

Emperor 4041

Chapter 4041: Trustworthiness

The monarch then brought the new recruits to another place for them to settle down.

“Young Noble, are you starting a sect?” Xu Yiyun became curious because Li Qiye had recruited people from all over the world. Most importantly, he had enough wealth to do so.

In history, top masters have started sects along with weaker cultivators. The sects of the former would last for generations while the latter might go down after a few years or decades at best.

This was a different scenario. The other progenitors relied on their strength while Li Qiye relied solely on his wealth.

He didn’t need to pass down any merit law or techniques. Just the salary alone was attractive enough for big shots to join him. With the right administration, his sect could become stronger than many top ones in Sword Continent.

“I’m just killing time.” Li Qiye smiled at her: “But if I were to start a sect, would you like to join?”

This sudden question surprised her. She was working for him but ultimately, she was still a disciple of the Xu.

She pondered for a bit before shaking her head: “I appreciate what you have done for me but I am a member of the Xu and always will be. The only exception is if they banish me.”

This was a tough choice for most. After all, she had personally experienced his generosity in the last few days. He gave her things that her clan couldn’t possibly muster. They had no access to those invincible weapons.

Thus, if he were to start a sect, she might receive incredible resources and gain high status due to her innate talents. Ten of her clans couldn’t match this sum.

It wouldn’t be an exaggeration to say that she would enjoy the same privileges as the behemoths’ successors.

Nonetheless, she still refused his tempting hypothetical because she wanted to stay in her clan in spite of its declined state. She would never abandon it for any reason.

“Interesting.” Li Qiye chuckled and nodded, dropping the issue.

Archaic Style has finished the transfer process for Omniscient Dao Lord’s territory. They led the way and showed Li Qiye the area.

This land was named Omniscient Home.

The group found that this place was filled with beautiful nature - a verdant mountain range with waterfalls.

It wasn't completely desolate either. Thousands and thousands of brick-and-tile buildings could be seen.

The manager of Archaic Style finished the process by handing the account books to Li Qiye: "Young Noble, this is the former home of Omniscient Dao Lord. In the beginning, there were only ten peaks or so. Once we entered the pact with the dao lord, we bought the surrounding areas. After many generations, there are thirty cities and more than seventy thousand shops. The annual profit is recorded in these books, please take a look."

This was a testament to Archaic Style's ability, managing to turn a small town into a large territory.

"The sealed pavilions of the dao lord are also available. According to the pact, the leftover merit laws can be given to the fateful ones." He handed an old jade over to Li Qiye.

The latter only took a quick glance without caring too much. Nonetheless, he still praised: "Archaic Style's reputation is solid indeed, more trustworthy than any other sect."

Unlike other powers who cared about expansion and passing down their arts, Archaic Style kept on doing business quietly for generations while maintaining a golden reputation.

As a result, this reputation earned them continuous business from top sects and masters. The best example would be the Preeminent Legacy.

The dao lord's monstrous wealth was coveted by all. Moreover, he left it to Archaic Style as well. If they desired it, they would have thousands of means to monopolize this wealth.

However, on the contrary, they invested this wealth and multiplied it without taking more than the agreed share.

"Thank you, Young Noble." The shopkeeper bowed: "Reputation is the most important thing for us ever since our establishment."

"Nothing short of a miracle." Li Qiye nodded and waved his hand: "All the shops and cities will still be under your jurisdiction. The terms shall be the same as before."

The shopkeeper was surprised to hear this. This sum was enough to put many sects to shame yet Li Qiye still gave it to them without thinking twice?

"We appreciate your generosity, Young Noble." He bowed deeply and said.

"You deserve it, trust is priceless." Li Qiye said.

"With this, we have finished the transfer process of Omniscient Dao Lord's legacy. If you ever need anything from us in the future, just let us know." He solemnly said and bid farewell.

"Young Noble, you're always so generous." Xu Yiyun sighed and said. The interest and profit given to Archaic Style earlier were more than enough to revitalize her clan.

“They deserve it for maintaining their integrity after all these years.” Li Qiye nonchalantly said.

Chapter 4042: Money Is King

The group along with the new recruits came to Omniscient Home after the transfer process.

The place became lively right away with new masters. This looked like the start of a new sect.

“Everything is available here.” Li Qiye smiled and told Crimsondeath Monarch: “Omniscient Dao Lord left behind top merit laws and secret arts from all over the world. Use them as rewards for notable contributions.”

“My Lord, should we really publicize these secrets?” The monarch was startled.

Cultivation manuals were heavily guarded in any sect, never available to outsiders. This was especially true for dao lord merit laws since they were considered nothing short of priceless. Sect members themselves didn’t necessarily have access to top-level merit laws.

However, Li Qiye was ready to give Omniscient Dao Lord’s secrets to the new recruits. This dao lord was famous for his knowledge and insight.

His lifelong collection of merit laws should be magnificent. Anyone else would rather monopolize it instead of sharing. Most importantly, they all belonged to Li Qiye in the first place. No one would have an issue with him keeping them for himself.

Furthermore, the new recruits had no ties with Li Qiye. Their motive was the handsome salary, nothing more.

Crimsondeath had traveled around the world but never experienced anything like this before.

“Manuals are dead, they are mere pieces of paper if there is no one to take advantage of them.” Li Qiye said: “An invincible merit law still requires a capable user to show the world its might.”

The monarch and those nearby didn’t expect this response from him. It was certainly a refreshing angle.

Most of them were accomplished cultivators with prestigious backgrounds. They naturally understood how heavily guarded merit laws were. Thus, Li Qiye’s viewpoint was a stark contrast to anyone else.

“My Lord, your magnanimity knows no bounds. Meeting you must be the luckiest event in my life.” The monarch bowed deeply.

“Lead them well. Remember, ask A’zhi for help when necessary.” Li Qiye ordered.

He then turned towards the reticent A’zhi and said: “Feel free to look at the sequestered merit laws. As for handlings the reward, you and Crimsondeath will be in charge.”

“Your existence shall be a blessing for the world. You have my gratitude.” A’zhi bowed as well.

Li Qiye chuckled and waved his hand. The group left as commanded.

He then turned his attention towards Tie Jian and smiled: "You and A'zhi are different. He's only a spectator while ambition fuels you. But that's fine, the stage is right here, progress is up to you. If you need money, I have money. If you need merit laws and treasures, they're right there. I have given you all the advantages. If you still can't amount to anything, that's your own fault."

"I understand, Young Noble. We will do our best to live up to your expectations." Tie Jian solemnly said.

"I have no expectations. It's just that I have too much money and no place to spend." Li Qiye chuckled.

He didn't demand anything of the group. Nonetheless, they shall avail themselves to his wealth and do their very best.

"This is your new home now, do as you please." Li Qiye waved.

Tie Jian bowed deeply before taking his leave.

"I don't think there's another master as generous as you, Young Noble." Lu Qi said after everyone was gone.

"Then you should think about switching master, no? You'll have all the food and clothes you want afterward." He smiled.

Lu Qi smiled wryly and said: "It is a blessing of three lifetimes to be able to serve you, Young Noble. However, my life belongs to my lord for what she had done for me. I will follow her till my last breath."

She knew that he was special and not inferior to her lord. However, her loyalty remained unwavering.

"That's her fortune then." He smiled.

"Young Noble, you have a lot of trust in A'zhi despite his mysteriousness." Xu Yiyun started a new topic.

Li Qiye had many followers at this point but the most mysterious was A'zhi. No one knew a thing about the old man.

These followers all had their own goals and agendas. This didn't seem to be the case for A'zhi.

Just three meals a day? Impossible. Tie Jian said something similar but his group desired a lord capable of giving them a stage for expansion.

This didn't apply to A'zhi. The man had no demand and simply wanted to follow Li Qiye as if he was a lost soul.

"Why not? He doesn't look like a bad guy." Li Qiye smiled.

"We can't see his character in such a short time and we know nothing about him. It'll be difficult to guard if he has treacherous intentions." She said.

Li Qiye even allowed the guy to look at the sealed merit laws of Omniscient Dao Lord. This was something Yiyun couldn't understand. She was still afraid of potential complications by keeping him around.

“A smart man knows what he should and shouldn't do and I have no complaints about his intelligence.” Li Qiye replied.

This wasn't enough to dispel Yiyun's doubt. She remained cautious of the old man.

Lu Qi didn't feel the same way. She was stronger and possessed more knowledge of the upper level. She wasn't afraid of the old man being able to harm Li Qiye and only had curiosity regarding his identity and goal. Why would such a powerful cultivator choose to lay low and work for Li Qiye?

Of course, Li Qiye didn't care. A'zhi could do whatever he wanted and leave whenever as well.

The arrival of the group was akin to the starting of a new sect despite Li Qiye never claiming so. Nonetheless, Omniscient Home was comparable to any power right now after the influx of recruits.

Because of this, other sects and countries came to congratulate Li Qiye, wanting to please the richest man in the world.

Moreover, some tried to start business deals with Li Qiye too. His generosity was well documented at this point.

“Young Noble, a few declining powers want to sell their land to you.” Xu Yiyun had to do numerous meetings since Li Qiye didn't want to see anyone. She then relayed it to Li Qiye.

Chapter 4043: Pineleaf Sword Lord

“Buy them all, why not?” Li Qiye smiled and agreed.

“I don't think we should because their territories are far away from us. We can't accept and administrate over them. For example, this estate in Dream Marsh is infested with bandits. We'll just be throwing money away.” Yiyun became worried.

Some came to sell Li Qiye their properties and land at sky-high prices, aware that Li Qiye had too much money.

It wouldn't be an exaggeration to consider a few deals as scams. These properties were worthless and too far away from Omniscient Home. Even if he were to purchase them, he wouldn't be able to go and take over.

Yiyun knew all of this since she had traveled extensively and was far from being a novice. She wanted to refuse right away but still waited to hear Li Qiye's opinion.

“We'll be fine. Send people to take the purchased territories. If there are problems, then subdue them with force. Otherwise, what's the point of feeding all these cultivators? My meals aren't free.” Li Qiye smiled.

Yiyun agreed with this. The new recruits so far could take on an entire country. Li Qiye spent such a monstrous sum already so they should work for it.

“I see, then I will carry out your command.” Yiyun agreed to buy the distant territories and estates.

Regardless of their conditions and circumstances, they would belong to Li Qiye after the purchase. This was time for his new recruits to work. Moreover, it would increase his reach in Sword Continent as well.

“I’ll tell Crimsondeath to help you.” Li Qiye said before summoning the monarch.

“Train your group well because Yiyun will be going to take over some properties. Prepare well, we can’t let the poor girl go all by herself for this sensitive task.”

The monarch understood Li Qiye’s intention right away. This wasn’t a charity. Li Qiye might be wanting to spend money but it must also entertain him in some ways.

“I will do my best to assist Miss Xu, My Lord.” The monarch bowed.

“Be clear with merits and contributions. Reward those deserving and vice versa. There are plenty of sealed merit laws, use them.” Li Qiye nodded.

The monarch accepted the order and went to carry it out.

Because of Li Qiye’s attitude, Xu Yiyun no longer hesitated in buying unsavory or problematic territories.

Nonetheless, she remained relatively picky regarding the purchases. She chose against buying the truly worthless territories even though Li Qiye never limited her capital. Thus, the sellers found it impossible to pull a quick one on her.

She was decisive and quick in this regard. Li Qiye was quite happy with her and joked: “You should just stay here forever and be in charge of administration and transactions.”

She chuckled in response. She was currently working for Li Qiye but would have to leave eventually to return to her clan.

Too many came wanting an audience with Li Qiye. Some wanted to join him, others wanted to sell their treasures, and more wished to befriend the richest man in the world due to his famous generosity.

Li Qiye didn’t see any of them with the exception of one group.

It was none other than Calm Bamboo Princess and the seniors from her sect who have been waiting a long time in the main chamber. Li Qiye took his time before arriving.

It wasn’t that long since the Preeminent Legacy event. The princess looked the same and still wore a green dress. She brimmed with life force and a refreshing aura.

Sitting next to her was an old man adorned in a regal robe. He was clearly a man of status despite having a wooden hairpin instead of a crest to hold his hair.

He exuded an ancient aura akin to a pine tree growing on the precipice - unmoved by the winds and rain.

His eyes contained a frightening flash despite his best effort to hide his power. This was a mighty Heavenly Sovereign.

Other big shots were nearby - the seniors of the princess from Wooden Sword Holy Kingdom.

The princess looked rather obedient this time around, no longer as prideful as arrogant as before. She bowed and introduced the group to Li Qiye: "Young Noble, please meet our king."

The old man turned out to be the ruler of Wooden Sword with the title of Pineleaf Sword Lord. He was also one of the Six Sect Masters of Sword Continent. The six were members of the last generation and were quite influential.

His kingdom only had one dao lord in the past. This didn't deter its prestige.

It was founded by Wooden Sword Holy Devil. He wasn't a dao lord but had defeated War God Dao Lord before.

Keep in mind, this dao lord had carried out numerous expeditions against the forbidden zones so he was no slouch.

Unfortunately, their founder died in one of the zones later on. The next notable character of the kingdom was their single dao lord - Jade Bamboo.

He was a jade bamboo demon and after finishing his dao, his first deed was recovering their founder's corpse from the forbidden zone.

Before leaving Eight Desolaces, he took off one of his branches and penetrated the Sword Burial Zone with it. This bought everyone else an opportunity spanning three thousand years.

Moving forward, the kingdom couldn't train another dao lord. Nonetheless, it remained as one of the top powers in the continent. Their current king being one of the Six Sect Masters was a testament to their prestige.

Pineleaf Sword Lord stood up and bowed towards Li Qiye: "Your reputation precedes you, Young Noble Li. There is no one else like you in history." He acted as humble as can be despite being a mighty king.

"Sounds about right." Li Qiye smiled and shamelessly accepted the praise.

A big shot in the back scowled after hearing this.

"Young Noble, I am here to carry out my end of the bargain..." The princess said.

However, an ancestor from the kingdom stood up and interrupted her: "That's too early to say, Little One. We haven't decided yet."

The princess wanted to speak but chose to move to the side instead.

"We're here to settle this dispute with you." The ancestor then turned towards Li Qiye.

Chapter 4044: I Have Money

“We are here to terminate the agreement.” The ancestor uttered coldly.

“Oh?” Li Qiye smiled, unintimidated.

“The princess is young and naive, which is why she agreed to the bet despite not being able to represent herself on something so serious since she’s a member of Wooden Sword.”

“So you wish to renege.” Li Qiye didn’t find this surprising.

“Mind your words now.” A different ancestor was unhappy with Li Qiye’s choice of words.

“No, you should be minding your words. This is my territory, not Wooden Sword.” Li Qiye chuckled and gave him the side-eye.

The third scowled but managed to restrain his anger.

The first to speak began again: “We’re not unreasonable, of course. If you agree to terminate the bet, we will compensate you handsomely.”

“Compensate me? Do you not realize how utterly ridiculous this is?” Li Qiye burst out in laughter.

His wanton laughter soured the ancestors’ expression. This attitude could only be viewed as contempt for both themselves and their kingdom. This was unacceptable.

“Please fix your attitude.” One ancestor uttered coldly, clearly unhappy.

“No, you’re the ones that need to reflect on your stance. Your kingdom is indeed a bit famous on the continent but take a look at yourselves then me. In my eyes, your kingdom is on the verge of declining, and as for you all? A bunch of impoverished old men daring to talk about compensating me with your meager coins? This is akin to beggars wanting to satisfy me, the richest man in the world. How is this not hilarious?” Li Qiye shook his head and retorted.

The ancestors’ expression became unsightly and glared at Li Qiye.

“How are you going to compensate me? A few hundred million Dao Lord Refined Jades? Actually, that might be too much for you, and even in that case, do you think I would actually give a damn? I have billions and billions of Dao Lord Refined Jades, this is not taking into account the lower-level jades. So in short, I don’t think you have what it takes.” Li Qiye added.

Li Qiye boasted about his wealth just like a parvenu. Nonetheless, they had a hard time retorting since he was indeed the richest in the continent or perhaps all of Eight Desolaces.

There were levels to having money as well. To be frank, once one got rich enough, everything they did became acceptable. Even their fart would start smelling good.

Li Qiye looked at the group, one by one, before smiling: “One sliver of my wealth is enough to feed your entire kingdom for three generations. So what can you offer me? Dao lord weapons? I have more than

ten. Merit laws? Nah, I just inherited an entire library of dao lord merit laws, I'm about to give them to my servants."

The ancestors were speechless while listening to him.

"We are indeed overestimating ourselves in terms of wealth." Pineleaf Sword Lord said: "No one can match you in this regard so there's nothing we can offer."

He knew that Li Qiye was telling the truth. That legacy simply had everything. Even the Sea Emperor Sword Kingdom couldn't compete with him.

"Your Majesty, you're lowering our morale..." An ancestor whispered to their king.

Pineleaf waved his hand and said: "I'm merely telling the truth, we need to accept this."

The first ancestor took a deep breath and told Li Qiye: "Wealth is not everything in this world. Power trumps all."

"Time for force when diplomacy doesn't work? Is this a threat?" Li Qiye waited for him to finish.

"That's not what I'm trying to do." The ancestor replied: "As the saying goes, wealth incites greed. Everyone desires your legacy so if we both take a step back and team up, you'll gain safety and more room to grow."

"I'm not looking down on you but the reality is that I don't even need to do it myself to subdue all of you right now." Li Qiye chuckled.

"You!" The ancestors became furious.

They came prepared this time and brought several top ancestors from their kingdom. They thought that they would be able to face any opponent - even the richest man in the world.

Thus, his contempt towards them was unacceptable.

"We might not be on the same level as Sea Emperor but not just anyone can prance in front of us." The first ancestor responded: "If Young Noble Li wishes to spar, so be it..."

"Don't act so tough now." Li Qiye smiled and ordered: "A'zhi, teach them a lesson."

A man in gray suddenly appeared next to Li Qiye like a specter.

He wasn't physically present before but he heard Li Qiye's call and rushed over in the next moment.

Both the king and the ancestors became alarmed right away. The sitting ancestors all stood up because the newcomer was just too fast. They didn't see how he got there at all. Even someone as powerful as the king shuddered.

"Affirmative." A'zhi bowed towards Li Qiye then stared at the opponents: "Come all at once, don't waste my young noble's time."

His nonchalant tone expressed his indifference towards the group. The latter had never been treated this way before.

"I hope your identity warrants your arrogance." An ancestor strongly responded.

"I don't remember my name anymore but dealing with you bunch won't be a problem. If your Poplar Paragon is still alive, then he might be able to fight me." A'zhi said.

His answer froze the entire group.

Chapter 4045: Maid

The members of Wooden Sword tried their best to hide their shock. Poplar Paragon would be a foreign title to regular cultivators.

However, top experts in the continent all knew the paragon - the number one cultivator of Wooden Sword.

Unfortunately, the paragon stopped appearing for a long time now. Even the ancestors of Wooden Sword rarely knew anything about the paragon's current situation. Only the core members had an idea.

Outsiders assumed that the paragon was dead due to withering vitality and lifespan. Others thought that the paragon had been sealed and would only come out during an existential crisis for the kingdom.

Regardless of the paragon's current state, the group was shocked to see A'zhi mentioning the paragon as a potential opponent.

They naturally weren't a match for the paragon, meaning that they weren't a match for A'zhi either.

They cast glances of doubt at each other. The king then cupped his fist and said: "Senior, were you acquainted with our forefather?"

"Too long ago, can't recall." A'zhi flatly responded, neither confirming nor denying.

The group didn't know the answer, only that this old man was definitely stronger than them. The question was why was he under Li Qiye? Just money?

They were stuck in a difficult situation. On one hand, they wanted to teach Li Qiye a lesson. Alas, this didn't seem to be possible since they would need to defeat A'zhi first.

The king spoke again: "Why not listen to what Ning Zhu has to say?" [1]

"Your Majesty, this is a matter of paramount importance, she shouldn't make a decision..." The first ancestor hurriedly said.

The king interrupted him right away: "Why can't she? This pertains to her life so she gets to pick. The sect's authority shouldn't infringe on the members' freedom."

"Little one, what do you think?" He then kindly asked the princess.

“Your Majesty, I was the one who caused this problem so I shall bear it myself. I am willing to stay. A member of Wooden Sword does not renege a bet.” She bowed deeply and said.

“Well said, well said.” The king nodded: “From now on, you are no longer a princess of Wooden Sword.” She trembled after hearing this.

“Your Majesty!” The ancestors became anxious because she was a prized genius of the sect.

“This is her decision.” He waved his hand: “And she’s right, members of Wooden Sword will not renege. This is her fate for losing.”

“But... what do we do about Sea Emperor?” One ancestor asked.

Breaking the engagement with Peace Ocean Sword King could have serious consequences, leading to potential war.

“Since she’s going to be my maid, they can come to me if they have a problem with it.” Li Qiye smilingly interjected.

The ancestor snorted, still annoyed with Li Qiye.

The king sighed and told the princess: “Little one, there is no turning back for you. You’re no longer a princess and the sect will have to decide if you’ll stay a regular disciple.”

“I thank you for training me, Master, and the sect for grooming me. The holy kingdom is my home, I will repay this debt one day.” She prostrated on the ground, still trembling.

“Sigh.” The king said: “Take good care of yourself now.” He then cupped his fist towards Li Qiye and added: “Young Noble Li, please treat her well.”

“Of course I will treat my people well.” Li Qiye smiled.

“We’re leaving.” The king nodded at the princess before ordering the ancestors.

“Your Majesty!” The ancestors panicked but the king was already leaving. Most followed him with the exception of a few close to the princess. They talked to her for a bit before leaving to join the group.

She bowed towards these ancestors as they were departing.

Once they were gone, Li Qiye told her: “Fetch water for your first task. Do your best now.” He then returned to his room.

The princess took a deep breath and tried to calm down. This choice wasn’t easy for her today, abandoning her status as a princess and becoming a maid.

She could have resisted for quite a while because she had her own kingdom on top of Sea Emperor as her backers. Alas, her final choice was made.

If others were to know about this, they would think that she was crazy. Nonetheless, she thought that there was no point in regretting her action.

Li Qiye was laying down on his comfortable chair. The princess came into the room with a basin filled with water.

He didn't open his eyes, seemingly asleep.

She crouched down in front of him and took off his shoes, placing his feet into the basin and earnestly washing his feet.

She had never done a chore before given her background, let alone washing the feet of a male stranger. Thus, she was slow and clumsy.

"You're quite smart." Li Qiye said: "But just know that one will get burnt eventually when they play with fire."

"I don't understand, Young Noble. I am merely carrying out my end of the bargain." She calmly answered, no longer possessing the same pride as before.

"Really now? Who began spying on me even outside the city?" Li Qiye chuckled.

The princess didn't expect him to know this. She composed herself and said: "I just happened to be there at that time."

Li Qiye smiled and gently lifted her delicate chin. She looked up and met his gaze.

She was gorgeous indeed with sculpture-like features, especially her red, tantalizing lips.

"Sure, that might have been a coincidence." Li Qiye said: "I don't think our second meeting inside the city was."

She didn't respond.

He let go and leaned back down: "You're smart enough to know who can help you. Unfortunately, you're jumping into the pit by doing this."

She continued washing his feet for a while before softly asking: "This place is a pit, Young Noble?"

"That depends on what you want." Li Qiye replied: "There are pros and cons in everything. It applies in this situation as well."

"I do not regret my choice. I am your follower now." She replied.

"The descendant of Jade Bamboo Dao Lord is impressive. Your intelligence alone does not shame your prestigious and pure bloodline. Just know that being too smart can backfire sometimes." Li Qiye said.

She started trembling again because he knew her true background - something misunderstood by others.

Chapter 4046: Smart People Learn Quick

The kingdom never explicitly stated nor confirmed her background. Others assumed that she was a jade bamboo demon.

They didn't know that she was the descendant of Jade Bamboo Dao Lord on top of possessing an exceedingly pure bloodline.

After all, too many generations have passed and the direct branch was no longer there. Furthermore, bloodlines would also become thinner with time before disappearing altogether.

Alas, there were exceptions to everything. One or two descendants later down the line might somehow possess a pure bloodline.

This was an extremely rare occurrence - being born with a pure dao lord bloodline. In these special cases, the lucky child would have an exceedingly bright future far exceeding their peers.

For Calm Bamboo Princess, she was able to become the successor of Wooden Sword and the direct disciple of the king due to her innate gifts.

Only the core ancestors of the kingdom had access to this knowledge but now, Li Qiye easily figured it out.

She took a deep breath and felt as if she was completely naked. All of her secrets were out in the open before him.

"I am in awe of your vision, Yong Noble." She said, looking as obedient as can be as if she has become a different person.

"Having a jade is a crime." Li Qiye smiled: "Being born with a pure bloodline is the same as having a piece of jade since birth, that's why Sea Emperor Sword Kingdom picked you."

Peace Ocean Sword King was the current ruler of the strongest lineage in Sword Continent, no need to elaborate any further regarding his prestige and authority.

Numerous sects would be more than willing to become in-laws with Sea Emperor. However, the latter eventually chose Calm Bamboo Princess. There was obviously a reason - her pure dao lord bloodline.

"Right, the engagement started during my youth." She nodded.

"The conditions must have been quite favorable. Hmm, Wooden Sword doesn't need resources. What was the demand?" Li Qiye smiled.

Wooden Sword was powerful but in this scenario, it was the one reaching up. Nonetheless, one could also say that the princess' future was bright either way. Thus, Wooden Sword should have more plans before picking this engagement.

She opened her mouth but hesitated, only letting out a sigh.

"Let me guess." He answered his own question: "They want a child."

Wooden Sword should have fully supported the princess given her bloodline. Why did they want to send her away?

“Right.” She admitted with a nod.

For Wooden Sword, this engagement would net them a powerful ally. Moreover, Peace Ocean Sword King was talented enough to have a good chance of becoming the next dao lord. Thus, the child of these two would be supreme.

If such a child was given to Wooden Sword as its future successor, they might be able to have a dao lord as well. Furthermore, it would strongly bolster the ties between the two sects.

The above factors made Wooden Sword agree to the engagement.

“But you don’t want to.” Li Qiye smiled and knew all of this.

She looked up at him and said: “No one wants to be controlled and manipulated.”

As a disciple back then, she had no power nor the right to oppose the marriage. This didn’t change even after she became the successor.

She naturally didn’t want this deep in her heart. Becoming the future queen of Sea Emperor sounded prestigious and glorious. Alas, she knew that she was being used as a tool for reproduction.

Unfortunately, resistance was futile. The majority of ancestors in Wooden Sword agreed to this engagement so her hands were tied.

“That’s why you picked me. The audacity.” Li Qiye shook his head.

“Someone as unfathomable as yourself should be capable and wise.” The princess said.

She had thought about various methods to escape this marriage despite being aware of the futility. Who would dare to offend Sea Emperor?

After the engagement was formalized, not even Wooden Sword could change its mind.

However, Li Qiye’s appearance gave her hope. His miraculous abilities made her think that he would be able to oppose Sea Emperor. This was the reason why she staged the next meetings and the bet.

“I don’t know about all of that, but is it wise for you to sell yourself to me as a maid?” Li Qiye chuckled.

She pondered for a moment before replying: “Being the future queen of Sea Emperor might not be better or more prestigious than a maid.”

She ruminated on this issue plenty in the past after observing Li Qiye before making the decision.

On the surface, the answer was obvious. The queen was countless times nobler than a maid. However, she disagreed with this because she would become nothing more than a reproduction tool for sale.

Therefore, taking this risk was necessary. She bet everything on Li Qiye’s abilities.

“All I can say is that Wooden Sword is run by idiots, to give up a good seed like you.” Li Qiye laughed.

“His Majesty treated me like a daughter and taught me everything.” She shook her head.

A few opposed the engagement. Her master was one of them but unfortunately, he couldn’t make the decision alone.

“Well, since you have chosen to join my side, do your best to serve me now.” Li Qiye ended it there.

“I never regret a decision once made.” She solemnly said then went back to her task of washing his feet.

After she was finished, she left quietly instead of bothering him.

“There’s potential here.” Lu Qi appeared next to Li Qiye like a specter.

“Indeed, very smart. Worthy of further grooming.” Li Qiye smiled.

Chapter 4047: Shi Yingxue

Omniscient Home remained lively with the horde coming to congratulate Li Qiye. Of course, none of them got a glimpse of him and only saw Xu Yiyun instead.

There was one exception. Today, she came and asked him: “Young Noble, the sect master of Armament Mountain wishes to have an audience for an important matter.”

“You’re making an exception today? What’s the reason?” Li Qiye smiled since no one else in the last several days was introduced by Yiyun.

“Yes, Young Noble.” She nodded and said: “Master Shi was kind to me during my travels. I have no choice but to put on a thick skin and ask you to see her, but if you don’t wish to see anyone, I’ll tell her to leave.”

“I can’t refuse once you’ve asked. Let her come.” He didn’t mind.

“Thank you, Young Noble.” She bowed, aware that he was being considerate and doing her a favor.

A while later, she brought another woman into the chamber. The latter’s presence lit up the room right away.

She wore a purple dress unaccompanied by other ornaments. Nonetheless, the craftsmanship alone made its value apparent.

She was a true beauty with curves in all the right places. The slightest movement from her would captivate any audience.

Despite her sexy figure, her face was one of authoritative elegance instead of seduction - starry eyes, crescent eyebrows, and a shape of perfect proportions.

Two contrasting styles manifested in her - nobility and sensuality.

“I am Shi Yingxue, a member of Armament Mountain. It’s a pleasure to meet you, Young Noble Li.” She bowed deeply towards him and introduced herself.

She was no ordinary disciple but was the sect master of War Mountain. Another status of her was being one of the Six Kings in Sword continent.

She belonged in the same generation as Peace Ocean Sword King, only a little older. Her reputation matched his.

Armament Mountain was created by Armament Dao Lord. It had two dao lords and was close to being as strong as sects such as Sword Temple and Nine-wheel Citadel.

She purposely displayed humility by introducing herself as a member of Armament instead of the sect master.

“I’m sure it has to be an important matter to bring you here, Sect Master Shi.” Li Qiye invited her to sit down.

“Yes, Young Noble. The truth is that I’m here to ask for help, hoping that you’ll be able to solve a problem plaguing us.” She got straight to the point.

“I don’t have much outside of money. If money can solve it, then I will help you out of consideration for Yiyun. As for anything else, I’m afraid I can’t guarantee anything.” He responded.

“I wouldn’t be here to bother you if money can solve it. I’m also aware that money is a trivial issue for the world’s richest man.” She glanced at Yiyun before smiling wryly and shaking her head.

“I do enjoy hearing praises.” He nodded: “Go on.”

“Something happened in our sect and we are powerless. Please come to our mountain and help us.” She said.

“I see, if it’s something dangerous such as the place being haunted, I don’t think I can help.” He replied.

“How do you know, Young Noble?” She thought that Li Qiye knew what was going on despite her vague description.

“Just a guess. You wouldn’t be here asking an outsider for help if it were an internal conflict. If it was an external enemy, you wouldn’t be as calm. It has to be something strange and bizarre for you to think of me.” Li Qiye said.

“You’re right, Young Noble. Looks like I have found the right person. You will definitely be able to help.” She commented.

“Hold it. Don’t you know that the only thing I know how to do right now is to spend and spend some more?” He shook his head.

“You’re joking, Young Noble. You are unmatched in the current generation and are comparable to Omniscient Dao Lord. Your benevolence knows no bounds and everything you do is nothing short of a miracle...”

“You’re going to make me conceited with all these praises. I might just have to say yes.” He smiled: “But then again, a new-rich like me can’t do anything unrelated to money. You’ve found the wrong person.”

“You’re the only one who opened the Preeminent Legacy. If you’re incapable, then everyone else is worthless.” She solemnly said.

“Pretty and know just what to say. But don’t you think I was just lucky?” He asked.

“No, countless have tested their luck in history but you’re the only one successful after a single attempt. This level of luck doesn’t exist.” She answered.

“You’re making it really difficult for me to refuse.” He said.

“So you’ll help?” She became excited.

“Fine, since you’re sensible, beautiful, and smart, I’ll take a trip to Armament Mountain. It’s not a big deal, just know that my price is very, very high. I don’t give out free lunches.” He smiled.

“Well...” She hesitated after hearing this.

Although her sect was definitely first-rate in both power and wealth, it would be silly to talk about wealth in front of Li Qiye.

He might find a sum normally considered large to others as insulting. However, they wouldn’t be able to afford a sky-high price. Sects had a limit to their wealth, unlike Li Qiye.

“May I ask what you want, Young Noble?” She said, hoping that he would go easy on them.

“Hmm...” He stroked his chin: “There aren’t that many things in Armament that I’m interested in. Maybe just that peak.”

“Peak?” She shuddered after hearing this and blurted out: “You’re talking about the peak left behind by our progenitor?”

“What else can it be?” He chuckled.

Armament Dao Lord was known as a master of weapons. However, other weapons paled before the sword in this land.

The dao lord went against the grain and didn’t cultivate the sword dao, becoming the master of all weapons. Strangely enough, the only weapon he refused to train was the sword.

According to the rumor, he once took back a peak from one of the seven forbidden zones - Sword Burial. It was then used as an armory.

His fascinating deeds earned him great fame. Some even listed him among the top ten dao lords.

Chapter 4048: Strange Occurrences

The peak remained in Armament Mountain for generations. It wouldn’t be an exaggeration to say that it served as a foundation for Armament.

Historians went as far as stating that the prosperity of Armament was predicated on its possession of this peak. Thus, it was more important than anything.

“I’m afraid I can’t agree to your request. Most importantly, neither I nor anyone else in Armament can make this decision.” She shook her head.

Armament could not use this peak as a transaction regardless of the circumstances. Even their second dao lord, God Ape Dao Lord, lacked the authority.

To do so was the same as betraying the sect or disrespecting the progenitor, punishable by death.

“Then there's nothing I can do. Your mountain doesn't have anything else that interests me.” He smiled.

She didn't know how to respond despite planning meticulously before meeting him. The issue for her was that Li Qiye was special.

Their sect could deal with anyone else's demand but his wealth was on another level. They were nothing more than a destitute group compared to him. Persuasion became difficult and she couldn't come up with another treasure or condition to tempt him.

“Young Noble, why not let the sect master talk about the situation there first?” Xu Yiyun decided to help out.

“Since Yiyun is helping you out, go for it.” He smiled.

“Something strange is happening, it's like we're haunted.” Yingxue took a deep breath and said.

“Haunted?” Yiyun didn't expect to hear this at all.

Others would find this hilarious because cultivators went against the laws of nature. Ghosts in the mortal sense simply didn't exist. At the very best, they were mere spirits with grudges or obsessions.

This belief was especially true for the more powerful cultivators. They weren't intimidated in the slightest.

In this case, one of the Six Kings was having this type of problem?

Normally, cemeteries or the wilderness would be the perfect places for ghost stories. On the other hand, Armament Mountain was filled with powerful disciples, not to mention their ancestors. Ghosts must be tired of “living” for causing trouble there.

Alas, Shi Yingxue had no reason to lie to them.

“It's true.” Yingxue smiled wryly: “It's only happening recently. We have people disappearing every night...”

“Hmm, could it be an enemy? Killing then destroying the corpses...” Yiyun suggested but then again, she herself found this implausible.

Armament Mountain had impressive defensive lines and barriers. If someone could sneak there and kill the disciples without being spotted, they would be powerful enough to not need to do so in the first place.

“No.” Yingxue elaborated: “Those who disappeared would come back on the next day. Even ancestors have experienced this. No one has died yet.”

“How bizarre.” Yiyun remarked.

“Yes, they said that they instantly lost all senses and woke up completely naked in the morning.”
Yingxue smiled wryly.

“Hmm, they got robbed?” This was Yiyun’s first thought after hearing about their condition. Alas, this didn’t make any sense either. Once again, someone strong enough to do this in Armament could do so in the open instead. They would look down on such an act.

“I’m not sure.” Yingxue pondered for a bit before adding: “One of our ancestors experienced this as well. Before losing his senses, he said it felt as if something swallowed him. He couldn’t resist at all before losing consciousness.”

“A monster then?” Yiyun said but this felt more like a ghost encounter rather than a monster encounter.

“No one ever saw the ambusher’s appearance.” Yingxue shook her head.

This problem was kept a secret but the entire mountain clamored over it. They searched the entire sect but didn’t find a single clue. Ancestors calculated the various possibilities to no avail.

In fact, they heightened their defensive barriers to the peak level. Disciples and elders patrolled the boundary but it kept on happening.

This creeped everyone out. Even in the case of a powerful enemy, they would be able to see and know them. This would be less frightening than facing the unknown.

Thus, they could only consider the place as being haunted - something ridiculous in the cultivation world. This was the reason why Yingxue had to ask Li Qiye for help.

“Is it a mischievous game? Doesn’t quite seem like it.” Yiyun wondered.

“Who would be doing it then?” Yingxue smiled wryly.

No one has been hurt yet so the ancestors had thought about this possibility. However, which top master in Sword Continent would have the time to play around with them?

“What do you think, Young Noble?” Yiyun asked Li Qiye.

Chapter 4049: Armament Mountain

Armament Mountain; one sect, two dao lords. It was created by Armament Dao Lord and revitalized later by God Ape Dao Lord.

The dao of the sword dominated this continent. Ninety percent of sects here focused on this dao. The rest had a hard time keeping up.

Armament Mountain was an exception. It maintained regional supremacy while focusing on other weapons - saber, hammer, spear... It had used every other weapon before to great effect with one exception - the sword.

Armament Dao Lord stood out even among his peers due to his versatility. There was no way the sword dao was too difficult for him.

Most believed that given his talents, he would have dominated the continent with this dao as well. Thus, the actual story perplexed future generations.

This issue has been discussed over and over again, resulting in numerous explanations and theories.

One stated that he was bullied by a swordsman during his youth. Thus, he had a grudge against the sword.

Another talked about him having a fiancée taken away by a sword genius. Therefore, he swore to oppose the sword dao, wanting to defeat it...

A third explained that due to his incredible talents, he had a unique pursuit. Since the sword dao was already on top during his generation, he didn't wish to follow the previous sages. Thus, he chose the other weapons in order to become a unique cultivator...

He never confirmed any of these theories before so it became an eternal mystery. Moreover, some were ridiculous anyway.

Though his sect only had two dao lords, it might not be weaker than those with three or more dao lords either.

From a distance, Armament Mountain looked as if there were hundreds of peaks crowding together. All of them had a different formation. One was tall and perilous just like a spear pointing at the sky. Another was thick and heavy, resembling a hammer. One more was a precipice in the shape of a saber... This was quite a sight to behold.

When observing deeper inside the sect, there was one particular peak shrouded by clouds and mists. It wasn't that large compared to some of its friends. However, it occasionally flashed brightly just like a treasure grove.

It was the size of a tiny boat amidst an ocean of clouds. However, it surpassed everything else and became the core of the sect. The most majestic and divine peak here still seemed inferior in comparison.

The others seemed to be crowding in this place just to prostrate and offer their respect to this one. It served as the foundation of Armament Mountain - the one taken back from a forbidden zone.

Li Qiye followed Shi Yingxue back to her sect. He didn't bring anyone except Calm Bamboo Princess.

Once they got close enough, they started observing the sect.

"Armament Mountain is as magnificent as ever." The princess became sentimental. The only difference now was that she was a maid instead of a princess.

"It has been several years since your last visit, Your Highness." Yingxue nodded.

"Please call me Ning Zhu instead, I'm no longer a princess of Wooden Sword and do not dare to use this title any longer." Ning Zhu said. [1]

Yingxue's eyes shifted between Ning Zhu and Li Qiye. She had heard of the bet between these two before.

Outsiders would consider a princess becoming a maid a fall from grace. She didn't agree but it would be improper to comment on it.

"That peak isn't bad." Li Qiye's focus was on the tiny peak.

"It's brought back by our progenitor from the Sword Burial Forbidden Zone. It is the very foundation of Armament Mountain, that's why none of us can use it in a transaction." Yingxue chuckled awkwardly while trying to spell it out for Li Qiye.

He smiled and knew her intention, choosing not to force the issue. He only gave it a brief glance before staring at something else.

Next to the sect was a field. It looked rather plain compared to the majestic peaks nearby.

"What is that place? Does it also belong to your sect?" He asked.

"Yes, Young Noble. It belongs to the Tang before and is also under our jurisdiction." She looked over and answered.

She was curious about his interest in the plain. Her sect didn't pay attention to it despite the close vicinity due to its desolate and barren nature.

Armament Mountain administered a large territory but not all the lands belonged to them. For example, this plain still belonged to the Tang.

"The Tang had a legendary character once. It's just that they have declined with few members left." She added.

She wasn't too certain because due to the Tang's current state, they had no connection with a big shot like her.

The Tang wanted to sell all of their land and properties to Armament Mountain. However, her sect had no interest in this deal. This was the only reason why she remembered them.

"I see." He smiled.

She remained curious but didn't ask him for elaboration. The trio then started heading for Armament Mountain again.

They met many disciples on the outskirts who instantly greeted their sect master.

"Sect Master." Their trip was interrupted by an anxious old man who ran up to them.

"What's the matter, Elder Sun?" Yingxue slightly frowned after seeing his abnormal expression.

"A little problem." The elder glanced at Li Qiye and Yiyun before whispering to Yingxue.

Yingxue's expression became serious after hearing this. Something must have happened in the sect.

She pondered for a bit before telling Li Qiye: "I'm afraid there are internal matters I have to take care of, Young Noble. Please rest in our courtyard for now and I'll take you on a tour of the sect once I'm finished."

Chapter 4050: The Strange Plain Of The Tang

Shi Yingxue initially invited Li Qiye to look at their problem. Alas, unexpected development forced her to put this on hold.

Li Qiye smiled and shook his head: "Go ahead and take care of your business, I'll be looking around in the meantime. Come find me when you're done."

She felt bad about it but there was no time to linger around. She bowed deeply and apologized: "Please forgive me for the lack of reception. Armament Mountain will make it up to you later."

"Go." He waved his hand since he wasn't in a rush to solve anything.

She then followed the elder; the two looked to be in a hurry.

"They're under attack?" Ning Zhu wondered after seeing this.

After all the trouble Shi Yingxue went through to invite Li Qiye, she should have prepared an official welcoming party for him. Ultimately, she needed to please him for his support.

But now, they haven't even made it to the sect and she chose to leave him behind. It must have been something important to warrant such an improper departure.

Ning Zhu thought that the only explanation was that enemies were invading. However, the place looked peaceful with no sign of warfare at all.

Plus, how many sects would dare to attack Armament Mountain? What else could it be then?

Li Qiye glanced at the peaks for a moment before speaking: "She probably can't guarantee her own safety, that's why she left me here."

"What?" Ning Zhu couldn't believe it and started speculating: "Something is happening internally?"

She was no stranger to political games and power struggles. However, Shi Yingxue always had full support as the sect master of Armament. What was going on? It wouldn't be easy to replace one of the Six Kings.

Nonetheless, her hasty departure was an ominous sign - a testament to the precariousness of the situation.

Ning Zhu thought about certain rumors pertaining to Armament Mountain. As the princess of Wooden Sword, she had access to many rumors and mysteries.

“Who is forcing her?” She didn’t want to overly dwell on this issue since it was none of her business.

“Let’s just take a look around since we’re here anyway.” Li Qiye smiled, not caring about Armament’s development.

Ning Zhu stopped pondering and gave chase. She quietly asked: “Young Noble, what do you think is behind all of this?”

She couldn’t ask him when Shi Yingxue was around. She was curious after hearing about it along the way.

“You tell me since you’re so smart.” He stared at her.

“I’m only a foolish maid, unable to grasp the situation,” to which she responded.

“Stop, there are only the two of us here, no need to play dumb.” He waved his hand.

“You’re too kind, Young Noble.” She bowed slightly before speaking her mind: “It doesn’t seem dangerous but this is a sign of a future problem. It’ll turn into a disaster soon enough. Given the circumstances, I don’t think it has anything to do with the outside world. The source might be Armament Mountain itself.”

“Certain things are inevitable. You reap what you sow.” He responded.

“What do you mean, Young Noble?” She asked.

He didn’t answer and moved on ahead.

“Reap what you sow?” She repeated and carefully digested this information. She then glanced back at the mountain range, seemingly realizing something.

Once she stopped ruminating, Li Qiye was far away so she had to catch up.

He didn’t go to Armament nor look for any disciple from there. His destination was the plain belonging to the Tang.

The massive plain looked pristine and desolate. Unfortunately, it was also barren. It was flat enough to seemingly give unrestricted vision to the other end. There were no rivers and lakes. The grass was yellow and dried up due to a lack of water. All of this resulted in a depressing atmosphere.

One thing of note on this flat plain were mud piles scattered everywhere. They seemed to have accumulated across the years and had grass growing on top.

Li Qiye stopped in front of one and took a look. Ning Zhu became curious - what was special about this dirt pile?

“Clean it up a bit.” He ordered.

She immediately began removing the grass and dirt without any hesitation despite this being her first experience with such a dirty task.

After she finished, she realized that there was something beneath - a little thing resembling a fort.

However, as she looked closer, it wasn't one since it didn't have a gate. She also noted that although it looked like black rocks on the surface, they were actually thick dao runes assembled together.

"What is this?" The only thing she was certain of was that someone made this.

Due to her curiosity, she began cleaning another dirt pile not far from there without receiving Li Qiye's command. Another tiny fort appeared, looking identical outside of some minor details.

She then looked across the plains and took note of their position. They were inconspicuous just like rocks. No one else would take a second look.

However, she then realized that there was an order to their placement. Unfortunately, she couldn't come up with a pattern in such a short time.

"What are they?" She asked Li Qiye.

He smiled and stared at the plain: "Those in the past have spent great effort on this."