

Walker 921

[Chapter 921 - The Answer To The Offer](#)

The Black Dune sect patriarch and the Light Harmony sect patriarch looked on at Lin Mu with anticipation while the rest did the same. To them, there was no reason why Lin Mu would deny an offer like this.

Any of the three sects would be a good option, though the people belonging to each of the sect hoped that Lin Mu would join them. All of them could see the value in him joining them, but at the same time felt a little envious that the position of the patriarch after that would be all but gone for them.

Even if these elders didn't have that great of a chance of becoming the patriarch, one could always dream. Once that was taken away entirely, it was a cold splash that would rudely awaken them from the dream, which wasn't exactly comfortable.

"I... Reject." Lin Mu firmly stated.

"WHAT?!"

"HOW IS THIS POSSIBLE?"

"This is absurd!"

"Has he gone mad?"

A variety of question and words were let out by the people in the hall as they were absolutely shocked by Lin Mu's answer. They had not expected for him to entirely reject them like this.

"Are you sure you don't want to think more?" Patriarch Shandian questioned.

"Yes, take more time. You don't have to answer us today, either." The Light Harmony Sect's Patriarch added.

But You Yi already had a knowing expression on his face.

"My decision is final. I do not want to be the heir of the sects. I don't think that is the right thing for me and it would be unfair to the sect as well. I cannot tell how things would go in the future and there are chances I may not be here to be there for the sects.

Even if I do join one, my departure would only leave the duties unfulfilled. That would be a grave mistake on my part, and I do not want the sect to bear that. Additionally, all the others who may have been striving for the position and working for it would be greatly disappointed.

If anything, this would be an insult to their effort and work. I do not want to deny them that either." Lin Mu explained.

Hearing Lin Mu's answer, the elders were surprised, but also felt a bit better at the same time. The answer that Lin Mu gave was shocking to them, but the explanation was enough to allay that.

~Sigh~

The Long Cloud Sect patriarch sighed to himself, while the Black Dune sect patriarch felt a little disappointed. The Light Harmony sect patriarch was in a similar situation and seemed to be thinking something.

"If that is your answer, then I'm fine with it." The Light Harmony Sect Patriarch spoke. "But if you ever change your answer in the future, the option will be open." He said before throwing Lin Mu a token.

Lin Mu caught it and looked at what was written on it; Mingliang.

"That is my token. It will allow you to request certain things from the sect and the same level of authority as an elder as well. Your Dao Shell realm cultivation base already puts you at the same level as a High Elder anyway. So you may as well be a guest elder." The Light Harmony Sect's Patriarch Mingliang stated.

"Hey, now you're being forward!" Patriarch Shandian said before taking out a token and tossing it to Lin Mu as well.

"I offer the same. Let this be known, Lin Mu is now a guest elder of the Black Dune Sect!" Patriarch Shandian declared.

Patriarch You Yi simply stood there smiling while Jing Luo did the same.

"Very well. I guess I can accept this much." Lin Mu said, thinking that it would not be good if he denied them this much as well.

"This is good, it will allow your authority among the people of the sect to strengthen. It will help you function better in the alliance." Xukong spoke.

"Mmm... that's why I took it senior." Lin Mu replied before looking at the three patriarchs.

"Well... we should start the oath ceremony, shouldn't we? Best to get it done." Lin Mu proposed.

"Of course!" Patriarch Shandian said out loud.

Soon Lin Mu took the lead in reciting the oath, while the others repeated after him. The ones that had already taken it, simply stood there in silence while the ceremony progressed. In just a few minutes, it was completed and the oath was forged.

The skies shook that day for a second and everyone in the world felt it but couldn't tell what had happened. All over the sects that didn't know of this ceremony thought that it might have been some rare phenomenon or just something unknown.

There was no lack of such things happening these days, and there were a lot more unexplained things adding to their woes. Thus, except for the more anxious and vigilant cultivators, the rest forgot it quickly.

In the Forbidden Continent there were vast tracts of frozen lands and snow capped peaks that dotted the land.

Between a few such unassuming peaks, there was an ancient temple. It looked like it had stood the test of time and looked very old. There were dead leafless trees spread around the temple, which was strange since the continent was always covered in snow thus the trees growing here were rarely seen.

Then there was the most eye catching feature which was the large bronze bell that hung from the top of the temple. The bell was at least ten meters tall and seven meters wide. There were tribal carvings on the bell that looked esoteric.

There were beasts, humans, devils and many other beings carved on it, looking mysterious.

The bell, which had not moved for a long time, suddenly shuddered today.

~HONG~

A faint wave of vibrations spread through the surroundings, dousing the frozen lands with them. Several pairs of eyes opened upon hearing it, each having different expressions in them; some surprised, some serious.

"The ancestral bell rings..."

[Chapter 922 - Smooth Sailing](#)

At the Long Cloud sect, everything went well and nothing unexpected happened like the time when they first took the oath a month ago.

Lin Mu couldn't help but feel relieved that there was no one among the higher ups of the sects here that had been controlled by Gu Yao or was looking to harm the alliance or the world.

The mystery about why Junior Elder Lao Ming was struck by punishment lightning was still unknown today. The sect was still investigating but couldn't find anything that seemed to be problematic on his end.

To them, junior elder Lao Ming was doing his duties perfectly and there were no lapses in his judgment either.

This was what put Lin Mu and the patriarchs in a dilemma. They didn't know if the oath was just this severe that it killed the elder just because he had thought wrong for a second or if it was something else.

"No... the oath won't kill someone for a simple lapse in thinking. Everyone has bad thoughts from time to time and unless one acts on it, it won't be imprinted on their karma. They won't be sowing karma, just be imagining things.

If it was like that, then the heavens would have never been in peace and chaos would have eliminated all life." Xukong clarified.

"Then what could it be, senior? Was Lao Ming just thinking of betraying the sect for gains on his own?" Lin Mu couldn't help but question.

"That is something no one can answer for now. Well... there is the option to use divination for that, but its close to impossible for there to be anyone with a divination technique as strong as that in this world." Xukong answered.

"Do you know any divination techniques, senior?" Lin Mu asked, feeling curious.

"No, I don't. That is not exactly something I'm comfortable with, and neither do I have an affinity with it." Xukong replied in a straight tone.

"I see... guess we'll just have to trust that the oath and world's will was correct." Lin Mu said.

Lin Mu opened his eyes to look at the discussion that was currently ongoing in front of him. The three patriarchs and several elders were talking about how things should go and how to proceed from here.

You Yi was telling them about the plans that Lin Mu and Jing Luo had formed earlier.

"So this 'teleportation gate'... you will be placing them in our sects?" Patriarch Shandian questioned.

"Well, your people can do it too if they are proficient in formations. I have made it so that they are mostly per-made and only some assembly is needed for the most part." Jing Luo answered.

"Hmm... you can talk with the fomentation elders and see to that." Patriarch Shandian spoke while the elders he was talking about nodded in response.

"It shall be the same for my sect as well. All formation elders of the Light Harmony sect are to meet up with him and discuss the setup of the Teleportation Gate." Patriarch Mingliang ordered.

"YES PATRIARCH!" The elders replied.

Seeing that everything was going smoothly, Lin Mu was pleased.

"Speaking of this teleportation gate, I heard that it is linked with a different plane, what exactly is it?" Patriarch Shandian asked.

"The name of the plane is Kong plane, and it was left behind as the dying legacy of the Kong Clan." Lin Mu replied.

"The Kong clan, huh..." Shandian repeated.

"Haven't heard that name many times before." Patriarch Mingliang spoke.

"So the people of the western continent are still helping us thousands of years after their death..." Patriarch Shandian muttered in a tone of melancholy.

"Even if the people of the Western Continent are all gone, at least there is still something left to remember them by; their sacrifice." Patriarch Mingliang said.

"That's not exactly true. There are still remnants of the western continent clans in the empire." Lin Mu clarified.

"Really? Who?" Patriarch Mingliang asked.

"The Mu Clan, the Fenlong clan and the Fen clan of the Fenlong kingdom, of course. The Mu clan are the descendants of the Mulong clan, one of the top clans of the western continent too." Lin Mu replied, surprising.

"THE MULONG CLAN?" One of the elders of the Black Dune Sect exclaimed, making everyone look at him.

"What's the matter? Is there something special about them?" An elder standing next to them asked.

"Of course! Many don't know but the Mulong clan was the most proficient in making puppets. These puppets were of many types and were strong enough to contend even with Dao Treading realm experts.

The most surprising part is that the one controlling the puppets didn't even need to be at that cultivation base to do that. For example, someone at the Nascent soul realm could control a puppet that had the strength of the Dao Shell realm." The Elder explained.

~Gasp~

A lot of the other elders couldn't help but take a breath of air after hearing this. They knew the implications of this and just how much it could change the tide of battle.

"If they really are from the Mulong clan, then they need to be nurtured well." Patriarch Mingliang spoke.

"They still have their inheritance from the ancestors thus they are safe in that part. But some support would still be good for them." Lin Mu spoke.

"Very well. We shall send a few disciples to assist them in what they need." Patriarch Mingliang stated.

"As it should be." You Yi nodded his head.

"Oh! If you're sending them there. Can you send some Formation masters there too?" Jing Luo interjected.

"Why?" The Patriarchs asked.

"Well, we have yet to set up a teleportation gate there. thus if someone sets it up there, it will save us time." Jing Luo answered.

Hearing this, Lin Mu felt like it was a great idea.

"We should do this for other places of interest too. It will save us a great bit of time.." Lin Mu said, calculating just how many months of effort could be saved that way.

[Chapter 923 - Two Words To Shake The Skies](#)

Patriarch You Yi heard it and found it to be a good option. The other two thought the same and discussed it for a minute before deciding.

"Then it shall be done. All elders proficient in formations will learn from Junior Jing Luo, starting today!" The Patriarchs ordered.

Seeing that they had accepted the suggestion, Lin Mu was pleased and so was Jing Luo. He could see the merit in the suggestion and knew that they would be saving a great amount of time this way.

Jing Luo silently counted the number of sets he would need to make and also allocate the time that would be needed to teach the elders that knew formations.

After this was done, the black dune patriarch and Light harmony sect patriarch wanted to see something else.

"Can you show us that... Invader?" Shandian asked.

"Of course." Patriarch You Yi spoke. "Bring it in!" he ordered.

One of the elders contacted someone using the communication jade slip and a couple of minute later the rabbit beast that was infected with the invader was brought in. It was kept in a large cage that was impossible for the beast to live.

There were some scars on the beast's body, but they seemed to be healing already. It was as if the beast had been injured multiple times and was not allowed to heal fully, which was true.

~thud~

The disciples that brought the invader in placed it in front of the patriarchs and retreated from the halls.

"Hmmm... so this is that invader?" Patriarch Mingliang asked.

"This is merely one of the avatars of the invader that has taken over this rabbit beast. There are more such like these." Lin Mu replied.

"Oh? How many do you think there are?" Patriarch Mingliang seriously questioned.

He could tell that Lin Mu knew a lot more than he showed, and his opinions mattered a lot more than others.

'If what You Yi told me about his master his true then he probably has the best estimate about the invader and its strength here.' Patriarch Mingliang thought.

"I can't estimate fully. So far, I know for sure that at least three such avatars were killed while there were a lot more that might have escaped. They all were fragments of a larger avatar that came from a single source.

But this one... I don't think it is from that source." Lin Mu spoke.

"Oh? What do you think it is, then?" Patriarch Shandian questioned.

"I think... that the smaller avatars earlier were just the start. Those avatars that escaped gave information to the invader's main body where our world was. This has now brought it here and it has sent out more of his avatars here.

More might be arriving or could already be here. If that is true, then the only reason why the invader's main body itself hasn't entered the world is probably due to the world's barrier." Lin Mu answered.

Hearing this, cold expressions appeared on Shandian and You Yi's faces while Patriarch Mingliang seemed to be deep in thought.

"Is this the same as that one thousand years ago?" Patriarch Mingliang asked.

"No... that one was... different. It was coming through a teleportation array that was in one of the shrines of the northern tribes. Though it was a very strong beast too and could be the bane of our world." Patriarch You Yi replied.

"If you are talking about the one that Old man Jing Wei fought, then it is indeed different. In fact... this one might be stronger than it." Lin Mu spoke.

Then thinking of something, Lin Mu wanted to try it. "The invader's main body might be possibly in the... Immortal Realm."

~RUMBLE~

The moment he said those two words, skies shook and a wave of thunder could be heard streaking across it. Out of nowhere, Dark clouds appeared and the entire Long Cloud sect turned gloomy.

The disciples who were going about their daily tasks and duties couldn't help but feel like they were being choked all of a sudden. The pressure on their bodies increased exponentially and the ones that were weaker directly fell to the ground.

In the main hall of the sect, the elders were in a similar situation, but due to being vastly stronger than most disciples they could bear the pressure far better. But even then, they felt like a sword was now hanging over their heads and a chill went down the spine.

The three patriarchs who were at the highest cultivation base managed to somewhat resist it, but the words that came from Lin Mu's mouth were enough to shock them to no end.

They thundered in their ears louder than the thunder outside and felt impactful. The patriarchs were at the Dao Treading realm and had lived a long time, being very experienced and knowledgeable.

They knew that there were cultivation realms above the Immortal ascensions realm but they didn't know what the exact name was. But now that Lin Mu had spoken them, they were carved within their minds.

They couldn't even understand how it was possible and felt like their world was shaking.

~pant~

Of course, as the other elders also came to understanding those two words, they were stunned. Many of them couldn't help but start panting, as this was a great event.

~RUMBLE~

The thunder shook the skies again and streaks of lightning shone within the clouds, threatening to drop any moment.

The three patriarchs were brought out of their traces due to that and looked at Lin Mu with complex expressions.

~shua~

Suddenly, a white pattern lit up on Lin Mu's forehead. It floated out from his forehead and let out a wave of energy that spread all over the area. Wherever it went, it erased the pressure that the people were feeling.

In less than five seconds, it had already covered the entire sect and reached all the way to the clouds.

And in ten seconds, it had wiped the clouds away as well; as if telling them there was no use for them here.

[Chapter 924 - The Change In The World And Weaker Restrictions](#)

The three patriarchs managed to get a hold of their wits before they looked at Lin Mu with speechless expressions.

"This..." You Yi found it hard to speak.

"Lin Mu, that..." the three of them mumbled for a few seconds while the white pattern disappeared back into Lin Mu's forehead.

Lin Mu opened his eyes after that happened and understood a lot more than before.

"How did you do that?" Patriarch You Yi finally questioned.

"I didn't do it. It was the world." Lin Mu answered.

"Not that... I mean... those words." Patriarch You Yi clarified.

"That too, it was the work of the world. You could say it is... growing." Lin Mu spoke.

"It's growing?" Patriarch Mingliang repeated.

"Yes. The restrictions that were on us are reducing since the world is getting stronger. The things that we weren't allowed to know previously will be understandable now. While it might not be all things, but eventually we will get to full clarity." Lin Mu explained.

"I see... and how did you know that this happened?" Patriarch Shandian asked, feeling a bit confused.

"Well, since we were talking about the invader and that it was sending out more of its avatars into our world, I concluded that the world's barrier might be weakening. But that was not all that I thought.

Another idea came to me and I wondered if it was true. And to confirm if it was true, all I needed to do was to see if I could reveal that information." Lin Mu replied.

Hearing this, the three patriarchs understood a bit better. At the same time, they also understood the implications of it. If Lin Mu could speak those words, it meant that he already knew of them before.

And that was not something which should have been possible before, unless it was under very specific conditions. The patriarchs tacitly agreed not to ask or talk about that, since they knew that it was way beyond them and nothing good would come out of it.

If anything, they might be getting themselves into more trouble because of it.

Xukong who had been observing everything, silently felt a little excited after seeing this too.

"I might be able to teach you a bit more now." Xukong suddenly spoke.

Lin Mu silently nodded his head and felt happy about that too.

"So the invader's main body will be far stronger than what any of us will be able to contend against." Patriarch Mingliang said, bringing the conversation back to the earlier topic.

"Yes." Lin Mu spoke. "It will be a tall order for us to resist that, and I don't know if we can even do that." He added.

"That is true. But we can't just wait for it, can we?" Patriarch Shandian added.

"Of course not. But we aren't the only ones that are worried about it. The northern tribes should be aware of it too. Perhaps even better than us." Lin Mu replied.

You Yi stroked his beard and thought over it for a bit.

"So you mean to say... they will have a solution?" Patriarch You Yi questioned.

"Not just will... they must have a solution. Otherwise, what they are doing won't make sense. Their goal is to take over the continent and rule it like their ancestors desired all those years ago.

And to do that, they enlisted the help of an invader. But doing so, they must have known the risks. After all, this is not their first time doing that. They should have a way to control or restrain it.

If not, then this would just be a lost cause for them. The invader would simply take over the world and do whatever it wants to do with it, and the Northern tribes won't be able to do anything at all either.

The worst thing of this all is that we don't know what the goal of this invader is." Lin Mu answered in detail.

The three patriarchs had faces of realization and understood Lin Mu's thinking.

"So we will get the way to stop the invader from the northern tribes after we defeat them?" Patriarch Shandian asked for clarity.

"That is the worst case scenario. If it really comes to that, it means that we failed to act in time. Ideally, we would have defeated the northern tribes and the Invader's traces would be wiped before that.

The world will help us in this too of course, or I would not have been ordained." Lin Mu replied.

Hearing this, the Patriarchs felt far better. For a minute there, they wondered if they were fighting for a lost cause, but now they felt relieved.

~Skwee~

Their attention was pulled by the infected rabbit beast that was cowering in the cage. It was evident that it had been scared by the thunder.

"Huh... this is new." Lin Mu muttered. "How are the tests going with it?" he questioned.

The Long Cloud sect had been testing the invader to see what its weaknesses were in the month that they had it. Lin Mu had given it to them so that they could learn more about it, along with the characteristic of the invader.

The two corpses of the earlier hosts were also given to the sect to study.

"We have had some discoveries about it indeed. It seems to be weak to fire on some level and is afraid of it though it might be more dependent on the cultivation base of the host as well.

It takes over the host and gives it characteristics that are innate to itself, such as the dark and slimy skin along with the bony structures. It also makes the hosts resistant to minor and small injuries while increasing its healing capabilities to some level.

It is also hungry all the time and will eat wherever is given to it. We think that the invader is gathering the cultivation base and nutrients from the host. It quite possibly drains them and there is no change in them at first, but the moment it leaves the host, the host dies.." Patriarch You Yi explained.

[Chapter 925 - Mountain Brush Sect's Supreme Elder?](#)

Lin Mu felt like finding the weaknesses of the Invader was a very important part and now that he knew that it was weak to fire, he would want to try and improve his control over fire spirit Qi more.

'Plus, since it is killing its hosts eventually, its end goal should be different. Going between the world and the void should probably cost it a lot of energy. Perhaps it uses the cultivation base and nutrients from them to accomplish that?' Lin Mu thought.

"Hmmm... since it's weakness is fire, we will have disciples learn fire attribute techniques... at least for the ones that can." Patriarch Shandian spoke.

"For those that can't, we can give them spirit weapons and spirit tools that can utilize fire. Some alchemical pills that can be used as weapons might as well be given to everyone." Patriarch Mingliang chimed in.

Hearing the suggestion of these two, Lin Mu nodded and felt that they were reasonable.

"Oh and there is another thing we should keep in mind. It's also a weakness, but not of the invader but Gu Yao." Lin Mu suddenly spoke.

"What is it?" everyone asked.

"The human controlling blood curse that Gu Yao uses. It doesn't work on humans that have assimilated other bloodlines. Beast bloodlines or any others should work." Lin Mu Replied.

"Really?!" Patriarch Shandian asked.

"Yes. I've seen someone being able to break the curse first hand." Lin Mu replied.

Hearing this Patriarch Shandian smiled.

"I reckon your sect has some disciples like this?" Lin Mu questioned.

"We pursue power so we will try multiple methods. Of course we have them. Around thirty percent of our disciples all have assimilated bloodlines." Patriarch Shandian said proudly.

Lin Mu looked towards the other two patriarchs, wondering if they had such disciples too.

"We do have some disciples with beast bloodline." Patriarch You Yi replied.

"Same for my Light harmony sect." Patriarch Mingliang stated.

"Good. The ones that have assimilated beast bloodlines should be the ones fighting when near Gu Yao or the ones being controlled by Gu Yao. That way, they will have no chance of being controlled. They will also be the ones investigating things for the very same reason." Lin Mu suggested.

"We shall do this then, it seems the right option." The Patriarchs accepted.

"Any news on who exactly brought the Horse Manticore to the Hong Lin Kingdom? They are missing too aren't they?" Lin Mu asked after remembering it.

"About that... Like we guessed before, it was indeed someone from the Mountain Brush Sect, an elder." High elder Sunsen spoke.

"Oh? Do we have an identity?" Lin Mu questioned.

"We do. It is none other than the Supreme elder of the Mountain Brush Sect. According to the official information given to the sect disciples, he is simply in seclusion. But once we investigated a few of the claims by providing them some resources they had asked for a long time ago, we managed to learn that he is actually not in the sect at all.

They have kept up this ruse for a while, but the Pressure elder left with the Horse Manticore secretly... or so we think. But we still don't know where he might have gone." High Elder Sunsen answered.

Lin Mu looked back to the corpse of the Horse Manticore as a thought came to his mind.

"What was the cultivation base of the Supreme elder?" Lin Mu asked.

"From what was last reported, Adolescent Soul Stage of the Nascent soul realm." High Elder Sunsen replied.

~Sigh~

Hearing this, Lin Mu shook his head.

"The Supreme elder of the Mountain Brush Sect is dead... no wonder this horse Manticore was this strong. It had actually consumed the supreme elder." Lin Mu stated.

~gasp~

Multiple people took a breath of air upon hearing this and couldn't help but feel a chilly breeze on their body even if it was not there.

"But how's that possible? He was still far stronger than the Horse Manticore." Some of the elders asked.

"Its simple, the way it can infect the others. We already have an example of the tragedy last month. The elder had to lose a hand to the beast." Lin Mu replied.

"But even if that is true, the supreme elder would have still been able to run away, wouldn't he?" someone else asked.

"He should have been able to. But I don't think he chose to run away at all. If he was controlled by Gu Yao, or had a drive to complete his mission, he might not have had the option to run away at all.

He possibly tried to fight the Horse Manticore and get it in control, since he couldn't kill it either. The fight ended up with him getting injured enough that he was eventually killed by the Horse Manticore." Lin Mu hypothesized.

Hearing this theory, the Patriarchs couldn't help but feel that it was rather plausible. They thought over it and eventually nodded their heads in approval.

"Looks like that is quite likely. But what are we to do now?" Patriarch You Yi asked.

"For now, simply keeping an eye on the Mountain Brush Sect should suffice. I don't think they would be able to keep still with their supreme elder missing and Gu Yao wouldn't like his things going missing either.

There will be bound to be some reaction from their end, and that is what we need to watch out for. It can be the clue that leads us to Gu Yao's location." Lin Mu replied.

"We shall do this then." Patriarch You Yi agreed.

With this done, Lin Mu and the Patriarchs discussed several more matters until the very next night. Many important decisions were made and the plans were finally set to play. With the Oath ceremony complete as well, they were now free to do a lot of things, and Lin Mu didn't need to worry as much either.

Since he will be delegating a large number of tasks to the sects, it will be a bit easier for them.

[Chapter 926 - Setting The Plans In Motion And Jingming Shang's Report](#)

Days passed by like a spring stream and Lin Mu entered seclusion.

He felt the need to get strong as soon as possible and felt the urge to do so even more now that his workload had been reduced. With the alliances working better than ever before and tasks split up, Lin Mu had less stress.

Jing Luo was going to train the elders that were proficient in formations how to assemble the teleportation gates and also manufacture enough of them so that they could be sent to the places they had chosen.

Teaching all the elders would take him nearly a week, while making the sets of teleportation gate components would take him at least five days for each. With the assistance of the many elders, it was way faster than before, but Jing Luo still needed to work for the main parts.

They would send out each set as soon as it was complete and the elder would set them on the place that was decided. The first location was none other than the Fenlong Kingdom and the teleportation gate there was set up fifteen days after the last meeting Lin Mu had with everyone.

Since Lin Mu spent his time in the Kong Plane cultivating, activating those gates didn't take him much effort. Once the gate at the Fenlong kingdom was complete, Lin Mu got a visitor who brought him a report.

He was currently sitting in a forest in the Kong plane and reading the long report that was given to him.

"Jingming Shang certainly did his due diligence." Lin Mu muttered as he started to read.

Lin Mu learned that the network Jingming Shang had made has been expanding decently. Every week more and more people joined them and there were already rumors in the kingdoms that there was a secret power recruiting people.

It gave them something to talk about and got them interested in it. They were lured in with the promise of profits and resources, which Jingming Shang could reasonably give them due to the revenue they were making from the expanded network.

While Lin Mu might have preferred to stay hidden a bit more, Jingming Shang took a different route. However, he didn't implicate the alliance either. Only the high ranking members of his group knew of the true alliance and Jingming Shang simply manipulated the rest of them.

He was good enough to know what they desired and how to give them that.

Jingming Shang also mentioned that he was going to run low on funds soon enough.

"Hmm... if he's running low on funds, then perhaps it is time for him to start using the Kong plane and the teleportation gates. He did say that we can make as much as ten times the profit or even more on many items." Lin Mu muttered to himself, reading this.

Since the network that Jingming Shang made ran on mutual interest and profits, funds were essential to run it all. Once people realized that there was no more profit to be made, the entire network might come collapsing down.

Thankfully, the trade plan Jingming Shang made keeping in mind the reach of the teleportation gate made it so that they would soon be reaping a large profit.

Funds were essential for running anything in the world; from sects, to kingdoms, to even a war. Lin Mu and the sects needed them too and while the Long Cloud Alliance had a decent amount of them, they couldn't just squander it all on this.

With Jingming Shang's work, they would have a cash influx as well as an expenditure that should balance things out.

Lin Mu then read the routes that Jingming Shang had planned out for the trades.

"So the Eastern Ming Dynasty's herbs to be sent to the kingdoms in the west. These will be taken through the Light Harmony sect's gate and leave through the Black Dune sect.

Same will be done for the myriad of resources that are in the Great Southern Forest. The Long Cloud Alliance will send multiple disciples to gather and harvest materials from the forest.

There will always be a great demand for them." Lin Mu analyzed.

He could see the benefit in doing all this and felt like Jingming Shang was very smart in doing business.

'Man can quite possibly own an entire kingdom one day if he keeps this up.' Lin Mu thought.

Lin Mu kept reading more and took about an hour to finish the report. By the end of it, he was thoroughly impressed by Jingming Shang's intellect.

"Seems like we certainly made a good choice with him." Xukong who had been silent for a while spoke.

"Indeed, senior. If things really progress as planned, our effort won't go wasted. Plus, with more and more merchants joining Jingming Shang, he is getting closer to tracking down Gu Yao.

They already managed to find a couple of shipments that were suspected to be sent by Gu Yao. They were heading to the Zither Wind sect and the West ocean sect." Lin Mu replied.

"Hmm... let things proceed, then. You have been far too involved in those matters and haven't been able to focus on cultivating as well. Now that you have the time, it's best to focus on it." Xukong stated.

"Mmm... once Jing Luo is done with his work, and the gates are set, we will be able to take the next step. I still have to meet up with Wu Hei and explain everything to him. He will also be our biggest link to Gu Yao and where he actually is.

Same with the Northern Tribes. Ku Waowen's intel is proving to be good too as well. They did manage to find a couple of spies that were hidden in the three sects as well." Lin Mu replied.

"That's good. You should have a while till Jing Luo will be free, so we'll make the best of it." Xukong said as he thought of some things he would be teaching Lin Mu.

Lin Mu put away the reports and got ready.

[Chapter 927 - Danger For Progress](#)

Lin Mu's goal was to gain as much power as he could in the time that he had right now. And since it was not a very large amount of time, the only way he had to increase that was in a rather dangerous way.

"Are you sure you want to attempt that?" Xukong questioned.

"Yes. It will take me a while to reach the Shell Completion stage of the Dao Shell realm. If I focus on body cultivation, I might be able to finish the third treasured organ and directly obtain the peak level strength of it." Lin Mu answered.

Lin Mu had finally decided to use the True Gold Body forging arts to cultivate. It was a cruel technique, but he was ready for it and had become extremely determined. But Lin Mu knew just being determined was not enough, he also needed some extra skills.

~huu~

"Time to finally learn the forging techniques Jing Luo gave me." Lin Mu said as he took out the jade slips.

There was possibly thousands of years of experience condensed in these jade slips and Lin Mu knew just how valuable they were.

'I don't need to learn it entirely. I simply need to learn the metal refinement part for now so that I can properly refine the gold.' Lin Mu thought as he closed his eyes.

His spirit sense touched the jade slip as bits of information started appearing in his mind. Lin Mu simply spent two days learning and memorizing just this information. After that, he spent three days comprehending and revising what he had memorized.

Then on the sixth day, he finally opened his eyes.

~huu~

Letting out a deep breath, Lin Mu's eyes glimmered with excitement.

"Time to test it out first." Lin Mu said as he took out a small cauldron.

The cauldron was something that was used to refine alchemical pills, but could still work for refining metal. Such cauldrons were usually very sturdy and easily withstood high temperature that could melt the base metals.

The cauldron in front of Lin Mu was very plain and generic, made out of Iron and reinforced with runes. This was something new disciples would use to learn first and make pills.

While it did not have any extra features nor did it provide better quality in making pills, for Lin Mu this was the perfect item since he didn't need to focus on the efficacy of medicinal ingredients.

He wasn't even using it for that; he was simply refining some metal.

Lin Mu scanned his ring and quickly found a suitable chunk of gold.

"Hmm... it should be about a kilogram in weight." Lin Mu estimated.

He had plenty of gold and other metals he had obtained over the years and the cave in the Kong plane where the nexus was had even more gold. In fact, the gold in the inheritance cave was many times more than what Lin Mu had in his storage.

He had let it stay in the cave since Jing Luo and others would be able to access it when needed and won't have to call for him every time. Of course, the access to it was restrained and not just anyone could go in.

For now though, Lin Mu had enough to just learn on his own.

~clang~

The chunk of gold landed in the cauldron and Lin Mu recalled the basic methods.

"Since I can use fire spirit Qi, I don't need to depend on external fire. Plus, the control will be better." Lin Mu muttered and ignited flames on his hand.

Then in the next second, the flames spread out like a wave and covered the entire cauldron. Lin Mu knew that equally spreading the heat was an important part of the process, and many forgers struggled with it.

But for him, this problem could be solved by directly covering the entire cauldron with flames. The flames licked the cauldron and soon it heated up.

~Crackle~

A strange crackling sound could be heard coming from the cauldron, which pulled Lin Mu's attention.

"What was that?" Lin Mu said, feeling confused.

At first, he wondered if the cauldron was damaged and breaking or something. But then using his spirit sense to check it in detail, he realized what the issue was.

"Huh, never thought there would be such fine air pockets in the cauldron." Lin Mu said, observing the cavities that were present on the cauldron.

They were too fine to see with naked eyes and only with spirit sense could he perceive them somewhat. The crackling sound Lin Mu heard had come from it. Thinking for the reason, Lin Mu recalled something he had learned.

'So it's the air escaping with force due to heating quickly. Normally it would not do this since a cauldron like this would be heated with an external fire that would heat it slowly and make the air escape gradually as well.' Lin Mu remembered.

With the little scare out of the way, Lin Mu put his focus back on the gold. While it had not shown any signs of melting yet, it was starting to heat up and change color.

Lin Mu felt like he should increase the heat more, but then recalled one of the warnings in the jade slip.

'If I heat it too quickly, the impurities will not be extracted properly. It needs to be gradual.' Lin Mu thought.

Hence following that, he let the gold heat up and change color several times. From its golden yellow color it changed to orange, then red, after which it returned to a bright yellow which was hard to look at.

After a few more minutes, it started to soften and change its shape. Lin Mu continued to heat it until it fully became liquid. Fine bubbles could be seen coming out from the liquid gold as some of the impurities escaped in the form of gases.

"The start is good, but this is just the second step.. More to go!" Lin Mu said with enthusiasm.

[Chapter 928 - Refining Gold](#)

Lin Mu carefully watched the molten gold and scanned it with his spirit sense. He could feel that other than gold, there were other substances mixed in it. They were not like chunks or separate particles though and seemed to be mixed finely with the liquid gold.

"From here, I can increase the heat and let it separate out." Lin Mu muttered and increased the output of flames.

~SHUA~

Like a forge that had just been stoked with bellows, the flames directly doubled in intensity. The iron cauldron was pretty much hidden by the flames, and it looked like there was a fireball floating in the air.

The area around Lin Mu had already been dried up by now and the ground directly below the Cauldron was scorched black. The liquid gold bubbled even more and the heat continued to pour into it.

Some time passed and Lin Mu could see floating particles on top of the surface of gold.

"There we go!" Lin Mu exclaimed.

It was his first time doing it, and he had managed to remove a majority of the impurities.

'Now to scoop them out.' Lin Mu began with the next step.

He took out another tool from his ring, which was like a shallow ladle. He steeped it in the liquid gold and skimmed its surface, removing all the impurities that were floating on it.

The impurities were a mixture of colors, with the majority being black, Grey and white. Throwing the impurities to the side, Lin Mu continued heating the gold. There were still some bubbles coming from the gold and he needed to continue doing it till the gold stopped bubbling.

Lin Mu checked it with his spirit sense and saw that it was now far purer than before.

"Now for the final step... actually refining it enough to make it reduce in volume." Lin Mu muttered in a serious tone.

This step was also the most difficult part of the entire process, since it needed pressure and heat at the same time.

~clang~

Lin Mu put the lid of the cauldron on and rotated it so that it would lock in place.

This time he used both his hands and used gestures to control the heat while keeping an eye on the liquid gold inside with his spirit sense. Since most of the gases in the form of impurities were already removed, the internal pressure did not spike like it would have normally.

The volume of gold stayed the same for the time being, but its temperature kept on increasing.

"Focus... focus..." Lin Mu muttered as he increased the heat even more.

The cauldron itself started to turn red as the heat started to overcome the formations that protected it. Still, it wouldn't break just from this and it was just the temperature maintaining formation that had failed.

The durability and formation was still working and won't break... at least not now.

By the time the heat reached a new level, the liquid gold inside had change color once again. Now, it was an almost blinding white in color. The heat had reached a peak point and Lin Mu knew it was time to circulate it.

~huh~

Taking a deep breath, Lin Mu split his mind to let out spirit Qi from his hands. This time it was pure spirit Qi and was not the fire elemental spirit Qi like before. The spirit Qi was like an invisible gas and floated around his hands.

Lin Mu used a tendril of spirit sense to guide this spirit Qi to the red hot cauldron. It passed through the restraints on the cauldron and seeped through the microscopic gaps in the iron.

Then it finally reached the pool of liquid gold inside. There it wiggled its way down and formed a circular ring around it.

'Need more spirit sense tendrils,' Lin Mu realized and produced more of them.

Then controlling all of them, he grasped the spirit Qi, turning it into several individual streams. These streams then started to flow into the gold and pushed it. And since it was being done from all angles, the liquid gold started to move.

Lin Mu controlled the spirit Qi streams to make it move at a deflected angle, which then made the liquid gold move in a spiral pattern. Till this point, the process was hard and taxing, but soon Lin Mu found the equilibrium and didn't need to put as much effort.

~Phew~

"Now to just maintain this." Lin Mu said as he took a breath of relief.

The liquid gold continued to stir within the cauldron and slowly absorbed the spirit Qi into it. Bit by bit, its properties started to change and it started to bubble once more.

~STRETCH~

The sound of metal being pressured was heard as the Iron Cauldron let out a low creak. The bubbles coming from the gold had increased the internal pressure. But at the same time, it made the lid of the cauldron tighten due to the opposing force.

'Perhaps it'll be better to use an even stronger cauldron for this...' Lin Mu noted.

Since it was going to be a first try, he thought that trying from something low leveled would be better. But he was now proved to be wrong. Which was a good thing, since it allowed him to learn better.

At this point, Lin Mu was already satisfied and even if the cauldron broke, he wouldn't mind it. He had come way farther than he had originally thought for the first try.

"May as well go all in." Lin Mu said with determination and increase the amount of spirit Qi he was pouring into the gold.

~SIZZLE~

As of water was poured into boiling oil, the gold sizzled and jumped. But at the same time, it *absorbed far more spirit Qi than before.*

~thung~thung~thung~

The sound of gold sputtering inside the cauldron could be heard as the vessel started to sustain damage.

About ten minutes passed like this until finally, the expected happened.

~BOOM~

[Chapter 929 - First Success](#)

~SPLASH~

~SIZZLE~

Lin Mu blocked the hot liquid gold from splashing on him with his hands. The armor of the mortal strengthening scripture appeared and quickly stopped it with ease. The fragments of the cauldron also pelted the armor, but did no damage.

A few seconds later, Lin Mu opened his eyes and saw the scene. The fragments of the cauldron were lying everywhere, while the splotches of gold were equally spread. Still, one one of the biggest fragments of the cauldron, Lin Mu could see something.

The bottom part of the cauldrons had been heated the most and thus it had directly cracked along the heated edges. It was like a shallow bowl that had fallen and it still contained some gold in it.

Lin Mu took a closed look and saw that the gold was cooling. Just from watching it physically, it was hard to tell if the gold had changed, but with his spirit sense Lin Mu could clearly feel the difference.

"Alright, so first failure." Lin Mu said, "but the next will be a success!" he said with surety.

He changed the location and went slightly away from the previous one and took out another cauldron.

~DENG~

The cauldron landed on the hard, rocky ground and slightly vibrated. Unlike the previous cauldron, this was an actual professional one that alchemists would use. Lin Mu had learned from his last mistake and picked a good from the many he had.

"This should be better." Lin Mu said as he took out another chunk of gold from the ring.

He didn't really care for the gold that had spilled everywhere and now cooled into solid form. Just collecting all of the fragments of the gold would take a long time and Lin Mu didn't want to waste time in doing that at all.

Thus, he simply took out a new chunk.

~CLANG~

Throwing it into the new cauldron, Lin Mu created the flames and started the entire process again. This time though, he could feel that the process was way smoother.

~hummm~

The runes on the cauldron faintly glowed, showing that they were working as per their functions. The cauldron that Lin Mu had used this time had the functions such as heat distribution, sound dampening, vibration suppression along with the earlier ones that toughed it. It was also a bit bigger in size than the previous one and also thicker.

Time passed as Lin Mu repeated all the steps until he reached the final step where he had failed.

~HONG~

The runes on the cauldrons glowed with a greater intensity as they did their duty of suppressing the unwanted vibrations caused due to the sputtering of gold in the cauldron. Such vibrations can cause the refiner to make some mistakes, thus it was best to not have them.

While Lin Mu wasn't exactly refining pills, the same concept could be applied here as well. In fact, seeing the complexity that was in all this, Lin Mu was rather appreciative of old man Jing Wei.

'He managed to refine Green Gold from raw gold back then. I don't know if I can fully refine it for just the technique, which isn't even on the level of green gold.' Lin Mu thought.

"That is the difference between many years of experience. Don't put yourself down. I'm sure you will be able to do it as well, if you just get more practice. Besides, the current technique does not call for Green Gold anyway. So no use thinking about that." Xukong suddenly spoke.

Lin Mu nodded his head and replied, "you're right senior. I best just focus on the task at hand."

With that little counseling, Lin Mu focused on the cauldron and could feel the spirit Qi being absorbed into the gold. His spirit sense focused on the liquid metal and saw that it finally started to shrink.

'Interesting... so the more spirit Qi it absorbs, the more condensed it gets.' Lin Mu thought.

While he couldn't understand the exact mechanism behind it, Lin Mu still memorized this observation. It was at this point that he needed to supply even more spirit Qi to the gold.

The more it got condensed, the greater amount of spirit Qi it needed. Which also got Lin Mu to think about how Jing Wei did this since his cultivation base was sealed and he didn't really supply any spirit Qi on his own.

'Maybe some other method.' Lin Mu thought and pushed out more and more spirit Qi.

Nearly an hour passed, after which the gold had reduced to the desired volume.

~pew~

Lin Mu let out a breath of relief and finally opened the lid of the cauldron, that was tightly closed.

~clang~ clang~ clang~

This one had clasps that held the lid instead of being screwed on. With the three clasps released, the lid was easily lifted and the hot yellow gold could be seen inside it. The volume had greatly reduced.

"Whoa! This isn't even a glassful, this is like just a cup's worth." Lin Mu said, seeing the actual liquid with his eyes.

The gold was roughly twenty five milliliters in volume now. Looking at the still liquid gold, Lin Mu felt like testing out something.

Gritting his teeth, Lin Mu dipped a finger into the liquid gold. He deactivated the Armor of the mortal strengthening scripture beforehand, though, or it wouldn't really be a test.

~Sizzle~

The hot gold evaporated the moisture on his finger almost immediately and soon Lin Mu felt the heat.

His eyes were tightly closed, but then ten seconds later he opened them.

"Huh?" A confused voice escaped his lips as Lin Mu saw the gold.

"It... doesn't hurt?" Lin Mu muttered in surprise.

He lifted his finger out of the gold and looked at it. Other than some redness on it, there were no burns that he could see. And he didn't feel any pain from it either.

"This... is the gold really supposed to hurt me?" Lin Mu said in confusion again.

[Chapter 930 - Tons Of Gold](#)

Lin Mu had not expected the reality to be like this.

"I'm pretty sure I used to get hurt by less than this." Lin Mu said, still finding it unusual.

"Actually that was for Qi skills, I don't think you tested heat damage any time after your breakthrough." Xukong spoke.

Lin Mu furrowed his brows and thought of it for a while before recalling that it was true. Even the recent battle that he had gotten injured in was with Ku Waowen, who was using some truly strong attacks.

"That's right... I've never tested something like this before." Lin Mu said with a sense of realization.

It also made him happy, since it meant that the part of suffering that one had to go through to practice the True Gold Body Forging Arts was gone now.

"It's really good for you. You will be able to progress even faster." Xukong added.

"Indeed, senior. Now I can't wait to do this on a mass scale." Lin Mu replied.

Having found even better motivation, Lin Mu decided to go the full length for the next refinement. He was going to attempt the very first stage of the technique properly this time.

'First, I need to determine how much I exactly weigh.' Lin Mu thought to himself.

Weighing himself was not something he had done before and was a new thing for him.

"Now then... how do I actually go about doing this?" Lin Mu wondered.

Thinking for a minute, he quickly came up with a solution. He took out a few objects from the ring and started to build something. The first was a pair of metal plates that were used for forging.

These plates could be hammered into different shapes and were used to make armor, but here he was going to use them for a different purpose. More importantly, he picked them because they were of the same size and shape.

Then he took out a large log that was about four meters wide. The final item he took out was some rope. He then punched some holes in the corners of the metal plates and tied the ropes at an equal length.

Then finally he attached the metal plates with the rope to the wooden log. With this, his makeshift scale was made.

"Now, to just have something to measure against." Lin Mu said as he took out metal bricks and ingots.

These were all of the equal weight and it was even written on it, thus making a convenient way to measure for himself. There were many different sizes of bricks in his storage and they would serve as measuring weights.

Lin Mu hung the long from its center to the side of a cliff and went to stand in one of the metal plates. He made sure that he was barely touching it and not exerting actual weight, as it would completely tilt the scale.

Then he threw out a brick of 10 kilograms bronze into the other metal plate. This of course made them shift and go down. But Lin Mu's body stopped the other plate from coming up too much.

Using his body as a counterweight, Lin Mu kept on adding more and more bricks until he felt like the force was almost equal.

'Now, to get the proper number.' Lin Mu said and fully sat down on the plate without floating.

~twang~

Slight sound was made from the stretching and flexing of the scales along with their tilting. But after a few seconds they stabilize, with Lin Mu's body being lowed.

"I'll add smaller ones now." Lin Mu said as he threw a few one kilogram bricks on the other plate.

At a certain point, the scales tilted on the other side, and Lin Mu was elevated. Lin Mu repeated the same process with lower weight bricks and went back and forth two more times before he got a proper balance.

"There we go!" Lin Mu said as he counted the bricks and estimated his weight.

"126.5 Kilograms." Lin Mu measured.

It was a relatively high weight for someone of Lin Mu's stature and build, if they compared him to a commoner. Someone like him would likely look way fatter, but his body cultivation skewed that result at the very start.

Having known his weight, Lin Mu did a quick estimate of how much gold he would be needing.

"62,122.5 Kilograms... Damn, that's a lot." Lin Mu muttered.

And it truly was a massive amount for most people and even cultivators. Thankfully, Lin Mu had many times more than that amount with him. Some of the gold was in the form of proper ingots, while the rest was in the form of irregular chunks.

There were even other items made out of gold that were mostly for display, like novelty armors, statues, weapons, and many other things. But Lin Mu knew that he couldn't use all of these without processing them, as they were often mixed with other metals.

Instead of all those, he simply used gold ingots that were mostly pure and had no metals in them, other than some impurities that were way harder to remove.

~huu~

"Let's get this started so that we can progress effectively." Lin Mu said as he sent a message to Little Shrubby.

He will be needing some help during this all and Little Shrubby was the perfect for this. Jing Luo was also someone who could do it, but with his current duties, he had little time to even think for himself and was busy with teaching and building.

It would take some time for Little Shrubby to return to him since he was out exploring the Kong Plane. Thus, while the beast returned, Lin Mu did other preparations. He first divided the gold into three different piles that would be used in the 3 different steps.

The first pile was 251 kilograms, the second 1506 kilograms and the third one being 60,240 kilograms.

Soon there was a hill of literal gold beside Lin Mu, and all he had to do was wait for his help to arrive.