

A Demoness 101

Chapter 101: Invitation to Join the Blackheaven Sect

Jiang Hao couldn't think of a reason. He sighed and decided to go find out. It was definitely nothing good.

He went to the Spirit Herb Garden to collect some bubbles.

He wanted to study the wrist guard that he had been given but decided to put it off till after meeting Xuanyuan Tai.

"Good morning, Junior Brother Jiang." Miao Tinglian greeted Jiang Hao in front of the Spirit Herb Garden.

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Jiang Hao turned around to greet her but felt that something was wrong. He frowned.

Miao Tinglian noticed it. "I'm at the middle stage of the Golden Core Realm. Please don't tell me you want me to address you as Senior Brother Jiang..." She smiled. "Anyway, I feel like you are wasting your talent in the demonic sect, Junior Brother Jiang."

Jiang Hao lowered his head and didn't say anything. He sensed that Miao Tinglian's cultivation wasn't at its peak. It was sealed. She could only use her cultivation till the peak stage of the Foundation Establishment Realm. She couldn't tap into her cultivation beyond that.

Just then, Mu Qi arrived. "Junior Brother Jiang, please ignore her. Master Ku Wu Chang has instructed her to be observed for at least a year. You don't need to worry. As for addressing her as Junior Sister or Senior Sister, you can do as you want. You don't need to listen to her at all."

Jiang Hao nodded. He didn't want to start any trouble. He didn't mind addressing her as "Senior Sister Miao" in any case.

Mu Qi was helping Miao Tinglian to familiarize herself with the new surroundings. Jiang Hao vaguely noticed that Mu Qi didn't want to be too close "I'm warning you," said Mu Qi to Miao Tinglian. "Don't start any trouble."

"How am I causing any trouble? Teasing a child isn't really "causing trouble", is it? I just feel that Junior Brother Jiang is a decent person. Aren't you being too nosy?"

"Just... stay away from him. The ones who had a grudge against him are all dead."

Jiang Hao overheard their conversation as they left. He didn't mean to, and they were very quiet. However, the knowledge he had gained from the nameless manual made him a bit sensitive to sound and energy fluctuations around him.

The overheard conversation at least helped him realize that people doubted him even if they had no evidence against him. If there was another death, he would definitely be suspected. He had been too reckless. Even half a year of solitude hadn't done anything to clear his name.

'I don't know if they think there's something wrong with me, or if I'm working for someone else...

The people who openly mocked him were far less dangerous than the ones who stayed behind a curtain and were wary of him. Bai Ye fell in the latter category...

Bai Ye had never approached him. He hadn't even sent anyone after him. However, he had silently planted some herbs in the Spirit Herb Garden and sealed his cultivation. He was terrifying.

Jiang Hao sighed and headed inside the garden to collect the bubbles for the day. He then headed to the Lawless Tower.

Xuanyuan Tai was imprisoned near the Lawless Tower. There was an area near the Lawless Tower that restricted any kind of power. The place had designated cells. The captives were put there to prepare them before entering the Lawless

Tower.

Jiang Hao arrived at the entrance.

“Jiang Hao of the Cliff of Broken Hearts?” The middle-aged man repeated Jiang Hao’s words back to him.

“Yes.” Jiang Hao nodded.

“Come with me,” said the man. His name was Guo Feng. “You might feel a little uncomfortable inside. Don’t panic.”

Jiang Hao nodded and walked alongside the man. It was so dark that he couldn’t even see where he was walking to. He only knew that he was walking downhill.

After a while, he felt a strange pressure trying to squeeze him from all sides. Jiang Hao was surprised, but he didn’t show it.

“It’s the Lawless ability,” said Guo Feng as an explanation. “The captives have to go through this every day before they are taken into the Lawless Tower. After long exposure, the soul essence dries up and the cultivation realm is completely shattered.”

Guo Feng shivered. It was as if he had gone through this first-hand.

“It works the other way round for the disciples. There is so much spiritual energy in this place that you can even use it to advance quickly. Unfortunately, not everyone can do that.”

Jiang Hao recalled a jade token that Han Ming had given him. The token helped somehow. If he wanted to advance quickly, he might just try it.

“We’re here. You can go in,” Guo Feng said as he stopped in front of a brightly lit cell.

He gave Jiang Hao a jade token which allowed him to pass through.

Jiang Hao thanked the guard and looked at the stone door in front of him. This was the type of cell where high-level criminals were locked up.

There was a sonic boom and the stone door slowly opened. Guo Feng gestured to him, and Jiang Hao walked in. The stone door then began to close behind him.

Jiang Hao wondered if he could break open the stone door if the need arose. With his Primordial heavenly Blade, it wouldn’t be much of a problem.

Jiang Hao observed the cell.

The cell was not a typical four-walled place. It was a karst. The path in front led to the cylindrical platform.

The cylindrical platform had four pillars around the surface. The chains from these pillars were roped around the limbs of the prisoner.

Jiang Hao sensed magical arrays everywhere. It was impossible to escape from such a place.

“You’re finally here.” Xuanyuan Tai was sitting on the floor. He looked at Jiang Hao.

He was dressed in his Daoist Robe. He looked tired and ragged, but his aura was still shockingly powerful.

He sat there without a care for the world.

“May I ask why you wanted me to visit?” asked Jiang Hao politely.

Although Xuanyuan Tai was a captive and an enemy of the sect, he couldn't underestimate him.

“You seem to have become famous in the sect because you helped to catch me, ” said Xuanyuan Tai with a faint smile.

“I am not capable of something like that,” said Jiang Hao. “It was Senior Brother Manlong who caught you.”

Xuanyuan Tai's next words surprised him. “Do you want to join the Blackheaven Sect?”

Jiang Hao was surprised. Xuanyuan Tai said it so casually, as though he was asking him whether he wanted to go grocery shopping.

“Don't look so surprised. I'm merely interested in you. People of the Blackheaven Sect are coming here soon. You might be in trouble. If you agree to join the Blackheaven Sect, I can help you. Even if they take you away, I can make sure you're safe.” Xuanyuan Tai looked at Jiang Hao as though he was highly amused by something. “You don't have to answer me right now. My invitation stands. You can even answer after you're captured.”

Jiang Hao used Daily Appraisal on him.

[Xuanyuan Tai: A formidable disciple of the Blackheaven Sect. Blessed by the mountains and the seas. Possesses a special spatial constitution. Can use the Heaven and Earth Dislocation divine ability. He learned from Hua Le that you have the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower in your courtyard. He understands your value and wants to take you back to his sect with the flower. However, he doesn't intend to inform anyone else about the value you hold. If you agree to his proposal and give the flower to him, he will not only let go of his hatred for you but also will reward you with great benefits..]

Chapter 102: The Demoness' Array Formation Effect

'Hua Le... Another traitor?' Jiang Hao wasn't very surprised. There were too many traitors in the sect.

However, none of the spies could compare to Liu Xingchen. The others just watched from afar, but Liu Xingchen was too reckless. He always approached Jiang Hao to talk to him. He had even helped Jiang Hao a couple of times.

Jiang Hao was a little puzzled. What value did Xuanyuan Tai see in him besides the flower?

The last line had surprised him. Xuanyuan Tai was willing to forgive him and give him benefits if he agreed to join him...

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What if he failed? If he failed to help Xuanyuan Tai plant the flower, would he kill him?

However, this gave him an option. If the Heavenly Note Sect decided to use him as a scapegoat and hand him over to the Blackheaven Sect, he could always choose to join them instead.

He had put so much effort into advancing in this sect by keeping a low profile. He didn't want to start from scratch. If possible, it was better to find a way to stay here in the sect.

Jiang Hao was about to refuse his offer when Xuanyuan Tai stopped him. "You don't have to answer me now."

"Even if you choose to remain in the Heavenly Note Sect, I hope we can still become friends. The path to immortality is... uncertain. Today's enemy could end up being a friend who could save your life. I'll try to help you as much as I can. However, I don't have any intelligence on who's coming, what they plan to do, and what decisions they have already taken."

Jiang Hao nodded and didn't say anything.

Xuanyuan Tai asked him about the Hundred Thousand Swords Talisman that Jiang Hao had used before. He wanted to know if Jiang Hao had made it himself.

Jiang Hao told him that he did.

Xuanyuan Tai nodded and talked about his own experience of making talismans. He even gave some pointers on how to improve at talisman-making.

Jiang Hao was grateful. A few tips had taught him a lot.

Xuanyuan Tai talked about gestures and channeling spiritual energy to make talismans more effective. There were many things that Jiang Hao didn't understand.

After they were done talking, Jiang Hao left.

Jiang Hao walked out of the prison in deep thought. 'The Blackheaven Sect is really coming here! I wonder how the Heavenly Note Sect will react to that.'

From the looks of things, Jiang Hao was really in danger. 'I'm not strong enough.'

Jiang Hao could only think about mining. If only he could mine for a few days, he could have a chance at advancing further.

Unfortunately, the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower and the demoness associated with it made it difficult for him to cultivate in peace. He had to adapt to his current circumstances.

After leaving the Lawless Tower, Jiang Hao headed to the market. He took out the blueprint that Hong Yuye had given him.

He needed to buy enough materials if he wanted to upgrade his place.

“1,300?!” Jiang Hao was stunned at the price.

The array master shook his head. “I can’t give you more discounts. The materials you see aren’t very common. This is an adaptation of the spirit-gathering array. However, no one would modify it as strangely as you. I have no idea what these array patterns are for. It’s as if... they’re incompatible. I can understand them while they are separated, but... it’ll take some time.

Anyhow, that’s the price for the materials and I don’t have some of them in

stock. You’ll have to wait.”

Jiang Hao was shocked. The blueprint that Hong Yuye gave him last time was cheaper. In fact, Jiang Hao didn’t even have to spend much on spirit stones to complete it. This time, the materials were too expensive, and the merchant didn’t even have some of the materials in the shop.

“How long?”

“Three days,” said the array master.

Jiang Hao paid him three hundred spirit stones as a deposit and went back to his house.

Three days later, he went to the market and paid the full price. He finally managed to get all the materials to set up the array formation. He looked at the formation diagram.

After a while, the array formation was successfully upgraded. Jiang Hao sighed in relief.

The array was needed to prevent the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower from affecting the surroundings.

The more people knew about the flower, the more trouble they would cause. Ordinary people looked at the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower and thought it was an ordinary spirit herb. However, a few of them knew about its potential and went to great lengths to obtain it.

Elder Baizhi hadn't made this matter public because she wanted to lure the traitors into her trap.

Ming Yi, Liu Xingchen, and the spirit beast had all approached him because of the flower. However, they kept their distance.

Only Hong Yuye had taken the bait.

In the courtyard, the spirit beast had fallen asleep near the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower while drooling from its mouth.

Jiang Hao sighed. No matter what he tried, the beast stayed close to the flower. He wouldn't mind if someone could teach it a lesson so that it would never approach the flower again.

Jiang Hao went into his house and prepared to cultivate. As he started it, he frowned. He found that the flow of the spiritual energy was quite smooth today. It was strange.

Even though Jiang Hao had bypassed Bai Ye's seal with the Black Lotus, he had found it quite difficult to cultivate. However, today, he wasn't affected by anything at all.

"Wow... Master, did you set up this formation? I feel the spiritual energy in waves," said the beast from outside.

Jiang Hao ignored the beast. He calmed himself and tried to make some talismans. Talisman-making was his livelihood. If he continued making good talismans, he could survive, no matter which sect he was in.

Early the next morning, Jiang Hao set down the talisman brush and let out a long sigh.

Jiang Hao had tried to make at least ten talismans. However, his success rate had decreased. He could only manage eight working talismans.

Jiang Hao realized that his failure was because he hadn't used the Clear and

Pure Heard divine ability. He was too tired and decided to rest for a day or two. 'I should try not to use my divine abilities too much.'

Three days later, Jiang Hao looked at the talismans, which had ended in failure. He shook his head in defeat. When he didn't use his divine ability, he increasingly failed at making effective talismans.

However, he realized that he felt less tired after making talismans when he didn't use his abilities.

Jiang Hao packed the materials and set them aside. He then went outside to collect some bubbles.

[Cultivation +1] [Lifeblood +1]

[Strength +1]

As Jiang Hao headed to the Spirit Herb Garden, the spirit beast jumped up and followed him.

"Master, aren't you bored of doing the same thing every day?" asked the spirit beast.

"You have to learn to enjoy this kind of life," said Jiang Hao. "When there is no trouble, it means you're safe."

"But you've raised me to be so strong and powerful," said the spirit beast.

"When will I get to show off?"

Jiang Hao smiled. "Don't cause trouble. When the time comes, you can show off all you like. Otherwise, I'll let you go free."

As he arrived at the Spirit Herb Garden, he saw that Cheng Chou looked worried.

“Did something happen?” Jiang Hao asked.

Ever since the Bone Flower incident, he knew that the Spirit Herb Garden hadn't known a moment of peace.

“Senior Brother Jiang, there's something I need your help with,” Cheng Chou said awkwardly. “It's not about the Spirit Herb Garden. Everything is alright.

It's... the new disciples.”

“New disciple?” Jiang Hao instantly thought of Xiao Li and Lin Zhi.

“It's Junior Sister Xiao Li, she's too... noisy.” Cheng Chou sighed wearily. ‘She started causing trouble so soon?’ Jiang Hao was surprised..

Chapter 103: Going Home For A Visit

“Tell me everything,” said Jiang Hao as he walked with Cheng Chou toward the outermost part of the Cliff of Broken Hearts.

Xiao Li was an outer sect disciple that he had brought in. If something happened, he would have to take responsibility.

“Actually...the outer sect disciples are required to recite the first chapter of Hundred Revolutions of the Heavenly Note to stimulate their spiritual roots to interact with the spiritual energy. But Junior Sister Xiao Li...” Cheng Chou pressed at his temples in frustration. “She's very hardworking in other things, but... she runs away when she's asked to recite it. She doesn't care how many times she is punished by her seniors. She always runs away when it's time to recite the text. A senior was a bit angry at her, so he tried to restrain her with a spell, but he couldn't. She refuses to study. Nobody can restrain her. Now, she's gone into hiding.”

Jiang Hao sighed. As someone from the Dragon Clan, it made sense why nobody could restrain her by normal means. However, he didn't expect Xiao Li to be so resistant to reciting the text. Was it because she couldn't read at all?

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Under normal circumstances, seniors wouldn't care about outer sect disciples. However, he was the one who had selected Xiao Li and brought her to the Cliff of Broken Hearts. She was his responsibility.

Jiang Hao stopped and looked up when he arrived in front of the outermost mountain of the Cliff of Broken Hearts.

"Is she there?" "Yes," said Cheng Chou.

"Call her," said Jiang Hao.

Cheng Chou looked puzzled. She had gone into hiding.

"Just say something about food," said the spirit beast. "I'm sure she'll come running."

"It's time to eat!" shouted Cheng Chou.

Something flitted past at an impossible speed. Jiang Hao sighed and raised his sheathed blade.

Bang!

As he swung it, a small figure fell to the ground. Xiao Li no longer looked malnourished and haggard as before.

She tried to run away. When she saw Jiang Hao looking down at her, she didn't dare move.

He was the person who had selected her and brought her here. She couldn't disobey him.

Jiang Hao felt sorry for the child when he saw her lower her head guiltily.

"Hungry?" he asked.

Xiao Li nodded and then shook her head.

"Follow me," said Jiang Hao.

Xiao Li walked behind him with her head lowered.

Cheng Chou was a little surprised. How was she so obedient in front of Jiang Hao?

The spirit beast jumped onto Xiao Li's shoulder. "Master brought you here? Call me "Big Brother". I can protect you."

Xiao Li was a little surprised. She pinched the spirit beast's cheeks. "You're cute."

"I'm Uncle Rabbit. You're being disrespectful," he said sternly. However, he didn't push her hands away.

In the cafeteria, Jiang Hao led Xiao Li to a table and sat down. Cheng Chou followed too.

Jiang Hao asked for some food. When it was brought to the table, Xiao Li looked at him expectantly. "Can I eat?" she asked.

Jiang Hao nodded.

Xiao Li ate heartily. Not one crumb was left. However, she took the last piece of dessert, wrapped it in a tissue, and put it in her pocket.

“Is that for later?” asked Jiang Hao.

“Not for me. My parents... the ones who raised me. I don’t think they’ve ever eaten food this delicious.”

Jiang Hao was stunned. He recalled the home he had stayed in before he was sold to the demonic sect.

“How old are they?” asked Jiang Hao.

“Well... my father’s hair is all white. He’s so old that he can’t even chop firewood anymore. My mother’s eyesight isn’t what it used to be. She can’t even sew the tear in my clothes. They are very old. They can’t even chew properly, but this dessert is soft. They’ll like it. When can I go home to visit them?”

Those words made Jiang Hao feel a pang in his heart. How long had it been since his family had sold him to the demonic sect?

He didn’t even know what he felt. Resentment? Hatred? Longing?

Jiang Hao didn’t hate them or resent them. He couldn’t even remember them properly. He had invested every ounce of his energy into surviving that he hadn’t even stopped once to think about his family.

Now that Xiao Li mentioned her family, even Jiang Hao wanted to go back and check on his previous home.

However, he didn’t dare leave the sect.

The Sunset Immortal Sect, the Heavenly Joy Pavilion, the Heavenly Saint Sect, the Blackheaven Sect, and now the Hundred Bones Forest were all watching him. He needed to compose himself and think calmly. Besides, was there even a point in visiting his previous home?

Xiao Li lowered her head. "We can't go back?"

Her question brought him back to reality. Jiang Hao looked at the child in front of him and sighed. It was very difficult to go out of the sect, but it wasn't impossible.

He took out the Hundred Revolutions of Heavenly Note textbook and gave it to Xiao Li. "Familiarize yourself with this. If you manage to recite the first chapter and enter the first stage of the Lifeblood Refinement Realm, I'll have someone take you back to your house for a visit. I'll also buy you some delicious food that you can take back."

"Read this?" Xiao Li made a long face.

"That depends on you. Do you want to do this for a chance to go home and visit your parents?" asked Jiang Hao, who got up from his seat. "Once you familiarize yourself with it and attain the first stage, come find me."

Jiang Hao turned around and left. Cheng Chou and the spirit beast followed him.

Xiao Li looked at the book. She then took out the dessert she had wrapped. It was breaking apart. She ate it.

She grabbed the book and ran to the place where the outer sect disciples were being taught. Everyone was stunned to see her sit down with the others and diligently recite the text.

The senior glanced at her. "Junior Sister Xiao Li, you'll doze off again. Stand up and recite the text."

Xiao Li Glared at him and stood up.

The seniors were wary of her. They knew that she wasn't someone ordinary. Their spells had no effect on her at all.

This time, Xiao Li obeyed their instructions. The seniors heaved a sigh of relief.

In the Spirit Herb Garden, Jiang Hao collected bubbles. The increase in attributes made him feel at peace.

However, Xiao Li's words lingered in his mind. It had been more than ten years since he had joined the demonic sect. He also wanted to go back and see what had become of his home.

"Senior Brother Jiang, Xiao Li's family sounds very old. By the time she reaches the first stage, her parents might..." Cheng Chou was concerned.

After entering the Heavenly Note Sect, they were all estranged from their families, especially those at the bottom of the ladder.

"Junior Brother Cheng, please make some arrangements to take her back to her house in a few days," said Jiang Hao.

Cheng Chou nodded. It seemed Jiang Hao wanted to send Xiao Li to her house to visit her parents as soon as possible. That was alright as long as she was motivated to cultivate.

Cheng Chou seemed to have misunderstood something, but Jiang Hao didn't say anything further to clarify..

Chapter 104: Robbing Him Of His Spirit Herb Garden

In the Spirit Herb Garden, Jiang Hao observed the spirit herbs around him.

He had already carefully checked the herbs sent by the Hundred Bones Forest.

On the surface, they all looked like ordinary spirit herbs. Jiang Hao wasn't able to figure out how Bai Ye had incorporated the Spirit Sealing Technique into them.

Jiang Hao had to admit that Bai Ye was a genius, and he couldn't do anything to thwart Bai Ye's plans. In the demonic sect, disciples had no restrictions and could experiment with things as much as they wished.

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Jiang Hao had once heard that someone's experiment had gone so wrong that a spirit beast had appeared in the sect and destroyed a whole city before it was put down. It seemed that the spirit herbs in front of him were also a result of experimentation.

In the afternoon, just as Jiang Hao was about to leave the garden, Miao Tinglian found him.

"Senior Sister Miao, is something the matter?" he asked.

Miao Tinglian smiled. "It is no wonder that others in the Cliff of Broken Hearts overlook you, Junior Brother Jiang. You keep a very low profile and avoid offending people as much as possible."

Jiang Hao didn't say anything to that. It was rare for him to meet seniors who were in the Golden Core Realm.

"Oh... since I'm a new disciple, should I also take care of the Spirit Herb Garden?" asked Miao Tinglian.

"That's not necessary, Senior Sister Miao. You should focus on your cultivation. Leave this to me." Jiang Hao wondered why she was trying to rob him of the

Spirit Herb Garden. He wouldn't let go unless he was allowed back in the mines.

"Actually... I do have some knowledge regarding the spirit herbs," said Miao Tinglian. "Are you sure you don't need my help in managing a section of the garden?"

Jiang Hao still shook his head.

Miao Tinglian nodded.

“Since you brought me here, I’m going to tell you this in gratitude,” said Miao Tinglian as she turned to leave. “If you’re not feeling well, it’s better to move away.”

Jiang Hao realized that Miao Tinglian indeed had sharp eyes. She had seen the problem in the spirit herbs brought by the Hundred Bones Forest when no one else had.

He wondered whether Miao Tinglian and Ming Yi knew each other.

Jiang Hao returned to his house. He looked at the courtyard that was stabilized by an array formation. Nothing seemed conspicuous. Very few people knew that he had the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower in his courtyard.

‘If Bai Ye finds out about that, will he try something new?’

The spirit beast ran into the courtyard and spun around. “Master, I love your house. You won’t kick me out in the future, right?”

“As long as you don’t turn into a monster...”

“Hahaha... You really like to joke! I’m a demon. How could I ever become a monster?”

The spirit beast then settled into a cozy space and stared at the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower.

Jiang Hao returned to his room and prepared to make talismans. He still had 1,700 spirit stones. He wanted to increase it to five thousand so that he could continue feeding the spirit beast.

Seven days later, Cheng Chou woke up early in the morning and was just heading out to the Spirit Herb Garden when he saw Xiao Li appear at his door.

He was worried. 'Is she alright?'

Cheng Chou knew that outer sect disciples were beaten a lot as punishment. No one really cared about it. Outer sect disciples were practically outcasts.

However, he knew that Xiao Li was extraordinarily talented.

"Junior Sister Xiao Li, were you looking for me?" asked Cheng Chou when she didn't speak.

"I want to see Senior Brother Jiang," she said.

Xiao Li knew his name but didn't know how to find him. She knew that Cheng Chou worked with him. So, she had come to seek him out, hoping he would take her to Jiang Hao.

Cheng Chou nodded and took her with him to the Spirit Herb Garden.

On the way, he glanced at her. "Junior Sister Xiao Li, you just have to be patient for two more days. Senior Brother Jiang will then allow you to go out and visit your family."

"Why wait two more days?" Xiao Li asked. "Senior Brother Jiang told me that I could go home for a visit if I made it to the first stage. I already did that." Cheng Chou stopped in his tracks. He looked at Xiao Li in disbelief.

"What's wrong?" Xiao Li was puzzled.

"No... nothing." Cheng Chou shook his head.

Cheng Chou remembered that a few days ago, Jiang Hao had told him to make preparations for Xiao Li to be taken to her home for a visit. He thought, at the time, that Jiang Hao was letting Xiao Li go home before she accomplished the goal because he felt sorry for her. But now... Cheng Chou wasn't so sure. Did Jiang Hao already know about her talent?

However, he couldn't sense whether Xiao Li had actually advanced or not.

Jiang Hao had already guessed that Xiao Li was strong, but even he was surprised at the speed at which she had advanced.

If Xiao Li had tried from the time she got here, it wouldn't even have taken this long.

Jiang Hao was stunned and envious.

He looked at his own interface. [Lifeblood: 97/100 (can be cultivated)]

[Cultivation: 90/100 (can be cultivated)]

In another month, he would be on par with Liu Xingchen. He just didn't know how much weaker he was compared to Bai Ye.

However, against the people from the Blackheaven Sect, being at the peak of the Golden Core Realm was not enough.

"Does anyone know that you've advanced?" asked Jiang Hao.

"No, I didn't tell anybody." Xiao Li shook her head.

Jiang Hao nodded. "Pack your things. I'll have Cheng Chou take you home for a visit. I'm going to go inform the outer sect manager."

The sect didn't pay much attention to outer sect disciples, so Jiang Hao wouldn't have any problem asking the manager for his permission.

He gave Cheng Chou five spirit stones for the trouble. He also gave him two Hundred Thousand Swords Talismans, some Healing Talismans, and a bunch of other divine talismans.

Cheng Chou looked at the talismans in surprise.

“Senior Brother Jiang, will I be able to see my family in the future too?” asked Xiao Li.

“Of course. Every time you advance to a new stage, I’ll have someone accompany you there.

“When you reach there, can you check on the condition of Xiao Li’s family?”

Cheng Chou was taken aback at the question. “Senior Brother Jiang, do you want me to do something so that Xiao Li can cut off ties with her family more easily?”

Cheng Chou thought Jiang Hao was a kind person. He didn’t realize that he could be ruthless too.

“Don’t be ridiculous,” said Jiang Hao. “I want you to check on their health so that they can live a little longer. They sound very old.”

Jiang Hao didn’t think of himself as a good person. However, Xiao Li’s concern for her family had moved him. He wanted to help in any way he could..

Chapter 105: A Thousand Miles Teleportation Talisman

Jiang Hao would try to help as much as he was able. Beyond that, he couldn’t do anything.

Before Cheng Chou left, Jiang Hao told him to be careful. If there was anything Cheng Chou couldn’t face, he told him to send Xiao Li to look for help.

Cheng Chou nodded. He had thought about it too and made his own preparations.

However, Cheng Chou thought he would be safe. He hadn't offended anyone, and he was only at the eighth stage of the Lifeblood Refinement Realm. Who would target him anyway?

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Jiang Hao returned to his house. He examined the wrist guard. Elder Baizhi had given him the wrist guard.

He had used his Daily Appraisal ability on it. It would take seven days for the power in it to activate.

[A piece from the Nine Heavenly Battle Armors: The ability of the two pieces of armor has been improved. It has a powerful attack support ability. It can hide a Golden Core Realm attack technique. The effect gets stronger when every piece from the set is obtained.]

He wasn't very clear about it. If he could hide a technique, he would probably Moon-Slaying or Mountain Suppression technique.

Jiang Hao activated the wrist guard. The power seemed to have a suction force that absorbed the power he released.

He used a simple fireball spell. The spell disappeared on the spot, and a mark appeared on the wrist guard.

Jiang Hao extended his hand, and the fireball flew out.

Then, he tried the Demonic Sound Slash. It could also be hidden in the wrist guard. After that, his fingers became blades and attacked.

He tried the same with his other blade, Shiyu. The result was the same.

The treasures Elder Baizhi gave him were too extraordinary. She was very generous since each item from the set of armor could add an extra bonus. The armor was mainly for defense, while the wrist guard was mainly for attack.

'The reward for raising the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower is so generous. If I were to gather all the pieces from the set of Nine Heavenly Battle Armor, how powerful would I be?'

Jiang Hao sighed. He didn't know how long he could take it. He might not last that long. The Blackheaven Sect had their eyes set on him. His future was uncertain.

After tending to the spirit herbs, he went to the market. He wanted to set up a stall to sell talismans and earn some spirit stones.

"Junior Brother Jiang, you're here again," said Fairy Leng Tian. "Let me see what you have today. Hm... so many Healing Talismans... you even have Hundred Thousand Swords Talismans! Please give me five of each type!"

"Of course," said Jiang Hao. "That'll be three hundred spirit stones." Jiang Hao sighed. Senior Sister Leng was indeed very rich.

"Thank you, Junior Brother Jiang," she said. "I feel that the quality of the talismans is better than before. You have a real talent when it comes to making talismans. If only I had such talent, I wouldn't have to buy talismans every time!"

"Junior Brother Jiang, are you in need of medicinal pills? I have a few with me," said Fairy Leng Tian.

Jiang Hao shook his head. "I don't really need them at the moment."

"Such a pity," she said, "but... that's alright. I have a lot of pills. If you ever need them, you just have to tell me. I'm going to refine them more."

"Senior Sister Leng, are you an alchemist?" asked Jiang Hao in disbelief. It was no wonder she was so rich.

Fairy Leng Tian chuckled. "I'm just an amateur right now." She looked around cautiously. "Junior Brother Jiang, do you have any thoughts on making high-grade talismans?"

"What do you mean?" asked Jiang Hao warily.

"I see that you have great talent when it comes to talisman-making. I was just wondering whether you might be interested in a talisman. I could sell it to you for two thousand spirit stones."

"What talisman is it?" Jiang Hao asked.

"I don't know. We got it by accident when we went out, but it was damaged. It felt... extraordinary. We were afraid that people would think we had stolen the second half, so we didn't ask others."

Jiang Hao hesitated briefly. "Could you bring it to the Cliff of Broken Hearts tomorrow?"

Leng Tian smiled and then nodded. "I heard that people from the Blackheaven Sect are arriving soon, Junior Brother Jiang. You have to be careful. This is the first time I have seen anyone in the sect provoke so many people at once."

Jiang Hao smiled awkwardly and watched Leng Tian leave. He did not want to miss that chance of discovering a powerful talisman.

Things weren't very good for him right now. The sale of the talismans wasn't what he expected. He needed to make better talismans to earn more spirit stones.

After selling a few more talismans, Jiang Hao went back to his house. He hadn't been able to sell too many talismans today, but he had managed to make 2,100 spirit stones in total. That was at least something.

Jiang Hao suddenly remembered that he had never used his Daily Appraisal ability on Leng Tian before. He didn't believe that she could be a traitor.

If he hadn't already used his ability on the wrist guard today, he would have appraised Leng Tian.

The next day, Jiang Hao saw Leng Tian walking toward him.

"Junior Brother Jiang, your house is in a very isolated area. I almost couldn't find it," said Leng Tian. "Can we talk inside?"

"Of course, Senior Sister Leng," said Jiang Hao. He wondered if any traitors watching him would find this strange. However, people generally visited each other. So, there was nothing strange about it.

Jiang Hao led Leng Tian inside. She was surprised to see the interior.

Jiang Hao made some tea and served it to her.

"I brought the... thing," said Leng Tian. She brought out a small wooden box and opened it. There was a broken stone tablet inside with half of the talisman character drawn on it.

The talisman looked complicated, but Jiang Hao didn't sense any divine intent from it. Jiang Hao activated the Daily Appraisal ability.

[Thousand Miles Teleportation Talisman: At noon, when your mind is clear, you can begin drawing the first half of the talisman. You can receive the inheritance and comprehend the Thousand Miles Teleportation Talisman. Leng Tian and the other seniors obtained this talisman with great difficulty. They almost died in the process.]

Jiang Hao was surprised. 'A Thousand Miles Teleportation Talisman?!'

If there came a time when he couldn't live in the Heavenly Note Sect anymore, could he use this talisman to escape?

This kind of talisman was very, very rare. It was extremely difficult to create such a talisman. “Could you sell it for a little cheaper?”

“I... uh...” Leng Tian looked troubled. “This doesn’t belong to me alone. We found it as a group. I can’t really make it any cheaper than it already is..”

Chapter 106: Rise Up In Rank

“Then can I offer some talismans instead of spirit stones?” asked Jiang Hao. Leng Tian frowned. “What talismans are you willing to give me?”

“Ten Healing Talismans and ten of Hundred Thousand Swords Talismans,” said Jiang Hao.

“Deal!” said Leng Tian without hesitation.

Jiang Hao heaved a sigh of relief. He really didn’t want to spend all his hard-earned spirit stones on one talisman.

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He ended up giving her 1,500 spirit stones, ten Healing Talismans, and ten Hundred Thousand Swords Talismans. Jiang Hao was only left with six hundred spirit stones now.

He wondered how much it would cost to make a Thousand Miles Teleportation Talisman.

“Here,” said Leng Tian as she handed him the box with the talisman. “This is yours now, but I have to warn you. This is something that we obtained through painstaking efforts. If it’s useful for you, that’s great! However, if you choose to sell it... please be careful. You might get in trouble.”

“Really?” Jiang Hao pretended to be surprised. “If you obtained it with such difficulty, are you willing to sell it for this price?”

“You look like someone who’ll use it instead of selling it somewhere,” said Leng Tian as she laughed. “Two thousand spirit stones is enough for us. I wouldn’t be worried if it was the whole talisman... but having half of it is... dangerous. So, be careful, Junior Brother Jiang.”

Jiang Hao bowed to her. “Of course. Thank you for the warning, Senior Sister Leng.”

Leng Tian smiled. “I should get going.”

Jiang Hao led her out to the courtyard. The spirit beast was hanging upside down from a tree.

“Junior Brother Jiang, your spirit beast is really extraordinary.” Leng Tian laughed.

Jiang Hao laughed too. The spirit beast was being a nuisance as always.

After that, Leng Tian said goodbye and left.

Jiang Hao hesitated for a moment, then decided to go to the Spirit Herb Garden.

He decided to make the talisman today. If he succeeded in making the Thousand Miles Teleportation Talisman before the Blackheaven Sect arrived, he would have an option for escape.

The ones who came after him would definitely be in the Golden Core Realm. If only he could advance to the peak of the Golden Core Realm, he would have a way out. However, that would be his last resort.

“Master, why are you so popular with women?” asked the spirit beast as it landed back on the ground.

“That’s not true,” said Jiang Hao.

Jiang Hao didn't meet many women. Leng Tian was just here to exchange the talisman for spirit stones. The others had been all traitors.

"Is there a lover among these women?" asked the spirit beast.

"No, there is not," said Jiang Hao.

"Who is it?"

A red shadow surfaced in Jiang Hao's mind. He didn't say anything further.

Although Jiang Hao definitely didn't love that person, he knew that as long as her Heaven Extinction Gu Poison was in his system, it was impossible for him to feel anything toward other women.

Even if there was a way to remove the poison, he wasn't sure if he was willing to do it. The Heaven Extinction Gu Poison's benefits outweighed its disadvantages. He was often reckless and had to depend on that poison to keep him calm. It had helped him out on many occasions. It especially helped him resist bewitching spells.

Jiang Hao shook his head and sighed. Sometimes, he felt that the price he had to pay to survive was far too heavy.

He didn't think about it anymore. He turned around and returned to his room.

Jiang Hao put away the stone slab, prepared some water and a brush, and began to meditate to calm his mind.

At noon, Jiang Hao sat at his desk. He picked up the brush, dipped it in water, and activated the Clear and Pure Heart ability.

Then, he began to draw.

He remained focused. He was afraid that heid mess it up.

Before this, Jiang Hao had practiced a few times already to get the characters right.

With the help of the ability, Jiang Hao's hand moved with ease and finally finished the last stroke.

A beam of light radiated from the stone tablet. The light entered his body via the brush he held in his hand.

At this moment, a golden light appeared in his mind. The golden light drew runes in his mind. Every single one was powerful.

Jiang Hao was attentive. He didn't want to miss anything. When the runes reached completion, Jiang Hao was delighted.

The moment the talisman was formed, the golden light disappeared entirely.

At this point, Jiang Hao had memorized the entire talisman.

The stone tablet on the desk cracked with a crisp sound.

Jiang Hao was surprised, but not for long. He knew that the Thousand Miles Teleportation Talisman needed many materials like a Golden Core Realm spirit beast's skin, beast's blood, and a talisman brush made out of Golden Core Realm materials.

Jiang Hao put everything away and headed to the Spirit Herb Garden. He collected some bubbles and then headed to the market to buy some materials.

It cost him a total of five hundred spirit stones for the materials. It was surprisingly expensive.

Fortunately, with the materials he had bought, he could practice the talisman at least ten more times.

He only had one hundred spirit stones left. Jiang Hao sighed. The spirit stones he had just earned were gone just like that!

Jiang Hao returned to his house and practiced drawing the talisman once again. He didn't use any spiritual energy for now. He only practiced the strokes.

After a while, Jiang Hao sat at his desk again. When he started making it, he realized that it consumed a lot of spiritual energy.

When his spiritual energy was exhausted, he could no longer continue. The beast's skin burned on the spot. It was another failure.

Jiang Hao was too exhausted to continue.

The next day, Jiang Hao was just planning to head to the Spirit Herb Garden when he met Liu Xingchen.

He looked very serious. Jiang Hao knew that something bad was coming.

"Junior Brother Jiang, you've been restricted from moving out of the sect," said Liu Xingchen gravely. "The Blackheaven Sect will be here in fifteen days."

Jiang Hao bowed and thanked him for the information. Liu Xingchen seemed to speak less when the matter was serious. Jiang Hao had noticed that about him.

He guessed that he was chosen to be the scapegoat to take the fall for the sect. Jiang Hao said goodbye to Liu Xingchen and headed to the Spirit Herb Garden.

He collected some bubbles and tended to the spirit herbs.

Even Mu Qi seemed worried about him. "Junior Brother Jiang, are you still tending to the herbs? Maybe you should go meet the Cliff Master..

Jiang Hao thanked him, but he knew it was useless. He wasn't a True Disciple, so the help his master could provide was... limited.

Mu Qi knew this too.

For the next few days, Jiang Hao continued to tend to spirit herbs in the Spirit Herb Garden during the day and tried to make talismans at night.

He failed for seven consecutive days. After that, he rested for three days straight.

During these ten days, Miao Tinglian watched as Jiang Hao quietly tended to the spirit herbs and cleaned up the Spirit Herb Garden.

She turned to Mu Qi. "If Junior Brother Jiang is allowed to live in safety and peace, he'll rise up in rank. He's going to face a great crisis in just five days, yet he seems so calm.."

Chapter 107: Moving In Together

"I went to meet my master to help Junior Brother Jiang, but he didn't say anything," said Mu Qi. "Master wanted to take in Junior Brother Jiang as a disciple but with the Law Enforcement Hall's investigation... It's a little troublesome to help him now. It seems some people want to use him as a scapegoat."

The Blackheaven Sect also wanted to punish someone to save its reputation. It seemed that both sects had agreed to choose someone as a sacrifice.

"What will happen to Junior Brother Jiang?" asked Miao Tinglian.

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Mu Qi frowned. "I'm not sure. Maybe the Blackheaven Sect will take him away.

If he isn't taken away by them, he'll likely end up in the Lawless Tower."

Miao Tinglian was shocked at that. 'The Lawless Tower?!'

"How cruel!" she said. "I remember you saying that all those who had any kind of grudges against Junior Brother Jiang are dead... Maybe the people from the Blackheaven Sect will end up dead this time too."

Mu Qi glanced at her. "It's not the same thing."

They fell silent.

"Does your master know about our... relationship?" asked Miao Tinglian.

"Why do you ask?" asked Mu Qi.

"If he does, I can just move in with you. As long as I don't create any problems in a year, I'll be accepted into the sect without conditions anyway."

Mu Qi's silence angered Miao Tinglian.

"Why aren't you saying anything? We secretly had an affair in the past, and you were so eager. Now that I defected from my sect to be with you, and you suddenly despise me? Are you dating someone else?"

Mu Qi sighed. "If you make our relationship public, it'll be used against us."

"I'm just asking to move in with you... I won't cause any trouble."

Mu Qi nodded. "Don't go back on your word."

Jiang Hao had just arrived at the Spirit Herb Garden when he saw Mu Qi and Miao Tinglian leaving the garden.

Ever since Senior Sister Miao had joined the sect, Senior Brother Mu Qi had changed. He seemed to have softened a bit.

If Miao Tinglian turned out to be a traitor, everything would fall apart. He wondered what Mu Qi would do then.

However, Miao Tinglian didn't seem to have any intention of bringing down the sect for now. She had come here for Mu Qi and had paid a heavy price in doing so.

Jiang Hao felt that it was really difficult to be in a demonic sect with human emotions. Nowhere was safe.

Mu Qi and Miao Tinglian both had been treating Jiang Hao well these past few days. Maybe both were grateful to Jiang Hao because he had brought her into the Cliff of Broken Hearts.

Jiang Hao collected some bubbles and returned to his house. Jiang Hao ate a spirit-gathering pill and then activated the Clear and Pure Heart ability. He realized that this wasn't enough.

He used the Reappearance of the Hidden Spirit ability too.

When the ability ran out of energy, the pill would replenish it, while he focused on making the talisman. This was the only way to maintain an uninterrupted flow.

If he failed again even after this, then there was no chance for him to master the talisman. He only had three pieces of beast skin talisman paper.

That night, Jiang Hao sat at his desk. He ate the pill and activated the Clear and Pure Heart ability.

He raised his brush and then activated the Reappearance of the Hidden Spirit ability.

Jiang Hao then began to draw. Every stroke was done carefully by filling it with just enough spiritual energy. His hand was steady, and his mind was clear.

After a while, the energy provided by the Reappearance of the Hidden Spirit reached its limit. The pill replenished his energy at that time.

Early the next morning, Jiang Hao was still at it. His forehead was covered in beads of sweat. His spiritual energy was about to be exhausted. At the last moment, he finished it.

However, the moment he was done with it, the beast's skin caught fire and the talisman was destroyed.

'I failed again?!' Jiang Hao was confused. He had prepared meticulously this time. He had done everything right. 'How did I fail?'

He retraced every step he had taken. 'Is it because I didn't do it at noon?'

Jiang Hao tried again at noon the next day. There were only two days left. He was running out of time.

Jiang Hao couldn't even go anywhere else. He had to wait to be summoned by the sect.

The Heavenly Note Sect also wanted to solve the matter with the Blackheaven Sect without any problems. The sect wasn't taking any chances because they weren't dealing with something like Azure Mountain this time.

The Blackheaven Sect, the Wind Lightning Sect, and the Sunset Immortal Sect were very powerful. If the negotiation failed, the three sects would band together and attack the Heavenly Note Sect. No one wanted that to happen. Therefore, they had chosen a disciple to act as a peace offering.

Jiang Hao understood why they had chosen him, but he still felt despair. He sat at his desk and tried again.

He used the same method. He ate a pill and activated the Clear and Pure Heart ability.

Jiang Hao then activated the Reappearance of the Hidden Spirit ability and picked up his brush.

He began drawing.

At this moment, he was on fire. His mind was clear, and he was focused. A beam of light emanated from the talisman brush and entered his body.

He had an inexplicable joy. His body, his heart, and his mind were in perfect harmony.

The light became brighter and there was a gentle wind in the room. Jiang Hao put down the last stroke. The moment he did that, his spiritual energy was devoured rapidly.

Pain spread throughout his body and mind. If he hadn't taken precautions, he would have fallen to the ground unconscious. Fortunately, it didn't last long.

The talisman flashed once and returned to normal.

Jiang Hao was gripping the side of his chair, sweating profusely. He covered his face in his hands. 'It's too exhausting... I can't continue...'

A Thousand Miles Teleportation Talisman was terrifying to make.

He took a break. When he was able to get up again, he used the Daily Appraisal on the talisman he had just finished creating.

[Thousand Miles Teleportation Talisman: Inferior. Ignores all spells and barriers. Randomly teleports to any place within 700 miles to 1,000 miles. Can be activated directly with blood or spiritual energy. Cannot be interrupted.]

Jiang Hao was surprised. The talisman was impressive. 'This talisman is worth more than two thousand spirit stones...'

It only worked within a seven hundred to one thousand miles radius, so the price might be a little less for this particular talisman. However, it wasn't bad. Seven hundred miles was still far enough.

As long as he wasn't caught, this talisman could give him a head start. He had to stay alert..

Chapter 108: Preparing To Defect

At noon the next day, Jiang Hao sat cross-legged in the courtyard. He looked at the spirit beast jumping around as it chased a butterfly.

Tomorrow was the day when the Blackheaven Sect would arrive. He had just recovered his strength and had also stored two attacks in his wrist guard. He had chosen Moon- Slaying and Mountain Suppression. Those were his two powerful attack techniques.

As for the Thousand Miles Teleportation Talisman, he couldn't make another. He was too exhausted to use two abilities at the same time.

One was enough for now. After he advanced further, he might have a chance of making another of that talisman.

"Master, will you come back home tomorrow?" The spirit beast looked at Jiang Hao strangely.

Jiang Hao didn't know how to answer that question. Nothing was certain. There was a high chance that he might not really come back here. He neither wanted to be taken away to the Blackheaven Sect nor did he want to be thrown into the Lawless Tower.

If he was thrown into the Lawless Tower, he would lose all his cultivation. It was better to just run away. He didn't have a choice before, but now he did. He had a Thousand Miles Teleportation Talisman! Jiang Hao wished he could advance quickly.

He looked at his interface.

[Lifeblood: 100/100 (can be cultivated)]

[Cultivation: 96/100 (can be cultivated)]

If only he could advance to the peak stage of the Golden Core Realm, he would have a chance.

"Master, I plan to go down the mountain tomorrow," said the spirit beast.

"Why?" Jiang Hao asked.

"My friends think it is the right time for me to embark on the path to becoming a great demon," said the spirit beast righteously.

Jiang Hao was glad that the beast wouldn't be here if he didn't come back.

As for other things...

Jiang Hao looked at the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower. He couldn't take it with him, so he decided to leave it behind. He felt a little sentimental.

Jiang Hao had spent much of his life being careful and trying to stay safe. In the end, nothing even mattered.

In the afternoon, Han Ming came to meet him. He was there to challenge Jiang Hao to a fight.

Jiang Hao sighed inwardly. He agreed. It only took two slashes to defeat Han Ming.

“Thank you for going easy on me, Junior Brother Han,” said Jiang Hao and bowed.

Jiang Hao had wanted to go easy on Han Ming, but he decided against it at the last minute. He was going through so much and Han Ming wanted a fight! He was really annoying.

Han Ming looked at Jiang Hao. He then turned around and left.

After that, no one disturbed Jiang Hao. There was not one person in this sect he was close with. He knew many people, but they avoided him.

Jiang Hao didn't seek out anyone because he didn't want to make their lives difficult.

The only person he was remotely close to was Cheng Chou. However, Cheng Chou wasn't here today. He had gone with Xiao Li to her house.

'Xiao Li...'

Jiang Hao didn't know what would happen to her. He hoped for her to be safe.

The next day, Jiang Hao woke up early. Today was the day. He was not in a hurry to meet the Blackheaven Sect. He watered the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower for the last time.

He was not in a hurry to meet the Blackheaven Sect. He watered the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower for the last time.

After a while, Liu Xingchen visited him. “Junior Brother Jiang...”

'Finally...

Jiang Hao understood why he was here. He walked out of the courtyard to meet him.

"You seem very calm," said Liu Xingchen as they walked.

Jiang Hao smiled but didn't say anything. It wasn't like he had any other choice.

This whole world was too brutal. Anyone could be sacrificed to fulfill a common interest. The world was driven by personal interest, not justice.

"Everything might go smoothly..." Liu Xingchen looked at him. "Your master is also going to be present. He might speak up for you."

Jiang Hao nodded and thanked him. He had made it to the top ten disciples list. That had its own advantages and disadvantages.

The advantages were that, as one of the top ten disciples, he could go to the Lawless Tower to cultivate, he had received the Immortal Peach Tree, and the Law Enforcement Hall couldn't lock him up.

The disadvantages were almost fatal.

"Junior Brother Jiang, you're in the middle stage of Foundation Establishment Realm, right?" Liu Xingchen suddenly asked.

"Yes." Jiang Hao nodded.

"If you're taken to the Lawless Tower... the people managing it are usually in the late stage or the peak stage of the Foundation Establishment Realm," said Liu Xingchen. "I... can't interfere. Usually, if those people can't handle something, then someone in the early stage of the Golden Core Realm will be sent to handle it. Or, if it is even more serious, then someone at the peak stage would be sent to investigate."

There was a person who betrayed the sect and someone in the late stage of the Foundation Establishment Realm captured him. I couldn't interfere even if I wanted to."

Jiang Hao was a little surprised. Was Liu Xingchen telling him that if he tried to flee, only those in the Foundation Establishment Realm would be sent to capture him?

If they didn't succeed, then others would be sent to handle the matter...

Knowing Liu Xingchen, he was probably bored and wanted a good show, but still, Jiang Hao was grateful.

"Where are we going?" Jiang Hao asked.

Liu Xingchen led Jiang Hao to a mountain peak in front of the sect.

"The Blackheaven Sect, the Wind Lightning Sect, and the Sunset Immortal Sect don't want to enter the sect. They plan to talk outside."

Jiang Hao could see the plaza below and some cultivation sites. There were mountains and fields as far as his eyes could see. He also saw some people there.

It seemed people were waiting for the negotiation to be completed. Maybe some people just wanted a good show.

Jiang Hao waited patiently. He saw some figures approaching from the sky. There were thirteen of them.

When they got closer, Jiang Hao was surprised to find that he couldn't see the cultivation of the others except for one young man who was at the peak stage of the Golden Core Realm.

At this moment, three people from the Heavenly Note Sect also arrived. A beautiful woman, a middle-aged man, and a very old man.

“The first is the Peak Master of the Misty Cloud Peak, Senior Qingyan. You already know about the Cliff Master, Ku Wu Chang. The third is an elder from the Law Enforcement Hall,” said Liu Xingchen. “Senior Qingyan will lead this negotiation.”

Jiang Hao nodded.

Soon, the thirteen experts stood outside the entrance of the Heavenly Note Sect. Their leader was an old man who stood at the front, with two middle-aged men on either side.

Both sides bowed in greeting. The negotiation began.

Jiang Hao lowered his head and listened attentively..

Chapter 109: Drawing A Saber

“I am Yang Huo of the Blackheaven Sect.” The man in the lead introduced himself.

“I’m Chi Yuan from the Wind Lightning Sect.”

“I’m Xin Dong of the Sunset Immortal Sect.”

Senior Qingyan smiled at them. “Not a single big shot is here.”

“Yes, but we have been given the authority to conclude this... negotiation. I hope that is enough for the Heavenly Note Sect,” said Yang Huo haughtily.

“Then... Do you agree with our conditions?” asked Senior Qingyan.

The Heavenly Note Sect didn't want another war at the moment. They had just finished fighting Azure Mountain. If they had to fight these three sects together, they would be at a disadvantage.

If the negotiation failed, both sides would suffer.

"We can agree to spirit stones, magic treasures, and pills, but we can't give you the cultivation techniques and spells," said Yang Huo. "However, we'll replenish the spirit herbs, pills, and spirit stones. We'll give you whatever you need."

Senior Qingyan and the others were surprised.

"Do the others agree to that too?" asked the elder from the Law Enforcement Hall.

"Yes," said Xin Dong. "Whatever you want, but we do have a small condition."

Jiang Hao lowered his head. 'Here it comes...'

The condition they had would probably be something to do with him. This was the moment of truth.

"What condition is that?" asked Qingyan.

"One of our disciples died at the hands of your sect's disciple. The disciple who died is an important person. The sect wants her avenged. We are prepared to pay anything to get that murderer," said Xin Dong.

"Who are you talking about?" Senior Qingyan asked.

"Jiang Hao of the Cliff of Broken Hearts," said Xin Dong.

Some appeared surprised, while others already knew about the matter. Jiang Hao knew that some people weren't happy because he had made it to the top ten.

Jiang Hao remained silent. He didn't think it was wise to speak up.

"Do you want to take him away or do you want him dead?" asked Ku Wu Chang.

"Both," said Xin Dong.

Xin Dong really wanted to take Jiang Hao away with him to the Sunset Immortal Sect. As for Jiang Hao's fate there, that was still undecided, but it wouldn't be anything pleasant.

"No," said Ku Wu Chang. "I am the Cliff Master and the Cliff of Broken Hearts will not hand Jiang Hao over."

That surprised Xin Dong and the others. They weren't the only ones. Even Senior Qingyan was surprised.

"If you aren't willing to offer anything in exchange, why do you make such demands?" asked Xin Dong indignantly.

Yang Huo of the Blackheaven Sect smiled. "Don't tell me the Heavenly Note Sect hopes to rob us. You're not willing to hand over even one person, but you want everything in return. Do you think we're afraid of you? If you're not willing to hand him over, at least cripple him, so he can't cause any more harm and pay for his crimes. He shouldn't be allowed to cultivate for the rest of his life. Tomorrow, we'll hand over the spirit stones and resources you've asked of us, but you have to cripple him in front of us. The most outstanding disciple of the Blackheaven Sect was captured because of him, we can't just let him go around like nothing happened."

"No," said Ku Wu Chang again.

"Then there is nothing to talk about," said Chi Yuan.

"In that case, why are we still standing here?" Yang Huo and the others planned to leave.

“Since the Heavenly Note Sect doesn’t uphold their end of the bargain, this negotiation is over,” said Xin Dong.

“Why are you all in such a hurry?” Senior Qingyan asked. “Let’s talk it out properly. You can reduce the amount of resources by 20%. As for Jiang Hao, he seems to have offended all of you. We can’t hand him over to all of you at the same time. What if we punish him ourselves?”

“How?” Yang Huo asked.

In order to appease their anger, the Heavenly Note Sect had to punish the person, no matter how outstanding he was.

The Heavenly Note Sect didn’t care about their reputation, but they did care about resources.

“We’ll have him thrown into the Lawless Tower where his cultivation will be stripped to nothing before having him thrown out of the sect,” said Senior Qingyan. “Will that be enough?”

The negotiation couldn’t fail. It would be disastrous if it did.

“I heard that he stabbed our sect’s disciple in the neck when he killed her,” said Xin Dong. “I’ll agree to your proposition if you let me stab him. Let him feel the same pain. After that, whether he lives or dies will be none of our concern.”

Ku Wu Chang frowned, but he didn’t say anything.

Jiang Hao sighed inwardly. He didn’t blame his master for not speaking up this time. He was an ordinary inner sect disciple who had been involved with too many traitors. His master didn’t owe him anything, after all. He had already supported him twice.

If he had to enter the Lawless Tower tomorrow, Jiang Hao would flee tonight.

After that, too many people would be chasing him. There would be no more peaceful days for him. However, Jiang Hao didn't have any other choice.

Hundred Flowers Lake.

Hong Yuye stood under the pavilion, dressed in red. She looked into the distance.

Today was a clear day with a gentle breeze. It was relaxing. The wind scattered the fragrance of the flowers.

At that moment, a white figure landed outside the pavilion.

"Sect Master," said Baizhi. "The people from the other sects have arrived. They agreed to our condition, but they have their own conditions as well. They want Jiang Hao from the Cliff of Broken Hearts. Cliff Master Ku Wu Chang had rejected their requests so far, so our sect also reduced the requirements by 20%. However, Jiang Hao is to be thrown into the Lawless Tower and then exiled from the sect. The Blackheaven Sect and the Sunset Immortal Sect seem to agree with it. The Wind Lightning Sect doesn't care much."

"Do the people from the Blackheaven Sect agree to that as well?" Hong Yuye asked calmly.

"The Blackheaven Sect hadn't said anything yet, but the person from the Sunset Immortal Sect wants to stab Jiang Hao to avenge the traitor who was killed."

Hong Yuye nodded. "It's what they would want since they have suffered a heavy loss. The more the Cliff Master refuses, the more excited they will become."

Hong Yuye walked to the flowers. Her steps were light and graceful. Her dress trailed behind. She walked a few steps and then stopped.

Baizhi felt that something was wrong. Hong Yuye bent down a little and reached among the flowers. She slowly pulled out a saber from the flowers. It was covered in cracks.

Baizhi felt fear.

“Baizhi,” said Hong Yuye.

“Yes?” Baizhi knelt.

However, the next words confused Baizhi.

“What do you think of this saber?” asked Hong Yuye as she stared at the silver saber..

Chapter 110: One Slash From The Saber Terrifies The Entire Heavenly Note Sect

Hong Yuye held the silver-white saber. She looked at it and asked Baizhi about it.

Baizhi was puzzled. She observed the saber that was about to shatter. “The saber... is usually used by those in the Foundation Establishment Realm. However, it looks like it’s going to shatter any minute. I don’t think it can be used anymore.”

Hong Yuye nodded. “You’re right. It can’t be used anymore.”

She walked to the edge of the pavilion with the saber in hand. The wind ruffled her dress. The flowers swayed around her.

“I recall that you used to like blades,” said Hong Yuye.

Baizhi nodded. “But you told me sabers weren’t suitable for me. I am grateful. Without you, I wouldn’t be here today.” Baizhi had achieved so much because Hong Yuye had nurtured her talents.

Only with Hong Yuye's direction, Baizhi had managed to reach where she was. She had even proved herself enough to become the Acting Sect Master.

"I remember that you used to learn the Moon-Slaying technique?" Hong Yuye said.

"Yes." Baizhi nodded. She didn't know why Hong Yuye was asking about this so suddenly.

Hong Yuye raised the saber and caressed the blade gently. "I know you. You are obsessed with learning new things. Although you've let it go, you always wanted to know how it feels to master the Luna Shadow technique. Am I right?"

Baizhi felt a little ashamed that she had given up learning different saber techniques. She nodded. "Yes. There were some things I absolutely wanted to master."

"Then open your eyes wide and watch." Hong Yuye swung the saber. It seemed to dance in her hands.

Hong Yuye shone like a bright moon illuminating the earth. The pure white light left a shadow under the scorching sun. Then, she swung the Half-Moon Blade.

Hong Yuye moved with the saber. The sharp blade could cut through everything in its path.

Under the sunlight, the shadow of the moon bloomed, as if all light was concentrated on it.

Baizhi was in a daze, then she saw the direction where Hong Yuye meant to slash in. She felt terrified. This was...

Hong Yuye was aiming for the ones from the Blackheaven Sect and the others!

"Tomorrow, I will stab him in front of Lawless Tower and watch him enter the tower," said Xin Dong. "If you agree to that, we're willing to give you all the resources you asked for." He wanted to make Jiang Hao pay for his actions.

“The Blackheaven Sect agrees to it, although we will only pay the 20% reduced resources as discussed before. We also want to witness Jiang Hao enter the Lawless Tower,” said Yang Huo.

Chi Yuan did not speak.

Senior Qingyan felt that it was fair. Just as she was about to nod in agreement, she felt a chill run down her spine. She turned around.

A bright moon suddenly appeared in the depths of the Heavenly Note Sect. The moonlight cut through the void and headed toward them.

The sharp and bright moon was the only thing in their vision.

In the blink of an eye, the moonlight flew past them. A terrifying chill spread through the world. They were frozen in fear.

The bright, razor-sharp light slashed toward Yang Huo and the others.

Yang Huo stared at it in disbelief. “How dare you? Are you trying to start a war?”

They defended themselves. However, their efforts were futile. The light passed through all defenses and all protective magical treasures.

“The Heavenly Note Sect is really shameless. You actually dare...”

Whoosh.

The slash of moonlight passed by the terrified Yang Ho and Xin Dong and caught up to Chi Yuan, who was fleeing with the others.

This blade was like a gust of wind. It was almost intangible.

Among the thirteen people, only one in the Golden Core Realm survived. He cried in fear but realized that he was fine. Twelve people spat blood and collapsed. They had been beheaded.

The entire Heavenly Note Sect fell silent.

Baizhi knelt in fear. The Sect Master personally taking action could only mean that she, as an Acting Sect Master, hadn't done her job well.

Hong Yuye buried the saber among the flowers again. She looked at Baizhi. "Send a message to the Blackeaven Sect. Tell them that if they want to negotiate, they should send someone who is more sincere next time. Also, send the prisoner to the Lawless Tower for five days. If they don't send someone who is sincere the next time, their captive won't be released from the Lawless Tower."

Hong Yuye walked back to the pavilion in the center. "You may leave."

"Understood, Sect master," said Baizhi.

Only at this moment did Baizhi understand Jiang Hao's significance. Perhaps no one could plant and raise the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower except him. She should never have allowed Jiang Hao to be brought to the limelight.

Baizhi was still confused. The Sect Master clearly didn't seem to care about Jiang Hao and still...

Baizhi didn't dare ask. She left.

After Baizhi left, Hong Yuye pressed her fingers to her lips and coughed softly. She seemed a bit unwell.

Outside the Heavenly Note Sect, Senior Qingyan and the others broke out into cold sweats. If the blade had hit them...

Their hearts were filled with fear and respect.

A white shadow descended from the sky. It was Elder Baizhi from the Hundred Flowers Lake.

Senior Qingyan, Ku Wu Chang, and the elder from the Law Enforcement Hall bowed in respect.

Baizhi ignored them all. She looked at the only surviving member of the convoy.

“Are you from the Blackheaven Sect?” she asked.

“Y-Yes,” said the young man who was in the Golden Core Realm.

“Go back to your sect and tell your people to show some sincerity next time. If not, don’t dare approach this sect at all. You’ll be thrown into the Lawless

Tower with no chance of escape if you pull something like this again. Leave.” The person scrambled away from the Heavenly Note Sect.

Baizhi looked at Senior Qingyan and the others. “Sect Master isn’t out of seclusion yet, but the twelve branches shouldn’t stoop lower in her absence. Those who refuse will have to abdicate, or I’ll help them fall from power.” Baizhi then turned around and left.

Jiang Hao was stunned. He hadn’t expected this outcome even in his wildest dream.

“Was it Elder Baizhi who did that?” he asked.

“Do you really think so, Junior Brother Jiang?” asked Liu Xingchen.

Jiang Hao shook his head. It didn’t seem like it. Senior Qingyan and the others wouldn’t have been that terrified if it was Elder Baizhi.

There was only one other person in the Heavenly Note Sect who was more terrifying than Elder Baizhi herself.

That was the Sect Master. The Heavenly Note Demoness..