

Emperor 4301

Chapter 4301: The Supreme Monarch

“Sect Master, why did this happen? What technique was it?” Elder Hu decided to ask the man himself.

They participated and knew just how strong their throw was. It couldn’t turn the rocks into meteors and was no threat to anyone.

Only Li Qiye, the mastermind behind this, had an answer. He clearly knew the outcome from the start.

The elders were nothing but impressed with his ability and insight. Little Diamond was on the brink of destruction but he still gave the insane command.

Then again, they also realized that they were insane for actually carrying out the order. Perhaps only their tiny sect had enough solidarity and trust to entertain Li Qiye’s perceived madness.

“When there’s a divine power, there’s always potential.” Li Qiye smiled and glanced at the sky.

“Sect Master, you’re the one behind this, right?” The first elder replied, thinking that only the mysterious man could turn the rocks into meteors.

“No, it wasn’t me but rather, the divine power from above.” Li Qiye answered.

“Are you saying that the high heaven is protecting Little Diamond?” The fourth elder blurted out.

“Incorrect.” Li Qiye denied the notion: “The high heaven protects no one. Only living beings protect living beings.”

The elders became confused since this conversation was being derailed.

Nonetheless, they still stared at the sky with respect in their eyes. There must be something up there that they couldn’t see due to their limited power.

“At least it’s over.” The fifth elder heaved a sigh of relief after commanding disciples to clean up the battlefield.

“We’re done with Eight Demons but I don’t know if peace will come. Du Weiwu died in front of our gate and his uncle fled. He might go to Deer King next.” The first elder remained worried.

Given the current situation, Eight Demons should be thanking the heaven if Little Diamond were to drop the issue and not assault them.

However, Eight Tiger Demon and Deer King were related; the latter was the real source of danger.

Dragon Sect was on an entirely different level. An expert from there could easily destroy Eight Demons or Little Diamond.

Thus, all of Little Diamond’s members became nervous.

“We have to avoid them.” The fifth elder suggested: “It’s best that we don’t go to the conference.”

“I agree. At the conference, Eight Tiger might accuse our sect and Deer King will support him. Dragon Sect will be on Eight Demons’ side for sure.” Elder Hu pondered for a moment before answering.

“True.” The second elder continued: “I don’t think our problem, regardless of how unjust it is, will earn the attention of Lion’s Roar. It’ll be decided beforehand.”

Lion’s Roar most likely didn’t have time to preside over every little thing and mediate conflicts between minor sects.

This was only a trivial fight in the grand scheme of things. Dragon Sect didn’t need to report this at the conference at all. Just one order from them could end Little Diamond.

“We shouldn’t go then.” The fifth elder said.

“What conference?” Li Qiye stared at them and asked.

“We are referring to the largest conference in Southern Desolace, Myriad Sects. This is a tradition dating back to the distant era. It was started by the Supreme Monarch of Lion’s Roar with the purpose of protecting Eight Desolaces. The entire world participated until peace finally came and the king disappeared. The scale of the conference gradually decreased and only became an event in our region. Right now, Lion’s Roar and the other behemoths such as Dragon Sect plan it together.”

“The Supreme Monarch?” Li Qiye asked.

“The king is the ultimate existence from Lion’s Roar’s Divine Ancestral Shrine. Rumor has it that there was another title for this being - Nightyearn Butterfly Monarch, the savior of Eight Desolaces respected by all. Lion’s Roar has enjoyed its prosperity for so long due to the foundation left behind by the monarch.” Elder Hu explained.

“Don’t casually talk about this topic.” The first elder became tense: “The Supreme Monarch is revered by all, it’s best to keep our mouth shut lest we say the wrong thing. If Lion’s Roar catches wind of any negative comment, the transgressor would lose everything.”

The other four heeded this warning and closed their mouth. Not to mention regular cultivators like them, even dao lords were fearful of this supreme existence.

“Nightyearn, I see.” Li Qiye stared at the horizon and ripples formed in his otherwise calm mind.

A layer of dust was wiped from his memories after hearing this title. It has been too long; he himself has almost forgotten.

Nightyearn Butterfly Monarch, an untouchable being in Eight Desolaces. Even the top dao lords and hidden masters spoke with a hushed voice regarding this person.

The past resurfaced in Li Qiye’s mind - the proud and stubborn girl has reached the apex. She grasped the truths and was able to control the immortal spear.

There was no need to think or take a look. He could sense everything in Eight Desolaces since this was his world and epoch.

The elders took note of his melancholic expression and found it strange. He seemed to be an old soul stuck in a youthful body. This was a strange and inexplicable feeling for them.

“Very well, we’re heading to the conference since I need to exercise. Pick some disciples to tag along.” Li Qiye said.

“What about Dragon Sect? What if Eight Demons report us...” The first elder hesitated.

“Completely trivial, you need not worry.” Li Qiye interrupted him.

Chapter 4302: Bodhisattva Metropolis

Bodhisattva Metropolis was the oldest and most prosperous city in Southern Desolace. It also had a reputation for being the strangest.

There were several accounts of its origin. One being that it was built as a memorial for Medicine Bodhisattva. Another account said that this was a place where she used to heal people. The third stated that this was her birthplace... All in all, the city was definitely connected to her in one way or another.

In the south, territories and borders were clearly defined. This was not the case for the city despite its abundant wealth and size. It remained neutral throughout the years and served as a place for mediation and contracts.

Any contracts signed here were considered holy. Breaching meant being reviled by the rest of the world. Thus, great powers and top cultivators normally came here to have discussions.

The agreements here have always been successfully carried out. Thus, this was the holy land for contracts.

Why did the city have this special characteristic? No one had an answer. Some believed that it has been implicit for so long that it became an unbreakable rule. Even dao lords obeyed the contracts here, let alone others.

Many believed that there was a mysterious power deep in the city, protecting it and allowing it to be neutral. This special status has been unshakable in the history of Eight Desolaces.

Dao lords have had their coronation ceremony in this place. For example, Puresun Dao Lord, Azure Ancestor, Space Dragon Emperor, even Blessed Dao Lord, and many others...

None of these supreme beings dared to take the city for their own in spite of the advantages. The prime example should be Blessed Dao Lord, someone who brought peace to the war and popularized cultivation by changing the established path. He didn’t seize the city and chose to build True Immortal Sect somewhere else.

Of course, there were exceptions. Many ambitious souls have tried to do so before. However, their ambition turned to dust the moment they approached the city.

These cultivators were instantly killed before making their way inside, either by the dao lord of that era or some unknown cultivation masters; some died of mysterious death as well.

All of this made the metropolis a perfect place to have conferences. One of the most important being Myriad Sects.

Historians believed that this conference has been around since the start of the epoch. The Supreme Monarch deemed it necessary after the great calamity. As for Bodhisattva Metropolis, there are conflicting sides on whether it was around then.

A consensus was that the conference served as a promoter of peace and stability, able to unite the world in the early days.

Later on, top dao lords also joined the conference. The Supreme Monarch only appeared during the first conference. The ones later were carried out by the major powers in the world.

As time passed, peace came to the world. This was especially true during Blessed Dao Lord's aura. The Myriad Dao Era emerged and the conference became less necessary. Thus, Lion's Roar Kingdom became less influential than before.

The conference itself started as one for all of Eight Desolaces. Eventually, only Sky Border was left and now, just Southern Desolace.

In the end, the great powers didn't find this conference as important any longer. This was the case for Lion's Roar as well. Recently, the big shots from Lion's Roar didn't bother participating.

Nonetheless, smaller sects such as Little Diamond still viewed it with great importance. They were granted a voice for participating.

Li Qiye wasn't interested in this conference. He only wanted to go on a remembrance trip. There were memories to be remembered at the metropolis.

The group consisted of the elders and a few young generations. Li Qiye specifically brought one man along - his new disciple, Wang Weiqiao.

"Observe and feel more, speak less." He told his disciple along the way.

Of course, Weiqiao wasn't as curious and active as the young ones. He kept this in mind and remained quiet along the way. He was mature and performed his tasks in a neat and tidy manner.

The disciples tagging along were curious about their relationship. Weiqiao looked more like the master.

Once they entered the city, the young ones looked east and west like country bumpkins. Nonetheless, this was indeed the case.

Little Diamond was a tiny sect while this city was as prosperous as can be. The trip alone was rather expensive and arduous. Thus, only a small group was eligible to come.

The street stalls, weapon shops, and auction houses attracted their attention. This was an entirely new experience for them so they wanted to take a look everywhere.

"There are great things in Bodhisattva but also plenty of trickery and con artists. Don't buy things without thinking." Weiqiao warned.

Li Qiye only smiled and accompanied them. He only stopped at a particular street.

There were many shops and merchants along the way but he only stopped at this particular stall.

His eyes narrowed while looking at the items on the display. They were old; some were even rusting.

The owner was an old man wearing a clean ashen robe. It lost its original color from being washed too many times.

His cheeks caved in since he was only skin and bones, seemingly malnourished. His arms were dried, looking like tree branches. His eyes were deep in the sockets. All in all, he looked sickly and on the verge of death.

The old man immediately looked up the moment Li Qiye got closer.

Chapter 4303: Old Acquaintance?

The old man saw Li Qiye and astonishment struck him like a lightning bolt. His eyes brimmed with a bright flash, albeit only for a split second - virtually unnoticeable.

He staggered backward, unable to stay calm.

Of course, Wang Weiqiao and the other disciples didn't notice this at all. Li Qiye was the only one privy to the minute changes.

He took a deep breath and calmed down, finally meeting Li Qiye's gaze.

"So we meet again." Serenity returned to his eyes. After all, the past was so long ago now; there was no point in holding a grudge.

Li Qiye wasn't overly surprised to see him: "You being alive is nothing short of a miracle."

He remained silent for a bit before answering: "The sky shattered and the earth collapsed. My return was due to fate."

"Fate?" Li Qiye chuckled in disagreement: "Do you actually think that you're alive right now thanks to fate?"

"If you think you've done me a favor, I didn't ask for it." He said.

"That's exactly what happened. This world was built and ruled by me and you're growing on it, so isn't it due to my grace that you're still alive?" Li Qiye smiled.

He had no choice but to admit: "Correct, but all you did was given an unsolicited gift. I owe you nothing, it's due to my own fortune."

The others had no idea what was going on in this conversation. They attributed this to Li Qiye's eccentric nature and decided to stay quiet.

"There is logic and truth in what you're saying. Without my gift, your achievements could have been even greater, still standing out at the apex." Li Qiye nodded.

He didn't say anything.

"I suppose you don't owe me anything, but, you do owe him, got it? You have always owed him and still owe him. This isn't only because of his love and expectation for you." Li Qiye stared at him.

He took a deep breath and let it out before nodding: "You are correct, I don't owe you but I do owe him."

"Then shouldn't you be doing something?" Li Qiye asked.

"The world has you, I don't need to do anything since you can do a better job." He responded.

"What if it needs you? And why does it have to be me? Haven't you thought about doing something for him?" Li Qiye asked.

He fell into silence.

"There can never be enough praise for your innate talent. Do you know what makes us different?" Li Qiye continued.

"Me." He eventually answered in a sentimental manner.

"Your desire drives and imprisons you." Li Qiye said: "Now, you get a redo. Will you be a slave to it again?"

"It is rather difficult. I am still me, nothing has changed." He clenched his fists and sighed.

"Don't do it for you or me or anyone else, do it for him. It is that simple, pay the debt." Li Qiye concluded.

He eventually loosened his fists and accepted this: "Right, it's been long enough, I should repay the debt."

Li Qiye smiled and stopped talking about this issue. He looked at the stall and said: "Decent items."

"Want to buy? They're all ancient artifacts from the forbidden zones. Each has its own uses and profundities." The old man reverted to his current state.

"Really?" The disciples were glad that the confusing conversation was over and took a look at the few items.

They looked old and rusty, not much different from scrap metals.

"See if there's anything you like." The old man looked particularly attentive to Wang Weiqiao and said: "Little Brother, come, one might be right for you."

The two were similar in age and appearance yet he called Wang Weiqiao "little brother". This could be construed as impoliteness.

They took a look at the items. Alas, nothing seemed worthwhile.

"Hey, are they really from the forbidden zones?" One disciple murmured, thinking that the old man was unreliable.

After all, these zones were extremely dangerous. The treasures from there should have incredible visual phenomena - immortal lights or clouds... The ones here seemed to be on the opposite end of the spectrum.

“Those connected by fate should be able to see the mysteries.” The old man smiled and didn’t overly peddle.

As for Li Qiye, he only spectated without interfering.

“How about this?” Wang Weiqiao found something looking like a tiny hatchet, no longer in a usable state.

“If you think it’s good, it’s good.” Li Qiye smiled.

“How much is it?” Wang Weiqiao liked it and thought that it was somehow meant to be with him.

“I’ll give you a friendly price, three million sovereign jades.” The old man raised three fingers.

“What?!” The other disciples became startled. Weiqiao himself put the item back on the stall.

“That’s a friendly price?” One of them complained.

This was a monstrous sum to them. In fact, selling the entire sect wouldn’t yield this sum.

“It’s too expensive.” Weiqiao smiled wryly and shook his head. He didn’t even have 30,000 Bronze Tendon Refined Jades, let alone the sovereign level.

“It is fate that we meet today, I’ll reduce it to three hundred bronze tendon jades.” The old man said.

“...” The sudden drop in price surprised Weiqiao. The old man sounded like a swindler.

“Boss, what are you trying to do here with these prices? I don’t think this item is even worth three hundred bronze tendon jades.” One disciple said: “It is worth one hundred at best, don’t take advantage of our nice senior brother.”

The old man only smiled and didn’t refute.

“What do you think, Master?” Weiqiao liked the item but still found this whole thing strange.

“That depends on you. If the thing is actually worth the initial price, he’s selling you a favor.” Li Qiye said.

“A favor.” Weiqiao carefully thought about it.

“Do you want it, Little Brother? If so, just three hundred.” The old man said.

Chapter 4304: Aunt

The others stared at Weiqiao. One of them said: “That might be okay, First Brother. You should give it a shot.”

They were definitely poor compared to members of the big sects. Nonetheless, this sum was quite doable.

“Yes, maybe it’s an actual treasure. Three hundred is not bad at all.” Another urged.

They were young and adventurous with an optimistic outlook, hoping for the best outcome.

On the other hand, Weiqiao worried about something else entirely. He saw the intricate relationship after listening earlier.

In the end, he shook his head and told the old man: "I'm sure it's worth three million higher-level jades, not three hundred. I do not wish to take advantage of you."

Other disciples didn't expect this response at all. Who would refuse this deal if the item was actually worth so much? It seemed rather foolish to refuse.

The old man stared at Weiqiao and said: "Just consider it a touch of a fate or a favor."

"I appreciate your kind intention." Weiqiao smiled: "Fate can be tied but I have to say no to the favor. I am but an insignificant cultivator. I do not wish to owe anyone since I might not be able to repay."

"Interesting." The old man smiled: "It's only one item, not a big favor at all. You don't need to repay me."

"It's rare that someone would take a second glance at me, let alone do me a favor. Perhaps you're doing this out of consideration for my master or some other reason, that makes it even harder for me to accept." Weiqiao lacked cultivation but still had enough experience in life.

Why would anyone do him a favor? It must be due to his master or some future plans. All in all, he didn't wish to owe a debt that must be repaid later.

"I see." The old man was impressed and nodded: "Nothing from luck, all from oneself."

He then glanced over at Li Qiye and said: "Seems like I'm inferior in this aspect, I didn't think like this back then."

"None can match you in terms of knowledge and intelligence, but the more knowledge, the less humanity." Li Qiye said flatly.

The old man wanted to respond but refrained and let out a sigh instead.

Suddenly, someone else loudly spoke behind them: "Hey, gentlemen, would you like a bowl of wonton this morning?"

The disciples looked back and saw that the voice came from a wonton restaurant on the other side.

The owner was a slightly-overweight woman wearing a flowered apron, looking like a nice aunt in the neighborhood. Her hair was dried and tied up in a bun.

However, her large and round eyes captivated them with their beauty - a stark contrast to her bulky and unfeminine appearance.

She rubbed her hands on the apron and crossed the street.

The old man ignored her and tended to his own stall. As for the disciples, they assumed that she was just a mortal and didn't care much.

"Sirs, a bowl of wonton is the perfect early morning meal." She ignored the lack of interest and enthusiastically advertised: "My restaurant is well known for being the most delicious on this street..."

A few young ones frowned since she was so loud. Others looked up and saw that it was already noon.

She still ignored them and actually pulled Li Qiye's arm and said: "Lad, do you want to try the best wonton bowl in the city?"

The disciples exchanged glances. Earlier, it was the best on this street and now, the entire city?

"Please don't be rude." Elder Hu didn't appreciate her touching Li Qiye.

Though Little Diamond was a small sect, all cultivators were people of status in the eyes of mortals. Moreover, Li Qiye was their sect master.

Li Qiye waved his hand, gesturing that it was okay to the elder. He looked at the woman and said: "This seems more like an invitation to a brothel than a meal."

"..." The disciples usually put up an act in front of the mortals. However, their sect master spoke like a hoodlum.

"Oh? I didn't know you were like that." The woman laughed and said: "If that's more your taste, then I can introduce you to some brothels."

"Forget it, can't handle the brothel right now. A bowl of wontons will do, can't work on an empty stomach." Li Qiye smiled back.

"Come, come, gentlemen, try our wontons." She happily pulled Li Qiye over to her restaurant.

The rest had no choice but to tag along.

"One bowl each then." Li Qiye ordered.

"Great, one bowl each." The woman became happy since there were so many customers.

The members of Little Diamond exchanged glances, wondering why their sect master was listening to this aunt.

They weren't interested in eating at this tiny shop even if they were hungry. Nonetheless, they still obeyed his order.

A while later, the woman brought out enough for everyone and enthusiastically said: "Sirs, here, please have a taste."

Li Qiye ate and slurped the noodles and wontons without holding back.

The others ate begrudgingly while wondering about Li Qiye. Was he here because he couldn't refuse the passionate aunt?

It didn't take long before Li Qiye finished. She picked up the empty bowl and eagerly asked: "Sirs, what do you think?"

"Delicious, definitely the best in this city." Li Qiye smiled.

"Uhh.." One disciple nearly spat out the noodles in his mouth.

They thought that the dish was only okay at best. Delicious wasn't the right word here. Did they eat the same dish?

"Young man, your taste is as excellent as your appearance." The woman clapped and laughed heartily.

"Indeed, I'm a very picky person when it comes to food." Li Qiye smiled.

"Definitely, definitely." She seemed pleased because he enjoyed her food: "Do you have a girlfriend yet? I can introduce you to someone if you would like."

"..." The disciples were speechless. One youth wanted to say something but didn't want to be rude.

Chapter 4305: Wonton

The disciples from Little Diamond didn't know what to do. Though they were just a tiny sect, if their sect master wanted a dao companion, she still had to be a cultivator.

Even the weakest cultivators rarely married mortals. After all, they were from two separate worlds.

"What type of girl do you have in mind?" He smiled while staring at the aunt.

"..." His fellow members exchanged glances, speechless.

An older disciple secretly pulled Li Qiye's sleeve in order to remind him about his status.

"There are many." The aunt's eyes flashed brightly as she responded: "I'm not exaggerating but I have quite a reputation in Bodhisattva. I know everyone and can help you find the right bride, do you have anyone in mind?"

"That sounds pretty great, I guess good things just happen to me because I'm handsome?" He phrased it like a question.

Some disciples nearly spat out their food. Their sect master was such a narcissist?

Even a blind guy could see that the word "handsome" and he had nothing to do with each other. He looked as common as can be. Nonetheless, he still spoke with confidence and didn't feel any shame.

"That's obvious, your handsome appearance can shake the heaven and earth." The aunt laughed: "Given your appearance, just say the word and hrm, Butcher Zhang's daughter, Tailor Liu's little girl, oh, Lad Bai from the eastern noble clan... you can pick any of them."

"Our sect master isn't interested." Finally, a disciple got up and protested.

None of those mortal girls are worthy of becoming their sect mistress.

"Who says I'm not interested?" Li Qiye waved his hand, gesturing for the disciple to sit back down: "I'm definitely interested, it's just that given my dashing looks, it would be awfully unfair for me to marry just one, no? I would be doing myself a disservice."

"..." His disciples became speechless because of their sect master's rampant ego.

"Sect Master, this, this isn't quite right." Elder Hu quietly whispered since this was heading down an unsavory path.

“No, it’s perfect. Aunt, what do you think?” Li Qiye smiled.

“Perfect indeed.” The aunt seemed to understand Li Qiye and said: “You might just be the most handsome man in history. Yes, yes, just marrying one wife is letting down the heaven and earth for sculpting you. Three wives and four concubines? Not enough either. Hmm, three palaces and six chambers should be a good starting point.” [1]

“Well said, you took the words right out of my mouth!” Li Qiye clapped and laughed.

This ridiculous conversation made the disciples think that Li Qiye had given the boss a big tip, hence the enthusiastic flattery and reception.

“Sigh, it must be nice being young, capable of doing whatever and enjoying the happiness of this world.” She suddenly became sentimental and let out a sigh.

“From the start of time, the things that cause the most pain to humans are emotions and ties, don’t you think?” Li Qiye said.

This sudden shift in this conversation caught the students off guard. He went from bragging shamelessly to becoming philosophical.

“Sigh, let’s not talk about this depressing subject.” The aunt regained her good spirit and said: “Pick the day, young brother, and I will introduce you to all the girls.”

“It’s alright, no need for such meticulous planning. Leave it to fate. Once fate comes, it’ll happen naturally.” Li Qiye smiled.

“It’ll happen naturally when fate comes.” The aunt nodded in agreement and appreciated the comment: “How open-minded. Very well, once you find a girl you like, let me know. Even if she doesn’t like you, I’ll tie her up and bring her to you.”

“...” This rendered the students speechless again. The woman turned from a matchmaker to a potential kidnapper.

Moreover, they felt quite strange about this meeting. The aunt clearly knew that they were cultivators yet still acted familiar with them, especially their sect master. The way they interacted resembled a mother meeting her future son-in-law.

The closeness between these two was akin to two friends, not strangers meeting for the first time. They didn’t know why their sect master was acting so nice towards a mortal either. The two weren’t on the same level at all.

Cultivators didn’t want to speak casually to a mortal aunt. On the other hand, mortals didn’t dare to speak to cultivators in this manner either.

Mortals looked up to cultivators and acted in a subservient manner. Alas, this aunt felt no pressure while being in their presence.

“Accept my early gratitude then.” Li Qiye smiled.

Despite this weird development, the members of Little Diamond continued eating without commenting.

Wang Weiqiao didn't ask anything since he remembered Li Qiye's advice early on - just observe and speak less.

"Sigh, this is a great place." Li Qiye spoke while eating another bowl, once again confusing the listeners.

The shop only had their group right now because no one else wanted wontons at this hour.

However, a customer finally came in - a youth wearing a regal robe that was meticulously embroidered. Each line was crafted perfectly - a testament to its exquisite and expensive nature.

Earlier, Li Qiye and the aunt were talking about him being handsome. This youth matched that description far more than Li Qiye.

His facial features were immaculate - bright eyes and long brows. Staring at him made others feel quite good.

He was clearly born of nobility and has been pampered since birth. He carried a long box on his arm. It appeared to be quite old, most likely containing a precious treasure.

"Boss, one wonton bowl please." He asked the woman.

"It's getting late, there isn't any left." The aunt said without bothering to look at him.

"Aren't they eating?" The youth asked.

"I said there is none left." She repeated.

The members of Little Diamond wondered about her cold attitude. Logically, the youth was more handsome than Li Qiye so she should be more enthusiastic.

"That's okay then, how about just a bowl of soup?" The youth still had a smile on his face.

Chapter 4306: Wang Zining

"No soup either." The woman coldly uttered while glaring at the youth.

Sure, there might not be wontons but there should still be some soup left. Alas, the disciples didn't understand why she disliked the youth so much.

"How about just tea? Or boiled water is fine too." This didn't kill the smile on the youth's face.

One strange thing happened after another today in front of them. This youth was clearly part of the nobility. Why did he insist on eating the wontons here? What could explain his polite attitude despite being shown none? Couldn't he just go to a different restaurant?

"No." She flatly refused.

One disciple felt bad and told the aunt: "Just give him plain boiled water, don't tell me that your shop doesn't even have that."

She gave him the side-eye before going to the back. She then came out with a kettle containing hot water and rudely placed it on the table, looking quite annoyed: "Drink."

“Thank you.” The youth smiled then stood up and cupped his fist towards the disciple earlier: “Thank you, Sir. I appreciate it.”

The disciple thought that this level of gratitude was undeserved since he only got annoyed enough to say something.

Meanwhile, Li Qiye watched silently, seemingly amused.

He poured himself a bowl before asking respectfully: “Sirs, where are you from?”

As the saying goes - one can't slap a smiling face. Polite people were always welcomed and appreciated. In this case, he was smiling, cupping his fist, and lowering his head.

The young ones from Little Diamond exchanged glances. They couldn't tell if he was a mortal or a cultivator, only that he was clearly from a wealthy clan - perhaps part of the nobility in the mortal world.

“We are from Little Diamond Gate.” One of them responded.

Normally, they might not converse with a mortal. However, this youth was just too polite so they had a good impression of him.

“It must be an amazing immortal sect.” The youth became excited and sincerely said: “I've always been a fan of cultivation since childhood, today, it is a great honor to meet you all. It must be the blessing of three lifetimes...” He cupped his fist and lowered his head again.

The others became embarrassed and only smiled wryly back. After all, Little Diamond was far from being an “amazing immortal sect”.

Nonetheless, it became clear that he was only a mortal from a rich clan, wanting to cultivate.

“My name is Wang Zining. It is my pleasure to meet you all.” He introduced himself.

They suddenly felt the urge to recruit him into Little Diamond if possible, wanting to have a polite junior.

“This, this must be fate.” After they got closer through small talk, Zining said: “When I was cleaning up old items from our ancestral hall, I noticed a particular item.”

“What is it?” They became interested.

“Well, I don't know what it is yet, please take a look.” He gently placed the box on the table.

“It might just be a regular mortal treasure.” One of them said while taking a look at the box.

“Open the box, let's see what it is.” Another suggested.

Wang Zining hesitated and looked around, looking awfully prudent before making a decision.

“It's fine, there's no one else here but our sect.” Those from Little Diamond were very curious about the box.

“We'll assess it for you.” Someone hurriedly said.

“Very well.” Zining finally made up his mind: “Please keep it a secret, Sirs.” He then opened the box.

“Buzz.” A golden light erupted along with the faint roars of mythical beasts. They also saw flashing runes as well.

“This is...” Though they couldn’t see the actual item, just this visual phenomenon alone told the tale. It was an amazing cultivation treasure.

Wang Zining immediately closed the box and the radiance dispersed. Meanwhile, the other youths couldn’t stay calm.

They eventually regained their wits and knew that a mortal like Zining didn’t have a full grasp of this treasure’s value.

“Sell it to us, we will pay a good price for it.” One of them suggested.

No one could escape the temptation of treasures, especially one for cheap.

“Mmm... I don’t think I can because this is something left behind by my ancestors. I’m the only one who knows about it but it doesn’t feel right...” Zining responded.

“Piece of crap.” The shop owner said with disdain.

Of course, the youths didn’t hear her at all because they were preoccupied with the treasure.

“Something is off here, it’s too much of a coincidence.” Wang Weiqiao whispered to Li Qiye.

He remained calm and observant, not tempted by the treasure in the slightest.

“This treasure isn’t of use to you. If you sell it now for a good price, you’ll never have to worry about money again.” One disciple didn’t give up and persuaded.

“Yes, don’t you know the saying, treasuring a jade ring becomes a crime? If people find out about it, it might end with a disaster for you. You might as well sell it now.” Another added.

“Well, that does make sense...” Zining said: “How about this, Sirs, I want to keep the box as a memento and only sell whatever treasure is inside to you.”

“That’s fine.” They exchanged glances and agreed. After all, they only wanted the thing inside, not the old box.

“Name the price.” One disciple became eager to buy this precious treasure.

“I, I don’t know much about this thing but there are many auction houses in the city. The good treasures start at... umm... several hundred million Heavenly Sovereign Refined Jades.” Zining responded.

Chapter 4307: A Deal

“It won’t go anywhere that high but just name a price.” One disciple tried to steer the direction of the price, thinking that a mortal noble wouldn’t understand the economy of the cultivation world.

Wang Zining seemed indecisive at first but eventually gritted his teeth and responded: “Sirs, though this might be an heirloom of sorts, but since you all seem to like it so much, I will begrudgingly sell it for one million sovereign jades, how about it?”

“One million sovereign jades?” The disciples from Little Diamond were astonished to hear the sky-high price.

Not to mention one million, their sect couldn’t muster a single one since it has been tough recently. This level of jade was too expensive and precious.

“You’re being unreasonable here.” One disciple said: “No one will buy it for one million sovereign jades.”

Only a few disciples could produce this sum, and they were definitely from the behemoths.

“Then, then how much? How about just five, five hundred thousand sovereign jades?” Zining said.

“That’s still a ridiculous price.” The disciple shook his head: “Do you know what a sovereign jade is? One is enough to let a mortal like you live lavishly for the rest of your life. One million is enough for a cultivator to do the same.

The disciple was right about the value of sovereign jade. They were all valuable regardless of the secondary level.

If a mortal were to somehow able to exchange a sovereign jade for usable resources, they would be set for generations to come. In this case, Zining could ask for a hundred million taels instead and Little Diamond would be happy to oblige. It was far easier for them to obtain mortal currency compared to a single sovereign jade.

“Then I just want one hundred thousand. After all, the treasures in the auction house sell for millions, even tens of millions.” Zining became impatient.

“You’ve only heard rumors. Keep in mind that those treasures have heaven-defying origins and are peerless. Yours is only an heirloom, I’m sure your ancestors aren’t big shots or anything. The thing in there should have limited power, it’s not the same at all.” The disciple elaborated.

Though they were definitely trying to take advantage of Zining, they were right about the assessed value of this heirloom.

“Well...” Zining became worried about not being able to make the sale. He asked: “Sirs, then what is your offer? Give me a fair price because otherwise, I won’t sell this heirloom.”

The disciples exchanged glances. In reality, they didn’t have an exact valuation for this treasure. Nonetheless, this thing was obviously amazing.

“Let us discuss it for a bit.” A senior brother told Zining.

The latter thought about it for a moment then agreed: “Very well, Sirs. I will trust that you all will give me a fair price.”

The group got together and the oldest senior asked Elder Hu: “Elder, how much do you think we should pay?”

“Pay what you can.” Elder Hu pondered and didn’t have a strong opinion.

In fact, he didn’t recognize this treasure either so he couldn’t give a definite price.

The disciples started counting their money and wanted to pay the highest price possible. Though they tried their best, they still thought that they were still getting an amazing deal.

That heirloom should exceed all expectations, meaning that it was outside of their price range.

Eventually, they came over and the senior took charge: "We have a total of three thousand, two hundred and sixty-one Violet Marquis Refined Jades. This is our best price so if you are willing, let's do it."

They were sincere in spending every coin possible. This was their highest possible offer. It was a large sum for those from a tiny sect.

Sure, they wanted to obtain this treasure but at the very least, they were honest enough in their offer. Others might not have done the same because Zining was nothing more than a mortal young noble. Any of them could crush him like an ant.

They would just wait until he was alone then dealt with him. Such things happened every day in the cultivation world.

Alas, they never thought about resorting to such a cruel and despicable method.

"Only this much?" Zining was disappointed to hear the offer.

"This is the most we can do." The senior shook his head: "We can't get you more even if you want more. Others might not be willing to pay at all."

"..." Zining hesitated in silence.

"Honestly, it is hard for you to sell this treasure on top of being potentially dangerous." Another disciple said.

"Impossible, don't scare me." Zining blurted out.

"I'm simply telling you the truth, plenty of people with treasures have been robbed and killed." The guy shrugged.

"I see... Fine, then this price. We can consider this transaction as a sign of friendship, a karmic bond. How about it, Sirs?" Zining was successfully persuaded.

"Absolutely!" The young ones cheered and heaved a sigh of relief.

Though they spent every single coin, this was definitely worth it.

"This is my heirloom." Zining stroked the box and became sentimental, not wanting to let go: "The money isn't important here. What matters is the bond we have forged today, okay?"

Chapter 4308: A Trick?

"Indeed, this is fate." One disciple happily said.

They didn't mind at all. The guy sounded like he wanted to join their sect, hence all the mentioning of "bonds" and "friendship".

After all, the sect didn't have strict requirements for new recruits. Just this treasure alone was enough to let Zining become an elder's disciple.

"Sigh..." Zining continued touching the box, seeming reluctant.

"Your heirloom isn't of much use in your possession." A disciple stared at the box, eager to finish the transaction.

"You're right, let's do this." Zining made up his mind and opened the box.

"Buzz." The same radiance appeared again along with the runes and the beautiful roars.

The individual ray stopped people from seeing it. Even Elder Hu could only see a faint figure - something resembling a heart.

"The heart of a divine beast? Or a special dao bone?" He became emotional.

As for the disciples, their eyes became wide open with excitement, wanting nothing more than to embrace this treasure. They had never seen anything like this before.

"Is this really a treasure?" Wang Weiqiao murmured. He still found the whole thing quite strange, thinking that there was something off about it.

Was it Wang Zining or the treasure? Or everything including the boss of this store? No, even the street was off. Intuition told him that this all happened the moment they set foot in the city.

Of course, he wasn't in a position to stop his peers from buying this treasure. These were mere conjectures and he had no proof.

The disciples from Little Diamond raised their hands, wanting to finish the deal.

"Where's my money?" Zining asked.

"It's right here, do you want to count?" The senior wanted to pay as fast as possible before the guy change his mind.

"What's the hurry?" Li Qiye finally spoke and all eyes turned on him.

"Keep the money, the deal is off." Li Qiye ordered.

The disciples couldn't believe it. They wasted so much saliva convincing Zining to sell. This was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

"Se-sect Master, this is a great treasure, it's a rare chance." One disciple winked repeatedly at Li Qiye, telling him not to ruin the deal.

"It's not worth anything, don't buy." Li Qiye smiled.

"What..." The disciples disagreed with Li Qiye's assessment.

"Sect Master, this has to be a valuable treasure." One of them didn't give up but Li Qiye seemed hellbent on canceling this transaction.

Though unwilling, they still listened to their sect master and took back the money.

“You don’t want it anymore? What’s going on?” Zining looked confused while holding the treasure.

“As for you, a little interesting. Quite audacious as well.” Li Qiye then spoke to him directly.

“What do you mean, Sir?” Zining scratched his head, looking like an inexperienced and naive young master.

“What do you think about me?” Li Qiye suddenly asked.

“Sir, you have an exceptional appearance, definitely a true dragon among men or even a true immortal.” Zining stared at Li Qiye and said.

“Are you being honest now?” Li Qiye’s eyes narrowed.

Though the young ones didn’t notice anything, Zining felt himself being pierced by Li Qiye’s gaze.

He took a deep breath to calm down before speaking in a serious tone: “Sir, you are matchless indeed.”

“Not so clever now, are you?” The boss of the restaurant standing to the side sneered.

Zining ignored the comment, still looking quite calm.

“Take this piece of crap away. You might be able to fool the children but doing this in front of me is rather unwise.” Li Qiye said.

Zining had thick skin and put his treasure away, albeit with a wry smile.

The disciples scratched their head in confusion. By this point, they realized that there was something off but were still uncertain.

As for Wang Weiqiao, he thought that this treasure was fake, just not the exact details. Only his master noticed from the very beginning.

“You said something about a bond of friendship?” Li Qiye asked.

“Zining wishes to have a bond with you, Sir.” He bowed towards Li Qiye.

“No need for that, just speak.” Li Qiye shook his head.

“What do you mean, Sir?” He didn’t expect this response.

“What is your goal? Just to have a good relationship with us?” Li Qiye smiled.

He pondered for a bit before replying: “Not quite, I wish to attribute the goodwill of this meeting to my sect.”

“Mmm. So be it, this karmic knot has been tied. Give it to them.” Li Qiye agreed then pointed at the young disciples.

“I will obey, Sir.” He bowed deeply.

Li Qiye then took out a bronze coin. This coin was completely worthless in the eyes of cultivators. In fact, it could only buy a meat bun at best in the mortal world.

He flicked and it landed on Zining’s table.

“This coin will be the payment for your box. The bond is forged.” Li Qiye said.

“The box?” The disciples were astounded. Li Qiye didn’t want the radiant treasure but this old box?

Was this a real-life case of buying the box but returning the pearls? This box was clearly less valuable than the treasure earlier.

Of course, Li Qiye was still getting a good deal because the box should be special given its old age. One bronze coin for it was as cheap as can be.

“Your insight is incredible, Sir.” Zining finished his scouting attempt and confirmed Li Qiye’s ability.

“A bond is forged, Sirs.” Zining slowly pushed the box across the table towards the young ones.

Chapter 4309: Plan

The disciples didn’t know what to do with the box in front of them while feeling perplexed about this situation.

They saw Li Qiye nodding and decided to accept the box.

“As long as the rivers flow and the mountains hold, we shall meet again, Sirs.” Wang Zining cupped his fist towards the disciples then bowed towards Li Qiye. He took the coin and left.

The disciples also returned the gesture, feeling as if they had just signed a contract or something similar.

“Sect Master, what happened just now?” One of them asked and brought the box to Li Qiye.

They wondered why he chose the box over the treasure within. The difference in value was rather obvious. Nonetheless, they had great confidence in him.

Li Qiye took the box for a look before smirking.

“Sect Master, what is the mystery behind this box?” Elder Hu couldn’t quell his curiosity, aware that Li Qiye had a perfect reason for his choice. His confidence in Li Qiye couldn’t be overstated.

“Chalk it up to fate.” Li Qiye’s hand became resplendent with circling dao laws. He clenched his fist and the box started transforming - soaring dragon, the celestials, a river reflecting for miles...

These images had ancient runes and hymns seemingly chanted by the sages, enough to captivate all listeners.

The young ones from Little Diamond were astounded. They didn’t expect the old box to be so magical. This was obviously an amazing treasure.

“Crack!” He loosened his grip and the box became normal again. However, a keen observer would note that the lines on the box became more defined versus before.

“Sect Master, you actually bought something so amazing with just one coin.” One disciple praised.

The others were in awe. It looked like they were too naive compared to their sect master.

“There is no free lunch. A bond has been forged so one day, we’ll have to honor it.” Li Qiye said.

They then realized that they had come to some agreement with Wang Zining earlier, something similar to a pact of friendship.

Though this was rather intangible, one thing for certain was that they would need to repay him in the future.

Li Qiye handed the box to Elder Hu and said: "Let them try."

The elder took a closer look and didn't notice anything peculiar. He asked: "How does this treasure work? What is special about it?"

"That depends on the individual, let them search for an answer." Li Qiye preferred to let his flock of sheep run freely.

"Everyone, take turns looking at it. Feel free to share your insight." Elder Hu understood and commanded.

After they got the box, they crowded up and became anxious. After all, they never had any exposure to a top treasure before. This was an opportunity they couldn't miss.

"Master, I don't understand. What was the goal of that man?" Wang Weiqiao quietly asked. He knew that Wang Zining was definitely not a mortal from a prestigious clan.

If this guy was a cultivation expert, why did he come here? If Li Qiye was right about the treasure being fake, then he was a swindler trying to trap the young ones.

This wasn't rare at all in this city due to its high population and visitors. There were hidden masters mingling among dishonest merchants.

But if Zining was a swindler, why did he use such a precious box to carry the piece-of-crap treasure? What was his intention?

Only someone like Li Qiye would have the insight to pick the box over the radiant treasure. Weiqiao was also certain that Zining himself knew the value of the box. Thus, the guy's action was rather confusing down to the end where Li Qiye paid a single coin for the box.

"A few people like to play around in the mortal world." Li Qiye smiled and explained: "Moreover, fate and relationships can be more important than anything else. A bond can protect someone for generations to come."

"I see..." Weiqiao carefully digested the guidance. He assumed that Wang Zining was actually a hidden master or a wise cultivator, not a naive mortal. Alas, he still remained confused about the exact goal.

"Young Noble, have you thought about it carefully yet?" The aunt came over and asked Li Qiye: "I'll have you know that the miss I'm thinking of is from a cultivation sect as well, a temple or something. We can go take a look and if you like her, I'll fix her up with you right then."

She was indeed an enthusiastic matchmaker, wanting nothing more than to push a girl into Li Qiye's embrace.

"Which temple?" Elder Hu casually asked.

The aunt pondered a bit to no avail. She answered: "Mmm, which temple... divine temple or something like that, she visited a while ago and has returned to see her family two days prior."

"Divine temple? The Ancestral Divine Temple?" Elder Hu was shocked.

"Right! The Ancestral Divine Temple, that's what it is. She told me but I couldn't remember, my memory isn't good anymore." She smiled and said: "Young Noble, are you ready? Maybe this will work out and I'll get my matchmaking payment."

"Ancestral Divine Temple..." On the other hand, Elder Hu became frozen. His soul nearly left his body.

Chapter 4310: Ancestral Divine Temple

The title of this temple scared the hell out of Elder Hu. All of Eight Desolaces have heard of it before. A weak cultivator such as Elder Hu took it even harder.

The temple was normally not the subject of casual conversations. Cultivators usually only addressed it as the "divine temple", not its actual name.

Thus, Elder Hu thought about it right away after listening to the aunt. He calmed down and repeatedly shushed her, not wanting to dwell on this topic.

"Why are you shushing me? It's just a temple, the girl herself said that it wasn't a big deal." The aunt wasn't happy.

"Please stop, you're scaring all of us." Elder Hu turned pale and kept on looking outside. Fortunately, no one paid attention to their conversation.

Anything pertaining to the temple must be uttered with respect. This aunt, on the other hand, spoke so casually.

In his opinion, she could speak this way because she was a mortal. Alas, cultivators couldn't do so. This was especially true in Southern Desolace, the land of Lion's Roar.

The temple wasn't a sect or a temple, strictly speaking. It was rather mysterious and special.

Lion's Roar had numerous kingdoms under its jurisdiction and thousands of sects. It didn't participate in ruling them but they were still considered vassal states.

This was the case for Little Diamond as well. Lion's Roar probably had never heard of such a sect before. Nonetheless, Little Diamond still needed to obey an official decree.

The ones with the most authority were none other than its royal clan - the Chi. The clan was also known as the Golden Lions because of their official emblem.

On a surface level, many would consider the Chi to be the highest authority of the land. However, those with more knowledge would disagree.

Their answer would be the temple due to its ultimate existence - the Supreme Monarch. According to the legends, the temple was her residence.

However, subsequent generations haven't seen her in there, not even members of the temple. Nonetheless, her legacy was passed down through the temple.

The temple had an intimate relationship with Lion's Roar. In a sense, it could actually decide the future direction of the kingdom. Even the members of the royal clan believed that the temple was their national spiritual totem.

The reason was simple - the Supreme Monarch came from the royal clan. Many historical accounts believed that the monarch had a blood relationship with Lion's Roar's best ruler - Golden Lion Emperor.

For eras now, the royal clan worshipped and asked for advice regarding important matters. This included the succession process.

This ultimate status was the reason why Elder Hu became so scared. However, the aunt ignored him and smiled at Li Qiye: "This girl is quite pretty and nice, I watched her grow up myself."

"Aunt, please spare us." Elder Hu started beginning.

Sure, this girl might have been her neighbor in the past but now, she had joined the temple. Her status has been elevated.

The mortal has turned into a disciple of the temple, meaning that she was part of the cultivation world. Mortal relationships no longer mattered.

Thus, the aunt was being suicidal for trying to be a matchmaker. The worst-case scenario might be death.

The temple was at the top of the cultivation world. Even a regular disciple there was a prestigious character in the grand scheme of things.

Little Diamond was only a speck of dust in comparison. Its members weren't qualified to meet anyone from the temple, not even the sect master - let alone marriage.

Nonetheless, the elder fantasized for a split second. If the sect master could actually marry someone from there, Little Diamond's status would soar overnight. Eight Demons and Deer King would be nothing compared to them then.

Alas, he knew that it was impossible. The thing worrying him was that the aunt's careless comment could reach the ears of the girl. This would result in a total disaster.

"You're quite ambitious." Li Qiye smiled and said, not paying attention to the sweating elder either.

"I'm only thinking about what's best for you, Young Noble. I know you're popular and other girls are always staring. I just think my girl is a great candidate." The aunt's cheeks were bouncing as she smiled.

"Your vision is commendable." Li Qiye smiled: "Aren't you a good candidate too?"

Elder Hu and Wang Weiqiao nearly spat out their tea after hearing this.

"Sect Master..." Elder Hu interjected right away.

Mingling with a disciple from the temple was dangerous. However, mingling with this old lady was potentially worse.

Flirting with a pretty girl meant that he was healthy, something rather normal. Alas, he wanted to flirt with the boss too?

“You’re funny, Young Noble. Look at me, no one wants me so that’s why I’m old and single.”

“I want you.” Li Qiye said.

“Puh!” The listeners spat out their tea.