

## **Sect Master's Immortal Journey**

### **#Chapter 731: Confused - Read Sect Master's Immortal Journey Chapter 731: Confused**

#### **Chapter 731: Confused**

Meng Zhang's cultivation of internal energy was extraordinary, and his expression remained unchanged. He didn't get angry at Wen Dong's disdain but instead privately reflected on his own mistakes.

He understood that in order to compete, he needed to demonstrate Taiyi Sect's strength to the Dali Dynasty, making them aware of the huge loss they would suffer by rejecting him. Only then would the members of the Dali Dynasty, including Wen Dong, start to value Taiyi Sect and consider granting it a proper position.

The overall strength of the Dark Alliance was almost second only to the Holy Land Sect in the Middle-Earth Continent. Even as a branch, it possessed power surpassing that of ordinary Primordial Spirit sects.

Whether for the sake of face at the Dark Alliance's headquarters or out of fear of its branch's strength, the Dali Dynasty would highly regard them and offer various advantages to win them over.

The situation for Taiyi Sect and the Dark Alliance branch was different. So far, neither Meng Zhang, the Sect Master, nor the entire Taiyi Sect had demonstrated the strength that would make the Dali Dynasty take them seriously.

Having grasped this truth, Meng Zhang knew that today's contact should end here. He couldn't obtain what he wanted from the Dali Dynasty at this point.

Of course, Meng Zhang didn't make the trip in vain. At least, he showed goodwill and made an early contact with the Dali Dynasty. When the Dali Dynasty truly valued him in the future, they would likely come to him proactively.

Although a bit reluctant, Meng Zhang maintained a minimum level of courtesy when facing Wen Dong.

After briefly exchanging words with Wen Dong, Meng Zhang took the initiative to bid farewell.

Watching Meng Zhang's departing figure, Wen Dong narrowed his eyes, lost in thought.

Being entrusted by the Dali Dynasty with important tasks to operate within the Jiuqu League, Wen Dong was by no means a shallow person. His cultivation base was profound, and his combat power was formidable, especially his mastery of escape techniques. Even when facing attacks from several Primordial Spirit True Monarchs, he had the means to survive.

As for his way of doing things, it was even more cautious and meticulous.

Before entering the Jiuqu League, Wen Dong had already thoroughly researched all kinds of information about it through the intelligence system of the Dali Dynasty. After entering the league, he gained even deeper insights through his own first-hand experiences.

Meng Zhang himself was unaware that Wen Dong valued Taiyi Sect and him, a young Primordial Spirit True Monarch, far more than he had imagined.

The reason Wen Dong still treated Meng Zhang with such arrogance was partly due to Dali Dynasty's custom of treating ordinary cultivators seeking to join with such an attitude. Currently, the Dali Dynasty held an absolute advantage, and it was impossible to readily treat every random person who sought to join with great importance or to negotiate with them.

Even if Wen Dong valued Meng Zhang somewhat, he wouldn't recklessly change the long-standing and effective customs.

Secondly, in Wen Dong's mind, there was the intention to test Taiyi Sect and see to what extent Meng Zhang's thoughts could reach. If Meng Zhang demonstrated his value in the future, he would naturally receive corresponding treatment. However, based on Meng Zhang's performance today, there was nothing extraordinary and he didn't leave a deep impression on Wen Dong.

Being a Primordial Spirit True Monarch indeed placed one at the upper echelons of the Cultivation World, making them valuable to attract. However, from another perspective, the Dali Dynasty was formidable and had numerous Primordial Spirit True Monarchs. They wouldn't lack for one or two more.

If Meng Zhang continued to perform this way, even if he joined the Dali Dynasty, he wouldn't attain a high position.

As a secret envoy sent by the Dali Dynasty to the Jiuqu League, Wen Dong's mission was not just negotiations with the Dark Alliance branch. He was tasked with using various means, including coercion and enticement, to create divisions within the Jiuqu League, preventing the major cultivation forces from uniting against the Dali Dynasty.

The high-ranking officials of the Dali Dynasty were skilled in strategy, adept at seizing opportunities, and knew how to leverage their advantages. After thoroughly defeating

the Three Sects Alliance, although they suffered losses, they still had the power to wage war with the Jiuqu League. However, they didn't rush into an all-out attack. Instead, they maintained pressure without launching a real offensive, which was a highly sophisticated strategy.

By not attacking immediately, the Dali Dynasty gave some cultivation forces a sense of luck and a chance to avoid confrontation. It also provided more time for various cultivation forces to weigh the pros and cons and carefully analyze the relative strengths of both sides.

The Dali Dynasty's actions, while seemingly allowing the Jiuqu League time to resolve its internal issues, directly led to the accelerated split between the Jade Sword Sect and the Azure Origin Sect, fostering further division within the Jiuqu League.

Currently, the Jiuqu League was in a state of panic, lacking fighting spirit, and everyone was busy seeking a way out for themselves. No one would easily trust their former allies. Even the staunch pro-war Jade Sword Sect found it challenging to gain the trust of other cultivation forces.

The situation within the Jiuqu League was deteriorating continuously, and internal division was only a matter of time.

When that time came, the Dali Dynasty would be faced with a fragmented Jiuqu League, saving them a great deal of effort. There were farsighted wise individuals within the Jiuqu League who saw through the Dali Dynasty's sinister intentions, but at this stage, the situation was difficult to reverse.

The two behemoths, Jade Sword Sect and Azure Origin Sect, would no longer trust each other, and other cultivation forces were caught in a web of mutual suspicion.

Wen Dong, who had infiltrated the Jiuqu League in secret, aimed to deepen this mistrust and accelerate the internal division of the Jiuqu League.

Meng Zhang, leaving the Dark Alliance secret base, was also well aware of the situation before the Jiuqu League. However, with his current strength and position, he couldn't influence the overall situation. Even when he was just a small cultivator, he often felt powerless in the face of adversity. Now, as a Primordial Spirit True Monarch, he still felt helpless against the vast tide of events.

The overall situation was irreversible, and he had no power to change the fate of the Jiuqu League. He could only hope to protect himself and Taiyi Sect amidst the tumultuous storm.

Initiating contact with the Dali Dynasty's envoy didn't bring any substantive benefits. Wen Dong's attitude left Meng Zhang unsure of his next step, plunging him into a state of confusion.

He didn't know where to go from here, and it was indeed a headache-inducing dilemma.

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## **Chapter 732: Participation**

Facing the upcoming major changes, Meng Zhang couldn't think of any other useful measures besides strengthening the sect's power and enhancing his own Cultivation Base. The Taiyi Sect's development was already on the right track, and even if Meng Zhang, as the Sect Master, no longer intervened in the affairs of the sect, it would still follow its established plans and operate with inertia.

Before entering the Primordial Spirit stage, Meng Zhang believed that achieving the status of a Primordial Spirit True Monarch would solve all the problems Taiyi Sect was facing. However, now that he had become a true Primordial Spirit True Monarch, he realized that he had underestimated the complexities of the situation due to his limited perspective.

As a Primordial Spirit True Monarch, he could participate in higher-level struggles, encounter new problems and challenges, and, as a result, have new worries. Though he now had the qualifications to be involved in the larger picture of the Jiuqu League, his limited strength made him merely a small pawn with minimal influence on the overall situation.

At present, Meng Zhang could only temporarily endure this and focus his main energy on cultivation. After obtaining the various scriptures of the rebuilt Taiyi Sect, he could progress steadily in his Primordial Spirit cultivation, even without direct guidance, by studying the scriptures and assimilating the experiences and insights of his predecessors.

Apart from the slight trouble of collecting the Nine Heavens Refined Essence, he didn't encounter major obstacles in his cultivation. After returning from the secret base of the Dark Alliance, Meng Zhang didn't stay in the sect for long and left again. This time, he followed Elder Beast Fury's recommendation to participate in a gathering of nearby Primordial Spirit True Monarchs.

This was the first time Meng Zhang attended a large-scale gathering of cultivators at his level since he entered the Primordial Spirit stage. He attached great importance to it and had high expectations. The gathering was held in a tranquil and beautiful estate owned by the Four Seas Commercial Firm.

As the largest business force within the Jiuqu League, the Four Seas Commercial Firm conducted extensive business not only within the League but also beyond its borders, with regular trade caravans reaching places as distant as the Grand Crossing Cultivation Circle and the Crossing Severing Mountain Range. Before Dali Dynasty expanded northwards, the Firm had commercial interactions in the Dynasty's territory as

well. However, after Dali Dynasty's expansion and domination of the Crossing Severing Mountain Range area, the Firm took an opposition stance against the Dynasty, withdrawing all personnel and cutting off all trade relations.

Despite the worsening external environment leading to a shrinking of their influence, the Four Seas Commercial Firm, which had been rooted in the Jiuqu League for many years, was deep and strong, and no one dared to underestimate them.

While the Jiuqu League was nominally united, it had internal divisions and factional disputes, especially between the relatively richer and powerful southern regions and the less prosperous northern regions. In recent years, Jade Sword Sect, located in the northern region of the Jiuqu League, had planned to secede from the League entirely, aiming to establish an independent territory.

Jade Sword Sect used various means to entice the cultivation forces in the north, while also suppressing those who remained loyal to the Azure Origin Sect. The tension and conflicts in the northern region of the Jiuqu League were ongoing.

The Four Seas Commercial Firm had a tradition of regularly organizing gatherings for Primordial Spirit True Monarchs from various regions. Since the internal split of the Yellow Lotus Sect, the Firm had become the third largest force within the Jiuqu League. However, being a cultivation force led by merchants, the Firm was known for its neutrality and non-involvement in factional disputes.

Despite the evident division within the Jiuqu League, the Four Seas Commercial Firm maintained its neutral stance, and both Jade Sword Sect and Azure Origin Sect were eager to win its support. As a result, the Firm held a gathering as usual, allowing nearby Primordial Spirit True Monarchs to discuss cultivation and exchange ideas, and facilitating trade and networking.

Originally, the Firm intended to keep the gathering open to as many Primordial Spirit True Monarchs as possible, but due to some incidents in the past, it had become more closed and exclusive. New Primordial Spirit True Monarchs could only participate if they were sponsored by existing members.

The host of this gathering was You Hongzhi True Monarch of the Four Seas Commercial Firm, who also happened to be Meng Zhang's sponsor. Meng Zhang and You Hongzhi True Monarch had no previous acquaintance, except for a few brief encounters during a mission to the Grand Crossing Cultivation Circle.

However, at that time, Meng Zhang was only a Gold Core cultivator. While he recognized You Hongzhi True Monarch, it was uncertain if the latter recognized him.

You Hongzhi True Monarch's sponsorship for him this time was solely due to his relationship with Elder Beast Fury. Elder Beast Fury and You Hongzhi True Monarch had been old friends for many years. When the Four Seas Commercial Firm conducted

business in the Crossing Severing Mountain Range, they received support from the local power, Beast King Mountain. It was during that time that Elder Beast Fury and You Hongzhi True Monarch developed a good friendship.

After Beast King Mountain was defeated and retreated to the Jiuqu League, the Four Seas Commercial Firm, adhering to its neutral stance, did not get involved in the conflict between the new and old Beast King Mountain openly. However, behind the scenes, You Hongzhi True Monarch and Elder Beast Fury had quite a few dealings.

Elder Beast Fury informed Meng Zhang about the gathering, but as an outsider, he felt inadequate to act as the sponsor. Therefore, he specifically asked his old friend You Hongzhi True Monarch to take on this role.

Elder Beast Fury had already arranged everything and informed Meng Zhang beforehand. When Meng Zhang arrived at the estate for the gathering, most of the other Primordial Spirit True Monarchs had not yet arrived. Being a first-time participant, he didn't want to be late, but he ended up coming too early.

The Four Seas Commercial Firm had already prepared clever attendants to serve the Primordial Spirit True Monarchs both inside and outside the estate. They guided Meng Zhang inside after he reported his name.

The estate was vast, with separate courtyards spaced far apart and separated by formations, each designated as a resting place for the Primordial Spirit True Monarchs.

You Hongzhi True Monarch, as the host, had arrived early and personally arranged everything for the gathering. Since Meng Zhang was in someone else's territory, it was only natural to pay respects to the host, especially because You Hongzhi True Monarch was the one who invited him to the gathering.

The attendant responsible for serving Meng Zhang conveyed his request to meet You Hongzhi True Monarch. Before long, the attendant received a response and took Meng Zhang to meet You Hongzhi True Monarch.

You Hongzhi True Monarch chose to meet Meng Zhang in a large garden. As a senior whose Primordial Spirit achievement surpassed his, and whose Cultivation Base was much higher, when Meng Zhang saw You Hongzhi True Monarch, he respectfully saluted from a distance and addressed him as "Senior."

Although You Hongzhi True Monarch had already reached the Primordial Spirit stage, his merchant temperament was hard to suppress. He was short and chubby, resembling a big dumpling. His face was always filled with a friendly smile, and he treated everyone with great warmth and enthusiasm.

You Hongzhi True Monarch politely declined Meng Zhang's formal gestures of respect. They exchanged courtesies and finally sat down together. As it was their first meeting

and there was no prior connection between them, they naturally did not discuss any important topics, engaging in casual and unrelated small talk.

Fortunately, You Hongzhi True Monarch had been involved in business for many years and traveled widely, so he had a unique skill in dealing with people. He was amiable and made everyone feel comfortable, with a quick wit and a sense of humor. Even if the topic was trivial, he could make it interesting and entertaining, preventing anyone from feeling bored.

Meng Zhang, on the other hand, was not someone easily swayed by words, nor did he want to become someone like You Hongzhi True Monarch. However, chatting with You Hongzhi True Monarch was by no means an unpleasant experience.

They had just met and couldn't establish a deep bond, but as they spent more time together, they would gradually become more familiar with each other. If there were future benefits involved, it would be even easier to become friends.

Meng Zhang couldn't tell if You Hongzhi True Monarch genuinely saw potential in him or if he treated every newly acquainted Primordial Spirit True Monarch the same way. Nevertheless, the constant stream of compliments and sincere words made Meng Zhang feel a genuine connection with him, and he felt close to You Hongzhi True Monarch.

Meng Zhang was certain that You Hongzhi True Monarch hadn't used any spells or techniques to influence him silently. He left a good impression solely based on his abilities to interact with others and his impressive verbal skills.

However, as valuable as the time spent chatting was, the time of a Primordial Spirit True Monarch was precious, and they couldn't afford to waste it like this. After a while of pleasant conversation, Meng Zhang achieved his purpose of getting acquainted with You Hongzhi True Monarch and decided it was time to take his leave.

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## **Chapter 733: Energy**

Meng Zhang had achieved his goal of meeting You Hongzhi, the True Monarch. As he was about to leave, You Hongzhi's old friend and fellow warrior, Elder Beast Fury, who had fought alongside Meng Zhang, also arrived at the estate.

Elder Beast Fury and You Hongzhi had been close for many years, so he didn't need any servants to announce his presence. He casually strolled into the courtyard and, seeing Meng Zhang there, approached him with great delight to chat.

With Elder Beast Fury's arrival, Meng Zhang couldn't easily take his leave and ended up continuing to chat with the two seniors. Elder Beast Fury recounted some amusing

stories and past experiences from when he and You Hongzhi were young. They joked with each other, maintaining a relaxed and informal atmosphere, without any airs of being Primordial Spirit True Monarchs.

Though Elder Beast Fury concealed it well, Meng Zhang keenly noticed that he showed signs of aging, and his physical condition wasn't too good. Having already been seriously injured and not fully healed, the last time Elder Beast Fury teamed up with Meng Zhang to kill two Primordial Spirit True Monarchs, he further worsened his injuries by forcefully advancing the merging of two sects. All these efforts took a toll on Elder Beast Fury's health, making his condition even worse.

Primordial Spirit True Monarchs are generally not easily heavily wounded, but once they are, it becomes extremely challenging to heal. Despite his connections and abilities, Elder Beast Fury must have tried various methods to treat his injuries, yet he couldn't fully recover. It seemed that he was truly unable to completely heal.

Beast King Mountain had just gone through a period of turmoil, and its internal situation was still not stable. If anything happened to Elder Beast Fury at this time, the entire sect might crumble.

Meng Zhang marveled at Elder Beast Fury's carefree attitude, wandering around instead of properly recuperating within the sect. Now, with the immense pressure from the Dali Dynasty externally and internal conflicts within the Jiuqu League, even someone as strong and accomplished as Meng Zhang often felt troubled.

Yet, looking at Elder Beast Fury's demeanor, he seemed as carefree as You Hongzhi, not at all worried about the current situation.

Seeing the two Primordial Spirit True Monarchs chatting happily, Meng Zhang couldn't help but interject, mentioning the current internal and external troubles facing the Jiuqu League. He especially emphasized the threat posed by the powerful Dali Dynasty, warning that the various cultivation forces within the Jiuqu League might not be able to escape unscathed.

However, the two Primordial Spirit True Monarchs disregarded Meng Zhang's words, seemingly not taking the Dali Dynasty seriously at all. You Hongzhi, the True Monarch, had his reasons, but even Elder Beast Fury, who had experienced the might of the Dali Dynasty first-hand and had endured hardships to escape to the Jiuqu League, appeared confident in their ability to overcome the invading force.

Meng Zhang couldn't help but wonder what basis they had for such optimism. Being seasoned Primordial Spirit True Monarchs, they might know things he didn't. So, he decided to probe further.

But both You Hongzhi, the True Monarch, and Elder Beast Fury remained tight-lipped, not revealing any useful information. They simply comforted Meng Zhang by saying that

the Dali Dynasty was nothing to worry about, and the Jiuqu League had ways to deal with such despicable invaders.

After spending a long time chatting with them, Meng Zhang didn't get any useful insights. As more Primordial Spirit True Monarchs began to arrive at the location, he had to take his leave to avoid delaying You Hongzhi, the True Monarch.

Returning to his own residence, Meng Zhang calmed his mind and pondered for a moment. It was only natural for Jade Sword Sect not to fully trust him and Taiyi Sect in their fight against the Dali Dynasty. However, it seemed likely that Elder Beast Fury, who held a deep grudge against the Dali Dynasty, had gained the trust of Jade Sword Sect and obtained some important information. This realization excited Meng Zhang. His hesitation stemmed from his skepticism about the power balance between the two sides. If Jade Sword Sect had a countermeasure against the Dali Dynasty, it would be a great advantage for him.

After spending some time in his courtyard, Meng Zhang went outside. At this point, many Primordial Spirit True Monarchs who were part of this gathering had already arrived at the estate. Meng Zhang's main purpose for attending this gathering was to expand his network of connections, and he wouldn't miss such a great opportunity for socializing.

Typically, Four Seas Commercial Firm's gatherings did not actively invite cultivators from the two giant sects, Jade Sword Sect, and Azure Origin Sect. Without their presence, everyone felt more at ease, as the cultivators from those sects might not hold such gatherings in high regard.

This gathering organized by You Hongzhi, the True Monarch, primarily invited Primordial Spirit cultivators from the northern part of the Jiuqu League. Seeing the continuous arrival of Primordial Spirit True Monarchs at the estate, Meng Zhang couldn't help but be amazed. The number of Primordial Spirit cultivators in the Jiuqu League was far more than he had imagined, with so many of them just in the northern region.

In the past, he didn't have the qualifications to interact with this circle, and many things were unclear to him. Now that he had entered this circle, his perspective naturally expanded.

Elder Beast Fury and You Hongzhi, the True Monarch, had already finished their private conversation and were now greeting the various Primordial Spirit True Monarchs. You Hongzhi, as the host, warmly welcomed guests from all directions.

Though Elder Beast Fury was relatively new to the Jiuqu League, he had a wide network of friends from his earlier years, which allowed him to maintain superficial relationships with some individuals. While these so-called friends might not be reliable in critical moments, maintaining some level of interaction and appearances wasn't difficult.

Seeing Meng Zhang come out, Elder Beast Fury enthusiastically called him over and introduced him to the familiar Primordial Spirit True Monarchs. Meng Zhang had only recently achieved Primordial Spirit, so his seniority in this circle was the lowest. However, that didn't mean he lacked status.

The fact that Meng Zhang had teamed up with Elder Beast Fury to kill two Primordial Spirit True Monarchs from New Beast King Mountain couldn't escape the eyes of the astute individuals. Though they didn't witness the events directly, smarter folks could make some educated guesses.

Additionally, Meng Zhang's victory over He Luo, the True Monarch, might not have been widely publicized, but the fact that He Luo returned empty-handed, and Great Wind City changed hands, spoke volumes about Meng Zhang's actions.

To have achieved Primordial Spirit and participated in the contest among Primordial Spirit True Monarchs, and even emerge victorious, demonstrated that Meng Zhang was extraordinary. He Luo, the True Monarch, wasn't a weakling among Primordial Spirit True Monarchs, and there were very few present who could confidently claim they could defeat him.

Meng Zhang's ability to force He Luo, the True Monarch, to retreat would naturally earn him the respect of many.

The gathering had been moved to Yuantu Great Prairie, and True Monarch Hundred Battles of Hundred Battles Gate and True Monarch Grey Mountain of Grey Mountain School had traveled from afar to attend. Elder Beast Fury introduced them to Meng Zhang.

Clearly, even after fleeing to the Jiuqu League, the Three Sects Alliance hadn't severed all ties and was still maintaining distant communication.

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## **Chapter 734: Full Arrival**

The Three Sects Alliance each have their own bottom line, and after uniting, their strength is formidable. Although the high-ranking members of the Jiuqu League accepted these remnants of defeated soldiers in the past, they were not without caution. Especially the Azure Origin Sect within the Jiuqu League is particularly wary of the Three Sects Alliance. Their attitude towards them is to both use and guard against them.

If the Three Sects Alliance stirs up trouble within the Jiuqu League, it will undoubtedly cause a big mess. Previously constrained by the New Beast King Mountain, Elder Beast Fury has now regained contact with his two old friends, Hundred Battles Gate, and Grey Mountain School, despite appearing distant from them.

They openly gathered in public, seemingly disregarding the apprehension of the high-ranking members of the Jiuqu League. With the Three Sects Alliance forming a united front, they become a force that no one can underestimate within the Jiuqu League.

Given the current situation in the Jiuqu League, the high-ranking members have little time to suppress the Three Sects Alliance. The relatively weaker Meng Zhang now actively seeks to align with any friendly force since he is under the influence of Elder Beast Fury.

Due to Elder Beast Fury's relationship with True Monarch Hundred Battles and True Monarch Grey Mountain, their attitude towards Meng Zhang is favorable. True Monarch Hundred Battles is a middle-aged man with a scarred face, exuding a fierce and iron-blooded aura. He is straightforward and seems to lack much cunning. On the other hand, True Monarch Grey Mountain is an older man with a gloomy expression, speaking very sparingly and mostly remaining silent.

At the first meeting, Meng Zhang couldn't discern their true intentions and naturally couldn't establish a close bond with them. He merely tried to show goodwill and express his good intentions.

After entering the Yuantu Great Prairie, both Hundred Battles Gate and Grey Mountain School faced difficulties. They mainly focused on countering the extraterritorial Barbarian Clan, leaving little room for territory development, resulting in insufficient income.

By now, both sects were living off their old reserves and lacked sufficient resources. The Old Beast King Mountain's merger with the New Beast King Mountain, a Primordial Spirit sect, meant that most of the accumulated resources, spanning 1,000 to 2,000 years, fell into the hands of Elder Beast Fury.

Elder Beast Fury clearly valued maintaining ties with the Three Sects Alliance, implying that he would support Grey Mountain School and Hundred Battles Gate. To be honest, Taiyi Sect also had the power to support both sects, but since their relationship was still new, Meng Zhang refrained from making any hasty commitments.

As more and more Primordial Spirit True Monarchs arrived, Meng Zhang also recognized some familiar faces. True Monarch Profound Wind, who was once unattainable, now saw Meng Zhang as an equal. True Monarch Mountain Peak also attended the gathering, making one wonder if he had already resolved the troubles with the Yellow Lotus Sect. If that were true, Taiyi Sect would have to face its own troubles.

He Luo True Monarch, who had crossed paths with Meng Zhang before, entered the estate with an air of arrogance. Upon seeing Meng Zhang there, the anger on his face quickly disappeared. Some curious Primordial Spirit True Monarchs around them whispered and pointed, clearly eager to watch the drama unfold.

However, He Luo True Monarch didn't give them what they wanted. He calmly walked past Meng Zhang as if he didn't exist and started chatting with his familiar peers.

He Luo True Monarch was a loose cultivator by origin, but he had close ties with the Azure Origin Sect and had powerful backers. In the absence of conflicting interests, no one wanted to pick a fight with him for no reason.

The gathering was about to begin, and almost all the various guests attending the event had arrived.

Meng Zhang roughly counted the number of Primordial Spirit True Monarchs participating in the gathering, which exceeded twenty individuals. This was not a small number, considering that although the Jiuqu League was not particularly rich, it indeed produced many talented cultivators.

Of course, not all these Primordial Spirit True Monarchs were loyal subjects of the Jiuqu League. Some belonged to forces that only nominally submitted to the Jiuqu League but maintained a strong sense of independence. For instance, the Nangong Family of Xiaomang Mountain was a highly conservative cultivation family that rarely ventured outside. They showed little interest in the affairs of the Jiuqu League and had minimal presence within it. While the Nangong Family was considered part of the Jiuqu League, their relationship was more symbolic, and the Jiuqu League lacked significant control over them.

Typically, the high-ranking members of the Jiuqu League refrained from conscripting cultivators from the Nangong Family unless it was an extreme situation where the survival of the entire Jiuqu League was at stake. In previous battles against the extraterritorial Barbarian Clan, the Nangong Family merely contributed additional resources but did not send any cultivators to fight.

The unique position of the Nangong Family was obtained through efforts by their ancestors, who negotiated with the high-ranking members of the Jiuqu League. However, due to the passage of time and deliberate concealment by the Jiuqu League's high-ranking members, many present at the gathering were unaware of the specific details.

Similarly, not far from Xiaomang Mountain, the Flawless Valley was also a Primordial Spirit sect with a status comparable to that of the Nangong Family. If it weren't for You Hongzhi True Monarch's extensive social connections and the Four Seas Commercial Firm's influence, the Primordial Spirit True Monarchs of the Nangong Family and Flawless Valley might not have left their sects to attend such gatherings.

Apart from them, there were a few loose cultivators who operated within the territory of the Jiuqu League and followed its rules but remained entirely independent and unbound by the Jiuqu League. Even if the Jiuqu League was domineering, they couldn't prohibit

the presence of loose cultivators in their territory, especially those in the Primordial Spirit realm, who were not easy to deal with.

True Monarch Profound Wind and He Luo True Monarch were examples of cultivators with similar backgrounds who were eventually recruited and absorbed by the Jiuqu League, becoming its members. However, there were other Primordial Spirit loose cultivators who rejected the Jiuqu League's recruitment and remained independent.

One such individual was True Monarch Crossing Blade, who had initially been ready to laugh at He Luo True Monarch's expense. He was a lone wolf, refusing to be bound by anyone's influence. True Monarch Crossing Blade had a reputation for acting recklessly and indulging himself, having caused numerous troubles in the past. Nevertheless, his formidable Cultivation Base and willingness to take risks made him a rare figure among the Primordial Spirit True Monarchs.

Taking him down would be a challenge even for three or five Primordial Spirit True Monarchs, and failure would lead to troublesome retaliation afterward. As a true loose cultivator, True Monarch Crossing Blade had no attachments or burdens, making him difficult to deal with for most Primordial Spirit sects.

Despite the Jiuqu League's high-ranking members' repeated attempts to recruit True Monarch Crossing Blade, he bluntly rejected them each time. As long as True Monarch Crossing Blade didn't pose a severe threat to the Jiuqu League, its high-ranking members couldn't muster the resolve to completely alienate him.

True Monarch Crossing Blade had been roaming freely for many years, living a carefree and enjoyable life.

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## **Chapter 735: Trade fair**

At this estate, gathered the majority of Primordial Spirit True Monarchs from the northern region of the Jiuqu League. If it weren't for the remarkable skills of True Monarch You Hongzhi, it would have been difficult to bring together so many people.

Unlike Gold Core Daoist Masters, who rely on Third Rank spirit veins for their cultivation, Primordial Spirit True Monarchs are not limited by spirit veins. The spirit veins in the Grand Dust World cannot meet their cultivation needs. In most parts of the Grand Dust World, they can fly freely into the sky, reach the Nine Heavens, and even enter the void through the Nine Heavens. Thus, Primordial Spirit True Monarchs are rarely constrained by geographical limitations and can wander all over the world.

For Primordial Spirit True Monarchs without the burden of sects or clans, they enjoy even greater freedom. They can roam the world, considering it their home, wandering

from the northern seas to the southern lands, living carefree. A casual journey or exploration that takes several hundred years is not considered much.

The loose cultivators who have appeared in the estate used to have a wide range of activities, not limited to the Jiuqu League. However, the Dali Dynasty has been strict with cultivators within its borders, whether they belong to sects, clans, or are loose cultivators. As the Dali Dynasty expands in the surrounding areas, the activities of many loose cultivators have been increasingly restricted.

The current Jiuqu League is probably the only pure land suitable for the survival of loose cultivators outside the Grand Crossing Cultivation Circle.

As the attendees gathered in the estate, True Monarch You Hongzhi wasted no time and gathered everyone on a small square. The square had several independent platforms, each large enough to accommodate several people meditating.

At the central platform, the highest and largest of them all, True Monarch You Hongzhi stood and addressed the visitors.

After a series of enthusiastic words, he finally got to the point. The reason why Four Seas Commercial Firm went to great lengths to hold such gatherings regularly was to expand their network and seek new business opportunities.

The various Primordial Spirit True Monarchs had come from far and wide to attend this gathering not only to make friends with fellow cultivators but also to exchange ideas and share their resources.

The highlight of each gathering was the trading session. True Monarch You Hongzhi, with his mid-stage Primordial Spirit cultivation base, was considered one of the strongest present. Along with the influence of the Four Seas Commercial Firm, he qualified as the intermediary.

With the opening remarks concluded, True Monarch You Hongzhi announced the beginning of the trading session.

To warm up the event, Four Seas Commercial Firm presented various Heaven and Earth Spiritual Objects. As all the attendees were resolute Primordial Spirit True Monarchs, they were not easily swayed by flashy tactics, saving time on creating atmosphere and showcasing the items.

The Heaven and Earth Spiritual Objects were displayed one by one in front of True Monarch You Hongzhi, with each item having a starting price. If multiple people were interested in the same item, the one willing to pay the highest price would obtain it.

These Heaven and Earth Spiritual Objects were mostly Fourth Rank items, with a few Third Rank ones that were either highly useful or exceptionally rare, even more valuable

than many Fourth Rank items. At the level of Primordial Spirit True Monarchs, even high-grade spirit stones had little value. Their transactions mainly involved exchanging items or using various rare resources as general equivalents.

Nine Heavens Refined Essence is only beneficial for Cultivators in the early stage of Primordial Spirit. In fact, even Cultivators in the early stage of Primordial Spirit, after consolidating their Cultivation Base, can absorb spiritual energy just as well, and the effect is better than refining Nine Heavens Refined Essence. However, the spiritual energy is exceedingly rare, and early-stage cultivators can't compete with mid-stage or late-stage cultivators, so they make do with Nine Heavens Refined Essence.

All kinds of spiritual energy are only born in the extraterritorial void, a vast and dangerous place. For Primordial Spirit True Monarchs, it is a perilous land that can threaten their lives. Treacherous void beasts, extraterritorial beings who are difficult to differentiate between friend and foe, unscrupulous cultivators... All of these are not mentioned, and only the boundless and endless extraterritorial void is emphasized. If a Primordial Spirit True Monarch gets lost in it, even if they exhaust their lifespan, they may not be able to return to their original world.

Meng Zhang has been a Primordial Spirit True Monarch for some time now, but he hasn't had the opportunity to enter the extraterritorial void. He won't act rashly until he is fully prepared. Taiyi Sect's records contain too many tragic lessons.

He knows that absorbing and refining various spiritual energies is better, but he has no means of obtaining them.

The scale of today's trade fair is not high, and the participating Primordial Spirit True Monarchs are limited in level. Even with True Monarch You Hongzhi relying on the Four Seas Commercial Firm, he is not considered wealthy among Primordial Spirit True Monarchs. Therefore, when they can't exchange for the needed spiritual objects, those who bring spiritual objects for trade can also accept various spiritual energies or even Nine Heavens Refined Essence.

Meng Zhang has a bit of Nine Heavens Refined Essence, but the quantity is limited and not enough for his usual cultivation, so it is not sufficient for trading.

As for Fourth Rank Heaven and Earth Spiritual Objects, Taiyi Sect has a shallow foundation and has little accumulation in this area. Even if they happened to obtain a few Fourth Rank Heaven and Earth Spiritual Objects, they have other uses and cannot be used for trading.

Watching everyone enthusiastically trade, each Fourth Rank Heaven and Earth Spiritual Object appearing on the platform, Meng Zhang could only envy them.

After True Monarch You Hongzhi started the trades, one after another, the participating Primordial Spirit True Monarchs presented the spiritual items they had prepared and flew to True Monarch You Hongzhi, stating the items they wanted to trade.

Meng Zhang is not qualified to participate in the trades; he can only watch the excitement from the sidelines. In such a high-level trade fair, there is almost no chance to pick up bargains. Even if some Primordial Spirit True Monarchs have limited vision and cannot recognize the specific origin of the Heaven and Earth Spiritual Objects they hold, they can generally judge their value based on their insights as Primordial Spirit True Monarchs and avoid leaving any regrets.

The most lively trading session lasted for most of the day before finally concluding. Afterward, the group didn't rest and directly entered the exchange session.

The so-called exchange session was a gathering where everyone exchanged their cultivation experiences and helped each other solve problems. In the Jiuqu League, apart from the Azure Origin Sect and Jade Sword Sect, which are the two giant sects, the other sects and clans could at most have 2-3 Primordial Spirit True Monarchs. In reality, most Primordial Spirit sects and clans in the Jiuqu League only have one Primordial Spirit True Monarch to sustain them. Moreover, the cultivation forces within the Jiuqu League generally have a relatively short history, and not many generations of Primordial Spirit True Monarchs have emerged. Few peers, limited experience passed down by predecessors, they encounter numerous problems, and seeking advice from fellow cultivators is often their only option.

The attending Primordial Spirit True Monarchs, especially a few loose cultivators, are eager for this kind of exchange and sparring between fellow cultivators. Of course, such exchanges are limited to small circles. Another exchange method encompasses almost everyone present.

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## **Chapter 736: Exchange**

After the item exchange phase, it was time for the cultivation and communication phase.

You Hongzhi True Monarch sat cross-legged on the elevated platform in the middle, quietly observing the crowd. After a while, talismans carrying messages turned into streaks of light and flew into You Hongzhi True Monarch's hands.

He briefly looked over the talismans before speaking, "A fellow daoist seeks the secret technique for refining an external avatar. Regardless of the grade of the technique, as long as the material requirements are not too high and the created avatar possesses the strength of the Early Primordial Spirit, it will suffice."

"The offered reward from this fellow daoist is one piece of Fourth Rank Heaven and Earth Spiritual Object, Sun Gold, two pieces of Mountain Suppressing Divine Stone, and twenty strands of Pure Jade Inspiration."

"Of course, if you find the reward insufficient, as long as the technique is sound, we can negotiate further."

Having said that, You Hongzhi True Monarch looked down below. Cultivators who reached the Mid Primordial Spirit level had the ability to refine an external avatar, but having the ability was one thing, successfully refining it was another.

The secret technique for refining an external avatar, Divine Ability, was relatively rare within the Primordial Spirit sects. Most of the Primordial Spirit sects in the Jiuqu League were considered weaker and lacked substantial accumulation or heritage. Thus, similar Divine Abilities were exceptionally scarce.

However, possessing the Divine Ability alone was not enough; various materials and great effort were needed to successfully refine an external avatar. Moreover, for a cultivator at the Mid Primordial Spirit level, it was only useful to have an avatar with the strength of the Early Primordial Spirit. A Gold Core-level avatar was not worth expending Primordial Spirit energy to refine.

At this moment, Meng Zhang felt incredibly fortunate. Although Taiyi Sect had been declining for a long time, at least their ancestors had left behind a considerable heritage.

After retrieving the Void Cauldron and obtaining the restored Taiyi Sect's inheritance scriptures, they had made up for the sect's most significant deficiency. While there was still a considerable gap compared to Taiyi Sect's prime, and many legacies remained unrecovered, they were still much stronger than other Primordial Spirit sects.

Regarding the secret technique for refining an external avatar, the Hidden Scripture Pavilion in the current Taiyi Sect held more than one method.

Upon hearing the conditions for the trade, Meng Zhang's interest was piqued for a moment, but he soon abandoned the idea of making a deal. The value of a secret technique far surpassed these external items. Both the Heaven and Earth Spiritual Objects and Pure Jade Inspiration could be obtained in the future, but a secret technique like this was incredibly rare and not something one could easily come by.

As a Sect Master, he had a responsibility to protect the sect's secrets from being easily leaked. Even if they were to trade, the current offer would not be enough to acquire such a valuable secret technique.

After You Hongzhi True Monarch stated the trade conditions, he waited for the response from the crowd below. After a long while, there was no reaction from anyone. It seemed

that within the Jiuqu League, Divine Abilities were indeed scarce, or perhaps everyone valued them more than ordinary Heaven and Earth Spiritual Objects.

After waiting for quite some time without any takers, You Hongzhi True Monarch took out another talisman and loudly read its content. These talismans either sought some Divine Ability secret techniques or asked for help in overcoming certain cultivation obstacles that individuals couldn't solve on their own.

Especially when seeking help with cultivation issues, cultivators would only resort to this method as a last resort. Despite You Hongzhi True Monarch acting as an intermediary, some secrets about their own cultivation techniques were inevitably exposed. In fact, some familiar Primordial Spirit True Monarchs could deduce the identities of those seeking help from the nature of the problems. However, the number of requests that could be successfully resolved was limited.

In matters that didn't involve specific cultivation techniques and wouldn't reveal the sect's secrets, Meng Zhang was quite interested. Although he himself had limited experience and knowledge, thanks to the sect's inheritance, his perception was quite good. He could identify the key points of some of these issues at a glance and had good solutions for them.

Unwilling to draw too much attention to himself, he chose two problems with extremely generous rewards to solve. After You Hongzhi True Monarch announced the problems, any cultivator interested in the rewards and capable of solving the issues could secretly contact him to obtain the contact information of the requester. After this phase, both parties could commission You Hongzhi True Monarch to act as an intermediary and conduct private transactions.

You Hongzhi True Monarch seemed to be providing a free service without charging any fees, but he gained several invisible benefits. Once this phase ended, the Primordial Spirit True Monarchs who were in no rush to leave formed small groups and circles, gathering in the manor.

At this point, You Hongzhi True Monarch was extremely busy, serving several pairs of trading partners. Meng Zhang handed over the talismans with the solutions to the problems and received his reward from You Hongzhi True Monarch.

This trading method was not perfect and had many flaws, leading to some disputes. However, over the years, no better method emerged, and the disputes were manageable and eventually resolved. As a result, this trading method continued to be used.

By helping others with their cultivation difficulties, Meng Zhang received considerable rewards. The Fourth Rank Heaven and Earth Spiritual Object, Yin Yang Essence, allowed his natal magic tool, Yin Yang Spirit Gourd, to shorten the time needed to advance to a Fourth Rank magic tool. The refined Ironblood Fiend Qi, pure and

menacing, greatly assisted the growth of his spiritual weapon, Spiritsnake Spear. Ten strands of Pure Jade Inspiration also benefited Meng Zhang's cultivation.

In reality, Meng Zhang could solve more problems and obtain more Heaven and Earth Spiritual Objects. However, he knew the importance of moderation. Even with You Hongzhi True Monarch as an intermediary, answering questions for others could still expose him. He couldn't trust You Hongzhi True Monarch either, as revealing his insights and knowledge would not benefit him but might instead trigger others' covetousness.

In the current Jiuqu League, many people knew that Taiyi Sect inherited its cultivation techniques from the Middle-Earth Continent's major cultivation sect. However, most people didn't believe that the current Taiyi Sect truly possessed the inheritance of its prime. Otherwise, Taiyi Sect wouldn't have fallen to its current sorry state. Some even thought that the current Taiyi Sect was just forcibly claiming a prestigious ancestry to enhance their reputation. Such situations were not uncommon in the Cultivation World.

For instance, Taiyi Sect's old rival, Fire Cloud Sect, once claimed to have inherited techniques from White Sun Valley and considered themselves a branch of White Sun Valley, which was nothing more than shameless self-promotion.

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## **Chapter 737: Hidden**

White Sun Valley is indeed a prominent sect in the Grand Crossing Cultivation Circle, and its strength is not much weaker than that of the Azure Origin Sect. So, with brazen faces, the Fire Cloud Sect seeks to recognize White Sun Valley as its ancestor. Of course, the Fire Cloud Sect is cautious in its approach, only daring to secretly claim this ancestry to gain prestige without openly worshiping White Sun Valley as their true ancestor. To some unsuspecting eyes, it appears as if the Fire Cloud Sect has a remarkable heritage, but to those who truly understand, it's nothing more than a farce.

In a similar vein, many see the Taiyi Sect in a comparable light. Although they have no real connection to the true Taiyi Sect, they still insist on attaching themselves to a powerful ancestor. The real Taiyi Sect has been extinct for many years, and no one bothers to investigate these baseless claims. It's quite possible that the supposed ancestors of Taiyi Sect were mere outer disciples or servants of the original Taiyi Sect, who never received its genuine teachings. After the fall of the true Taiyi Sect, they identified themselves as its descendants and founded what is now known as the Taiyi Sect. While the current Taiyi Sect might possess some heritage, it certainly doesn't inherit the true essence of the original Taiyi Sect.

Due to this impression, coupled with the rise of the Taiyi Sect and its protection by Jin Li True Monarch and now the achievements of Meng Zhang as Primordial Spirit True Monarch, nobody dares to forcefully seize their inheritance. Those who may harbor

such intentions likely lack the capability, while those who do have the power, such as the Jade Sword Sect and Azure Origin Sect, have no interest in such affairs.

However, if the specific details of the legacies hidden within the Void Cauldron were to be leaked, it might entice the Dali Dynasty to covet them.

After receiving his reward, Meng Zhang did not rush to leave. With the introduction of Elder Beast Fury, he mingled with the attending Primordial Spirit True Monarchs, making some acquaintances. If opportunities arise in the future, they might deepen these connections.

The gathering lasted for several days, and after the main events concluded, some of the Primordial Spirit True Monarchs bid their farewells and left.

So far, Meng Zhang has not successfully integrated into any particular group. Although Elder Beast Fury seems to be trying to connect and assist him, Meng Zhang can faintly sense that there is still a distance between them, preventing him from truly entering Elder Beast Fury's inner circle.

Having achieved the objectives of this meeting to some extent, Meng Zhang took his leave from the host You Hongzhi True Monarch's polite entreaties and returned to the Taiyi Sect.

Back in the sect, everything was in order, and there were no major matters that required his attention as the Sect Master. Thus, Meng Zhang focused on cultivating peacefully.

He took out the pure jade inspiration he obtained and carefully confirmed its authenticity before utilizing a special technique to absorb and refine its spiritual essence. The pure jade inspiration was brimming with vast and pure spiritual energy, and if fortunate, one could even sense the presence of the Grand Dao of Heaven and Earth while assimilating its insights.

Meng Zhang spent nearly two months to fully absorb and refine the strand of pure jade inspiration. As he had recently entered the Primordial Spirit stage, his cultivation base progressed rapidly, visibly increasing at a staggering rate.

If absorbing the Nine Heavens Refined Essence was likened to a meager meal, then absorbing the spiritual insights from the pure jade inspiration was akin to a sumptuous feast. After experiencing the taste of the pure jade inspiration, Meng Zhang found the Nine Heavens Refined Essence to be bland and unappetizing in comparison.

The pure jade inspiration is not easily obtained and requires venturing into the dangerous extraterritorial void to collect. Given Meng Zhang's current Cultivation Base, he dare not rashly enter the extraterritorial void. He carefully stows away the remaining pure jade inspiration, reserving it for more crucial needs. In his daily practice, he continues to focus on absorbing and refining the Nine Heavens Refined Essence.

His Natal Magic Tool, the Yin Yang Spirit Gourd, has become highly spiritual. Placing the Fourth Rank Heaven and Earth Spiritual Object, Yin Yang Essence, beside it, the Yin Yang Spirit Gourd spontaneously begins to absorb and refine it. The Ironblood Fiend Qi, while not a rare spiritual entity, can be gathered through secret techniques on large-scale battlefields where the casualties are significant. The larger the scale of the war, the better the quality of the absorbed Ironblood Fiend Qi. The quantity and quality of Ironblood Fiend Qi that Meng Zhang possesses are abundant and exceptional, surpassing many Fourth Rank spiritual entities. Despite being of Third Rank grade, its value exceeds that of many Fourth Rank spiritual entities due to its exceptionally pure and intense killing aura.

Carefully, Meng Zhang takes out the Spiritsnake Spear and gently integrates the Ironblood Fiend Qi into it. A phantom serpent appears above the Spiritsnake Spear, hungrily absorbing the Ironblood Fiend Qi. Meng Zhang infuses True Essence into the spear, assisting in its absorption and refinement.

In the following days, aside from his regular cultivation, Meng Zhang focuses on enhancing his two magic tools. However, this routine is soon interrupted by the arrival of Luo Ye Daoist Master.

Luo Ye Daoist Master seems a bit embarrassed when meeting Meng Zhang. Last time, she introduced Meng Zhang to Wen Dong, the envoy of the Dali Dynasty, but their meeting did not yield any results due to the prideful nature of the Dali Dynasty's representatives. Nevertheless, Meng Zhang holds no grudge over the matter, understanding that it was simply a result of the Dali Dynasty's arrogance.

Luo Ye Daoist Master gets to the point and asks Meng Zhang for help with a matter involving a faction from her branch of the Dark Alliance. Meng Zhang had agreed to help last time, and he remains true to his promise this time as well. Pleased with his willingness, Luo Ye Daoist Master asks him to accompany her in a mission to ambush the enemies.

After informing the sect, Meng Zhang follows Luo Ye Daoist Master, leaving the Taiyi Sect's mountain gate, Hundred Grass Slope, and flying towards the outskirts of the Demon Wind Gobi. They make several detours before reaching a hidden outpost.

This Dark Alliance secret outpost is situated south of the Demon Wind Gobi and lies underground, with countless interconnected passages resembling spider webs linking numerous independent chambers.

Luo Ye Daoist Master leads Meng Zhang into one of these chambers and hands him a hooded cloak. It is a special magic tool that, once refined with True Essence, conceals the true identity of even cultivators of the same level. In the Dark Alliance, Meng Zhang has seen many of these identity-hiding magic tools, each varying in grade for cultivators from the Refining Qi stage to the Primordial Spirit stage.

It becomes apparent that the Dark Alliance lives up to its reputation, particularly in maintaining secrecy and special obsessions with concealing identities.

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## **Chapter 738: Cleans up the gateway**

Meng Zhang didn't say much; he directly refined the cloak and draped it over himself. Once the cloak was on, Meng Zhang transformed into a blurry figure, perfectly concealing his appearance and form. Even if various Divine Abilities were used for careful observation, they could only see a hazy figure shrouded in mist, unable to see through Meng Zhang's true identity.

They were not far from taking action at this point. Daoist Master Luo Ye didn't conceal anything from Meng Zhang and revealed the adversary he was dealing with. It turned out that within the Jiuqu League's Dark Alliance branch, the internal situation was complex, and factional struggles were intense.

When facing the enticement from the Dali Dynasty, most of the factions in the Dark Alliance had reached a consensus and were willing to cooperate with the Dali Dynasty. However, unbeknownst to them, the Dali Dynasty had already infiltrated the Dark Alliance branch. They had successfully recruited a group of individuals whose influence within the Dark Alliance was significant.

Luo Ye Daoist Master's faction realized their vulnerability against the mighty Dali Dynasty and chose limited cooperation. Their plan was to outwardly submit to the Dali Dynasty and obey some reasonable commands, but maintain their independence and not be fully controlled by the Dali Dynasty.

Upon hearing Luo Ye Daoist Master's description of her faction's intentions, Meng Zhang felt a sudden shock. Earlier, when Luo Ye Daoist Master sought his advice on how to deal with the Dali Dynasty, Meng Zhang had confidently suggested that her faction actively side with the Dali Dynasty to gain greater benefits. Now, it was clear from Luo Ye Daoist Master's account that her faction had already carefully considered the situation and knew they couldn't directly confront the Dali Dynasty. They understood how to negotiate with them and preserve their own independence.

Meng Zhang realized that he was not as strategically astute as he thought. The advice he had given was not as insightful as he believed. He reminded himself not to act presumptuously among the strategists and wise individuals within the Dark Alliance.

In fact, Meng Zhang's thoughts were somewhat self-deprecating. Luo Ye Daoist Master had genuinely sought his counsel, and his advice had indeed been valuable. She had followed his advice, persuaded her faction's leadership, and helped them make crucial decisions and formulate subsequent plans.

Luo Ye Daoist Master was unaware of the complexity in Meng Zhang's mind and continued to narrate the entire sequence of events.

Although the Dark Alliance branch of the Jiuqu League had decided to align with the Dali Dynasty, they didn't want to become genuine vassals or puppets. They were determined to maintain their independence. During negotiations with the Dali Dynasty's envoy, Wen Dong, his attitude remained ambiguous and evasive due to the presence of traitors within the Dark Alliance branch who had completely sided with the Dali Dynasty.

These traitors were obedient to the Dali Dynasty but deliberately caused trouble for the other members of the Dark Alliance branch. Having the upper hand with these traitors' support, Wen Dong believed he had the advantage during the negotiations and was reluctant to make any clear commitments.

Faced with no other option, the high-ranking members of Luo Ye Daoist Master's faction made a painful decision. They had to eliminate those traitors who had fully aligned with the Dali Dynasty to preserve the purity of their organization.

In the Cultivation World, internal strife within cultivation forces was not uncommon. Particularly in organizations like the Dark Alliance, such conflicts often turned bloodier and more brutal.

Meng Zhang had no interest in determining who was right or wrong in this situation, nor did he care about the authenticity of the arguments presented.

Since Meng Zhang had already chosen to align himself with Daoist Master Luo Ye's faction and sought their friendship, he had no choice but to cooperate with their actions. To prevent interference from the Dali Dynasty, the operation to clean house had to be swift and decisive. Once launched, they needed to eliminate the traitors swiftly and efficiently. All battles had to be concluded within the shortest possible time.

The high-ranking members of Luo Ye Daoist Master's faction had coordinated in advance and united most of the Dark Alliance branch's forces. They had devised a meticulous plan to eradicate the enemy completely. Ordinary cultivators were manageable, but dealing with enemy Primordial Spirit True Monarchs presented a more significant challenge. Killing these adversaries' Primordial Spirits was of utmost importance. Letting enemy Primordial Spirit True Monarchs escape would provide them with a chance to turn the tables and create numerous complications.

To ensure they had enough power for decisive strikes, they not only mobilized their own strength but also sought outside help actively. Having known and trusted Meng Zhang for many years, Luo Ye Daoist Master was willing to foster good relations with him, making him a valuable asset for this operation. Luo Ye Daoist Master shared all the details of the impending battle, ensuring that their allies were well-informed, preventing them from going into battle without a clear understanding of the situation.

Having been fully briefed on the plan, Meng Zhang had no objections. He knew that this time, he was just an emotionless fighter, executing whatever tasks his superiors assigned to him. If the plan went smoothly and their side gained the upper hand, he would fiercely strike down their enemies. However, if things took an unexpected turn, and their side fell behind, he wouldn't hesitate to escape when necessary.

After Luo Ye Daoist Master finished briefing Meng Zhang, she hurriedly left, leaving him alone in the cave, waiting in silence. Meng Zhang crossed his legs, closed his eyes, and began to meditate.

After about half an hour, a message talisman flew into the cave. Meng Zhang received it and, after reading its contents, stood up and left the cave. Following the instructions on the talisman, Meng Zhang traveled through underground passages, taking twists and turns until he finally arrived at a spacious hall.

In the hall, two cultivators were already meditating at the center. As Luo Ye Daoist Master had described, they were the leaders of her faction - Red Pig True Monarch and Jade Rabbit True Monarch.

Red Pig True Monarch was a tall, heavily built individual with a belly full of fat. On the other hand, Jade Rabbit True Monarch possessed a captivating and alluring appearance, making it almost impossible to associate her with her true identity as a Primordial Spirit True Monarch.

As Meng Zhang entered, Jade Rabbit True Monarch blinked her alluring eyes, seemingly extending an invitation. But Meng Zhang dared not linger on her gaze and respectfully greeted both of them with a bow. They were senior Primordial Spirit True Monarchs, with profound cultivation bases and inscrutable powers.

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## **Chapter 739: Flying Cat**

Jade Rabbit True Monarch let out a playful laugh, "Sect Master Meng, we are fellow daoists; there's no need for such formality."

"You keep calling me 'senior,' making me feel ancient. If you truly hold me in high regard, just call me 'big sister.'"

Meng Zhang remained silent, pretending to be dumb.

"Enough, you shameless flirt. Every time you see a young man, you can't help but flirt. Your behavior might scare off our honored guest," Red Pig True Monarch scolded half-seriously.

"Sect Master Meng, you don't need to pay attention to this shameless one; it's just her way. No one bothers her, and she'll calm down on her own."

"By the way, there will be others coming later. If you don't want to reveal your identity in front of them, then give yourself a code name beforehand."

The Dark Alliance had thought ahead and prepared special magic tools to conceal their true identities. It seemed they also hoped their recruits wouldn't easily expose themselves.

Meng Zhang had difficulty coming up with names and struggled to think of a good one. After some contemplation, he finally said, "You can both call me 'Flying Cat.'"

Meng Zhang chose this code name because his spirit pet, Liu Li (Colored Glaze), was a small cat.

When Meng Zhang initially acquired his two spirit pets, he followed his heart without expecting them to play a significant role.

As Meng Zhang's cultivation base skyrocketed, even the Spirit Beasts with slow cultivation progress couldn't keep up, let alone the famous geniuses in the Cultivation World.

Now, Meng Zhang was already a Primordial Spirit True Monarch, while the two spirit pets he had obtained were still striving to reach the level of Third Rank Spirit Beasts.

In both battle and assistance, they had long ceased to be of any help to Meng Zhang.

When Meng Zhang went out, he didn't bother bringing the two little ones with him. He let them stay at home, allowing them to grow freely.

In his spare time from cultivation, Meng Zhang occasionally enjoyed watching the two little pets being cute, which helped him relax.

Upon hearing Meng Zhang's choice of the code name "Flying Cat," Red Pig True Monarch remained silent, but Jade Rabbit True Monarch burst into a series of giggles.

"Sister, I have a dear friend whose code name also includes the word 'cat.' When the time comes, bring your little tomcat to meet her, and you can get acquainted."

Meng Zhang just smiled and didn't respond.

In normal circumstances, he didn't mind bantering and joking with beautiful women. However, since the other party belonged to the Dark Alliance, he had a natural sense of caution and didn't open up easily.

The Dark Alliance consisted of various unorthodox factions and even demonic path cultivators. If they saw someone attractive, they might swarm like sycophants, and it could end up draining someone down to their very marrow.

Jade Rabbit True Monarch, upon encountering Meng Zhang, seemed to have discovered an intriguing toy and couldn't resist teasing and provoking him, engaging in playful banter.

Meng Zhang played the fool, feigning ignorance and avoiding any substantial response.

When Jade Rabbit True Monarch went too far, Red Pig True Monarch would step in with a few words of admonishment, but Jade Rabbit True Monarch paid it no mind.

This scene didn't last long and came to an end as new guests arrived.

Next, a cultivator who was dressed similarly to Meng Zhang swaggered into the cave.

This cultivator didn't bother with pleasantries and plopped down on the ground. "Jade Rabbit, my dear, have you missed Old Blade?"

"I've been thinking about you day and night, my dear Jade Rabbit. My heart has no room for anyone else since you entered it."

Jade Rabbit True Monarch scoffed, "You rough fellow, who's your 'dear'? You can't even speak properly."

Red Pig True Monarch paid no attention to their banter and proceeded with introductions.

"Old Blade, we have a newcomer this time. You can call him Flying Cat."

"Old Blade, this is Flying Cat, and we've had a long-standing friendship for many years. We've cooperated many times, and it's always been pleasant."

As a newcomer, Meng Zhang kept a low profile and nodded in acknowledgment to Old Blade.

Old Blade, however, ignored Meng Zhang and disdainfully snorted.

"I wonder if you're of any use or just another silver-spoon cultivator."

"In all these years, I've met plenty of Primordial Spirit stage cultivators who couldn't fight a lick."

Meng Zhang didn't appreciate Old Blade's attitude but didn't see any reason to argue with him. He had long passed the age of recklessness and wasn't about to engage in physical confrontation over a few words.

Seeing Meng Zhang remaining silent, Red Pig True Monarch assumed he might be feeling uncomfortable.

"Flying Cat, don't mind Old Blade's attitude. After spending more time with him, you'll realize he's not a bad person; he's a rare honest one."

After consoling Meng Zhang, Red Pig True Monarch began to brief Old Blade on the mission.

Old Blade appeared entirely indifferent after hearing Red Pig True Monarch's words.

"You people, always talking big and righteous, yet it's clear you're causing internal strife within the organization, trying to gain an advantage. You act like you're the embodiment of justice."

"If you ask me, there's too much unnecessary talk. When things become unbearable, we should just take action."

"Life and death are decided in battle. If you don't submit, we fight. That's the true nature of us cultivators."

Red Pig True Monarch had known Old Blade for years and understood his temperament. She chose not to engage with his foul mouth.

After a short wait, the last helper arrived.

"Wood, why are you always the last one to arrive? Do you really think you're some bigshot who has to make a grand entrance?"

The Primordial Spirit True Monarch known as Old Blade was truly a character with a foul mouth, sparing no one.

Fortunately, Wood was no stranger to working with the group and knew Old Blade's ways. He was also a quiet and reserved individual and chose not to respond to Old Blade.

Wood, like Old Blade, was a Primordial Spirit True Monarch and had a personality quite different from Old Blade's.

After Wood's arrival, Red Pig True Monarch patiently went through the details of the mission once again, clarifying what each of them needed to do. Among them, Meng

Zhang was the only newcomer; Old Blade and Wood had worked with Red Pig True Monarch's team many times before.

They were all well-versed in the procedures involved, and trust had already been established among the four Primordial Spirit True Monarchs.

Being hired by the Dark Alliance often involved carrying out unsavory tasks, such as assassinations, which required them to conceal their identities thoroughly.

If certain actions were exposed, it would be difficult to find refuge within the Jiuqu League, and the consequences could be dire.

Though this mission was related to internal strife within the Dark Alliance, Old Blade, Wood, and Meng Zhang adhered to the usual practice of concealing their identities.

If their targets in this operation discovered their true identities, it would undoubtedly create a formidable enemy. If the operation failed and the target escaped, it would lead to even more trouble. Cultivators like Meng Zhang, who had families and businesses, would bring significant problems to their sects if they had a powerful enemy.

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## **Chapter 740: Threat**

Meng Zhang remained silent, quietly observing the others. Known as Old Blade and Primordial Spirit True Monarch Woodenhead, he concealed his identity, but the nearby Primordial Spirit True Monarchs of the Jiuqu League were aware of his presence. If they were to take action, even a little bit, some clues would inevitably be exposed. Especially the prominent Primordial Spirit True Monarchs who often engaged in conflicts, they were more prone to exposure.

Meng Zhang was not very familiar with the nearby Primordial Spirit True Monarchs, and most of what he knew about them was hearsay. If it weren't for attending the gathering hosted by True Monarch You Hongzhi last time, he would know even fewer Primordial Spirit True Monarchs.

Red Pig True Monarch and Jade Rabbit True Monarch were seniors to Luo YeDaoist Master, so Meng Zhang also had reservations about trusting them too much. While Luo YeDaoist Master was a trustworthy friend, her seniors were a different matter altogether.

Before taking any action this time, Red Pig True Monarch explained various arrangements, seemingly having a good grasp of the situation. However, on the battlefield, the situation could change in an instant. Meng Zhang would never be complacent or put his safety in the hands of others.

As the time approached, Red Pig True Monarch signaled everyone to move. The five Primordial Spirit True Monarchs present left the chamber together.

Leading the group through a complex underground passage with many twists and turns, Red Pig True Monarch eventually brought them to the end of a corridor. He gestured for everyone to stop and gather together. Then he took out a small leaf and waved it casually.

The leaf flew up and enlarged countless times, transforming into a broad curtain that enveloped everyone securely. Trusting Red Pig True Monarch and seeing that the leaf posed no harm, including Meng Zhang, no one attempted to evade it.

Once enveloped, Meng Zhang keenly perceived that he seemed to be in an isolated space. He could see the outside scenery and hear the outside sounds, but this wrapped space seemed disconnected from the original world. Nothing inside leaked to the outside, including the visuals and sounds.

As Red Pig True Monarch had instructed beforehand, everyone remained patient and waited slowly.

After a considerable amount of time had passed, a group of people arrived from the other end of the passage, appearing not far from where the others were. The two leading figures among them were the targets of Meng Zhang and his group's ambush - Dong Qiang True Monarch, the leader of another faction within the Dark Alliance, and True Monarch White Crow.

Following the two Primordial Spirit True Monarchs were five Gold Core Daoist Masters. Among them, one person was surprisingly familiar to Meng Zhang - Daoist Master Black Fox.

Once they arrived, Dong Qiang True Monarch forcefully grabbed towards the front. Initially, the end of the corridor seemed empty, but his action seemed to lift an invisible curtain, revealing a large hall behind it.

In the center of the hall, a refined middle-aged man was engrossed in reading a book. Startled by the intrusion, he raised his head and looked at the unexpected visitors, wearing a wry smile on his face.

"Dong Qiang, when will you ever change this impatience of yours? You've forcibly broken my formation, and now I have to spend effort repairing it," the middle-aged man said.

"Dong Qiang, my brother, your impatience will never change in this lifetime," Dong Qiang True Monarch replied in a low tone. "If my brother had given me a definite answer, I wouldn't have come looking for him like this."

The middle-aged man was also a Primordial Spirit True Monarch from the Dark Alliance, but he belonged to the third major faction, independent of Red Pig True Monarch and Dong Qiang True Monarch. He was the leader of that faction and was known as Book Mountain True Monarch.

"Brother, you can't force me. You should know my principles of dealing with things—I won't get involved in your conflicts," Book Mountain True Monarch said earnestly.

"Brother, listen to my advice. We are all fellow cultivators, and there's no problem we can't resolve. One day, I'll bring Red Pig Brother here, and we can all sit down and talk openly, solving any issues face to face. There's no need for such hostility, risking life and death," he continued, trying to persuade the others.

However, Dong Qiang True Monarch and True Monarch White Crow remained unmoved. True Monarch White Crow even showed a sneer on his face.

"Book Mountain, my friend, you are still too naive. I wonder how you've lived to your age," Dong Qiang True Monarch bluntly replied. "Between us and Red Pig's group, we have long been at odds and must determine the victor."

"Brother, the situation has been explained to you many times. This time, with the support of the Dali Dynasty, if Red Pig's group doesn't submit, they will have only one path—death," Dong Qiang True Monarch added.

"Brother is trying to help you and your followers find a better future by joining our side," he said, emphasizing that he was acting out of goodwill.

Despite the persuasive efforts from Dong Qiang True Monarch, Book Mountain True Monarch still stubbornly refused, and they had already had similar conversations many times before. Neither side could convince the other.

"Brother, since you have the upper hand, why do you need me to join you?" Book Mountain True Monarch questioned.

Before Dong Qiang True Monarch could reply, True Monarch White Crow grew impatient and spoke up, saying that Book Mountain was a stubborn bookworm who couldn't be persuaded. He asked directly whether Book Mountain would join them or not.

Facing True Monarch White Crow's coercion, Book Mountain True Monarch shook his head helplessly.

True Monarch White Crow then showed a black bead, boasting with satisfaction. Book Mountain True Monarch was shocked to see the bead, unable to believe that it was in True Monarch White Crow's possession.

"This thing was lost long ago, how could it be in your hands?" Book Mountain True Monarch exclaimed in disbelief.

Proudly, True Monarch White Crow didn't answer his question and casually tossed the bead in his hand.

Meng Zhang also recognized the bead. Though years had passed, he still vividly remembered it.

When he was still a Gold Core cultivator, Daoist Master Black Fox had entrusted him to venture into the Yuan'tu Great Prairie, risking his life to enter the Black Market's treasure vault within the extraterritorial Barbarian Clan's controlled area. There, he retrieved this bead.

After Luo Ye Daoist Master processed it, Meng Zhang returned the bead to Daoist Master Black Fox.

Unexpectedly, after all these years, the same bead appeared here, in the hands of True Monarch White Crow.

With his current experience, even from a distance, Meng Zhang could discern the bead's purpose. It was a special magical tool used to store soul energy, similar to the soul lamps often used by various sects in the Cultivation World.

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