

Sect Master 531

Chapter 531

Before cultivators enter the Deadly Sea of Sand, Meng Zhang has repeatedly emphasized the various dangers inside to them. Cultivators are not children, and they should take responsibility for their own choices. As the Sect Master of Taiyi Sect, Meng Zhang feels heartbroken about the injuries and deaths of Taiyi Sect cultivators, but he will never force them to change their choices.

Since it is a trial, they are bound to face various challenges and tests, and it is normal for injuries and deaths to occur. Meng Zhang is not a nanny who can protect disciples from harm forever. In the world of cultivation, there will always be times when one has to face dangers alone, and no one can avoid it. The only thing Meng Zhang can do is to give warnings in advance and enhance their combat power as much as possible.

Meng Zhang himself has average talent in talisman-making. With the help of Yang Xueyi, he has spent precious materials to refine some pseudo Third Rank talismans, which he has given to valued disciples as their life-saving cards. The current situation in the Endless Sea of Sand is stable, and there are no major events happening in the Demon Wind Gobi. Taiyi Sect, which is gradually developing in a stable manner, is exploring various resources within its territory. Apart from slowly repaying the debts owed to the Gu Yue Family, they are also gradually enriching the sect's treasury.

The Foundation Building stage cultivators of Taiyi Sect may not be extravagant, but at least their equipment is passable. Some outstanding cultivators even have life-saving items bestowed by the elders of the sect, so their survival ability is not bad. The cultivators from the Hanhai Alliance who enter the Deadly Sea of Sand have also been specially taken care of by Meng Zhang. They have the opportunity to exchange various items from Taiyi Sect to enhance their combat power and life-saving abilities.

For the current Taiyi Sect, low-level resources are not lacking. What the sect really needs are items useful for Gold Core Daoist Masters or those that can help Foundation Building stage cultivators break through to the Gold Core stage, as well as special spiritual items like the Lingyuan Pearl. Therefore, Meng Zhang is very willing to arm these Foundation Building stage cultivators who enter the Deadly Sea of Sand. This is equivalent to consuming low-level resources in exchange for high-level resources. The biggest loss is the casualties.

With the continuous investment from Taiyi Sect and the continuous entry of Foundation Building stage cultivators into the Deadly Sea of Sand, there have been some gains brought back intermittently. In addition to the Lingyuan Pearl requested by the Deep Earth Spirit General, there are also some other precious spiritual items, such as some spiritual flowers and herbs that have special growth requirements. Yang Xueyi personally led a team that went deep into the vicinity of the Black Wind Grave and obtained two Soul-Replenishing Grasses.

Soul-Replenishing Grass is a spiritual medicine that can repair and enhance the soul and has great uses in many aspects. Before Foundation Building stage cultivators break through to the Gold Core stage, they need to achieve Soul Completion, where their physical body is flawless and their true qi is integrated. After cultivators consume the Soul-Replenishing Grass, it can help complete their soul. Cultivators who have suffered soul damage can repair their soul's injuries by taking the Soul-Replenishing Grass. If the Soul-Replenishing Grass is refined into a pill, it can further stimulate its medicinal power and have better effects.

Currently, Taiyi Sect is not lacking Second Rank Alchemists, especially An Xiaoran, Meng Zhang's second disciple, who has made tremendous progress in alchemy techniques after obtaining part of the inheritance from the Layered Mystery Sect. The alchemy technique is a common skill in the cultivation world, requiring cultivators to study diligently and possess exceptional talent.

An Xiaoran is someone who possesses both talent and diligence. Despite her young age, her proficiency in alchemy technique has already surpassed that of Zhang Yingying, the Pill Hall Master of the sect, and is approaching the level of alchemy masters like Shi Changqing.

If An Xiaoran were not disinterested in power struggles and solely relied on her exceptional alchemy technique, she would be qualified to compete for the position of Pill Hall Master, even without considering her status as the Sect Master's disciple.

With outstanding alchemists, the sect has already collected numerous prescriptions. The demand for various spiritual medicines within the Taiyi Sect has gradually increased.

However, due to the sect's shallow foundation and the relatively short time its own spiritual medicine garden has been established, it can only produce a limited quantity of low-level spiritual medicines.

Originally, the sect could obtain high-level spiritual medicines by purchasing a small amount from Great Wind City or by collecting them from the wilderness.

The Demon Wind Gobi is a place abundant in wild spiritual medicines of decent quality.

However, collecting spiritual medicines in the wilderness still requires some luck, and the supply is not always stable. freewebnovel.com

It was not until Meng Zhang unfolded the Hundred Grass Pavilion obtained from the Layered Mystery Sect that the Taiyi Sect finally had a relatively stable source of high-level spiritual medicines.

However, the current focus of the Hundred Grass Pavilion is on maintaining the spiritual medicine garden, and Meng Zhang has requested to minimize the collection of high-level spiritual medicines from within.

The fact that the teams of cultivators entering the Deadly Sea of Sand have brought back some special spiritual medicines has greatly piqued the interest of the alchemists in the sect.

If Meng Zhang had not specifically ordered it, cultivators within the Taiyi Sect who lacked combat power, especially those involved in production, would have long gone to search for spiritual medicines.

In this barren land known as the Deadly Sea of Sand, a forbidden zone for living creatures, some special high-level spiritual medicines have unexpectedly grown. This has not only made Meng Zhang marvel at the wonders of life but has also increased his investment in the Deadly Sea of Sand.

Both within the Taiyi Sect and the Hanhai Alliance, there are many cultivators who have consumed the Lesser Foundation Building Pill and are unable to advance further on their cultivation path. From the perspective of the sect's interests, these ordinary cultivators can be sacrificed.

In order to cultivate the elite cultivators who have the potential to form the core of the sect, these ordinary cultivators can serve as stepping stones.

As the lord of the sect with abundant resources, Meng Zhang does not need to give direct orders. By offering high rewards, many cultivators will willingly explore the Deadly Sea of Sand according to his wishes.

Especially for the other members of the Hanhai Alliance, they are extremely eager for the alchemical pills that can assist in Foundation Building.

The Taiyi Sect doesn't even need to provide Foundation Building Pills; offering a batch of Lesser Foundation Building Pills as rewards will be enough to attract Foundation Building stage cultivators from various forces to willingly venture into the Deadly Sea of Sand.

Meng Zhang only strictly restricts the entry of cultivators from the Taiyi Sect who lack strength into the Deadly Sea of Sand. There are no such restrictions for cultivators from other members of the Hanhai Alliance.

In reality, even if Meng Zhang were to impose restrictions, others might not appreciate it and think he is being stingy with the rewards.

With more and more Foundation Building stage cultivators entering the Deadly Sea of Sand, they bring back more and more surprises.

This place, the Deadly Sea of Sand, which cultivators used to deliberately avoid, is truly a treasure trove.

Special spiritual medicines, rare spiritual materials from the outside world, and hidden underground mineral deposits...

Jin Qiao'er obtained a lot of information about the Deadly Sea of Sand from Daoist Master Jin Li and generously shared it with everyone.

The teams that enter the Deadly Sea of Sand have gained a lot of firsthand information through long periods of exploration.

With ample experience, cultivators now know to seek benefits and avoid dangers, actively avoiding various risks. As a result, casualties have greatly decreased, while the gains have significantly increased.

Chapter 532: Picking

Amidst the howling gale and swirling yellow sand, An Xiaoran led a group of cultivators through the treacherous Deadly Sea of Sand. Ever since becoming a Second Rank Alchemist, An Xiaoran had devoted a significant portion of her energy to refining various elixirs. This not only met the needs of her sect but also aligned with her personal interests.

Having mastered the alchemy techniques passed down by the Layered Mystery Sect, An Xiaoran had acquired numerous prescriptions. The last team to return from the Deadly Sea of Sand brought back some news. They discovered a large patch of Silver Moon Grass near the Black Wind Grave. They had intended to harvest it, but their plans were thwarted by the sudden appearance of a horde

of sand monsters. Realizing that they couldn't venture into that dangerous area on their own, the surviving team members returned to the Demon Wind Gobi and sold the information.

Since about ten years ago, under the leadership of the Taiyi Sect, the entire Hanhai Alliance had launched a large-scale exploration of the Deadly Sea of Sand. More and more cultivators joined the exploration teams, and the scale of the expeditions continued to grow. Some of the unique resources within the Deadly Sea of Sand were already quite valuable, and the Taiyi Sect offered generous premiums for their acquisition. For the teams traveling to and from the Demon Wind Gobi, the Taiyi Sect provided various conveniences such as free supplies and maps.

News of teams striking it rich overnight spread quickly throughout the Endless Sea of Sand, and even reached the Jiuqu League, thanks to the deliberate promotion by the Taiyi Sect. Now, not only the cultivators of the Taiyi Sect and the Hanhai Alliance, but also the Foundation Building stage cultivators of the Northern Desert Qi Family and the Flying Swan Sect, were forming teams to explore the area. Many cultivators from Great Wind City, who were officially considered loose cultivators, were actually members of the major cultivation families in Great Wind City, as revealed by the intelligence from the Secret Hall.

Meng Zhang did not prevent external cultivators from entering the Deadly Sea of Sand. Firstly, the area was too vast with numerous bordering regions, making it impossible for him to stop everyone. Secondly, the Deadly Sea of Sand was extremely dangerous, and the more cannon fodder there was to explore, the better. In reality, among the many teams entering the Deadly Sea of Sand, only a few were able to reap any rewards. Not to mention the teams that suffered casualties, many of them returned empty-handed, having wasted talismans, elixirs, and other resources. If it weren't for the various subsidies provided by the Taiyi Sect, these teams would have long been unable to sustain themselves financially.

The phenomenon of trading various resource information had become very common. An Xiaoran needed some Silver Moon Grass to refine a certain elixir, but she had been unsuccessful in acquiring it through the channels of her sect. Fortunately, her younger brother, An Moran, was the Hall Master of the Secret Hall in charge of intelligence affairs for the Taiyi Sect. He was well-informed and resourceful. After exerting her sisterly authority over him, An Xiaoran managed to obtain the information through An Moran's efforts.

Originally, An Moran wanted An Xiaoran to hire a team to harvest the large patch of Silver Moon Grass. However, An Xiaoran was both distrustful of others and impatient. As a result, she organized a team within her sect and set out to harvest the Silver Moon Grass herself.

As a Taiyi Sect Alchemist, An Xiaoran was theoretically under the supervision of Pill Hall Master Zhang Yingying. However, An Xiaoran didn't think highly of Zhang Yingying and refused to accept her authority. Although Meng Zhang strictly prohibited production cultivators from entering the Deadly Sea of Sand, An Xiaoran was different from the weak production cultivators within the sect. She cultivated the superior technique "Fusang Sutra" from the Layered Mystery Sect, which directly targeted the Primordial Spirit Grand Dao. With a mid-Foundation Building cultivation base, her combat strength was remarkable. Meng Zhang was unable to refuse her due to her persistence and, for the purpose of tempering his disciples, tacitly allowed her actions.

An Xiaoran was not reckless. Knowing the dangers within the Deadly Sea of Sand, she made thorough preparations in advance. She had a good relationship with Delicate Water Spirit General and had received much guidance from her. Meng Zhang had kept the news of Delicate Water Spirit

General's restoration to the Gold Core stage hidden well, and only the three Guardian Spirit Generals were aware of it within the sect.

Originally, An Xiaoran wanted to find Delicate Water Spirit General and invite her to join the expedition. However, Delicate Water Spirit General had already left the Taiyi Sect and ventured deep into the Demon Wind Gobi. Failing to locate Delicate Water Spirit General, An Xiaoran turned to Shocking Thunder Spirit General instead. Without much hesitation, Shocking Thunder Spirit General agreed to join her team.

Subsequently, An Xiaoran invited the Qian brothers, Qian Kaiyu, to join the team. The Qian brothers were experienced loose cultivators who had roamed the Cultivation World for many years and possessed abundant knowledge. Many teams that disappeared silently in the Deadly Sea of Sand were likely victims of the schemes of Ghost Cultivators and Demonic Cultivators. In recent years, more and more cultivator teams have entered the Deadly Sea of Sand. Occasionally, some teams have encountered Ghost Cultivators and Demonic Cultivators, resulting in tragic casualties.

An Xiaoran insisted on having Shocking Thunder Spirit General accompany her to prevent any unexpected encounters with Ghost Cultivators or Demonic Cultivators. "We're almost there," she said as the team traveled a long and arduous journey, their morale somewhat low. An Xiaoran encouraged everyone.

The journey hasn't been smooth. They have encountered sand monsters several times along the way and have experienced several life-and-death battles, leaving everyone exhausted.

Up ahead is the Black Wind Grave, where Ghost Cultivators often gather. In the Deadly Sea of Sand, it is rare to find cultivators at the Gold Core stage. Even among the Ghost Cultivators, the highest cultivation base is only at the False Core stage. However, Ghost Cultivators are treacherous and not easy opponents to deal with.

Cultivators who enter the Deadly Sea of Sand know that the Black Wind Grave is the stronghold of Ghost Cultivators and deliberately avoid it. They rarely approach unless absolutely necessary.

The team that discovered the Silver Moon Grass happened to take the wrong path and ended up in that location. They were initially planning to directly harvest the Silver Moon Grass but lost the courage to do so when they encountered sand monsters and discovered the presence of Ghost Cultivators. Instead, they decided to sell the information for profit. It was through An Moran's well-informed connections that they obtained this information.

The closer they got to the Black Wind Grave, the more cautious everyone became. Each person mustered their spirits and observed their surroundings.

Perhaps all the bad luck they had encountered along the way had been exhausted, as An Xiaoran and her team began to have a stroke of good luck. They safely reached their destination without any unexpected incidents.

An Xiaoran could hardly believe her good fortune. With the protection of her teammates, she quickly harvested the mature parts of the Silver Moon Grass.

The Silver Moon Grass is a spirit herb that has strict requirements for its growth environment. As a qualified alchemist, An Xiaoran did not exploit the resources but only harvested the mature medicinal plants, leaving the immature ones untouched. She only made a note of this information for future reference.

After harvesting the herbs, An Xiaoran relaxed and said with a smile, "My little brother may not have any other skills, but he's good at gathering information. It's quite unexpected that he could provide such accurate information."

The terrain in the Deadly Sea of Sand often changes, making it difficult to navigate. Besides accurate intelligence, An Xiaoran's luck was truly remarkable for them to successfully find this place.

Before An Xiaoran finished speaking, her expression suddenly changed, and she turned her head abruptly to the left. Shocking ThunderSpirit General had already anticipated her reaction and looked in that direction.

The others, only now realizing something was amiss, followed their gaze. Their faces initially showed confusion, then extreme shock.

In the distant sky, dark black clouds rapidly moved towards them. In front of the clouds, a white whirlwind swiftly moved as if evading the pursuit of the clouds.

An Xiaoran's face turned serious, and she hesitantly asked Shocking ThunderSpirit General, "Demonic Cultivation?"

Shocking ThunderSpirit General didn't speak but nodded in confirmation. Though Demonic Cultivation was still far away, his body had already started to emit flickering electric lights, and his eyes seemed as if they were about to spew fire.

As An Xiaoran, a direct disciple of Meng Zhang, she had learned many secrets from him, including some history of the Taiyi Sect and the origins of Shocking ThunderSpirit General. The Taiyi Sect, rebuilt in the Grand Crossing Mountain Range, was destroyed during the demonic calamity. Shocking ThunderSpirit General himself had his physical body destroyed and his soul severely injured during the battle against demons, forcing him into a long slumber. If it weren't for Meng Zhang's revival of the sect, Shocking ThunderSpirit General might never have had the chance to awaken.

Seeing Demonic Cultivation appear before them, Shocking ThunderSpirit General's eyes turned bloodshot. As a senior who had lived for many years, he could hardly contain his anger. An Xiaoran had thought that perhaps there were misunderstandings about Shocking ThunderSpirit General among the others. Unexpectedly, he erupted at this moment.

The white whirlwind rapidly flew towards them, closely pursued by the black clouds. They were about to reach the group.

An Xiaoran had intended to lead the team to take cover first. Fighting against Demonic Cultivation held no benefits for her.

"I'll leave the Ghost Cultivator in front to you. I'll deal with the Demonic Cultivation behind," Shocking ThunderSpirit General said, taking the initiative to fly into the sky to meet them.

An Xiaoran smiled wryly. She had heard that Shocking ThunderSpirit General had a hot temper and a penchant for battle. Throughout the journey, he had been obediently playing the role of a team member, never taking the lead in any decision-making. An Xiaoran had even wondered if there were misunderstandings about Shocking ThunderSpirit General. Unexpectedly, he erupted at this moment.

As a junior disciple in the sect, An Xiaoran couldn't disregard the senior's presence and focus solely on avoiding the battle. She called out to the five cultivators behind her and led them to attack the white whirlwind. freewebnovel.com

An Xiaoran didn't fully understand the origin of the white whirlwind, but since Shocking ThunderSpirit General had identified it as a Ghost Cultivator, there was likely some truth to it. As a righteous cultivator, it was only natural to take action when encountering a Ghost Cultivator.

An Xiaoran, with her Fire-Wood attribute, had been practicing the "Burning Wood Technique" since she was young. Later, she switched to the "Fusang Sutra" of the Layered Mystery Sect. The Fire-Wood attribute cultivation technique not only aided her in refining pills but also had the advantage of countering Ghost Cultivators in battles.

An Xiaoran flew to the front of the white whirlwind and with a single move, a large green tree rose up in front of her. Flames fell from the tree, flying towards the white whirlwind.

The Qian Family brothers and the other three Foundation Building cultivators also attacked the white whirlwind simultaneously.

The white whirlwind quickly dissipated, revealing a snow-white skull.

The Ghost Cultivator, who had been chased by Demonic Cultivation for quite some time, was already severely injured. After being attacked by An Xiaoran and her team, he immediately lost all his strength, barely clinging to half his life.

"I surrender, I surrender. Please, don't attack anymore," the white skull pleaded incessantly.

An Xiaoran had never encountered a Ghost Cultivator before and was unaware of their nature. However, it was quite unexpected for a Ghost Cultivator, known for their cruelty and ruthlessness in the Cultivation World, to be so weak and cowardly. With the opponent surrendering, An Xiaoran thought it would be a good opportunity to capture a prisoner and gather more information about the Deadly Sea of Sand.

She took out a crimson net and placed the skull inside, affixing a talisman to prevent the captive from escaping.

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While An Xiaoran was dealing with the battle on this side, he looked towards Shocking ThunderSpirit General in front of him and realized that his situation was not good. Shocking ThunderSpirit General is proficient in lightning attribute techniques, and the power of thunder is majestic, with the ability to exterminate demons and destroy evil.

With a cultivation base at the Foundation Building stage and the experience of a Gold Core cultivator, Shocking ThunderSpirit General's combat power can definitely be considered top-notch among Foundation Building cultivators. However, after encountering the pursuing demonic cultivators, he gradually fell into a disadvantage.

Shocking ThunderSpirit numerous thunder spears and continuously threw them towards the dark cloud layer. Wherever the thunder spears reached, large gaps appeared in the black cloud layer.

However, black qi immediately rose from behind, quickly filling these gaps. More black qi transformed into dark tentacles, twisting and reaching towards Shocking ThunderSpirit General.

Although Shocking ThunderSpirit General had fought against real monsters before and didn't pay much attention to a group of demonic cultivators, he unexpectedly found himself at a disadvantage when he actually engaged in battle. It wasn't because Shocking ThunderSpirit General was weak, but rather because demonic cultivators were too cunning and had not fully exerted their strength before. When chasing and killing the ghost cultivator, they had reserved a large portion of their power. Now, facing a formidable enemy like Shocking ThunderSpirit General, the demonic cultivators naturally displayed their full abilities without any reservations.

The dark clouds rolled in the sky, and the demonic energy surged, creating countless phenomena. Although the power of thunder had the ability to exterminate demons and destroy evil, it was insufficient in the face of the powerful demonic energy; it was like a drop in the bucket. Despite the cunning tactics of the demonic cultivators, Shocking ThunderSpirit General, with his rich combat experience, could firmly hold his ground. At most, the situation would be a bit unfavorable.

After An Xiaoran and the others finished dealing with the battle against the ghost cultivator, they were preparing to go and reinforce Shocking ThunderSpirit General, but they were promptly stopped by Shocking ThunderSpirit General. When dealing with demonic cultivators, more people doesn't necessarily mean better. Demonic cultivators have mysterious and ever-changing methods and are skilled at exploiting the weaknesses of human nature. A group of unprepared cultivators besieging demonic cultivators would only play into their hands.

Shocking ThunderSpirit General had abundant experience in dealing with monsters, so it seemed reasonable to apply that experience to demonic cultivators. The opposing demonic cultivators displayed the strength of false Core Formation cultivators, enough to suppress Shocking ThunderSpirit General. However, Shocking ThunderSpirit General continued to firmly hold his ground and transmitted instructions to An Xiaoran and the others, guiding them on what to do.

After a moment, An Xiaoran and the others followed Shocking ThunderSpirit General's instructions and set up a small-scale formation. Within the Taiyi Sect, there is a profound inheritance of formations, and most disciples have been taught some simple formations to facilitate joint combat when facing enemies. Foundation Building cultivators have longer lifespans, allowing them ample time to familiarize themselves with and practice formations.

The formation that An Xiaoran and the others set up now is the Sun, Moon, Stars, and Constellations formation, which is commonly used by disciples of the Taiyi Sect in group battles. The Sun, Moon, Stars, and Constellations formation is easy to learn but difficult to master. It has simple requirements for deployment and can be set up and used as needed, whether with just a few people or dozens or even hundreds of people. Almost all Taiyi Sect disciples have practiced this formation to some extent, although their proficiency may vary.

An Xiaoran and the others, all Foundation Building cultivators, quickly set up the formation and prepared for defense. When facing demonic cultivators, rushing in recklessly is not advisable. The first priority is to protect oneself and prevent the demonic cultivators from taking advantage, especially those skilled in manipulating people's hearts. They are adept at finding gaps and infiltrating enemy formations from within.

After setting up the formation, with the support of their fellow disciples within the formation, An Xiaoran activated the "Fusang Sutra." A giant tree appeared in front of him, and crows made of flames flew up from the tree, continuously diving into the black cloud layer ahead. The sound of the demonic energy being burned by the flames resounded in the air, and Shocking Thunder Spirit General felt a significant reduction in pressure.

At that moment, a sharp sword aura descended from the sky and accurately struck a spot not far from Shocking Thunder Spirit General. In the previously empty air, a black figure suddenly appeared. Blood continuously spurted from the area where the figure was struck by the sword aura.

Extreme Sword Spirit General descended from the sky, and several sharp sword auras continued to strike the black figure, which kept dodging and parrying. The black cloud layer in the sky seemed to be enraged and suddenly expanded. Countless black qi formed thick tentacles, surging towards Extreme Sword Spirit General.

Extreme Sword Spirit General remained calm, with no ripples on his face. He simply joined his index and middle fingers together and continuously made quick gestures. Each gesture released a sharp sword aura that directly shredded the seemingly terrifying giant tentacles.

Taking advantage of the opportunity, the black figure plunged into the black cloud, evading Extreme Sword Spirit General's pursuit. After the appearance of the Extreme Sword Spirit General, not only did he demonstrate a combat power surpassing that of the Shocking Thunder Spirit General, but he also joined forces with everyone present to scatter the black clouds in all directions.

Finally, the black smoke wrapped around the Demonic Cultivation and escaped. The indignant Shocking Thunder Spirit General wanted to pursue, but was stopped by the Extreme Sword Spirit General.

Among the four Guardian Spirit Generals, whether it is the steady Deep Earth Spirit General, the hot-tempered Shocking Thunder Spirit General, or the unruly Delicate Water Spirit General, they generally obey the orders of the senior Extreme Sword Spirit General.

"It has been hundreds of years, and you are still so impulsive."

"Just now, during the battle, you didn't notice the hidden enemies. Now that the enemy's strength remains and we don't know if there are reinforcements, it would be unwise to rashly pursue. Isn't that asking for trouble?"

In front of the younger generation, the Extreme Sword Spirit General saved face for the Shocking Thunder Spirit General by only reprimanding him briefly without a major scolding.

Everyone was delighted by the timely appearance of the Extreme Sword Spirit General. However, An Xiaoran felt that things in the world wouldn't be so coincidental, so he asked a few more questions.

It turned out that before An Xiaoran set off, the Extreme Sword Spirit General, along with Wen Qiansun and Yang Xueyi, infiltrated a sand monster nest and obtained many spiritual source beads. They had just returned from the Deadly Sea of Sand.

Meng Zhang was a little worried about An Xiaoran, so he personally requested the Extreme Sword Spirit General to take care of him.

The Extreme Sword Spirit General has always respected Meng Zhang, the Sect Master, and agreed without hesitation.

He had been secretly following behind An Xiaoran and the others all along, without revealing his whereabouts. If it weren't for the battle with the Demonic Cultivation, he probably wouldn't have shown himself voluntarily.

Meng Zhang's concern and thoughtfulness touched An Xiaoran, making him feel both moved and a little embarrassed.

After a brief conversation, the Extreme Sword Spirit General told everyone that it was not suitable to stay in this place for long.

The people who had just encountered the Demonic Cultivation also had no intention of lingering here, so they immediately left and headed towards the direction of the Demon Wind Gobi.

While resting on the way, with the help of the two Guardian Spirit Generals, An Xiaoran carefully interrogated the ghost cultivator who surrendered voluntarily.

At first, this ghost cultivator wanted to play tricks and was full of unreliable lies.

However, when An Xiaoran's condensed true fire began to burn the remaining skull of the ghost cultivator, he finally became honest.

With the experienced two Guardian Spirit Generals by his side, he had no chance to deceive. Any unclear statement would be met with a thunderous strike.

From the mouth of this ghost cultivator, everyone learned about a series of recent changes in the Deadly Sea of Sand.

This ghost cultivator was called Dao Gu, and among the many ghost cultivators in the Deadly Sea of Sand, he was quite famous.

It was unclear when the Black Wind Grave in the Deadly Sea of Sand became a gathering place for ghost cultivators.

There were both foreign ghost cultivators and local cultivators who developed into fellow daoists.

Although there were many drawbacks to practicing the Ghost Path, for many cultivators who had no other options, it was a viable choice.

The Black Wind Grave gathered many ghost cultivators and was the second largest gathering place for cultivators in the Deadly Sea of Sand, second only to the Small Demon Cave.

The ghost cultivators here were led by four cultivators at the False Dan Cultivation Base level, and Dao Gu was a small leader among them.

Some time ago, Ye Feifan, a cultivator closely associated with these ghost cultivators, pretended to want to convert to a ghost cultivator.

Many cultivators who couldn't survive in the outside world fled into the Deadly Sea of Sand.

At first, they could barely hold on, but in the end, they either converted to ghost cultivators or fell into demonic cultivation.

Ye Feifan had a close relationship with the leader of the Black Wind Grave, Li Gu.

Unable to establish himself in Great Wind City, Ye Feifan fled into the Deadly Sea of Sand, where Li Gu had been trying to get him to convert to a ghost cultivator.

Ye Feifan never agreed, but later got involved in a matter related to the mysterious deaths of several ghost cultivators.

Although there was intense infighting among the ghost cultivators, they could still unite when facing external threats.

After this incident, Ye Feifan and the ghost cultivators grew apart.

Now, Ye Feifan took the initiative to approach them, but many ghost cultivators didn't trust him and some even opposed him.

Ye Feifan requested to convert to a ghost cultivator and received strong support from Li Gu.

Li Gu went against the majority and convinced everyone to accept Ye Feifan.

Just as Li Gu and the other ghost cultivators were preparing the conversion formation for Ye Feifan, the Demonic Cultivation from the Small Demon Cave launched a large-scale invasion on the Black Wind Grave.

With Ye Feifan's inside help, the Demonic Cultivation easily broke through the Black Wind Grave.

The ghost cultivators, who were already afraid of the Demonic Cultivation, quickly lost the battle after losing the element of surprise.

Dao Gu, being clever, managed to escape during the chaos.

Of course, he didn't completely escape but was chased by the Demonic Cultivation all the way. If it weren't for accidentally encountering An Xiaoran and the others, he would have fallen into the hands of the Demonic Cultivation long ago.

As a ghost cultivator, death was not the most terrifying thing. Falling into the hands of the Demonic Cultivation, being tainted by demonic energy, and falling into the demonic path would be truly irreversible.

According to Dao Gu's observations before his escape, most of the ghost cultivators captured by the Demonic Cultivation were not killed but were transformed into demonic creatures through the Demonic Dye.

This information from Dao Gu made An Xiaoran and the others realize the seriousness of the situation.

Compared to ghost cultivators, the Demonic Cultivation was the true enemy of cultivators, the target that every cultivator wanted to eliminate.

The Deadly Sea of Sand became a special place because of its unique circumstances, giving rise to places like the Small Demon Cave.

If it were outside, a gathering place for demonic cultivators would have been eradicated by major cultivation sects long ago.

Although the situation in the Deadly Sea of Sand is fraught with danger, it has remained relatively stable. The main forces inside are the wandering sand monsters and the Demonic Cultivation from the Wind Grave and the Demonic Cultivation from the Little Demon Cave.

Recently, the Demonic Cultivation from the Little Demon Cave launched a surprise attack and directly broke through the defenses of the Wind Grave, capturing the Ghost Cultivators and transforming them into demons. This undoubtedly greatly increased their strength.

Under the leadership of Meng Zhang, the Taiyi Sect is actively exploring the Deadly Sea of Sand and has also recruited many Foundation Building stage cultivators from outside.

At this moment, an anomaly occurs in the Deadly Sea of Sand. Will it affect Meng Zhang's plans? Will the Demon Wind Gobi, which is adjacent to the Deadly Sea of Sand, be affected by this anomaly?

When An Xiaoran thinks about these questions, she no longer wants to stay in the Deadly Sea of Sand. Urged by her, everyone speeds up their pace. Apart from encountering two sand monsters on the way, they are not delayed by any other incidents and leave the Deadly Sea of Sand directly.

Not far from the Deadly Sea of Sand, in the area belonging to the Demon Wind Gobi, there is a place called Tiger-Wolf Plain. It is an endless plain separated by a large mountain range and the Deadly Sea of Sand. In the center of the plain lies a Second Rank spirit vein.

After the Taiyi Sect increased its investment in the Deadly Sea of Sand, they constructed a market in this place and named it Tiger-Wolf Market. This market serves as the forward base for the Taiyi Sect's exploration of the Deadly Sea of Sand. It is where teams set off to explore the Deadly Sea of Sand and where returning teams rest and resupply.

The Foundation Building stage teams passing through this area have brought a considerable amount of traffic and business to this market. The customers here are mainly Foundation Building stage cultivators, and although their numbers are not large, their purchasing power and consumption capacity are strong.

In just a few years, this place has unexpectedly developed into a bustling area. To effectively manage this place and deter the Foundation Building stage cultivators passing through, Taiyi Sect has not only set up a Second Rank protective formation in Tiger-Wolf Market but also stationed several Foundation Building stage cultivators here year-round.

Originally, An Xiaoran planned to rush back to the current mountain gate of Taiyi Sect, Grand Lion Ridge. However, after traveling all the way, everyone is a bit exhausted. Moreover, after leaving the Deadly Sea of Sand, everyone feels relieved, including the Qian Family brothers, who want to take a temporary rest.

Seeing that neither the Shocking Thunder Spirit General nor the Extreme Sword Spirit General object, and considering that there has never been a precedent of threats like sand monsters leaving the Deadly Sea of Sand, An Xiaoran, as the team leader, agrees to go to Tiger-Wolf Market with the flow. She leads everyone there.

An Xiaoran and her team are all disciples of the Taiyi Sect and hold important positions within the sect. The Taiyi Sect cultivators stationed at Tiger-Wolf Market immediately recognize them and warmly receive them. Even the Foundation Building stage cultivators responsible for maintaining the protective formation come out to greet them.

Tiger-Wolf Market is not large in size, but it is well-equipped with all the necessary buildings and facilities. There are two very good inns in the market specifically for accommodating cultivators.

An Xiaoran and her team choose to stay at an inn operated by the Taiyi Sect and are about to go there when a female disciple wearing the standard robe of the Qiaoshou Sect approaches them. This female disciple has only reached the Refining Qi stage of cultivation, but she behaves confidently and gracefully in front of a group of Foundation Building stage cultivators.

She first bows to everyone and then says that an elder from her sect would like to meet them. An Xiaoran and her team are extraordinary in terms of both their status and cultivation base. Especially the Shocking Thunder Spirit General and the Extreme Sword Spirit General, even the Qiaoshou Sect Master Jin Qigu would show respect to them as juniors. The fact that someone from the Qiaoshou Sect wants them to come over instead of visiting them personally is surprising.

The Qiaoshou Sect is officially a member of the Hanhai Alliance and a loyal ally of the Taiyi Sect. However, in the eyes of some Taiyi Sect cultivators, the Qiaoshou Sect is considered a vassal. It is truly audacious for a mere vassal cultivator to act so arrogantly without knowing their place.

An Xiaoran is not as shallow as those cultivators and knows how highly Meng Zhang regards the Qiaoshou Sect. Ignoring the displeased expressions of her teammates, she leads the entire team to follow the Qiaoshou Sect female disciple.

The female disciple leads them to a shop opened by the Qiaoshou Sect. Behind the shop, there is a small door that leads to a delicate and compact courtyard. Just as everyone enters the courtyard, a burst of light flashes, and the entire courtyard is enveloped by a formation.

Everyone's expression changes, and those with a hot temper are about to take action.

"Don't be nervous, I mean no harm. I set up this formation just to isolate the inside from the outside, just in case." With the sound of her voice, Jin Qiao'er walked over holding an ancient mirror. Most of the Taiyi Sect cultivators present knew Jin Qiao'er and were aware of her close relationship with Sect Master Meng Zhang. In the gossip among some Taiyi Sect disciples, there were even rumors of an intimate relationship between Meng Zhang and Jin Qiao'er.

Seeing Jin Qiao'er's arrival, although everyone did not completely let their guard down, they no longer appeared as tense as before. Jin Qiao'er didn't waste any time and went straight to the point. It turned out that she often ventured into the Deadly Sea of Sand for training. Within the Deadly Sea of Sand, there was a small demon cave where demonic cultivators would occasionally appear.

Before coming to the Deadly Sea of Sand, Jin LiDaoist Master had dealt with demonic cultivators and had always been very cautious of them. Worried that her disciples might be targeted by demonic cultivators, she gave Jin Qiao'er the mirror. As long as any demons appeared within a certain range, the mirror would automatically sound an alarm. Most demons in the demonic path, including the invisible Yin demons, would find it difficult to escape the mirror's surveillance.

Jin Qiao'er, who frequently entered and exited the Deadly Sea of Sand, was also a regular customer at the Tiger-Wolf Market. She was originally resting in this property of the Qiaoshou Sect when the mirror suddenly sounded an alarm, indicating the presence of a demon. Jin Qiao'er was initially startled but carefully observed her surroundings and found nothing unusual. Then, following the guidance of the mirror, she discovered An Xiaoran and his group.

Jin Qiao'er, of course, recognized Meng Zhang's second disciple and knew that they couldn't possibly have any connection to demons. The most likely possibility was that a demon had infiltrated the team, or someone had accidentally been possessed by a demon. To avoid alerting the demon prematurely, she sent a disciple from the Qiaoshou Sect to lead An Xiaoran and his group here.

A formation had already been set up here, isolating the inside from the outside and sealing the space, effectively preventing the demons from escaping. Demons are a scourge and must be completely eliminated. They must not be given a chance to escape, or the consequences would be unimaginable.

After Jin Qiao'er finished speaking, she raised the mirror in her hand and gently shone it on the cultivators in An Xiaoran's team, hoping to quickly force the demon out. Upon hearing Jin Qiao'er's words, everyone had a bewildered expression. Even An Xiaoran himself seemed somewhat skeptical, not understanding how a demon could have infiltrated their team.

However, both Extreme Sword Spirit General and Shocking Thunder Spirit General, upon hearing Jin Qiao'er's account, had their expressions drastically change. Extreme Sword Spirit General's eyes shot out two sharp gazes like swords, scanning the surroundings. Including An Xiaoran, everyone in the team instinctively avoided the gaze of Extreme Sword Spirit General.

"Give me the bone blade," Extreme Sword Spirit General said to An Xiaoran. Extreme Sword Spirit General's tone was serious, and his expression was not pleasant. An Xiaoran didn't know what had happened but still handed over the net bag containing the bone blade to Extreme Sword Spirit General. This fiery red net bag was also a magic tool specifically used to imprison captives.

Extreme Sword Spirit General untied the net bag, revealing the snow-white skull of the bone blade. "It's like being pecked in the eye by a goose while hunting geese all day long. I was just lecturing that Shocking Thunder guy for being too careless. I didn't expect that I, too, would be caught off guard and almost deceived by this thing," Extreme Sword Spirit General said coldly.

After finishing this sentence, Extreme Sword Spirit General began to act on the bone blade. When Extreme Sword Spirit General took out the bone blade, Jin Qiao'er's mirror underwent a change. "So the demon was hidden inside this skull and didn't infiltrate your team," Jin Qiao'er said as she looked at the mirror in her hand.

Shocking Thunder Spirit General's expression was quite awkward as he explained, "When we were in the Deadly Sea of Sand, because time was too rushed, we didn't have time to interrogate the bone blade in detail. We planned to come back and obtain more information from the bone blade and learn more details. To avoid harming this guy's soul, we didn't rashly inspect his soul."

"It's truly unexpected that an invisible Yin demon was lurking in the soul of the bone blade," Shocking Thunder Spirit General, who always prided himself on being an expert in combating demons, made consecutive mistakes this time and felt that he couldn't save face.

"We've been sleeping for too long, and our minds have become numb, which is why we made such a low-level mistake," self-mockingly said Extreme Sword Spirit General. With his abilities, as long as he was reminded, he would quickly discover the problem.

Extreme Sword Spirit General released sharp sword energy, which seemed to be embroidering as he carefully manipulated the sword energy into the skull. The entire body of Dao Gu has been lost in

the previous battle, leaving only a hidden Soul within a skull. Fortunately, he is a ghost cultivator, which allows him to continue surviving in this state.

Dao Gu does not know when he was possessed by the demon creature. He witnessed in horror as the sword energy emitted by the Extreme Sword Spirit General pierced into his skull and penetrated into the hidden Soul.

The pain of the sword energy cutting through his Soul was excruciating, akin to being tortured. The unprecedented agony caused him to let out a scream of despair, begging for mercy.

The Extreme Sword Spirit General paid no attention and continued with his actions.

After a while, Dao Gu's screams grew weaker, sounding as if he had lost all his strength.

A black smoke flew out from within the skull, about to escape, but a powerful sword energy swept across, shattering the smoke into pieces, leaving no trace behind.

"Alright, the demon creature has been dealt with."

After confirming multiple times that there were no traces of the demon creature remaining, the Extreme Sword Spirit General spoke in a deep voice.

After going through all this, Dao Gu lost consciousness and fell into a coma.

Jin Qiao'er repeatedly checked with the mirror in her hand to ensure that the demon creature had been completely dealt with before releasing the Formation outside.

An Xiaoran then put Dao Gu back into the net bag and sincerely thanked Jin Qiao'er.

If the demon creature continued to hide within Dao Gu's Soul and found an opportunity to erupt, it would have caused a lot of trouble.

Jin Qiao'er exchanged a few polite words and then started talking with An Xiaoran. She was clearly interested in the Extreme Sword Spirit General and the Shocking Thunder Spirit General.

She had heard before that the Guardian Spirit Generals of the Taiyi Sect were very powerful, and now that she had seen them, she realized that their reputation was well-deserved.

The Extreme Sword Spirit General and the others were probably grateful to Jin Qiao'er for her reminder, so they treated her with some courtesy.

After conversing for a while, they bid farewell and left.

After leaving the courtyard, An Xiaoran and his teammates were no longer in the mood to stay longer at the Tiger-Wolf Market due to the incident.

They informed the disciples of the Taiyi Sect stationed there and abandoned their plan to rest, immediately setting off to return to the Grand Lion Ridge.

They traveled without encountering any obstacles along the way and safely returned to the Grand Lion Ridge. freewebnovel.com

As long as they were within the Demon Wind Gobi, Meng Zhang mostly stayed at the Grand Lion Ridge.

An Xiaoran led the team directly to meet Meng Zhang.

As long as there were no major matters delaying him, Meng Zhang would always meet his three disciples in a timely manner.

An Xiaoran and the others came before Meng Zhang and wasted no time in explaining the whole incident.

After listening to An Xiaoran's account, Meng Zhang indeed became interested.

He first checked everyone in the team again to ensure that no one had been tainted by the demon creature and that there were no hidden demons. Then, he began contemplating what An Xiaoran had told him.

The demonic cultivation of the Deadly Sea of Sand devouring ghost cultivators was indeed a major event.

Especially the name Ye Feifan, which brought back memories for Meng Zhang.

Back then, this guy had schemed against Meng Zhang but ended up falling into a trap set by Meng Zhang.

Later, Meng Zhang was in a hurry to leave the Deadly Sea of Sand and didn't have time to pay attention to Ye Feifan's fate.

After forming the core, it was even more impossible for Meng Zhang to enter the Deadly Sea of Sand.

This guy, Ye Feifan, was truly lucky. Not only did he escape from the trap, but he also joined the camp of demonic cultivation.

Meng Zhang actually took this ruthless old opponent somewhat seriously. If he fell into the demonic path, he might become another formidable old demon.

Meng Zhang had a premonition that he and Ye Feifan would meet again and become opponents once more.

As a diviner, Meng Zhang always had great faith in his premonitions.

He felt that he should pay close attention to the movements of the demonic cultivators within the Deadly Sea of Sand.

As a Gold Core Daoist Master, he couldn't conveniently enter the Deadly Sea of Sand. Even the Foundation Building cultivators who entered the Deadly Sea of Sand would not have time to avoid the demonic cultivation, let alone actively provoke them.

Meng Zhang was also unwilling to let the disciples of the Taiyi Sect take such risks.

Entering the Deadly Sea of Sand for training was one thing, but actively investigating the demonic cultivation was another matter entirely.

The difficulty of the two was incomparable.

After thinking for a while, Meng Zhang believed that this matter should be entrusted to Daoist Master Jin Li.

Jin Li frequently entered and exited the Deadly Sea of Sand and was very familiar with the situation there. Monitoring the various changes in the Deadly Sea of Sand was originally her responsibility.

The demonic cultivation of the Little Demon Cave making a large-scale move and devouring the ghost cultivators of the Wind Grave should catch her attention.

Chapter 535: Waiting

Meng Zhang dismissed the team led by An Xiaoran and asked everyone else to leave. He only kept An Xiaoran and two Guardian Spirit Generals. The two Guardian Spirit Generals had been to the Deadly Sea of Sand multiple times in recent years and were familiar with the situation there. An Xiaoran was Meng Zhang's personal disciple and qualified to know the sect's secrets. Meng Zhang asked the two Guardian Spirit Generals if the current Hanhai Alliance could completely sweep through the Deadly Sea of Sand if they mobilized all their forces.

The response from the two Guardian Spirit Generals did not surprise Meng Zhang. Even without considering the influence of Demonic Cultivation, the countless sand monsters roaming within the Deadly Sea of Sand were far more powerful than the entire Hanhai Alliance. Meng Zhang had been to the Deadly Sea of Sand before and had some understanding of the situation inside. Now, upon hearing the response from the two Guardian Spirit Generals, he abandoned the idea of taking the initiative to solve the problem.

The Deadly Sea of Sand is adjacent to the Demon Wind Gobi and the Endless Sea of Sand. There are several areas in Taiyi Sect's territory that border the Deadly Sea of Sand. If any unexpected situations were to occur in the Deadly Sea of Sand, Taiyi Sect would be the first to bear the pressure, even before the Flying Swan Sect and the Northern Desert Qi Family. With a mindset of being prepared for the worst, Meng Zhang immediately informed Daoist Master Jin Li to investigate the situation inside as soon as possible. At the same time, he increased the deployment of more cultivator teams to go to the Deadly Sea of Sand and act as Taiyi Sect's eyes and ears.

After discussing the main matters, Meng Zhang assumed the role of a master and reprimanded An Xiaoran before ending the conversation. Afterwards, Meng Zhang sent someone to inform Jin Qiao'er of the changes in the Deadly Sea of Sand and asked her to relay the information to Jin Li Daoist Master. Although Jin Li Daoist Master spent most of his time near the Deadly Sea of Sand, his whereabouts were unpredictable, and he occasionally went on long trips. Jin Qiao'er knew how to contact Jin Li Daoist Master, but when she would respond and return was not something she could decide.

Meng Zhang had no other choice but to wait patiently for Jin Li Daoist Master's response. After waiting for a considerable amount of time without receiving any news from Jin Li Daoist Master, he was greeted by WaterSpirit General instead. In the past few years, WaterSpirit General had voluntarily ventured deep into the Demon Wind Gobi for exploration. She had been gone for several years and had finally returned safely to Taiyi Sect.

Upon returning to Taiyi Sect, WaterSpirit General immediately came to pay respects to Sect Master Meng Zhang. WaterSpirit General had always been unruly and didn't pay much attention to even the Sect Master, Meng Zhang. However, she knew how to distinguish between important and urgent matters and wouldn't be confused in critical situations. After meeting Meng Zhang, WaterSpirit General didn't exchange any pleasantries and went straight to the point, recounting her experiences in the depths of the Demon Wind Gobi.

Taiyi Sect's current territory is located to the east of the Demon Wind Gobi, while there are still many demonic beasts occupying the west. This time, WaterSpirit General traveled westward, leaving the controlled area of Taiyi Sect and entering the region occupied by demonic beasts. WaterSpirit General had profound cultivation and rich experience, so she was not unfamiliar with tasks such as infiltrating and gathering information. She didn't elaborate much on how she managed to penetrate the area controlled by demonic beasts or the battles she fought against them. The main content of her account was about the strength of the demonic beasts and the overall situation there.

In the area of the Demon Wind Gobi where Taiyi Sect has yet to set foot, there are still a large number of demonic beasts, including Third Rank ones. Although there are occasional internal conflicts among these demonic beasts, they are relatively united as a whole. When the joint forces of the three major powers invaded the Demon Wind Gobi, they occupied a large area. Later, Taiyi Sect took advantage of the situation and even claimed the areas around the Crow's Nest. The demonic beasts are not unaware of this situation, nor are they uninterested in expelling humans. However, they are troubled and preoccupied with their own issues, making it difficult for them to pay attention to humans.

At the western end of the Demon Wind Gobi lies an endless sea. This sea area is part of the Western Sea. Within the sea, there is a powerful clan known as the Sea Clan. For many years, the Sea Clan has been continuously attacking the western coast of the Demon Wind Gobi, attempting to invade and occupy the mainland.

The demonic beasts living in the western part of the Demon Wind Gobi naturally refuse to give up their homeland without a fight. The demonic beasts united and fought against the Sea Clan multiple times, doing their best to resist their invasion. The Sea Clan's goal in invading the mainland is to occupy the Demon Wind Gobi and plunder its resources.

The demonic beasts in the Demon Wind Gobi are also valuable resources. When the Sea Clan leaves the sea and enters the land, their strength is greatly reduced. Even so, these demonic beasts, even when united, are unable to withstand the Sea Clan's invasion. In multiple wars, the demonic beasts have been at a clear disadvantage, retreating step by step. If the Sea Clan had invested more forces in the Demon Wind Gobi, the demonic beasts would have been unable to resist long ago.

The current situation in the western part of the Demon Wind Gobi is that, under the leadership of some Third Rank demonic beasts, a large number of demonic beasts have gathered to barely withstand the Sea Clan's attacks. However, it is unknown how long the demonic beasts can hold on and whether the Sea Clan will continue to advance after achieving a comprehensive victory.

After listening to WaterSpirit General's account, Meng Zhang felt fortunate for himself and Taiyi Sect. The demonic beasts in the depths of the Demon Wind Gobi were being restrained by the Sea Clan, allowing Taiyi Sect to easily occupy a large area of the Demon Wind Gobi without being distracted. Without the threat of these demonic beasts, Taiyi Sect could safely develop the various resources of the DemonWind Gobi. However, Taiyi Sect still had its concerns.

If the demonic beasts in the area couldn't withstand the Sea Clan's invasion and retreated towards Taiyi Sect's territory, conflicts and even large-scale battles would be inevitable. What worried people even more was that no one knew the extent of the Sea Clan's ambitions. If they were to occupy the western region of the Demon Wind Gobi and continue advancing eastward, it would pose an unprecedented threat to Taiyi Sect.

The intelligence brought back by WaterSpirit General was crucial, as it provided Sect Master Meng Zhang with a clearer understanding of the situation in the Demon Wind Gobi and what Taiyi Sect would face.

Meng Zhang realized how lucky he and Taiyi Sect were. The demonic beasts in the depths of the Demon Wind Gobi were being held back by the Sea Clan, allowing Taiyi Sect to easily occupy a large area without being distracted. The absence of these demonic beasts' threat enabled Taiyi Sect to develop the resources of the Demon Wind Gobi in peace.

However, Taiyi Sect was not without worries. If the demonic beasts couldn't hold off the Sea Clan's invasion and were forced to retreat, there was a risk of conflict and even all-out war with Taiyi Sect. Furthermore, the extent of the Sea Clan's appetite remained unknown. If they were to occupy the western region of the Demon Wind Gobi and continue their eastward expansion, it would present an unprecedented challenge to Taiyi Sect.

The information brought by WaterSpirit General was of great importance, providing Sect Master Meng Zhang with a deeper understanding of the situation in the Demon Wind Gobi and the challenges that lay ahead for Taiyi Sect. Long ago, after the Taiyi Sect occupied the eastern region of the Demon Wind Gobi, Meng Zhang and some elders in the sect had the idea of advancing westward. They wanted to wait for the right moment to occupy the entire Demon Wind Gobi as the foundation of the Taiyi Sect.

Now it seems that their idea at that time was too naive. Besides the vast number of demonic beasts, there is also the powerful Sea Clan in the west of the Demon Wind Gobi, which is beyond the reach of the Taiyi Sect. The path of the Taiyi Sect's westward expansion has been effectively blocked.

To the south of the Taiyi Sect is the Jiuqu League, where there is no room for the Taiyi Sect to expand. To the north is the Deadly Sea of Sand, which contains many resources but is not suitable for human habitation. To the south is the territory occupied by the Flying Swan Sect and the Northern Desert Qi Family within the Endless Sea of Sand.

Although the Taiyi Sect has not fully developed its existing territory, as the Sect Master, Meng Zhang has to consider the long term. "He who does not plan for the distant future is not worthy of a moment's plan. He who does not plan for the whole situation is not worthy of a corner's plan." If they do not consider the long term now, how can they expand and develop rapidly in the future?

If it weren't for the factors of the Primordial Spirit True Monarch, the Flying Swan Sect and the Northern Desert Qi Family should be the next targets for the Taiyi Sect's conquest. As for the situation in the west of the Demon Wind Gobi, they cannot be careless and must pay attention at all times.

According to the information provided by WaterSpirit General, there are at least five Third Rank demonic beasts deep in the Demon Wind Gobi, each leading a large army of demonic beasts. However, they are still at a disadvantage against the invasion of the Sea Clan. Fortunately, WaterSpirit General has a clear judgment of the situation. The demonic beasts can hold on for a while, and if nothing unexpected happens, they can maintain a stalemate with the Sea Clan for a long time.

During this period of time, the Taiyi Sect will definitely have greater development and accumulate stronger power. In fact, the two young elders of the Taiyi Sect, Wen Qiansun and Yang Xueyi, have

honed their cultivation bases during their time in the Deadly Sea of Sand and are not far from reaching the Gold Core stage.

What the Taiyi Sect needs most now is enough time for development. If it were not for the necessity, Meng Zhang would not want to engage in external warfare. His greatest expectation is to stay low-key, focus on farming, and not seek unnecessary conflicts.

After WaterSpirit General finished reporting, Meng Zhang asked her to stay in the Taiyi Sect for the time being and not to wander around. If the changes in the Deadly Sea of Sand affect the Demon Wind Gobi, the Taiyi Sect will still need her strength as a Gold Core cultivator.

As for the situation in the west of the Demon Wind Gobi, the Taiyi Sect currently lacks the ability to intervene and is unwilling to get involved easily. Meng Zhang only instructed the disciples in the sect to strengthen their surveillance of the west of the Demon Wind Gobi and be vigilant for any major events.

After discussing matters with WaterSpirit General, Meng Zhang bid her farewell. She had been away from the sect for several years and had a lot of things to take care of. Before leaving, she handed a pearl the size of a human head to Meng Zhang.

This time, WaterSpirit General went to the west of the Demon Wind Gobi, all the way to the western coast and even deep into the sea. While roaming near the coast, she accidentally encountered a severely injured thousand-year-old clam.

As a cultivator specializing in water attribute techniques, WaterSpirit General is almost in her element in the sea, fully able to unleash the power of her water-system Divine Ability. Even when encountering powerful aquatic beasts, she is not at a disadvantage.

After a fierce battle, WaterSpirit General successfully killed the thousand-year-old clam and obtained its corpse. Clam demons usually give birth to clam pearls, which are the most precious items on their bodies. This thousand-year-old clam was no exception, and it indeed contained a thousand-year-old clam pearl.

WaterSpirit General has some knowledge of Meng Zhang's cultivation technique, the "Sun-Moon Wheel Turning Sutra," especially the Sun and Moon Divine Light, a derived Divine Ability. After successfully cultivating the Sun and Moon Divine Light, one can refine a spirit pearl into a Sun Moon Divine Pearl.

The Sun Moon Divine Pearl not only enhances the power of the Sun and Moon Divine Light but also has other uses. Meng Zhang had considered refining a Sun Moon Divine Pearl after cultivating the Sun and Moon Divine Light, but it would require at least a Third Rank spirit pearl.

Spiritual treasures of Third Rank and above are often priceless. With the current channels of the Taiyi Sect, it would be difficult to collect them in a short time. Unexpectedly, WaterSpirit General had been keeping this matter in mind. After obtaining the spirit pearl, she voluntarily handed it over to Meng Zhang.

Feeling in a good mood, Meng Zhang, for the first time, found WaterSpirit General quite adorable. Her somewhat unruly nature didn't seem so annoying anymore. WaterSpirit General seemed indifferent about handing over the spirit pearl to Meng Zhang and left in a hurry. Meng Zhang knew her temperament and didn't waste words on unnecessary thanks. If he were to express gratitude, it would only create distance between them.

In the days waiting for Jin Li Daoist Master's return, Meng Zhang began to refine the spirit pearl according to the methods recorded in the "Sun-Moon Wheel Turning Sutra." This superior cultivation technique not only recorded the main cultivation method but also derived Divine Abilities and special magic tools that complemented the main cultivation method or Divine Abilities.

These special magic tools are not difficult to refine, but they have strict requirements for the cultivation technique. Even cultivators who are not good at crafting can succeed as long as they have suitable materials and slowly refine them using the main cultivation technique.

Meng Zhang tirelessly displayed the Divine Ability Sun and Moon Divine Light day and night, refining the Third Rank spirit pearl. He cleansed the demonic energy attached to the pearl, allowing it to slowly absorb the aura of the sun and moon. Shortly after Meng Zhang began refining the Sun Moon Divine Pearl, Jin Li Daoist Master received news from Jin Qiao'er and returned from his trip, arriving at the Grand Lion Ridge.

Originally, Jin Li Daoist Master received a message from Jin Qiao'er, saying that Meng Zhang wanted to discuss something with her, and she felt a bit embarrassed about it. Previously, Meng Zhang asked Jin Li Daoist Master to take care of the cultivator team sent by Taiyi Sect to the Deadly Sea of Sand. Jin Li Daoist Master agreed immediately, only asking Meng Zhang to take care of Qiaoshou Sect in return. Meng Zhang fulfilled his promise and provided many benefits to Qiaoshou Sect. However, Jin Li Daoist Master had been busy with her own matters during this time and hadn't stayed in the Deadly Sea of Sand. Instead, she went to the Jiuqu League.

Since Jin Li Daoist Master wasn't in the Deadly Sea of Sand, she naturally couldn't take care of the Taiyi Sect cultivators. Moreover, she had heard rumors that the cultivators from Taiyi Sect who entered the Deadly Sea of Sand seemed to have suffered heavy casualties. Jin Li Daoist Master thought that Meng Zhang wanted to hold her accountable, and feeling guilty, she didn't know how to face Meng Zhang. However, shortly after, Jin Qiao'er provided more detailed information.

Upon hearing about the changes in the Deadly Sea of Sand, the Demonic Cultivation in the small demon cave breaking through the Black Wind Grave and capturing all the ghost cultivators, Jin Li Daoist Master realized that something was amiss. She quickly finished her business in the Jiuqu League and hurried back to the Demon Wind Gobi. First, she met with Jin Qiao'er and had her recount the events in front of her, and then she brought Jin Qiao'er to meet Meng Zhang. After meeting Meng Zhang, he once again explained the whole story to her.

After listening to Meng Zhang's account, Jin Li Daoist Master remained silent for a long time. After a moment of silence, she finally spoke to Meng Zhang. It turned out that the Fifth Rank great power deep in the Deadly Sea of Sand rarely interfered with the events there. Shortly after his arrival in the Deadly Sea of Sand, many Demonic Cultivations came here, followed by ghost cultivators. It's unclear what agreement the ghost cultivators and Demonic Cultivation reached with the Fifth Rank great power. The base established by the ghost cultivators, Black Wind Grave, and the stronghold established by the Demonic Cultivation, the small demon cave, have never been subjected to a full-scale attack by the sand monster army.

The ghost cultivators and Demonic Cultivation coexist in the Deadly Sea of Sand, and although conflicts occasionally occur with the sand monsters, they have never erupted into a major battle. Jin Li Daoist Master couldn't understand how a group of Foundation Building stage cultivators like the

ghost cultivators and Demonic Cultivation managed to catch the attention of the Fifth Rank great power.

Over the centuries, more and more cultivators have come to the Deadly Sea of Sand, either because they had no other choice or in search of treasures like the spiritual essence. Apart from many cultivators dying at the hands of the sand monsters, some of them either turned into ghost cultivators or Demonic Cultivation. Jin Li Daoist Master dealt with the ghost cultivators who were at most at the False Core stage with ease. If she wanted to, she could have dealt with them long ago. However, when it came to Demonic Cultivation, Jin Li Daoist Master became extremely cautious. As a strong cultivator at the Gold Core stage, she didn't even pay attention to ordinary cultivators at the early Gold Core stage. But a group of Foundation Building stage Demonic Cultivation in the small demon cave made her wary and unwilling to approach them easily.

According to Jin Li Daoist Master's judgment, the Fifth Rank great power came from outside this world, and the earliest Demonic Cultivation in this world also came from outside. Who knows if there is any connection between the two? Jin Li Daoist Master wasn't a diviner and didn't have the ability to have sudden insights. However, as a cultivator with her level of cultivation base, she had some spiritual awareness. Jin Li Daoist Master could vaguely sense the danger in the small demon cave. A group of Foundation Building stage Demonic Cultivation didn't bother to hide their malicious intent in front of her.

Jin Li Daoist Master's entry and exit from the Deadly Sea of Sand were not of her own volition but for True Monarch Tian Zhu. She had personally experienced the troubles and treachery of Demonic Cultivation in the past. As long as they didn't actively provoke her, she didn't want to easily become enemies with Demonic Cultivation. Now, after hearing the situation from Meng Zhang, she couldn't continue to ignore it.

The Deadly Sea of Sand was full of dangers, but the situation had always been stable. Both the small demon cave and Black Wind Grave were long-established forces that had existed for centuries. The sudden attack by the Demonic Cultivation in the small demon cave on the ghost cultivators in Black Wind Grave must have some secret that she didn't know about.

She repeatedly questioned Meng Zhang, but his knowledge was also limited. The captured ghost cultivator, after being interrogated by the Guardian Spirit General and even personally questioned by Meng Zhang, provided valuable information, but the information about Demonic Cultivation was limited. Black Wind Grave and the small demon cave coexisted in the Deadly Sea of Sand for many years without any conflicts.

The ghost cultivators have always feared Demonic Cultivation and never dared to provoke them. Even if they occasionally encountered each other outside, they would immediately keep their distance. Why did Demonic Cultivation suddenly attack the ghost cultivators, break through Black Wind Grave, and capture a large number of ghost cultivators?

Jin Li Daoist Master was still very confused. Unable to obtain more useful information from Meng Zhang, she needed to personally go to the small demon cave to investigate further. However, Jin Li Daoist Master was very resistant to this idea and was unwilling to deal with Demonic Cultivation.

Meng Zhang urgently hoped that Jin Li Daoist Master would clarify the situation, but Jin Li Daoist Master tried to avoid it. In the end, she told Meng Zhang to wait a while longer. She would report to True Monarch Tian Zhu and see how he would handle the situation.

Chapter 536: Xueyi Forms the Core

The ghost cultivator, and the demonic cultivator in the Deadly Sea of Sand were not given enough attention by True Monarch Tian Zhu in the past. Moreover, in the agreement reached during his gambling match with the Fifth Rank great power, it was stated that he would not actively interfere in the affairs of the Deadly Sea of Sand. Of course, True Monarch Tian Zhu is not completely indifferent to everything happening in the Deadly Sea of Sand. Over the years, Jin Li Daoist Master has been monitoring the situation in the Deadly Sea of Sand on his behalf.

Now, with the sudden changes occurring in the Deadly Sea of Sand, if it weren't for the timely information provided by Meng Zhang, Jin Li Daoist Master would not have known when the situation would be discovered. At that time, she would definitely face consequences from True Monarch Tian Zhu for her negligence. Jin Li Daoist Master appreciated Meng Zhang's efforts. Before leaving with Jin Qiao'er, she assured Meng Zhang that she would definitely show her gratitude in the future.

After Jin Li Daoist Master left Grand Lion Ridge, she first sent Jin Qiao'er back to Qiaoshou Sect and then went directly to the Deadly Sea of Sand. However, there has been no news from her since her departure, and even Jin Qiao'er has been unable to contact her. Helpless, Meng Zhang had no choice but to temporarily set aside this matter and focus on cultivation.

Even Jin Li Daoist Master did not want to provoke the demonic cultivators in the Little Demon Abyss, so Meng Zhang certainly would not meddle. He earnestly instructed the cultivators from Hanhai Alliance who entered the Deadly Sea of Sand not to approach Wind Grave and the Little Demon Abyss. In fact, even without Meng Zhang's reminder, these cultivator teams would avoid those two places. They went inside to seek benefits and definitely did not want to provoke the ghost cultivators and demonic cultivators.

Before Meng Zhang received the news of Wind Grave being occupied by the demonic cultivators, the cultivator teams entering the Deadly Sea of Sand rarely encountered ghost cultivators, let alone demonic cultivators. After Wind Grave was occupied, apart from the sand monsters, the cultivator teams encountered almost no other external enemies in the Deadly Sea of Sand.

In this situation, besides reminding everyone to be more cautious, Meng Zhang could only order the cultivators in the sect to strengthen their patrols and regularly patrol the border between Demon Wind Gobi and the Deadly Sea of Sand to prevent any unexpected incidents. Until Jin Li Daoist Master returned, he could only maintain the current situation.

Meng Zhang, who focused his thoughts on cultivation, spent some time completely refining the spiritual bead and forming the prototype of the Sun Moon Divine Pearl. Next, he needed to patiently nurture it with his own cultivated True Essence and gradually infuse the power of the Sun and Moon Divine Light into it.

While Meng Zhang was wholeheartedly refining the Sun Moon Divine Pearl, the disciples of Taiyi Sect were not idle either. The disciples whom Meng Zhang had high hopes for all made significant progress, and new generations of disciples were emerging one after another.

Since Taiyi Sect migrated on a large scale to Demon Wind Gobi, many mortals under their jurisdiction have established themselves in the An Family. In this place with more abundant resources and more suitable for human habitation, the number of mortals under their jurisdiction has rapidly increased. With the increase in the mortal population, the number of awakened spiritual roots has also grown.

Taiyi Sect is no longer the small sect it used to be. With its current development, the number of disciples in the sect is increasing. When recruiting new disciples, they are no longer as desperate as before but have certain standards. Those with extremely poor aptitude cannot directly join Taiyi Sect unless there are special circumstances. However, not being able to join Taiyi Sect directly does not mean that these people cannot embark on the path of cultivation.

Taiyi Sect has long established the Co-operative Society, which recruits a large number of loose cultivators and cultivators from other families and sects. They also have arrangements for recruiting new cultivation talents. Even cultivators with the lowest aptitude, after joining the Co-operative Society and embarking on the path of cultivation, have the opportunity to join Taiyi Sect if they can pass numerous tests and gain the recognition of the high-ranking members in the sect.

Taiyi Sect now has many affiliated families. When these affiliated families recruit new members, they are not picky. Additionally, there are many members in the Hanhai Alliance, and they do not have the luxury of being selective like Taiyi Sect. Especially for some weaker cultivation forces, they are satisfied as long as they can recruit new members.

With the increase in the threshold for recruiting disciples in Taiyi Sect, the quality of newly admitted disciples is getting higher. Through the sect's cultivation, truly outstanding individuals can quickly stand out. The original senior disciples, who have been in the sect for a longer time, have temporarily gone further on the path of cultivation.

Yang Xueyi, whom Meng Zhang put a lot of effort into recruiting into the sect, has completed the Foundation Building stage of her cultivation base after this period of training in the Deadly Sea of Sand. She had already stepped down from the position of Hall Master and now serves as an elder in the sect, giving her more time for cultivation. Recently, she informed Meng Zhang that she would be entering seclusion to break through to the Gold Core stage.

Yang Xueyi has made significant contributions to the sect and has achieved great military merits in external battles. She has continuously refined a large number of talismans for the sect and has also cultivated many outstanding Talisman Masters, which is a remarkable achievement.

Currently, Taiyi Sect is particularly eager for the strength of Gold Core. In order to support Yang Xueyi's advancement to the Gold Core stage, Meng Zhang has allowed her to seclude herself in the area of Grand Lion Ridge, where the spiritual energy is the most abundant. The spiritual energy from the Third Rank spirit vein in Grand Lion Ridge is sufficient for Yang Xueyi to advance to the Gold Core stage. To achieve this, Meng Zhang has voluntarily reduced his own absorption of spiritual energy.

Before Yang Xueyi entered seclusion, Meng Zhang personally passed on all his experiences of advancing to the Gold Core stage to her. In fact, after Meng Zhang formed his own core, he

recorded his insights and experiences from that time, as well as the key points he obtained from Luo Ye Daoist Master, in the Hidden Scripture Pavilion.

As Meng Zhang's cultivation base continued to improve, his understanding of the Gold Core stage deepened. Through exchanges with Luo Ye Daoist Master and Gu Yue Huaidie, he learned a lot. All this knowledge was also recorded in the Hidden Scripture Pavilion.

Even several Guardian Spirit Generals of Taiyi Sect, after gradually recovering their memories, supplemented the records in the Hidden Scripture Pavilion with their own experiences of forming the core in the past.

Before preparing to form the core, Yang Xueyi naturally spent her sect's merits to exchange for relevant content from the Hidden Scripture Pavilion. She studied it meticulously and repeatedly.

Now, despite the repetition of many contents, she still gained something from Meng Zhang's personal teachings.

In addition, some time ago, Extreme Sword Spirit General and Shocking Thunder Spirit General ventured into the Deadly Sea of Sand together. After numerous battles, they destroyed a nest of sand monsters and successfully obtained a spiritual marrow.

They did not keep it for themselves but handed over the carefully preserved spiritual marrow to Sect Master Meng Zhang.

Meng Zhang bestowed this carefully preserved spiritual marrow to Yang Xueyi for future use.

In the Cultivation World, there are many kinds of pills and spiritual objects that assist in forming the core. Each of them is not only expensive but also very rare, rarely available in the market. Even if one is willing to spend spirit stones, it is not guaranteed that they can be purchased.

In Jiuqu League and the Endless Sea of Sand, even Foundation Building Pills are considered important strategic resources, let alone pills and spiritual objects that can assist in forming the core.

Given the current situation of Taiyi Sect, it is unable to provide any other spiritual objects that can assist in forming the core.

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However, Yang Xueyi is not concerned about this. As long as there is an abundant supply of spiritual energy from the Third Rank spirit vein, she has the confidence and determination to advance to the Gold Core stage.

After making all the necessary preparations, Yang Xueyi began her seclusion to advance to the Gold Core stage.

During Yang Xueyi's seclusion, Meng Zhang and Delicate Water Spirit General stayed in Grand Lion Ridge to protect her.

Five years later, the spiritual energy above Grand Lion Ridge surged, and the sky was filled with colorful clouds. Chaotic spiritual energy quickly gathered, forming a series of tides. Many disciples of Taiyi Sect who were originally cultivating had to interrupt their practice and look towards the direction of the surging spiritual energy.

Meng Zhang and other high-ranking members who knew the situation were initially nervous, staring at that direction without blinking.

After a while, the surrounding spiritual energy returned to calm, and rays of light appeared in the sky.

Meng Zhang, as an experienced person, finally breathed a sigh of relief.

From then on, Taiyi Sect had one more Gold Core Daoist Master.

Like other cultivators, when Yang Xueyi formed her core, there were obvious signs that couldn't be concealed.

Not long after, the news of Yang Xueyi becoming a Gold Core Daoist Master spread throughout Taiyi Sect, both internally and externally, and quickly reached every corner of the Endless Sea of Sand.

Everyone in the sect was excited about the addition of a Gold Core Daoist Master. Previously, although Taiyi Sect claimed to be a Gold Core sect, Meng Zhang was the only Gold Core Daoist Master, and the success or failure of the entire sect rested solely on him.

Now, with the addition of Yang Xueyi as a Gold Core Daoist Master, the sect had greater security and the disciples had more confidence.

Finally, Taiyi Sect could firmly establish its position among the Gold Core sects.

Due to Meng Zhang's strict confidentiality, most disciples in the sect were unaware that Delicate Water Spirit General had already restored her Gold Core stage cultivation base. Otherwise, the sect would have already started a grand celebration.

Among the members of the Hanhai Alliance, the cultivation forces that were loyal to Taiyi Sect naturally felt happy and relieved about the increased strength of Taiyi Sect. As for those who were not convinced, they secretly hid their inappropriate thoughts.

With the addition of a Gold Core Daoist Master in Taiyi Sect, their strength surpassed that of the Northern Desert Qi Family. In the future, Northern Desert Qi Family would need to carefully consider how to interact with Taiyi Sect.

At this time, the atmosphere within the Flying Swan Sect was very complicated.

Flying Swan Sect, which had ruled the Endless Sea of Sand for many years, had experienced hardships and continuous decline in the past few years. It was only in recent years that they had the opportunity to recuperate.

However, Taiyi Sect, which was once an insignificant small sect and a vassal of Twin Success Valley, continued to grow and rise step by step.

Taiyi Sect occupied a large area of the Demon Wind Gobi and had the potential to compete with Flying Swan Sect. After Yang Xueyi formed her core, Taiyi Sect truly possessed the strength to directly confront Flying Swan Sect.

The members of Flying Swan Sect had complex feelings, but let's not mention that for now. After Yang Xueyi formed her core, she did not immediately come out of seclusion. She still needed time to consolidate her cultivation base in the Gold Core stage and become familiar with the new realm.

During Yang Xueyi's formation of the core, she did not rely on any external assistance, not even using the spiritual marrow.

Her formation of the core went very smoothly, without leaving any sequelae or the like.

Chapter 537: The Demonic Cave

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After Yang Xueyi formed her core, it took her just about half a year to fully solidify her Cultivation Base, completely mastering the power of a Gold Core period cultivator.

Then, she left her secluded meditation to pay her respects to Sect Master Meng Zhang. Yang Xueyi's demeanor was very appropriate; the first person she visited upon emerging from seclusion was Sect Master Meng Zhang.

Meng Zhang praised and encouraged her, spending a long time communicating with her. He generously imparted his own experiences and techniques from the Gold Core phase without any reservation.

What Yang Xueyi needed to do next was to continue to strengthen her Cultivation Base, cultivate the Divine Abilities unique to Gold Core period cultivators, and truly harness the combat strength of a Gold Core Daoist Master.

Within the vast library of the Taiyi Sect, there were several Third Rank magic tools. These tools, passed down from the Layered Mystery Sect, were of excellent quality and highly valuable. As one of the only two openly recognized Gold Core Daoist Masters in Taiyi Sect, Yang Xueyi was eligible to exchange her sect merits to possess one or two.

Although Yang Xueyi held a rune weapon passed down from seniors of the Purple Gold Sect, she was not in urgent need of the Third Rank magic tools.

Now, as a Gold Core Daoist Master, Yang Xueyi was also entitled to know some of the secrets of the Taiyi Sect.

Meng Zhang found an opportunity and had a long conversation with Yang Xueyi, revealing to her the origins and history of the Taiyi Sect without holding anything back. The origins of the Four Guardian Spirit Generals, including the secret of the Water Spirit General having restored her Gold Core Cultivation Base, were also shared with her.

After learning about the Taiyi Sect's history from Meng Zhang, Yang Xueyi felt a profound weight in her heart. The Taiyi Sect had faced calamities and been annihilated several times throughout history. She wondered if the same fate would befall the current Taiyi Sect.

She greatly admired Meng Zhang for carrying so many secrets while resiliently leading the Taiyi Sect to its rise. Being a person of steadfast determination, Yang Xueyi didn't let these negative emotions affect her for long.

Having recently formed her core, she still had much to do. The Taiyi Sect's Hidden Scripture Pavilion housed numerous scriptures. Even Divine Abilities meant for Gold Core Daoist Masters were plentifully stored. These included legacies Meng Zhang obtained from the Taiyi Sect Trial Ground, continuous inheritances from the Purple Gold Sect, fragmented Layered Mystery Sect legacies, and contributions from the Guardian Spirit Generals.

Most Gold Core Daoist Masters could find Divine Abilities suitable for their cultivation within. The inheritance Yang Xueyi received from the seniors of the Purple Gold Sect was already vast, and the Taiyi Sect's Hidden Scripture Pavilion could satisfy most of her needs.

Currently, Taiyi Sect had two open and one hidden Gold Core cultivators. The Grand Lion Ridge's Third Rank spirit vein was overburdened. The spirit essence that Yang Xueyi didn't use when she formed her core was eventually shared among the sect members. The spirit essence wouldn't last long, and the Grand Lion Ridge's Third Rank spirit vein couldn't be over-extracted for an extended period. To support three Gold Core Daoist Masters, the Taiyi Sect either needed to find more spirit essences or acquire another Third Rank spirit vein.

Spirit essences were rare and often priceless in the Cultivation World. Apart from the Deadly Sea of Sand, no other places were known to have them regularly. The Deadly Sea of Sand was perilous. Even as Meng Zhang continued to send more cultivator teams into it, no new spirit essences were found. As for finding a new Third Rank spirit vein, Meng Zhang was at a loss.

Meng Zhang had never expected that one day he would be troubled because there were too many Gold Core cultivators in his sect.

Three years after Yang Xueyi formed her core, two unexpected visitors arrived outside the infamous Demonic Cave in the Deadly Sea of Sand. One was the external avatar of True Monarch Tian Zhu, and the other was Daoist Master Jin Li.

The so-called Demonic Cave was originally a series of interconnected caves that extended far below the Deadly Sea of Sand. After it was occupied and transformed by Demonic Cultivators, it became the stronghold for them, hence earning its ominous reputation.

As True Monarch Tian Zhu's avatar stood silently in the sky, he looked down at the Demonic Cave and said, "Had you not reminded me, I would have been deceived by that old fox."

"It's pitiable. That old fox used to be a dominant figure across realms. Now he has stooped to colluding with these petty demons."

"You've done well this time. Consider it a merit."

Daoist Master Jin Li respectfully replied, "I dare not take credit. The anomaly in the Demonic Cave was first discovered by Taiyi Sect's Sect Master Meng Zhang, who then informed me."

In these matters, Daoist Master Jin Li had nothing to hide from the external avatar of True Monarch Tian Zhu.

"Taiyi Sect, that ambitious young man, he's somewhat interesting," murmured the avatar of True Monarch Tian Zhu.

"He's here. After all these years of waiting, the old fox, you've finally given me an advantage."

True Monarch Tian Zhu's avatar suddenly became animated with excitement.

From the small demon cave, two Third Rank sand monsters flew out, ready to dissipate into the wind and sand. However, with a wave of his hand, True Monarch Tian Zhu's avatar immobilized them.

The two Third Rank sand monsters struggled fiercely, but they couldn't move an inch.

With a pseudo grip in mid-air, True Monarch Tian Zhu's avatar squeezed tightly. Those two Third Rank sand monsters, which even the average Gold Core Daoist Master wouldn't dare to provoke, were crushed by an invisible force, turning into a sky full of ash.

Jin Li Daoist Master, despite having witnessed True Monarch Tian Zhu's prowess before, was still astonished by the immense power possessed by the Primordial Spirit True Monarch.

Not long ago, Jin Li Daoist Master had broken through to achieve the Gold Core completion stage.

Although it seemed that there was only a slight difference between Gold Core completion and Primordial Spirit True Monarch, this gap had stumped countless talented Gold Core Daoist Masters in history.

Jin Li Daoist Master had an excellent inheritance and practiced a technique directly pointing to the Primordial Spirit Grand Dao. He was of excellent aptitude and exceptional talent.

After pledging allegiance to True Monarch Tian Zhu, Jin Li Daoist Master occasionally received guidance from the great expert in the late stage of the Primordial Spirit.

Even so, he wasn't confident of breaking through the barrier between Gold Core and Primordial Spirit periods to become a Primordial Spirit True Monarch.

After crushing the two Third Rank sand monsters, True Monarch Tian Zhu's avatar effortlessly summoned the items from the monsters.

By now, the commotion had alarmed the highly vigilant demonic cultivators inside the small demon cave.

Dark shadows flew out of the cave, trying to investigate the disturbance.

True Monarch Tian Zhu's avatar secured the items and instructed Jin Li Daoist Master, "Guard the entrance. Kill anything that tries to escape."

Without waiting for Jin Li Daoist Master to respond, the avatar casually marched into the demon cave.

Obedying the command, Jin Li Daoist Master guarded the entrance. Inside, thunderous booms echoed, causing intense tremors and collapsing tunnels. However, not a single demonic cultivator emerged.

Sometime later, a slightly disheveled avatar of True Monarch Tian Zhu returned, looking displeased. "The creature inside was nearly matured. Even an average Primordial Spirit True Monarch might have struggled against it."

"These little demons have some skill, managing to secretly cultivate such a monster."

"It's good you sought me out. Venturing in on your own, given your cultivation, you might not have escaped unscathed."

"What kind of monster was cultivated down there?" Jin Li Daoist Master inquired.

Ignoring the question, True Monarch Tian Zhu's avatar continued, "I've completely obliterated that monster, leaving no trace. Some little demons managed to escape. I couldn't be bothered chasing them. With this, in our wager, he has lost another round to me. Now I have an excuse to cleanse the Deadly Sea of Sand and completely cut off his influence. Gather all available forces to eradicate all

the sand monster colonies in the Deadly Sea of Sand. Capture or kill all ghosts and demonic cultivators."

Seeing Jin Li Daoist Master's hesitation, the avatar reassured, "Don't worry, you won't be alone. Aside from the Flying Swan Sect and Taiyi Sect, I have prepared new allies for you."

Without further explanation, True Monarch Tian Zhu's avatar left with Jin Li Daoist Master.

Meanwhile, Meng Zhang, the Sect Master, remained unaware of these events. Despite having his senior disciple, Niu Dawei, share much of his workload, he still had numerous responsibilities.

After Yang Xueyi's emergence, many elders, inspired, suggested hosting a grand Gold Core celebration to not only celebrate Yang Xueyi's achievement but also to deter other forces in the Endless Sea of Sand.

The stronger a sect, the more benefits its disciples received and the more respect it garnered from other cultivation powers.

Meng Zhang was initially inclined to accept the suggestion but, after consulting Yang Xueyi, decided against it.

A more powerful Taiyi Sect might threaten the Flying Swan Sect. If Taiyi Sect continued to grow, the Northern Desert Qi Family might even align with the Flying Swan Sect. To avoid antagonizing them, it was best to keep Yang Xueyi's achievement discreet and not to ostentatiously celebrate with a Gold Core ceremony.

Chapter 538: Xihe Market

After True Monarch Tian Zhu's external avatar and Jin Li Daoist Master left the Little Demon Cave, it didn't take long for Jin Li Daoist Master to leave the Deadly Sea of Sand and visit the designated targets with True Monarch Tian Zhu's orders. The first target Jin Li Daoist Master visited was Taiyi Sect.

However, when she arrived at Grand Lion Ridge, Sect Master Meng Zhang happened to be away from the sect. Niu Dawei, who is responsible for handling the daily affairs of Taiyi Sect, knew that she alone couldn't handle the situation and specifically requested the presence of Yang Xueyi, who was in seclusion, to receive Jin Li Daoist Master together.

It was a bit inconvenient not to see Meng Zhang, but both Yang Xueyi and Niu Dawei have some authority within Taiyi Sect. After explaining the purpose of her visit, Jin Li Daoist Master hurriedly left.

Meng Zhang's absence from Grand Lion Ridge was not to avoid Jin Li Daoist Master, but because he had important matters to attend to in Jiuqu League. After receiving Jin Li Daoist Master's instructions, Niu Dawei quickly notified Meng Zhang to return as soon as possible through the sect's channels.

At this time, Meng Zhang had already arrived at Xihe Market. He was invited to Jiuqu League by Luo Ye Daoist Master to handle some unfinished business related to the Qin Family from years ago.

When Qin Hongying was hired as a guest of Taiyi Sect, she not only demanded many benefits from the sect but also made Meng Zhang and Luo Ye Daoist Master swear an oath to do their best to

preserve the Qin Family's heritage. Although Qin Hongying had long since died in Myriad Layers Peak, the Qin Family still existed. Meng Zhang and Luo YeDaoist Master were committed to fulfilling their oath.

This chapter is by Qin Hongying was always arrogant and domineering, relying on her strong cultivation base to act tyrannically, seizing and offending many forces, and making numerous enemies. While she was alive, she was able to protect her own family. However, after her death, those enemies came knocking on the door, overwhelming the Qin Family, which lacked a Gold Core Daoist Master.

Of course, most of these so-called enemies were not seeking revenge but rather wanted to take a piece of the Qin Family's wealth. The Qin Family used to be a Gold Core family and enjoyed many benefits thanks to Qin Hongying's power. Now that Qin Hongying was gone, they naturally wanted to reclaim all those benefits.

Such situations were common in Jiuqu League. Many families and sects rose and fell because of this. When the Qin Family was unable to resist, their first thought was to seek help from Luo YeDaoist Master.

Although Meng Zhang never complained to Luo YeDaoist Master about Qin Hongying's actions after becoming a guest of Taiyi Sect, Luo YeDaoist Master had heard about it. Luo YeDaoist Master had promised to do his best to preserve the Qin Family's heritage but had not promised to maintain the Qin Family's original influence.

Luo YeDaoist Master did not refuse the Qin Family's plea for help but only half-heartedly and slowly delayed her response. Taiyi Sect's influence has grown significantly in recent years, and its reputation has gradually spread to Jiuqu League.

However, after Qin Hongying's death, Taiyi Sect stopped providing various resources promised to the Qin Family. Facing a Gold Core sect like Taiyi Sect, the Qin Family, which had lost its only Gold Core Daoist Master, dared not speak out and could not continue to entangle themselves.

Now that the family was facing a crisis, while seeking help from Qin Hongying, the Qin Family also had someone pass on a message to Taiyi Sect, expressing their willingness to pay a price in exchange for Meng Zhang's assistance.

Before receiving the Qin Family's plea for help, Meng Zhang had already received a letter from Luo YeDaoist Master. When Meng Zhang interacted with Luo YeDaoist Master, he felt that she was a kind and wise senior, a trusted friend. Actually, how could someone from the Dark Alliance organization be a good person? When the time comes, she can also be ruthless. Now that the Qin Family is in trouble, it's an opportunity. She doesn't have to dirty her hands and can still make a fortune. Why not take advantage of it?

Originally, Luo YeDaoist Master could handle this matter alone, but considering that Taiyi Sect has paid a lot to hire Qin Hongying as a guest elder, it's only fair to compensate Meng Zhang.

Currently, Taiyi Sect has two experts in the Gold Core stage, Yang Xueyi and Delicate WaterSpirit General, one overt and one covert. Even if Meng Zhang is not in the sect, they still have the ability to protect themselves. Moreover, the surrounding situation has been stable recently, and there have been no new changes in the Deadly Sea of Sand.

After considering it, Meng Zhang accepted Luo YeDaoist Master's kind offer and set off for the Jiuqu League.

The Qin Family's territory is located in the southeast direction of the Jiuqu League, which cannot be considered a core area. However, compared to the Endless Sea of Sand, it is already a rare fertile land.

Meng Zhang first arrived at Great Wind City and inspected Taiyi Sect's layout there, including various commercial and stronghold constructions. Then, he traveled south and finally arrived at the Xihé Market, where he met Luo YeDaoist Master.

Xihé Market is named after a river called Xihé. Although it is called "Xihé," it is actually a magnificent river. As a tributary of the Jiuqu River, the river flows continuously and stretches gracefully.

Xihé Market was originally established by several Gold Core forces in the surrounding area and is located on a Third Rank spirit vein.

Due to its strategic location and efficient management, it has long been one of the most prosperous places in the surrounding area.

Originally, the Qin Family also had a certain share in Xihé Market and was one of the managers. However, after Qin Hongying's death, the Qin Family not only lost their position in the management of Xihé Market but also lost all their interests there.

This was just the beginning of the Qin Family's bad luck. Many forces in the vicinity have been using various excuses to conflict with the Qin Family, including some Gold Core forces.

In the Jiuqu League, there is a basic order in the Cultivation World. Incidents like the extermination of a whole family rarely occur.

However, cultivators have various means and secretive spells, and there are ways to secretly plot against opponents.

Recently, the Qin Family has lost many of its experts for various reasons. Some were disabled in public battles with others, some couldn't tolerate provocations and took the initiative but were killed by their opponents, and some even disappeared without a trace...

The Qin Family's Foundation Building stage cultivators have almost been wiped out. If this continues, there might come a day when a group of foreign bandits will raid the Qin Family and plunder everything.

Even if the Qin Family is not exterminated, they will completely decline and fall.

The high-level figures in the Jiuqu League do not care about the struggles at the bottom. Some radical cultivators even believe that this survival of the fittest can maintain the vitality of the Jiuqu League.

After Meng Zhang and Luo YeDaoist Master met, they briefly discussed and came up with a rough plan.

Next, they ignored the Qin Family's plea for help and leisurely strolled around Xihé Market. From time to time, they also visited nearby forces and exchanged ideas with nearby Gold Core Daoist Masters.

