

I Practice Farming While the Rest Cultivates

17 Chapter 16: Elixir Recipe_1

“It seems that the Dark Marrow Mushroom dislikes light, and its growing environment requires decayed spiritual wood,” Lu Xuan surmised from the hints that appeared in his mind.

“It being light-averse is fairly simple. Although due to the nature of the Spiritual Field and Spiritual Soil, it’s not convenient to move it inside, I can build it a simple shed to block the light.”

“Finding decayed spiritual wood, however, is rather difficult. Spiritual wood is common enough, but who would have decayed spiritual wood in their home?”

While pondering this, Lu Xuan fetched some tools from his house and built a simple wooden shed for the Dark Marrow Mushroom.

After all, the earlier a Second Grade Spirit Plant is planted, the earlier it can be harvested. He would not delay further, deciding to go out and look for the item immediately.

He headed towards the center of the market. Half a moment later, he arrived in front of a huge courtyard.

His gaze traveled over the stone wall, making out the densely planted tall spirit trees inside.

The owner of the courtyard was a cultivator surnamed Zhou, with a cultivation level of Third Layer of Qi Cultivation. Lu Xuan had only heard rumors about him and rarely had the chance to interact with him.

It was said that this Zhou cultivator had a close relationship with a high-tier Qi cultivator in the market center, which was why he could occupy such a large courtyard and plant so many spirit trees.

Decayed spiritual wood usually results from pest damage during growth, being kept too long, or from poor storage conditions, causing the nature of the spiritual wood to change and consequently decay.

With the Zhou cultivator planting such a large quantity of spiritual trees, it was possible that his family would have some decayed wood.

Lu Xuan walked up and a young cultivator greeted him.

Lu Xuan explained his purpose, and the young cultivator brought him to the Zhou cultivator.

The young man quietly spoke a few words to his father, the Zhou cultivator.

"I am Zhou Yuan. May I know how to address little brother?"

"Lu Xuan."

"Greetings, Friend Lu. I heard from my son that you are curious if we have any decayed spiritual wood. May I ask what you need it for?"

"I don't mean to hide anything from Brother Zhou, I recently have some insights on nurturing spiritual plants and want to verify a hypothesis with the decayed wood. I've heard that Brother Zhou has a very high level of skill in planting spiritual trees, so I thought I'd try my luck here."

Lu Xuan responded, half true and half false.

"I see."

Zhou Yuan nodded, his expression unchanged; it was unclear if he believed him or not.

"Due to various reasons, we do indeed have several pieces of decayed spiritual wood at home."

Zhou Yuan instructed his son, who then fetched several pieces of spiritual wood from the storehouse in the backyard.

The spiritual wood's surface was rotting and emitted a foul and decaying odor.

"Little brother Lu, if you want it, you can take it."

"However, planting spiritual trees requires more resources and manpower than ordinary spiritual plants. Even if these pieces of spiritual wood are decayed, they still have some value."

"Two spirit stones, and you can take these three pieces of spiritual wood."

Lu Xuan frowned.

"Since the spiritual wood is decayed, it means it has lost its original use. Asking two spirit stones for three useless pieces of wood seems a bit unreasonable, don't you think?"

He clearly understood the other party did not know his true intentions for wanting the decayed spiritual wood, so with this information asymmetry, Lu Xuan was very confident.

“One spirit stone, consider it as me helping you, Friend Zhou, to dispose of your waste.”

Zhou Yuan originally just wanted to test Lu Xuan's bottom line. Seeing his attitude, he didn't insist any further and agreed with a nod.

These discarded spirit woods are usually gathered in large quantities and then buried in an uninhabited area outside the market. To be able to exchange them for a single spirit stone is already quite a good deal.

Upon reaching an agreement, Lu Xuan paid with spirit stones and took the three discarded spirit woods back home.

In the courtyard, under the shelter of a simple wooden shed, the dark red fungi seemed to be merging into the shadows.

Lu Xuan hurriedly took out the three decayed woods and carefully placed them around the Dark Marrow Mushroom spiritual seed.

By the time he returned from casting a round of the Spirit Rain Technique, he already noticed clear changes in the Dark Marrow Mushroom spiritual seed.

At the root of the fungus, whether it was drawn to the special smell of the decayed spirit wood or not, numerous tiny dark-red mycelia had quietly grown.

The red mycelia spread into the decayed wood, and Lu Xuan felt the Dark Marrow Mushroom take on a deeper color. The flow of viscous liquid in the blood vessel-like channels inside had accelerated.

Successfully planting the Dark Marrow Mushroom, Lu Xuan finally breathed a sigh of relief.

Over the following period of time, he stayed mostly at home, spending most of his time meticulously cultivating spiritual plants, and using the rest of his time in practicing cultivation techniques and formula methods, getting familiar with the still remnant Silver Edge.

He also visited the Loose Cultivation Market twice, hoping to come across unknown spiritual seeds from Loose Cultivators who have just returned from opening up secret lands.

Unfortunately, the seeds sold at the stands that occasionally had a spiritual seed were all common ones Lu Xuan was familiar with.

The spirit field in the courtyard was already packed full and has no space to accommodate other spiritual plants.

The twenty stalks of Spirit Firefly Grass were entering a rapid growth phase, while half of the two Moon Erosion Trees' Moon Erosion Fruits had already matured.

A Red Cloud Pine at first grade didn't require a high spiritual energy environment, and needed only occasional stimulation from the Fireball Technique.

A Second-Level Sword Grass required the Golden Sword Technique and Spirit Rain Technique, and a second-level Dark Marrow Mushroom drew its nutrients primarily from decayed spiritual wood, not needing Lu Xuan to nourish it with the Spirit Rain Technique.

All that was required was to keep the decayed wood in its decayed state using the Spirit Rain Technique and Earth Pulling Technique.

Looking at this, Lu Xuan realized that he had the least amount of first-grade spiritual plants in his spirit field, just a single Red Cloud Pine, and found two unexpected surprises from the spiritual seeds he had obtained, as they were both second-grade spiritual plants.

In the meantime, he harvested another five Moon Erosion Fruits.

Four were of good quality, and one was of superior quality.

The five white light clusters they brought with them included two Silver Edge fragments. With that, the Magic Artifact Silver Edge was almost complete, with just a few minor gaps left.

Lu Xuan estimated there would be no trouble with the remaining fourteen Moon Erosion Fruits.

There were also two first-grade talismans, a Sword Qi Talisman and an Evil Banishing Talisman, both of which were quite impressive for first-grade talismans.

As for that superior quality Moon Erosion Fruit, after Lu Xuan absorbed it, a stream of information appeared in his mind.

"Cultivating Pill Prescription, records the materials and methods related to refining the first-grade Qi Cultivation Pill."

"It's actually an elixir recipe. As expected of a superior quality Moon Erosion Fruit."

Lu Xuan was surprised. The white light clusters had previously emerged as Yuan Cultivating Pills, but they directly exploded into an elixir recipe this time.

It was a good thing, teaching a man to fish is better than giving him a fish. It seemed like he would need to spend some time learning how to refine elixirs.

Lu Xuan thought to himself.

“It’s just that I don’t have any foundation before, so the probability of failure in refining elixirs from scratch is quite high.”

“I don’t know if the Moon Erosion Fruits will explode into Cultivating Pill Prescriptions again. If there are more elixir recipes, will it be like the previous Earth Pulling Techniques and Golden Sword Techniques, and multiply my alchemy experience after repeated absorption?”

Lu Xuan looked at the more than ten plump Moon Erosion Fruits hanging among the lush leaves and optimistically thought to himself.

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“Each mature spirit plant bestows different gifts within the white light cluster.”

After harvesting two different types of spirit plants, Lu Xuan began to recognize some patterns.

When the Spirit Firefly Grass ripened, the white light cluster contained varying levels of cultivation, low-grade formula methods, and First Grade Talismans. When the Moon Erosion Fruit ripened, it mainly unveiled fragments of magic weapons, elixirs, charms, and occasionally the much rare elixir recipes.

“Perhaps in the future I could adjust the types of spirit plants I’m cultivating according to my needs.”

However, the immediate problem that needed to be solved was to find a larger Spirit Field with abundant spiritual energy and a complex environment suitable for various types of spirit plants.

The second most pressing concern was a storage bag, because as his wealth was increasing, the amount of talismans, elixir medicines and more was also growing. He couldn’t possibly carry all of them in his pockets every time he went out.

With that in mind, Lu Xuan, looking at the twenty-eight Moon Erosion Fruits piled up in his room, decided to sell them and exchange them for spirit stones.

He packed them in a sack and without stopping along the way, he headed straight for his destination – Bai Cao Tang.

In the room full of heavy medicinal aromas, Manager He, with sharp eyes, spotted Lu Xuan and the bulging sack he was carrying.

“Kid Lu, it’s been a while. Did some other spirit plants mature?”

“Two Moon Erosion Trees entered the mature stage and I harvested some fruits to visit you.”

Lu Xuan said with a smile.

“Visiting this old man is not the real intention, visiting the spirit stones of Bai Cao Tang is the real goal, right?”

The thin and old man said with a teasing smile.

“Take out your treasures and show this old man.”

Lu Xuan placed the sack on the wooden cabinet.

“Twenty-eight Moon Erosion Fruits, one of them is of superior quality while the rest are all of good quality.”

“Almost all of them are of good quality? Did you gain some insight?”

Manager He said, astounded. Previously, the Spirit Firefly Grass that Lu Xuan brought had plants of good and superior quality, but there were also many of ordinary grade. Now, all of them are of good quality, which surprised him.

“They are certainly all of at least good quality.”

He checked each Moon Erosion Fruit one by one, determining their quality by assessing the size and roundness of the fruits.

“A gentleman changes within three days... One should look at him with fresh eyes.”

The lean old man stared at Lu Xuan and sighed with emotion.

He remembered when this teenager had first come to Bai Cao Tang, selling a few ordinary Spirit Firefly Grass.

Bai Cao Tang usually had steady suppliers and didn’t buy spirit plants from small Loose Repair cultivators. However, seeing the persistent and firm expression on the young boy’s face, the old man empathetically agreed to his request to sell the plants.

And now, this young man had become a Spirit Plant Master, capable of planting high-quality spiritual medicines anytime he wanted.

The lean old man was filled with a momentary reflection, but the youngster's next sentence pulled him back to reality.

"Manager He, are you daydreaming? Are you thinking about how to take advantage of me?"

"You cheeky brat!"

Manager He laughed and scolded.

"Good quality Moon Erosion Fruits will be ten broken spirits for each, and that superior quality one will add twenty broken spirits."

"Agreed."

Lu Xuan had compared the prices with several other drugstores and stalls, and knew that this was a fair price, and readily agreed.

The price of Moon Erosion Fruits was lower than Spirit Firefly Grass, but one Moon Erosion Tree could produce more than twenty fruits. So, in the end, the value was much higher than the Spirit Firefly Grass.

Manager He gave Lu Xuan a total of thirty-two low-grade spirit stones and curiously asked,

"Kid Lu, tell me honestly, has your planting skills improved a lot? So many good quality Spirit Fruits can't be achieved purely by luck."

"Yes, they have improved."

"However, this improvement came with a lot of sacrifices."

"I only use the time other cultivators spend on cultivation and exploring the Secret Land on planting spirit plants."

"In order to plant higher quality spirit plants, I have completely given up the naive idea of becoming a powerful cultivator. Now, I just want to plant spirit plants and live an ordinary life as a Spirit Plant Master."

Lu Xuan stared blankly, trying hard to maintain his character as a very ordinary Spirit Plant Master.

"It's good to have such thoughts; it's definitely safer. You don't need to fight to death with others for a slim chance, and you might even live longer than them."

“And if you keep improving like this, you can also gain a high status as a Spirit Plant Master.”

The lean old man empathized and comforted Lu Xuan.

He paused for a moment, then continued.

“I told you before, if you can maintain this level of planting skill, I'll give you an opportunity.”

“You know that there is a Pill Master in Bai Cao Tang. His alchemy level is one of the top in Linyang Market, and he has many alchemy apprentices under him.”

“Hence, the demand for various elixir materials is huge. We also have a few big Spirit Fields, hiring Spirit Plant Masters specifically to plant related spiritual medicines.”

“Though I don't hold a high position, I can still have some say in Bai Cao Tang. I can recommend you to cooperate with Bai Cao Tang.”

“What kind of cooperation?” Lu Xuan asked curiously.

“There are generally two kinds. The first is to directly hire a Spirit Plant Master to plant spiritual medicines for Bai Cao Tang, and the produced spiritual medicines belong to Bai Cao Tang, with a certain compensation given to the Spirit Plant Master.”

“The better the quality of the produced spiritual medicine, the more rewards will be given.”

“This cooperation model can provide you with a more stable planting environment, so you can concentrate on cultivation, without worrying about anything else.”

“The second one is much simpler. We will sell spiritual seeds to Spirit Plant Masters who want to cooperate at a low price, and at the same time stipulate that when the spirit plant matures, Bai Cao Tang has the right to buy it first. The risks and benefits are all borne by the Spirit Plant Master himself.”

“Of course, this right of first refusal will not be abused. If the price difference with other buyers is too great, the Spirit Plant Master can make a decision on his own.”

Lu Xuan nodded. Both modes of cooperation had their pros and cons.

The first one is more stable, providing safety for both himself and his spiritual plants, but comparatively it has less freedom.

The second one carries higher risks, but it can also generate higher rewards. If he were truly content with a mundane life as an Ordinary Spirit Plant Master, the first option would definitely be more sensible.

However, Lu Xuan has never liked being restrained, and with the existence of the white light cluster, having the freedom to do as he pleases was especially important for him.

“Manager He, I’m used to being lazy and not keen on being controlled, so if we are to cooperate, I’d choose the second kind.”

Lu Xuan was pleased at the prospect of having people providing spiritual seeds for him.

“Alright, then I’ll report it to the superiors. Once it’s confirmed, I’ll inform you when you come next time.”

“Thank you, Manager He.”

Lu Xuan clasped his hands towards the lean old man in gratitude.

He could clearly sense the kindness of the old man, which he kept deep within his heart.

“With this, the most pressing matter is to get a bigger and better Spirit Field.”

His heart was filled with a clear sense of urgency regarding this idea.