen and before more people died for nothing he needed to make this group of old farts move.

## **Chapter 583**

There he was, standing with his chest raised. A scowl appeared on Zhang Dong's face as he continued to talk with the Heavenly Crane Sect. This was all according to his hastily produced plan. What he needed to do was convince these people that it was in their best interest to make a move now and not wait a year or two for their lands to be overrun by the Emerald Phoenix Empire's forces. To do such a thing fists were better than words and he already had a target to present them on.

"You do not realize the power of that empire or of their Emperor, how about I prove it to you now?"

"How could you prove something like that? Have you come in contact with that person yourself, Golden Dragon?"

"No, but I have faced someone on that level, you may know him as the Demi-human Emperor."

"Ah yes, the illusive master that you have bested in single combat... or so the rumors say."

The leader from the Sun Lily faction chimed in on the conversation that he was having with the Patriarch. It was clear that these ten groups didn't hold their leader in very high regard. Usually, no one would dare speak out unless they were allowed to. Even in his sect where he allowed conversation between everyone no one besides his close family and friends would interrupt him.

"I see that the leader of the Sun Lily doesn't believe my claim. Would you like me to demonstrate my skills to make this move along?"

"You wish to show your techniques?"

The people at the assembly started to whisper between each other. It was a rare occurrence for a known expert to show off their skills, even less when they were potentially one of the top ten experts in the whole empire. To this sect, it would be a chance to see what their competition was capable of. There wasn't really a reason to refuse as they could only gain from this exchange, even if Zhang Dong's opponent lost no one would have to know.

Their sect's prestige would be kept and everything that transpired in this innermost sect zone would never leave it. Then on the other hand if he was bested by one of their elders it would allow them to gain fame. The only problem in that situation would be the Azure Emperor that might dislike the fact that his brother's name was getting dirtied.

"Yes, I think it would move things along, the Emerald Phoenix Emperor should be my equal, I don't think you have anything to lose."

Zhang Dong shifted the conversation in this direction to get things rolling. The people in this world still followed people with the bigger fist and would do so after they proved themselves. For now, they only had rumors to go around and those could have been fabricated. For all they knew, the western side had been lucky to have been attacked by weak opponents. Then in Wang Long's case, the young man could have been critically injured during the destruction of the Soaring Dragon Sect which could explain his early demise.

"Nothing like this has ever been proposed before, we would need to deliberate on it for a few days."

Zhong from the Sun Lily faction continued to talk as if he was the Patriarch of this sect. To Zhang Dong's knowledge, if an all-out war between the factions broke out then the Sun Lily faction was the one most likely to come out on top. It was only thanks to the equal divide in voting power that some semblance of equality had been created.

However due to this way of taking care of things he couldn't see them making a decision any time soon. If they were allowed to ponder his proposition he might be stuck in this place for weeks or even months. The other group was clearly intending to not engage into battle or send any of their troops to aid others.

'Do they want the other factions to send out their troops instead to weaken them?'

Before coming here he had also looked at the Heavenly Crane Sect side of the map. It seemed that the areas owned by the Sun Lily faction were closer to the outer edges and closer to the main sect. The ones that were losing ground were the other side that probably wanted to collapse. If they could then swoop in and take everything over from within they could probably guarantee that someone from their side would be chosen as the next Patriarch.

'They haven't realized that there won't be a sect to return to if this continues.'

Zhang Dong was sure that the Emerald Phoenix Empire was still pushing their troops through the bridge and slowly building up their strongholds. When they were finished establishing a proper foothold they would start to wage war in a more aggressive fashion. At that point even when all of these factions came together it would be too late for a counter-attack.

Their only hope would then be help from outside or fleeing. He could offer that help but it would be better to use their existing forces now before they got wiped out. The elders that were gathered in this



place weren't weak, if all of them made a move at the same time even the Emerald Phoenix Empire experts wouldn't have an easy time. Then if he added his own special forces along with some weapons then they could push back their advance.

"I don't think that will be necessary, just let me fight your two guardians there, you have my word that I won't kill them."

Zhang Dong pointed at the two twins that were behind the Patriarch. These two guardians were supposedly very powerful, presumably more powerful than their leader. If he didn't challenge them outright the other side would probably have a hard time picking a capable opponent from him. No one from the other faction leaders would probably dare to engage in a bout. Their positions would be at stake if they ever got injured during the process. Old monsters like them only fought when there was no other means for them or to protect their assets from being taken.

The guardians on the other hand had a special position. They didn't really belong to any of the factions, if even both of them died they would only affect the Patriarch's power base. To some of the ten factions removing them would actually be beneficial. Their replacements would need to be trained again and this time could be used to scheme and gain further power.

The people making plans were still ignoring the enemy empire at their doorsteps. These twin guardians were not allowed to leave the Patriarch's palace. They weren't considered in the main fighting force but just as strong bodyguards. Losing them here wouldn't be that much of a problem as they wouldn't be fighting in the war anyway. Their job was to defend their leader and subdue any of the ten faction leaders if they went against the sect in any way. If they were out of commission then some of the plans that couldn't be carried out previously, would be plausible.

"You wish to face the left and right guardian in battle?"

"Yes, they do seem the most capable of all of you but perhaps if three of you took their place then it wouldn't be that much of a problem, hm...on second thought maybe four would be better otherwise it might be considered bullying on my side."

Zhang Dong rubbed his chin while nodding as if he was concerned about the well-being of the old experts here. All of them were instantly maddened by the way that he ignored their status in one sentence. It was as if they were nothing but little juniors that he could swat away like flies. To old elders that had resided on the pinnacle of the world for hundreds of years, this was quite a hit to their face.

"You dare insult our sect, you might be the Emperor's brother but you are not the Azure Emperor himself! Patriarch, I propose we excuse this young man and punish Leader Shen for bringing him here without discussing it with the other faction leaders."

Leader Zhong wasn't having any of it, he could tell that the deal looked too good to be true. If the guardians lost then the other side would have gained some footing. It would perhaps not prove that the Emerald Phoenix Empire was dangerous but would at least give the opposition a strong backer. The twin guardians were considered to be the strongest experts of their sect if they worked together.

Their cooperative techniques could not be beaten by a single combatant from either side. If the Golden Dragon came out on top then the Sun Lily faction would potentially lose a lot of influence. It would be only natural for everyone to flock to the Moon Lily faction that looked to be backed by him instead.

“So, you would deny this test? Are you so afraid of losing?”

Before Zhong could continue a deep voice filled the entire assembly. It was Zhang Dong that was chuckling and acting like a villain. He started smiling as if he owned the entire place, clearly playing the role of a villain.

“I thought that the Heavenly Crane Sect was one of the three great sects but you are even afraid to let me face two of your masters, do you wish me to promise to only use my left hand? If I don’t use any of my sword skills would that be better?”

“You dare make light of our skills?”

A strange voice that sounded like two people talking at the exact same time echoed through the entire place. This was followed by an astonishing amount of spiritual energy. This time around it was the twin guardians that burst out in anger. This was probably the first time they were disrespected this much. Every of the faction leaders feared their might but Zhang Dong was not showing them the respect they thought they were owed.

“Hoh? I see that you two are willing. How about it, Patriarch Tao Guan? This is your decision to make, allow me to fight your two experts to prove my point. Otherwise, you won’t see reason before it’s too late.”

Finally, all eyes went toward the leader of this Heavenly Crane Sect. The others could give him advice but when it came to the two guardians the Patriarch was the only one that could make them move. His eyes that were closed finally opened and it seemed that he had made a decision. His mouth opened and finally, he spoke out the words that Zhang Dong wanted to hear.

“I will allow this.”

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“Patriarch? Won’t you reconsider? We can’t have an outsider like this come to our sect and challenge our elders, there are procedures that we need to follow.”

“Faction Leader Zhong, you are forgetting yourself.”

“I... I understand Patriarch.”

To everyone’s surprise, Tao Guan took Zhang Dong up on the offer. Then out of nowhere he finally glared at Zhong that was throwing his weight around. The man had no right to call out the Patriarch on his decision; that was something he could decide on. The two guardians that were his protectors only answered to him and him alone. They would follow his orders just as they were taught to do.

Zhang Dong looked at these two men with identical stature and matching clothes. The only difference was that one was wearing a black robe while the other was donning a white one. They were no simple opponents and this he knew, they were endgame characters that would probably pose a threat to the generals of the opposing force. However, when pitting them against an Emperor level there was probably a gap that he wanted to show to these people.

It seemed that these people were having a misconception about the power levels existing in this world. The Great Circle level of the Nascent Soul realm was considered to be the pinnacle of power. Most

people that achieved this goal were considered true grandmasters of similar power. With only the immortal stage existing above and no one being able to even grasp it to become a half-step expert, this was all they knew.

By this logic, even the Azure Emperor that was considered to be the world's strongest could be defeated by numbers. This sect had quite a number of nascent soul masters and was convinced that with enough of them any master could be taken down. It was just a matter of numbers as there was a limit to everyone's true power and potential.

He on the other hand knew that this wasn't quite true. With the system and his world-traveling expedition, he had enhanced his soul. This was to the point of it being over the limit of what was possible in this world. Coupled with various other enhancements as his queer cultivation seed within, he was able to exert a power that was over the great circle of the nascent soul level.

The existence of stages between the immortal realm and the great circle was known to him. This growing seed inside of him was close to something like those but not quite. This created world rejected the conventional methods that allowed people to achieve one of those realms between the immortal one.

His own theory was that if a person was capable of grasping one Dao fully then they should be able to take the next step. In Zhang Dong's mind, there were at least three steps the cultivator could take. The first one started from the Qi Condensation stage and ended at the Great Circle of the Nascent Soul realm. The second step started after that and ended right before the immortal stage which was then the third step and perhaps the final one.

It was impossible for the people to skip the middle step. The path was blocked by a mountain that no one besides a system holder could cross. Even those people like him needed to gather a massive amount of spirit points through the thousand or so years that they were allowed to live in this world. Then they would forcefully advance to a higher realm or at least that is what the speculation was.

No one really knew anymore what happened after a person reached the immortal stage. Even those with talent could barely grasp one greeted Dao in their entire life but even with multiple ones, it was still impossible to progress. He already knew it as he had a grasp on three greater Daos and his seed was still not opening up.

With each realm, some of the secrets of the world became more apparent. When achieving the nascent soul level a person became more aware of the spiritual energy around them. Probably the first step required a person to grasp one of the lesser Daos to advance. Then mastering a greater Dao to go further and finally perhaps multiple ones along with something else before achieving the Immortal stage. This he felt slightly after defeating Wang Long but the moment was too fleeting for him to fully grasp it.

Nevertheless, he considered himself on a level slightly above what a great circle nascent soul master should be. This was the same for the demi-human emperor that he face and also for Wang Long that was defeated. It wouldn't be strange if the Fish Empress in the north or the Emerald Bird Emperor were above them.

This all depended on how this game-like world worked. Usually, there were two possibilities, one of them that whatever the order he beat the last bosses their power would not change. Then there was the second type that was more concerning where the emperors could become more powerful depending on how many of them were already dead. This would balance things out slightly for the enemy side slightly but he didn't expect the emperors to get too out of hand.

Would this scaling process exist for the people that lived in this empire? Probably not. While the enemies grew in power the sects that he wanted to protect would remain stagnant. They already started at a lower point. Old records showed that if a system holder wasn't there to aid in the battles the lands would be overrun. Then the Long Clan would use their flying city to stem the tide and emerge after the enemies had retreated into their own lands.

"You are very confident in yourself Golden Dragon but you must understand our position, we can't have the Emperor's brother be injured in our sect thus..."

"Do you want a written contract? Don't worry my brother won't seek vengeance even if I fall here, your guardians can come at me what all they have."

"If you are going to this extent then I will not stop you but let it be known that we from the Heavenly Crane Sect have warned you."

Zhang Dong smirked a bit while producing a legally binding document along with a recording of this bout. Tao Guan didn't seem to be convinced of his power but instead was worried that the Azure Emperor would seek trouble with them if something happened.

'Not bad, he insulted me and my sect without even mentioning them.'

It didn't seem that the Patriarch was concerned about the United Element Sect and any of their masters. No one was mentioned explicitly, it was as if they wouldn't be able to seek revenge even if they wanted after he vanished. People did somewhat accept his strength but not much was known about people like Huo Qiang or Zhang Zhi that were only now showing their expertise. He could not really do much about it for now but perhaps after a joint mission with this Heavenly Crane Sect, even his people would finally be accepted as some of the all-time greats.

"A decision has been made then, let us depart to the holy testing ground!"

"The holy testing ground?"

"Yes, Leader Shen, will you please guide our honorable guest there."

"As you wish, Patriarch."

Zhang Dong repeated what the Patriarch said after the contract was signed. Tao Guan took the piece of jade with Zhang Dong's spiritual signature as proof. Then instead of answering the question, he shoved that onto Sun Shen. He didn't sound particularly mad about being called out but Zhang Dong felt that this man was working from some kind of angle. This angle was discussed previously between Sun Shen and him before this meeting.

"It seems that you were right, Leader Shen. I didn't think that he would actually agree to something like this, this fast."

“The Patriarch is a smart man, he knows that we need to move but is being held back by the traditions.”

“His arms are tied eh? Well I guess I’ll have to untangle those bonds”

“Honorable Golden Dragon, be careful the left and right guardians can’t be taken lightly not even the Patriarch could face them alone...”

“Don’t worry, I never take anyone lightly.”

Tao Guan, the current leader, could not force a move without straining his own position. This didn’t mean that he didn’t want to do something about it. The way he went about things didn’t really sit well with Zhang Dong though. Even if he was going to lose some of his power base in the sect or anger some elders, he should have prioritized his people and survival. The more they spend on bureaucracy the more lands were getting taken.

However, he understood that it was hard for anyone to forsake the old traditions. After a sect had existed for a while people would start to adhere to traditions. It was a safe road paved by their predecessors that had lasted them for millennia. It was a tried and true process that never failed them so there was no reason to not stick with it. Unless something really drastic happened there was no use in changing what was already working well.

‘I need to really show them the difference between the pinnacle experts...’

His main goal was to beat into these people that they should fear the Emerald Phoenix Emperor and his forces. This he could only do by totally eviscerating their top experts. He could not leave any doubt in their minds, the victory didn’t need to be swift but it had to leave a long-lasting stigma in their hearts.

“So, what is this secret trial ground?”

“It’s a secret spot that our elders use to settle disagreements, there you won’t have to worry about causing destruction to the surrounding.”

“Sounds good but I’ll hold you to that...”

“Hm?”

“Oh, nothing.”

Zhang Dong whispered while placing his hands behind his back and whistling. Soon enough all of the elders that were gathered here started flying away toward a certain location. This was a large mountain at the end of this valley that had been hidden from view by a grand illusory formation.

‘Not bad, even I had a hard time noticing it...’

It was quite well hidden and only when he got within a few hundred meters of the secret spot did he notice that something was there. This was truly an end-level zone that he would not have been able to discover on any other occasion. Inside was the battleground where he needed to deliver a swift beating to two people he didn’t know.

‘Well then, let’s see what these guardians are made off.’

‘Looks like we are in some kind of giant soap bubble... neat.’

Zhang Dong was always surprised by the fantastic sights that this world was capable of providing him. At this very moment, he was floating around a large open area somewhat similar to another dimension. This one wasn’t as stable as the one used in the dimensional regalia or the replica he made. Instead of being contained its walls were somewhat transparent and looked similar to a soap bubble.

This produced clear edges of this zone that he was inside of now. From the outside, the space also looked more compact. When looking inside the elders from the Heavenly Crane Sect would see militarized versions of Zhang Dong and the two guardians that he was facing.

The landscape on the inside was quite natural and filled with green grass and trees. The whole area was around five kilometers in diameter with some hills here and there. It was enough for a nascent soul master to let loose, damaging the translucent walls of this place wouldn’t be easy even for him. At most he could puncture a small hole to get out or use his formation knowledge to find the exit.

‘The system’s teleportation function isn’t getting blocked at least so I don’t have to worry about them holding me captive here.’

What he was doing was quite risky. He placed himself in an unknown lesser dimensional treasure. Objects like this weren’t easily left and could act as a prison for a cultivator like him. Perhaps the Heavenly Crane Sect was even planning to do this if things got out of hand.

However, he managed to keep some decorum and was acting as an ally and not an enemy. If they chose to trap him here then perhaps the east side of the empire would already be lost. Without this sect’s approval, it would be hard to maneuver in their lands. Potentially getting attacked by their masters when he was trying to subjugate the other forces was a possibility. In that case, the safer bet would be to wait for the Heavenly Crane Sect to weaken a bit before taking over their lands.

This would be then further complicated by the Long Clan which was right in the middle of it all. The whole thing might look like a hostile takeover even more and war might follow. As long as the Heavenly Crane Sect made an official statement asking for help though, then even the Azure Emperor couldn’t complain.

‘It doesn’t seem that this place has any suppressing formations at least, at most they would try to trap me inside...’

The notion that Sun Shen and Sun Shi had planned all of this out just to get him here crossed his mind. There could be many reasons why they would try to capture the rising star of the empire. Perhaps the Azure Emperor ordered it or they were hoping to stop his meteoric rise to power out of fear. This was a bit of a stretch though as the real problem was the Empire at their doorstep and not what was happening on the other side of the empire.

The people in this world mostly kept to their lands and ignored what was happening outside of them. This was also one of the biggest reasons that no one was actually interested in aiding the Heavenly Crane Sect out with their problems. It was their land and it was their responsibility to take care of it.

“You two don’t talk much but that’s fine, I’m a man of few words myself.”

Zhang Dong looked at the two men before him, they were standing there with their hands behind their backs just like him. It looked like there was a mirror between the two as their poses were identical to a strange extent. This was part of their routine and the power of the technique they were using. It was as if they were one being and their souls that showed signs of resonance confirmed this.

'I wonder if it would be possible to go further with this technique and actually fuse both souls together...'

It was a scary thought to have two people combine their souls. Normally absorption of soul energy was possible while the rest dissipated. Then there was the more drastic method of devouring it whole without leaving anything behind. Such a thing would of course kill the person that the soul was devoured. Side-effects of such a technique were always there, memories mixed with each other and could break a cultivator's mind if they weren't prepared for it.

"Well then, let us get this over with."

Finally, after looking over his opponent that was standing half a kilometer away from him, Zhang Dong called out to the people watching them. The one to answer was Tao Guan the sect Patriarch and after his proclamation, it was on.

"We will then commence the match between the Twin Guardians and Long Dong the Golden Dragon of the West. Let it commence!"

A loud gong echoed through this compact landscape but none of the three fighters moved. While the two guardians took up fighting stances their opponent Zhang Dong didn't. He just stood there while looking at them with his piercing gaze. Weapons were of course allowed, each of the guardians had a long sword matching the color of their robes but their opponent decided to remain without it.

"What are they doing? Why aren't the guardians attacking?"

Zhong asked with a rather angry tone. He had been against all of this from the start and perhaps thought that there was someone that was working in the background to make all of this happen. From his standpoint, there was also no possibility of the guardians losing if they took the fight seriously. The young upstart was strong but he clearly lacked the proper decorum and experience of a grandmaster. If they lost then it was probably due to some kind of deal being made between the Moon Lily Faction and the Patriarch.

"Do you really think that the Golden Dragon is an easy opponent, Leader Zhong?"

"What do you mean Leader Shen? Of course, he is strong but he can't be stronger than the left and right guardians! This is a preposterous claim, are you insinuating that they aren't moving because they can't?"

"You might not believe me but that man can't be looked at with our current understanding of the Dao..."

"Hmph..."

There was usually one reason for an expert of the nascent soul level to remain standing, this was due to their keen sense of danger. People like the Twin Guardians didn't reach this level of power without a good reason. Usually, with age and experience, a sense of measuring an opponent's strength came with it.

It wasn't that they weren't willing to engage in combat, they just couldn't find a weak spot that they could exploit. The path of cultivation was a path of self-betterment but it was a continuous journey with no one. Through it, there were always a few chinks in a practitioner's armor that would arise.

These could then be exploited in combat but in this case, the two grandmasters couldn't see anything they could exploit. It was as if they were looking at a giant iron wall that would not buckle under their punches even if they continued to hit it for years.

"If you won't move then I will have to, from the outset I apologize for what I'm about to do but you must understand my position here..."

Zhang Dong finally decided to act, the twins reacted by placing their backs against each other. They were clearly guarding both of their blindspots which was the main strength of their techniques. With both fighters attuned to each other's moves, they could perform more daring attacks. They could fully commit to devastating sword strikes when knowing well that the other would defend them if their enemy managed to dodge it.

'So, one of them will concentrate on blocking my attack while the other launches an instant counter. I could play around with that but this won't get the message across without them realizing the difference in power...'

There were many ways of going with this fight but he wanted to send a message. He could beat them by safely using his ranged skills and using his superior Qi foundation. The space they were fighting was large but not that large either. Producing powerful wide-area attacks to whittle down their defenses wouldn't be such a bad idea, considering he had a lot more in his tank than they both combined.

Instead however, he decided to get in close range and engage the two in a battle that they were famous for. Close-range combat using mostly fast-paced skills that didn't require much spiritual energy but instead a lot of battle sense and skills. Thus with just one step, his body blurred as he found himself right at the right guardian's side. This one was wearing a black robe and was quick to move into a defensive position to intercept the kick that Zhang Dong jabbed at his stomach.

The left guardian instantly reacted, at the exact moment that the foot would collide with the black sword, the white one would deliver a devastating blow to the opponent. The only way to counter this would have normally been to change the trajectory of the kick and try to evade it. Yet when Zhang Dong tried that, then the black blade would find its way into his side.

This was what the two masters worked as one expected but reality was different. The kick that they predicted increased in speed and collided with the black blade to send the right guardian tumbling into the horizon. The amount of sheer power and Dao behind that kick was just too devastating. Even the white blade that was supposed to take advantage of the perfect counter hit nothing more than air.

"You should work on that a bit more..."

The ten elders and the Patriarch that were watching this exchange almost fell out of their seats. They couldn't see what moves Zhang Dong used, the speed was above what they could predict and the movement seemed mysterious.

"Want to try it one more time?"



Then they instantly frowned at what the man in the white robe was doing. Instead of continuing with the assault he just stopped. He didn't use the chance he made to capitalize on the exchange but instead moved back to the spot he started in and waited for the right guardian to return.

"Now, I'll do the exact same thing... see if you can react this time around."

With a smile plastered all over his face, he flew forward once more. Staying true to his word the exact same kick was used and it flew at the exact same guardian as it did before...

## **Chapter 586**

"Are the twin guardians doing this on purpose? How can this man be this powerful?"

"Leader Zhong, those are some serious allegations, do you have anything to back those claims up? Do the guardians look like they are losing on purpose? Are we looking at the same fight?"

"What are you prattling about Leader Shen?"

"Do you have eyes like the rest of us? Do you think any of the Leaders would do better than the guardians, even when we all attacked him together?"

"Preposterous, he can't be that strong..."

"Are you sure, perhaps you should change your tune, what if the Golden Dragon seeks you out for an apology, you have been quite rude?"

Zhong's forehead began to sweat, something a nascent soul master should be above. Sun Shen, whom he was talking to, was smiling. Zhong wanted to deny the claim of Zhang Dong's superiority but it was obvious that his skills were far above those of the twin guardians.

Even he who was a smidge above the other Leaders couldn't see the man's moves, it wouldn't be strange if he couldn't take more than a few moves before being defeated. Only with a combined effort of at least three leaders could he see them wining against such an opponent.

"Patriarch as you can see, this is the true power that we will be facing and what the Azure Emperor was holding back from us."

"This is truly concerning..."

Tao Guan's eyebrows wiggled as he tried to hide his displeasure. His true reason of allowing this fight to happen was out of curiosity. He wanted to measure the power of the man called the Golden Dragon who was rumored to be on equal footing to the Azure Emperor. The latter was considered to be the true endpoint and foe that was holding his sect back from taking over the whole empire.

Now, on the other hand, he wasn't sure if that had even been something that they would have been capable of. This man was just playing around with their strongest tag team experts. Tao Guan knew the two well and in the past he even sparred with the two. They were his equals and if they wanted they could defeat him by sacrificing one in the process. When looking at this fight, he couldn't see the two winnings even if they attempted that secret technique.

Their opponent was far too nimble and if rumors were true, he could also recover from critical wounds in a matter of seconds. To defeat someone like this they would probably need to entrap him in a powerful formation and reduce him to ashes. Perhaps if they overloaded the pseudo-dimension that they were fighting in and used all the power of the ten grand elders together it would be possible. However, if he ever managed to escape, their sect would be ruined.

“Is the Azure Emperor as strong as his younger brother or could he actually be the more powerful one of the two?”

“No one knows, the younger one only appeared recently. The old information we receive of him must have been false as well, it’s impossible that some little sect as the Dark Palm Sect almost destroyed him.”

Since the Golden Dragon appeared in the empire everyone started gathering all the data of his exploits. His first appearance dated back to around six years ago in the then-small Zhang Clan. The rumors stated that he was dragged around by one of the middle-sized sects to do their bidding. It appeared as if they were actually almost able to kill him before a turnaround.

Now after seeing his true power it was obvious to them that this was some kind of elaborate theater show. It made them believe that this Long Dong was hiding his power and slowly presenting it to the world at critical junctures. Some attributed this to some kind of hobby that this Golden Dragon had. He probably withheld his full strength in hopes of getting challenged by weaker masters only to then seek conflict with them.

It looked like the other side was bullying him but in reality, he was a master that could wipe them out with a poke of his finger. This was more probable than the other hypothesis which stated that he gained some type of legacy of an immortal. Even those took some time to stomach and going from core formation to the pinnacle of nascent soul in just six years was unfathomable.

Either he was some kind of old perverse monster that took joy in getting into trouble or an expert of unmanageable potential. None of these two were good choices but the second one was a bit better as it would mean that the man could perhaps be controlled. If he was a young expert that earned power fast he would probably be lacking in many other places. It would be easier to control a young inexperienced practitioner than an old monster that was playing some strange game with others.

“Wait... could he be the one?”

“What do you mean, Leader Qiaolian?”

While the other leaders were brooding and looking at the two guardian’s being smacked around by the much younger Zhang Dong, one of their leaders tried to get their attention. She was on the older side and looked like a nice old lady with a staff. She was wearing a gray robe and in front of her was a floating crystal ball which made her look like some kind of fortune teller.

“Could he be the reborn immortal of legends?”

“Leader Qiaolian...”

The other leaders frowned when they heard what the old woman spoke. She belonged to one of the neutral factions that never took any sides. They were known for their future-telling techniques that

sometimes bore fruit. They were oracles in a sense and had some chaotic beliefs, one of them was the belief in an immortal being that would be reborn every hundred thousand years during a chaotic period.

"It all makes sense, this is the period of turmoil that has been passed down in legends, he must be the one, that aura of magnificence radiates excellence... he must be the immortal that was promised."

This group of fortune tellers was considered to be mostly filled with insane people. However, their power in the sect was large as thanks to their future sight techniques which they could use in their battles, they were strong foes. Thanks to their power they were able to hold on to one of the ten great seats.

"Leader Qiaolian why don't you calm down, the Golden Dragon is certainly strong but he is not immortal..."

"That's why you've always been a fool Zhong, you wouldn't be able to tell an immortal from a cow!"

"Now listen here you old crow!"

"I won't listen to a fool, at least Leader Shen had the insight to bring this man here, my faction will not remain silent anymore!"

"Do you mean?"

"Yes, we will support the Moon Lily faction if this individual is involved, we must support the immortal, this is why our faction was created!"

"Just because of some old prophecy, you would risk our sect's safety?"

"Old Prophecy? My people have been passing down the legend of the immortal through generations since a time when the empire didn't even exist! It's not just an old prophecy you old fool, it's the truth of this world, the immortal has always appeared and we have always lent him our strength!"

"Y-you..."

Zhong was not happy to hear that one of the neutral factions had decided to switch sides. With the old woman supporting the Moon Lily Faction he needed at least one of the other three neutral ones to come to his side instead. If he wasn't able to convince them otherwise then what Leader Shen was proposing would be voted in his favor.

"Both of you, calm down, this is not the place to discuss this issue."

The patriarch raised his voice at the two leaders that were fighting with each other. It was quite a surprise to have the old woman speak this much. Usually, she was uninterested in the voting process. There was not even a record of this faction group ever picking a side and now suddenly they were interested in this white-haired man. The Patriarch needed to agree that there was something about this Long Dong.

His presence was either a blessing or a curse on this sect and it was up to him to decide. The only problem was that this could perhaps be the only time that he could get rid of him. By ordering the guardians to use their life they could probably stall for long enough to overload the pseudo-dimension.

Either the man there would die or be trapped for all eternity between dimensions with no way of getting back here.

"I think they are almost finished... the left guardian isn't moving, is he out cold?"

"Hmmm..."

The Patriarch looked into the transparent dimension. There he saw one of his best warriors down on the ground. It took a lot to knock a nascent soul master, something that wouldn't usually be possible. It meant that Zhang Dong's Qi had overwhelmed them to a point of no return. The other guardian didn't look much better, his face which was kept behind a robe was exposed. His face looked like it had been beaten on for a few days, and his lips and eyes were swollen. The man could not even hide the shaking knees that were barely keeping him upright.

After letting out a sigh Tao Guan decided to leave it up to a vote. The power of this man was not something he could contend with and he might have lost his chance of doing anything by this point. His most trusted two experts would probably not be able to muster much energy to keep him busy long enough. It was better to not poke the beehive if he didn't have to, working under this man wouldn't be a shame and it really didn't matter if Long Dong or Long Qing ruled over them. Perhaps the other leaders still had rebellion on their minds but he had somewhat given up on that notion.

"This is enough, honorable Golden Dragon, we have seen your capabilities and we accept you as a proper honorary guest of our sect."

"Patriarch?"

The man made the announcement which would make Zhang Dong one of their closest allies. It was not a hollow title, it would force their own sect members to be lenient with the United Element Sect and punish them if problems arose.

"Is that so, well then..."

Zhang Dong started speaking but in a flash, his voice found itself in the room that the ten great leaders were occupying.

"How about we talk about this little war you are having trouble with..."

The Patriarch's eyes bulged out in fright as he realized that he made the right decision and if he actually attempted something sketch he would have died in this very instance.

## **Chapter 587**

"Are you feeling alright? You don't need to kneel that far down...did she get lost here or something, Sun Shen?"

Zhang Dong whispered the last part into Sun Shen's ear while looking down at a strange grandma who looked like a witch. After he left the special battle area she had face-planted down on the floor and was prostrating herself before him. His battle with the guardians was one-sided and all but he didn't think they would react this extremely.

"No Honorable Golden Dragon, this is Leader Qiaolian she is part of our sect..."

“Is that so...”

When looking at the old woman that was performing a dogeza bow before him, he started feeling uncomfortable. It always felt strange for the elders in this world to do it, even though he was a lot more powerful than she was, there was still a big difference in age. The woman looked to be in the twilight years of the nascent soul level.

‘She must be over nine hundred years old...’

“Please stand up Leader Qiaolian, there is no need for this.”

He beckoned her to stand up and luckily the old woman followed his proposition. Before getting to this meeting he got a short briefing from Sun Shen. The names of all the various leaders were known to him and this woman was part of the Astral Lily faction that was known for their foresight techniques.

These would allow people to see a second or so into the future and allow them to react to some attacks. It was somewhat similar to reading the flow of battle but it had some downsides. At first, it might have seemed that knowing for sure what an opponent would do was a big advantage but at the higher levels of power this wasn’t true.

A second was a lot of time for a nascent soul master. If the person with the foresight ability used it and knew that a right punch was coming they could counter it. However, if the opponent was good at reading the flow of battle they could instantly alter the trajectory of the fist.

Using future sight to predict enemy attacks cost a lot of spiritual energy and were usually slower than outright reacting to movements. This didn’t mean that it could be always countered, if a person trained in both foresight and was good at predicting the flow of battle they would make a dangerous opponent for anyone.

“I am truly blessed to have lived long enough to be spoken to by the Immortal of legends!”

“Immortal of legends?”

“Ah yes... Leader Qiaolian is a staunch believer in an old legend that speaks of Immortal rebirth, you can ignore her if you wish.”

“How dare you speak in that way to the Immortal, bow down your heads you old fools!”

The old lady peeked her head up to look at Leader Shen and Leader Zhong. The others looked at her as if she was crazy and Zhang Dong was just trying not to instigate anything. At least the woman belonged to one of the neutral factions so she would probably vote in his favor.

“The Immortal? I think your elder has quite the admiration for me but I’m not quite an Immortal.”

He chuckled a bit to ease the tension between this group of cultivators. Everyone was somewhat looking stressed out after he just popped out of nowhere next to them. It was possible that they could have tried to do something underhanded so he set up a teleportation point on the outside and then used him after winning the bout against the twin guardians.

The two weren’t weak by any means but their power was just slightly above that of a demi-human tribe chief. They would probably be able to win against one but probably one of the combatants would be

injured or even die. With this amount of power, they were certainly not capable of taking out an Emperor level threat.

It wasn't strange that they were weary of his movements now. Just a few moments ago he toyed around with one of the two most powerful experts this sect could offer. While they probably had some secret treasures that could increase their power further, it didn't mean that those would be enough. Also after witnessing his teleportation capabilities they probably assumed that they were never capable of confining him here in the first place.

This meant that he could have killed any one of their ten leaders and the Patriarch. After witnessing his close-quarters capabilities and how easily he defeated the twin guardians they were scared. They all managed to survive for a good reason, all of them were good at assessing danger and they knew that it would be unreasonable to aggravate Zhang Dong. Leader Zhong in particular was starting to quiet down and inching toward the people from his faction.

Perhaps in his eyes, three or four of their leaders would be enough to cut him down. The only problem was the bout that took place inside the pseudo-realm. There all of them could see one of the passed-out guardians while the other was popping recovery pills to help with the swollen face. No grand techniques were really used during that combat demonstration, it was just an all-around loss for their side.

"Nonsense, the honored Immortal just doesn't recognize his legacy yet but if you wish, This servant would be glad to tell the legend."

"The legend? Sure, I don't mind listening to your story."

The others did quiet down but the old woman continued to talk. He wasn't sure where she was going with this but hearing out an old legend could be helpful. Perhaps it would give him an idea of some kind of hidden treasure trove that would aid him in this war. It could also point him to a weakness of the overseer that he still needed to face in the end even after all of this was over.

"Yes, the honored Golden Dragon is probably tired after his presentation, why don't we resume our talks tomorrow?"

Sun Shen proposed this notion and the other elders were all for it. This would give them precious time to discuss this one-sided beatdown and even let the guardians recover from the injuries for the next meeting. The man known as the Golden Dragon was not someone that they could disrespect and this also put their relationship with the Azure Emperor into perspective.

If Zhang Dong was this strong then perhaps his older brother was even stronger considering he was still the one on the top of the Empire. What would happen to them if these two decided to team up against them in the future? Now was the chance to foster a good relationship with this new powerhouse of a cultivator. Sun Shen seemed to have realized this sooner than the others and this would give the Moon Lily faction a lot more breathing room as they were already in Zhang Dong's good graces.

"Yes, I'm sure you have things to discuss but let us not forget about the real enemies that are plaguing your borders. I will aid you if you so wish, so please decide on what you are going to do before it's too late."

"We will consider your wise words."

The Patriarch nodded while all of them flew away. His side consisted of the three leaders from the Moon Lily faction side that were eager to get to know him and the old lady that was just prostrating herself before him. Even though she was of advanced age her mouth continued to move as she spits out long-forgotten fables. This somewhat caused the other two elders to be dejected as they couldn't introduce themselves to him just yet.

"Let me describe the legend of the Immortal being that walks this earth every hundred thousands of years, it's a tale passed down from faction leader to faction leader for generations..."

He perked up as she gave him a number that he was familiar with. If this legend told of an immortal that appeared every hundred thousand years then it could be only one thing it was referring to, a system holder. By the things that he saw at the secret ground his predecessor made, he too came at a hundred thousand-year interval.

This old woman painted the legend a bit differently but it was clear that this was what she was talking about. Apparently every so often an immortal would appear, they would show genius-like progress and quickly reach the pinnacle of power. A century of turmoil would follow as they appeared but would be continued by an era of prosperity and peace.

This was probably all hogwash as depending on the character of the system holder they could very well destroy everything around them, just like wang long. The time frames added up though, hundred years of wars with the other empires and then peace after it was all over. With the system aiding these 'immortals' it was easy to win even against all odds. The legend then ended with the immortal achieving godhood and ascending to a higher realm.

"So, are you saying that I'm the same Immortal that always appears? Why would an Immortal being need to be reborn every hundred thousand years?"

"Our people have no right to make any assumptions, the deep insights of the immortal are his to contemplate!"

"I see... I guess there are ways of explaining it..."

The other elders looked at Zhang Dong with interest as he didn't discard the preposterous legend outright. However, this didn't mean that they actually believed that he was some old monster and an immortal to boot. Explaining the system to them would be meaningless but there were a few alternative techniques that could explain it all.

"Perhaps it's a way of prolonging life by rebirth, even though we call it the immortal realm we don't really know if a person that reaches that stage can actually live forever!"

"That does make sense."

Sun Shen nodded as they finally arrived at his personal valley side resort. There he could rest for the day and then go see if they would allow him to take part in their war. Even when they wouldn't it didn't mean that he couldn't delve into their lands by himself. The show of strength wasn't just to convince them of the dire situation they were in, it was also meant as a warning. Now that they knew that he was more powerful than their best masters, they would be unable to deny his entrance into the East.

'Still... it will be better if I can join up with their troops instead of wandering these lands alone, I'll just get lost and sidetracked as always.'

Another awkward day of old people trying to crawl up his ass awaited him. He could tell that Sun Shen had prepared a feast and many other cultivators were already flying here to greet him. This was part of living at the top but he never could get used to the awkward exchanges.

## Chapter 588

"Stop pushing you bastards, just because you're from the Azure Lily faction doesn't mean that you are related to the honored golden dragon!"

"You have always been jealous of our ties to the Azure Emperor, it's pathetic!"

"You mean that one disgraced elder that got beat up twenty thousand years ago and came running back here with his tail between his legs? Now that there is a powerful member of that family there you think that you are related! I'm probably a closer relative to the Golden Dragon than you!"

"Why, just because you have white hair?"

"Yes, snow-white hair like that must mean that he is related to our Frost Lily faction! Perhaps one of our ancestors was his master!"

"Ancestor my ass, baseless claims as always!"

"Why you, I dare you to say that to me again!"

'They are really going at it...'

Zhang Dong was sitting in an empty room while drinking some spirit alcohol that he was offered. While he wasn't that much of a drinker he needed some liquid courage to survive the ordeal that was waiting for him in the next room. After showing his power the Heavenly Crane Sect went ballistic and now everyone was trying to seek favor with him.

"Honored Golden Dragon..."

"Another one?"

"Yes..."

"Okay, just bring it in..."

While a shouting match between the faction members continued outside there were some people allowed to enter this room. One of them showed up with a nice-looking spear in their hands that they then placed on the pile in the corner. Seeking favor with an expert like him had some bonuses to it, one of which was the large pile of costly items in the corner. It was slowly turning into a massive heap of treasure that would be enough for some to perform acts of murder.

"Well... at least I can use those for the coming battles..."

Luckily these gifts weren't tied to any sort of official deal. While normally a person would return the favor in some kind of way, Zhang Dong felt that aiding this sect in the coming battles was thanks



enough. They were in reality just trying to bribe him and expecting something in return or at least that he would not bring down his rage on them if they didn't.

There were various pills of the heaven grade along with weapons of the same. They varied in quality that he was already able to achieve on his own accord.

"These weapons could be used by some of the elders but they aren't all that great either... should I just melt them down for resources and make something better?"

Thanks to his system he had a whole factory waiting for him to just dump materials in. One of the reasons for coming here was to get to the various mines that the Heavenly Crane Sect was known for. Those were needed to help him outfit his people with better weapons and power armor replicas.

He had designed new models that could be used by anyone and were attuned to many Daos. They would not be as good as the battle armor that he made for himself or his wife but the power increase was there. If he wanted to produce those types he would need to examine each person individually. Even with the system giving him all the stats, it wasn't easy to produce those suits with better resources.

It was far easier to prepare several prototypes for the main types of practitioners. He mainly wanted to focus on the main elemental Daos like Earth, Fire, Wind, and Water. Then his sect was also good with the holy element. With those five prototype armors, he could outfit his army by type and organize them into groups. Some elements worked well with each other, like the wind could augment fire and let it spread more thoroughly through the air.

Earth and water produced mud which combined the weight of earth and the moldability of water together. Then the people that were versed in the holy arts would probably be used as a combat medic. With their powerful healing arts that could mend wounds almost instantly his army would be unstoppable. Even now as he looked over these treasures this type of formation was being used by his army in the north.

"Honorable Golden Dragon..."

"You may enter."

Sun Shi along with Sun Shen walked into the room. Before speaking out they looked at the mountain of unorganized treasures. It was clear that they wanted to say something about them but couldn't complain before an expert of his caliber. Instead, they brought out another topic that concerned the people outside.

"Firstly, I must apologize for my sect brothers and sisters, they are being rather rude when so close."

"It's fine."

"You have my thanks for your understanding."

Sun Shen clasped his hands while trying not to show his displeasure. Even now he could hear the elders outside from various other factions shouting at each other. Many of them were old masters that rarely showed their faces to the public. Now they were surrounding his home and it was up to him to make it bearable. As the host, he needed to prepare rooms for such highly regarded figures but the sheer number of them was making it difficult.

This place they were in wasn't really made to host so many nascent soul masters. Naturally, when he tried to offer smaller rooms to some they started to bicker with the ones that received better accommodations. In reality, the room assignment was mostly depending on who arrived first but this didn't keep them from bickering. It was a hit to their face if they were given worse accommodations than someone they felt superior to.

"It must be hard on you, having to deal with people like those."

"It's nothing to be worried about, if you wish I'll tell them to leave for now."

Sun Shen replied but the old man wasn't good at hiding his dissatisfaction with the situation. Zhang Dong knew that even the Moon Lily faction leader would not be able to push away so many nascent soul masters. They were dead set on gaining favor with the honored Golden Dragon and would probably not leave before at least seeing him once.

"Fine... how about I go meet with them?"

"You would, honorable Golden Dragon?"

"Sure, I just have the thing that might quiet them down for good."

"Such a thing exists?"

"Just watch, I know how to deal with people like them..."

Zhang Dong smiled in a somewhat devilish way which made the two masters recoil in confusion. They couldn't really stop him from moving out after he stood up but they also wouldn't refuse aid if he was offering it. The fact that he was willing to converse with the mob of masters was already enough. Also at this point, they didn't believe that he carried any animosity toward their sect members. There were accidents from which he could seek reparations but he never acted out on those occasions.

"First let me just grab those."

After a wave of his hand, the pile of treasures vanished from the corner of the room. They made their way into his spatial ring and later would be given away for processing. He on the other hand walked out through the door that led him to a nice cozy looking garden. There were several pagodas and ponds here, quite a nice place to relax. That is if it wasn't filled with old people fighting everywhere.

"It's the honorable Long Dong!"

"He is more radiant than the rumors said!"

The fighting between the cultivator masters ended the moment they felt his aura. Even though he was hiding most of it, a smidge was enough for a nascent soul master to get a read on it. Everyone here was at least a late stage nascent soul master and even a couple were above it. Some of the faction leaders from the other camp had come here as well. They were certainly unwilling to let the Moon Lily Faction get everything.

"I am glad to see that so many of you have come to receive me."

Zhang Dong was fast to garner everyone's attention while speaking out loudly. His voice had a nice ring to it and thanks to his senior aura skill that he entered this world, everyone was in a state of awe.

"You honor us with your words!"

One of them replied while stepping forward. The man had quite a full set of snow-white hair that was similar to his but before he could continue another old gentleman appeared from the side.

"No, you honor this Azure Lily faction with your words and presence, why don't we discu..."

"Hey, what do you think you're doing, I was first!"

"Hah."

The two old men didn't seem to have the best relationship with each other. It must have been really bad if they forgot that they were in the presence of the Golden Dragon. They almost forgot that he was there and only remembered after more people started clamoring for his attention.

"Please calm down everyone, I'm fully aware of your plight and I have just the thing to repay you with, just give me a second..."

Everyone was confused about what Zhang Dong meant but it was clear that he was scanning through his own spatial ring. Soon an item appeared in his hand, it looked to be a book of rather good quality. However, it looked to be newly made which disappointed most of them. Usually, techniques that were highly regarded were kept on old parchments and never copied down to new ones.

"This is a little something I've been working on, I think it should be enough as a thank you for all your hospitality."

"Golden Dragon, this is?"

"Oh right, let me show you...I think it should be barely able to take it..."

"What do you mean?"

With a little jump, he found himself up in the air. There everyone started looking at him with question marks above their heads that is before a massive spike of spiritual energy appeared around his palm. This palm started radiating with a strange power, it was truly immense and something they could not quite understand.

"Is that a pinnacle-grade heavenly palm art?"

"It must be... such power!"

The palm quickly flew forward and collided with the nearby protective barrier in the sky. This forcefield was not weak but it buckled under the hit and even cracks started to form before the energy dissipated.

"This is called the Mystical Elemental Palm of Heavens and it's as you see, the highest grade!"

"Could that book be..."

"Yes, this contains this technique, I'm sure you'll make good use of it... then, I'll leave you to it, my friends."

With those words, he took the pose of a baseball pitcher and quickly threw the book into the distance which caused everyone to panic.

“H-how could he throw a magnificent technique like that...”

“W-what?”

“What are you waiting for? The one that gets the book, gets to keep it of course, well if you don’t want it...”

The cultivators looked at each other and frantically took off in the direction he threw the secret technique. Thanks to his plan the whole place had become abandoned but to his surprise so did the homeowner.

“I didn’t expect both Sun Shen and Shi to go after it too...”

After laughing to himself he returned to his room where he decided to contact his family and generals. It seemed that the war effort would be moving along soon as this sect had no reason to deny him anymore.

Chapter 589

“So we are in agreement then?”

“Yes, Patriarch!”

“This is surprising, didn’t expect so many of you to agree with Leader Shen’s faction, did something happen in this one day?”

“No, we just saw the errors of our ways...”

Leader Zhong replied while thinking back to the various riches the Golden Dragon had in his possession. The pinnacle-grade heavenly palm art wasn’t the only technique he pulled out from his spatial ring. There was also a foot art, a fist art, and even a movement technique all above what they were used to. Everyone soon realized that if they hugged Zhang Dong’s thigh tightly enough they could profit greatly.

“This might have been the first time this sect council has been established that all factions agreed to something, unanimously. What did the Golden Dragon give you in return, is there something you wish to disclose?”

“Please Patriarch, what do you take us for? We wish nothing more than to let our sect prosper, a gift from someone reputable as the Golden Dragon would not move us in the slightest!”

“Leader Zhong speaks the truth.”

“I see that Leader Shen is a great man of true integrity, I’m glad that we were able to put our differences behind us.”

“I agree, Leader Zhong!”

The Patriarch narrowed his eyes at the two faction leaders that a day ago were at each other's throats. The Moon Lily Faction and the Sun Lily Faction stood divided for millennia now. Either they were offered something worth more than their pride or they were under the effect of some demonic technique.

He couldn't feel any demonic energy around them and the protective formations didn't pick up anything. Thus he concluded that they were offered something they couldn't refuse and had the gall to not fill him in on the rewards the emperor's brother was offering.

"... If there isn't anyone against it, then we will accept Leader Shen's proposition and allow the Golden Dragon access to our lands."

The Patriarch proclaimed and everyone else nodded. With this Zhang Dong would be able to use all of their teleportation gates and be welcomed in all of their cities without any trouble. No elder or formation would stand in his way and offering him help would be required from everyone affiliated with them.

"While we agreed to this, we also need to understand that we do not know what the Golden Dragon wishes to accomplish, for all we know he could have discovered some immortal treasure in the deeper regions."

"Could that be true?"

"It does make a bit of sense... why would he be so generous otherwise..."

"Now now, this is just a theory of mine without a basis, why are you losing faith in him this quickly? Why did you agree so easily to Leader Shen's proposal??"

The Patriarch narrowed his eyes once more but the other faction leaders just evaded his gaze. At this point, he was already convinced that in a day they had been bribed in some kind of way. The reward must have been nice if they were keeping him in the dark.

"Fine be silent, what I wanted to bring up was a guide for Long Dong."

"A guide, Patriarch?"

"Yes, we can't have a prominent figure like that wandering around our lands unsupervised. Someone will need to take a risk and go on this journey with him. We need to be aware of his movements, we can't know what his true plan is... so which faction wishes to offer up their masters to go on this journey with him."

"..."

"The Moon Lily has supported the honorable Golden Dragon from the beginning, it would be best if we continued with this support."

"Hah, you just snatched him before any other from us could! I think the Sun Lily Faction should take over now, our masters are far more diligent than yours."

"That is slander and you know it!"

“Both of you stop arguing, the sect doesn’t revolve around the Moon and Sun Lily factions, our Azure Lily faction has close ties to the emperor’s family and Long Dong is part of it so it’s best if we take care of this.”

“No, we will do it!”

“No!”

The Patriarch looked in astonishment as the people started bickering again. While this was not anything new there was a danger of fists flying between some of the leaders. He had no idea what Zhang Dong could have promised them but they were really trying to seek favor with the illusive master. This scene was even more troublesome as the two strong guardians that were his bodyguards were still injured. Even though they were here with him they would not really be able to fight with their usual strength.

...

‘They are really going at it...’

Zhang Dong was not with the faction leaders at this meeting. Instead, he was eavesdropping out of sight with the help of his system. It wasn’t hard to leave a little something on Sun Shen who was there and listen in. After yesterday’s break, he disclosed the fact that he had many wondrous techniques that he could offer to these old men.

Cultivators were really hungry for more wisdom so dangling something that could make them slightly stronger or that could prolong their life would make them go berserk. They were now all seeking favor with him in hopes of getting their hands on some of that knowledge. He had it all, pill-making formulas, blacksmithing secrets, and formation arrays that they were all dreaming of. Each faction was guaranteed to find something they could use.

‘If what Sun Shi was telling was the truth then they could be arguing for days before coming to a decision...’

This was not an easy dilemma for the nascent soul masters. Everyone wanted to make a good impression and sending a guide was a good opportunity to do so. In reality, he would be fine with throwing a custom book at each of the leaders if it advanced everything faster. After all this was over he didn’t expect anyone to be able to go after him.

Since the seed appeared inside of his body he had become a lot stronger and even with these secret techniques his opponent wouldn’t be able to match him. There was also a difference in studying those arts at such an advanced age. His people had a better foundation to take in superior skills. They would have more time to study them and also more refined Qi to use them.

‘Can’t go overboard though, it will take some years until the nascent soul masters reach the later stages, that is if I don’t enhance them with my system.’

He didn’t want to keep using it but the system still remained the best tool for winning all of this. His whole sect was already reliant on it and whenever he vanished they were quickly driven onto the defensive. If he didn’t need to take care of this war as quickly as possible he would have loved to allow his people to do things at their own pace.

‘Sometimes taking time to think things over is a blessing. Can’t do much about it now, without the system they wouldn’t be able to contend with the sea creatures and I couldn’t be here either... I also didn’t expect that thing to be here, now what should I do with it?’

Zhang Dong waited for the elders to reach an agreement while also looking at an item that fell into his hands. The item he was holding was a silver bracelet, the design wasn’t anything special but it gave away some of its true nature. What he was holding was a very powerful defensive artifact, something that Argus and Lucius were looking for.

“What was it, the Aegis Shield or something?”

This bracelet was given to him by the old lady that thought that he was an immortal reborn. It was apparently something that her faction protected through generations and gave to their Matriarchs. At first, he wasn’t sure what he should make of it but after analyzing it slightly he remembered a similar weapon, the holy sword that the golden knights were looking for. Just like the sword, it reacted to his divine energy but like the other item, he couldn’t activate it.

If he injected a copious amount of holy energy into this thing he would be able to generate a radiant shield. It was fully golden and made from energy, the bracelet would change colors from silver to bright yellow when he activated it. However, within a few seconds, he would have drained half of his Qi reserves. It was not something he could actually use in battle as he could produce a better shield with his own abilities.

‘This just makes me think that that holy empire in the south is meant for another system holder instead of me, Bob can’t even do anything with this thing unless I feed in an astronomical amount of spirit points.’

While the item couldn’t be used there was still hope if he decided to use up spirit points. For the time being he didn’t have enough, even with the farm against the fish people continuing he would not be able to. It was to the point that he felt that his fortress could be upgraded a level further before he could even be able to work with any of these holy relics.

‘But considering that it can be accessed by the system there is a way, maybe it’s similar to the fortress that was just given to me just thanks to having the system...’

This item could have just been late stage loot that was left for a given system holder. It might have been the same as the flying fortress that was left by the late Golden Dragon, a hidden quest reward for him transmigrating into this world.

‘No use spending so many points on it, I have other things I can spend them on. I’m sure Lucius and Argus will be ecstatic to get this but...’

While he didn’t need this item for anything it didn’t mean that he couldn’t use it for something. The Golden Knights were quite strong and perhaps even had an emperor-level combatant somewhere or some kind of magical ability that could bring something at that level out. Their power would be much appreciated when going up against the Emerald Phoenix Emperor.

‘They did help me with the demi-human emperor for the sword... now I’m sure they’ll do the same for the shield...’

A smile crept on his face as things were going his way. After the Heavenly Crane Sect decided who to send him with he would depart to the east. Argus needed to be informed about the shield artifact and a deal needed to be made. It was almost time to tackle another Empire.

## Chapter 590

“Uh... are you my guides?”

“Yes, great and honorable Golden Dragon!”

“But why are there so many of you...”

Zhang Dong turned to Sun Shi, the man that came to his sect and started this little adventure. Next to him was his granddaughter with only two guards this time around. Besides these four people, there were ten other small groups with around four to five people in them. Each nascent soul master seemed to have four or three core formation attendants but this wasn't all.

“To make the journey preferable the council had decided to use our finest luxury flying ship. It will of course be escorted by our finest warriors and you Golden Dragon will be tended to by our finest servants.”

“And you are?”

A new face appeared next to Shun Shi. The moment Zhang Dong witnessed his robe he knew what the problem was. This late stage nascent soul elder was from the Sun Lily faction and it was obvious that the two men had a history with each other. He noticed the faint eyebrow twitch and raise in blood pressure Sun Shi which indicated anger.

This turned out into quite the expedition with each faction lending them one nascent soul elder of varying power. Some of the less prominent factions only gave out an early stage master but they tried to counter this deficiency by putting in better-serving staff. There were quite a few of them and would somewhat complicate things.

While it would probably open a lot of doors to him he wasn't going out for a picnic. The power this group of nascent soul masters offered wasn't small but he wasn't sure if he could trust them to protect his back. Would they continue fighting in a dire situation or just flee to save their lives? He had already grown accustomed to fighting alone and taking out the leaders and now that Wang Long was dead there was no one that could block his teleportation escape.

It would be much easier for him to go around the eastern regions alone to scout things out first and then come back with reinforcements. With this many people around it, his progress would be slowed down by the slowest ship they had. His personal speed surpassed anything that could be built and not like he had that much time to spare.

“My name is Kang Yunru, Honorable Golden Dragon, I come from the Sun Lily faction and I'll be honored to guide you through these lands.”

“Hm... sometimes more isn't better, I think we'll have to make some changes.”

“Golden Dragon, what do you mean?”



Kang Yunru asked and Sun Shi perked up along with all the other various elders that were gathered here. Zhang Dong needed to put his foot down as they weren't out here for a picnic. If too many came with him he would feel responsible for them and it would slow down his progress. Instead of a bulky gathering that was a whole battalion, he wanted to go light and scout things out.

For that reason, he needed to get rid of most of these people. This was slightly problematic as he knew that they would start arguing if he picked out one group instead of the others. At the moment he wanted to just grab Sun Shi who he already knew slightly and go. The man called Kang Yunru would probably start pouting and complaining though. Thus when thinking about it he decided to go for a mix.

"There are far too many of you, one speedy flying vessel is all we need. For this reason, I have decided, Sun Shi from the Moon Lily faction will come with me."

Sun Shi started grinning instantly and glanced at Kang Yunru as if his side was victorious. Of course, the other old fart wouldn't just take this lying down. He was quick to step forward with his voice raised.

"But Honorable Golden Dragon what about..."

"Hold on there, I wasn't finished. To be fair, the Sun Lily faction can tag along too but the rest will remain here. If you can't agree with my decision then I will just go alone instead."

He needed to put his foot down. These people were like hungry locusts, they clearly only intended to come with him in hopes of him giving them new high level techniques or perhaps some pointers. It wouldn't be strange that if he corrected someone's form that another would quickly ask for some help. This whole expedition allowed him to remember how shameless some of these old cultivators really were.

"If the honorable Golden Dragon has decided then it will be so..."

Kang Yunru that was about to go into a rant covered his mouth while faking a coughing sound. It was clear that he didn't have anything against this situation if his faction was allowed to come. The others looked disappointed but they didn't complain as much and this was also what he expected.

Both the most prominent factions the Moon and Sun Lily were like representatives of each side, as long as both of them were allowed to go the other lesser factions wouldn't complain. It was these two large sides that stirred the pot in the first place so if they agreed with Zhang Dong's decision the other eight couldn't complain.

"Lend me your fastest ship, best if it won't announce to the whole world that we are coming from the Heavenly Crane sect... got something less flashy than those?"

In the air, ten flying ships from each faction had been gathered. From their designs, they screamed that they belonged to this large sect. They all had some crane-related symbols on them that gave everything away, one, in particular, was just shaped like a white crane including big wings on the side. To sneak up on the enemies something more neutral was required.

"Less flashy?"

"Yes, if it was silent and had some camouflaging formations to hide our approach. It should also be very fast but doesn't need to be large as we won't be traveling in numbers."

“Such a ship exists but...”

“But what? If it exists then go get it, we are wasting important time, what if your sect brothers are dying to the Emerald Phoenix Empire at this very moment?”

“I.. very well...”

Sun Shi looked at Kang Yunru who somehow deducted which ship they would be going for. The whole place went silent as the nascent soul elders felt uncomfortable about what they would be doing. Zhang Dong, on the other hand, didn't care, he just wanted to get out of here if they didn't give him a ship then they could all just stay here.

“Let's go, unless you wish me to leave alone.”

“No honorable Golden Dragon, please just follow us I'm sure the owner of the ship you wish to take will give it up willingly.”

“Give it up?... Well whatever, let us just get on with this.”

...

“That both of you would lose, I can hardly still believe it.”

“Forgive us, Patriarch.”

“It's fine, no one could hope to defeat that monster. It is better if we work with him than against him, if we are lucky then we won't even need to lift a finger.”

Tao Guan and the two guardians were talking to each other over some tea. After the loss they had taken their bodies were still not fully healed. Even with the various healing pills and elixirs, they had access to, getting rid of internal Qi damage wasn't that easy. Each punch and hit that their bodies took was like another day's worth of rest.

“The Patriarch is right, we just need to distance ourselves from both of them and only act after a victor presents himself.”

“Wise words left guardian.”

Tao Guan nodded as the three were talking about the Azure Emperor and Zhang Dong. They believed that sooner or later the two brothers would come to blows. After this transpired they would either use that moment to attack or follow the victor. The decision was not made yet but it would require some more deliberation with the other ten leaders.

“You two should rest up.”

“Thank you Patriarch but I'll come with you while the right guardian rests, he had suffered more than me.”

“If you must.”

The two were still his bodyguards that were supposed to shadow his every movement. The sect didn't want their Patriarch to ever suffer a defeat as he was a symbol for the whole sect. This was the first time

in many years that one of the protectors had become injured this much. Luckily while inside of this sect there wasn't that much to worry about, the two slowly moved over to another location where something awaited them.

"This always seems to calm me down."

Tao Guan gave out a sigh while looking at something that he had received from the previous Patriarch. A medium-sized crystal treasure that was floating on top of a magnificent pond. At first, it looked like it was a regular boat but after peeking another time a person could see that it was gently floating above water that could not touch the surface. The water was instead repelled from the crystalized surface of this flying vessel.

This had turned into Tao Guan's hobby. He would come to this serene pond where a treasured flying ship was docked. He would either ride it slowly while fishing or just clean it a few times to relax. It was his last hobby and something that he learned to treasure through the years. While everything seemed to have continued to change this ship that he was proud of always remained the same.

"Hm? Who is trying to gain entrance through the formation... is that the Golden Dragon? What does he want and why are there two elders from the factions with him..."

He didn't like the look of this, ever since this troublesome man entered his sect things started moving in a direction that he couldn't foresee. While he was not the greatest Patriarch out there, he still considered himself one of the better ones. His motto was to go with the flow while slowly analyzing things around him. There was no reason to rush into things before he had the whole picture. This approach had gotten them through hundreds of years but now things were moving too fast for him to wrap his head around it and this man was part of the problem.

"Honorable Golden Dragon, was there some kind of problem?"

"So that's the ship... it does look like it fits the description, good we will take it and depart immediately!"

"You wish to take my ship? What is this about..."

He glanced at the two elders that were behind Zhang Dong but they instantly turned their heads away as if they didn't have anything to do with it. The troublemaker of a Golden Dragon in response landed on the boat that he was about to give a nice scrub down with a sponge.

"A fine boat you have, I'm sure with its help I'll be able to get my mission over fast, thank you for your help, Patriarch Guan."

Zhang Dong clasped his hands while smiling, someone else wasn't smiling though and it was the owner of this boat.

"B-but my boat..."