

Battle Through the Heavens #Chapter 301: Sudden Appearance of a Dou Huangs Presence - Read Battle Through the Heavens Chapter 301: Sudden Appearance of a Dou Huangs Presence

Chapter 301: Sudden Appearance of a Dou Huang's Presence

"Did you purposefully act so intimate with me to turn me into a shield to block that fellow?" Xiao Yan suddenly said with a faint smile as he and Ya Fei came to a stop near the entrance to the hall.

"I'm sorry..." Having her intention exposed by Xiao Yan, Ya Fei's pretty face became bright red as she softly apologized, "I have really become afraid of his pestering. He won't leave when he is beaten up, he won't listen when I lecture him, so I can only do it this way..."

"You... you aren't angry, are you?" Ya Fei looked at Xiao Yan and timidly asked. Although acting like this could help her extricate herself, it ended up resulting in the innocent Xiao Yan being hated by Mu Zhan without reason.

"Anyways, it's not the first time that I experienced this..." Xiao Yan smiled bitterly and shook his head.

Hearing this, Yan Fei pursed up her red lips and smiled gently. However, she did not dare to speak, resulting in the atmosphere between the two of them to pleasantly become silent.

"*Cough*... why don't you go and walk around. I need to go and help Grandfather Nalan to complete today's poison removing session." A long while later, Xiao Yan coughed softly and in an offhanded manner, lifted a cup of red wine from the silver plate a female servant was carrying passed. He tasted it a little before randomly pressing it into Ya Fei's hand. With a smile, he then walked toward the side door of the hall.

Standing in the original spot, Ya Fei saw Xiao Yan off with her eyes. She gently shook the bright red wine within the wine cup. Under the reflection of the wine, her lovely face became even more red and more enchanting.

Ya Fei lifted the wine cup and headed out of the hall. She stood beside a pillar and shook the wine cup. As she recalled the aggressive and imposing manner that Xiao Yan had in the fight earlier, she become a little confused. It had only been over a year since they last saw each other. The innocent young man back then had actually transformed into one who had such confidence.

“Ya Fei, what are you thinking about?” An old laughter suddenly sounded behind her. Primer Tengshan then walked over with a smile and asked.

“Ah? It’s nothing.” Having her thoughts interrupted, Ya Fei was shocked and hurriedly replied.

“Ha ha...” Primer Tengshan smiled and slowly walked forward. He spoke with a deeper meaning in his words, “What do you think of that little fellow, Yan Xiao?”

“He’s not bad.” Hearing the words he said, Ya Fei’s comment immediately left her mouth. Quickly following it, however, she appeared to have sensed something and hurriedly stopped her mouth. Her eyes stared at Primer Tengshan and softly asked, “What is the meaning of First Elder’s words?”

“Haha, if you feel that he is satisfactory, you can become a little more bold. I don’t have any intention of opposing...” Primer Tengshan smiled and said.

Hearing the meaning behind his words, a bright red color immediately stained her cheeks, as though she was a drunk person from having too much wine. She waved her hand and hurriedly said, “First Elder, I don’t have those kinds of feelings for Yan Xiao. He is just an ordinary friend of mine.”

“If you don’t have feelings, you can cultivate them...” Primer Tengshan smiled and said with a deeper meaning, “You should also know that as a member of a large clan like us, there is seldom any wedding agreement where both parties are willing. The clan is focused on interest. If one can find a person whom you don’t dislike and the clan doesn’t oppose, that is a very fortunate thing.”

“I will tell you something that will cause you to be quite sad. Before the appearance of Yan Xiao, if the clan’s internal elders were to vote to choose the person most suitable for you, I’m afraid that it would have been likely for Mu Zhan to receive the most of votes. This is because from the two large clan’s prospective, a marriage is something that benefits both parties...”

Hearing this, Ya Fei’s hand that was holding the wine cup suddenly tightened.

“Ah.” Following Ya Fei’s reaction, Primer Tengshan sighed. He patted her shoulder and walked back into the hall.

With her teeth biting on her red lips, Ya Fei lowered her head to eye the red wine in the cup. That face which was enchanting, stunningly creature-like, had at the moment, contained a faint sadness that would break people’s heart.

Ya Fei knew that Primer Tengshan was speaking the truth. Although being born in such a large clan would enable one to obtain a high status and position that countless people yearned for, some things could not be achieved, one would also lose many things at the

same time. She did not have Nalan Yanran's training talent or good luck. Due to her status in the Misty Cloud Sect, the latter could easily escape the restraints that the clan gave her. Therefore back then, she did not have any fear as she went to the Xiao clan to cancel the engagement. Ya Fei also knew that she did not possess such ability.

Ya Fei linked her hands in front of her chest. She gently sat on the stone stairs. The night breeze came one wave after another, causing her heart to feel a little cold.

She lifted her head and eyed the bright moon in the sky. A long while later, Ya Fei's alluring eyes suddenly bent slightly, much like a fox's eyes, flashing both shrewdness and temptation.

"If I don't want to be controlled by the clan then... I can only control the clan..." Ya Fei softly whispered as her pretty eyes stared at the red wine in the cup. Within it, the enchanting and moving reflection appeared to quietly have something change from that moment...

"I don't have the training talent of Nalan Yanran but the Primer clan is a business clan. With my ability, getting to the position of the person in charge does not appear to be too difficult..." Her delicate finger flicked against the wine cup. A clear sound that echoed. Being able to become the person in charge of the Primer Auction House Headquarters at such an age, Ya Fei's talent in business and human resource management was something that could not be doubted.

After all, this world was not lacking people who had thousands or tens of thousands of loyal strong people as their subordinates despite not having even the strength to slaughter a chicken.

Hearing the clear sound, a faint arc formed on the corner of Ya Fei's mouth. She was enchanting and moved with a natural charm. At this moment, she was undoubtedly even more beautiful compared to before.

Just as an unknown thing was sprouting in Ya Fei's heart, a black robe gently covered her from her behind. A familiar gentle voice caused the heart of this woman, which was most sensitive at this moment, to secretly move a little.

"The weather is cold. Aren't you afraid of getting sick..."

Ya Fei abruptly turned her head around. She blankly eyed the face which had appeared extremely ordinary after a change in appearance. In her trance-like state, the tip of her nose felt a little sour.

Ya Fei gently sniffed. Her hands pulled at the black robe and her delicate body was squeezed into it. A faint warm feeling shrouded her spirit which had turned cold with one sentence from Primer Tengshan.

Her long eyelashes blinked a little as she smiled and asked, "Have you finished?"

Xiao Yan smiled and nodded, his gaze swept across the enchanting and moving, pretty face. He felt somewhat strange. For some unknown reason, he realized that the current Ya Fei seemed to have something more compared to earlier... moreover... it caused people to be even more reluctant to shift their gazes...

"Are you alright?" Xiao Yan asked doubtfully.

"I'm very well..." Ya Fei blinked her eyes saucily at Xiao Yan as she smiled and said.

"Oh." As he nodded, Xiao Yan lazily let out a yawn. He glanced at the hall which had remained noisy and could not help but shake his head. These people can really endure such a torment...

"Forget it, I cannot take it any longer. I am going back, are you coming?" Xiao Yan yawned once again and randomly asked Ya Fei.

"Ah..." Hearing this, Ya Fei was about to shake her head to reject him. However, when her hand gently stroked the black robe on his body, she hesitated for a moment before nodding her head and agreeing.

Ya Fei stood up. The two of them had just planned to leave when Xiao Yan's somewhat weary expression suddenly changed. He immediately turned his head and eyed the north-west direction of the capital. There were two terrifying presences that had suddenly shot up to the sky.

"Hai Bo Dong? This old fellow has been missing for two days. Why is he fighting with someone? From the other person's Qi, it appears that his strength isn't lower than Hai Bo Dong..." Having fought together with Hai Bo Dong, Xiao Yan was quite familiar with his Qi. Immediately, he managed to identify it. The reason that his expression changed further was that there was another terrifying presence that was not weaker than Hai Bo Dong.

During the time that Xiao Yan was mumbling, two figures abruptly shot out from within the hall. Those two that had immediately appeared in front of Xiao Yan, were Nalan Jie and Primer Tengshan who had similarly sensed something.

Behind Nalan Jie, Mu Zhan, Nalan Yanran and the others also came filing out. Their expressions were filled with shock as they eyed the north-west direction.

"Dou Huang?" Nalan Jie's and Primer Tengshan's expression were filled with seriousness as they eyed each other.

Hearing Nalan Jie's and Primer Tengshan's voices, the faces of Nalan Yanran and the rest became shocked. Dou Huang? People of that level were basically at the peak of the empire. It was unexpected that there would be two of them that suddenly appeared.

"Let's go and take a look."

Nalan Jie and Primer Tengshan spontaneously shot up into the sky. Two pairs of gorgeous Dou Qi wings swiftly agglomerated behind them. After which, they turned into two flowing lights and swiftly flew toward the spot where the aura had erupted from. They could not help but carefully handle this matter where strong people of such class had suddenly appeared in the imperial city.

"Hee hee, let's also go and take a look. Dou Huang..."

Mu Zhan's face let out a fanatic heat as he eyed the spot where Nalan Jie and Primer Tengshan disappeared. His feet stepped off the ground and his body swiftly shot to the roof. Immediately, he became like a grasshopper as he began leaping and charging on the roof of the buildings. Behind him, Nalan Yanran, Liu Ling, and the others exhibited their respective great powers and followed closely.

A fight between Dou Huangs was not something that one could see just because they wanted to...

TL: Something that didn't occur at one's whim

Xiao Yan frowned slightly. Hai Bo Dong was his protective charm while he was making the trips to the Misty Cloud Sect. Therefore, nothing can happen to him before make the final trip. Otherwise, if Xiao Yan had to go to the Misty Cloud Sect, that huge being, alone, it would be something that would cause him quite a headache.

"You remain here and be careful. I will also go over and take a look..." Xiao Yan mused for a moment before turning around and told Ya Fei by the side. The latter also knew the seriousness of the matter and obediently nodded her head. She did not say anything to stop him.

Xiao Yan's feet pressed gently on the ground and leaped up onto the roof in a supple manner. His back trembled slightly as he summoned the Purple Cloud Wings in front of everyone's stunned gazes.

With her red lips opened slightly as she watched Xiao Yan call out the wings, Ya Fei's pretty eyes were filled with disbelief...

The wings flapped and Xiao Yan's body instantly turned into a ray of light. After which, he used all his effort and shot in the north-west direction.

"Dou Qi Transformation Wings?"

When Mu Zhan, who was leaping on the roof, heard the breaking wind sound from behind him, he hurriedly turned his head around to take a look. Immediately, he foolishly watched Xiao Yan who was flapping his wings, swiftly fly passed.

“That fellow is of the Dou Wang class? How can it be?”

Mu Zhan was like an idiot as he stood on the rooftop, eyeing Xiao Yan blankly as the latter disappeared. A long while later, he turned his head around, only to realize that Nalan Yanran and the others behind him also had stunned faces.

“We’ve seen a ghost...” In the dark black night sky, the few young people uncertainly and angrily scolded themselves.

Chapter 302: Linen Robe Jia Lao

In the dark, night sky, two flashes flew past, much like falling stars.

Nalan Jie and Primer Tengshan had faces that were as deep as water. Their gazes stared directly in the distant north-west direction. That place appeared to belong to the tomb of the Imperial Family within the capital. Usually, it was extremely remote. It was entirely unexpected that two Dou Huang would suddenly appear tonight.

“Huh?” During the flight, Primer Tengshan’s expression suddenly changed. His flying speed gradually slowed down. He eyed the flying human figure a short distance away who was following closely behind. With a stunned voice, he said, “This is... Yan Xiao? How can he transform Dou Qi into wings?”

At the time Primer Tengshan turned his head around, Nalan Jie by the side also sensed the movement in the air. When he turned his head around to take a look, shock also surfaced on his old face.

Of course, their hearts may be shocked, but the two of them were after all not of the younger generation like Mu Zhan and the others. Being well informed, they did not forget themselves. Although there was a pair of wings present behind Xiao Yan at the moment, they saw that his Qi still remained merely at the Dou Shi class.

“Old fellow, do you still recall that there was a special kind of Dou Technique that had been lost over the ages?” Tengshan slowed down his speed and eyed Xiao Yan who was swiftly flying over. He then suddenly spoke to Nalan Jie.

“You are saying.. a flying type Dou Technique right?” Nalan Jie was momentarily at a loss before he replied with a sudden understanding.

“Ah, I did not expect that young friend Yan Xiao had such a strong backing. He is even able to get his hands on the long lost flying Dou Technique. Looks like... the teacher or strength behind him has quite a great ability...” Tengshan said with a deeper meaning.

“Yes...” Nalan Jie nodded slightly. The importance that he attached to Xiao Yan could not help but increase greatly.

“Two old sirs, with this slow speed of yours, the fight might be over by the time we arrive.” Xiao Yan flapped his wings and appeared behind the two people in the front as he smiled and said.

“Ke ke, young friend Yan Xiao, you keep causing me to feel surprised. This flying Dou Technique is so rare, yet you are able to get your hands on it. Tsk tsk, you really shock people.” Tengshan laughed.

Hearing that Tengshan had revealed the origin of the wings on his back when he spoke, Xiao Yan was stunned for a moment. He then became at ease. These old fellows had lived for a very long. What they had seen and heard were naturally not something that he, as someone of the younger generation, could compare with. It was natural that they were able to recognize the flying Dou Technique at a glance.

“I had only obtained it coincidentally. It was purely luck.” Xiao Yan smiled. He immediately fondled his chin while facing the north-west direction and said with a smile, “Two sirs, let’s go.” Once he said those words, he flapped his wings slightly, took the lead and charged over.

“Ke ke, alright.” Nalan Jie and Primer Tengshan smiled and nodded. The wings on their backs were flapped as they closely followed behind Xiao Yan.

Not long after the three of them disappeared into the night sky, Mu Zhan and the others far behind finally appeared feeling a little out of breath. They watched the three blurry lights on the horizon and could not help but shake their heads. The speed of those who possessed a pair of wings was really unmatched.

As they grew increasingly close to the place where the breaths had erupted, Primer Tengshan frowned slightly. A long while later, he suddenly asked with hesitation to Xiao Yan, “This Qi... why does it appear a little like Old Hai’s?”

Hai Bo Dong had lived in isolation for decades and had only recently returned to the capital. Due to being far away earlier, Primer Tengshan had not been able to immediately identify it. Now that they were closer, he finally realized that this Qi was a little familiar.

“Haha, yes, it is indeed Old Hai.” Xiao Yan smiled and nodded.

“Old Hai?” Hearing the conversation of the two of them, Nalan Jie’s shrivelled face could not help but twitch slightly. A moment later, he finally could not resist and he asked Primer Tengshan, “Old fellow, you recognize one of these two Dou Huangs’ presence?”

Hearing this, a pleased expression appeared on Primer Tengshan's face. He mysteriously said, "Hee hee. you'll know about it in a little while..." Once he said it, he smiled at Xiao Yan. The speed of the two of them rose once again. After which, they moved toward the spot where the Qis erupted.

Nalan Jie anxiously watched the two people in front of him. His eyebrows were knit together slightly as he muttered, "What is that fellow doing? Is he really acquainted with the owner of that Qi?"

After muttering doubtfully for a moment, Nalan Jie, who learned nothing, could only helplessly shake his head. He flapped his wings and hurriedly followed.

As they gradually drew closer to the spot where the breath was erupted from, Xiao Yan's three man group also reduced their speeds. They looked at each other before stopping in the sky outside the huge tomb. Their expressions were serious as they eyed the two large clusters of light in the middle of the tomb.

The two clusters of light were white and yellow respectively. Those two terrifying Qis were also emitted from these two clusters of light. The two clusters of light flashed and soared in an agile manner. At the middle of the cluster of light, two human figures appeared and disappeared.

Each time the two light clusters made contact, they would emit a incomparably ferocious energy ripple. Under this energy ripple, even Xiao Yan's three man group some distance away could not help but feel a stuffiness in their hearts.

The dark black night appeared to have been expelled from this region in the air above the tombs. The bright manner was like daytime.

The white colored light cluster carried an icy cold force that was unmatched. Each time the energy fluctuated, the water vapor in the surrounding air around the cluster of white colored light would instantly agglomerate into cold ice.

The yellow colored cluster of light was different from the white colored cluster of light. It faintly had a thick sturdy feeling like that of the land. Although the attacks from the white colored light cluster were extremely sharp, they were completely and easily dodged by him. Seeing the movement which had not sign of hesitation, it was obvious that the attack of the other party did not pose much of a threat to him.

"Ha ha, old man ice. I didn't expect that after not seeing you for decades, your strength had decreased instead of increased. Back then, even I had to fear your ice cold attacks a little. But now, the threat has been greatly reduced." There was a violent collision once again and an old loud laughter was emitted from within the yellow colored cluster of light.

“Humph. Old Demon. You have also not made much progress during these years. If you were to count your age, you appear to have reached your limit. If you cannot break through, I’m afraid that your end is coming. When that time comes, the Jia Ma Empire royalty which has lost your protection will no longer be this comfortable!” From within the white cluster of light, a snort that Xiao Yan was familiar with was emitted.

“Hee hee... the old me still has a very long time to live... why would I so easily... fall.” The old voice faintly laughed from within the yellow colored light cluster. Although these words were calm, it was not difficult for Xiao Yan and the others to hear some seriousness from within it.

“Che, I don’t think you believe those words of yours...”

“Ice Emperor?” Hearing this title that was once extremely prominent within the Jia Ma Empire, Nalan Jie was blank for a moment. He immediately widened his eyes, watched that Primer Tengshan who was smiling proudly and let out an involuntary cry, “Ice Emperor? That is Hai Bo Dong? He is actually still alive?”

“Hee hee, why would Old Hai fall so easily? It is just that he lived outside in isolation for a few decades.” Primer Tengshan smiled and said. The shocked manner of Nalan Jie caused him to feel extremely pleased.

Hearing the words of Primer Tengshan that did not deny his hypothesis, Nalan Jie’s expression immediately became a little volatile. He was naturally extremely clear of the relationship between Hai Bo Dong and the Primer clan. Back then, when the position of the head of the Primer clan was empty for a long while, it was Hai Bo Dong who had been supporting this clan which had a long history. Under his management, this clan, did not end up declining at a time when it had no leader.

Currently, the strength of the three large clans were not far apart from each other. This, however, was excluding the Hai Bo Dong factor. A strong person of the Dou Huang class was sufficient to instantly raise the entire clan’s strength by a couple of times. The Primer clan which possessed a Dou Huang would not only be able to easily surpass the other two clans, but would also be able to alarm the Jia Ma Empire’s imperial family with its strength...

This was because the last time there was a political change in the Jia Ma Empire, the Jia Ma Empire imperial family back then was coincidentally also a huge clan within the last empire. Therefore, the imperial family had always been extremely alert within the shadows when it came to these large clans within the empire.

“This time around, things are a little troublesome...” Nalan Jie bitterly laughed as he muttered before finally sighing. He then shifted his gaze toward the tomb. Although things had become a little troublesome, Nalan Jie was not overly worried about this. There were always policies and measures to counter any issue. Even if Hai Bo Dong had once again returned to the Primer clan, the Nalan clan also had quite a good

relationship with the Misty Cloud Sect due to Nalan Yanran. If they found themselves on opposing ends over a matter, even Hai Bo Dong would definitely not dare to randomly offend the Nalan clan and the Misty Cloud Sect.

This matter was also something that Primer Tengshan also understood. Therefore, he had only appeared pleased on the surface. He really did not have the boldness to do anything to the Nalan clan.

“Hearing their conversation, within that yellow colored light cluster should be the imperial family’s Jia Lao, right?” Nalan Jie voiced his thoughts.

“Yes. Other than that old fellow, there should not be anyone else who would dare to speak in such a manner to Old Hai.” Primer Tengshan smiled and nodded.

“After all the hassle, it seems that they are only sparring... they really made us worry over nothing.” Seeing that there was no struggle to the death as he had expected, Xiao Yan sighed in relief and helplessly said with a bitter smile.

“Young friend Yan Xiao, do you also know Old Hai?” Nalan Jie saw Xiao Yan’s expression and could not help but ask.

“Hee hee, it was really thanks to little brother Yan Xiao that Old Hai can return. Therefore, young friend Yan Xiao is also our Primer clan benefactor.” On one side, Primer Tengshan smiled and interrupted. His words purposefully described the relationship between Xiao Yan and the Primer clan as being very close.

Hearing this, Nalan Jie’s expression changed slightly, but it quickly recovered to its natural state. He went along with the situation and smiled again. The more he looked at Xiao Yan, the more he realized that this fellow was a mystery. This fellow was even able to come into contact with a Dou Huang. “What exactly is his identity?”

During the time that the three of them were conversing, the fight in the tomb area had also reached the end. Mu Zhan and the others were also panting as they appeared outside the tomb area. All of them were like monkeys as they leaped to the top of the trees. They watched Xiao Yan’s three man group which had stopped in the air with envy. After which, their gazes paused on the interior of the tomb area.

“This Qi... it seems to be great-grandfather’s...” Little Princess said in a stunned voice as she frowned slightly and eyed that cluster of yellow colored light.

“Who is the other person? Within the Jia Ma Empire, Dou Huangs can be counted with one’s hands. The only Dou Huang around the capital should only be Sect Leader Yun Yun.” Mu Zhan said with a frown.

“That person isn’t Teacher...” Nalan Yanran took a few breaths to calm down, shook her head and said.

“Then who would it be?” Everyone looked at each other, feeling utterly confused. A strong person of such a class should not have appeared out of nowhere.

“Bang...”

Within the tomb area, the two clusters of light violently clashed. During this clash, the white colored light cluster was clearly at a disadvantage and was forced back for a long distance before coming to a stop.

“Ah, forget it. Let’s stop. Currently, I am indeed no match for you...” Hai Bo Dong admitted defeat somewhat helplessly within the cluster of white light.

“Ke ke, old man ice, your strength has really greatly declined...” The yellow colored cluster of light trembled slightly and the glow was slowly withdrawn. Finally, it revealed a white haired old man wearing a plain linen robe. He eyed Hai Bo Dong with a smile, who had similarly withdraw his aura, and said.

Hai Bo Dong rolled his eyes. He skimmed his lips and said, “Wait for some time. My strength will naturally recover, you need not be overly worried... Additionally, you can cast aside the thing that you are worried about. I have no intention of continuing to manage the Primer clan after my return this time around. Those people in the younger generation will settle everything properly.”

“He he, we are all old already. Why do we want to get involved with matters that give people a headache. If we have time, we can sip tea and roam around. How comfortable.” Hearing Hai Bo Dong’s words, the face of the linen robed old man became much gentler as he smiled and said.

“Che, don’t think that I don’t know what you are worried about...” Hai Bo Dong coldly smiled and said.

The linen robe old man smiled and appeared not to be concerned. He turned his head and threw his sight to Xiao Yan’s group outside the tomb area. With a smile, he said, “Looks like we have disturbed quite a number of spectators tonight.”

The gaze of the linen robe old man swept through the crowd and finally stopped on the Little Princess who was trying to hide herself. He could not help but be stunned. Immediately, he shook his head helplessly.

“He he, Jia Lao, after not seeing you for a few years, you appear to be growing stronger in your old age.” Seeing the linen robe old man looking over, Primer Tengshan and Nalan Jie hurriedly greeted.

“I didn’t expect that I would have alarmed both of you and caused you to hurry over. I’m really sorry. Being older, it seems that I have become more and more willful...” The linen robe old man smiled and nodded.

“Jia Lao really knows how to joke.” Hearing this, Nalan Jie and Primer Tengshan hurriedly accompanied him in laughing.

The old man who was addressed as Jia Lao, swept his gaze across them and finally stopped on Xiao Yan. When his muddled gaze swept across the pair of wings on his back, he was momentarily blank. He then said with surprise, “Eh, this is? Flying Dou Technique? Who is this young fellow?”

“The little me is Yan Xiao. It’s an honor to meet you, Jia Lao...” Xiao Yan bowed his body slightly and smiled softly.

“Tsk tsk, you’re quite good. Being able to possess such a rare Dou Technique at such a young age. Little fellow, you don’t appear to be someone simple.” Jia Lao warmly said with a smile.

“Huh, you have also run over here?” With a flash of white light, Hai Bo Dong appeared in front of Xiao Yan and said with a smile.

“You have been missing for two days. I thought that you had run away...” Xiao Yan rolled his eyes and said.

“Hee hee, how can it be... it is just that this old demon saw me. He was afraid that I would do something that would damage the stability of the empire. After which, he pulled me aside and taught me a lesson.” Hai Bo Dong ridiculed.

“You, this fellow...” Hearing these words, Jia Lao could only helplessly shake his head.

“Old man ice, this little friend, is he your disciple? It seems that his talent is quite good.” Jia Lao’s old experienced gaze watched Xiao Yan. When he saw the tone that the two used to converse with each other, Jia Lao smiled and asked.

Hearing this, not only did Mu Zhan and the rest instantly straighten their ears, even Nalan Jie also secretly threw his gaze over. He also really wanted to know what exactly the relationship between Xiao Yan and this person who was formerly the Ice Emperor.

Hearing Jia Lao’s words, Hai Bo Dong was at a loss. Immediately, he laughed out loud and patted Xiao Yan’s shoulders. However, the words he said caused the faces of everyone, including that Jia Lao, to be completely stunned.

“My disciple? Ha ha, I also want it to be so. Unfortunately, I don’t have that qualification...”

Chapter 303: Jia Lao’s Strength

“Not qualified?”

Some shock surfaced on Jia Lao's gentle old face. He immediately turned a strange gaze toward Xiao Yan. With Hai Bo Dong's Dou Huang class strength, he actually said that he was not qualified to be this little fellow's teacher? Did he really have such great potential?

Under the night sky, Nalan Yanran and the others could only speechlessly watch the laughing Hai Bo Dong. After they were dumbstruck for a while, they treated these words of Hai Bo Dong as a joke. In this Jia Ma Empire, if a Dou Huang were to release news that he wanted to accept disciples, there would be an unknown number of people with outstanding talent swarming over quickly to fight for the spot. Being able to become the disciple of a Dou Huang basically represented that one possessed the capability to become a strong person.

"Haha, Old Hai is just joking. Jia Lao, please don't mind him. It's just that the little me already has a teacher and naturally cannot switch to someone else so carelessly." Xiao Yan shook his head as he said with a smile.

By his side, Hai Bo Dong was silent. Back then, despite having recovered his Dou Huang strength, Xiao Yan still gave him an extremely dangerous feeling. Later on, the terrifying level of the 'Angry Buddha Lotus Flame' that Xiao Yan had displayed when fighting with the two mysterious Dou Huangs caused Hai Bo Dong's fear of him to grow even more.

Although Xiao Yan's current strength had appeared to have greatly declined since he displayed the 'Angry Buddha Lotus Flame's power, within Hai Bo Dong's heart, Xiao Yan was almost a strong person that was of his equal or even one that surpassed him. Therefore, when he heard Jia Lao ask if Xiao Yan was his disciple, he could not help but laugh involuntarily and reply in this manner.

Hearing this, Jia Lao smiled slightly. His gaze swept across Hai Bo Dong's face without leaving any trace. His heart become increasingly shocked. With his knowledge of Hai Bo Dong, he naturally knew that the latter's character would seldom joke in such a manner.

"Don't tell me that what he said is the truth?" Jia Lao muttered softly in his heart and could not help but asked, "Young friend Yan Xiao, may I know the name of your teacher? Perhaps the old me is acquainted with him."

"Haha, I'm sorry, Jia Lao. Before I came out, teacher had told me not to reveal his name since he likes to keep a low profile and has been living deep in the mountains all his life. I think that Jia Lao may have never heard of him." Xiao Yan said apologetically.

"Ke ke, it doesn't matter. There are many strong people who have unique characters. I have also met some strong people that live in isolation and know of their indifferent character." Jia Lao smiled and shook his head. His heart still had some doubt regarding Xiao Yan's words. Being able to let Hai Bo Dong say those words was a treatment that

even Jia Lao himself had never received. Therefore, Yan Xiao's teacher should be someone who was stronger than Hai Bo Dong or even himself...

Although the Jia Ma Empire was vast enough where it was not surprising for countless of strong people to live in isolation deep within the mountains, as the guardian of the empire's imperial family, Jia Lao was able to borrow the empire's ability and vaguely learn about some of the strong people that lived in isolation within the Jia Ma Empire. However, he had really never heard of any place where there was someone living in isolation who corresponded to the legendary class strong person that he had imagined.

With their bodies suspended in midair, Nalan Jie and Primer Tengshan secretly exchanged glances. They could naturally sense that Hai Bo Dong's words were not a joke. If it was true, then the teacher behind Yan Xiao... would have a strength that was terrifyingly strong...

"Luckily I did not become enemies with him..." As the two of them exchanged glances, they managed to spot the rejoiceful emotion within each other. As the person in charge of their own clan, they clearly knew just what kind of terrifying power the strong people of such a class possessed.

"Alright, alright. It is already quite late. Everyone should go back." Hai Bo Dong lifted his head, eyed the silver moon that was gradually descending. He let out a yawn, clapped his hand and said.

"Ke ke, young friend Yan Xiao should also be attending tomorrow's Alchemist Grand Meeting, right?" Jia Lao nodded his head and randomly asked.

"Yes." Xiao Yan smiled and nodded. Jia Lao's name was something that he had heard a couple of times from Hai Bo Dong. When he was fighting with the two mysterious Dou Huangs just outside Yan City back then, he had also heard the title 'Old Demon' from the two of them. In the Jia Ma Empire, he was the only one known to be able to contend with Queen Medusa. Therefore, the current Xiao Yan who did not have Yao Lao to protect him was extremely fearful of this Jia Lao. When he spoke, he was extremely courteous and cautious.

As he recalled Queen Medusa, Xiao Yan's hand involuntarily rubbed the 'Seven Colored Heaven Swallowing Python' who was quietly sleeping in Xiao Yan's sleeve. Luckily, this little fellow was born with the knowledge to perfectly hide its Qi. Otherwise, it would definitely be discovered by strong people like the Old Demon and Hai Bo Dong.

"Ah, this little fellow is also an unstable bomb..." Xiao Yan smiled bitterly and shook his head. Just thinking of Queen Medusa's icy manner, his heart began to palpitate. This woman may be bewitching to the point of being intoxicating to people, but when she killed people, it was as easy and neat as killing a chicken. Xiao Yan believed that had he not promised Queen Medusa to help her obtain that so called 'Thawing Spirit Pill'

medicinal formula this time around, she would definitely take his little life the next time she woke up.

“It seems I face restrictions everywhere when Teacher is not around. Looks like I need to hurry up and get my hands on the Nalan clan’s ‘Seven Magical Green Spirit Saliva’. Otherwise, it is really uncomfortable having my life molded in someone else’s hand...” Xiao Yan smiled bitterly and shook his head. After losing Yao Lao, he finally realized that his situation was actually very dangerous.

“Ke ke, that thing is the stage for young people to compete. Tomorrow, I may go and take a look and see how many outstanding people that even Old Man Hai cannot stop praising.” Jia Lao smiled and turned his gaze to the top of that huge tree. He said faintly, “Little Yue-er, it is already so late, yet you are still blindly muddling along outside. You better follow me back.”

“Yes...” Hearing Jia Lao’s words, the Little Princess who had usually appeared quirky could only helplessly give a reply. She then obediently came forward. Jia Lao beckoned with his hand and a suction force pulled her to his side where she was suspended without moving.

“Niece Yanran, Liu Ling boy, help me send my regards when you see your Teachers.” Carrying the Little Princess with one hand, Jia Lao smiled toward Nalan Yanran and Liu Ling. Immediately, his gaze was thrown at Mu Zhan, whose face was filled with respect. He said with another smile, “Little fellow from the Mu clan. Have you returned? This time around, you better be still and quiet. Otherwise, you will have to be expelled out again.”

“Definitely.” Hearing this, Mu Zhan’s head nodded like a little chicken feeding on grain. In front of this old demon whom Mu Zhan had to respectfully greet upon sight, his arrogant and imposing manner no longer remained.

Seeing that they were about to disband, Xiao Yan lifted his head. He cupped his fist together at Nalan Jie and Primer Tengshan before facing Hai Bo Dong and asking, “Shall we go?”

“Ah, let’s go.” Hai Bo Dong lazily nodded his head. He only said his goodbyes to Jia Lao. As for Nalan Jie and Primer Tengshan, they were simply ignored by him. The pair of icy wings gradually surfaced. He flapped them, carrying a cold wind as he disappeared into midair.

“Ke ke, Jia Lao, goodbye.” Xiao Yan smiled at Jia Lao. The pair of wings on his back were flapped and he turned into a ray of light which followed Hai Bo Dong in front of him.

Seeing Xiao Yan and Hai Bo Dong leaving, Jia Lao also did not remain any longer. Carrying the Little Princess with one hand, his pale-yellow colored Dou Qi wings

flapped. With a 'xiu' sound, he disappeared from sight, leaving only a faint laughter that lingered in midair.

"Everyone, please scatter..."

In the night sky, two rays of light swiftly flashed and disappeared.

"Hey, you didn't leak out any information regarding me, did you?" Xiao Yan, who was following closely behind Hai Bo Dong, suddenly said.

"No... I know that you want to hide your identity. I did not mention even the slightest bit regarding you to that Old Demon. You don't need to worry." Hai Bo Dong shook his head and said.

"Try your best to keep it a secret. For the Misty Cloud Sect to survive in the Jia Ma Empire for so many years, it is likely that they have quite a good relationship with the imperial family. We must be careful." Xiao Yan sighed.

"Have your injuries not recovered yet?" Hai Bo Dong nodded before abruptly asking.

The tip of Xiao Yan's heart jumped. His face remained unchanged as he nodded slightly and said, "That thing is really too terrifying. The aftermath is really too serious... but I think it should be soon. As long as I get my hands on the 'Seven Magical Green Spirit Saliva', I should be able to recover."

"Back then I had already told you not to be so impulsive, yet you insisted on doing that crazy act of merging two 'Heavenly Flames'..." Hai Bo Dong helplessly shook his head and said, "That Old Demon's strength has increased to much greater heights. Back then when I exchanged blows with him, I was entirely at a disadvantage. I think that the current him should be around an eight star or even nine star Dou Huang. Ah... if he has the luck, he might be able... to break through the barrier and become a Dou Zong."

"He's that strong?" Although Xiao Yan had already anticipated this in his heart, he still could not help but be shocked when he heard Hai Bo Dong admit it.

"That's right... due to the relationship between me and the Primer clan, that fellow had always been very attentive toward me. He's afraid that I would take advantage of the situation and overthrow their Jia Ma Empire imperial family. Yesterday, I accidentally allowed him to discover my Qi. From his words, he says that he wants to spar with me but does he really think I am a fool? Isn't he clearly trying to display his strength and scare me off. That old man really won't die." Hai Bo Dong scolded.

"He won't be an obstacle to our matter, will he?" Xiao Yan frowned slightly and softly asked.

“That won’t happen. Didn’t you see that the old fellow had also begun to be a little afraid of you? Uh, or perhaps I should say that he is afraid of the teacher behind you that doesn’t exist. As long as your strength has not been exposed, he would not dare to touch you in any way.” Hai Bo Dong voiced his thoughts.

TL: Kinda confusing since Hai Bo Dong says that Xiao Yan had a lie in the raws. What I think it’s referring to is Xiao Yan’s lack of strength.

“Therefore, you need to quickly recover your strength. As long as you recover your strength, we don’t need to be too worried of that Old Demon.”

“I will do my best. However, if he goes overboard, then I will throw an ‘Angry Buddha Lotus Flame’ at the capital even if I have to endure serious injuries...” Xiao Yan shrugged his shoulders and said in a casual manner.

“Uh... you lunatic...” Hearing this, Hai Bo Dong opened his mouth. A long while later, he finally bitterly choked out a sentence. After which, he no longer dared to say anything.

Seeing that Hai Bo Dong had become quiet, Xiao Yan smiled and twisted his neck. In his heart, he softly muttered, “Tomorrow is the Alchemist Grand Meeting. Ah, I better get my hands on that ‘Thawing Spirit Pill’ medicinal formula first. Before I go to the Misty Cloud Sect, I need to first calm Queen Medusa, this female fiend...”

Chapter 304: Fa Ma, Yao Ye. The Grand Meeting Begins!

The next day, there were no clouds in the blue sky for tens of thousands of kilometers. The sunlight was warm, yet not overbearing. The occasional breeze that brushed past carried away the noise within the city, causing one to feel very refreshed.

Today there was a great event within the Jia Ma Empire. The Alchemist Grand Meeting would begin today.

The moment the first rays of sunlight broke through the boundary of the land and shone upon the city that had a rich history, groups of human figures in long alchemist robes began to appear on the quiet streets.

These people who had an occupation that was highly regarded were usually seldomly seen en masse. Due to their great strength and their incomparable importance, alchemists appeared to be somewhat mysterious and revered in ordinary people’s hearts. Today, these alchemists of high status were like ants leaving their nest, repeatedly swarming out from the various resting places in the capital. Although the paths they took differed, their final destination was that ancient looking alchemist association that stood in the center of the city.

Today, all the shops within the Jia Ma Sacred City were opened much earlier than usual. Countless people climbed out of their warm beds, stood at the door and eyed the

large group of alchemists bustling through the streets. Their gazes were filled with heat and respect.

The Alchemist Grand Meeting during these few days would be the Jia Ma Sacred City's most lively and fiery period of the entire year...

The alchemists that were usually rarely seen, came out from all directions today and appeared at a scale similar to a military unit. This kind of majestic scene was something that people only had the luck to see during the Alchemist Grand Meeting...

On this special day, Xiao Yan had also woken up very early. He sat cross legged on the bed and quietly readjusted his condition for an hour. When his body had achieved its peak condition, he finally slowly opened his eyes.

Xiao Yan lazily twisted his body. He heard some crackling sounds within his body. With a slight smile, he came down from the bed and walked out of the inner hall. At one glance, he saw Hai Bo Dong who was by the window side.

"You're awake? Today the number of alchemists appearing in the Jia Ma Sacred City will likely reach a frightening number. It is indeed worthy of being the Alchemist Grand Meeting. Only this kind of great event can summon all of the alchemists within the empire." Hai Bo Dong's gaze eyed the street where alchemists were repeatedly flashing past. He could not help but click his tongue and praise.

"Alchemists are also people. They also need the honor and approval... this Alchemist Grand Meeting will be their best stage." Xiao Yan poured a cup of tea for himself, sipped a little and said with a faint smile.

Hai Bo Dong turned his body around, stared at Xiao Yan, with a smile he asked, "Actually, I am very curious. With your ability, you would actually be thinking of participating in the Alchemist Grand Meeting. Although this kind of Grand Meeting is rarely seen, it does not quite suit your ability, does it?"

Xiao Yan smiled, lifted his teacup with both hands and said softly, "I don't have a choice. Who asked this Grand Meeting's Champion prize to be something that interests me. That 'Thawing Spirit Pill' medicinal formula will be very useful to me..."

"Although you are not an alchemist, I think you should also know what kind of alluring ability a medicinal formula has toward an alchemist. That tier six medicinal formula has an attractiveness that would not be lower than a Di Class Dou Technique..."

Hai Bo Dong helplessly shook his head, smacked his lips and said, "With your ability, participating in this Grand Meeting is just like a Dou Huang charging into the competition ground of a group of Dou Zhe."

“You really overestimate me...” Xiao Yan shook his head slightly and said with a smile, “If it was before I have displayed the ‘Angry Buddha Lotus Flame’, becoming the champion of the Grand Meeting would be as easy as flipping one’s hand. Although, now... my spirit is damaged and my strength is much weaker than before. And the most important thing when refining medicinal pill is Spiritual Strength. Therefore, I don’t have absolute confidence in winning the Grand Meeting that I am participating in this time around.”

“Uh... it can’t be that serious right? If an alchemist grandmaster who can refine a tier six medicinal pill was to really lose in this kind of competition to the younger generation, then...” Hai Bo Dong’s expression was strange as he eyed Xiao Yan and said.

“That would really be embarrassing, right?”

Xiao Yan smiled and continued. He stood up and said, “If I don’t even possess this little bit of mental fortitude, then how would I go and pursue the long alchemist road?”

“Alright, it is nearly about time. Let’s go...” Xiao Yan placed the teacup down. He smiled, turned around and walked out of the door. Behind him, Hai Bo Dong helplessly shook his head and could only follow.

They walked out of the room and climbed down the stairs of the inn. The tier two alchemist robe on Xiao Yan’s body attracted many eyes, but Xiao Yan was not very concerned about these things. His gaze randomly swept past a couple of alchemists who were passing by the door. After which, he slowly walked out.

As he walked on the street, those curious respectful gazes that were repeatedly shot at him caused Xiao Yan to purse up his lips. The corner of his mouth contained a slight smile.

On the two sides of the spacious street, young ladies with curvaceous and slim figures softly laughed melodiously. They threw their shy and worshipful gazes towards those alchemists walking on the street. For these young ladies who belonged to the age where they were filled with tricks and delusions, the mysterious and deep alchemists were like magnets that tightly attracted their gazes.

In this era, alchemists had an easier time letting these young ladies fall in love than with those princes in fairy tales. From this, one could tell just what kind of prestigious status an alchemist had in the continent where Dou Qi was most respected.

The city permeated with liveliness and enthusiasm, washing away the rigorous and solemn aura until nothing was left. Feeling the passion within the city, Xiao Yan’s calm heart had also begun to secretly beat faster. No matter how outstanding his mental strength was, he was after all still a young person. As long as one was a young person, one’s heart would be frivolous and wild. The thing about young people that others were

envious of, was them striving forth energetically, persevering untiringly until they succeeded.

Xiao Yan walked slowly toward the alchemist association. His gaze would occasionally sweep past those alchemists that had passed by him. In his heart, he muttered in surprise, "Looks like the people that the Grand Meeting attracted are not weak. Not only have the peak alchemists in the empire swarmed over, many from other countries have come. I wonder if there will be a dark horse from another country that might suddenly appear during the Grand Meeting... if that is the case, then this will be a little fun."

Although Xiao Yan's heart thought such malice thoughts, his face did not reveal any of it on the surface. He slowly passed through a few streets, lifted his head and eyed the ancient association that stood at the edge of his sight. He sighed gently, turned around and glanced at Hai Bo Dong who was leisurely following behind him. After which, he lifted his leg and walked toward the association.

After entering the association, Xiao Yan could not help but shake his head helplessly when he saw the association's entrance that appeared to have been completely blocked. He pushed his way into the human crowd. His body was like a fish entering the sea, passing through the crowds in a strange manner.

After undergoing Yao Lao's dodge ability training in the Magical Beast Mountain Range, Xiao Yan managed to save quite a lot of trouble in such a situation now.

As his body swayed slightly, Xiao Yan arrived at the front of the crowd and released a long sigh of relief as he finally entered the front gate of the Alchemist Association. His pupils constricted as he turned his head to look around and saw Hai Bo Dong, who looked as if he was sleepwalking, closely following him.

"Truly worthy of being a Dou Huang, accompanying me so closely yet I was still unable to detect him even slightly..." Xiao Yan secretly admired him in his heart as he entered the Alchemist Association and strolled around the hall. He was just about to enter the east zone when he actually ran into Ao Tuo and his group, who were surprised to see him. They immediately started to laugh.

"Come with me little guy, the venue of the Grand Meeting is not inside the Alchemist Association..." Ao Tuo said with a smile as he patted Xiao Yan's shoulder.

Xiao Yan smiled and nodded as he greeted Frank as well as both of the Xue and Mei girls.

"Little guy, this time our Black Rock City's Association has come to see you. Be sure not to lose to that Liu Ling." Frank smiled and said. He had a lot of confidence in Xiao Yan since the previous internal tests.

"Hehe, I'll try."

Xiao Yan smiled. He suddenly saw Ao Tuo staring with surprise at Hai Bo Dong, and introduced, "Master Ao Tuo, This is a friend of mine, Hai Bo Dong..."

"Oh... ke ke, how are you? Black Rock City's Ao Tuo, Frank..." Ao Tuo and Frank smiled and nodded. Due to Hai Bo Dong having lived in isolation for a few decades, the both of them were not too familiar with the name Hai Bo Dong. They only vaguely felt that the name was a little familiar to the ear. Ao Tuo and Frank were of the Dou Ling class and as alchemists, their Spiritual Strength was much higher than those of the same class. Therefore, despite being ignorant of the background of the other party, they could faintly sense with their Spiritual Perception that the old man in front of them had something profound and they did not dare to slight him.

"Yes." Hai Bo Dong merely nodded faintly at the polite etiquette of the two of them. His calm manner caused the two of them to be at a loss. Ling Fei, who could not have the slightest imperfection in her eyes, widened her eyes and stared. Just as she was about to shout, she was quickly grabbed by Ao Tuo.

"I'm sorry two grandmasters, Old Hai's character is like that. He has no intention of going against the two of you." Xiao Yan shook his head helplessly. He could only smile slightly and smooth things over. Fortunately, Ao Tuo and Frank were not really concerned. They smiled carelessly and changed the conversation topic. The group conversed and laughed as they walked out of the hall. With Ao Tuo leading the way, they walked out from the back door of the association and headed toward a spot south of the city.

"The location for the Grand Meeting this time around is the Imperial Family's plaza. The size of that place can hold tens of thousands of people, and it completely meets the size needed for this Grand Meeting." As they walked on the street, Ao Tuo smiled and explained, "After an initial estimation, there should be around more than two thousand people participating in this Grand Meeting. This is the greater number of participants compared to the previous few Grand Meetings."

"Over two thousand people..." This number caused Xiao Yan to suck his tongue involuntarily. It should be known that the requirements to become an alchemist were very harsh. Saying that only one in a thousand or even one in ten thousand could become an alchemist was not an exaggeration. The two thousand people currently here may be the gathering of over half the alchemists in the Jia Ma Empire.

"The Grand Meeting is divided into a few examination rounds. Each examination will eliminate quite a number of people. In the later rounds, the examination difficulty becomes much greater. The last person who finally remains will be the final champion..."

"Ah," Xiao Yan nodded his head slightly. Thinking about having over two thousand people simultaneously raising their flames and refining pills in the same open field, Xiao Yan felt a little excited. That spectacular manner was likely to be extremely thrilling.

While he spoke, the imperial family plaza, that Ao Tuo had mentioned early, had gradually appeared in their sight. Xiao Yan raised his eyes and watched. The edge of his sight could actually only see a small portion of the huge plaza.

Currently, there were fully armed soldiers who were stationed outside the plaza to maintain order. This kind of Grand Meeting had gathered strong people from everywhere. If a riot were to occur, the capital would receive a huge blow. Therefore, the imperial family was extremely cautious regarding maintaining order.

There were inspectors from the Alchemist Association stationed at the entrance of the plaza. Only the people from the association and the participants were allowed to enter from this entrance. The entrance to the audience seats was located in another place.

Under Ao Tuo's lead, Xiao Yan and the others did not face the slightest hindrance as they entered the plaza. After walking up a high slope to enter the plaza, that enormous open area was finally completely displayed in Xiao Yan's sight.

Standing at the top of the slope, Xiao Yan eyed that green rock plaza that was large to the point of being ridiculous. He could not help but shake his head and praise.

The plaza was round in shape, with countless seats located on two sides of it. It seemed that those were seats for the audience. Opposite the audience seats, there were VIP seats which were decorated in a much more luxurious manner. These were specially catered for the upper echelons of the association and the heads of those large strengths.

As his gaze swept over the incomparably large open ground, Xiao Yan discovered that thousands of green rock square tables were actually placed openly and neatly in it. These square tables were orderly scattered and were placed extremely precisely. At a glance, they were like a green rock military unit standing still.

Currently, there were already quite a number of alchemists participating in the competition quietly seated cross legged on a rock chair behind the green rock tables within the open ground. As time flowed, moving closer to the time beginning of the competition, more and more alchemists swarmed out from the path and searched for their seats according to the number tag that they had received.

Ao Tuo glanced at the sky as he smiled and said, "Let's go to the VIP seats first. There is still some time until the start of the Grand Meeting. There, you can meet some important people who have significant power. This may be useful to you."

"Ah." Last night, Xiao Yan had already seen even the guardian of the imperial family, the mysterious Jia Lao. Therefore, he did not express an opinion in regards to the people of significant power that Ao Tuo had mentioned. However, it was currently still quite early so he randomly nodded his head.

Seeing that there were no objections, Ao Tuo and Frank took the lead and brought the few of them toward the VIP seats. When they were about to enter the VIP section, Ao Tuo suddenly pointed at the front row. There was already a row of people seated. Among them, there was the deputy chairman of the Alchemist Association, Qie Mi Er. Beside him sat an old man wearing a purple colored alchemist robe.

“That is the chairman of the Jia Ma Empire Alchemist Association, Lord Fa Ma. I have heard that the current him is about to step into the tier six alchemist level. In the alchemist world within the Jia Ma Empire, Lord Fa Ma’s reputation would be about the same when compared to Pill-King Gu He. Even when Gu He meets Lord Fa Ma, he must be a little more courteous. Back then, before Gu He gained fame, Lord Fa Ma had given him quite a lot of care. It would not be overboard to say that he was a patron of Lord Fa Ma...” Ao Tuo softly said.

Note: The lord here is used as a respectful term

“Hei, I didn’t expect that old fellow to still be alive. These old things are more undying than I thought...” Hai Bo Dong narrowed his eyes as he stood beside Xiao Yan. When he heard Ao Tuo making the introductions, he abruptly raised his head. He glanced at the old man and said.

“Oh?”

Xiao Yan’s eyebrows twitched slightly. He eyed that dried tree bark like face of the old man that appeared to be dying. His gaze was somewhat strange. From what he had heard, this old man should be the leader of the Jia Ma Empire’s alchemist world.

The old man with bleary eyes appeared to have sensed the gazes focused on him and suddenly turned his head around. He turned his seemingly perplexed gaze toward Xiao Yan’s side. A friendly smile appeared on the dried skin on his face.

Seeing that old man had turned his head over, Ao Tuo and Frank hurriedly bowed and greeted. after which, they moved along the corridor and carefully walked to the front row. They spoke respectfully to the old man, “Lord Fa Ma, it has been a few years since we last met. You are still filled with the same vigor.”

“Ke ke, it’s Ao Tuo and Frank from the Black Rock City, right? The both of you are quite good. You’ve actually become tier four alchemists in these years. Your progress is quite fast...” The old man who was addressed as Fa Ma swept his turbid gaze at the two of them and laughed softly.

“It’s all because of Lord Fa Ma’s lectures the last time around.” Ao Tuo respectfully smiled and said.

“All that I can speak about is some of my personal experience. The most important thing is depending on yourselves...” Fa Ma smiled and shook his head. He suddenly turned

his gaze toward Xiao Yan behind Ao Tuo. With a friendly smile, he said, "This little friend must be the one who obtained the best result during the association's test this time around, right? His name... seemed to be called Yan Xiao."

"Chairman Fa Ma, This little one is Yan Xiao." Xiao Yan did not dare to slight this person whose reputation in the Jia Ma Empire Alchemy world was greater than Gu He. He bowed and smiled as he replied.

"Haha, most heroes are from the young. At such an age, you can refine the 'Black Iron Spiritual Leaf' so many times. I remember that back then, Gu He, that boy did not have this kind of ability..." Fa Ma's voice was neither hurried nor slow. Although it was a little hoarse, it had a certain magical-like property that did not allow others to interrupt his words.

Xiao Yan calmly smiled, but did not continue to say anything on this topic.

Fa Ma smiled and stared at Xiao Yan, his gaze seemed to have a deeper meaning as he paused on that calm face for a while. Sensing his gaze, Xiao Yan abruptly felt alarmed. "He... don't tell me that he has seen through this disguised appearance?"

Just as Xiao Yan was imagining things in his heart, Fa Ma appeared to have sensed his uneasiness. The latter immediately said softly with a smile, "Little friend, as long as you are not targeting the association, the old me won't be nosy..."

Although Fa Ma's laughter caused the surrounding association elders to feel baffled, Xiao Yan secretly sighed in relief. He threw a thankful gaze at Fa Ma.

"Che, old fellow who won't die. It seems that the longer you live, the more you like talking..." The sudden appearance of a cold laughter, caused the expressions of all those on the VIP seats to change drastically. The expression of Qie Mi Er, who was seated by Fa Ma's side, sank as he cried in a low voice, "Who is it?"

When this cold laughter rang, Xiao Yan helplessly sighed in his heart. Other than Hai Bo Dong who was behind him, who else would be this rude when he spoke?

The cold laughter also caused Fa Ma to be at a loss. Quickly following which, however, he turned his gaze behind Xiao Yan and muttered, "This Qi... it's icy like a cold ice... don't tell me... Old Man Ice?" When he said up to this point, more shock clearly appeared on his face.

"Hee hee, Old Man Fa, I didn't think that you would still remember me. It isn't easy..." The human figure behind Xiao Yan flashed. Hai Bo Dong slowly walked forward under the stunned gazes of Ao Tuo, Xue Mei and the others. He proceeded to directly sit by Fa Ma's side and opened his mouth to laugh.

“You actually haven’t died? Didn’t Queen Medusa end up... doing that to you?” Fa Ma was shocked as he stared at Hai Bo Dong by his side and could not help but question.

“I have luckily survived...” Hai Bo Dong smacked his lips. There was some remaining fear in his eyes as he sighed, “That woman... is really terrifying...”

“You are really a fellow with a tough life... but it is good that you are still alive. At least an old fellow like me will not be too lonely, ha ha...” Fa Ma’s withering tree like face moved as he laughed out loud.

Hearing the conversation between the two of them, those elders of the association who were originally displeased with Hai Bo Dong’s impertinent words immediately shrunk back. According to what Fa Ma had said, this unknown old man was actually a great character who had a humble appearance.

Standing behind Ao Tuo, Ling Fei and Xue Mei were completely stunned as they eyed Hai Bo Dong who was carelessly chatting with Fa Ma to kill time. At this moment, they finally understood that this old man who appeared extremely ordinary was actually a strong person who hid his skills.

“This fellow, why is it that all those he befriends are people of such a level?” The two girls exchanged glances before turning their strange gazes toward the Xiao Yan by the side, who was shaking his head helplessly.

The familiarity between Hai Bo Dong and Fa Ma clearly caused Ao Tuo and Frank to be startled. Some time later, Ao Tuo, who had recovered, suddenly had his expression change slightly. He softly muttered, “Hai Bo Dong? Hai Bo Dong? The Ice Emperor of the Ten Strong back then... seemed to be called by this name right?”

As he thought this in his heart, Ao Tuo tilted his head and exchanged glances with Frank. They could see the shock within each other’s eyes. They did not expect that this kind of antique level person would still be alive. Moreover, his relationship with Xiao Yan did not appear to be a simple one...

“This little fellow hides really deeply...” Just like Xue Mei and Ling Fei, Ao Tuo and Frank also stared at Xiao Yan with strange eyes. In their hearts, they were uncertain why a young man who had stepped into the alchemist world not long ago was actually able to get to know such a strong person.

Xiao Yan stood on the same spot and could only helplessly endure the numerous strange gazes. He suddenly realized that Hai Bo Dong had said something to Fa Ma who had once again turned toward him. The current Fa Ma was frowning slightly as he swept his gaze over Xiao Yan, seemingly searching for something.

“Why?” Seeing Fa Ma’s manner, Hai Bo Dong could not help but ask in surprise. He had simply mentioned that Xiao Yan’s training talent was not bad, but he did not expect the other party to react like this.

“Haha, for some unknown reason, I seem to sense a Qi of someone I have met before on young friend Yan Xiao...” Fa Ma coughed gently and said somewhat uncertainly.

“Have met before?” Xiao Yan blinked his eyes. There was a change in his heart as he muttered, “Don’t tell me that he sensed Queen Medusa’s presence?”

“Ke ke, perhaps I have sensed wrongly. When one is old, one tends to hallucinate more...” When Fa Ma sensed again, he did not have the same feeling as before. Fa Ma shook his head with some disappointment. He leaned against the chair, appearing a little absent minded as he entered a trance while his memory played...

Back then, when Fa Ma was still young, he had coincidentally met an old man, whose ability was unfathomable, while he was roaming the continent. Due to some reason, the old man and Fa Ma lived together for three days. During those three days, the old man casually imparted some things to him. However, Fa Ma benefitted greatly from those things. By borrowing what the old man had taught, the originally unknown Fa Ma returned to the Jia Ma Empire and advanced step by step until this stage today. It was also because he had reached this step that Fa Ma increasingly realized just how terrifying the ability of that mysterious old man back then was...

The vague Qi that he sensed on Xiao Yan a moment ago was quite similar to the one that the old man back then had... it was the reason that Fa Ma had abruptly lost himself.

Since Xiao Yan had guilty conscious, he did not dare to pursue this topic. However, when he was about to change topic, an old laughter was emitted from a passageway in the middle of the seats, “Ke ke, old man Hai, Young friend Yan Xiao, you have arrived quite early.”

Hearing the laughter, everyone turned their heads around to take a look. When they saw a white haired old man wearing a simple linen garment, everyone was so shocked that they paled. In their hearts, they asked just what wind had blown over today. Even this old demon had come running about today...

The person who came was naturally Jia Lao, whom Xiao Yan had met last night. The Little Princess also followed closely behind. Today, she was wearing a pale-green alchemist robe that was clearly specially tailored. Her spacious sleeves, had bright silk pulled around them to form a lotus shape. This gave her an elegance that came from nowhere. However, Xiao Yan who clearly knew her character, understood that this young lady, who appeared quiet on the surface, was actually a quirky person.

As his gaze swept past the Little Princess, Xiao Yan discovered that beside her, there was a tall lady wearing a luxurious and brilliant dress. This lady’s face was similar to the

Little Princess but it had an iciness that was not much different from Xue Mei. Moreover, under this iciness, there was actually a majestic and imposing manner that was an edification of the imperial family.

Compared to the cute looking and small sized Little Princess, there was an iciness and matured aura seeping out from all over this lady. As her pretty eyes moved, a temptation naturally appeared.

Xiao Yan's gaze swept passed the two ladies and finally landed on Jia Lao. He bowed and greeted with a smile, "Jia Lao is early too."

Jia Lao smiled and stepped forward. He eyed Hai Bo Dong and Fa Ma before laughing loudly, "I didn't expect that the three of us still had the chance to gather. It really is fate."

"We do indeed have some affinity..." Fa Ma softly smiled and said, "Old Demon, I didn't think that you would actually come to watch the Grand Meeting. I recall that you don't really like this kind of competition."

"I have stayed back for so many decades. It is also good to occasionally come out and take a look..." Jia Lao smiled and turned his head toward Xiao Yan. After which, he pointed at the matured and icy lady behind him and said, "Little Fellow, I think that you already know Yue-er. This is Yue-er's elder sister, Yao Ye. The security and order of the Grand Meeting as well as the fifty thousand soldiers around the Meeting are all under her control."

Hearing this, Xiao Yan felt a shock in his heart. He did not expect that this icy lady in front of him would actually possess such ability. Fifty thousand soldiers. If it was left to him, he would likely make a mess of the situation. However, the orderly and disciplined manner of the soldiers at the front gate just now clearly showed that this woman could easily command them.

"Yao Ye, this is young friend Yan Xiao whom I have mentioned to you. His ability is extraordinary. He is likely the competitor with the most ability to snatch the champion position this time around." Jia Lao pointed at Xiao Yan and smiled as he said to the cold woman behind.

Hearing Jia Lao's evaluation, the Little Princess by the side tooted, secretly muttering something. It was likely that she was not satisfied by these words of Jia Lao.

"Nice to meet you, Mister Yan Xiao."

The pretty eyes of the icy woman stared at Xiao Yan. She gracefully and naturally extended her hand and smiled. The instant she smiled caused some of the descendants of the noble clans around the VIP seats to become absent minded. It was usually very difficult for them to see the usually cold Elder Princess treating people in such a manner.

“Nice to meet you, Princess Yao Ye...” The attitude of the other party was such that Xiao Yan could find no fault with. He smiled and extended his hand and gently held that soft and seemingly boneless hand. He secretly admired in his heart, but on the surface, he simply let go the moment he made contact. He did not let the other party feel any inappropriateness.

“Hopefully, Mister Yan Xiao is able to obtain a satisfactory result during the competition. When that time comes, Yao Ye will personally hold a banquet to celebrate the accomplishments, I hope that Mister Yan Xiao will not refuse.” Yao Ye withdrew her hand and smiled as she said.

“This woman... her methods of roping people over are really quite acute... she will likely be someone extremely great in the future...” Xiao Yan smiled and nodded as his heart felt a little astonished. Even someone of his mental strength, his guard against her had diminished greatly with just a few sentences from Yao Ye during the time that they had made their initial contact.

Seeing that Xiao Yan had nodded, Yao Ye stepped back behind Jia Lao with satisfaction. With her character, she would not have lowered herself and befriended Xiao Yan in such a manner had her great-grandfather not given this young man such a high evaluation.

“Although, if he really possesses the potential that great-grandfather described, then it is worthwhile for me to lower myself to befriend him...” The pretty eyes swept across Xiao Yan’s face, which had not displayed much fluster since the beginning. Yao Ye was quite satisfied with his mental strength. It was extremely rare to be able to maintain such calm in front of the upper echelons of the empire and strong people at the peak level. At the very least, those descendants of the noble clans behind her had shrunk back and dared not approach her because of her status.

After conversing a little with Xiao Yan, Yao Ye bowed and greeted Fa Ma, Hai Bo Dong, and a few others. Her perfect etiquette was difficult for someone to find fault with; even someone like Hai Bo Dong had adopted a less cold expression.

Once the group had greeted each other, they sat down in the front row of the VIP seat. Whether it was intentional or otherwise, Princess Yao Ye ended up sitting beside Xiao Yan. The faint female body fragrance drifted from the side, causing him to become a little distracted.

As the sun in the sky moved, the number of people in the VIP seats also increased. These people were mostly people who possessed some strength in the capital or their families. The audience seats opposite them had long been overly packed. The shouting aggregated into a torrent that shot to the horizon.

Xiao Yan sat quietly in a seat with his eyes closed. A long while later, he suddenly sensed some movement in the seats around him. Only then, did he frown and turn his head around to see the source of the commotion.

The line-up that was entering the VIP section was quite large. The empire's three large clans arrived together. This kind of line-up was likely something that no strength within the Jia Ma Empire dared to look down on. A greater reason for causing such a commotion, however, was Nalan Yanran and Ya Fei who were walking in the middle. The two women had different dispositions, but they were similarly extremely beautiful. When the two of them walked together, it naturally attracted many eyes. No wonder the children of the noble clans behind were so excited...

The group of people moved along the walkway until they came to the position right at the front before greeting people they were familiar with.

Borrowing the time that they were greeting each other, Xiao Yan's gaze swept across an unknown old man who was walking with Nalan Jie and Primer Tengshan. Closely following behind this old man was Mu Zhan. Hearing the manner the two addressed each other, Xiao Yan had also figure out this old man's identity. Mu Chen from the Mu clan, another Dou Wang...

After greeting the elders, Ya Fei quietly slipped to Xiao Yan's side and sat down. With a smile as pretty as a flower, she said, "Yan Xiao di-di. You must get a good result this time around. There are countless people watching..."

"With Mister Yan Xiao's ability, his result this time around would naturally not be poor. Obtaining the top three should be something that is easily done." Nalan Yanran came over to this side without anyone knowing when and smiled as she said.

Yao Ye, who was seated beside Xiao Yan, saw Ya Fei and Nalan Yanran, these two beauties whose appearance did not lose to her, gathered around Xiao Yan. She was naturally extremely clear of the identities of these two ladies. An astonishment flashed in her pretty eyes as she quietly said in her heart, "This Yan Xiao may have an ordinary appearance, but it is really unexpected that he is so attractive to ladies... looks like great-grandfather was telling the truth. This Yan Xiao is definitely an attractive person with great potential. Otherwise with Ya Fei's intelligence and Nalan Yanran's aloofness, they would definitely not converse with him in such a manner.

The three great beauties were all crowded around Xiao Yan's side. This undoubtedly caused some of the gazes on the VIP seats to become heated. Some of the young people who possessed some imagination regarding the three ladies were clenching their teeth and staring intently at Xiao Yan. That manner of theirs was as though Xiao Yan was their enemy who had murdered their father.

Xiao Yan sighed and rubbed his head. The waves of fragrances shrouding the tip of his nose caused Xiao Yan to have an intention to laugh bitterly. The numerous heated

gazes behind him resulted in his back feeling pricked. Even he himself did not understand why these three women would crowd around him. Was it that silly comparison mentality of women?

Xiao Yan laughed bitterly in his heart. He was like an old monk in meditation as he sat in an extremely straight manner, waiting for the time for the Grand Meeting to begin. In an instant, he suddenly frowned and turned his head around, only to coincidentally see Liu Ling, who was seated in the row behind, staring at him icily. His manner was like a poisonous snake ready to bite.

Seeing that Xiao Yan had discovered his gaze, or perhaps it was because the Grand Meeting was about to begin, Liu Ling did not bother to disguise his thoughts. The corner of his mouth lifted into a cold smile. His hand was held horizontally and his middle finger pointed to the sky. His mouth squirmed, "I want to let you suffer a crushing defeat in front of Nalan Yanran!"

Xiao Yan smiled gently. He moved his lips a little and immediately turned his head around.

Liu Ling watched Xiao Yan's back in a dark and cold manner. He slowly let out a breath. A moment ago, he had clearly understood Xiao Yan's lips movement.

"Let's see..."

.....

As time gradually flowed, the time for the start of the Grand Meeting slowly arrived under tens of thousands gazes...

When a clear bell rang out on the plaza, the noisiness that had shot to the sky suddenly became quiet...

Hearing the bell ringing by his ears, Fa Ma quivered slightly and stood up. After which, he slowly walked to the very front of the VIP seats. His gaze watched the thousands of alchemists seated behind the green tables below. At this moment, over two thousand alchemists also lifted their heads and threw respectful gazes toward this old man who possessed an extremely great reputation within the Jia Ma Empire's alchemist scene.

"As the chairman of the Jia Ma Empire's Alchemist Association, I pronounce that the seventh Alchemist Grand Meeting has begun!"

"Bang!"

The entire ground boiled. Their happy cries stirred the skies.

Chapter 305: First Round, Begin!

Fa Ma stood in front of the VIP seats and eyed the bustling plaza. A while later, he softly said, "Now, I would like to invite all the competitors to move to their assigned positions."

Although the plaza was currently bustling about to the point that the ring of the bell could hardly be heard, Fa Ma's voice managed to still sound in everyone's ears. From this, it could be seen that this dying old man possessed extremely extraordinary strength.

Hearing Fa Ma's words, many alchemists in the VIP seats immediately stood up. There, the alchemists were mostly groomed by or roped into some of the more powerful groups. Due to having a powerhouse to support them, the tier of these alchemists was slightly higher as a whole compared to those "free" alchemists.

The high platform was tens of meters higher than the open ground below. With such a height, these young people, many of them whose strength was merely that of a Dou Shi or perhaps even a Dou Zhe, would naturally not dare leap down. Therefore, on the walkway by the two sides of the VIP seats, there were staircases that exclusively led to the open ground below. Currently, they were successively walking down under countless gazes.

"Ke ke, Liu Ling, Little Yue Er, Yan Xiao, you should also go to your respective positions... as your results in the internal test were the most outstanding, the stations over there belong to the three of you. Those three seats will make you the focus of the crowd's attention." Fa Ma's finger pointed at a place located in the middle of the open ground. That place had over ten huge green tables and not only were these green tables larger than the others, they also seemed to be elevated higher than the rest. Such a special position that stood out would naturally be able to cause the people standing there to become the main attraction.

When the gazes of the three people followed the direction that Fa Ma pointed and saw the special spot, their expressions were different from each other: Liu Ling was a little excited, on top of being surprised; Little Princess was curious and eager; while Xiao Yan was blank for a moment before he knit his eyebrows slightly together. Given Xiao Yan's character, he really did not like such a special position that placed him in the spotlight.

Fa Ma's gaze slowly drifted over the faces of the three people and finally stopped on Xiao Yan. He appeared to be able to see through what Xiao Yan thought as he gently said with a smile, "It is naturally a good thing for a young person to know how to keep a low profile. However, there are some things in this world that are made to be impossible to keep a low profile in. Since you are participating in the Grand Meeting, you must be thinking of obtaining the best result. In order to obtain the best result and be at the forefront of these two thousand plus people, you cannot escape being the focus of attention. Since you will eventually be discovered, then what is the difference of it happening now rather than later?"

“If you don’t do some rash and arrogant things while you are young, you will not have fun memories to recall in the future...” Fa Ma said with a smile.

“Chairman Fa Ma is right.” Xiao Yan smiled bitterly and nodded his head. He did not continue to be entangled over this matter.

“Ke ke, alright. The few of you please proceed down...” Fa Ma smiled and said.

“The two of you, I will go first.”

Liu Ling responded to Fa Ma first before laughing at Xiao Yan and Little Princess. Immediately, he pressed the ground lightly and his body charged to the edge of the high platform. He glanced at the huge open ground below. Then he leaped, diving forward and elicited countless sounds of shock from those in the VIP seats.

His body swiftly descended and just as he was about to reach the ground, two Dou Qi columns, that could be seen with the naked eye, appeared out of Liu Ling’s heel. Borrowing the opposing force from the Dou Qi columns, he landed on the ground without any injury. After which, he smiled and swiftly walked up to the middle spot of the plaza under gazes that were filled with a fiery heat.

“This fellow really likes to show off, but does he think that only he knows how to jump?”

Eyeing Liu Ling who had received attention from everyone by directly leaping down, the Little Princess smack her lips together. Her lovely body leaped forward and also shot off of the high platform. Like a falling leaf, her body gently and elegantly descended. Her beautiful posture was like that of a goddess.

“*Roar*, *roar*...” This beautiful action of the Little Princess had undoubtedly stirred the hearts of those observing more than Liu Ling’s earlier performance. Moreover, due to her tender and cute manner, it had not only caused a howl to sound from the VIP seats, but also a deafening roar to be emitted from the audience seats on the opposite side.

“Ke ke, old man Jia. I did tell you before that your agility Dou Technique ‘Flying Floc’ was more suited to women, but I never did expect that you would ever teach it to this little girl.” Eyeing the Little Princess’s body which had totally ignored gravity as she floated, Fa Ma could not help but turn around and smile as he spoke to Jia Lao.

“She had only learned a tiny bit of this agility Dou Technique. However, since she has only pursued beauty, she will easily become a target for the other party, if she were to meet an enemy.” Jia Lao shook his head. Although the words from his mouth were spoken as such, when one looked at the smile on his face, he was clearly satisfied with the skill that the Little Princess had revealed.

“Hey, Little Fellow. Why don’t you leap down as well. You cannot lose to them in this entrance parade...” Seeing Jia Lao’s slightly pleased face, Hai Bo Dong could not help but roll his eyes as he urged Xiao Yan.

“...I think I will walk down.” Sensing the countless of gazes that were gathered on him, Xiao Yan shook his head. He turned around and began walking along the walkway to head down. However, Hai Bo Dong abruptly waved his hand and an invisible force blew out, fanning Xiao Yan down, who did not have the time to defend himself.

“Ha ha, you better not make me lose face. Go down...”

“You old bastard...” Being pushed, Xiao Yan’s palm swiftly danced around. He had just cursed when his body began wildly descending under everyone’s gazes.

The wind whistled passed Xiao Yan’s ears. Due to him being forcefully pushed off by Hai Bo Dong, he had actually ended up falling head first. Xiao Yan helplessly sighed as he heard the intense sound of the wind in his ears. Both his hands did not move as he allowed his body to fall straight down head first.

In the plaza, countless gazes were stunned as they saw that Xiao Yan still did not have any reaction despite becoming increasingly closer to the ground. Some of the more cowardly young ladies had already hurriedly shut their eyes, afraid that they would see an extremely bloody scene.

Just as countless people widened their eyes, wanting to see if this little fellow, who appeared to have some ability, would turn into a pile of meat paste on the spot, Xiao Yan, who had remained still, finally moved his hands. He aimed them at the ground and an instant later, an incomparably fierce shapeless force swarmed out, violently smashing into the hard green rock surface. Immediately, a crack line began spreading out on the surface of the rock.

Borrowing the force of the push, Xiao Yan’s sharply falling body became much slower. His body was like a spiralling ball in midair, beginning to swiftly spin. Each time the force was about to fade away, Xiao Yan’s palm would carelessly smack downward, borrowing the rising airflow created from the force to cancel out the downward force on his body, forming a perfect equilibrium. Under everyone’s shocked gazes, Xiao Yan’s body was like a helix, rotating as he moved toward the center of the plaza.

“Tsk tsk, what an exquisite airflow control. At such an age, he can actually move freely in the air without using a pair of wings. This is something that even some Dou Wang could not achieve.” Eyeing the human figure which was swiftly spiraling as he moved through the open space, some shock surfaced involuntarily on Jia Lao’s and Fa Ma’s faces as they praised.

“Hei, this fellow is really unpredictable. I had originally thought that he would use the flying Dou Technique. It is really unexpected that he actually still had this type of skill

hidden away as well...” Hai Bo Dong’s face was similarly filled with shock. Although he knew that this method of Xiao Yan’s was impractical when it came to real flying, it would however, in this current occasion, be undoubtedly flashy enough to cause many people to be shocked.

Under the stunned gazes of the few thousand competitors, Xiao Yan’s body swiftly moved to the middle; the rotation of his body gradually weakened. With a gentle tap of the tip of his feet in the empty space, his body flipped in the air and rolled down like a gourd. A long while later, his body was gently bent and he landed smoothly with one foot supported on the ground. He gently patted the dust on his hands and slowly stood up, eyeing the dense mass of human heads in the audience seats, which he could see no end to.

“*Clap*, *Clap*...”

“He’s too handsome!”

“*Roar*, great!”

A deafening clapping sound instantly sounded from the somewhat quiet audience seats. Sharp yells suddenly reverberated throughout the entire plaza. The Grand Meeting had yet to begin, but this young man had already given them an eye-opening entrance performance.

With merely just this perfect entrance performance, there was already numerous young ladies who were fascinated by this young man wearing a black alchemist robe.

On the VIP seats, Ya Fei rubbed her cheeks with her hands. Her pretty eyes stared directly at the young man standing at the most conspicuous spot, receiving the attention of everyone. Her enchanting and moving face was slightly absentminded. A splendid glint appeared in her pupils. This little fellow appeared to no longer be that immature young man...

“He really does have some ability. No wonder great-grandfather praised him so highly...” Yao Ye softly muttered as she eyed the young man who was quietly enjoying the countless cheers.

Nalan Yanran sat lazily on a soft comfortable chair. The beautiful outline that was formed under the bundle of the spacious moon-white dress caused many gazes behind her to secretly sweep over. The current her had similarly paused her gaze on Xiao Yan who was on the open ground below. Watching the latter’s indifferent manner as though he had heard nothing as he stood in the middle of the countless cheers, her pretty face could not help but become much gentler. Perhaps it was because she had stayed with her teacher, who was viewed like a god in her heart, for a long time, but Nalan Yanran had a good impression regarding this imposing presence that was similar to her teacher’s.

Mu Chen narrowed his eyes. He stared at Xiao Yan in the competition ground. A long while later, he tilted his head and said to Mu Zhan, "Is he that person who you have mentioned?"

"Yes, this fellow actual dares to be so close to Ya Fei. Yesterday, was it not for Nalan Yanran stopping me, I would have taught him a lesson!" Mu Zhan spoke evilly.

Mu Chen's finger gently tapped on his shrivelled back of his hand. He shook his head slightly and slowly said, "In the future, don't go and offend him. If you really like that girl Ya Fei, you can use ordinary methods to pursue her. It would be best if you do not provoke this fellow called Yan Xiao... if you really were to fight him, you may not be his match."

"But..." Hearing this, Mu Zhan became anxious. He was about to say something when he saw Mu Chen's face which had sunk. Mu Zhan's head sank and he could only helplessly agree.

Xiao Yan quietly stood in front of a clean green rock table. He realized that a set of medicinal ingredients was orderly placed on the rock table and in front of those was a thin piece of paper peacefully sitting. Additionally, a jade mirror was embedded at the front of the rock table with a weak green-red light flickering in it.

As Xiao Yan conveniently picked up the thin paper and swept his gaze over it, he was somewhat stunned to realize that it was actually a medicinal formula for a tier two medicinal pill. However, the thing that caused Xiao Yan to be speechless was that only some of the medicinal ingredients and other things were carelessly written onto this medicinal formula. Its format, in no way, complied with the orthodox method of creating a medicinal formula.

As mentioned earlier, an orthodox medicinal formula required the use of Spiritual Strength to read. Only through this method could the formula relay all the necessary information that the reader needed to grasp in order to refine a medicinal pill in the shortest amount of time. The things that were recorded on this thin sheet of paper simply gave a vague refining method. All the remaining details actually completely required the reader to grasp by himself. This undoubtedly would cause the number of failures in refining this medicinal pill to be raised to a terrifying extent.

The thing that really caused Xiao Yan to be utterly speechless was the amount of medicinal ingredients placed on the rock table. The quantity was clearly only enough to allow one to refine the medicinal pill twice. In other words, it meant that each person had only one chance of failure. If the medicinal ingredients were completely exhausted and there was not a medicinal pill that had been refined, then it was clear that the person had failed... the result of failure was removal from the competition.

"It is certainly a Grand Meeting held every eight years. This kind of difficulty... it is really great." Xiao Yan held the thin piece of paper, smiled bitterly and shook his head. He

then lifted his head and glanced in all directions, only to realize that there was some bitterness on many of the alchemists' faces. Tilting his head, he eyed the Little Princess and Liu Ling on his left and right. The both of them appeared much calmer. However, they were still both frowning slightly as they recognized some of the problems with the formula recorded on the thin paper.

Xiao Yan gently inhaled a breath of air. He could only turn his focus towards the thin piece of paper. This kind of strange examination was something that he had never tried before, therefore his heart felt a little uneasy.

During the time that Xiao Yan withdrew his gaze, Liu Ling turned his gaze over. He saw the bitter smile on the former's face that had yet to disappear and could not help but softly give a cold laugh. He whispered, "Humph. So what if you are outstanding in refining the medicinal ingredients. I have already said that the examination during the Grand Meeting is not simply competing on that front. Next, let me see how you embarrass yourself in front of Nalan Yanran... country bumpkin..."

Having received Gu He's extremely orthodox teachings, Liu Ling had extremely great confidence in himself for this Grand Meeting. Therefore, he wanted to obtain the champion spot for the Grand Meeting. After which, he would have the qualification to pursue the goddess in his heart, Nalan Yanran...

On the enormous open ground, all the competitors were holding the thin paper with both hands. They displayed many different expressions as they read. In an instant, the entire plaza was totally silent.

The quiet atmosphere continued for nearly five minutes. A clear bell then sounded abruptly within the open ground.

Hearing the bell ring, all the competitors spontaneously placed the things in their hands down. They beckoned with their hands and instantly, thousands of cauldrons of different colors and shapes suddenly appeared on the green rock tables.

Following the ringing of the bell, Fa Ma, who had his eyes closed also opened them. He swept his gaze under him as his slow voice sounded by everyone's ears, "I think that all of you should have understood something. During this first round of the competition, all of you need to follow this incomplete medicinal formula to refine a medicinal pill that is a finished product. Each of you have two tries. If the medicinal pill is not successfully refined after two attempts, the jade mirror behind the green table will automatically display a red light. When the red light flicks on, that person will exit the competition ground..."

"On the wall opposite all of you, there is a huge hourglass. That is the time limit for the competition. Those who still fail to refine the medicinal pill before all the sand in the hour glass falls will similarly fail."

“Do you all understand?” Fa Ma said with a smile.

“Yes!” The sound that was projected forward from the ground below was like a muffled thunder that roared upward.

“Since it’s like this, then... the first round of the examination shall now begin!”

Fa Ma slowly lifted his palm as he smiled. He abruptly swung it down. At this moment, thousands of flames suddenly appeared in the large open ground like fireworks. The spectacular scene caused peoples’ fiery blood to boil!

Chapter 306: Soul-Stirring

Xiao Yan quietly stood in front of the rock table. He quietly pushed the crimson cauldron in front of him a little further away. The current him did not immediately summon out his flame and start the refinement like the other alchemists. Instead, he quietly held the thin paper with both hands, knit his eyebrows slightly together and studied what little information was written on it in greater detail.

Before doing anything, one must first make preparations. This logic was something that Xiao Yan clearly understood. He only had two chances. Any negligence would result in failure.

This time around, the examination required one to refine a tier two medicinal pill that was called ‘Bone Growing Pill’. As the name suggests, it was a kind of medicinal pill used to cure those who were quite seriously injured. It was a medicinal pill that was of the healing category. Usually, these medicinal pills were not overly expensive. If they were placed on the market, it would likely be priced at a few hundred or a few thousand gold coins. This price appeared a little shabby compared to those medicinal pills that could raise one’s Dou Qi or have other uses.

Refining the ‘Bone Growing Pill’ needed a total of six kinds of medicinal ingredients. Among all of the tier two medicinal pills, it was not considered to be extremely complex. However, this kind of ‘Bone Growing Pill’ was clearly a new kind of healing medicine specially configured by the alchemist association. Therefore, Xiao Yan still felt that the ‘Bone Healing Pill’ was a little foreign despite having seen quite a number of healing medicines before.

Although there were many different kinds of healing medicines that were mysterious and strange, all roads lead to Rome. The rough sequences used to refine these healing medicines were very similar. It was just that the degree of complexity was different. Moreover, this medicinal pill was not extremely troublesome. As long as one’s real alchemist ability was not weak, it should be possible to successfully feel around and grasp the refining method to refine the ‘Bone Growing Pill’.

Therefore, even though the medicinal formula only gave the generic things one must pay attention to, it should not be too difficult to refine it successfully if one followed one's senses...

After memorizing, in detail, all the information on the thin paper, Xiao Yan slowly closed his eyes. A moment later, he gradually opened them and sighed gently. Placing the thin piece of paper on the table, he turned his head and looked around. He realized that the Little Princess and Liu Ling had already begun to control their flame and began refining.

The flames that were being manipulated within the medicinal cauldron were all the same dark yellow color. This was a flame that was completely catalysed by using Dou Qi. However, Xiao Yan believed that this was not the bottom line of the two of them. Perhaps they were all hiding their trump cards. With their status, it was an extremely natural thing to possess trump cards.

"Regardless of the character of these two people, their actual ability is indeed very great..." Xiao Yan sighed gently in his heart. No matter how he counted, he had only practiced for three years ever since he came into contact with alchemy. On certain aspects, Xiao Yan naturally could not catch up with Little Princess and Liu Ling, who had been groomed by their teachers since youth. After all, no matter how talented one is, it was impossible to catch up with over a decade of achievements of other people in such a short time.

It was also due to this reason that Xiao Yan did not feel any blow even though the Little Princess had already achieved a tier three alchemist level at such an age. The other party's talent was quite good. Adding this to being in contact with refining skills for many years, it was not unexpected that she had such achievements.

At this moment, over ten minutes since the start of the examination had elapsed. During this short ten minutes, there was already red lights flickering off and on within this huge open ground. After the red light flickered, those alchemists who had failed could only choose to leave with embarrassed red faces. For these alchemists who liked to follow the rules to refine medicinal pill, this kind of examination which took a slanted path was impossible for them...

Xiao Yan indifferently glanced at an alchemist in front of him who had their head lowered as he walked out of the open ground with a face on the verge of crying, Xiao Yan shook his head. He ignored him and turned his attention completely to the refining process that was about to begin.

Xiao Yan placed the dark red cauldron properly in front of him and rubbed his hands together. He flipped his finger and a purple colored Danwan appeared between his fingers.

TL: Recall - Danwan - is a pill like thing but does not have any medicinal properties. It can even be harmful upon consumption

Flicking his finger slightly, Xiao Yan directly shot the Danwan into his mouth. He slowly chewed. A moment later, he widened his mouth and a cluster of purple flame was spat out. It was immediately held in Xiao Yan's palm.

"Wow. Purple colored flame?" Due to Xiao Yan being at a spot that attracted the most attention and adding the special appearance from before, there were countless of people from both the VIP seats and the audience seats who were observing all of Xiao Yan's movements during the entire time. Seeing the bright purple flame that he had created, waves of exclamation immediately sounded.

Although the large open ground did not lack strange and unique colored flames, the strange method where Xiao Yan used his mouth to spit out the flame pulled many gazes over.

"Purple colored flame?" Eyeing the cluster of purple colored flame hovering above Xiao Yan's palm, Fa Ma was slightly surprised. Immediately, he laughed softly, "This little fellow really does have some foundation."

Hearing this, Hai Bo Dong by the side smack his lips. After living together with Xiao Yan for so long, he knew this fellow's bottom line only too clearly. This kind of purple colored flame was merely the weakest flame among the flames that he could control. The other dark and cold white colored flame as well as the ethereal green colored flame were the terrifying 'Heavenly Flames' that even Hai Bo Dong feared.

The purple colored flame danced around lively on Xiao Yan palm like a fairy. A moment later, Xiao Yan waved his palm gently. The purple flame was directly shot into the fire outlet. Immediately, the turbulent Purple Flame soared and burned within the medicinal cauldron. The temperature of the icy cold cauldron was swiftly raised...

When the temperature within the medicinal cauldron was raised to a certain stage, Xiao Yan placed his palm at the fire outlet. He slowly closed his eyes and his Spiritual Strength was extended out, gradually controlling the Purple Flame that was rising.

Due to his ability to control the Purple Flame being far less precise than the 'Green Lotus Core Flame', Xiao Yan could only use his hand to touch the medicinal cauldron in order to accurately control the Purple Flame. If he controlled it away his hands away like the Green Flame, it was likely that his already high failure rate would soar... Xiao Yan really did not dare to take such a risk on this examination which only had two chances.

Under the control of Xiao Yan Spiritual Strength, the purple colored flame suppressed its temperature extremely obediently. It did not pose the slightest resistance. After this continued for some time, Xiao Yan beckoned with his palm. A medicinal ingredient on the rock table was sucked into his hand. He gently molded it and then threw it into the medicinal cauldron. Immediately, the Purple flame tumbled and rolled over, swiftly wrapping around it...

Xiao Yan closed his eyes and frowned slightly. He used his Spiritual Perception to slowly refine the medicinal ingredients. In order to refine the medicinal pill, the medicinal ingredients must be refined to a certain degree. Sometimes, if the purity was a little higher or lower, it could result in the refining process failing. It was also for this reason that an orthodox medicinal formula appeared to be extremely important. This was because on most of the orthodox medicinal formulas, there would be a detailed record of the degree of purity each medicinal ingredient needed to be refined to.

Unfortunately, Xiao Yan currently did not have that precise medicinal formula. Everything would have to rely on him using his Spiritual Perception to slowly investigate.

A low-grade medicinal ingredients had in total consumed over ten minutes of Xiao Yan's time before it gradually achieved an extent that he thought was right. At this moment, he then carefully placed the second type of medicinal ingredient into the medicinal cauldron.

Using the brief instance when he threw in the medicinal ingredients, Xiao Yan glanced at his two sides. He realized that the Little Princess and Liu Ling may have appeared to have similarly serious faces, their movements did not show the slightest sign of being flustered. Their faces also did not display any emotion that showed that they were at a loss. It appeared the refining process was entirely within their control.

“Bang!”

Just as Xiao Yan withdrew his gaze, a cauldron on a rock table not far away where the flames were raging could not suppress the increasingly high temperature. It suddenly exploded. Following the explosion of the cauldron, the medicinal pill that was being refined within it had also announced its end. Therefore, the merciless red light in the mirror shone in an eye-piercing manner.

That alchemist's hair was burned until it was charred black. His face had also completely changed as he stood there foolishly watching the flickering red light. A long while later, he finally cursed out loud as he descended from the platform. He clenched his teeth and walked out of the open ground under countless gazes. As he walked passed Xiao Yan's front, the latter was somewhat surprised to realize that this failure was actually a tier three alchemist from another country...

“What a pitiful fellow...” Xiao Yan laughed somewhat gloatingly in his heart. He then threw aside this small interlude and continued to place the medicinal ingredients carefully into the medicinal cauldron one at a time. After which, he patiently probed for the most optimum purity that they should be refined to. With the earlier lesson from that failure, the current Xiao Yan had undoubtedly become more careful.

.....

As time slowly flowed by, red lights were repeatedly flashed on the huge open ground. One by one, green faced or crimson faced alchemists would helplessly leave the platform and under the countless of regretful eyes from the viewing platform, moodily left this place which caused them sadness and anger.

While the examination this time around possessed quite great difficulty, it must be said that many of those who had participated in the Grand Meeting were people who possessed great skills. Other than those competitors who had failed due to many different reasons, there was still nearly around half the alchemists who were quietly probing the degree of purity of the medicinal ingredients just like Xiao Yan.

After nearly half of the sand within that huge hourglass on the wall had fell, Xiao Yan's probing of the degree of purity of the ingredients had finally completed. Other than having accidentally incinerated two medicinal ingredients during the refinement process, Xiao Yan's final result could be considered to be quite good.

TL: Im guessing that although there are only two portions, there is room for error so even though XY burned to ingredients, there is still enough for a second try.

The next thing was to begin merging the different kinds of medicinal ingredients, turning them into the real 'Bone Growing Pill'.

This step would be even more troublesome than the refining earlier. During this period, if Xiao Yan were to even slightly lose his concentration, he would have to start from scratch.

Being extremely clear of the importance of this step, Xiao Yan had already made preparations, transforming his Dou Qi into a film which covered his ears, shielding him from the noise of the outside world.

As the noise from the outside world faded, Xiao Yan's mind gradually began still. He let out a mouthful of coarse air, closed his eyes once again and swiftly picked up a jade bottle on the rock table. Inside it was the essence of a medicinal ingredient that Xiao Yan had refined earlier. He held the jade bottle, paused for a moment, before pouring it all into the medicinal cauldron. Immediately following that, he swiftly threw the other two bottles of medicinal ingredients that he had refined into the medicinal cauldron...

Xiao Yan's Spiritual Strength cautiously controlled the Purple Flame and slowly grilled those medicinal ingredient powders, that would not mix. Their special response when they merged slightly together was passed through the Spiritual Strength within the flame and swiftly entered Xiao Yan's mind. After which, he would be able to use the information to distinguish if the merging method was correct.

This kind of feedback analysis was an analyzing job that greatly exhaust Spiritual Strength. Fortunately, Xiao Yan currently only needed to analyze a tier two medicinal formula. If it was tier three or even tier four, it was likely that even him, who was around

a tier three alchemist would not be able to analyze it. Even if it was a tier four or tier five alchemist, it would basically be impossible for them to analyze. After all, if analyzing a medicinal formula was such a simple thing, then medicinal formulas would not be so valuable...

“Bang...”

With a slight frown, Xiao Yan carefully sensed the merger of medicinal ingredients. At one instance, his expression suddenly changed slightly. The Purple Flame writhed wildly within the medicinal cauldron and a soft muffled sound was emitted from the medicinal ingredient. The three kinds of medicinal ingredients that were halfway done merging had instantly turned into dark black ashes. After the ingredients turned into ashes, the Purple Flame rising in the medicinal cauldron was also quietly extinguished...

Xiao Yan narrowed his eyes as he watched the medicinal ingredients that had turned into ashes. He opened his mouth slightly and patted his head in annoyance. Due to his mind being too focused, he had actually forgotten that the Purple Flame did not have any continuous support. Therefore, it could at most burn for an hour.

The muffled bang within the medicinal cauldron was not small. Hence, not long after it sounded, the Little Princess and Liu Ling not far from him turned their gazes over. When they saw that Xiao Yan's medicinal cauldron did not have any flame, they were all surprised. The former was a little better, simply revealing a helpless expression. The latter's mouth was lifted as he gloated, giving a feeling of being asked to be beaten.

On the high platform, Fa Ma and the others were momentarily blank as they eyed Xiao Yan whose flame had suddenly been extinguished. However, they did not say anything and simply quietly waited. Although the flame was extinguished and the time allocated for the examination was about to be up, Xiao Yan should have one portion of medicinal ingredients on his table. Therefore, he still had a chance. Of course... the precondition was that he must hurry up. This was because there was only one third of the sand in the huge hourglass remaining.

.....

Xiao Yan gently inhaled a breath of somewhat hot air. He eyed those dark black ashes within the medicinal ingredients and closed his eyes. A moment later, he slowly opened them and suddenly smiled faintly. Although he had failed this time around, he had grasped an approximation of the method needed to refine this 'Bone Growing Pill'. The next thing he needed to do was to gracefully and easily refine it...

Xiao Yan took out another purple colored pill and placed it into his mouth. He slowly chewed it. Using this short amount of them, he swept his gaze around him and discovered that within the cauldrons in front Little Princess and Liu Ling, an initial pill like shape thing was already beginning to be agglomerated. Clearly, they should be able to form pills not long later...

“Their speed is not bad... they really do have some clout.”

Xiao Yan lifted his eyebrows slightly. He opened his mouth and once again spat out the purple colored flame. After which, he poured it into the medicinal cauldron. His hands were stilled before they abruptly began to move a moment later. As his hands danced, he poured all six small jade bottles placed in front of him into the medicinal cauldron...

“He actually wants to merge all six medicinal ingredients together? In this way, he would be able to save a lot of time, but if his Spiritual Strength is not strong enough and can not control it properly, it would be basically seeking death...” As they watched the action of Xiao Yan below, Fa Ma, Ao Tuo, and the group of very experienced people softly muttered.

Xiao Yan’s gaze stared at the writhing flame within the cauldron. His Spiritual Strength controlled the Purple Flame and separated all the medicinal ingredients within it. After which, he slowly moved them closer as he grilled them. As they grew closer, they finally began to gradually show a tendency to merge...

The sand within the enormous hourglass swiftly scattered down.

“Clang!”

Finally, a clear sound of the cauldron being tapped sounded in the open ground.

Liu Ling was first to heavily tap on the cauldron. The cover on the cauldron shot up and a round medicinal pill came flying out. After which, he leaped and grabbed it in his hand. The pride on his face was difficult to hide.

“Clang!” With another clear sound, the Little Princess beckoned with her delicate hand and a medicinal pill shot out from within the medicinal cauldron.

“Clang, clang, clang...”

Following the two continuous sounds, it appeared that a chain reaction had occurred within the large open ground. Numerous cauldron covers were shot up and a few hundred, different shaped medicinal pills shot out from medicinal cauldrons, flying to the sky. After which, their owners excitedly caught them with their hands.

“Time is almost up...” Ao Tuo stared intently at Xiao Yan in the center spot who still had his eyes closed. He then looked at the sand in the hourglass that had almost completely fell. His hand abruptly tightened. Each time this fellow took a test, he would keep people on tenterhooks.

Within the large open ground, countless of gazes were slowly thrown to the middle spot where Xiao Yan was at. They then eyed the sand in the hourglass that was splashing down. All of these people wanted to know if this young person who stood in the spot

that attracted the most attention would be able to complete the test in this round at the last minute.

The very little sand within the hourglass quietly descended. The moment the last piece of sand came rolling down, a pitiful sounding hiss came from the audience seats and the VIP seats.

“Clang...”

The young man who had his eyes tightly closed suddenly opened them. His palm patted the cauldron and its cover flew up. A round medicinal pill flew out at the very last moment, in a dazzling manner that caused people’s eyes to become blurred...

Chapter 307: Test, The Mysterious Man in The Gray Robe.

Xiao Yan’s face was calm as he looked at the pill shooting out of the cauldron. His palm released a suction force which pulled it into his palm.

The instant the pill entered his hand, the little remaining sand finally fell down. On the big open ground, hundreds of red lights, behind those alchemists who had still not finished refining the pill, lit up.

Disappointedly looking at the flashing red light, those alchemists smiled bitterly and took back their respective cauldrons, their faces were dispirited as they exited the square.

Standing behind the green table, Xiao Yan looked at the contestants withdraw one after another. His eyes looked around, somewhat startled at his discovery. This was just the first round of assessments and yet unexpectedly one-third of the participants had been eliminated. He let out a sigh as he thought about the strictness and the harshness of the Grand Meeting.

Playing with the pill in his hand, Xiao Yan turned his head to the nearby Liu Ling. This fellow was throwing a smile at the pill in his hand, his whole face full of a proud color. He looked at Xiao Yan, his pill steadily grasped in his hand, and said with a smile, "Mr. Yan Xiao, ah you truly have good luck. Unexpectedly you managed to refine the pill at the last moment.... You had the best score for the internal test, so if you failed to pass even this round, it would have been a big joke."

Shooting a look at Liu Ling’s triumphant appearance, Xiao Yan faintly smiled and said, "In any case, one would be considered to have passed as long as this is refined. Whether it is finished in the first moment or the last makes no difference at all...."

"Mr. Yan Xiao seems to be deceiving himself and others. In this Grand Meeting, attended by innumerable outstanding Alchemists, refining with the fastest speed in an undeniable skill." Liu Ling laughed. He was naturally unwilling to let Xiao Yan diminish his achievements.

“Ha-ha, perhaps...” Xiao Yan shrugged as he no longer wasted his words on Liu Ling. He turned his head toward the Little Princess and smiled. Looking up at the VIP seats, he saw Fa Ma, waiting for his turn to speak.

“Hu...”

In the VIP seats, Ao Tuo heavily exhaled. He used his sleeves to wipe off the cold sweat on his forehead. He faced Frank by the side whose face was also filled with cold sweat and said with a bitter smile, “No matter what this fellow does, he likes to keep doing it in such an extremely thrilling manner. Doesn’t he know how to think of us old fellows? We don’t have the kind of strong heart he has for these kinds of soul-stirring things.”

Frank similarly had a face with a bitter smile. Of course, on top of the bitter smile there was some relief and joy, “But fortunately, he managed to complete the test at the last moment. Otherwise, it would really be a great embarrassment if the person with the best result in the internal test actually failed to pass the first round...”

Hearing this, Ao Tuo felt the same as he nodded his head. If that had really happened, then it would really not be fun. He would have directly packed up and returned to Black Rock City...

Fa Ma stood at a spot on the front of the platform. He looked down from the top and watched the entire open ground. His gaze swept across it, eyeing the place where a third of the competitors had been eliminated. Nodding with a faint smile, Fa Ma’s hands pressed down on something imaginary. Immediately, the noisy ground began to gradually quiet down.

“Congratulations to all of you who are still standing in the plaza. You have more or less successfully passed the test for the first round; however, it has not completely ended...” Fa Ma said with a smile, “I think that everyone should also know that there are some cunning little fellows who like to create some bizarre things. Perhaps it may appear that they have successfully refined a medicinal pill that appears round on the exterior but they very well may not have even the slightest healing properties. Essentially, such creations have not even a little relationship with the words ‘medicinal pill’... Therefore, the next thing we need to do is to test the ‘Bone Growing Pill’ that all of you have refined and see whether it has achieved the required level stated on the medicinal formula...”

The slightly hoarse voice of Fa Ma slowly sounded in everyone’s ears, “Now, can all the competitors please search for a green colored button located at the bottom left corner of your green stone table and press it.”

Hearing this, Xiao Yan’s gaze swept across the rock table and finally stopped at the bottom left corner which was not very noticeable. He was somewhat stunned to realize that there were a few different colored small buttons scattered there. His finger followed the instructions and stopped on the green colored button before pressing it down gently.

As the button was pressed, the bright and clean rock table suddenly trembled slightly. On its surface, a slate was slowly protruding out. Once it was raised by around half a feet, it sank slightly and finally revealed a tiny black hole.

“This is a testing machine. Place the ‘Bone Growing Pill’ that you have refined into it. If you have achieved the requirement, a green light will flash on the jade mirror in front of the table. If you have failed to meet the requirements, it will flash a red light: that represents failure. The result of failure is that you must exit the competition...

Additionally, the brighter the green light, the closer your refined ‘Bone Growing Pill’'s effectiveness to the real one described in the medicinal formula. On the other hand, the brighter the red light... Well, the opposite... the farther your pill is from the real ‘Bone Growing Pill’. It also implies that what you have created is a Danwan that has not the slightest effect. Of course, if it can be use to satisfy hunger, it would at least have a slight use...”

Hearing the humorous joke that sounded in the air above the open ground, laughter was emitted from both the audience seats and the VIP seats. Within the open ground, however, there were quite a number of alchemists whose expressions had suddenly changed...

“Haha, alright. Everyone, begin...”

As he fondled the round medicinal pill gently with his fingers, Xiao Yan calmly eyed the dark black colored hole of the testing machine. He did not hurriedly throw the pill in. Instead, his gaze swept around him.

At this moment, there were already some alchemists who had begun to throw their medicinal pills into the testing machine. Not long after that happened, the open plaza suddenly became very colorful. Strong and weak green and red lights interweaved as they glittered. Each represented either joy or gloominess...

“Bullsh*t testing machine...” A tier two alchemist with a dark expression angrily glared at the red glow flickering from the jade mirror. The red glow there was practically the densest among the entire open ground. Therefore, countless of stunned gazes were thrown at this gloomy-faced young man.

After smashing his fist violently at the rock table, the alchemist returned the medicinal cauldron into his storage ring and descended from the platform while cursing under the observation of countless of gazes. With a green face, he gnashed his teeth as he walked out of the open ground.

“Keep doing these messy nonsensical examinations... Will a serious medicinal pill refinement kill people? A group of old men who will not die... I used all my effort to merge those medicinal ingredients together. Yet, you actually gave me another test. You gave a medicinal formula that had not the slightest information besides the name, refine what...”

Xiao Yan eyed the tier two alchemist who had walked out of the place in front of him. When he heard the extremely angry curses from his mouth, Xiao Yan could not help but feel neither able to laugh nor cry. He did not expect that this kind of clown could actually pass through the soul-stirring examination earlier.

Following this round of the test, there were at least nearly a hundred alchemists who left the open ground with green or red faces.

“Ke ke, Mister Yan Xiao, why don’t we do it together...” Little Princess tossed the medicinal pill in her hands and suddenly spoke with a smile to Xiao Yan.

“Anything will do...” Xiao Yan indifferently shrugged his shoulders. He eyed Liu Ling whose eyes were fixated on him. Currently the contesting scent of the other party was extremely dense...

Xiao Yan smiled. The medicinal pills of the three of them were thrown into the dark black hole of the testing machine at almost the same time.

As the three of them threw in their medicinal pills, countless of gazes were immediately thrown at this spot which was the most eye-catching. Everyone all wanted to know who among these three, who were clearly considered the seeded level competitors, could refine a medicinal pill that was better than the others.

“Bang, bang, bang...”

The jade mirror was a little quiet. An instant later, a slight muffled sound erupted and three bright colored green light pillars were abruptly shot out from the rock tables in front of the three of them. The density of any of the green colored lights was clearly much denser than any of the green lights that had appeared in the open ground before.

Among the three green lights, the left was slightly pale, the right was a little better while the middle green colored light pillar was already green like an emerald. Its color was extremely attractive.

“Wow... what a dense color.” As they eyed the emerald like light pillar, numerous shocked voices from the audience were endlessly emitted.

“Haha, Mister Yan Xiao really had a well thought out plan. Although you used the most amount of time, the effect of this medicinal pill of yours is the best. Yue-er admits defeat.” Little Princess watched the emerald light pillar in front of Xiao Yan with shocked pretty eyes. She then shook her head and sighed.

“I was merely lucky.”

Xiao Yan carelessly smiled and turned his head over. When he saw the somewhat dark expression of Liu Ling, he shrugged his shoulders as he smiled and said, "I'm sorry, Mister Liu Ling."

The corner of Liu Ling's mouth twitched. He inhaled deeply, turned his head over and stared intently at the jade mirror which was flashing a green light. His heart suddenly had an impulse to smash it to pieces.

"Ke ke, Yan Xiao is indeed a notch above." Fa Ma said with a smile as he eyed the three bright pillars of light.

"If it were not for the little fellow's purple flame suddenly disappearing just now, I think that he would have refined the medicinal pill ahead of Liu Ling. Hee hee, I already said that this little fellow's refining ability is not something that these children could compare with." Hai Bo Dong proudly laughed.

Fa Ma smiled. He was about to say something when his expression suddenly changed. A soft exclamation was emitted from his mouth. His gaze swept through the huge open ground and finally paused on a remote corner. A human figure that was entirely wrapped in a gray colored long robe slowly dropped the medicinal pill in his hand into the testing machine.

"Why?" Seeing Fa Ma's reaction, Jia Lao was stunned and he asked uncertainly.

"That fellow..." Fa Ma's old eyes narrowed. A glint flashed within those turbid eyes. His finger gently tapped on the guardrail as he softly said, "That fellow seems a little strong..."

"Oh?" Hearing this, Hai Bo Dong and Jia Lao were a little surprised. Their gazes were instantly thrown toward the gray robed person. Immediately, they frowned and doubtfully asked, "What is it about him that you have discovered?"

"You both are not alchemists, therefore your Spiritual Perception isn't very clear. But from what I have sensed, that fellow's Spiritual Strength might well be much stronger than Liu Ling, Yue-er and even Yan Xiao. Among those in the open ground below, his Spiritual Strength should be the strongest. I remember that when Gu He participated in the Alchemist Grand Meeting back then, his Spiritual Strength wasn't even as strong as this..." Fa Ma shook his head. He knit his eyebrows gently together and stared intently at the ground below. A moment later, the bright green colored light pillar abruptly shot out from the rock table in front of the gray robed person. The intensity of the light had vaguely surpassed that green light of Xiao Yan.

The sudden appearance of the strong light had almost instantly attracted all the gazes on the open ground over. When everyone saw that the person who had created this light pillar was a gray robed person who was reduced to a remote corner, their faces could not help but be filled with surprise.

The strong green light that had suddenly appeared had also simultaneously attracted the gazes of Xiao Yan's group. When he saw the light pillar that was even denser than his own glow, Xiao Yan was momentarily at a loss. He immediately frowned slightly as he eyed that mysterious person whose body was wrapped within gray robes. He did not expect that such a strong person would actually appear at this moment. Moreover, by looking at his size and the position that he occupied, it was clear that this person was not among those that had participated in the internal test back then...

"Don't tell me he is a free alchemist?" Xiao Yan muttered softly. He pursed his lips up as his gaze stared at the gray robed person. From his perception, he felt that this mysterious gray robed person would likely be his most troublesome opponent during this Grand Meeting.

Seemingly having sensed the gaze that Xiao Yan had shot over, the gray robed person lifted his head slightly, revealing half a section of his pale tender face. Hidden behind his bamboo hat, a pair of eyes where a blue light was flickering carried a little iciness as they eyed the former indifferently.

"Who is this fellow?" After looking at the strong opponent that had suddenly appeared with stunned gazes, Little Princess and Liu Ling exchanged glances with surprised faces that were utterly perplex.

"Qie Er Si, give me his information..." At the front of the VIP seats, Fa Ma suddenly turned his head around and said in a deep voice to Qie Er Si.

TL: New character, not important though

From the moment that Fa Ma emitted the shocked sound a moment ago, Qie Er Si had sensed that something was wrong. He swiftly identified the spot where the gray robed person was. After which, he took out a stack of documents and swiftly flipped through it. A while later, his flipping ceased and a thin paper that recorded the information appeared. The drawing on it was that mysterious gray robe man. It also had a clear up close drawing of the person. The face was that of an ice, pale-faced young man with a pair of blue colored eyes. From his appearance, he appeared to be around sixteen or seventeen years old, being strangely young...

After Qie Er Si passed the information to Fa Ma, the latter pressed his eyebrows together and carefully read through it. A moment later, his expression changed as he said, "It's an alchemist from the Chu Yun Empire?"

Strictly speaking, the Chu Yun Empire and the Jia Ma Empire were enemy countries that frequently went to war. As the Chu Yun Empire held the occupation that was the deadly enemy of the alchemist, 'Poison Masters', in high regard. This resulted in the orthodox alchemists of the Jia Ma Empire to view them poorly. Of course, the most important reason was that during each time the two countries fought, those 'Poison Masters' would utilize those underhanded methods to release poison medicine, poison

powder, poison liquid in many different places. Therefore, during each large fight, the number of Jia Ma Empire's soldiers that died was a very shocking number.

Additionally, the alchemists within the Chu Yun empire did not oppose the 'Poison Masters'. Some of them even cooperated with each other. This resulted in the alchemists within the Jia Ma Empire to feel angry and disdain for these fellows who had betrayed the purpose of the alchemist world.

It was also due to this reason that Fa Ma's expression was so ugly when he saw that the mysterious gray robed person was actually from the Chu Yun Empire.

"Why is it written that he is only a tier two alchemist on this paper? From the Spiritual Strength that I sensed just now, that fellow should at least be a tier four alchemist!" Fa Ma's eyes glanced across the tier that was recorded as he said with a frown.

"A seventeen year old tier four alchemist? Chairman, do you think that is possible? Regardless of how much talent he has, alchemy skills require time and experience to accumulate." Qie Er Si smiled bitterly and said.

"My senses should not be wrong..." Fa Ma shook his head. His gaze stared intently at that tender face. For some unknown reason, he felt that this face was somewhat strange.

"Don't tell me that he had altered his appearance and come here? Seeing his well practiced technique when he was refining medicinal pill, it totally did not look like something a teenage youth would be able to possess." Fa Ma softly muttered.

"If he has altered his appearance, he would naturally be unable to escape our senses." Jia Lao smiled faintly. As he said these words, the corner of his eyes swept to the spot on the open ground where Xiao Yan was, without anyone noticing. It appeared that he seemed to have discovered Xiao Yan's disguise. It was just that he did not reveal it for some reason.

"But that fellow has hid himself so well. During this kind of competition, we cannot just stop the Grand Meeting and lift his hat, right? That way, other people would say that our Jia Ma Empire's Alchemist Association is overbearing and rude." Seeing the gray robed person who had covered his head very well, Fa Ma helplessly said.

"If he is unwilling to lift it up, then let us help him to do so..." Hai Bo Dong stood up, walked to Fa Ma's side and softly said with a smile.

"You... won't be discovered, will you?" Fa Ma expression moved slightly and he immediately asked with hesitation.

"Hee hee, although my strength has weakened a little, controlling the flow of coldness and unwittingly freeze that weak headdress until it become powder is something that I

can still do..." Hai Bo Dong smiled and said. He naturally knew what kind of huge embarrassment it would be to allowed a Chu Yun Empire's alchemist became the champion of the Jia Ma Empire's Alchemist Grand Meeting.

"This kind of thing that requires subtle control is really most suitable for Old Man Hai's ice Dou Qi to do. My Dou Qi affinity leans more toward being forcefully. It is suitable to split mountains and stones but now, it won't do..." Jia Lao shook his head and said.

"Alright... then I will rely on you." Fa Ma mused for a moment, nodded his head and said.

With a smile, Hai Bo Dong gradually narrowed his eyes. His shriveled hand was extended out of his sleeves and flicked slightly. Following a flick of his finger, a pale strange ripple was quietly emitted.

At the moment Hai Bo Dong secretly moved, Jia Lao and Fa Ma moved closer to him. It looked like they were discussing something, but it also coincidentally isolated the surrounding gazes.

"Looks like there is some unforeseen turn of events in the Grand Meeting..." Ya Fei's eyes looked at Hai Bo Dong's three man group a short distance away with eyes that held a deeper meaning as she softly said. With her eyesight that had been trained over so many years, she was naturally able to discover that ever since the strong green colored light appeared, Fa Ma's expression was somewhat ugly. Qie Er Si's follow-up action of flipping through the documents also proved some things.

"Yes... that mysterious gray robed man appeared to have broke the order of the Grand Meeting." Yao Ye and Nalan Yanran nodded. They were not flower vases that were put on display and did not miss those things that Ya Fei was able to discover.

"The 'Growing Bone Pill' that the gray robed person had refined appears to be even more outstanding than Yan Xiao's group... Originally I thought that only the three of them would be fighting for the champion of this Grand Meeting. It is really unexpected that such a dark horse has suddenly come running out..." Ya Fei knit her eyebrows slightly together and helplessly said in her heart.

.....

A faint ice flow quietly passed through the air. A long while later, it shrouded the air above the mysterious gray robed person without leaving a trace. It was like a couple of ice snakes that were invisible to the naked eyes that were quietly emitting a fog.

At the moment, the gray robed person was slowly packing up the things on the rock table. In an instant, his moving hands abruptly stiffened. The blue eyes under the gray robe suddenly shrank as his feet heavily stomped on the ground. His body shot backward.

“Humph, where can you run?” Seeing that the gray robed person appeared to have discovered the ice flow, Hai Bo Dong was somewhat astonished. He immediately laughed coldly and tightened his fist abruptly, “Break!”

“Bang!”

Following the tightening of Hai Bo Dong’s fist, the bamboo hat on the head of the gray robed person who had just moved his body abruptly turned into powder which then scattered.

When the bamboo had disappeared, the tender face that was covered under it immediately appeared in front of countless of gazes. Immediately, the audiences in both the regular and VIP seats emitted a sound of inhaling cold air. None of them had expected that this person who had obtained the most outstanding result in the first round would actually be such a tender looking youth...

The young man who possessed a pair of blue colored eyes extended his hand and touched the bamboo hat which had disappeared. A moment later, he suddenly lifted his head and shot his ice gaze toward Hai Bo Dong’s three man group at the front of the VIP seats.

“This fellow is definitely not someone simple. Not only did he discover my ice flow, but he also managed to use it to sense my direction...” Hai Bo Dong narrowed his eyes and watched that gray robed young man. He fondled his chin a little and coldly laughed, “Although I don’t know why he has such a tender youthful face, but if he is really seventeen as written on the information, I, Hai Bo Dong, don’t need to continue to come out. I can directly go and live in isolation for the rest of my life...”

Fa Ma and Jia Lao narrowed their eyes and slowly nodded.

“Looks like the Grand Meeting this time around will be quite interesting...”

Chapter 308 : The Overly Simple Second Round

Although many people felt strange that the bamboo hat of the gray robe young man had suddenly disappeared, none of them suspected Hai Bo Dong. At this moment, most of the audience’s eyes were basically glued to the tender face of the gray robe young man. It was likely that this young man’s age was the youngest in all of the seasons of the Alchemist Grand Meeting,

The gray robe young man patted off the remnant ice fragment on his shoulders. He then lifted his head to look at Hai Bo Dong and the others on the VIP seats, revealing a cold smile. His lips moved slightly. By relying on the shape of this mouth, Fa Ma and the others could clearly identify what he had said, “I want the champion spot for this Grand Meeting!”

“How is it? Can you see if he is disguising his appearance?” Fa Ma’s finger gently tapped on the guardrail as he asked faintly.

Hai Bo Dong and Jia Lao exchanged glances and immediately shook his head slightly. In a deep voice, he said, “I can’t see that he has disguised his appearance...”

“What you are telling me... is that this person is really only so young? If this is really so, then I think that he has completely explained what is called a true genius. Compared to him, the talent of Liu Ling, Yan Xiao and the others appears to have become extremely ordinary.” Fa Ma said with a frown.

“Although I can’t see how he disguised himself, his age is definitely not what is written in the information...” Hai Bo Dong shook his head and said, “His sensitive reaction toward danger does not appear to be something that a seventeen year old young man possesses. Instead, it seemed like that of a warrior who has been in the battlefield for a long time. Moreover, he was able to hide his ability and reveal it only now. This is sufficient to see that his mental strength is extraordinary. I really have difficulty imagining that a seventeen year old young man is able to do all these things so perfectly.”

“In this world, there are other methods besides changing one’s appearance to turn oneself into such a manner... You, as an alchemist, should be even more clear of this than me. Some special medicinal ingredients or medicinal pills... have this kind of strange effect.” Jia Lao said in a low voice.

“There are indeed some unique and rare medicinal pills that can change a person’s exterior into that of a young person. But those medicinal pills are all extremely rare things and they are extremely difficult to refine... However, if anyone really obtained one, it would be likely that no one would be able to distinguish him unless he opened his mouth to admit his age...” Fa Ma nodded his head and voiced his thoughts.

“If any old fellows were to obtain a medicinal pill that could change his appearance back into a young man, won’t he be able to deceive everyone and participate in this Grand Meeting? When that time comes... Who among the younger generation would be able to contend with him? In this way, this Grand Meeting of yours still has some loopholes.” Hai Bo Dong frowned and said.

“Do you really think that those kind of medicinal pills are so easy to refine? Moreover, who among the older generation would abandon their face and do such a thing. If he were accidentally exposed, won’t he be utterly embarrassed?” Fa Ma helplessly said.

“Yes, there is one below... I am now certain that under this tender outer appearance, there is definitely an old soul.” Hai Bo Dong spread out his hand and lifted his chin at the gray robed young man.

“What use is there if you can’t be certain? We cannot just simply base everything on a couple words of yours and forcefully expel him in front of so many people, can we? Since our Alchemist Grand Meeting is known to be opened to any alchemist, then it naturally includes the alchemists from Chu Yun Empire...” Fa Ma smiled bitterly and said.

“Then what do you plan to do now? If you let a person from the Chu Yun Empire obtain the champion position, your association’s reputation will end up receiving quite a big blow.” Jia Lao knit his eyebrows together and said.

“What else can we do? We can only choose to continue conducting the grand meeting. If he were to fumble and accidentally fail, it would save us those thoughts. Moreover... Yan Xiao and those little fellows aren’t ordinary people. What if they beat that old fellow by chance?” Fa Ma spread his hands and said.

From the looks of the situation, it seems a little difficult.” Jia Lao shook his head and said.

“That may not be certain...” Hai Bo Dong suddenly parted his mouth and smiled. His gaze swept to Xiao Yan in the open ground and smiled as he said, “There might really be some surprise...”

“Hopefully.”

Fa Ma sighed. Although he spoke in such a manner, his heart did not feel so certain. Yan Xiao may be considered among the best of the younger generation, but that mysterious gray robed young man clearly did not belong to the level of a young person.

“Let’s wait and see. If it is really not possible... we can wait until the examination is over and find a chance to do... to that fellow.” Hai Bo Dong patted Fa Ma’s shoulders. He randomly waved his hand and a faint killing intent appeared on his old face.

Fa Ma’s turbid eyes narrowed. A long while later, he shook his head and sighed, “Forget it. If the matter were to be exposed, us, the Jia Ma Empire’s Alchemist Association, would become extremely notorious in this continent. For us, the price of that outweighs the benefits! Therefore, we cannot take this risk.”

“It’s up to you.” Hai Bo Dong shrugged his shoulders and did not continue speaking. Taking a few steps back, he sat on his chair and waited for the Grand Meeting to continue.

Jia Lao also patted Fa Ma’s shoulders and retreated to his seat.

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“That fellow... is actually so young?” Xiao Yan, Liu Ling and Little Princess felt a similar shock as they eyed that tender face of the gray robe young man. They did not have the judgement power of Fa Ma and the others. Therefore, when they saw the other party’s appearance, they were all shocked speechless.

“That fellow is someone from the Chu Yun Empire?” The Little Princess eyes suddenly saw the badge that was worn on the gray robe of the young man’s chest. On the badge, there was a bright sun that was slowly rising from the horizon. This image was the symbol of the Chu Yun Empire.

“Chu Yun Empire?” Hearing this name, Xiao Yan was slightly surprised. The Little Fairy Doctor that was wearing a floating white dress suddenly flashed across his mind. “She appeared to have left for the Chu Yun Empire, no?”

“He actually is a person from the Chu Yun Empire? This is going to be fun...” Liu Ling was similarly shocked as he immediately muttered. As the disciple of Pill-King Gu He, he naturally clearly knew the grudge between the Jia Ma Empire and the Chu Yun Empire.

“We must not let him be the champion!” Liu Ling eyed Xiao Yan and the Little Princess as he said in low voice.

Xiao Yan shrugged his shoulders in an unconcerned manner. As no one had poured any enmity thoughts against the Chu Yun Empire into him, he did not have too much of a conflict or enmity with the Chu Yun Empire. The Little Princess, who was a member of the imperial family, nodded her head seriously.

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On the front stage of the VIP seats, Fa Ma slowly exhaled. His turbid eyes carried some coldness as he stared at the gray robe young man in the open ground below. A long while later, a calm voice once again sounded in the plaza.

“Alright, since everyone has completed the test, let us start the second round of the examination... Move your fingers and press the red colored small button on the bottom left of the rock table.”

Hearing the voice by the side of his ear, Xiao Yan immediately threw the matter regarding the gray robe young man to the back of his mind. His finger touched it and then pressed the little red colored button down.

As he pressed the button, the huge green table suddenly trembled slightly. The machine that had protruded out earlier was once again withdrawn. A huge pile of neatly stacked medicinal ingredients and a medicinal formula scroll slowly appeared on the clear and sleek table surface.

“This time around, the medicinal formula is an orthodox one. This is something that our association used all of our manpower and a few months in order to create it. The examination this time around will require all of you to follow the medicinal formula to successfully refine the medicinal pill. The medicinal ingredients in front of you are sufficient enough for all of you to refine twice. In other words, all of you still only have two tries. Once the medicinal ingredients are exhausted, it represents your failure...”

“Uh?” Hearing this, Xiao Yan was at a lost. Immediately, he frowned. “Following the medicinal formula to refine the medicinal pill? This kind of examination... isn't it a little too easy? This kind of refining by following the method step by step was clearly far easier than the first round... If the Grand Meeting was so prudent, how could they perform such an examination?”

Xiao Yan doubtfully shook his head. He picked up the medicinal formula scroll and slowly pulled it open. After which, he closed his eyes and extended his Spiritual Strength out, gradually scanning the information recorded on the medicinal formula.

As his Spiritual Strength did the scan, numerous amounts of precise information was swiftly stored in Xiao Yan's mind. The various different things that one needed to pay attention to were also swiftly and clearly recorded in Xiao Yan's mind. This was the advantage of an orthodox medicinal formula.

After this information was recorded in Xiao Yan's mind, he could sense that the Spiritual Strength on the scroll that was storing the information was swiftly disappearing.

“‘Wind Walking Pill’, tier three medicinal pill. Its effect: Able to let the person who consumes it be extremely sensitive toward the wind type natural energy for a short period of time. From this, one could use it to raise one's movement speed.”

“It is a rather practical medicinal pill... the way the alchemist association leaves it to the contestants is really generous. This formula is something that one can forget about obtaining from the market if one did not have a hundred thousand gold coins. But they actually gave them out for free.” Xiao Yan sighed emotionally and shook his head. Xiao Yan was a little surprised by its effect of being able to increase one's movement speed.

“According to what is written on it, one needs to merge nine different types of medicinal ingredients in order to refine the ‘Wind Walking Pill’. Although this isn't considered a lot, it is not a small number either...” Xiao Yan's gaze slowly swept over the nine different types of medicinal ingredients in front of him as he muttered, “This kind of medicinal formula has only reached tier three. Adding to that there is a medicinal formula. It should not be too difficult to refine it. The examination this time around... is quite easy. Don't tell me that they currently intend to let people successfully pass it because they were a little too ruthless earlier?”

Xiao Yan smiled bitterly and shook his head. He raised it and looked around him only to find that Little Princess, Liu Ling and the others had their eyebrows slightly knit together. Clearly, they felt a little surprise at the simplicity of the examination this time around.

“I don’t care what exactly is the reason. I should act first. It would naturally be good if I can successfully pass and save myself quite a bit of trouble.” Xiao Yan mumbled softly, He threw the purple colored Danwan into his mouth and sprayed the Purple Flame into the medicinal cauldron.

At a remote corner, the gray robed young man looked at the scroll on his hand indifferently. A smile of ridicule was contained at the corner of his mouth. “A cheap trick... does the Jia Ma Empire’s Alchemist Association only have this little ability?”

On the stage in front of the VIP seats, Fa Ma stood on the high ground and looked down at the entire place. He eyed Xiao Yan at the middle spot who had already raised his flame and began to refine. He frowned slightly and softly said: “Little Fellow, you must always be careful. This kind of Grand Meeting is not like a competition along the road side. If you don’t pay attention, you will end up being eliminated.”

Chapter 309: The Source of The Problem

On the huge square, most of the alchemists were joyful once they inspected the formula and immediately lit their Dou Qi flames and began preparing measures to refine the pills.

Of course, among so many alchemists, there were naturally some cautious ones who upon looking at the simple test were surprised and hesitated. But upon discovering nothing wrong, they could only helplessly shake their heads, and light their fires...

Xiao Yan firmly observed the rising purple flames in the cauldron. After the temperature of the flame had reached a sufficient temperature, he slowly began to throw in the medicinal ingredients one by one. His pupils constricted as he slowly began to refine.

Right after Xiao Yan began refining, Liu Ling and the Little Princess on his sides, slightly frowned, and also started refining. They had the orthodox formula, and with their capabilities, as long as they were careful, refining should not be too difficult. That is, unless they suffered a stroke of extremely bad luck. After all, no matter what, it was impossible to have a success rate of 100% when it came to refining.

As the refining of the medicine once again began, the noise from the two seating galleries at the sides also gradually decreased. Numerous gazes swept over the alchemists in the open square, eyeing those within the open ground with envious faces as the latter released essence like flames with the raise of their hands.

In front of the VIP seats, Fa Ma stood with his hands held together. His gaze was directly locked onto the gray robed young man at a remote spot on the open ground.

Seeing that the methods the gray robed man used while refining medicine was as well versed as some of the elders within the association, he knit his eyebrows slightly. With a soft voice, he muttered, "This kind of extremely practiced skill is something that one could not possibly have without decades to train... this person is indeed very strange. But why is it that I have not heard when such a high tier alchemist had appeared in the Chu Yun Empire? Don't tell me that he is new to the scene?"

"Let's first see if he can pass this round..." Fa Ma sighed and once again threw his gaze back toward Xiao Yan's three-man group. He softly said, "Hopefully, these three fellows can also pass... please don't be too careless."

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As the time slowly flowed by, some of the competitors within the open ground, whose abilities were quite good, had already refined all the necessary quantities of medicinal ingredients needed. After hesitating for a moment, they clenched their teeth and poured all the essence components into the medicinal cauldron, beginning the final part of the refinement.

Xiao Yan's gaze focused on the medicinal ingredients that were writhing within the Purple Flame. As he was worried about the possibility of some problems suddenly arising, his refining speed this time around was extremely slow. This resulted in him still refining carefully at a steady pace while many other competitors had already refined all the essential components of medicinal ingredients.

"It appears that there isn't any problem..." After some time, Xiao Yan eyed the pile of pale-purple that had been formed from the grilling of a medicinal ingredient with the Purple Flame. He muttered to himself, opened the cauldron cover and sucked out the pale-purple powder before storing it within a jade bottle.

Xiao Yan's gaze slowly swept across the nine jade bottles in front of him. The necessary ingredients to refine this 'Wind Walking Pill' had already been completely refined by him. Next was the last step of merging them together.

Xiao Yan slowly rubbed the warm surface of the jade bottle as he mused for a moment. Finally, he ceased hesitating. With a wave of his hand, he threw all the ingredients within the jade bottle into the medicinal cauldron. At this time however, a soft muffled sound was suddenly emitted from a green table not far away from him. Xiao Yan raised his eyes to take a look. At that spot, an alchemist was foolishly staring at the pile of black ashes that was discharged from the medicinal cauldron. Clearly, this was a product from a failed refining attempt...

"How can it be? Didn't I completely follow the medicinal formula? Why did I fail?" The alchemist mumbled in a soft and doubtful manner. A moment later, the him who did not have any answer could only attribute the failure this time around to his failure of controlling the flame. Therefore, he swiftly cleared out the ashes and began to throw in

the last set of medicinal ingredients into the medicinal cauldron as though he had done it a thousand times before and began to proceed with the refinement.

Xiao Yan narrowed his eyes as he watched the alchemist's action. His hand, which was lifting a jade bottle was slowly placed down. His gaze stared at the latter's every action. This alchemist was someone whom Xiao Yan had seen previously at the internal test. Logically speaking, the him who possessed the ability of a tier three alchemist should not make an extremely low level mistake like improper control of the flame when refining a tier three medicinal pill. Although it was said in this manner, the true event that had appeared in front of him was that he had indeed failed in the refining...

"Something is a little off..." Xiao Yan muttered softly. He tried his best to calm himself down. When he glanced at his two sides, he realized that Little Princess and Liu Ling had already began merging the medicinal ingredients.

As more and more time passed, numerous soft muffled sounds from the medicinal cauldrons occurred one after another on the large open ground. The alchemists who failed stared at the dark black soot that came scattering out of the cauldrons with completely stunned faces. Their perplexed eyes let everyone knew that they did not appear to know where the problem came from.

The people on the audience seats began to whisper privately amongst themselves as they watched the alchemists who had suddenly become foolish looking.

"Bang, bang..." Another two soft muffled sound was emitted by Xiao Yan's two sides. He turned his head to take a look. Upon seeing the ugly expressions of Liu Ling and Little Princess, he slowly exhaled.

"It seems there's something wrong." On the VIP seats, Ya Fei softly said. As she did so, her astonished eyes watched all the alchemist on the open ground turning into fools exchanging glances with each other.

"Something is indeed wrong... Although I am not an alchemist, I also know that one's success rate in refinement would greatly increase if one refined according to the medicinal formula. However, those below, including Liu Ling and Little Princess... all seem to have failed..." Nalan Yanran knitted her eyebrows together and said.

"This examination question... seems to have concealed a mystery." Yao Ye's long right leg was crossed over her left one. She watched the open ground which had a strange atmosphere and spoke.

"Bang..." Another muffled sound was suddenly transmitted from a spot a short distance in front of Xiao Yan. The tier three alchemist who had failed earlier still ended in failure during the merging portion this time around. The current him was eyeing the dark black soot spilling out from the bottom of the medicinal cauldron with a green face.

After this sound rang, a red glow suddenly lit up from the jade mirror in front of the tier three alchemist. Evidently, he had lost his last chance after consuming both portions of medicinal ingredients.

On the open ground, numerous gazes eyed this alchemist who was the first to be knocked off. Seeing his ending, some of the people who were impulsively planning to immediately refine again were frightened. They calmed down and no longer dared to carelessly waste their last portion of medicinal ingredients.

That alchemist's entire body trembled as he picked up his medicinal cauldron with a green face. After which, he angrily walked out of the place while being filled with fury and incomprehension. While he was walking passed Xiao Yan, the latter could vaguely hear him muttering to himself in an unresigned manner, "Bastard. How could I have fail again? My control over the flame was clearly very good. Why is it that they wouldn't merge?"

Xiao Yan sent the alchemist off with his gaze. He rubbed the warm and moist jade bottle as he narrowed his eyes. A long while later, he suddenly poured the ingredients within the bottle into the medicinal cauldron. The current him needed to personally sense exactly what the reason that caused so many participants to be unable to successfully refine the medicinal pill.

Xiao Yan's gaze stared intently at the writhing purple colored flame. In a systematic manner, he placed the ingredients contained within the nine jade bottles into the medicinal cauldron one at a time. After which, he controlled the Purple Flame and separated them. Finally, he inhaled a deep breath and began to carefully merge them...

As he had witnessed the many people before him, Xiao Yan was almost more cautious than anyone else this time around. His Spiritual Strength spewed out, covering every inch of the Purple Flame. He did his best to store all the reactions created when each type of medicinal ingredient was merged and precisely sent them to his mind.

When Xiao Yan began to raise his flame and perform the merger, some of the alchemists around him including Liu Ling and the Little Princess threw their gazes over. Under the circumstances where they did not have any other solution, they could only hope that this young man who obtained the best result in the internal test could solve this difficult problem...

Xiao Yan ignored the surrounding gazes as he put all his attention into controlling the Purple Flame. Under the grilling of the Purple Flame, the ingredients were gradually and successfully being merged one after another.

"Three-tailed Wing Leaf... successfully merged!"

"Cloud Grass... successfully merged!"

“Off-ground Fruit... successfully merged!”

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One by one, the ingredients were successfully merged without the slightest resistance under the sensitive senses of Xiao Yan’s Spiritual Strength.

“Thick-soil Ganoderma...” Xiao Yan’s eyebrows suddenly knit slightly together. His expression suddenly and immediately changed. The flame that was rising within the medicinal cauldron writhed intensely. Instantly, a soft muffled sound was emitted from within it and some black colored soot was spilled out.

“Ah...” Hearing the muffled sound, the people around sighed in disappointment..

Xiao Yan slowly opened his eyes and eyed the dark black soot on the rock table. He was silent for a moment. His finger dipped and scooped up a little of it and rubbed it with the tip of his fingers. Quick flashes of the somewhat unnatural ripple that was transmitted to him through his Spiritual Strength during the merging process earlier appeared in his mind.

After being silent for a while, Xiao Yan’s rubbing hands abruptly stiffened. His gaze suddenly paused on that medicinal formula scroll on the rock table. He pursed his lips up slightly, tightened his fist and softly muttered, “Dammit... there is something wrong with the medicinal formula...”

“Heh, what a group of useless people...” On the quiet open ground, a soft, ridicule-like laughter suddenly resounded, causing everyone to stare angrily.

As his gaze followed the voice and drifted over, Xiao Yan realized that the person who emitted the voice was actually the gray robed young man at a remote corner. The current him also had a pile of black colored soot on the rock table in front of him. From the looks of it, it appeared that he had similarly failed in his first attempt.

The gray robed young man ignored those gazes that were filled with fury. The corner of his mouth contained a cold smile as he suddenly threw the last medicinal ingredient on the table into the medicinal cauldron. The faint laughter reverberated in the open ground, “Looks like I am leading in this round. The alchemists in the Jia Ma Empire are only so-so...”

As he spoke, the gray robe young man’s speed was not reduced by the slightest. One after another, the medicinal ingredients were swiftly being refined within the flame. Seeing his manner, it appeared that he was also clear of where the source of the problem was during his previous failed attempt.

With a frown, Xiao Yan watched the gray robed young man that did not hide his wild arrogance before he suddenly smiled coldly. His calm voice similarly reverberated in the air above, "That may not be so..."

Hearing this voice, the gray robed young man's hands abruptly paused. He raised his head and stared at Xiao Yan with icy cold blue colored eyes. The corner of his mouth twitched, giving off an extremely dense ridicule.

Ignoring the displeased gaze of the gray robed young man, Xiao Yan suddenly turned his body around. He waved his hand and the remaining medicinal ingredients were all thrown into the medicinal cauldron. Immediately, he lifted his right hand slowly. He mused for a moment, then an elegant green-colored flame suddenly appeared in front of a countless number of shocked gazes...

Chapter 310: Turning the tide, Temporary Suspension of the Grand Meeting

"Green colored flames?"

"Heavens, he actually possesses two kinds of flame?" Eyeing the green colored flame that was rising in Xiao Yan's palm, waves of surprised noises immediately erupted from the seating stands on both sides. Although many people present were not alchemists, most of the them still knew the basic knowledge that different flames could not be merged. However, Xiao Yan in front of them had appeared to use reality to break their knowledge.

Compared to the audience on the seats around them, the alchemists on the open ground undoubtedly felt an even greater shock. As an alchemist, they had an even clearer understanding on how dangerous and incredible having two types of flame appear on one's body was compared to anyone else. It must be known that a flame was a violent and wild thing. When two violent and wild things came into contact, the heat they released would be sufficient enough to incinerate their owner into a pile of ash.

Therefore, when they saw that Xiao Yan was actually able to once again summon out a green colored flame that was even more ferocious than the Purple Flame, shock covered all of their faces.

"Green colored flame. This fellow really still possesses a trump card." While she eyed the green colored flame on Xiao Yan's hand, the pretty eyes of Little Princess flickered as she muttered softly.

"This should be that 'Heavenly Flame' which he can control, right? How unexpected. It's actually true." Liu Ling said with a deep voice in his heart as he slowly inhaled the air that had become somewhat hot as a result of the appearance of the green colored flame.

“That is.” On the front stage of the VIP seats, Fa Ma was stunned as he watched the green colored flame which appeared a little elegant. A long while later, he narrowed his eyes and softly said, “That is a ‘Heavenly Flame’? This little fellow actually possessed such a thing?”

“Hee hee, didn’t I tell you not to underestimate him just now. He has so many trump cards that it would stun people.” Hai Bo Dong smiled and said while being extremely satisfied with Fa Ma’s shocked expression.

“He’s really not someone simple. At such an age, he actually possesses and has managed to tame this kind of thing that even Fa Ma and Gu He covet. He really surprises people.” The appearance of the Green Flame had similarly caused Jia Lao’s face to be astonished. As a Dou Huang, he was naturally very clear just what kind of terrifying force this kind of natural mysterious thing possessed. Back then, he had once fought with a strong person who possessed a ‘Heavenly Flame’. Although the other party’s true ability was far inferior to him, that ‘Heavenly Flame’ which had an infinite amount of power caused Jia Lao to suffer terribly.

“Hu.” Fa Ma slowly exhaled. He turned his gaze toward the grey robed young man and smiled as he said, “It looks like there will be some difficulty if that fellow still wants to obtain the best results in this round of the examination.”

“Green colored flame.” Ya Fei sighed and shook her head with her teeth biting her red lips. She really could not understand just what kind of things this tender young man had experienced in this short year. Why was he able to leap forward in such a short period of time and grow to a point where even Dou Huangs could not stop marvelling at him.

“Don’t tell me it’s because of her?” Ya Fei tilted her head slightly, stared at Nalan Yanran by the side and muttered in her heart.

“No wonder great-grandfather attached so much importance to him. He actually possesses such a trump card that shocks people.” Yao Ye’s long white right leg swayed slightly. The expression on her face felt a little relieved.

Nalan Yanran watched the young man who had appeared to be the focus of attention of the entire place. The current him had undoubtedly become the only one from the Jia Ma Empire who could contend with the mysterious grey robed young man. Using his own strength to turn the tide. This kind of pride was what a man, a hero should have. Nalan Yanran pursed her lips up and thought in this manner. After which she quietly moved slightly.

The different types of gazes in the outside world did not affect Xiao Yan in the slightest. At the moment, he was completely focused as he stared at the medicinal cauldron. The Purple Flame within the cauldron had already disappeared. Replacing it was that elegant green colored flame.

Xiao Yan's hand swiftly swept across the rock table. Different kinds of medicinal ingredients were thrown into the medicinal cauldron all at once. However, the last medicinal ingredient on the medicinal formula, the 'Thick-soil Ganoderma', was excluded from the refining. Back then, Xiao Yan had already discovered the problem in the examination this time around; he had focused on sensing the ingredient merger during the refining process, and discovered the reason. The reason why so many alchemists failed to successfully coagulate it, and form a pill was all because the medicinal ingredient called 'Thick-soil Ganoderma' was basically superfluous. It was due to this extra unnecessary medicinal ingredient that caused the fusion to finally fail!

Calling into question a part of the medicinal formula was something that required courage and boldness. Some of the traditional alchemists trusted the authenticity of the medicinal formula far too much. Therefore, no matter how they failed, they would not attribute the problem to the medicinal formula. They would only think that they had made a mistake in the control of their flame, or when refining the components. People who possessed such thinking would undoubtedly fail.

Xiao Yan did not lack courage or boldness. Therefore, he had discovered the problem with the medicinal formula. It was also due to this that he was able to hurry and compete against that mysterious grey robed person. The rest of the people, including Little Princess and even Liu Ling could only be reduced to being the audience.

On the huge open ground, there were only two spots where flames were rising. Everyone's eyes focused on the competition ground moved to and fro, watching these two spots. Xiao Yan and the grey robed young man raced against time under the observation of these gazes as they refined the few medicinal ingredients.

Xiao Yan's hand was currently completely removed from the medicinal cauldron. Around a foot away from the medicinal cauldron, his long ten fingers began to roll and jump in an agile manner in front of him, as though they were dancing. With his control ability over the 'Green Lotus Core Flame', it was completely possible for Xiao Yan to reach the stage where he could control the temperature from a distance. If one were simply comparing who was more elegant and filled with charm, Xiao Yan would undoubtedly be superior.

"Hurry up, hurry up." As her gaze swept between both parties and observed their refining speed, the Little Princess repeatedly sent urges, within her heart, in the direction where Xiao Yan was at. As a member of the imperial family, she naturally did not wish for a person from another country to obtain the best result within the Jia Ma Empire's Grand Meeting. That would undoubtedly be giving the alchemists from the Jia Ma Empire who were participating in this Grand Meeting a hard slap.

"That fellow's refining speed is too fast. Although his flame is far more inferior than Yan Xiao's, he appears to be extremely experienced and does not appear to even lose a second in any aspect. Compared to him, Yan Xiao is very much disadvantaged in this aspect. It is fortunate that he has the help of the 'Heavenly Flame', which results in him

not lagging behind. As long as he is just a little faster, he should be able to surpass the other guy.” Liu Ling’s gaze stared intently at every single action of the grey robed young man. He then watched Yan Xiao before frowning slightly as he spoke. Although he was rather narrow minded, he was after all a person from the Jia Ma Empire. At this instance, he clearly knew what kind of ridicule would be directed toward the Jia Ma Empire’s alchemists who had participated in this competition if the grey robed young man were to obtain the best result.

Xiao Yan and the grey robed young man had undoubtedly turned into the focus of attention of everyone at this moment.

“Bang!”

A muffled sound from a hand tapping the rock table was emitted. The corner of the grey robed young man’s mouth contained a cold smile as he flipped his palm. Different colored powders or viscous liquids were shot out of the cauldron and were poured into the neatly arranged jade bottles.

At the instance when the tapping sound grey robed young man struck the table sounded, Xiao Yan’s palm also abruptly slammed the rock table. Following the muffled sound, a wisp of green colored flame shot out from within the cauldron. Xiao Yan waved his sleeves and the flame suddenly shot into a jade bottle in front of him. When it was about to enter the bottle, it abruptly disappeared. Clusters of different colored powders and liquids immediately came spilling downward.

After the refinement was complete, Xiao Yan borrowed the time for which the ingredients needed to cool to tilt his head toward the direction of the grey robed young man and watch him.

Sensing the gaze that Xiao Yan had shot over, the grey robed young man raised his head and gave a mocking cold smile. “Hei, you are slow. What use is that flame being good while you aren’t?”

Xiao Yan withdrew his gaze in an expressionless manner. He did not reveal any emotion. After being quiet for a moment, he waved his sleeve once again. The jade bottles in front of him abruptly burst apart and the ingredients contained within them were sucked to the midair. After which, they were blown into the medicinal cauldron. The green flame suddenly rose and began the final coagulating process.

At the moment before Xiao Yan began, the grey robed young man had taken the lead and threw all the medicinal ingredients within the jade bottles into the medicinal cauldron.

The flames within the two medicinal cauldron rose and the numerous kinds of medicinal ingredients were slowly merged within the flame, waiting to finally form a pill.

“What a fierce competition that races against time.” Seeing the two people whose gaps were no more than five seconds apart, Fa Ma and the others could not resist shaking their heads and sighing. Eliminating the commotion caused by the grey robed young man, this contest between people of similar strength had undoubtedly caused the heated blood of many people in the seats at both sides to boil.

“Old Man Fa, who do you think will be the fastest to form the pill?” Hai Bo Dong smiled and asked. At this moment, he had also stood up after being attracted by the intense competition in the open ground.

“It’s difficult to say. Although Yan Xiao has the advantage of the ‘Heavenly Flame’, his experience seems to be far inferior to that strange fellow due to his age. Therefore, the two offset each other. It is really difficult to predict who will win.” Fa Ma shook his head and sighed.

“That fellow seems to be very tough.” Hearing this, Hai Bo Dong shook his head. He muttered in his heart, “But this little fellow Yan Xiao won’t really lose, will he? Even if his Spiritual Strength was seriously damaged, he was after all an alchemist grandmaster who could once refine a tier six medicinal pill. He wouldn’t decline so quickly, would he?”

On the open ground, Xiao Yan and the grey robed young man stared intently at the writhing flames within their cauldrons. The two different colored flames painted their faces with a green or yellow light respectively.

“Faster, faster. go for it, go for it.” The hands of the Little Princess twisted slightly. Her gaze repeatedly swept past the two cauldrons. Using her excellent eyesight, she was able to discover that the medicinal pill within the two medicinal cauldrons were slowly being formed.

“The medicinal pills are about to be formed.” As they sniffed the faint medicinal fragrance that was emanating from the medicinal cauldrons, Liu Ling and the others, who clearly knew what it represented, began to feel an instant tension in their minds.

At this moment, countless people’s hearts were hung in their throat.

“Yan Xiao is about to succeed.”

Fa Ma’s shrivelled palm tightly held the guardrail. He frowned and softly said, “But the other party is following closely and could surpass Yan Xiao at any time.”

Xiao Yan tightly pursed his lips. A green colored flame was dancing within his dark eyes. From the reflection of the flame, a round medicinal pill was spinning rapidly as it rotated on a different axis.

"If I continue like this, I cannot close the gap between us." Xiao Yan narrowed his eyes. In an instant, Xiao Yan suddenly smashed his palm heavily on the medicinal cauldron. Immediately, the medicinal pill which had yet to complete the final stage of being kept warm, suddenly shot out of the cauldron along with a cluster of green flame.

"Foolhardy! Although it is the last step, how can he allow the medicinal pill to leave the cauldron in advance. Once a medicinal pill that has just been born comes into contact with the air, the contents within it that have yet to completely solidify might be dismantled!" Seeing this sudden action of Xiao Yan, the guardrail that was being held by Fa Ma abruptly cracked apart as he angrily said.

"Reckless fellow!" Seeing Xiao Yan's action, Little Princess and Liu Ling were similarly stunned. A moment later, they could not help but shout.

Xiao Yan ignored the surrounding gazes. His feet pushed off the ground, and his body shot up. He extended his hand, and grabbed the medicinal pill that was wrapped by the green flame into his palm. The moment the medicinal pill entered his palm, an even greater incomparably ferocious green flame suddenly rose from within Xiao Yan's palm. The medicinal pill, which had yet to finish the last step of being heated, instantly solidified.

As Xiao Yan's body descended, his finger flicked gently. His medicinal pill turned into a ray of light as it was shot into the jade bottle. Immediately, the green colored light roused the people's spirit as it took the lead in shining from the jade mirror in front of Xiao Yan.

"Madman."

In a remote corner of the open ground, the expression of the grey robed young man, who originally held a cold smile, suddenly turned green. He did not expect that Xiao Yan would actually be so crazy. If the medicinal pill that had not yet solidified came into contact with the air, all his earlier efforts would have instantly turned into nothingness. This kind of bold and crazy action was merely to get rid of the person that was competing for time with him.

With a grey face, the furious grey robed young man smashed the jade bottle in front of him into powder with one palm. A long while later, his expression was gloomy as he patted the medicinal cauldron. The medicinal pill shot out and was immediately thrown into another jade bottle. At the moment, however, a full minute had passed since Xiao Yan's success.

The silent atmosphere on the open ground that was caused by Xiao Yan's insanity persisted for a full minute before overwhelmingly joyful cries suddenly shook the entire plaza until it trembled, much like a torrent.

As he held the jade bottle, Xiao Yan slowly exhaled. He raised his head and watched the seats on both sides that had started boiling. A faint smile appeared on his calm face.

“Ha ha, little fellow, very good!” On the high platform, Fa Ma rubbed his chest and let out a long breath. Although he was very angry at Xiao Yan’s earlier action, the current Xiao Yan had indeed obtained victory regardless of the process. Moreover, this victory was done by tossing his opponent far behind him. Immediately, the excited Fa Ma could not help but laugh loudly as he spoke to Xiao Yan on the open ground.

“What a crazy fellow.” Ya Fei and Yao Ye exchanged glances. In addition to being relieved, they gave an endless bitter smile at the gambling like character of Xiao Yan.

“Although it was insane, it was not simply being completely rash because of his heated blood. At that moment, it was likely that he had only dared to perform such an action because he had the confidence to do so.” Nalan Yanran gently said with a simple smile as she watched Xiao Yan, that calm and joyful young man, who was smiling faintly in the plaza under countless of cheers. Although this was only the second round of the examination, the great atmosphere that he had created had already far surpassed the last round of the previous Grand Meetings.

“Mister Yan Xiao. Congratulations. But please refrain from performing such an insane act in the future. If it fails...” Little Princess cupped her hands together and spoke to Xiao Yan in an annoyed manner.

“This time around, you were indeed very outstanding. But I will also hold nothing back in the final round.” Liu Ling shrugged his shoulders. His current expression could be forcefully called somewhat friendly.

Xiao Yan smiled, but did not speak. He turned his head over and threw his gaze at the gloomy faced grey robed young man. His thumb which was lifted up was facing downward. His usual calmness and imposing manner finally revealed an arrogance that belonged to a young man.

With a green face, the grey robed young man eyed Xiao Yan’s actions. He coldly and darkly snorted as his lips wiggled, “Don’t be so pleased. In the final round, we will compete once again! At that time, I will hold nothing back!”

Facing this threat of him, Xiao Yan unconcernedly spread his hands apart. He withdrew his gaze and watched those alchemists who were still throwing their gaze at him. He hesitated a little bit before quietly picking up the remaining ‘Thick-soil Ganoderma’ on the table and carelessly threw it aside.

Seeing Xiao Yan’s action, the surrounding alchemists were at a loss. A little while later, some of them appeared to have understood what the problem was. A wild joy gradually appeared on their faces as they threw a gaze that was filled with gratitude toward Xiao Yan. After which, they hurried to use the remaining time to begin refining.

Seeing the participants who had begun rushing to refine, the corner of Xiao Yan's eyes glanced at the sand in the hourglass on the opposite wall that was about to completely fall. He shrugged his shoulders, lowered his head and packed up the different things on his stone table. Whether they were able to successfully refine the 'Wind Walking Pill' at the last moment was something that he need not worry about.

As time slowly passed by, the deafening cry of joy throughout the plaza had also gradually weakened. After this great excitement the audience finally had enough as they threw their gazes at the busy alchemists on the open ground. Besides this, the gazes of many young ladies on the gallery were sneaking glances at Xiao Yan, who had his head lowered as he randomly cleaned up the rock table in front of him. His earlier performance had already moved these young ladies' passion-filled hearts. Currently, even the ordinary face of Xiao Yan after he had changed his appearance, had suddenly become extremely handsome in their eyes.

Half an hour later, the green light of the Little Princess and Liu Ling were the first to light up. The two of them placed their medicinal pills into their bottles, exchanged glances and sighed in relief.

Behind these two people, there were also more green lights flickering one after another. However, most of the glow throughout the plaza was still red. The open ground was overly big and the alchemists who had received the clue from Xiao Yan were merely restricted to those lucky few alchemists who surrounded him. Those competitors who were outside of Xiao Yan's sight range could only stare at the ingredients on the rock table, feeling at a loss. Without knowing where the problem lay, they could only continue to forcefully refine it. By adding the 'Thick-soil Ganoderma', their refinements all failed in the end without any exceptions.

Additionally, even if one were to exclude the reason mentioned above, this 'Wind Walking Pill' was after all a tier three medicinal pill. Therefore, there was only two to three alchemists whose abilities were around tier two were luckily able to pass. Even some of the competitors who had just entered the tier three level had also failed because of their carelessness.

Under these two somewhat harsh conditions, the number of competitors in the Grand Meeting was being reduced at a swift pace. Perhaps there was not even three hundred remaining out of the original thousand plus people. Watching the situation develop, it appeared that the reduction would continue.

When the sand within the hourglass on the wall completely fell, there was actually only a little over a hundred people still remaining on the open ground. The rest of the people had already been completely expelled during these two rounds.

The moment that Fa Ma's laughter sounded in the open ground, Xiao Yan slowly raised his head. His gaze was thrown toward the old man who was at the spot where the VIP

seats were located. Sensing Xiao Yan's gaze, Fa Ma revealed a friendly smile toward the spot where Xiao Yan was at.

After the time for the examination was over, the next event was to once again conduct the test for the pills. As Xiao Yan had the help of the 'Heavenly Flame' this time around, it was natural that Xiao Yan's medicinal pill would have the most outstanding effect in this test. The second was the grey robed young man. Following behind him was the Little Princess, Liu Ling and the other tier three alchemists whose abilities were quite good.

Once the test was completed, the sky had already gradually darkened. A crescent moon slowly appeared at the edge of the sky, shining on the well lit capital.

"Everyone, we will stop here for today's Grand Meeting. All the competitors, please have a good rest for the night. Tomorrow will be the final round for our Grand Meeting. It is also the important round which decides who will be the champion. Therefore, everyone should not end up failing to appear because of various events. Otherwise, you will regret it for life." Fa Ma laughed clearly.

Hearing Fa Ma announcing that today's examination had ended, everyone in the open ground, including Xiao Yan, immediately heaved a sigh of relief. After the two rounds of examination, everyone was indeed a little tired.

As Xiao Yan stored the medicinal cauldron, he suddenly raised his head and glanced around. He noticed that after Fa Ma spoke those words, the grey robed young man packed up his things and walked out of the open ground. Before he left, he did not forget to throw an icy cold gaze at Xiao Yan.

Xiao Yan rubbed his forehead while faintly watching the back of the grey robed young man who was slowly walking out of the plaza. After packing his things, he also followed the crowd of participants and squeezed out of the place.

After exiting the plaza, Xiao Yan raised his head and inhaled a breath of fresh, cool air. His tense mind became a little more relaxed. Xiao Yan lowered his head and watched those people around him who were coming out from the audience seats. He noticed some of the young ladies were staring at him with glittering eyes and shook his head with a bitter smile. When he was about to raise his leg and walk away, a sweet gentle voice was suddenly transmitted from behind him, "Congratulations, Mister Yan Xiao."

Xiao Yan turned his head over and eyed the large group of people that had just come out from the passageway behind him. At the front of the group of people was naturally Nalan Yanran, Ya Fei and Yao Ye. Behind them, Nalan Jie and the rest were conversing with a smile.

Glancing at Nalan Yanran, whose smile was like a flower, Xiao Yan shook his head and said, "I was merely lucky."

During this period of time, Nalan Yanran had already gotten used to Xiao Yan's humility. She smiled, pulled Ya Fei and Yao Ye along as she said to Xiao Yan, "Princess Yao Ye had said that she wishes to give a feast to help you, Liu Ling, and Little Princess celebrate. Are you..."

Nalan Yanran's group of three ladies could be considered to be the top beauties within the entire capital. Now that the three of them stood together, their beautiful figures set-off each other's and it could be said that they were prettier than flowers. Therefore, there were already many young people currently at the entrance to the competition ground who had shot their gazes over.

Hearing this, Xiao Yan was momentarily at a loss. He immediately smiled bitterly and shook his head, apologizing, "I'm sorry, Princess Yao Ye, I really am far too tired tonight. There is still the final round of the examination tomorrow. Therefore, I'm afraid I cannot find the time to attend the banquet. My heart appreciates Princess's intention. Good night."

Once he said those words, Xiao Yan faced Princess Yao Ye and cupped his hands together. Without waiting for her reply, he turned around and strode toward the street. After which, he squeezed into the human flow and disappeared in front of the shocked gazes of the women he had just rejected.