

Emperor 4381

Chapter 4381: Competition

Secret information networks flowed in full swing as a result.

For example, it became public knowledge that Goldbird Monarch has entered isolated cultivation, leaving Phoenix Ground to the ancestors.

This caused members of Dragon and even external sects to gossip.

“Why did the monarch choose to train right now?” A Dragon member wondered since this was too much of a coincidence.

“I don’t think it’s related at all, the three branches do not interfere with each other and work together against external enemies. Peacock Monarch might be your leader but he can’t exert influence over Phoenix Ground. He’s from Dragon Platform, the ancestors from Phoenix Ground will not allow this.” His friend from another sect speculated.

In another conversation, a disciple from Dragon whispered: “I heard Peacock Monarch conspired with the enemy.”

“What the hell are you saying?” Someone else who has just gotten back to Dragon found this unbelievable.

Most felt the same way because Goldbird was one of the four monarchs on top of being the ladder of Phoenix Ground. His status was only slightly inferior to Peacock Monarch.

“Don’t you know? He invited Li Qiye to Phoenix Ground.” Another quietly added.

“Li Qiye?” The person had no idea.

“The leader of a tiny sect who conspired and killed our young lord along with many members. The sect master has ordered for his death.” Someone answered.

“Damn right, if he killed our brothers, then he’s our enemy, I can’t believe Goldbird Monarch is conspiring with the enemy.” The listeners became unhappy.

“That is a serious offense. He’s probably being put under house arrest, they might cripple his cultivation too.” A disciple from Phoenix Ground became worried.

In reality, many from Phoenix Ground truly respected Goldbird Monarch and didn’t want to see this.

“Either that or death.” Another interjected.

“Not quite.” An older disciple shook her head: “The problem between the sect master and Li Qiye can be construed as a personal feud. The ancestors haven’t stated their stance on this and we don’t have a rule forbidding members from interacting with enemies.”

Others exchanged glances. If Dragon wanted to go all-out against a sect or a cultivator, this required the consensus of the three branches.

If this was strictly a personal feud between Li Qiye and Peacock Monarch, then Goldbird Monarch could still befriend Li Qiye. This was not considered traitorous.

“Either way, we need to be united, befriending an enemy is a bad look.” One more supported Peacock Monarch: “If we don’t destroy the enemies, regardless of who they are, then others will not take us seriously.”

“Yes, we have to take down anyone who offends us.” One disciple felt his blood boiling.

They thought that Peacock Monarch represented their sect. Offending him was the same as offending Dragon. All members should work together to help him.

“So who is this Li Qiye? He actually dared to provoke us?” Another became curious.

“Just an insect from Little Diamond.” Someone answered with disdain.

“Just destroy this tiny sect, they must be tired of living.” The third uttered coldly.

“If we don’t do something about this, others might think we’re easily bullied. They deserve it for challenging our authority anyway.” The majority agreed with this point of view. It wasn’t a big deal to destroy a tiny sect in their mind.

“Disciples of the three branches, return to the sect.” Amidst the turmoil, Peacock Monarch gave this order.

It became apparent that something big was going on.

“There has to be something going on.” All three branches thought the same thing.

The three branches only made up the core of Dragon, not everyone else. In normal circumstances, this command would only be given when Dragon was invaded.

“Is this escalation necessary over a nobody?” One of them asked.

Another piece of information traveled across the city next.

“I heard Li Qiye escaped with his fellow members already.” Someone from Phoenix Ground murmured.

“Escape?” This surprised quite a few members.

“What else can he do? He killed Senior Brother Sky Eagle’s group, I’m sure Phoenix Ground hates and wishes to destroy him. He would be dead if it wasn’t for the monarch’s protection. Now that the monarch is in isolated training, he obviously has to run away.” Another elaborated.

“Is that all? I can’t believe the overreaction then.” An older disciple complained.

Meanwhile, outsiders staying in the city had a different opinion.

One of them said: “Looks like changes will be happening, this is actually part of an ongoing competition between the three branches. Dragon Platform might be taking advantage of this to take over Phoenix Ground.”

“Impossible, the stalemate has gone on for millions of years. There is an implicit agreement to maintain the status quo. No one can break it.” A cultivator from the last generation disagreed.

“But the personnel might change. The Jian has been in charge for too long. Not to mention Dragon Platform or Tiger Pond, even some from Phoenix Ground are tired of this.” The first speaker retorted.

This made the crowd ponder quietly. The Jian has indeed been in charge for a long time now. The other demon clans in Phoenix Ground naturally wanted to see a change in leadership.

If Peacock Monarch and Dragon Platform were to exert pressure, maybe they would agree to push the Jian down a notch in order to replace them.

Therefore, the city found itself in the calm before the storm.

Back in the pinnacle of the roost, the flames appeared again only for a split second. A figure appeared afterward - Li Qiye.

“Young Noble Li, you’re back just in time.” Someone was ecstatic to see him and rushed over.

Li Qiye slightly frowned after seeing Jian Qingzhu and said: “What’s the problem?”

She smiled wryly and nodded: “There’s a problem indeed, my father is under house arrest and Peacock Monarch has returned to City of Demons. The three branches are on the move right now.”

“Is that so?” Li Qiye narrowed his eyes.

“Don’t worry, Young Noble, Father has already ordered people to take the members of Little Diamond to safety outside of Phoenix Ground.” She said.

“What do you want then?” He asked.

“Young Noble, please help me save my father.” She requested.

“Easy enough, you and I will go save your father and kill anyone who stands in our path.” He smirked.

“That’s not what I meant!” She hurriedly waved her hand after hearing the bloodthirst in his voice. By this point, she knew that he could actually start a massacre.

“No? Do you have a better plan?” He stared at her, amused.

Chapter 4382: Long-armed Monkey King

She contemplated before answering: “Father is under watch in a heavily-guarded prison in Phoenix Ground, it’s quite hard to enter.”

“Not even a heavenly prison can stop my pace, it’s fine.” He chuckled.

“Of course.” She didn’t question his ability because he managed to understand the roost, something numerous sages have failed before.

“Father has praised your matchless ability before.” She went on: “However, just saving Father won’t do anything about the chaotic situation in Phoenix Ground.”

“That’s not my problem, but go ahead and tell me your plan.” He shrugged.

“I thought about finding our ancestor and asking him to stabilize the issue.” She revealed.

“Nine-tailed God?” Li Qiye asked.

She smiled wryly and shook her head: “You think too highly of me, Young Noble. A regular disciple such as myself can’t ask the demon god for help. Even if I want to, I’m afraid no one in the sect knows where he is. Communication is lost unless he wants to show himself.”

Nine-tailed God was Dragon’s strongest and most talented ancestor. However, unlike his peers, he didn’t bury himself or live reclusively in the sect.

In reality, he hasn’t shown up for a very long time now. No one in Dragon had a clue if he was actually dead or alive.

Rumor has it that he preferred traveling the world and could appear anywhere in Eight Desolaces. Outsiders actually believed that he was still residing in Dragon, it’s just that his disciples had no idea about it. Of course, some also believed in his demise from running out of lifespan...

All in all, no one in Dragon could contact him. Jian Qingzhu knew that if he were to show up, he could take care of the internal problems in Dragon with haste. No other ancestors could oppose him.

“I’m thinking about asking an ancient demon ancestor for help. With his help, it should be enough to quell the current turmoil.” She said softly.

She was wise enough that saving her father alone wouldn’t solve the problem. Li Qiye’s involvement would only result in a massacre and exacerbate the situation. Thus, she needed a powerful and prestigious ancestor on their side to stop Peacock Monarch from pressing further.

“Ancient demon?” Li Qiye casually asked.

“He is a senior known as Ancient Pheasant from our Phoenix Ground, most likely the strongest demon king we have.” She explained.

Ancient Pheasant was one of the three ancient demons of Dragon and had enough prestige to stop Peacock Monarch.

Thus, this was her goal to stop the current issue in Phoenix Ground and prevent Peacock Monarch from causing more trouble.

“Go for it then.” He didn’t mind because, in reality, Dragon was powerless to stop him.

“Please escort me, Young Noble. You don’t have to worry about the others because they are safe right now.” She added.

“Sounds like you have no idea where this Ancient Pheasant is then.” He chuckled.

“Yes.” Jian Qingzhu smiled wryly and admitted: “Father only gave me one possible location but the ancient ancestor might not actually be there. However, many fellow sect members are looking for me so I alone won’t amount to much.”

She stared at him, looking both cute and pitiful. Others would find it hard to refuse.

“Your cute expression might not be enough to make me want to be a hero.” He said.

“I am alone now, Young Noble, and can do naught if the ancestors pursue. Please protect me.” She bowed deeply.

She needed his help because Peacock Monarch was in charge right now and wouldn’t let her easily save her father.

He certainly sent experts after her. She could take on many of them with the exception of the top ancestors.

“Fine, since we’ve met through fate and I enjoy your intelligence, something rather rare these days.” He accepted since this didn’t require any effort.

“Thank you, Young Noble, thank you.” She happily bowed several times.

“Let’s go find this Ancient Pheasant then.” He said and headed for the roost’s exit.

“Young Noble, from what I know, he is right here in the city.” She hurriedly gave chase, aware that the chance for success was high after gaining his protection.

However, the moment they left the roost, they immediately met pursuers despite her using a secretive passage.

In the past, no one would dare to touch her in Phoenix Ground. After all, her father and clan were in charge.

Now, an old demon led a punitive force towards them. He had a long pair of arms reaching his knees. He had a hairy human body and a monkey head. Though he was up there in age, he was still spirited with a bright pair of eyes.

“Monkey King.” She took a deep breath after seeing him.

He was the strongest regular ancestor from Phoenix Ground, Long-armed Monkey King. He was not from their clan but still wielded ample authority.

It was clear to her that her clan’s ancestors were being held up by something. That’s the reason why her father got captured.

“Little one, come back with me.” The monkey demon said calmly.

She firmly shook her head: “I’m afraid I can’t follow your orders, Monkey King. I have not done anything wrong.”

“The sect master has ordered for the members of the three branches to return.” He insisted.

“I have yet to leave the city so how can I return?” She retorted.

“Enough talk!” A muscular figure leaped forward and released his vitality and bestial aura.

“Bear King...” Her eyes narrowed after seeing the large demon - the master of Sky Eagle.

Chapter 4383: Jian Qingzhu's Power

Bear King was another top cultivator from Phoenix Ground but he wasn't from the Jian Clan.

A while ago, Li Qiye killed his disciple, Sky Eagle. He tried to avenge him but Goldbird Monarch stopped him. Now, this was an opportunity he couldn't miss.

"Bear King, do you wish to capture me?" She calmly asked the incoming demon.

In reality, she was only worried about the monkey king, not him.

"Brat, return with me and we'll let bygones be bygones. However, I'm not here for you anyway." The bear always had a loud voice.

"Then why are you here?" She still asked despite already knowing the answer.

"I am here today to take his dog life! I'll offer his head to my fallen disciple!" He pointed his thick finger at Li Qiye.

"I'm afraid you will be disappointed." She shook her head: "Young Noble Li is our clan's guest. We naturally won't let you trouble him."

She mentioned the clan instead of Phoenix Ground since she could represent the former but not the latter.

"Brat, don't ruin your own future over one boy, this is not only your father who is involved but you will be too, perhaps your entire clan. Hmph, Dragon will have no place for you if you don't stop now." Bear King glared at her, only wanting to deal with Li Qiye.

Ultimately, she was still a member of Phoenix Ground and also a junior. They watched her grow older and didn't wish to make it hard on her.

"Thank you for your advice." She shook her head: "I will also sincerely ask you to stop thinking about avenging Senior Brother Sky Eagle because it is suicidal."

She implied that Li Qiye was above his level but he interpreted it differently.

"I see, I see, the Jian has chosen to abandon old friends for this boy. Come, let's see your cultivation!" Bear King became livid and gestured: "Make your move, you won't be able to protect him."

Meanwhile, Li Qiye only watched silently without reacting as if this had nothing to do with him.

She didn't relent and also stepped forward: "You leave me no choice, Bear King. Excuse me then."

"So be it!" Bear King roared and became gigantic. His bestial aura rushed forward like waves and pushed many weaker spectators back. He was considered a great demon for a reason.

"Boom!" He raised one foot and stomped down; the sky above them suddenly turned dark.

The foot increased in size unceasingly. It became the sky vault falling down and prompted disciples to get far away.

“Bring it.” Jian Qingzhu shouted. She leaped in the air and used celestial steps in order to strike at the bear’s weak point.

“Bam!” The massive giant lost its balance and fell to the ground.

In this split second, she grabbed his foot and sent him flying. He smashed into a distant peak and crushed it in the process.

He was furious and got up again, causing debris to fly chaotically. Despite the flashiness of the attack, he didn’t suffer serious damage.

“Screech!” A phoenix cry could be heard while he was trying to stabilize. She crossed through the sky and left behind after-images due to her incredible speed.

She appeared above and raised both hands. Her finger spread and released images of ten blades. They combined into one for a vertical slash.

“Slash of the Luan!” An expert recognized the move.

“Activate!” Bear King’s expression soured as he hurriedly placed his hands together to form a frontal barrier.

Alas, the barrier was not enough and crumbled before the slash. The remnant power pushed the bear back down to the ground and made him vomit blood. Numerous cracks appeared beneath.

Spectators couldn’t believe their eyes. Their shock was warranted since a senior had lost two consecutive exchanges.

“Third Brother, you’ve lost because you underestimated her.” A great demon standing behind the monkey king shook his head.

“He would have lost even if he didn’t underestimate her, she is simply stronger. Goldbird has a capable successor.” The monkey king disagreed.

“Senior Sister Zhu is too strong.” One disciple was left breathless.

Bear King wasn’t a top expert in Phoenix Ground. Nonetheless, he was still strong in the eyes of the juniors. Jian Qingzhu has just shown that she was at the apex of the young generation.

“She’s still the strongest genius from our area and can compete with Celestial Tiger and Crystal Dragon.” Another said.

“I think she’s stronger than the young lord.” An older disciple added.

“Senior Sister is the jewel of our sect, the current saintess, and as beautiful as can be. Why is she protecting that sect master?” Someone else didn’t understand.

Many misunderstood the situation, thinking that she likes Li Qiye and that this was the reason for her father and clan’s current predicament.

If her father didn’t welcome Li Qiye, he wouldn’t be under house arrest right now and the Jian wouldn’t be under pressure by the other two branches.

“Right, so many members of our sect have a crush on her, what makes him special compared to them?” A younger one found this frustrating.

“Not just our sect, numerous geniuses in Sky Border were enamored with her from first sight.” A senior brother said softly.

They simply didn’t understand. She was at the top for everything - talent, power, beauty. Alas, she picked this sect master over all the geniuses. This was absolutely not a good match.

Not to mention her, any regular female disciple in Phoenix Ground wouldn’t give him the time of day. Now, she risked everything to protect him including potentially becoming the sinner of the clan.

Chapter 4384: Mad Flurry

“Boom!” Bear King leaped into the air, revealing his wounds. Nonetheless, he still looked dignified and ready to fight.

“Not bad at all.” He laughed and said: “I see that our Phoenix Ground has a capable successor. Brat, you’ve proven yourself. Let’s go again!”

Having said that, he summoned a weapon resembling a crescent moon spade, jet black from top to bottom. It appeared rather heavy, capable of crushing a mountain if he were to drop it.

All the disciples took a deep breath. If this thing were to fall on them, they would be reduced to a pulp in the blink of an eye.

“Mad Staff, he used his own source to craft it. It’s very powerful.” An expert whispered.

“Girl, let’s see if you can handle my staff technique.” He pointed the spade at Jian Qingzhu, exerting immense pressure.

“I’ve heard praises of your Mad Flurry before from the demon kings, I will overestimate myself and try to stop it.” Qingzhu responded.

“Very well!” The bear activated his vitality and entered a frenzied state, becoming even larger than before.

“Take this!” He roared and began spinning his weapon. The gales coming from it alone horrified the spectators.

Once he garnered enough momentum, the weapon looked like a spinning wheel blowing away winds and clouds. The swing resembled a torrential downpour heading straight for Qingzhu.

She retaliated by also activating her vitality and true blood, creating the image of a divine luan. Countless feathers materialized and created a multi-layered barrier in front of her.

“Rumble!” The torrential swing smashed against the barrier repeatedly, causing sparks to go flying.

He had smashed the barrier thousands of times in the blink of an eye. The world lost its colors as a result while spectators turned pale. Alas, this was still not enough to break the barrier.

“Devil Frenzy!” Bear King roared again and the image of a divine bear appeared behind him. He became empowered and the intensity of his swing reached the limit.

The spade turned red and left behind a blazing trail. It had enough power to destroy a mountain range.

“Boom!” This smash penetrated the feathery barrier and made Qingzhu stagger backward.

“Not bad at all!” Members of Phoenix Ground and those from Dragon appreciated the attack.

“Luan Tail!” Qingzhu roared and the divine luan behind her released its divinity, showing off its prestigious bloodline. Other beasts and birds would prostrate before it.

“A technique from Sacred Luan.” The members of Phoenix Ground knew that this was a merit law left behind by Sacred Luan for the Jian.

“Clank!” As the bird spread its tail, an ocean of blades manifested into reality and engulfed the air.

Spectators gasped as the ocean of blades rushed toward the bear.

“I shall become the devil!” Bear King grew six more hands and raised his spade forward. It became a windmill of sorts and blocked out the area.

“Clank!” A contest between the countless blades and the crescent spade ensued.

At first, the demon king could withstand the incoming blades. Alas, the ocean was endless and he started sweating while retreating.

Everyone could tell that he was put in a passive position.

“Senior Sister Zhu is insane, she’s suppressing him.” Someone from Phoenix Ground became emotional.

“Dao Rise!” He let out his chaos energy and dao laws this time. They coiled together to create a majestic grand dao hovering around him.

Inside this grand dao was a celestial bear god. This empowered him further and his size grew even more. His fiery eyes resembled two suns.

“A one-dao sovereign.” Spectators saw his fate palaces and realized that he was going all out.

“Mad Flurry!” He took eight steps forward and created eight identical images, all using the same chaotic swing. They entered the ocean and smashed the blades to bits.

Jian Qingzhu was clearly affected as her blades were being destroyed. Her body trembled as a result. If this continued, he should be able to defeat her technique.

“His Mad Flurry is impressive indeed.” A senior from Phoenix Ground couldn’t help but praise.

Though he couldn’t compare to Goldbird or Peacock Monarch, he was still above the reach of many juniors.

“My turn!” She roared and became shrouded in a blue radiance. After a spatial fluctuation, she seemingly turned into a blue luan with two halos around it.

“Screech!” The halos were her grand dao. They stored the totems and power of the luan.

“Two-dao sovereign!” The youths couldn’t believe it.

The Heavenly Sovereign title started at the myriad dao realm. It consisted of nine levels to start, one to nine dao.

Ten meant completion so those with ten became Golden Sovereign. Next were Myriad Dao Sovereigns and they were far superior to the previous level.

In terms of cultivation, it seemed that Jian Qingzhu was actually stronger than Bear King.

“Pill-keeper Luan.” She raised her hand and summoned a blinding light.

Chapter 4385: Pill-keeper Luan

A screech resembling that of a phoenix penetrated the eardrums in a frightening manner. A blinding radiance flashed akin to the birth of a primordial star. The individual rays seemed to be solid and capable of piercing through all darkness.

Next came an erupting inferno. A red pill could be seen inside with the same color glow, seemingly containing the essences of countless suns.

The power of the pill swept in all four directions - completely unstoppable - and forced numerous disciples backward.

The luan behind her spread its wings and blotted out the sky. Its divinity made all the demons tremble and want to prostrate. This was an instinctive fear before a superior bloodline.

“Boom!” She raised her finger and commanded the pill to shoot forward. It was only the size of a pigeon egg yet it made the ground tremble. It wielded the power of numerous suns. The flames coming from it could ravage the entire region.

The crowd couldn’t believe it. How could such a mighty move be performed by the young girl?

“Wild Flurry!” Bear King didn’t expect her to be this powerful and swung his spade to erect countless layers of mountains in front of him.

This defense was his best and prevented anyone from taking half a step forward. Alas, the tiny pill simply had too much power despite its small size.

The immensity of the suns smashed into the mountains and pierced through them. Cracks emanated from this hole before a total collapse.

“Bam!” Pieces were scattered everywhere in a magnificent manner. The defense stopped the brunt of the attack but the shock waves continued onward.

He formed several seals afterward but they broke through and sent him flying. He smashed into the ground and created a large crater.

This time around, he was seriously wounded despite having a tough frame. Blood could be seen all over. This second defeat made it clear who was stronger between the two.

He was only at the first level while she was already at the second. The difference of one dao, in this case, was insurmountable.

The scene became quiet; the usual commenters kept their mouth shut. A senior had just lost to her so the young ones couldn't criticize her.

"She won." An expert murmured. In reality, this was rather obvious the moment she showed off her two dao.

They just didn't expect Bear King to lose so quickly. She absolutely crushed him with that exchange.

"She'll be the pillar of the Jian in the future." A great demon became sentimental.

"Unfortunately, she's too stubborn. What a shame." Another from Phoenix Ground replied.

Although they came to capture her, they had no intention of escalating the issue. The Jian has ruled for a long time now and the sentimental ties were still present.

Some demons who weren't from the clan didn't harbor deep resentment. However, they didn't dare to show favoritism because of the sect's rules.

"Yes, her talent and personality are just like her father's." Another nodded: "She would have had a chance to become the next sect master if it wasn't for this."

In the past, numerous top demons and ancestors from Phoenix Ground had high hopes for her. They found her to have great potential, going as far as becoming the next sect master or at least becoming a demon monarch like her father.

Alas, her relationship with Li Qiye created a rift between her and the sect. They thought that this was truly regrettable.

"Boom!" Suddenly, debris went flying and a figure rushed out.

"Watch out!" Jian Qingzhu shouted instinctively.

The figure was none other than Bear King who seemed rather lively as he lunged for Li Qiye.

It could be his speed or Li Qiye's lack of reaction. All in all, he had a firm grip on Li Qiye's neck.

The crowd didn't expect this at all since he was wounded. He ignored them and his status, resorting to a sneak attack.

"Junior, I will have your head no matter what in order to avenge my fallen disciple!" He laughed maniacally. His face was twisted with anger and ferocity.

"Halt, Bear King, or I will not show mercy!" She roared.

"Little girl, you might be stronger than me but you won't be able to save him today." Bear King abandoned everything in order to kill Li Qiye.

"Stop, Bear King, this will harm Phoenix Ground's reputation." The monkey king shook his head and disagreed.

Everyone sympathized with him wanting to avenge his disciple. However, he was a great demon of Phoenix Ground and Dragon.

They considered themselves an orthodox and righteous sect. A senior sneak-attacking in this manner would incite disdain and criticism.

It was fine for him to challenge Li Qiye to a duel. Of course, he would be considered a bully but this was far worse.

Chapter 4386: My Turn

All eyes were on Bear King; none appreciated the unbecoming conduct.

Nonetheless, he put himself in a predicament - unable to release Li Qiye or just kill him.

“Monkey King, I can accept other requests but I must wring his head today!” He shouted.

The monkey king furrowed his brows, looking dissatisfied.

“Brat, I shall offer your head to my disciple in heaven.” He then glared at Li Qiye.

The audience watched with bated breath, believing that Li Qiye was about to die.

Of course, they didn’t sympathize because he asked for it. Some snorted while thinking that this was the outcome for those who dare to oppose them.

Li Qiye’s crimes were worthy of clan extermination. They needed to make an example out of him or the other sects might become too arrogant.

They disliked Bear King’s method but had no problem with the end result.

“Is that so?” Li Qiye still had a smile despite the fact that the demon could break his neck by adding a little strength.

“Yes.” For some reason, the demon had a bad feeling about this and decided to end this quickly: “Die now!”

He closed his fingers and channeled his energy in order to break Li Qiye’s neck. Alas, this didn’t work and he felt that the guy’s neck was tougher than the hardest metal in existence.

“Die-” He roared and mustered all of his strength. This still didn’t work; this neck seemed impervious to damage. His face turned red from straining to no avail.

“What is going on?” Spectators realized that something was a miss.

“It’s rather commendable trying so hard to avenge your disciple. Unfortunately, you picked the wrong enemy.” Li Qiye smiled.

Li Qiye who was suspended in the air suddenly floated upward. Strangely enough, the demon was being pulled up with him as well.

This frightened him so he immediately let go of Li Qiye’s throat. However, this didn’t stop him from floating upward. He had lost control of his body and struggling was futile.

“Are you seeing this?” Confusion struck the crowd.

At the start, they thought that Bear King was pulling Li Qiye up in the air before tossing the guy down. This wasn't right because Bear King had let go.

The top demons here didn't have an answer either.

“This is bad!” The monkey king's expression soured after assessing the situation.

“What sorcery is this?!” Bear King bellowed.

“Tell me, how do you want to die?” Li Qiye asked with a smile.

Having said that, waves of fire appeared behind him and turned into a pair of wings. Dao laws emanated in all directions and exuded unbearable heat.

“Screech!” A phoenix cry made listeners tremble with fear.

They suddenly felt the supreme power of a phoenix coming from Li Qiye. It was as if the divine beast has taken over Li Qiye and granted him immeasurable strength.

“What is this?!” The great demons standing behind the monkey king became startled.

Their very soul was affected by his aura - an instinctive and primal fear. This was the feeling of subjugation all birds felt towards the phoenix.

It had nothing to do with actual cultivation and power, only bloodline superiority.

“The grand dao of the phoenix?” Jian Qingzhu became emotional.

She had the bloodline of a luan. Rumor has it that her ancestor, Sacred Luan, could reach atavism and evolve into a phoenix.

In all of Dragon, her bloodline was the closest to the ultimate bloodline. Alas, she still felt the same fear as the others.

Even the prestigious luans would be subservient to a phoenix. One was a true divine beast while the other only had a bloodline with a touch of divinity.

She then recalled how Li Qiye lit up the roost. He was the only one to do so after Divine Luan Dao Lord.

“He actually obtained something like this from the roost?” The monkey king could sense the noblest power of the demon race from Li Qiye.

As an ancestor of Phoenix Ground, he was aware of Li Qiye being granted permission to enter the roost. Thus, it became abundantly clear that he had obtained something incredible from there.

“The winner takes all. Do your worst, I'm not afraid.” Bear King couldn't escape this invisible power but still didn't beg for mercy.

“How courageous.” Li Qiye smiled and a wave of fire behind him turned into a fist.

“Bam!” It struck the demon's chest and broke numerous bones.

His gigantic body flew downward like a meteor, smashing into the ground and leaving behind a deep crater. The crowd gasped and couldn't make sense of this.

Just a moment ago, Li Qiye was completely helpless. Now, it was a perfect reversal.

Chapter 4387: Dominating Without Lifting A Finger

Everyone thought that Li Qiye was dead for sure. How did a first-dao sovereign be so powerless? His opponent didn't lift a single finger from start to finish.

"Boom!" The gigantic figure leaped out of the crater and let out a furious roar.

The moment he was smashed onto the ground, he regained freedom. Though he was covered in wounds, he was still doing fine.

"Engulfing Flurry!" His staff became as thick and long as a mountain range, shooting upward and piercing the sky vault.

He then smashed the entire mountain range downward and broke the fabric of space. Spectators gasped as a result; some felt their knees buckling.

This attack was enough to instantly destroy a small sect and its ancestral ground.

"Poof!" Li Qiye's fiery wings became resplendent just like a rising phoenix. The inferno turned into a massive foot heading straight at the staff.

One had the immensity of a mountain range while the other was simply unstoppable.

"Boom!" All entities within ten thousand miles were sent flying from the impact.

The outcome was absolutely one-sided. The foot easily cut through the staff and hit the demon. Though he was shrouded by true energy, it still didn't prevent his bones from breaking.

"Ahh!" His chest completely caved in as he vomited blood. He fell to the ground and created another crater, one stained with his blood.

"Bam!" The foot didn't stop there and stomped on him.

"Activate!" The weakened Bear King still didn't want to give up. He raised both hands, wanting to lift up the foot.

Alas, this ended with both of his hands being crushed. It then stomped repeatedly on the helpless victim, breaking more bones in the process. Eventually, he was on his last breath; his flesh pulverized.

Even the great demons were left speechless. They thought Bear King would put up a better fight instead of this domination.

"Fellow Daoist, please show mercy." Long-armed Monkey King beseeched.

Li Qiye glanced at him once without saying anything. Though there was no blatant expression of disdain, the monkey king felt that he was an ant on the ground while Li Qiye was a soaring true dragon. The dragon simply looked down on the ant once without giving it any thought.

This froze him and even made his legs tremble. As a top ancestor of Phoenix Ground, he was not weaker than Goldbird Monarch.

However, just a casual glance unaccompanied by any aura frightened him. He wondered if Li Qiye would actually give him face and spare the bear demon.

“Young Noble, please forgive Bear King’s insolence and spare him.” Jian Qingzhu asked Li Qiye to show mercy.

Though they had fought earlier, she wasn’t one to hold a grudge. After all, he was a senior on top of not bearing that much malice towards her.

Meanwhile, Bear King no longer made any sound outside of labored breathing.

“Fine, I’m in a good mood and will spare him.” Li Qiye lazily said.

Having said that, the fiery foot along with the pair of wings disappeared. Li Qiye assumed his normal appearance once more.

The only thing that reminded people of what had transpired was the messy state of Bear King and the craters. Other great demons came to help and took him away.

Eyes of astonishment fixated on Li Qiye.

“How did he do it? It looked like a god was on his side.” One disciple said.

The pair of wings came out of nowhere and effortlessly defeated Bear King. Someone like Li Qiye shouldn’t have enough power to beat a Heavenly Sovereign.

Alas, they all saw it with their own eyes, hence their confusion.

“He must have a treasure of the phoenix affinity or an immortal flame.” One of them commented on the fiery wings. This was the only explanation since Li Qiye himself didn’t do anything.

“I just can’t see what merit law or method he used.” One expert didn’t give up on observing Li Qiye.

Meanwhile, Jian Qingzhu came over and bowed her head: “Thank you, Young Noble.”

The monkey king also did the same. Both knew that Li Qiye could have done whatever he wanted and that it wasn’t a big deal for Li Qiye to do so.

“You may do whatever you want. This is not my problem anymore.” He told Jian Qingzhu.

“Grandpa...” She said.

He became sentimental because he watched her grow up. Alas, he couldn’t stand on her side this time.

“I don’t think you’ll be able to leave the city.” He warned.

Chapter 4388: Just Like That

“I have never thought about leaving the city or betraying Phoenix Ground. I am always a member of Dragon, Phoenix Ground, and the Jian, not a deserter or a traitor.” She shook her head.

“What is your plan?” He asked.

“I want to save Father.” She replied: “Putting him under house arrest is a mistake, a detriment to the sect’s wellbeing. You know this along with many others.”

The monkey king only sighed. Currently, Peacock Monarch has garnered the support of Dragon Platform and Tiger Pond. The other branches and their ancestors also supported him.

It could be said that his influence was untouchable right now. Goldbird and the Jian were no longer enough to deter him.

Because of this, Goldbird was put under house arrest. The fact that he wasn’t prosecuted was thanks to the Jian’s power and authority in Phoenix Ground. Even Peacock Monarch couldn’t go overboard against them.

Nonetheless, it wasn’t wise for her to go against Peacock Monarch right now. She could be just fine while staying in Phoenix Ground but this might not be the case outside of it.

“I think you need to reconsider, just one wrong move might result in banishment.” The monkey king glanced at Li Qiye and then back at her.

He implied that Peacock Monarch and the others wouldn’t allow her to save her father, meaning that a battle was inevitable.

It could be construed as betraying Dragon and killing fellow sect members. At that point, both the father and daughter, even their clan, would be in trouble. Ultimately, betrayal was a serious offense.

The money king thought that she was strong enough to break into the prison on top of knowing the defenses of Phoenix Ground. Moreover, Li Qiye was unfathomable as well.

There was a high chance of success but what would come after saving her father?

“Grandpa, don’t worry, I will not use force.” She revealed: “I want justice. We are a righteous sect thus there will be places with reasonable people.”

His eyes narrowed, seemingly aware of her goal.

“Fine, follow the rooster’s crow. That is the place you’re looking for.” He nodded.

“Thank you.” She bowed her head.

He waved his hand and said: “Go, we can open a path in Phoenix Ground but once you leave, there is nothing we can do.”

She bowed again before leaving with Li Qiye.

“Senior Uncle, what now?” A great demon nearby asked.

“What else can we do but watch?” The monkey king said.

“What about the monarch’s eventual trial?” The demon asked again about Goldbird.

They were lost without their leader who willingly put himself under arrest. They needed to be cautious of Dragon Platform and Tiger Pond wanting to take over.

"Ignore it for now, we're not that easily bullied and the Jian won't give up without a fight either." The monkey king said.

"But the sect master has given the order." The demon became worried.

"Sure, but he can't make all the decisions here. The three ancient ancestors have yet to state their stance, it's too early to say. Wait for it."

The demon found this reasonable. Normally, the sect master was in charge but not for everything. The ancestors, especially the three ancient ones, had vetoing power.

"What if they will not interfere?" Another demon asked.

"Then we have to ask the demon god to make a decision." A peer nearby answered instead.

Nine-tailed God was even above the three ancient ancestors. Any decision from this being was final.

"We can't bother the demon god over something so trivial." The monkey king shook his head.

A trial for Goldbird would be carried out by the three main branches. There was no need to summon the demon god. Moreover, they didn't know where he was either way.

No one stopped Li Qiye and Jian Qingzhu along the way because the monkey king had given the order. They turned a blind eye and ignored the duo.

They left Phoenix Ground and returned to the city. There were peaks everywhere but the peace of nature couldn't be seen.

People were everything, flying and riding on beasts. The news of the duo had attracted everyone's attention. Regular disciples gave way but still gossiped quietly.

"Is Senior Sister Jian really a traitor?" One of them whispered.

"Impossible, she is a pillar of the sect." The second was skeptical.

"But she left Phoenix Ground with that weak sect master." Most were noisy and wanted to learn more.

"What's so good about him?" A female disciple who had recently joined couldn't understand.

Official disciples like them never cared about the countless small sects under Dragon's jurisdiction.

They were merely stepping stones before reaching the final goal - Dragon.

"I don't know, maybe there is something exceptional about him." An older disciple shook his head.

"I don't think so, I've met him before. There is nothing special about him." The female disciple responded.

"Is his cultivation brilliant?" Another interjected.

“No, it’s so strange though. He’s weak but he still managed to kill Senior Brother Sky Eagle’s group. I believe he has capable treasures.” A youth who had seen Li Qiye before joined in.

“Treasures? What are we talking about here?” Many became spirited.

This was the City of Demons, a rather complicated area where crooks mixed in with the honest folks. Some might actually take the risk to try and steal Li Qiye’s treasures.

Chapter 4389: Choice

Though the duo left Phoenix Ground without facing any resistance, this didn’t mean Dragon Platform and Tiger Pond would let this go. Thus, their location was always known.

However, she had no intention of leaving the city or betraying Dragon. Therefore, she didn’t try to hide her location along the way.

A few disciples wanted to be risky for contribution points. After all, capturing either would be a noteworthy achievement. The sect and Peacock Monarch would recognize them for sure.

“Li Qiye is over there!” Many of them immediately shouted the moment they saw the duo.

A dozen or so disciples surrounded the two. They had qualms going against Jian Qingzhu so they only called out Li Qiye’s name.

Li Qiye only smiled while she glared at them.

“What do you think you’re doing?” She coldly uttered.

They exchanged glances; none dared to step forward. She was still the current saintess of Dragon, still as prestigious as ever.

Moreover, who among them could actually beat her? All of them here might not be able to win.

“Senior Sister, we-we’re not here to trouble you. We only wish to capture him because that’s the sect master’s order.” One of them said without confidence.

“Do you know what you’re saying? This is ridiculous, are you stronger than Bear King?” She chastised.

“I...” The first disciple had no response.

One female disciple wasn’t convinced and fought back: “Junior Sister, you speak as if you’re not a disciple of Dragon. You are siding with an outsider against your fellow sect members, are you trying to rebel...”

“Know your place.” She unleashed a fiery palm strike with haste.

The female disciple became startled and hurriedly blocked the strike. Alas, she wasn’t fast enough and a print could be seen on her cheek.

“You!” She was furious after being humiliated by the slap.

Qingzhu glared at her and said: “If I wasn’t holding back, all of you would be corpses on the ground right now.”

In reality, she was saving them by acting harshly. If she didn't take the initiative, Li Qiye would be forced to act.

What would be the result? All of them would be laying in a puddle of their own blood. Li Qiye wasn't one to show mercy and certainly didn't mind killing more disciples from Dragon.

"Forget about capturing anyone with your skills, get out of my way right now." She continued.

The group exchanged glances. They came in a hurry and didn't have a plan in the slightest. Qingzhu's words made them calm down quite a bit.

As for Li Qiye, he watched with a smile and had no intention of interfering.

Eventually, the group slowly stepped aside and made way for the duo. Qingzhu didn't say anything else and moved on with Li Qiye.

"What should we do now?" One disciple asked while watching the departing duo. They had no plan because Jian Qingzhu alone was far stronger.

"Should we report this to the elders?" One of them suggested.

"They already know, it's a matter of taking action or not." Another responded.

"We should go find First Brother, he can do it." Someone from Tiger Pond said.

Many eyes lit up after hearing this.

"You're right, let's find Senior Brother Celestial Tiger." The others nodded in agreement: "Since the elders do not wish to interfere, he's the only one who can fight Senior Sister Jian."

Jian Qingzhu headed for a mountain range inside the city, clearly aware of where to find Ancient Pheasant.

"Are you sure that this Ancient Pheasant can take care of this mess?" Li Qiye seemed amused.

She halted her step and nodded: "Yes, he is one of the three ancient demons and has considerable influence in our sect. Peacock Monarch and the other ancestors wouldn't be able to push the issue."

"He's only one of the three. How do you know the other two ancient demons are on your side?" He asked.

"Well..." Qingzhu had no response. Ancient Pheasant was from Phoenix Ground but the other two came from Tiger Pond and Dragon Platform.

She understood this and responded: "The three ancient ancestors have experienced the ups and downs of life. They are more insightful than us."

She hoped that they would have a different opinion of Li Qiye and wouldn't be swayed by the current political struggle. This was the reason why she wanted Li Qiye to meet one of them.

“I’m afraid age isn’t a good indicator of wisdom. This applies to power as well.” He said: “The existences from the darkness are strong and old, not necessarily wise though. Therefore, making the right choice can be the deciding factor rather than wisdom.”

“Hmm?” She didn’t get the point right away.

“It is a contest between your intuition and their own branch. I hope they’re as wise as you think they are.” He smiled.

She didn’t respond this time because she knew very little about the three ancient ancestors.

“What do you think we should do then, Young Noble?” She asked after a moment of silence.

“My method is naturally different from yours. I’ll have to make a trip to Dragon Platform and Tiger Pond eventually since I need some things there. If they hand them over, I’ll leave. Otherwise, I’ll take them myself.”

Though Li Qiye was being vague, she could still envision the carnage already.

“However, keep on trying. I don’t mind accompanying you since I’m bored anyway.” He added.

Chapter 4390: Celestial Tiger

Jian Qingzhu had gathered clues from her father and the monkey king to know the location of Ancient Pheasant.

Along the way, disciples were smart enough to get out of their way. The power disparity was apparent at this point - only elders and ancestors could stop her.

However, none has shown up so far outside of Phoenix Ground. Strictly speaking, she was not a traitor and no judgment has been given yet. Thus, they wouldn’t even stop her from leaving Dragon.

Members of Phoenix Ground could do so because that would be an internal matter. However, anyone else in the sect would need permission from the ancestors.

“It’s right ahead.” Qingzhu entered a mountain pass then looked around and said with relative confidence.

A village appeared before them with sparse houses. She saw smoke and heard the sounds of livestock. It was the perfect image of a rural area.

This wasn’t uncommon in City of Demons. These villages were either inhabited by mortals or owned by disciples.

The moment they walked in, they saw someone seemingly sitting and waiting there for them.

Moreover, there was a crowd watching from a distance too, consisting of both Dragon’s members and those from other sects.

The person sat beneath a pear tree. He was young yet still brimming with authority. His eyes were sharp just like that of a ferocious tiger. No one wanted to be the target of his attention.

He gave the impression that he alone could defend a pass, not allowing anyone to get through.

“That’s the first brother of Tiger Pond.” One spectator quietly commented.

“Tyrant-eyed Celestial Tiger, we’ll see this genius in action today.” An outsider said.

“Yes, a competition of the leaders of the young generation.” A friend responded.

There were three primary leaders among the young generation of Dragon - Celestial Tiger, Jian Qingzhu, and Crystal Dragon Young Lord.

In reality, most believed that the young lord was one level beneath his peers in terms of talent and power.

He was considered a genius because of his influential father. Moreover, his father loved him and spent immense effort. He personally taught his son on top of using natural resources to boost the boy’s cultivation. If it wasn’t for this, he wouldn’t be considered to be one of the three geniuses.

On the other hand, Jian Qingzhu and Celestial Tiger earned their current achievements. They didn’t use the same number of natural resources and pills as the young lord.

The main difference between the two was their conduct. Qingzhu kept a low profile while Celestial Tiger was famous for his love of fighting.

He served as the first brother of Dragon as well, not just Tiger Pond. This was approved by all three branches.

The successor of Dragon has yet to be determined. Thus, Celestial Tiger never hid his ambition before. He was virtually unbeatable in Dragon on top of entering Eastern Desolace and challenging many geniuses there.

Of course, Peacock Monarch supported his son as the next successor. Nonetheless, Celestial Tiger kept on proving himself as a worthy candidate.

Among the three, Jian Qingzhu had the lowest chance, especially when she was assigned as the saintess already. Now, the young lord was dead so the most likely winner became Celestial Tiger.

The crowd was awfully interested in this development.

“This battle might show us who’ll be the successor.” One outsider whispered. Though Peacock Monarch was brilliant, growing old was inevitable. He would have to give up his position eventually.

The majority believed in Celestial Tiger because Jian Qingzhu was teaming up with an outsider. If Celestial Tiger were to win, it would pave the way for his future ambition.

Jian Qingzhu slowly walked over and Celestial Tiger stood up.

“Long time no see, Senior Brother.” She stopped and greeted.

Celestial Tiger’s sharp eyes fell on Li Qiye, looking like a tiger descending from a mountain and searching for prey.

“Indeed, your changes are startling, Junior Sister.” He turned his sight toward her.

“I didn’t change.” She shook her head.

“You are a pillar of the sect, Junior Sister, yet you conspire with the enemy. Is it worth it?” He said with a serious tone and glared at Li Qiye again.

“You’ve listened to false rumors.” She calmly explained: “I am still a member of Dragon and certainly not conspiring with anyone. The sect hasn’t banished me.”

The crowd thought that this was true. The ancestors and the elders never mentioned anything about banishing her.

“That’s perfect if what you’re saying is true. You just need to hand over Sect Master Li Qiye and his sect members.” Celestial Tiger nodded.

“I’m afraid I can’t do so because they are my good friends. I will not hand them over.” She refused.

“Don’t you know the consequences?” His eyes turned cold: “The sect master has declared them as our enemies. Protecting the enemy is a serious offense.”

“This is another misunderstanding.” She elaborated: “The feud between Young Noble Li and the sect master is personal, not a sect matter. That would have to be decided by the ancestors. There is a clear distinction and there are no rules forbidding me from interacting with Little Diamond’s members.”

Celestial Tiger couldn’t come up with a response. Sure, she wouldn’t be able to befriend anyone who was deemed an enemy of Dragon. However, this wasn’t official yet.

Any disciple might have enemies outside. This didn’t mean that their fellow sect members couldn’t interact with the latter.