

## **World 941**

Chapter 941: Hall of Ten Directions How could this Purple Electric Sword learn such bad habits!

After hearing this, Chen Mobai had only this thought in his mind.

He instinctively felt that he couldn't indulge it, now it even dared to demand more Spirit Stones, what would it be like in the future!

But with the arrow on the bowstring, he still needed the wholehearted cooperation of the Purple Electric Sword to stand a chance of arm-wrestling with this Core Formation Late Stage Xuan Shu, so Chen Mobai could only agree for now.

Chen Mobai: "After we kill him, how many Spirit Stones do you want, just name your price."

Purple Electric Sword: "This... probably can't kill him."

The Purple Electric Sword, which had been all geared up to demand more Spirit Stones, suddenly deflated.

Chen Mobai: "Can't kill him?! And you still dared to ask for more Spirit Stones!"

Purple Electric Sword: "Then... maybe let's not add then."

The simple Purple Electric Sword thought about it and felt it made sense, after all, it only asked for half a piece when slaying enemies before, and now there was no certainty in achieving a kill, asking for more would be somewhat embarrassing.

Chen Mobai: "However, since the opponent's cultivation level is indeed higher, if you can injure him, I will reward you half a piece more, making it a whole one."

The Purple Electric Sword, whose morale had been a bit deflated, immediately soared upon hearing this.

Amidst the rumbling of thunder, a purple current flickered in the void like a dragon-snake, coiling and spiraling as it infused into the long-hilted Sword Artifact in Chen Mobai's palm.

Chen Mobai only felt that the vast Pure Yang Spiritual Power within his Dantian Qi Sea was drained by a third in an instant, and his Gold Core dimmed significantly.

However, this made him feel that the power concentrated in the Rank-4 Sword Artifact in his palm was even more terrifying and sharp than before.

With a sizzling sound, Chen Mobai raised his sword!

A streak of purple light burst from the tip of the sword, like a heaven-splitting purple rainbow shooting straight into the sky.

The clouds in the sky rotated around it as the center, and the nature's spiritual energy above Giant Tree Ridge was drawn by this sword, generating strands of purple lightning in the void, twinkling as they merged into the Sword Artifact and the body of Chen Mobai who wielded it.

A feeling akin to acupuncture spread from the palm holding the sword throughout his body, and had Chen Mobai not cultivated the Longevity Dao Body, he might have been injured.

Before he could question the Purple Electric Sword, a blindingly brilliant golden meteor had already flashed out from Xuan Shu's right hand.

The renowned "Sun Shooting Halberd Technique" of the Xuan Xiao Taoist Palace, when unleashed by him, possessed a far greater power than Nanxuan Jing.

Chen Mobai waved his left sleeve, and an Ancient Bronze Mirror flew out.

After a Spiritual Power Injection of Pure Yang Spiritual Power, the Profound Yang Divine Light Shield transformed into a semi-circular arc of light in an instant, shielding Chen Mobai.

With a bang!

The golden meteor collided directly with the Profound Yang Divine Light Shield, unleashing a dazzling red and gold shockwave impossible to look at directly, the air explosion rippled out like water waves in midair.

Chen Mobai felt the Pure Yang Spiritual Power in his Dantian Qi Sea being drained crazily by the Profound Yang Divine Light Mirror and frowned slightly.

Compared to his encounter with Nanxuan Jing, he had used up four times the amount!

After just two exchanges with Xuan Shu, Chen Mobai had used up more than half of his spiritual power.

This couldn't go on, he had to play his last sword, to keep up appearances!

With this thought, Chen Mobai, who had originally planned to strike three times, suddenly brightened his eyes and loosened his grip on the Purple Electric Sword.

“Master...”

The Purple Electric Sword felt the tight grip on it disappear and was full of doubts, thinking perhaps Chen Mobai could not bear the pain of the increased Purple Lightning Infusion after increasing its power by another ten percent.

Just as the Purple Electric Sword was considering dissipating one-third of the concentrated Purple Brilliance Sword Light, a translucent Skeletal Palm extended from the right side of the void next to Chen Mobai.

The Skeletal Palm, with five-colored brilliance at the fingertips, carried a sense of cyclic perfection, and firmly grasped the long-hilted Sword Artifact hovering in midair!

“I want to try the greatest power I can control you with right now, keep refining the nature’s spiritual energy into Purple Lightning, do not stop unless I say so!”

Chen Mobai’s heart and mind communicated to the Purple Electric Sword, and the latter did not hesitate, as it did not know how long it had been since it had gone all out.

Although it still could not display its full glory, being able to increase its power a bit more filled it with joy.

And so, the Purple Electric Sword began to run wild!

Boom!

In the void where originally only one dragon-snake-sized purple electric current coursed, another suddenly emerged in an instant!

The purple current was absorbed by the sword tip, extending along the sword body to the translucent Five Elements Dao Palace arm of the All Laws Persona, and although Chen Mobai’s body was spared the pain of the Purple Lightning Infusion, his Divine Sense still had to bear the heavy pressure of controlling this power.

Soon, as the silhouette of two half-dragon-snake purple lightnings emerged in the void, he felt that his Divine Sense, at the second level of the Gold Core, had reached its limit and immediately began to call for a stop.

At this moment, the clash between the Profound Yang Divine Light Shield and the Sun Shooting Halberd Technique also reached its peak!

Amid the booming sound, the Golden Halberd’s spiritual power was exhausted, and it fell dimly from the sky.

The Profound Yang Divine Light Shield also trembled as it flew back into Chen Mobai’s sleeve, showing signs that the Defensive Magic Xuan Yang Divine Light had been damaged.

This demonstrated the formidable power of Xuan Shu's Spell!

However, after Chen Mobai blocked one Sun Shooting Halberd Technique, Xuan Shu, standing on the Jade Bridge, had already pulled out two more Golden Halberds from his Storage Bag, and with the golden light flickering in his palm, two comet-like golden streams shot out.

But a dark purple swath of sky-covering Sword Light also erupted from the translucent Five Elements arm next to Chen Mobai at the same time. As the Sword Light spun like a wheel, it swiftly swept towards Xuan Shu on the bridge with the Purple Electric Sword at its center, as if Mowing the Grass.

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The two golden meteors conjured by the Sun Shooting Halberd Technique, upon their halfway journey, encountered deep purple sword radiances, and merely after two breaths' time, they were ground into a sky full of golden dust.

Xuan Shu's eyes widened in shock at this sight, and the Gold Jade Treasure Pearl he had retracted was spat out once more.

A vast eruption of spiritual power, transforming into a golden tempest, wrapped tightly around Xuan Shu like a whirlwind.

The deep purple sword radiances that sliced through the golden tempest burst forth with extremely dazzling radiance, surpassing the Rank-3 level in an instant.

"A Rank-4 Defensive Magic Weapon!?"

It wasn't until then that Chen Mobai realized why, after he had easily slain Nanxuan Jing with the Purple Electric Sword, the former Saint Heir of Xuan Xiao Taoist Palace still dared to seek him out.

So the man had a Rank-4 Magic Artifact to rely on as well!

The collision between the Purple Electric Sword's energy and the Golden Mirage Pearl dominated half of the sky over Giant Tree Ridge, with the tremendous fluctuation of nature's spiritual energy making over

a hundred Foundation Establishment Practitioners gathered in Divine Wood City to celebrate Chen Mobai's Core Formation shiver uncontrollably.

Foundation Establishment Practitioners are already capable of employing the nature's spiritual energy to cast spells.

Compared to the Qi Practitioners who only feel a dazzling, splendid sight, these Foundation Establishment Practitioners can sense the terrifying power between the two individuals clashing above them.

If the two Fourth Order Magic Weapons colliding midair were to fall here now, it's likely at least half of the Foundation Establishment Practitioners present would perish.

Is this the might of a Golden Core Cultivator, the strongest force in the Eastern Wilderness?

Just as some of the family Foundation Establishments were still in awe of Chen Mobai and Xuan Shu, Kong Shanxu from the Five Elements Sect and Ye Bopei from Back to Sky Valley had solemn expressions on their faces.

Both were direct disciples of Core Formation from their sects, having witnessed their own masters in action.

But in their perception, either of the individuals fighting in the sky seemed to be a bit more formidable than their masters.

It made sense for Xuan Shu to be so powerful, as he was once known throughout the East Barbarians as an extraordinary genius a hundred years ago and was considered to possess the talent for Nascent Soul Formation.

But this Elder Chen of Divine Wood Sect—even if he were a Sword Cultivation Genius like Xuan Shu, after all, he had only just formed his core, so how could he fight so fiercely with Xuan Shu, who is at the Core Formation Late Stage?

Could it be that Elder Chen's talent is even more heaven-defying than Xuan Shu's?

With this thought, both Kong Shanxu and Ye Bopei became somewhat restless.

Zhou Shengqing of the Divine Wood Sect had already made their two sects feel like there was a thorn in their side just with his Nascent Soul Formation; with this newly formed genius, whose talent was so frightening, would they not have even less chance to resist given some time?

As the two pondered how they might suppress the growth of Divine Wood Sect, the collision between the two Fourth Order Magic Weapons in midair finally determined a victor.

An "All Laws Persona" that had emerged beside Chen Mobai began to dissipate inch by inch like green smoke, and amidst the humming sound, the Purple Electric Sword landed in front of him.

On the other side, Xuan Shu's face paled slightly, and he swallowed back the Gold Jade Treasure Pearl that he had spit out earlier.

"Master, I feel that the adversary is not in harmony with the Magic Weapon; his maneuvers were hindered, and moreover, I estimate that he probably had to use the original spiritual power of his Gold Core to bring forth the might of a Rank-4. If we unite man and sword like just now to strike another sword blow, we might be able to slay him."

The Purple Electric Sword conveyed some excited emotions to Chen Mobai, but feeling the nearly depleted Pure Yang Spiritual Power within his Dantian Qi Sea, Chen Mobai could only shake his head.

If he were to take action now, he would have to draw upon the original spiritual power of the Gold Core, which was irreplaceable once used.

There was no need to compromise his own foundation for the sake of this Xuan Shu.

"That sword of yours, where did it come from?"

At this time, in front of Chen Mobai, Xuan Shu, having taken an elixir, rejuvenated almost instantaneously, his originally pale complexion turning rosy. He raised his head to look at the Purple Electric Sword, his eyes intense.

“And that bead of yours, what’s its origin?”

Chen Mobai smiled and retorted. The last reserve of spiritual power in his Dantian Qi Sea began to circulate, readying to activate the Ground Firelight escape technique at any moment to descend into the Array of Ten Thousand Woods below.

“A hundred years ago, a relic appeared in Dongyi Panghai Mountain, left by the Fanhai Sect of the Hall of Ten Directions. I entered it and acquired this Golden Mirage Pearl.”

Xuan Shu actually revealed the origin of his fourth-grade treasure bead, causing Chen Mobai to be slightly surprised.

Having been with the Divine Wood Sect for so many years, although he wasn’t very clear about the rise and fall of minor powers, he had read through all the legends and epics related to the Tianhe Realm concerning holy lands, Divinity Transformation, and even Ascension Superpowers.

The renown of the Hall of Ten Directions was among them.

At the peak of the Eastern Emperor Court’s power, it was one of the sects assigned to suppress all corners of the world. When the ten halls united, even the holy land major sects with Divinity Transformation experts had to retreat three steps in deference.

After the disintegration of the Eastern Emperor Court, some of the halls of the ten fell to ruin, while others left the Eastern Earth Region to continue their lineage, and some, relying on their extraordinary power, managed to survive the great calamity and even became one of the holy lands.

Since Xuan Shu possessed a treasure of the Hall of Ten Directions, could he also have inherited something from the Fanhai Sect?

It was said that the Fanhai Sect cultivated the technique to overturn rivers and seas, and at its zenith, under the edict of the Eastern Emperor Court, even the Dragon King of the water and sea territories outside the Eastern Earth Region did not dare to set foot on land.

“I’ve finished speaking. What about you?”

Xuan Shu spoke again. After swallowing that elixir, the initially pale and weak aura from using the Golden Mirage Pearl had completely vanished, and it seemed as if he had restored all his spiritual power, his gaze burning as he looked at the Purple Electric Sword in Chen Mobai’s hand.

[It seems it’s time to bring that out.]

Chen Mobai had long before thought about how to explain the various magic artifacts and spiritual objects he had brought over from the Immortal Gate in the Tianhe Realm.

That would be under the pretense of the Longevity Sect.

Zhou Shengqing and Fu Zongjue were already deeply convinced of this, firmly believing that Chen Mobai had received the true inheritance of this ancient great sect and was the living heir of the Blue Emperor of the Longevity Sect.

Chen Mobai raised the Purple Electric Sword in his hand and gently released it.

The Golden Core Domain was activated, the void opened up as if a mouth was unfastened, slowly swallowing the fourth-grade sword artifact until it completely disappeared into thin air.

Witnessing this scene, Xuan Shu’s eyes sharply narrowed. With his cultivation realm, he was unable to see how the sword artifact had vanished?

“I am the Saint Son of the Longevity Sect!”

And at this moment, Chen Mobai resoundingly declared his “true” identity!

Once these words were said, Xuan Shu was first shocked, then his expression passed through a flash of realization, and he looked solemnly at the handsome young man in front of him, who had just achieved Core Formation.

The Longevity Sect was an influence even more ancient than the Eastern Emperor Court, and it was said to have worshipped a Heavenly Sovereign of Longevity.

Unfortunately, one day, due to some taboo, the upper echelons of the Longevity Sect vanished overnight.

However, the relics of the Longevity Sect were scattered across the six domains of the Eastern Land, and True Lord Yuan was able to ascend because he had cultivated the Longevity Technique, greatly extending his lifespan and reverting to youth.

If this person had indeed received the inheritance of the Longevity Sect, then that would explain everything.

For a great power that once worshipped the Heavenly Sovereign of Longevity, a fourth-grade sword artifact was merely trivial.

In that case, the reason he couldn't defeat him wasn't that the opponent was exceptional, but simply because the sword artifact of the Longevity Sect was formidable.

With that thought, Xuan Shu felt balanced in his heart. He gave Chen Mobai another deep look and then, without saying anything further, turned and rode the Jade Bridge as he disappeared into the horizon.

"This guy, did he simply come here to make a scene for Nanxuan Jing? Or was he sent by the Xuan Xiao Dao Palace to station in the Eastern Wilderness?"

As he watched Xuan Shu's departing figure, Chen Mobai pondered this.

At that moment, a golden light shone at the teleportation array in Giant Tree Ridge, and Mo Douguang's figure appeared, quickly joining Fu Zongjue as they flew to Chen Mobai's side.

"Junior Brother Chen, shall we pursue and attack?"

Mo Douguang asked.

"My spiritual power is depleted, and I cannot take action. Brother Mo has just made a breakthrough; it's essential to consolidate your realm. Let's let him go today."

Chapter 943: The Family Split in the Past Chen Mobai spoke up. Under the current circumstances where he couldn't use the Purple Electric Sword, it was impossible for Mo Douguang and Fu Zongjue alone to kill Xuan Shu.

During their conversation, the three of them had already flown down from the sky.

Chen Mobai landed first above Divine Wood City, said a few words to the Foundation Establishment practitioners from the various powers of the Eastern Wilderness who had come to congratulate him, and concluded the Core Formation ceremony.

As Sect Leader, Chu Zuoshu was responsible for the follow-up work.

Chen Mobai went to join Mo Douguang for tea.

He had originally brought two jars of fine wine, but Mo Douguang, true to the style of a Sword Cultivator, abstained from drinking. Fortunately, the Snow Peak Bai Family had presented Snow Needle Immortal Buds, and the three of them drank and discussed their perspectives on the situation in the Eastern Wilderness.

The discussion was primarily between Chen Mobai and Fu Zongjue. Mo Douguang only gave a brief reply when he was asked.

Fu Zongjue said, "The Xuan Xiao Taoist Palace remains a major threat, but the person in charge has now changed from Nanxuan Jing to Xuan Shu."

Chen Mobai replied, "Without Nascent Soul Cultivators coming forth, the entirety of the Eastern Wilderness is still under the control of our two factions. Xuan Shu alone cannot turn the heavens."

Fu Zongjue added, "Now it all depends on whether Brother Zhou can achieve 'Nascent Soul Formation.' I hope nothing goes wrong during this time."

At that point, the three looked up towards the Everlife Wood, where nature's spiritual energy was boiling and converging. Zhou Shengqing had already taken that step, and whether he lived or died next depended on his fate.

Chen Mobai noted, "If the Xuan Xiao Taoist Palace wants to challenge our two factions in the Eastern Wilderness, their only option is to drag the Five Elements Sect into the fray. We need to guard against that possibility."

As for Yan Shaoyin and Kong Lingling, since they had both sent representatives to attend Chen Mobai's Core Formation ceremony, it was clear that they did not wish to become embroiled in the conflict between the two powers, and for the time being, could be disregarded.

Fu Zongjue suggested, "Isn't Kong Shanxu here? Call him over and give him a warning."

After hearing this, Chen Mobai nodded and used the Heavenly Communication Device to contact Chu Zuoshu.

Divine Wood City.

Following Chen Mobai's departure, the high-ranking officials of the Three Halls and Twelve Divisions, led by Chu Zuoshu, gathered in their respective circles according to their connections. They sang and danced with long sleeves, either discussing the Tao or exchanging elixirs and Spirit Materials.

This was a rare spectacle for those family Foundation Establishment practitioners.

Without the support of a major sect, even though they had some precious resources, they were difficult to trade due to limitations on their use.

Take, for example, the Liu family of Yun Country, who specialized in breeding Azure Blood Carps. Liu Jingxian was also a Rank-2 Artifact Refiner, but typically he only crafted Magic Artifacts for the Foundation Establishment Practitioners of a few major families within Yun Country and wasn't able to sell his skills even once in ten years.

Now, because Liu Jingxian was singled out by Chen Mobai, many families from outside Yun Country became aware of his existence and flocked to socialize with him.

Not only were the Spirit Fish bred by his family booked up, but the orders for refining Magic Artifacts extended several years into the future as well.

Among those coveting Liu Jingxian the most was Patriarch Luo of Yun Country's own Luo family, Luo Sancai.

The fact that Elder Chen had three direct disciples had become widely known amongst all present due to Liu Jingxian's new fame.

The teacher and his four disciples were all from Yun Country's Cultivation World and were disciples who entered the Divine Wood Sect together over twenty years ago.

Among them, Elder Chen was recognized for his extraordinary talent upon joining the sect. He lived up to expectations and, after only four years, suppressed three thousand Qi Practitioners with a single sword, successfully reaching Foundation Establishment as number one among the true disciples. His cultivation then advanced by leaps and bounds, and he now was a Core Formation practitioner, one of the top Cultivators in the Eastern Wilderness.

Besides his exceptional talent in cultivation, Elder Chen's ability to teach and solve doubts was also publicly acknowledged as the best within the Divine Wood Sect.

The majority of Qi Practitioners he advised had succeeded in their Foundation Establishment.

Among his disciples, Luo Yixuan, known as the Southern Mountain Fairy, was considered to resemble Elder Chen the most.

After entering Xiao Nanshan, her extraordinary talent began to unfold under Elder Chen's guidance, consistently securing a spot among the top three true disciples. Her effortless Foundation Establishment further established her as the number one fairy of the Divine Wood Sect. Known for her ethereal beauty, she was the shining moon in the hearts of countless Cultivators.

Logically, this young disciple should have been Elder Chen's favorite.

No one understood why Elder Chen had chosen Liu Jingxian over Luo Sancai during his previous lecture, but from this action, they gleaned one thing: compared to the Liu family, the Luo family held little standing in Elder Chen's heart.

Thus, Liu Jingxian was surrounded by layer upon layer of people, while only Luo Yixiu stood lonely by Luo Sancai's side.

Only Foundation Establishment Practitioners from the families could enter the Core Formation ceremony, and Luo Yixiu was present to accompany Luo Sancai as a disciple of the Divine Wood Sect.

Luo Sancai glanced at Luo Yixiu, who stood beside him with his head lowered in a timid manner, and his brows furrowed involuntarily.

How had he ever thought this fellow capable of inheriting his mantle?

He had been utterly blind!

To mistake excrement for treasure!

Over the past twenty years, to support Luo Yixiu's cultivation, the Luo family had spent a considerable amount of Spirit Stones and resources, only for Luo Yixiu to fail his Foundation Establishment despite taking a Foundation Building Pill from the Divine Wood Sect.

In contrast, Luo Yixuan, who was sent to the Divine Wood Sect merely to accompany Luo Yixiu, had surprisingly surpassed everyone's expectations within the Luo family. Not only did she cling to the towering tree that was Elder Chen, but she also showcased talents far beyond those of Luo Yixiu.

If they had only been nicer to Luo Yixuan when she was younger, it would be Luo Sancai, not Liu Jingxian, who would now be at the center of everyone's flattery!

Chapter 944: Dividing the family's past\_2

With this thought in mind, Luo Sancai found the sight of Liu Jingxian relishing the crowd's flattery and his smile ever broadening increasingly irksome when looking at Luo Yixiu beside him.

"Your brother's son and daughter have decent Spiritual Root Talents. I will arrange for them to join the Divine Wood Sect when it next recruits disciples."

Upon hearing Luo Sancai's words, Luo Yixiu's face turned stark white.

His own brother was merely a mixed Spiritual Root, assigned early on by the family to practice the Strong Kidney Technique, and then to copulate with female cultivators with a Spiritual Root, selected through trades from all over the place.

Over the past twenty or so years, Luo Yixiu had lost count of just how many nephews and nieces he had, but he knew that among them, a pair had talents not a whit inferior to his own and Luo Yixuan's.

If the Luo family arranged for them to join the sect, the resources formerly allocated for Luo Yixiu's cultivation would be transferred to them instead.

"Ancestor, give me one more chance. I will surely succeed in refining the Foundation Building Pills by the next batch at the sect," Luo Yixiu appealed with persistence on behalf of himself.

Faced with a matter affecting his own cultivation path, Luo Yixiu had no choice but to argue for himself boldly.

“Since you have such ambition, then work hard on your own,” Luo Sancai said indifferently, implying that the family would no longer provide resources for his cultivation; he would have to figure it out by himself.

“Ancestor, Xuan and I have a great relationship. Aren’t you afraid she’ll be unhappy when she comes back?”

At this point, Luo Yixiu couldn’t care less, starting to invoke Luo Yixuan’s name for leverage.

After hearing this, Luo Sancai couldn’t help but chuckle coldly. He certainly hadn’t forgotten the attitude Luo Yixuan had after her initial Foundation Establishment when she returned to the family—apart from her mother, with whom she still had some affection, she treated all other members of the Luo family with cold disdain, including her own father. She mocked and ridiculed Luo Yixiu, seemingly wishing that everyone in the Luo family knew she was the brightest of all, that they had been blind back then.

For this reason, in the past decade, Luo Sancai had started adjusting the family’s strategy. For those female members with a Spiritual Root, they no longer simply traded with other families for breeding, but instead tried to cultivate them together to see if they could raise another “Luo Yixuan” who had affection for the family.

“You don’t need to follow me. I’m going to get close to Elder Chen’s disciple, and see if I can send your niece to serve by Elder Chen’s side as a maid,” Luo Sancai announced without delay.

“Ancestor, Elder Chen is a cultivator dedicated to bitter cultivation, usually in seclusion, and doesn’t like to have people around to serve,” Luo Yixiu quickly advised Luo Sancai, a fact that was common knowledge within the Divine Wood Sect.

“Your niece resembles Xuan quite a bit. We need to arrange for her to meet with Elder Chen at least once. Perhaps Elder Chen, upon seeing her, will be reminded of the missing Xuan, and in his longing, might take her in,” Luo Sancai said, turning thoughtful.

Luo Sancai, older even than Liu Jingxian, likely only had twenty or thirty years left to live.

The family's previous hope in Divine Wood Sect, Luo Shupin, died in Lei Nation, the promising Luo Yixiu proved incompetent, and the only one they counted on, Luo Yixuan, had gone missing. However, this was perhaps for the better. After all, Luo Yixuan had little affection for the Luo family. With her missing from Elder Chen's side, a female cultivator from the family who was loyal in her stead could take her place, possibly inheriting Luo Yixuan's position in Elder Chen's heart.

With these thoughts, Luo Sancai promptly changed his demeanor and made his way towards Zhuo Ming, who was surrounded by even more people.

He had investigated before; Luo Yixuan had a good relationship with this Second Senior Sister, often farming together and attending to Chen Mobai at Xiao Nanshan.

Just at this moment, in the midst of a conversation at the center of Divine Wood City, Chu Zuoshu suddenly stopped speaking. With a respectful expression, he took out a long, rectangular box, fiddled with it somehow, and the voice of Chen Mobai emerged from within, astonishing everyone present.

"Yes, yes, I'll come over with him right away," Chu Zuoshu replied after answering the call.

After he finished the call, Chu Zuoshu looked up at Kong Shanxu who was on his left. Kong Shanxu had also heard the contents and, after straightening his attire and ensuring there were no issues, nodded at Chu Zuoshu.

"Ladies and gentlemen, Kong Shixiong and I will go to meet the three Ancestors. Later, there will be Rank-2 Spirit Rice and Spiritual Wine cultivated personally by Elder Chen on offer. Meng Shixiong, please help entertain the guests for me," Chu Zuoshu addressed those present.

Meng Hong had arrived today too, and seeing Chen Mobai's Core Formation, he was exceptionally pleased, glowing with health.

His rapport with several Foundation Establishment families from Jian Country was excellent; he laughed heartily at the side, boasting that it was under his term as Sect Leader that Chen Mobai came to the Divine Wood Sect, taking the credit for himself.

Following Chu Zuoshu's departure, Meng Hong walked up to the main seat with a smile, continuing his boasts.

Meanwhile, Ye Bopei of Back to Sky Valley watched Kong Shanxu fly away, his brow slightly furrowed.

He was anxious.

Now that the Divine Wood Sect and Golden Cliff together have four Golden Core Cultivators, will they re-integrate into the Five Elements Sect?

If Zhou Shengqing reaches "Nascent Soul Formation," then by that time, the Divine Wood Sect having absorbed the Five Elements Sect would become so powerful that it might even surpass the era when Ancestor Hunyuan was present.

Should that happen, what would our Back to Sky Valley and other powers in the Eastern Wilderness do?

Amidst his worries, Ye Bopei glanced at the veiled Xue Ting beside him, considering whether he should talk with this Foundation Establishment cultivator from the Snow-blowing Palace first. If both parties proceed or retreat together, it would make the Divine Wood Sect pay them more respect.

...

Chen Mobai and the other two, who were enjoying their tea, naturally had no idea that summoning Kong Shanxu had triggered such concerns among Back to Sky Valley and other forces in the Eastern Wilderness.

"Greetings, Uncle-Master Mobai, Uncle-Master Fu, and Uncle-Master Chen!"

After Kong Shanxu arrived, he greeted Chen Mobai and the others with the courtesy due from a junior.

"The initial separation was a matter of necessity, but after all, we come from the same lineage. Go back and inform Brother Zhou Ye: do not be misled by the Xuan Xiao Taoist Palace any longer."

Fu Zongjue's words left Kong Shanxu with a wry smile. Though he held a high position within the Five Elements Sect, he dared not respond to such a matter in front of Golden Core Cultivators.

"I will certainly report back to my Sect Leader after I return."

"The Five Elements Meridians connect like limbs of one body. This Eastern Wilderness was won by Primordial Ancestral Master; even if it decays in our hands, we can't let outsiders take it, right?"

"Yes, Uncle-Master speaks truly. Nevertheless, it would be best if the Elders and Uncle-Masters themselves discussed this matter with the Sect Leader face to face. I can only relay the message."

Kong Shanxu, ever cautious, managed to respond without slipping in front of the three Golden Core oppressors.

"We're just reminding you. If you want to talk, let Zhou Ye come to the Divine Wood Sect."

Fu Zongjue seemed to have a rather negative impression of the Golden Core Ancestor from the Five Elements Sect, and his tone had become much less polite by this point.

"This..."

After hearing this, Kong Shanxu didn't dare agree and could only stand there awkwardly, wiping his sweat.

"I happen to have some business in the Ming Nation, so Nephew Kong, please pass on a message. Set a time when Brother Zhou can come over for a face-to-face talk."

It was at this moment that Chen Mobai spoke.

The last known location of his missing junior disciple was at the Guiyuan Sect in the Ming Nation. He had not dared to go there before due to the menacing attention from Zhao Xuankang and others outside.

Now, with the Purple Electric Sword in hand, he could traverse the Eastern Wilderness unhindered and was free to search for Luo Yixuan.

“Yes, yes, yes, this is my Message Talisman. Uncle-Master Chen, when you come to Hunyuan Immortal City, just call for me.”

Kong Shanxu, feeling relieved, handed a talisman to Chen Mobai and was then led away by Chu Zuoshu.

“Does Brother Fu have a grudge against that Brother Zhou Ye?”

Chen Mobai asked curiously.

“Do you know why our Five Elements Sect’s five meridians ended up separating?”

“It’s said that Brother Zhou Shengqing originally thought he would inherit the Five Elements Sect and Hunyuan Immortal City, but right before the old ancestor passed away in meditation, he designated Brother Zhou Ye as the successor. Dissatisfied, the former proposed to divide the sect.”

“That’s the official story.”

The one speaking now was Mo Douguang, who narrowed his eyes as if recalling the scene from those days, and couldn’t help but sigh with emotion.

“Before the Sect Leader passed away in meditation, he asked us to expend sixty years’ worth of our foundational spiritual power to help our Junior Brother Zhou Ye cultivate that Primordial Dao Fruit. Brother Nu Jiang and Sister Sheng, although unwilling, didn’t want to defy the Sect Leader’s final wishes. Only I and Brother Zhou Shengqing, being somewhat more straightforward, refused to agree even as the Sect Leader was taking his last breath.”

Chapter 945: I love you “After our master passed away in meditation, Zhou Ye, holding our master’s posthumous order, demanded our assistance in cultivating the Chaotic Dao Fruit,” said Mo Douguang.

“Naturally, Brother Zhou and I were unwilling, and we proposed a division of the sect. In response, Zhou Ye, holding the master’s order, furiously denounced us as traitors.”

“What followed was a protracted war, which also involved Zhao Xuankang and a few other major sects from the Eastern Wilderness fanning the flames.”

After Mo Douguang finished speaking, Chen Mobai finally understood the details of the Five Elements Sect’s split.

If they truly had offered sixty years of their original spiritual power, then the Sect’s other Golden Core Cultivators would certainly have no hope of “Nascent Soul Formation.”

For Zhou Shengqing, a cultivator who could see a higher realm, this was something he would never be willing to do.

No wonder he chose to split from the sect.

It’s difficult to say who was right and who was wrong in this matter.

Since it was still unclear whether the Xuan Xiao Taoist Palace had any moves left, Mo Douguang, after finishing his tea, stayed in the Divine Wood Sect for a while longer.

The place where he stayed was right in front of the Everlife Wood where Zhou Shengqing was in closed-door cultivation, which also allowed him an opportunity to feel the aura of “Nascent Soul Formation.”

After the Core Formation celebration ended, Chen Mobai received an encrypted message from the Heavenly Communication Device sent by Zhuo Ming.

“The Luo family?”

Upon hearing this, Chen Mobai was somewhat surprised; Luo Sancai should have the insight to know why Chen Mobai chose only Liu Jingxian at the ceremony.

To curry favor with a Golden Core Cultivator like himself, Luo Sancai had really put his pride aside.

“There’s no need to agree to him, nor to prevent the Luo family from sending people to the Divine Wood Sect. In the future, if the opportunity arises, either you or Wen Bo could accept Xuan’s nieces and nephews as your disciples,” Chen Mobai thought and decided.

Although his little disciple harbored a lot of resentment towards her family, after all, the resources from her early cultivation years came from the Lou family; she can’t forget the kindness of being raised.

Now that his little disciple had disappeared, as her master, he still had to look out for the Lou family.

Following Zhuo Ming, Liu Wenbo also rushed to visit in a hurry.

At the end of the Core Formation grand ceremony, the Divine Wood Sect presented all the guests with spirit wine and Spiritual Rice from the Xiao Nanshan lineage.

The spirit wine was laid out in four large vats, ranging from Lower-grade Rank-2 to Upper-grade Rank-2; the most precious vat was made from Jade Bamboo Spirit Rice, nearly a Rank-3 spirit wine.

There were even more types of Spiritual Rice, as Zhuo Ming had tried hundreds of hybrid species over these past twenty years, and more than ten Rank-2 varieties had been cultivated, but the most suitable for large-scale cultivation was still the Green Jade Spirit Rice.

The style of self-service spirit wine tasting and taking Spiritual Rice as they pleased amazed all the Foundation Establishment Practitioners from the Eastern Wilderness; the flavor of the spirit wine, which was better than anything available in the Eastern Wilderness, instantly conquered everyone.

The presence of so many unseen Rank-2 Spiritual Rice varieties also greatly shocked all the powers in the Eastern Wilderness.

The complete method of cultivating Rank-2 Spiritual Rice isn't even accessible to every major sect in the East Wilderness.

Wasn't the Divine Wood Sect supposed to only have Jade Bamboo Spirit Rice?

When they learned that these results were the product of Elder Chen and his disciple's hard work and experimentation over more than twenty years, everyone was amazed by Chen Mobai's talent.

Wasn't he a peerless Sword Cultivation Genius?

How could his talent in spirit plants be even more astonishing than his mastery of the Sword Dao?

Indeed worthy of the Saint Heir selected by the Ancient Changsheng Sect!

As everyone marveled, Meng Hong announced that Elder Chen was willing to sell the seedlings of these Spiritual Rice to any forces and sects interested in planting them.

At this announcement, everyone present was extremely excited.

But with their vast experience, they knew well that nothing good in this world comes for free.

As they awaited the Divine Wood Sect's stringent conditions, Liu Jingxian, who had already been instructed, immediately stepped forward, expressing the Liu family's desire to purchase the seedlings of the Flower Rice Spirit Rice from the Divine Wood Sect.

This Flower Rice Spirit Rice was a variety that needed paddy Spiritual Land to grow and was considered a failed product in Zhuo Ming's attempts at developing Rank-3 Spiritual Rice over the years.

However, even though this Spiritual Rice was a failure for Chen Mobai and Zhuo Ming, it was almost a priceless treasure for the Liu family.

Their family's paddy fields were all waterfields, which due to the abundance of water, even the cultivation of Jade Bud Spirit Rice would often result in the plants drowning and dying.

By introducing this Flower Rice Spirit Rice, their family's paddy fields could be utilized fully, and they might even be able to cultivate Rank-2 Spiritual Rice.

Purchasing these seedlings wouldn't require any cost in Spirit Stones, they just needed to give three-tenths of the mature harvest to the Divine Wood Sect.

This right to use the seedlings would be tentatively set for ten years.

If after ten years the Divine Wood Sect was dissatisfied with the yield of the Flower Rice Spirit Rice grown by the Liu family, they might choose to stop supplying the seedlings.

Liu Jingxian was acting as a middleman, and everyone could see it.

Apart from the Liu family, several core families from Jian Country associated with the Divine Wood Sect had also previously received internal signals and one by one stood out, claiming the Spiritual Rice seedlings that best suited their own families.

The Foundation Establishment Practitioners from the Eastern Wilderness, who were practically cunning themselves, decided after some deliberation to wait and see for a few years.

Of course, there were still some families outside of Jian Country who, after leaving the Divine Wood Sect, came back secretly to negotiate for some seedlings.

The Divine Wood Sect uniformly refused them.

If they wanted to cooperate with the Divine Wood Sect, they must do so openly, making it known to all of the Eastern Wilderness.

The patriarch of the Lou family from Yun Country, who had not understood the reason at first, suddenly realized the implications on his way back when he heard that Xuan Xiao Taoist Palace had once again sent people to seize the Bao Se Mountain of Yan Country.

Chapter 946: I love you

Divine Wood Sect is making them choose sides.

As long as they accept the Divine Wood Sect's Spirit Rice seedlings, it's clear in the eyes of Xuan Xiao Taoist Palace that they would be a vassal family to the Divine Wood Sect.

Luckily, they were cautious; otherwise, they would have plunged headfirst into the collision of the two great forces, and in the future, if the Xuan Xiao Taoist Palace were to attack, the Lou family could be easily wiped out over such an incident.

It wasn't just the Lou family ancestors who realized this point.

The Foundation Establishment practitioners not tempted by the Divine Wood Sect's Spirit Rice seedlings all felt fortunate that their Dao Heart was firm.

...

Seven days later, Yue Zutao, the Town Guard of Rock Country, returned personally.

"Xuan Shu has reopened the Nanxuan sect!"

After hearing this news, Chen Mobai and the others exchanged glances, simultaneously heaving a sigh of relief.

Fu Zongjue, "That Great Elder of Xuan Xiao Taoist Palace really couldn't bear to part with his own lifespan. As long as 'Nascent Soul Formation' does not come, we still have room to maneuver."

Chen Mobai, "And what about Zhao Xuankang?"

Yue Zutao: "To report to Elder Chen, this reopening of the Nanxuan sect has temporarily not shown Zhao Xuankang's presence, but considering his level of understanding of the Eastern Wilderness, it's impossible for him not to come. He is likely hiding in the background, planning to cooperate with Xuan Shu, one in the open and one in the dark."

Fu Zongjue, "It's nothing more than the original Nanxuan Jing being replaced by Xuan Shu. The pattern of Rock Country and Sky Country remains unchanged. It is the same as before. If you encounter a Golden Core Cultivator who shamelessly strikes at you, just immediately abandon the territories of the two countries and return to the sect."

After discussing for a while, the three Golden Core Cultivators quickly came to the decision to wait and see how things would unfold.

Although no Nascent Soul came from Xuan Xiao Taoist Palace, Xuan Shu was also considered the most top-notch Golden Core below them. If it weren't for Chen Mobai using the Purple Electric Sword to drive him away, Giant Tree Ridge might have already been blocked by him alone.

Now for Divine Wood Sect, the biggest task is to guard Zhou Shengqing during his Nascent Soul Formation. For this matter, even if it means surrendering all territory beyond Giant Tree Ridge, it is tolerable.

"Then I'll head back to Golden Cliff first, call me if you need anything."

Having confirmed there was nothing else concerning him, Mo Douguang directly left Giant Tree Ridge using the Teleportation Array.

After sending him off, Chen Mobai and Fu Zongjue immediately instructed Chu Zuoshu to convene a grand assembly of the Three Halls and Twelve Divisions, to pass down their directives for the time to come.

Among them, the spread of the Spirit Rice seedlings was deemed particularly important.

This was Chen Mobai's first step in trying to change the Eastern Wilderness. However, the reason used was to have the Foundation Establishment forces outside the Divine Wood Sect side with them.

To this, both Fu Zongjue and Chu Zuoshu even felt that the strategy was extremely exquisite.

Since this grand assembly of the Divine Wood Sect was the first since Chen Mobai's Core Formation, everyone was very clear about its importance.

Apart from the Three Halls and Twelve Divisions, the Town Guards of various countries also rushed to attend upon receiving the news.

"E Yun, long time no see."

When E Yun returned, still pondering over how to interact with Chen Mobai, his old friend, Yuan Chiye, who had returned earlier, had already come to find him.

"Yuan Junior Brother, I heard Elder Chen recommended you to be the Town Guard of Rainbow Country, congratulations."

Aside from the positions of real authority in the Three Halls and Twelve Divisions, commanding a country as a Town Guard was the most influential in terms of gathering cultivation resources.

"Oh, it's nothing, it's just because the sect has just taken over Rainbow Country, there's no specific selection process for Town Guard yet. So, Elder Chen let me stand in as a Town Guard. After this sect assembly, perhaps a highly esteemed senior brother or senior sister will take my place."

Yuan Chiye was very clear about his own weight; it was simply because among the group of Foundation Establishment practitioners who stayed in Rock Country, he and Chen Mobai were the most familiar.

"Junior Brother is being modest. Since Elder Chen has spoken for you, then among the Three Halls and Twelve Divisions, no one will make things difficult over this matter."

Compared to Yuan Chiye, E Yun was even clearer about the operational rules of the Divine Wood Sect system.

The word of a Golden Core Cultivator is everything.

Although Chen Mobai had only recently achieved Core Formation, as a supreme sword cultivator, he vanquished Nanxuan Jing and repelled Xuan Shu with Purple Lightning. His combat power was so formidable that he could be said to be the first in the Eastern Wilderness.

As long as Fu Zongjue does not speak against it, within the Three Halls and Twelve Divisions of the Divine Wood Sect, definitely no one dares to defy Chen Mobai.

“It’s just that I fear some senior brothers and sisters may not be willing to accept this.”

“

Yuan Chiye smiled wryly as he spoke; E Yun thought for a moment before he also understood what he meant.

Within the Divine Wood Sect, there were still a few elders whose bodies had passed their peak years yet had broken through to the late phase of Foundation Establishment. Their belief in wanting to achieve Core Formation surpassed that of all others.

On ordinary days, they would mostly gather at Yun Meng Ze, all for a slim chance at Core Formation.

And after Chen Mobai rose to prominence and succeeded in Core Formation, they all thought about how to attract the attention of this new elder.

The matter of Yuan Chiye acting as the Town Guard for Rainbow Country was very suitable for them to use as an excuse to draw Elder Chen’s attention.

“Let’s take it one step at a time.”

Though E Yun was clear about Chen Mobai's character, after the latter's Core Formation, E Yun did not dare to measure a Golden Core Cultivator by his own thoughts and could only speak to Yuan Chiye in this manner.

At this time, a Foundation Establishment practitioner came to visit.

"Greetings to E Shixiong and Yuan Shixiong."

The visitor was very familiar to them; he was Chen Mobai's eldest disciple, Liu Wenbo—who used to be under their command when he just came out of Bud Hall.

Back then, E Yun felt that given Liu Wenbo's potential, he would at most be a lineage inheritor; Foundation Establishment seemed impossible.

But unexpectedly, after becoming a disciple under Elder Chen, he was now at the same realm as them.

"Please have a seat, Liu Shidi."

E Yun invited him courteously. However, Liu Wenbo shook his head and uttered a sentence that made the two of them tense.

"My master is currently in the courtyard of Divine Wood City; he's sent me to invite both Shixiong over for a talk."

"Liu Shidi, lead the way."

E Yun and Yuan Chiye dared not keep a Golden Core Cultivator waiting and immediately followed Liu Wenbo to the familiar place.

This courtyard was the sect privilege that E Yun had helped arrange for Chen Mobai when he had just achieved Foundation Establishment. Afterwards, the three of them had also drunk quite a lot of wine here.

Upon entering the gate, they saw the back of a young man in front of a greenish-blue Spirit Tree, pointing and discussing something.

There was also a young girl in village attire by the youth's side; the two seemed to be discussing Spirit Plant techniques.

"We pay respects to Elder Chen."X2

As soon as E Yun and Yuan Chiye arrived, they paid their respects to Chen Mobai.

"We don't need to be so formal among the three of us."

Although it was impossible to change the custom within the Tianhe Realm that dictated seniority by Cultivation Realm, Chen Mobai still tried to follow the habits he had cultivated since childhood in the Immortal Gate when dealing with his own people.

Zhuo Ming immediately extended her hand and pointed at the ground where the soil swelled and shaped into a round table and several stools on its own.

After inviting E Yun and Yuan Chiye to sit down, Liu Wenbo had already brought out a large jar of Jade Bamboo Spiritual Wine from the courtyard storeroom.

"Chu Shizhi told me a few days ago that he wanted to enter retreat to comprehend Nascent Soul and was thinking of stepping down from the Sect Leader position."

After the three had drunk their first cup, Chen Mobai said something that made the expressions of E Yun and Yuan Chiye change dramatically.

"Who does Elder have in mind to take over?"

Suppressing the tumult in his heart, E Yun put down his cup and asked Chen Mobai.

“Naturally, my inclination is towards you, but your two competitors are just too strong. King Zhou has an outstanding record of meritorious deeds, and Fu Shixiong’s disciple, Hong He, is at the late phase of Foundation Establishment. Compared to them, even with my support, you still have no advantage whatsoever.”

Chen Mobai forthrightly expressed his thoughts to his friend, E Yun.

Owing to the refinement of the Golden Liquid Jade Pill, Chu Zuoshu’s resignation to prepare for Nascent Soul Formation came much earlier than previously scheduled, by more than a decade.

He had sensed E Yun’s aura, and although he was now at the Foundation Establishment Middle Stage, it seemed quite unsteady for assuming the position of Sect Leader.

“I ask for Elder’s guidance!”

Chapter 947: The Most Rule-Abiding Chen Mobai had always distinguished clearly between gratitude and grudges.

Back when he was in the Qi Cultivation stage, if it hadn’t been for E Yun’s intervention, who killed a group from the South Mountain Thieves, Chen Mobai might not have entered the Divine Wood Sect that easily.

And after he joined the sect, E Yun took great care of him, a kindness which Chen Mobai always firmly kept in his heart.

While both were in the Foundation Establishment stage, they were stationed in different countries to guard them, so there were few opportunities to help each other.

Now that Chen Mobai reached the Core Formation stage, he felt he could finally repay E Yun for his kindness.

“If you wish to become the Sect Leader, I will certainly support you with all my strength,” he said.

Upon hearing Chen Mobai's words, E Yun felt an unprecedented surge of emotion welling up from the bottom of his heart.

In the treacherous Eastern Wilderness, men who valued loyalty and deep relationships like Chen Mobai were rare. E Yun felt extremely fortunate to have encountered one in his lifetime.

Chen Mobai: "I have already inquired about Hong He. He sets his sights on higher realms and does not want to occupy his time with being the Sect Leader before his cultivation level hits a bottleneck."

As a genius whose talent was only second to Chen Mobai within the Divine Wood Sect, Hong He's goal was definitely Core Formation. So, when Chen Mobai asked him, his intentions were very clear.

Chen Mobai: "Zhou Wangshen, on the other hand, is different. He is determined to secure the position of Sect Leader. With Brother Zhou's influence, I would rather not say too much."

On hearing this, E Yun's face showed a slight hint of joy: "So, there's only one competitor."

To this, Chen Mobai shook his head: "Although Hong He himself is not interested in the position of Sect Leader, being the direct disciple of Fu Shixiong, the group from Penalty Evil Hall will rally around him to compete for the position, and he cannot refuse."

The fact that Hong He had been able to cultivate to such a realm wasn't only due to his outstanding talent; the support from Penalty Evil Hall was significant as well.

Even if Hong He himself didn't want it, these people would push him to the fore to compete for the Sect Leader's position for their own benefit.

The current situation had become quite clear.

Shenmu Hall, Penalty Evil Hall, and Reward Virtue Hall each supported one candidate, hoping to lift their own man to the position of the Sect Leader after Chu Zuoshu's retirement.

Among them, as a Golden Core Cultivator, Chen Mobai currently held a very influential voice but still needed to consider Zhou Shengqing and Fu Zongjue who were in seclusion.

Although Chen Mobai was confident that with a firm stance, he could certainly push E Yun to the Sect Leader's position,

doing so would sow the seeds of internal division and might even incite extremist reactions from the other two factions, potentially becoming a cause of internal strife should the sect encounter adversity in battle one day.

"Among the three of you, you have the least chance of taking the position, while Hong He has the greatest. Having earned considerable merits over the past decade, Zhou Wangshen is regarded as the most decorated among the Foundation Establishment Practitioners in the sect, and with the support of the most profound Shenmu Hall and the Zhou family, he can contend with Hong He."

In comparison, E Yun's years stationed in Yun Country and parts of Yun Meng Ze's Fang Market, although he increased the sect's income of Spirit Stones, seemed somewhat modest next to the achievements of Hong He and Zhou Wangshen.

"I've also realized this and have applied to the sect to join the frontline battlefield, but unfortunately, I've never received the sect's orders."

E Yun's face darkened as he spoke.

The Divine Wood Sect hadn't called up E Yun for any of the last three wars they waged, but it wasn't just him; Hong He was also left out.

The reason was easy to guess.

It was certainly the Zhou family's doing, pushing the priority of drafting both of them to the very end.

However, at that time, both Hong He and E Yun were merely at Foundation Establishment Middle Stage, and their presence might not have turned the tides of battle, so the Zhou family's arrangement, even unnoticed by the likes of Chu Zuoshu and other high-ranking members of the Divine Wood Sect, went unchallenged.

“Since they operate within the rules, I can’t blame them. For the upcoming Sect Leader election in the Divine Wood Sect, I will only help you within the confines of the sect’s rules and will not break them for your sake, as the consequences would be too great.”

Chen Mobai would not forget his ideals to gradually improve the Eastern Wilderness with the rules of the Immortal Gates and turn it into a smaller version of the same.

And the essence of the Immortal Gates was an intricate network of laws.

E Yun: “Then how should I compete with the two Senior Brothers?”

Chen Mobai: “I’ve been thinking it over, and I can’t figure out a way to elevate you to their level in a short time.”

Hearing Chen Mobai’s words, E Yun couldn’t help but let out a wry laugh, feeling he was without hope.

“So, I’ve decided to help you delay it for another twenty years. If twenty years aren’t enough, then sixty years, a hundred years, until your cultivation level and merits can match or even surpass those of Hong He and Zhou Wangshen.”

Just as E Yun was about to lift his cup in resignation, hoping to drown his sorrows in alcohol, Chen Mobai’s words stunned him.

What did this mean?

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Zhou family.

As the family of Zhou Shengqing, while they have always kept a low profile, they are undeniably the foremost family of the Divine Wood Sect.

Besides the five practitioners of Foundation Establishment within the family itself, at least half of the Foundation Establishment Practitioners within the Three Halls and Twelve Divisions have been graced by Zhou Shengqing or the Zhou family.

And these individuals extended their influence outward, their connections intricately covering almost the entire Divine Wood Sect.

Just consider that both the preceding and incumbent Sect Leaders, Meng Hong, and Chu Zuoshu, were disciples of Zhou Shengqing, and one can imagine the extent of the Zhou family's profound influence.

Chapter 948: The Most Rule-Abiding\_2 “

It was precisely because of this that Zhou Wangshen was always brimming with confidence about becoming the Sect Leader of Divine Wood Sect.

So what if Hong He's cultivation level was higher? His contributions to the Sect were minimal, nothing compared to Zhou Wangshen's life-and-death struggles in Rock Country.

Although the announcement of Chu Zuoshu stepping down was extremely sudden, the Zhou family still managed to devise a series of plans for Zhou Wangshen's competition for Sect Leader in record time.

The only variable in this plan was the Nascent Soul Ancestor.

Under the circumstance of Zhou Shengqing's retreat into seclusion, even if all Three Halls and Twelve Divisions supported Zhou Wangshen, without the approval of Fu Zongjue and Chen Mobai, it would be very difficult for him to rightfully become the Sect Leader.

“Will Elder Fu descend from his position to support his own disciple?”

The Foundation Establishment practitioner Zhou Junzhi from the Zhou family asked somewhat worriedly.

“He won’t. As long as we don’t go overboard and win the election fairly and squarely, Elder Fu will not throw away his dignity for the sake of Hong He.”

Although a Golden Core Cultivator in the Sect possesses power to turn the heavens and the earth, Divine Wood Sect after all has three Golden Cores, and Fu Zongjue cannot command absolute authority. In the grand scheme of things, he most certainly would not forsake his dignity for the mere position of Sect Leader.

The Zhou family’s Great Elder Zhou Junxian had a deep understanding of Fu Zongjue. It was unfortunate that he himself had failed to form his Core, left with only a crippled body, while Fu Zongjue had survived the tribulation.

The two were like the best of sworn brothers, and his analysis of Fu Zongjue was met with nods from everyone present.

“Then what about Elder Chen?”

The Zhou family didn’t know much about this newly emerged Nascent Soul Ancestor of Divine Wood Sect. Although they had heard of his legendary Sword Dao genius, they thought that if he wanted to form his Core, he would at least have to wait his turn until after Chu Zuoshu.

By that time, the Zhou family would have ample time to build a harmonious relationship with him.

Who could have expected that in a short span of just over twenty years, while the Foundation Establishment members of the Zhou family hadn’t even begun to focus on Chen Mobai, he had already successfully formed his Core while abroad.

That was just too fast!

“When I was in Rock Country, I followed Elder Chen many times in life-and-death situations. I have a fair understanding of his character. The thing that Elder Chen values most is rules. When arranging troops and formations, if anyone disobeys his orders, the penalty is always death without mercy. So as long as we act by the rules, he might even support me in becoming the Sect Leader,” Zhou Wangshen said.

As the youngest Foundation Establishment practitioner in the Zhou family and the only direct descendant now showing signs of Core Formation, his words carried weight second only to the Great Elder.

“If that’s the case, it would be for the best,” the other Foundation Establishment practitioners of the Zhou family said, nodding in agreement after hearing this. They felt that it was almost certain Zhou Wangshen would become the new Sect Leader.

The day of the Sect’s grand assembly quickly arrived.

In addition to the upper echelons of the Three Halls and Twelve Divisions, all Foundation Establishment Practitioners who were not in seclusion at Giant Tree Ridge were summoned by the Sect Leader’s decree.

All forty-two Foundation Establishment Practitioners sat solemnly and respectfully behind their desks, waiting.

After Chu Zuoshu, acting as Sect Leader, finished paying his respects in the direction of the three Everlife Woods, everyone rose and followed his lead in shouting.

“We welcome the descent of the Ancestor!”

Two vast streams of Spiritual Light rose from two of the Everlife Woods. In an extremely short period of time, they soared into the sky. Approaching from afar, they descended upon the space above Shenmu Hall before plunging straight into the hall.

As the Spiritual Light dissipated, a handsome young man and a delicate-looking youth emerged.

It was Fu Zongjue and Chen Mobai!

“We pay our respects to the Ancestors!”

In the face of the grand salute from the forty-two Foundation Establishment Practitioners below, Chen Mobai gestured for Fu Zongjue to proceed, who in turn unceremoniously ordered Chu Zuoshu to start the day's grand assembly.

"The Sect is depleted of Spirit Stones in the treasury after the great battle with Rock Country. The budget for each division needs to be reduced..."

"The Alchemy Department is preparing to refine Demonic beast Foundation Building Pills. Many auxiliary herbs need to be purchased from the major families of the Eastern Wilderness. If the budget is cut, the Elixirs won't be made. Just cut other divisions, the Alchemy Department cannot be cut..."

"In response to Elder Chen's call in the past twenty years, the Spirit Plant Division has reclaimed wasteland to grow Spirit Rice. Now we are already severely short-staffed to tend to the medicinal and Spirit Fields. We need a significant amount of Spirit Stones to hire Sect Disciples to look after the Spirit Plants. If the budget is cut, wouldn't it ruin Elder Chen's plans for the Spirit Rice? Absolutely not..."

"The Puppet Division is repairing Elder Fu's Purple Sun Puppet..."

"The Spirit Beast Division..."

"The Body Forging Division..."

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The Sect Conference was convened, and Luo Xue'er, the Vice Hall Master of the Reward Virtue Hall and the keeper of the sect's Spirit Stone Bag, was the first to stand up. She began to propose an internal cost-saving scheme as she had reported to Chen Mobai the previous night.

But no sooner had she finished than her proposal was resisted by virtually all departments.

Moreover, their objections were neither for the sect's welfare nor did they concern the two elders above.

The implication was clear; the cuts must not affect them.

“We ask the two ancestors to discern that the treasury now has only enough Spirit Stones to last half a year. It is estimated that it will take three and a half years of deficit to recover from the commercial and vein revenues to achieve a balanced budget,” Luo Xue’er persisted doggedly, despite being opposed by all departments.

Normally, a proposal that faced collective opposition would be directly dismissed, but Luo Xue’er refused to give up and brought it to the attention of the two Nascent Soul Ancestors.

In order to check the powers of the Three Halls and Twelve Divisions, rejected proposals could be reported to the elders.

However, since the founding of the Divine Wood Sect, no one had ever done so.

It was an unspoken rule to handle matters without troubling the Nascent Soul Ancestors.

Luo Xue’er’s actions now indicated how desperate the situation was; the Reward Virtue Hall’s supply of Spirit Stones had truly run out, and she had no other options.

“Besides Spirit Stones, what other resources are abundant within the sect?” asked Chen Mobai, seated at the top right.

Luo Xue’er replied, “Thanks to Elder Chen’s efforts in the production of Spirit Rice, the storerooms are now filled with various types of Spirit Rice.”

Chen Mobai added another rule to the sect’s regulations; “If one opts to receive Spirit Rice in place of the annual Spirit Stone stipend, an additional ten percent shall be given as compensation.”

With this suggestion, it was naturally approved by a unanimous vote.

Chu Zuoshu, who had Chen Mobai’s support, took the lead as the Sect Leader and decided to forgo his entire annual stipend for the year to help the sect through its difficulties.

Upon his declaration, everyone stared at him—if looks could kill, Chu Zuoshu would have been riddled with holes by now.

“This disciple is also willing to give up this year’s Spirit Stones,” the second to speak was Zhou Wangshen.

Following him, the Foundation Establishment practitioners of the Zhou family enthusiastically agreed, willing to forego not just one year but the next three years if necessary.

The other Foundation Establishment Practitioners finally understood why they had been called, and though they found themselves in an awkward position, they felt compelled to offer their support as well.

After this round of declarations, six out of the forty-two Foundation Establishment practitioners in the Shenmu Hall remained indifferent, acting as if they hadn’t heard a thing.

Chen Mobai exchanged a look with Fu Zongjue, nodded, and said, “My fellow disciples are willing to risk their lives for the sect; how can we ask you to incur further costs? Let’s issue I.O.U.s for the Spirit Stones, which can be redeemed once the sect’s finances have recovered.”

Upon hearing this, the six Foundation Establishment Practitioners who had not spoken up underwent a subtle change of expression.

But before they had a chance to argue, Chu Zuoshu put forth his intention to step down as Sect Leader.

“This disciple wishes to attempt Core Formation and seeks the blessing of the two ancestors.”

It was for this reason that all Foundation Establishment practitioners who had their eyes on Core Formation aspired to be Sect Leader.

“Agreed!” Fu Zongjue nodded his assent.

“Honored ancestors, with my resignation, the sect cannot remain leaderless for even a day. The Town Guard of Sky Country, Zhou Wangshen, is young and promising, with distinguished achievements, and he is suitable to succeed me as Sect Leader,” Chu Zuoshu stated, attempting to repay the Zhou family for their favors in his final moments and recommending Zhou Wangshen as the new leader.

With these words, more than half of the people in the Shenmu Hall, along with those from the Zhou family and the Alchemy Department, supported Zhou Wangshen.

Seeing this, Quan Shanlin, the Vice Hall Master of Penalty Evil Hall who had hopes of promoting Hong He to compete with Zhou Wangshen, let out a sigh, sensing that the tide had turned.

“Zhou Shizhi is still a bit too young. In my opinion, someone else would be more suitable as Sect Leader under the current circumstances of the sect,” said Chen Mobai abruptly.

Fu Zongjue’s expression shifted subtly upon hearing this, contemplating whether to stop Chen Mobai’s forthright approach. However, Chen Mobai stood up and walked over to the Sect Leader’s designated spot.

Chapter 949: The First Order of the New Policy “Just as the sect faces an unprecedented time, I feel that I am very suitable to become the Sect Leader and lead the sect through this special era.”

After Chen Mobai finished speaking, everyone looked at him in shock.

The cultivators of Eastern Wilderness always put cultivation first.

Therefore, Golden Core Cultivators never take on the role of Sect Leader, because it would greatly hinder their cultivation.

And the reason Foundation Establishment Practitioners are keen on it is that, within the major sects of the Eastern Wilderness, there’s an unspoken rule: if you want access to the sect’s Core Formation resources, you must contribute a period of time to the sect.

For instance, the two previous Sect Leaders of Divine Wood Sect, Meng Hong and Chu Zuoshu, both received full support from Zhou Shengqing and Fu Zongjue.

And Chen Mobai, despite being a Golden Core Cultivator, was willing to take on the role of Sect Leader; to the people of the Eastern Wilderness, it looked like he was exhausting himself for the sake of the sect.

So when he uttered these words, it instantly shocked everyone present.

“If Elder Chen is willing to bestow such honor, indeed no one is more suitable than you.”

After being stunned, Chu Zuoshu was the first to come to his senses and paid Sect Leader-level respect to Chen Mobai.

“Greetings, Sect Master Chen!”

As his words fell, the rest of the Foundation Establishment Practitioners within the Shenmu Hall also reacted.

Seeing that Fu Zongjue showed no signs of interjection, everyone followed Chu Zuoshu in greeting the new Sect Leader.

Meanwhile, E Yun and Yuan Chiye, who had been forewarned, were full of admiration, feeling that Elder Chen truly exemplified integrity.

Among those present, only Zhou Wangshen had the most complex emotions.

But with a Nascent Soul Ancestor becoming the Sect Leader, even Zhou Shengqing wouldn't object. Which Sect Leader among the entire Eastern Wilderness was of Core Formation level?

From now on, at least in terms of Sect Leadership, their Divine Wood Sect would be the undisputed number one in the Eastern Wilderness.

“I have no personal attachment to the position of Sect Leader. It is only because there is no one currently in our sect with a reliable cultivation level, such as Nephew Meng, Nephew Chu, thus I will take on this arduous task for the time being. Once Nephew Hong He, Nephew Zhou, Nephew E Yun, or any other Foundation Establishment individuals meet the criteria to be Sect Leader, I will step down and yield the position.”

Hearing this from Chen Mobai, Zhou Wangshen felt a little better. Having made such a promise before so many witnesses, a promise from a Golden Core Ancestor, meant that he still had a chance to succeed as Sect Leader.

In fact, this was a favorable turn for him. Since his cultivation level was not as high as Hong He’s, even if he had forcibly assumed the position of Sect Leader today, many would not have acknowledged his legitimacy.

They would think he relied solely on Zhou Shengqing and the Zhou family.

Now with Elder Chen taking the Sect Leader position, as long as he could elevate his cultivation level during this period, even if he wasn’t as advanced as Hong He, he could claim the position rightfully as long as he reached the Foundation Establishment Late Phase.

“May I inquire, Elder Chen, on how you think the criteria for the position of Sect Leader should be set?”

Great Elder Zhou Junxian of the Zhou family spoke up at this point, seeing through the subtleties and suspecting that Chen Mobai was securing time for E Yun.

If Chen Mobai never left the Sect Leader position, with the lifespan of a Golden Core Cultivator, he could easily outlive them all.

Therefore, for the sake of the Zhou family, he boldly stepped forward to ask the question.

Upon hearing the query, Chen Mobai smiled faintly and revealed the answer he had long contemplated.

“It just so happens that the selection criteria for the Sect Leader of our sect have always been vague, which is not conducive to motivating our cultivators. Today, I shall set some clear standards.”

“The Sect Leader is a figurehead; their cultivation level must at least be at the Foundation Establishment Late Phase, and their age cannot exceed one hundred years, ensuring that they are still in the peak years of their life after stepping down and can attempt Core Formation.”

“Moreover, the Sect Leader must have made contributions to the sect. The previous contribution threshold of one hundred thousand I find too low. From now on, let’s raise it to two hundred thousand.” No sooner had he spoken than everyone’s faces twitched slightly, yet none dared to object.

“Lastly, the Sect Leader must be capable. I propose that the town guards of the other six countries, aside from Jian Country, should all be candidates for the Sect Leader.”

“Previously, sect guards in the various countries were either padding their experience or leveraging the sect’s name to gather resources from local families without truly developing those lands.”

“From this point forward, the town guards should run their territories as though they are managing a small sect. If the administration is clear, and the governance harmonious, it shows the potential for them to become Sect Leader and lead all seven countries without issue.”

“Of course, it is impossible to get things done without sufficient authority. Hereafter, in their respective national territories, the town guards’ status shall be second only to the Sect Leader and The Three Great Halls, and ranked above the Twelve Divisions.”

As Chen Mobai finished speaking, there was a stir among the division heads and vice-heads of the Twelve Divisions.

How come six more people were suddenly ranking above them out of the blue?

Even if this power only applied within the territories of the six countries, it still made them feel uncomfortable.

“Elder, if I were commanded by you to go to Yun Country to collect a certain herb but then the town guard of Yun Country ordered me to refine an elixir for him, should I refine it or not?”

Zeng Woyou, a straightforward person from the Alchemy Department, stood up and voiced his concerns about the situation.

“Nephew Zeng’s point is well taken. Let’s say that within their respective territories, the town guards will be on equal footing with you division heads, shall we?”

Chen Mobai was referencing the system used by the Immortal Gates, where the City Lords of blessed lands held a high degree of autonomy. Within the Immortal Gates, the only ones who could command them were the members of the Kaiyuan Hall and the masters and vice-masters of The Three Great Halls.

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However, with only three Golden Core Cultivators in the Divine Wood Sect, there was a need to adapt and change the approach accordingly.

If Chu Zuoshu had brought up this proposal, the Twelve Divisions would have unanimously rejected it long ago.

A mere town guard is only a qualification to enter the Twelve Divisions; how suddenly had their status been elevated to equal that of theirs!

With the rise in the authority of Town Guards, and The Three Great Halls remaining aloft, it meant that the powers of the Twelve Divisions were being reduced—a simple truth that was easily understandable.

Signed to oppose, but the current Sect Leader was a Nascent Soul Ancestor!

“I’ll strictly follow the Sect Leader’s decree.”

After hesitating for a while, and without any sign that Fu Zongjue was going to speak, the Foundation Establishment Practitioners of the Twelve Divisions had no choice but to unanimously pass the proposal.

“Given that, the position of Town Guard becomes extremely important. Apart from the Guard of the Founding Nation remaining unchanged, the other six nations will need to be re-examined.”

Chen Mobai did not disturb the Guard of the Founding Nation for two reasons.

First, the sect was located there; if the Town Guard were granted such authority, the friction with the Twelve Divisions would surely be plentiful, and it would ultimately be he, as Sect Leader, who’d be vexed.

Second, it was to avoid suspicions and prevent others from thinking that he was attempting to leverage this situation to elevate his disciple, Zhuo Ming.

“I was the Town Guard of Sky Country before and am willing to continue in this role, to protect the sect’s border and counter the Nanxuan sect.”

Zhou Wangshen promptly volunteered, though he originally wanted to choose Lei Nation because this country had been under the rule of the Divine Wood Sect for nearly a century and would be very easy to manage.

However, this would not showcase his superior skills in governing. Moreover, he would be unable to use the Nanxuan sect to acquire contributions and merits. Therefore, after some thought, he decided to stick with Sky Country, where he had laid some foundation over the past decade.

“I am fair and just in my actions. This matter also needs to give all Foundation Establishment Cultivators in the sect a chance. Spread my proposal today to the other cultivators not in the sect. They, or even you all, if you have this intention, can participate in the election. One month later, all Foundation Establishment votes shall decide the position of Town Guards for the six nations.”

Upon hearing Chen Mobai’s words, everyone present was startled.

“For this matter, the Sect Leader and Elder Fu can make the decision.”

Chu Zuoshu spoke out with some trepidation.

“If there is a tie, or something beyond the rules, I and Senior Brother Fu will make the final decision. For the rest, you all need to play your role.”

The confidence of the Golden Core Cultivators lay in their own cultivation levels, neither Chen Mobai nor Fu Zongjue really cared about these issues.

And to put it bluntly, if they wanted to support someone, just by saying the word, at least half of the Foundation Establishment practitioners within the Divine Wood Sect would choose the person they mentioned.

Inside Shenmu Hall, the Foundation Establishment practitioners had varied thoughts and left with indescribable expressions.

Some heads of the Twelve Divisions even contemplated whether to give up their current positions to compete for the role of a nation’s Town Guard.

Any cultivator who had advanced to the Foundation Building Realm and held a high-ranking position was a shrewd thinker.

Because, they saw a glimmer of hope for Core Formation in this.

After leaving Shenmu Hall, groups of familiar Foundation Establishment Cultivators gathered at their usual places and began discussing this matter.

...

“Junior Brother, with your exceptional talent, focusing on cultivation would be more beneficial for the sect.”

After the sect conference concluded, only Chen Mobai and Fu Zongjue remained in Shenmu Hall, and the latter advised the former.

“Don’t worry, Senior Brother. Affairs of the sect won’t affect my cultivation. Besides, once a genius like my nephew Chu emerges from the next generation, I will willingly hand over the leadership of the sect.”

Chen Mobai’s words also made sense, as the Sect Leaders of the East Wilderness Major Sects were mostly at the peak of Foundation Establishment, at the very least in the late phase of Foundation Establishment.

If Zhou Wangshen were appointed, the unenlightened Loose Cultivators and minor powers would probably believe that their Divine Wood Sect had no successors.

“Since that’s the case, Sect affairs will be taken care of by Junior Brother. I will continue to delve into the Puppetry Technique of Liu Jia Mountain.”

For Fu Zongjue, the role of the Divine Wood Sect in aiding him was diminishing, and instead, it was their Golden Core Cultivators supporting and sustaining the sect.

So, it was good news to him that Chen Mobai was willing to handle things.

Soon after.

The news that Chu Zuoshu had stepped down and Chen Mobai had taken over as Sect Leader quickly spread throughout the Divine Wood Sect.

Many Qi Cultivating Disciples felt only one thing about this change, and that was more confidence when they left their abode.

Because their own Sect Leader was a Nascent Soul Ancestor.

The only one in the whole Eastern Wilderness!

For the Foundation Establishment Practitioners of the Divine Wood Sect, however, the proposal to elect the next Sect Leader caused a great uproar.

“Yan Shidi, are you really going to compete for the position of Town Guard?”

Kou Canzhi, the head of the Body Forging Division, looked at the young Foundation Establishment Cultivator before him with his bronze skin and resolute face, feeling both alarmed and delighted.

“Kou Shixiong, I want to reach Core Formation. Although staying here would give me access to abundant Spirit Stone resources, at most, I would only end up outlasting you to take control of a division. Now that there’s a better path, I want to give it a try.”

The young man with bronze skin was named Yan Yuanhao. He had just celebrated his eightieth birthday, and his cultivation level had reached the peak of the Foundation Establishment Middle Stage.

His other identity was that of deputy head of the Body Forging Division.

In the recent battle between Rock Country and Nanxuan Sect, it was he who led the cultivators of the Body Forging Division on the bloodiest battlefield. On the brink of death, the image of Chen Mobai wielding Purple Electric Wild Thunder and transforming it into Sword Light to slay Nanxuan Jing had left a profound impression on him.

Having survived the battlefield and witnessed the power of Core Formation, Yan Yuanhao longed even more for such a realm.

Now with an openly fair competition, Yan Yuanhao was willing to give up his prospects within the Body Forging Division just to fight for a possibility.

Not just Yan Yuanhao, the deputy heads of the Talisman Making Department and the Formation Division had also made the same decision.

As had the Inspection Envoys and Inspectors of The Three Great Halls, and so on.

Within the Divine Wood Sect, any Foundation Establishment Practitioner who had conviction in reaching Core Formation was stirred to maximum enthusiasm by Chen Mobai's first decree as the new Sect Leader.

"Well said, well said. Take care, Mu Shixiong. When the master summons me, I will find an opportunity to speak..."

Liu Wenbo sent off another Sect Foundation Establishment visitor, scratching his head helplessly.

He had not quite anticipated the significance of his status as Chen Mobai's Eldest Disciple.

Lately, almost every Foundation Establishment Practitioner in the Divine Wood Sect who did not know him had used the Heavenly Communication Device to send him messages requesting to meet.

It was the same for Zhuo Ming.

However, Zhuo Ming didn't like socializing, and since she was a Female Cultivator, many people refrained from visiting her directly.

It was different for Liu Wenbo. He managed the Little Nan Mountain Shop, and nearly everyone had his contact information. He found it difficult to refuse requests for meetings, so ever since Chen Mobai became Sect Leader, he had not had a single day of leisure.

Many people wanted to pledge their loyalty to Chen Mobai through Liu Wenbo, assuring that they would do whatever the Sect Leader asked if he appointed them as a Town Guard.

Unfortunately, Chen Mobai did not need such loyalty, and although Liu Wenbo was a simple and honest man, he would never actually bring such matters to Chen Mobai's attention.

Seeing that his Heavenly Communication Device continued ringing endlessly, Liu Wenbo sighed, left a message for Chen Mobai, gathered his things, and made the excuse of managing the Little Nan

Mountain Shop to also help his family plant rice back in Yun Country. He then took the Teleportation Array and left Giant Tree Ridge overnight.

The next day, Qi Rui, who came to visit Liu Wenbo, saw the [Out] sign hanging on the door and looked troubled.

Three years ago, he had successfully reached Foundation Establishment by taking a Foundation Building Pill left by Chen Mobai, and he had always wanted to thank him in person. Unfortunately, he had been outside the Sect on business prior to this.

After learning about Chen Mobai's Core Formation and his succession as Sect Leader through the Sect's messages, Qi Rui was astonished. He completed his tasks as quickly as possible and hurried back to Giant Tree Ridge.

Chen Mobai's current status was not the same as before, and after finishing his tasks at the Spirit Treasure Pavilion, Qi Rui had headed straight for Liu Wenbo, hoping to request his assistance for an audience.

Unfortunately, Liu Wenbo had slipped away a step ahead.

Having no other choice, Qi Rui headed to Little Nan Mountain only to find that Zhuo Ming was also not there.

"Eh, isn't this Junior Brother Qi?"

Just as Qi Rui was considering visiting Xi Jinghuo for information, a familiar voice called out to him.

He turned around to see Yan Jinye from the Alchemy Department.

They had met several times when Chen Mobai had gathered everyone for wine tasting in the past.

“Are you here for Zhuo Shimei? That’s really unfortunate; she was taken by Sect Master Chen to Black Cloud Mountain today.”