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Chapter 201: Yun Family Conspiracy

Ning Yue spoke for nearly half an hour.

It was only after half an hour that she finished telling the whole story.

And the few people sitting there finally understood what had happened.

It turned out that the whole affair went like this...

Ever since Ning Yue returned to her family, her two male cousins felt threatened.

They began to make all sorts of secret arrangements, scheming to drive Ning Yue out again.

But since Ning Yue had chosen to return, she definitely would not let them have their way.

However, with Wei Zhengqing and Yan Xiong around...

Their tactics were child's play and posed no threat to Ning Yue whatsoever.

Meanwhile, Ning Yue was focused on making a breakthrough.

Until half a year later, Ning Yue successfully broke through the Foundation Establishment.

She also advanced to a Third-Grade Alchemist.

After becoming a Third-Grade Alchemist, Ning Yue, with the help of Wei Zhengqing and Yan Xiong, met with the Ning Family ancestor.

Once the Ning Family ancestor came out of seclusion, he personally supported Ning Yue and directly announced that she would be the next family head.

Although Ning Yue was a woman, the Ning Family, as an Alchemy Dao family, naturally revered alchemy skills above all.

Ning Yue's uncles, in terms of alchemy cultivation, were nowhere near her, naturally they couldn't compete with her.

Not to mention those two unworthy cousins of hers.

Felling threatened, Ning Yue's uncles banded together, trying to find ways to deal with her.

Especially the fathers of those two cousins, who saw Ning Yue as a thorn in their side.

But Ning Yue had the support of the Ning Family ancestor.

Even though they really wanted to get rid of Ning Yue, they were completely powerless against her.

Until one day...

Ning Yue's uncle, the father of those two male cousins, was seduced by someone's slander.

He actually went to the Yun Family, seeking their help to eliminate Ning Yue.

And he actually managed to do it.

Ning Yue's uncle, with help from a mysterious person, acquired the family seal.

And using the family head's seal, he signed a contract with the Yun Family.

The contract stipulated that the Ning Family would help the Yun Family cultivate a third-grade Spirit Plant—the Moon Mulberry Spirit Fruit.

If the Ning Family successfully cultivated it, the Yun Family would reward them with two hundred thousand Medium Grade Spirit Stones.

If they failed to cultivate it, the Ning Family would hand over their Inheritance Elixir Technique and from then on, would exist as a subordinate family to the Yun Family.

Besides...

There was another condition—that if the Moon Mulberry Spirit Fruit was not cultivated successfully, Ning Yue would have to marry into the Yun Family as a concubine to the Young Master.

Indeed, as a concubine...

Not even as a cultivator's dao companion or anything of the sort, but a mere mortal concubine.

This was a complete insult to the Ning Family.

And yet, such an outrageous contract was signed by Ning Yue's uncle without any hesitation.

Because...

The Yun Family promised him that if the Ning Family became a vassal to the Yun Family, he would be put in charge of the Ning Family.

They also guaranteed that the Yun Family would not interfere in the Ning Family's affairs in the future.

Ning Yue's ignoramus uncle didn't care about anything else...

He thought that as long as he could sit in the family head's seat, he could later hand it over to his son when he grew tired of it.

Wasn't this exactly what he wanted?

However, no sooner had the contract been signed...

His dreams had not been fully realized.

The matter was directly exposed by the Yun Family.

When the Ning Family ancestor learned of this, he was so outraged his beard trembled uncontrollably, and he almost had a heart attack...

He immediately imprisoned Ning Yue's uncle and his two sons in the family dungeon.

But the contract was finalized and stamped with the family head's seal, and with the involvement of key members of the Ning Family, there was no reneging on it.

If they did, the Yun Family could take it as a pretext to attack the Ning Family without restraint.

This incident was clearly a scheme by the Yun Family.

From beginning to end, Ning Yue's uncle had been led by the nose.

Not long after, people from the Yun Family arrived at the Ning Family, bringing with them a seed of the Moon Mulberry Spirit Fruit.

They also set a deadline: within three years, the fruit must sprout to be considered a success.

Three years was actually a sufficient time to make a normal Moon Mulberry Spirit Fruit sprout.

Of course, this was for a normal Moon Mulberry Spirit Fruit.

Since the Yun Family had gone through all this trouble, they certainly would not send a normal seed.

The Ning Family ancestor knew there must be something wrong with this seed.

If they could prove that the seed was abnormal, they could use it as a reason to tear up the already signed contract.

Despite the Ning Family not being as powerful as the Yun Family...

The Ning Family had been in existence for many years and certainly had its own strengths.

The Ning Family also had a backing from the Nanming Immortal Sect.

As long as they were in the right, the Yun Family wouldn't dare to act rashly.

What the Ning Family ancestor hadn't expected was, after the Moon Mulberry Spirit Fruit seed was delivered, he could not find any problems with it.

The seed appeared to be completely normal.

But the reality was clear...

The Yun Family definitely would not be so kind as to give them two hundred thousand Medium Grade Spirit Stones for nothing.

You have to understand, that amount was equivalent to the wealth of an entire family.

The Yun Family's confidence in their contract suggested that they were sure the Ning Family would never be able to make the seed sprout.

Also...

It was to make the contract appear to be incredibly fair.

To leave the Ning Family without a reason to refuse.

The worried Ning Family ancestor knew all this.

Therefore...

He even invited his good friend from the Nanming Immortal Sect to come over.

But the Ning Family ancestor's friend...

After observing for quite some time, he also found no problem with the Moon Mulberry Spirit Fruit seed.

In the end...

Even the old ancestor of the Yun Family came forward to confront the friend of the Ning Family ancestor.

And, due to the contract's limitations,

the friend of Ning Family's ancestor was also unable to offer any more help.

They could only let the Ning Family take the Moon Mulberry Spirit Fruit seed first and then cultivate it with dedication.

There was nothing more to say beyond that.

Just like that...

After the Ning Family had taken that seed, they carefully nurtured it for two years, yet the seed still showed no signs of sprouting.

Now, there was less than a year left before the contract would expire.

Having no other choice, the Ning Family's ancestor thought of coming to Nanshan Immortal City to seek out his friend—the Old Master of the Li Family—to see if there was a solution here.

By the end of the story, everyone was furious.

They were disgraced by the actions of Ning Yue's uncle.

For his own greed, he was willing to let the entire family meet their doom.

At the same time, they felt even more chilled by the tactics of the Yun Family.

This was clearly a conspiracy directed at the Ning Family.

At this moment, Lin Jing was still pondering...

Ever since Ning Yue first mentioned the Moon Mulberry Spirit Fruit seed, Lin Jing had become excited.

However, because the current situation was not appropriate, Lin Jing could only suppress the excitement in his heart and continued to listen to Ning Yue's story.

Because...

Lin Jing was only one Spirit Plant away from completing his Cultivation True Elixir, and that was the Moon Mulberry Spirit Fruit.

Since the Demon Race Secret Realm had opened, many rare Spirit Plants had appeared.

Lin Jing had also been paying close attention,

all for the purpose of learning news about the Moon Mulberry Spirit Fruit.

But these past few months, there had been absolutely no news of the Moon Mulberry Spirit Fruit.

Unexpectedly, at this moment, he received news of the Moon Mulberry Spirit Fruit from Ning Yue.

But...

After Ning Yue finished explaining the situation, Lin Jing's brows furrowed once more.

Then, Lin Jing spoke up, asking Ning Yue:

"Ning Daoist friend, are you certain that the Moon Mulberry Spirit Fruit seed is genuine?"

Li Qingqing also echoed:

"Yes, could it be that the seed itself is a fake, merely disguised as a Moon Mulberry Spirit Fruit seed through special means?"

Ning Yue shook her head, saying:

"That's highly unlikely; the seed should be genuine."

"My ancestor once had it thoroughly examined by someone, and that person was a Nascent Soul True Monarch."

"Even with the use of tricks, it would be impossible to deceive a Nascent Soul True Monarch"

Having said this, Ning Yue paused for a moment before continuing:

"But there is definitely a problem with that seed—it's just that our methods are not capable of detecting it."

After finishing, Ning Yue turned her head to look at Li Tangyu:

"Actually, I also know that my ancestor is seeking your grandfather in desperation, with only a slim hope."

"It seems we have no other options left now..."

As her voice trailed off...

Even the usually strong-willed Ning Yue began to look perplexed, her eyes vacant as she sat there, lost in thought.

Huang Qingling's eyes flickered, and she suddenly spoke up:

"Can't we just find another Moon Mulberry Spirit Fruit or obtain another seed and start over?"

"After all, they only demanded the sprouting of a Moon Mulberry Spirit Fruit; they didn't specify it had to be the one they provided, did they?"

Ning Yue shook her head, saying:

"We've already tried that..."

"The Moon Mulberry Spirit Fruit is too rare; we simply can't find it..."

Li Tangyu also nodded his head:

"Recently in the Demon Race Secret Realm, although several Tier 3 Spirit Plants have appeared, the Moon Mulberry Spirit Fruit has not..."

"Is there really no other way?"

Huang Qingling furrowed her brows and then said through gritted teeth:

"Damn it..."

"That Young Master of the Yun Family is detestable to the extreme..."

"To think he wants Ning Yue to become his concubine—it's an insult, isn't it?"

"Yes, it's despicable..." Li Qingqing followed with her agreement.

At this point, Li Tangyu softly spoke up, asking:

"Miss Ning..."

"If you can't cultivate that Moon Mulberry Spirit Fruit, what do you plan to do?"

"Are you really going to marry him and become his concubine?"

"If it really comes to that..."

Ning Yue's eyes suddenly filled with resolve, and then she said:

"I would rather fight to the death than let him succeed..."

"Ning sister, why don't you just run away..."

At this time, Li Qingqing spoke up.

"As long as you leave this place and make it impossible for them to find you, they will be powerless."

Huang Qingling also nodded, agreeing with Li Qingqing's words.

"Yes, if it comes to that, just run away..."

"Where there's life, there's hope."

On the other hand, Li Tangyu was deep in thought with a concerned expression.

"If Miss Ning runs away, they might use that as an excuse to take action against the Ning Family."

"Moreover..."

"The Yun Family is not a small power, and with Miss Ning's level of cultivation, escaping might not be easy."

Huang Qingling said somewhat angrily:

"Are we to just stand by and watch her fall into a predicament?"

As Huang Qingling's words fell, the atmosphere in the room instantly became tense.

"Actually, I might have a solution..."

Just as the mood had become heavy, Lin Jing suddenly spoke up, causing everyone to lift their heads and look at him incredulously.

Chapter 202: Lin Jing's Method

"Brother Lin, do you really have a method?"

Li Tangyu asked.

Ning Yue beside him was also looking at Lin Jing with a puzzled gaze, yet within that look, there was a glimmer of hope.

Huang Qingling, however, wore a face filled with doubt.

"You're not going to say, it's about the soil you brought me..."

"Exactly..."

"If it were that simple, things would be easy..." Li Qingqing also chimed in.

"Soil?"

"What soil?"

Li Tangyu was completely clueless, not understanding what they were talking about.

"Lin Jing asked Qing Ling to bring him some soil from the Demon Race Secret Realm, claiming he wanted to use that soil for researching Spirit Plant cultivation," Li Qingqing explained.

After hearing this, Li Tangyu couldn't help but laugh and cry in frustration.

"Brother Lin, you think too much..."

"Your method simply won't work. The soil from the Demon Race Secret Realm has already been collected by our Li family, and we've started experimenting with it."

"The soil from that secret realm isn't much different from that of the outside world, without any value worth researching."

Upon hearing this, the thread of hope in Ning Yue's eyes quietly dissipated.

But Lin Jing's eyes gleamed with light.

"Brother Li, did you collect all the different colors of soil from inside the Demon Race Secret Realm?"

"Of course..."

"Earth-yellow, dark red, black, and even some soils mixed with light green sand were collected..."

When Lin Jing heard Li Tangyu mention that their home had black soil from the Demon Race Secret Realm, he quickly asked:

"I wonder if Brother Li could gift me some of that."

Li Tangyu said:

"We have already studied those soils, and they are of no use now; we had planned on throwing them away."

"Since Brother Lin likes them, I can give them all to you."

After hearing Li Tangyu's words, Lin Jing was at a loss for words, not knowing what to say.

The precious item that he desired but couldn't obtain was considered useless and ready to be discarded by others.

"How about this, Brother Lin..."

"I will keep that soil for you, and you can come to collect it at any time."

Lin Jing bowed with his hands clasped:

"Thank you, Brother Li..."

"You're too polite, Brother Lin..." Li Tangyu said.

The conversation between them concluded.

The private room fell silent once more, the atmosphere becoming somewhat awkward.

Lin Jing turned his head and saw Ning Yue's desolate eyes...

Then, slapping his forehead, he said:

"Oh dear, look at me, I got sidetracked discussing soil..."

"Apologies, Daoist Ning..."

Lin Jing quickly explained:

"The method I mentioned earlier is not about soil."

As Lin Jing finished speaking, the other three looked at him with curiosity.

Even Ning Yue looked up.

However, there was no longer any light in his eyes.

"Brother Lin, do you truly have a method?" Li Tangyu asked skeptically.

"Have you all forgotten a place, or perhaps a person..."

"If we wish to germinate the Moon Mulberry Spirit Fruit, I believe only a person from that place might be able to accomplish it..."

"What place?"

"Who?"

As Lin Jing spoke with such conviction, even Huang Qingling began to wonder, her head lowered in deep thought...

Yet she couldn't remember any place that possessed such an expert in Spirit Plant cultivation.

Seeing this, Lin Jing straightforwardly said:

"The Elixir Valley Heir, the Elixir Valley..."

After Lin Jing finished, Li Tangyu suddenly came to a realization, slapping his forehead and exclaiming:

"Right..."

"How could I forget the Elixir Valley."

"It's said that there are several top Pill Masters in that valley, and they are fond of researching Elixir Medicines, so they must be very knowledgeable about the Spirit Plants used in alchemy."

"The most important thing is, they are suspected to have an inheritance from the Ancient Alchemy Path."

"Maybe, they have some way to solve the problem of the Moon Mulberry Spirit Fruit seed not germinating."

"Right, and there's also Elixir Valley. I was so focused on cultivating the Spirit Plant that I forgot about Elixir Valley..."

Huang Qingling also came to this realization.

Hearing them all say this,

Ning Yue, who had already given up hope, once again saw a spark in her eyes.

"Really?"

Ning Yue asked, turning to Lin Jing.

Lin Jing nodded and said:

"Yes, besides him, I can't think of anyone else who could resolve this issue."

Li Tangyu also chimed in:

"Lin Brother is right..."

"If someone can solve such a problem, Elixir Valley is the most likely candidate..."

The reason for saying this...

Was because Lin Jing did indeed want to help Ning Yue.

However, he couldn't offer help in his own identity, and the identity of the Elixir Valley Heir was perfect for this occasion.

Lin Jing had a system, and he could plant that seed in the Spirit Field when the time came to see if the Spiritual Plant Restoration Function could be used to fix it.

However...

Having not seen that seed, Lin Jing didn't know what the issue was with it, or whether it could be fixed.

"Also..."

At this moment, Li Tangyu continued to speak, reminding:

"The Elixir Valley Heir only sells Elixir Medicines and it's not known whether he would be willing to help you."

"Miss Ning should definitely prepare herself for the possibility of refusal."

"Yes. I understand..."

Ning Yue nodded her head, then asked:

"Li Daoyou..."

"Do you know where I can find this Elixir Valley Heir?"

Li Tangyu then spoke again:

"The Elixir Valley Heir only appears in the Black Market and the timing is not fixed, sometimes it's several days, and other times it may be several months before he appears."

"If Miss Ning plans to go, she should try to set off as early as possible."

"And she should visit multiple times, just in case she happens to meet him."

Ning Yue frowned slightly and said:

"I understand..."

Following that, she looked towards Lin Jing:

"Lin Daoyou, I remember you used to frequent the Black Market, I wonder if you could accompany me to find the Elixir Valley Heir there?"

Upon hearing this, Lin Jing was stunned in the moment.

He couldn't help but complain internally:

"If I were to accompany you..."

"Then in this lifetime, forget about ever finding the Elixir Valley Heir."

However, in reality, Lin Jing wore a helpless expression and let out a wry smile.

"Ning Daoyou, I would like to accompany you...

"But unfortunately, I am currently an Offering Priest and Pill Master for the Yuebaolou, with monthly Alchemy tasks that I simply cannot break away from."

"Perhaps Brother Li could accompany you on the journey..."

And Li Tangyu readily agreed, saying that he would bring Ning Yue to the Black Market to look around...

After thanking Li Tangyu, Ning Yue became somewhat restless and wanted to inform her family's ancestors of the news as soon as possible.

Not long after, the group left the Drunken Immortal Pavilion.

After leaving the Drunken Immortal Pavilion, they unanimously decided to first head to the Li Family.

And Lin Jing was to follow Li Tangyu to collect that soil.

Together, they set off towards the Li Family.

Upon arriving at the Li Family, they went their separate ways...

Li Qingqing took Huang Qingling to her boudoir.

Meanwhile, Ning Yue went to find the Ning Family ancestor to discuss the trip to the Black Market.

Soon, only Li Tangyu and Lin Jing remained.

"Lin Brother, come with me..."

Saying that, Li Tangyu led Lin Jing towards the back courtyard of the Li Family.

Chapter 203: Successfully Cultivating the Blood Red Vermilion Fruit Tree

The entire Li Family was very large, even significantly larger than the Liu Clan.

Lin Jing followed Li Tangyu, passing through numerous courtyards.

At last, they arrived at a particularly large courtyard situated in the back corner.

Upon entering the courtyard, Lin Jing looked up and saw that apart from a small room, the entire place was planted with various Spirit Plants.

This courtyard had been transformed into a Spirit Field.

And...

The ground of this yard was divided into many sections by narrow pathways just wide enough for a single person to walk.

The color of some sections of the Spirit Field was visibly different from the surrounding areas.

There were red ones, black ones, and even some green...

Moreover, the Spiritual Energy inside this small courtyard was incredibly rich, much denser than the Spiritual Energy throughout the whole Li Family residence.

Clearly, there was a Spirit Gathering Array here.

It seemed...

This was the Spirit Field that the Li Family used for experimentation.

And those soils brought out from the Demon Race Secret Realm were placed in this small courtyard.

At this time, in that Spirit Field, an elder in his sixties was squatting there, observing the Spirit Plants.

He hadn't noticed the arrival of the two.

Just then, Li Tangyu called out,

"Elder Jin..."

On hearing this, the elder looked up and saw...

When he saw Li Tangyu, the elder named Elder Jin showed a happy smile on his wrinkled face:

"It turns out to be Tangyu, what brings you here today..."

Li Tangyu started to speak,

"I've got something to ask you..."

"Just stopping by to see how you were doing, Elder Jin..."

As he said this, Li Tangyu proceeded along the narrow path towards Elder Jin.

Lin Jing, meanwhile, followed closely behind Li Tangyu.

Soon, the two of them reached the elder.

Li Tangyu began, introducing Lin Jing:

"This is one of my elder relatives, Elder Jin."

"Elder Jin is very fond of researching various Spirit Plants cultivation techniques and has a deep mastery of it."

"You could say, in terms of understanding of Spirit Plants, no one in the entire Nanshan Immortal City can match him."

Listened to this, Lin Jing quickly clasped his hands and said,

"I've seen the senior before."

"I'm just an old man, not worthy of being called a senior," Elder Jin responded.

"You jest, senior..."

"You're a relative of Brother Li, and as a friend of Brother Li, it's only proper for me to respectfully call you senior..."

Lin Jing said.

"This kid..."

Elder Jin said with a smile and then fell silent.

Afterward, Elder Jin looked towards Li Tangyu again and asked,

"Tangyu, what brings you to me today?"

"Elder Jin, it's like this..."

Li Tangyu took a step forward and then pointed at Lin Jing and said to Elder Jin:

"This is my friend, Lin Jing."

"He is also an Alchemist and is currently studying the cultivation of Spirit Plants; he wants to get some soil from the Demon Race Secret Realm to take back with him."

"The various kinds of soil from the Demon Race Secret Realm that our family brought out are all here with you, so I came to see you..."

After listening, Elder Jin looked Lin Jing over with interest and then asked,

"Young man, how long have you been studying the cultivation of Spirit Plants?"

Lin Jing quickly clasped his hands and replied to Elder Jin:

"To respond to the senior..."

"I have also just started recently, it hasn't been two months."

After hearing Lin Jing's words, Elder Jin nodded and then said,

"Hm..."

"I see..."

"Alright, follow me..."

With that, Elder Jin turned around and walked along the narrow path toward the small house in the middle of the courtyard.

Li Tangyu and Lin Jing then followed behind Elder Jin.

When they reached the house, Elder Jin first washed his hands in a wooden basin that was placed next to the door.

He then took a cloth that was draped over the basin and casually wiped his hands.

After that, he went to the door, opened it, and walked in.

"Come in..."

With Elder Jin's words coming to an end, Li Tangyu and Lin Jing entered the room.

The room was quite simple, featuring a table, a bed, and four small stools, arranged around the table.

On the other side of the room, there were several burlap sacks.

Lin Jing glanced at the sacks, which contained the various soils that Li Tangyu had mentioned.

There was yellowish-brown, dark red, and black soil, as well as that mixed with light green sand...

"All that soil is right here," Elder Jin said, gesturing to the piles of soil.

"Take however much you want, just take it directly..."

"I've already experimented with these soils; they aren't of much use."

After saying this, Elder Jin continued to address Lin Jing:

"Cultivating spirit plants is quite a profound science..."

"Only now, there are few who show interest in these things..."

"If the young man is truly interested in this area, he may seek advice from this old man at any time..."

At that moment, Lin Jing felt somewhat ashamed:

"Actually, he wasn't particularly interested in researching the cultivation of spirit plants; his interest lay merely in the soils."

"Thank you, senior."

"Should there be a need, I will come to disturb you again," said Lin Jing with a cuppedfist salute.

"Mhm, alright..."

Elder Jin nodded, then pointed to the soils again:

"All those bags there, just pack them yourself..."

"Yes, Elder Jin..."

Li Tangyu responded.

Then, Lin Jing took out a bundle he had prepared earlier and with Li Tangyu's help, started to fill it with some of the different soils.

After completing the task, Li Tangyu and Lin Jing stayed a while longer, having a conversation with Elder Jin.

Afterward, the two men bid farewell to Elder Jin and left the place.

No sooner had the two returned to the front courtyard than Ning Yue, having finished her discussion, found them.

Upon seeing them, Ning Yue spoke up directly:

"I've finished negotiating with the ancestor. Tonight, we will go to the black market to find the Elixir Valley Heir."

"At that time, we'll have to trouble Daoist Li to lead the way..."

"It would be my pleasure..."

said Li Tangyu.

After lingering at the Li Family home for a while longer, Lin Jing informed Huang Qingling of his intentions and then made an excuse to leave.

Upon returning to his own courtyard, Lin Jing couldn't wait to enter the System Space at the first opportunity.

After arriving in the System Space, Lin Jing headed straight for the Spirit Field.

He first took out the black soil he had obtained from Li Tangyu from the Storage Bag.

He then buried this soil next to the Blood Red Vermilion Fruit tree.

And then...

he simply waited in silence...

Suddenly, the system notification chimed:

"Ding."

"System Notification: Host has successfully obtained a special Secret Realm soil sample that matches with the Spirit Plant 'Blood Red Vermilion Fruit tree,' enabling environmental simulation for this spirit plant."

"Finally, it worked," Lin Jing said with a smile curving his lips.

Following that...

Lin Jing first harvested the spirit plants in Spirit Field number two ahead of time and then, without any hesitation, activated the environment simulation.

Before long, a thick black fog began to rise within Spirit Field number two, next to the first.

The black fog was dense, and within moments, Spirit Field number two was engulfed in darkness, obscuring everything from view.

However, the black fog was contained within the boundaries of Spirit Field number two and did not drift beyond.

About a quarter of an hour later, the fog slowly dissipated, and clarity returned to Spirit Field number two.

At this moment, the system notification sounded again.

"Ding."

"System Notification: Environmental simulation complete. Please name the environment for the host..."

"Demon Race Secret Realm," Lin Jing said.

"Naming successful. Spirit plant cultivation is now available."

Looking again...

Lin Jing saw that the land of Spirit Field number two had completely turned black.

Then, Lin Jing transplanted the Blood Red Vermilion Fruit tree originally in Spirit Field number one into Spirit Field number two.

After planting, Lin Jing summoned the system to check the information of the Blood Red Vermilion Fruit tree.

Blood Red Vermilion Fruit Tree

Current Environment: Demon Race Secret Realm.

Environment matched, rapid growth in process, time until maturity remains: 100 years.

Chapter 204: Middle Stage of Foundation Establishment

A hundred years, indeed, is not a short time.

However...

In the System Space now, there's that new feature of Spiritual Plant Acceleration that can make spirit plants mature instantly.

It's just that I don't know how many Harvest Points will be needed to make this Blood Red Vermilion Fruit mature immediately.

The spirit plants needed for refining the Cultivation True Elixir are not yet all gathered by Lin Jing.

Once he does gather them, he indeed wants to give it a try.

Hopefully, it won't be too many.

Otherwise, he really can't afford to use this feature of accelerated growth for the spirit plants.

Next, Lin Jing left the Spirit Field.

From his entry into the System Space until now, barely a quarter of an hour had passed, and it was still early...

So...

Lin Jing left the Spirit Field and went to the Alchemy Room.

Upon entering the Alchemy Room, what came into view was the enormous Fire Meteor Four-Pattern Furnace, which Lin Jing always placed in the center of the room.

There was no need to carry it out unless necessary.

Following...

Lin Jing approached the Pill Furnace, then took out materials for the Gathering Yuan Pill from the Storage Bag, beginning his preparations for alchemy.

He first processed the alchemy ingredients he had just taken out and set them aside...

Afterwards, Lin Jing circulated his spiritual power, and True Fire surged out from within his body, converging between his palm and fingers.

With a "boom,"

The blazing flames rose from the palm of Lin Jing's hand.

Lin Jing's fingers subtly moved, and the flames, like obedient little sprites, danced at his command.

Then, Lin Jing controlled the flames, concentrating them at the bottom of the Pill Furnace to preheat it...

As the flames roasted it, the temperature of the Pill Furnace gradually increased...

Seeing that the temperature of the Pill Furnace had risen and was almost right,

Lin Jing then began to place the various ingredients, which he had already processed earlier, into the Pill Furnace in sequence.

Until finally, all the ingredients were put inside.

He directly sealed the furnace by closing the lid.

What followed was the actual start of alchemy.

Lin Jing circulated his spiritual power, causing the flames beneath the furnace to surge violently, becoming even more intense.

It was at this moment...

Lin Jing also activated the Divine Fire Triple Realm.

The flames beneath the furnace gradually shrank, growing smaller and smaller, as if they were about to extinguish.

Simultaneously, the color of the flames also began to slowly change.

As time ticked away...

The color of the flames beneath the furnace changed from red to orange, then from orange to yellow, slowly transforming.

Eventually, the color shifted from yellow directly to white.

The white flames looked quite beautiful.

Even though the cluster of white flames was still small, the aura it emitted was incredibly terrifying.

And the air around the white flames twisted with a scorching sensation, just looking at it was enough to inspire fear and respect.

This white flame was the very one condensed after Lin Jing mastered the first layer of the Divine Fire Triple Realm, which Elder Yu had given to him.

This was only the first layer, yet the white flames it produced were already so fearsome.

The following two layers were likely to be even more formidable.

However, practicing the Divine Fire Triple Realm was extremely difficult.

Only the first realm had been mastered by Lin Jing a few days ago.

According to Elder Yu, it was easy to enter the first layer of the Divine Fire Triple Realm, but starting from the second layer, it became much harder.

The third layer was even more so.

It was said that throughout the entire Southern Ming domain, it had been many years since anyone had reached the third layer.

Next...

Lin Jing continued to pour spiritual power into the process, carefully controlling the fire. The white flames, from their initial state that looked set to extinguish, slowly grew larger.

Until the flames became the size of a campfire, then he stopped.

Meanwhile, Lin Jing carefully controlled the flames and extended his Divine Sense into the Pill Furnace to monitor the state of the Elixir Medicine.

With the enhancement of the Divine Fire Triple Realm, Lin Jing's alchemy speed had increased by a lot.

But with the fire's temperature increasing and the alchemy quickening, it also became more mentally draining.

Lin Jing needed to continuously pay attention to movements inside the Pill Furnace.

Soon, half an hour passed...

A rich scent of Elixir Medicine began to emanate from within the Pill Furnace.

At the same time, Lin Jing's forehead was already covered with many fine beads of sweat.

At this moment...

It had reached the final critical moment of elixir formation.

It was his first time using the Divine Fire Triple Realm to refine elixir medicine.

Lin Jing dared not be the slightest bit negligent.

The flames of the Divine Fire Triple Realm were too explosive and were not that easy to control.

Elder Yu had also told him that to use the Divine Fire Triple Realm for alchemy, one needed not only to practice continuously but also to enhance the strength of the Divine Sense.

After a long time of alchemy, Lin Jing's Divine Sense was already quite strong.

What he lacked was the experience of using the Divine Fire Triple Realm for alchemy.

He believed that it wouldn't be long before he would be able to skillfully control the Divine Fire Triple Realm, and then his alchemy would become extremely effortless.

Afterward, the scent of the elixirs kept drifting out of the pill furnace, growing stronger and stronger.

And this batch of elixir furnace medicine had reached the final stage of solidification.

Lin Jing constantly watched the contents of the pill furnace, where several blobs of medicinal liquid were slowly forming and continuously spinning.

As time passed, the flames at the bottom of the pill furnace burned vigorously, and the medicinal liquid kept solidifying.

Finally...

A system notification was heard.

"Ding"

"System notification: Congratulations to the host for refining Pure Elixir Medicine, reward obtained: 10 Harvest Points."

"Elixir medicine refinement successful, alchemy proficiency +32."

It was a success...

And it produced Pure Elixir Medicine.

Although Pure Elixir Medicine was produced, Lin Jing had already grown accustomed to it and was no longer as excited as he was at the beginning.

Then...

Lin Jing stood up, opened the pill furnace, and bottled the elixirs in small porcelain vials.

He threw the Pure Gathering Yuan Pill directly into his mouth.

Next, he wanted to take advantage of this moment to try for a breakthrough to the middle phase of Foundation Establishment.

Several months had passed since his last breakthrough.

Now was the time to launch an assault towards the middle phase of Foundation Establishment.

Originally, he had planned to wait a few more days.

But during the alchemy process just now, he unexpectedly discovered a substantial increase in his Spiritual Power.

This happened while he was operating the Divine Fire Triple Realm.

If he didn't break through now, when would he?

After consuming the elixir medicine, Lin Jing sat cross-legged.

Then he operated the cultivation technique within his body and began to refine the Spiritual Power brought about by the elixirs he had just taken.

After Lin Jing finished refining the Spiritual Power of the Pure Gathering Yuan Pill, afraid of encountering the same difficulty in breaking through as last time, he took out another Pure Elixir Medicine from the Storage Bag and swallowed it.

Not until he had refined all the Spiritual Power from the two Pure Gathering Yuan Pills did Lin Jing begin his breakthrough.

Yet this time, the breakthrough was especially smooth.

He managed to break through the bottleneck on just the second attempt.

Following that, a system notification sounded.

"Ding."

"System notification: Congratulations to the host for successfully breaking through the current realm, reward obtained: 20 Harvest Points."

Fourth layer of Foundation Establishment, successfully broken through...

Now, Lin Jing had finally become a mid-phase Foundation Establishment cultivator.

If Liu Yiyuan had not yet broken through to the middle phase of Foundation Establishment, then Lin Jing's cultivation would have already surpassed Liu Yiyuan's.

Back then, Lin Jing was just a mid-phase Qi Refinement cultivator when he encountered Liu Yiyuan.

Now, he had reached the mid-phase of Foundation Establishment.

If Liu Yiyuan knew this, who knows what he would think...

After the successful breakthrough, Lin Jing simply smiled lightly.

He did not get up, but continued to meditate to stabilize his cultivation.

Until he felt it was about time, Lin Jing finally left the System Space.

Once out of the System Space, Lin Jing looked outside immediately.

It was already a tranquil deep night, except for the occasional sound of birds sweeping across the night sky, the rest of the time was incredibly quiet.

Tonight, he still had to go to the black market.

And now was the time...

Just right.

Chapter 205: Selling Pills on the Black Market

Afterwards, Lin Jing disguised himself and then stepped out of the courtyard.

The Nanshan Fang Market had been expanded into the Nanshan Immortal City, and the former Teleportation Arrays leading to the black market had all been abandoned, with new locations already replaced.

Lin Jing, of course, knew these new locations very well.

Leaving the courtyard, Lin Jing walked on the streets...

Even though he resided in the outer city, the present Nanshan Immortal City was not the same as the old Nanshan Fang Market.

The outer city was very safe as well.

Lin Jing continued on until he reached the end of the street where there was a small alley; he arrived at the entrance of the alley and turned directly into it.

In the middle of this alley, there was an inconspicuous little courtyard.

The door of this small courtyard was left ajar.

Lin Jing pushed the door open and walked in.

Inside the courtyard was actually a Teleportation Array to the black market.

After entering the courtyard, Lin Jing went over to a well surrounded by overgrown weeds.

It looked utterly desolate, and even the houses within the courtyard seemed dilapidated.

A gust of wind blew by, causing the broken door to creak and sway...

The atmosphere could even be described as somewhat terrifying.

Then...

Lin Jing approached the well in the middle of the courtyard and found a groove next to the well's edge.

He then took out a Black Market Token from his Storage Bag and placed it into the groove on the well's edge.

As soon as the Black Market Token was placed there, a dismal green light flared up around it.

As the light grew more intense, the Token in the groove fell off automatically, and Lin Jing stretched out his hand to catch it as it flew back into his grasp.

However, what Lin Jing did next, if seen by some commoners who had never seen a cultivator, would likely scare them witless.

Because...

Lin Jing approached the well and jumped straight down.

It turned out that the entrance to this well was the Teleportation Array to the black market.

Who knows what kind of genius came up with this idea for constructing the Teleportation Array...

They even changed the originally pure white light of the Teleportation Array to a dismal green color just to suit the atmosphere.

This also demonstrated that the person's mastery of formations was definitely not low.

As the dismal green light dissipated, Lin Jing disappeared from within the courtyard, which then returned to its previous quiet state...

When he reappeared, Lin Jing was already in the dense woods outside of the black market.

With the expansion of Nanshan Fang Market into Nanshan Immortal City and the dramatic increase in population, to avoid overcrowding...

...the black market had naturally also expanded to some extent.

It remained unknown just where exactly this valley that housed the black market was located, so mysterious that to this day no one knew its location.

Or perhaps, even if someone did know, they dared not reveal it.

After all...

The person in charge of the black market was that exceedingly terrifying Demon Lord.

After arriving via teleportation, Lin Jing took out a Black Gauze Bamboo Hat from his Storage Bag and put it on his head.

Then, he started making his way towards the black market.

It didn't take long for Lin Jing to arrive at the entrance to the black market.

At the moment, there were several guards stationed at the entrance.

Among them was a dark-skinned elder.

This elder, whom Lin Jing had come to recognize from his frequent visits to the black market, was one of the market's managers and possessed the cultivation of the Golden Core Stage.

Others who saw him would generally address him respectfully as "Black Elder."

Black Elder usually didn't venture out unless necessary.

It was unknown why today he had appeared at the entrance to the black market.

Lin Jing approached the entrance, handing over the Spirit Stones he had prepared in advance to the guard at the door.

Then, the guard gestured to the one behind him who, in turn, lowered his weapon and cleared the entrance.

After that, Lin Jing walked right in.

Black Elder merely glanced at Lin Jing before paying him no further attention.

Once inside the black market, Lin Jing walked on the bustling streets, surrounded by various pedestrians.

But most of the people here, like Lin Jing, wore black gauze bamboo hats.

Only a few dared to show their true faces.

Of course, that might not be real either.

After the expansion of the Black Market, the streets of the market were much more spacious than before, and although there were more people coming to the market now, it still didn't feel crowded.

Lin Jing followed the street to the spot where he usually set up his stall, only to find that someone else had already taken it.

Previously, the Black Market authorities had approached him, wanting to lease that stall spot to Lin Jing long-term.

But he had declined.

Because Lin Jing often didn't come for a long time, sometimes not visiting for several months at a stretch.

Keeping that stall was not very useful.

Besides, apart from Lin Jing...

There was no second Elixir Valley Heir in the Black Market to worry about being impersonated.

Because no one else could bring out so many Pure Elixirs...

Seeing the spot occupied, Lin Jing didn't mind and continued to look for another unoccupied stall.

The increase in people at the Black Market also meant that stalls were in short supply.

It wasn't until he had almost reached the end of the street that Lin Jing found an empty stall.

Then...

Lin Jing went to that stall and started to get busy.

On his way here, in addition to looking for an unoccupied stall, Lin Jing had also been on the lookout for Ning Yue's figure.

However, along the way...

He had not seen Ning Yue.

As Lin Jing placed a Pure Jade Box on the stall and set up the signboard of the Elixir Valley Heir,

it immediately attracted the attention of many people.

"Elixir Valley Heir..."

A man, upon seeing the signboard displayed by Lin Jing, exclaimed in surprise and ran straight to the stall, gathering around it.

"Fellow Daoist, do you have Pure Healing Elixirs? I'll take one."

"Yes..."

"100 Midium Grade Spirit Stones..."

Lin Jing replied directly.

"Understood, understood..."

The man nodded eagerly.

With the large population in Nanshan Immortal City, what followed was a rise in prices.

So, Lin Jing raised the price of his Elixir Medicines.

Before, when prices were low, he had ripped off Liu Yiyuan, selling for 100 Midium Grade Spirit Stones.

But now, with the rise in prices,

Lin Jing directly sold at the price of 100 Midium Grade Spirit Stones.

At this price of 100 Midium Grade Spirit Stones, nobody objected; in fact, it was very much in demand.

Because most of the buyers of these Elixir Medicines were disciples from powerful families, and they certainly weren't short of Spirit Stones.

Then, Lin Jing took a Pure Jade Box out of his Storage Bag and placed it on the stall.

Meanwhile, the man took out 100 Midium Grade Spirit Stones from his Storage Bag and handed them over to Lin Jing.

He then picked up the Pure Healing Elixir, glanced at it, and tucked it into his Storage Bag.

He didn't even bother to check it.

"Fellow Daoist, won't you check it?"

Lin Jing asked afterwards.

"I've bought your Elixir Medicines twice already, and I'm very familiar with them. I can tell at a glance…"

"Besides, these Pure Elixirs can't be faked..."

Seeing the man say this, Lin Jing had nothing more to say.

"Uh..."

"Alright then..."

Following that, the transaction was completed, and the man bid farewell to Lin Jing and left.

Chapter 206: The Untainted Foundation Building Elixir Priced at 5000 Spirit Stones

However, this was just the beginning...

After that man left, a few others spotted Lin Jing's stall...

These people were clearly in a group, and after some discussion, each of them bought a Pure Elixir Medicine.

After these people finished purchasing the Elixir Medicines, they left...

Since Lin Jing's stall was in a rather remote location, almost at the very end of the street, there weren't many visitors...

But Lin Jing wasn't in a hurry; his main purpose was to wait for Ning Yue and the others to arrive.

As long as the news of the Elixir Valley Heir spread out, there would be no lack of visitors.

Sure enough, not long after those people left...

The news of the Elixir Valley Heir's appearance once again began to circulate in the black market.

As more and more people heard the news and came, Lin Jing's stall was once again surrounded.

The scene got very lively for a while...

The thirty-some Elixir Medicines that Lin Jing brought out this time were quickly snatched up by the crowd.

Had it not been for Lin Jing's prior restriction that each person could only buy two at most.

those Elixir Medicines would have probably been gone much earlier.

With the rest of the Elixir Medicines sold out, and just as everyone was losing interest...

Lin Jing took out the last Elixir Medicine from his Storage Bag and said to the crowd in front of his stall:

"Fellow Daoists, this is the last Elixir Medicine I brought out this time."

"The Pure Foundation Building Elixir..."

In fact, as soon as Lin Jing took out the Elixir Medicine, some sharp-eyed individuals noticed that it was a Pure Foundation Building Elixir.

The value of a Pure Foundation Building Elixir was much greater than that of the other Elixir Medicines.

Everyone's eyes shone as they looked at the Pure Foundation Building Elixir.

"Fellow Daoist, is this the only Pure Foundation Building Elixir?"

Soon, someone couldn't hold back and began to ask.

Lin Jing nodded and said:

"Yes..."

"There is only this one Pure Foundation Building Elixir."

No sooner had Lin Jing finished speaking, another voice rose from the crowd:

"May I know how you intend to sell this Pure Foundation Building Elixir, Fellow Daoist?"

"Is it still 100 Medium Grade Spirit Stones?"

As soon as this person finished speaking, a corpulent cultivator spoke up to refute:

"100 Medium Grade Spirit Stones, what are you thinking?"

"This is a Foundation Building Elixir, a Pure Foundation Building Elixir..."

Lin Jing looked up to see who had spoken...

He saw that the cultivator was exceptionally corpulent, taking up the space of three people by himself.

Moreover, this person wasn't wearing a Black Gauze Bamboo Hat to conceal himself.

It seemed unnecessary, given his rare physique; there was probably no need for him to hide.

After speaking, he turned back to Lin Jing and said:

"Fellow Daoist, I'll take the Pure Foundation Building Elixir, name your price..."

No sooner had he finished speaking...

The person who had been refuted immediately followed up with an explanation:

"I was just asking a question; I didn't say I would definitely buy it with 100 Medium Grade Spirit Stones..."

"Of course, I know that the Pure Foundation Building Elixir is valuable..."

After explaining and feeling it wasn't enough, he went on to angrily refute the corpulent cultivator:

"You want it?"

"On what grounds do you want it? Because you have a big face?"

At these words...

The surroundings immediately erupted into guiet "pu-chi" laughter...

They were obviously amused by the comment.

Lin Jing looked back at the corpulent cultivator...

Goodness...

The man's face was indeed not small, and the fat on his face was sagging, almost becoming wide...

Lin Jing almost burst out laughing.

But the cultivator with the big face, as if a sore spot had been poked, immediately yelled at the other cultivator:

"That is the cultivation technique I practice, the technique..."

Following that, the two of them started arguing on the spot.

However, given that this was the black market, no one dared to make a move.

The scene became exceedingly chaotic for a moment...

It seemed that many people had their eyes on the Pure Foundation Building Elixir.

At this point, Lin Jing had to speak up.

"Everyone, please quiet down..."

Seeing Lin Jing speak, the two who were arguing also quieted down, turned their heads away, and stopped looking at each other.

Even though they were not willing to concede to one another, they still had to give face to the Elixir Valley Heir.

Then, everyone turned their attention to Lin Jing.

Lin Jing surveyed the crowd, ready to present his solution...

Just then, his gaze shifted through the crowd and unexpectedly landed on Ning Yue.

At this moment, Ning Yue was walking towards this place...

No doubt, they had arrived here after hearing the news about the Elixir Valley Heir.

Following Ning Yue was Li Tangyu, and an elderly man in a purple robe with all white hair and beard.

This elder with the visage of a youthful old man led the way, and if Lin Jing wasn't mistaken, it must be the Ning Family's patriarch.

However, Lin Jing merely glanced at them before moving on, without lingering his gaze on the group.

Next, Lin Jing spoke to the people in front of him:

"Since you all want it, there is no point in arguing. The owner of this Pure Foundation Building Elixir will be the highest bidder."

As Lin Jing's words ended, the rotund cultivator who had been called 'big-faced' immediately said:

"I bid 300 Midium Grade Spirit Stones."

But no sooner had his words fallen than the cultivator who had been sparring with him also called out a price:

"I bid 400..."

"500, Midium Grade Spirit Stones..."

The rotund cultivator followed up.

"800 Midium Grade Spirit Stones, I really want this Pure Foundation Building Elixir..."

At this point, one cultivator wearing an ancient bronze mask spoke up.

A bid of 800 Midium Grade Spirit Stones indeed wasn't low.

Even the rotund cultivator and his bidding rival stopped raising the price.

Shortly after the voice of the man in the ancient bronze mask fell, another voice came from behind the crowd.

"My young friend, pardon the intrusion..."

"This old one has business to discuss with the Elixir Valley friend today..."

"I offer 5000 Midium Grade Spirit Stones to purchase this Pure Foundation Building Elixir."

As the voice ended, everyone turned their heads to look backward.

They saw Ning Yue and the other two...

Since none of the three had made any attempt at concealing themselves,

Lin Jing saw them very clearly...

The one who spoke was indeed the Ning Family patriarch.

5000 Midium Grade Spirit Stones, far exceeding the value of the Pure Foundation Building Elixir; it seemed that he wouldn't offer such a high price if he didn't have an important matter.

That's what everyone thought...

Seeing Ning Yue and the others approaching the stall, the crowd that had been jostling close together quickened to part to the sides and cleared a path.

At this moment, none of the onlookers left; they all wanted to witness the moment of the Pure Elixir Medicine transaction.

The Ning Family's patriarch reached the stall and directly took out a small Storage Bag meant for transactions and handed it to Lin Jing.

"Here are 5000 Midium Grade Spirit Stones, young friend, please verify..."

Even Lin Jing had not expected the Ning Family patriarch to start off by handing over 5000 Midium Grade Spirit Stones upon his arrival...

This move stunned not only the surrounding crowd but even Lin Jing himself for a moment.

"He actually meant it..."

"He really plans to use 5000 Midium Grade Spirit Stones to buy this Pure Elixir Medicine."

A shock ran through the crowd, some even exclaimed aloud.

Meanwhile, Lin Jing pondered inwardly:

"I wonder what Ning Yue told him when he returned; the Ning Family patriarch has yet to bring up the matter of the seed, and yet he is offering 5000 Midium Grade Spirit Stones right off the bat."

"Now it seems that the issue with the seed hasn't been resolved by the Li Family either."

"The situation doesn't look too good..."

Chapter 207: Deliberation

However...

Since the Ning Family ancestor had given the Spirit Stones, Lin Jing had to accept them.

Otherwise, it really wouldn't be easy to explain...

Afterward, Lin Jing reached out, took the small Storage Bag, then opened it and looked inside.

He saw that the inside was densely packed, filled to the brim with Midium Grade Spirit Stones,

Lin Jing counted them, a total of 50 stacks, each stack containing 100 pieces, adding up to a total of 5000 Midium Grade Spirit Stones.

After counting, Lin Jing raised his head.

"5000 pieces, not one more, not one less..."

Then, Lin Jing turned to the crowd and said,

"Fellow Daoists, this senior has offered 5000 Midium Grade Spirit Stones to purchase this Pure Foundation Building Elixir. It seems there's no one else who can outbid this senior, so this Pure Foundation Building Elixir will be sold to this senior..."

As Lin Jing's voice fell, the crowd was filled with nothing but exclamations and a very few who felt extreme regret.

However, no one objected.

After all, the price of 5000 Midium Grade Spirit Stones was indeed enough to deter people.

Then, Lin Jing said to the crowd,

"Alright, fellow Daoists."

"The Elixir Medicine has been sold, you may all disperse now."

After Lin Jing finished speaking, the people shook their heads and dispersed.

Some who hadn't managed to buy the Elixir Medicine inquired with Lin Jing when he would come out next time.

Lin Jing generally wouldn't come out unless he had a certain amount of Pure Elixir Medicine in hand.

So...

Lin Jing explained for a bit, giving them a rough time frame.

Only after these people had all left did...

After those people had left, Lin Jing then handed over the Pure Foundation Building Elixir to the Ning Family ancestor.

Afterward, Lin Jing gave a fist salute to the Ning Family ancestor and said,

"Senior, you said you wanted to see me about something, may I ask what it is?"

As soon as Lin Jing's words ended, Li Tangyu spoke up,

"Ning Senior, this place is not convenient. The black market has a Secret Trade Room for conducting secretive transactions. We could go there to discuss..."

The Ning Family ancestor nodded and then spoke,

"Young friend, it is inconvenient here, how about we go to the Secret Trade Room?"

"Alright..."

Lin Jing nodded his head and readily agreed.

"Please wait a moment, the three of you."

"I need to clear up this stall first."

Having sold all the Elixir Medicine, there wasn't much to clear, and in a short while, Lin Jing had the stall tidied up.

"Senior, we can go now."

After clearing up, Lin Jing followed the others toward the Secret Trade Room.

Shortly, the group arrived at the Secret Trade Room.

Li Tangyu stepped forward, paid a Midium Grade Spirit Stone, and then received the Token to open the Secret Trade Room from an elder in black at the front desk.

After that, Li Tangyu led the way, with Lin Jing and the others following, heading inside.

Upon reaching the door of the room, Li Tangyu placed the Token into the groove at the entrance and the Formation activated, opening the door.

"Please..."

Li Tangyu gestured with his hand, indicating for them to come in.

Once Lin Jing and the other two had entered, Li Tangyu came in and closed the door behind them.

"Ning Senior, it's all set..."

"This Secret Trade Room is specially designed for secret transactions in the black market. Here, even a Golden Core Cultivator like yourself cannot pry in."

"Moreover, when we entered just now, the two at the counter were Golden Core Cultivators. If anything unusual happens, they will take immediate action."

This statement...

It seemed as if it was meant for the Ning Family ancestor to hear, but in reality, it was more so for Lin Jing's benefit...

It was to put Lin Jing at ease and to show that they meant no harm to Lin Jing.

Then the Ning Family ancestor spoke,

"Young friend of Elixir Valley, I would like to inquire, does your Elixir Valley have someone proficient in cultivating Spirit Plants?"

Indeed, as soon as they entered, the Ning Family ancestor went straight to the topic.

Upon hearing this, Lin Jing responded,

"I'm not hiding anything from the senior, in our Elixir Valley, there indeed is an expert proficient in the cultivation of Spirit Plants."

"After all..."

"Many of the Spirit Plants in our Elixir Valley are grown by ourselves, naturally requiring meticulous care."

"May I ask, senior, you said you were looking for me for a matter, could it be this matter?"

The Ning Family ancestor nodded and said:

"Correct, I have a Spirit Plant seed here that I simply cannot get to grow, and I would like those seniors of your Elixir Valley to take a look and help..."

"I wonder, young friend, if you would be willing to help lead the way and take this old body to your Elixir Valley for a visit..."

After hearing this, Lin Jing first gave the Ning Family ancestor a bow.

Then he spoke, rejecting the Ning Family ancestor's request.

"Senior, I apologize!"

"Our Elixir Valley has always remained hidden from the world, never making contact with outsiders..."

"This, I'm afraid I cannot comply with the senior's request..."

At this moment, to avoid any unpleasantness, Li Tangyu also helped to explain from the side:

"Senior Ning, you may not be aware..."

"Besides this heir of Elixir Valley, we have not seen anyone else leave the valley; it seems they have their own rules..."

"I see..."

The Ning Family ancestor's brow furrowed slightly, but after listening to Li Tangyu's explanation, he nodded and then said:

"Then. I won't enter..."

"I wonder if it would be possible to have that expert proficient in the cultivation of Spirit Plants from your Elixir Valley come to this black market?"

"I wish to consult with him in person, how about it?"

"This..."

Lin Jing pondered for a moment and then said:

"The expert from our Elixir Valley has never left the valley since entering it."

"Moreover, he has a peculiar temperament, not allowing others to mention worldly affairs in front of him, not even the Valley Master is an exception."

"I regret I cannot fulfill the senior's request and hope the senior will forgive me..."

This matter, of course, Lin Jing also could not agree to.

After all...

The Elixir Valley he spoke of, did not exist.

Where could he go to find that expert proficient in Spirit Plant cultivation?

Having said this...

Lin Jing took out 5000 Medium Grade Spirit Stones from his Storage Bag and handed them to the Ning Family ancestor.

"These Spirit Stones, please take them back, senior..."

The Ning Family ancestor's brow furrowed, clearly displeased, but he still said:

"These were for the purchase of Pure Foundation Building Elixirs; they have nothing to do with this matter..."

"You take them back..."

After the Ning Family ancestor finished speaking, Lin Jing did not go to take the small Storage Bag,

and inside the room, no one else spoke, making the atmosphere tense for a moment.

"Is there really no other way?"

A moment later...

Ning Yue spoke up, frowning.

"Actually, I do have a proposal..."

Lin Jing then spoke.

"What proposal...?"

The Ning Family ancestor looked up, turning his gaze to Lin Jing.

Lin Jing said:

"If you trust me, you can hand over that seed to me, and I will take it back to Elixir Valley..."

"Then, have that expert help inspect it."

"If that expert finds a solution after inspecting the seed..."

"I will bring the seed out again and return it to the senior, while also sharing the solution with the senior."

Taking advantage of the moment, Lin Jing spoke out the explanation he had thought through beforehand.

Because only by doing so could he take that seed back to the System Space for inspection.

As Lin Jing's words ended, both the Ning Family ancestor and Ning Yue frowned, falling silent.

They began to contemplate...

Chapter 208: Trouble at the Li Family

If he were to hand over the seed of the Moon Mulberry Spirit Fruit to someone else...

It would be akin to entrusting the fate of their entire Ning Family to another.

Their hesitation was a natural course of action.

Lin Jing was of course aware that this would put them in a difficult position...

However, he would never expose his own secrets.

Beyond this, there was no other way.

After a moment of thought, the Ning Family ancestor made a move...

He pointed at Ning Yue and said to Lin Jing:

"Young friend, please wait..."

"This matter is of great importance, I wish to discuss it with this junior member of my family..."

"I hope you can step aside for a moment..."

"After we've discussed, we will give you an answer, if that is acceptable..."

"Of course, that's fine..."

Lin Jing nodded in response.

Since the Ning Family ancestor had already said so, it was not appropriate for Lin Jing to continue staying here.

Lin Jing spoke to the Ning Family ancestor:

"In that case, I will step out first. Let me know once you've finished your discussion."

Having said that, Lin Jing was about to walk outside.

At this moment...

Li Tangyu also came over and said to Lin Jing:

"Fellow Daoist, let us go together..."

It was clear that he was also not suited to remain here while the Ning Family ancestor and Ning Yue discussed the matter.

Then, Lin Jing and Li Tangyu left the Secret Trade Room together and walked outside.

The two of them left the Secret Trade Room but did not go far, staying not far from the entrance.

The pair were silent for a moment...

Then, Li Tangyu looked at Lin Jing seriously and suddenly said:

"Fellow Daoist..."

"I constantly have this feeling that I am acquainted with you."

"Have we met before?"

Lin Jing nodded directly and said:

"Of course we have..."

"I've long heard of Young Master Li's great name..."

"Moreover, I often go to Nanshan Immortal City to make purchases, and I've seen Young Master Li on the streets a few times."

"However, I've always been in disguise, not wanting to expose my identity, which is why you might find me familiar."

"No wonder I felt this sense of familiarity, you also frequent Nanshan Immortal City... I understand now..."

Li Tangyu said, suddenly enlightened.

"Of course..."

Lin Jing continued:

"Many of the alchemy ingredients we use in Elixir Valley are purchased from Yuebaolou and other merchants."

"I understand. I understand..."

Li Tangyu nodded in response.

In his mind, with the many alchemists in Elixir Valley, there was a natural need for a large amount of alchemy ingredients. The spirit plants grown by Elixir Valley alone would surely not suffice.

The same was true for the Li Family.

Though the Li Family also had their spirit fields, the number of alchemists in the Li Family was not few...

The alchemy ingredients used each year were innumerable, and solely relying on their own cultivation would definitely not be enough.

It only made sense to purchase from the outside world.

Therefore...

Li Tangyu did not doubt what Lin Jing had said.

Afterward, the two chatted casually for a few sentences before falling silent again.

Because Li Tangyu realized that this heir of Elixir Valley seemed to be watching the passersby on the street without any interest in idle chatter with him.

He then refrained from being a nuisance and did not say anything further.

In fact...

It wasn't that Lin Jing did not want to chat, but he did not dare...

After all, trouble often starts with careless talk.

The more he said, the greater the chance of making mistakes.

If he were by any chance careless and something seemed off to Li Tangyu, that would spell trouble...

So, the best strategy was to keep silent...

Soon, a quarter hour passed...

At this time, someone emerged from the Secret Trade Room.

Lin Jing and Li Tangyu turned their heads to look, only to see the elder of the Ning Family and Ning Yue walking toward them.

Coming to a stop nearby...

The elder of the Ning Family said to Lin Jing with a smile:

"Young friend, to be frank, this seed is of great significance to our clan..."

"And the Elixir Valley where you reside is inaccessible to outsiders, plus those seniors you mentioned cannot come out either..."

"We are truly at a loss as to what decision to make at this moment..."

Lin Jing wasn't at all surprised by the elder's words.

After all...

The Moon Mulberry Spirit Fruit seed was tied to the fate of the Ning clan, immeasurably precious – how could they easily hand it over to someone else?

The key point was, it was their first meeting and they were not acquainted.

If it had been another clan, they probably would have left long ago; the elder of the Ning Family was already showing a remarkably good temper.

Then, the elder of the Ning Family continued.

"How about this, we will take two days to think it over. Please come to the black market without fail in three days, by then we will have decided on the outcome and will inform you."

As the elder of the Ning Family finished speaking, Lin Jing immediately responded:

"I understand the concerns of the senior..."

"Let's do as you have said."

"After three days, I will be here waiting for the senior..."

"Thank you, young friend..."

The elder of the Ning Family said to Lin Jing with cupped hands.

"No trouble at all..."

Having settled the matter, Lin Jing then took his leave from the three of them.

Thereafter, Lin Jing left the black market.

Time flew by quickly...

And the next day arrived.

At this moment, Lin Jing was in his own small courtyard, cultivating in the Divine Fire Triple Realm.

A strand of white flame, emitting a terrifying aura, danced continuously between Lin Jing's fingers,

shifting into various shapes as Lin Jing kept forming different seals with his hands.

Lin Jing's spirit was focused intensely on the flame at this moment.

But just then...

A knocking sound "thump thump" came from outside the door...

The knocking startled Lin Jing, causing the flame on his hand to quiver and then dissipate completely.

Lin Jing let out a sigh and calmed the spiritual power within his body before standing up.

Fortunately, Lin Jing had taken precautions earlier, so the sudden disturbance didn't affect him much.

Following that, Lin Jing walked over to the door...

Upon reaching the door, he opened the courtyard gate.

Upon seeing Lin Jing, Huang Qingling said directly:

"Lin Jing..."

"Do you know, a big incident has happened..."

"Qing Ling, my friend, please, come in and speak..."

As he spoke, Lin Jing invited Huang Qingling inside.

After coming into the courtyard, Huang Qingling was the first to speak:

"News just came today – the elder of the Li Family and the disciples he led, they all died within the Secret Realm..."

"Even the head of the Li Family and the Young Master Li Yao died in the Secret Realm. The Li Family is finished this time."

Hearing this news, Lin Jing was also shocked.

The elder of the Li Family was a well-known Golden Core Immortal with extensive experience in combat.

In theory...

Even if he couldn't win, he should've been able to escape without any issues.

How could he have suddenly died inside the Secret Realm?

Lin Jing was puzzled.

And then there was Li Yao; Lin Jing had met him twice, not expecting that he too would die in the Secret Realm along with the elder of the Li Family.

This made Lin Jing frown and ponder:

"Could it be that this Secret Realm is really that dangerous?"

Chapter 209: Heading to the Zhang Family

After pondering for a moment, Lin Jing suddenly thought of the Demon Cultivator he had encountered before...

If they met him, then the Li Family Patriarch might not truly be able to escape.

Therefore, he quickly asked Huang Qingling,

"What exactly is going on?"

"Could it be that like last time, another Demon Cultivator with terrifying cultivation has emerged within the Secret Realm?"

Huang Qingling shook her head repeatedly,

"It's still not very clear..."

"When the incident occurred, the Zhang Family Patriarch was training in the Secret Realm with Zhang Yuan, and it's said that both of them were severely injured."

"The news has just come out, and many people have rushed to the Zhang Family to inquire about the situation."

"Moreover, the message coming from the Secret Realm..."

"Those who were exploring inside have all run out, scared, and the entrance to the Secret Realm has been temporarily sealed."

"What about Zhang Yuan, Brother Zhang, is he alright?"

"I remember that recently, he has been continuously with their family's patriarch..."

"I'm not quite sure..." Huang Qingling replied as she shook her head, then continued,

"I came to find you to say..."

"How about we call on Li Tangyu and his sister to head to the Zhang Family to see..."

"Console Zhang Yuan and also take the opportunity to find out what exactly is happening inside the Secret Realm."

After hearing this, Lin Jing pondered for a moment and then nodded,

"That seems like a good idea..."

Subsequently...

After the two had finished discussing, they were just about to leave the house.

But just then, a knocking sound came from outside...

"Thump thump thump"

As the knocking ended, another voice came from outside the door.

"Brother Lin, are you there...?"

The voice turned out to be Li Tangyu's; unexpectedly, he had arrived first.

"Brother Li has come; if there's nothing wrong, he wouldn't seek me out. It seems it must also be about the Secret Realm..." Lin Jing said to Huang Qingling.

Huang Qingling nodded in agreement,

"That's likely..."

"Let's go and see..."

"Brother Li, wait a moment, we're coming..."

After speaking, Lin Jing and Huang Qingling headed toward the door together.

Upon reaching the door and opening it...

Li Tangyu and his sister Li Qingqing were standing at the doorway, with Ning Yue also behind them.

"Brother Li, Daoist Qingqing, Daoist Ning..."

"What brings you here..." Lin Jing asked.

Li Tangyu then spoke up,

"Brother Lin, an incident occurred in the Demon Race Secret Realm..."

As soon as Li Tangyu started speaking, Huang Qingling interrupted him,

"I've just mentioned this to Lin Jing..."

"Oh..."

Li Tangyu was momentarily stunned, but then said,

"So you all already know..."

"Yes, Daoist Qingling just came over and told me."

"We were even saying we should find you, and then the few of us could go visit Brother Zhang together, as we heard he was injured." Lin Jing spoke directly.

"Yes, I also heard about it and had the same intention, so that's why I came looking for you, Brother Lin…" Li Tangyu then explained.

"Then how about we set off now?" Lin Jing asked Li Tangyu.

"Okay..." Li Tangyu nodded.

At that moment, Lin Jing looked towards Ning Yue, who was standing behind the two.

Then he asked with some confusion,

"Is Daoist Ning also coming along?"

After all, Ning Yue had never met Zhang Yuan, nor was she familiar with him, so going there at this time seemed somewhat unreasonable.

Li Tangyu hastened to explain,

"Miss Ning is here to find Sister Qingling..."

"To find Daoist Qingling?"

Lin Jing was initially taken aback, but then he quickly realized.

It likely had something to do with himself.

After all, previously, in order to deliver Elixir Medicine to Elder Yu, he had contact with Huang Qingling while posing as the Elixir Valley Heir.

And this matter was not concealed by Huang Qingling; Li Tangyu was also aware of it.

So...

Ning Yue wanted to learn about the 'Elixir Valley Heir' through Huang Qingling...

"Looking for me?" Huang Qingling asked, puzzled.

"Yes..."

Ning Yue nodded.

Then, she stepped forward and said to Huang Qingling:

"Huang Daoist friend..."

"I have something I'd like to ask your advice on..."

Huang Qingling looked at Ning Yue and suddenly recalled the events of the previous day, so she opened her mouth and said:

"I don't know what Ning Daoist friend is seeking me out for. Is it related to the Elixir Valley Heir?"

"Yes..."

"I heard from Young Master Li that you've had interactions with the Elixir Valley Heir..."

"I would like to ask, how does Huang Daoist friend view the Elixir Valley Heir? What do you think of his character?"

Upon hearing this, Huang Qingling replied directly:

"As for the Elixir Valley Heir, I don't know how others see him, but I think he's quite decent..."

Having just finished speaking, Huang Qingling felt something was off, so she continued to ask:

"By the way..."

"Didn't you go to the black market last night to find the Elixir Valley Heir?"

"Could it be that you didn't find him?"

Li Tangyu shook his head and explained:

"We did meet the Elixir Valley Heir yesterday, but we didn't come to an agreement..."

"Hmm? What happened?"

"That shouldn't be! I thought the Elixir Valley Heir was quite amiable..."

"How could it be that you didn't come to an agreement?"

"Could it be that his asking price was simply too high?"

Huang Qingling looked at the two of them, her voice filled with curiosity.

At that moment, Ning Yue truly didn't know how to explain the situation to Huang Qingling, so she could only say:

"It's not that!"

"It's just that this matter, when discussed, is rather complicated..."

"Let me explain..."

Li Tangyu then took over the conversation, explaining to Huang Qingling:

"Originally, the Ning Family Patriarch wanted to enter Elixir Valley personally to seek advice from the people there..."

"But Elixir Valley does not welcome outsiders..."

"And this seed is far too precious; even the Ning Family Patriarch didn't dare to make a decision lightly..."

Li Tangyu briefly summarized the matter to Huang Qingling.

After Li Tangyu finished explaining, Huang Qingling pondered for a moment and then nodded slightly:

"In that case..."

"Indeed, that would be difficult to handle, after all, you don't know each other and lack a foundation of trust, so you can't just rashly entrust the fate of your family to a stranger."

After saying this, Huang Qingling once again turned to Ning Yue, speaking very earnestly:

"If it were up to me, I might be more inclined to trust the Elixir Valley Heir a bit more."

"Because when facing him, I had a familiar feeling and thought that he was trustworthy..."

"Of course, this is just an intuition..."

"But I trust my intuition."

"However, since this matter concerns the entire Ning Family, it's not my place to make a decision for you."

"Ultimately, you'll have to make up your own minds about this."

Ning Yue nodded, bowed in thanks to Huang Qingling:

"Thank you, Huang Daoist friend. I understand."

At that moment, Lin Jing spoke up, asking Ning Yue:

"Apart from the Elixir Valley Heir, do you have any other methods?"

"In the Qingyuan Sword Sect, there is a remarkable person proficient in cultivating Spirit Plants..." Ning Yue replied.

"Now our family Patriarch, along with Young Master Li's grandfather, have already gone up to the Qingyuan Sword Sect..."

"Before leaving, the Patriarch mentioned that he didn't have high hopes, and they wanted to try their luck..."

"If it really doesn't work out, we might have no choice but to approach the Elixir Valley Heir once again…"

Ning Yue stated candidly.

After Ning Yue finished speaking, Lin Jing only offered a few words of consolation and did not attempt to make excuses for the 'Elixir Valley Heir.'

Because there was no need to do so—if they naturally trusted him, they did. If they didn't, no amount of persuasion from Lin Jing would have any effect.

Moreover, intervening in this matter would be unreasonable for him.

Afterward, the group finished their discussion and set off toward the Zhang Family.

On the bustling street leading to the Zhang Family, the crowd surged back and forth, never ceasing.

Lin Jing, Li Tangyu, and Ning Yue talked about Alchemy as they walked.

Li Qingqing and Huang Qingling, clearly uninterested, were glancing around every which way...

But just then...

As Li Qingqing, idling about, craned her neck to look ahead, she suddenly exclaimed:

"Liu Yiyuan..."

Chapter 210: The Arrogant Yun Family Young Master

The three, including Lin Jing, who were engaged in conversation up front, also hurriedly looked up and gazed ahead.

Right across from them, two figures were walking towards them...

The one leading the way had the air of a dashing young master, clad in white, appearing quite charming and suave.

Following behind him, with bowed head, was none other than Liu Yiyuan, whom they hadn't seen in a long time.

Seeing the newcomers, Ning Yue's face turned exceedingly ugly on the spot.

Witnessing this, Lin Jing sensed trouble. It seemed Ning Yue must have caught sight of Liu Yiyuan and was reminded of past events...

To prevent Ning Yue from becoming too impulsive, Lin Jing quickly tried to console her:

"Ning, my friend, that is Liu Yiyuan from the Liu Clan of Nanshan Immortal City. His family boasts two Golden Core Immortals. He's not someone to provoke lightly..."

"Don't act rashly..."

"You're talking about Liu Yiyuan, but who is he?"

As soon as Lin Jing finished speaking, Ning Yue turned her head, looking at him with confusion.

Seeing Ning Yue's reaction, Lin Jing was somewhat flabbergasted, his face a picture of bafflement.

"Isn't it, Ning Yue actually doesn't recognize Liu Yiyuan?"

"Then why did her face look so terrible just now?"

Lin Jing couldn't help but muse inwardly.

Seeing that Lin Jing didn't respond, Ning Yue turned her head back towards the opposite side.

Suddenly, her gaze drifted to the side...

And it was just at that moment that Liu Yiyuan raised his head...

After clearly seeing the man's face, Ning Yue's expression grew even uglier...

"It's actually him..."

Seeing this man's face brought to mind that perilous moment from the past.

Back then, in a desperate bid to save his own life, he had thrown Luo Luo towards the Flame Poison Centipede...

If it weren't for Lin Jing's timely rescue at the critical moment, she and Luo Luo would have likely perished at the fangs of the Flame Poison Centipede three years ago...

She had thought all was in the past, that she would never encounter this man again...

Yet, to her surprise, she ran into him here, of all places...

And this man was with another person she found most distasteful...

At this moment...

Liu Yiyuan and the charming young master also noticed Lin Jing's group.

The scornful gaze of the young master swept over the group, and upon seeing Ning Yue, a wicked smirk appeared on his lips before he boldly strode toward them...

Lin Jing and the others frowned deeply at the sight of this approaching young master.

"So this is who it is, my would-be concubine who has yet to cross my threshold..."

"What ...?"

"Have you grown tired of waiting at home and come to warm your husband's bed?"

Hearing these words, Lin Jing and the others realized who this man was.

Turns out, he was the Yun Family's Young Master.

At this point, Lin Jing finally understood why Ning Yue's face had been so unsightly earlier.

Nonetheless, it was unclear why he had joined forces with Liu Yiyuan.

"Yun Long, the outcome of this matter is still uncertain, and if you dare to spout nonsense again, I'll kill you..."

Out of extreme anger, Ning Yue's face turned steel blue as she spoke to the Yun Family Young Master.

Her hands, too, were clenched tightly at this moment.

It seemed she was struggling to control her emotions...

Fearing she might lose restraint and attack in the street.

In response, Li Tangyu stepped forward with a serious expression and said to the Yun Family Young Master:

"Esteemed fellow, Miss Ning is a friend of mine. Please show her some respect."

But the Yun Family Young Master disregarded Li Tangyu's words and continued to taunt Ning Yue:

"Oh, oh, oh..."

"You, wanting to kill me..."

"You're barely at the primary stage of Foundation Establishment. Do you really have the strength?"

Then

He scanned the group, pointing towards Li Tangyu and Huang Qingling and said:

"All of you, apart from him..."

"And that beauty there."

"The rest probably can't even withstand a single strike from me..."

Such arrogance from the Yun Family Young Master suggested his Cultivation was not low...

And he had instantly seen through everyone's level of Cultivation.

Li Tangyu, who had just advanced to the peak of Foundation Establishment not long ago, had his level discerned, suggesting that the Young Master was at least of peak Foundation Establishment Cultivation himself...

Having spoken, the Yun Family Young Master then turned to Liu Yiyuan and said:

"The ones who caused your Heart Demon, it wouldn't be these two, would it..."

The fact that Liu Yiyuan had developed a Heart Demon was known only within the Liu Clan and not to outsiders.

Yet the Yun Family Young Master brazenly revealed this secret, demonstrating that he was not just arrogant, but also dismissive of Liu Yiyuan's presence at his side.

Having his embarrassing secret exposed, Liu Yiyuan was seething with anger, his head bowed and fists clenched, yet he dared not lash out...

Because the Yun Family was too powerful for the Liu Clan to provoke.

Moreover, earlier on...

The Wu Cai Immortal had warned him that the Yun Family Young Master was not to be provoked but to be appeased, as it concerned the Liu Clan's future destiny...

Yun Long saw Liu Yiyuan's reaction and seemed unconcerned, but suddenly remarked:

"If it weren't for our Yun Family's assistance, you'd probably still be stuck at the primary stage of Foundation Establishment...

This statement was clearly meant as a warning.

It was evident he was aware of Liu Yiyuan's discontent.

Hearing this, Liu Yiyuan gradually unclenched his fists.

He then took a moment to collect himself before pointing towards Li Tangyu, addressing the Yun Family Young Master:

"Young Master Yun, this is Young Master Li Tan from the Li Family, Li Tangyu."

After finishing his introduction, Liu Yiyuan pointed towards Lin Jing and continued:

"The one who aggrieved me was him..."

The Yun Family Young Master followed Liu Yiyuan's pointing finger and, seeing Lin Jing merely had the Cultivation of Qi Refinement's eighth level, he burst into uproarious laughter:

"Hahaha..."

"Qi Refinement's eighth level, and you, a Foundation Establishment Cultivator, are troubled by a Heart Demon because of an ant like him..."