

Emperor 5181

Chapter 5181: I'll Help You Tidy Up

The duo crossed through many streets and alleys, commanding attention along the way. Of course, given the scale of the city and its diverse visitors, they weren't too surprised.

Li Qiye didn't seem to mind the uninvited companion who insisted on following him.

Eventually, they reached a small courtyard. The old bricks have been battered by time.

Only apex existences would note how special the bricks were - each had this shape from the initial conception, not molded by men.

The entire courtyard seemed to have grown from the ground, whether it be the bricks and roof tiles or the soil itself.

They would realize that one could obliterate the entire city but this place would still remain standing.

"So meticulous with a grave, the dead want to be buried like the living." Li Qiye judged the courtyard and said.

With that, he opened the door and entered. It closed afterward and the old man in blue didn't follow.

He sat down on a step by the corner of the entrance, waiting for Li Qiye to come out.

There was nothing inside the courtyard but an entirely different world. Li Qiye could see the profundities hidden within.

“Open.” He stomped on the ground and golden radiance appeared beneath his feet.

With him at the center, supreme runes and grand dao mantras manifested into reality. They intertwined like streams flowing through the cracks between the brick tiles.

In reality, each brick was already a dao seal. Li Qiye was imprinting his own dao in it.

A golden spring gushed out of the ground after loud explosions and formed a pond in a shallow spot within the courtyard.

Its appearance improved the courtyard and brought it to life with incredible vitality. It resembled the eye of the yellow river, capable of connecting the mortal world to hell itself.

Li Qiye took out the coffin of the Qian and added more seals to it before lowering it into the pond.

“Splash!” The coffin slowly sank into the pond and disappeared from sight. This was as if it was taking a trip to hell in order to bring the soul back.

“Rumble!” Next, he drilled dao laws into the ground, adding a layer of blessing to the entire courtyard.

One bodhi tree after another began to grow in this paradise. They swayed to the wind and emitted the fragrance of the grand dao. One could meditate here forever and be in touch with the dao.

“You’re stuffing a corpse in my resting place on top of trying to suppress me?” A feeble voice sounded.

It came from an old man laying in a long chair in order to bask in the sun - the same beggar seen earlier in the city.

Li Qiye finished with his task and smiled: “You’ve done an amazing job taking care of your corpse and death energy but since you were dead, it wasn’t perfect. I’m helping you get rid of all the impurities by turning this place into a paradise.”

“You’ve turned it into something awfully unsuitable.” The old man angrily said.

“I’m sure you didn’t expect your grave to be so nice and comfortable.” Li Qiye waved his hand.

“Why don’t you join me then?!” The old man retorted.

“Is that really what you want, my corpse being here too?” Li Qiye asked.

“Bah.” The old man spat on the ground and said: “Just imagine how inauspicious this palace would be with your corpse here. I don’t even want to see you now, let alone having to tolerate your corpse every day.”

"I see." Li Qiye smiled: "I'm just borrowing it for a bit, and look, I've added some trees too in order to chase bad luck away. Since you died long ago, there is some unwanted accumulation but worry not, your friend is here to visit and help you out."

"Maybe I should just kill you." The old man said.

"Would you sweep my tomb after killing me? Or light an incense? No, I won't even be buried since you would have devoured me completely. On the other hand, I actually showed mercy by letting you rest in peace, that's how kind I am." Li Qiye said.

"Go ahead and devour us if you can." The old man said.

"No thanks, I don't have the same taste as you, and I'm sure you old geezers would have made me puke after one bite." Li Qiye shrugged.

"Fine, whatever." The old man waved his hand: "This is the only exception, no more."

"Yes, the only exception." Li Qiye bowed and gracefully accepted this condition.

In reality, the old man had no choice since he was already dead. Plus, even back when he was alive, his group was still taken down by Li Qiye.

"Who is she?" He opened his eyes and asked.

"An ascender." Li Qiye looked up at the sky and said.

“Hmm, not killed by the villainous heaven.” The old man shook his head.

“Yes, and she shouldn’t appear here either, which is why I revive her.” Li Qiye nodded.

“It seems things are changing faster than your expectation.” The old man said.

“Too fast, perhaps the established foundation is no longer there.” Li Qiye said.

“Then just wait, the villainous heaven won’t sit idly by.” The old man responded.

“Indeed, but others are not lazing around either, perhaps they are waiting for the villainous heaven.” Li Qiye said.

“A trap?” The old man’s eyes suddenly flashed with destructive rays.

“I would say so, someone is behind all of this.” Li Qiye said.

“Scared?” The old man joked.

“Not quite, it’s just troublesome having to figure it out.” Li Qiye rubbed his nose.

“Good.” The old man was happy to see Li Qiye suffer.

“It’s no big deal.” Li Qiye smiled: “But before I do anything, I have to find a flower for this place first or your unpleasant aura will resurface.”

“Get lost.” The old man didn’t appreciate his home being modified by Li Qiye.

Chapter 5182: Pick A Lotus Flower

Li Qiye left the courtyard and saw a large bear laying outside. The moment it saw Li Qiye, it approached and bit on his pants, seemingly wanting to follow him.

This was none other than True Bear Conqueror who had lost his human form. He had been following Li Qiye since Immortal’s Peak and finally caught up just now.

“Fine, we can travel together.” Li Qiye patted the bear and smiled.

“Raa!” The bear lifted its head and roared happily.

Meanwhile, the old man in blue also tagged along, still wearing the same sign.

Li Qiye stopped and looked back, prompting him to raise the sign.

“Want to sell yourself?” Li Qiye said with a smile.

The old man nodded repeatedly, seemingly wanting nothing more than to be sold to Li Qiye.

The latter took out a few silver coins and tossed them toward the old man: "Alright, I can't keep on refusing. I'll buy you."

The old man caught the coins and excitedly put away the advertising sign. He lowered his head and said: "Your servant greets you, Master."

The bear stared at the old servant, seemingly on guard on top of being confused since it couldn't see through him. Keep in mind that True Bear had three dao fruits now.

The group traveled southward. The old man walked behind them, looking rather relaxed as if he had been doing this for several thousand years now - just another servant from Li Qiye's mansion.

They visited the southern region of the city - a place with beautiful landscapes and special fragrances known as Alchemy Dao - one of the most influential powers and contributors of Imperial Attendant.

Most sects had something unique about them - a special aura or transcending energy. As for Alchemy Dao, it resembled a flower blossoming quietly.

There were alchemy gardens everywhere with grass dormitories for the disciples. The sect was known for its pill-making and healing prowess. Its agricultural mastery was second to none as well.

In the upper continents, eighty to ninety percent of all expensive pills and medicines came from Alchemy Dao.

Its prestige traveled far in the river of time; its members were a part of all the great wars. This was especially true for Heavenly Sage Yuan who had saved numerous emperors for The People.

She preferred to be known as an alchemist and a doctor. Alas, she gained the title of “Heavenly Sage” because the emperors she had saved addressed her with this title.

She worked with City Lord Zi Yan and the others to establish Imperial Attendant City.

During the war known as Grand Dao, it was said that she expended all of her energy into supporting and healing her allies, eventually leading to her death.

Nonetheless, Alchemy Dao inherited her legacy and continued to prosper, retaining the respect of top cultivators.

As the group walked through the fields to the main gate, they saw a constant flow of people entering and leaving. Among them were powerful cultivators and even mortals.

The disciples of Alchemy Dao numbered in the millions. They provided medicine for cultivators but also treated mortals.

After passing through the main gate, security became stricter since this was the inner mountain. The alchemy medicines and plants here were precious, not to mention the finished elixirs and furnaces. Thus, it was no longer as accessible as before.

A disciple immediately came over and inquired Li Qiye the reason for his visit. He honestly answered: "I'm here to pluck a lotus flower."

"A lotus flower?" The disciple was surprised at first before answering: "I don't think we have lotus flowers here, please try another place."

"No, it's definitely here, and only here." Li Qiye smiled and shook his head.

"Could you elaborate? What is the exact type of flower you're looking for?" Another disciple asked with a changed expression.

"The one growing right up there." Li Qiye pointed at the highest place of Alchemy Dao where ten peaks or so gathered together like the petals of a blossoming lotus.

"Our ancestral lotus?!" One of them blurted out.

"The Exalted Cascade Lotus!" The first disciple shouted.

"So that is its name, then yes, I just want one." Li Qiye smiled.

Disciples nearby rushed over and grasped their weapon, ready to unsheathe right away.

A third disciple stared at Li Qiye and said: "Fellow Daoist, your joke is not funny. Please be respectful."

Their strong reaction was warranted. These lotus flowers were their ancestral inheritance. With the plant's existence, the effectiveness of all aspects relating to alchemy was boosted.

Rumor has it that it was planted by Heavenly Sage Yuan herself. Another legend said that after passing away, she transformed into the plant.

Either way, the plant was priceless and could be viewed as the very foundation of Alchemy Dao. Moreover, it took eras for one lotus flower to form.

Now, an outsider wanted a flower? This was a blatant provocation.

"I'm not joking." Li Qiye smiled and waved his hand: "And I'm not here to negotiate either, I'll leave after taking one flower."

This nearly drove the disciples crazy.

"Fellow Daoist, what are you trying to do?" A disciple said while giving an eye signal to his peer to go seek reinforcement.

In reality, he wisely enough assessed the situation - the enemies consisted of two men and one bear.

The one making the unreasonable request appeared ordinary enough, the same for the old servant. On the other hand, this bear looked intimidating and powerful.

Chapter 5183: Blushing

Alchemy Dao felt as if they were facing a serious threat - a stranger coming to ask for their Exalted Cascade Lotus in such a direct manner.

The man was either crazy or extremely powerful. Thus, the disciples were rather nervous and tense.

“Fellow Daoist, if Alchemy Dao had offended you in some way, we apologize and will do our best to amend the issue.” One disciple took a deep breath and said.

“It’s nothing like that, I just need a lotus flower.” Li Qiye said with a smile.

The disciples heard this and exchanged glances. They then discretely surrounded him.

Li Qiye saw this and said: “You’re making it difficult for me, I will leave after getting one flower, no need for escalation.”

“Fellow Daoist, don’t you know what the Exalted Cascade Lotus is?” A disciple asked.

They didn’t know that Li Qiye was already showing restraint. Otherwise, he would have just taken the flower without asking first.

“I need something to get rid of inauspicious energy in a courtyard. Coincidentally enough, your lotus flower is the closest.” Li Qiye said.

The disciples nearly vomited breath. Using their hallowed flower to get rid of some bad luck? The guy doesn't know that this is a priceless treasure?

Thus, they viewed it as a deliberate insult and their expression darkened.

"Enough of this! Who do you think you are?! To actually insult us like this!" Another group came forward, led by a youth wearing expensive clothes to show off his status.

"First Brother!" The members of the sect bowed after seeing him.

He was none other than Miracle Saint Child - a famous cultivator throughout the upper continents due to his alchemy and medicinal prowess. Despite being young, he had the ability to heal dragon lords.

"Who are you?!" He asked aggressively.

Pride was inevitable for a young man enjoying so much success in life. Even dragon lords showed him respect so he had never been afraid of anyone.

Other disciples reported about an outsider wanting to pluck their ancestral lotus. This caused him to rush over to the entrance with haste.

Despite the intimidating bear, he wasn't that afraid of an ordinary-looking fella like Li Qiye.

“Just a visitor wanting to take a flower.” Li Qiye smiled.

The saint child stared intensely at Li Qiye, wondering if this person’s cultivation could back up his bold demand.

“The ancestral lotus is our legacy. Leave or don’t blame us for hurting you.” The saint child uttered coldly, still showing restraint.

“I’m afraid I can’t obey since I must have the flower.” Li Qiye smiled.

“Ignorant fool!” The saint child unsheathed his sword, releasing its cold aura.

The others readied their weapon as well, ready to attack if Li Qiye were to make any sudden move.

“It is not too late to leave or your corpse will be on the ground.” Miracle Saint Child asserted.

Li Qiye looked at them and sighed: “Here I am trying to be nice due to old sentiments. Looks like blood must flow then.”

“Wait, stop!” A girl rushed over and shouted.

All eyes were on her - Saintess Shao Yao.

“Young Noble.” The moment she saw Li Qiye, she immediately bowed and had to restrain her excitement.

“Senior Sister.” The others bowed to greet her because her status was similar to the saint child’s.

“Junior Sister, he is your friend?” The saint child remained aggressive.

“Senior Brother, he is a benefactor who saved my life before.” Shao Yao responded.

“Hmph, even then, he was rude to our sect. That is a serious crime.” The saint child said, not giving her any face.

Despite being fellow sect members, they were actually rivals for the successor spot. Everyone knew about the animosity between the two.

“I will report this matter to my master and she will make a decision. You need not trouble yourself, Senior Brother.” She bowed slightly.

The saint child glared at Li Qiye and said: “Tell your benefactor to watch himself. No more blasphemous comment.”

He turned and left after saying this. After all, her master was Jadeclure Conqueror whose words were the laws here.

With her as Li Qiye’s companion, the other disciples stopped blocking the way.

“Young Noble, may I ask why you are here?” She stole a glance at him, blushing.

“I need a lotus flower.” He answered.

“The exalted flower?” She became surprised.

“That’s the one.” He nodded, leaving her speechless.

“May I ask for the reason why?” She calmed down after a while.

“My courtyard has some unlucky presence, I need one flower to chase it away.” He repeated.

She recalled how he was able to summon numerous king medicines with a single whistle on top of gifting her a precious flower. Thus, this didn’t seem that ridiculous.

“It is our priceless legacy.” She quietly answered.

“That’s why I am asking.” Li Qiye smiled.

Chapter 5184: Burning

“I don’t think our sect will agree to this.” She said softly, stating the obvious.

Not to mention an outsider, even their ancestor couldn't just take a flower.

"I didn't say I was asking for permission." Li Qiye smiled.

"..." She became worried after hearing this since this left her in a tough situation. Nonetheless, she felt the urge to help him.

"Let me report this to my master. If she refuses, there is nothing else I can do because the flowers are priceless." She said weakly.

"That's fine, I'm in no hurry." Li Qiye smiled.

"Then will you stay at our Alchemy Dao during the wait, Young Noble?" She asked bashfully while stealing glances at him.

"Yes." Li Qiye agreed since he had time to stay in the city.

She was awfully pleased since they could spend more time together. The more she thought about it, the shyer she became and didn't dare to look in his direction.

As they were walking, he stopped to look at a statue leading to stone steps. It depicted a woman that was remarkably lifelike - elegant and beautiful like a jade lotus in a secluded valley.

Though she was far from being a kingdom-toppling beauty, she could captivate viewers with a long-lasting charm.

Her dress flowed gracefully while she held a lotus flower in her hand, looking like a fairy treading on the mortal realm. She seemed to be gazing into the horizon, perhaps reflecting on the past or awaiting the return of a certain traveler.

Li Qiye observed the statue in silence and transcended time and space, returning to the past once more. Everything was vivid and clear as if it was just yesterday. Her soft and elegant voice echoed in his mind.

“This is our founder.” She let him take his time before introducing the statue.

“So lifelike and vibrant.” Li Qiye sighed and said.

“The six continents have other statues of our founder but none is as lifelike as this one here.” The saintess said.

Li Qiye didn't answer, feeling as if the girl from the past was actually there. Everything had changed - she gained incredible fame as Heavenly Sage Yuan. Alas, they could no longer see each other.

Shao Yao stood there in a daze. For some unknown reason, she got the strange idea that Li Qiye knew the founder.

His eyes were so profound, seemingly lost in memories. They were immensely charismatic and captivating, capable of drawing souls closer...

She calmed down and realized how flustered she was, not daring to let him see her red complexion.

“Let’s go.” Li Qiye let out a sigh and told her.

She followed quietly behind him, making it look like this was his home instead.

“Senior Sister, we have a problem!” A disciple rushed over and interrupted their time together.

“What is it? Take your time.” Shao Yao wasn’t just a young girl lost in infatuation. When there was a matter concerning the sect, she regained her composure and became serious.

“Our garden is burning again.” The disciple anxiously said.

“Again?” Her expression soured as she wanted to leave. Alas, she has yet to prepare a place for Li Qiye so she stared at him.

“Let’s go take a look.” He smiled and said.

She heaved a sigh of relief and appreciated his gesture. The two of them went to the troubled area.

As the direct disciple of Jadeclure Conqueror and a potential successor, she was responsible for many tasks in Alchemy Dao.

She was also in charge of a garden with precious medicines of at least 100,000 years of age, reserved for the ancestors.

For some unknown reason, this garden has been burning recently with heavy losses. She couldn't find the reason and thought that it might be arson. Alas, there was no evidence.

Once the two arrived on the scene, they saw flames soaring into the sky and intertwining to form a strange pattern. Disciples of Alchemy Dao tried to extinguish them to no avail.

"Extinguish!" She saw a few plants burning and let out a shout while forming a mudra. A seal descended with dao power and stopped the flames.

"Heat stagnation!" Miracle Saint Child appeared and also used a seal to stop the spread of the flames.

The two of them worked together and managed to extinguish the fire. Unfortunately, seven or eight plants have been lost.

Her expression darkened since this had happened repeatedly under her watch.

"Junior Sister, what is happening? This garden is for the ancestors and you know how much they need the plants. How are we going to answer for this?" The saint child uttered coldly.

This development was indeed unfavorable for her since they were competing for the successor spot.

"I will report to the ancestors and take responsibility." She responded.

“This happened too many times already.” The saint child pressed on: “This is absolutely arson but the issue is that your people are being careless and irresponsible.”

The disciples in charge of the garden became alarmed since they could face serious punishment.

“What happened here?” An old man rushed over. He had a treasure gourd hanging on his waist and wore straw sandals.

He had shining amber-like eyes while exuding a formidable aura - clearly a capable cultivator.

“Junior Uncle.” Both the saint child and saintess bowed.

He was the junior brother of Jadeclure Conqueror and a famous ancestor of the sect - Gourdkeeper Monarch.

“Shao Yao, I know you are excellent at farming, not to mention being educated in our techniques. Why are these mistakes happening?” He frowned.

“It is my fault.” She bowed and took no responsibility.

She had ordered fellow disciples to guard the garden carefully but it still happened again.

“In my opinion, Junior Sister’s group must have neglected their duties and left their post without permission.” The saint child said, kicking a horse while it’s down.

“Ancestor, we have diligently maintained our post, whether it be day or night.” One disciple turned pale.

Chapter 5185: The Culprit?

Dereliction of duty was a serious offense, especially due to the importance of this particular garden. Their Senior Sister might not be able to shield them from consequences.

“We were here the entire time.” Another lowered their head.

“Then how did a fire start so many times?” The monarch took a look at the scene and said: “This is done by a true flame, it’s arson.”

This startled them even more.

“If it’s arson, then who did it? How did we not catch the culprit?” The saint child stared coldly at them.

Though he couldn’t do anything to the saintess, he could still take down her group and deal an indirect blow.

The monarch also stared at them, causing them to tremble in fear. They hurriedly reported: “Ancestor, we did not take half a step away from the garden, but we didn’t see anyone either.”

“The garden doesn’t burn on its own.” The saint child said: “Could it be that someone among your group had either stolen or lost a plant so in order to cover it up, they started burning randomly.”

The serious accusation frightened the group. They got on their knees and said: “Ancestor, Senior Sister, we have always obeyed the sect’s rules and wouldn’t do something like this. Please investigate!”

“Is there any other reason for this to re-occur several times? Losing a few plants, might as well burn it all up.” The saint child pressed on.

“Senior Brother, enough of accusation void of any evidence.” She coldly uttered.

“Junior Sister, you are responsible for this as well since you are in charge here.” He didn’t hold back.

The saintess glanced at her followers and then respectfully told the monarch: “Junior Uncle, I can guarantee that they are neither thieves nor arsonists.”

“Thank you, Senior Sister, thank you!” The group bowed and expressed their gratitude. They needed her assurance in order to survive any inquisition from the ancestors. At that point, even sect banishment would be the light punishment.

“Hmm...” The monarch couldn’t find any clue after observing the garden.

“This can’t just end here.” The saint child said: “If we can’t find the culprit, the same thing will occur again and the entire garden might be gone. Junior Sister, you won’t be able to bear the responsibility.”

“We will be more vigilant than ever.” One disciple said.

“Hmph, what if it happens again? Who will take responsibility?” The saint child said.

No one answered while the saintess frowned. In reality, she couldn't come up with a reason why. There was nothing wrong with her agricultural skill so it had to be external.

“It's not that hard finding the arsonist.” Li Qiye yawned before speaking up.

“Could you elaborate, Young Noble?” The dejected saintess' face lit up after hearing this. Due to the tense situation prior, she had forgotten about him.

“The arsonist is here right now.” He said.

“In the garden?” The saint child looked around and said while staring at the saintess' followers: “Indeed, it has to be one of them.”

“We didn't do it!” Her followers were startled again.

“Who are you?” The monarch stared at Li Qiye and furrowed his brows.

“Junior Uncle, Young Noble Li saved my life twice back in Immortal's Peak.” The saintess said.

“Since you claim that the arsonist is still here, who is it then?” The monarch asked. As an ancestor of Alchemy Dao, he was rather capable yet still couldn’t see any clue.

“Sigh, you all claim to be successors of alchemy, what are Alchemy Dao’s most amazing aspects?” Li Qiye asked.

“It’s obviously our two legendary pills, nothing can compare to them.” The saint child responded.

“An ignorant answer.” To which Li Qiye responded.

“You!” The saint child glared at him.

“Tell us then, which pills in the six continents are better than ours?” The monarch’s expression soured as well.

“Your founder was in love with alchemy. Her pill-making art is exceptional indeed but her greatest achievement in life is actually the dao of agriculture.” Li Qiye said: “Her pill refinement became more famous due to the wars.”

The monarch froze for a second before agreeing: “You are not wrong. I have read this in our historical scrolls.”

“Because you all didn’t focus on her true legacy, you can’t find the culprit.” Li Qiye said.

“What does that have to do with the arsonist?” The saint child said.

“If you had inherited her abilities and teachings, the answer would have been obvious.” He said.

“That’s a bold claim, I’m still waiting for you to reveal the answer.” The saint child uttered coldly.

“You don’t think I know?” Li Qiye asked.

“Reveal the answer and prove us wrong.” The saint child said.

“It is right before us.” Li Qiye said while staring at the saint child.

“Are you saying that I did it?” The latter’s expression darkened.

“No, I’m only disappointed in a potential successor of Alchemy Dao for not spotting this.” Li Qiye shook his head.

The saint child was furious: “You have insulted my sect and me several times now. Don’t think about leaving this place unscathed if you can’t find the culprit.”

“Oh? Is that a threat?” Li Qiye asked.

“Young Noble Li, what do you suggest we do to capture the culprit?” The monarch interrupted them.

“Very well, I will teach you the dao of alchemy today.” Li Qiye pointed at a plant in the center of the garden and ordered: “Dig it up.”

“What?!” Everyone couldn’t believe it because he was pointing at the largest and most precious plant in the garden.

It was a red cock’s comb looking like a soaring phoenix.

“We can’t! That’s Her Majesty’s phoenix crest!” One disciple shouted.

“The sect master needs it. Is this a joke?” The monarch’s expression changed.

Jadecure Conqueror was planning on using it as one ingredient for her next cauldron. The saintess herself came often to check on it.

Now, Li Qiye wanted to dig it up?

Chapter 5186: Really?

The plant was near maturity and ready for the cauldron. What if it were to be damaged during the digging? The sect master’s cauldron would be delayed afterward.

“What is your nefarious intention in trying to ruin Her Majesty’s plant?” The saint child shouted.

“Your ignorance is raucous.” Li Qiye glanced at him.

The saint child trembled and turned red. As a famous doctor and alchemist, even dragon lords addressed him as “Dao Brother”. This contempt was unacceptable.

“I will not let you leave Alchemy Dao alive!” His eyes brimmed with murderous intent.

“Enough!” Gourdkeeper Monarch shouted at him.

“Junior Uncle, this man is outrageous...” The saint child said.

“If you can’t control your emotion, how will you lead later on?” He said.

The saint child immediately shut up, realizing his impropriety. He restrained his anger despite hating Li Qiye.

“What is your reason for digging up the plant?” The monarch asked Li Qiye.

“My reason? It is the culprit.” Li Qiye said.

“Hmph, more nonsense.” The saint child said: “The plant might be as red as fire but it is of the ice dao. Moreover, it is yet to be sentient and doesn’t have the power to release flames.”

“Yes, it is of the ice affinity while the culprit used true flames. This can’t be it.” The monarch said skeptically.

“The shallow understanding of dao agriculture leads to this. Even your sect master made this mistake.” Li Qiye said.

“How dare you insult Her Majesty?! Do you wish to provoke us?!” The saint child shouted before turning toward the saintess: “Junior Sister, your friend is insulting your master yet you stand there in silence. Your sin is not upholding the prestige of our sect.”

“Pop!” Li Qiye slapped him, knocking out his teeth and leaving his face bloody and swollen like a pig’s head.

“I am showing mercy out of consideration for your founder.” Li Qiye said.

“I’ll kill you!” The maddened saint child summoned a cauldron, wanting to burn Li Qiye to a crisp.

“Stop!” The monarch rushed over to stop the inferno while glaring at him: “If you insist on being out of control, I will send you into isolated reflection.”

“Junior Uncle... he attacked first...” The saint child said indignantly but stopped after seeing the monarch’s glare.

The monarch then spoke to Li Qiye: “You need to watch your words for they were insulting. If there is no good reason, we shall consider it as an act of deliberate contempt and will not let it go.”

The saintess became anxious and winked at Li Qiye. He had indeed insulted their sect and her master so she couldn't speak up for him.

"I am merely speaking the truth." Li Qiye said: "Do you know why the phoenix's crest is burning the garden?"

"It can't be, once again, it is of the ice affinity." The monarch said.

"Your skill is not refined enough, only aware of one aspect but are ignorant of the rest." Li Qiye responded.

"I started learning alchemy at the age of eight, controlling a cauldron at sixteen, creating new medicines at twenty. I humbly claim to have learned seventy to eighty percent of our sect's alchemy dao, whether it be pill refinement, healing, or agriculture. What about you?" The monarch didn't accept the criticism.

He wasn't as skilled as Jadeure Conqueror and his first brother, Panacea Monarch. However, he could compete with anyone else in the world.

"The problem is that you all have been focusing on pill refinement and medicines while ignoring agricultural alchemy, resulting in only knowing the bare surface." Li Qiye said.

The monarch and the other disciples' expression soured. He was right about the current focus but they were still confident in knowing how to take care of plants and medicines.

"That is a bold claim, I hope you can back it up, for your sake." The monarch uttered coldly.

“Let me ask you then, when your sect master transplanted the phoenix’s crest, did she immerse the roots in the juice of a sacred mulberry, hundred-art wood, and locking-stone vine for at least ten years first?”

The monarch and saintess exchanged glances. After a brief moment, he shook his head: “No.”

“This is why I mentioned the lacking proficiency of your agricultural dao.” Li Qiye said.

“Do elaborate on the issue then.” The monarch didn’t appreciate the tone but could tell that Li Qiye was an alchemist with a focus on agriculture.

“Ever heard of slumbering flame-worms?” Li Qiye smiled.

“Yes, a type of worm of the fire affinity yet grows in extreme cold climates.” The monarch responded.

“Well, there you go.” Li Qiye said.

“The phoenix’s crest is infected with slumbering flame-worms?” The monarch stared at him and said: “No, we are very meticulous when dealing with worms and insects. The very garden itself would have prevented this from happening.”

All of Alchemy Dao had a unique aura. It prevented worms and insects from entering without their permission. After all, foreign insects could cause devastating damage to the gardens.

“Your sect master brought it in, an amateurish mistake.” Li Qiye said.

The saintess winked at him again. How could he be so blunt toward a renowned conqueror?

“Please choose your words better.” The monarch said with a grave tone.

“Phoenix’s crests and slumbering flame-worms share the same environment. Occasionally, there would be eggs stuck to the roots, waiting for the plant to mature. When these eggs hatch, they will release true flames to the surrounding. Your sect master did not prepare the roots with the proper concoction so the eggs were still alive.”

Chapter 5187: Letting The Founder Down

“Really?” The monarch remained skeptical since this was his first time hearing about this phenomenon. Nonetheless, he agreed with the rationale.

“Hmph, he has no evidence, it’s a ridiculous claim.” The saint child scowled.

“We’ll find out by digging it up.” Li Qiye yawned.

The others didn’t dare to speak due to the gravity of the situation. There was a high chance of the plant withering after removal.

Their sect master sorely needed it for her next batch of medicines. Losing it now meant delaying the cauldron refinement indefinitely.

“That’s fine, don’t dig it up. Just wait for the flame-worms to mature completely, the plant will be burned anyway for their rite of passage.” Li Qiye added with a smile.

“I believe you, Young Noble.” The saintess stood by his side and said: “Junior Uncle, I agree with digging up the phoenix’s crest. This gives us a chance to save it, not to mention protect the entire garden from further losses.”

“This is a one-sided speculation. If he is wrong, who will take responsibility for the uprooted phoenix’s crest?” The saint child said.

“I will.” The saintess had complete confidence in Li Qiye: “I trust the young noble so if it turns out to be false, I will take responsibility and tell my master.”

The saint child had no response since he actually preferred this development. If Li Qiye were wrong, then his rival would definitely lose the competition for committing this careless mistake.

“Junior Uncle, I will take responsibility.” She repeated firmly.

“Very well, dig it up then.” The monarch took a deep breath and agreed. Digging it up might kill the plant but if the guy were right, the entire garden was in danger.

Nearby disciples heard this and followed their command. They carefully dug up the plant with the monarch standing nearby. The saintess also gave them meticulous pointers on how to do it correctly.

“Zzz.” The moment the roots were finally taken out of the ground, fiery strands could be seen.

“It’s true!” The saintess exclaimed.

“Seems so.” The monarch couldn’t believe that Li Qiye was right.

“Watch out now.” Li Qiye warned.

“Seal!” The monarch was already prepared to deal with the flames and summoned a cauldron. It expanded and resembled an ocean ready to devour the flames.

“Boom!” A strange worm rushed to the sky and sent it flying. It didn’t bother attacking the group since escaping was its main intent.

It was the size of a bowl but when it spread its wings, true flames poured down in a devastating manner.

“Raa!” The bear laying next to Li Qiye’s feet leaped into the air and smashed the fleeing worm down to the ground.

“Crack!” The bear started chomping on the worm. It didn’t take long before it ate all the flames and the worm itself.

It seemed satisfied and smacked its lips, still savoring the delicious meal while laying down next to Li Qiye again.

The monarch became startled. He had underestimated the worm, leading to its potential escape. However, this bear easily took it down, meaning that it was most likely stronger than him.

His eyes shifted between the bear and Li Qiye while wondering about Li Qiye's identity. Since even a pet was this strong, he should at least be a powerful and famous cultivator.

"Okay, now we can plant it again. So much problem over something so minor, you all should focus on agricultural alchemy more lest you want to let your founder down." Li Qiye looked bored as he said.

The young disciples didn't say anything while the saint child had an ugly expression. He hoped for a mistake not only to punish Li Qiye but to also weaken the saintess' claim to the successor position. Alas, this ended up with her making a notable contribution by being so decisive.

Under her guidance, other disciples were able to plant the phoenix's crest again without any lasting damage.

She then bowed toward Li Qiye and said: "Thank you for your guidance, Young Noble. I will try my best to amend my lack of skills."

Li Qiye nodded and had a high evaluation of her. He added with a smile: "As long as you put in the effort, you will be able to inherit your founder's legacy one day."

"I will work hard." She stared at him for a second before lowering her head, blushing.

“Hahaha, amazing.” The monarch calmed down and joined the conversation: “Looks like we are indeed lacking in many aspects, I appreciate your guidance today, Young Noble.”

He was proud of their alchemy skill including agriculture and cultivating the plants. Alas, this was a clear mistake.

“May I inquire where you are from, Young Noble? How did you learn your alchemy dao?” He then asked.

“I studied it myself.” He smiled.

“Oh?” The monarch didn’t quite believe him.

If someone could be so knowledgeable alone, then what was the point of their sect? Its elites had worse skills than a self-taught alchemist? That would be rather embarrassing. Little did he know that he was talking to the very progenitor of the modern alchemy dao.

“Either way, you definitely have a unique perspective on plant cultivation.” The monarch praised.

“I just know a little bit.” Li Qiye said humbly, prompting the monarch to smile wryly.

If the guy only knew a little bit, what about them?

“Hmm, are you good at solving alchemy issues?” The monarch thought about something.

“Depends on the question.” Li Qiye stroked his chin.

Chapter 5188: Just A Lotus

“Regarding the mysteries of a divine tree.” The monarch hesitated for a second before replying.

“It depends on the tree. The word ‘divine’ shouldn’t be used to describe just any common tree but people like to overuse this adjective.” Li Qiye said.

“I wholeheartedly agree.” The monarch made up his mind and tapped Li Qiye’s shoulder: “Come, let me introduce you to an old geezer.”

He acted familiar and was touchy regardless of Li Qiye’s wish. He laughed and said: “It’ll be rather beneficial for you if you can solve his problem. Keke, maybe he’ll be your backer in Imperial Attendant and plus, I won’t owe him anymore. If you can do it, just say the words and I’ll agree to anything.”

“Anything?” Li Qiye smiled.

“Yes, do you have something in mind already? I won’t refuse as long as it is within my ability.” The monarch was a straightforward person.

“I’m afraid this might be too difficult for you.” Li Qiye said.

“What do you mean? Although I’m not a supreme cultivator, I still have ample resources up my sleeves. Just tell me what you want.” The monarch glared at Li Qiye, not appreciating the lack of trust.

Li Qiye had a faint smile as he responded: “I came to Alchemy Dao for a particular lotus flower. It’s great that you’re willing to help.”

“Which flower?” He asked.

“He’s talking about the Exalted Cascade Lotus.” The saintess quietly interjected.

The startled monarch took a second before glaring at Li Qiye: “Do you know that it is?”

He then realized that this was a wasted question. Of course the guy knew what it was and its value.

“Yes, just a lotus.” Li Qiye said.

“Why do you want it? Pill-refinement?” He inquired further, thinking that this alchemist needed a priceless alchemy ingredient.

“No.” Li Qiye shook his head: “My courtyard has some bad luck so I need the flower to chase it away.”

“What kind of joke is this?!” The monarch jumped up and widened his eyes from astonishment.

“See, Junior Uncle, this arrogant guy is here with nefarious intent, we should capture him.” The saint child couldn’t help but interject.

“You, go find something else to do, you’re an eyesore right now!” The monarch shouted at him.

The saint child turned red as he stood there awkwardly for a few seconds. He eventually scowled and left the group.

“Are you serious about using our exalted lotus to chase away bad luck?” The monarch asked again.

“I’m serious.” Li Qiye said.

The monarch’s expression changed several times after seeing that Li Qiye was not messing around.

“Do you know how precious a single flower is and how long it takes to blossom?” He asked despite already being aware of the answer.

“It’s just a lotus.” Li Qiye said, rendering the guy speechless.

The monarch found this answer ridiculous. As far as he knew, his sect was the only one with a lotus plant of this level in all of the upper continents.

“Why do you want our lotus? Other alchemy plants can solve this issue.” He inquired.

“Yes, quite a few, such as the quaking immortal vine, abyssal golden flower, elusive draconic orchid. The problem is that they’re rather far away and this lotus is the closest.

“...” The monarch stared at Li Qiye as if he was staring at a madman.

Those alchemy materials mentioned were all wondrous. He had only heard or read about them, never seeing one in person.

“Are you really just using them to chase bad luck away?” He couldn’t help but ask the same question.

“What else?” Li Qiye waved his hand.

He felt the urge to yell at the guy for being outrageous but restrained himself since Li Qiye had displayed his knowledge prior.

These plants and flowers were virtually legendary. They should be used as inheritances and legacies for a sect, or to be refined into peerless pills. Using the exalted lotus for chasing luck away was simply ludicrous. Not even an apex conqueror could be so wasteful.

“I’m afraid I can’t make a decision on this matter.” The monarch gave up.

“It’s alright because I’m not asking for permission. I’m telling you out of courtesy.” Li Qiye smiled.

“... Are you saying that if we don’t agree, you will rob us?” The monarch stared at him.

“That’s a strong word, all I’m doing is picking a flower.” Li Qiye said.

The monarch felt the urge to yell out profanities but restrained himself. After all, he was a man of status and shouldn’t act improperly.

The lotus was one of their prized treasures and foundations. If Li Qiye were to try, the members would risk their lives to stop him.

“We do have one flower active right now but this is beyond my station. If you need it, I can help you negotiate.” The monarch took a deep breath and acquiesced.

“See, isn’t this going well? It’s hard to refuse someone courteous such as myself.” Li Qiye smiled.

The monarch didn’t know whether to laugh or cry when talking to this ridiculous man. He also wondered whether Li Qiye had enough power to take on Alchemy Dao.

Nonetheless, he was sure that the guy wasn’t crazy. He glanced at the bear and the old servant behind him - this only made the assessment more difficult.

“The negotiation requires some time, no?” The monarch said: “I will try my best to help you out but I’m unsure of the result.”

“I still have some patience, at least when it comes to your sect.” Li Qiye smiled.

“Great.” The monarch patted his shoulder again and said: “Let’s go back to our prior issue. I need your input on a problem of mine.”

“You owe someone a favor?” Li Qiye gave him the side-eye.

The monarch coughed awkwardly and said: “True, true. Hehehe, but I’m sure you will be interested in this.”

Chapter 5189: The Young Noble Can Do It

Gourdkeeper Monarch led the group to a mansion - his personal residence.

The group entered deeper into Alchemy Dao without facing any obstacles because of the monarch. After all, he was the third-ranked member of the sect, only beneath Jadeclure Conqueror and Panacea Monarch.

“Geezer, come out, I brought a big shot here for you.” He was particularly excited as he entered the backyard filled with precious medicines and springs.

There was a fire vein for pill refinement as well. An old man sat there, wearing a robe made of coarse cloth.

There were two horn-like protrusions on his head, a bit similar to deer antlers but they were smaller and forked.

When he opened his eyes, darkness enveloped and only allowed room for starlight. It became difficult to discern the directions afterward.

He had the aura of a dragon lord accentuated with a bestial presence. Just one roar from him could break the earth.

“Which big shot?” He stood up and asked.

The monarch introduced Li Qiye and said: “This young brother right here, he has a unique view on alchemy so I took him here to solve your problem.”

“And here I thought you had invited Jadeclure Conqueror.” The old man stared at the duo.

“Our sect master is not here right now.” The monarch shook his head and confidently said: “Trust me, he can solve it.”

The old man remained skeptical and stared at Li Qiye, only to not notice anything peculiar. However, his eyes changed the moment he saw the bear.

“...” He was a brilliant cultivator and could see that this bear was immensely strong.

His astonishment grew when he saw the old servant standing behind Li Qiye. This old man was clearly even more special than the bear. Alas, he failed to pinpoint their origin.

“Come, let me introduce you. He is Resplendent Monarch from Qilin Manor.” Gourdkeeper said.

This was the strongest ancient ancestor from Qilin Manor - a major lineage in the upper continents founded by two beings - Peerless Monarch and Immortal Emperor Qilin.

After Grand Dao War, City Lord Zi Yan and Heavenly Sage Yuan disappeared from the world. Peerless Monarch became the next lord of the city before giving the position to Imperial Gate and passing away from old age.

It was a major contributor to the city's success, not inferior to Dao Alchemy, Imperial Gate, and Iron Tree.

Resplendent Monarch possessed an amazing formation that had trapped top cultivators such as conquerors before.

He glanced at Li Qiye and then at the old man in blue before asking the latter: "May I ask where you are from?"

The old man didn't answer and simply posed there like a loyal servant. Resplendent found this rather strange - the old man seemed to be stronger than the ordinary youth. Why was he subservient to him?

Li Qiye took a seat first without waiting for an invitation.

"Geezer, take out your thing, let Young Noble Li take a look." Gourdkeeper didn't care for trivial matters and said enthusiastically.

“I came to Alchemy Dao seeking your help, now you want to throw it to someone else.” Resplendent seemed annoyed.

“No, I couldn’t solve it so I found young Noble Li for you, I’m trying my best here.” Gourdkeeper said.

“You should have at least invited Brother Panacea or Jadeclure Conqueror.” Resplendent complained.

“I never said I would help.” Li Qiye shook his head.

“Young Noble, please don’t be offended.” Gourdkeeper said: “You might actually find this interesting.”

Having said that, he winked at Resplendent and said: “What are you waiting for? Take it out.”

“It’s not that I don’t want to, you know how serious this matter is.” Resplendent apologized and bowed to Li Qiye.

“Suppression won’t know, I trust Young Noble Li.” Gourdkeeper said.

“We cannot be so careless when this pertains to the future of Imperial Attendant.” Resplendent became serious.

Gourdkeeper’s expression changed as well.

“I trust in the young noble, and so does Hallowedsteel Ancestor.” Shao Yao finally spoke.

“What about that old man?” Resplendent stared at Shao Yao.

Shao Yao hesitated and didn’t reveal the event she saw. She responded: “I’m aware of what’s going on right now in Imperial Attendant, and I respectfully think that the young noble can be in charge later.”

“Girl, watch your words.” Gourdkeeper said.

“I am not shooting without aim.” She said firmly.

“He’s not from one of our lineages, it’s not possible.” Resplendent said.

“If he agrees, this will end Hundred Dao’s attempt at taking over. Imperial Attendant will return to the orthodox path.” Shao Yao felt as if she could see the future.

“Though we don’t like Suppression, Hundred Dao had done plenty to protect the city during Imperial War.” Resplendent shook his head.

“Excuse my lack of knowledge, but may I ask how the ancestors are planning to end Suppression Conqueror’s authority?” Shao Yao believed that Li Qiye was the chosen one, not only for her own life but also the city. She had absolute confidence in this belief.

“Old geezer, it’s not easy. Nothing has changed with you so you’ll lose for sure. No one from Imperial Gate or Iron Tree can stop Suppression.” Gourdkeeper said.

“Jadecure has a chance to win with alchemy if we follow the ancestral guidance.” Resplendent said.

“Still missing a little something.” Gourdkeeper disagreed: “Time is running out, we can afford to take risks.”

Chapter 5190: Seeing The Nine Worlds Again

“So be it, no harm can come from this.” Resplendent took a deep breath and nodded.

With that, he took out a tree still with fertile soil stuck to the roots.

“Do you know this divine tree, Young Noble?” Resplendent asked.

What it lacked in size, it made up in grace. The trunk and the thick barks resembled a scaled dragon. The leaves were green and brimmed with life. As they swayed, they seemed to be bringing spring back.

Some of the leaves were longer than the body and actually touched the ground. It gave the illusion that they were drilling into the ground and could continue to grow, capable of reaching the core of the ground.

“The Tree of Tranquility.” Li Qiye said: “Calling it a sacred tree is fine but using the word divine is far-fetched. Divine trees are beyond your capability to transplant.”

This was an offensive statement, especially when he was speaking to a dragon lord with ten sacred fruits.

“So which ones are divine trees in your opinion?” Resplendent didn’t take it in stride.

This tree was the best from their Qilin Manor, planted by their progenitor - Peerless Monarch. Sure, it wasn’t as precious as Alchemy Dao’s exalted lotus plant but didn’t deserve the disdainful comment.

“A so-called divine tree should rule over heaven and earth, grasp the sun and moon, rotate the celestials, and encompass three thousand worlds.” Li Qiye said: “Your tree might be able to conceal a region and safeguard it from a disaster on top of providing solutions to dao mysteries, but this is not comparable to a true divine tree.”

The group exchanged glances.

“I don’t think such a tree exists in the six continents.” Gourdkeeper took a deep breath.

“That makes it worthy of being a divine tree but nowadays, people use this adjective all the time.” Li Qiye responded.

The two old men chuckled awkwardly but Li Qiye didn’t actually have any intention of calling them out specifically.

After reaching this level, they knew that they were far from being unbeatable.

“Young Noble, allow me to show you something.” Resplendent finally made up his mind because there was no other option.

He took out something resembling a go board. Upon closer inspection, there were mountains and rivers within along with grand veins - looking just like an entire world sealed within.

Anyone could tell at first glance at this was an ultimate treasure.

“Behold, Resplendent Array of Qi...” Resplendent Monarch introduced.

Alas, he was interrupted by Li Qiye who grabbed the board from him. He took a look and said: “The nine worlds, should change its name to Nine Worlds Array instead.”

He only took a split second to understand the entire board and all of its minute transformations. The basis of this treasure was none other than the nine worlds, utilizing its terrains to duplicate the momentum and flows.

“You know about the nine worlds?!” Both Gourdkeeper and Resplendent became startled.

This went double for Resplendent because the array was their secret. Only ancient ancestors had access to the board. Ordinary disciples never got the chance to take a look or didn’t even know what it was.

“This is not Immortal Emperor Qilin’s technique.” Li Qiye commented: “He follows the path of the ancient beasts.”

“Yes.” Resplendent became excited: “Our other progenitor created it.”

“Peerless Monarch.” Gourdkeeper said.

“Yes, this array managed to stop conquerors and monarchs from entering our city.” Resplendent smiled wryly: “It is still here but unfortunately, I cannot activate its true power. The flaws and openings were taken advantage of, hence my defeat to Suppression.”

He saw hope in Li Qiye so he revealed everything.

“Activate!” Li Qiye formed a mudra and chanted.

“Buzz.” The array released an ocean of light, completely engulfing the manor.

The group was taken inside the array afterward. They looked around and saw an unfamiliar world.

Only Li Qiye found this place familiar, whether it be the majestic mountain range and draconic earth veins. Even the boundless galaxy above took him back to the past.

“The nine worlds.” He sighed and still remembered. These memories were buried deep in his mind.

This place had changed completely and turned into the current Eight Desolaces. Nonetheless, someone else in the six continents was still in love with this world, deciding to take advantage of their peerless wisdom to imprint these memories into an array.

Li Qiye became sentimental since he didn't expect to see the nine worlds again.