

Song Junwan looked at Bai Xiaochun and said, “You and I won’t be the only ones going with the patriarch on the diplomatic mission to the Spirit Stream Sect. There will be others. However, Middle Peak will be in charge.”

“There are two purposes to the mission, one primary and one secondary. Let’s start with the secondary purpose. We want to get a firsthand look at Bai Xiaochun!” When Song Junwan spoke Bai Xiaochun’s name, her eyes flickered with intense coldness. Bai Xiaochun’s nervousness mounted, especially when he saw that cold look. From the way she was looking at him, it seemed as if her killing intent were rising to explosive levels. He gritted his teeth. Killing intent overflowing, he said, “Back in the Fallen Sword Abyss, Bai Xiaochun and I sparked the greatest of enmities! My hatred for him runs as deep as the sea! I refuse to live under the same sky as him. You had better not, under any circumstances, allow me to run into him, otherwise I’ll do everything in my power to kill him!” Of course, he really felt that he was getting the short end of the stick in this situation, and hoped that Song Junwan wouldn’t be offended. Song Junwan nodded. Sighing, she said, “Bai Xiaochun stole Que’er’s Heavenstring Foundation Establishment, and destroyed all of the Song Clan’s plans. The clan paid a very heavy price to get that chance. We bought the secrets of the Heaven-Dao cultivation base from Patriarch Limitless, all for the purpose of Que’er becoming Middle Peak’s blood master! “But now, it’s too late for that. Que’er only reached eight Tideflows, and can’t possibly fight Xuemei. Now I’m the only one who has a chance at the blood master spot!” As of this moment, she seemed more than ever like she wanted to kill the Spirit Stream Sect’s Bai Xiaochun. Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, then began to nod deeply as if he approved of what she was saying. “Yeah, that’s right,” he said, feeling quite proud of himself. “If it weren’t for Bai Xiaochun, Que’er would definitely have reached Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment!” He couldn’t help but imagine the glorious expression Song Que would have on his face if he were present to hear himself called Que’er. Song Junwan continued in a soft voice: “The main reason for the diplomatic mission, though, is to see if war is really going to break out between the Blood Stream Sect and Spirit Stream Sect!” As she spoke, it almost seemed as if she could see the future war playing out. Bai Xiaochun’s scalp was tingling so hard it felt like it might explode. Although he had always known that war was likely to break out between the Blood Stream Sect and the Spirit Stream Sect, he didn’t want that to happen. War was a brutal thing, and if it truly occurred, many people would die. “The Profound Stream Sect and the Pill Stream Sect have already been fighting for some time. The Pill Stream Sect is weak, and have already begged the Blood Stream Sect for help.... However, at the same time, it is highly likely that the Profound Stream Sect and the Spirit Stream Sect have been in secret negotiations regarding an alliance.... If they’re doing that, then so can we! “The most interesting thing of all is that the Profound Stream Sect also hinted to us about an alliance in the past.... However, that seemed a last-minute thing, something doomed from the beginning to collapse. From all of this, we can see how much scheming and plotting is going on. In the end, the sects can only trust and rely on themselves.” Although Song Junwan’s eyes seemed to contain a bit of cynicism, there was an icy coldness deep within that. Bai Xiaochun didn’t say anything at first. This wasn’t the first time he’d heard about the war between the Profound and Pill Stream Sects. From the rumors he had caught wind of in the sect, the war had already reached a very brutal level, with countless casualties on both sides. “It’s hard to see where the true battlefield lies. Although the Profound and Pill Stream Sects are fighting each other, for all we know, they might end up as allies in the end. It’s always difficult to tell who your true enemies are. Determining the identity of your true foe is the most critical aspect of war. Considering the importance of what is at stake, the Stream Sects are going crazy. Nightcrypt... war is not too far off. It could break out at any moment. “Furthermore, biding time and waiting for the outbreak,

waiting until the battlelines are drawn, is not necessarily the best decision. If too much time goes by, it's possible that two of the other sects could form an alliance. Maybe even all three of them. They might all join forces to defeat the Blood Stream Sect. After all, we are the strongest sect! As the saying goes, once you start riding a tiger, it's hard to get off, so we need to take advantage of the moment before true war breaks out to seize the advantage!" Song Junwan sighed and looked at Bai Xiaochun. Bai Xiaochun smiled wryly. From the perspective of the Blood Stream Sect, this was exactly the right move. If they let things progress too far along without making a move, the other three sects might form an alliance. In that case, the Blood Stream Sect would be at a distinct disadvantage, and might even suffer a bitter loss. "This time, there will be a war! And the Blood Stream Sect must rise up to become a Middle Reaches sect!" At this point, Song Junwan went on to explain matters regarding the Sky River Court in the Middle Reaches. For the most part, her explanation matched the explanation given by Sect Leader Zheng Yuandong of the Spirit Stream Sect. Bai Xiaochun listened quietly and didn't ask any questions. "If war breaks out," she continued, "we really have only one option, and that is to fight the Spirit Stream Sect. After all, the four great sects are located on the tributaries in the following order: Blood, Spirit, Profound, Pill. The closest to us is the Spirit Stream Sect. "If we do start fighting, the Blood Stream Sect is confident of winning. But that doesn't mean the Spirit Stream Sect can be underestimated. They are adept at hiding their resources, and have profound reserves built up. Although we would suffer heavy losses, the Spirit Stream Sect would be destroyed in the end. But then we would have to face the advance of the Profound Stream Sect! "Even if we came out victorious against them, there wouldn't be many survivors. If all of the sects ended up suffering heavy casualties, there would be no hope of being powerful enough to take out the Sky River Court. Any chance of rising up to a higher position would be dashed." Song Junwan frowned. By now, she was divulging information that an ordinary Dharma protector would never have access to. Only the higher echelons in the leadership of the Blood Stream Sect would be privy to such matters. Bai Xiaochun's heart trembled. After coming to the Blood Stream Sect, he had become very familiar with how powerful and savage they were, and was certain that if war erupted, the Spirit Stream Sect wouldn't be a match for them. He could only imagine what it would be like to see so many faces he knew awash with blood, never to open their eyes again. "The war would be one in which the Spirit Stream Sect was wiped out, and the Blood Stream Sect suffered severe losses. The truth is, we don't actually want such a war to happen. If we could prevent it, and maintain the full strength of the Blood Stream Sect, then the Profound Stream Sect and Pill Stream Sect could be easily wiped out. Then, we would be much more confident in maintaining the strength necessary to defeat the Sky River Court!" At this point, Song Junwan's eyes shone with a mysterious light. "Our biggest concern is this: when the Blood Stream Sect finally moves to take out the Sky River Court, what would happen if the Spirit Stream Sect suddenly allied with the Sky River Court? Then we would be wiped out for sure! "No amount of promises, not even oaths sworn to the Dao of the heavens, can be trusted when it comes to matters affecting the entire sect! "Therefore, after much discussion, the patriarchs have chosen to send a diplomatic mission. If the Spirit Stream Sect agrees, then we will promise not to fight them. The Spirit Stream Sect will not be exterminated, nor will the Blood Stream Sect suffer heavy casualties!" To hear such words coming from Song Junwan's mouth caused Bai Xiaochun's heart to tremble. As far as he was concerned, the best outcome would be no war at all between the two sects. "However, that agreement would involve the Blood Stream Sect setting up an enormous spell formation on the Spirit Stream Sect's portion of the Heavenspan River. That spell formation would seal their sect for a thousand years! "During those thousand years, anyone would be able to enter, but no one would be able to leave. Disciples of the Spirit Stream Sect would be unable to go out into the Eastwood Continent, and the Spirit Stream Sect's portion of the Heavenspan River would waste away to some degree. Their spiritual energy would grow weaker. However, it would only be for a short thousand year period. Afterward, the Blood Stream Sect would be in a stable position in the Middle Reaches, and would undo the seal. "That is the only circumstance in which we could trust the Spirit Stream Sect, and the only way to prevent war between the two of us. Not a single person from the Spirit Stream Sect would die, and the Blood Stream Sect would definitely succeed in rising up to a new level!" By the time Song Junwan finished explaining everything to Bai Xiaochun, she was almost panting. As for Bai Xiaochun, great waves of shock filled his heart. From what he knew, it seemed unlikely that the Spirit Stream Sect would agree to such

terms. To be sealed for a thousand years was basically a prison sentence. Most frustrating of all would be the situation after the thousand-year-period ended.... However, from the standpoint of the Blood Stream Sect, there seemed to be no other options. They didn't want to go to war, but there was no way they could put faith in simple promises or agreements. They could only trust a powerful magical seal! Bai Xiaochun was a bit at a loss. It was a weighty matter, so much so that he felt almost as if he were being suffocated. He wasn't sure what choice the Spirit Stream Sect patriarchs would make. Would they go to war? Song Junwan smiled. "Very well, there's no need to think too much into the deep things. The patriarchs will handle everything. In the end, there will be war, the question is only who we'll fight." After chatting a bit longer about trivialities, she could tell that Bai Xiaochun was a bit stunned. She didn't seem upset. After all, it was only natural to react in such a way to news like this. In fact, when she had heard the information a few days ago, and realized that bitter war would be coming, she had also been shaken for some time. With that, she dismissed him. However, even as he turned to leave, Song Junwan suddenly seemed to remember something, and said, "Xuemei was lying. For the entire time I've practiced cultivation, I've never had any Daoist partners to pick from. In fact, I've never even had a Daoist partner!" She wasn't really sure why she felt the need to explain such a thing, and after the words came out of her mouth, she found them to be so outrageous that her face immediately turned bright red. "Huh?" Bai Xiaochun said, stopping in place and looking back at her. When he saw her flushed cheeks and lovely dimples, she looked even more charming than before. "Another deadly move!" he thought, gasping inwardly. Ducking his head, he hurried out of the immortal's cave. The whole time, he was thinking that the two moves she had used after her transformation were quite formidable. In fact, he had felt almost powerless to resist them. Some time later, he was back in his immortal's cave, where he sat down cross-legged to think about everything that Song Junwan had told him. Finally, he sighed. "Is there really no other way?"