

Emperor 4281

### **Chapter 4281: Ice Plateau**

Chi Jinlin released his true fate and divine intents, letting chaos energy surround and nourish them.

He felt an unprecedented comfort and thought that he could actually open his grand dao and break the bottleneck.

The shackles were still there but if he kept on gestating his grand dao in this manner, it would grow stronger. After hearing Li Qiye's advice, he took the risk of involving his true fate in the cultivation process.

Previously, he merely tried to channel as much chaos energy and dao power as possible to break the shackles. This was proven futile.

Now, he approached this problem from a new angle, focusing on his true fate instead. This, in turn, improved his vitality. The true fate gradually grew stronger and could play a factor in overcoming his dao issue. It was only a matter of time.

His enthusiasm returned as he nourished his true fate, hoping for the day of breakthrough.

"This is different, I think I can do it!" He benefited from the sessions and became ecstatic.

He looked over in Li Qiye's direction but Li Qiye was no longer there.

"Brother?!" He searched his home to no avail.

He didn't give up and returned to the city. Li Qiye wasn't there either.

"Where did he go?" He murmured with disappointment.

It turned out that Li Qiye had done another spatial step while he was immersed in cultivation and left for another place.

The body had no awareness or destination. The next location happened solely by chance - a world of ice and snow.

In the distance was a divine mountain reaching the sky. It was covered in ice and couldn't be overcome, seemingly the home of an ice god.

Just watching from afar was enough to stir the soul. Cultivators could sense a dreadful intent of the ice affinity.

This place was known as Ice Plateau, famous for its inhabitable mountain. The world knew very little of it, let alone visiting.

It was famous for a tale back in the previous epoch - the age of the Immortal Emperors. This plateau didn't use to be unbearably cold or filled with ice.

It had fragrant flowers and birds singing, being one of the most fertile lands in the world.

That era was ruled by a brilliant emperor. According to the legends, he had reincarnated three times and became emperor each time.

His title was San Shi, meaning three eras. During his youth in his third reincarnation, he obtained a divine fire from the other shore. He cultivated it and obtained a historically matchless mastery over flames.

His opponent resided in a mythical ice palace - the master of ice. She has lived for a long time, starting as a goddess and ending as an empress. Her title was Ice Empress despite not being an Immortal Emperor.

For some reason, a battle ensued between Ice Empress and Immortal Emperor San Shi. Rumor has it that they had an ongoing feud for eras now. Another perspective stated that it was due to their conflicting dao...

Either way, this ended with a frightening battle that shook the core of the world. Alas, others didn't have the privilege of watching this fight in person due to its destructive nature.

Immortal Emperor San Shi showed the power of his flame during this battle, incinerating both oceans and continents.

However, Ice Empress was equally as impressive. Her ice froze time and space along with the stars above.

Eventually, the invincible emperor that has reigned for three eras lost to Ice Empress. This was one of the most well-known fights from the last epoch.

After all, Immortal Emperors were invincible during their era, especially one as brilliant as San Shi. How did he lose to Ice Empress who wasn't a real emperor?

Though he lost, the prosperous territory under Ice Empress became eternally frozen. The mythical palace was encapsulated in ice and disappeared from the world.

Everyone knew that the emperor had lost but they didn't know the ending of the princess. Some speculated that she was grievously injured and couldn't heal the wounds, eventually dying in her palace.

Another rumor included her taking the spot of the emperor and leaving for another world. Of course, one more camp said that she was still inside the palace, wishing to live a reclusive life...

Now, these beings were only parts of a legend, no longer mattering in Eight Desolaces. The one clue left was the plateau. Alas, there were no signs of the battle since only ice and snow remained.

Li Qiye suddenly stopped and fell downward. The chilling snow began covering him.

After a long while, a group came across the area.

"Hey, there's a corpse here." Someone noticed the frozen Li Qiye.

The group dug him out and a senior took a better look at Li Qiye's dirty appearance then said: "This beggar must have gotten lost and died here."

"Poor guy." A girl in the group lamented.

Suddenly, Li Qiye opened his eyes, albeit still in a muddled state.

“What the hell?!” The group shouted.

“It’s a zombie!” A cowardly member turned and ran.

He was grabbed by a senior who told him: “What zombie? He’s alive.”

The guy calmed down just like the rest. They took a good look and sure enough, Li Qiye was alive.

They didn’t know that the cold had zero chance of freezing Li Qiye to death, not even the coldest place in existence.

### **Chapter 4282: A Fool?**

The group all speculated that he was a beggar given his dirty outfit.

“How did a beggar reach this remote region?” They heaved a sigh of relief since Li Qiye wasn’t a zombie and became curious instead.

A girl wearing a white fur coat approached. She was clearly a lady from a rich clan. Her eyes were special with golden pupils. Anyone could tell that her bloodline was exceptional.

“What is your name? How did you come to Ice Plateau?” She crouched them and asked.

Li Qiye didn’t answer; his eyes didn’t even glance at her.

“Hey, our lady is speaking to you!” A cultivator nearby shouted.

This didn’t garner a reaction from him.

“Where are you going? This place is extremely cold and dangerous. Only death awaits.” She didn’t give up and said.

His dazed eyes were still fixated on the sky.

“Miss, the cold might be too much for him.” A follower tried to alleviate the awkwardness.

She frowned slightly and found this whole thing strange - both the beggar’s current state and her own feelings. She found him rather familiar.

“Come with us, it will be safer.” She kindly suggested.

In her opinion, his death would only be a matter of time if he were to be left alone in this wintry region.

Your Highness, I’m afraid this isn’t proper given your position. Bringing him back will result in unsavory rumors.” An expert immediately whispered.

“It’s fine, I’m merely saving someone, an act greater than building seven pagodas.” She replied.

“Please reconsider, Your Highness.” The expert repeated.

After all, a stranger like him was completely insignificant. It would be akin to an insect dying.

“Yes, Your Highness, we can leave him clothes and food.” Another advised.

Due to her position, bringing back a male stranger - a beggar - wouldn't be good for her reputation.

"Take him with us." She was decisive despite her young age and gave the order.

"Miss..." The seniors didn't want unnecessary trouble.

"It's final." She waved her hand.

The others couldn't change her mind so they had to take Li Qiye out of this region.

In fact, she took it further by taking him back to her sect. She was awfully interested in him and ordered followers to bathe and change his outfit. She chose only the best accommodation for him.

Once he was clean, she took another look and found him rather ordinary-looking. However, since she had plenty of time, the more she stared, the more she became attracted by his hidden charisma and mysterious nature.

The thing bugging her the most was a sense of familiarity. She thought that she had seen him before but couldn't pinpoint it exactly. After racking her brains, she confirmed that they had never met before.

She also asked him numerous questions but never got an answer.

"Are you hurt?"

"Something bad happened to you, right?"

The truth was that when she brought him back, the seniors in the sect thought that there was something wrong with his brain.

She disagreed because although he was unresponsive, his eyes were still relatively clear, unlike a deeply afflicted victim. Thus, she became interested in why he was in his current state.

In the beginning, she was merely curious but she grew attached to him. The one-sided conversation became more frequent and intimate.

"What do you think I should do with my cultivation?" She asked.

He was a good listener and never turned down a conversation. Due to her special status in the sect, she had no friends in the same generation while Li Qiye gave off a familiar feeling.

Every time she said what she wanted to say, he would still only look up at the sky.

"Were you born like this?" She wondered.

Seniors and doctors had come to look at him in the beginning. Alas, they didn't notice any clue. Some believed that this was due to an injury; others said that he was defective from birth.

"Only a medicine god can save him." One doctor concluded.

At the start, many found her decision to bring a man back puzzling. It did cause some rumors to start as well.

The seniors didn't agree either but she insisted on keeping him in the sect. She didn't know why she went against everyone.

She considered herself to be on the side of logic and reason. Her own action confused her. She attributed it to the sense of familiarity or his mysterious aura.

As time passed, she considered him a confidante who would listen to her worries. He became a friend she never had before.

### **Chapter 4283: Dao Comprehension**

Due to his silent state, the girl didn't feel any threat from him and told him everything on her mind.

"There are too many layers to the divine dao, I don't know how to keep on improving. If I don't get through this next one, the sisters might surpass me." She was pessimistic today.

Possessing a high status didn't mean that she was freed from worries. As a heavily-groomed disciple, she needed to show results. If she were to be surpassed by her rival, she would lose her status.

"In history, the members of our sect cultivate the divine dao in different ways." She murmured: "They all experienced something unique and personal. Recently, I saw a strange phenomenon, a divine tree blotting out the sky and my vision, I can't see anything past it..."

She became frustrated because there shouldn't be anything wrong with the merit law. Rumor has it that it came from a heavenly dao.

Their patriarch extracted it from a heavenly dao in order to protect the descendants. Thus, it had no form and was fluid like water.

Thus, disciples had varying results and power from cultivating it. This made the learning process exceedingly difficult and full of pressure.

A successful soul would be able to take over the sect and gain immense authority. This was an established rule - their leader must have finished learning this dao.

The strongest of these users was naturally their patriarch. In the distant and chaotic era, the patriarch annihilated evil and established an everlasting foundation.

Their divine dao became well-known, rumored to be superior to most dao lord merit laws. She had access to this dao at a young age - something quite enviable.

Everyone knew that she was a potential successor. Nonetheless, this didn't mean that she lacked rivals.

Among the competitors, whoever successfully finished the dao first would become the official successor.

Alas, the recent phenomena during training recently left her confused. She asked the seniors and ancestors but didn't get any concrete response or solution. Everyone had a different experience before so they couldn't offer good advice.

"Why am I the only one with these phenomena that blind me? Is this qi deviation?" She told Li Qiye.

Being surpassed by the martial sisters was one thing. After all, they were all supreme geniuses. However, qi deviation might result in death.

"Why do you think these phenomena are detrimental?" She suddenly heard a voice.

“Ah!” She blurted out and stared at Li Qiye in astonishment, still looking as gorgeous as always despite the shock.

Ever since she brought him back, he was no different from a living corpse. She assumed that he could only listen without understanding.

Thus, his sudden speech caught her off guard.

“You... you can speak?” She stammered.

“I’m not mute so I can obviously speak.” Li Qiye’s soul had returned to the body so he became normal again.

She took another look and saw a distinct change in his eyes - they became unbelievably profound. She thought she might become lost the more she stared at them.

“You heard everything?” She thought about their previous conversations and turned red right away.

“I did not hear when I didn’t want to hear, so I was spared of your babblings, fortunately.” He responded.

“You...” She was embarrassed.

“All of you have done a terrible job training the divine dao passed down by your empress.” He changed the subject.

“W-what?” These words struck her deeply.

“Do not worry about these phenomena. Others would love to have them since it is a sign of the door yet they are stuck circling outside.” He revealed.

“Really?” Her eyes widened in disbelief but his words gave her hope.

“Of course.” He continued: “The visual phenomenon of the blotting divine tree is a sign, a reflection of the source.”

“A reflection of the source?” She became emotional and took a deep breath.

“What should I do then?” She hurriedly asked and forgot about everything else: “I couldn’t see anything outside of the tree, how can I understand its profundities?”

“Profundities aren’t learned with the eyes, use your heart and listen to its whisper, feel its beat. Listen and it will answer.” He explained.

“Is that so?” She skeptically sat down in the meditative pose and channeled her merit law and vitality.

Chaos energy permeated the room and the visual phenomena came back - the divine tree and the celestials floating around it. The myriad dao and time itself were subservient to the tree. Its existence supported all lifeforms.

Alas, the world created by the tree was just too large. She was tinier than a speck of dust in comparison and couldn’t fathom its immensity.

“The dao resides in the heart, release your mind and soul...” Li Qiye chanted while she was lost in her training.

His words echoed in her mind like bells, knocking on her very soul.

She followed his advice and after a buzz, when she opened her eyes again, she found herself to be in the illusory world.

Time and the celestials also flowed around her. The orders of the world could be clearly seen, truly a magnificent sight.

She became captivated by the colors; the most mysterious grand dao seemed to be imprinting itself into her heart.

“What was that world?” She forgot her way back while feeling this unprecedented dao enlightenment.

After a long while, she regained her wits and returned to the real world.

“How magical, I sensed it, its sound and beats!” She shouted.

“Thank you...?” She was ecstatic and turned around to show her gratitude.

Alas, Li Qiye was not there. She assumed that he had gone outside but still couldn’t find him after searching the entire sect.

She panicked and ordered followers to look for him. They still couldn’t find him within a thousand-mile radius.

#### **Chapter 4284: Bodhisattva Garden**

It was understandable that she couldn’t find him since he had concluded his astral projection. He then performed a spatial leap to reach the next destination - a place known as Bodhisattva Garden or Bodhisattva Grave.

The world has changed continuously but one thing remained - the respect everyone had for this area - the resting place of Medicine Bodhisattva.

It served as a garden without walls. One could smell numerous medicinal fragrances from a distance.

It resembled a hill in appearance with countless medicinal grass and herbs. They grew naturally without anyone in charge.

Nonetheless, the garden was neat and had its own order. It had both common and rare grass. For example, one could even find precious ones such as Nine-cycle Violet Leaf, Platinum Hyaline, Crimsonblood Draconic Tendon...

Normally, spirit vegetations had their own growing conditions, especially the precious ones. The latter had strict requirements regarding their surroundings. This didn’t apply in the garden. All of them seemed to be flourishing just fine, completely untethered. This has puzzled cultivators for eras now.

Rumor has it that Medicine Bodhisattva was buried here. There was a nameless tablet in the garden. To the left and right were various statues of auspicious beasts. In an inconspicuous corner was the statue of an old man, seemingly the servant of the Bodhisattva.

The memorial tablet strangely didn't have an epitaph or any rune. Nonetheless, people still came to offer their respect.

Its existence was more significant than the spirit vegetation nearby - the primary reason for many pilgrimages.

Li Qiye stood in front of the tablet and his eyes flashed brightly. The light illuminated the tablet and pierced into the ground, allowing him to see all of its mysteries.

There were also bundles of flowers left in front of the tablet, ranging from rose to chrysanthemum or other spirit flowers... They must have been left behind by cultivators who came to offer their respect.

Medicine Bodhisattva had appeared before many dao lords. However, they were forgotten while this being was still worshiped.

Li Qiye didn't say anything and merely observed the ground beneath the tablet as if there was a hidden treasury.

In reality, he wasn't the only one in the garden. It had a thousand visitors or so each day.

"Please bless and protect us from disasters and sufferings, Bodhisattva." Many placed their palms together and quietly prayed.

The majority of cultivators didn't believe in gods and ghosts, the same with whatever Bodhisattva. After all, they themselves were virtually gods in the eyes of mortals, capable of doing wondrous feats. They should be praying to themselves, not other deities.

Medicine Bodhisattva was an exception in their world. She was a real person, not a mythical figure.

She was a doctor who traveled around the world to heal people and perform kind deeds. Her medicinal skill was peerless, capable of saving mortals on their last leg and cultivators on the brink of death.

Most importantly, she never discriminated, whether it be by race or morality. She would heal even the most heinous devil as long as they came in contact. She never demanded payments either.

There have been top doctors and alchemists in history. Alas, they only worked in the cultivation world.

No cultivator versed in this art would bother traveling around to help mortals. After all, refining each precious pill required immense effort and resources.

One could say that using these pills on mortals was a waste of resources - akin to feeding ginseng to ants. Thus, she was special in that she would try to save whoever she saw regardless of their circumstances.

This noble creed of her won the heart of both mortals and cultivators. Therefore, all of Eight Desolaces mourned her passing.

Dao lords and devil kings alive came to carry her coffin. The entire world grieved as a result.



She was a rare historical figure who wasn't known for having incredible power and battle prowess. The respect shown to her didn't wane over the years.

Top existences, evil or not, still occasionally visited the garden to offer their respect.

Today, Li Qiye was also here. Was it for remembrance or something else?

After a while, he averted his gaze then gently stroked the tablet, seemingly wanting to sense its vibration.

He then pulled back and turned his attention to the statue in the corner. It has been ravaged by rain and wind; the lines were no longer clear.

Nonetheless, one could still tell that it depicted an old man. It appeared rather ordinary, perhaps a servant of the Bodhisattva.

It stared in the direction of the tablet, perhaps still wanting to protect its master and the garden. No one really knew the actual stories behind this place.

Most never paid attention to this statue. There were no writings regarding it either.

"Crack!" However, once Li Qiye got close enough, cracks suddenly appeared on the statue.

#### **Chapter 4285: Wounded**

"Crack!" The cracks took over the entire statue. It seemed to be on the verge of crumbling.

"No need for formalities." Li Qiye reached forward and touched it in this crucial moment.

Water-like rays flowed into the statue through the cracks. The gaps began closing since they were filled by the rays.

Once he pulled his hand back, the statue became the same as before. It was as if the whole thing was just an illusion.

He sighed and said: "You have done a commendable job, a reward is inevitable."

The statue didn't speak but there was an internal fluctuation only sensed by Li Qiye. This conversation seemingly dated back to millions of years ago. In fact, even a conversation was unnecessary between these two.

He glanced back at the tablet and said: "The only thing to do now is to wait for that day. I'll personally come to take it then."

The statue seemed to understand him since they had a secret relationship. Any true master present would be able to see the statue nodding; regular cultivators wouldn't be able to discern anything.

"Monumental changes are coming." He concluded and the statue agreed.

He never told the statue about the reason why. Nonetheless, it shouldered a serious mission and didn't need to know the reasons. It had accepted the task and just needed to protect this place.

"I'll be back again, be patient and keep on waiting." He added.

The statue nodded, ready to perform the task regardless of the endless years. This mission wouldn't end until Li Qiye said otherwise.

"Though things are continuously changing." He thought about something else: "But where I am should be the safest spot. It's best to stay in this world."

"There is still hope in the future. This might actually be the best plan." He then shifted his focus to the garden one last time before leaving.

The statue clandestinely watched him leave. The other visitors had no idea about its movement, thinking that it was just a regular statue.

They also thought the garden served as a memorial for Medicine Bodhisattva. Little did they know, there was a shocking secret underground that would astound even dao lords.

After leaving the garden, Li Qiye didn't enter his astral state again. He traveled and stopped on top of a peak for a panoramic view of the scenery ahead.

It gave him a feeling of peace to see the mountains and forests. He smiled and said: "Things come and go but the land remains."

Though the place in front of him appeared ordinary now, it used to be the home of a mighty sect - completely unstoppable. Alas, time destroyed everything, even the strongest foundation and mightiest bloodline. People tried to fight this inevitable truth only to fail.

"Immortal." Li Qiye chuckled: "How silly, everyone wishes to become one."

The character "immortal" was special in the cultivation world. It would make people fantasize instantly, even top characters like dao lords and emperors.

What did the character represent? Invincibility? Everlasting life?

All in all, this was the end goal for numerous cultivators. They all yearned for it despite being aware of the impossibility.

Only a few knew that nothing good might come from being involved with this character. One would most likely become an abomination first before an immortal.

"If immortals exist, there would be no need for the villainous heaven." He looked up above.

There were white clouds and blue sky, at least in the eyes of regular people. As for Li Qiye, when he gazed above, the heaven also gazed back at him. However, the heaven never responded.

"I'm coming, I'll change the heaven." He uttered with absolute confidence. Each word carried enough power to split the world open and destroy the ages despite being spoken so casually.

The world had no idea the potential consequences resulting from carrying out his mission.

Li Qiye then sat down and rested his chin on his knees, enjoying himself.

This didn't last long before loud and urgent footsteps came from behind. A person got closer to Li Qiye, clearly wounded judging by his lousy movement.

“Clank!” This person thought that Li Qiye was an enemy blocking their path and unsheathed a sword.

It was an old man wearing a simple yet masterfully crafted robe - a sign of his status.

Alas, he was covered in blood and wounds, some of which were deep enough to see bones. The worst one was on his chest - a full penetration by an unknown weapon.

He was barely hanging on after making it this far. He stared intensely at Li Qiye, feeling dizzy from losing too much blood. Beads of sweat streamed down his pale face.

Li Qiye only gave him a passing glance and didn't ask questions.

He realized that Li Qiye wasn't an enemy and heaved a sigh of relief. Alas, the momentary lapse in focus made him fall to the ground.

“Your injuries are serious.” Li Qiye helped him up and said.

“I-I don't have much longer.” He coughed out a mouthful of blood and struggled to breathe.

“Indeed, your true fate is broken. You'll be a cripple even if you somehow survive.” Li Qiye assessed the wounds.

#### **Chapter 4286: Picking A Successor Before Death**

The old man sat down on the ground and smiled wryly: “You're right, I-I'm finished.”

The destruction of the true fate signaled death. He was surviving on sheer willpower.

“What a shame...” He looked around with indignation and unwillingness.

“Seems like you still have unfinished business.” Li Qiye calmly said.

“Yes.” The old man grimaced from pain as he tried to reply: “I, I can't go back to the sect in time.”

“Even gods have regrets. You will die, it's better to die with your eyes closed than to hold this grudge after passing. Just let go and be at peace.” Li Qiye smiled.

Anyone else would find this questionable. The majority would try to console the dying old man but Li Qiye was telling him to die faster.

“Just let go...” The old man was also surprised. He thought about it and laughed. Unfortunately, this worsened some wounds and caused him to vomit more blood.

Li Qiye didn't seem to mind the result of his words.

“R-right, I'm dying...” The old man stared at Li Qiye and hesitated for a moment before making a decision: “I-I have something to give to you, Fellow Daoist.”

He didn't wait for a response before taking out an item in a meticulous manner. It was clearly precious to the old man.

“It pertains to my sect's prosperity.” He placed it in Li Qiye's hand while enduring the pain: “Please, bring it back to my sect after reading it. But, it's alright if you won't, just keep it then. It's still better than letting it fall to the hands of those dogs.”

He risked his life for this item and it was extremely pivotal to his sect. He hoped that it would help revitalize the sect.

Alas, death beckoned and he didn't have anyone else nearby. It had to be Li Qiye.

The world coveted the item. That's why he hoped that Li Qiye would somehow be kind and bring it back to his sect after learning it. This was an unlikely scenario but he would rather give it to Li Qiye than his enemies.

Li Qiye glanced down and saw an ancient scroll with a seal on the surface. He knew what it was right away after seeing the runes.

"An immortal physique from the past. Indestructible Diamond, mmm, a disorderly edition." Li Qiye was amused.

"Yo-you can read it?!" The old man was astounded.

"It's just an immortal physique law, no big deal." Li Qiye said.

How could he not know the so-called ancient immortal physique laws? They were derived from the Physique Scripture and propagated to the rest of the world. Of course, the current versions were far inferior compared to the real things.

Moreover, the actual Physique Scripture was in Li Qiye's possession right now. However, it no longer had this name.

"No big deal?" The old man's pain was alleviated for a moment since he was astonished.

These immortal physique laws were unbeatable. His sect spent generations searching for one and their effort was finally rewarded. Alas, he also lost his life in the process.

"Hahaha." He laughed heartily and said: "Take it then, do as you wish."

He then coughed repeatedly and his color changed to a faint yellow. This was the final radiance of a setting sun. He had one step in the grave at this point. It was nothing short of a miracle for someone with his injuries to last so long.

More footsteps could be heard from below. Many pursuers were coming.

"They're here. G-go!" The old man grabbed the sword hilt tighter and became worried about Li Qiye.

It had nothing to do with Li Qiye himself. However, all would be in vain if Li Qiye were to be captured right now.

Li Qiye stood there with a smile, not listening to the man's urging.

"Go!" The old man shouted with his remaining strength. Breathing became difficult.

The pursuers finally arrived and surrounded Li Qiye with drawn weapons.

"Sect Master!" They saw the old man and pointed their sword at Li Qiye, thinking that he was the culprit.

The old man was relieved since they were fellow sect members, not the enemies.

“No..” Alas, he was losing control. He pointed his shaking finger at Li Qiye and mustered his last breath: “I, I pass my position to him, he, he is the new sect master...”

The last words required everything he had. After this last command, he vomited more blood and closed his eyes.

“Sect Master!” The group rushed over to him while Li Qiye watched silently.

They lamented and cried but the old man was already dead. Not even an immortal could save him now.

The juniors wept while the older seniors exchanged glances, unsure of what to do because of their sect master’s last wish.

“Sir, may I ask for your name?” An elder of the sect with the last name Hu came over and cupped his fist. He had the highest status here and saw the last words in person.

He was under heavy pressure. Though their sect was small, they still had rules and principles regarding the succession process.

Alas, their previous sect master broke the process by passing it to Li Qiye. They needed to deal with this carefully or it might result in chaos.

“Li Qiye.” Li Qiye wasn’t too interested in this trivial matter.

The sect members were at a loss due to this unexpected development. They had just lost their sect master and now, an outsider has become their new leader.

“Sir, may I ask how did you know our sect master?” Elder Hu inquired.

“I don’t, we’ve just met.” Li Qiye told the truth.

This further perplexed the listeners. Their sect master gave his position to a complete stranger?

“We...” Elder Hu was speechless. They were just a small and inexperienced sect, unequipped to deal with this situation.

“Take this.” Li Qiye handed a scroll over to Elder Hu: “Your sect master traded his life for this merit law and gave it to me. You may have it.”

An ancient immortal physique law was considered priceless by many. Li Qiye was one exception.

### **Chapter 4287: Little Diamond Gate**

“Well...” Elder Hu hesitated while all eyes were on him and Li Qiye.

Even a fool could tell how important this merit law was. That’s why their sect master risked and lost his life for it.

Elder Hu knew more about the value of this scroll than the others. The sect master had revealed his mission to the elders before departing.

“Sir, since the sect master had given it to you, please keep it.” After a long lull and internal struggle, he gave the scroll back to Li Qiye.

This prompted Li Qiye to smile and accept the scroll without saying anything.

“Elder, what is our next course of action?” One brilliant disciple asked while maintaining alert, vigilant of any incoming enemies.

“We’re bringing the sect master’s remains back to the sect. Summon everyone back as well, be swift and discreet.” Elder Hu ordered.

The juniors respectfully picked up their sect master’s corpse and were ready to retreat.

“Sir, please come back to Little Diamond Gate with me.” Elder Hu bowed earnestly during the request.

“Little Diamond Gate?” Li Qiye repeated.

“Our sect master has passed on his position to you, Sir. This is a pivotal event and I do not dare to make a decision on my own. Please come back to our sect first if that is okay with you.” Elder Hu said.

They respected their sect master’s decision but this was still an utterly ridiculous command - letting an outsider take over.

He didn’t know whether Li Qiye wanted to be their sect master but either way, he must bring Li Qiye back to the sect first. They would then deliberate and come up with a decision.

He was sincere because putting the sect master position aside, Li Qiye would still be an esteemed guest.

‘How commendable.’ Li Qiye thought to himself while glancing at the corpse and Elder Hu.

“Very well, I’ll take a trip there.” He then agreed.

Of course, he didn’t give a damn about becoming a sect master. It’s just that a few things at play here amused him enough to pique his interest.

“After you, Sir.” Elder Hu heaved a sigh of relief and gestured.

They then moved at a rapid pace through obscured roads in order to avoid the powerful enemies.

Along the way, Li Qiye saw that the sect was weak indeed. The disciples were just average cultivators. A single branch from any large sect could annihilate Little Diamond.

However, their comradery from top to bottom was excellent. This might be due to the fact that it was a small sect so the members were closer and weren’t blinded by greed and competition.

They returned to the case of the sect. Li Qiye looked up and saw a notable aura, albeit tiny. The sect occupied a mountain range and a territory of a hundred miles or so. There weren’t many impressive architectures.

It was located in a tiny corner of Southern Desolace. Normally, a weak sect in this region would have a few hundred thousand to a million members.

Thus, Little Diamond was laughably weak in the grand scheme of things. A single expert from the larger sect could wipe them out.

Interestingly enough, this insignificant sect had an unbelievably deep history. Its founding was traced back to the previous epoch.

Alas, too much time had passed and the older members didn't have concrete information regarding its history. All in all, they only knew that their sect was older than many behemoths in the present day.

The entrance had an arched gate with a plaque in the center - Little Diamond Gate. In reality, no current members could read these characters without knowing beforehand.

The plaque was far older than the entrance. The characters were impeccably written, clearly the work of a mighty master.

"Our sect has endured time itself, I don't think there are many other sects as old as ours." Elder Hu introduced Li Qiye to the sect.

"We might be small but we have survived for eras." He added with pride, and rightfully so.

For example, that gate in front of them must have been rebuilt numerous times. Only the plaque was untouched.

"Right." Li Qiye smiled because the characters were indeed from the nine worlds.

In other words, this validated the long history of Little Diamond.

Its existence was miraculous because not to mention such a weak sect, even some dominating behemoths have been reduced to ashes and disappeared.

"Patriarch Long lived in the ancient era and was a world-renowned cultivator who taught numerous geniuses. He had the title of "Diamond" so when he created our sect, he named it Little Diamond Gate."

"Diamond?" Li Qiye smiled.

"Yes, rumor has it that our patriarch cultivated an immortal physique known as Indestructible Diamond. He reached grand completion during his later days and became untouchable." Elder Hu spoke with pride: "It is said that during his grand completion ceremony, even the Immortal Emperor came to congratulate him. Thus, we used to be the lord of an entire region."

There was a lack of records regarding their patriarch since it was too long ago. Nonetheless, the members of the sect took pride in their glorious history. After all, they were nothing right now but at least they had this going for them.

Moreover, they could also say that they have outlasted virtually all other sects from the same period. Few could match them in this regard, one exception being Lion's Roar Kingdom.

Elder Hu brought Li Qiye into the sect and prepared the highest accommodations possible. He then convened an emergency meeting with the other elders.

Losing their sect master was a heavy blow. Keep in mind that he was the strongest cultivator in the sect at the grand Yin Yang realm. They lost a stalwart pillar as a result.

Moreover, he died competing for a merit law. This wasn't something that should be publicized so they silently buried him.

Now, they were lost regarding their newly-chosen sect master, Li Qiye. This was an unprecedented case for a small sect like them.

### **Chapter 4288: Elder Assembly**

After burying their sect master, an upper-echelon assembly was held.

Of course, the tiny sect only had a few hundred disciples. Thus, the assembly included five elders.

They didn't have a deep command structure like the larger sects including protectors, elders, supreme elders, ancestors...

Normally, these five made decisions in the absence of the sect master. Since there were only five, it made the decision-making process simpler and faster.

Plus, they rarely experienced anything serious during their tenure until today. The hall had a repressed atmosphere after the death of the sect master.

In the past, the sect master took care of problems personally, whether it be internal or external matters. In his absence, the five elders became a headless snake.

"What should we do?" One elder initiated the meeting.

Others exchanged glances but didn't respond.

"We can't let anyone know that the sect master died for an ancient immortal physique. Others will come to rob and annihilate us." The first elder said with a serious tone. He became the one with the highest authority now.

He was the second-strongest in the sect, being at the minor level of the Yin Yang realm. In a larger sect, he would only be a below-average cultivator.

The other four agreed with this, hence their decision prior to not having a large burial ceremony. They didn't notify their neighbors either.

"What about the appointment?" Elder Hu asked.

This was another tough decision for the group. Their sect master gave the scroll and his position to a stranger before death. This left them in a difficult spot.

"A sect needs a leader." The second elder said: "Regardless of all else, we do need someone to step up so that the juniors can be at ease."

"The problem is that he's an outsider. We know nothing about him." Another replied.

"I wonder why the sect master picked him." One more said.

"I'm not sure but this is confirmed. I and the others saw with our own eyes that he was still lucid." Elder Hu said.



It was one thing if their sect master was hallucinating or confused during his last moment. Alas, his mind was still sound.

“Can an outsider really become our next sect master?” One elder asked.

The others thought that there was no precedence to this even in their long history. They didn’t have a complicated system to pick a successor. One could be appointed by the current sect master or the elders.

Thus, there was no rule prohibiting Li Qiye from accepting this role. It depended on their decision.

“What kind of person is he?” The first elder asked.

All eyes turned towards Elder Hu because he was the only one who had interacted with Li Qiye.

Elder Hu smiled wryly and shook his head: “Well, I also don’t know anything about him.”

“What is his cultivation?” The first elder asked again.

“I’m not sure either.” Elder Hu thought about it and answered: “In my opinion, it should be higher than mine, most likely the Yin Yang realm and above. If he was weaker, I would have been able to tell.”

“The yin yang realm would be perfectly acceptable.” The fourth elder said: “But there is no way he would be higher. Someone at a higher realm wouldn’t agree to come here.”

After all, Little Diamond had no treasures and resources to speak of. Some powerful cultivators’ personal wealth far exceeded their treasuries.

Becoming a sect master sounded grand but in reality, there was nothing good about it. It meant shouldering a heavy responsibility and taking care of several hundred disciples.

Therefore, someone at the myriad-form realm would not accept an invitation to become their sect master. Having a decent position in a larger sect was far superior than being the sect master of Little Diamond.

“I agree, let him be the sect master if he is in the yin yang realm.” The second master said.

“What if he harbors nefarious thoughts against our sect?” The fifth elder said.

“Say, if he is in any higher realm, there is no reason for him to scheme against us. Just using force is more than enough.” The first elder disagreed.

Luck was the primary reason for their sect’s survival, not power and treasure. They had nothing worth coveting. Moreover, if Li Qiye’s cultivation was indeed strong, he could just rob and destroy them.

The first elder stared at his peers then said: “Gentlemen, say what is on your mind. Yes or no?”

The four contemplated carefully. This was a pivotal decision since it pertained to the well-being of their sect. One wrong move might result in sect destruction; they would be too ashamed to meet the ancestors in the afterlife.

“In my opinion, we should follow the wish of the sect master.” Elder Hu, the third elder, gritted his teeth and said.

“What is your reasoning?” The second elder asked.

“Forget about his cultivation since it is uncertain, there is another angle. The sect master gave him the scroll for the immortal physique and didn’t bring it up with his last words. However, Young Noble Li was generous enough to give it to us. There are two explanations, one being he doesn’t care about this peerless scroll because he is too strong already. The other would be him having perfect morality and character...”

Having said that, he went over the event in detail.

The other four listened attentively then nodded approvingly. The scroll containing an immortal physique was priceless.

Only the mightiest sects wouldn’t care too much about it. In this case, Li Qiye decided to give the scroll to them. From this alone, the man was clearly right for the job.

“If that’s the case, I believe he should become the next sect master.” The first elder revealed his stance.

### **Chapter 4289: New Sect Master**

The other four elders contemplated after hearing their leader.

“I support letting Young Noble Li become the next sect master.” Elder Hu stated his stance as well.

Only three were left. Of course, the first elder’s decision was rather influential since he was the strongest with the most authority and prestige.

This meant that many other disciples would also support Li Qiye.

“Count my vote too.” The second elder also supported Li Qiye, leaving the fourth and fifth elder.

In other words, their choice didn’t actually matter at all.

“Since everyone has decided, let him be the sect master.” The fifth elder said. Refusing was meaningless. Plus, he had no ill-will towards Li Qiye and believed that the previous sect master must have had a reason.

“I support as well, it is decided then.” The fourth elder was the last.

Therefore, it was a unanimous decision to support Li Qiye to become their sect master. This was a favorable development for the sect since the five were in solidarity.

Little Diamond might be small now but as long as their members had this level of comradery, flourishing was inevitable. This was a minor consolation after losing their leader.

“Let’s prepare for the ceremony then.” The first elder said.

“Should we invite guests?” The fourth elder asked.

Despite being a small sect, they still had friends and allies nearby. Thus, the succession ceremony was important enough to invite them.

However, they needed to keep the death of the previous sect master a secret.

“No, keep it low-key.” The first elder decided.

“Yes, these are special circumstances. We’ll inform them when the time is right.” The second elder agreed that this wasn’t the right time for fanfare.

“Very well, Brother Hu, you’ll be responsible for talking with Young Noble Li regarding this matter.” The others decided and Elder Hu agreed.

Elder Hu then personally came to visit Li Qiye about this matter. The latter was looking at the blue sky. After a while, he stared at the elder and said: “I see.”

Of course, this position didn’t tempt him in the slightest.

“We five elders all agreed that you would be perfect as the next sect master, Young Noble Li.” Elder Hu said.

“That’s fine, but what makes you think I’m interested?” Li Qiye smiled.

“...” Elder Hu hasn’t thought of this yet. They didn’t discuss this possibility in detail. It’s not as if they could force him.

“Please think about it, Young Noble.” Elder Gu smiled wryly: “Our sect sincerely awaits your leadership.”

They trusted their previous sect master to know what he was doing. Elder Hu himself believed that Li Qiye could bring a change to their sect.

The elders knew that if Li Qiye were to refuse, the first elder would become the sect master. Alas, they were also aware that nothing would come from this.

He was already old and could be stuck at the minor level of the Yin Yang realm. Thus, he was weaker than the previous sect master, meaning that their sect had suffered an overall weakening. This didn’t bode well for the future.

They were already a minor sect. A continual decline meant potential destruction during their generation. That would be their worst nightmare.

Therefore, they were hopeful of Li Qiye. The sect might be able to develop better with this stranger leading them.

“Fine, let’s chalk this up to fate. I have time anyway and will grant you all a fortune.” Li Qiye said.

“Great!” The elder became excited because of Li Qiye’s attitude. He felt as if his sect had just come across a treasure.

Putting Little Diamond’s humble state aside, an experienced youth should be ecstatic to become a sect master. However, Li Qiye sounded as if he was doing them a favor.

He became more confident that Li Qiye could change the direction of their sect. He left and reported this to his peers before arranging a quiet ceremony.

The process was rather simple. All of the sect's disciples were recalled for the funeral of the previous sect master first. On the second day was Li Qiye's coronation. No outside guests were invited to the event.

The fellow disciples witnessed Li Qiye on the front stage. The majority was very surprised and stared intensely at Li Qiye.

They were aware that he wasn't a member of their sect, and that the previous sect master was the one who made this decision.

They also wondered why the five elders agreed to it. Nonetheless, since it was a unanimous decision, they also accepted this without a fight - something not seen in the larger sects.

Li Qiye also observed the crowd as they stared at him.

### **Chapter 4290: Poor**

The majority of the disciples were weak, still stuck in the first four realms - Mortal Shell, Iron Skin, Bronze Tendon, and Silver Carapace.

In larger sects and kingdoms, new disciples would pass through these realms in a matter of two or three years.

In Little Diamond, the Conqueror Vessel realm was considered the top already for the young generation. Thus, the first elder being at the yin yang realm was virtually untouchable - a supreme existence in the youths' eyes.

Li Qiye didn't comment on their weak cultivation and accepted their bow.

After the ceremony, Elder Hu gave him a tour of the sect. After all, the new sect master was qualified to know the in and out of his new domain.

In reality, they only had a territory spanning one hundred miles or so. There wasn't that much of note - only regular terrains, no special grounds and ore mines.

Perhaps its impoverished state played a large part in its longevity. If it had any resources, other sects would have attacked long ago.

In this case, the stronger sects didn't want to waste time conquering it. It would only require more manpower and resources to occupy.

During its glory days, it was far stronger and had plenty of lands, going as far as being superior to most dao lord lineages. Later on, it became weaker and lost control.

Eventually, Elder Hu led Li Qiye to the ancestral peak - one of the most important locations. It served as the home for the sect's treasures and merit laws.

There was a statue of their patriarch on this peak, depicting him as a middle-aged man with incredible divinity and prestige - clearly a big shot during his era.

There were two ancient characters carved at the base. No one in the sect could read them.

“Here is our patriarch.” Elder Hu elaborated: “A grand-completion immortal physique master, impervious to swords and sabers, none in the world could injure him back then. Others referred to him as Diamond Long.”

“I see.” Li Qiye chuckled. He also recognized the two characters at the base - Zuntian.

He had an impression of this person; they had absolutely met before.

“Fate indeed.” He murmured. To think that he could come across the sect of an acquaintance from so long ago. Of course, the ties were gone now.

He didn’t say anything else as Elder Hu took him to see the treasury. Well, it would be more accurate to call this a storeroom. It was only guarded by a few exceptional disciples.

The treasures and merit laws were stored in the same room. To be blunt, no treasures here could fetch a decent price. Once sold, they could only let the disciples live a humble life.

“The merit laws are all here, feel free to take a look, Sect Master.” Elder Hu introduced the scrolls on a wooden rack.

Little Diamond was too small to have rules and regulations regarding access to its merit laws. Some dao lord lineages had heaven-defying and secret merit laws; even the sect masters weren’t qualified to see them.

This wasn’t the case here. Li Qiye took a look and saw how simple and common they were. Some could actually be purchased from street vendors.

“Our patriarch had an immortal physique law before but for some reason, it was never passed down. Our sect once had sacred physique laws and several heaven-level laws, but they’re all gone now.” Elder Hu had a sad expression.

They wanted powerful merit laws as well. Alas, they haven’t produced any disciple at the Myriad-dao level for a long time now. Top merit laws could be purchased but they were too poor to do so.

This was the reason why the previous sect master lost his life over the physique merit law.

“You have one now.” Li Qiye smiled and placed that scroll on the rack.

“Sect Master...” Elder Hu became emotional.

“Am I not the sect master of Little Diamond? Now it belongs to the sect.” Li Qiye said.

“Your generosity puts me to shame.” Elder Hu prostrated right away. It would have been perfectly acceptable for Li Qiye to cultivate that physique law alone. He had both the right and authority to do so.

However, he decided to share it with the rest of the sect. Such generosity moved the elder to tears.

“We are so fortunate to be under your leadership.” Elder Hu said.

“No need to be so happy, I can’t be your sect master for long.” Li Qiye chuckled.

“...” Elder Hu didn’t know how to respond.

“Take me to see the other elders.” Li Qiye said since he wasn’t interested in this treasury.

Elder Hu arranged another meeting in the main hall. This time around, Li Qiye sat in the main chair.

The atmosphere was slightly awkward since Li Qiye was a stranger. No one had talked to him previously outside of Elder Hu.

“What is your plan?” Li Qiye stared at them and asked.

The five elders exchanged glances, not knowing how to answer right away.

Eventually, the first elder spoke: “We follow your command, Sect Master.”

The other four were astounded after listening to Elder Hu telling them about Li Qiye’s generosity. This made it apparent that Li Qiye didn’t want anything from their sect. After all, that scroll alone was countless times more valuable than all of Little Diamond.

“What is your goal then? To revitalize the sect or improve your own cultivation?” Li Qiye smiled.

They haven’t thought of this before. For the first elder, he knew that this was the end of the road for him. There was no way of breaking through to the next realm.

This had nothing to do with a lack of confidence. He had a good grasp on his own talent and the lack of resources.

Not long ago, the sect used all of its resources and still couldn’t get the previous sect master to reach the next realm.