

Walker 1021

Chapter 1021 - The Location Of The Ancestral Land!

Lin Mu and Jing Luo returned to the village and dropped off the Village head there.

The man had invited the two of them for a feast in their honor, but Lin Mu simply rejected them, citing that it would be better to save up the resources for themselves. Even if they were people of the Northern Tribes, Lin Mu wasn't dumb enough to think that they were the same as the ones that were invading.

The commoners and cultivators of the Northern Tribes were rather different and also had different goals.

The commoners were just trying to survive on the meager resources they had, while the higher ups of the Northern Tribes wished to invade the Empire.

Lin Mu wasn't stupid enough to think that it was just the Northern Tribes' fault that there was conflict. He knew that the true reason for enmity on both sides was because of the greed of the three continents of the past.

But it was still on the Northern Tribes for bringing invaders into the world. That was a crime for which the world could not forgive them for.

Lin Mu and Jing Luo departed the village shortly after to discuss what needed to be done.

"So, what are we going to do about them?" Jing Luo asked.

"I don't think we need to do anything. They were clearly fooled into being test subjects by the Northern Tribes' priests. I'm thinking they were testing out old teleportation arrays to see which one worked." Lin Mu replied.

Jing Luo thought over it too and agreed with Lin Mu. There was no threat from the Innocent villagers even if they were from the Northern Tribes. He could understand that these were mere pawns in the hands of the elders of the tribes.

~Sigh~

"Still... this only means that the Northern Tribes are looking for more ways to get into the empire." Jing Luo stated.

"Indeed... first the Kushao ruins and now this... who knows how many more such teleportation arrays are left in the empire." Lin Mu replied.

"There shouldn't be many... at least not the ones that are still working. There is a reason why the northern tribe elders were unwilling to test the arrays on their own and instead used these villagers." Jing Luo said, after thinking for a moment.

The teleportation arrays needed to be secure or there was always a chance of one being sent to the void instead. In worst cases, they would simply be torn apart mid transmission.

Another thing was that, even if an array was functional after being damaged, there was a limit to how many people it could send or how many times it could work before stopping entirely.

These villagers were the best example of that, considering that half of them never arrived here. And since there were no spatial fluctuations in the area around the array either, Lin Mu reckoned that the space had stabilized fully now.

Even if he tried to open up a rift there, Lin Mu wouldn't find anything there.

The two of them discussed for a little while more before deciding to leave. They didn't speak to the villagers anymore and left them as it is. It was best for both parties. If Lin Mu and Jing Luo brought them to other places, there was a great chance the villagers would be killed anyway.

It was safer for them here.

Continuing their search, Lin Mu and Jing Luo moved along the coast. It felt rather slow to Lin Mu after moving around so fast all this time, but he knew that there was no other choice.

They would easily miss the location if they went too fast.

Lin Mu's spirit sense was fully spread and constantly probing the area for signs of the Jing Clan's ancestral land.

About a week ended up passing like this until Lin Mu finally detected something.

"Huh? It's actually there?" Lin Mu suddenly spoke.

"You found it?!" Jing Luo said with excitement.

"I... think so..." Lin Mu said in a slightly doubtful voice.

"You're not sure?" Jing Luo asked, his tone deflating.

"There are indeed some spatial fluctuations there, but the locations is..." Lin Mu said before pointing towards the ocean.

"The ocean? It's in the ocean?" Jing Luo asked in confusion.

"More accurately, it's there... on that rock." Lin Mu pointed in the distance.

Jing Luo narrowed his eyes and barely spotted a lonely rock that protruded from the ocean. It was hard to see, and the moving waves made it disappear from time to time under the water.

"We may as well check it out then." Jing Luo stated.

"Yeah, let's go." Lin Mu said before flying there.

Jing Luo and Little Shrubby followed behind him, and they quickly arrived at the rock.

The rock was very small, so much so that only a single person would be able to stand on it. The place was almost half a kilometer into the ocean and was actually at the top of a hill that was underwater.

"Let's see..." Lin Mu came to stand above the rock and used his spirit sense to feel the area.

His eyes too scanned and his spatial perception detected some signs too.

"Seems like this is the place." Lin Mu stated.

"Only one way to confirm it, then." Jing Luo said as he took out the Entrance Token he had made.

He injected some spirit Qi into the token, and it flew out of his hand.

~shua~

Seeing this, Lin Mu's eyes lit up.

"This is a good sign." Lin Mu muttered.

The token seemed to fly around in the area randomly, as if searching for something. It did so for about two minutes while Lin Mu and Jing Luo stayed put.

And when it finally came to a halt, a humming sound was heard coming from it.

"WE FOUND IT!" Jing Luo exclaimed.

~HONG~

The entrance token let out a bright light as runes came out of it. The runes spread around into a formation in the air before the space started to flicker!

Chapter 1022 - Entering The Ancestral Lands

Lin Mu and Jing Luo watched as a small dot of light appeared in the air.

It hovered there lightly before it elongated into a vertical line.

~shua~

Then suddenly, it expanded horizontally, turning into a light curtain. And when it was fully expanded, the three of them felt a strong force tugging at them.

~WHOOSH~

Lin Mu, Jing Luo and Little shrubby were all sucked into the light curtain and disappeared. The Light curtain too faded away, leaving behind nothing. Lin Mu felt his vision turning white.

He could not see anything else than a bright white light. Even after he closed his eyes, the light which had burned into his retinas was still there. He felt as if he was soaring through the air, but didn't feel any air touching his skin.

It was a strange feeling of weightlessness which Lin Mu had only felt once before when he had escaped the fragment of the Ripple Mist Sect's sacred ground. A minute passed by like this before Lin Mu finally felt like he had stopped moving.

He slowly opened his eyes and saw the new scenery in front of him.

"This..." Lin Mu was surprised.

In front of him was a vast sea, the end of which could not be seen. The horizon extended infinitely, but Lin Mu could tell that this was a mere illusion and it wasn't actually like this. If he actually traveled in that direction, he would end up hitting a barrier at the end.

He looked in the other direction and saw vast plains, hills and mountains. There was lush greenery spread everywhere along with flowers that were filled with the colors of rainbow. Small spirit beasts roamed around the plains and the melodic cries of birds could also be heard as they flew through the skies.

"Despite hearing about the ancestral lands from grandfather in the past, this place is even more beautiful. His words were not enough to describe the place's beauty..." Jing Luo spoke.

~sniff~ sniff~

Little Shrubby sniffed the air, trying to get a sense of the area and what beings were here.

Lin Mu too spread his spirit sense around and quickly grasped the lay of the land. And when his spirit sense was fully extended, it directly hit the barrier of the minor plane.

'So it extends about fifty kilometers in the direction of the sea huh...' Lin Mu took note.

On the other side, Lin Mu discovered that the area was wider than a hundred kilometer. Though he also realized the curvature of the coast, making him think that this place was actually an island!

But after scanning as much area as he could with his spirit sense here, Lin Mu didn't find the people he had come here for.

"I don't sense them here... where are they?" Lin Mu muttered as his brows furrowed.

"Come, the ancestral lands of the Ji clan are very wide. We need to travel further deep to find it." Jing Luo spoke.

"Alright." Lin Mu said as the three of them started to move.

They didn't ride on Little Shrubby though, as they wanted to search everything a lot more carefully. And it was worth it for Lin Mu, too. He saw a myriad of spirit herbs and fruits along the way, some of which were even extinct in the Xiaofan world.

Though he also discovered the fact that the place was lacking in spirit beasts. The strongest beasts here were merely at the core condensation realm and most were simply at the Qi refining realm.

The Trio traveled for about an hour before they reached a mountain that was rather peculiar. It looked like there was an additional peak sprouting from the original one from the angle they were standing at.

"Hang on... isn't that..." Lin Mu finally recognized.

"The Myriad Armament Canopy Abode..." Jing Luo said as he gazed at the pseudo immortal spirit tool.

The Myriad Armament Canopy Abode was attached to the side of a mountain and looked like a mountain in itself. At the top of it, a flat plateau was seen on which the great mansion was located.

"Are they there?" Lin Mu wondered while he scanned the area with his spirit sense.

But upon reaching the Myriad Armament Canopy abode, he found it to be empty.

"They are not there either." Lin Mu said with slight confusion.

"Oh yeah, if they are at the ancestral lands it wouldn't make sense to stay at the Myriad Armament Canopy abode when they have an even better place to live." Jing Luo replied.

"What is that place?" Lin Mu questioned.

"I've only heard stories about it from grandfather a long time ago, and he told me that there is a large castle with several courtyards in the middle of the ancestral lands. It is the true heart of the Jing Clan." Jing Luo answered.

Hearing this, Lin Mu felt rather interested in this. He already knew that the Myriad Armament Canopy abode was filled with dense spirit Qi that helped greatly in cultivation. And if the area told by Jing Luo had even better spirit Qi, it would be very powerful.

He couldn't wait to reach it.

"How far is it? What do you think?" Lin Mu questioned.

"If the Myriad Armament Canopy Abode is here, it shouldn't be too far. I'm sure we are almost at the center of the ancestral lands now." Jing Luo answered.

"Let's continue then." Lin Mu said, and they went further.

After about five minutes, Little Shrubby spoke.

"I can smell new scents." Little Shrubby said.

Jing Luo was surprised and wondered what this was about, so Lin Mu translated for him.

"He can sense them. They are nearby." Lin Mu replied.

"Let's speed up then!" Jing Luo said.

The three of them started to run and when they finally crossed a tall mountain, they could see the great castle that was hidden behind it.. It wasn't like anything Lin Mu had seen before, and even Jing Luo was lost for words.

Chapter 1023 - War Castle Jing!

The castle looks liked it was built on top of a massive shield that floated in the air. The four corners of the castle looked to be built by using giant spears while the central building of the castle was built around an even bigger sword.

Chains extended from the ground and attached to the massive shield below the castle, keeping it in place.

Around the castle, tens of other courtyards could also be seen.

'Just how great it would have been in the heyday of the Jing Clan...' Lin Mu couldn't even imagine.

It was clear that this place was built to house at least fifty thousand, if not a hundred thousand, people comfortably.

"It really does exist..." Jing Luo muttered. "War Castle Jing!"

"War Castle Jing? That's the name?" Lin Mu questioned.

"Yeah. Like the Myriad Armament Canopy Abode, the entire thing is a weapon and filled with formation arrays that can attack and defend. The Myriad Armament Canopy Abode was actually made as an improvement for this since the War Castle Jing can't really move.

Though if we compare the raw power, the War Castle Jing certainly has a lot more power. But despite that, it is not a complete spirit tool." Jing Luo answered.

"Huh? If the Myriad Armament Canopy Abode is weaker than this, then how is War Castle Jing not at least a Pseudo Immortal tool?" Lin Mu asked in confusion.

"As you can see, the entire War Castles made from different components and is not a whole spirit tool individually. The clan's goal was to make a strong castle where its people could come to take shelters in times of distress.

The ancestor wanted to make a version that could do all that the War Castle Jing could do and thus the Myriad Armament Canopy Abode came into existence. It took several generations of elders working on it before it reached the current level." Jing Luo explained.

"I see... still, this is no less of an achievement." Lin Mu said, feeling impressed.

He could tell that the Jing clan already had enough background to easily compare with a top ten sect.

'No wonder the sects were so wary of the Jing clan. Their eliminating all of them in one go was the only way they could stop them from rising up.' Lin Mu guessed.

"Come, the entrance seems to be from this part." Jing Luo said as he gestured towards a gate.

The gate was strange as it had no walls surrounding it. There were simply two pillars on top of which a beam was erected. Fine carvings could be seen on it too, and it was clear that this was all part of a formation array.

Lin Mu's spirit sense probed the gate and realized the reason for the absence of the walls.

'The gate is indeed just a gate. The walls don't exist because they are in the form of formation array barrier.' Lin Mu undertook.

He could feel the strong barrier that even he would have a hard time breaking, covering the entire area. The War Castle Jing as well as the surrounding courtyards were all protected within the barrier, which could defend against Dao Treading realm experts with ease.

'If this castle could really be moved around like the Myriad Armament Canopy Abode, it would be enough to eradicate several sects and kingdoms with ease.' Lin Mu thought.

He felt that it was a shame it could not be moved.

If it could, Lin Mu thought it would serve as a great deterrent for the Northern Tribes as well as the Gu Legion.

He walked towards the gate and stopped in front.

~HONG~

A formation appeared on top of the gate as runes flowed out of it. The runes flew around Lin Mu and Jing Luo, as if searching for something.

"Don't move. The formation might attack us if it detects us as a threat." Jing Luo warned.

After a few seconds, the runes all surrounded Jing Luo and went into his body.

~HUMM~

The entire formation array vibrated as a light shone from Jing Luo's body. An opening appeared in the barrier where the gate was after this.

"Come, this is it." Jing Luo directed.

Lin Mu nodded his head, wondering if it would stop him there and Little Shrubby too. He could tell that this was an Identification formation that would only allow those of the Jing clan in.

"Will it allow us to?" Lin Mu asked, just in case.

"It will now. I can control it somewhat. It gave me the authority just now." Jing Luo replied.

"Oh, that's great." Lin Mu said as he followed behind him.

~shua~

Little Shrubby shrunk down as well, as he was a too big to pass through the gate. Returning to his small cat form, he went and sat on Lin Mu's shoulders. Lin Mu didn't mind this anyway and the three of them continued under the guidance of Jing Luo.

They passed by the empty courtyards that were still clean and well maintained, evidently due to the formation arrays working this entire time. A look of pain appeared on Jing Luo's face as he was reminded of his clan, which no longer existed.

The three of them reached the bottom of the War Castle Jing, before flying up directly.

~whoosh~

But just as they were about to reach it, they felt danger.

~BOOM~

An explosion happened where they were just standing and they had barely managed to dodge it. Lin Mu was surprised too, since the attack was really fast.

'No... it's not the attack that is fast... my speed is being restricted...' Lin Mu felt a faint restriction on his body.

He couldn't even tell when it was applied and was shocked.

"HALT! WHO DARES ENTER THE ANCESTRAL LANDS OF THE JING CLAN!?" A woman's voice could be heard.

It was filled with utter rage, but there was also a hint of confusion in it.. The voice seemed to echo from far but still seemed close.

Chapter 1024 - A Tearful Reunion

When Lin Mu heard the voice, his eyes lit up. He could after all, recognize the voice and knew it well enough. Jing Luo was the same, and tears almost appeared in his eyes.

Both of them felt close to the voice, and yet distant. Lin Mu's spirit sense scanned the area and yet he couldn't tell where exactly it had come from.

~SHUA~

But before he could search any more, he felt another attack coming towards him. This time though, Lin Mu didn't even dodge and took the attack head on.

~BOOM~

"WHAT!?" The woman's voice said in shock.

She had just witnessed the intruder running straight into the attack instead of trying to avoid it. She knew just how powerful that attack was and it could even injure a Dao Treading realm cultivator!

~whoosh~

The cloud of smoke was suddenly cleared, and the body of Lin Mu was visible again. Not one bit of a scratch could be seen on his shimmering golden skin, but his sleeves were torn from the attack.

"Wait! It's me Duan Ke!" Lin Mu called out.

He had taken the attack head on, so that he could trace it back. This allowed him to discover another layer of formation barrier that was hiding Duan Ke behind it.

"HOW DO YOU KNOW MY NAME!? WHO ARE YOU!?" Duan Ke shouted, feeling absolutely stunned.

She couldn't recognize the man with the golden shining skin in front of her at all. He was tall and had a well built body. And along with him was another man who was even larger in build than the first man.

Neither of them were familiar to her. Not to mention, even if they were familiar, them being here in the Ancestral Lands of the Jing clan was ridiculous in itself. As far as she knew, only she and her grandfather were the ones with access to it.

'Did some great formation master break in? There is no other way they would be able to bypass the fomentation arrays...' Duan Ke thought.

But just as she was thinking this, she heard the voice of the young man again.

"Its me, Lin Mu!" He announced.

But Duan Ke didn't believe him one bit. She had not forgotten about the teenage boy who had brought them many surprises. She would never forget him. After all, they were in debt to him.

'Could it really be?' Despite that, after a few memories resurfaced in her mind, she couldn't help but feel hesitant.

Lin Mu understood Duan Ke's thoughts a bit and quickly took out something that could easily prove his identity.

"It really is me, Lin Mu." He said again. "Look!" The short sword came to float in front of Lin Mu and he showed his right hand too, on which a golden ring with green streaks was present.

Seeing them, Duan Ke's eyes went wide.

"No way... it can't be... how?" Duan Ke said with confusion. "How can you even enter this place?"

"That's because of me." Jing Luo spoke.

Duan Ke's attention was pulled to him, and a strange feeling stirred within her heard. The voice of the other man tugged at her memories again, but she couldn't tell where she had heard them before.

"It's me, Ke'er..." Jing Luo continued.

As soon as he said that, Duan Ke's head spun. Memories came rushing back, memories of her and her cousin who had seemingly died a long time ago. She couldn't believe it when she had lost him in the past, and now that she was hearing it again, she found it hard to believe it too.

"No! That can't be... Jing Luo is dead!" Duan Ke yelled, her voice trembling.

"I know it's hard to believe. But I never died... I escaped and was trapped." Jing Luo explained before showing something to her. "Look, the entrance token to the ancestral lands."

Her eyes went to the token in Jing Luo's hand's carefully scanning it.

~HONG~

She waved her hands as a few runes came to touch upon the entrance token. And when they did, the token resonated in response.

"Do you really think anyone else would be able to make the Entrance token of our ancestral land? Even in our own clan, there were only a handful that can make it." Jing Luo added.

"It really is... you." Duan Ke said, finally coming around.

"Show yourself to us, cousin. I want to see you... it's been too long..." Jing Luo said, his eyes reddening.

~shua~

The barrier hiding Duan Ke dissipated and her body became visible. She was standing some distance away from them, atop a triangular plate. She wore a pale green dress with yellow tassels hanging on the edges of her sleeves and slacks.

Her hair was divided into three sections, with one part being tied up in a bunch on the back of her head, while two sections were left to flow freely behind her back. There was a coiling gold hair ornament holding the hair on her head while another tassel hung from it.

Lin Mu looked at her and found her to be the same as before, though her demeanor had slightly changed to become more domineering. The spirit Qi fluctuations coming from here were also many times stronger than before, being at the Adult Soul stage of the Nascent soul realm.

Such power was a great difference from when Lin Mu left her. Back then, Duan Ke was barely at the Peak stage of the core condensation realm. But with the insights for cultivation that Xukong had passed onto her through Lin Mu, she had progressed at a very fast speed.

Not even ten years had passed since then and she was at the Adult Soul stage of the Nascent soul realm. Such progress was indeed quite fast and Lin Mu would have thought so too, if he didn't know multiple others who had achieved the same.

The two men and one woman stared at each other, memorizing every single inch of their faces.. Hoping that this was not a dream and that they truly were here.

Chapter 1025 - Playful Banter

"How... what..." Duan Ke didn't know what to say and was at a loss for words.

Jing Luo though, didn't mind that and flew towards her. Duan Ke didn't move and let him embrace her, her expression still frozen the same.

"Don't worry, I really am here." Jing Luo spoke calmly in her ears.

In that moment, Duan Ke's eyes started tearing up and low sobs could also be heard.

~squeeze~

She wrapped her arms around Jing Luo as well and hugged him as hard as she could. She didn't want it all to be a dream. She didn't want him to be gone anymore and she would do anything to keep that from happening.

Lin Mu and Little Shrubby watched the tearful reunion from the distance silently.

'I'll give them some time.' Lin Mu thought as he looked behind Duan Ke.

When she had disabled the barrier that was hiding her, she had also revealed the rest of the area that was hidden along with her. Lin Mu could now see the rest of the area of the War Castle.

The one that they had seen before was actually an illusion to make it look like there was no one there and no activity was present either.

But now, Lin Mu could see components of formation arrays as well as spirit tools lying around haphazardly. There were raw materials and a lot of other things here too, including beast pelts and ores.

It was certainly not as clean and pristine looking as it did from the outside.

Five minutes passed like this, when Lin Mu decided that it was time to intervene.

~cough~

"Are you two okay?" Lin Mu asked lightly.

"Uh..." Jing Luo and Duan Ke finally separated.

Duan Ke's face was particularly red, and the embarrassment was apparent. Jing Luo though, was fine and a wide smile was present on his face.

"You have certainly grown since the last time I saw you." Jing Luo said with a chuckle.

~Pat~pat~

He lightly patted her head, to which Duan Ke quickly reacted.

~smack~

"Hey! I'm no longer a child." Duan Ke said.

"You will still be a child to me. We are after all, fifty years apart, haha!" Jing Luo laughed.

Hearing this, Lin Mu was surprised.

"You are... fifty one years old?" Lin Mu said to Duan Ke upon hearing this.

He had known Jing Luo's age already and it was at about 101 years old. It was very young when compared to most cultivators of his cultivation base who would be around seven to eight hundred years old.

Deducting fifty years from that age gave Lin Mu the age of Duan Ke. Which was surprising to him, considering how young she looked.

'Doesn't the aging only stop when one reaches Nascent soul realm?' Lin Mu was a bit confused.

"Female cultivators are just like mortal women and will try to do their best to keep up their looks... at least the majority of them. Thus even if they are not at the Nascent soul realm, they would still look younger.

Cultivation still does slow down aging for them." Xukong chimed in.

He had been silent for a rather long time and had only woken up upon sensing a strong attack coming towards Lin Mu. While he was confident of Lin Mu being fine, he still paused his cultivation for that just in case.

'I see...' Lin Mu replied, keeping it in mind.

But Duan Ke didn't take Lin Mu's words kindly, and an irritated expression appeared on her face.

~humph~

She turned away, not wanting to look at Lin Mu's face.

"The excitement faded away so soon?" Jing Luo joked. "I thought you'd be a lot more happy seeing him." He added.

"Cousin!" Duan Ke was even more embarrassed at hearing his words.

"What? I approve of him. If you want to, he has the go ahead." Jing Luo said brazenly, confusing Lin Mu and making Duan Ke blush even more.

"Uhh... what?" Lin Mu said in confusion.

"He's a child!" Duan Ke said in response to Jing Luo.

"Ahahaha! It won't matter in a few centuries." Jing Luo continued.

Lin Mu tilted his head in confusion while Duan Ke felt her face burning.

~step~step~step~

While this was happening, Little Shrubby had taken the liberty of getting down from Lin Mu's shoulder and walking towards Duan Ke.

The small form of Little Shrubby looked up at the red face of Duan Ke and tilted his head too.

~mew~

He let out a cry, pulling Duan Ke's attention. But Lin Mu heard the actual meaning of it.

"This woman is better than that man. She's red like me too!" Little Shrubby said.

~chuckle~

Lin Mu couldn't hold back and chuckled, too. Jing Luo who heard it, felt irked and knew that something must have been said behind his back.

"What did the cat say?" Jing Luo narrowed his eyes.

"Just that Little Shrubby likes her more than you." Lin Mu answered.

Duan Ke looked at the small cat and lowered herself to pick him up. Little Shrubby let her do it as well.

~pet~

She lightly stroked Little Shrubby's head and spoke, "this beast is smart."

"Hey!!!" Jing Luo protested.

~mew~

Little Shrubby didn't care for any words and simply enjoyed behind stroked.

Duan Ke felt a little better seeing her cousin being embarrassed now and a slight smile appeared on her face too.

"So this cute beast is named Little Shrubby?" Duan Ke asked.

"Yeah, he is." Lin Mu answered.

"He's not so cute and not so little... you'll see." Jing Luo snarked.

~smack~

Jing Luo was smacked on the shoulder by Duan Ke again.

~Poof~

And then a small fireball lit his beard on fire.

"YOU!!!" Jing Luo was infuriated by the actions of both.

"Come on now, you two." Lin Mu stopped them, before they went into one of their squabbles.

Jing Luo stopped while Duan Ke glared at him, and Little Shrubby simply stuck out his tongue.

Chapter 1026 - Where Is Jing Wei?

With the playful banter over, Lin Mu finally asked the question that he had been wanting to ask for a while.

"Where is Old man Jing?" Lin Mu questioned.

Duan Ke looked over and replied, "he's... been in seclusion."

"He's cultivating?" Lin Mu asked.

"Not exactly..." Duan Ke replied.

"Then what's he doing in seclusion?" Lin Mu asked, feeling even more confused.

"Well, he's... Forging. He has been for the past five years and I don't know what." Duan Ke answered.

Hearing this, Lin Mu found it strange, but Jing Luo seemed to have some insight.

"Oh! Grandfather went into one of his forging bouts. He used to do this in the past too. Whenever he reached a certain point of breakthrough in his skill, he would start forging and won't stop until he finally accomplished it." Jing Luo explained.

"Ah, really?" Lin Mu had not expected this.

Duan Ke too looked on in interest, having not known this.

"You were too young back then and didn't live at the clan. I even heard from father that once before the last great war, grandfather started forging and didn't stop for over a hundred years.

It is said that the clan even thought that he had gone mad. While the outsiders thought that he had died in seclusion." Jing Luo revealed.

"This... he won't just stay like that for a century again, will he? We need him." Lin Mu said with concern.

"Don't worry, I'm sure he'll stop once we're there." Jing Luo replied.

"Yeah, there's no way he won't want to meet you." Duan Ke said with a nod.

"Well then, bring us to him. There is a lot... a lot, that has happened and we need your help." Lin Mu stated.

Hearing Lin Mu's tone, Duan Ke's expression turned stern.

"What is it?" Duan Ke questioned.

"It will be better if we explain to you and your grandfather together." Lin Mu answered.

"Alright, follow me then." Duan Ke replied, and turned around with Little Shrubby still in her hands.

The beast seemed to have become comfortable and was resting his neck on the soft chest of Duan Ke.

They continued inward as more formation barriers were lifted. Lin Mu could tell that the security here was the strongest he had ever seen, even when comparing the top sects. In fact, after seeing the entire area and the spirit Qi here, Lin Mu was sure that the Jing Clan could itself be a top sect.

They did after all have the background, the resources, the fortune and the techniques to back it all up. The only thing they lacked was people and also that they had a lot of enemies.

If not for that, Lin Mu was sure that the Jing clan could rise were quickly. A few thoughts came to Lin Mu with respect to this too.

'When I leave this world... what do I want to leave it as?' Lin Mu wondered.

Having become the world's ordained, he knew that he had a responsibility to the Xiaofan world. But he also knew a fact that he could not stay here. He wanted to see a lot more, and explore the many worlds.

That day, which once seemed distant, was approaching fast. Lin Mu could tell this much.

'Once the Northern Tribes and Gu Legion are dealt with... I'll find ways to leave the world. Even if I don't, I simply need to cultivate till the Immortal Ascension realm and leave the world naturally.

That will also give me enough time to get my affairs in order.' Lin Mu thought.

He was fully prepared to enter seclusion and cultivate until he reached the Immortal Ascension realm. Though he didn't yet know how he will be doing that. His Dao Shell was close to completion stage and he had already started feeling the hints of Dao.

He had a instinctual feeling about what Dao Embryo he would be condensing as well. This was something Lin Mu couldn't explain how, it was as if it was built directly into his soul.

While having these thoughts, Lin Mu was brought to the depths of the War Castle Jing. It was really huge in the inside as well and there were easily thousands of rooms and halls in it.

Lin Mu even wondered if there were spatial expansion formations being used here. Though when he tried to look for them, his perception was being blocked by the many formation arrays.

It wasn't that they were all strong, but that there were simply so many of them that when stacked they became too opaque to look through.

~DENG~

~DENG~

~DENG~

Finally, Duan Ke came to a stop in front of a pair of large doors. They were ten meters tall and looked similar to the ones in the Myriad Armament Canopy abode. The faint sound of metal clanging against metal could be heard coming from inside.

Duan Ke extended her hand and placed it on the door.

~shua~

A small formation lit up on it before the doors started to move.

~Creak~

~Rumble~

The whole area shook as if an elephant was running around there. The opening of the door seemed to have removed some sort of a damper that stopped these vibrations.

~WHOOSH~

When the doors were eyelevel open, Lin Mu felt a gust of hot air hit his face.

"That's rather warm..." Lin Mu muttered as he gazed into the glowing room.

There were tools flying around, while runes surrounded them. Tens of formations were working non stop, while flames raged around in the ten forges that were in there. The roof was pulling the smoke and channeling it some place else while the floor was automatically cleaning the soot and dust that fell to the ground.

Then in the center of the hall, stood an old man. He had a crazed look on his face, with his hair and beard being covered in ash and black oil.

"NO! NO! NO! NO! THIS IS NOT ENOUGH! I NEED MORE!!!!" The old man yelled.

Chapter 1027 - The Crazed Old Man

Jing Wei seemed to be lost in his work and was continuously talking to himself. He would scream at some times, and whisper at others. It was extremely strange and if any normal person saw it, they would certainly think that the old man had gone senile.

But if a person with some insights into spirit tool refinement and weapon forging heard them, they would feel their whole world view shake. Each and every sentence of Old Man Jing was filled with a deep meaning that many others would take thousands of others to reach.

~BOOM~

And just as Jing Wei was working on a slab of metal, it suddenly exploded.

"DAMMIT! THE HEAT IS STILL NOT ENOUGH!!" he cursed.

Gritting his teeth, he slammed his fists on the ingots of metal kept on the side in frustration.

~DENG~

The ingots were directly bent from the force, but after a few seconds, they reformed into their original form.

"Again!" Old man Jing said and waved his hand.

Making gestures with his fingers, he created runes. The runes flew around in the air in a peculiar pattern and went to several materials laying around the hall.

~whoosh~

~shing~

Various materials started to fly when the runes touched them. They came towards Jing Wei and floated around him. Extended his hand, the old man grasped a sheet of metal that was at least an inch thick.

It was unknown what kind of a metal it was, but it seemed to be rather tough.

~DENG~

Old Man Jing slammed the metal sheet on the forging platform and pulled on the door of the forge.

~HUAAAAAAAAA~

Scorching flames shot out from the mouth of the forge, threatening to burn everything down.

"Suppress!" Old man Jing made a hand seal, and the flames became a lot tamer.

And yet their heat had not been suppressed, what had been suppressed was merely the unruly shape of the flames. Now the flames were smooth, like a ribbon made from the finest silk fluttering in the wind.

Old Man Jing controlled the flames to meticulously spread over the metal sheet and heat up its surface. Once it was red hot in color, he closed the door of the forge and picked up the hammer that laid on his side.

The hammer was thick and dense, but looked rather plain. There weren't even any runes on it. But if anyone sensed the spirit Qi fluctuations coming from the hammer, they would realize that the hammer was no common hammer.

It was in fact, a Peak grade spirit tool!

One hit from such a hammer was enough to flatten a hill into a plain. And just like that, the hammer rose up in the hand of Jing Wei and came down like the first thunder of summer.

~DONG!!!!!!~

A sonorous sound was heard as the entire metal sheet vibrated from the strike. An imprint of the hammer's face appeared on the sheet's surface. But that was simply the start as Jing Wei lifted his hand again and again, striking the metal sheet over and over again.

In just a minute, he had hit the metal sheet enough times that it had been flattened even more. It was now only half as thick as before, being elongated in size instead. When this was done, Jing Wei flipped the sheet on its side and struck it from the very edge.

~CLANG~

This hit was more powerful than the earlier hits and directly bent the sheet in half. He then pressed it further, making sure that the edges matched perfectly, and it was like half folded sheet of paper.

~HUAAAAAA~

The door of the forge opened again as flames shot out from it, heating the metal sheet again. Old Man Jing repeated the hammering process again, before folding the sheet in half again.

"Umm... should we stop him?" Lin Mu suddenly spoke.

It didn't look like the old man had even noticed the presence of Lin Mu and others, despite that fact that it had been half an hour. They had even been chatting amongst themselves, but the old man didn't seem to be aware of it at all.

His heart and soul were in his work and it didn't look like he would come out of it easily.

~Sigh~

Duan Ke shook her head.

"I've had to tell him for over a week before he finally took a break last time." She stated.

"Should I try?" Lin Mu asked.

"Go head." Duan Ke replied.

Lin Mu walked a bit ahead, but didn't go too forward since that area was protected by the formations.

"Old Man Jing! It's me Lin Mu! I've returned!" Lin Mu called out.

They waited to see if Jing Wei would respond, but there was no response.

"I'll try, he should respond hearing me at least." Jing Luo said.

It would certainly a matter of shock if Jing Luo, who was supposedly dead for over fifty years, were to suddenly return. They all thought that it should truly be enough to move the old man.

"GRANDFATHER I'M BACK! LUO'ER IS BACK!" Jing Luo yelled with excitement.

A minute passed, but the response never came.

"It's no use... he's too deep." Jing Luo said with a crestfallen face.

"It doesn't work. And we can't get close either. Only grandfather can lift that heat barrier." Duan Ke spoke.

"Does that barrier block sound to by any chance?" Lin Mu wondered if they had missed such an obvious thing.

"Of course not! It only blocks the extreme heat from the forge. If any of us get close, we'd be burned to ashes rather easily. Even a Dao Shell realm expert is not safe from it." Duan Ke replied.

"Huh... so that's all?" Lin Mu said in a rather casual tone.

"What do you mean?" Duan Ke asked before her eyes went wide. "WAIT!... DON'T!" she yelled as she saw Lin Mu getting closer to the barrier.

"It'll be fine." Jing Luo stated. "Just watch."

Under the shocked eyes of Duan Ke, Lin Mu easily walked past the barrier and into the scorching heat of the forge.

Chapter 1028 - Jing Wei's Vow!

Duan Ke's heart shook as she watched Lin Mu step past the barrier. She fully expected him to burn up. She had not gotten the chance to know his cultivation base and didn't even have that in her mind.

After all, according to common sense, there was no way Lin Mu would be at the Dao Treading realm which would be needed to resist the heat. Which in reality, he wasn't. But Lin Mu had other ways to resist this heat with the great defenses of his body.

"How?" Duan Ke was at a loss for words, seeing Lin Mu fine.

Not even his robes were burning as a brown light armor could be seen appearing around it. It was effortlessly resisting the heat.

'The earth element?' Duan Ke could at least recognize that Lin Mu was using some kind of a skill.

Lin Mu continued to walk forward until he was merely a meter behind Old Man Jing.

"Old man Jing, I'm here." Lin Mu spoke lightly and extended his hand.

The hand lightly tapped on the old man's rugged back, causing a bigger reaction than expected.

~BOOM~

The light tap had interrupted Jing Wei's hammer strike, and made him use inadequate force. This ended up with him slamming the hammer with extreme force and it completely warped the metal sheet.

"DAMMIT! WHO?" Old Man Jing was infuriated.

But when he turned around, he saw Lin Mu who was not the person he was expecting to see there.

"Ke'er? When did you become a man?" Jing Wei said with confusion.

"AHAHAHAHHAHAHA!" Jing Luo who heard it, burst out laughing.

"GRANDFATHER! HOW CAN YOU EVEN THINK THAT!?" Duan Ke shouted.

With his attention off from the forging, Jing Wei finally heard the voice of the other two. He looked at them and then back at Lin Mu.

"What is happening here? Why are there two more people than there should be? Am I finally going senile?" Old Man Jing muttered to himself. "Even Luo'er seems to be here. I should really be going insane."

Lin Mu who heard this, understood the man was really a bit too confused. He had been working non stop for a little too long and was disoriented to say the least.

"You aren't going senile old man... you can't go insane either, at least not now when we need you." Lin Mu spoke.

"Who are you?" Old Man Jing asked, not feeling threatened with the appearance of a random person at all.

"Why don't you tell me?" Lin Mu replied before withdrawing the Short sword from his ring.

~shing~

When the short sword appeared in front of him, it vibrated lightly and let out resonating sound. It felt like the sword was feeling happy seeing its old owner again.

The old man too locked his eyes onto the short sword and narrowed them.

"It's this?" Jing Wei said as he looked back at Lin Mu. "And you... that boy... Lin Mu?!" Old Man Jing finally recognized.

"You got that right." Lin Mu said with a smile.

"Then..." Old Man Jing seemed shook for a second as he turned towards Jing Luo stiffly.

"Who are..." Jing Wei couldn't believe his eyes.

"It's me, grandfather.... Jing Luo, your grandson." Jing Luo said, as his eyes reddened slightly.

"But... how?" Jing Luo seemed to be truly confused right now.

His hands trembled while his fingers twitched, holding the peak grade spirit tool hammer in his hand.

"We have a lot to catch up on. Why don't we go somewhere more comfortable to talk." Lin Mu suggested.

Old Man Jing simply nodded and was still lost in his thoughts.

Duan Ke brought them all to the upper lounge, where Old Man Jing sat silently as Jing Luo narrated what had happened to him. Lin Mu didn't say much during this time either, as he knew the shock of Jing Luo being alive was the greatest for old man Jing.

On some level, Jing Wei had always blamed himself for his grandson's death and wished that time could turn around so that he could save him. But he also knew that it would never happen. He could only regret for years to come.

And thus when Jing Luo finally appeared in front of him again, he was at a loss. He had fully accepted that Jing Luo was dead and knew that the only time he might see his grandson in the future would be when he was dead.

This combined with his bottleneck made him think that he had Qi deviation or some other problem which killed him swiftly and that he was now in the afterlife.

Only after the detailed explanation by Jing Luo and several proofs did he believe them.

"This... Heavens have blessed me again..." Jing Wei muttered.

He brought his hands to his face and pressed it hard while taking a deep breath.

~huu~

A minute later, he put down his hands and looked at a particular person.

"Seems like the debt that we owe you will never decrease." Jing Wei spoke with great emotion in his voice.

"Not only did you give us new insights, but you even saved my grandson and returned him to us. This grace... the Jing clan shall never forget." Jing Wei said with a firm voice.

~shua~

All of a sudden, a dagger appeared in front of Jing Wei, surprising everyone. The dagger had a short handle but a sharp, almost needle like blade. Old Man Jing firmly grasped it and before anyone could respond, thrust it toward his heart.

~SHING~

"GRANDFATHER!!!" Duan Ke and Jing Luo screamed.

But much to their shock, the dagger turned ethereal before it touched Jing Wei. He pulled it back out and there was only a small drop of blood on it that glowed lightly with a white shimmer.

"I Jing Wei, the patriarch of the Jing clan hereby declares Lin Mu, the eternal saviour of the Jing clan.. For the coming one thousand and one generations, the Jing clan shall be under his grace!" He declared.

Chapter 1029 - The New Approach

Jing Wei's words resounded in the entire hall and even beyond it. In fact, they continued to resonate and echo long enough that they extended beyond the reaches of the War Castle Jing and throughout the entire ancestral land.

It seemed to have caused some strange phenomenon where the skies of the ancestral land started to tremble.

The glowing drop of blood on the tip of the needle like dagger flew up and shot into Lin Mu's forehead before he could react. And when that happened, Lin Mu felt an inexplicable link forming between Jing Wei, Jing Luo, Duan Ke and him.

It wasn't like the link he had between Little Shrubby and him, nor was it like the ordainment of the world's will. It was entirely different from it. It was as if the three of them could never harm him and if he said so, the three of them would die.

'What even is this?' Lin Mu found it to be a bit terrifying.

"Now I didn't expect this to happen... A Vow of servitude taken upon an entire clan's bloodline." Xukong suddenly spoke, his voice containing hints of surprise as well.

"What is this, senior?" Lin Mu questioned, feeling lost.

"You can basically consider it as an oath. Similar to the one you took with others for the alliance. Except this one is far stronger... this basically turns the Jing Clan into your servants... if you want to of course." Xukong answered.

"WHAT!? Why would he do something like this?" Lin Mu was utterly shocked.

"Well, I don't know either. But it seems your help has deemed it important enough for Jing Wei to do this. I'm more surprised he even knew how to do this." Xukong replied.

And just as he said that, Lin Mu saw something happening to the needle like dagger.

~KACHA~

The dagger shattered into three fragments before shooting towards Jing Wei, Jing Luo and Duan Ke. But just like before, it turned ethereal before entering either hearts.

"The vow has been made..." Jing Wei said, opening his eyes.

Jing Luo and Duan Ke were stunned at the whole situation, not knowing what it was at all.

"What... what was that, grandfather?" Duan Ke asked.

"It was repayment... or at least an attempt." Jing Wei replied.

"Did you really need to go that far?" Lin Mu questioned, having learned about the whole thing from Xukong.

"I'm afraid even that is not enough. You may not know the significance of what you have done for us. What I've done is perhaps only the beginning for the repayment of debt. I only hope that our latter generations will be able to complete it." Jing Wei stated.

"Stop that!" Lin Mu protested. "You do not owe me a debt. I only did what I thought was right." He replied.

Upon hearing this, a smile appeared on Jing Wei's face.

"This is exactly why I made the decision. You are worthy of our vow. The Jing clan will be at your command from this moment onwards." Jing Wei answered.

"But—" Lin Mu wanted to say more but was interrupted.

"Don't try anymore. This is actually good." Xukong spoke. "Besides, as long as you don't take unfair advantage of them, there won't actually be any difference from before, will there?" he asked.

"That..." Lin Mu found senior Xukong's words to be rather understandable.

"Just because he took a vow of servitude for his clan doesn't mean you really have to treat them as servants. In fact, it will be better if you treat them as you have all along." Xukong continued.

Hearing Senior Xukong's words, Lin Mu understood that perhaps this was the best way to approach this. He could only accept it and take the gratitude of Jing Wei.

~Sigh~

"Fine... but please don't do anything more like this. I don't think I'll be able to handle more." Lin Mu said.

"Alright." Jing Wei chuckled.

"Now then... we should probably get to the more important things..." Lin Mu said.

"Of course..." Jing Wei said, as his expression darkened.

"I had never expected the sects would not learn the lessons after all these years." Jing Wei spoke. "At least some of them are wise though... the Long Cloud Alliance was a good decision." He added.

Lin Mu nodded his head before explaining more things to Jing Luo. He told them about everything that had happened; the invader, Gu Yao, the Northern Tribes, the immortal ascension realm cultivators, the mutated beasts as well as the reborn.

The more they heard, the stiffer Duan Ke and Jing Wei's expressions got.

"Can't believe the world would change this much in just a decade..." Duan Ke muttered, finding it all absurd.

~Sigh~

"I wish all I said was a lie. Things would be so much better that way." Lin Mu replied.

"Indeed. I've wracked my head thinking about how things could go this bad this quickly after a long time of peace." Jing Luo added.

"The fates have a fickle reputation of flipping the odds when we get the most comfortable. Seems like it is just a repeat of that again." Jing Wei said in melancholic tone.

"Can you help us about this then, old man Jing?" Lin Mu asked.

"Of course! It is our duty! Not only due to the vow, but the old duty that the Jing clan took several thousand years ago!" Jing Wei stated.

Lin Mu's eyes lit up upon hearing this and he nodded his head extendedly. Duan Ke too, let out a smile while Little Shrubby simply curled up more in her embrace. The beast had been taking a nap without a care in the world.

"When can we start?" Lin Mu asked.

"Right away. With the issue of tracking down the Invader's traces, Duan Ke can help you. I believe her breakthrough has given her some new abilities. As for the issue of the communication jade slips being jammed, I can help make something that'll revert that.." Jing Wei replied.

Chapter 1030 - Jing Wei's Strongest Weapon

Lin Mu and Jing Wei continued their discussion for a while and a lot of plans were made in that time. After having done this, Lin Mu wanted to inform the Alliance right away, but when he tried to go to the Kong Plane, he realized he couldn't.

"Huh? I can't enter it?" Lin Mu was surprised.

"It won't work if you are in another minor plane. You need to be in the main world for it to be possible." Xukong informed.

"Oh, I see..." Lin Mu replied.

He had not known this so far, but it was good to know now. It was in fact rather important information as he could end up getting trapped in some other minor plane and be unable to leave just because he made a mistake of thinking that he could always enter the Kong plane.

"What's the problem?" Jing Luo asked, seeing that Lin Mu was still here.

"I can't go to the Kong plane from here. I'll need to go back to the Xiaofan world." Lin Mu replied.

"You can't? That'll be a problem then." Jing Luo stated.

"Yes, you won't be able to leave the ancestral lands right now, either." Duan Ke added.

"Huh? Why?" Lin Mu was surprised.

"It's for the safety of the ancestral lands. The formation arrays restrict the entry and exit from the ancestral lands. We can change that, but we had it set to a week till now. Or rather, it was set as default." Jing Wei explained.

"So I won't be able to leave for another six days?" Lin Mu questioned, finding it rather troublesome.

He knew that he could always use the ring to tear open a rift, but that was still a wild card, as he could just end up in some other place in the lesser void. It would be a problem if that happened.

"I'll remove that limit, but it won't change the restriction just now. You will still have to wait six days more." Jing Wei spoke.

Lin Mu furrowed his brows and wondered if this would be good. He couldn't help but feel anxious about not being in contact with the alliance.

"It should be fine, we were in contact the entire month till now and nothing problematic happened. Not to mention we actually increased the security due to the information we got from Wu Hei." Jing Luo spoke, understanding what Lin Mu was thinking.

~huh~

Lin Mu took a deep breath and nodded his head.

"Yeah, it should be fine." Lin Mu agreed.

"If even four top sects can't hold back for a mere week, then those nincompoops deserve to perish." Jing Wei scoffed.

He was still a bit biased against the sects and couldn't forgive them right away. Though his anger against them had significantly reduced after Lin Mu and Jing Luo's explanation.

Hearing it though, Lin Mu could only let out a wry smile.

"Regardless, we can still work on the plans at this time. I'll need to refine the remains of the invaders to know how to track them first, too." Duan Ke interrupted.

"Oh yeah, here you go." Lin Mu said as he took out the corpses of the mutated beasts and the reborn.

~thud~

The remains fell to the ground and looking at them, Duan Ke couldn't help but furrow her brows.

"They certainly are ugly..." Duan Ke muttered.

Jing Wei checked the remains with his spirit sense too, as a frown appeared on his face.

"These... Are vastly different from what I expected." Jing Wei spoke.

"Oh? What's the issue, grandfather?" Jing Luo asked.

Lin Mu was intrigued too as he knew that Jing Wei was the most experience here and had even fought against an invader in the past. While that invader had been unable to fully appear in the Xiaofan world, it was still valuable experience.

Not to mention that invader was rather strong too, having said to be above the immortal ascension realm.

"This thing... it makes me uneasy. It's as if... the one we fought in the past was like a child compared to this." Jing Wei answered.

"What? Was the one you all fought in the past similar to this?" Lin Mu asked, feeling curious.

"No... it was not like this at all. That was a beast. This though... I can't even tell what creature this is. Is it a beast? A ghost? Or what? This has gone beyond the normal understanding.

But from what the traces of leftover aura are there on this... they are vastly more sinister than the one I felt before from the previous invader.

It's like... the one in the past was merely a beast that had wandered into an uncharted territory and was lost. But this... this feels downright malevolent." Jing Wei explained.

Lin Mu furrowed his brows as he understood that perhaps they needed to consider they may not win against this thing. At least not safely...

Jing Wei rubbed his beard and thought about the entire thing.

"Seems like I might really need to complete it soon... we will need it if we are to go against this invader." Jing Wei spoke.

Lin Mu raised his head and wondered what Jing Wei was talking about.

"What are you talking about?" Lin Mu asked.

"A weapon. It would be the strongest spirit weapon I would have ever made. The best in this continent." Jing Wei replied.

"Really?" Lin Mu was surprised, but felt like it would really help them.

With a strong being such as the invader that just did not die easily, a weapon like that would be necessary.

"What's the problem you are facing then, grandfather? We saw that you were struggling back in the forge." Jing Luo asked.

"I... have reached a bottleneck. Even with the insights Lin Mu's master gave me, I still can't find the proper ways to apply to it such that I finally breakthrough to the new level.. I don't want to just make a Pseudo Immortal weapon... I want to make an Immortal weapon!" Jing Wei declared.