

Walker 641

Chapter 641 - A Foolish Owner

The customers who had been watching the entire show all this time were shocked by this development. They were sure that it would be Jing Luo being beaten up rather than the owner. In fact, they had not expected the owner to be hurt at all.

But seeing that a member of the merchant council himself had done this, they could not question it. All they could do now was to wait and see what else happened.

"The owner is out of his luck," One of the customers said.

"I didn't think that this man would be so influential that even council members Shang would give him face." Another customer said.

"You don't understand. What if the man was not lying at all?" A customer who was old said.

"What do you mean?" the previous customers questioned.

"Don't you all know that the spirit stones aren't actually the same size? It is the sects and the mine owners that cut it into that size to make it standardized. An uncut stone that is as big as this is quite rare." The old man spoke.

"Why would it be rare, grandpa?" a young teenage girl questioned.

"Simply because they are usually not let out into the market and the ones who can have them are usually the mine owners themselves. This means that either this man is an owner of a spirit stone mine himself, or that he belongs to some powerful sect." The old man spoke in a wizened tone.

"Whoa! Can he really be from a sect?" The people were now really surprised.

"I can't sense his cultivation base! He's definitely stronger than me." A young man who had a sword on his back said.

The other customers of the shop also heard the conversation that happened on these few tables and had a face of realization. To them, the restaurant owner had simply kicked a steel plate today.

The owner, who had been knocked into the wall, managed to sit up while coughing blood. Pain filled his body as he realized he had probably broken several bones and had internal injuries. His mouth also seemed to be far lighter than before to him.

"My teeth... they are gone..." the owner said in a sorrowful tone.

When he spoke, one could see the missing teeth in the front and the fragmented teeth in the back. The fragments that had been broken could be seen lying around the place where he had coughed.

The white teeth stained with blood and lying in the splattered pools looked rather gross.

"Why Council member Jingming Shang?" The owner questioned.

"You just offended a person I know and you are in the wrong as well. This is truly a spirit stone... an uncut one." Jingming Shang stated.

"I-I... I... ahhhh! ~thud~" The owner tried to justify himself but simply fainted after a few tries.

Perhaps it was the pain of his body that made him faint or it could even be the loss of face that knocked him out, but the owner no longer replied.

"Come on, let's go." Lin Mu spoke while shaking his head.

"Humph!" Jing Luo harrumphed while looking at the unconscious owner, and turned around to follow Lin Mu.

Jingming Shang gave no more attention to others and hurried behind Lin Mu and Jing Luo. To him, he had done a favor to the restaurant owner by slapping him. If the owner truly had managed to piss off Jing Luo, there was a great chance he would lose his life and the business as well.

At least this way, he had only gotten some injuries and lost face; he still had his life and business.

"You held back quite a bit there." Lin Mu said to Jing Luo.

"Why would I attack weaklings without a reason? Though I was quite on edge, if he really didn't stop I would have shoved that spirit stone down his throat." Jing Luo replied.

~gulp~

Jingming Shang secretly gulped when Jing Luo said this and felt a tinge of fear. And just as he did this, Jing Luo looked at him, making him shudder as well.

"And who's this man?" Jing Luo questioned after they all left the restaurant.

"This is one of the ten council members of the merchant council, Jingming Shang. He will be helping us in our endeavor." Lin Mu replied. "I'll explain more, but first we need to get to a more private place." He added.

"Let's head to my residence. I have formation arrays set up and no one will dare disturb us there." Jingming Shang said.

"Alright," Lin Mu agreed, and the three of them headed there.

A couple of minutes later, they reached the residence of Jingming Shang, that was actually located at the beach. This was in a slightly secluded area from the city and was away from the port where the main hustle bustle of the city was.

This area was silent, and the wide residence that extended into the beach sand looked exquisite and quaint. Jingming Shang led them inside and waved his hand, activating the formation arrays of the residence.

"Hmm... not bad for a place like this." Jing Luo commented, much to the pride of Jingming Shang. "But even Lin Mu should be able to bypass this in less than a minute." He added, dousing the pride Jingming Shang felt.

Still, the man could not really complain about it much and knew that compared to them, he was rather low. Even though his cultivation base was at the mid stage of the core condensation realm now, it was mostly achieved through the use of resources that he had bought with his fortune.

Ever since the danger of the invasion and the conflict of the sects started, Jingming Shang had become a bit paranoid and thought about increasing his personal strength. In these past couple of years, he had spent almost ninety percent of his profits on himself and to further his cultivation base.

But despite that, he had only reached the mid stage of the core condensation realm.

Chapter 642 - Potential Allies

Jingming Shang couldn't help but look at Lin Mu, who was so young and had reached a cultivation base that was far superior to him that to in less than five years. To him, this was nothing less than miraculous.

"It should be safe now, we can talk." Jingming Shang said.

"So who is this, really?" Jing Luo questioned again.

"Like I said before, this is one of the council members, Jingming Shang. He's also one of the people that old Man Jing Wei and Duan Ke trusted." Lin Mu answered.

Jing Luo raised his brows upon hearing this. He had not expected his grandfather and cousin to trust someone else after all that happened.

"Are you sure? There were many of our friends and so called allies that betrayed us back then." Jing Luo questioned in an apprehensive tone.

"I know..." Lin Mu said in a calm tone. "Jingming Shang owes them though and thus will not betray them... they simply have far too many things that can cause trouble to him." Lin Mu added, making a wry smile appear on Jingming Shang's face.

"That's true. Old man Jing Wei and Duan Ke saved my life many years ago and thus I owe them for that. Even when I helped them, it was mostly equal trades of items and gold, so there wasn't really a way that I was paying for that debt.

At most I was keeping their location a secret, but that didn't really count because as a merchant I do that for a lot of my clients when they need the source of a product hidden. But now... since you are here, I can finally fulfill my debt." Jingming Shang explained.

Jing Luo stayed silent for a minute and gaged the man before finally nodding his head.

"Alright, if grandfather and Duan Ke trust you and Lin Mu approves of it, I'll trust you too." Jing Luo stated.

~pew~

Jingming Shang took a breath of relief and felt like he had avoided a great calamity. This might have been true, as it was unlikely Lin Mu or Jing Luo would let him go after having learned so many things about him.

"So what is it that we need to do?" Jingming Shang asked.

"Ah, yes. So like I said, in the fight against Gu Yao, we will need allies. You are one of them, but that is not enough. We will need hundreds if not thousands of people to help us. And for that I want you to infiltrate the council and join the other members in the plan." Lin Mu spoke.

"Huh? Why?" Jingming Shang questioned.

"That secret backer Shantung talked about... that is quite likely to be Gu Yao or someone working for him. If we have you in there, we will get a lot of information and it will save us some valuable time. Plus... it will allow us to save the Mu clan." Lin Mu spoke.

"The Mu clan?" Jing Luo questioned.

"Let me explain the entire thing..." Lin Mu said before telling Jing Luo about all that had happened earlier and the condition of the Mu clan.

At the end of the explanation, Jing Luo was visibly enraged to say the least.

"THAT GU YAO!" Jing Luo said through gritted teeth.

~THUD~

~CRACK~

He slammed his fist on the floor in a rage and punched through the solid wood flooring. Jingming Shang could only look on with a wry smile while crying internally for his precious polished wood floor.

"We definitely need to save the Mu clan." Jing Luo stated with determination.

"Indeed. Not only will we save them, but we will also be getting an extra ally in the process." Lin Mu spoke.

"Hang on, if the Mu clan truly is linked with the ancient Mulong clan, they might not be that weak." Jing Luo suddenly said.

"Why do you say so?" Lin Mu questioned.

"I've read some old documents that said that the Mulong clan was proficient in small trap puppets. If they truly have a link to the Mulong clan, we may get lucky their inheritance may still be there." Jing Luo answered.

"Really?" Lin Mu said, feeling surprised.

"Indeed. Though there is no guaranteed. Still... since Gu Yao exterminated the Mu clan's members, I'm sure they hold a grudge against him and will aid us, regardless." Jing Luo stated.

"Perfect! That will be the best thing if it really is true." Lin Mu replied, feeling a bit pleased.

"If we really are looking for allies, I have a suggestion." Jingming Shang spoke in a hesitant tone.

"Oh? Please do tell." Lin Mu asked.

"Since you were in the meeting hall when they were discussing everything, you must have heard Miss Fen's condition, right?" Jingming Shang asked.

"Yup, I did. She's doing this to find a solution to her bloodline." Lin Mu replied.

"I think there is a chance that we can recruit her and her family as allies as well." Jingming Shang stated.

Lin Mu and Jing Luo furrowed their brows upon hearing this. To them, Miss Fen had given into temptation and gone against the Mu clan and they didn't know if they wanted someone like that.

"I'm not too sure of that." Jing Luo voiced out his concern.

"I know what you two are thinking, but Miss Fen is relatively a better choice out of all the members of the council. I know the others and they are far more corrupt than the Mu clan and the Fen Clan. The Fen Clan is linked to the royal family of the kingdom as well and thus they keep a better image of themselves." Jingming Shang replied.

Lin Mu and Jing Luo were not convinced by this and kept their silence.

"If we are able to find a way to take care of Miss Fen's bloodline problem, we might actually gain a powerful ally. Miss Fen does have a great network in places that I don't have mine in. Thus she could definitely be useful.

Don't forget that while we ten merchants are based in the Fenlong Kingdom, this is mostly due to the stability and remoteness which provides safety. In reality, we work all over the continent and have businesses everywhere.

The Fenlong Kingdom is merely a means to an end." Jingming Shang stated.

Chapter 643 - Heading To The Mu Clan

Lin Mu and Jing Luo considered Jingming Shang's proposition for a few minutes and eventually nodded.

"We shall do it then. Though finding a solution would be the hard part." Lin Mu said.

"Hmm... I'll try to see what I can do as well. My clan did have several methods of doing so, but I don't know if they would work on them as well or more specifically on their bloodline." Jing Luo stated.

"That will be fine. As long as we do an effort, Miss Fen and her clan will be grateful. She... isn't a vengeful woman and is only acting with the others because of her clan's circumstances.

Plus, if we are able to awaken the Fen Clan's Bloodline, we may even be able to rope in the Fenlong Royal family since they are related as well." Jingming Shang added.

"Alright then, I guess we should start from here." Lin Mu spoke, looking at the city.

"What will you be doing first?" Jing Luo asked.

"I'll go talk to the Mu clan and see how their situation is. I'll monitor them for a bit before actually talking to them, though. As for Jingming Shang, you should go and talk with Shantung and join up in their plan.

Jing Luo can go and monitor the other members of the council and see if he can find any more clues or information." Lin Mu directed.

"I shall take my leave then. If you want to rest, feel free to come back here to my residence." Jingming Shang said before leaving the residence.

Once Jingming Shang was gone, Jing Luo looked at Lin Mu with a serious expression on his face.

"You think these people will be worth it?" Jing Luo questioned.

"If there is one thing I've learned in these past years is that underestimating people can be the biggest mistake one can make. There is a great cultivator who I read about, he said:

'The potential of humans is endless and there are a million Dao's hidden in one's body. No one knows when one will gain enlightenment and ascend to the heavens.'" Lin Mu said, reciting the words of the Lost immortal that he had read.

Hearing Lin Mu, Jing Luo was lost in thought. He felt like he had gained something from this and was impressed.

"This cultivator must have been a peerless expert of his time," Jing Luo commented.

"Indeed, he was..." Lin Mu said with a hint of melancholy in his voice.

Jing Luo didn't notice this and simply left to do work on his own.

~Sigh~

Lin Mu lightly shook his head and blinked away, his destination the Mu clan.

The courtyard of the Mu clan was rather large and was not located in the city itself. Rather, it was located on the south eastern cliff of the area. It was a relatively picturesque area that overlooked the vast ocean on one end and the city on the forest on the other side.

It was a good location for defending against attackers as well as they would only need to defend on side. Though this also meant that they would have a hard time escaping themselves if they got overwhelmed.

Lin Mu floated up in the sky while looking down at the courtyard. His spirit sense sweeping across the area, letting him observe each and every person there.

"They really do have very few people for a courtyard this large..." Lin Mu muttered.

The courtyard was a large community courtyard with multiple smaller courtyards located within it. There was enough space to accommodate over five hundred people comfortably, but currently, there were only eighty seven people in the entire courtyard.

"The Mu clan certainly suffered a lot." Lin Mu muttered.

His spirit sense checked the identity of the people and he soon had a result. Only ten people in the entire courtyard were those of the Mu clan. All the remaining people were the servants of the clan.

"This was supposed to be an aristocratic clan... and now there are barely any people left." Lin Mu said as he tried to find the current head of the Mu clan, Mu Tao.

After a few seconds of search, Lin Mu found him in a place that was located beneath the courtyard. It was an underground area that seemed to function as the secret area of the clan where they had their vault and stored precious items.

There were formation arrays to defend against spying here, but to Lin Mu could still sense the presence of the three people inside there.

"Let's take a look..." Lin Mu said as he disappeared.

A few seconds later, he appeared on the ground and sank into it, directly heading to the hidden underground area. Once he reached the barrier that blocked him from going further, Lin Mu created an opening using the formation manipulation skills that he had improved in the past year in Sleepscape.

Lin Mu's skill in modifying already made formations was far better than making them from scratch and thus it didn't take him even a minute before he was able to enter it without alerting the owners of the formation array.

"There we go... though it feels a bit wrong entering like this. But if I don't know the true situation of the Mu clan, it will be hard to judge. It's not like they would reveal their vulnerability so easily..." Lin Mu justified to himself.

Lin Mu hid in the walls and listened to the conversation going in the hall. There was a young twenty year old man sitting at a wide table with a frustrated expression. At the other side of the hall, a teenage girl was standing while crying and another man that looked to be in his forties was standing in front of the young man with a helpless expression.

It was evident that they had been having some kind of an argument for a while now. Though Lin Mu's attention was on the young man at the table.

"That must be Mu Tao."

Chapter 644 - Bloodline Trinity Formation

A few seconds later, the three of them started talking.

"Uncle Niu, no matter what we do, there is no chance we can let the heirlooms of our ancestors be given to outsiders!" Mu Tao stated firmly.

"Nephew, but we don't have any chance. Our coffers are dried up and even the servants have started leaving. Only the ones who have been serving the clan for a long time and are loyal are here. Our businesses are gone and only a few small ones are left, but even they are likely to be gone soon.

We need a solution or our clan will be forever gone." Mu Niu replied.

"Cousin... I... I'm willing... I'm willing to marry the heir of the Fei Clan... if we do that we will be able to resolve some of our debt, right?" the teenage girl said in between her sobs.

Hearing the words of the girl, Mu Tao got enraged and slammed his fist on the table.

~THUD~

"NO! I'll never let that piece of shit, Fei Teng marry you. I'd rather let the Mu clan perishes than be disgraced like this." Mu Tao said in a stern tone.

Lin Mu narrowed his brows upon hearing this and tried to remember if he knew any Fei clan and Fei Teng.

'Isn't one of the council members surnamed 'Fei?' Lin Mu recalled that it was one of the old men that had sided with Shantung from the start.

"B-But counsel—" girl wanted to say more but was interrupted.

"Enough! This matter is final." Mu Tao declared.

"I fear soon we may not have the choice. I suspect the other council members have been planning something. There have been unusual activities on their end and what they are planning we do not know.

We no longer have enough people to look out and spy for us and we are in the blind. If we do not take a concrete decision soon, we might not be able to last long." Mu Niu said after seeing it all.

"The Mu clan still has several trump cards we can use. I'd those greedy and dishonorable bastards try it I won't hesitate in using them!" Mu Tao replied, rage fuming from his eyes.

Upon hearing this, the eyes of Mu Niu and the teenage girl went wide.

"Cousin, you don't mean..." the teenage girl muttered.

"That vault cannot be opened carelessly! The last time we did it your junior uncles had to sacrifice their lives. And now... there is only you of the direct bloodline left that can open it. We can't afford to lose you." Mu Niu said, feeling uneasy.

The teenage girl sobbed even more and slumped down onto the floor while the middle aged man tried to persuade Mu Tao further. But the young man was like a hundred year old Oak, firm and unyielding.

'What is this vault they are talking about... could it be the inheritance?' Lin Mu wondered and checked the interior more thoroughly with his spirit sense.

After two minutes of search, he finally found a small clue to where the vault was. He headed there and ended up another two floors below the one he was on before. The vault was made out of a solid black stone and many formations could be felt beneath it.

"What is this... these formations... they are not normal..." Lin Mu muttered as he assessed the vault.

He placed his hand on the black stone and found it to be a bit familiar.

"Wait a minute, isn't this... Earthen Depths Obsidian?" Lin Mu recognized.

"Looks like the Mu clan truly has a decent inheritance. The formations and the vault are not something a clan of their current stature can make. I doubt even the Top sects will find it easy to make something like this.

Plus, using Earthen Depths Obsidian that can isolate spirit Qi is very difficult and needs a formation grandmaster to operate on it. I doubt even the people in higher realms would find this easy.

Whoever made this vault was certainly not weak." Xukong commented.

Hearing the high praise from senior Xukong, Lin Mu knew that this was far more complex than he thought. He tried to see if he could do anything to the formations and found it to be impossible for him as of now.

"I can't do this, we'll need Jing Luo for this." Lin Mu said.

"Hmm... one of the key formations used for this vault is the bloodline trinity formation. This will be hard even for Jing Luo." Xukong replied.

"What is the Bloodline Trinity Formation senior?" Lin Mu questioned.

"One of the strongest key formations in the world. But its strength is varied depending on the bloodline that is entered into the formation. It is a formation you will encounter in nearly every world that has cultivators in them.

Resolving it is hard, and the solutions are sparse. You can still ask and see if Jing Luo can open it. If he can then we will be lucky if not, then we may need a more crude method." Xukong answered.

"I see. But first, we need to talk to them..." Lin Mu said as he looked up.

~Sigh~

'Let's get to it.' Lin Mu thought to himself and ascended directly to the hall where the three people were still conversing.

Mu Tao and Mu Niu suddenly felt a strong spirit sense scan over them and their eyes went wide.

"WHO'S THERE!" Mu Tao shouted and got into a defensive pose, taking out a spirit sword.

Mu Niu on the other hand, rushed to the teenage girl and pulled her to his back.

"Mu Bing, stay behind my back and get ready to run. If they managed to come here, then they are stronger than the enemies that came before." Mu Niu warned.

He then took out a small triangular pendant from his neck and handed it to Mu Bing.

"Take this... it will take you far from here." Mu Niu said with a heavy heart.

"Uncle... you..." But before Mu Bing could say more, she was stunned.

A Handsome long haired man dressed in black robes appeared from the ground.

Chapter 645 - Calming The Mu Clan Trio

Mu Tao, Mu Bing, and Mu Niu had fully expected the one appearing right now to be the same attackers that had killed a majority of their family two years ago. They had been ready to fight to the death, ready to perish with the enemy.

But the one that appeared was something completely different.

"Handsome..." Mu Bing muttered to herself.

But while Mu Bing was appreciating the appearance of Lin Mu, Mu Niu and Mu Tao were terrified of the spirit Qi fluctuations that were coming from his body. Mu Tao couldn't even estimate what Lin Mu's cultivation base was at due to him being far weaker than him.

Mu Tao was only at the peak stage of the Qi refining realm and thus could not sense Lin Mu's actual cultivation base. All he could feel was that it was overwhelming to him. Mu Niu on the other hand, was at the Early stage of the Core condensation realm and was barely able to tell Lin Mu's cultivation base.

Mu Niu was the only person in the entire courtyard that was at the Core Condensation realm. All the others that were not servants were at the Qi refining realm. Still, even among the servants, there were about thirty that were at the Qi refining realm which was a bit surprising.

"N-Nascent Soul... it's a Nascent Soul realm expert!" Mu Niu said out loud.

Mu Tao and Mu Bing's eyes went wide upon hearing this and they became even more terrified.

"Quick Mu Bing! Use the talisman! Leave this place!" Mu Niu ordered.

Mu Bing reacted almost instantly and activated the talisman, which was made into a pendant. It was still in her hands and thus she didn't need any time to do so. In the next second, spatial fluctuations appeared around her as the fabric of space started to bend.

Her body became blurry and half of it disappeared into air. But just as the talisman was about to fully teleport her away, Lin Mu extended his hand.

~shua~

It was as if the space around them had solidified and the talisman, which was about to teleport Mu Bing away, stopped. Mu Bing's body returned and became corporeal again.

~Crack~

The teleportation talisman in her hand cracked and shattered, shocking Mu Niu and Mu Tao.

"H-How?... how can this be possible?" Mu Niu said, in fear.

Seeing all that happened in the few seconds of his appearance, Lin Mu didn't know what to think of. He could only sigh to himself and attempt to explain.

"Stop, I'm not here to hurt you all." Lin Mu stated.

Hearing his words, no one believed him.

~shua~

Seeing that Lin Mu had not acted yet, Mu Niu pulled Mu Bing to the back, and they retreated to the end of the hall. Mu Tao did the same and looked at Lin Mu with a sharp gaze. He was fully prepared to end it here today.

~Sigh~

"I'm here to help the Mu clan. You three don't need to worry." Lin Mu spoke.

"And why would you do that?" Mu Tao questioned in a stern voice.

"Because we have the same enemy." Lin Mu answered.

"Why should we believe you? For all we know, you could just be here to trick us!" Mu Niu was the one who shouted this time.

"You have to believe me, I'm here to help you all. I also bring you some news. The other members of the Merchant council are going to kick the Mu clan off the council. They are also planning to exterminate you according to the wishes of their 'backer'." Lin Mu replied.

Hearing his words, they were surprised. Mu Tao was still in doubt, but Mu Niu was not.

"It c-can't be... how did they start to act so fast?" Mu Niu spoke, his voice stuttering.

Hearing this, Mu Tao remembered what his uncle had said about the council members wishing ill on the Mu Clan.

"Seems like you can already guess. This backer of theirs is none other than the ones who had attacked you before." Lin Mu added.

~thud~

Mu Tao and the rest couldn't help but slump to the ground, feeling helpless. They didn't know that things had progressed to this level without them knowing. They had thought that while the merchant council wasn't necessarily friends, they wouldn't at least kill each other.

But that was proved to be wrong by hearing Lin Mu's words. There was no reason for them to doubt him anymore, as his words aligned with their earlier assumptions. It was just that they were unwilling to believe those assumptions with the hope that it would not happen.

Seeing their expressions and turmoil in their eyes, Lin Mu knew that they would be deeply traumatized if this was not taken care of quickly. He thus closed his eyes for a second, before starting to chant.

Esoteric chants came out of his lips as they spread in the hall. These chants entered the ears of the three people sitting here and shook their minds. It was as if a massive fan blew in their minds, blowing away the fog of uncertainty and fear.

Once the fog was swept away, they felt a unique sense of calmness and peace. The turmoil within the eyes of the trio faded away, and a serene expression appeared on their faces. About thirty seconds later, when Lin Mu felt that it was enough, he stopped chanting.

With the disappearance of the chants, the three people felt a bit uncomfortable, but this was enough to snap them out of their daze. They could now think clearly and consider all things properly.

"Who are you?" Mu Tao was the first to stand up and question.

"An ally... My Name is Lin Mu." Lin Mu said with a smile.

"Lin... Mu..." Mu Bing repeated under her breath.

"Are you really here to help us?" Mu Niu finally asked.

"Indeed. I believe we have the same enemy. An enemy who has taken families and loved ones from both of us," Lin Mu said, a hint of fury flashing in his eyes.

Chapter 646 - Pulling In The Mu Clan

Mu Tao and Mu Niu could very well see the anger in Lin Mu's eyes and knew that it was true. Emotions such as those could not be faked and they would know the best, since they had once felt the same.

"How will you help us, senior? We have nothing to compensate you with." Mu Tao said respectfully.

Now that it was established that Lin Mu was not here to harm them and only wanted to help them, he wondered at what cost help like that came. Even if Lin Mu had said that they had the same enemies, it did not mean help like thee could be free.

"Rather than just helping, I would say this would be an alliance. The person targeting you is far more powerful than you think. In fact, the one that previously attacked you was merely just a subordinate of that man.

Right now, I'll help you stabilize the Mu clan and exterminate the enemies that are close. Once that is done, we will be able to progress further." Lin Mu replied, before explaining the entire situation to them.

Having learned that such machinations were happening in the world, the trio were shocked, to say the least. They were even more surprised when they learned that Lin Mu was 'the Lin Mu' who all the sects were searching for.

"So that's why they targeted us..." Mu Bing muttered.

"I'm sorry that all this happened to your clan. Perhaps if I had chosen some other name at that time, your family may have still been safe." Lin Mu replied.

Upon hearing his words, Mu Tao and Mu Niu shook their heads.

"No senior. Regardless of you using our name, they would have still attacked us." Mu Tao said.

"Why's that so?" Lin Mu questioned, wanting to know the entire situation.

"We managed to suppress this matter with great difficulty by doing some misdirection, but the truth behind the attack is that they wanted the secret inheritance of our clan." Mu Tao answered.

"Hmm... that bloodline vault below this hall." Lin Mu replied.

Mu Niu's eyes went wide for a moment, but he then understood it.

~Sigh~

"So you've already seen it... doesn't matter now. Not like we can make use of that vault, anyway." Mu Niu stated.

"Tell me about this vault? What is inside it exactly? I know that the Mu clan is descended from the Mulong clan of the western continent and that they were experts in puppets." Lin Mu said in a calm tone, putting his cards on the table.

Mu Tao felt even more shocked after hearing that their ancestry was known by Lin Mu already.

"You know this too? Senior's scope of knowledge is profound." Mu Tao said in a stunned voice.

"It didn't know it myself, a friend of mine told me about it." Lin Mu spoke.

"As senior said, the Mu clan is an offshoot of the Mulong clan of the western continent that no longer exists. Even I didn't know about my ancestors until my father, the former patriarch, died and I was given the access to the ancient records of our clan.

There, I learned the truth of my clan and why we were really attacked. The attacker... Gu Yao or whoever came at that time wanted our inheritance. Thankfully, our ancestors were wise and made it so that the vault could only be opened by the direct members of our bloodline.

My father's younger brothers... my uncles sacrificed their lives by opening the vault and unsealed the power of the ancestors to repel the attackers. But even then, it was not enough to kill them all, and we merely managed to push them back.

Ever since then, they had not attacked us, but we knew that they would come one day. And now we have confirmation that they are indeed targeting us... it's just their method that has now changed." Mu Tao explained.

Lin Mu narrowed his eyes upon hearing this from Mu Tao.

"So you're saying that only the people who have the direct bloodline of the family can open it right?" Lin Mu asked.

"Yes senior." Mu Tao replied.

"Then why has the vault closed, and you needed so many people to open it? That too needing them to sacrifice their lives?" Lin Mu questioned.

"That... the truth is senior... our bloodline has gotten thinner over the generations and thus the vault does not recognize us easily. Those that are from the branch of uncle Niu aren't even considered to be from the same family as us by the vault." Mu Tao said.

"Indeed. If it were possible, I would have already sacrificed myself to open that vault." Mu Niu said.

"I see... no matter what, we need to open that vault if we are to make you stronger. Your current strength is far from enough to go against them right now." Lin Mu said without sugar coating it.

"We know, senior... but how will we open the vault? In our records, it was mentioned that even a Dao Treading realm cultivator would be unable to open it and neither would their attacks would do anything to it.

And if someone forcefully tried to manipulate the formations, the vault would just self destruct, destroying all the contents." Mu Tao replied.

"Don't worry, we'll figure it out. But before that, we need to take care of the other council members." Lin Mu said, before telling them about the plan they had made.

Lin Mu also told them about the Fen clan and taking them in as potential allies.

"Miss Fen... she has indeed been genial to the Mu clan till now. We've had some good deals before and I think she is the only council member that has been cooperative with our clan even now." Mu Niu spoke.

Lin Mu nodded his head and thought that if even the Mu clan had this kind of an impression of the Fen clan and in turn Miss Fen, she might really be a worthy ally to recruit to their cause.

Chapter 647 - Mu Clan's Flaw

Mu Tao rubbed his chin for a bit before speaking.

"I would be grateful for Miss Fen's support. If she wants those records that would help her awaken her bloodline, I would gladly give her that. But the problem is... all such records are stored in the vault and can't be accessed by us.

Even I only know about it because my great grandfather was the last person who was able to open the vault without having to sacrifice his life. But even then he only did it twice in his life and it was to take out the cultivation techniques we use today." Mu Tao said.

"I see... no wait! You said you all use the cultivation techniques from the vault? Then they must belong to the inheritance, right?" Lin Mu replied.

"Yes, they should." Mu Tao replied.

Hearing this Lin Mu furrowed his brows. He didn't know if he was overthinking it, but the cultivation technique of the Mu clan didn't seem to be that good. Lin Mu had seen many cultivators by now and had even seen the elders of the top sects.

He had felt their spirit Qi signatures, and they all had a unique rhythm to them. From this, Lin Mu was able to estimate if a cultivation technique was good or not. And from Mu Tao and Mu Niu, he couldn't really feel much.

"You are thinking right, either their cultivation techniques are inferior, or they are using it wrong," Xukong spoke.

Lin Mu nodded his head and looked at Mu Tao.

"If you don't mind, can I take a look at the cultivation technique your clan uses?" Lin Mu questioned.

"Sure, if it's senior then we have no problem." Mu Tao answered right away.

To them, a cultivation technique being exposed was the least of their troubles. Besides, they didn't think Lin Mu even needed that when he definitely had a far superior technique than them.

Mu Tao withdrew a scroll from his spatial storage ring and handed it to Lin Mu. The scroll was made from a special kind of paper and was much heavier than normal paper. Its thickness was also more than normal paper.

Lin Mu opened it and saw the words written in it with dark ink. The strokes were smooth and flowing, which showed that whoever wrote this was very confident and proficient in this cultivation technique.

'The Thousand thread Spirit Breath Technique...' Lin Mu read the title.

The cultivation technique was quite different from the conventional ones Lin Mu had seen until now. Lin Mu had a rather large store of cultivation techniques in his ring now, since he had raided the vault of the Tri Cauldron peony pill and had also killed the elders of the Ripple Mist sect.

Lin Mu had taken the spatial storage tools of all those that were killed by him and had been scanned by him. He had read almost all the cultivation technique and Qi skills that were contained in them.

But despite that, he had not practiced any of them as they were either not compatible with him, or were of no use to him. Even the Qi skills were not something that Lin Mu desired that much since they were not really according to his fighting style.

Lin Mu's style focused more on dodging and avoiding hits before delivering fatal attacks. The Qi skills would be useful if Lin Mu were fighting a normal and prolonged battle, but that didn't really happen.

Though Lin Mu had not given up on those skills and thought that when he had a lot of time in the future, he may learn them eventually. But for now, Xukong had advised him to focus on what he already had.

The Thousand Thread Spirit Breath Technique allowed one to condense spirit Qi in the form of threads in their body. These threads could then be emitted to control the puppets that the Mu Clan used.

Lin Mu instantly understood where the main problem laid; the Mu clan had no puppets as of now.

"No wonder... you are missing the most important part of your cultivation technique... the puppets." Lin Mu spoke.

"Indeed, senior. That has been one of the biggest flaws of the Mu clan. The knowledge about the creation of puppets was lost a long time ago and the ones that we had were destroyed before my grandfather's generation." Mu Tao spoke in a sorrowful tone.

"Looks like our only option is the vault, then. That should definitely contain the information we seek along with the knowledge about the puppets." Lin Mu spoke.

"If that can happen, it would be wonderful. But the problem is still about how we are going to open the vault." Mu Tao replied.

"Let me see what I can do about it..." Lin Mu said before withdrawing a communication jade slip and contracting Jing Luo.

He then informed Jing Luo of all that had happened till now and that he needed his help. And a few seconds later, Jing Luo replied to him as well.

"I'm currently spying on two of the council members and need to observe more. I'll meet you with you in the evening and then we will see what we can do about the Mu clan." Jing Luo messaged.

Lin Mu nodded his head and felt like at least there was some hope since Jing Luo had not denied right away.

"We will need to wait till the evening before my friend will be able to come help." Lin Mu informed.

"That will be fine, senior." Mu Tao replied with a satisfied expression.

Mu Niu, who had not spoken for a bit suddenly furrowed his brows and took out a formation plate from his pocket. He closed his eyes for five seconds before opening them.

"We have intruders near the clan." Mu Niu said.

Mu Tao had a tense expression on his face while Mu Bing seemed to be a bit fearful. Lin Mu instead let out a wave of spirit Qi, as his spirit sense spread all around the courtyard before extending up to an area of three thousand meters.

Chapter 648 - Intruders At The Mu Clan

Mu Tao and Mu Niu were a bit overwhelmed by the pressure of Lin Mu's spirit sense and wondered just how strong was Lin Mu.

'If just the spirit sense is this strong that what will his cultivation be like?' Mu Tao thought.

'Such force... just what kind of foundation is be needed to reach this level?' Mu Niu wondered.

Lin Mu didn't know that he had awed the trio once again just by this. He was too focused on seeing who was it that had come near the Mu Clan. In the range of his spirit sense, Lin Mu detected thirteen men that were sneaking their way to the Mu clan.

They were completely covered up to hide their identities and it was easy to understand that they weren't here for anything good. Lin Mu also sensed their cultivation base and found them all to be at the Qi refining realm.

"Thirteen Qi refining realm cultivators coming towards the clan." Lin Mu said.

"It can't be the council members, right? They won't act so soon." Mu Tao asked.

"We can't say for sure. Even if they only revealed their plan today, Shantung might have been thinking of doing this for longer than that." Mu Niu replied.

"Regardless of that, we will know once we interrogate them..." Lin Mu said before he disappeared into thin air.

Mu Tao and Mu Niu were stunned by seeing this.

"He really can use spatial skills..." Mu Niu who knew a bit more guessed.

Lin Mu appeared in the sky above the Mu Clan and looked at the places where the intruders were located at. He then blinked towards them and stood at the back of one of them.

Without giving the man to even know he was there, Lin Mu knocked out the man unconscious. He then did the same for the rest of them and in less than thirty seconds, thirteen men had been incapacitated.

Lin Mu then tied all of them up with a rope into a large bundle and carried them to the clan. The few clansmen and servants were shocked upon seeing a man descending from the sky in the middle of the clan.

"Who's that!?" A servant shouted.

This caught the attention of the others and all of them looked at Lin Mu, who had the bundle of thirteen men in his hand.

~thud~

He landed in the central courtyard of the Mu clan where there was a large open space and put the captured men there.

"It can't be... a Nascent Soul realm cultivator..." one of the Mu clansmen said upon seeing Lin Mu being able to fly.

"Everyone, get back to your works. We will be having a clan meeting later in the day. Also... no one is allowed to leave the clan till further notice!" Mu Tao, who had just appeared from the main hall of the central courtyard, announced.

The servants went to their posts upon hearing their patriarch's words while few remaining clansmen went back to their rooms. They all had been stressed in these few months and had been doing their best to cultivate and thus would spend most of their time in the rooms.

This was the order Mu Tao had given them and they were following it. They all had seen the condition of the clan when they were attacked and thus they no longer wanted to be in the same helpless state.

"There are the intruders." Lin Mu informed.

"Let's see who they are..." Mu Niu said as he pulled off the face coverings of the men.

Upon seeing their appearance, Mu Tao and Mu Niu furrowed their brows.

"They are indeed sent from Shantung... I've seen a couple of them working as guards for his caravans." Mu Niu stated.

"Hmm... at least this saves us time and we don't need to interrogate." Lin Mu said. "Though what do we do with these men?" he asked.

"For now, we will throw them in the dungeon. Once the problem with the vault is resolved we will think of what to do with them. We will also get to see Shantung's reaction." Mu Tao replied.

Lin Mu thought over it and found it to be fine.

"That would be good. We will also make the man nervous by not showing any reaction." Lin Mu spoke.

"Exactly, it will make him confides and he will wonder where his men are since he will detect no disturbance in the Mu clan." Mu Niu agreed.

With everyone in agreement, Lin Mu and the rest waited till the evening. Mu Tao and Mu Niu went to make an announcement to the clansmen about what would be happening. While they didn't tell them everything, they did tell them that the clan was being targeted and that Lin Mu was a senior that was going to help them.

It was safe to say that they were shocked by this and also wondered about who Lin Mu was. But Mu Tao gave them no information other than he is to be respected and not to question his orders.

While this was happening, Lin Mu was waiting in the underground secret area of the clan. He took out the Grey egg of the fire fang snake and injected some beast Qi into it. Lin Mu had been doing this once every day since he got it.

So far, there had been no changes in the egg and it showed no signs of hatching. Even using spirit sense was not possible as the interior of the egg just looked hazy to Lin Mu. Originally Lin Mu had even wondered if the egg had died, by Xukong had told him that the egg was fine.

The only difference was that the egg was rather unique and could block the spirit sense's perception somehow. While they were curious how this was possible, they didn't prod it too much as they didn't want to accidentally damage the egg.

"Here you go senior," The voice of a girl was heard as a teacup was placed in front of Lin Mu.

Chapter 649 - Change In The Egg And A Minor Flaw?

Lin Mu looked up and saw that it was the girl Mu Bing serving him tea. Mu Tao and Mu Niu had asked her to accompany Lin Mu while they got the clan in order, as they found it to be rude to leave Lin Mu alone.

In a way, it was to keep an eye on Lin Mu and also a way for them to serve Lin Mu for a bit.

Ever since Mu Bing saw Lin Mu thought she had a constant blush on her face. Lin Mu though, was oblivious to this and just thought that was how her face looked. She had been crying before that and thus her face had been red the entire time, making him unable to see the difference.

Besides, he was far too busy in his own things to notice other matters such as this.

"Thank you," Lin Mu said as he took the tea and took a sip.

"Oh, it's better than the tea shop in the city." Lin Mu said upon finding its taste to be a bit more pleasant than the watery one in the city.

"I'm happy that senior likes the tea of our clan. This is something we grew ourselves," Mu Bing replied.

"Oh, you did? That's nice." Lin Mu said as he finished the tea in the cup.

Mu Bing poured another cup of tea for him and looked at the Grey egg that was placed on the table. She had noticed it from the start and wondered what it was, but she didn't want to disturb Lin Mu at that time.

Lin Mu had been injecting the beast Qi into the egg and thus Mu Bing had felt there to be a strange pressure exuding from Lin Mu that prevented her from interfering back then. But now that it was gone, she felt like Lin Mu was pleasant again.

"What egg is this, senior? Is it a beast egg?" Mu Bing questioned.

"Yes, it is a beast egg, but I don't know what kind of a beast it will hatch." Lin Mu answered.

"I see... did senior found it in the wild?" Mu Bing asked further.

"You can say that, I guess..." Lin Mu replied.

Mu Bing then extended her hand to touch the egg carefully. She watched if Lin Mu was in disagreement but did not see any response from him.

"Whoa! It's so warm," Mu Bing spoke.

"It is?" Lin Mu said as he placed his hand on it as well.

"Hmm... it seems to be the same to me," Lin Mu muttered.

"Now it became cold all of a sudden!" Mu Bing

Lin Mu furrowed his brows and tried to feel it but found it to be the same.

"Are you sure of what you are saying?" Lin Mu questioned.

"I swear senior!" Mu Bing said hurriedly.

'This is strange... why can only she feel the changes? It doesn't seem like she's lying either.' Lin Mu thought.

Lin Mu was then reminded that he had not felt any change in the egg since he had gotten it and was worried about it. But now that someone was telling him that there was a change, he could not sense it.

"Wait, a minute... can it be?" Lin Mu suddenly had an idea.

He closed his eyes, and a wave of spirit Qi came from his body.

"Eek!" Mu Bing got startled and took a step back.

She was merely at the late stage of the Qi refining realm and even a little fluctuation of spirit Qi from Lin Mu's body was strong for her. If he exerted a bit too much force, there was a chance she might be directly knocked away.

But then Mu Bing saw something change in Lin Mu.

"Huh? What's that brown layer?" Mu Bing said upon seeing the armor made of Mortal Strengthening scripture appearing on his body.

A few seconds later, the layer disappeared and Lin Mu opened his eyes.

"Let's try now..." Lin Mu muttered and placed his hand on the egg.

His eyes went wide as he finally felt the warmth of the egg. Lin Mu kept his hand there and ten seconds later the egg felt cold instead. The change in temperature was rather drastic and was not something an egg should have usually.

'So it really was Mortal Strengthening scripture that was preventing me from feeling the temperature difference.' Lin Mu realized.

"While it does make sense, it shouldn't have happened before. When you had it at a lower stage, did you ever have difficulty sensing temperature before?" Xukong suddenly questioned.

"Hmm... I don't think so, senior. Before I was able to sense everything normally." Lin Mu answered.

"Seems like you need better control over it, then. The mortal strengthening scripture is probably working at its full potential at all times. This also has the side effect of suppressing certain senses like touch and temperature." Xukong analyzed.

"At least we were able to find out about it now, rather than sometime later when a major problem could have popped up. Plus, we now know that the egg is at least showing some changes." Lin Mu replied.

Lin Mu then looked at Mu Bing and smiled.

"Thank you for telling me about this. I was mistaken earlier and couldn't feel it because of something I was unaware of." Lin Mu stated.

"Ah!" Mu Bing got a bit startled. "It's nothing senior. I didn't do anything praiseworthy, I just said what was true." She added.

~chuckle~

Lin Mu chuckled upon seeing her reaction and felt like he should do something. He flipped his hand and took out a small bottle filled with pills.

"Here you go," Lin Mu handed the bottle to Mu Bing.

"My, my, you're already taking the persona of a senior and gifting resources to junior." Xukong laughed upon seeing this.

While Lin Mu felt embarrassed internally, he didn't show it on his face, as that would only make him far more embarrassed. Mu Bing on the other hand, was overwhelmed upon seeing the pills.

Chapter 650 - Three Clan's To Eliminate

Mu Bing could tell that these were Mid grade Basic Qi pills. She had only used these a couple of times before when her clan was still surviving with all its members. Back then, the clan still had plenty of resources to give to the members.

But now they had to be frugal with their resources and sold off all those that could be liquidated to pay off their debts.

"Senior, you... thank you!" Mu Bing said, her eyes red.

Lin Mu was a bit taken aback and had not expected such a strong reaction from the girl.

"It's okay, you don't need to be so..." Lin Mu replied, trailing off after not knowing what to say to the girl.

Mu Bing didn't question it either and simply nodded her head, wiping away the tears that were appearing at the corners of her eyes.

"I'm really grateful for this senior." Mu Bing said as she put the pills away into her pocket.

It was evident that she did not have a spatial storage treasure of her own. If she did, Lin Mu would have been able to sense them on her, due to the spatial fluctuations they let off. He had become quite sensitive to them now.

Lin Mu wondered how the condition of the clan would change if they had the right resources and their cultivation technique was full. If that was done, he reckoned they would not be any inferior to the top sects perhaps.

~Creak~

The door of the hall opened, and in walked Mu Tao with another man in tow.

"Ah, you're here finally Jing Luo." Lin Mu said upon noticing the wild man.

Jing Luo still had long hair that was tied in multiple parts with ribbons, each of which was a spirit tool. The man was always decked in spirit tools and weapons, and this was his way of fighting as well.

Jing Luo had informed Lin Mu when he would be coming and thus Lin Mu had told Mu Tao about Jing Luo's appearance. It was safe to say Mu Tao was rather shocked upon seeing the wild man.

Jing Luo was far bigger in size than most other people he had seen being over two meters tall and having shoulders as wide as that of a horse.

"Did you find anything interesting?" Lin Mu questioned.

"Nothing out of the ordinary, just regular corruption, murder, and abuse." Jing Luo replied.

"Ah... which ones?" Lin Mu questioned.

"The one named Fei, Hui and Shu." Jing Luo answered.

Mu Tao raised his brows upon hearing the surnames.

"Aren't these the surnames of the other members of the council?" Mu Tao asked.

"They are." Jing Luo nodded his head. "I was spying on them and found a lot of dirty secrets."

"More targets for us to erase?" Lin Mu asked.

"Definitely. They will go to the side that pays them the most and brings them benefits. While we may be able to tempt them, there will be no guarantee that they will stay loyal." Jing Luo replied.

~Sigh~

Lin Mu shook his head.

"A single rotten apple will spoil the rest and a single termite will shake the foundation of the house. We better get rid of them, before they cause us problems." Lin Mu said in a serious tone.

"Just tell me and I'll get to it. Their formation arrays aren't really that strong and I can break through them whenever needed. Plus, the strongest person they have is only at the core condensation realm.

This will be a joke." Jing Luo replied in a casual tone.

Mu Tao was shocked by seeing how easily Lin Mu and Jing Luo were deciding the fate of multiple merchant clans. He had seen the spirit tools on Jing Luo's body and could tell that they were not normal, even if the spirit Qi fluctuations coming from his body were too weak.

Mu Tao was sure that despite the low spirit Qi fluctuations coming from Jing Luo, he was probably no less powerful than Lin Mu. He even wondered if the enemies that attacked his clan discussed it casually too before they attacked him.

Except at that time they didn't send any Nascent Soul realm cultivators, only core condensation realm cultivators and several peak stage Qi refining realm cultivators. But despite that, over ninety percent of his clan ended up dying to them.

"Well, since we are in agreement, should we go get rid of them?" Jing Luo questioned.

"Not so fast. First, I want you to take a look at the vault below and tell me your opinion." Lin Mu replied.

"Ah, of course. I want to see what it could be like as well..." Jing Luo said.

Lin Mu gestured to the man, and he followed him to the bottom part where the vault was located. Mu Tao accompanied them as well and observed them without disturbing them. Jing Luo furrowed his brows as his spirit sense analyzed the formation.

"A Bloodline Trinity formation huh... this is gonna be a tough one to resolve." Jing Luo stated.

"Tough? Senior, you have a solution to it?" Mu Tao said out in surprise.

Even if Jing Luo said there was a solution, it was a difficult thing. Mu Tao knew there was at least a solution unlike before when there was no chance. Even if Mu Tao used himself as a sacrifice, it would still not be enough to open the door.

As for the other members of his clan, they were no longer related to the clan's original bloodline close enough for the vault to recognize them, and thus they had no chance of becoming sacrifices either.

"I do have a solution... actually I have three of them." Jing Luo answered, catching Lin Mu's interest.

"And what are they?" Lin Mu questioned, feeling a bit excited.

"The first is getting the actual bloodline to unlock this, but it is not possible as of now. The second would be for me to unravel the formations one by one, till I get to the core. This is the most difficult situation and may take a very long time." Jing Luo replied.

"And what's the third?"