

## Tales of Herding Gods Chapter 216-220

### Chapter 216: Guiding Souls

Qin Mu turned his head around and was stunned when he saw Wei Yong. A smile bloomed on his face and he waved his hand. "So it's Brother Wei and Duke Wei. Why are you standing outside? Come in quickly."

Wei Yong immediately made eyes at him and said, "Come out quickly, I have something to tell you! Come over here, something huge has happened at Imperial College!"

He was worried about Qin Mu's safety, so he had to pull him out of the pit. He thought to himself, "Brother Qin must have come to take a walk, not knowing that this is the place where Heavenly Devil Cult is seeking its revenge, so he went in mistakenly. How dangerous is this? These fiends of Heavenly Devil Cult even dared to kill a first ranking high official like Sun Nantuo, who was a cult master level existence, in an instant. I'm afraid that even the bone marrow would be squeezed out from that small body of Brother Qin!"

Duke Wei looked at the two elders blocking his path of retreat and a vein popped out on his forehead while the corners of his eyes twitched. "Wei Yong, this scoundrel, he's even more of a troublemaker than me! I'm afraid I can't leave now even if I wanted to!"

Qin Mu raised his hand, and the old woman behind Duke Wei immediately went forward. Qin Mu tilted his head and said a thing or two to her.

That old woman returned with a grin. "Duke Wei, little brother from the Wei Family, please take a seat inside."

The corners of Duke Wei's eyes twitched, and he took a long look at Qin Mu before taking in a deep breath. "Let us go in."

As the two people went into the village, they could see that this place was only built recently. Everything was new, and there was even the fragrance of wood in the air.

Duke Wei and Wei Yong saw Qin Mu walking farther into the village and braced themselves to follow him. Duke Wei asked in a low voice, "Yong'er, how's your relationship with Little Brother Qin Mu?"

"We have been through life and death together!" He then added respectfully, "He was the one who saved me when the scholars' ship got attacked by Dragon Rider Sect!"

Duke Wei started to get a headache. "Then did you save him?"

Wei Yong shook his head.

"He saved you yet you didn't save him in turn, so what's this having been through life and death together!"

Duke Wei's heart was anxious. "I can only take thing step by step now. I can consider myself having been sabotaged by this little scoundrel. I don't know if my few meetings with Li Tianxing would be of any use..."

They came to the center of the village where there was a stage. It was only a foot above the ground and was constructed of wood.

The stage wasn't huge, about ten yards wide.

Most of the Heavenly Devil Cult's followers sat below the stage, and the old woman beside Duke Wei chuckled. "Duke, little brother from the Wei Family, just take a seat. Don't worry, we've just mopped the floor, it's very clean.

Wei Yong lowered his head to have a look and saw some dark red bloodstains. After noticing this, he couldn't stop himself from muttering under his breath, "I wonder if they cleaned up properly, or if there's still a human head or two lying around..."

Heavenly Devil Cult had eliminated Nantuo Side Palace as well as Sun Nantuo in an instant, which showed how absurd their strength was. Even Duke Wei who had experienced hundreds of battles didn't dare to be reckless and thought to himself, "Even though Heavenly Devil Cult has such a great fanfare here, the strong practitioners in the capital will definitely not be alarmed. Their actions were too quick back then, and I reckon they could kill us equally fast right now too..."

Under the stage, several hundred people sat in silence, waiting for the teachings of the sacred teacher.

Wei Yong looked around and saw Qin Mu. He immediately waved his hand at him excitedly. "Brother Qin, Brother Qin! Over here!"

Duke Wei wanted more than anything to press this little fatty down on the ground and stuff a few stinky socks into his mouth so that he would stop blabbering.

Luckily, the followers of Heavenly Devil Cult didn't seem to hear Wei Yong's blabber and remained sitting upright.

Qin Mu smiled at Wei Yong and walked up the stage.

Wei Yong jumped in shock and hurriedly said in a hoarse whisper, "Don't go up the stage, don't go up. That's where their sacred teacher gives his teachings..."

Duke Wei looked at him fiercely and scolded, "Rascal, keep your mouth shut!"

Wei Yong immediately shut up. Duke Wei said angrily, "Don't you see how tight-lipped I am? How did I have such a blabbermouth of a descendant like you? Haven't you realized it yet?"

Wei Yong was stunned. When Qin Mu walked up the stage and turned around, all the followers of Heavenly Devil Cult stood up and bowed. "Cult master sacred teacher!"

Qin Mu nodded and said, "Everyone, dispense with the formalities, sit."

Everyone sat down.

Wei Yong's mouth was agape, and there was a stupefied look in his eyes. He didn't regain his sense for quite some time.

Duke Wei sighed and muttered, "I long knew that there was a problem with that Pangong Tso. His Grand Shaman Ruda Scriptures was a little different. From the looks of it now, it was most likely the cult master sacred teacher of Heavenly Devil Cult making his move personally. Heavenly Devil Cult actually chose a youth as their cult master, they really have guts..."

On the stage, Qin Mu also sat down and said, "Who here know spells regarding searching the soul?"

A woman stood up and bowed. "Sacred teacher, I have some attainments."

Qin Mu nodded. He suddenly executed Soul Guide and a sinister looking gate appeared behind his back. Black fog poured out of the gate, and even the light from the kerosene in the iron woks died down.

At this moment, everyone saw Sun Nantuo standing in the sinister darkness along with the rest of the monks.

Qin Mu said, "Hall Master, I want to know who are the accomplices of Sun Nantuo that had allied with him to harm our two heavenly kings."

"Understood."

The female hall master went forward and took out a shining mirror. She executed her secret art and shone the light towards Sun Nantuo.

This mirror ray shone on the monk's soul, penetrating it and landing on the air behind him. All kinds of pictures appeared, which were the memories of Sun Nantuo of when he was still alive. The pictures fled by rapidly and continued to go back in time. Soon, they reached the memory of when they had ambushed Heavenly King Lu.

"Crown Prince's Grand Tutor Yun Boshan, Crown Prince's Grand Protector Ting Yanju, Crown Prince's Junior Preceptor Cui Mingzhi, Crown Prince's Junior Tutor He Qianqiu, and..."

Right Guardian Xue Bi'e recorded down the people who had appeared in Sun Nantuo's memory. Her pupils contracted when her gaze landed on the last guy. "And Eternal Peace Empire's Crown Prince Ling Yuxia."

Qin Mu nodded and said, "Note it down. We'll send them on their way when we find the chance."

Right Guardian noted down the name of Eternal Peace Crown Prince.

Duke Wei's heart trembled violently, and he opened his mouth, yet no sound came out.

Heavenly Devil Cult was too unbridled to even want to send the crown prince on his way. After all, that was the crown prince of Eternal Peace Empire!

However, it wasn't good for him to say anything. Eternal Peace Empire may be flourishing now, but it had only started doing so in the last two hundred years. Eternal Peace Empire only rose in power when Eternal Peace Imperial Preceptor had risen.

Heavenly Devil Cult was instead a true behemoth that had existed from the ancient times. It had a long history and had been through the prosperity of countless countries as well as the change of dynasties. What happened was not only a deep hatred that was born from the death of their heavenly kings, but also a great humiliation, so this revenge had to be taken.

Now that Duke Wei was in a precarious situation himself, how could he speak for the crown prince?

That female hall master continued to look back into Sun Nantuo's memories and searched all the way until they had ambushed Heavenly King Qian. Other than the ones named, there was an additional person during the attack, Crown Prince's Junior Protector Master Ruo Piao.

Crown Prince's Junior Protector of this generation wasn't Gu Linuan. Because he had been missing for two hundred years, the position of Crown Prince's Junior Protector was given by the emperor to Master Ruo Piao.

He was from Buddhism, and his religious name was Ruo Piao.

Yun Boshan and Cui Mingzhi were both cult master level existences that came from Daoism. Ting Yanju and He Qianqiu were both from influential families that had followed Great Ancestor Emperor to conquer the world.

These five people including the already dead Sun Nantuo belonged to the crown prince's faction. They had all been teachers of the crown prince.

Among the sixteen first ranking high officials, there were six in the crown prince's faction.

"Note down Master Ruo Piao's name," Qin Mu said. "It's almost New Years now, so let's let them have a peaceful celebration and eat their last New Years Eve's family dinner. Sun Nantuo is already dead and Nantuo Side Palace has already been eliminated. Nantuo Monastery is still around, so guardians and elders, raze Nantuo Monastery without leaving any trace."

All of the guardians and elders acknowledged this command.

Duke Wei let out a sigh of relief. This young cult master of Heavenly Devil Cult was still thinking logically. If they went in now and killed six first ranking high officials of the imperial court in a short while, including the crown prince, the emperor would definitely investigate and find out that it was the doings of Heavenly Devil Cult.

Eternal Peace Imperial Court was the orthodox one after all. If they went against the imperial court, there would be no place left for Heavenly Devil Cult. In addition to that, Dao Sect and Great Thunderclap

Monastery would definitely hit them when they were down. When that time came, Heavenly Devil Cult would be in danger.

Killing one every few days could minimize their risk to the lowest.

For example, to kill Sun Nantuo and eliminate Nantuo Monastery, Qin Mu had used the identity of Rolan's Golden Palace and brought Nantuo Monastery's legacy treasure to bait the monks out. He also forced Sun Nantuo into the open and lured him out of the capital city.

Even though Sun Nantuo was a cult master level existence, killing him and eliminating Nantuo Side Palace only took an instant. Furthermore, since they didn't make their move in the capital, there was no traces left, so it could be said that everything had been perfectly executed and covered up nicely.

Even if the emperor wanted to investigate, he wouldn't be able to find any clues. He would never know it was the doing of Heavenly Devil Cult.

After Sun Nantuo had died, the crown prince would definitely be alerted, and it would be hard to lay their hands on him. If they made a move, they would probably fall into an ambush, so it would be better for them to pass this period of time in waiting.

At this moment, Qin Mu looked at Wei Yong and Duke Wei, revealing a smile. Duke Wei felt a lingering fear in his heart and chuckled. "Cult master, I have a very loud voice."

"I know." Qin Mu smiled. "If duke shouted, everyone in the capital city would probably hear you quite clearly. Does duke think the method our sacred cult used to kill Sun Nantuo was clean and fast?"

Duke Wei's heart was hanging on a string. Qin Mu meant that he could eliminate them before they could even shout out a word!

Duke Wei took in a deep breath. "I once had quite a deep friendship with your Cult Master Li!"

Qin Mu tilted his head and looked at the Left and Right Guardians beside him. Xue Bi'e replied, "The previous cult master had met with him a few times. They didn't have a deep friendship."

Duke Wei's complexion turned black, and he looked around secretly, trying to see if there was a chance to escape.

Qin Mu said solemnly, "Duke, my cult just lost two heavenly kings so there are two seats empty. Since Duke belongs to an influential family but not to any sect, there shouldn't be anything stopping you from becoming our cult heavenly king, am I right?"

Duke Wei gave two coarse laughs, then looked around and saw the twenty strong practitioners who had worked together to kill Sun Nantuo standing up. The corners of his eyes twitched, and he said, "I'm Duke Wei and I have an official position, so where would I find the time to be your cult's heavenly king? Why don't you give me an easier task..."

Qin Mu smiled warmly down at him. "Don't worry, our sacred cult is quite idle. We will only trouble Duke Wei when we need to fight, it'll be just a title. Besides, not only are the cult heavenly kings idle,

even I the cult master am also very idle. If something like this hadn't happened, there wouldn't have been the need for me to come out personally. If duke isn't willing to, we won't make things difficult for you. As long as duke makes an oath to not say what you saw today, you may leave. Everyone has too many misconceptions about our sacred cult. They even think that we are devils that don't even blink when slaughtering people. Don't you think so?" When he was done, he laughed out loud.

The followers of Heavenly Devil Cult also laughed with him, but they were all putting on fake smiles. They looked like they were ready to fall onto the two intruders and silence them.

"I'm willing!" Duke Wei immediately said.

Wei Yong hesitated for a moment and said, "Duke..."

"Shut up!"

Duke Wei turned his head around and scolded him, "You have landed me in hot soup! The reputation I built throughout my whole life is all tarnished now in the hands of you little brat. If you didn't shout out for Brother Qin, we could have left unscathed!"

Wei Yong pouted and said, "Old master, they said that they would let us leave, so why did you have to join their cult? Brother Qin is kind-hearted. He's not some kind of villainous person.

Duke Wei blinked a few times. "Do you really think he's not a villainous person? If he's not a villainous person, how did he become the cult master of Heavenly Devil Cult?"

Qin Mu coughed. "Heavenly King Wei, we normally call ourselves Heavenly Saint Cult and not Heavenly Devil Cult. I'm also not a devil cult master, I'm a sacred cult master. Heavenly King Wei, keep this in mind."

Wei Yong said excitedly, "Old father, the title heavenly king stands out much more than duke! Brother Qin, assign me a role as well!"

### **Chapter 217: See No Evil**

Duke Wei rolled his eyes at this little fatty. This brat didn't find it a trouble to enjoy the bustling scene. After pushing his own old father into the pit, he even wanted to jump in himself. He was helpless.

"Heavenly King Yu, Heavenly King Shi, may I trouble you to brief Heavenly King Wei about our sacred cult." Qin Mu looked around, then said, "Ladies and gentlemen, tear down this place and don't leave any traces behind."

Wei Yong and Duke Wei immediately rose and saw figures flashing by. In a short moment, the entire village was cleanly dismantled and all the planks and pillars were stacked neatly. Even the iron woks, kerosene, and stands were all put away.

A few hall masters unfurled their huge flags and gently covered the planks and pillars with them. When the huge flags were pulled back, the planks and pillars had all vanished without a trace.

Couple more hall masters covered up the corpses of the Nantuo Monastery's monks, and when the huge flags were pulled off, the bodies had disappeared as well.

Some other hall masters were shoveling a hectare or so of land and sending it into Mud River, to be washed away by the strong currents.

Many things were cleanly executed in a short while, and soon no one would be able to tell that a bustling night market had once existed here.

Qin Mu said, "Disperse."

The few hundred hall masters and guardians bowed to him. Some used huge flags and disappeared with a sweep, some covered themselves with their clothing and left, others blended into the darkness or drummed on their flower drum to leave. A few more pushed away their single wheel carts, and soon, this place was no longer the bustling place it was before. It had sunk into pitch black darkness, and only Qin Mu, Wei Yong, Duke, and the two heavenly kings were left.

There were lights farther away, they were the ones that belonged to the real night market outside the city gate.

Qin Mu rose to leave, leaving the four people behind.

Duke Wei has just joined the cult so Heavenly King Yu and Heavenly King Shi had to talk to him about the rules of Heavenly Devil Cult so as to prevent any blunders.

Qin Mu stopped the on way back to the city as he enjoyed the night market and the flower lanterns. There were scholars and beauties who enjoyed themselves in the brightly lit streets and forgot to go home. There were also literary people who were showing off their literary excellence, martial artists who showed off their skills, and maidens laughing from time to time.

"The capital city has indeed a myriad of things and is a place of glory for its illustrious people."

Qin Mu was deeply moved. Suddenly goose feathers came swirling down from the sky as the snow arrived. The sparkling snowflakes landed on the shoulders of the people who had forgotten to go home, and many of them raised their heads up to the sky. Quite a number of them exclaimed, "Beautiful snow!"

The snow was lighted up by the lamps in the city and became even more sparkly. There were quite a number of maidens standing under the roofs of the shops, stretching their hands out and letting the cool snowflakes land in their palms. The people on the street didn't decrease because of the snow; instead, more and more people came out.

"It's snowing and the end of the year is coming. I reckon Imperial College will let the scholars go home for New Years soon, I wonder if granny and the rest are back in the village?"

Billowing white steam was given off by numerous stalls on both sides of the street, spreading a nice fragrance around. Qin Mu sat down in front of one stall and said, "Boss, two bowls of minced meat noodles, add more chili oil."

"Okay!"

After a moment, two big bowls of minced meat noodles were served with a layer of spicy red chili oil covering the surface. A few pieces of pork floated about, which was seventy percent lean and thirty percent fat meat. There were also some garlic shoots and leaves, bringing out the fragrance of this dish.

Qin Mu took a bite and felt invigorated by the spiciness. He had only eaten once today and was feeling hungry; thus, he radiated with heat as he slurped up the bowls of noodles.

At this moment, someone laughed. "Old Brother Qin, I've finally found you. You had promised to build an iron shell ship for him, now you can't run! Boss, I want four bowls of minced meat noodles, make them spicier, he will pay!" When the person was done ordering, he sat down opposite of Qin Mu.

Qin Mu looked at that person and smiled. "Brother Fan Yunxiao, why have you come to the capital?"

The person was indeed Fire Bandit Fan Yunxiao. He had a knife scar across his left eye, but Qin Mu suspect it was pasted on.

"Don't bring it up, what wretched luck I've had." Fan Yunxiao sighed. "It's sad just talking about it. My ship crumbled to pieces and disassembled in midair, so everyone inside almost fell to their deaths. I had to exhaust all of my strength to catch them in midair; however, I couldn't send them to the capital city so I had to compensate them quite a sum of money.

"This morning, I went to find you, but you ended up not in Imperial College. I decided to take a walk around the capital and coincidentally saw you here. You must help me build an iron shell ship! Now that the world is peaceful again, I'm going back to my business!"

Qin Mu had a weird expression. With the world at peace, the business this bandit mentioned was his old business. He was planning to forgo turning good and return to being a bandit once again.

"Have you prepared enough black iron, black copper, and money?" Qin Mu asked. "And also the blueprints of the flying ship. Without a blueprint, it isn't easy to build one."

"It's is all prepared. I bribed the official registrar of the shipyard and got a set of blueprints for the flying ship."

The minced meat noodles were served and Fan Yunxiao took a big mouthful before exclaiming, "How spicy, how fragrant! I have also bought the black iron and black copper. They're in a shipyard beside Mud River, outside the city. I'm now bankrupt and can only rely on this iron shell ship to earn more money."

Qin Mu smiled. "Alright, I'll help you finish building the ship before Imperial College goes on a holiday. You can come to find me tomorrow." When he was done, he took out a great abundance coin and handed it to the noodle stall owner.



That man used a towel to wipe his hand before smiling over at Qing Mu. "Guest, I don't have the change for this, do you have any change? Six bowls of noodles only need thirty wen."

"There's no need for change," Qin Mu said and left.

Fan Yunxiao looked at his back figure and exclaimed, "How rich!"

Qin Mu was still confused about the value of a great abundance coin, so he didn't know how much it was worth. When he comes out for a meal, even the most expensive restaurant only cost over a dozen great abundance coins for a whole spread of delicacies using the best ingredients. As for an ordinary roadside stall like this, the owner would be deeply grateful for a great abundance coin.

The next day, Fan Yunxiao came to Imperial College. Qin Mu brought Hu Ling'er, the dragon qilin, and Dutian Devil King to the shipyard. There were quite a number of martial arts practitioners using true fire to smelt the black iron and true water to cool it down in this place, forging the pill furnace used for the flying ship. There were also those proficient in algebra that were measuring the sizes of the components and using vital qi to assemble them. There was also strong men forging and strong giants casting metal as well as carpenters using sword qi to shave wood. The shipyard was very lively.

Fan Yunxiao led them to a factory, and Qin Mu looked around. There were all kinds of wares over here. There was a great furnace used for smelting, irons, and diamonds for forging, scaffoldings, wingwall, wood sliding rails, and also quite a number of black iron and black copper piled up at one corner.

This factory was very huge and was big enough to store six to seven ships properly.

There was an official registrar waiting there, and he grumbled when he saw Fan Yunxiao, "Why are you here only now? I will only let you use this empty room for ten days. Once they're over, I'm closing the factory down."

Fan Yunxiao smiled and said, "Ten days are enough!" When he finished saying this, he stuffed a coin pouch into the other's hand.

The official registrar weighed the coin pouch and said, "I'll close one eye for the next ten days. Finish your ship quickly or else it'll be difficult for me when the supervisor comes."

He then left the factory. Fan Yunxiao looked at Qin Mu and asked, "Old Brother Qin, can you finish in ten days?"

Qin Mu took a look at the blueprint and marked several changes before saying, "There'd be some difficulty if I was to do it alone. I'll need some helpers. My helpers and I will be building your iron shell ship here for the next few days and you are not to enter the factory during that time. If you enter, you'll have to pay the price."

Fan Yunxiao didn't understand what he meant but nodded nonetheless. "Don't worry, I'm not that curious of a person."

Qin Mu nodded and chased him out of the factory. He then said to Hu Ling'er, "Help me call a few people over and let them enter this place using the teleportation flag."

Hu Ling'er acknowledged and left immediately.

After a while, Hu Ling'er returned and said, "Young master, Nature Craft Hall Master and Carpentry Hall Master said they would hurry over as soon as possible."

Just as she was saying that, two huge flags appeared out of thin air. Under each of them were a hundred followers of Heavenly Devil Cult. Nature Craft Hall Master and Carpentry Hall Master had led everyone and come right over.

Qin Mu handed the blueprint to the two hall masters and asked, "Can you do this in ten days?"

The two hall masters looked at the blueprint several times, and Carpentry Hall Master asked, "Cult master wants to build an iron shell ship? The firepower of the pill furnace must be fierce enough!"

Qin Mu smiled. "I have some attainments in forging and can make a pill furnace with a high firepower. However, the shipyard only allows us to stay here for ten days, so it'll be slightly rushed. We have to finish it in ten days. Are you guys confident in doing it?"

The hall masters of nature craft and carpentry looked each other in the eyes and asked, "How many ships does cult master want to make? With our two halls working together, we can build five flying ships in ten days. We can't do any more than that."

Qin Mu was startled and muttered to himself irresolutely, "There's not enough black iron and black copper to build five flying ships..."

"We have enough materials in our Carpentry Hall and Nature Craft Hall."

Qin Mu's eyes lighted up, and he smiled. "Then we'll build five!"

The two hall masters immediately left to take care of the materials.

Five days later, Fan Yunxiao came by a few times, but he never dared to enter the factory. It sounded like a few hundred people forging at the same time, and he wanted to go check in on the situation, but when he thought of Qin Mu's words, he didn't dare to do so.

Snow had been falling heavily for the last two-three days, so lots of it had accumulated on the ground. The Sky Supervising Department led a group of divine arts practitioners above to melt the snow clouds to disperse the heavy snow; however, the snow outside the capital city was still very heavy.

Fan Yunxiao's curiosity grew heavier, and his ears twitched as he scratched his cheek in anxiousness. Another two days passed, and Fan Yunxiao could resist no longer, thinking to himself, "There should be no harm in sneaking a look, right?"

He pushed open the gate to the factory and put his head in to have a look. Suddenly, an eight-armed and four-faced devil god appeared in front of his eyes and grabbed his neck. "Brat, how dare you peek!"

Fan Yunxiao immediately cried out, "Old Brother Qin, it's me, it's me!"

In the factory, over two hundred Heavenly Devil Cult's followers looked towards the source of the sound, their gazes landing on the troublemaker. They then turned their heads towards Qin Mu. "Cult master, this man..."

Fan Yunxiao jumped in shock when he saw everyone. When he saw the clothing of these people, his expression changed, and he cried out, "Heavenly Devil Cult... I saw nothing! I'm a blind man, where is this place, why am I here..."

Qin Mu was creating the pill furnaces when he heard the commotion. He then instructed the two hall masters, "Continue building, I'll handle this."

Fan Yunxiao didn't dare to retaliate after being grabbed by the eight-armed and four-faced devil-god who had a dragon qilin by its side. With a smile, he said, "Old Brother Qin, I had wandered in here without paying any attention, I didn't see anything..."

"Brother Fan, I told you not to come in and take a look. Now you have placed me in a very difficult situation." Qin Mu raised up two fingers and said with a smile, "Two choices. You are not new to the martial world, you should know what those two choices are."

"I'm in!" Fan Yunxiao immediately said. "From today onwards, I'm part of the sacred cult!"

Qin Mu laughed out loud and made Dutian Devil King place him down. "From today onwards, we're brothers!"

In Crown Prince Side Palace, a middle-aged man who looked like a scholar hurried over to Eternal Peace Crown Prince's side. "Your Highness, the grand preceptor has really died. There is not one monk that can be found in Nantuo Monastery, so I reckon they had met with a treacherous assault. Yesterday, Abundance Prefecture had also sent news that Nantuo Monastery was eliminated. The emperor was angered and sent people to investigate, but no trace of the perpetrators was found. The people only said that it was the doing of Rolan's Golden Palace, so the emperor has an inclination to send troops beyond the Great Wall after New Years..."

Eternal Peace Crown Prince had a grim look as he rose. "Can't find any trace of them? I'm afraid it's because father doesn't want to investigate, right? This was clearly the doing of Heavenly Devil Cult! Only Heavenly Devil Cult, the head of the devil, could execute such a secretive operation! They lost two of their heavenly kings, so they naturally wanted revenge! You shall head to Great Thunderclap Monastery and ask for an audience with Old Rulai, I want to know who exactly is the new cult master of Heavenly Devil Cult!"

With his hands behind his back, he added coldly, "Nantuo Monastery is also part of Buddhism path, so Old Rulai won't sit back and do nothing. Even though Grand Preceptor is dead, we can't lose our connections with Great Thunderclap Monastery. Old Rulai isn't satisfied with Imperial Preceptor, so he will definitely be glad to help. I will have to kill a person to warn all others, to make sure the sects in the martial world see clearly that I'm not a useless person. Those who dare to touch my men shall wait to be eliminated!"

## Chapter 218: No Sun In The Sky

“Your Highness, Heavenly Devil Cult is still one of the three biggest sects. Even though they haven’t had a cult master for the past forty years, they are still not to be underestimated.”

That middle-aged man continued, “Since they haven’t been eradicated even after having no cult master for this many years and are still this powerful, this shows how united they are. If it was Great Thunderclap Monastery or Dao Sect, would they dare to have no Rulai or Dao Master for forty years? If you underestimate Heavenly Devil Cult, you will only be at a disadvantage.”

Eternal Peace Crown Prince shook his head and said, “Don’t worry, I won’t underestimate Heavenly Devil Cult. For it to get rid of Grand Preceptor Sun Nantuo, the monks of Nantuo Side Palace, and Nantuo Monastery without any news reaching the outside world, they can’t be seen as weak. How would I underestimate a cult like this?”

The middle-aged man gave a puzzled look, and Eternal Peace Crown Prince continued, “There’s no need for me to make a move against Heavenly Devil Cult. Dao Sect, Great Thunderclap Monastery, these two sacred grounds have a far longer grudge with them than Eternal Peace Empire. The two sacred grounds want more than anything to get rid of this chief of the devil path, they just hadn’t had the chance. What if...

“What if the emperor of Eternal Peace Empire no longer stood against these sects? What if the emperor of Eternal Peace Empire no longer supported Imperial Preceptor’s reform. What if the emperor of Eternal Peace Empire dismissed Imperial Preceptor? What if the emperor of Eternal Peace Empire made the struggle between sects and countries vanish like smoke in thin air? Do you think Dao Sect and Great Thunderclap Monastery would be willing to ally themselves with this emperor? Would Dao Sect and Great Thunderclap Monastery be willing to support this emperor?”

The body of the middle-aged man trembled slightly as he looked at his superior.

With a deep gaze, Eternal Peace Crown Prince said indifferently, “Even though my father has great skills and strategy, he is too trusting of Imperial Preceptor. With such trust in him, more than half of the imperial court belongs to him. The roots of our Ling Family are going to be lost. Father has let Imperial Preceptor’s power grow, so if Imperial Preceptor decides to rebel, there will be nothing to do. If Imperial Preceptor continues to grow like this, the world is going to change, and the dynasty will be changing hands!”

With a stern gaze, he said solemnly, “The older generation of our Ling Family, the people with lofty ideals have all seen the first signs of this. This was the reason why eighth uncle supported me. Eighth uncle had exhorted father before, but father remained obstinate and chose to believe in Imperial Preceptor. Eighth uncle was helpless and hoped that I would change things.”

He got worked up and said with sorrowful anger, “Eighth Uncle was a senior of Ling Family who had conquered the world along with the ancestor. Eighth uncle of our Eternal Peace Empire didn’t mind bearing the name of traitor to the country and contacted the sects of the martial world as well as the officials everywhere. All of this was to pave the way for me, to pull Imperial Preceptor off his horse. What a pity that it was all for naught! He couldn’t even have a complete corpse after death, his head

having been severed by Imperial Preceptor, that wretch. There are even rumors in all levels of society saying that he wasn't loyal!"

Eternal Peace Crown Prince shed tears and slammed the table violently, both of his eyes red. "I can't watch as our Ling Family's country gets destroyed under father's hand, even if I have to become unfilial! I can't be both loyal and filial, so I will be loyal to the Ling Family! Some things have to be done, I can't not do it!"

He walked to and fro in excitement. "How laughable, my brother and sisters are still leading a befuddled existence and don't know about the impending doom that's about to fall on our Ling Family! Father has already been overridden by Imperial Preceptor, and if the Ling Family is chased off the throne, they will all be annihilated! I can't let this happen, I can't let Imperial Preceptor, this devil, take over our nest! I will have to become the emperor and stop all this from happening!"

In the shipyard, Nature Craft Hall and Carpentry Hall used ten days to build five ships. Everyone installed the fifteen pill furnaces that Qin Mu had forged and connected them to the bronze beasts.

Qin Mu did minor adjustments to the blueprints of the flying ships and changed some layout. Every ship needed to have three pill furnaces installed. There were three bronze beasts on the ship, with two at the aft of the ship and one at the bottom. The heads of the bronze beasts could turn in all directions.

Changing the materials of the flying ship from wood to black iron and black copper had resulted in its weight increasing exponentially. One pill furnace was definitely not enough to make it fly, so Qin Mu added two more. Besides that, another bronze beast that could spew fire was added to the bottom of the ship which could make it less shaky when taking off and landing.

There were three big and two small ships among the five iron shell ships. Even though they were small, they were complete in every detail. All of the guest rooms in the hold of the smaller ships also had everything that was needed.

Qin Mu made his men paint wood grains on the five ships so that they would look like five wooden flying ships. This was so they wouldn't be universally shocking.

Fan Yunxiao was abnormally excited and kept walking to and fro around the five ships. "Cult master, which ship is mine?"

Qin Mu pointed at the smaller ship and Fan Yunxiao's expression instantly turned ugly. "Can't I get a bigger ship?"

"Big ships are used for transporting soldiers and fighting in war, their speed ain't as great as that of the smaller one," Qin Mu explained. "If you want to continue being a fire bandit, it's best for you to choose the small one. If you want the big one, you can use it to ferry passengers. However, big ship consumes more medicinal stones and you might not earn enough from ship fares to buy them in times of peace."

Fan Yunxiao hesitated for a moment. "In that case, I shall choose the small ship. What are you going to use the other small ship?"

Even though it was a small ship, it wasn't really that small. It was thirty yards long, ten yards wide, fifteen yards tall, and able to ferry around twenty-thirty people.

Qin Mu had made the disciples of Heavenly Devil Cult change their clothing before driving the three big ships out. He then sent the smaller ship to Imperial College while saying, "It's almost New Years, this smaller ship will be my mode of transport. Incense Master Fan, you have already entered the Bandit Hall of our sacred cult. Bandit Hall is part of our sacred cult, so I won't say anything more, it's a way of living for our cult's disciples after all. You can plunder people's riches but you can't take their lives nor rape them."

"I was from Dao Sect and even though I was chased out by old Dao Master, we fire bandits never take people's lives nor do we ever rape them. Don't worry, there are three hundred and sixty trades and each trade has its own master. I will definitely do my best and not let down cult master's great hopes for me!"

Qin Mu was flabbergasted. He only waved his hand after quite some time while looking at Fan Yunxiao boarding the small ship with excitement. More than a dozen fire bandits were pushing the ship out of the factory using the wooden rails with all of their strength.

The snow outside had already stopped, but with the cold weather, there were few people in the shipyard.

Fan Yunxiao shouted, "Light up the furnace, we're taking off! This ship will be our new Cloud Chasing Pirate Ship! We're no longer turning good, fly the flag of our fire bandits! What's outside is the sky and countless riches!"

The iron shell ship slowly rose, its speed gradually increasing. When the ship suddenly broke through the air, Qing Mu could hear the fire bandits crying out, "So cold, so cold! Boss Fan, don't stand on the deck, come in to get warm!"

Qin Mu saw them off before returning. He then brought the dragon qilin, Hu Ling'er, and Dutian Devil King back to the capital.

Lots of snow had fallen a couple days ago, so even though it had stopped, the sky was still filled with gloomy dark clouds. No sunlight could be seen as cold wind raged on, freezing everything it found.

"It's been ten days since we saw the sun," Hu Ling'er said as she looked up at the sky.

She couldn't sit still in the factory and frequently ran outside.

Qin Mu was slightly stunned. There has been no sun for the past ten days? It seemed like the snow was quite heavy, but why didn't the sun come out even after the snow had stopped?

He didn't think too much about it. Now that it was getting closer and closer to New Years, there was also some flavor of it in the capital as everything was decorated with lanterns and colored banners. Qin Mu walked into the city only to see flying ships going up into the sky. Besides the soldiers on the ships, there were also some ministers of the imperial court. He wondered why they were going up.

“It doesn’t seem like they’re going to war.”

Qin Mu raised his head but only saw the dozen flying ships going higher and higher. They headed up above instead of any horizontal direction, and he was left bewildered.

He returned to Imperial College and saw many scholars discussing New Years. No one was talking about why the ministers had flown into the clouds. There were also some scholars discussing about the flying ship that had docked in front of Scholar’s Residence.

“I wonder which rich son actually got a flying ship as a mode of transport.”

The next day, the sky was still gloomy. Gu Linuan gathered all the scholars of Imperial College and announced, “The emperor has called a holiday for the New Years, so you can now all return home.”

The entire mountain erupted in cheers.

Qin Mu raised his head and saw a couple more flying ships rising into the sky, towards a higher altitude.

Meanwhile Cloud Chasing Pirate Ship, Fan Yunxiao stood at the bow while trembling and picking the icicle hanging from his nose as he looked down. “Second brother, where are we now?”

A fire bandit looked down and distinguished the terrain before saying, “We have already reached Li River.”

“Why is snowing over Li River as well?”

Fan Yunxiao was astonished. Pointing at the mountains blanketed in white, he said, “That’s not right, Li River is situated at the southernmost border of the southern borders, Even when it’s heavy winter, it would usually be bare. Why has the snow covered even this place this year?”

Most of the fire bandits came up from the hold of the ship and looked down, clicking their tongues in wonder.

Suddenly Fan Yunxiao’s expression changed slightly, and he hurriedly asked, “We’re over thousands of miles away from the capital city, right? Yet have any of you seen the sun?”

The dozen of bandits looked at one another and all shook their heads.

Fan Yunxiao took a cold breath and looked at the gloomy cloud in the sky while muttering, “A cloud that covers a radius of a few thousand miles. Could this f\*cker be an ordinary cloud? And this snow, even the southern border is under it... This coming year might not be a year of peace but instead might be a year of disaster with starving people everywhere... If people starve and have nothing to eat, they will start to rebel... I thought I could earn quite a sum of money during the couple years of peace. Second brother, increase the firepower of the pill furnaces to their maximum, let us continue heading south!”

Over two hours later, Cloud Chasing Pirate Ship had flown out of the southern border and into the sky above the southern sea. Suddenly, a bright light in front of them dazzled their eyes, and when they flew

over there, they were met with the light of a blazing sun shining freely, illuminating the surface of the sea like it was a sapphire.

Fan Yunxiao turned his head back to have a look and sucked in a deep breath.

An incomparably ginormous gloomy cloud shrouded the entire territory of Eternal Peace Empire!

In Imperial College, Qin Mu packed up his luggage and prepared to return to Great Ruins when a directorate walked over while shouting in a loud voice, "Palace Grandee, the emperor has ordered that all officials with sixth ranking and above have to head to the imperial court for discussion! Anyone who does otherwise will be punished!"

Qin Mu placed his luggage down and said to Hu Ling'er, "You guys shall remain here for now, I'll go to the palace and take a look."

It was his first time attending the imperial court, and when he came to the imperial court hall, there was already a vast crowd there. Thousands of officials had squeezed in. Luckily, the emperor's audience hall was huge enough to accommodate these many people.

Emperor Yanfeng sat on the throne in the audience hall and had a worried look on his face. He would ask time and time again, "Is Imperial Preceptor here?"

When he heard that Eternal Peace Imperial Preceptor had yet to come, the worried look on Emperor Yanfeng's face grew even heavier.

After some time, Emperor Yanfeng cleared his throat and said in a resounding voice, "No need to wait for Imperial Preceptor anymore. My dear ministers, it's been over ten days since you have last seen the sun, is that right? I too have not seen the sun for over ten days and not only me, the entire Eternal Peace Empire had not seen the sun for over ten days. I received memorials from officials all over the world that snow is falling everywhere. From the northern desert to the southern sky, from Sunrise Island in the east to Secret Waters Pass in the west, lots of snow fell, six to seven days worth of it!"

The emperor stood up from the dragon throne and pointed upwards with his trembling finger, "A cloud has covered the entire territory of our Eternal Peace Empire!"

### **Chapter 219: Meteorological Attack**

When he said it, the hall began to buzz with discussions. It was almost impossible for something like the single cloud covering the entire Eternal Peace Empire to happen, yet it did!

Eternal Peace Empire had a broad territory spanning ninety thousand miles from east to west and eighty thousand miles from north to south. Now that the entire territory was under snow and even for six-seven continuous days, it was something that should have been impossible!

Divine arts practitioners had the ability to summon wind and rain, but they could only make the rain descend and the wind blow in a small area. They could never control the kind of spell that could cover the entire Eternal Peace Empire.



However, this was no natural disaster. It rarely snowed in the south of Gold River, while it was even more impossible to have rainy or cold weather at the south of Surging River. On top of that, when it came to Li River, all four seasons were like summer, so there was no possibility of snow there.

If that wasn't enough, the snow had descended on the whole empire at the same time!

Emperor Yanfeng gave a cough and quieted all the ministers. "Minister of Agriculture, there are probably quite a number of ministers who don't understand how scary this snow is, you can explain it to them."

An old minister stepped out of the ranks. He was the Minister of Agriculture of Eternal Peace Imperial Court and managed the agriculture of the entire empire. He bowed and said, "Your Majesty, ministers, this snow disaster doesn't affect the next year's harvest for the villages to the north since they are used to enduring through winter and had made preparations. The crucial point is the south. After this huge snow, the villages of the south will probably be frozen clean. When the next year comes, the south would most likely have no harvest at all."

The Minister of Revenue immediately asked, "Minister of Agriculture, by the south you mean?"

"Everything south of Gold River."

All of the ministers took in a cold breath, and even Qin Mu was shocked.

He also had a geographic map of Eternal Peace Empire. Gold River originated in the Great Ruins and stretched all the way to the east for tens of thousands of miles before entering the ocean.

The land south of Gold River was two-thirds of Eternal Peace Empire's land!

This meant that two-thirds of the empire's land would have no harvest!

"This... Your Majesty, I think we should channel the rations and fodder from all places to the south, preparing to send relief!" Grand Servant stepped out of the ranks and bowed. "The south just went through a war, so there are many counties that still need relief. I'm afraid that the rations there have already been depleted, so may Your Majesty channel rations from the north to save those people from the disaster!"

Minister of Agriculture sighed. "As of now, we can't channel anything. Lords might not know but the war had depleted rations and most of them are gone everywhere. If we channel the rations to the south now, they will only be eaten by the starving people. Once these rations are finished, we won't even have the grains to plant anymore, and there will be nothing to eat when autumn comes. Lord Grand Servant, if the starving people have nothing to eat, they will start eating humans."

"Are we supposed to just let the people of the south starve?"

Minister of Agriculture said, "Provisions would have to be transported to the south, but we must provide them in limited quantity. We need to give them just enough to survive. There are actually some granaries in the south, but they all belong to influential families and landlords. If we want to touch their provisions, I'm afraid they would instigate the disaster victims to rebel. Your Majesty..."

Emperor Yanfeng's expression sunk, and he said, "I will think of something regarding the provisions of the influential families and landlords. Continue."

"Yes. Other than the south, there's another huge disaster looming over us," said Minister of Agriculture. "The north is usually cold during winter, but it's even colder this year. Walking through a few counties in the north, I discovered farmers chopping down trees to burn them for warmth. This resulted in many forests being cleared out, turning the area bare. For the north, which can endure the cold to resort to chopping trees for warmth, you can imagine the current situation in the south. If the trees in the south are completely cleared out, mountain torrents, landslides, and floods will definitely become endless.

"A natural disaster can result in a manmade disaster, and a manmade disaster can result in many more natural disasters. However, if we don't let the victims chop down trees for warmth, I'm afraid that countless people will be frozen to death. When that time comes, I'm afraid most of the families will die..."

Emperor Yanfeng let out a deep breath, and the ministers of the imperial court also became quiet. It was so silent that even the noise of breathing became jarring. If they didn't chop down the trees to burn, the farmers would be frozen to death. Yet if they chopped down the trees, there would be more disasters.

A snow disaster had made a huge empire like Eternal Peace Empire sink into circumstances in which they had to make a difficult choice.

Minister of Agriculture continued, "The crucial point is that we don't know how long this cloud will last. If the gloomy cloud disperses in a few days, we can minimize the damage to the lowest. But if it doesn't, the empire will be in danger!"

"I... understand." Emperor Yanfeng leaned back, looking powerless. "Now, my dear ministers, do you understand how dangerous the situation is, right? Lately, some renegades rebelled, but I was still unworried and didn't pay any attention to it. I knew nothing would come out from what they were doing, and they would be eradicated by Imperial Preceptor and my dear ministers. However, this snow disaster and this cloud is going to break our Eternal Peace's fate! Dear ministers, do you have a way to solve this?"

All of the civil and military ministers fell silent. Even with their remarkable abilities, they couldn't blow away the cloud or melt the snow.

Emperor Yanfeng looked at his ministers and felt angry and anxious in his heart. Snow, a single cloud, were they going to tear this empire apart, destroy their hundred years of effort?

A civil official said, "I think this is because Imperial Preceptor's reform has angered the Heaven..."

Emperor Yanfeng burst into anger. "Drag him out and execute him!"

That civil official immediately knelt down and cried out with all his might, "Your Majesty, Heaven has its heavenly law, and Imperial Preceptor's reform is going to change the heavenly law, so Heaven is angered. People will suffer from the anger of Heaven, unable to do anything about it, Your Majesty!"

“Men!” Emperor Yanfeng was infuriated. “A disaster is upon our empire and you’re still eager to delude people with lies. If he’s not executed now, will I have to do it myself?”

The guards inside the emperor’s audience hall dragged that civil official away. The cries of the man gradually moved farther away.

Emperor Yanfeng paced around anxiously, suppressing his anger. “I want ministers that are able to work and are not useless puppets that only know how to slander! This reform is what I want and not what Imperial Preceptor wants! If Heaven is angered, then it should be angry at me and make me suffer! Imperial Preceptor is a capable minister. Not to say five hundred years, it is even rare to find someone like him within one to two thousand years! You all shall think of a solution for me. If you can’t think of anything, there’s no need for any of you to go home and no need for you to celebrate New Years!”

“Your Majesty, why not store the cloud away?” a voice asked from the audience hall. “Since you can’t chase it away, why not just store it away?”

All of the ministers looked over at the speaker, and Emperor Yanfeng’s gaze also moved on him. “So it’s Palace Grandee. What great idea does Palace Grandee have, why not share it with all of us.”

Qin Mu said, “I have seen treasures like the fire bottle gourds in the army which the soldiers use to store their true fire. When it comes time to battle, they would release the fire stored inside. When Hall of Supreme Healing slipped up in refining medicine and paralyzed the entire Imperial College, the former grand chancellor had used a bottle gourd to store away the anesthesia to save Imperial College. I was thinking if we could use treasures like the bottle gourd to also store away this dark cloud?”

Emperor Yanfeng looked at General of Heavenly Strategies and asked, “General Qin, do you think this can work?”

General of Heavenly Strategies had the surname Qin and name Jian. He was the head of the generals and also the sect master of the influential Qin Family in the capital city. He stepped out of his ranks and said, “Your Majesty, what Palace Grandee suggested is plausible. However, there aren’t this many fire bottle gourds in the army. The ones we use are wisteria bottle gourds which are handed to the Vermillion Bird Troops all around the world. There is a total of one million such bottles in the entire empire, and this amount would only be enough to store away one province worth of dark cloud. With so many provinces in the empire, it isn’t possible to rely solely on the fire bottle gourds from the army.”

Qin Mu then spoke up. “Even though there aren’t many bottle gourds in the army, the empire has many officials that cultivate spells and influential families with powerful people. There are numerous strong practitioners in the imperial court as well, and with a decree from Your Majesty, you could order all them to create treasures to store away the dark cloud in the sky. With so many people, the county magistrates, young magistrates, and magistrates who are also strong practitioners could take responsibility for the area under their jurisdiction. With the strong practitioners of the army going to help out in each and every area, we could expect to mostly get rid of the dark cloud.”

Emperor Yanfeng pondered it for a moment. “There would be some difficulty in mobilizing the divine arts practitioners of the entire empire to get rid of the cloud. There are some wandering divine arts practitioners in the martial world who don’t listen to the orders of the imperial court...”

“Therefore we will need Your Majesty to do it yourself, showing an example to the whole world,” said Qin Mu. “If Your Majesty leaves the capital and goes to each province to store away the dark cloud, the people will naturally follow suit.”

Most of the civil and military officials looked at one another. If the emperor left the capital to store away the dark cloud, the remnants of the sects would probably take advantage of this to assassinate him, since their rebellion had just been quelled.

Eternal Peace Imperial Preceptor went to Great Ruins for battle and got ambushed, which resulted in him returning in failure. If the emperor was to leave the capital, he would definitely have to suffer all kinds of assassination attempts.

Just as everyone was about to say something, Emperor Yanfeng’s eyes lighted up and he smiled. “Right. Minister Qin, do you have any other ideas to handle this snow disaster?”

“The snow disaster is already here, and I’m helpless to do anything.”

Qin Mu said, “I’ve heard of a sentence once: The path of a saint is not different than the one of a common person. With so many divine arts practitioners in the world, if the sun came out and melted the snow, you could have these divine arts practitioners personally go down to help clear up the frozen villages. They could help plant the grains again, and there might even be harvest next year. If there’s no wind, we can invite the divine arts practitioners to send wind. If weeds grow, invite divine arts practitioners to remove the weeds. If there is insect damage, invite divine arts practitioners to remove the insects. If there is frost damage, invite divine arts practitioners to use fire to get rid of the frost.”

“Your Majesty, these are words of the devil!” A civil official stepped out of from the ranks while trembling with anger. “Your Majesty, what Palace Grandee said are words of the devil, this would damage the country and hurt the people. He should be executed on the spot!”

Emperor Yanfeng smile. “His sentences were very correct, so why are they words of the devil? Those aren’t words that would damage the country and hurt the people, but instead, they are good words that would heal the country and save the people. Your position is revoked, go home and reflect on yourself. Minister Qin, what other good strategies do you have?”

Qin Mu pondered and said, “Your Majesty can also make Minister of Sky Supervision watch the weather of all area. During flood years, we can store the rainwater into spirit treasures like the bottle gourds. During years of hurricane, we can store the winds inside spirit treasures. We can store tornadoes, hails, lightning—all of them for our own usage. If we meet with years of drought, we can release the rain, and if we fight with other countries, we can release the hails, snow, lightning, and tornadoes. This way, we could deal with our own weather and attack the enemy countries. The snow disaster just now came close to destroying such a glorious empire like Eternal Peace, so if this kind of meteorological divine art was used on an enemy country, which one would be able to withstand it?”

“You Majesty, controlling the meteorology is defying the heavenly laws, these are words of the devil!” Another civil official stepped out of the ranks and kowtowed repeatedly until his head bled. “These are words of a true devil and will really destroy our empire! Your Majesty, please quickly kill this demon of the devil path!”

“You’re removed from your position.” Emperor Yanfeng waved his hand and smiled. “If you don’t have any ideas, don’t spout rubbish and slander Palace Grandee. What’s the point of me giving you a high salary every month? This snow cloud is the one destroying our empire! Men, drag him out. Palace Grandee, talk is easy, action is hard. You shall follow me for the disaster relief.”

Qin Mu hesitated and said with embarrassment, “I still have to go home for New Years... I can recommend some people who could help Your Majesty.”

Emperor Yanfeng laughed out loud and felt that the dark cloud which had shrouded his heart had dispersed. He waved his hand. “Approved. That’s fine, I’m in need of people now and if the people you recommend are really useful, I won’t leave you wanting.”

Duke Wei’s heart trembled slightly. “Heavenly Devil Cult is going to enter the imperial court... Come to say of it, I’m now the heavenly king of Heavenly Devil Cult and have long entered the imperial court. This young cult master really knows how to curry favor. With Imperial Preceptor not in the imperial court these days, he took the chance to plant his men. If Imperial Preceptor were to stay away for a few years, I’m afraid even the emperor would become part of Heavenly Devil Cult! Where exactly did Imperial Preceptor go? He went on such a long tour with his wife and doesn’t even bother to come back when such a huge thing has happened...”

## **Chapter 220: No End To Trouble**

“This cloud is big enough yet not big enough. This cloud and snow in Eternal Peace Empire are more like a warning.” In the west, on majestic Mount Meru, the golden-topped Great Thunderclap Monastery stood tall. It was situated atop the layer of clouds, and Old Rulai looked towards the territory of Eternal Peace Empire. He could see the sun shining with a golden brilliance, which made the sea-sized cloud abnormally bright. “Once, in the long history of Great Thunderclap Monastery, we have witnessed such a meteorological attack.” Below Old Rulai’s seat, the numerous bodhisattvas, venerables, arhats stood in great numbers and listened to his words. “That meteorological attack was even larger than this one. It came with heavy snow and a similar dark cloud. The people had no way to make a living, which resulted in natural disasters year after year, and only god knows how many people died. Venerable Ku, go and fetch the Emptiness Era Mourning Emperor Scriptures from the Depository of Buddhist Texts and flip it to the one thousand and three hundred and sixty-seventh page.” A monk with a worried frown stood up and went away. After a moment, this Venerable Ku carried over a thick scripture and flipped to the page which Old Rulai had mentioned. “Emptiness Era, Mourning Emperor Year 6420, changes in the meteorological phenomenon, snow fell for thirty days, cloud covered eighty thousand miles, no sun could be seen. Starving people were everywhere, bandits rose in all places, and Mourning Emperor ordered the gods and dragon kings to get rid of them. Mourning Emperor Year 6430, meteors descended from the sky, meteor shower was like a flood, volcanoes erupted in tens of thousands, the earth trembled, and a thousand of fissures opened up, drying up the rivers. The ocean was emptied. The next year, the sun disappeared, there was no light from the two heavenly bodies...” Behind Old Rulai, the hearts of Teacher Poor and the rest trembled heavily as they cried out, “Rulai, this is...” “Great Ruins.” Old Rulai turned his head back and looked towards the vast uncivilized territory behind Mount Meru. “This ancient scroll records the last moments of the divine kingdom of Great Ruins. The heavy snow and the dark cloud were merely the first warnings. However, the warning now is much earlier than I expected. Earlier, and lighter. It seems like Eternal Peace Empire’s doings have caught the eyes of the ones above.” Teacher Poor, True Lord Tian, and the rest were blown back, and they muttered, “Great

Ruins...” “If the emperor wants to quell this disaster, the only way is to stop the reform immediately and surrender himself, begging forgiveness from Heaven and his people.” Old Rulai looked away with a deep gaze. “Otherwise, this snow disaster will only be the start; there would be even more terrifying meteorological phenomenon following after. And they will no longer be just snow and a dark cloud. They’ll consist of meteor showers, volcano eruptions, dried up rivers and oceans, the vanishing of the sun and the moon. This is the wrath of Heaven, the anger of Heaven that the people have to bear. This is too much...” “Rulai, Eternal Peace Crown Prince has sent a person to seek an audience with you.” Old Rulai was slightly stunned, then he smiled. “This Highness has still come to find me. Invite him forward.” “At your command.” Old Rulai smiled at the monks surrounding him and said, “His Highness is quite extraordinary, and he might even be the saviour of the world. The emperor might be obstinately clinging to his course, but the crown prince is not the same. His envoy should be worth meeting.” Dao Sect’s Kunlun Jade Void Mountain was called Jade Void Paradise and was like a world unto itself. The four seasons on the mountain were like spring and seemed like a sacred ground for immortals. It was no inferior to Mount Meru. “The cloud covering Eternal Peace is a serious yet not overly dangerous warning. It is much more trivial compared to the destruction of Great Ruins,” Old Dao Master said to the Daoists of Dao Sect with a speed that was neither too fast nor too slow. “Our Dao Sect was against Eternal Peace Empire’s reform not for our own personal gain, but for the Dao. That reform ruined too many rules and too many principles, so it was destined to fail. It’s a pity Eternal Peace Imperial Preceptor’s knowledge was too shallow, and he didn’t understand the great terror that would descend.” His gaze was deep, but he had an air of calmness as he said slowly, “Back then, when Eternal Peace Imperial Preceptor was still young, he had come to Dao Sect to meet me. I could see that he was out of the ordinary and had high expectations for him, so I had allowed him to browse through the legacy scriptures of our Dao Sect, hoping he would have success in the future. As for sectarian bias, that was thrown to the back of my head. For such a talent, I naturally had to discard sectarian bias and groom him to the best of my ability. When he had become the imperial preceptor, my expectations turned into disappointment. Why? It’s because Dao models itself after nature.” Most of the experts of Dao Sect sat and listened quietly. “Dao models itself after nature, so we Daoists can summon the wind and the rain, but we can’t change the wind and the rain nor can we change the nature and the great Dao. I actually had no prejudice against Heavenly Devil Cult; on the contrary, I still admire some of its doings. However, our paths are different. Why so?” Dao Master shook his head. “Dao originates from nature yet Heavenly Devil Cult wants to use the Dao to change the nature. This is the biggest difference between our Dao Sect and Heavenly Devil Cult. This is also the reason why Heavenly Devil Cult is being referred to as the devil.” Most of the Daoists of Dao Sect were slightly shaken. Dan Yangzi said, “I’ve observed the disciples of Heavenly Devil Cult using spells to move the clouds and spread the rain. During periods of drought, they would make rain fall and collect money from the farmers. There were some people using drilling spells to create wells, solving the problem of having no drinking water. There were also people who would use true fire to smelt ores and retrieve the metal to forge farming equipment for sale. There were even some devil cult’s disciples that collected money from farmers to hunt down demon beasts. Heavenly Devil Cult is indeed going against the nature which Dao originates from, changing the nature.” Dao Master said, “Using the path, skills, and divine arts for the common people is to change the nature, to destroy it. Changing the nature and destroying the nature is changing the great Dao and destroying the great Dao. Heavenly Devil Cult’s teachings are wrong, so they can only move into the devil path. Another of their teachings is to act straightforwardly, to follow the course of nature. This means to let one’s desire run wild and do as you please. If this isn’t what a devil does, then what is a devil?” He sighed and said, “Imperial Preceptor is too deeply influenced by Heavenly Devil Cult which is why he has used Heavenly Devil Cult’s ideology to run a country. The disasters that Great Ruins experienced will also come to Eternal Peace Empire. This is the punishment of Heaven, the calamity sent by Heaven. Be that as it may, the people are innocent.” Dao Master softened his tone then. “You all shall go down the

mountain. The punishment from Heaven that the emperor and Imperial Preceptor have invoked shall not be bore by the people. Go and help the commoners that are in trouble and save as many people as you can. When you save the people during your travel, you can also find youths with good foundation and continue adding more descendants to our Dao Sect.” “At your command.” The experts of Dao Sect all went down the mountain. Dao Master looked up at the cloud above Eternal Peace Empire and sighed. “This shouldn’t be bore by the people... If Imperial Preceptor and the emperor still obstinately persist in going about things the wrong way, my Dao Sect will have no choice but to enter the secular world.” Qin Mu contacted Left and Right Guardians and passed down his decree, “You shall assist the emperor in sending disaster relief and storing away the dark cloud in the sky. You can send our disciples to the south to help get rid of the frozen crops and replant them. Many people will die in this snow disaster, so just do your best and save as many people as possible. Also, make sure that our disciples remain careful, since there will definitely be riots with such a disaster around. The world will certainly not remain at peace.” “At your command.” Left Guardian Ning Daochi hesitated for a moment, then said, “Sacred cult master, what identity shall we assume to assist the emperor? If the emperor confers a title on us, shall we accept it?” Qin Mu thought for a moment. “Assist the emperor with your own identities and with the power of the sacred cult. If the emperor confers a title on you, just accept it. If the emperor can tolerate Imperial Preceptor, he can tolerate us too. We are part of Eternal Peace Empire, so there’s no need for paranoia.” He paused for a moment, then added, “Even if the world is in chaos, the divine art practitioners who are used to being high at the top will definitely not be willing to become like our Heavenly Devil Cult and serve the ordinary people, helping them in their need. Imperial Preceptor had once said that he killed a batch of contrarians, but he still couldn’t kill all of them. After killing one batch, there would be another batch. I had thought Imperial Preceptor was joking, but it seems like it’s true.” Qin Mu raised his head and looked at the dark cloud in the sky and said with a smile that wasn’t really a smile, “This snow and the dark cloud have created a disaster that can destroy the country, yet they are still thinking about what is devil-like and what is not. Not once did they think about helping the people. They’re probably too used to being high at the top and think that helping the commoners is an insult to them, so it’s the devil path.” He shook his head. “These kind of people aren’t few in number, and there are probably extremists among them who would take this chance to rebel or even target our Heavenly Saint Cult. You two must be careful!” “Cult master, don’t worry. Our cult does not have an undeserved reputation for standing tall until now, not crumbling under the so-called orthodox path!” The two guardians bowed and left. Qin Mu composed himself and raised his head to look at that dark cloud above Eternal Peace Empire before shaking his head and returning back to Imperial College. Hu Ling’er, dragon qilin, and Dutian Devil King were already waiting on the ship. Qin Mu said, “We should buy some New Year’s goods on the way back to the village. I’m afraid there might no longer be anything in Border Dragon City. With Eternal Peace Empire in such a precarious situation, I reckon there will be much fewer merchants over there.” Dutian Devil King raised his head and sized up the sky while chuckling. “Your world is going to be in trouble, this heavy snow and dark cloud has shrouded the entire territory of your Eternal Peace Empire, right?” Qin Mu’s heart moved slightly, and he asked politely, “Lord Devil King, what wise opinion do you have?” “Kneel down and lick my toes, then I will tell you!” Dutian Devil King said, acting high and mighty. Qin Mu threw a glance at Hu Ling’er, and she opened the compartment in the chest area of the eight-armed god statue. She sat down inside and controlled Dutian Devil King to kneel down and stretch his tongue out to lick Qin Mu’s shoes. Dutian Devil King immediately cried out, “Devil can be killed but cannot be humiliated! Stop, stop... I’ll say it, I’ll say it.” Qin Mu raised his hand. Hu Ling’er relaxed her control, and Dutian Devil King immediately jumped up. He spat twice and no longer dared to be impudent. These few days, Hu Ling’er had been oddly clever and messed with Dutian Devil King until he became submissive. He felt that a wise devil knew better than to fight when the odds were against him, so he could only cooperate with the demon fox. Dutian Devil King raised his hand to wipe his mouth and sneered, “This is the method of a god, and

not any normal god. If my true body descended, I could also execute this kind of action and use a meteorological phenomenon to attack, eliminating the entire human race. I could wipe out your race and turn this world into the new Dutian. However, the god that used this meteorological attack seems to be a little gentler, so they didn't land a ruthless blow. I reckon this snow and cloud are merely a gentle warning." "Warning?" Qin Mu was stunned. Just a gentle warning? This gentle warning would probably kill millions of commoners since they wouldn't be able to make it through winter! He got lost in thought, and his mind ventured to Great Ruins. Because of the decree of a god and a devil, the people of Great Ruins were abandoned and gained the despise of everyone else. "If the gods and devils don't die, there will be no end to trouble!" Qin Mu said coldly. "Wife, if the gods and devils don't die, there will be no end to trouble." Eternal Peace Imperial Preceptor stood on the clouds high up in the sky while looking at that incomparably vast cloud above Eternal Peace Empire and sighed ruefully. The woman beside him could only be said to be of average beauty. She wasn't incredibly pretty, but she was not ugly either. She had a pleasant look and was one of the palace maids rewarded to Imperial Preceptor. Among the many of them, she was the only one that became his wife. The thoughts of this woman were very incisive as she asked, "Husband didn't go back this time, is it because you feel that the emperor can solve this natural disaster?" "Even if the emperor can't solve it, there will be people who will solve it for him, there's no need for me to return." Eternal Peace Imperial Preceptor smiled. "Let us go to the Little Jade Capital in the sky."