

**Bai Xiaochun looked at Bruiser in shock. Beneath his mask, he was smiling warmly; the fact that Bruiser was so powerful left him elated.**

Furthermore, the exclamations of shock around him got him even more excited. As of this moment, he wished that he could loudly announce: "That's my Bruiser!" However, Bai Xiaochun knew that such a thing wasn't possible. He remained within the group of Blood Stream Sect cultivators, giving Bruiser a look that only the two of them would be able to understand. Be a good boy and go back. Dad has a few matters to handle, then he'll come for you. Bruiser suddenly halted in place. He was smart, and had been well trained by Bai Xiaochun. It only took a moment of thought for him to understand what Bai Xiaochun wanted. He bared his teeth at the Blood Stream Sect people, radiating an air of incredible ferocity. Then, his gaze shifted to Song Junwan's chest, where it lingered for a long moment.... Although few people present knew what that look meant, Bai Xiaochun understood, and he couldn't help but sigh one more time and then glare at Bruiser. Growling, Bruiser bowed his head and then turned and left. In the blink of an eye, he was gone. The other battle beasts let out powerful howls and then returned to their masters' sides. The mountain-toppling, sea-draining energy from moments ago faded away until it couldn't even be detected. In that moment, something else happened that no one else detected. Someone in the crowd on Irispetal Peak was looking up at Bai Xiaochun in the Blood Stream Sect forces. It was a pretty young woman in plain and simple clothing. A very strange look could be seen in her eyes, and her face was very pale. However, none of that lessened her beauty; it only made her seem more worthy of pity. The young woman smiled, but covered it with her hand as she murmured to herself, "So, sweetie, you're in the Blood Stream Sect...." A strange flicker of light passed through her eyes. That girl was none other than Gongsun Wan'er, who had gone missing in the Fallen Sword Abyss. During the time that Bai Xiaochun had been spending in the Blood Stream Sect, she had returned to the Spirit Stream Sect! In the moment that Gongsun Wan'er looked at Bai Xiaochun, the Heaven-Dao aura within him stirred. Sensing that someone was looking at him, he glanced down to try to determine who it was. At the same time, the old woman from Irispetal Peak smiled, thinking to herself that all of her years of spoiling Bruiser had finally paid off. A single order from her had sent him away. "My apologies," she said. "Ladies and gentlemen, I think it would be best if we stayed away from the north bank." Although her expression was somber, she was inwardly delighted. Song Junwan took a deep breath to calm herself. Although she had been aware that the Spirit Stream Sect possessed a beast king, seeing it with her own eyes left her shaken in a completely different way than before. "According to the secret reports, the beast king was raised by Bai Xiaochun," she mused to herself. "He reached Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment, and gained enlightenment of the Waterswamp Kingdom. Who exactly is this guy?! If only he were a cultivator of the Blood Stream Sect!" Song Junwan wasn't in the mood for any more touring. Just when she was about to respond to the old woman from Irispetal Peak, a cold snort echoed out from the sky above. An enormous vortex appeared, out of which strode the Song Clan patriarch, surrounded by flickering flames. He was followed closely behind by Li Zimo, who had a look of regret on his face. Expression grim, the Song Clan patriarch looked back into the vortex, and then at Li Zimo. "Make no mistake, Fellow Daoists from the Spirit Stream Sect. If war breaks out, the fighting will not stop until the bitter end!" The person to respond to the Song Clan patriarch wasn't Li Zimo. An ancient, somber face appeared within the vortex, a face that seemed to radiate boundless years of time. When he spoke, the mere sound of his voice caused ripples to spread out in all directions. "Your demands are too harsh, Fellow Daoist Song. The Spirit Stream Sect would rather go to war than be slowly strangled for a thousand years!" This man was none other than the first generation patriarch of the Spirit Stream Sect, Frigidsect! The Song Clan patriarch snorted coldly and looked away. Swishing his sleeve, he summoned a blood cloud, and then waved his hand at the Blood Stream Sect cultivators. "We're leaving!" he said. Bai Xiaochun and all the others flew up into the air and landed onto the blood cloud, which seethed as it shot off into the distance. A moment later, not a

trace of it could be seen! Everything happened so quickly that the people from the Spirit Stream Sect were completely taken aback. The face which had just appeared in the vortex watched as the blood cloud shot away, and his expression turned grimmer by the second. "Should we stop old man Song?" Li Zimo asked slowly. A moment later, the first generation patriarch replied, "Old man Song has an extraordinary cultivation base. Among the eight patriarchs of the Blood Stream Sect, his battle prowess rates in the top three. The fact that he visited us alone indicates that he came prepared, especially for tricks. If we provoke him, he certainly won't be bound by morality in his counterstrike." Whether the most important factor was the first or the second, no one could tell. Li Zimo hesitated for a moment. Unable to bear the thought of how many casualties war would bring, he softly said, "Brother Frigidsect, the Blood Stream Sect doesn't want to go to war either. You can see that from their demands. They've already backed down as far as they can. Why don't we--" "Zimo, you're being too softhearted. At the moment, softheartedness won't benefit anybody. I know that many lives will be lost if we go to war. The Spirit Stream Sect doesn't want such a catastrophic event to occur. That was why I initially agreed to Song Yunwen's demands that we not go to war. Even if it means missing out on a huge opportunity, we could avoid the destruction of our sect, and the loss of many lives among the younger generation...." Frigidsect's ancient voice seemed tired, although no one could hear his words other than Li Zimo and the other patriarchs. "We agreed not to attack the Blood Stream Sect, nor to join forces with the Sky River Court. Those are demands we could meet. However, there is no way we could agree to the erection of a spell formation on the Heavenspan River! "If we allowed the Heavenspan River to dry up in our area, all in order to prevent a catastrophe, the spiritual energy here would grow scarce. Over the course of a thousand years of being sealed, the cultivation bases of everyone inside the seal would stagnate. Progress would be impossible, and it would only take a few hundred years out of that thousand year period for the Spirit Stream Sect to wither away into death. Even if the sect still existed a thousand years later, we would be weak beyond compare. We would simply be giving up our own right to decide our fate, and allowing anyone to come along and destroy us! "Fate would be like a sword hanging over our necks. Besides, in a thousand years, the Blood Stream Sect would be completely different than they are today. They would be a great sect in the Middle Reaches, far more powerful than they are now. At that time, they might feel pity on us, and honor their agreement from before. But if they didn't feel like it, they could destroy us as easily as turning over their hand!" Within the eyes of the founding patriarch, it was almost possible to see all those future deaths. His voice sounded very grim. "Being sealed for a thousand years would avoid deaths in the moment, but the truth is, it would only be delaying our inevitable destruction. We're actually in a much better situation now, with all the different variables at play. If we do go to war, we might not be able to defeat the Blood Stream Sect on our own, but with the cooperation of other forces, we would have a chance. "Zimo, sometimes we patriarchs have to look at the bigger picture, not just the events playing out right in front of us. We have to take the future into consideration! "It would be better for the Spirit Stream Sect to go out fighting in battle, than to gasp and wheeze our way into death a thousand years from now. Clearly, there is only one path for us!" The founding patriarch seemed very tired. After he was finished speaking, he faded back into the vortex. Soon, the vortex itself dissipated. Li Zimo hovered there silently for a moment, the desire to do battle slowly building up in his eyes. Just as the founding patriarch had said, standing and fighting held the hope of survival, whereas hiding away only ensured a tragic end later on! Eventually, orders from Sect Leader Zheng Yuandong were sent to both the south and north banks. "The sect's grand spell formation will be activated, along with all the formations in the Luo Chen Mountains. All disciples must return to the sect immediately to begin preparing for war!!" Meanwhile, the blood cloud shot along at top speed in the air between the Spirit Stream Sect and the Blood Stream Sect. The cultivators from the Blood Stream Sect were scared witless; even the Song Clan patriarch's face seemed ashen as he sat at the front of the cloud, frowning in thought. When everyone pondered the words spoken by the Song Clan patriarch when he left the vortex, they realized that the discussions with the Spirit Stream Sect had not ended well. Apparently, war between the two sects could break out at any moment. That in turn made the return trip to their own sect seem that much more fraught with danger. Master God-Diviner's face was pale as he looked down into his lap and performed auguries. Bai Xiaochun also maintained his silence. He knew the big picture, and he knew why the Spirit Stream Sect had made their choice. He sighed inwardly. Huge matters that affected the entire sect were things

that he didn't qualify to participate in or interfere with. He could only turn his head and look back at the Spirit Stream Sect, his heart aching with worry. Song Junwan sat next to the Song Clan patriarch at the front of the cloud, her face a mask of vigilance as she scanned the road ahead for potential danger. Everyone else on the cloud simply sat there silently. Time passed. Eventually, the cloud passed through the Luo Chen Mountains to arrive in Blood Stream Sect territory. At that point, the Song Clan patriarch's eyes snapped open, and they shone with profound coldness. Not a single ambush had occurred, and in fact, the instant they left Spirit Stream Sect territory, the Luo Chen Mountains began to rumble, and a cascade of light shot up into the sky. A huge barrier now existed, clearly demarcating the boundary between the two sects. After a moment, the Song Clan patriarch murmured, "Well played, Spirit Stream Sect...." Deep in his eyes could be seen both regret and respect. He suddenly waved his sleeve, and three motes of light flew out, which transformed into three shadowy figures. There was one that Bai Xiaochun recognized immediately. It was none other than Patriarch Limitless. "So they didn't intercept us?" Those three figures were illusory projections of patriarchs of the Blood Stream Sect. As soon as they appeared, the cultivators on the cloud clasped hands in formal greeting, Bai Xiaochun included. Then he looked up, shocked at the strange fluctuations emanating from the shadowy figures. "I put myself up as bait," the Song Clan patriarch said softly. "Whether because of their righteousness or their suspicions, they allowed me to leave. That in itself is a type of domineering fearlessness. The Spirit Stream Sect is indeed a worthy adversary!" The other three patriarchs maintained their silence. As for Patriarch Limitless, he looked off in the direction of the Spirit Stream Sect and shook his head. Sighing softly, he said, "It's too bad. We can't trust them, nor can they trust us."