

Martial 271

[Chapter 271 – Completely Annihilated](#)

After just ten breaths of time, one of the Alchemists who had taken the poison pill had their face go pale, and soon after his whole body also began to tremble and cold sweat appeared his forehead.

Gasps arose from within the audience. None of them had expected this poison pill Grandmaster Xiao had refined to be so potent.

As these gasps continued, three puffing sounds suddenly rang out from the stage, and soon a bizarre stench began wafting through the air.

It was that struggling Alchemist on stage inadvertently releasing several loud farts.

A lot of people who were standing close to the platform were caught unaware and inhaled a big mouthful of this stench, which almost caused them to vomit on the spot. All of them showed expressions filled with disgust.

The Alchemist's pale face immediately turned bright red, not from the effects of the pill, but from the stench.

Under the watchful eyes of his peers, suddenly releasing three farts, such a result was obvious.

Seeing countless members of the crowd gazing towards him with looks of both pity and disdain, the Alchemist, who was now thoroughly embarrassed, hastily stood up, jumped from the high platform, panicked and fled like a stray dog.

"Hmph, having no ability yet wanting to participate in Grandmaster Xiao's test, Truly overconfident!"

"You will bring shame to your grandmother! You might as well go back home now."

"Which Alchemist was that? How is he going to live in the future?"

With the constant mockery stabbing into his back like thorns, this youth did not dare to stick around, and in the blink of an eye disappeared into the crowd.

The crowd had not yet recovered from this farce when from the high-profile two "thud" sounds suddenly came. As everyone turned back to look at what had happened, their eyes were greeted with the sight of two Alchemists who had swallowed the poison pills completely slumped over. Their eyes were unfocused, but they still maintained a posture of meditation, yet they were clearly unconscious.

The three Medicine King's Valley young disciples only spared these two a single glance before coldly snorting, walking over, and kicking them down off the platform.

Their attitude was extremely arrogant and overbearing. It was like they were kicking aside two pieces of trash rather than people.

However, no one dared raise an objection. Prior to the test beginning, everyone had been clearly told that this was a poison pill refined personally by Grandmaster Xiao. If one was going to try participate they would have to be psychological prepared to be poisoned.

“They’re not dead!” Someone called out after going up and checking the breath of the two Alchemists who had failed, but it was also true that neither of them were moving and would not wake up no matter how much they were yelled or prodded at.

“It’s hot!” One of the remaining Alchemists on the platform suddenly cried out, every last piece of his exposed skin showing a blood red sheen, exuding a scorching heat. As steam began rising from his head, as he viciously tore at his clothes until his entire upper body was exposed. However, it seemed he was so hot he did not realize he was already half naked and kept clawing at his chest.

Dong Qing Yan’s pretty face flushed as she quickly covered her eyes.

A few cultivators soon jumped up onto the platform and dragged this suffering man down. These cultivators were likely from the same Family or Sect as this Alchemist and did not want to see him shame himself.

After less than thirty breaths of time, the first group of Alchemists to take this poison pill test was annihilated!

Everyone here had watched these unfortunate souls go through a strange and tragic myriad of poisoning symptoms, but this not dampen these Alchemists’ determination to enter Hidden Cloud Peak; in fact, it only further increased their enthusiasm.

These poison pills that Xiao Fu Sheng had refined were clearly all the same type of pill, but they could actually produce a wide variety of different effects. There was no doubt he was truly an amazing master.

Because of this, the group of Alchemists here could only randomly guess how they should refine Grandmaster Xiao’s poison pill.

As soon as this first group of people came or were forced down, *Shua Shua Shua*, thirty more went up.

As time passed, those who went up were continuously poisoned, falling unconscious, and embarrassing themselves. In the end, after more than two hundred of those gathered went up not a single one managed to pass Grandmaster Xiao’s test.

The whole test site was surrounded by gloomy atmosphere.

Amongst the latest group of Alchemists to go up and be poisoned, one of them that had his entire body go stiff as stone yet remain conscious cried out, “I’m not satisfied, I’m not convinced! How can just a single refining a puny poison pill measure my extraordinary aptitude? I demand to visit Hidden Cloud Peak and speak directly with Grandmaster Xiao, Grandmaster Xiao, please give this junior a chance!”

“Kick him down!” Qin Ze coldly replied.

One of the three young Medicine King’s Valley disciples walked over in front of this youth and coldly booted him off the stage.

However, despite being already kicked off the stage, the young Alchemst kept shouting, “Grandmaster Xiao, I am worthy to inherit your mantle, please give this junior a chance!”

“These people have gone crazy.” Yang Kai looked around and shook his head.

Dong Qing Yan quietly whispered, "It's because you don't understand just how prestigious Grandmaster Xiao's position in the Alchemist community is that you can say that. Just look at that guy, even though he's behaving so ugly and disgracefully, is anyone here ridiculing him?"

Hearing this, Yang Kai glanced around and found that there really was no one who was ridiculing him; most people were simply indifferent while the others wore looks of sympathy.

"Grandmaster Xiao in the eyes of us Alchemists is a supreme existence, and in order to worship him as a master, who would care about eating bitterness and losing face?" Dong Qing Yan said as she bit her lip, her face was filled with a mix of of tension and anticipation.

"Are you sure you want to go up and take that poison pill?" Yang Kai grinned meaningfully, "You've also seen those people's reactions; just passing out and falling to the ground could be considered lucky, if you fail the test and you rip off all of your clothes in the process..."

Dong Qing Yan's pretty face suddenly went pale.

"Well, there are a lot of young people gathered here. I think many of them would be happy to see that scene. Heh, the Dong Family's Young Lady stripping off all her clothes, it'd make for a great after-dinner conversation."

"That's unlikely ..."

"Even so, if you were to publicly put out a few farts..."

"Don't say it!" Dong Qing Yan beautiful face contorted.

No matter which of these ugly performances it was, it was not something this little girl could accept. Were she to embarrass herself in front of all these people, it would undoubtedly become a permanent shadow that loomed over her life, and once it happened, she would never be able to raise her head in public again.

Turning a firm gaze towards Yang Kai, Dong Qing Yan gripped her little fists, "I know you're trying to scare me so that I'll go back to my brother, but even seeing everything that's happened I still want to try this test. I prepared so much just for this single opportunity, and now that I'm here, how could I just give up so easily and go home?"

Pausing here for a moment, her voice gradually becoming a whisper and her face blushed a bright red, "If things really turn out like you said... please take me away quickly..."

Yang Kai slightly shook his head, seeing his little cousin's determined expression. He knew that no matter how he discouraged her it would be to no avail.

All of a sudden a burst of noise rose up from the crowd, "An Earth Grade Top-Rank Alchemist! Isn't he the genius Alchemist the Wang Family has been raising, Wang Qi Ren? He also came?"

"If he tries, maybe he really can pass Grandmaster Xiao's test."

"Good, we'll finally get to see something interesting."

"Look there, that Earth Grade Mid-Rank Alchemist, he's the young talent from the Xiong Family."

“And him, another Earth Grade Mid-Rank Alchemist from the Chang Family.”

“The Alchemists from the various Great Families are finally coming out; this will be a good show.”

This group of young Alchemists were actually those who had been cultivated by the various Great Families. Each of them had come here hoping to inherit Xiao Fu Sheng’s mantle.

Up till now, the people who had gone up were just Alchemists from smaller unknown forces, so being unable to pass was actually to be expected. But now seeing these people about to try, many in the crowd became excited.

The crowd quickly became abuzz with noise, and as this sound drifted over to the ears of these ten or so Earth Grade Top-Rank Alchemists, their expressions couldn’t help but become slightly proud.

However, each of them maintained proper etiquette and calmly boarded the platform and then first paid their respects to Qin Ze one by one before walking over to the poison pill pot.

“After you, Brother Wang. Among us, only Brother Wang has managed to reach the Earth Grade Top-Rank, naturally you should be first.” The Chang Family’s young Alchemist said with a smile on his face, as he opened up the way. The others on stage also followed suit.

Wang Qi Ren smiled, cupped his fists, and said, “Many thanks, then this Wang will partake.”

Finished speaking, he turned and faced towards Hidden Cloud Peak and bowed before reaching out, taking a poison pill, tossing it into his mouth, and then sitting down nearby to begin refining it.

From his gestures, he was clearly extremely confident about passing this test, otherwise he would not have rushed to pay respects to Hidden Cloud Peak.

After all, that was Xiao Fu Sheng’s peak.

The three young Medicine King’s Valley disciples couldn’t help laughing to themselves.

So what if he was an Earth Grade Top-Rank Alchemist? In front of Uncle Xiao’s personally refined poison pill, even if it was a Heaven Grade Alchemist, if his aptitude was not good enough the end result would be the same.

[This Wang Qi Ren really thinks too highly of himself!] The three young disciples exchanged a glance and secretly sneered as they waited to see this Wang Qi Ren make a fool of himself.

A moment later, all the young Alchemists who had gone up this round had taken one of the poison pills and found a place to sit down.

As the youths onstage began refining these pills, the members of the audience down below all held their breaths. One by one they stretched their necks to get a better look, many of them felt even tenser than when it had been their turn.

These young Alchemists were indeed talents cultivated by great forces, and each of them had outstanding achievements and aptitude. Before now, those who had gone up had at best managed to last half a cup of tea’s worth of time.

But it was a full cup of tea’s time before the first one in this group showed a reaction.

The first to be eliminated was an Earth Grade Low-Rank Alchemist who suddenly began foaming at the mouth.

Soon after someone on the high platform let out a few loud farting sounds.

One after another, these great forces' Alchemists gradually failed. This result left everyone in the crowd stunned.

None of the crowd gathered here thought these young talents weren't worthy of their names, but instead they all felt that Grandmaster Xiao's recruitment test was far more difficult than they had imagined.

After a stick of incense, Wang Qi Ren was the only one left on the platform. Everyone else had already made a sad exit.

Countless people felt their chests tighten. If Wang Qi Ren couldn't pass this test, they really didn't know if anyone amongst them could.

A moment later, Wang Qi Ren suddenly began to tremble and a whiff of black gas began to emerge from his eyebrows.

Seeing this, Qin Ze, who had been sitting there like a stone statue ever since the tests had begun, suddenly sat up, and his eyes flashed a faint light as he began to carefully observe Wang Qi Ren's situation.

As time passed by slowly, the whiff of black gas became more and more obvious as it further condensed.

Suddenly, the black gas disappeared without a trace, and at the same time, Wang Qi Ren loudly coughed and vomited out a mouthful of black blood!

Cries quickly rang out from the crowd below. Wang Qi Ren's reaction was the first of its kind during this test, so no one knew whether it was a sign he had passed or failed.

A few cultivators from the Wang Family immediately jumped up on stage and hurriedly came over to support Wang Qi Ren.

However, Wang Qi Ren waved his hand at them, and after struggling a bit, managed to stand on his own before turning towards Qin Ze with a trace of expectation on his face.

But to his disappointment, Qin Ze shook his head and sighed, "Failed!"

Wang Qi Ren's expression suddenly went dark, but he did not give up, cupping his fists and asking, "May I ask respected senior, how can we pass this test?"

Qin Ze could see that this question was purely driven by alchemic curiosity, so he still patiently explained, "In fact, you were just one step away from passing, but unfortunately... you fell short!"

"Junior thanks Senior for his guidance!" Wang Qi Ren wore a wry smile and thanked Qin Ze before jumping down the platform along with his family Disciples.

[Chapter 272 – He's Not An Alchemist](#)

Once again, everyone was annihilated.

Even the young genius Alchemist Wang Qi Ren had failed to pass Grandmaster Xiao's test. This result was completely beyond everyone's expectations.

After Wang Qi Ren left the high platform, for quite a while, no one dared to go up on stage.

With even these great family talents having failed, no one was confident that they could make it through Grandmaster Xiao's test, and were afraid that going up would simply be disgracing themselves.

The Medicine King's Valley disciples from beginning to end were not impatient, all of them simply stood around waiting.

When he glanced over at Dong Qing Yan, Yang Kai found her constantly clenching and releasing her two little hands, clearly very tense, yet her face still showed an eager expression even if it was mixed with a bit of unease.

An Earth Grade Top-Rank Alchemist had just failed, could she, a Common Grade Mid-Rank succeed?

"Sometimes, missing a single opportunity will be someone's lifelong regret!" Yang Kai faintly whispered.

Hearing this, Dong Qing Yan's tender body trembled. Turning to look at Yang Kai, her eyes flashed a thoughtful light before immediately became resolute; inhaling a deep breath, she declared, "En!"

Yang Kai smiled and, together with Dong Qing Yan, jumped up onto the platform.

Seeing someone still dare to take the stage, a round of voices suddenly stirred below, shouting a few words of encouragement, which caused Dong Qing Yan to smile shyly.

However in the next instant, these people noticed the ornament which was pinned to her chest.

"She's just a Common Grade Mid-Rank Alchemist..."

"Her level is so low; she's probably just another fool."

"Poor little girl, even if she is a fool, how will she be able to show her face after this?"

...

Listening to these words, Dong Qing Yan bit down on her lip and remained silent.

The three young Medicine King's Valley disciples, however, still smiled at her. It seems that beautiful women were able to win favour no matter where they went.

"Young lady, if you please!"

Dong Qing Yan nodded gently, took a deep breath, and walked over to the pot. Pulling out a poison pill, she glanced back once at Yang Kai, silently consulting him.

Yang Kai nodded lightly and said, "Rest assured, I'll observe you first."

If Dong Qing Yan failed to pass the test, he would have to immediately bring her away. There was no way he could really allow her to disgrace herself in front of this crowd.

In addition, to the Medicine King's Valley disciples, there were only Dong Qing Yan and Yang Kai on stage now, and since Yang Kai was dressed up as her escort, the Medicine King's Valley disciples did not immediately ask him to leave.

Dong Qing Yan took a deep breath, put the poison pill into her mouth, and nervously swallowed it before immediately sitting cross-legged and running her Secret Art to refine the pill.

Yang Kai crossed his arms and stood nearby, straight as a javelin, vigilantly observing Dong Qing Yan's every movement.

Half a cup of tea's time later, she showed no reaction.

A full cup of tea's time passed, yet she still did not show any symptoms.

Yang Kai couldn't help but squint and secretly use his Divine Sense to sweep over Dong Qing Yan. He quickly discovered that the Yuan Qi in her body was now rapidly circulating and burning away some kind of debris in her meridians.

These pieces of debris should be the toxins that had been in the poison pill.

"Hey, this girl is pretty good; she's managed to last for this long!" Someone in the crowd below suddenly called out in surprise.

Of the few hundred or so people who had taken this test already, in addition to a few of those Alchemists cultivated by Great Families, very few people had persisted for this long, and it wasn't like no Common Grade Alchemists had come up before. It was just that them lasting more than ten breaths was already considered good, but Dong Qing Yan's performance now had caused everyone to sit up and take notice.

"How did she do it? She's definitely another Alchemy genius, possibly even greater than Wang Qi Ren."

"I know her; she's the Dong Family's Young Lady Dong Qing Yan!"

"What, the Dong Family's Young Lady?"

As everyone was chattering, a ray of black gas emerged from Dong Qing Yan's brow and quickly became thick. Immediately after, this black gas disappeared back into her body and Dong Qing Yan quickly opened her mouth and spat out a visibly black breath.

At the end of this breath, Dong Qing Yan slowly opened her big round eyes.

For the first time, Qin Ze stood up from his chair, his face bursting into a big smile, repeatedly praising, "Good, good! Finally, someone managed to pass Uncle Xiao's test!"

[Passed?]

Hundreds of people suddenly went silent, almost unable to believe their ears.

From the beginning until now, more than three hundred Alchemists from numerous forces, hailing from all over the world had come up and taken this test. Many of them had exceptional aptitude and were considered geniuses. Even Earth Grade Top-Rank Alchemists had appeared, yet all of them had eventually failed.

But now, a Common Grade Mid-Rank Alchemist had managed to pass? What kind of profound and mysterious ability did she use to do it?

Even Dong Qing Yan was also stunned stupid, blinking her big eyes blankly while staring at Qin Ze.

Yang Kai lightly coughed and said, "Young Lady, this Senior just said you have passed the Grandmaster's test."

"Uh... huh?" Dong Qing Yan still seemed like she hadn't recovered.

Qin Ze's previously cold and solemn look had now changed to a warm and friendly smile as he once again said, "Little girl, congratulations! You have passed this test! From now on, you are my Uncle, Xiao Fu Sheng's, disciple! Wait... this Qin should be calling you Junior Sister now!"

After this third explanation, Dong Qing Yan finally reacted.

Suddenly jumping high up into the sky, crying out and weeping with elation, her hands clutched her face as her eyes immediately became red.

This happiness had befallen her all too suddenly, and she was clearly caught unprepared.

Helplessly puttering about for a long time, unable to find any words to say, Dong Qing Yan simply continued to shed tears of joy.

Only after she carried on like this for quite some time did she managed to barely compose herself and reply, "Yan'er greets Senior Brother Qin!"

To this silly little girl, Qin Ze laughed heartily, "Junior Sister is too polite! Uncle Xiao accepting you as his disciple is a blessing for our Medicine King's Valley."

As these two exchanged greetings, the atmosphere between them immediately became harmonious, which caused the crowd gathered below to wear looks of pure shock.

When had any of them ever seen Qin Ze of Medicine King's Valley acting so friendly? Every time someone found him to perform Alchemy for them, he would have an extremely ugly expression on his face, as though they all owed him something.

But now, this fellow was laughing so hard every one of his teeth was exposed.

It wasn't like he was somehow incapable of laughing with others. It was simply that before now he had never placed anyone else in his eyes.

"Now that Junior Sister has passed Uncle Xiao's test, you will be immediately counted as one of our Medicine King's Valley's disciple, if you have no other matters to settle first, you can accompany me into Medicine King's Valley, if there is something you wish to deal with beforehand, please inform me now." Qin Ze said as he laughed happily.

Dong Qing Yan simply nodded. About her joining Medicine King's Valley, she obviously had to inform the Dong Family, but after things had progressed to this step, she firmly believed that her brother would no longer try to stop her.

Her becoming a Medicine King's Valley disciple would also bring a lot of face to the Dong Family. It was quite simple actually, no matter which force it was, as long as they belonged to this world, they would desire a good relationship with Medicine King's Valley, and now the Dong Family's Young Lady was the Medicine King's Valley Grandmaster Xiao's direct disciple. It was simply an incomparable position.

"Senior Brother, Yan'er's guardian would also like to try." Dong Qing Yan looked towards Yang Kai and said.

"Guardian?" Qin Ze frowned, having written Yang Kai off as a simple escort before, although he did not openly show disgust, the look of disdain in his eyes was quite obvious.

"Yan'er's guardian has been protecting her since she was just a child, so..."

Qin Ze suddenly looked at her wryly, apparently misunderstanding that his new Junior Sister had a forbidden love for this 'guardian' of hers.

Without digging any deeper into it, he simply nodded and said, "Since he would like to try, then so be it, in any case, there are still a lot of Uncle Xiao's poison pills remaining."

Having already agreed, Qin Ze casually asked, "What level of Alchemist is he?"

At this question, Dong Qing Yan blushed even harder and said, "He's not an Alchemist..."

"Not an Alchemist?"

"..." Qin Ze's expression suddenly turned sour, sternly objecting, "If he has never performed Alchemy before why does he want to try now? Does he looking down on Alchemy as if it's some kind of trivial matter? My Medicine King's Valley's isn't some random place that one with no heart for Alchemy can casually join. Him being able to pass this test isn't even worth considering."

In response, Yang Kai simply looked at him and asked, "May I ask, did Predecessor Xiao ever state that someone with no experience in Alchemy cannot participate in this disciple recruitment test?"

To this, Qin Ze laughed loudly, "Indeed, Uncle Xiao did not say as such, but since you have never learned Alchemy before now, your future achievements on this path will naturally not be anything significant. If you aren't willing to dedicate your life to the pursuit of Alchemy then this is not a place where you belong."

However, Yang Kai remained unfazed, lightly countering, "According to what this junior knows, Grandmaster Xiao himself was twenty-six years old when he was first exposed to Alchemy. This junior is still only seventeen this year, nearly ten years younger than Grandmaster Xiao when he began learning."

This was something he had overheard people talking about earlier.

To this point, Qin Ze frowned, his expression quite displeased.

Suddenly, some people in the crowd below began to curse, "Who the hell do you think you are you damn brat! how dare you compare yourself with Grandmaster Xiao!"

“Grandmaster Xiao is a Heaven sent genius, he was born for the Alchemist Path, so what if he was twenty-six years old when he began practicing Alchemy, even if he had been forty or five years old it would have been the same, how could a nobody like you hope to compare with him!?”

“Enough!” Qin Ze roared furiously, immediately causing the crowd below to fall silent.

Staring silently towards Yang Kai for a long time, he eventually gave a nod, “What you have said is not without reason. Since Uncle Xiao did not set any requirements about having to have practiced Alchemy beforehand, you are indeed still qualified to take this test. Go get yourself a poison pill.”

Yang Kai also gave a nod, and while the other three young Medicine King’s Valley disciples sneered, he reached out and swallowed one of the poison pills.

Nearby, Dong Qing Yan was looking towards him nervously, but Yang Kai just smiled at her then sat down and began refining the pill.

Circulating his True Yang Secret Art, a sweltering heat began to spread out around him, causing Qin Ze’s brow to prick up as he secretly nodded.

Although he still somewhat looked down on Yang Kai, after feeling his True Qi fluctuations, he also realized that this boy was not simple. Being able to reach the True Element Boundary at such a young age, this kind of aptitude was not something an average person would possess. If he did not distract himself by trying to learn Alchemy and instead concentrated solely on the Martial Path, he would not doubt have some achievements in the future.

[Even just a trivial guardian is so powerful? The Dong Family’s background is not shallow], Qin Ze thought to himself in surprise.

As soon as the poison pill reached his stomach, Yang Kai will felt it completely dissolve and pour directly into his meridians.

It was truly something personally refined by a once-in-a-generation master, this effect was simply too fast, not to mention Yang Kai with his True Element Boundary Second Stage cultivation, even someone who had just entered the Initial Element Stage, as long as they even slightly circulated their Yuan Qi, would effortlessly be able to absorb this medicinal essence.

As the poison flowed through his meridians, it was quickly refined and incinerated by his True Yang Yuan Qi, which made it completely unable to harm him in any way.

After he had completed a few rotations of his True Qi, Yang Kai felt the last of the toxins in his body completely disintegrate, while the remaining dregs rose up to his head and gathered into a cloud of turbid gas in his mouth.

Startled by this, Yang Kai suddenly began feeling anxious.

When Dong Qing Yan had spent only slightly more than a cup of tea worth time to pass this test, it was apparently quite surprising to Qin Ze, if he were to achieve the same results after only a few breaths of time, it would no doubt set off a great storm.

[It’s too fast!]

Considering up to this point, Yang Kai quickly held his mouth shut, refusing to spit out the black gas, and continued circulating his True Yang Secret Art as if nothing had happened.

[Chapter 273 – Hidden Cloud Peak](#)

After a stick of incense worth of time, Yang Kai, who had been quietly circulating his True Qi, began moving some of the black gas and forcing it out of his forehead.

To those observing, there was now a sliver of black gas on Yang Kai's brow.

Qin Ze was shocked.

This was clearly the sign that the final step of the test had arrived. Of the hundreds of Alchemists who had participated before now, only Wang Qi Ren and Dong Qing Yan had managed to reach this point; the former falling short, the latter finally succeeding.

How did this mere bodyguard do it?

Only a true Alchemy genius should be able to do this!

Qin Ze suddenly became nervous as he carefully watched Yang Kai with his heart stuck in his throat. Uncle Xiao had personally told him that for this time's test, as long as he could find even a single suitable successor, he would be completely satisfied.

Now that Dong Qing Yan had already passed, if a second person were to also succeed... wouldn't his old Uncle cry out in joy? If Hidden Cloud Peak were to obtain more than one successor, it was not hard to imagine it flourishing in the future.

Just as Qin Ze felt like his heart might burst from the tension, the wisp of black gas between Yang Kai's eyebrows vanished. Qin Ze immediately held his breath as he intensely focused his attention.

Successor of failure would be decided in the next moment!

As he anxiously waited for a long time, Yang Kai showed no reaction. Then suddenly Qin Ze's eyes went round as he shockingly saw a puff of black smoke re-emerge from Yang Kai's brow.

[What's going on!?!]

Qin Ze was completely confused. The reaction of this boy in front of him was nothing like Wang Qi Ren's vomiting of black blood, nor was it like Dong Qing Yan successful exhalation of black smoke. [How is it that the wisp of black gas moved back and forth from his brow? This is very different from what Uncle Xiao said the situation should be.]

As he mulled over this puzzle in his heart, the black gas once again disappeared.

However, before his nerves could settle, it once again emerged.

...

Qin Ze's heart twisted every time the black gas appeared and disappeared. This kind of situation was simply akin to torture, especially since this result was still waffling back and forth between success and failure, toying with the emotions of everyone who was watching.

After this cycle continued back and forth a dozen times, the young boy in front of him suddenly opened his mouth and spat out a turbid cloud of black gas.

As soon as he spat out this black gas, the youth's whole body seemed like it had lost its strength, his head hanging down with a disappointed look on his face.

[The hell! You finally decided to spit it out.] Qin Ze fiercely cursed in his heart, thinking that if he had to endure this much longer his heart might not be able to bear the stress.

But... how could such a thing happen?

Qin Ze frowned, was it that this youth's aptitude could only barely meet the standard Uncle Xiao had set, causing him to linger between success and failure? [That must be it...]

"Senior Brother Qin..." Dong Qing Yan looked hesitantly towards Qin Ze, "How did he do?"

Shaken out of his stupor by this voice, Qin Ze laughed, "En, he did alright. Although his aptitude is not nearly as high as Junior Sister's, this can still barely be considered a pass."

[He also passed?]

These words suddenly made the crowd below feel dizzy.

Before now, so many people had gone up on the platform, but not a single one had been successful. Even Wang Qi Ren had failed and wound up vomiting a mouthful of black blood, but now a Common Grade Mid-Rank Alchemist passed. Although this rank of Alchemist was quite low, in the end she was still the Dong Family's Young Lady. The Dong Family was by no means a small force, so them being able to cultivate such a talent was acceptable to most.

But her guardian passing as well?

This guy was just the Dong Family Young Lady's attendant; such a person had also managed to succeed?

"Senior Qin, that little brat must have cheated somehow." Some people began to clamour.

"That's right Senior Qin, this bastard has never even performed Alchemy before. A completely unranked Alchemist, how could he have passed Grandmaster Xiao's test?"

"He must have used some underhanded means to do this, I am not satisfied!"

...

Qin Ze's smiling face immediately cramped up as a dangerous light flashed across his eyes, so glaring towards the crowd gathered below he coldly snorted, "This is my Uncle Xiao's personally refined poison pill! No one- I repeat- no one can avoid its effects. Even if it was an Immortal Ascension Boundary Master who had taken this pill. Without an appropriate aptitude for Alchemy, he would still be unable to bear it. If you are not satisfied, you can try it yourself, but those who dare question the results are slandering my Medicine King's Valley and slandering my Uncle Xiao!"

As these words echoed throughout the plaza, the crowd fell silent.

“Fuck, a no-name servant who can’t even perform Alchemy managed to pass. I don’t believe it!” One of the Alchemists in the crowd gnashed his teeth and jumped up onto the platform.

Many others soon followed behind him.

A moment later, a large group of people were poisoned...

The giant medicine pot contained at least five or six hundred poison pills, but by noon all of them had been taken. However, in the end, only Dong Qing Yan and Yang Kai managed to pass the test.

There were many people who obtained the same result as Wang Qi Ren, managing to arrive at the final step but ultimately falling short. Each of them helplessly let out a sigh of regret.

It was clear to everyone now that Grandmaster Xiao had issued such a difficult test this time not to recruit disciples but to find a suitable successor.

At the end of the test, Qin Ze came over with a smile on his face, “Junior Brother, Junior Sister, would you like to go to Hidden Cloud Peak now? If Uncle Xiao were to learn that two people managed to pass his test, he will certainly be very pleased.”

Yang Kai remained silent and indifferent. His face was completely unchanged. His identity right now was that of a simple escort, so naturally he had no right to decide such matters.

Dong Qing Yan, on the other hand, smiled and said, “I’d like to first go talk with my brother.”

“Good, I’ll come with you. After you say your goodbyes, then we will proceed to Hidden Cloud Peak!”

Clearly he could not wait to bring them into Medicine King’s Valley.

On the third floor of the Dong Family Medicine Store, Dong Qing Han’s pudgy face was plastered with an awkward smile. News of Dong Qing Yan having passed Grandmaster Xiao’s disciple recruitment test had long since reached his ear.

Although he knew that his sister had been obsessed with Alchemy since she was a child, he had never dreamed she would be able to accomplish such a feat.

Worshipping Xiao Fu Sheng as her master! This was a wondrous opportunity that no one would refuse. But in the end, she was still just a little girl, and from the moment she was born she had grown up spoiled. Now, suddenly changing to a strange new environment, as her brother, he was worried about if she would be able to handle it or not.

However, the ship had sailed, so unless the Dong Family was willing to completely offend and break off all ties with Medicine King’s Valley, they would never even dream of trying to snatch Dong Qing Yan back from them.

The Dong Family severing relations with Medicine King’s Valley was clearly impossible.

As he smiled wryly again and again, the Wind and Cloud Dual Guard’s suddenly whispered, “Along with the Young Lady and Young Master Yang, another man is accompanying them, and he should be a steward of Medicine King’s Valley.”

Dong Qing Han was startled by this news and quickly got up, “Come with me!”

But before he could reach the door, the sound of footsteps on the stairs reached his ear.

Upon opening the door, he saw Dong Qing Yan break into a dash, nearly jumping up the stairs towards him.

“Big Brother, Big Brother, I did it!” Dong Qing Yan simply couldn’t wait to tell Dong Qing Han this good news.

Dong Qing Han however stretched out his hand and knocked on her head, swiftly reprimanding her, “What “I did it”! Something this important, yet you didn’t even discuss it with me in advance!”

Dong Qing Yan clutched her little head, but kept smiling, apparently not fazed in the slightest by this scolding.

Just as Dong Qing Han was about to continue, Qin Ze who had been following behind lightly coughed.

Hearing this, Dong Qing Han turned around and hurriedly cupped his fists, “This Junior greets Senior Qin!”

“En.” Qin Ze faintly nod before frowning slightly, “Young Master Dong, since your younger sister has passed this test, she is now a disciple of my Medicine King’s Valley, my Uncle Xiao’s Apprentice, and this Qin’s Junior Sister, although she is still a member of your Dong Family, you are no longer allowed to arbitrarily hit her!”

Dong Qing Han was stunned.

Qin Ze reluctantly continued to explain his reprimand, “Alchemy is a distinguished profession, and different from you fist throwing sword wielding bunch, their minds are important, do you understand? How would you compensate this world if you damaged her brain by striking her? Junior Sister Yan is an Alchemy genius, if her aptitude was in any way affected, do you think you could bear responsibility for such a loss? Could you bear my Uncle Xiao’s anger? Could your Dong Family bear my Medicine King’s Valley’s wrath?”

After being verbally beaten over the head like this, the once proud Young Master Dong could only lower his head like a whipped dog and desperately hold his tongue.

Qin Ze snorted and continued, “You just called me Senior, and Yan’er is now this Qin’s Junior Sister, so she is now also of higher seniority than you. How can you raise your hand against your senior... do you not even understand something so simple? Hm?”

This time, Dong Qing Han was completely dumbfounded, desperate to cry but unable to shed any tears.

[I was simply paying you the appropriate respect yet you didn’t even acknowledge me with a single word. I know you Medicine King’s Valley people are all important enough to justify your arrogance but... she is still my little sister! How can I not even be allowed to teach her a lesson? Not to mention that ridiculous justification you spouted.]

[On top of that, she had not officially worshipped into Medicine King’s Valley, if you really want to use your Medicine King’s Valley’s authority to justify your words, I’m afraid you’ll be in for some trouble!]

But although Dong Qing Han was extremely depressed over this, in his heart he was still quite happy with someone as prestigious as Qin Ze shielding his sister like so. Once she officially entered Medicine King's Valley, she should not need to endure such bitterness.

"This Junior knows his wrong!" Dong Qing Han obediently admitted.

Qin Ze faintly nodded, "Good, I see Young Master Dong is not brainless; being able to admit one's wrongs is a good thing."

Hearing these words, Dong Qing Han's fat face managed to squeeze out a stiff awkward smile. His expression was more ugly than if he had simply broken down and cried.

Ignoring him, Qin Ze turned and looked at Dong Qing Yan, "Junior Sister, please finish up your discussions with Young Master Dong as soon as possible, I'll wait for you downstairs."

Finished speaking, he went straight downstairs.

The only reason he had taken this little trip was to accompany Dong Qing Yan.

Once Qin Ze left, Dong Qing Han ground his teeth and glared at his little sister, "Well aren't you a big deal, should I be calling you Senior Dong now!?"

"Hee hee..." Dong Qing Yan smiled sheepishly walked up, shook her brother's arm, and softly asked, "About Daddy's side..."

Dong Qing Han could only helplessly shake his head, "I'll tell him, I don't believe he will try to stop you."

"En en, Daddy will definitely be proud of me." Dong Qing Yan quickly nodded, suddenly putting down the boulder from her heart.

Turning to look at Yang Kai, Dong Qing Han whispered, "Once you've entered Medicine King's Valley be extremely careful, and whatever happens, don't even think of getting Yan'er involved!"

Of course he was referring to the matter of the Pill Saint's Peak.

"I have a sense of proportion." Yang Kai solemnly said.

Half an hour later, Yang Kai and Dong Qing Yan came downstairs.

Down below, Qin Ze and the three Medicine King's Valley disciples had grown increasingly impatient, so once they saw them it was like someone had lit a fire under their asses.

Amongst Medicine King's Valley's Twelve Peaks, Hidden Cloud Peak was situated very close to the centre, only separated from the Pill Saint's Peak by two small hills.

As one approached it and looked up, a rugged mountain path surrounded by lush green forests that led to the top of the peak was vaguely visible. The entire scene was extremely beautiful.

At the foot of the mountain, there was a stone upon which the three characters "Hidden Cloud Peak" were inscribed, giving off a vigorous and powerful air.

At the lower right corner of this monument, there was also an additional line of blood red characters.

When Yang Kai saw this small line of words, he couldn't help but be slightly taken aback, "Trespassers will die!"

[Chapter 274 – Xiao Fu Sheng](#)

This line of brilliant red characters highlighted Medicine King's Valley's high-handed and extraordinary courage.

Only the people of Medicine King's Valley would dare engrave such an overbearing declaration upon the entrance to their home.

Passing by the unguarded base of this mountain, Qin Ze led the crowd steadily upwards.

Dong Qing Yan and Qin Ze walked side by side, followed by three Medicine King's Valley disciples with Yang Kai bringing up the rear.

The three young Medicine King's Valley disciples gazed towards Dong Qing Yan with looks of envy, worship and even love; however, they still looked upon Yang Kai with disdain and were even too lazy to exchange a single word with him.

Alchemists were a group of unsociable and arrogant people. All of them had eyes on top of their heads.

Medicine King's Valley Alchemists were also so!

Dong Qing Yan had an extraordinary background and was also a natural beauty, so obviously they would concern themselves with her. Yang Kai, on the other hand, although he had also passed Grandmaster Xiao's test and had the qualifications to worship into Hidden Cloud Peak, in essence, he was still just an ordinary servant possessing low status. How could they degrade themselves by speaking to such a nobody?

Since there was no one to speak with, Yang Kai was also quite bored and chose to secretly observe his surroundings as they walked instead.

Dong Qing Yan, in contrast, was just like a newborn sparrow. Since arriving at the foot of the rugged mountain path, she had been twittering about non-stop. She was about to enter the centre of her heart's holy land and worship a great senior expert as her master, of course she would be feeling expectant and tense.

Qin Ze was composed as usual, remaining silent most of the time, but when asked a question by Dong Qing Yan, he would still carefully explain things to her, not showing any signs of impatience.

Listening to the conversation between the two of them, Yang Kai also learned some things.

Xiao Fu Sheng had been the only Alchemist since several decades ago to inhabit Hidden Cloud Peak. In addition to him, there were only his two dedicated maidservants, and not a single other person lived there.

Additionally, these two maids were not cultivators but instead just ordinary people.

Xiao Fu Sheng was obsessed with Alchemy, had never married, and had never taken any disciples until this year, when he suddenly changed his mind and decided to recruit a successor.

This had led to today's test.

"Why did Grandmaster suddenly change his mind?" Dong Qing Yan asked curiously.

Qin Ze's expression went dim, and he did not immediately answer as he pondered for a moment before saying, "About Uncle Xiao's thoughts, I dare not presume to speculate. This is something you should ask him about yourself."

"Oh."

The first half of the journey up Hidden Cloud Peak was not surprising. The sights were filled with rugged rocks and mountain forest. There were also some wild animals that came and went, such as rabbits and deer, but nothing dangerous of course.

But upon entering the upper half it was like stepping off the Earth and entering the Heavens. Rich World Energy swirled about, causing one to feel relaxed and happy. The mountain side was also dotted with exotic flowers that spread out as far as the eye could see, swaying gently in the wind; a dazzling sight to behold.

"So many herbs scattered about, does no one secretly come to pick them?" All the way up, Dong Qing Yan hadn't seen a single person guarding this mountain, so she couldn't help being curious.

"Who would dare?" Qin Ze coldly snorted, "Anyone who dares steal from Medicine King's Valley will soon find themselves without their head!"

From this casual mention of murder, Dong Qing Yan could only stick out her tongue.

The herbs randomly growing upon the mountain were certainly not expensive things. Offending Medicine King's Valley just for these was clearly not worth it.

Half an hour later, everyone arrived at the mountain's peak. At the top, there was a row of houses. Their number was small, probably only seven or eight, of which more than half of them were newly built.

These should be the residences Xiao Fu Sheng had prepared for his disciple.

At this point, Qin Ze stopped and turned to the three young Medicine King's Valley disciples, "You three wait here."

Immediately, the three of them showed big grinning faces and begged, "Uncle Qin, please also allow us to go in?"

"What do you want to do there," Qin Ze questioned unhappily.

One of the three with a look of longing on his face quickly replied, "Since we entered Medicine King's Valley until now, we have only been able to pay our respects to Predecessor Xiao from afar, now that we are here... well..."

Qin Ze frowned for a moment before nodding, "Very well, but you are not to speak, Uncle Xiao does not like it when people disturb his home's tranquility."

"Yes, we promise we will not speak." The three disciples immediately agreed.

Observing from the side, Yang Kai found that these three people looked incredibly happy and had traces of awe in their expressions, even Qin Ze also had a smile upon his face.

It seems that Xiao Fu Sheng's position within every Alchemist's heart far exceeded what he had imagined.

Even the disciples of Medicine King's Valley were thrilled simply being able to meet him.

Under Qin Ze's leadership, the group walked straight towards the row of houses.

But before they had gone far, two women emerged to receive them. These two women were great beauties. Their figures were outstanding, and their faces were charming. Both of them revealed warm yet modest smiles as they glanced towards these visitors.

These two beauties women at first glance appeared to be around twenty-five or twenty-six years old.

But in reality, they were both past forty.

This was well known because as early as twenty-five years ago, they had come to Hidden Cloud Peak to serve Xiao Fu Sheng, and twenty five years ago they were both around sixteen seventeen years old.

These two beautiful women were not cultivators but ordinary people, yet they had been able to maintain their youth and charm even more so than most cultivators their age, and all of this was thanks to Xiao Fu Sheng's methods.

Seeing these two beautiful women approach, Qin Ze quickly cupped his fists, not daring to show the slightest disrespect and politely said, "My two ladies, please inform Uncle Xiao that the people he requested have been brought over."

"There are two of them?" One of them beautiful pair, wearing a long white dress, looked at Dong Qing Yan and Yang Kai.

"Disciple greets these Elders!" Dong Qing Yan also understood proper etiquette, and together with Yang Kai quickly paid her respects.

The beautiful woman simply chuckled, "You may call me Aunty Xiang, this is Aunty Lan."

Dong Qing Yan giggled happily and once again saluted these two.

Aunty Xiang nodded and said, "You do not have to be so anxious here, just treat this place like your own home. From now on both of you will be living here for a quite some time, if you are too cautious it will be uncomfortable for both you and us.

The other beautiful woman, Aunty Lan, also laughed and said, "When we first came to Hidden Cloud Peak, we were nearly the same age as you two, yet in a flash over twenty years passed."

Seeing these two behaving so cordially, Dong Qing Yan's tensed nerves gradually relaxed.

"Two mistresses, is Uncle..." Qin Ze patiently waited for their greetings to finish before respectfully inquiring.

“Master is currently practicing Alchemy, but the news from the Valley Town has long since been passed back here, so the four of you may leave. Once master finishes refining his furnace of pills, he will meet with them.”

Upon hearing this, not just the three young Medicine King’s Valley disciples looked sad, even Qin Ze appeared slightly disappointed.

“Then I shall leave things here to you!” Qin Ze quickly adjusted his expression, cupped his fists and led the three Medicine King’s Valley disciples back down the mountain.

When they left, the two women ushered Yang Kai and Dong Qing Yan in, smiling as they helped arrange their accommodations.

For many years, Hidden Cloud Peak was only inhabited by Xiao Fu Sheng and the two of them. Xiao Fu Sheng was often in retreat to perform Alchemy, spending ten or more days without even showing his shadow, so the two women had only had each other for companionship. Now that Yang Kai and Dong Qing Yan had come, they were naturally quite happy.

Hidden Cloud Peak was not like other Medicine King’s Valley peaks. There was nothing to pay attention to, and very, few if any restrictions. Everything was very free and relaxed.

Once they were done arranging Yang Kai and Dong Qing Yan’s accommodations, the two beauties left them alone to get adjusted.

After three days on Hidden Cloud Peak, Xiao Fu Sheng still had not shown up, and only the two women would often come see Yang Kai and Dong Qing Yan to carefully attend to their needs.

Three more days later, just as Dong Qing Yan was chattering, wondering when Xiao Fu Sheng would exit his retreat, a surge of World Energy fluctuations suddenly erupted not far away.

Yang Kai’s expression slightly changed as he and Dong Qing Yan exchanged a look and quickly rushed outdoors.

The two beautiful women had also come out and were patiently gazing towards a certain room.

Of course, it was the residence of Xiao Fu Sheng.

After a few breaths of time, the door opened and an all white haired white bearded old man of about 60 years of age emerged from inside the house. His face was calm and dignified, yet at the moment seemed to have a few additional wrinkles. In his hand was holding a golden yellow pill, which he rolled around in his fingers as he stepped forward and frowned.

Dong Qing Yan suddenly tensed up.

A great figure that she had long since idolized was now standing before her eyes. Her feelings were easy to imagine.

Yang Kai also carefully observed this legendary Alchemist and was surprised to find that his whole body did not emit the slightest traces of Yuan Qi fluctuations, like he was just an ordinary old man you could find anywhere.

But Xiao Fu Sheng was definitely not an ordinary person. At the very least, he was an Immortal Ascension Boundary master.

Yang Kai couldn't help being impressed. Being able to converge one's aura to such a level, this Xiao Fu Sheng was not simple!

"There's no Pill Veins, no Pill Veins... without Pill Veins it's useless." Xiao Fu Sheng's face showed a trace of disappointment as he mumbled about something several times in-between long sighs.

Yang Kai skimmed the pill in his hand and found that it was releasing a rich aura. Even from several tens of meters away he could clearly smell its fragrance. The whole body was perfectly rounded, and its colour was flawless. It was clearly a good Heaven Grade or higher pill.

But in Xiao Fu Sheng's eyes this pill was now completely worthless.

"Master," the two beautiful women greeted him as Auntie Xiang whispered, "The two juniors you were expecting have come."

"Hm?" Xiao Fu Sheng suddenly woke from his stupor, readily throwing the pill in his hands to one of the beautiful women, then he turned and looked towards Yang Kai and Dong Qing Yan.

"En. Very good, very good!" After walking around Dong Qing Yan a few times, Xiao Fu Sheng happily said.

At this time, Dong Qing Yan did her best to maintain a serious expression, not daring to move in the slightest.

Next, after circling Yang Kai a few times, Xiao Fu Sheng suddenly frowned, "You are also very good, but your murderous aura is too dense!"

Yang Kai was secretly surprised.

Carefully examining the two, Xiao Fu Sheng then asked, "Young ones, stretch out your hands."

As instructed, Yang Kai and Dong Qing Yan both held out their hands and Xiao Fu Sheng quickly gripped their wrists. Checking something for a long time, the old man's face filled with a meaningful smile and a light flashed across his eyes, as he looked directly at Yang Kai and declared, "You faked your test results!"

Yang Kai was surprised for a moment but then immediately praised, "Predecessor's insight is impressive."

Dong Qing Yan on the other hand was dumbstruck but then quickly tried to defend Yang Kai, "He didn't cheat, he took the poison pill in front of everyone and then forced out the black gas, how could he have faked his results?"

But Xiao Fu Sheng simply smiled and continued, "I'm not saying that his aptitude isn't good enough, on the contrary, his aptitude is probably better than yours, but he deliberately delayed forcing out the black gas. Apparently he did not want to draw too much attention to himself."

"Ah!" Dong Qing Yan was once again shocked.

Even the two beautiful women's eyes showed a touch of wonder as they looked towards Yang Kai in surprise.

A grin emerged on Yang Kai's face as he inquired, "How did Predecessor find out?"

Xiao Fu Sheng chuckled as he stroked his beard, "I designed the test; how could I not find out?"

[Chapter 275 – Who Says An Alchemist Cannot Stand At The Martial Peak](#)

From Xiao Fu Sheng's simple explanation, Yang Kai immediately understood that the poison pill must have had some kind of hidden trick.

The method of refining those poison pills was not complicated. Even the required materials were not expensive, otherwise there would not be so many of them.

But the greatest effect of the poison pill was to test a person's Yuan Qi purity.

Alchemists were also cultivators. Their bodies all contained Yuan Qi, but this group of people had set Alchemy as their main focus, and increasing their cultivation and strength was only a means to improve their Alchemic abilities.

After swallowing the poison pill, if one's Yuan Qi was pure enough, they could completely refine and eliminate the toxins from their body, otherwise they would fail.

The purity of one's Yuan Qi's was related to many things, a cultivator Secret Art, Martial Skills, the pills they had consumed, their physique. All kinds of factors played a role.

Those Alchemists who had attempted this test, although Alchemy was their profession, because of various different experiences, their Yuan Qis had become impure, so they had not passed Xiao Fu Sheng's test.

Since he began cultivating until now, Yang Kai had only ever used a single Secret Art, the True Yang Secret Art, so it was not surprising that the purity of his True Qi could meet Xiao Fu Sheng's requirements.

Dong Qing Yan's situation was similar, she had been cultivating a fire attribute Secret Art specifically chosen for her by the Dong Family and had now reached a cultivation of Peak Separation and Reunion Boundary. In order to prepare for her promotion to the True Element Boundary, the Dong Family had used a lot of Precious Treasures on her, so it was natural that her Yuan Qi would be pure.

Xiao Fu Sheng wore a wry smile and continued, "In fact, this Old Master's poison pill was designed specifically so that 99% of all Alchemists would be unable to pass the test because they have not paid enough attention to their cultivation and the purity of their Yuan Qi. While they are refining pills, many Alchemists have to personally sample their creations, causing various medicinal effects to build up inside their bodies, eventually leading to their Yuan Qi becoming impure. But it might be a different story for those gifted talents who cultivate fire or yang attribute Secret Arts.

Yang Kai suddenly understood; no wonder the time it took to resolve the poison pill was even shorter than Dong Qing Yan's, it was because of such a reason.

But of those who came to participate in Xiao Fu Sheng's disciple recruitment test, who was not an Alchemist? Only cultivators like Yang Kai, who had ulterior motives, would even bother.

Clearly, Xiao Fu Sheng had some kind of difficulties with his successor already being an accomplished Alchemist.

Dong Qing Yan being able to successfully pass this test was likely due to the Dong Family not supporting her study of Alchemy. If she had grown up learning the Alchemic Path, this test would likely have ended in disappointment for her.

"About the Alchemic Path, many people are wrong, even this Old Master is wrong!" Xiao Fu Sheng let out a deep sigh, his voice mixed with loneliness and regret.

Yang Kai frowned suddenly and thoughtfully said, "Grandmaster, if what you said is true, wouldn't it be better for you to find a child with the appropriate aptitude and train them starting from a young age?"

"A child..." Xiao Fu Sheng shook his head and smiled wryly, "This Old Master cannot wait that long."

Yang Kai's brow twitched as he looked towards Grandmaster Xiao with surprise.

The two beautiful women wore a look of sadness but remained silent.

Dong Qing Yan went pale, and hesitantly asked, "Grandmaster, you..."

Xiao Fu Sheng suddenly let out a chuckle, his expression carefree, "Well, it's nothing serious. I'll live a few more years yet, but in this lifetime I fear I will not be able to break through the Mysterious Grade Top-Rank and see just what kind of level lies beyond that."

As he spoke, one could hear the longing and regret in his voice.

Shaking off this gloomy atmosphere, Grandmaster Xiao suddenly said high spiritedly, "Although I may be unable to accomplish this, I want to cultivate a Spirit Grade Alchemists who will one day break free of this world's shackles. So I will be counting on the two of you!"

It was for this reason that Xiao Fu Sheng had suddenly decided to find a successor. His entire life had been dedicated to Alchemy, yet he had always been unable to ascend to the Spirit Grade, so how could he not have regrets?

However, in this world, he had an unparalleled understanding of Alchemy and also his own experiences on the Alchemic Way, so he was convinced that he could train a disciple who would no doubt one day surpass him!

Realizing Xiao Fu Sheng's passion and determination, Yang Kai struggled for a moment before saying, "Predecessor Xiao, please forgive me, the reason this Junior came to Hidden Cloud Peak, in fact, was not to learn Alchemy."

Xiao Fu Sheng wrinkled his brow at these words as he looked towards Yang Kai.

"My goal is to rise to the Martial Peak; if I were to try to study Alchemy as well, I'm afraid it would just be a distraction." Yang Kai confessed with full sincerity. Him coming to Hidden Cloud Peak was only because he wanted to get close to the Pill Saint's Peak.

Seeing Xiao Fu Sheng speak completely openly with them, Yang Kai did not want to deceive him. He certainly wouldn't talk about wanting to sneak into the Pill Saint's Peak, but he also could not learn Alchemy here, otherwise he would likely not be able to come and go freely.

Hearing his confession, the two beauties couldn't help frowning as they directed slightly unhappy gazes towards Yang Kai.

However, Xiao Fu Sheng only smiled meaningfully and said, "Who says an Alchemist cannot stand at the Martial Peak?"

Yang Kai was suddenly shaken and fell into deep thought.

His first meeting with Xiao Fu Sheng had left a very deep impression on Yang Kai. Although he already had one foot into the grave, his fierce passion and his mentality of wanting to challenge just how high the Heavens were was something even many young people did not have.

In the end, Grandmaster Xiao did not let Yang Kai and Dong Qing Yan immediately worship him as their master and instead asked them to live on Hidden Cloud Peak for a time.

For the next few days, the number of times Xiao Fu Sheng appeared was quite small, but when he did, Dong Qing Yan adhered to the attitude of a disciple meeting her master while Yang Kai would only call him as Old Xiao.

Although the two beautiful women were not very pleased with Yang Kai's attitude and tone that day, both of them had excellent self-restraint and did not make things difficult for him, still smiling each day as they greeted him and taking meticulous care of his everyday needs while he was on Hidden Cloud Peak.

After spending a number of days like this, Xiao Fu Sheng called Yang Kai and Dong Qing Yan to his house.

As they stood in front of Old Xiao, Yang Kai remained indifferent while Dong Qing Yan couldn't help fidgeting a bit.

Xiao Fu Sheng faintly smiled and nodded repeatedly, "These days I did not teach you anything but was instead observing your characters. Although it takes time to see through people's true nature, but this old master for better or worse has lived for many years and seen many people. Yan'er, you have a kind heart, much unlike many of the spoiled young ladies born into great families. If you inherit this old master's mantle, I believe that in the future you will not commit any deeds unworthy of my name. If you are willing to, this Old Man will take you as his disciple."

"Disciple is willing!" Dong Qing Yan hurriedly replied, her face filled with joy.

Xiao Fu Sheng nodded and then looked towards Yang Kai, "You on the other hand are a different story. Although you are young, you have suffered and endured much which has caused you to mature much faster than those of your generation. Your True Qi has been forged into a sharp sword along with your will, something that can only be achieved through taking many lives. But though your methods are decisive and ruthless, you are not someone who would slaughter the innocent!"

Yang Kai nodded silently, not trying to refute.

As people age, their eyes truly became sharp.

“You and Yan’er pursue different paths, so even though your aptitude is better than Yan’er’s, I will not insist and will instead allow you to make your own way. As such I will not take you as a disciple or teach you Alchemy.”

“Master!” Dong Qing Yan exclaimed, thinking her new master was going to expel him.

However, Xiao Fu Sheng waved his hand to stop her and smiled, “But... since you passed this old man’s test, it can be considered fate that you are here, so I will instead pass some other things to you and allow you to remain with Yan’er for the time being on Hidden Cloud Peak”.

“Thank you, Old Xiao!” Yang Kai couldn’t help feeling relieved. If Xiao Fu Sheng really wanted force him out, there would be very little he could do, so now that he knew he could stay on Hidden Cloud Peak, it was only natural for his nerves to relax.

This way, there were no longer any burdens holding him backs.

“This is a copy of a special Secret Art. The two of you take this and study it, but remember you can only cultivate it for an hour every day.” Xiao Fu Sheng handed both of them a set of exercises then close your eyes.

After accepting this Secret Art, Yang Kai and Dong Qing Yan both left the house.

Half a day later, the two of them had familiarized themselves with this Secret Art and each had gone back to their respective houses to cultivate.

Yang Kai did not know what kind of Secret Art this was. It had no name, and its circulation path was quite strange. However, one fact was clear, it required one to simultaneously utilize 108 of the body’s meridians, a staggering number.

Yang Kai and Old Demon had gone over it together for a long time, but even with Old Demon’s profound knowledge, he could not decipher what role this Secret Art served, and was only able to determine that it was harmless to cultivate.

Xiao Fu Sheng did not have much time left, and now that he had finally received Dong Qing Yan as his disciple, naturally he wouldn’t try to harm her.

Thinking so, Yang Kai sat cross-legged on his bed, adjusted his breathing, and began to cultivate this unknown Secret Art.

Time rush by and in the blink of an eye an entire month had passed.

During this month, Yang Kai rarely had a moment of leisure. Each day he woke up early in the morning to greet the rising sun and cultivate his Unyielding Golden Skeleton’s Tempered Body Record.

After this he would focus on his own cultivation.

This caused each day to pass by very quickly.

During this time, Yang Kai repeatedly inquired about the Pill Saint Peak’s situation, but with no suitable reason and excuse to approach, he would often be shooed away before even getting close, leaving him feeling slightly helpless.

On the plus side, the two beautiful women on Hidden Cloud Peak were very good to Yang Kai. Every day they cooked delicious foods containing many medicinal benefits for both him and Dong Qing Yan. Their cooking techniques were truly superb. Even with simple materials, they were always able to prepare delectable dishes.

Dong Qing Yan's feelings towards these two beautiful women also greatly increased over the past month. After all, they were all women, so they naturally felt comfortable around one another.

After one month of this bitter work, Yang Kai's strength and cultivation did not grow much. The unknown Secret Art he was told to cultivate did not increase his True Qi at all, and there also didn't seem to be any other effects. However, just as Xiao Fu Sheng had said, once he tried circulating this Secret Art for more than an hour, he would feel his True Qi suddenly become like boiling water, causing piercing pain all over his body.

Exactly one day after this first month, as Yang Kai and Dong Qing Yan were eating breakfast, the two beautiful women hand them each a large basket.

"Aunty Xiang, what is this for?" Dong Qing Yan asked with a puzzled face as she reflexively accepted the medicine baskets and passed one to Yang Kai.

Aunty Xiang laughed, "Master has assigned a task to you two."

"Really!?" Dong Qing Yan was very excited. All this time she had been here she had done nothing but cultivate, and Xiao Fu Sheng had not taught her a single bit of Alchemy, so she had been quite depressed.

The entire reason she had wanted to enter under an apprenticeship in Hidden Cloud Peak was to study Alchemy, but until now she hadn't even seen the shadow of a pill, so she couldn't help feeling uneasy, but now that her master had given her a task, naturally she couldn't wait to put forward her best performance to gain her master's approval and then take the opportunity to ask her own questions about Alchemy.

"What kind of task?" Yang Kai asked lightly.

"Master would like you to gather some herbs." Aunty Xiang smiled and quickly listed the names of the herbs they were to collect while also describing their habitats and characteristics.

Yang Kai and Dong Qing Yan both carefully remembered all of this information before lifting their baskets and leaving their residence.

[Chapter 276 – Shut Up! You've Already Embarrassed Me to Death!](#)

Medicine King's Valley, Hidden Cloud Peak, halfway up the mountain, Yang Kai and Dong Qing Yan, both carrying a medicine basket, searched around the forest looking for herbs.

This task that Old Xiao had given them was not difficult to complete. The herbs they needed to find where nothing rare and could be found growing in the wild quite easily.

The only reason they did not immediately finish was that the required age of each herb was quite high.

For each one, they needed to be at least thirty years old.

The two of them scoured the mountain for most of the afternoon, yet they still couldn't find a few of the herbs they were searching for.

"Aunt Xiang said that for the Iron Bone Grass, ten stalks would be enough." Dong Qing Yan cracked her fingers, her brow wrinkling slightly, "Cousin, we're still missing one."

Yang Kai looked around him at the forest and also frowned, "I'm afraid Hidden Cloud Peak doesn't have any more of these herbs, we should probably go to other places to search."

Dong Qing Yan glanced towards him and giggled, "You mean... Pill Saint's Peak perhaps?"

Yang Kai glanced back at her.

And so, the two of them, reaching a tacit understanding, began walking towards Pill Saint's Peak.

Pill Saint's Peak was the ultimate forbidden zone in Medicine King's Valley, Common Disciples could not even approach to within three thousand meters of its summit; however, the region below three thousand meters was still accessible.

With their objective set, the two of them proceeded towards Pill Saint's Peak.

"We should split up to search." Yang Kai said as he lightly coughed.

"En." Dong Qing Yan nodded and laughed, she clearly knew what Yang Kai wanted and naturally wouldn't bring it up, instead simply saying, "Be careful out there."

"I know."

Carrying his basket, Yang Kai strode slowly towards Pill Saint's Peak while casually looking for Iron Bone Grass and secretly observed his surroundings for any signs of movement.

Half an hour later, as Yang Kai meandered back and forth, he 'unintentionally' found himself only a thousand meters away from Pill Saint's Peak.

Quietly, he looked up, Yang Kai was surprised to find a great stone statue standing at the top of Pill Saint's Peak. Obviously, this statue was of the Pill Saint himself.

This stone statue was at least a hundred meters tall, a magnificent work of art. Even separated by a thousand meters, Yang Kai could still clearly see its top half.

The stone was worn here and there, yet after all these many years, enduring wind and rain, it was still proudly standing.

Yang Kai wanted to release his Divine Sense in order to get a better look, but he hesitated.

Although he could not see anyone right now, there was no doubt a master guarding the peak.

"Old Demon, can you sneak in and check what the situation is like?" Yang Kai asked.

"If there is an Immortal Ascension master up there, Old Servant would have no hope of escaping." Old Demon responded.

Right now, his strength was still not too high, so he simply couldn't hide his own Devil Qi. On top of that, his appearance was too obvious. Appearing as his Soul Breaker Awl shrouded in black gas, there was no way he could hide from an Immortal Ascension Boundary master's eyes and Divine Sense.

Was there really no way? He had stayed on Hidden Cloud Peak for more than a month, yet he was not even clear about what mystery he had been sent here to discover.

"You there!" Just as Yang Kai's expression was turning bitter, a thundering voice angrily called out from above him.

In the next instant, a man flew down from the summit, landed directly in front of Yang Kai and glared at him coldly.

This person was definitely a master at the Immortal Ascension Boundary, and his strength was not low. Although most of the disciples in Medicine King's Valley were Alchemists, there were also a number of masters who were responsible for fighting and defense.

"What peak are you a disciple of? Don't you know that no one is allowed within three thousand meters of Pill Saint's Peak?" The man roared, his expression filled with anger.

Yang Kai frowned as his thoughts swirled.

"Who is your master? Did he not tell you what the consequences of approaching Pill Saint's Peak were?"

Yang Kai eventually had no choice but to reply, "Disciple greets Senior, this Junior belongs to Old Xiao's Hidden Cloud Peak and was sent here today to pick herbs."

"Grandmaster Xiao?" The man looked surprised for a moment before suddenly realizing, "You are the young boy who a month ago worshiped into Hidden Cloud Peak?"

"I am the one!"

The man examined Yang Kai up and down cautiously, using his Divine Sense to sweep over him once before retracting it.

Finishing this, the icy cold look in his eyes slowly faded.

Yang Kai quickly followed up, "This Junior was only looking for herbs and unintentionally wandered too close, I hope that Senior can please forgive me."

The man nodded before saying, "If you were any other disciple, although you would not be killed on the spot, you definitely wouldn't be able to avoid some punishment! But seeing as you have only recently joined Medicine King's Valley I will forgive you just this once. Do not let it happen again!"

Helpless, Yang Kai could only retreat.

It wasn't until confirming that Yang Kai left that the man soared back up to Pill Saint's Peak's top and resumed his watch.

Now far away, Yang Kai looked back once more.

Confirming there really was an Immortal Ascension Boundary master on guard, how could he be feeling good? If there was a way to get close to the Myriad Drug Pond, then maybe he could have glimpsed what mysteries it hid, but now that he couldn't even approach the mountain's summit, there was no way for him to learn anything.

With a depressed expression upon his face, Yang Kai walked back when from afar came the sound of Dong Qing Yan arguing with someone. He quickly increased his pace, and a moment later the voices became clear.

"I discovered this stalk of Iron Bone Grass first, how can you just lay claim to it like that?" Dong Qing Yan said in a wronged tone.

Another person's voice shot back, "Junior Sister must be joking, this herb is the property of my Medicine King's Valley. Naturally it is first come, first serve. Moreover, if we go by the logic of what Junior Sister has just said, then all the herbs here should be ours since we discovered them first, we have lived here since childhood after all."

"Who is your Junior Sister?" Dong Qing Yan angrily said, "I am Grandmaster Xiao's disciple; according to seniority, all of you have to call me senior!"

Keke... When Dong Qing Yan shouted these words, the three young Medicine King's Valley disciples she was arguing with had their expressions turn bitter as they were unable to refute.

Xiao Fu Sheng was quite old, so even though Dong Qing Yan was very young, she technically belonged to a higher generation than most of the Medicine King's Valley disciples her age, and instead was closer to being sister disciples with the likes of Qin Ze, so naturally these young people were a generation below her.

"What is it? Do you little nephews want to snatch the things your Aunty fancies? Hm?" Dong Qing Yan triumphantly snorted.

"Aunty..." the lead disciples muttered in dissatisfaction, "You just had the good luck to pass Grandmaster Xiao's test and worship into his Peak. If Grandmaster Xiao was willing to let me try that poison pill, I could certainly pass as well."

"Hmph!" Dong Qing Yan frowned as she scoffed at these three, "Talking about what ifs are useless now. Obediently hand over this Aunty's herbs or else, I'll tell my master that you all... that you all intentionally offended me and refused to respect your seniors!"

As she reached the end of her speech, Dong Qing Yan became increasingly abrupt.

The several young Medicine King's Valley disciples' complexions immediately changed. If such an incident was reported, they would likely no longer be able to remain in Medicine King's Valley. On top of that, the regulations imposed on Hidden Cloud Peak were quite loose, or more accurately, Hidden Cloud Peak had no regulations. It was essentially a free entity, very much unlike the other peaks which were governed by many rules, so given its master's influence and prestige, if he decided they had committed some kind of wrong, then they had committed a wrong.

But in the end, the few of them were all older than Dong Qing Yan and had their own pride as men, so how could they be willing to simply bow down in front of this little girl?

The group leader's eyes suddenly flashed as he thought of something, a big grin appearing on his face, "Respected Aunty, since you have worshipped into Hidden Cloud Peak, naturally you must be an Alchemy genius!"

"Obviously!" Dong Qing Yan proudly stated. Since she was a little girl she had been obsessed with Alchemy, instead of praise about her beauty, she was happier to receive praise about her Alchemy technique, so when she heard these words, her ego couldn't help inflating.

"Respected Aunty is looking for Iron Bone Grass correct?" The man asked again.

"En!"

"There aren't that many Iron Bone Grasses in Medicine King's Valley right now. I wonder how many stalks Respected Aunty has found?"

"I require ten, but have only found two stalks so far..."

"Hoo, what a coincidence, we happen to have collected a number of Iron Bone Grasses, it should be enough to satisfy Respected Aunty's requirements."

"So you're willing to give them to me?" Dong Qing Yan smiled brightly, suddenly feel that these nephews of hers weren't so annoying anymore.

The lead man also showed a big grin, "Giving them all to you is naturally impossible... however, nephew is willing to use these Iron Bone Grasses as a wager in a contest. Let us exchange pointers and if Respected Aunty can win, not only can I offer up our stalks of Iron Bone Grass, if any other herbs we have on us catches Respected Aunty's eye then you may take them too. How about it, is Respected Aunty willing to play?"

Hearing this challenge, Dong Qing Yan frowned as she bit her lip.

Suddenly from the side, Yang Kai's voice rang out, "If you want to exchange pointers, I will take you on!"

"Escort Yang!" Dong Qing Yan expression suddenly became bright again, smiling as she waved towards Yang Kai.

Yang Kai's image flashed as he suddenly appeared in front of Dong Qing Yan, glancing at the three Medicine King's Valley disciples in front of him, "You want to exchange pointers?"

"It's him! The other guy who managed to pass Grandmaster Xiao's disciple test, he's also a disciple of Hidden Cloud Peak!" One of the Medicine King's Valley disciples shouted, his face filled with envy and jealousy, as he desperately wished he could take this no-name's place.

"Bullying a woman only shows how incompetent you are, why don't you try me instead?" Yang Kai glared at the trio.

Yang Kai acting so rampantly immediately provoked these three Medicine King's Valley disciples' anger, and the lead man shouted, "Good, since you asked for it, I will let you see my ability!"

"Wait a minute!" Yang Kai raised his hand and asked, "What you just said about betting your Iron Bone Grasses, does that still count?"

“Of course it still counts!”

“Excellent.” Yang Kai nodded, “You three come together.”

The three disciples couldn't help being stunned by these words. Each of them looked at the other two in confusion.

“Please enlighten me!” Yang Kai voice had hardly faded before his body disappeared. The three disciples only caught a glimpse of a shadow before a heavy impact sent each of them flying. In the blink of an eye, the three Medicine King's Valley Alchemists were sprawled out on the ground crying out miserably.

“So weak?” Yang Kai frowned as he looked at these three suspiciously.

Yang Kai had thought that since these people dared to act so rampantly, they must have possessed at least some ability, but little did he expect that none of them could withstand a single one of his strikes. On top of that, the attacks he had made were merely meant to test the waters, so he had held back at least half his strength.

“You... why the hell did you hit us!?” One of the Alchemists who had just been knocked down roared as he trembled and pointed towards Yang Kai in both fear and anger.

“Nonsense!” Yang Kai sneered, in an exchange of pointers how could there not be any hitting?

Not bothering with them anymore, Yang Kai went up and opened the trio's medicine baskets, plucking out all of their Iron Bone Grasses and placing them into his bag.

“Escort Yang, let's go!” Dong Qing Yan's pretty face was flushed bright red as she pulled Yang Kai and dashed towards Hidden Cloud Peak.

“How dare you deceive us!” Desolate cries filled with unwillingness rang out from behind them. “I'll tell Grandmaster Xiao about this and let him punish you!”

“What the hell are they on about?” Yang Kai frowned. “Didn't they want to exchange pointers? Why are they whining about losing now, it's their own fault for being so weak.”

Keke... Dong Qing Yan's face became even redder as Yang Kai spoke.

“Why do we have to run away? These Iron Bone Grasses are what they wagered in that fight, it's not like we robbed them or something, we won them fair and square!”

“Stop talking, you're making us lose face.”

[Chapter 277 – It's Not Like That...](#)

Only after they had fled all the way back to Hidden Cloud Peak did the two slow down, Yang Kai suspiciously looking at Dong Qing Yan, his face filled with confusion, not able to understand why she was blushing so red.

“Why did you do that?” Yang Kai frowned.

Dong Qing Yan glared back at him but managed to calm herself after taking a few deep breaths, carefully explaining, “Silly cousin, when Alchemists say they want to exchange pointers, they're referring to

competition in Alchemy, both sides take out the same set of materials and then refine them into pills. The one who produces the highest number of pills at the highest level of quality in the shortest amount of time is the winner, not like...”

While talking, she raised her small fists and swung them about a few times, “It’s not like that...”

Yang Kai was stunned; his face couldn’t help turning a bright shade of crimson, quietly whispering, “They never said anything about that, how was I to know?”

Dong Qing Yan smiled wryly, “It’s common sense amongst Alchemists... Fortunately, you didn’t go all out, so none of them were actually hurt. If you had really wounded them, the consequences would be quite serious.”

Done explaining, Dong Qing Yan rubbed her forehead helplessly, “Sure enough, cultivators following the Martial Path are really just a group of muscle heads who only know how to fight...”

Yang Kai was also very embarrassed, now understanding why those three disciples were so excited when he agreed to an exchange of pointers, as if they were looking at an idiot who didn’t know how to write the word dead.

They thought they were going to compete in Alchemy...

So the beating they received really was him wronging them.

Aware of his wrong, Yang Kai remained silent the rest of the way back, occasionally hearing Dong Qing Yan burst into giggles as she recalled the events that had just transpired.

Arriving back at Hidden Cloud Peak’s summit, the two of them handed the herbs they had collected to the two beautiful women, ate a medicinal meal which was prepared for them, then went back to their own houses to rest.

The next day, before Yang Kai had even left his residence, a strong medicinal fragrance wafted over to him; as soon as this fragrance entered his nose, he felt a calm relaxing sensation envelop his body.

Curious, Yang Kai opened his door, went out, and followed the scent to a nearby hut.

Looking around, he found a pair of rooms not far away, each one containing a large steaming basin in which a mixture of herbs was being brewed. Each of these basins had one of the two beautiful women tending to it, fanning the flames and stirring the water, their brows covered in a thin layer of sweat.

“Is Master going to use these to refine some pills?” Dong Qing Yan had also come out, looking around curiously, her two big eyes flashing with an excited light.

Yang Kai observed for a while before asking, “Do you want us to help?”

Hearing this, the beautiful Aunty Xiang got up and looked towards the young pair with a smile and nodded, “Please.”

Yang Kai quickly rolled up his sleeves and inquired, “What should we do?”

However, Auntie Xiang simply smiled, "You don't need to do anything for the time being, we're actually preparing these medicinal baths for you two; they've been boiling like this since last night but should be just right very soon."

"Prepared for us?" Yang Kai was surprised.

Auntie Lan nodded, "Yes. This past month, Old Xiao has been configuring the herbs required for these baths; in fact, the herbs you collected yesterday have also been included."

"I also have one?" Yang Kai couldn't help feeling touched. Old Xiao preparing such an elaborate treatment for Dong Qing Yan was only to be expected, Yang Kai understood that, after all, Dong Qing Yan had worshipped him as her master and would one day become the successor to his mantle, but he too receiving the same treatment surprised Yang Kai.

But to his surprise, Auntie Xiang just nodded and said, "Naturally, since the two of you came to Hidden Cloud Peak you are both our Hidden Cloud Peak's people. The two of you should eat something first and then prepare yourselves; return here in an hour."

Yang Kai's jaw slackened a bit, his eyes filling with gratitude.

Dong Qing Yan and his breakfasts had already been prepared in the kitchen and were still steaming, clearly showing they had been cooked just recently. While eating this delicious meal, Yang Kai couldn't help watching Auntie Xiang and Auntie Lan busily working on the two medicinal baths, spontaneously feeling a faint warmth rise up within him.

This warm and happy feeling was something he had not experienced in a long time.

After an hour, Yang Kai and Dong Qing Yan each entered one of the rooms.

Auntie Xiang was in charge of his room and under her instructions Yang Kai removed his robes down to a thin pair of pants and jumped into the bath.

Towards these two beautiful women who resided on Hidden Cloud Peak, Yang Kai held great respect.

Both of them had silently given Hidden Cloud Peak over twenty of their years. They had dedicated some of their best and most beautiful years to this place, but when the world heard of Hidden Cloud Peak, the only name they knew was Xiao Fu Sheng. No one knew or bothered to know anything about these two women.

Even Yang Kai himself, after staying on Hidden Cloud Peak for a whole month, his daily life and living arrangements being meticulously cared for by them, only knew to call them Auntie Xiang and Auntie Lan, not even knowing their full names.

So even though at the moment he was baring his upper body before them, he didn't have the slightest unnatural behaviour.

"Auntie Xiang, now what should I do?" Yang Kai, feeling the warmth in his surroundings, physically and mentally comfortable, couldn't help but ask.

"Just circulate the Secret Art Old Xiao passed to you! Old Xiao specifically designed that Secret Art to allow you to properly absorb the effects of this medicinal bath and actually has no other use for him. Old

Xiao spent a great deal of effort to gather together the required herbs for these baths and there are only two of them, so you must be very careful not to waste them so you can live up to Old Xiao's kindness."

"I understand!" Yang Kai said as his face became solemn, closing his eyes and beginning to circulate that unnamed Secret Art.

The moment he began operating the Secret Art, Yang Kai felt as if his every single one of his body's hundreds of millions of pores opened, the medicinal bath's effects flooding into him like millions of sharp needles.

Omnipresent and pervasive.

There was nowhere on his body that did not experience this sensation.

Involuntarily, Yang Kai's brow wrinkled, his body trembling slightly.

On the other hand, from next door, Dong Qing Yan's voice cried out.

After all, Dong Qing Yan was still just a young girl and had grown up spoiled, when would she have ever had to endure such pain?

As the sound of Aunt Lan's comforting voice also drifted over from next door, Aunt Xiang carefully observed Yang Kai's reaction, her beautiful eyes flashing a dignified light, secretly impressed.

Old Xiao had told them before that the effects of this medicinal bath on one's body and their cultivation aptitude were very significant, but the pain that had to be endured was akin to an inhuman torture. He had been worried about Yang Kai and Dong Qing Yan's ability to bear this, but now it seems that Yang Kai would have no problem with it.

As time passed, the pain only seemed to strengthen, not only appearing on the outside of his body, but also coming from his meridians, five viscera and six organs.

It was like there were tens of millions of ants crawling around inside of him, biting his body.

As big drops of sweat rolled down his forehead, Yang Kai's skin became blood red, yet he never stopped circulating the unnamed Secret Art.

This kind of torturous pain continued for an entire hour before suddenly decreasing sharply.

It was as if the medicinal effects had somehow reached their limit and the resulting pain they had caused rapidly faded; but a moment later there wasn't even any discomfort left.

What replaced it was a comfortable, pleasant sensation.

Yang Kai couldn't help taking a deep breath and slowly opened his eyes as a brilliant light flashed across them.

Aunt Xiang watched all of this approvingly, smiling towards Yang Kai for a moment before nodding and saying, "It looks like Old Xiao underestimated the two of you, you managed to endure that well."

As she spoke, her hands never stopped moving, tossing various new herbs into the medicinal bath before once again fanning the flames below.

Since the pain faded away, Yang Kai found that there was no longer any need for him to consciously operate the unnamed Secret Art; instead, just by sitting in the bath, the medicinal effects of the herbs would be absorbed into his body and would automatically circulate.

With each revolution, Yang Kai could feel his physique improve and become more solid; his meridians became wider and more elastic while the True Qi in his body became more and more pure.

“Aunty Xiang, the rest of this medicinal bath should be left Young Lady Dong.” Yang Kai said as he felt a pang of guilt in his heart, he had come to Hidden Cloud Peak not to learn Alchemy but for an ulterior purpose, yet Old Xiao still did not treat him as an outsider even though he was not his disciple.

However, Aunty Xiang simply chuckled, “This medicinal treatment Old Xiao created is too overbearing so it can only be used once in a cultivator’s lifetime, if your family’s Young Lady were to attempt it a second time, her meridians would not be able to handle it.”

Pausing for a moment, Aunty Xiang continued, “In fact, you don’t have to burden yourself over this so much. Old Xiao is actually quite optimistic about you; it is just that the path you pursue is different from most Alchemists.”

“What kind of effect is this medicinal bath supposed to have?” Yang Kai asked curiously.

Aunty Xiang pondered briefly before replying, “According to Old Xiao, this bath’s main purpose is to fundamentally improve a cultivator’s meridians, so that afterwards, when one cultivates, they can more easily quench their Yuan Qi, allowing it to become more pure.”

“Is that related to Alchemy?” Yang Kai frowned, quietly thinking back to words Old Xiao had spoken when they had first met.

“About the Alchemic Path, many people are wrong, even this Old Master is wrong!”

Yang Kai still vividly remembered the frustration and regret that filled Old Xiao voice back then.

To his spontaneous question, Aunty Xiang nodded, “Naturally it is related to Alchemy. Old Xiao also only realized this truth in recent years just... for him this enlightenment came too late. Alchemists, in the end, are also cultivators, they too need pure Yuan Qi to fully display their abilities when trying to refine good pills, so he specifically set his disciple recruitment test to screen for that.”

Brushing the hair back behind her ear, Aunty Xiang thought for a moment before saying, “Old Xiao once said, if he received a successor, he would first teach him a fundamental truth.”

“What truth?”

“Before reaching the Immortal Ascension Boundary one must not practice Alchemy!” Aunty Xiang grinned, “Perhaps this thinking is not completely correct, but it is still a valuable insight into the Alchemic Path that Old Xiao discovered.”

Before Immortal Ascension, no practicing Alchemy! No wonder Old Xiao didn’t teach Dong Qing Yan anything about Alchemy this past month, and instead had been completely focused on the growth of her cultivation.

"If you are determined to learn the art of Alchemy, Old Xiao would very willingly teach you!" Auntie Xiang smiled.

Old Xiao wanting his successor to reach the Immortal Ascension Boundary before cultivating their Alchemic Path meant that any disciple of his had to have a passion for the Martial Path as well.

Yang Kai's desire to reach the Martial Peak was clearly in line with this condition.

"I appreciate Old Xiao's care but unfortunately I cannot." Yang Kai shook his head; before his cultivation had reached a certain height he refused to have any other pursuits distract him.

Alchemists were indeed distinguished, garnering admiration from around the world, but this was not the path Yang Kai sought.

"Oh yes, I heard yesterday you exchanged pointers with Hidden Cloud Peak, Elder Duan's three disciples?" Auntie Xiang quickly changed the topic to avoid putting Yang Kai into an awkward position.

Yang Kai's face instantly went red as he scratched his cheek and whispered, "I didn't know that when they said 'exchange pointers' they meant about Alchemy..."

Auntie Xiang couldn't help trembling slightly as she laughed, only able to compose herself a good while later, "Now there are rumors outside that one of the disciples that came to Hidden Cloud Peak to learn Alchemy is an underhanded rogue!"

"Did I make trouble for Old Xiao?" Yang Kai asked guiltily.

Auntie Xiang shook her head, "No, you didn't injure them, but this morning someone did come here to complain. Well, just remember not to let something like this happen again, otherwise there may be an issue."

"Of course, of course!" Yang Kai nodded again and again.

This event was simply too embarrassing, any time he thought back on it he couldn't help blushing.

[Chapter 278 – Old Enemies Often Meet On Narrow Roads](#)

For an entire day, Auntie Xiang was busy tending to the fire, from time to time tossing additional herbs into the bath. It wasn't until evening, panting slightly, a fragrant sweat dripping down her neck, that she informed Yang Kai that the treatment had finished and he could come out, return to his room to rest.

Having soaked in the bath the whole night, Yang Kai could feel his entire body infused with the medicinal effects.

Arriving back at his room, he quickly closed his eyes and examined the changes in his physique.

His realm had advanced slightly and his True Qi had also become a bit purer; however, the most significant improvements were to his meridians and constitution.

Auntie Xiang had told him that the most important role of this medicinal bath was to improve a person's foundations, especially their meridians, which would allow them to more easily cultivate and quench their Yuan Qi in the future, allowing it to become more vigorous and pure.

The benefit of this was not immediately apparent, but over the course of one's life it would no doubt become significant.

Upon circulating his True Yang Secret Art, Yang Kai was surprised to find that it too could revolve faster than before. Not only that, the rate at which his body absorbed the surrounding World Energy was also a little bit quicker.

Such a change was very subtle, but like water trickling onto a stone, many grains of sand would eventually build a tower. Accumulated over many years of cultivation, the effect would be extraordinary.

That this medicinal bath and magical Secret Art, being able to do all this showed just how Heaven defying Xiao Fu Sheng's methods were.

In terms of combat strength, in this world his name was likely not worth mentioning, but as one of the few Mysterious Grade Top Ranking Alchemists alive today, his technique and achievements in Alchemy had reached the very peak. His insights into Alchemy were so great that they could even be described as a work of god.

The next morning, Xiao Fu Sheng called Yang Kai and Dong Qing Yan to his house.

Once more he did not pass them anything related to Alchemy, but instead a set of exercises designed to improve their Yuan Qi control.

Yuan Qi control was of paramount importance to Alchemy because when an Alchemist was refining a pill they would use their own Yuan Qi to control all the various aspects and processes. The slightest misstep would lead to a massive difference in results. If one wanted to refine a good pill, subtle Yuan Qi manipulation was essential.

Controlling one's Yuan Qi was also strongly related to the cultivator's battle prowess. In a fight, the strength of one's martial skills depended greatly on one's Yuan Qi control.

Anyone strong would know how to effectively utilize their own Yuan Qi to the point of mastery. Effective use of one's Yuan Qi would allow a skilled cultivator to display the full might of their martial skills using only half the effort! Mastering this kind of control was extremely important. It allowed a cultivator to attack more explosively and sustain themselves longer in combat.

So whether it was Yang Kai or Dong Qing Yan, both of them studied these exercises seriously.

This set of techniques was something Xiao Fu Sheng had created over the course of his life while studying the Alchemic Path; it could be said to be one of his most valuable insights and now, without reservation, he had gifted it to them.

Teaching them for several days, interspersed with periods of time for self enlightenment, Yang Kai and Dong Qing Yan gradually became familiar with these exercises; all that remained after that was for them to cultivate diligently.

At this time, Yang Kai suddenly remembered something Xiao Fu Sheng had once said.

"Who says an Alchemist cannot stand at the Martial Peak?"

When Old Xiao had said these words, his face had been filled with a deep self-confidence.

Through these methods of Yuan Qi manipulation, it was indeed possible to spy on the mysteries of the pinnacle of Martial Arts.

Yang Kai couldn't help being in awe! Every word Old Xiao had said to them seemed to contain profound meaning and insights more valuable than any worldly treasure.

Over the next few days, Yang Kai and Dong Qing Yan's ability to manipulate their Yuan Qi became increasingly sophisticated. Yang Kai also found that these exercises not only allowed him to better control his True Qi, they also subtly smelted it, leading to a very slight yet gradual increase in purity.

He now faintly felt that his True Element Second Stage cultivation had reached its peak and there was only a thin line to cross before reaching the Third Stage.

On this day, when Yang Kai and Dong Qing Yan were outside their houses practicing their Yuan Qi control by executing their own martial skills, they surprisingly found that the various other peaks around them seemed to be bustling with activity as many disciples of Medicine King's Valley as well as numerous outsiders were scurrying about.

"What's happening?" Dong Qing Yan stopped and looked around curiously, "How come there are so many outsiders within the Medicine King's Valley grounds?"

In response, Yang Kai could only shake his head, apparently also puzzled.

"The Alchemist Summit will start a few days from now." Aunty Xiang and Aunty Lan strolled over and softly explained.

"Although Medicine King's Valley usually doesn't allow outsiders to enter its inner grounds, this place is, after all, inextricably linked with all of the world's Great Forces, so every time such a summit is held, many cultivators will come to the various Peaks to visit with the Elders."

Yang Kai and Dong Qing Yan suddenly remembered, since they entered Hidden Cloud Peak till now, the two of them had spent their time in near isolation and hadn't noticed that many days had quickly passed by. They were completely unaware until now that the Alchemist Summit was about to begin.

Aunty Xiang chuckled loudly, "All the various Peaks are quite lively around this time except for the forbidden Pill Saint's Peak and our Hidden Cloud Peak!"

"En, this place always remains a bastion of calm!" Aunty Lan also smiled.

Dong Qing Yan couldn't help giggling, "If Master was to open his doors to outsiders, I'm sure everyone would come rushing here! It wouldn't be long before all the other peaks were empty."

Aunty Xiang put on a scolding look and shot back, "Then I and your Aunty Lan would soon faint from exhaustion! With so many visitors, we'd soon be pouring water instead of tea, how could we let such a thing happen?"

Aunty Xiang and Aunty Lan were very fond of Dong Qing Yan, the two beautiful women were neither married nor had children, so they looked upon Dong Qing Yan as if she were their own daughter and took very good care of her.

The little girl was also very relaxed around them, never once looking down upon them because they were ordinary people or because of their status as maids, even behaving very politely to them.

As soon as Aunt Xiang had finished speaking, Xiao Fu Sheng's door suddenly opened, accompanied by a burst of laughter, "It seems that my Hidden Cloud Peak is peaceful again today."

"Master!"

"Old Xiao!"

Yang Kai and Dong Qing Yan quickly cupped their fists as they saw Xiao Fu Sheng smile and emerge from his house, apparently in high spirits.

"Master, has something good happened?" Dong Qing Yan asked in a polite and flattering tone, causing Yang Kai to feel a slight prickle in his heart, this little cousin of his always acted so casually in front of him but in front of Xiao Fu Sheng, Aunt Xiang, and Aunt Lan she was quite well-behaved.

"A friend from far away is coming to visit, naturally I am happy." Xiao Fu Sheng replied.

Dong Qing Yan's eyes fluttered slightly at these words, "I thought master did not like it when outsiders visited but I suppose that is not so."

Xiao Fu Sheng chuckled at his little disciple's comment, "It all depends on who is visiting; those who come here simply to ask me to do things for them I naturally don't welcome, but the guest who is coming soon is not the same."

"Hahaha... Old Man Xiao, this time this old master has also come here to ask you to do something for him; you won't chase me away now will you?" Accompanied by a burst of laughter, a silhouette quickly approached the summit from the mountain road.

Hearing this voice, Yang Kai's face couldn't help cramping up, his expression becoming strange.

[This voice... could it be... but how...]

Aunt Xiang and Aunt Lan frowned slightly in surprise as they heard someone call their master 'Old Man Xiao', what was also strange was that neither of them could identify who this strange visitor was.

In this world, even the patriarchs of the Eight Great Families would respectfully call him Grandmaster Xiao!

No one would dare be so brazen as to call him Old Man Xiao!

But not only was he not annoyed by this rude fellow, Old Xiao even quipped back in a joking tone, "How could this Old Xiao dare turn you away? This old master owes you his life."

With just these few words, Aunt Xiang and Aunt Lan suddenly understood, this man turned out to be Old Xiao's saviour, quickly fixing their pretty faces and preparing to respectfully greet him.

From below, the figure flickered slightly before instantly crossing the last few thousand meters between them, suddenly appearing in front of everyone.

However, it wasn't just one person, there were two.

First was a white haired old man who appeared to be around the same age as Old Xiao, his smiling face showing a few wrinkles here and there, and following him was a pretty young woman. This woman had a pair of mesmerising eyes filled with pure innocence that seemed to shimmer like stars; donning a pale green dress, her jade like forehead was adorned with a sky blue gem while the rest of her face was concealed behind thin chiffon veil, obscuring her true countenance from those around her.

As the wind fluttered, causing her veil and dress to sway gently, making it seem like she was a floating immortal fairy, untouched by a single speck of dust.

Yang Kai was startled, his mouth showing a strange smile as his eyes instantly stared at this masked woman.

On the other side, the woman felt this pair of aggressive, unscrupulous eyes gazing at her, her eyebrows wrinkling slightly as she glanced towards Yang Kai.

But the instant she did, her star like eyes flashed with surprise, her delicate lashes rapidly fluttering as she couldn't believe who she was seeing.

Four eyes suddenly met, Yang Kai warmly smiled while the woman's eyes also became crescent-shaped.

This woman was none other than Xia Ning Chang, and the visiting old man turned out to be Meng Wu Ya.

"Brother Meng, it has been too long!" Stepping forward, Old Xiao respectfully cupped his fists.

Meng Wu Ya smiled back, also quickly cupping his fists, "Xiao... uh... ke, keke, kekeke..."

After only managing to speak a single word of greeting, it was like Meng Wu Ya suddenly got a bone stuck in his throat, coughing violently, feeling dizzy, like his consciousness was blurring.

"Master!" Xia Ning Chang was quite shocked, quickly patting Meng Wu Ya's back.

"Brother Meng, have you been injured?" Xiao Fu Sheng looked dignified, coming forward and reading Meng Wu Ya's pulse.

Meng Wu Ya quickly waved, continuing to cough for a while before finally composing himself, his expression like that of one whose father had just died, dumbfoundedly staring towards Yang Kai, "Smelly brat, what the hell are YOU doing here?"

[Fuck! This really was a case of enemies often meeting on narrow roads and evil spirits will continue to haunt one's soul.]

More than a year ago, along with Ling Tai Xu, he had sent this little bastard out to Nether Mountain for life experience and had not seen him since. For this past year, although at the beginning his treasured apprentice was dispirited and sighing all day long, through his dedicated teaching, she had finally managed to bring herself out from the shadow of longing, and her cultivation had rapidly progressed.

(Silavin: how sweet.)

Originally, Meng Wu Ya had thought that his disciple had certainly forgotten about Yang Kai, but now they had met once again in this completely unexpected place.

Looking into the eyes of his treasured apprentice, how could Meng Wu Ya not realize that she had never forgotten about Yang Kai, but had instead just been suppressing her thoughts and feelings about him deep inside her heart?

Perhaps, all this time, when no one was around, she had silently been thinking about him, only deepening the longing she felt.

At this moment, Meng Wu Ya understood. Love was like wine, the more it aged, the richer it became!

At this moment, Meng Wu Ya wanted to turn around and leave, but obviously it was too late.

At this moment, Meng Wu Ya couldn't wait to slap his face a dozen times!

Recently, he had seen that Xia Ning Chang was feeling somewhat sullen, so he had brought her to Medicine King's Valley to attend its Alchemist Summit and sightsee, how could he have imagined that this little bastard would be here too?

[Fuck, why did you have to bring her here, why did you have to be so meddlesome!?] Meng Wu Ya silently cursed, feeling a little dead inside.

[Chapter 279 – It Shouldn't Be Like This](#)

On Hidden Cloud Peak, Meng Wu Ya's face was filled with frustration while Xia Ning Chang gently comforted her master as she giggled softly.

Xiao Fu Sheng also wore a quirky expression, quickly glancing back and forth between Xia Ning Chang and Yang Kai. Aunt Xiang and Aunt Lan by his side now completely confused.

After a moment, Dong Qing Yan quietly came up next to Yang Kai and poked him, "Hey... stop staring so much at each other. You are embarrassing everyone else."

"Do you know each other?" Xiao Fu Sheng looked around and smiled.

Yang Kai nodded slightly, smiling as he performed a disciple's greeting, "Treasurer Meng ..."

Then turned around and gently called, "Little Senior Sister!"

Xia Ning Chang exquisite ears completely flushed; slightly lowered her head and softly whispered, "Junior Brother..."

Her voice trembled, obviously disturbed.

"Keke..." Meng Wu Ya quickly coughed twice, forcefully interrupting this ambiguous atmosphere; then, not even bothering to return Yang Kai's greeting, he shifted his eyes, "Old Man Xiao, a guest has come to visit you from far away, do you plan to have this old man stand around outside all day?"

Laughing, Xiao Fu Sheng quickly waved, "Brother Meng jests, please come inside to speak!"

Although he had a belly full of questions, Xiao Fu Sheng was still an experienced man, how could he not see that Meng Wu Ya's apprentice and Yang Kai had some kind of subtle relationship? When they had first met, this little girl was only about twelve years old; at the time, Meng Wu Ya treated her as if she

was his own daughter, and now this little girl was experiencing her first love. Obviously Meng Wu Ya would be concerned about this matter.

[It's understandable! Such a pure and innocent girl, if she had worshipped him as her master, he would certainly be worried about her suffering any wrong.]

Meng Wu Ya and Xiao Fu Sheng slowly walked to his house, Xia Ning Chang nodding softly towards Yang Kai before keeping up with them.

Gently, Meng Wu Ya's pointed voice drifted over, "My dear disciple, just look at this little bastard, he's really too romantically unrestrained, everywhere he goes he had beauties accompany him, you have to carefully see his true nature."

Xia Ning Chang simply nodded warmly.

"This old man..." Dong Qing Yan pursed her lips, a look of discontent appearing on her face.

Aunt Xiang and Aunt Lan couldn't help chuckling, glancing teasingly towards Yang Kai for a while before also walking towards the house to pour tea for their guests.

"Cousin! Who is she!?" Waiting until they were the only ones left outside, Dong Qing Yan asked curiously.

"She's a Senior Sister from High Heaven Pavilion." Yang Kai replied lightly.

"Is she really just your Senior Sister?" Dong Qing Yan grinned meaningfully.

However, Yang Kai only glanced at her before walking back to his room.

Soon Dong Qing Yan was the only one standing there, pursing her lips as she pouted slightly. Her eyes glancing back and forth between the two houses for a moment before snorting, "Hmph, you think I can't see what's going on? I'm not just a child anymore!"

Thinking to herself for a little while, she suddenly began laughing mischievously.

Meng Wu Ya and Xia Ning Chang coming to Medicine King's Valley was something completely unexpected for Yang Kai.

Although the Alchemist Summit would be held soon, and Yang Kai had thought that High Heaven Pavilion would also participate, but his Little Senior Sister possessed a special constitution, the Alchemist of the younger generation were simply unworthy of competing with her, if she were to participate, there would be no need to hold this Alchemist Summit, first place could be none other than her.

After a moment, his door was softly knocked upon. Yang Kai smiled, stood up, and opened the door, and sure enough, Xia Ning Chang waiting there.

"Junior Brother!" Xia Ning Chang's star-like eyes flashed with joy as they reunited, gently calling out to him.

"Come inside first." Yang Kai said as he opened the way.

Xia Ning Chang nodded and, like a fragrant wind, lightly stepped inside.

Yang Kai gently closed the door behind her.

“How come you’re here?” Yang Kai asked as he poured her a glass of water.

“Master said that the best Alchemist in this world lives here, so he brought me here so I could ask him for some guidance!” Xia Ning Chang responded as she quietly sat there; having gone more than a year without seeing him, obviously she felt a little nervous, but more than anything else she felt happy.

“En, Old Xiao certainly is the best Alchemist in this world.” Yang Kai nodded in agreement.

“How is it that Junior Brother is here?” Xia Ning Chang asked, “Didn’t you go to Nether Mountain?”

“It’s a long story,” Yang Kai smiled wryly, not elaborating, instead just saying, “There’s just one thing I want to do here.”

“Something you want to do? Can I help you?”

Yang Kai didn’t want to hide his plans from her, but around his house he could faintly feel a misty Divine Sense floating about; how could he not know it was Meng Wu Ya’s surveillance.

Grinning meaningfully, Yang Kai beckoned to Xia Ning Chang, leaning in towards her, bringing his mouth right up next to her ear.

Xia Ning Chang’s heart raced, her body suddenly stiffening up, blushing a bright shade of crimson, wanting to pull back but not daring to move, even subconsciously holding her breath.

Not seeming to care about her embarrassment, Yang Kai continued bringing his lips closer to her glowing red ear and softly whispered, “I want to go to Pill Saint’s Peak and see the Myriad Drug Pond.

“Uh...en...” Xia Ning Chang stuttered, her voice as quiet as a mosquito, replying unconsciously, her delicate fingers tightly gripped her cup, likely not having heard a word Yang Kai had said.

“Keke... kekeke...” In another house not far away, Meng Wu Ya began coughing violently again.

“Brother Meng!” Opposite of Meng Wu Ya, Xiao Fu Sheng watched dumbfounded, helplessly trying to comfort him, “Some things must be left to take their course, even if you want to prevent it there is nothing you can do.”

“I know...” Meng Wu Ya said wearily, nodding again and again, quietly retrieving his Divine Sense.

Although he was concerned about his apprentice’s wellbeing, he understood that he could not always spy upon her private life. But just thinking about how tens of meters away, his precious daughter and that damn little bastard boy were together, alone, in a room, getting closer to one another, Meng Wu Ya couldn’t help feeling unwilling.

[Haa... what the eyes do not see, the heart does not grieve!]

In the other house, Xia Ning Chang’s body remained stone stiff, still feeling the hot breath that had brushed past her ear, her heart beating fiercely, unable to react until quite a long time has passed, “Ah... Junior Brother you want to go...”

“Shh...”

Xia Ning Chang suddenly went silent, a moment later saying, "I have to go there too."

"You're going to visit there?" Yang Kai looked at her with surprise.

Xia Ning Chang nodded softly, "Master said that a profound truth is hidden there, possibly the essence of an Alchemy Grandmaster's lifetime of experience, so he wanted to let me study it, I just don't know if the elders here will be willing to accommodate such a request.

"If it is Little Senior Sister, Old Xiao might agree!" Yang Kai frowned and thought about it, a smile slowly appearing on his face.

He did not know what mysteries were hidden within the Myriad Drug Pond, but if Xia Ning Chang was able to carefully explore it first, it would be easier for him to act later.

Nothing would be better than him being able to go there himself, but even if Old Xiao had been very good to him, it was impossible to expect him to open the Myriad Drug Pond to him. On the other hand, Meng Wu Ya had once saved his life, and Xia Ning Chang possessed the Sacred Spirit Medicine Body. Making an exception so that she may visit the Myriad Drug Pond was not unreasonable.

[Little Senior Sister is always saving me, this time too.] Yang Kai thought to himself.

Just as he was feeling happy, Yang Kai suddenly looked towards the door, grinning deviously as he sent out a True Qi wave.

As soon as this wave hit the door, it suddenly burst open.

"Ah!" Dong Qing Yan who had eavesdropping outside by been pressing her ear against the door suddenly yelped as she lost her support and fell face first into the house.

"What are you sneaking around for?" Yang Kai said as he stared at her.

Dong Qing Yan quickly picked herself up, patted down the dust on her clothes, and giggled impishly, staring towards Xia Ning Chang with great interest.

"This is..." Xia Ning Chang curiously asked as she quietly got up.

"My cousin ... the Dong Family's precious Young Lady." Yang Kai replied.

"Dong Family? Last time there was a member of the Dong Family who came to High Heaven Pavilion ..."

"The very same Dong Family; the one who visited High Heaven Pavilion last time was her older brother."

"So you are Young Lady Dong."

"No need to be so polite, there are no outsiders here..." Dong Qing Yan didn't think of herself as an outsider. Carefully examining the beautiful woman in front of her, staring at Xia Ning Chang's slightly blushing face and smiling, "Are you... my sister-in-law?"

Xia Ning Chang nearly fell over, her heart suddenly thrown into chaos. Glancing back towards Yang Kai before frantically waving her hands, "N-n... no, yo... your sister-in-law is... is someone else..."

"Hmm... it seems like you will be sooner or later though." Dong Qing Yan nodded her head slightly, her voice filled with confidence.

Straightening her back and pretending to lightly cough, Dong Qing Yan shuffled her way over to a nearby chair, sitting herself down in front of Xia Ning Chang and Yang Kai, staring at them with a pair of sparkling eyes, laughingly saying, "Well, pay no attention to me, carry on carry on!"

This little girl was also at the age where she was beginning to think about love, so naturally she was quite curious; now, finally having found a perfect example to learn from, her desire to study their interactions ran rampant.

Xia Ning Chang glanced around helplessly, panicking as she whispered, "Master seems to be calling me; I'll leave first."

Finished speaking, she hurriedly left.

Dong Qing Yan was stunned, her expression filling with disappointment and chagrin, frowning as she murmured, "Wrong... It should not be like this!"

"What are you thinking about now?" Yang Kai looked at her strangely.

"It's your long awaited reunion, you... you should be more affectionate, whispering sweet words of love to each other, building up a passionate atmosphere and then... then..."

Arriving at this point, Dong Qing Yan also found herself becoming embarrassed, blushing involuntarily, trying to hide her face by bowing her head.

Yang Kai faintly sighed, "This really should be the case, but since you interrupted, such things were no longer possible, understand?"

Dong Qing Yan's tender body trembled, suddenly feeling deeply guilty and regretful, "Oh cousin, I was wrong, and the next time you two are together I won't bother you."

"Hmph, well at least you know, now go on!" Yang Kai nodded seriously.

"En..."

In the other room, Meng Wu Ya and Xiao Fu Sheng were chatting as they shared some tea.

After drinking a few cups, Meng Wu Ya grinned meaningfully and said, "Old Man Xiao, this old master's purpose in coming this time, you should already know, correct?"

Xiao Fu Sheng chuckled lightly, put down his cup and nodded, "Of course I know, with regards to giving guidance about Alchemy, this old man has no objections, but your other request..."

"Hmm, is it inconvenient?"

"It is not inconvenient; however, it will depend on if she has the qualifications! If she is not qualified, then even if I allow her to visit the Myriad Drug Pond, it will simply be a waste; it costs quite a bit to open it after all."

Hearing these words, Meng Wu Ya laughed heartily, "How can my apprentice not be qualified? If she cannot qualify, then no one under the Heavens can."

"You are that confident?" Xiao Fu Sheng wrinkled his brow.

Meng Wu Ya smiled and nodded, "It is not my self-confidence, it is simply my confidence in her; if you don't believe me, you can test her yourself!"

Xiao Fu Sheng was slightly startled, but more so intrigued, "Good! This old master is also interested now."

"Chang'er!" Meng Wu Ya called out.

"Here!" Xia Ning Chang quickly responded.

"Old Man Xiao here wants to test your Alchemy skills, give him a demonstration; make sure not to disappoint him." Meng Wu Ya laughed slyly.

"Yes!"

[Chapter 280 – Mysterious Grade Top Rank Counts For Shit](#)

When Xiao Fu Sheng conducted Xia Ning Chang's test, he also had Yang Kai and Dong Qing Yan sit and listen.

Old Xiao obviously wanted his own disciple to broaden her knowledge of Alchemy from this experience. As for Yang Kai, he was probably only invited as a courtesy.

This test lasted for an entire day, Old Xiao asking a variety of questions about the Alchemic Way, from shallow to deep, step by step, slowly but surely increasing in difficulty.

Xia Ning Chang answered each question seriously and meticulously on the opposite side.

Half a day later, Old Xiao wore a pleasantly surprised expression, and after a full day, his face had become filled with shock, while the way he looked upon Xia Ning Chang had also changed.

It was like he had suddenly found a rare and priceless treasure, his eyes leaking a green light containing a mix of greed and envy.

Meng Wu Ya on the side laughed proudly.

Dong Qing Yan also had an expression full of worship and admiration as she watched Xia Ning Chang, only Yang Kai remaining nonchalant.

A day later, Old Xiao exhaled a long breath.

"So, how about it?" Meng Wu Ya glanced at Xiao Fu Sheng, grinning arrogantly.

Xiao Fu Sheng looked dignified, pondered for a long time in silence before finally summarizing, "Both her basic skills and theoretical knowledge are as solid as Mount Tai, and she has clearly gained many insights that even this old man has not."

Over the course of evaluating Xia Ning Chang, Old Xiao has also benefited from her various answers. This had not been so much a test as it had been a discussion between two peers, the difference being that Xiao Fu Sheng was asking the questions while Xia Ning Chang only answered.

"That's only natural!" Meng Wu Ya said flatly.

However, the pride he had in this apprentice of his was very apparent, his grin almost extending from ear to ear.

Xiao Fu Sheng chuckled before glancing at him with great meaning. "Theory is one thing, but sometimes knowing theory is not as good as moving one's own hands."

Meng Wu Ya was suddenly like a cat that had its tail trampled on, "Old Man Xiao, if my disciple cannot let you be convinced, this old man will change his surname to yours and call you Father!"

At this point Dong Qing Yan couldn't help herself, doubling over in laughter, her hand clutching her stomach as her shoulders trembled non-stop.

Xiao Fu Sheng could only let out a sigh and wryly smile, turning his attention to Xia Ning Chang and asking, "So far, what is the highest grade of pill you have successfully refined?"

"Mysterious Grade Low-Rank..." Xia Ning Chang replied softly.

Hearing this, Xiao Fu Sheng's entire body tensed up, his old face immediately changing colour, quickly staring at the young woman before him, trying to see if there was any sign of her joking with him. But the pair of star-like shimmering eyes didn't contain the slightest trace of impurity, remaining very bright; where was there any trace of her lying?

Mysterious Grade Low-Rank ...

Could it really be that at such a young age she was already a Mysterious Grade Low-Rank Alchemist?

Medicine King's Valley's top disciple Qin Ze this year was thirty-five years old, yet he was only a Heaven Grade Top-Rank Alchemist! In terms of age, Qin Ze was almost twice as old.

How could there be such a terrifying genius!

"What is your success rate in refining Mysterious Grade Low-Rank pills?" Xiao Fu Sheng asked.

"I've only succeeded once... and at that time it was still quite difficult."

"Oh..." Xiao Fu Sheng couldn't help exhaling a long breath, thinking to himself that this was reasonable; it seems that she had only luckily managed to refine a Mysterious Grade Low-Rank pill. Essentially it didn't really count.

Quickly changing the question, "What about Heaven Grade?"

"Never fail."

"What!?" Xiao Fu Sheng was again shocked, "You never fail?"

Xia Ning Chang nodded softly in reply.

"That's impossible!" Xiao Fu Sheng's brow wrinkled up, "Even if it was this old master personally performing Alchemy, I cannot guarantee a 100% success rate."

Alchemy was always accompanied by a certain risk of failure. Although Xiao Fu Sheng had reached the very peak of this world's Alchemic Way, he still couldn't completely avoid this and could only say that his chance of failure was very small.

But Meng Wu Ya just chuckled, "There is nothing that is impossible, Brother Xiao, if you have doubts, just try it and you'll understand."

Xiao Fu Sheng's face became serious as he hesitated for a moment before standing up and motioning to the crowd, "Come with me!"

As he took the lead, everyone else hurriedly kept up.

Entering a different room inside his residence, Old Xiao brought everyone to the entrance of an underground passage. From the looks of it, one could obviously tell that Hidden Cloud Peak had a large underground space.

This group of people were all cultivators so descending a long distance was not an issue; after passing a few bends, they suddenly came to a huge stone room.

The stone chamber was the size of ten regular sized houses and was filled with a variety of Pill Furnaces surrounded by many medicine shelves, each of these shelves was filled with a variety of herbs, even with just a cursory glance anyone could tell that the amount stored here was massive.

"You have a lot of good things here." Meng Wu Ya commented as he looked around, picking up a few items and examining them, often appearing reluctant to let go.

Xiao Fu Sheng did not mind, casually saying, "These are all of this old master's income from a lifetime worth of hard work."

Everyone who had ever come to ask Xiao Fu Sheng to perform Alchemy would always bring many precious treasures to compensate him, most of which had been stored here over the years.

Now inside this stone chamber, Xiao Fu Sheng turned towards Xia Ning Chang, "Little niece, you may use anything in here, choose some ingredients and refine the best pill you can, let this old master take a look at your skills."

"Yes!" Xia Ning Chang politely replied before wandering around the stone room.

Dong Qing Yan and Yang Kai also quickly followed after her, the two of them helping Xia Ning Chang carry the herbs she picked out.

Less than half a cup of tea later, the three juniors came back with a selection of herbs, but when Xiao Fu Sheng came over to inspect their choices, he couldn't help wrinkling his brow, "These materials are all for refining Heaven Grade Mid-Rank pill's. Is Little niece confident?"

However, Xia Ning Chang simply nodded.

"Very well, then begin, use whatever pill tripod around here that you'd like, this old master has plenty after all." Xiao Fu Sheng smiled.

"There's no need..." Xia Ning Chang softly said.

"No need for a pill furnace..." Xiao Fu Sheng had not even finished his sentence before he saw Xia Ning Chang's True Qi suddenly surge.

Gently picking up one of the materials with her delicate hands, Xia Ning Chang formed her True Qi into fine silk threads and injected it into the herb, its medicinal essence quickly being extracted as a result and then floating mid-air like drops of crystal rain, a fragrant medicinal liquid quickly forming.

Flicking her wrist, the drop of liquid was transferred to her other hand where it gently floated above her jade white palm.

Xia Ning Chang then picked up another herb, followed the same procedure, and soon after another drop of crystal liquid appeared.

Every time she extracted the medicinal essence from an herb, it would lose its spirituality and soon wither.

“Heavens...” Dong Qing Yan eyes filled with indescribable shock, her face showing an expression of pure awe.

This was simply not Alchemy; instead it was some kind of magical world shocking display.

Xiao Fu Sheng was equally surprised, his mouth constantly muttering, “Medicinal liquid can be refined like this, how could it be, how is this possible?”

Less than a quarter of an hour later, all the herbs had their essences condensed into medicinal liquid which had been gathered in Xia Ning Chang’s delicate palm.

Next she gently waved her hands and molded her True Qi into this ball of liquid. A moment later she suddenly gripped her fist and the surrounding World Energy quickly swirled together. After this rapid and unexpected change, once she opened her hand again, a green pill impressively appeared.

The pill was perfectly rounded, not containing the slightest impurity, and on its surface, there was a network of fine lines that gave the whole pill a look of mystery and spirituality.

“Pill Veins!” Xiao Fu Sheng’s eyes nearly popped out as he suddenly screamed.

Yang Kai’s brow also twitched.

He remembered that the first time he saw Xiao Fu Sheng, he had just finished refining a pill. At that time when he was examining that pill, he had been muttering about these ‘Pill Veins’ as well.

“Uncle, please examine it!” Xia Ning Chang gently held this pill and passed it towards Xiao Fu Sheng.

“Careful, careful little Aunty, please be careful not to damage the Pill Veins...” Xiao Fu Sheng stretched out his trembling hands and extremely gently received the pill, as if it was some kind of divine object that he was paying homage to.

“Hmph, good-for-nothing!” Meng Wu Ya teased in a timely manner.

“Fool, you know shit!” Xiao Fu Sheng viciously cursed, lightly turning over the pill as he carefully examined it.

“They real are Pill Veins... real Pill Veins.” At the moment Xiao Fu Sheng no longer had any trace of a Grandmaster’s demeanor; he was totally like an ignorant country bumpkin who had suddenly come to the big city, gazing in wonder at the marvels before him.

“Master, what exactly are Pill Veins?” Dong Qing Yan asked softly.

“Pill Veins...” Xiao Fu Sheng gently sighed, “The appearance of Pill Veins is one of the highest achievements an Alchemist can attain in Alchemy. These faint lines which appear on the pill’s surface are akin to our body’s meridians, in other words, Pill Veins are a pill’s meridians!”

“Whether or not a pill has Pill Veins, its grade does not change, but there is a big difference between a pill with Pill Veins and one with none. Pills with Pill Veins have absorbed the energy of Heaven and Earth and are therefore more than twice as potent as ordinary pills! In addition, the existence of Pill Veins can prevent a pill from losing any of its medicinal effects, which means that no matter how many years it is stored for, its efficacy will not decrease!” Xiao Fu Sheng explained, his voice filled with emotion, “This old master has been studying Alchemy for many years and recently I have focused on the refinement of Pill Veins, but only when refining Common Grade pills will I have occasional success, for Earth Grade, Pill Veins almost never appear, and as for Heaven Grade... I’ve never succeeded.”

Turning around, his eyes shining, Xiao Fu Sheng gazed towards Xia Ning Chang, “Little niece, when you refine Heaven Grade pills, what proportion of them have Pill Veins appear?”

Xia Ning Chang immediately bit her lip and timidly looked at Meng Wu Ya, not sure how she should answer.

She had already given Grandmaster Xiao a huge blow today and she really couldn’t bear to answer this question truthfully.

However, Meng Wu Ya only grinned, “Just tell him.”

“About five to six percent!”

Hsss... Xiao Fu Sheng gasped.

Five to Six percent of the Heaven Grade pills had Pill Veins, and each of these would have more than twice the ordinary efficacy... such methods exceed the realm of skills.

It could only be recognised as a heavenly blessing!

Still wearing a look of shock, Xiao Fu Sheng quickly asked, “Pill cloud? Has the legendary Pill Cloud which is even above Pill Veins appeared?”

Xia Ning Chang slowly shook her head.

“Hmm, it should be that your cultivation is not high enough, if you can break through to the Immortal Ascension Boundary, you should be able to refining the legendary Pill Cloud.” Xiao Fu Sheng nodded, his hands still trembling, pacing back and forth inside the stone room for a while before suddenly declaring, “Everyone else out, I have something to discuss with Brother Meng!”

The three young people, although startled, quickly bowing before leaving.

A moment after they had left, the sound of Meng Wu Ya’s furious voice rang out from below, “Not in your wildest dreams! Having designs on this old man’s apprentice, how dare you! If I knew you are such an ungrateful wolf then I would never have saved your damn life, if would’ve been better to let those Sixth-Order Monster Beasts rip you into a hundred pieces!”

Xiao Fu Sheng shot back, "It only makes sense; you don't understand Alchemy, what can you teach her? Such a good piece of jade, her running around by your side is simply a waste of Heavenly gifts; her worshipping this old master is a far better idea."

Meng Wu Ya sneered again and again, "Even if I can't teach her, can you?"

"I can teach her all of my life's experiences! I can let her in the shortest possible time become a Mysterious Grade Top-Rank Alchemist!"

"Mysterious Grade Top-Rank counts for shit, you're looking down on my background far too much!"