

Sect Master 501

Chapter 501: Intrusion

After a brief consultation, Meng Zhang and Qin Hongying opted for the second strategy.

The reason was straightforward. No one knew what kind of treasures the three Gold Core Daoist Masters of the Flying Swan Sect might acquire from the Layered Mystery Sect's legacy after seizing its most precious artifacts.

Suppose they obtained items that could instantly enhance their combat capabilities, such as powerful talismans. In that case, Meng Zhang and Qin Hongying, already significantly outmatched, would stand even less of a chance against them.

By intruding and preventing the Flying Swan Sect's cultivators from seizing the treasures, they could avoid this scenario.

In contrast, the first option, seemingly a chance to reap the benefits of others' efforts and strike unexpectedly, actually posed far more unpredictable risks.

Qin Hongying, the old lady, was extremely pragmatic. Initially, she vehemently stated that she would only help the Taiyi Sect resist the Demonic Beasts, avoiding entanglement in the grudges between the Taiyi Sect and other factions.

But now, seeing the benefits, she sprinted faster than anyone. Concerning her last hope, her urgency was almost unmasked.

Of course, the more eager she was, the more proactive Meng Zhang became. Her urgency aligned perfectly with his intentions.

Meng Zhang observed that since the three Gold Core Daoist Masters of the Flying Swan Sect entered among these mountains, numerous peaks had vanished in less than half a day, and many more were scarred and badly damaged.

According to An Moran, the Myriad Layers Peak, transformed from the treasure, had the ability to trap and confuse enemies. However, it seemed neither outstanding in offensive nor defensive capabilities.

Almost a day had passed since the Flying Swan Sect's trio broke in. If they continued to delay, they might genuinely allow them to succeed.

The only chance for Qin Hongying and Meng Zhang to win was to launch a surprise attack while the Flying Swan Sect's three Gold Core Daoist Masters were busy breaking through the Myriad Layers Peak and had exhausted much of their strength against the Dark Crow Demon General.

Only during their moment of weakness could the vast gap in strength possibly be bridged.

After discussing, Qin Hongying and Meng Zhang plunged into the mountains ahead.

The two charged side by side, with the Extreme Sword Spirit General following Meng Zhang.

Since leaving the Grand Lion Ridge, the Extreme Sword Spirit General had been silent, following Meng Zhang without a word.

Upon entering the mountains, their surroundings blurred, and the scene before them changed drastically.

Thick fog engulfed the area, obscuring their senses and even preventing the Divine Sense of a Gold Core Daoist Master from extending far into the mist.

The mountains, previously towering on the ground, were now floating in the air, slowly moving along a certain trajectory.

These peaks, sometimes hidden within the fog, were elusive and unclear.

Had Meng Zhang and his companions been the first to enter, they would have needed considerable time to understand the intricacies and find a way out.

However, the three Gold Core Daoist Masters of the Flying Swan Sect, who had broken in earlier, inadvertently assisted them significantly.

As these Masters sought a way out and solved the restrictions, they not only greatly weakened the confusing force inside but also illuminated a clear path for Meng Zhang and the others.

With Meng Zhang's profound inheritance and solid foundation, coupled with Qin Hongying's deep cultivation base and vast experience, they understood what to do in no time.

They struck almost simultaneously.

The Fierce Yang Sword rose in the air like a blazing sun, heavily descending towards a vaguely visible mountain ahead.

Qin Hongying's dragon-headed cane transformed into a black dragon, soaring into the sky and pouncing on the same target.

A light screen arose on the mountain, blocking Meng Zhang's Fierce Yang Sword.

With a powerful thrust, the Fierce Yang Sword shattered the light screen.

Then, the cane-transformed dragon lunged forward, slamming into the mountain.

After a loud explosion, the mountain shook violently, several deep cracks appearing on its surface.

If it were a regular peak, a casual strike from a Gold Core Daoist Master could have turned it into dust.

The mountain, having taken hits from both Meng Zhang and Qin Hongying, was not heavily damaged.

At this point, Meng Zhang confirmed that these mountains were indeed transformations of the Layered Mystery Sect's ultimate treasure, the Myriad Layers Peak.

Although Qin Hongying hadn't received information about the Myriad Layers Peak from Meng Zhang, her savvy experience still allowed her to identify many issues.

Without speaking, they continued to strike in perfect sync.

After several attacks, the mountain shattered. The surrounding fog receded, revealing a large empty space.

Meng Zhang and Qin Hongying proceeded, relentlessly attacking the mountains ahead.

Along the way, they left behind a trail of shattered mountains and severely damaged peaks.

As they moved forward, the thick fog continued to dissipate.

The traces left by the Flying Swan Sect's three Gold Core Daoist Masters, who had arrived earlier, now guided them.

Advancing towards the center surrounded by these mountains was their target.

Indeed, the Myriad Layers Peak, the legacy artifact, only had the ability to confound and trap enemies, with little to no lethal power. Its defensive strength was average, not exceeding the limits of what a Gold Core Daoist Master could handle.

Meng Zhang and Qin Hongying had to exert considerable effort to break through the obstacles and reach the center.

Ahead, a towering mountain stood. This conspicuous peak soared into the clouds, standing out like a crane among chickens.

Surrounding smaller mountains orbited this central peak like stars around the moon.

Atop the main peak was a vast palace, occupying nearly half of the summit.

Using his Deception Breaking Eye, Meng Zhang saw the Dark Crow Demon General in its true demonic form.

A massive dark crow guarded the palace entrance, desperately blocking the three Gold Core Daoist Masters of the Flying Swan Sect.

On the plaza before the grand palace entrance lay various Demonic Beasts' corpses.

These recently deceased Demonic Beasts still emitted strong auras and intense demonic energy.

These fallen creatures were the elite of Second Rank Demonic Beasts, some nearing the strength of Third Rank Demonic Beasts.

Meng Zhang was taken aback; he never expected the Dark Crow Demon General to have concealed such a force here.

If these Demonic Beasts were released into the wild, the forces under the Dark Crow Demon General would swell by dozens of times.

Had Meng Zhang known earlier that the Dark Crow Demon General held such an ace up his sleeve, he might not have had the confidence to seize the Grand Lion Ridge.

However, now, such a formidable force had been entirely decimated by the hands of three Gold Core Daoist Masters from the Flying Swan Sect.

The attack on the crow's nest had also cost the Flying Swan Sect dearly.

Of the only two Third Rank warships in the sect, one was completely destroyed, and the other was slightly damaged, still stranded out in the open.

Countless disciples in the sect were killed or injured, including many Foundation Building period cultivators.

Among the three Gold Core Daoist Masters who had made it here, Daoist Master Fei Jiang seemed seriously wounded, sitting aside to recuperate.

Daoist Master Fei Shi, along with Wu Mingwei, was attacking the Dark Crow Demon General.

The Dark Crow Demon General was covered in scars, with a significant part of his body missing. It seemed he wouldn't be able to hold on much longer.

Meng Zhang and Qin Hongying exchanged glances, understanding each other's intentions.

If they didn't act now, once the Dark Crow Demon General fell in battle, there would be no chance of victory.

Meng Zhang and Qin Hongying lunged forward, covering the not-so-short distance and directly approaching the main peak.

The smaller peaks rotating around this main peak should have served to guard it and ward off enemies. However, they were destroyed or severely damaged when the three Gold Core Daoist Masters from the Flying Swan Sect broke in.

Most of the remaining small peaks were in shambles, and the few that were intact could not form a defensive front, offering little resistance.

Meng Zhang and Qin Hongying flew through the gaps between these small peaks and plunged into the main peak, arriving on the broad plaza outside the palace gate.

Daoist Master Fei Jiang, who had been meditating aside, was highly vigilant and responded immediately.

He unleashed a giant sword, slashing towards Meng Zhang and Qin Hongying.

Though Meng Zhang had formed the core not long ago, his combat strength was already not inferior to many seasoned Gold Core Daoist Masters. Even if he intended to hide his capabilities, his displayed combat power was still extraordinary.

Qin Hongying, with her peak early-stage Gold Core Cultivation Base, was even more formidable. Battle-hardened and extremely experienced, she posed a great threat to Daoist Master Fei Jiang with her every move.

Neither Meng Zhang nor Qin Hongying had any intention of showing mercy. The two, joining forces, had pushed Daoist Master Fei Jiang into a disadvantage within moments.

As Daoist Master Fei Jiang fended off their attacks in a very disheveled manner, he shouted angrily, "Meng Zhang, how dare you! I swear I won't rest until your Taiyi Sect is uprooted."

The battle had already commenced, and there was no question of daring or not. As for the threat of annihilating the Taiyi Sect, Meng Zhang didn't take it to heart.

If he didn't intervene and the Flying Swan Sect indeed acquired the inheritance of the Layered Mystery Sect, that would be the real disaster for the Taiyi Sect.

Already seriously injured, Daoist Master Fei Jiang was struggling under the joint assault from Meng Zhang and Qin Hongying. In no time, he was in grave danger, barely holding on.

Daoist Master Fei Shi, who was in the midst of attacking the Dark Crow Demon General, couldn't possibly stand by and watch Daoist Master Fei Jiang in peril.

With a point of his finger, a mountain-peak-like spiritual tool, which had been restraining the Dark Crow Demon General, moved under his command, pressing towards Meng Zhang and Qin Hongying.

Indeed, a mid-Gold Core stage cultivator was extraordinary. With one move, he had suppressed Meng Zhang and Qin Hongying.

This mountain peak was Daoist Master Fei Shi's natal spiritual tool, nurtured over many years and containing immense power.

Facing the mountain peak above their heads, they felt an enormous pressure continuously bearing down on them.

The dragon-head cane and two Flying Swords rose into the air, desperately resisting the descending peak.

The Dark Crow Demon General, already hanging by a thread, saw Daoist Master Fei Shi distracted and sensed an opportunity in the battle. With the last of his strength, he broke free from Daoist Master Fei Shi's control, attempting to escape into the palace.

Wu Mingwei, having formed the core not long ago and being the weakest, hadn't drawn much attention from the Dark Crow Demon General. However, seeing the Dark Crow Demon General trying to flee, he erupted with power.

The iron whip in his hand suddenly shone brightly, lashing fiercely toward the head of the Dark Crow Demon General.

Being from a sect with a long heritage and profound background had its advantages. Not long after Wu Mingwei formed his core, he was bestowed with a suitable Third Rank magic tool by his sect.

This was not the case for someone like Meng Zhang, who, after forming his core, struggled desperately to find a suitable magic tool. He searched far and wide, exerting much effort, yet achieving his goal was anything but guaranteed.

The Dark Crow Demon General couldn't dodge in time and was brutally struck in the head by the iron whip.

Accompanied by a shrill scream, the Demon General's skull cracked open, spewing blood in all directions. Using the last of his strength, the severely wounded demon threw his broken body into the palace.

After launching this powerful attack, Wu Mingwei had to pause to catch his breath.

On the other hand, Fei Jiang, the Daoist Master, found himself momentarily unoccupied because Fei Shi, another Daoist Master, had intervened, suppressing both Meng Zhang and Qin Hongying.

Seeing Fei Shi making his move, Fei Jiang didn't pay attention to the two foes in front of him. Instead, he dashed into the palace after the Dark Crow Demon General.

The three Gold Core Daoist Masters from the Flying Swan Sect were unaware that the Myriad Layers Peak was the Layered Mystery Sect's most treasured legacy.

Once the Myriad Layers Peak transformed and settled into its numerous layers, it was incredibly difficult to move. Control over its nexus could gradually refine this precious treasure.

This crucial insight was even more unlikely to be known by them.

They simply assumed that the Layered Mystery Sect's legacy treasure must be in the possession of the Dark Crow Demon General.

In the past, the White Lion Demon King seized a treasure from True Monarch Li Chong, but being a Demonic Beast, he couldn't utilize it. After his death, the White Lion's remains were buried near a crow's nest, naturally falling into the hands of the Dark Crow Demon General.

The Dark Crow Demon General, already gravely injured and close to death, couldn't survive Wu Mingwei's powerful strike for much longer.

Fei Jiang, relentless in his pursuit, intended to seize its body immediately to prevent any unforeseen circumstances.

Seeing Fei Jiang rush into the palace, Qin Hongying, who likely shared his thoughts, abandoned her joint effort with Meng Zhang against Fei Shi's natal spiritual tool. She executed some unknown Divine Ability, disappearing on the spot, leaving Meng Zhang alone to resist Fei Shi.

Meng Zhang was furious, almost cursing out loud. Together, they could barely hold off Fei Shi, but alone, how could he withstand such a seasoned Gold Core mid-stage expert?

"Cursed old witch, I should've never relied on her," he thought bitterly.

By the time Qin Hongying reappeared, she was already by the grand entrance of the palace. Without hesitation, she chased after Fei Jiang into the palace.

Fei Shi, busy suppressing Meng Zhang, and Wu Mingwei, still catching his breath, couldn't stop her in time.

Fei Shi's expression changed. He invoked his mountain-shaped spiritual tool, pinning Meng Zhang in place, but he didn't bother launching further attacks. Instead, he dashed toward the palace.

A scream of utmost agony emanated from within the palace.

Followed by the sounds of explosive shockwaves, Qin Hongying's body was hurled from the palace, screaming incessantly, "This can't be, how are you not dead yet?"

Before Qin Hongying even hit the ground, Fei Jiang's body was also thrown out.

Both of them landed, coughing up large mouthfuls of blood, obviously sustaining serious injuries. Particularly, Fei Jiang, whose left arm had disappeared, with blood spurting wildly from the stump.

Fei Shi halted his advance, retracting the spiritual tool that held Meng Zhang, his face stern as he gazed into the palace.

Chapter 502: Monster King

After Fei Shi Daoist Master retrieved the natal spiritual tool, Meng Zhang temporarily escaped from the suppressed situation. However, there was no trace of joy on his face. Instead, he looked solemnly towards the palace.

Wu Mingwei, who had recovered his energy, casually threw a healing talisman. The talisman landed on Fei Jiang Daoist Master and turned into a green light that merged into his body.

Fei JiangDaoist Master, who had barely controlled his injuries, quickly swallowed a pill and began healing himself.

Qin Hongying's injuries were much lighter than Fei JiangDaoist Master's, and with this buffer, she had already stood up. However, fear still lingered on her face as she stared ahead.

The change came quickly, without making the crowd wait for long. A huge white lion phantom slowly rose from the top of the palace, overlooking everyone from above.

"White Lion Demon King," Fei ShiDaoist Master said the name almost word by word. "How is this possible? Aren't you supposed to be dead?" Wu Mingwei panicked almost as much as Qin Hongying.

Perhaps because Meng Zhang was the youngest among them, he had the least fear of the White Lion Demon King, like a young calf unafraid of tigers. In the hearts of those present, White Lion Demon King was still the Monster King who once dominated the Endless Sea of Sand.

But that was hundreds of years ago. At that time, the Purple Gold Sect was still the ruler of the Endless Sea of Sand. Cultivators like Qin Hongying and Fei ShiDaoist Master, who were older, still vividly remembered the White Lion Demon King's various atrocities.

In their minds, White Lion Demon King was still the once formidable Monster King. But for Meng Zhang's generation, White Lion Demon King had become a legendary beast, more of a symbol than anything else.

Meng Zhang instinctively activated his Deception Breaking Eye and carefully examined the huge white lion phantom. Although he couldn't completely see through the opponent, the limited information he obtained was enough to dispel his fear.

"Don't panic, everyone. Something is off about this big guy."

In fact, there was no need for Meng Zhang to remind them. Everyone had already noticed the issue. Even Qin Hongying, who had been frightened a moment ago, quickly saw through the opponent's facade.

Although the white lion phantom appeared imposing and could easily overpower the Gold Core Daoist Masters present, a closer observation revealed a sense of weakness.

The complete White Lion Demon King was a Fourth Rank monster capable of matching a Primordial Spirit True Monarch. With just a little effort, it could easily crush all the Gold Core Daoist Masters present like insignificant bugs.

But now, it had the aura but lacked the matching power.

If it hadn't taken advantage of Qin Hongying and Fei JiangDaoist Master's lack of preparedness and launched a sudden attack, it wouldn't have been able to easily inflict heavy injuries on them.

Fei ShiDaoist Master, with the highest cultivation base and the sharpest insight, had already seen through the opponent's weakness.

"A mere remnant soul, daring to cause trouble instead of waiting obediently for death. Truly ignorant of one's own insignificance."

Seemingly provoked by Fei ShiDaoist Master's words, the white lion phantom roared angrily, causing everyone's ears to buzz.

"You useless crows couldn't even handle a small matter and let you all trespass here."

"Since you've come, don't think about leaving. All of you will go underground and accompany those useless crows."

In a thunderous voice, the white lion phantom directly attacked. A wave of energy swept through, fiercely engulfing everyone present.

Although Fei Shi Daoist Master appeared calm in his words, he didn't dare to be careless when it came to action. The natal spiritual tool flew above his head, protecting his entire body.

White Lion Demon King's first move was a large-scale group attack, enveloping everyone present.

At this moment, faced with the indiscriminate attacks of a formidable enemy, everyone no longer cared about their grievances with each other. They temporarily joined forces to confront the enemy.

Thus, everyone displayed their abilities and unleashed numerous Divine Ability techniques against the remnants of the White Lion Demon King.

Of course, each person held back to some extent. No one was foolish enough to go all out at this moment without reserving some strength.

The five Gold Core Daoist Masters present engaged in a fierce battle against the Fourth Rank monster, the remnants of the White Lion Demon King. The fight quickly entered a heated stage.

Although the White Lion Demon King appeared fearsome and invincible, in reality, it did have a sense of weakness.

Hundreds of years ago, when the White Lion Demon King entered the Deadly Sea of Sand, it led its subordinates to besiege a Fifth Rank great power. After a great battle, its Third Rank monster subordinates suffered heavy losses, and the White Lion Demon King itself was gravely injured and on the verge of death.

After barely escaping back to its lair, the White Lion Demon King's physical body finally couldn't hold on and completely collapsed, leaving only its lingering soul. Unlike the Primordial Spirit True Monarch of humans, most of the abilities of Fourth Rank demonic beasts are in their own physical bodies. Even if the physical body of a human Primordial Spirit True Monarch collapses, the Primordial Spirit can exist independently and retain a significant portion of its strength. A pure Primordial Spirit can cultivate as a ghost immortal or follow the path of a Ghost Deity.

However, Fourth Rank demonic beasts do not have such luck. After the collapse of their physical bodies, their remaining soul power is not strong, and it continues to decline. Even if they want to seize another body for rebirth, it is difficult to find a suitable vessel to accommodate their residual soul.

Demonic beasts are not cultivators of the Dao, so they cannot cultivate as ghost immortals. As for the path of the Ghost Deity, the White Lion Demon King is unable to enter. It seems that the residual soul of the White Lion Demon King can only slowly dissipate. Fortunately, there is always a way out. The White Lion Demon King has thought of the last path available.

Back then, the White Lion Demon King took advantage of the opportunity and killed the heavily injured Li Zhong, the True Monarch, and seized the treasure known as Myriad Layers Peak. Myriad Layers Peak is a Fourth Rank magic tool. In the Cultivation World, Fourth Rank magic tools are

also known as treasures or artifacts. Third Rank magic tools possess a certain spirituality and are called spiritual tools. Fourth Rank magic tools, or treasures, generally have a tool spirit. A tool spirit is a special creature with intelligence and many unique abilities.

Myriad Layers Peak also has a tool spirit, although its tool spirit is not very powerful and is not skilled in combat. The last resort that the White Lion Demon King came up with is to devour the tool spirit of Myriad Layers Peak with its own residual soul and use Myriad Layers Peak, this Fourth Rank magic tool, as its new body. Although Myriad Layers Peak's attack and defense capabilities are average, it is, after all, a Fourth Rank magic tool with extraordinary essence, fully capable of accommodating the residual soul of the White Lion Demon King. Devouring the tool spirit with its residual soul can provide a significant replenishment. With a new body, its combat power can be restored to at least half.

Once the great plan is accomplished, the White Lion Demon King will once again become the unrivaled Monster King. For hundreds of years, the residual soul of the White Lion Demon King has been hiding here, devouring the tool spirit. Its most trusted subordinate, the Dark Crow Demon General, is responsible for guarding outside. With the various arrangements it left outside and the formidable Dark Crow Demon General, it can almost block all prying from both inside and outside the Demon Wind Gobi.

To avoid external interference, the White Lion Demon King has kept this matter strictly confidential. It even spread news of its own death to confuse any potential enemies. In addition to the Dark Crow Demon General guarding outside, there is also an elite demonic beast guard stationed outside the palace, day and night.

With everything arranged properly, the White Lion Demon King can rest assured and focus on devouring the tool spirit of Myriad Layers Peak wholeheartedly. What surprises the White Lion Demon King is that the tool spirit of Myriad Layers Peak, despite its weak combat power and seemingly timid personality, is incredibly tenacious and resilient. Even after hundreds of years, the White Lion Demon King has been unable to completely devour it.

The tool spirit of Myriad Layers Peak has been resisting in various ways, preventing the White Lion Demon King from achieving its goals. Even when the White Lion Demon King devoured most of it, leaving only a small part of its spiritual body, it still fought desperately in its final resistance.

Of course, the White Lion Demon King, being a Fourth Rank demonic beast, has a strong residual soul and many means at its disposal. After hundreds of years of honing, the tool spirit of Myriad Layers Peak is almost completely devoured by it. If nothing unexpected happens, it won't be long before the White Lion Demon King achieves its goal.

Unfortunately, things don't always go as planned. Just when it was about to succeed, a group of human Gold Core cultivators broke through the defenses and chased the Dark Crow Demon General all the way here. The Dark Crow Demon General and the demonic beast guards all died in battle, leaving only the White Lion Demon King to face the enemy.

The crucial process was interrupted, and the White Lion Demon King was furious. Most importantly, it cannot let these human cultivators leave alive. Otherwise, the secret of its continued existence might be exposed, potentially attracting enemies from the past. Given the White Lion Demon King's current state, it has little resistance against its old enemies.

With a murderous intent, the White Lion Demon King unleashed its full power, vowing to keep these human cultivators here. However, the residual soul is just a residual soul, and without the powerful physical body of a demonic beast, the White Lion Demon King's formidable appearance does not match its actual combat strength.

If the five human Gold Core cultivators present could unite and wholeheartedly join forces against the enemy, they might not defeat the White Lion Demon King, but at least they wouldn't be at a disadvantage. Unfortunately, the five individuals split into two groups, each harboring their own ulterior motives and lacking trust in each other. Even between Meng Zhang and Qin Hongying, who have been together all along, there is already a rift in their hearts. They hope others will attract the attention of the White Lion Demon King and save their own energy.

The three Gold Core Daoist Masters from the Flying Swan Sect are united, but they also reserve a significant portion of their strength to guard against Meng Zhang and Qin Hongying, so they won't go all out. The five Gold Core Daoist Masters are too cunning, unwilling to risk their lives, and hope others will bear the pressure.

As a result, the White Lion Demon King, facing five opponents alone, gradually gained the upper hand. The self-assured White Lion Demon King suppressed the five Gold Core Daoist Masters while still having the ability to pay attention to its surroundings.

"There are even two little bugs." The White Lion Demon King sneered disdainfully and fiercely swiped its enormous claw, formed from demonic energy, towards an empty space on the left. After a series of shattering sounds like breaking glass, it seemed as if a large hole had been torn open in the space. Two figures flew out from inside, looking somewhat disheveled.

Chapter 503: Chaotic War

The two figures forced out by the White Lion Demon King appeared in front of everyone and were immediately recognized.

"Hong Siming, Qi Nanfei, how did you two end up together?" Fei Shi Daoist Master shouted sternly. Neither of them paid any attention to Fei Shi Daoist Master and were busy evading the attacks of the White Lion Demon King.

Ever since Meng Zhang formed the core, he had been gathering information about the surrounding Gold Core cultivators.

Meng Zhang had heard of Hong Siming, a Gold Core cultivator from the Yellow Lotus Sect East River Branch.

As for Qi Nanfei, Meng Zhang had interacted with him several times during the joint attack on the Demon Wind Gobi by the three sects.

The appearance of the two of them together seemed unexpected at first glance, but upon closer thought, it made sense.

Qi Nanfei had no choice but to reveal the secret of the Layered Mystery Sect's heritage treasure. Besides diverting the attention of the Flying Swan Sect, he also aimed to provoke a conflict between the Taiyi Sect and the Flying Swan Sect.

He definitely wouldn't willingly give up the heritage treasure of the Layered Mystery Sect.

As for how he managed to collude with Hong Siming from the Yellow Lotus Sect East River Branch, that was unknown.

They had secretly infiltrated this place and hid themselves, obviously intending to take advantage of the situation and strike when the opportunity arose.

What Meng Zhang could think of, the Gold Core cultivators present could naturally think of as well.

Fei Shi Daoist Master snorted coldly, his eyes filled with killing intent. However, with the great enemy before them, he temporarily couldn't spare the time to confront Qi Nanfei.

The White Lion Demon King was pleased with itself, thinking that it had once again thwarted the plot of human cultivators and forced the hidden ambushers out.

After forcing Qi Nanfei and Hong Siming out, it immediately involved the two of them in the battle.

Knowing that it was difficult to escape, Qi Nanfei and Hong Siming reluctantly engaged in the fight.

Facing seven opponents alone, the White Lion Demon King showed no fear and exuded an air of confidence.

Ironically, when the five Gold Core Daoist Masters originally fought against the White Lion Demon King, they were only slightly at a disadvantage.

Now that two more Gold Core Daoist Masters had joined as allies, the situation should have improved.

Who would have thought that the addition of two Gold Core Daoist Masters not only failed to provide assistance but instead became a burden.

Among the seven Gold Core Daoist Masters present, their main focus was on preserving their own strength, and no one was willing to face the enemy head-on.

With a formidable enemy before them, their guard against each other surpassed their attention towards the White Lion Demon King.

All seven of them prioritized evasion, only resorting to defending against the attacks of the White Lion Demon King when absolutely necessary.

Although the seven Gold Core Daoist Masters still had some rationality and didn't turn on each other at this critical moment, they were all looking out for their own interests and hoped that others would act as the main force against the White Lion Demon King. Sometimes, they would intentionally or unintentionally scheme against each other.

In this situation, the White Lion Demon King displayed its might and completely dominated the seven individuals, taking the initiative.

Among the people present, Meng Zhang was not the weakest, but he concealed his own aura, appearing much weaker than even Wu Mingwei.

When dealing with the attacks of the White Lion Demon King, he appeared the most miserable.

Several times, Meng Zhang narrowly avoided being hit by the White Lion Demon King's attacks, almost getting struck.

Putting on a posture of barely holding on, Meng Zhang shouted, "Everyone, with a formidable enemy before us, we shouldn't fight amongst ourselves. Let's deal with this big guy in front of us first, and then we can discuss the ownership of the Layered Mystery Sect's heritage treasure."

"Fei Shi, what do you think?" Meng Zhang shouted to Fei Shi Daoist Master.

Fei Shi Daoist Master couldn't overlook Meng Zhang's hidden strength. Even if Meng Zhang acted convincingly, Fei Shi Daoist Master wouldn't believe him.

However, Meng Zhang's words did make some sense.

If they continued like this, they would only hinder each other. If they were individually defeated by the White Lion Demon King, it would be a huge joke.

Among the people present, Fei Jiang Daoist Master was actually in the worst condition. He was already heavily injured and had been ambushed by the White Lion Demon King.

Now, he was just barely holding on with his heavily injured body.

If they continued like this, he would likely be the first to collapse.

As the only mid-stage Gold Core cultivator among the seven, Fei Shi Daoist Master seemed to naturally take on the role of leader.

"Everyone, I will kill this beast first, and then we can discuss the rest," Fei Shi Daoist Master said.

Fei Shi Daoist Master's charisma was unmatched by Meng Zhang. After hearing Fei Shi Daoist Master's words, the two disciples of the Flying Swan Sect didn't need to be mentioned, and the other Gold Core Daoist Masters all nodded in agreement.

Seeing that everyone agreed, Fei Shi Daoist Master knew that as long as the great enemy wasn't eliminated, they still had the basis for cooperation.

As the leader, Fei Shi Daoist Master naturally had to exert more effort and take the lead.

He formed hand seals and summoned his own natal spiritual tool, a massive mountain peak, directly crashing into the airborne White Lion Demon King. White Lion Demon King, sensing its impending demise, let its beastly nature drive out any remaining rationality. Its ferocity erupted, and even if it were to die here, it would not let its enemies off easily. It was determined to drag them down with it.

With a roar that shook the surroundings, the White Lion Demon King unleashed its full power, attacking with all its might. Its massive claws swiped fiercely at its opponents, targeting the other six individuals.

While some of the others hesitated in the face of the sudden outburst from the White Lion Demon King, Meng Zhang launched another fierce attack. Both of his flying swords were swept aside, but he continued to fight back.

Some of the onlookers even underestimated Meng Zhang, thinking that as a Gold Core Daoist Master, he should not be so easily defeated. However, they failed to consider that the greatest advantage of a demonic beast compared to a human cultivator was its powerful physical body.

Even though the White Lion Demon King's current combat strength might not surpass that of a Gold Core late-stage cultivator, the several Gold Core Daoist Masters besieging it had yet to fully react.

In an instant, the White Lion Demon King became furious, unable to bear the humiliation. It unleashed its full strength, but it was unable to turn the tide and regain the upper hand.

One after another, spiritual tools struck the massive white lion phantom, causing it to tremble incessantly. The White Lion Demon King was now clearly at a disadvantage and continuously weakened.

Despite knowing that these human cultivators were deliberately provoking it, the White Lion Demon King couldn't help but be consumed by rage.

In battles at this level, anger did not bring more power; it only led to more mistakes. After a bitter struggle, the White Lion Demon King gradually lost its ability to resist.

Even at the critical moment, the massive white lion phantom did not show any intention of begging for mercy from these human cultivators. Of course, even if it were willing to beg for mercy, there was no guarantee that they would spare it.

On the contrary, knowing that its fate was sealed, the White Lion Demon King harbored a desire to take down as many enemies as possible with it.

The main peak and the numerous surrounding peaks, including the ongoing battle, were all part of the Layeredcore Daoist Master's ability to control demonic beasts. Meng Zhang's strength lies not in his personal cultivation, but in his mastery over the White Lion Demon King.

As the battle raged on, the other six Gold Core Daoist Masters also joined the fight. They each displayed their own formidable power, no longer resorting to deceit and trickery. This time, they fought with all their might.

Meng Zhang, undeterred by their combined efforts, continued to unleash his attacks, targeting the remaining six individuals. The sudden onslaught of the White Lion Demon King left the others momentarily hesitant. However, before they could fully react, the Fourth Rank heritage magic tool of the Layered Mystery Sect, the Myriad Layers Peak, transformed into action.

The remnants of the White Lion Demon King's soul had already devoured a large portion of the Myriad Layers Peak's tool spirit, gaining control over this powerful Fourth Rank magic tool. With its newfound power, the White Lion Demon King launched a devastating assault on the remaining six Gold Core Daoist Masters.

The situation became increasingly dire as the White Lion Demon King unleashed its full might. The six Daoist Masters struggled to defend themselves against the overwhelming force. Their hesitation earlier had cost them precious time, and now they were paying the price.

Feeling the urgency of the situation, Fei Shi Daoist Master, as the leader among them, took charge. He mustered all his strength and summoned his own natal spiritual tool, a massive mountain peak, to confront the airborne White Lion Demon King head-on.

The clash between Fei Shi Daoist Master's mountain peak and the White Lion Demon King's power created a shockwave that reverberated throughout the battlefield. The other Daoist Masters, inspired by Fei Shi Daoist Master's bravery, followed suit and unleashed their most powerful attacks.

The chaotic war continued to escalate, with each side unleashing their full strength. The outcome of this battle would determine the fate of not only the Gold Core Daoist Masters but also the entire realm.

Chapter 504: Becoming 1 group randomly

On the face of the White Lion Demon King, a resolute expression appeared as it seized an opportunity and decisively self-destructed its residual soul. The gigantic white lion phantom first contracted abruptly and then exploded suddenly.

If it were just the self-destruction of the White Lion Demon King's residual soul, it wouldn't be much of a threat, considering the extensive depletion it had endured. The remaining soul power was already limited, at best stronger than a regular Gold Core Daoist Master's self-destruction.

However, this time, the White Lion Demon King's self-destruction wasn't just limited to its own residual soul. It used its control over the Fourth Rank magic tool, Myriad Layers Peak, to detonate it from its core.

Beneath it, the massive palace exploded in tandem with the self-destruction of the White Lion Demon King's residual soul. Violent waves of energy surged in all directions, imposing terrifying harm on the Gold Core Daoist Masters present.

As the primary force confronting the White Lion Demon King, Daoist Master Fei Shi took the brunt of the impact. Whether he liked it or not, at this moment, he first shielded the others from the initial wave.

His natural spiritual tool, the enormous mountain peak, shook intensely within the explosion and was immediately blasted into several pieces, flying away.

With his natural spiritual tool destroyed, Daoist Master Fei Shi spewed blood and collapsed weakly on the ground.

The raging shockwaves swept across all directions, causing all the Gold Core Daoist Masters present to tremble in fear.

Wu Mingwei stood behind Daoist Master Fei Shi, forcibly resisting the force of the explosion, trying to attend to Fei Shi's condition.

With the palace's explosion, countless orbs of light shot out in all directions. Myriad Layers Peak was a rare spatial magic tool with an immense independent space within it.

All the inheritances of the Layered Mystery Sect, along with various treasures, were hidden in the deepest part of this space.

Besides the owner of Myriad Layers Peak, this Fourth Rank magic tool, others could only obtain these inheritances and treasures if they completely unraveled the mysteries of the space and reached its innermost layer.

The White Lion Demon King had never completely assimilated the tool spirit of Myriad Layers Peak nor fully mastered this Fourth Rank magic tool, so it naturally couldn't obtain these things.

However, by forcibly detonating Myriad Layers Peak, all those items hidden in the deepest part of the space were now ejected and flying in all directions.

The Gold Core Daoist Masters present were all crafty individuals with keen eyesight, and they quickly noticed the extraordinary nature of these orbs of light. They were prepared to collect these orbs, but suddenly, they felt the ground violently shaking, and the main peak beneath their feet began to collapse. As Myriad Layers Peak was detonated, its independent space was inevitably collapsing too. However, this level of collapse wasn't immediate; it followed a process.

Before the space completely collapsed, everyone still had some time to freely collect these orbs of light flying around.

Qin Hongying, an elderly lady, reacted the fastest. She leaped into the air, trying to capture one of the orbs not far ahead.

But just as she soared into the sky, she let out a miserable scream as a deep, bone-visible wound appeared on her body.

It turned out that as the independent space slowly collapsed, numerous spatial fissures of various sizes began to emerge all around. If someone accidentally brushed against these fissures, even a Gold Core Daoist Master would inevitably be injured. Unfortunate ones might even face a life-threatening situation. Qin Hongying's encounter did not scare the others. Everyone flew into the sky and chased after the orbs. Even Qin Hongying herself, after tending to her injuries, flew away as well. Among the group, Fei Shi Daoist Master had the highest cultivation base, but due to his natal spiritual tool being destroyed, he was heavily injured and couldn't chase after the orbs in time. He waved his hand to Wu Mingwei beside him.

"Don't worry about me, go after those things quickly. That should be the inheritance of the Layered Mystery Sect. It's related to the future of my Flying Swan Sect and must not fall into someone else's hands."

Seeing Wu Mingwei hesitate, he shouted sternly, "I can take care of myself, you go quickly."

Wu Mingwei nodded and immediately flew into the sky, chasing after the orbs. Fei Jiang Daoist Master suppressed his injuries and also flew into the sky to pursue the orbs. The mountain peak collapsed and Fei Shi Daoist Master couldn't stay in one place. He released a talisman, creating a protective barrier around himself, and then struggled to fly up, slowly leaving the main peak.

As for Meng Zhang, he actively launched an attack on the White Lion Demon King, not to show off or help the others, but to distract the enemy. Faced with his aggressive assault, the White Lion Demon King delivered a heavy blow, just as Meng Zhang had expected. Seizing this opportunity, Meng Zhang flew far away from the battlefield and pretended to be heavily injured and on the verge of death.

In fact, Meng Zhang had no ulterior motive for doing this. He simply wanted to conserve his energy and avoid further combat. He didn't think that his clumsy feigning of death could deceive the Gold Core Daoist Masters present. He lay on the ground, pretending to be dead, and a series of changes occurred behind him.

Seeing various orbs floating in the sky, he wanted to reach out and grab them but didn't know where to start. Suddenly, he had a feeling of good fortune and flew up into the sky, reaching out to grab one of the orbs. It felt like he had caught a miniature pavilion. Without examining it closely, he tucked it into his embrace and prepared to continue collecting the orbs.

Just as he flew a distance away, a sense of danger arose in his heart, and he abruptly stopped. He activated his Deception Breaking Eye and saw a barely visible spatial crack not far ahead. It was a close call, as Meng Zhang almost collided head-on with the spatial crack. If he had hit it without any precautions, he would have suffered severe injuries.

Having been delayed for a moment, the orbs that were originally flying ahead had disappeared without a trace. The remaining Gold Core Daoist Masters chased after the orbs in all directions. Meng Zhang was no exception and began to pursue them, but he became extra cautious after the previous lesson. He continuously released his Divine Sense to monitor his surroundings and frequently used his Deception Breaking Eye to survey in all directions.

During his journey, Meng Zhang's luck was neither good nor bad. He managed to collect a total of five orbs. Except for the first one, the other four orbs could be stored in his storage magic tool. Items that couldn't be stored in a storage magic tool generally fell into two categories: living creatures and items with inherent spatial power, which were inherently spatial in nature.

This place was full of dangers, and Meng Zhang had to continue chasing after the flying orbs, so he didn't have time to carefully examine his harvest. Meng Zhang quickly glanced at them and deduced that the first orb was most likely a spatial magic tool, which was why it couldn't be stored in his storage magic tool. He hid it close to his body and didn't pay it any more attention. Instead, he wholeheartedly focused on searching for the remaining orbs.

Chapter 505: Battle

The space transformed by the Fourth Rank magic tool, Myriad Layers Peak, was originally vast, but now it's gradually collapsing, causing the entire space to tremor. More and more spatial fissures, and even spatial turbulence, are appearing all around.

The Divine Sense of Gold Core cultivators has been greatly disturbed, and various detection spells are becoming less effective.

The Gold Core Daoist Masters chasing after those clusters of light quickly split up, making it difficult to maintain communication with each other.

As Meng Zhang advanced, he collected several clusters of light, but with time passing, it became increasingly challenging, and the number of clusters he could find decreased.

The extent of the space collapse deepened, and Meng Zhang began to consider retreating. If he lingered here for too long and got trapped until the space completely collapsed, even a Gold Core Daoist Master would struggle to survive.

Suddenly, a large crimson cluster of light, noticeably larger than the others, flew towards Meng Zhang from the left. A figure was closely chasing after it.

Without hesitation, Meng Zhang accelerated and captured the red cluster of light in his hand.

A sharp force struck mercilessly towards Meng Zhang, who dodged to the side, staring coldly at Qin Hongying, who was flying towards him.

At this moment, Qin Hongying showed no self-restraint as a Taiyi Sect guest elder, shouting with a fierce expression, "Daoist Master Meng, hand over the item, and I'll let you go."

No one would willingly give up something they obtained with effort.

According to the customs of the Cultivation World, at times like this, it's each individual's ability that determines ownership. Qin Hongying's attitude of taking Meng Zhang for granted infuriated him.

Nevertheless, Meng Zhang suppressed his anger and said, "Qin Daoist Master, don't forget, when we entered here, we made a vow to cooperate and face the enemy together."

"You voluntarily bound yourself by the vow. Aren't you afraid of being troubled by inner demons in the future?"

Qin Hongying had been chasing after this particular cluster of light, which was clearly different from the rest, in hopes that it contained something extraordinary that could aid her. Without Layered Mystery Sect's heritage or pills to break through her cultivation base, her lifespan couldn't be prolonged.

With her life nearly at its end, she didn't care about the inner demons vow. Besides, dealing with inner demons could wait until later. Resolving the immediate crisis was the priority.

Moreover, there were ways to break the inner demons vow. Qin Hongying was experienced and knowledgeable enough to find a solution.

Seeing that Meng Zhang showed no intention of yielding, Qin Hongying stopped wasting words and launched an attack against him.

Meng Zhang's patience reached its limit with Qin Hongying's blatant disregard. Now, he could retaliate without any pressure since she had already broken the inner demons vow.

In truth, if Qin Hongying had a better attitude and negotiated with Meng Zhang properly, he might have considered sharing the cluster of light with her to gain her favor. However, her attitude of treating Meng Zhang as nothing and trying to forcefully seize the item provoked his anger.

Especially the ruthless sneak attack she made at the beginning heightened Meng Zhang's killing intent.

Recalling the condescending attitude Qin Hongying displayed in the past, old grievances surged in Meng Zhang's heart, fueling his fury.

Both parties fought fiercely, employing their regular techniques, and the outcome was inconclusive for a while.

However, up until now, they had only used conventional methods, holding back their hidden cards and ultimate moves.

Compared to Qin Hongying, Meng Zhang seemed relatively immature. His combat experience, especially in battles against human Gold Core Daoist Masters, was not extensive.

In the past, Luo Ye Daoist Master and Gu Yue Huaidie sparred with him many times, but those sparring sessions were limited and didn't involve using killing moves.

Now, the battle between Meng Zhang and Qin Hongying was a life-and-death struggle, an entirely different kind of fight.

Seizing the opportunity of her injuries, Meng Zhang managed to barely contend with her.

With Meng Zhang's outstanding aptitude, he gained valuable combat experience in this life-or-death struggle, learning about Qin Hongying's ever-increasing repertoire of techniques.

As time passed, Meng Zhang became more adept in this battle. His progress was evident in the ongoing fight.

Qin Hongying, being seasoned and experienced in numerous battles among Gold Core Daoist Masters, quickly noticed this development. Her face turned grim, filled with anger.

Originally, she didn't hold Endless Sea of Sand, this remote and impoverished place, in high regard. Before fighting Meng Zhang, she felt she had a psychological advantage, always maintaining a lofty posture.

However, now that she truly clashed with Meng Zhang, she realized she had underestimated her opponent.

Not only was he powerful, but his growth potential was tremendous. He was even growing stronger during their battle.

Was he treating her as a training partner or a whetstone?

While feeling ashamed and resentful, Qin Hongying also felt a twinge of fear.

If Meng Zhang continued to grow, it would be unfavorable for her.

For a Gold Core Daoist Master like Qin Hongying, whose lifespan was nearing its end, the last thing she wanted was to face a young genius like Meng Zhang.

As conventional methods didn't work, she decided to use her true killer move to eliminate Meng Zhang on the spot.

Silently preparing herself, a strange delight welled up in her heart.

Meng Zhang, who was somewhat absorbed in the battle, suddenly felt an intense threat, triggering his ability to anticipate danger.

With such a powerful warning, Meng Zhang couldn't afford to be careless.

He didn't want to continue the fight with Qin Hongying. Without a certain level of certainty, he didn't want to bring out his ultimate move easily.

A dazzling light burst forth, temporarily blocking Qin Hongying's perception.

Meng Zhang quickly retreated at the fastest speed, using a sudden spatial turbulence to successfully escape from Qin Hongying's pursuit.

In such a chaotic place, once someone disappeared from sight, it became difficult to locate them again.

After parting ways with Qin Hongying, Meng Zhang had no intention of lingering here any longer. But because the space is collapsing, it is difficult to leave directly from here and a new way out needs to be found. Along the way, other light clusters flew by, and he chased and captured each one.

In this way, he wasted a lot of time and stayed here longer.

As for the other Gold Core Daoist Masters, they all had some gains after desperately chasing. The most unlucky one was Fei Jiang Daoist Master, who first got separated from Wu Mingwei. Then he accidentally collided with a spatial rift, which further worsened his already severe injuries.

His bad luck didn't end there. While chasing a light cluster, he actually bumped into Qi Nanfei, a Gold Core Daoist Master from the Northern Desert Qi Family. It goes without saying that the Northern Desert Qi Family and the Flying Swan Sect have been in conflict for many years. The last time the Northern Desert Qi Family lent a helping hand, they were instead deceived by the Flying Swan Sect.

After the Northern Desert Qi Family received news that the Flying Swan Sect wanted to exterminate their family, they had no choice but to release the exclusive information about the Layered Mystery Sect's heritage treasure.

Now that enemies meet, they are particularly envious.

The Yellow Lotus Sect's East River Branch invaded the Endless Sea of Sand in history but was later expelled by the Flying Swan Sect. Although they didn't continue to entangle with the Flying Swan Sect for some reason, the two sides have never been friends and have always maintained a hostile relationship.

Seeing that Fei Jiang Daoist Master was clearly seriously injured, Hong Siming didn't mind delivering a final blow and effortlessly cut off the Flying Swan Sect's wings.

There's no need for further explanation. Qi Nanfei and Hong Siming directly went all out, targeting Fei Jiang Daoist Master's vital points.

It was another fierce life-and-death battle, but Fei Jiang Daoist Master couldn't even display his true strength and was killed on the spot.

He didn't even have time to self-detonate his Gold Core. Everything on him became the spoils of war for Qi Nanfei and Hong Siming.

Apart from being injured by his final blow, Qi Nanfei had no other gains.

While being besieged, Fei Jiang Daoist Master desperately sought help and sent out distress signals. Unfortunately, due to the collapsing space, the transmission of the distress signal was affected. By the time Fei Shi Daoist Master arrived, he could only collect Fei Jiang Daoist Master's body.

Seeing Fei Jiang Daoist Master's corpse, the enraged Fei Shi Daoist Master disregarded his own injuries and forcefully suppressed them. He wanted to avenge Fei Jiang Daoist Master and capture Qi Nanfei and Hong Siming.

Facing the mid-Gold Core stage Fei Shi Daoist Master, even Hong Siming, who came from the Yellow Lotus Sect, a major cultivation sect, had no intention of fighting.

Qi Nanfei and Hong Siming defended against Fei Shi Daoist Master's attacks and found opportunities to escape.

Fei Shi Daoist Master, filled with unwillingness, wanted to pursue them, but his suppressed injuries were triggered due to his forced actions. Because of his severe injuries, he had to watch the two enemies escape.

In addition to this life-and-death battle, the several Gold Core Daoist Masters had encountered each other a few times and had a few skirmishes.

Firstly, the environment was not suitable for a fight to the death, and secondly, everyone's main goal was to search and capture those light clusters. So no one was interested in prolonged battles, and each encounter was brief, quickly separating.

Meng Zhang later encountered Qi Nanfei and Hong Siming separately. After testing the waters, they each went their own way.

After flying a considerable distance, they were about to leave this space. Unexpectedly, Meng Zhang encountered Qin Hongying again.

When Meng Zhang appeared, Qin Hongying was fighting Wu Mingwei.

In order to seize a light cluster, Qin Hongying had Wu Mingwei firmly suppressed, with the intention of killing him.

Meng Zhang had entered here together with Qin Hongying, so naturally, they were companions.

Even Qin Hongying couldn't resist, let alone Meng Zhang.

Worried about being surrounded by the two, Wu Mingwei made a move that surprised both of them. He took out a bunch of light clusters he had just captured and threw them forcefully in all directions.

Qin Hongying immediately gave up attacking Wu Mingwei and started collecting the light clusters around her.

Taking advantage of this opportunity, Wu Mingwei desperately broke free from the battle and fled at full speed.

Meng Zhang sighed at Wu Mingwei's decision and eagerly collected the light clusters he had thrown.

When Meng Zhang appeared, Qin Hongying had no intention of continuing to entangle with Wu Mingwei. Wu Mingwei took the initiative to escape, which happened to be in line with her intentions.

The number of light clusters in this batch was not many and was quickly snatched up by Meng Zhang and Qin Hongying.

Then, without any warning, they suddenly launched fierce attacks against each other.

Qin Hongying directly used a high-grade Third Rank talisman, intending to kill Meng Zhang in one strike.

Meng Zhang, on the other hand, used the Thunder Child given to him by Jin Li Daoist Master last time. He had been carefully preserving it and hadn't used it up yet.

The Thunder Child's casting speed was much faster than that of the Third Rank talisman. The Thunder Child was about to approach Qin Hongying, while the talisman was still floating in front of her, emitting a dazzling light.

Feeling the thunderous aura contained in the Thunder Child, Qin Hongying didn't dare to resist head-on and had to dodge, retreating repeatedly.

The Thunder Child exploded next to the Third Rank talisman, triggering the terrifying power contained within it.

The powerful explosion swept over, engulfing Qin Hongying, who couldn't avoid it in time.

Qin Hongying's body flickered with light, exhausting her protective items, before barely withstanding the power of the explosion.

Before she could catch her breath, the Fierce Yang Sword and Shadow Killing Sword attacked from both sides, and she had to fight with all her might.

Qin Hongying, who had lost the initiative, temporarily fell into a disadvantageous position.

Meng Zhang pushed the Strange and Upright Sword Art to its limit but still couldn't defeat Qin Hongying.

While the two were fiercely battling, another person appeared near the battlefield.

When Meng Zhang and Qin Hongying entered the main peak, the Extreme Sword Spirit General, who was in the Foundation Building stage, was too slow and didn't catch up in time, thus avoiding a series of subsequent changes.

When the Gold Core Daoist Masters fought against the remnants of the White Lion Demon King, the Extreme Sword Spirit General knew that his strength was far from recovered and he didn't have the qualifications to participate in such a battle, so he stayed far away.

Later, when the remnants of the White Lion Demon King self-detonated and the light clusters scattered, the Extreme Sword Spirit General, who was in the distance, quietly joined the chase.

Feeling that the space was about to completely collapse and starting to leave, the Extreme Sword Spirit General happened to encounter Meng Zhang and Qin Hongying fighting.

Chapter 506: Seizure

When Extreme Sword Spirit General appeared, Qin Hongying didn't pay much attention. She didn't even consider the Foundation Building cultivator in her eyes. Her main focus was on Meng Zhang. She believed that, with her hidden trump card aside from the Third Rank superior talisman, she could easily kill Extreme Sword Spirit General.

Though temporarily at a disadvantage, Qin Hongying remained composed. Besides the Third Rank superior talisman, she concealed other aces up her sleeve, yet to be unleashed. With full confidence, she knew that once she deployed her most powerful move, Meng Zhang would not escape death.

Throughout the long battle with Meng Zhang, Qin Hongying had been looking for the right moment to reveal her secret weapon. Now, she was determined not to give Meng Zhang any chance to flee. This time, she had to strike and kill with a single blow.

As the space continued to collapse rapidly, time was running out. Qin Hongying could not wait any longer. She was willing to risk taking a hit from Meng Zhang just to keep him here.

Meng Zhang seemed to sense something and intensified his attacks.

While Qin Hongying prepared herself, Extreme Sword Spirit General, whom she had always underestimated, suddenly made a move. A broken Third Rank flying sword appeared and exuded

the power of a Gold Core Daoist Master. Qin Hongying, caught off guard by this unexpected attack, was in a bit of a predicament.

But that wasn't all; Extreme Sword Spirit General took out the sword pouch collected by Meng Zhang and activated it somehow. Numerous fiercely sharp sword energies shot out, overwhelming Qin Hongying.

With a shocked expression, Qin Hongying wondered how a mere Foundation Building cultivator could unleash such a fierce assault. Could this person be a Gold Core Sword Cultivator hiding their identity and power to scheme against her?

In the midst of the fierce battle, Qin Hongying no longer paid attention to Meng Zhang. She focused all her efforts on defending against Extreme Sword Spirit General's attacks, which reminded her of the terrifying Gold Core Sword Cultivators she had encountered before. Fear crept into her heart, making her uneasy.

As the saying goes, with age comes a loss of courage. Despite Qin Hongying's extensive experience, she had witnessed firsthand the terror of Gold Core Sword Cultivators. Her fear caused her aura to diminish.

Another broken Third Rank flying sword shot toward her, leaving Qin Hongying struggling to cope with the successive attacks. Extreme Sword Spirit General had exerted all their power after releasing three attacks that surpassed their current Cultivation Base.

After the final Gold Core-level attack, Extreme Sword Spirit General suddenly appeared weakened, struggling to remain stable.

Qin Hongying, busy defending against the three attacks, finally realized that the enemy's assault was mostly a facade, a show of force without the true lethality of a real Gold Core Sword Cultivator's one-hit-kill ability.

Once Qin Hongying noticed Extreme Sword Spirit General's sudden weakness, she felt relieved. Though uncertain how the seemingly terrifying attacks were accomplished, she knew that the opponent was just a Foundation Building cultivator with limited strength and posed no real threat.

At this moment, Meng Zhang, holding the Spiritsnake Spear, took advantage of Qin Hongying's distraction and silently struck her. Having learned many assassin skills from Luo Ye Daoist Master, who was skilled in both orthodox and unorthodox paths, Meng Zhang now displayed the expertise of an excellent assassin, launching a powerful attack.

By the time Qin Hongying reacted, the Spiritsnake Spear had already pierced her. This fierce spiritual weapon handed down by Taiyi Sect's ancestors easily claimed Qin Hongying's life.

With a successful assassination, Meng Zhang wasted no time. They swiftly took Qin Hongying's corpse and brought Extreme Sword Spirit General, leaving the area at the fastest speed possible.

Because of the extended battle at Myriad Layers Peak, Meng Zhang was the last one to leave the collapsing space. Shortly after flying out, the entire space crumbled. The peaks collapsed rapidly, and massive explosions followed suit.

Meng Zhang hurriedly flew away, accelerating to avoid the force of the collapsing space. The other Gold Core Daoist Masters who had escaped from within didn't linger either; they promptly left the area.

After the Taiyi Sect cultivator army assembled near Crow's Nest under Niu Dawei's leadership, they waited in silence. As soon as Meng Zhang gave the order, they would launch a fierce attack against the Flying Swan Sect cultivator army.

Deep Earth Spirit General, within the Taiyi Sect's ranks, kept a wary eye on the Third Rank warship floating above the Flying Swan Sect army. He knew that, in a large-scale battle between cultivator armies, the Third Rank warship played a crucial role, nearly matching the combat power of a Gold Core Daoist Master.

But the Flying Swan Sect cultivators were not blind or deaf; they noticed the ominous Taiyi Sect army. Due to their heavy losses after the battle at Crow's Nest and the absence of three Gold Core Daoist Masters, the temporary commanders of the Flying Swan Sect were hesitant to initiate a war with Taiyi Sect. They could only strengthen their vigilance and prepare to fight Taiyi Sect cultivators while waiting.

Qi Nanfei and Hong Siming had left the area long ago, fearing Fei Shi Daoist Master's retaliation. After escaping from Myriad Layers Peak's space, the heavily injured Fei Shi Daoist Master returned to the Flying Swan Sect army alongside Wu Mingwei. With Fei Jiang Daoist Master's recent loss and Fei Shi Daoist Master's grave injuries, they had no intention of continuing the confrontation with Taiyi Sect.

Myriad Layers Peak had completely collapsed, and there was nothing valuable left. Flying Swan Sect's large army stayed here for a long time when Endless Sea of Sand was in a vulnerable state.

Fei Shi Daoist Master, eager to return to Endless Sea of Sand, did not even consider leaving a small team to occupy the place. He ordered the Flying Swan Sect cultivator army onto the flying boats and quickly departed.

Once Meng Zhang returned to the Taiyi Sect army, he remained silent, watching the Flying Swan Sect's fleet of flying boats depart. With two Gold Core Daoist Masters still unaccounted for, and unsure of Fei Shi Daoist Master's condition, Meng Zhang dared not initiate an attack.

Once Meng Zhang confirmed that the Flying Swan Sect's fleet had completely departed, he ordered the Taiyi Sect cultivator army to move forward and fully occupy Crow's Nest. The terrifying power of the collapsing space had left numerous deep and large crater-like holes where Myriad Layers Peak's peaks used to be, but those mountains had almost entirely disappeared.

After the explosion's force subsided, it took many days for the space storms to begin calming down and the surroundings to return to normal. Crow's Nest was Dark Crow Demon General's lair, possessing a few Second Rank spirit veins. Myriad Layers Peak, where many peaks transformed from, was White Lion Demon King's former lair. Originally, it had an excellent Third Rank spirit vein, making it unparalleled across the vast Demon Wind Gobi. This Third Rank spirit vein allowed Myriad Layers Peak to be placed there.

When Myriad Layers Peak exploded, the closely connected Third Rank spirit vein naturally suffered significant impact. The most valuable resource in the vicinity was this Third Rank spirit vein, and it was also the most important to Meng Zhang. Once the area returned to normal, he had Deep Earth Spirit General personally inspect it.

Flying Swan Sect's original army of demon beasts had been scattered by the Flying Swan Sect cultivators. Taiyi Sect's cultivator army effortlessly occupied the area, bringing the surrounding

region under Taiyi Sect's control. This time, Taiyi Sect had picked up a huge advantage, gaining a vast territory for free.

Within a radius of thousands of miles around Crow's Nest, powerful demon beasts were concentrated mostly inside the nest. After losing a large portion of their forces in the recent battle with Flying Swan Sect, there were hardly any demon beasts left that could challenge Taiyi Sect.

With the destruction of Crow's Nest, a huge vacuum formed around, and Taiyi Sect seized the opportunity to expand into the area. By connecting Crow's Nest with Grand Lion Ridge, Taiyi Sect would occupy at least a quarter of Demon Wind Gobi. This vast territory contained abundant resources that, once developed, could support Taiyi Sect's rise as a powerful sect among the Gold Core sects.

Meng Zhang didn't rush to disband the Taiyi Sect cultivator army; instead, he dispatched teams to hunt and drive away the demon beasts that had fled in the surroundings. The main force of the cultivator army remained together, ready to handle any unexpected situations.

Once everything settled down, Meng Zhang took the time to sort out the various gains obtained from Myriad Layers Peak. Extreme Sword Spirit General didn't hide anything and took out the glowing orbs they had collected from the peak. After breaking the protective spell on the outer layer, the true contents were revealed.

Meng Zhang and Extreme Sword Spirit General obtained dozens of glowing orbs in total, along with 10-20 orbs found on Qin Hongying's body. After breaking them open, the multitude of treasures left Meng Zhang stunned. Among them were many jade slips containing Layered Mystery Sect's various legacies, including cultivation techniques, magical arts, and secret manuals for alchemy and mechanical arts.

Most notably, there were three legacy beads. Legacy beads were a more advanced and rarer form of information storage compared to jade slips. These precious items, which only Gold Core Daoist Masters could refine, could store vast amounts of information, including insights from senior cultivators.

Among the three legacy beads were records of Layered Mystery Sect's secret alchemy techniques, crafting arts, and a profound cultivation technique. The latter was one of Layered Mystery Sect's fundamental legacies and directly pointed to the "Fusang Golden Crow Canon" at the Primordial Spirit stage. An Xiaoran's "Fusang Sutra" was a derivative of this technique, though incomplete.

The alchemy techniques and crafting arts were also complete legacies in their own right, forming a self-contained system. If obtained by a talented cultivator, they could grow into an outstanding Alchemist or tool refiner from scratch.

These two legacy beads significantly strengthened Taiyi Sect's heritage. Moreover, among the glowing orbs was a variety of Third Rank talismans, elixirs, and a few Third Rank magic tools.

Especially noteworthy was the large glowing orb Meng Zhang collected first, following his instincts. After breaking the outer protective spell, a palm-sized tower appeared. The tower had special restrictions on its surface, and even with Meng Zhang's current strength, breaking them would require considerable time.

As one of the Primordial Spirit major sects, Layered Mystery Sect had indeed left behind a remarkable hidden card for its disciples to rise again after experiencing a crisis of extermination.

Meng Zhang admired the profound heritage of Layered Mystery Sect but also felt regretful. The glowing orbs that fell into his hands were only a small part of those that flew out. The majority had disappeared during the space's collapse.

If he had obtained all the glowing orbs, perhaps he could rebuild a completely new Layered Mystery Sect from scratch. Of course, Meng Zhang, as the Taiyi Sect's Sect Master, would not rebuild Layered Mystery Sect. However, the inheritance of Layered Mystery Sect now falling into Taiyi Sect's hands meant that the legacy would continue to be passed down through Taiyi Sect to some extent.

With these gains, Taiyi Sect's foundation significantly strengthened, and it could quickly be converted into power for Meng Zhang and the entire sect.

Aside from these gains, there were also various rewards obtained from Qin Hongying. Among the miscellaneous items such as spirit stones, talismans, and elixirs, a silver-colored page particularly caught Meng Zhang's attention.

The page bore some unique characters that even the experienced Extreme Sword Spirit General and other Guardian Spirit Generals could not recognize. Meng Zhang carefully tested the page's resilience, but even with his current Cultivation Base and means, he could not damage it.

No matter if it was the Spiritsnake Spear or the Solar True Flame and Lunar True Water, they could not affect the page in the slightest. After numerous attempts, Meng Zhang finally grasped one function of the page. By continuously inputting True Essence, he could activate a light circle within the page that could be used to trap enemies.

Once an enemy was ensnared by the light circle, they would find it difficult to escape and would be at the mercy of the captor. When dealing with Gold Core Daoist Masters, this could serve as Meng Zhang's secret weapon. However, due to the heavy consumption of True Essence, he could not use it lightly.

Killing Qin Hongying this time brought Meng Zhang a lot of pleasant surprises. With her death, Taiyi Sect was rid of a massive burden. Moreover, with the deaths of Dark Crow Demon General and others, and the destruction of Crow's Nest, Taiyi Sect finally got rid of its biggest internal threat and firmly established itself in Demon Wind Gobi without any external pressure.

From now on, Taiyi Sect could focus on developing Demon Wind Gobi and obtaining various cultivation resources. While Taiyi Sect reaped a massive advantage from Flying Swan Sect, the situation changed drastically on the Flying Swan Sect's side, directly impacting the entire Endless Sea of Sand's situation.

Chapter 507: Change in Situation

Initially, when Meng Zhang received a hint from Jin Li Daoist Master, he learned that the Flying Swan Sect was about to target the Northern Desert Qi Family. Besides discreetly informing the Northern Desert Qi Family and preparing Taiyi Sect for assistance, he also secretly conveyed this information to the Fire Cloud Sect.

At first glance, the Fire Cloud Sect seemed inactive. As for whether the Fire Cloud Sect had any contact with the Northern Desert Qi Family in secret, that remained unknown.

Later on, instead of attacking the Northern Desert Qi Family, the Flying Swan Sect made a massive move and launched a surprise attack on the Crow's Nest. After the Flying Swan Sect cultivator army set off, only Fei Yu Daoist Master remained behind.

It was at this moment that the Fire Cloud Sect suddenly launched an assault, heading straight for the Flying Swan Sect. After a fierce battle, the remaining cultivators from the Flying Swan Sect suffered a crushing defeat, and even Fei Yu Daoist Master appeared to have been injured.

Cultivators from the Fire Cloud Sect continued their advance, killing their way into the Endless Sea of Sand until they reached the heart of the Flying Swan Sect.

On this side of Demon Wind Gobi, there was some delay in receiving news from the Endless Sea of Sand. An Moran, responsible for the Taiyi Sect Secret Hall, had taken measures to strengthen surveillance in the Endless Sea of Sand, particularly around the Flying Swan Sect, following his previous mistake.

After much effort, he managed to establish some reliable sources of information to keep track of the latest developments there. An Moran, the Secret Hall Master, personally went to investigate the situation after Fire Cloud Sect invaded the Endless Sea of Sand again.

Subsequently, powerful members of the sect, such as Shocking Thunder Spirit General, were dispatched by Meng Zhang to assist An Moran in monitoring the situation in the Endless Sea of Sand.

As the experts sent by Taiyi Sect arrived, more and more information flowed back to Taiyi Sect. It turned out that two of the three Gold Core Daoist Masters from the Fire Cloud Sect, Daoist Master Dark Cloud and Daoist Master Fiery Cloud, who were seriously injured in the last confrontation with the Flying Swan Sect, had already recovered from their wounds.

Fire Cloud Sect had kept this secret hidden from the Flying Swan Sect all along. This made the words of Daoist Master Scarlet Flame, who came to persuade Meng Zhang before, more credible.

Upon receiving the news secretly transmitted by Meng Zhang, Fire Cloud Sect intensified its surveillance over the Flying Swan Sect. When the three Gold Core Daoist Masters from the Flying Swan Sect led their army to attack the Crow's Nest, the Daoist Master Scarlet Flame, Daoist Master Dark Cloud, and Daoist Master Fiery Cloud of the Fire Cloud Sect seized the opportunity and led their cultivator army to launch a sudden attack on the Flying Swan Sect.

Although the Flying Swan Sect cultivator army did not attack the Northern Desert Qi Family, as the news received by the Fire Cloud Sect suggested, and instead aimed to attack the Crow's Nest, it played to their advantage as it delayed the Flying Swan Sect's response.

With the main forces of the Flying Swan Sect absent, they were too vulnerable. Even the lone Fei Yu Daoist Master could not withstand the combined strength of the three Gold Core Daoist Masters from the Fire Cloud Sect.

After a fierce assault, the Fire Cloud Sect cultivator army advanced rapidly, pushing forward continuously. Despite Fei Yu Daoist Master's efforts to delay, the difference in strength was too great, and he achieved little success.

The losses suffered by the Flying Swan Sect were immense. Almost all their remaining cultivators were annihilated, and even Fei Yu Daoist Master, after being seriously injured by Daoist Master

Scarlet Flame, was relentlessly pursued by Daoist Master Dark Cloud and Daoist Master Fiery Cloud until he met his demise.

After the death of Fei Yu Daoist Master, the Flying Swan Sect collapsed completely. They not only lost the majority of their territory but also failed to hold onto Flying Swan City, which fell into the hands of the Fire Cloud Sect.

Upon the return of Fei Shi Daoist Master and Wu Mingwei with their cultivator army, they faced a wretched and desperate situation.

Fei Shi Daoist Master's injuries were severe, and he could barely muster any combat strength. During their time at the Crow's Nest, they captured only a few light clusters, and Wu Mingwei even voluntarily abandoned most of his captures.

They refrained from seizing others' light clusters not because they didn't want to but because they couldn't. Qi Nanfei, a renowned Gold Core Daoist Master, had fled Myriad Layers Peak, and they had no time to intercept him.

Furthermore, they were unaware of the conflict and internal strife between Meng Zhang and Qin Hongying within the Taiyi Sect.

With Meng Zhang as a Gold Core Daoist Master and a powerful cultivator army on the Taiyi Sect's side, facing the Flying Swan Sect's two Gold Core Daoist Masters and their cultivator army in that state, their chances of winning in a direct confrontation were not high.

Therefore, Fei Shi Daoist Master made a very difficult decision. Instead of leading the cultivator army to directly clash with the Fire Cloud Sect army, he chose to retreat and withdraw to the Yellow Sand Ridge.

Yellow Sand Ridge was the location of the Flying Swan Sect's headquarters back when the Purple Gold Sect ruled the Endless Sea of Sand hundreds of years ago. Situated on the easternmost side of the Endless Sea of Sand, it was remote and desolate, far from the core area of the Endless Sea of Sand, where Flying Swan Sect's main forces had relocated after replacing the Purple Gold Sect.

Yellow Sand Ridge was a place that Flying Swan Sect didn't abandon; instead, they arranged some disciples to remain and continue their operations. As Flying Swan Sect gradually established a foothold in the core area of the Endless Sea of Sand, the significance of Yellow Sand Ridge, its original headquarters, diminished over time. Eventually, it became a location for exiled disciples who had committed serious crimes.

Fei Shi Daoist Master led the Flying Swan Sect's cultivator army to retreat swiftly, successfully avoiding the Fire Cloud Sect's cultivator army and withdrawing all the way to Yellow Sand Ridge. Upon arrival, the Flying Swan Sect's cultivator army immediately fortified the area, bolstering their defenses using the mountain-guarding great formation.

Fei Shi Daoist Master's decisive action preserved what was left of the Flying Swan Sect's main force and retained hope for a future counterattack. However, many of the Flying Swan Sect's vassal families couldn't retreat in time and were effectively abandoned by the sect. Faced with the invading Fire Cloud Sect's overwhelming forces, some vassal families were annihilated, while others surrendered willingly.

Most of the cultivation forces that were formerly under the authority of the Flying Swan Sect in the Endless Sea of Sand chose to submit to the Fire Cloud Sect, except for a few die-hard loyalists who were subsequently eradicated. Fire Cloud Sect's relentless and powerful offensive allowed them to seize control of most regions in the Endless Sea of Sand, and the majority of the cultivation forces there surrendered.

Fire Cloud Sect now replaced the Flying Swan Sect as the new dominator and ruler of the Endless Sea of Sand. Curiously, the Fire Cloud Sect's army did not pursue its victory further and continued to advance against Yellow Sand Ridge or eradicate the Flying Swan Sect completely. Many believed that Fire Cloud Sect's army likely suffered significant casualties during the previous battles and needed time to recuperate. Moreover, conquering such a large territory required careful consolidation and absorption, leaving them temporarily unable to completely eliminate the Flying Swan Sect.

Various pieces of information trickled back to Grand Lion Ridge, reaching the ears of Meng Zhang. Some of this intelligence came from Taiyi Sect cultivators conducting their own investigations, while some were mere speculations. Most of the news proved authentic, but some were less reliable.

After the Flying Swan Sect's army retreated from Demon Wind Gobi, Meng Zhang led the Taiyi Sect's cultivator army back to Grand Lion Ridge to be prepared for any changes in the Endless Sea of Sand. The recent series of events in the Endless Sea of Sand left Meng Zhang feeling overwhelmed.

Fire Cloud Sect's decisive action had achieved unprecedented gains, which somewhat surprised Meng Zhang. On careful consideration, he found it understandable and even suspected that his secret communication with Fire Cloud Sect may have played a role in fueling the situation.

During Daoist Master Scarlet Flame's last visit to Grand Lion Ridge, he brought goodwill from Fire Cloud Sect, but Meng Zhang had not responded promptly. At that time, Daoist Master Scarlet Flame sought Meng Zhang's support to counter the mighty Flying Swan Sect. Now that the tide had turned, and Fire Cloud Sect had gained the upper hand, Meng Zhang wondered if the same goodwill and promises still stood.

Meng Zhang had no answer in his heart and couldn't afford to lower his guard against Fire Cloud Sect. Consequently, he refrained from interfering in the situation in the Endless Sea of Sand and instead prepared for a potential large-scale battle while observing how things would unfold.

During this waiting period, he diligently continued his cultivation. The Third Rank pills he obtained included some that could help Gold Core stage cultivators enhance their Cultivation Base, and Meng Zhang put them to good use. With a steady supply of spiritual energy from Grand Lion Ridge's Third Rank spirit vein, he was no longer restrained by the small piece of spiritual marrow in his possession.

With ample spiritual energy, the spiritual marrow was no longer necessary. Combined with the aid of the pills, Meng Zhang's Cultivation Base progressed rapidly. Currently, among the early Gold Core stage cultivators, he was considered a formidable presence.

The intense life-and-death battle with Qin Hongying had granted him substantial experience and insights, enough to keep him occupied for a long time.

After the Fire Cloud Sect's cultivator army entered the Endless Sea of Sand and occupied the original territories of the Flying Swan Sect, causing the major cultivation forces to submit, there were no further actions. They did not encroach on Taiyi Sect's territory or bother the members of the Hanhai Alliance.

Under these circumstances, Meng Zhang had no intention of actively provoking Fire Cloud Sect. Nonetheless, with Flying Swan Sect's downfall, he saw an opportunity to gain some advantages. He dispatched Taiyi Sect's Foundation Building stage cultivators to lead their forces and occupy all the territories previously held by the Flying Swan Sect in Demon Wind Gobi. With most of the Flying Swan Sect's forces retreating to Yellow Sand Ridge, the territories in Demon Wind Gobi were no longer adjacent to the Flying Swan Sect and became isolated enclaves.

Chapter 508: 0 Grass Pavilion

Especially after the news from the Endless Sea of Sand gradually reached these territories, the disciples of the Flying Swan Sect on these lands became restless and anxious.

The Taiyi Sect suddenly turned hostile and sent a large number of people to their doorstep, and these cultivators couldn't resist at all.

Moreover, everyone knows that the Flying Swan Sect, in its current state, can't afford to spare any resources for this outpost in the Demon Wind Gobi.

The Flying Swan Sect doesn't even have enough strength to defend the Yellow Sand Ridge, let alone provide reinforcements here.

The disciples of the Flying Swan Sect here are basically abandoned by the sect.

However, Meng Zhang has a long-term vision. He didn't kill these Flying Swan Sect disciples just because the sect suffered a temporary setback.

His orders to the Taiyi Sect cultivators he dispatched were to try not to harm these Flying Swan Sect disciples and simply drive them away.

As long as there is no excessive killing and no blood feud, there is still room for maneuver between Taiyi Sect and Flying Swan Sect in the future.

Meng Zhang hasn't forgotten that the True Monarch Tian Zhu stands behind the Flying Swan Sect. Who knows what tricks True Monarch Tian Zhu might have up his sleeve when the Flying Swan Sect is pushed to the brink?

It's advantageous to take advantage of the Flying Swan Sect now; it's not yet time to completely break ties with them.

There are no powerful external enemies in the Demon Wind Gobi, and the cultivation base of the remaining disciples of the Flying Swan Sect here is not strong, with only a few Foundation Building stage cultivators.

The Taiyi Sect cultivators have an overwhelming advantage and easily subdue the Flying Swan Sect disciples who have little fighting spirit.

Then, all the Flying Swan Sect disciples are gathered together and sent off by the Taiyi Sect cultivators as a gesture of farewell.

After leaving the Demon Wind Gobi, where they go and what fate awaits them is no longer Taiyi Sect's concern.

The area of the Flying Swan Sect in the Demon Wind Gobi is not as large as that of the Taiyi Sect, but the resources here are more abundant and fertile.

Devouring such a large piece of fat, the Taiyi Sect feels satisfied from top to bottom.

Even if the entire Hanhai Alliance's forces are deployed here, it would be difficult to completely digest such a vast and fertile territory.

Due to the changes in the situation in the Endless Sea of Sand, under Meng Zhang's orders, the Taiyi Sect has slowly been migrating towards the Demon Wind Gobi.

Various parts of the sect, a large number of cultivators, and a massive number of mortals have started to migrate to the Demon Wind Gobi.

Meng Zhang's idea is simple. If the situation in the Endless Sea of Sand continues to change and Taiyi Sect finds it difficult to hold onto its territory there, they will retreat to the Demon Wind Gobi.

The Demon Wind Gobi is far more fertile than the Endless Sea of Sand and more conducive to human survival.

Of course, unless absolutely necessary, Meng Zhang will not easily give up Taiyi Sect's territory in the Endless Sea of Sand.

After all, there are many unique resources of great value in the Endless Sea of Sand.

The elite cultivators dispatched by the Taiyi Sect constantly monitor the next moves of the Fire Cloud Sect and continuously transmit the information back to the Grand Lion Ridge.

After some time and effort, Meng Zhang finally broke the restriction on the small attic and gained a preliminary understanding of how to use this treasure.

This treasure is called the Hundred Grass Pavilion, a Third Rank high-grade spatial magic tool.

After infusing True Essence into it, the Hundred Grass Pavilion flew into the air, transformed, and landed on the ground, becoming a real attic.

The attic has six floors, each of which is an independent space.

Inside the entire attic, there are many rooms of various sizes.

Some rooms are specially designed alchemy rooms with various equipment for alchemy.

Each alchemy room has an alchemy furnace.

The worst of these alchemy furnaces is a Second Rank alchemy furnace, while the best is a Third Rank high-grade alchemy furnace.

The best alchemist in the Taiyi Sect is currently only a Second Rank Alchemist and does not have the qualifications to use a Third Rank alchemy furnace.

Alchemy performed by alchemists in these specially designed alchemy rooms receives significant enhancements.

In addition, some rooms store many well-prepared spirit medicines. These precious elixirs have been preserved using special methods, and despite the passage of hundreds of years, their medicinal properties are still intact. Meng Zhang, with limited knowledge of alchemy, roughly counted them. There are various types of elixirs inside, suitable for refining all kinds of pills. Not only are there various elixirs for refining Foundation Building Pills, but there are also many elixirs that can be used to refine Third Rank pills. Just the acquisition of these elixirs alone makes Meng Zhang's trip worthwhile.

In addition, the Hundred Grass Pavilion also comes with a huge medicinal garden. It needs to be placed on a Third Rank spirit vein in order to unfold the medicinal garden. Meng Zhang's initial intuition was correct - the Hundred Grass Pavilion is an important part of Myriad Layers Peak and a valuable treasure that can exist independently.

The spiritual energy provided by the Third Rank spirit vein in Grand Lion Ridge is limited, and it is currently only sufficient for Meng Zhang's cultivation. If it is used to accommodate the Hundred Grass Pavilion and fully utilize its effects, it would be somewhat insufficient. Moreover, Meng Zhang is currently in a period of rapid progress in their cultivation base and is unwilling to give up the spirit vein, which would delay their own cultivation.

Meng Zhang can only hope that the original location where Myriad Layers Peak was placed has not suffered too much damage to the spirit vein. Unfortunately, things in the world do not always go as planned. After a careful survey by the Deep Earth Spirit General, it was discovered that when Myriad Layers Peak exploded, the Third Rank spirit vein closely connected to it was also affected and severely damaged. Now, not only has the spiritual energy been depleted, but even the earth veins have shifted.

Upon hearing the report from the Deep Earth Spirit General, Meng Zhang felt heartbroken. The spirit vein near the Crow's Nest was originally the stronghold of the White Lion Demon King. It is many times stronger than the Third Rank spirit vein in Grand Lion Ridge. The Third Rank spirit vein in Grand Lion Ridge is only enough to support Meng Zhang alone. If another Gold Core Daoist Master appears in the Taiyi Sect in the future, they will once again face the dilemma of insufficient spiritual energy.

If it is still a long way off for the Taiyi Sect to produce another Gold Core Daoist Master, then the immediate priority is how to accommodate the Hundred Grass Pavilion. If the Hundred Grass Pavilion can be fully utilized, the alchemy level of the Taiyi Sect will definitely reach a new level.

As a Geomancer, the Deep Earth Spirit General became Meng Zhang's source of help. After thinking for a long time, the Deep Earth Spirit General told Meng Zhang that he could try to repair the Third Rank spirit vein, but there was no guarantee of success. After all, his cultivation base has only just recovered to the completion of the Foundation Building stage, and many Geomancer techniques cannot be performed.

Considering the extent of the damage to the spirit vein, even if a Third Rank Geomancer were to intervene, there is no guarantee of successful repair. The Deep Earth Spirit General also informed Meng Zhang that repairing the spirit vein would require a large amount of manpower and resources, at least half of the Taiyi Sect's strength. Therefore, he made a request for Meng Zhang to grant him authority to mobilize all the disciples of the Taiyi Sect and the resources of the entire sect.

After thinking for a moment, Meng Zhang reluctantly agreed to the Deep Earth Spirit General's request. The Third Rank spirit vein is related to the future of the Taiyi Sect, it is a plan for the next hundred years, no, it should be a plan for the next thousand years. All investments in the Third Rank spirit vein are worthwhile. The situation in the Endless Sea of Sand is currently relatively stable. There are no signs of major conflicts or battles from either the Fire Cloud Sect or the Flying Swan Sect. Could it be that the Fire Cloud Sect is satisfied with their current achievements? Meng Zhang has a feeling that this matter is not so simple. However, regardless of the situation, as long as the Fire Cloud Sect does not continue to expand, the Taiyi Sect does not need to worry for now.

After receiving authorization from Meng Zhang, the Deep Earth Spirit General immediately took action. Of course, he also knew that the situation in the Endless Sea of Sand could change at any time, and the Taiyi Sect needed to be prepared to adapt. Therefore, he initially mobilized only a small number of people, mostly disciples with average combat abilities. This way, although the progress of repairing the Third Rank spirit vein would be slow, at least it would not deplete the Taiyi Sect's ability to respond.

In addition to monitoring the movements of the Fire Cloud Sect and the Flying Swan Sect, Meng Zhang also allocated some resources to monitor the movements of the Qi Family in the Northern Desert. It is unknown what benefits Qi Nanfei gained from Myriad Layers Peak. After returning to the Northern Desert Qi Family, he secluded himself and guarded the mountain gate. Qi Nanfei and Hong Siming joined forces to kill the Flying Swan Sect's Fei Jiang Daoist Master, creating a blood feud with the Flying Swan Sect, which had also intended to exterminate the Northern Desert Qi Family.

According to reason, the Northern Desert Qi Family should join forces with the Fire Cloud Sect to strike back at the Flying Swan Sect. However, the Northern Desert Qi Family has remained silent and showed no intention of getting involved in the war between the Fire Cloud Sect and the Flying Swan Sect. Meng Zhang finds it difficult to understand the intentions of the Northern Desert Qi Family. However, he later realized that behind the Fire Cloud Sect, the Flying Swan Sect, and the Northern Desert Qi Family, there is the support of the Primordial Spirit True Monarch. All their actions should be guided by the will of the Primordial Spirit True Monarch.

These seemingly invincible Gold Core forces are just pawns in the struggle of the Primordial Spirit True Monarch. If the Primordial Spirit True Monarch gives an order, their actions, even if they seem illogical, are not surprising. Understanding this, Meng Zhang gains a new understanding of the situation in the Endless Sea of Sand. He becomes even more cautious and constantly reminds himself to keep the Taiyi Sect away from these troubles and not to easily get involved in their conflicts.

The recent series of changes in the Endless Sea of Sand has made the various cultivation forces in the Hanhai Alliance become more obedient. Initially, when they saw the Flying Swan Sect as the core, these cultivation forces were somewhat shaken and even restless. However, when the Fire Cloud Sect suddenly attacked and the Flying Swan Sect suffered a major defeat, it truly frightened these cultivation forces. If they had allied with the Flying Swan Sect earlier, even if they were not dealt with by the Fire Cloud Sect, they would have been eliminated by the Taiyi Sect.

They secretly rejoiced in their escape from disaster and became more obedient, suppressing all their hidden thoughts. Meng Zhang sees all these things but doesn't pay much attention to them. These small fish and shrimps cannot cause any major waves. As long as the Taiyi Sect maintains its

overwhelming advantage, they will always be loyal followers of the Taiyi Sect. In the long run, they will be completely assimilated by the Taiyi Sect and become an extension of the Taiyi Sect's influence.

Meng Zhang is satisfied with the seemingly calm situation and hopes that no new changes will occur. However, the arrival of a guest is about to disrupt the peaceful situation.

Chapter 509: Visits again

The solitary visitor who arrived was Daoist Master Scarlet Flame from the Fire Cloud Sect. This was not the first time Daoist Master Scarlet Flame had visited the Grand Lion Ridge. During his previous visit, he had been quite low-key and had not caused much commotion.

This time, however, he arrived in a grand and eye-catching flying vessel, accompanied by a large group of disciples, proudly displaying the demeanor of victors. Meng Zhang received Daoist Master Scarlet Flame with apparent warmth, though deep down, he was dissatisfied.

Daoist Master Scarlet Flame's conspicuous actions put both himself and the entire Taiyi Sect at risk. To outsiders unaware of the truth, it might appear that Taiyi Sect and Fire Cloud Sect had formed an alliance.

While Fire Cloud Sect had dealt a significant blow to the Flying Swan Sect and occupied a large portion of the Endless Sea of Sand, forcing numerous cultivation forces to submit, the Flying Swan Sect still possessed the ability to counterattack. If the situation were to reverse again, and the Flying Swan Sect rose from defeat to victory, how would Meng Zhang and Taiyi Sect handle the aftermath?

Even before this incident, the Flying Swan Sect had harbored animosity toward Taiyi Sect. Now, with these events, Taiyi Sect had become an eyesore and a thorn in the side of the Flying Swan Sect.

When the Flying Swan Sect was powerful, Meng Zhang had wished to weaken them. He had even prepared to support the Northern Desert Qi Family secretly and provide intelligence to the Fire Cloud Sect to aid in the destruction of the Flying Swan Sect. But now that the Flying Swan Sect was weakened, Meng Zhang hoped they would put up a good fight and divert Fire Cloud Sect's attention away from Taiyi Sect.

However, it seemed that even though Meng Zhang had tried to keep a low profile, he couldn't escape the attention of Fire Cloud Sect. After all, Taiyi Sect was still a Gold Core sect, and with Fire Cloud Sect conquering the Endless Sea of Sand, it was impossible for them to ignore Taiyi Sect.

After welcoming Daoist Master Scarlet Flame into the protective formation of the mountain, Meng Zhang engaged in some small talk, endlessly praising and flattering him. However, Daoist Master Scarlet Flame, being a senior cultivator in the mid Gold Core stage, was not swayed by Meng Zhang's tricks. Though not particularly eloquent, Daoist Master Scarlet Flame's cultivation base far surpassed Meng Zhang's, and if it weren't for the protection of the Third Rank protective formation, Meng Zhang wouldn't have dared to get too close to him.

With just a few words, Daoist Master Scarlet Flame silenced all of Meng Zhang's chatter and went straight to the point. His purpose was simple: to persuade Meng Zhang and Taiyi Sect to form an alliance with the Fire Cloud Sect and jointly deal with the Flying Swan Sect.

According to Daoist Master Scarlet Flame, the Flying Swan Sect was already a defeated force and no match for the combined strength of Taiyi Sect and Fire Cloud Sect. He promised that once the Flying Swan Sect was eliminated, the Endless Sea of Sand would be divided between Taiyi Sect and Fire Cloud Sect. Taiyi Sect would have the first choice of everything they obtained from the Flying Swan Sect.

Daoist Master Scarlet Flame sincerely explained that Fire Cloud Sect belonged to the Jiuqu League and would ultimately need to return to the Jiuqu League's jurisdiction, leaving Endless Sea of Sand to Taiyi Sect as its dominant power.

Listening to Daoist Master Scarlet Flame's tempting offers and benefits, Meng Zhang had a momentary wavering in his heart. However, he quickly regained his composure. The conflict between Fire Cloud Sect and Flying Swan Sect involved the struggles of their respective Primordial Spirit True Monarchs, a complicated situation that Taiyi Sect couldn't afford to get involved in lightly.

The situation in the Endless Sea of Sand is best left as it is. If the Flying Swan Sect and Fire Cloud Sect continue to confront each other, maintaining this status quo indefinitely would be most advantageous for Taiyi Sect. Of course, Meng Zhang knows that this ideal situation is impossible to achieve. Nonetheless, he was somewhat surprised that Fire Cloud Sect came knocking on his door so quickly.

Faced with the enticing conditions offered by Daoist Master Scarlet Flame, Meng Zhang chose to ignore them. He did not outright reject Daoist Master Scarlet Flame but began making various excuses to evade the matter.

Fire Cloud Sect had only recently defeated the Flying Swan Sect and was at the height of its power. Meng Zhang did not want to provoke Daoist Master Scarlet Flame with a direct refusal.

Daoist Master Scarlet Flame paid no attention to Meng Zhang's excuses and did not get entangled in the details. Instead, he increased the stakes and offered even better conditions.

Truth be told, if Fire Cloud Sect could truly fulfill these conditions, it would be enough to lure even more powerful Gold Core sects than Taiyi Sect.

Although Meng Zhang is not particularly astute, having been in the Cultivation World for many years, his instincts are keen. He sensed that there must be something about these favorable conditions and Fire Cloud Sect's eagerness to recruit him that he didn't know.

The fact that Fire Cloud Sect sent a mid Gold Core Daoist Master Scarlet Flame to visit showed their regard for Meng Zhang, giving Taiyi Sect face. However, Daoist Master Scarlet Flame, while highly respected and powerful, was not an adept negotiator.

Seeing that Meng Zhang had not given a clear answer, Daoist Master Scarlet Flame assumed that Meng Zhang didn't believe him. He sincerely assured Meng Zhang that he was willing to make a soul oath or even a ghost oath to guarantee the fulfillment of his promises. Fire Cloud Sect valued Taiyi Sect greatly and demonstrated ample sincerity with their generous terms.

While Meng Zhang was somewhat tempted, he also felt a sense of unease. Was Taiyi Sect really worth such treatment from Fire Cloud Sect?

Daoist Master Scarlet Flame's discontent with Meng Zhang's unyielding attitude became evident. He suppressed his frustration and presented Fire Cloud Sect's final bottom line.

Fire Cloud Sect could accept Taiyi Sect not joining the battle against the Flying Swan Sect. As long as Meng Zhang made a ghost oath to ensure that Taiyi Sect would remain neutral and not get involved in the conflict between Fire Cloud Sect and Flying Swan Sect, Fire Cloud Sect would fulfill all the benefits originally promised.

The more Daoist Master Scarlet Flame persisted, the more uneasy Meng Zhang felt. These conditions were too generous and had no cost to Taiyi Sect. It seemed like Taiyi Sect would gain countless benefits without having to do anything.

In the worst-case scenario, if Fire Cloud Sect was defeated by the Flying Swan Sect and completely withdrew from the Endless Sea of Sand, what would that have to do with Taiyi Sect? Taiyi Sect had not participated in the attack against the Flying Swan Sect but maintained a benevolent neutrality.

Another person might have been swayed by Daoist Master Scarlet Flame and agreed to his request, but Meng Zhang, guided by his Diviner instincts, still didn't give in.

However, he did not outright refuse either. He kept emphasizing his difficulties and continued to find excuses to evade the situation. At one point, he mentioned the unstable situation in the Demon Wind Gobi, which prevented him from leaving. Then he mentioned the constant harassment by various demonic beasts in the Demon Wind Gobi, which tied up the main forces of Taiyi Sect cultivators.

Chapter 510: Secret Grandmaster

Seeing that Meng Zhang was determined not to agree immediately, Daoist Master Scarlet Flame didn't have a better option either. He had already offered all the conditions he could. Offering such generous terms would undoubtedly spark much controversy within the Fire Cloud Sect. Even for him, a mid-Gold Core cultivator, it would require a significant price to quell the opposition within the sect.

Daoist Master Scarlet Flame wasn't foolish; he understood the principle of "haste makes waste" and knew that the more generous the conditions he offered, the more suspicious Meng Zhang would become.

Unfortunately, many matters were beyond Daoist Master Scarlet Flame's control. The next course of action for the Fire Cloud Sect was a reflection of the will of True Monarch Profound Wind, and any deviation was absolutely unacceptable.

Frankly, if Meng Zhang had acted like a typical cultivator, displaying boundless greed, Daoist Master Scarlet Flame wouldn't be so helpless. Other lords of sects would seize this opportunity and demand more benefits from the Fire Cloud Sect.

However, Meng Zhang just happened to appear indifferent and disinterested, not giving any definite answer. Despite wasting a lot of words, Daoist Master Scarlet Flame couldn't persuade Meng Zhang to change his mind and had to give up.

He didn't resort to tearing up relations with Meng Zhang either, not even showing a hint of displeasure. He assured Meng Zhang that his promises remained valid. As long as Meng Zhang

maintained neutrality within the Fire Cloud Sect and thoroughly defeated the Flying Swan Sect, he would receive all the benefits promised.

Meng Zhang nodded obediently, maintaining a friendly attitude, but he still didn't agree outright with Daoist Master Scarlet Flame. He knew that once he did, there would be no room for regret.

In the world of cultivation, there were plenty of ways to ensure the fulfillment of a promise. If he gave in, he would likely be forced to make a blood oath or something similar.

Daoist Master Scarlet Flame acted nonchalant, ignoring Meng Zhang's insincere attempts to keep him. After discussing the matter at hand, he took his leave voluntarily.

As Meng Zhang saw him off and bid farewell, he couldn't help but make a veiled threat. He simply compared the strength of the Fire Cloud Sect to that of the Flying Swan Sect and hinted that the Fire Cloud Sect had many hidden aces. With enough determination, they could surely wipe out the Flying Swan Sect. He warned that any force supporting the Flying Swan Sect would face retaliation from the Fire Cloud Sect.

The revelation of the Fire Cloud Sect's strength made Meng Zhang's heart tighten. Within the Fire Cloud Sect's gate, there were Sect Master Daoist Master Firecloud and Elder Daoist Master Blueflame, both mid-Gold Core cultivators.

After speaking, Daoist Master Scarlet Flame didn't linger and departed with his followers.

As Meng Zhang watched the flying ship gradually disappear into the distance, he felt a bit uncertain. To be honest, he wasn't willing to ally with the Flying Swan Sect against the Fire Cloud Sect. Daoist Master Scarlet Flame's request for Taiyi Sect to remain neutral seemed to align with Meng Zhang's intentions and Taiyi Sect's interests.

Yet, Meng Zhang's intuition stopped him from agreeing with Daoist Master Scarlet Flame. Could his intuition be accurate, or would it hinder significant matters?

With this inner conflict, Meng Zhang secluded himself in meditation after Daoist Master Scarlet Flame's departure, lost in deep contemplation for a long time.

About half a month later, Meng Zhang, who was meditating, suddenly opened his eyes with a radiant look and a face full of indescribable confidence. Just now, his stagnant Celestial Calculations Cultivation Base finally made a breakthrough. He now had the ability to use Grand Evolving Fortune and handle matters at the level of a Calculated Gold Core Daoist Master.

A long time ago, he had sensed that there was only a thin barrier separating him from this breakthrough in his Celestial Calculations. However, despite his diligent pondering and recitations of scriptures, he couldn't break through this barrier.

The opportunity presented by Daoist Master Scarlet Flame's visit had given him the chance to break through. Celestial Calculations was indeed a mysterious and unfathomable art that couldn't be measured by conventional means. Moreover, such breakthroughs relied on fortuitous circumstances.

Now, Meng Zhang could rightfully be called a Grandmaster of Celestial Calculations. After the breakthrough, he meditated for a while and then used Grand Evolving Fortune to deduce the purpose of Daoist Master Scarlet Flame's visit.

Exhausting all his previously accumulated calculation tallies, Meng Zhang finally obtained the desired result. The outcome of his calculations confirmed the accuracy of Meng Zhang's intuition - agreeing to Daoist Master Scarlet Flame's conditions would invite significant disaster.

Meng Zhang tried to continue calculating the details, but they remained blurry. Celestial Calculations were not omnipotent, and a Diviner couldn't know everything. Obtaining ambiguous results during a calculation was a normal occurrence.

Nevertheless, Meng Zhang was quite satisfied with being able to derive such a result. Among the various Celestial Calculations, Grand Evolving Fortune was an exceptionally advanced spell. The inability to see the details could have many reasons. Perhaps Daoist Master Scarlet Flame possessed a special treasure that interfered with his calculations, or another Diviner had meddled with the celestial forces.

The most likely reason, in Meng Zhang's opinion, was that Daoist Master Scarlet Flame's actions involved a Primordial Spirit True Monarch, surpassing his Calculated abilities.

Feeling somewhat proud, Meng Zhang acknowledged that his intuition played a significant role in making the right decision at a critical moment.

However, he was also puzzled. Taiyi Sect's policy was to remain neutral in the conflict between the Fire Cloud Sect and the Flying Swan Sect. Even if Daoist Master Scarlet Flame hadn't visited him or proposed those conditions, Taiyi Sect would most likely have stayed neutral to avoid getting entangled in the war.

Could there be an irresistible force pressuring Taiyi Sect to join the Flying Swan Sect?

Meng Zhang pondered for a long time but couldn't figure it out, only getting more confused.

He decided to set these matters aside temporarily and return to his normal life. After Daoist Master Scarlet Flame left Grand Lion Ridge, he didn't contact Meng Zhang again proactively. Meng Zhang shared the details of Daoist Master Scarlet Flame's visit with the higher-ups in the sect.

Though some of them didn't fully understand Meng Zhang's decision, no one dared to openly question it due to Meng Zhang's unparalleled prestige in Taiyi Sect. However, Elder Yang Xueyi raised a practical concern.

Daoist Master Scarlet Flame's current actions clearly aimed at undermining any potential support the Flying Swan Sect could receive. Would he go to Northern Desert Qi Family next to sway them? If Northern Desert Qi Family agreed to Daoist Master Scarlet Flame's conditions and joined the Fire Cloud Sect's side, how would Taiyi Sect respond?

Yang Xueyi's question was realistic, but Meng Zhang found it difficult to answer. It was indeed possible for Daoist Master Scarlet Flame to try to win over Northern Desert Qi Family. As for what choice Northern Desert Qi Family would make, Meng Zhang couldn't say. Considering the grievances between Northern Desert Qi Family and the Flying Swan Sect, they might not side with the latter.

Meng Zhang simply replied to Yang Xueyi, saying they would watch and wait for developments. After that, he ordered the Secret Hall to strengthen surveillance on Northern Desert Qi Family, ready to receive any updates.