

Battle Through the Heavens #Chapter 51: Relief - Read Battle Through the Heavens Chapter 51: Relief

Chapter 51:Relief

Nearing the heavy door, there were more than 10 guards with indifferent eyes standing firmly before the gate, barring it. At one corner of the gate in a chair, sat an aloof looking man. In his hands was a pen and a thick book.

At this moment many clansmen lined up in a row in front of the old man, each one of them had brought whatever Qi Method to him so they could sign it out. After doing so, they carefully left the pavilion under the cold stares of the 10 or more guards.

This was the procedure to leave the Qi Method Pavilion. Before entering the Qi Method Pavilion, Xiao Yan and everyone else was informed about the procedure, therefore it was not something unexpected.

The Qi Method Pavilion was a place where all of the clan's Qi Methods were held; methods that were acquired painstakingly by the clan for over dozens of generations. These Qi Methods were the foundation of Xiao Clan, thus the clan had extremely protective measures on the methods.

The Clan had their Qi Method scrolls made out of a special type of bamboo. The bamboo could be defined as a mother-son. The mother part was the size of the palm while the son part would be able to grow as large as a dozen meters. Since the technique scrolls were made from this special material, as long as the clan chief held onto the mother part, there was no way that anyone could sneak away with a scroll. The moment one left the area with a son scroll, the mother scroll would notify everyone.

The Parent's area of influence just happened to cover the entire Xiao Clan. Therefore, once a technique scroll leaves the Xiao Clan, it is detected. Of course, nothing is absolute in this world. An individual with powerful enough Dou Qi could forcefully destroy the connection between the scrolls. However, with power at that level, why would one bother to steal Huang level Qi Methods...?

It was finally Xiao Yan's turn after waiting in line for a period of time. Walking to the front, he withdrew a Qi Method from his pocket and gave it to the old man.

Receiving the dark red scroll from Xiao Yan left the old man slightly surprised. His eyes quickly appraised the boy as he thought to himself "*This, the [Burning Flame Refinement], was protected by a shield with the power of a 9th Duan Qi. This little brat, to think he could actually get through it.... It would seem he has some skills after all.*"

After recording that Xiao Yan had that scroll, the old man returned it to him and indifferently cautioned, "I think you know the rules, right?"

"The scroll can't leave the clan, otherwise there will be severe consequences! You must return the scroll after one year! There must be no damage to it."

Casually nodding his head, Xiao Yan moved to the side. He leaned on the front door and waited for Xun Er's scroll to be recorded.

Flashing Xiao Yan a light smile, Xun Er extended her snow white wrist and took out her scroll.

Seeing Xun Er standing in front of him, the emotionless face of the old man suddenly let a out a hint of a respectful smile. Using both hands to receive the scroll, he then quickly recorded the borrower of the scroll.

Standing off to the side, Xiao Yan narrowed his eyes at the old man after seeing the change in his attitude. Xiao Yan fingers curled instinctively slightly. Since this old man was in charge of the Qi Method Pavilion, his position in the clan was comparable to that of one of the 3 elders.

Xiao Yan had heard that this old man's nickname in the clan, Cold hearted Xiao Han. This old guy, even if it was to his own father, would still talk in a foreign manner. An old emotionless face, like the muscles of the recently dead, stiff with rigor mortis. .

This cold faced old man, who didn't even respect the clan elder, was acting so respectful before Xun Er. This once again kindled Xiao Yan's interest in Xun Er's identity.

Rubbing his nose, he thought about how each time Xun Er was silent about her identity. Lifting his head, he saw Xun Er coming over with a smile on her face. With a shrug of his shoulders, he left with her through the front door.

Bursting out from the crowded entrance, Xiao Yan breathed fresh air. The atmosphere inside the Qi Method Pavilion was far too oppressive to breathe normally.

"What's wrong, Yan Er?" Low laughter greeted Xiao Yan as a figure came into view. Looking through the Qi Method Pavilion's door, the figure asked with a smile.

Tilting his head to smile at his father, Xiao Yan nodded back with a smile of his own. A red scroll came out from inside his sleeves, "I got it."

Seeing the red scroll, Xiao Zhan gave a sharp intake of air, "It's a good thing you were able to get it." He said in a low voice.

Seeing his father's expression, Xiao Yan couldn't help but roar with pride filled laughter alongside him.

Extending his arm to clap Xiao Yan's shoulder, Xiao Zhan smiled, "Now that you have a Qi Method, once you become a Dou Zhe, then you'll be able to practice Dou Qi for real."

Xiao Yan nodded obediently as he returned the red scroll back up his sleeves. He could not help but think softly, *"Hmm, I don't know what's that special about that Qi Method. A Qi Method that can evolve...is that even possible?"*

"It's even stranger than a Tian level Qi Method..." Trying to recall the strange yet arrogant words of Yao Lao. Xiao Yan shook his head with a bitter laugh. He had just come across one of the finest Qi Methods in his life: Xun Er's High Xuan level Qi Method: Flame Manipulation. To be honest, he had an internal struggle when he declined it. After all, Qi Methods of that caliber were not only expensive but extremely rare.

Massaging his forehead with an open palm, he was starting to regret declining Xun Er's kindness but the deed had already been done, it was too late. Xiao Yan did not have the face to ask Xun Er again for it, so he had no choice but to pray that Yao Lao was not playing around with him. Otherwise, he would be the biggest loser out of everyone.

"Hmph, it's only High Xuan, there's nothing special about that. Even though she isn't normal, her collection of Qi Methods can't possibly compare to mine." Right when Xiao Yan was praying that Yao Lao didn't deceive, Yao Lao gave a slight humph and started speaking.

"At last you say something..." Hearing the voice within his own thoughts, Xiao Yan scratched his nose. His mouth twitched upwards into a pleasant smile as he spoke; his point of saying so much was so that he could force that old geezer to say something calming.

"Ai...you tiny brat, trying to deceive me..." An echo came out from within Xiao Yan's mind. Yao Lao didn't know whether to laugh or cry and instead said, "Brat, keep on practicing Dou Qi. Qi Methods are not something for you to worry about: mine won't be shabby. In the future, your achievements won't be lower than that little girl. Her clan is only... Ahem."

Even though Xiao Yan was disappointed that the last sentence was incomprehensible, he still nodded with a smile; he was given an answer to his question so he could concentrate on practicing Dou Qi so that he could become a Dou Zhe. This was the first step he had to take in order from him to become strong and...for him to find Nalan Yanran who has been on his mind for quite some time...

Chapter 52:Breakthrough

After the Qi Method selection, the entire clan seemed much emptier than usual. The young clansmen who were unable to achieve 7 Duan Qi had been assigned to various clan businesses outside of the clan home, where they would learn their respective tricks

of the trade. The talented members of the clan, those who had successfully obtained a Qi Method, started to immerse themselves in rigorous training, in hopes of learning their Qi Method skill as fast as possible.

As the burning sun rose high in the sky, rays of heat baked the earth like an oven. Heat waves bled out of the ground causing ripples in the air, making the air distorted and blurry.

Within the dense forest atop the mountain bordering the Xiao Clan...

Sunlight trickled through the dense foliage, splattering the leaf-matted ground with tiny droplets of light –like a sky full of stars.

In the small forest two shadows weaved and crossed about, explosions rippled the air whenever their palms met. Violent winds gushed forth from each exchange, rushing through the fallen leaves and tossing them into the air.

Engaging in another fierce flurry of blows, Xiao Yan used both palms to parry Xun Er's fair hands and a muffled 'boom' sound rang out with each counter. Though each attack looked light, in actuality whenever one landed it would instantly turn vicious and powerful.

The corners of Xiao Yan's mouth twitched as he was hit by a strong force, strong enough to cause him to stumble back two steps. Xun Er, on the other hand, was starting to get bruises on her delicate palms because of all the times she got hit..

Seeing Xiao Yan stumble backwards, a slight smile formed on Xun Er's lips as her fair hands slowly danced in the air, her fingers wrapped in a golden silky glow.

"Tsk tsk, so strong..." Settling down, the slightly shocked Xiao Yan inwardly shook his head and directed his eyes at Xun Er, she had a slight smile on her face. She then licked her lips, emitting a strong battle lust.

He abruptly pushed himself off the ground with the soles of his feet and dashed forward, specks of mud scattered in his wake.

With a glance at the incoming Xiao Yan, the corners of Xun Er's dainty mouth lifted up as the golden glow on her hands intensified.

A small crater was left after Xiao Yan had started rushing forward. He suddenly stopped a meter away from Xun Er. So perfect was his stop, it seemed as if Xiao Yan had never moved at all.

Seeing the depth of control Xiao Yan possessed over his movements, Xun Er's autumn water eyes couldn't help but betray a sense of admiration.

“Octane Blast!”

As his running figure suddenly came to a halt, his right foot pushed off the ground causing his body to spin: increasing the force of his attack. Filled with power his left leg arced through the air, bringing forth an ear piercing shriek of wind. Fiercely, he angled his blow at Xun Er.

Seeing Xiao Yan’s fierce incoming attack, Xun Er slightly nodded her exquisite chin in response. her dainty hands formed into a strange semicircular shield of light that slammed against Xiao Yan’s left leg without hesitation.

“Bang!”

A muffled boom resounded from the clash causing the leaves on the ground to be swept up into the sky, before scattering about.

Leg met fist in a momentary collision and a split second later, the two figures were pushed back.

The strength of the blow was enough to push Xiao Yan’s body four to five meters into the air. As his body fell downwards, he angled his right hand to face a nearby tree and emitted a suction force to negate the force of the fall. Jumping off a tree branch, he landed steadily onto the ground.

Lifting his head to look at Xun Er who was likewise pushed back a few steps, Xiao Yan smacked his lips and laughed, asking: “What was that Dou Technique you used?”

“High level Xuan Dou Technique: Swallow’s Return..... When mastered, it is able to return the force of an opponent’s attack. I am only at the beginner’s level, thus I can only return about 10% of the power.” Xun Er smiled while replying.

Having understood, a thought emerged from within Xiao Yan: “Borrowing a force to counter another.....”

“This Dou Technique that Elder Brother Xiao Yan used is not bad either. If Xun Er was not a one star Dou Zhe with a power beyond yours, I would be unable to withstand the strong force from that attack.” Xun Er smiled, her eyes forming two crescent moons.

Xiao Yan shrugged without commenting, lazily twisting his neck. A high level fight caused muscle fatigue and mental exhaustion to build up.

Rubbing the sweat that was pouring like water off his face, Xiao Yan silently cursed the hot and humid weather before he stripped off his shirt.

Under the shirt, his young, somewhat tanned and fit physique was revealed. Even though it was not considered muscular, his small body hid an explosive power.

Enjoying the half naked Xiao Yan, Xun Er's beautiful face flushed.

Xiao Yan grabbed his clothes and leaned tiredly against a limestone rock. Facing Xun Er, he let out a bitter laugh, "Sigh, it's already been two months, yet I am still stuck at the 8 Duan Qi....."

Looking at the somewhat helpless Xiao Yan, Xun Er pursed her lips and giggled. Gracefully sitting down, she joined Xiao Yan and leaned against the limestone rock. She retrieved the sweat filled clothes from Xiao Yan before gently drying the sweat off his body. Consoling him, she said, "The 8th to the 9th Duan Qi is the beginning of Dou Qi bottleneck stage. Xiao Yan ge-ge should not be impatient. When the time is right, all that should be, will be....." At this point, Xun Er suddenly sensed a heated gaze and looking up, she found Xiao Yan staring at her. Flushing red, she pouted playfully: "Xiao Yan ge-ge....."

The young maiden's gentle and playful tone was like a refreshing breeze in the humid jungle.

Because of the hot weather, Xun Er wore a short, light-green apron that exhibited a lovely patch of white skin below her long, alluring nape. In addition to that, the developing marshmallows of the young maiden were revealed by the tight contours of her clothing, causing a sense of beauty in the youthful body. Faced with such a beautiful scene, it was no wonder that Xiao Yan felt slightly absent-minded.

Awakened from his stupor by Xun Er, Xiao Yan's face flushed slightly. Letting out an embarrassed laugh, he lay on the cooling limestone, slowly closing his eyes, allowing Xun Er's pair of tiny hands to gently rub across his body.

The corners of her rosy lips slightly tipped upwards as Xun Er helped wipe Xiao Yan's body. Without turning, she secretly swept a glance across his body, only to be startled to find that unknowingly, he had fallen asleep.

Helplessly shaking her head, Xun Er also understood that today's high level fight had caused him to be exhausted. Wrinkling her nose, she put down the clothes as a soft golden glow started to gather at her fingertips.....

Sneakily taking another glance at the unresponsive Xiao Yan, Xun Er laid a finger on Xiao Yan's skin. Golden light followed the path along the finger and seeped into Xiao Yan's body.....

As golden light was transferred, beads of sweat started to roll down Xun Er's forehead and she could be seen slightly gritting her teeth. Just as she prepared to continue the transfer, a surprised look flashed across her face.

As he was in a deep sleep beside the limestone, an unfathomable sucking force suddenly originated from within Xiao Yan's body. Lines of Dou Qi gathered from the surroundings and started to quickly flow into his body.....

"Oh..... Is it a breakthrough?"

A gasp of shock and awe could be heard as Xun Er's small mouth formed into the shape of an O and she quietly watched Xiao Yan as he unknowingly absorbed Dou Qi.

Chapter 53:9 Duan Qi

In the small lush forest, threads of white Dou Qi flowed through the air, continuously absorbed by Xiao Yan's body as he slumbered.

Looking at Xiao Yan, who had practically become an energy sink, Xun Er felt pleasantly surprised. Quietly putting some distance between him, she stood in silent vigil and guarded the area. If Xiao Yan were to be roused from his state of training mediation, he would lose a chance to advance another level.

The success of Xiao Yan's advancement could be said to be almost certain.

As the Dou Qi was absorbed, the faint traces of fatigue on Xiao Yan's face gradually faded away. Like a piece of warm jade, his delicate and pretty face glowed with a pale light.

For the next hour these events carried on continued within the small dense forest, until at last coming to the end.

Finally, when the last wisps of Dou Qi entered Xiao Yan, the small forest regained its original calm; the sun's burning rays continued to shine down on the forest.

Even though Xiao Yan's eyes were tightly shut, his chest rose and fell in a smooth and steady manner. Xun Er, seeing this, let out a sigh of relief, relaxed and laughed gently: "He has finally reached the 9th Duan Qi. Maybe in half a year, Xiao Yan ge-ge will be able to condense a Dou Qi Cyclone and become a true Dou Zhe."

A light hearted smile on her lips, Xun Er leaped onto a nearby limestone and sat down in a crosslegged position. Elbows on her knees, palms supporting her chin while her fingers lay on her cheeks, she waited for Xiao Yan to wake up.

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The sky had gradually turned to dusk when Xiao Yan finally arose from his deep slumber. Blinking his eyes in confusion, Xiao Yan stared blankly about before regaining his wits. Lifting his head, his sight came to rest upon a figure clothed in the golden rays of the setting sun. Bright and clear like liquid water, a pair of eyes met his. He smiled.

“Is Xiao Yan ge-ge finally awake?” Xun Er let out a lovable laugh as she posed the question to the recently-awakened Xiao Yan.

Smiling with a nod of his head, Xiao Yan got up. Twisting his numb neck about, he lazily stretched. “Pi Li Pa La” the satisfying sounds of bones cracking against each other could be heard from a body that had just raised a Duan Qi.

Dazed at the feeling of achieving a breakthrough, Xiao Yan curled his hand in to a fist before uncurling it again, his jaw slightly slackened and he tilted his head; his face filled with equal parts of doubt and uncertainty and he uttered: “What..... I seem to have reached the 9 Duan Qi?”

Staring at Xiao Yan’s look of bafflement with an interested look, Xun Er started to laugh.

Upon seeing Xun Er’s nod, Xiao Yan’s lips curled upwards into a smile. His heart was pleasantly surprised, though he still didn’t know whether to laugh or cry. The last time he made a breakthrough, it was when he was sleeping. This time he made another breakthrough while asleep. This way of breaking through was a bit too comical.

Vigorously punching at the air a few times in rapid succession and feeling Dou Qi that was stronger than a few hours ago, Xiao Yan couldn’t help but laugh.

After getting all of his pleasant surprise out of his mind, Xiao Yan was finally aware of the murky sky color. Giving an apologetic smile to Xun Er, he knew that she had been waiting for him this whole time.

While putting his clothes back on, he began to crack jokes with Xun Er, “Not leaving? Today’s a good day so why don’t you let ge treat you to a nice meal in Wu Tang City.”

TL: Ge = Brother and Ge-ge = Brother

“Xixi, I want the most expensive meal then...” She responded with a light laugh of her own. Tiptoeing on the limestone for a while, she gingerly dropped down next to Xiao Yan, emitting a faint bell laugh that scatter across the gingerly green forest.

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In order to thank Xun Er for waiting the whole afternoon, Xiao Yan took care to take Xun Er on a stroll around Wu Tang City before parting with her in the clan.

Dragging his still somewhat excited legs back to his room, Xiao Yan dropped down heavily onto his bed and hugged his quilt. With a soft murmur to himself, he said, “At last, I am finally going to become a Dou Zhe once more...”

“Hey, this breakthrough you just managed... it was due to that little girl.” From the midst of the room, the laughter of an old man suddenly sounded.

Raising a single eyelid, Xiao Yan stared lazily at Yao Lao and furrowed his eyebrows, "What does Xun Er have to do with this?"

"Eh, she definitely had a part, otherwise you would have taken a week to breakthrough by yourself." Yao Lao's transparent body sat down on a chair, his casual tone ringing throughout the room.

Begrudgingly shrugging his shoulders, Xiao Yan threw his head back into his quilt. "Right now I'm already at 9 Duan, if I want to breakthrough to become a Dou Zhe, I'm afraid it'll take me another half year or so..." After saying that, he momentarily paused and threw off his quilt. His previously focused face became gloomy, his voice now revealing a cold tone, "One year has already passed and yet I am still not a one star Dou Zhe. If things keep on going at this rate...I'm afraid I won't be able to catch up to Nalan Yanran in three years."

Upon hearing this, Yao Lao raised an eye to look at him but remained silent.

"Nalan Yanran is being trained to be the Faction of Misty Cloud's next Faction leader. Her talent cannot be said to be low at all and the Faction of Misty Cloud is quite strong as well. They even have the formidable alchemist Pill King Gu He amongst their ranks...if he were to help Nalan Yanran, her speed would be terrifying. It would be no slower than my training speed." Xiao Yan thought aloud to himself.

Yao Lao tilted his head at Xiao Yan and saw Xiao Yan's bright crystal like eyes focus closely on himself. Yao Lao immediately started to laugh but still made no comment.

Looking at Yao Lao's face, Xiao Yan could only roll his eyes. His words were pointless...

"Heh..." After staying silent for some time, Yao Lao slowly sighed. Standing up to walk towards Xiao Yan, his lips began to curl into a smile: "That Gu He fellow isn't anything more than a 6th tier Alchemist. Is he even worthy to be called a Pill King? Other than refining pills, what else can he do?"

Hearing Yao Lao talk in this manner, Xiao Yan's face suddenly adopted a smiling expression. At this moment, he knew that the mysterious teacher was finally about to show his hand...

"Tomorrow, you will go buy some materials. Qi Gathering Powder, you will be eating it like it's candy... I don't believe that this Nalan will have this sort of treatment!" With both hands behind his back, Yao Lao sneered proudly.

Chapter 54:Raising Money

Of course, saying that he would be able to eat Qi Gathering Pills like candy was a somewhat boastful claim. However, given the skills of Yao Lao, with enough materials, helping Xiao Yan refine tens of Qi Gathering Pills was not a problem.

However, even with all the boastful claims of Yao Lao, Xiao Yao had no time to feel any excitement. With each and every required material uttered by Yao Lao, Xiao Yan couldn't help but feel his heart sink lower and lower.

"Tomorrow, prepare for me four 50 year old Inky Leaf Lotus flowers, two Ripened Snake Venom Fruits, one bundle of 20 year old Spirit Gathering Grass and a Rank 2 Water Attribute Magic Stone," Came Yao Lao's indifferent voice and when he saw Xiao Yan's stiff and distant look, he couldn't help but be startled. "What's the matter?"

"50 year old Inky Leaf Lotus? Flowers that age are sold for 3000 gold coins and that's just for a single blossom! Ripened Snake Venom Fruit? That's considered one of the top lower grade alchemy ingredients, even the pharmacies don't carry them, it would have to be through sheer luck if one were to ever obtain one and at the very least 8000 gold coins would be needed to buy just one. And the 20 year old Spirit Gather Grass? Dear god, I have only heard of this item appearing in auctions only once and the starting price was at 10,500 gold! Even the Rank 2 Water Attribute Magic Stone, the cheapest of all the materials, would require at least 2000 gold pieces." Xiao Yan's wiped his sweaty brow and painfully let out a groan, "These ingredients alone would cost me around 50,000. Where in the world would I get such a large sum of money?"

"Eh..." On hearing Xiao Yan whine, Yao Lao just rolled his eyes and shrugged his shoulders mockingly, "Obtaining those ingredients is your problem. It has nothing to do with me; I will only be in charge of refining the ingredients."

"Dammit. The cost for everything is going to be way too high. If I'm really going to eat Gathering Qi Powder like candy, I'm afraid that even the Xiao Clan's wealth would be unable to cover the costs." Scolding himself, Xiao Yan fingered the green card he had hidden under the pillow with some regret. Helplessly, he said, "I only have 10,000 gold left from selling the Foundation Elixir, nowhere near enough to buy the ingredients you need."

Yao Lao laughed while leisurely sitting down onto a chair; showing that the matter of obtaining the ingredients was of no concern to him.

Kneading his head, Xiao Yan grimaced in pain as he continued his line of thought, "First, I'll just use this money to buy ingredients for the Foundation Elixir. Then I'll just sell that at the Auction House; otherwise, I'll never get enough money."

Yao Lao gave a smug nod. For him, refining something as low-grade as the Foundation Elixir was nothing strenuous. Letting out a short breath, Xiao Yan flopped back onto his bed and bitterly laughed, "Being poor is extremely annoying..."

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The next morning, Xiao Yan secretly slipped away from the clan to Wu Tan City's pharmacies and bought all of the materials needed for the Foundation Elixir. Afterwards, Xiao Yan searched for a tavern in an isolated area and entered.

Because he would be selling the elixirs for other people to use, he could let Yao Lao mix the ingredients together without a single care. So, just like last time, Xiao Yan bought the cheapest and lowest quality materials.

Because he desperately needed money, Xiao Yan bought enough materials to make 7 Foundation Elixirs, which which had completely drained the green card of money.

While waiting for Yao Lao to refine the ingredients, Xiao Yan began to flick the green card around his hands. Absentmindedly shaking his head, Xiao Yan came to realize that he had once again returned to his original poverty stricken state.

This time, Yao Lao had spent an entire hour to create all of the Foundation Elixirs. Arranging each of the seven white jade bottles neatly onto the table, Xiao Yan couldn't help but smile widely. Carefully wrapping each bottle up in cloth, he secured them tightly to his back.

Gently patting the elixirs on his back, Xiao Yan swung a huge black cloak over himself to hide both him and the elixirs from view before laughing to himself as he exited the tavern.

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At the Primer Auction House inside the treasure inspection hall.

Primer Auction's top auctioneer, Ya Fei, was staring at 7 small jade bottles full of Foundation Elixir in front of her in shock. Her eyes had lost her usual sparkle and she leaned forward at a precarious angle.

"Cough..."Sitting not too far away from Ya Fei with his black pouch, Xiao Yan coughed, bringing her back to attention.

Her pale white hands tenderly groped the jade bottles while she sniffed it to try and authenticate the elixirs. After a while, she handed the bottles to Gu Ni, the alchemist expert of the auction.

Taking the Foundation Elixir from her, Gu Ni began to inspect the bottle closely and then remarked, "All of these are truly Foundation Elixirs..."

Upon hearing Gu Ni's confirmation, Ya Fei's eyebrows leapt up in surprise. She observed the black cloaked figure before her and her face carried a smile. Bringing out the most appeal she could muster, she said, "I didn't think half a year later, uncle would bring us such a large business."

“When will the elixir be sold?” The cloaked figure asked with the voice of Yao Lao.

“Does uncle need money right away? If you are not that busy, then I suggest waiting for 1 or 2 days. 7 bottles of Foundation Elixir rarely come onto the market at the same time. If you would let the Auction House publicize this then your profits will surely be a lot higher...” Ya Fei smiled sweetly while suggesting her idea.

Hearing this, the cloaked figure went silent momentarily and just for a moment, a light groan in confirmation was heard.

Hearing his response, Ya Fei’s smiling face slipped for a second. Her white hands reached for her teacup and she brought it to her lips. She could now ascertain that this black cloaked figure was a rank 2 alchemist, if not a rank 3 alchemist!

Taking a sip from the teacup, the cloaked figure spoke once more with an elderly voice, “Perhaps your auction house could assist in helping me procure some alchemy ingredients as well?”

The bright eyes of Ya Fei twinkled as she sat down on top of a chair. Smiling even brighter, she said, “What ingredients does uncle want?”

“Four 50 year old Ink Leaf Lotuses, two Ripened Snake Venom Fruit, one bundle of 20 year old Spirit Gathering Grass and a single Water Attribute Rank 2 Magic Core...”

By the side of Ya Fei, Gu Ni’s face changed drastically upon hearing the ingredients listed. His eyes had a hint of confusion as he watched the black cloaked figure.

“Hehe, Ya Fei will definitely help uncle find those materials. The moment I hear a single mention of any of the items, I will inform uncle immediately. But, where does uncle live I wonder? How will we keep in touch?” As Ya Fei asked, she glanced at Gu Ni and saw shock etched on his face. Seeing that her heart gave a violent leap but she didn’t show her surprise on her face.

“There is no need to try to contact me. If any of the ingredients appear, deduct the costs from the Foundation Elixir. I will visit again.” Under the black cloak, a wizened voice rang out. “I also have other matters to attend to that cannot be postponed. I will be back in two days.” With that said, the cloaked man stood up and walked out of the Auction House.

Watching him disappear as he turned around the corner, Ya Fei’s eyes narrowed. “Was there something wrong with the ingredients he asked for, Gu Ni shu-shu?”

Gu Ni shook his head and exhaled before laughing bitterly, “If I remember correctly, these are the ingredients to refine and make the Qi Gathering Powder.”

Ya Fei's face changed immediately after hearing that, "Doesn't one have to be a Rank 4 alchemist before attempting to create the Qi Gathering Powder?"

Nodding his head, Gu Ni continued, "That would appear to be the case. However, within the Jia Ma Empire, there are no more than 20 Rank 4 alchemists. How is it that we've never heard of this mysterious cloaked person before?"

Ya Fei gently shook her head, her eyes were brimming with curiosity as she spoke, "A Rank 4 alchemist...if I ever get the chance, I'll definitely have him owe a favor to me!"

Chapter 55: Accident

Looking at the Primer Auction House's ability to circulate information, one cannot help but admit that it was extremely effective. It had barely been a day since Xiao Yan had handed over his Foundation Elixirs to the Auction house, and yet almost every influential clan in Wu Tan city had already heard the news causing a great disturbance.

The only thing different between this auction and the last was the star of the show. The previous auction showcased the High Level Xuan Dou Technique, a piece which would fetch a sky-high price any day; because of that only the major powers had the qualifications to bid, those of lesser ranks could only watch in longing.

But to many people, the Foundation Elixir was a more realistic goal. To help their children become a Dou Zhe as quickly as possible, many elders of various clans were willing to spend quite a bit on advantageous items like the Foundation Elixirs.

Word of the Foundation Elixirs had spread enough to send the city of Wu Tan abuzz with excitement, even Xiao Yan, deeply secluded within his clan, caught wind of the news. Seeing the commotion over a mere seven bottles of impure Foundation Elixir had caused, though shocked, Xiao Yan was grateful for the being able to confirm the unique charm that the pills had on this continent.

On the second day, the Xiao Clan also received an invitation from the Primer Auction House. Most likely because Xiao Zhan had previously bought a Foundation Elixir. Several elders of the clan were interested in the appearance of the Foundation Elixirs, especially those who still had children whom had yet to achieve the level of Dou Zhes.

Xiao Yan had originally planned to sneak out in the afternoon, but before his plan came to fruition, he was stopped by a messenger from Xiao Zhan. Xiao Yan had no choice but to follow behind the messenger and walk towards the entrance of the clan.

At the entrance, Xiao Yan found not only Xiao Zhan, but also several elders that were gathered there, all bustling with excitement.

Raising his head to find the leisurely approaching Xiao Yan, a grinning Xiao Zhan urged Xiao Yan to come forward with a gesture of his hand.

Xiao Yan let out a sigh, seeing his father beckon him. As he walked forward, his glance fell upon the two figures next to Xiao Zhan and his eyebrows furrowed at the sight.

“Dilly-dallying, just like a woman.....” Xiao Yu taunted the frowning Xiao Yan. She had been made to wait all day for the ‘princess,’ for this she was slightly angered.

“Are you really in such a rush to your funeral?” Xiao Yan rebutted in a matter-of-fact manner; Xiao Yu to ground her teeth in anger, almost chipping a tooth.

“Pffftttt.” Within the crowd, a young maiden’s mocking laughter rang out like a silver bell.

Tilting his head, Xiao Yan looked to see Xun Er standing in the middle of the crowd. Shrugging his shoulders at her, he smiled back, “Are you going to the Auction House too?”

“Staying within the clan grounds is really boring. I might as well go look around any time I can...” Xun Er squeezed her way through the crowd to stand at Xiao Yan’s side; her beautiful laughter echoing behind her as she walked.

“What’s there for you anyways, except for, well... really at best only a few Foundation Elixirs? Nothing that would be of any use to you will be there.” Xiao Yan asked with a pleasant smile on his face.

“Hmph, YOU still dare to talkback? If it weren’t for those Foundation Elixirs, you’d be no where near my level?” retorted Xiao Ning bitterly, his feet still slightly unsteady since he had had only recently fully recovered. He had just healed from the fight he had with Xiao Yan 2 months ago, but now, as he looked at the two people being ridiculed standing so close to each other, his cheeks reddened with jealousy. It was as if he forgotten the lesson Xiao Yan taught him, after all that pain.

“You still itching for a fight?” Lifting his head to look at him, Xiao Yan’s expression was dangerously unclear, no one could tell if he was smiling or not.

“You...” Xiao Ning’s wrath grew along with the clenching of his fists, but slowly, his fists relaxed and returned to their original state. With a sneer, he followed with: “Don’t be so proud of yourself, although you managed to injure me that time, I still have to thank you for the experience. If it weren’t for this period of healing, I would not have even been able to get close to the 9 Duan Dou Qi. Within 7 days at most, I’ll be able to breakthrough to 9 Duan! After that, we’ll see who’ll be wanting to fight again and who will be the winner!”

Hearing Xiao Ning, some of the surrounding older clansmen couldn’t help but look astonished at his claim. Even the first elder nearby couldn’t hide the pleasant look of pride from his face. Really, this grandson of his never ceased to amaze him.

Xiao Zhan's eyebrows wrinkled with some annoyance as he looked at the first elder. When he was about to wave his hand to signal for everyone to prepare to leave, he stopped as he saw Xiao Yan's smiling expression towards Xiao Ning and was momentarily stunned with the words he was about to say died in his mouth.

Facing Xiao Ning, whose face still had that arrogant sneer, Xiao Yan yawned after a moment of silence. Then he shrugged his head and spoke with a neutral tone, "Well...this is quite embarrassing. Just a few days ago, I accidentally...entered the 9 Duan Qi. I'm afraid that it seems like you're still a step behind."

"Eh..."

Right after hearing Xiao Yan, all of the surrounding clansmen went silent. Looks of shock and astonishment appeared on everyone's faces as they watched the impassive face of Xiao Yan. Xiao Yan had said he broke through...by accident?

Not knowing if they should either laugh or cry, everyone all had a similar thought. This kid had deliberately hit Xiao Ning where it hurt most, poor, poor Xiao Ning...

Xiao Ning's arrogant smirk went rigid as he heard Xiao Yan. His mouth began to twitch slowly, and his throat was trembling. With an unwavering stare at Xiao Yan that lasted for some time, Xiao Ning finally backed down with a dejected look. He had thought that he could gain some face with his expected breakthrough but who would have thought that he was met with an even more shocking statement.

Jade-like hands supported a rather downtrodden Xiao Ning as Xiao Yu glared furiously at Xiao Yan, as if trying to burn holes into him. Surprisingly, she did not say anything to mock him, only thinking to herself: "How exactly does this little bastard train? It was only two months..... how could he have achieved 9th Duan?"

Even though there was bad blood between them, Xiao Yu was still mind-blown at Xiao Yan's rapid progress.

"Haha" A peal of laughter thundered from Xiao Zhan, his previous annoyance fading away as he saw the surprised faces of his clansmen. Casting a glance towards the First Elder, he smiled and said: "Let's get going, the auction is about to start, any more delays and we'll miss our chance."

Watching the elders walk out the main door, Xiao Zhan could not help but turn around and happily ruffle his son's hair. He praised Xiao Yan in a happy tone: "Not bad, you have done your father proud yet again. That old fogey, the first elder, kept going on and on about how much talent his grandson until I almost felt like killing myself in irritation; he obviously wants the clan to invest in a bottle of Foundation Elixir for his grandson. Beating around the bush like that, what a super annoying old cheap-skate."

With his hair ruffled into a mess, Xiao Yan forced a smile. He innocently spread his hands while taking a step out of the main door as he grudgingly replied: "Originally, I didn't want to reveal it but he just had to force my hand....."

At a distance from the door, hearing Xiao Yan's words, Xiao Ning's mouth twitched as his heart became heavy with gloominess and depression.

Chapter 56:Jia Nan Academy

For the Primer Auction House, today was definitely the busiest day in the past half a year. Inside the expansive and spacious reception lounge, many people were chattering away and moving about which made Xiao Yan's group head hurt with all of the noise. It was as if a large buzzing insect was flying around in their ears and wouldn't leave.

Looking at the crowd so densely packed together that even an ant couldn't get through, Xiao Zhan shook his head helplessly. It would be for the best for the auction house security guards to help escort his group through the VIP entrance. That would be the best way to get in.

Inside the Auction House, although the number of people was definitely not too few, compared to the lounge outside, it was relatively peaceful. Xiao Zhan looked around the bustling floor as he walked along casually with Xiao Yan and some other clan members to find their seats.

Sitting on one of the edge seats, Xiao Yan looked around the hall with a bored expression while leaning back in his chair without a care in the world,

"Elder Sister, in another half a year, the enrollment period of Jia Nan Academy will start right?" Xiao Yan was leisurely sitting and almost fell asleep when his ears picked up the question Xiao Ning had asked. The mentioning of that special name caused his eyebrows to raise slightly in interest.

Jia Nan Academy, a famous Dou Qi Academy in the Dou Qi Mainland, was armed with a strength that wildly exceeds the common man's imagination. It is said that one has to be about Da Dou Shi level to become a teacher in Jia Nan Academy. And, even the famous Misty Cloud Faction cannot match up to the might of Jia Nan Academy.

In the Dou Qi Mainland, Academies are somewhat different from clans. If one joins a clan, he would not only be restricted by the clan but would also have to watch his every action as it would reflect back on the clan. An academy was different since all ties would be cut off after graduation!

Even though that is said, humans are not unfeeling animals. In an ivory tower like the academy, students become easily attached to the academy. After graduating, these faint feelings will become the reason why graduates are willing to support the academy to the best of their abilities.

One person's help might not make much of a difference but if there were thousands or tens of thousands of people helping, that would be quite a scary force..... and this, was the aim of every academy.

Enrolling into an academy was also the best shortcut in obtaining Dou Techniques and Qi Methods. At an academy on the level of Jia Nan, if one's performance was stellar, he might catch the eye of a teacher, which would open up doors to high level Qi Methods and Dou Techniques. With these two in hand, the distance to becoming a strong Dou Zhe would be shortened by quite a bit.

Qi Methods, Dou Techniques and Alchemy Pills are the three most sought after commodities in the Dou Qi Mainland. Jia Nan Academy dominates in two of these fields, thus people all over the mainland believe that if one were able to enter Jia Nan Academy, one would never again need to worry about their future. Everyone who graduates from Jia Nan Academy is a highly sought after talent with bright prospects.

Therefore, every year, countless youths from all over Jia Ma Country try all sorts of ideas in hopes of somehow getting into Jia Nan Academy.

Thus, Jia Nan Academy is definitely a great place, however it's enrolment criterias are extremely strict: To reach the 9th Duan Dou Qi before the age of 18!

These requirements bar many of the less talented people and thus only the truly gifted are left to enter Jia Nan Academy.

.....

Having heard Xiao Ning's inquiry, Xiao Yu gave a slight nod. With a quick glance at Xiao Yan, she proudly replied: "Fret not, you have already fulfilled the criteria. Furthermore the one in charge of recruitment in Wu Tan City is my teacher, who is a 5 star Da Dou Shi. Together with the fact that I am here to put in a word for you, there is definitely no problem for you at all."

"Haha, that's great." Having heard her reply, Xiao Ning's face lit up like fireworks and nodded his head in excitement.

Hearing their conversation, Xiao Yan's mouth slightly twitched. If it was before, he could only enter Jia Nan Academy in hopes of obtaining higher tier Dou Techniques and Qi Methods. But now, since he had Yao Lao, whose origins remained a mystery, as a teacher, Jia Nan Academy no longer interested him.

"Does Xiao Yan ge-ge not plan to take the entrance test for Jia Nan Academy in half a year?" Xun Er softly asked, having picked up Xiao Yan's lack of interest.

At Xun Er's question, Xiao Yu raised her brow and cast a gaze towards the two, she had already made up her mind that if the little bastard was going to try to go to Jia Nan Academy, she would tell her teacher to make him suffer a bit.

Xiao Yan rubbed his nose and lazily replied: "Not interested. What could I possibly learn with a bunch of wimpy kids? If I wanted Dou Techniques, jumping off cliffs in search for hidden treasures would be more exhilarating."

"Humph, what a boastful tone. Do you really think an Academy would beg for you to join? Don't be so arrogant just because you're blessed with a bit of talent; there are many in Jia Nan Academy who could easily match you. In fact, not entering would be better for you, given your hateful character, all you would find there is a world of beatings." At Xiao Yan's belittlement of the academy she was intensely proud of, Xiao Yu interjected icily as her expression turned frosty.

Xiao Yan turned his sight to sweep over the indignant Xiao Yu, the sides of his mouth slanted downwards, yet he could not be bothered with her. His promise with Nalan Yanran would need to be fulfilled in less than two years. The only goal he had now was to surpass that woman.

There was not much time left but the difference between them was still too vast. Xiao Yan did not believe that there was anyone in Jia Nan Academy who would be able to help him surpass Nalan Yanran in the two years left.

Since they could not help him, why would he bother to enroll into that lousy academy? Unless they could instruct him in the Alchemy Arts like Yao Lao? But even if they could, could they match up to Yao Lao's skills?

Shaking his head, Xiao Yan decided not to debate with her about academies anymore. Taking a look around, he found that two other large clan's members had also entered the auction.

After yet another crowd had passed by, Xiao Yan suddenly felt a cold gaze. Briefly turning, he realised the owner of the gaze was the one he had clashed with in the marketplace: Jia Lie Ao.

Currently, the young master of the Jia Lie Clan was staring at him with malicious intent while occasionally sneaking lustful glances at the exquisite figure of Xun Er beside him. This caused Xiao Yan to stare back, eliciting an evil smile from the young master.

Coolly staring at Jia Lie Ao whose mouth kept opening and closing, Xiao Yan was barely able to decipher his intentions: "Little useless trash from the Yan Clan, you have finally completed your Coming of Age ritual right? Better not let the young master see you in Wu Tan City or else..... heh heh!"

Slightly squinting at Jia Lie Ao who had burst out into laughter, Xiao Yan faintly smiled as a viscous light flashed in his eyes.

Chapter 57:Advertisement

Releasing his chilly gaze, Xiao Yan did not act but rather curled all ten fingers while a strange push-and-pull force began to gather in his palm; it was as if his hands were alive and breathing.

After refining “Vacuum Hand” and “Fire Palm” for more than a year, Xiao Yan, though unable to say his skills had reached perfection, could confidently say that he was able to switch between the two skills much more smoothly. If Xiao Yao sparred with someone, it was assured that he could quickly release the two Dou Techniques together and harm the other party.

Beside him, Xun Er gave a quick glance towards Jia Lie Ao, a small smile crept onto her lips: “Xiao Yan ge-ge, that guy seems to be a lot stronger than before.....”

Xiao Yan inclined his head in agreement, coolly replying: “Last time at the auction, his father managed to win a Wind-Attribute High Xuan Level Qi Method. It’s been a year and that certainly has been enough time for Jia Lie, who is of the wind attribute, to change his old Dou Qi into the new Method’s Dou Qi and thus making him stronger than before.

“Hehe, no wonder he’s become so arrogant. Does he really think that a High Level Xuan Technique is something so rare?” Xun Er was all smiles as she remarked. Within her crystal-clear eyes a light golden blaze danced wildly.

Xiao Yan smiled as he shook his head and with a hint of playfulness he replied: “To a wealthy young girl like you who can pull Qi Methods of High Level Xuan quality out of thin air, of course something like that isn’t rare.”

Hearing Xiao Yan’s teasing words, Xun Er wrinkled her lily-white nose. Rolling her eyes, she replied with some bitterness: “Even though it’s rare, didn’t Xiao Yan ge-ge still reject it?”

Having heard what she said, Xiao Yan smiled in embarrassment. Pointing his chin towards the stage, he said: “The auction is about to start

Seeing Xiao Yan feign ignorance, Xun Er could only shake her head grudgingly as she cast her gaze towards the auction stage which suddenly lit up.

Under the attention of countless eyes, Ya Fei, dressed in a red dress, stepped up onto the stage. The red dress tightly wrapped around her body, causing the audience’s gazes to blaze with passion.

Ya Fei, wearing a lovely expression, veiling her ever so slightly sensual lips behind a hand, faced the audience below and let out her lovable laugh as she said a few words to the crowd. With her charm, she easily drove the auction into a frenzy of desire.

Feeling the growing excitement in the air, even Xiao Yan could not help but smack his lips together. Ya Fei was indeed worthy of the title of Primer Auction House's Chief Auctioneer; with just a few words, she had turned weaker willed men into beasts and filled their heads with passion. At this point, if Ya Fei were to try and auction off a pebble, many people would value the pebble as a priceless treasure to be bought.

Looking at the intense atmosphere in the hall, Ya Fei was slightly pleased with herself. Her years of training had enlightened her on how strongly her beauty effected men. Her red lips formed an inviting smile as her gaze shifted around the room taking in everything around her. When her eyes swept over a young man sitting behind Xiao Zhan, she could not help but be faintly surprised.

Though the youngster's gaze was on the platform, those ink-black eyes which danced around let Ya Fei know that this young man was not swayed by her alluring performance which caused her black eyebrows to lift slightly in astonishment.

Moving her gaze away from Xiao Yan, Ya Fei's red lips slightly parted as a soft laugh escaped. Clapping her hands, she smiled and said: "Ya Fei knows what has brought everyone here today, thus the usual appetisers will be left out. Instead, we will start right away with the main event."

As she ended her speech, Ya Fei lightly waved her hands, dimming the lights on the stage. Bowing to the crowd, she took out a jade plate and at the middle of the plate laid a tiny White Jade Bottle.

At the appearance of the tiny White Jade Bottle, the audience's gaze heated up with longing. One by one, they rubbed their hands together in anticipation of obtaining the bottle for themselves.

"Does anyone remember the Foundation Elixir from our last auction? The ones we are offering now are made by the same alchemist. Our Auction House's grandmaster Gu Ni has assured us that the effectiveness and quality are also the same, so everyone need not worry about that." Ya Fei said as she gently smiled. Suddenly turning towards Xiao Yan, with a charming and lovely smile, she added: "Previously, the Foundation Elixir was bought by the Xiao Clan Leader, Xiao Zhan and after this purchase, Young Master Xiao Yan managed to jump from the 3rd to the 8th Duan Dou Qi in one year, whether this was due to the Foundation Elixir..... Haha, Ya Fei can only guess." Towards the end, within Ya Fei's beautiful eyes, a flash of craftiness could be seen.

Hearing Ya Fei's words, all eyes shifted to the front row until they laid upon the slightly overwhelmed figure of Xiao Yan. Gasps of surprise could be heard all around and although word of Xiao Yan's monstrous training speed had long ago spread throughout

Wu Tang City, many had not been able to personally see it. Thus having the chance to see Xiao Yan in person, many could not help but sigh in amazement. At the same time, it strengthened everyone's conviction to obtain the Foundation Elixir for themselves.

Not far away, seeing Xiao Yan in the spotlight, the corners of Jia Lie Ao curled into a sneer as his face became filled with disdain.

Under the crowd's attention, Xiao Yan twisted uncomfortably in his seat; in his heart he could not decide whether to cry or laugh. This woman was brilliant, she actually used Xiao Yan himself as a free advertisement. With Xiao Yan here as a living specimen, the price of the Foundation Elixir would rise by at least 20% to 30%.

"Sigh, this woman..... it'd be a waste if she weren't a merchant."

Sighing yet again, although Xiao Yan was disturbed by the surrounding gazes, he remembered that the items on auction were actually his and thus he could only shake his head in frustration and give a death stare to the smiling Ya Fei on stage.

Ya Fei fearlessly ignored Xiao Yan's stare and instead brazenly replied with a mature, lovely and alluring smile, causing a few men behind Xiao Yan to swallow a mouth of saliva.

"For the first bottle of Foundation Elixir, the auction price starts at 15 000!"

On stage, Ya Fei was all smiles as she asked for such a huge amount; she had pushed the price of the Foundation Elixir to twice the original value.

"What viciousness....." Below the stage, having heard the price, Xiao Yan's mouth split open in amazement as he inwardly shook his head. As expected, women were the most vicious beings there were.

Chapter 58:A High Price

Even though everyone in the hall quieted down after Ya Fei announced the starting price, soon, a young man who had been distracted by Ya Fei hurriedly yelled: "16,000!"

Immediately after calling out his price, the slightly pale faced young man tried to act gracefully by faking a bow towards Ya Fei. However, he missed the fact that his eyes were giving conspicuous lust-filled looks at her well formed chest.

Internally sneering at the young man, whose thoughts were obviously fixed on her body, Ya Fei continued to keep her smiling expression and asked the rest of the crowd, "Do we have any other offers?Are there any other takers?"

"17,000!"

“19,000!”

The crowd under the stage erupted with people calling out their prices after that initial offer. The first buyer looked embarrassed after his initial price had been beaten by two or three other people and promptly sat down.

Hearing the nonstop stream of prices, Xiao Yan couldn't help but feel shocked and could only let out a gasp in his surprise. The buyers wanted the Foundation Elixir to a degree that was far greater than he had anticipated. It would appear that letting the Primer's Auction House spread word of the Foundation Elixir had been a wise decision after all.

The three major clans held an spectator stance in regards of this Foundation Elixirs and thus weaker parties seized the opportunity and began to scramble to name whatever they would pay. They all wanted to snatch a Foundation Elixirs because, after all, something, such as a Foundation Elixir, that could increase one's Dou Qi was rare even within the whole of the Jia Ma Empire.

After half an hour of prices being called , the first Foundation Elixir was sold after the bids began to stall at around 47,000.

Looking at the happy look on the fat buyer's face, Xiao Yan was truly speechless. He didn't think that anyone would want a Foundation Elixir more crazily than his father had... It costed around 1000 gold coins to make just one Foundation Elixir, but here one just sold for ten times that amount. At such large profit margins, Xiao Yan couldn't help but salivate.

Xiao Yan took a moment to ponder, scratching his chin and blinking: if he had never met Yao Lao, would he ever have had the luxury of being able to use the Foundation Elixir every day?

Seeing that the first Foundation Elixir had been sold for such a large price, Ya Fei could only let out a sigh of relief and think to herself, “With such a price, will the mysterious alchemist be satisfied? It would be great if the mysterious alchemist had even a slightly better impression of the Primer Auction House!”

Ya Fei turned back to look at all the people who filled the auction house, after shaking her head out of her thoughts. With a laugh, she stared at the white jade bottles in her hands, “The last 6 Foundation Elixirs will be divided and sold as 3 groups of 2. Each group will have a starting price of 30,000 gold!”

Eyeing each of the two bottles of Foundation Elixir, the people all became strangely quiet. They looked at the 3 major clans standing a distance away for only a moment. But that short moment was all they needed to know that the 3 clans were about to make their move.

“31,000.” The Jia Lie clan leader Jia Lie Bi was silent for a second after the price was announced, and then slowly called out his bid.

“Hehe, Jia Lie Bi, did the Qi Method you buy last time empty your clan treasury? How is it that you’re so stingy now? Can you even spare 1,000 gold now?” Ao Ba Pa suddenly jeered after hearing Jia Lie Bi’s price.

His face twitching slightly, Jia Lei Bi glared at Ao Ba Pa with a single eye. Instead of firing back an insult, he turned his cold gaze back to the white jade bottles onstage.

“35,000.” Yelled out Ao Ba Pa. He mockingly looked at Jia Lei Bi as he gave his bid.

“38,000.” Jia Lei Bi followed suit.

“45,000.” Ao Ba Pa continued to provoke the other clan leader.

“50,000.” By the time this price was called, Jia Lie Bi’s hand had started to tremble. Although it was hard for him to admit it, as Ao Ba Pa had said before, the Jia Lie Clan had used several years of savings to buy the High Level Xuan Qi Method. Thus recently, Jia Lie Clan’s income had already shrunk by more than 20% to 30%.

“55,000.”

“56,000...”

The rest of the audience members could only sigh regretfully at the sight of the two, even if they had enough funds, they still lacked the might to challenge the three great clans. After all, each of the three great clans of Wu Tang City had at least three strong Da Dou Shi level practitioners!

Though economic power was an important pillar that supported a clan, if there was no military might to protect this economic power, with the riches of the world, they would still not be powerful.

Therefore, the rest of the audience tactfully avoided entering the auction battle between these two clans, while occasionally glancing towards the Xiao Clan, who were still sitting on the fence.

When the Foundation Elixir price raised to 73,000, an ashen-faced Jia Lie Bi finally withdrew. With his clan’s current circumstances he could not afford to continue squandering money.

At the sight of the ashen faced Jia Lie Bi, Ao Ba Pa joyfully pulled back his body, a splendid smile lighting up his face.

While the two were battling, Ya Fei observed from the stage while maintaining her alluring smile. Her gaze was similar to that of a wolf eyeing a fat sheep. It was only when the final auction price had been settled that Ya Fei reluctantly let the smaller hammer in her hand smash downwards.

When Ya Fei once again pushed forward another set of two Foundation Elixirs, the silent Xiao Zhan finally made his move. His indifferent tone sounded out before anyone else, causing the already crestfallen Jia Lie Bi to fall further into depression.

“70,500!” A voice filled with the determination to win flatly resounded throughout the hall.

On the stage, even Ya Fei was taken aback by Xiao Zhan’s drive, taking a little while to recover from her daze, she finally smiled and asked: “Is there anyone else?”

Sitting on his chair, Jia Lie Bi fiercely glared at the smiling Xiao Zhan, cursing in fury to himself: “Bastard, if it was not for him, how would my Jia Lie Clan have fallen to this embarrassing state?”

Flames of rage flickered within his eyes as Jia Lie Bi grinded his teeth and he abruptly shouted with a voice full of bitterness: “85,000!”

“95 000!” Not even bothering to glance at Jia Lie Bi, Xiao Zhan waved his hand, giving the impression that he would be more than able to keep up with any amount Jia Lie Bi could bid.

Seeing that Xiao Zhan was determined to win at all costs, the corners of Jia Lie Bi’s mouth twitched, yet one could see that deep within his eyes, he was happily sneering. It was though he had a bit of hesitation as he clenched his jaw: “100,000!”

Hearing Jia Lie Bi’s bid, the entire hall erupted, using 100,000 gold coins to buy two bottle of Foundation Elixir is insane. It was clearly a big loss.

Carefully scrutinizing Jia Lie Bi who looked like he was ready to fight to the death, Xiao Yan lightly smiled. Shaking his head, he spoke to Xun Er in a low voice: “I bet that if father bids once again, that guy would wash his hands clean of this money loser transaction.”

Xun Er blinked her long eyelashes, she had not payed close attention to the struggle between the two and somewhat startled, she said: “But he looks like he wants it a lot.”

“Hehe” Xiao Yan smiled, he did not need to say another word.

Xiao Zhan sat silently in the front row after having heard Jie Lie Bi’s latest bid. Abruptly standing up, he gave Jia Lie Bi a funny look. At the next instant, the suddenly grinning, Xiao Zhan’s next words stupefied Jia Lie Bi: “You win... ”

TL: Great dad

Chapter 59:End of the Auction

As the words left Xiao Zhan's mouth, the whole hall fell silent. A while later, one by one, everyone's gazes turned towards the ashen faced Jia Lie Bi, gleeful at the calamity that had befallen him.

"Haha, 100,000 gold coins for two bottles of Foundation Elixir... this guy is truly extravagant." Watching as Jia Lie Bi's face cramped up, Xiao Yan bowed his head in an effort to hide a cheeky smile and muttered.

Seeing the gloating Xiao Yan, Xun Er smiled and, softly laughing, she said: "Normally, a second rank pill would have a market value of at most 30,000 gold. The Foundation Elixir is a wonder drug that is able to increase the speed of Dou Zi Qi training and is relatively rare, thus it's price should be much higher than a second rank pill. However... using 100,000 gold to buy it, this Jie Lie Bi is seriously "extravagant"."

Xiao Yan laughed as he nodded in agreement. He licked his lips in yearning before he smiled and said: "If a bottle of second grade Foundation Elixir could be sold for tens of thousands of gold, doesn't this mean that those great alchemists would be able to swim in gold?"

"Alchemy is the continent's most wealthy profession, this is a fact, every Alchemist owns a generous amount of property." Xun Er was all smiles as she nodded her head. Shifting her gaze towards the Foundation Elixirs on stage, she continued: "As an Alchemist's rank rises, they don't auction off their products often. Instead they would rather choose to engage in bartering, as money no longer has value to them..."

"Bartering?" Xiao Yan's eyebrows perked up and realized that he gained a little insight as to why Yao Lao had such an abundant secret treasure stash.

"Yeah, they use things like Dou Techniques, Qi Methods, rare alchemy ingredients or high level Monster Cores to trade for such pills." The corners of her rosy lips tilted upwards, forming a smile as Xun Er continued her lecture, "As a result, it is often said that the Alchemist is the most envied profession in the continent. All people dream to become an alchemist but those dreams are often shattered by the harsh and unreachable requirements."

Eyeing the somewhat regretful Xun Er, Xiao Yan rubbed his nose, grateful for the mutation in his soul.

Deciding not to further the conversation, Xiao Yan turned his sight towards the ashen faced Jia Lie Bi.

Similarly, Jia Lie Bi was shocked into a daze by Xiao Zhan's words, he stared stupidly at Xiao Zhan who had so easily given up on the bidding war as the corners of his eye's twitched in disbelief. It felt like half a day had passed before it finally dawned upon him. Jia Lie Bi hoarsely croaked: "Bastard, you tricked me again! It was all an act!"

"Hehe, weren't you trying to do the same, except that recently your mind was a tad distracted and your acting, it's..... too fake." Xiao Zhan smugly laughed, his tone full of mockery.

"Good, good, very good, extremely good, the best, Xiao Zhan, I, Jia Lie Bi will remember those words!" Jia Lie Bi continued to gasp out a few breathes in fury, his gaze cold and venomous.

Xiao Zhan ignored his threat, with a final sneer he turned to face Ya Fei and said: "Mistress Ya Fei, let us start the last auction."

Nodding her head, Ya Fei smiled as she maintained her impartial expression. Yet inside, she was giddy with laughter at this turn of events. This auction had exceeded her wildest expectations and the better the profits, the more the mysterious alchemist would favor the auction house.

Gracing the ashen faced Jia Lie Bi with a consoling smile, Ya Fei once again bent to retrieve the last two bottles of Foundation Elixir. Complementing her rosy lips with a dazzling smile, she announced: "Ladies and Gentlemen, this is the last batch of elixirs, likewise, the starting bid is 30 000."

At the sight of the final batch of elixirs, the few elders in Xiao Zhan's vicinity trembled and hurriedly gazed at Xiao Zhan with obvious intentions.

Calmly sitting in his chair, Xiao Zhan took no notice of the elders signals. Instead his gaze looped around the auction house, coming around full circle before he finally announced in an icy tone: "50 000."

Having heard Xiao Zhan's bid, Jia Lie Bi's face tightened as his mouth instinctively started to open, yet at the thought of his current financial crisis, he could only shut it regretfully.

In another corner Ao Ba Pa kept eying the stoic Xiao Zhan. Furrowing his brow and thrumming his fingers against the back of his hand, Ao Ba Pa's eyes faintly flickering in movement of revelation. In a moment, he faintly smiled and said "55,000"

The three great clans of Wu Tang City had a strange relationship, each wanted to consume the other two's businesses, yet each feared to act out against the other clan, for the neutral clan would gain from them doing so. Yet even if two of them joined hands, they could not avoid suspecting their 'partner'. Thus unless they were assured of

completely wiping out one party, all three sides could only continue in this complicated and brittle stalemate that had formed between them.

Each of the three great clans had their own set of grudges; each could not stand the sight of another. Even though before, Ao Ba Pa had mocked and ridiculed Jia Lie Bi and now that Xiao Zhan was bidding, Ao Ba Pa was more than willing to compete with Xiao Zhan so that Xiao Clan would lose a bit more money.

Ao Ba Pa's bid didn't make Xiao Zhan face change expression. With a casual glance, Xiao Zhan called out, "65,000."

65,000 was a bit too much for the regular market price for a Foundation Elixir but Xiao Zhan was also knew in deep down that in this 3 way struggle between the clans, it would be impossible to buy a Foundation Elixir for a low or even fair price.

"Hehe, the Xiao Clan Leader sure is extravagant but I'm afraid of being be tricked by you. I already have Foundation Elixir, so I'll give this one to you." After Xiao Zhan's bid, Ao Bo Pa had started to hesitate. It would seem that after the Jia Lei Bi's huge loss, he had become even more cautious.

Xiao Zhan gazed at Ao Ba Pa and relaxed in his chair while giving out a laugh. The smile, or whatever Ao Ba Pa had plastered on his face was obviously not what the man was feeling. Regardless, Xiao Zhan still let out a grumble afterward: "Dammit, I had to pay an extra 10,000. This bastard is nothing good."

Hearing those words, Xiao Yan thought that it was comical. In this kind of battle, were there any good men? If the other party did not fear of ending up in a predicament like Jia Lie Bi, he would have definitely continued to raise the bid even more before finally letting the matter drop.

Tapping his fingers, Xiao Yan directed his gaze upon the stage at Ya Fei, who had just brought down the small hammer, signalling the end of the auction. Inwardly, he let out a sigh of relief, this sum of money would be enough for a period of time. Now, all that was left were the alchemy ingredients and for Yao Lao to refine the Qi Gathering Powder...

"Soon, I'll be a Dou Zhe..."

Xiao Yan licked his lips and let out a long sigh, the first obstacle in his training journey was about to be overcome!

Chapter 60:Ingredients Obtained

Seeing that the auction was about to end, Xiao Yan found an excuse to sneak away.

After carefully leaving the auction floor, Xiao Yan walked along a nearby street for a little bit. He made his way towards a secluded corner and donned the big, black cloak he had

previously purchased. Wrapping himself up in the bulky cloak inhibited his movements, so he could only slowly return to the auction floor.

Ever since Ya Fei had identified him as a 4th tier alchemist, she had stationed an informant on the auction floor to watch for any signs of the mysterious man... Consequently, as soon as Xiao Yan arrived, there was already a delicate and pretty maiden that had been waiting who led him to the back and carefully waited on him.

Silently sitting in his chair, Xiao Yan lifted the teacup on the table to his lips and took a sip. He took a quick glimpse at the timid maiden next to him and faintly nodded his head. The voice of an old man could be heard even though Xiao Yan's lips never moved: "How much longer until the auction ends?"

"Ah!" The sudden question made the maiden jump. Xiao Yan, enshrouded behind a large black cloak, was given a concealed look by the girl. She then, with a pale face, tightly clenched her small hands and nervously replied., "Sir, the auction has already ended; Ya Fei is handling the transfer procedure."

Xiao Yan couldn't help but feel puzzled when he saw the maiden; she looked like a startled hare. He wasn't that scary, was he? Reluctant to accept that possibility, he shook his head and continued in silence.

Standing to the side with her head bowed, the girl looked at the once again silent Xiao Yan and secretly let out a breath. She had been warned by Master Gu Ni, when she had taken on this task, to never hesitate to satisfy any request this mysterious person may have –even if that request was to do something 'extra'.

Having worked at the auction floor for a year, the young girl obviously understood what these 'extra tasks' would require. This was why, everytime Xiao Yan spoke, she would shiver from head to toe. She was afraid that this mysterious man might request one of those... 'extra tasks'.

The girl stood trembling for about 10 minutes, after which footsteps could be heard outside the door. She was finally able to relax a little bit.

"Oh, sir, you arrived really early. Xue Li should've entertained you properly right?" Ya Fei's serpentine waist swayed and she released an alluring demeanor as she slowly walked into the room. Her curvy figure could make men with little self-control feel fiery impulses.

"Succubus..." His heart once again cried out. Xiao Yan withdrew backwards, and lightly nodded.

Watching Xiao Yan nod, the maiden standing to the side once again released a breath. She respectfully bowed and quickly left.

Seeing that Xiao Yan's appearance had no trace of dissatisfaction, Ya Fei felt relieved. She gave him a smile that contained heaven's charm.

Her smile gave Xiao Yan an electrifying jolt. When interacting with this enchantress, Xiao Yan didn't dare let down his guard. Under the cloak, he stroked the unadorned black ring, hurriedly handing over the responsibility of speaking to Yao Lao.

"Has the auction ended?"

"Yes." Ya Fei wore a smiling expression as she nodded her snow white chin. Ya Fei waved her hand and a light blue jade card appeared in her hand. She laughed, "Sir, these 7 foundation elixirs, all together auctioned off for 285,000 gold coins. After deducting taxes, the rest of the money is on this card."

Xiao Yan reached forward and took the card. It rested comfortably in his hand and was clearly expensive to make. He lightly caressed the jade card and nodded.

Looking at the pair of young and fair palms, Ya Fei once again had a strange feeling.

"This price is beyond my expectations. I am very satisfied..."

Yao Lao's voice made Ya Fei feel pleased. She quickly discarded any strange thoughts. Staring with her alluring eyes, she pursed her rosy lips and laughed, "If you still want to auction medicine later, please come to the Primer Auction House; we will definitely strive to get you the best price."

Nodding his head, Xiao Yan put away the jade card. After a slight hesitation, Yao Lao's voiced inquired, "The ingredients I requested, did you find them?"

Her long and narrow eyebrows bent in a beautiful arc, Ya Fei lightly laughed. The lovable tone made Xiao Yan feel somewhat pleasantly surprised.

"Yes, our auction house naturally fulfilled your request."

Ya Fei clapped her hands, and Gu Ni personally stepped forward holding a jade plate. Then he stopped by Xiao Yan's side and bowed. He carefully placed the jade plate onto the table and laughed, "Sir, the ingredients you have requested are all here."

Xiao Yan's eyes lit up in happiness when he looked at the plate full of ingredients beside him. This auction house's power was nothing small. If he were to try and buy these ingredients himself, he would have wasted a lot of time and energy. But here, this auction house was able to gather everything in a single day. This left Xiao Yan overjoyed at his unexpected fortune.

"Hmm, sorry for the trouble..." Seeing all the materials for Qi Refining Powder gathered, even Yao Lao's indifferent voice grew a little soft.

Having interacted with many people at the auction floor for many years, Ya Fei was naturally able to distinguish Yao Lao's softer tone. She was pleasantly surprised. This transaction was the right decision!

"I don't want to take advantage of you. The money for these ingredients; subtract it from this card."

Seeing that Xiao Yan was about to bring out the card again, Ya Fei immediately laughed, "Sir, we obtained these ingredients internally. The price is much cheaper compared to what you would find outside. Your two auctions gained a lot of reputation for our auction house. How could we dare take money for these things?"

"Fine, let's do it your way. If I need more ingredients in the future, I will exchange pills with you." Nodding his head, the astute Yao Lao understood that she wanted to create a good relationship. Not wanting to argue with her, Xiao Yan carefully picked up the jade plate and stored its contents away.

"Okay, I have other business to attend to and will not stay any longer."

Seeing that everything had been stored, Xiao Yan stood up. He shook his hands and headed directly outside.

"Sir, Ya Fei will accompany you." Ya Fei winked at Gu Ni. The two of them stepped forward to lead the way.

Xiao Yan followed these two auction managers who graciously led the way and walked out of the back room. He raised his head and slowed down.

As they were leaving the back room, a group of three people across the auction floor also emerged. Sweeping his eyes over the three people, Xiao Yan couldn't help but nervously tug on his cloak. He realized that the person in the middle was his father Xiao Zhan.

"Please don't let him see me..." Prayed Xiao Yan.