

## Three Realms 1051

### Chapter 1051: Speed in Earning Money

The bounties in the Bounty Arena were separated into ten ranks.

The bounty for the first rank was 50 thousand saint spirit stones, the second rank was 100 thousand, the third was 200 thousand, and the fourth was 300 thousand. There was a big jump in bounty starting from the fifth rank with 500 thousand saint spirit stones, the sixth was 1 million, the seventh was 2 million, the eighth 5 million, and the ninth 10 million.

The tenth rank was meant for the most supreme of bounties. The diamond of all bounties. They would only appear on the final three days. These bounties were of utmost difficulty and were the penultimate event. The lowest reward for a rank ten bounty was 30 million saint spirit stones, but it was only the starting price. The sky was the limit for a bounty of this rank. It was also the most sought after and exciting event. The bounties before it were nothing but a warm-up.

To put it in simpler terms, it was to allow the arena lords and assistants to make some money. At the beginning, the arena lords would often refrain from taking on bounties out of respect for their status. When the assistants completed a bounty, half of it would be distributed to the arena lord. They were guaranteed to make money as soon as they made arena lord. They could earn a large sum of bounty even if they chose not to take on any missions.

Becoming an arena lord was no easy feat. It was so difficult that it bordered on impossible. A large sum of money was required as guarantee in tryouts, and they would lose a tenth of it if they failed. It was why many preferred to be assistants. They had to split half of their bounties to the arena lords, but they didn't have to bear any risks. It was guaranteed profit.

"Yanyu, you should return to your sub arena. The amount of customers in this event has already exceeded our expectations. Business is surprisingly good." Jiang Chen consoled Lin Yanyu after noticing the dejected look in his eyes. The latter probably felt that it was a waste to lose such a big business. He glanced towards the man who'd just left and saw him walk to another arena.

"Don't bother about him. He'll come back to us in the end." Jiang Chen said confidently.

True enough, the man found that none of the other arena lords could solve his problem after walking around. Many tried to swindle him or ask for an extortionist price. None seemed to know exactly how to solve his problem. He was incredibly depressed. Do I really have to seek his help in the end?

He'd consulted every single arena from the pill dao zone to the general zone. He even went back to Pill King Blue Phoenix's arena. The pill king had taken another look at his bounty and redirected him to Jiang Chen again. He didn't know whether to laugh or to cry. He recalled how furious he'd been when he left Jiang Chen's arena. But in the end, he still found himself at the kid's mercy.

After all, it was a problem that not even the pill king could solve. The pill king recommends that brat's arena even though he was unable to solve the problem? Does this mean that his knowledge is no match for the mysterious, young arena lord? Truth be told, he would never return to Jiang Chen if he could help it.

Unfortunately, that wasn't the case. He reluctantly returned to Jiang Chen's arena.

Jiang Chen didn't respond with mockery or contempt. Instead, he welcomed him with a faint smile. Business was business after all. Jiang Chen wasn't going to resort to flattery or ass-kissing to keep him around.

"Arena Lord Shao, are you certain that you can solve my problem?" Suspicion due to Jiang Chen's age was written all over the man's chubby face.

"My response is still the same. I won't force you to make the deal if you think that I'm unsuitable for the job." Jiang Chen couldn't be bothered to explain himself.

The fat on the man's cheeks trembled a little. He gritted his teeth as though he'd finally made a decision. "I believe you. Five million saint spirit stones for this rank eight bounty right?"

Fatties were typically quite miserly, and this chubby one was no exception. However, it seemed like he was determined to solve this problem of his once and for all.

Five million saint spirit stones were deposited in the arena. The chubby man clutched the spirit stones tightly with his two hands and growled. "Arena Lord Shao, the Bounty Arena has always had incredible credibility. It's also why I've come all the way here to join the event. If you take my money and fail me, I will not let you off easy, and neither will the Temple of Cleansing Fire!"

Jiang Chen could tell that the chubby man was definitely capable of paying five million saint spirit stones. He was just incredibly stingy. Paying this sum was like asking for his life. Jiang Chen was equally as amused as he was annoyed.

"Friend, just ask your own conscience. How can this bounty be worth a mere two million? Moreover, five million is already a huge bargain. If your attitude gets any worse, I might get angry and increase the price again." This wasn't a business he had to accept. His life wouldn't be even mildly affected if he chose not to take the bounty.

The chubby man panicked after hearing that. "Don't! Please don't increase the price! It'd be easier to scavenge the money from my corpse if you did!"

Swish! Swish! Jiang Chen took up his brush and began writing on a piece of paper without saying another word. It didn't take long before he was done answering the main questions, including the question about the spirit herb, the cultivation method, and the curing method.

"Just do as I've written and your problems should be solved. It takes a lot of technique to mass produce true saint rank spirit herbs. Your technique is fine, there's just some issues with the details. It's often the deciding factor for success."

This bounty wasn't actually that difficult. The insight of the spirit herbalist was the deciding factor for its difficulty. Those who know, know. Those who don't, struggle.

The chubby man took the instructions and looked at Jiang Chen blankly. "You really know how to cultivate the Rivercloud Dream Grass?"

"How on earth would I be able to write you an instruction if I didn't?" Jiang Chen was losing his patience. It was the most idiotic question he'd ever heard.

The chubby man grew more and more surprised. "Are you saying that my inability to cultivate the Rivercloud Dream Grass was all due to the fertilizer and not my technical skills?"

Jiang Chen smiled. "Haste doesn't lead to success. More often than not, spirit fertilizers can hasten the growth of spirit herbs, but sometimes it leads to an opposite effect. Your eagerness for its growth is incompatible with the herb's nature."

"Is it really that simple?" The chubby man still found it hard to believe.

Jiang Chen replied blandly. "Why don't you go home and give it a try? If you really need to apply fertilizer, try applying it only at midnight."

The chubby man seemed to have something to say, but Jiang Chen shooed him away with his hands. "Alright, I've already given you the instructions. If you have any issues, feel free to complain to the Temple of Cleansing Fire."

The bounty arena organized by the temple. It was only natural that they would handle all of the complaints as well.

The chubby man was more or less convinced now. He was just incredibly reluctant to part with five million saint spirit stones. He felt incredibly aggrieved for paying so much money in exchange for a piece of instruction and a few words. However, he didn't dare to cause any trouble as he knew the rules of the arena. He picked up the instruction and left, grumbling all the way.

Lin Yanyu was kept incredibly busy at the sub arena, but he was still able to keep an eye on the main arena. He was elated when he saw the chubby man return to the arena to pay five million saint spirit stones. The amount of foresight his master had was unbelievable!

Master is truly incredible! It would've taken us many hours of labor to make five million! We better work harder to keep up. Lin Yanyu didn't remain idle. He had many bounties to claim as well. He was the first in line at the Jiang Chen's sub arena, and was the first person everyone sought. Customers would only be sent down the line if he was busy. Thus, he was practically never without a customer.

By the end of the day, Jiang Chen had only completed two bounties. One was rank eight, and the other rank seven. However, it was a bountiful day for the assistants beneath him. They were swamped with bounties, and made a total sum of sixty million on the first day.

As the arena lord, Jiang Chen would receive half of it. He made roughly forty million on the first day if the two bounties he'd completed was added to the count. Forty million wasn't exactly a large sum to him, but it was incredibly easy money. So much so that he was still in disbelief over how much he made in so little time. Moreover, this was only the first day. Everyone knew that the public mostly preferred to observe on the first day. The following days were only going to be busier.

The public would soon scramble to post their bounties because the event only lasted for fifteen days. If one waited for too long, they might have lost their chance to post a bounty. Jiang Chen made sixty million on the second day, and profits broke through the 100 million mark on the third day.

Profits stabilized on the fourth to sixth day. They hovered around the 100 million to 150 million mark. Something interesting finally happened in the arena on the seventh day. Jiang Chen finally received a rank nine bounty.

Emperor Peerless had actually received rank nine bounties on a daily basis. The public had a lot of trust in him due to his reputation. Thus, almost everyone looking to post a high rank martial dao bounty would seek his help. Pill King Blue Phoenix had already received two rank nine bounties, while Master Wang Xuetong had received one.

Jiang Chen only received his first rank nine bounty after seven days. Moreover, it was a bounty that even Master Wang Xuetong was unable resolve. It was a question related to spirit beasts. The one who posted the bounty was a noble youth from a great clan in Pillfire City. These people often had vast wealth, but an incredibly short temper.

#### Chapter 1052: Unexpected Incident

Jiang Chen glanced at the spirit beast in the noble son's hand. Nothing seemed to be wrong with it. It was keen-eyed, powerful, and brimming with explosive strength.

"Arena Lord Shao, I heard that you did pretty well during the arena lord tryouts, didn't you? Even Formation Master Wang Xuetong has nothing but praises for you. Well, his arena is out of the question. He said that you may be the only one in this entire Bounty Arena who can solve my bounty. I gotta say that I'm pretty confused though. You don't look much older than I am, so how can you possibly win such high praises from old man Wang Xuetong? What kind of benefits did you sneak under the table, or are you actually his bastard son or something?" Noble fops like this guy was disgusting to say the least. He was arrogant, rude, and showed no intention of conducting himself in a socially acceptable manner at all.

Jiang Chen responded indifferently, "You are here to seek medical treatment, aren't you? Or are you just here to talk?"

The dandy laughed. "Can't take a joke, can you? Alright alright, I suppose the mistake is mine. Anyway, can you tell me what's going on with this Cloud Devouring Tiger, man? It looks lively, but something just feels off about it everyday." Jiang Chen smiled disdainfully. "You may leave now."

The good-for-nothing was caught off guard for a second before he demanded unkindly, "What do you mean?"

"Oh, nothing. I just don't welcome a customer like you." Jiang Chen really disliked useless fops like him. Of course, he could see that this fop was highly placed in Pillfire City. He suspected that even Temple of Cleansing Fire had to give face to this noble son's family.

The hedonistic son immediately exploded. "I may be calling you an arena lord right now, but you are nothing the moment you leave this Bounty Arena, man! Did you seriously think you can go against me in Pillfire City?"

If he had tried to sweet talk Jiang Chen instead, Jiang Chen might have welcomed him. Unfortunately, the way he was acting was the kind of behavior Jiang Chen hated the most.

"Get out!" It was only two words, but Jiang Chen had uttered it in a domineering, thunderous manner that caused this part of the Bounty Arena to freeze for an instant.

Those in charge of maintaining order immediately ran over when they noticed the disturbance. When they saw Jiang Chen and the fop butting heads with each other, they immediately tried to defuse the situation.

Sadly, the fellow was obviously the kind of who found energy from a crowd. He also felt that he'd lost face because a foreigner had spoken roughly to him. Furious, he jabbed his forefinger towards Jiang Chen repeatedly. "Very good, very good! Shao Yuan, is it? I won't forget you!"

The Temple of Cleansing Fire's men hastily walked forwards. "Young master Nangong, please calm down. You're in the Bounty Arena right now."

The fellow was infamous for his good-for-nothing actions in Pillfire City. Not even the Temple of Cleansing Fire's name might deter him when stubbornness got to his head.

"Remain calm, my ass! Who the hell is this guy? How do you choose your arena lords? How can you allow an uncultured and uneducated barbarian like this to slip through and hold two arena lord seats? This crude bastard just acted rudely to me. How do you think this score should be settled, huh?"

The Temple's senior executive hurriedly pacified, "Calm down, young master Nangong, calm down. Please give me face, will you? Please give Temple of Cleansing Fire face."

"Fuck you! If I give you face, then who's going to give me face?!" Judging from Nangong's expression, he wasn't going to let go the matter rest until retribution was exacted.

More senior executives had poured into the arena while they were arguing. Assistant Temple Master Gao had also rushed over after hearing that a commotion had broken out somewhere in the Bounty Arena. "What are you doing, Nephew Nangong?" Assistant Temple Master Gao shared a relationship with Nangong Ping's family. In fact, he was on very good terms with them. That was why Nangong Ping had behaved as atrociously as he did in the first place. He thought that the assistant temple master would support him no matter what happened. "Uncle Gao, where does this country bumpkin come from? He has quite the temper even though he has no skill at all. Would you believe that he talked shit in front of your nephew? Tell me, when have I, Nangong Ping, ever suffered such disrespect? Get out, you say? There really aren't many people in the entire Pillfire City who dare say that to me! Who the hell do you think you are?!"

Nangong Ping definitely enjoyed being in the limelight alright. When he saw Assistant Temple Master Gao, he grew even more insufferable as he fired off another round of insults at Jiang Chen. He looked like he could pick a fight at any moment.

Jiang Chen raised his eyebrows, but surprisingly kept quiet for some reason. He glanced calmly at the assistant temple master. He wanted to know how Temple of Cleansing Fire would react in a situation like this.

Assistant Temple Master Gao smiled awkwardly. "Dear nephew, let us speak about this in private, shall we? The Bounty Arena is a grand event celebrated by all in Pillfire City. Your father would be unhappy if he learns that you're making a scene here. Why don't we discuss this in private?"

“Uncle Gao,” said Nangong Ping with a dark face when he heard this. “What do you mean by that? Are you seriously taking the side of an outsider? He humiliated me, and you’re going to pretend that you saw nothing? Is that it?!”

It wasn’t that Assistant Temple Master Gao was biased towards Jiang Chen, but that his hands were tied. Jiang Chen was an arena lord that the Temple had selected and a genius who’d taken two seats of his own accord. Besides, the assistant temple master was also rather cautious of Jiang Chen’s identity as a supposed denizen of Myriad Abyss Island. That was why he couldn’t take any actions against Jiang Chen no matter what. If he did, every arena lord in this Bounty Arena would be extremely disappointed with him.

This was especially true considering the whispers springing up around them. It was obvious that Nangong Ping was the one who’d acted rudely and talked shit from the start. Assistant Temple Master Gao knew Nangong Ping very well. He knew that the lad was not a good person, so he had even less reason to spout literal nonsense in the boy’s defense.

“Dearest nephew, give your Uncle Gao face this time, alright? I’ll give you a proper explanation once we get back home. Every minute in the Bounty Arena is precious, so if you keep this up...”

Furious, Nangong Ping’s temper reared its ugly head in full. “Well, well, Assistant Temple Master Gao! I’ve finally seen through your mask! You may call my father your brother, but it was all just a lie. Very well, if you won’t do me justice then I won’t treat you as my senior too. Today, I will teach this bastard the price of offending I, Nangong Ping!”

Jiang Chen smiled calmly. “Nangong Ping, is it? Look at how impressive you are! I don’t know who your father is in Pillfire City, but I really can’t help but feel sorry for him. I believe that a friend of Assistant Temple Master Gao is a good man as any, but how did he come to raise a bastard like you?”

Even Assistant Temple Master Gao agreed with Jiang Chen for an instant. It was true that he shared a great relationship with Nangong Ping’s father, but business was business. Considering how stupid and unreasonable Nangong Ping was acting right now, he would’ve thrown out of the Bounty Arena already if not for his father. The assistant temple master wouldn’t even be wasting breath on him.

So what if he was a great clan descendant? The Temple of Cleansing Fire only answered to a great emperor faction of Pillfire City, and everyone else was at best their equal. Normally, people answered to the Temple and not the other way around.

Nangong Ping was a dandy, presumptuous and arrogant. He seemed to believe he had the right to behave atrociously even in front of Assistant Temple Master Gao. What he didn’t realize was that he had angered the assistant temple master.

Nangong Ping was obviously at fault in this matter, but he was still making a fuss using this incident as a pretext. From the assistant temple master’s point of view, Nangong Ping’s actions were no different from sabotage!

“Did you hear that, Assistant Temple Master Gao? That bastard humiliated both me and my father! You are the assistant temple master and my father’s brother, aren’t you? Are you really going to sit by and do nothing about this?” Nangong Ping started interrogating the assistant temple master instead! The

latter's face turned cold. "Nangong Ping, this is my last advice to you as your father's friend. I will forget everything that had happened today if you leave right now."

Nangong Ping had never been threatened in his life. Humiliation turned into anger. "Oh, there's no way I'm leaving, if only to see how a mere outsider plans to take a shit on a Pillfire City noble son's head! I don't care if you're a tiger or a dragon, you're going down one way or another, brat! This is Pillfire City!"

Jiang Chen was just about to say something when a blur entered his vision. In the next moment, Nangong Ping was lifted into the air by a big hand.

Everyone exclaimed in surprise when they found Nangong Ping held up in the air by another person. It was none other than Emperor Peerless.

Emperor Peerless frowned slightly as if he wasn't holding a person but a bag of trash. "What are you doing, Assistant Temple Master Gao? You should just throw him right out the door and be done with it. Why even waste your breath with trash like him? Or are you planning to end this Bounty Arena prematurely?"

Assistant Temple Master Gao had no choice but to smile apologetically since it was Emperor Peerless. "His father is a friend of mine. I have to give his father face even if I don't care for his."

"You may know his father, but I don't." With that, the emperor strode straight out of the perimeter and tossed Nangong Ping into the air like he was throwing a ragged doll. The prodigal noble son flew at least a couple hundred meters before he landed on the ground.

"Boy, I don't care who your family is in Pillfire City. If you're going to cause trouble in the Bounty Arena, then you better bring everyone in the family along and pray that they're important enough to stand my wrath!" Emperor Peerless was truly peerless.

Thunderous applause and exclamations of admiration surrounded him. In the end, it was the great emperor who'd tossed the trash straight out of the Bounty Arena without wasting a moment of breath. It was soothing to say the least! Even Jiang Chen felt deep veneration towards Emperor Peerless. Now this was someone who'd won the people's respect.

Pill King Blue Phoenix shook his head wryly when he saw this outcome. Nangong Ping was an infamous good-for-nothing in Pillfire City, so of course he had heard about the boy. Formation Master Wang Xuetong felt no goodwill towards Nangong Ping either. That boy had no idea how to conduct himself before others, nor did he know to respect his seniors either. Worse, Nangong Ping had called Arena Lord Shao Yuan his bastard! Many knew of what'd happened, so no one blamed Jiang Chen for his actions. Nangong Ping was the one who made a scene from the beginning to the end.

Emperor Peerless clapped his hand carelessly. "Alright, let us continue." He glanced at Jiang Chen. "Don't worry. I've given my word to protect you, and that shall be the case for as long as you are in Pillfire City."

Emperor Peerless' tone wasn't flattering. He was simply stating this in the way a senior would to a junior. It left a deep impression on Jiang Chen.

Chapter 1053: One Issue After Another

The issue was settled cleanly thanks to Emperor Peerless. The Temple of Cleansing Fire had been a little too wishy-washy in their handling of this matter. This caused the emperor to temporarily explode with popularity. Jiang Chen's impression of Emperor Peerless was even better than before. He could tell that the emperor was a straightforward person who truly knew how to carry his seniority in front of others.

When the emperor had seen how indecisive and wishy-washy the Temple was being, he immediately stepped in and tossed that young good-for-nothing out without wasting a single breath. His domineering yet effective way of handling the matter left a good impression in others.

"I'm grateful for your help, Senior Peerless." Jiang Chen thanked the emperor with proper manners.

"Even if I hadn't stepped in, that good-for-nothing will still surely suffer in your hands. However, it's better to let me be the bad guy." Emperor Peerless had very keen eyes and could tell that Nangong Ping was nothing to the youth before him. He knew that the youth wasn't from Pillfire City and there would be strong backlash if he'd even touched a hair on Nangong Ping. Thus, he decided to step in and be the bad guy instead. After all, Nangong Ping and his clan were nothing but ants to him. Even great emperor factions were unwilling to antagonize a wandering great emperor like him, let alone Nangong Ping's clan.

"Carry on your activities in peace. You have nothing to worry about as long as I'm here." He exuded the assertiveness of the strong. His every word and action incited a great amount of confidence in others.

Pill King Blue Phoenix cast a meaningful glance at Jiang Chen without saying anything. There also seemed to be complication in Wang Xuetong's eyes when he looked at Jiang Chen. He approached Jiang Chen after everyone had returned to their own respective arenas.

"Little junior, I'm truly sorry for causing you trouble. I would've chased Nangong Ping away if I'd known he was going to be such a bastard. His bounty was incredibly high so I thought it'd be a good deed to recommend him to you. I didn't think that he'd... sigh... regardless, I just want to apologize for this inconvenience." Wang Xuetong genuinely regretted his decision. He knew how much of a bastard Nangong Ping was, but he never imagined that the good-for-nothing would stir up trouble in a place as prestigious as the Bounty Arena.

He'd had good intentions. He wanted to give Jiang Chen a chance to earn some money and fame. Of course, he was also a bit curious about Jiang Chen and wanted to probe the depths of the latter's knowledge. Unfortunately, things had ended in a mess. Wang Xuetong was a upright and all around nice person. His reputation was quite good in Pillfire City, and he felt somewhat responsible for causing the issue.

"Master Wang, it isn't your fault. Trash like him are all the same. They always misuse their family's influence to act willfully. Your good intention is appreciated." Jiang Chen didn't blame Wang Xueyong for what happened. The formation master had mostly good intentions.

"I'm glad you see it that way." Wang Xuetong felt much better after hearing Jiang Chen's reply. He paused for a second before he continued. "You should still be careful of Nan Gongping. He's famous in Pillfire City for his vindictive streaks. You probably don't need to worry about it too much since Emperor Peerless is backing you up, but you can never be too cautious."

Jiang Chen responded with a faint smile. "Thank you for your advice."



Wang Xuetong nodded. However, he suddenly approached Jiang Chen again when he suddenly recalled something. He quietly asked, "Little junior, come to think of it, what exactly was wrong with Nangong Ping's Cloud Devouring Tiger? I looked all over and couldn't notice anything wrong with it. It seemed as healthy as an ox."

Jiang Chen's brows quivered a little as he looked straight at the senior. "Master Wang, do you really think it was merely a Cloud Devouring Tiger?"

Wang Xuetong was puzzled by the question. "Are you saying that it isn't a Cloud Devouring Tiger? Its stripes and head clearly indicate that it's a Cloud Devouring Tiger."

Jiang Chen was rendered speechless. He didn't think that Wang Xuetong would really fail to notice the spirit beast's true identity. Upon further thought, he realized that Master Wang Xuetong's true expertise was in formations. It was only natural that a layman of beast taming would fail to identify the spirit beast. Moreover, the beast indeed resembled a Cloud Devouring Tiger. The similarity was more than ninety percent strong.

"Little junior, do you have a different outlook to this matter?"

Jiang Chen smiled faintly. "It isn't a Cloud Devouring Tiger. However, I didn't get a detailed look at it, so I won't be jumping to conclusions."

Actually he'd already identified the spirit beast, but would rather keep its identity to himself for the time being.

Wang Xuetong didn't know what to respond after seeing the look on Jiang Chen's face. After all, the person before him was from the Myriad Abyss Island. Although he himself was a respected elder in Pillfire City, but spirit beasts weren't within his expertise. He didn't have the courage to refute the claim.

He sighed gently and patted Jiang Chen in the shoulder. "That man would've received the answers that he sought if he'd been a little less full of himself. Everyone could've gone home satisfied."

Business was as usual after Wang Xuetong returned to his arena. Jiang Chen noticed Lin Yanyu's concerned glance and sent him a silent message. "Yanyu, don't lose focus."

The young disciple was calmer after seeing how collected his master was.

The Bounty Arena remained as hectic as before after the small incident. Nangong Ping didn't cause any more trouble. Nobody knew if he was really afraid, or if it was just a temporary truce. No matter what it was, Jiang Chen didn't let his guard down. He understood that the good-for-nothing wasn't the kind to swallow his anger and grievances. Even if Nangong Ping wasn't personally causing strife, he was definitely up to something in the shadows.

As expected, an issue really occurred at Jiang Chen's arena on that very afternoon. Five rank nine bounties were posted at his arena at exactly the same time. Each bounty was worth ten million.

Lin Yanyu was extremely excited to see the large bounties. It was a big deal to receive so many rank nine bounties in such a short time. Unfortunately, Jiang Chen immediately noticed that the customers were up to no good.

“Arena Lord Shao, what do you think? I’m here to seek advice because I heard you were very capable. Surely you won’t let me down?”

“Yeah, Arena Lord Shao. You must be better than the others since you’re the lord of two arenas. My rank nine bounty must be of little difficulty to you.”

“Help solve my mission too, Arena Lord! Money isn’t an issue.”

“Arena Lord Shao...” These rank nine bounties almost seemed pre-planned.

Jiang Chen remained unperturbed. He swept their questions aside and looked at them coldly. “Is Nangong Ping behind all of this?”

“What are you trying to say?”

“How dare you insult us!”

“We came all the way here for business and all you do is spit on our face!”

“How dare you insult us just because you can’t solve our missions? Just admit that you’re worthless! Why pretend to be high and mighty?”

“You’d best give us an answer or we’ll give you more than just a hard time!”

These men were actually worried that they wouldn’t be able to find a reason to stir trouble, so they immediately grabbed the opportunity when Jiang Chen voluntarily insulted them. They raised their voices and acted very unreasonably.

Jiang Chen was extremely annoyed. It was clear that they were here to cause trouble because their bounties consisted of nothing but gibberish. Their pill recipes and formations were all made up. He didn’t to be courteous to them because he had no enemies here. Nangong Ping was definitely the perpetrator behind this.

He laughed sarcastically at them. “Go back and tell Nangong Ping that if he’s really a man, he’d settle this issue himself with his clan’s power. He’s a coward himself and so sends some mindless idiots to cause me trouble?! It’s an insult to his and your intelligence.”

These words enraged the five greatly.

“You bastard! How dare you insult us?!”

“Where are the representatives of Temple of Cleansing Fire? How did a person like him even become an arena lord?”

“I’m going to lodge a complaint! I stand my ground in protest!”

“This is strange. The Bounty Arena has always set a high standard. But this time, they hired someone worthless to fill the numbers!”

“He’s insulting everyone just because he’s unable to solve the bounty! He should be removed from the event!” These men kept acting as though they were victims.

Personnel from the Temple of Cleansing Fire rushed to the arena.

“Assistant Temple Master Gao! Such opportune timing! We want to complaint about this brat!”

“Yes! This brat insulted us and insulted our intelligence!”

“Mm! We strongly suggest that the Temple remove this man from the Bounty Arena immediately!”

“Fraudsters don’t belong in the Bounty Arena!”

“Kick him out!” They went even more overboard when they saw personnel from the temple.

The assistant temple master and his personnel frowned when they caught a rough understanding of the situation. Why are you so good attracting attracting trouble?! The Bounty Arena was often held without much issues, but today, the problems seemed to have no end. The assistant temple master’s opinion of Jiang Chen was falling even though he understood that these people were likely sent by Nangong Ping. Unfortunately, there wasn’t no proof. He couldn’t help but think that Jiang Chen was the reason for all this mess. After all, his arenas were the only one with endless issues.

From the assistant temple master’s expressions, Jiang Chen could tell that he was being blamed for this incident.

“Assistant Temple Master Gao, I will take full responsibility if I was the one at fault. They claimed that I’ve insulted their intelligence, but one question remains in my mind. Do they even possess such a thing?” He raised his hand to reveal their missions. “Pill King Blue Phoenix, have you ever seen such a nonsensical pill recipe? There are three conflicting ingredients in this recipe alone, and yet they shamelessly claim that it’s an ancient recipe and I’m supposed to complete it for them!

“Also, how is this a formation? Do you even know the basics of formations? Do you really think that a formation is made out of random scribbles? Master Wang Xuetong, just take a look at this nonsense. He doesn’t even know the basics of formations, and he claims that this is a long lost formation from the ancient age!”

#### Chapter 1054: The Emperor Rages, and the World Trembles

While speaking, Jiang Chen shot the two bounty scrolls at Wang Xuetong and Pill King Blue Phoenix while grabbing a third bounty scroll to look at. Then, he sneered. “Ah yes, this, the so-called ancient talisman. If my eyes aren’t playing tricks on me, this is a piece of tiger skin. I’ll admit that it’s a good material for making talismans, but seriously, can’t you put at least put a bit of effort into your forgery? The cinnabar on this thing hasn’t even dried yet. My hands are red after just touching it once. I can’t believe you call this moronic thing an ancient talisman. You want me to fix this? Are you sure you haven’t given me your mother’s menstrual pad by mistake?”

The crowd burst out into raucous laughter. Arena Lord Shao Yuan is truly ruthless. It can’t get any worse than this. A menstrual pad was something that a woman used only during their monthly period. It didn’t take much effort to fill up one’s mind with evil imaginations. [1]

Jiang Chen tossed the pitiful excuse of thing towards Assistant Temple Master Gao. “You may think that I’m a trouble magnet, but I’ll ask only this: what do you think I should do with obvious troublemakers like these?”

The assistant temple master's face looked incredibly ugly after he caught the tiger's skin and gave it a look.

It was at this moment Pill King Blue Phoenix swore loudly. "Who is the brainless idiot who called this an ancient pill recipe? Show me your face so I can see if you have a pig's head on your shoulders! These people are obviously here to make trouble, Assistant Temple Master Gao. When is this going to end if they keep doing this? The Temple cannot possibly let this stand!"

Pill King Blue Phoenix hadn't made any drastic comments earlier, but it was obvious that he was enraged now. A brainless, fake pill recipe put pill dao to shame, and that was the one thing he couldn't stand the most. He wasn't being partial to Jiang Chen, he just couldn't stand something like this from the bottom of his heart.

Pill dao was sacred to Pill King Blue Phoenix. He absolutely couldn't forgive anyone who used it like this. At least put some effort into your forgery! The fact that this forgery was so stupid only made him angrier.

Even Wang Xuetong was shaking his head. "Nonsense, this isn't a formation at all. The person who made this doesn't even understand the basics of formations. It's absolute nonsense, nonsense!"

Wang Xuetong was a goody two shoes, but he never lied about something that involved his profession.

Assistant Temple Master Gao's face grew even uglier. He stared coldly at the fellows who were full of righteous indignation just moments earlier. "You lot are determined to cause trouble in the Bounty Arena, aren't you?"

The accused lot panicked. They were the scum of society and lowlife of the streets. After they being bribed by Nangong Ping's men and fooled with honeyed words, they had come to the Bounty Arena to cause trouble or to put it bluntly, attack Jiang Chen. As for the consequences? Their unenlightened brains hadn't thought that deeply. They thought that they would suffer a beating at worst, and it was obvious that whatever Nangong Ping's men offered them was worth a beating and a lot more.

That was why they had shown up without a speck of hesitation. That was why they were utterly fearless when they stirred up the pot. Their mission was to cause trouble and embarrass Jiang Chen from the very beginning. The person who paid them also guaranteed that the worst thing that could happen to them was a mere beating. He even said that they might be chased out completely unharmed.

Assistant Temple Master Gao's face was as cold as ice, and yet these fools couldn't read an expression to save their own lives. They yelled loudly, "What the hell do you mean by that? We are here to post a bounty, and yet you're accusing us of causing trouble? You're obviously working together to oppress your customers!"

"Yeah, you're accusing us because you don't understand our mission. You're just trying to conceal your low standards, aren't you?"

"Hmph, this Bounty Arena is a sham after all!" This lot was prodigiously stupid. They didn't realize the severity of the situation at all. Their ignorance also showed just how treacherous Nangong Ping was. He never told them how serious the situation was. He wasn't just using them to make trouble for Jiang Chen, but also to slap the Temple's face.

This was because Nangong Ping was a vengeful person, and the Temple of Cleansing Fire had become his target as well. As for whether the idiots lived or died, Nangong Ping didn't care in the least. He wasn't the one who personally ordered them to do this anyways. Even if the Temple knew that he was the mastermind behind all this, they didn't have any evidence to accuse him.

Nangong Ping's scheme was devious and disgusting. Not only did he seek to embarrass the Temple of Cleansing Fire and Jiang Chen with his act, but the entire Bounty Arena as well.

Assistant Temple Master Gao's face darkened. As a murderous intent passed through his eyes, the man ordered with a wave. "Take them away and kill them!"

The Temple of Cleansing Fire was no ground of mercy. It was obvious that this series of unrepentant transgressions had completely exceeded their bottom line. Assistant Temple Master Gao's hate had reached even Nangong Ping. He was certain that Nangong Ping was the culprit behind all this, but he also knew that the bastard would've steered clear from this nonsense. There was no way he could find anything even if he were to investigate this to the end.

Plus, Assistant Temple Master Gao didn't want to break ties with the Nangong Family just because of this. That was why he laid ordered the group to be killed and save himself some unnecessary troubles. The fighters of the Temple had been waiting for this moment for a very long time. The moment they heard these orders, they immediately rushed forward and captured the five fools.

The lot was nothing more than street thugs, so how strong could they possibly be? They were taken into captivity without being able to resist at all. It was only when they heard the kill order that the lot realized just how big of a blunder they committed.

"Ah, have mercy, don't kill me!"

"Don't kill me, I'm innocent!"

"I confess, someone ordered me to do this!"

"Aah! Please don't kill me, I have an eighty year old mother and a three year old kid..." The pathetic cries immediately caused the Bounty Arena's atmosphere to sink to new depths of incongruity.

Assistant Temple Master Gao was incredibly furious. He never imagined that the Bounty Arena would turn into a mess like this. Even if the customers chose not to leave, this commotion would still be a stain in the history of the Temple of Cleansing Fire. The constant trouble that kept happening in the Bounty Arena was without a doubt a form of an indirect shaming on the Temple.

He waved his hands again. "Take them away!" He then called over another aide. "Go to the Nangong clan and inform them of my will. Tell the head of the Nangong clan to keep that bastard Nangong Ping under control, and that we won't suffer a third transgression. If this were to happen again, then the wrath of the Temple will befall his family!"

"Yes sir!"

Assistant Temple Master Gao had finally bared his fangs, but in Jiang Chen's eyes, it was nothing more than pretense. The assistant temple master was just giving both sides a set of stairs to step down. Just as the aide was about to leave the scene, Emperor Peerless suddenly interjected, "Wait."

The aide came to a stop after a distracted moment. "What are your orders, great emperor?"

"I would like you to bring a message of mine to Nangong Jun too. Tell him that I am waiting for his show of sincerity. If he doesn't give a response soon, I will personally visit him after this Bounty Arena is over."

Everyone was shocked when they heard this order. Emperor Peerless was obviously planning to cause trouble for the Nangong clan!

The aide hurriedly looked at Assistant Temple Master Gao after hearing Emperor Peerless' message. He wanted to know what his superior's stance in this matter.

Naturally, Assistant Temple Master Gao didn't dare turn down Emperor Peerless' demand. He waved his hand again. "Do as Emperor Peerless says."

In the end, it was Emperor Peerless who put on a real show of force. Some of the crowd were secretly excited by this. Unless they were sorely mistaken, the Nangong clan was soon to meet with a spell of misfortune. The wrath of Emperor Peerless was absolutely not something they could withstand!

Even if the Nangong clan was supported by a great emperor faction, they weren't a great emperor faction themselves. Therefore, they weren't strong enough to endure Emperor Peerless' might. The Nangong clan would gain nothing but misfortune for offending Emperor Peerless.

While the crowd was delighting in the Nangong Family's misery, they couldn't help but wonder: Just who is this young man? Not only does he command two arenas on his own, Pill King Blue Phoenix and Formation Master Wang Xuetong gives him face too. Even Emperor Peerless is clearly taking care of him. Can he be Emperor Peerless' junior or something?

"This young man must have a prestigious background, or there's no way the Temple will let him command two arenas by himself." The mystery of Jiang Chen shrouded everyone's minds for a moment.

After two such ridiculous commotion in a row, half of the day had essentially been wasted. When the day was finally over, the income of all arenas had reduced by at least thirty percent.

The Temple of Cleansing Fire was furious because of this, but even worse was the fact that they had nowhere to vent their ill temper.

Meanwhile, the head of the Nangong clan, Nangong Jun sneezed a couple of times in a row back in his own home. While he was feeling bewildered by his unusual condition, he received the message from the Temple of Cleansing Fire. The man was thrown into disorder immediately after he heard the message. He knew that his spoiled child was a rod of trouble, but he never imagined that he would dare cause trouble in the Bounty Arena!

Not once, but twice in a row! Nangong Jun actually felt like slamming his head against the wall for a second. He could hear from the tone of the Temple's envoy alone that they were truly enraged this time, but if that was all, he could've dealt with their fury. Most shocking was Emperor Peerless himself had sent a message.

The meaning behind his words were as clear as day. If Nangong Jun didn't clean up this mess and head over to the Bounty Arena to explain himself, the great emperor was going to visit him personally in his residence.

Nangong Jun couldn't help but shudder violently at this point. "Summon all the elders now, quickly!"

Not long after the emergency summons was sent out, every elder in the Nangong Family gathered in one place in fifteen minutes. They all wore confused looks on their faces. Why had the family head send for them so suddenly? There hadn't been an enemy invasion, nor was there any big unforeseen events as of late.

A palefaced Nangong Jun said, "I've failed you all, elders. I have failed to educate my son properly and have brought great trouble to us all..."

At this point the elders were completely confused by this unbelievably humble attitude. The usual Nangong Jun wasn't like this at all.

"Family Head, what on earth did Nangong Ping do again?"

"It shouldn't be too bad, right? This is Pillfire City, it shouldn't be a problem if he caused a bit of trouble here."

"Family Head, this isn't the first time young master Ping has caused us trouble. If it's nothing big, you can make a decision yourself."

"Yeah, we are prestigious enough in Pillfire City. Whoever they are, they have to give us some face."

Nangong Jun shook his head and sighed. "It's different this time..."

He eventually stammered out the entire mess. When he was done, every elder had turned pale with shock and panic.

Chapter 1055: Jiang Chen Makes Out Like a Bandit

The morning of the second day, Nangong Jun and the rest of the house's elders brought a restrained Nangong Ping to the Temple of Cleansing Fire's entrance. They found Assistant Temple Master Gao before the Bounty Arena had even opened.

"Brother Gao, I must apologize profusely. I have taught my son poorly and caused you much trouble." These were the clan head's first words of great recalcitrance to the assistant temple master.

Temple Master Gao harrumphed. He glared at Nangong Ping, the latter's face pale and frightened. "Hmph! I don't know what to say. Is one loss not discouragement enough for you to refrain from a second offense? Do you think that the Nangong clan is the greatest beneath the heavens? Even if Emperor Peerless hadn't been present, Arena Lord Shao is not someone you can trifle with. What gave you the confidence to challenge him?"

The harsh words the assistant temple master had sent to Nangong Jun prior was mere posturing, meant for the common observer. Deep within his heart, he knew that this wasn't something they would fall out over.

The questions mark the end of the affair for him, Nangong Jun realized. The assistant temple master had no intention of breaking away from the Nangong clan after all. He gave a swift kick to his son's rear.

"Apologize right away to Uncle Gao, you lout! Beg him for forgiveness. If he's not satisfied with your apology, then you're no longer my son!"

These words bound the assistant temple master on a moral level. Assistant Temple Master Gao gave a convincingly helpless smile. "Brother Nangong, there are no outsiders here, so I can speak plainly. It is no trouble for me to forgive your son, his lack of manners aside, but I am not the one in charge here. Emperor Peerless is the one displeased this time."

"Emperor... Peerless? He and that Arena Lord Shao... are they close in some way?" Nangong Jun couldn't help but ask.

"Brother, there's no point in asking me that. The problem right now is clear: the emperor is really quite upset."

Nangong Ping made a bitter face. "Brother Gao, I am a slow man. This problem has turned my brain to mush. You are much smarter than I. Can you give me an idea?"

"I can put in a good word in for you, but I don't know if it'll be enough to exonerate you in Emperor Peerless's sight." Assistant Temple Master Gao sighed. "The emperor's recent appearance in Pillfire is odd enough by itself. From what I see, he has something on his mind. There is no other reason for a man as clement as he to be so ill-tempered. Well, I suppose it's also possible that his admiration for Shao Yuan is just that strong."

"Then I'll go talk to him about it right away. We are willing to accept any claim of compensation that the emperor asks for." Nangong Jun did not dare become upset at this revelation. A great emperor realm cultivator's authority and clout were absolute. The thought of opposing Emperor Peerless did not cross his mind for even a second. Despite the fact that the emperor was a wandering cultivator, no less. The head of the Nangong clan was perfectly clear on the fact that a single great emperor could annihilate his entire house rather easily.

"If you go to Emperor Peerless right now, you'll only be running yourself into trouble. The root of the matter rests on Arena Lord Shao Yuan. Why not reconcile with him first? After all, he was the... ahem... victim in both conflicts." Assistant Temple Master Gao begrudged Jiang Chen somewhat. Why did a youth have such a fiery temper? What was once a mild inconvenience had been blown up into a significant matter. But it wasn't the young man's fault at the end of the day. From the Temple's perspective, he had no grounds to offend the arena lord.

Emperor Peerless's attitude towards him aside, if the youth really was from Myriad Abyss Island, the Temple of Cleansing Fire wanted to avoid slighting him at all costs. As for the Nangong clan? If they really did offend someone from Myriad Abyss Island, there was no telling what kind of pain they were in for.

"Brother Gao, you're telling me to apologize to the young arena lord?" Nangong Jun was a bit hesitant. He felt no burden in having to bow to Emperor Peerless. Asking forgiveness of an intrepid youngster was a lot more difficult, mentally speaking. He was a person of some status here in Pillfire City, an expert at ninth level emperor realm. Lowering his head in front of a young man was, at best, mildly humiliating.

Nangong Jun's expression chilled Assistant Temple Master Gao's tone. "Brother Nangong, the Nangong clan is the party that has a problem, so it's your call at the end of the day. I've given you a suggestion, but there's nothing more for me to say if you can't accept that advice."



Beads of cold sweat formed on Nangong Jun's forehead. Assistant Temple Master Gao's coolness scared him. "That, er..."

"I have other matters to attend to. Please excuse me." The assistant temple master spoke with some indifference.

Nangong Jun felt himself collapse into a mess. He smelled the thick stench of danger in the temple master's demeanor.

"House Head, the situation presses against us. If we must yield, then we should." One of the elders urged.

"We don't know what kind of backing the young arena lord has. Since Emperor Peerless thinks so highly of him, perhaps he is of much nobler origins than we imagine."

"Yes, Nangong Ping is the cause of the problem in the first place. There's nothing wrong in apologizing, right?"

"If you can't bear losing face yourself, send Nangong Ping instead. We will back him up from the sidelines and butter the young man up a bit. Anything to make amends." The elders were inexplicably frightened by the assistant temple master's attitude as well. They were aged and experienced enough to sense the oncoming crisis, just the same as Nangong Jun had.

"Impossible!" Hearing that he was being made to apologize, Nangong Ping yelled. "I'd rather die than apologize."

"Silence, fool!" Flustered and exasperated, Nangong Jun gave his son a vicious slap. "Haven't you made enough trouble?"

"Nangong Ping, you've brought great disaster upon our house. Enough stubbornness!"

"If you were not the house head's son, you would be dead to house law several times over. Does being the young master of the Nangong clan make you remarkable? No matter how good you think you are, there's always someone better out there!"

"Isn't that right! From what Assistant Temple Master Gao says, that young man has enormous backing. Fighting with him when you can't win? Don't even think about it. Can you endure Emperor Peerless's ceaseless fury?" The Nangong clan's elders were truly angry now. They didn't care that Nangong Ping was the house head's son any more and showered him with loud insults.

Nangong Jun became purple in the face. His voice was shiveringly cold. "If you insist on being so hard-headed, you nitwit, then I have no choice but to renounce you!"

Nangong Ping had seen his father irate before. This time, however, his father's fiercely contorted expression was finally enough to strike a shred of fear into him. He had a feeling that if the current problem wasn't settled, he was quite likely going to die at his father's hand. As lawless as the young man was usually, this was enough to bring horror to his face.

"Tell me!" Nangong Jun was infuriated. "Are you going to listen or not?"

His upraised palm tipped his son off that if the answer was 'no', he'd be lying down in the next moment.

"I... I am, yes." There was evident panic in Nangong Ping's tone.

Nangong Jun's forearm trembled slightly. He let out a long sigh, his whole person looking several hundred years older. "Fool, fool... You've spent all of the Nangong clan's face today. This is the last time. If you still can't make something of yourself after this, then I'd rather cripple you than have you around stirring up more trouble!"

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"Arena Lord Shao, everything is our fault. I did not teach my son well, and I've brought the moron in question before you. Do with him as you like. Even if you kill him in the process, we shall not complain." Nangong Jun humbled himself before the youthful young lord.

Jiang Chen glanced sidelong at the house head, smirking to himself. Admittedly, the older man was a very good actor. For one, his flexibility alone marked him a thousand times superior than his worthless son. After a short pause and a frosty look, he replied icily. "I'm curious. Where does the young master Nangong's confidence come from? Why does he look down on the rest of us so?"

Nangong Ping's own eyes narrowed like a venomous snake. Still, he had the semblance of a brain, and quickly drooped his head when he noticed his father's fierce gaze. "Arena Lord Shao, I was the blind one this time. I'm sorry. Will you forgive me?"

"I'm not interested in such an insincere apology," Jiang Chen snickered. "Whether you gnash your teeth internally or not is of no matter to me. That's as much as you can amount to doing, eh? Whether you hate me or fear me is no business of mine. You're nothing but a flea to me."

It was an intensely demeaning statement. Nangong Ping felt blood rush to his head. Nangong Jun's own heart dripped blood at the insult against his son as well. Still, he knew that he had to bear any degradation that took place now, regardless of how debasing it was. One couldn't profitably go against the tide of things.

"You are a first-rate genius, Arena Lord Shao. Commanding two arenas at such a young age... truly a man among men. My son has many awful habits, and I've spoiled him too much. Will you let a witless child off just this once? We will forever appreciate your magnanimity."

"I know that you're swallowing some very bitter medicine right now to plead with me, head of the Nangong clan. Are you worried that Emperor Peerless will give you hell for this?"

"No, no, we're very sincere. We seek only to douse your fury, Arena Lord Shao." Nangong Jun explained hurriedly.

"Oh, that's easy enough. Everything has its price, no?"

A price? Nangong Jun was pleased to hear it. Any concessions that the arena lord wanted was good news to him. In the grand scheme of things, the young man holding a grudge was much more problematic. Any greed on the youth's part made it significantly more straightforward!

"What compensation would you like, Arena Lord Shao? If it's at all in our power, we will spare no expense." Nangong Jun pledged devoutly.

"I only want Nangong Ping's Cloud Devouring Tiger." Jiang Chen was perfectly fine with resolving the affair on material condition. Why let go of an opportunity to fleece a family of villains?

"Cloud Devouring Tiger?" Nangong Jun bellowed to his son. "Give it up at once, you dolt!"

Nangong Ping was despondent, but nevertheless wilted at once. "It is kept in the Qinyun Residence at home."

"Send for it at once!" Nangong Jun shouted.

Before long, the 'Cloud Devouring Tiger' in question was brought here. Nangong Jun gave it several once-overs before personally offering it up. "Arena Lord Shao, this Tiger is now yours. About my son..."

Accepting the Tiger unceremoniously, Jiang Chen casually waved a hand. "You can leave. You will hear no more of this particular affair. Whether you want peace or war in the future, that's up to you."

Nangong Jun was exuberant. Finally, the problem was solved.

#### Chapter 1056: The Great Emperors Worries

The root of the issue was now resolved. Earning Jiang Chen's forgiveness was the same as being forgiven by Emperor Peerless. However, Nan Gongjun didn't dare to celebrate just yet. He immediately visited Emperor Peerless to admit his wrongdoings. The emperor was aware that Jiang Chen had already come to a settlement with the Nangong clan.

"Nangong Jun, I'm not the kind of person that seeks trouble, but that doesn't mean I'm afraid of it. If this had happened two thousand years ago, you wouldn't even have the chance to beg for forgiveness right now."

Nangong Ping trembled with fear. "I-I understand. We will forever be grateful for Your Majesty's leniency." He forced a smile. He wasn't saying this out of courtesy. He genuinely believed that the emperor had been lenient with them. If it'd been some other hot headed emperor, his son would've already be dead before he had the chance to hire goons to cause another round of trouble.

"Take your men and leave. This emperor hopes that your clan will be smart enough to nip the issue in the bud."

Nangong Ping understood the gravity of things. "This will absolutely be the last you'll ever hear of this," he reassured.

"Leave." The emperor was losing patience. He chased them away with a sweep of his hand.

The Nangong clan quickly scuttled away. The clan elders shivered in trepidation as cold sweat poured down their foreheads. The emperor had been so dominant that it felt like they'd escaped death. Even though Nan Gongjun was ninth level emperor realm, he was extremely relieved that it was all over.

Jiang Chen watched the Nangong clan leave. A glimmer of excitement appeared in his eyes when he looked at what looked like the Cloud Devouring Tiger beast. However, he was aware that the issue was only resolved peacefully thanks to Emperor Peerless. He was using the emperor's influence. Since there was still some time before the start of today's Bounty Arena, he asked Lin Yanyu to take care of the spirit beast while he visited Emperor Peerless.

All of the arena lords resided in the Temple of Cleansing Fire for the duration of the Bounty Arena.

“Haha, little fellow, I thought you’d come by!” The emperor wasn’t surprised to see Jiang Chen at all. He seemed to have foreseen the visit.

“This junior is here to thank Your Majesty.” Jiang Chen wasn’t the kind of person that would feign ignorance of the kindness shown to him by others.

“Why thank me? You had no fear of the Nangong clan either.”

“The issue was only resolved so quickly because of Your Majesty’s influence. Your magnanimity was the only reason I was able to go up against them.” Jiang Chen replied with a smile.

“Haha! You’re truly a likeable lad!” The emperor burst into laughter. “Come! Sit with me!”

The emperor was obviously very fond of Jiang Chen. He respected the genius greatly for being on equal footing in the Bounty Arena, despite his youth.

Jiang Chen knew that Emperor Peerless didn’t like him just because he claimed that he was from Myriad Abyss Island. The emperor had already shown a lot of goodwill before Jiang Chen had revealed his background. Jiang Chen sat down without the slightest hesitation.

The emperor secretly praised him for being able to maintain his composure before a great emperor. He wasn’t anxious or uneasy like many other young juniors.

“Young lad, I’ve been observing you the past few days. You’re able to instantly solve missions that even Pill King Blue Phoenix can’t. It’s unfortunate that everyone places so much importance in seniority. The pill king is everyone’s first choice for pill dao bounties, and yet you don’t mind this even though he’s your biggest competitor. This temperament of yours is truly exceptional.” The emperor was first to speak. His words shocked Jiang Chen greatly. He never thought that the emperor would observe him so closely under such a hectic environment. Moreover, his observation was incredibly accurate too.

“Are all youths in Myriad Abyss Island as talented as you?” The emperor’s words didn’t contain any doubt. In fact, there was even hints of fascination.

Jiang Chen could feel cold sweat running down his back. “This junior has been blessed with great fortune. Thus, I am one of the best in pill dao even on the island.”

The excuse he made wasn’t exactly the greatest, but it was easier for others to accept.

The emperor nodded. He mused deeply before he suddenly asked, “Little junior, since the island is a place of legends, there should be pill dao masters that exceed even the level of pill emperor, right?”

Jiang Chen was taken by surprise. “Your Majesty, why do you ask?”

“Just answer my question first.”

Jiang Chen pondered deeply before nodding. He wasn’t sure if there was one, but since it was a place of legends, empyrean realm pill dao masters was most definitely present.

“Is it true?” the emperor was visibly moved by the answer.

“Mm.” Jiang Chen nodded again.

“Surely... pill dao masters of that level will have arts that even pill emperors lack...” the emperor muttered to himself.

“Yes, that’s definitely the case.”

“Little junior, how many pill dao masters of that caliber are there on Myriad Abyss Island?” The emperor asked unrelentingly.

No pill emperors or empyrean pill saints could ever hope to match Jiang Chen. He was the strongest pill dao master in the entire world, even in the heavenly planes. In his previous life, empyrean pill saints were only suited to be his pageboy. They weren’t even worthy to be his assistant. “Emperor Peerless, why are you asking these questions?”

The emperor revealed a hint of sadness. He sighed gently. “I didn’t want to bring it up at first as it unearths some sad memories.”

Jiang Chen was at a loss for words when he saw the sadness within his eyes.

“But for some reason, I feel an indescribable connection with you. It’d be a shame if I hide this from you any longer. It’s all related to my dao partner. Speaking of dao partner, you might’ve heard a few rumors in the Upper Eight Regions, and it’s all true. For the sake of love, I dueled a great emperor that had already been inaugurated for three thousand years. The duel ended with my loss for I was weaker. When he was about to take my life, my love rushed to my side and took half a strike in my stead...”

“Why only half?” Jiang Chen asked curiously.

“Ai... because of that man was also blindly in love with her. He was able to retract half of his force when he saw her rushing to my side. Ever since that duel, I’ve made a vow to live the rest of my life as a wandering cultivator, never to establish my own faction. Unfortunately, my love had to spend the rest of her life in illness after that. Two thousand years have passed, and her progress in martial dao has come to a halt. Her lifespan was also reduced by half. My pitiful Ah Yun. She was born intelligent and sharp, and was on track to become a great emperor. But because of me... the years of her prime was ended prematurely, leaving her with nothing but a life of slow decline...” Emperor Peerless was extremely sorrowful. A great amount of despair could be glimpsed within his eyes. He must’ve toiled over this issue for an extremely long time without ever seeing light at the end of the tunnel.

One of the most painful things in the world was to see one’s love fall into decline before their time. The pain that the emperor felt pierced through Jiang Chen’s heart like a knife. He was suddenly reminded of his father from his previous life. It was a different kind of love, but the great love knew no bounds. Parental or romantic love was the same in the end.

“Your Majesty, may I ask what cultivation level your dao partner is at?” He suddenly asked.

“She’s younger than me, but she was already eighth level emperor realm two thousand years ago and would’ve broken through the great emperor realm by now. Unfortunately, circumstances have caused her cultivation to stagnate at the ninth level emperor realm. Without a breakthrough, she’s unable to overcome her injuries, leading to an early decline.”

“Emperor realm eh?” Jiang Chen wanted to recommend the Longevity Pill, but since she was at the emperor realm, only a Pinecrane Pill could possibly extend her life.

“Yes. If she can ascend into the great emperor realm, she will surely overcome her injuries. It’s unfortunate that her life energy was reduced by half after sustaining the injury, which also reduced her lifespan by a great amount. Sigh... she’s even showing signs that she will not make it past another thirty years.”

Thirty years was a long time in human years, but to a great emperor realm cultivator, it was like only three months.

“Your Majesty, are you perhaps thinking about crossing the endless ocean with your dao partner to seek help in Myriad Abyss Island?” Jiang Chen asked after connecting the dots.

“At the very beginning, no.” the emperor sighed. “If you hadn’t mentioned that you were from Myriad Abyss Island, I’d never have believed that it was real.”

Jiang Chen felt a little guilty. Surely the emperor wouldn’t travel all the way to Myriad Abyss Island for help because of his thoughtless claim? He would be a great sinner if the emperor really did such a thing. The emperor’s chance of surviving the ocean crossing was very miniscule even if he went by himself, let alone with his injured dao partner.

“I will not lie, I’m only considering this because you brought up the island. Truth be told, I’ve traveled far and wide in search of great pill dao masters, even the reclusive hermits. Unfortunately, there wasn’t a single person who could cure Ah Yun’s injuries. I only joined the Bounty Arena because I was passing through the city and wanted to help the Temple of Cleansing Fire raise the prestige of the Bounty Arena. All this trouble for that glimmer of hope...”

Jiang Chen finally understood the emperor’s reasons for joining the Bounty Arena. After all, the event that was clearly beneath his stature. As it turned out, he was searching everywhere for the slightest bit of hope. It was like searching for a needle in a haystack...

Chapter 1057: The Best of Friends Despite Differences in Age

Seeing Emperor Peerless’s normally radiant and graceful visage so sad filled Jiang Chen with compassion. He felt that he had to do something for the emperor.

“Senior, where is your dao partner presently?” he suddenly asked.

Emperor Peerless blinked. He blurted out the answer subconsciously. “I have her somewhere secret and safe. Not in Pillfire City itself, but not far from here.”

Jiang Chen nodded. “My cultivation is rudimentary, and I therefore have no grounds for self-recommendation. That aside, though I might not be able to heal your partner’s injury, I might yet be able to extend her life via a means or two.”

“What?” Hearing this made the emperor jump up like a spring. The emperor’s gaze on him was almost searing, but Jiang Chen kept his cool. He inclined his head once, twice, in the affirmative.

“You... you really have a way?” Emperor Peerless’s voice trembled. It was a far cry from his typical refinement.

Indeed, Jiang Chen had a way to extend the emperor's partner's life. In fact, he thought himself quite capable of taking care of a supposed 'internal injury' as well. It was simply better to keep his mouth shut about it before seeing the woman in person. Whether she had an injury or not was irrelevant to his ability to lengthen her life, however. Jiang Chen had the Pinecrane Pill on his side.

So what if Emperor Peerless's partner didn't have a constitution befitting an average emperor realm cultivator? The Pinecrane Pill didn't ask for that. As long as she could consume it, and the pill's medicinal effects took, then the effect on her lifespan was the same. Moreover, the Pinecrane Pill intrinsically had the extraordinary ability to repair bodily functions. Though it couldn't single-handedly cause an internal injury to heal, it would at least partially help. Emperor Peerless's partner wasn't being threatened by her natural end, but a kind of accelerated aging inflicted by her injury. Because of this, the Pinecrane Pill might be even more beneficial than advertised.

"Speaking of increasing lifespans, I've heard of a kind of pill called the Pinecrane Pill. It increases the life of an emperor realm cultivator by a thousand years or so." Jiang Chen immediately spilled the beans – er, pills.

"Pinecrane Pill?" Emperor Peerless was inspired. "I've heard of a certain Longevity Pill. What difference is there between them?"

"The Longevity Pill? That's just an earth rank pill. The Pinecrane Pill is sky rank! I'm sure you can agree that that's enough of a defining difference. Plus, the Pinecrane Pill is even harder than normal sky rank pills to refine." Jiang Chen was entirely truthful.

"Is there such a miracle pill in the world?" The emperor was overjoyed. He rubbed his palms together incessantly, pacing back and forth in place.

Jiang Chen smiled and nodded.

"Where can I find this Pinecrane Pill?" His expression cheered up, Emperor Peerless looked towards Jiang Chen expectantly.

"One of my seniors has refined it in the past. I remember that he has some on his person still." Jiang Chen wanted to take the pill out on the spot, but he managed to repress the impulse.

Emperor Peerless appeared to be an honorable enough man, but the time they had known each other was too short. Jiang Chen wanted to repay the favor the emperor had given him, but all could come in due time.

Emperor Peerless wasn't privy to Jiang Chen's thoughts. The joy in his face still apparent, he prodded at the youth earnestly. "Where is this senior nowadays? Is he willing to sell this pill of his? I am not a wealthy man, but I am willing to give all that I own for but a single one."

His tone was resolute. In his eyes, a million million spirit stones could not compare to a single life-saving pill. Anything he owned was a worthy enough sacrifice.

"I cannot promise anything, sir, but I don't think it's much of a problem to ask for a Pinecrane Pill. My senior is not within the human domain at the moment, but you needn't worry. He will come find me for sure in the next three to five years." Jiang Chen surmised the emperor probably had enough time to wait just a little longer.

Emperor Peerless was really excited now. He clenched both fists with great determination, knuckles white at the sheer force. His back-and-forth pacing increased in frequency. "Good, good! If you do manage to get your hands on the pill, young man, I'll give you anything you ask for. Even if it's something I don't have, I'll wade through fire and brimstone to bring it to you."

There was no piece of news that could be as exhilarating as this for the old man. He had traveled over a thousand mountains and ten thousand rivers, but always, always met disappointment. And yet, the Bounty Arena he'd decided to attend on a whim had been a stroke of serendipitous fortune. His partner had a small chance at life again! It was riddled with uncertainty, but the emperor was overjoyed nevertheless.

"Can the Pinecrane Pill really extend an emperor realm cultivator's life by a thousand years, my little friend?" Still, he wanted to hear repeated verification after coming out of his emotional high.

"Yes, Your Majesty. You may be completely sure on that front. If you've investigated the effects of the Longevity Pill, then the Pinecrane Pill is like an upgraded version of that pill. A single rank's difference means a hundredfold the technical complexity, however."

It was as Jiang Chen had guessed. Emperor Peerless had explored and studied the Longevity Pill. In particular, he knew that the Longevity Pill was definitely off-limits to emperor realm cultivators. That was why he'd held back on having his partner try it.

Jiang Chen's confident and faithful tone alleviated the majority of his doubts.

The emperor did not have the All-Seeing Eyes that Emperor Peafowl did, but his status as a great emperor was still quite respectable. His experience meant that he had some degree of discernment when it came to people. Typically, the emperor had zero likelihood of believing tall tales from the average youth. No, youngsters in general were too flighty and impulsive.

But this youth in particular had a certain bearing to him, a manner of behavior that made Emperor Peerless want to trust him implicitly. He had the perpetual feeling that the young man before him was unfathomably powerful, worthy of sitting on the same level as he. Any lingering remnant of suspicion about whether Jiang Chen came from Myriad Abyss Island or not was dispelled. Even on the very slight chance that the young man wasn't from the Island, his origins were surely extraordinary in some other way.

"Excellent, excellent. Young man, there's no need to call me senior any more. My name is Mo Wushuang, the same 'wushuang' as peerless. You can call me Old Brother Mo."

"I don't think it is proper for me to call you that, senior."

"Why wouldn't it be proper? I don't see a problem." Emperor Peerless coughed. "If you can bequeath Ah Yun with a lifeline, then you are my savior as well. How can I maintain my seniority in front of someone worthy of my thanks and respect?"

Jiang Chen smiled. "That's something to think about in the future. Actually, er, where is your partner located exactly, senior? If I can take a look at her, the additional information might help me out. I can explain things better to my own senior, right? Better knowledge means better ideas."

"Is this senior of yours also your master?" Emperor Peerless couldn't help but ask.



"I guess you can say that." Jiang Chen grinned. He'd begun weaving this elaborate lie about his tutelage ever since Sky Laurel Kingdom. Whether it was around there, Regal Pill Palace, or even Veluriyam Capital, the fact that he had a reclusive but sage teacher was common knowledge. He'd come this far with the story. What harm was there in continuing with it?

"His cultivation level must be above great emperor realm, no?" Emperor Peerless's eyes were filled with fascination.

"Mhm. In addition, his pill dao cultivation is also one of the best on Myriad Abyss Island." Jiang Chen kept his face completely straight. His feigned stoicism made it hard for others to doubt him.

"Perfect!" Emperor Peerless slapped his thigh. "A senior expert like him will have a solution without fail. Hard to imagine that I, Mo Wushuang, had to travel the entire world before meeting my lucky star here. Haha, do feel free to call me Old Brother Mo from now on. I won't answer to 'senior' after this."

As a great emperor who was also a wandering cultivator, Emperor Peerless lacked the hauteur that his fellows often possessed. Noting his insistence, Jiang Chen finally acquiesced, nodding. "Then I will respectfully call you Old Brother Mo."

"Exactly as you should." The emperor brightened up instantly. "Come, the Bounty Arena is about to start." He wasn't even two steps out before he put a hand to his head. "Look at my memory. I almost forgot. I've settled Ah Yun down in the Tilted Moon Region."

"The Tilted Moon Region?" Hearing that gave Jiang Chen sudden pause.

"Hmm?" His reaction surprised Emperor Peerless somewhat. "Have you gone there, my young friend?"

"I haven't, but I've heard of it for sure. It is located in the northwest of the Upper Eight Regions, adjacent to Pillfire City... certainly not far. I hear that the Moon God Sect rules there?"

"That's absolutely right." Emperor Peerless inclined his head.

Jiang Chen didn't prod the subject further. His next stop was the Tilted Moon Region, so it was a pleasant coincidence that the emperor's partner was there as well. What a happy coincidence, hmm?

"Little brother, do you hold a grudge against that sect?" Emperor Peerless was astute enough to detect the disturbance in Jiang Chen's tone.

"No, not at all. I just happened to want to gather some information there." The emperor's guess had been patently true, but Jiang Chen wasn't stupid enough to admit to it outright.

Emperor Peerless chuckled. "Perfect. Two birds with one stone, then. If you need my help once we're there, don't hesitate to say so. I shall move on your every whim."

The two of them walked out to where the Bounty Arena was actually taking place. The sight of them talking and laughing as they did so was mouth-opening for all of their observers. The other arena lords were especially envious. They had attempted to win over their imperial fellow with flattery as well. Though Emperor Peerless didn't quite give them the cold shoulder, neither did he treat them with any semblance of warmth.

How could this young man be so cozy with the emperor? Was it just because he was from Myriad Abyss Island? In their heart of hearts, the others doubted Jiang Chen's claim to varying degrees. Some thought that the boy was a common fraudster.

Pill King Blue Phoenix and Wang Xuetong were also secretly astonished. The emperor was being friendlier to the young man than he had been with them! This only piqued their interest in Jiang Chen further. How many secrets did the youth have hidden away? What moved Emperor Peerless's interest in him so?

Given the Nangong clan's prior example, the Bounty Arena proceeded with remarkable smoothness. No one was brave enough to stir up further trouble, lest they be exposed to Emperor Peerless's fury. As such, business in the next three or four days boomed. Twelve days passed in the blink of an eye. It was time for the last three days of the Bounty Arena, heralding an oncoming climax.

#### Chapter 1058: Sovereign Rank Bounty

The Bounty Arena was open for half a month. The first twelve days of the event were pretty much routine. The last three days were the craziest days. High rank bounties only appeared during this time. Of course, the highest rank available was sovereign rank. The sovereign rank bounties didn't only include bounties that were posted on the spot by visitors. The incomplete bounties that were accumulating dust at the back of the Temple would also be making an appearance.

During these final three days, only bounties of rank six and above could appear. This also meant that the reward for all bounties that appeared during this period were worth a million saint spirit stones at a minimum. No other bounties beneath this sum was allowed in the Bounty Arena. Although the rule barred low rank bounties from entering the arena, it wasn't a problem because most of them had already made their appearances during the first twelve days.

For example, Jiang Chen alone had received one and a half billion saint spirit stones during the twelve days he spent managing two arenas. Even the weakest of the eighteen assistants he recruited had earned at least twenty to thirty million saint spirit stones. Naturally, the assistants who were stronger or more favored by Jiang Chen gained even bigger profits.

For starters, Lin Yanyu had earned over a hundred million saint spirit stones. Lin Zhirong himself had earned almost the same amount as Lin Yanyu. The guy's foundation was quite solid despite his crazy attitude. Now that they had entered the last three days of the Bounty Arena, it was entirely possible to earn even greater sum of spirit stones from the continuous influx of high rank bounties. Everyone was eager to get started as they prepared themselves for the final three days.

Standing at a high place, Assistant Temple Master Gao declared loudly, "Everyone, the last three days of the Bounty Arena are also the best part and the climax of the event. Not only have we already received twelve sovereign rank bounties this time, we are also announcing twelve more sovereign rank bounties that we've accumulated in the past. This also means that every arena will get to look through two sovereign rank bounties on average. Of course, it comes down to personal capability as to the number of such bounties you may receive in the end!

“Apart from the sovereign rank bounties, all rank six bounties and above are allowed to enter the Bounty Arena during these three days as well. These bounties will be processed in the same way as before. The same cannot be said about the sovereign rank bounties, however.”

The sovereign rank bounties won't follow the same format? Everyone, including Jiang Chen, looked at the assistant temple master. They wanted to know exactly how the bounties were going to be distributed. Will they be distributed equally among the arena lords?

“We have twelve arena lords here, and each of you will receive two sovereign rank bounties each.” Assistant Temple Master Gao continued, “However, this doesn't mean that the sovereign rank bounties are yours alone to take. Upon receiving the sovereign rank bounties, you must first appraise your strength and foundation before deciding if you are qualified to resolve these bounties. If you are not, then you must give up on them. If we do not receive your declaration of concession six hours after the bounties have been distributed, then we will assume that you've accepted the responsibility to solve them. If you fail to complete the mission on time, then you will be charged with the same amount of spirit stones as the bounty you accepted.”

Jiang Chen finally understood everything was going to be processed. The sovereign rank bounties weren't actually distributed evenly among the arena lords. If an arena lord didn't believe that they could solve a particular bounty, then they had to give it up back to the Temple. If they didn't, they would have to pay a compensation fee. Because of this, the sovereign rank bounties might not be boons, but hot potatoes instead.

“If you gave up your bounty in time, the rest of the arena lords will have the opportunity to take the bounty themselves. The arena lord who gave up the bounty doesn't need to bear any responsibilities. Just the same, the arena lord who took over the bounty must pay a compensation fee if they fail to complete the mission in the end.

“If the person who took over the bounty ultimately succeeds, they must pay the arena lord who gave up the bounty ten percent of the reward as a gesture of encouragement.”

The sovereign rank bounties are certainly more interesting and serious. Jiang Chen was starting to looking forward to them. Considering how mysterious they made the bounties, he was sure that the rewards were very high.

Thirty million saint spirit stones were just the beginning. In fact, there is no cap on the reward. It wouldn't be surprising if several bounties that worth several hundred million were to appear. Most importantly, the person who solved a sovereign rank mission gained more than just spirit stones. They would be gaining fame as well.

The sovereign rank bounties were the climax of the entire Bounty Arena and were problems that not just anyone could solve, so naturally they garnered plenty of attention. This meant that the arena lord who managed to solve one would earn both money and fame. That was exactly what Jiang Chen was looking for. It was the key to acquiring sufficient right of speech and initiative when bidding for Mu Gaoqi.

“Alright, all arena lords, please come up to the stage and receive the two sovereign rank bounties that have been distributed to you.

“The disparity of rewards between these sovereign rank bounties is quite large. It all depends on your luck.” That was what he said, but getting a highly rewarding sovereign rank bounty might not necessarily be a good thing.

After all, the reward of a bounty was proportional to its difficulty. If a bounty was too difficult to solve, then there was no point getting it in the first place. This was especially true considering that many of the sovereign rank bounties had remained unresolved in the Temple for a very long time already. Some of them remained unsolved even though they had passed through the hands of hundreds or even thousands of people. Therefore, there was no point in getting those relic-like bounties no matter how high their rewards were.

“Brother Shao, do you want me to help draw the lot for you?” Lin Zhirong asked cheerfully. “My luck has always been pretty good. You may not know this, but I’m a gambling addict since young. My luck is so good that I’ve never failed to get what I wanted in a casino. That’s why every casino in my area turn me away politely every time they see my face.”

Jiang Chen ignored Lin Zhirong’s offer however. He walked straight up to the stage. As much luck as Lin Zhirong might have, Jiang Chen still wished to do this himself.

“Emperor Peerless, you are the number one arena lord of this Bounty Arena. You may draw the first lot.” Assistant Temple Master Gao was very respectful towards Emperor Peerless. He allowed the great emperor to make the first pick. In reality, the order didn’t matter much. No one could read the contents of the bounty after all.

Emperor Peerless didn’t stand on ceremony either. After randomly picking two bounties from the lot, he returned to his own arena. The second person to go up was Pill King Blue Phoenix. He too randomly selected two missions. It was Wang Xuetong’s turn to draw the lot. The formation master turned around and smiled at Jiang Chen. “Young friend, do you wish to draw first?”

“It doesn’t matter who goes first, so feel free to make your pick, Master Wang.” Jiang Chen didn’t care who went first.

Wang Xuetong chuckled and rubbed his hands together. “I sure hope I could get two sovereign rank bounties that are suitable for my level of skills. It will be saddening if they turn out to be too easy or too difficult.”

Formation Master Wang Xuetong spoke everyone’s mind. Sovereign rank bounties were uncapped. So of course the best one was the one most suitable for him. After Wang Xuetong was done, it was Jiang Chen’s turn to draw.

Jiang Chen controlled two arenas, so he could draw a total of four sovereign rank bounties. He received two pill dao and two general zone related sovereign rank bounties. He returned to his own arena after he had obtained all four mission scrolls.

Lin Zhirong immediately moved closer to him. “Come on, let’s have a look at the scrolls already.”

Lin Yanyu berated in a somewhat annoyed tone, “Don’t you think you’ve overstepped your line a little, sir? The arena lord has the first right to the sovereign rank bounties. They will only be passed down to the assistants if the arena lord decides to forfeit his right.”

It wasn't that Lin Yanyu was jealous of Lin Zhirong. He just thought that Lin Zhirong was being very rude to his master.

But Lin Zhirong was an easygoing person, so he laughed and replied, "Don't worry, that's not my intention. I just want to see what a sovereign rank bounty looks like."

"Do take a look, everyone." Jiang Chen lifted his hand and hung all four bounty scrolls on the arena. He showed the bounties to everyone without hesitation so that they all had an idea of what they were dealing with.

At first, everyone was momentarily distracted by the arena lord's generosity. Then, they all looked at the scrolls. A moment later, the assistants' expression began to crumple one after another. It was obvious that the contents of these four bounties had shattered their delusions in an instant. Forget completing these missions, they found that even understanding the questions was a chore.

There was no such thing as an 'easy' sovereign rank bounty. Every single one of them was a highly difficult problem that almost no one could solve. Why else would the bounty posters offer such a high sum of reward?

Lin Zhirong clicked his tongue while sighing. "Holy shit, the lowest bounty is worth eighty million, and the highest bounty is worth five hundred million. Arena Lord Shao, your luck is downright extraordinary. Even my luck cannot get any better than this."

The guy didn't forget to praise himself even as he praised Jiang Chen. The latter smiled calmly. "All those who believe that you can solve any one of these bounties, take your pick."

Temptation reared its head for a quick second when he said this. However, groans of lamentation quickly overtook them. Their desire to challenge was there, but they just didn't possess the ability to realize their ambition.

Lin Zhirong said gloomily, "This is unfortunate. None of these missions are my kind of mission. Forget it, I guess I'm just not good enough to challenge a sovereign rank bounty."

It was impossible that a normal assistant could take on a sovereign rank bounty. In fact, most arena lords had to give up on them. There might be many who could complete a bounty below one hundred million. But a bounty with a reward of one hundred million and above exceeded the capabilities of a normal arena lord.

Lin Yanyu had kept quiet up to now because he was thinking about the two pill dao bounties. One of the bounty was worth eighty million, and the other one was worthy five hundred million. The gap of difficulty between the two of them was enormous. The five hundred million bounty caused Lin Yanyu to feel dizzy just by looking at it, so he immediately tossed it out of his mind. On the other hand, the eighty million bounty felt doable to him.

"Why don't you pick one, Yanyu?" Jiang Chen smiled encouragingly at Lin Yanyu.

A hint of eagerness appeared on Lin Yanyu's face. Truth be told, he didn't have one hundred percent confidence that he would be able to solve the eighty million bounty, but it didn't feel completely hopeless either. Seeing the light of encouragement in his master's eyes, Lin Yanyu clenched his teeth and declared, "Alright, I'll pick one then."

The rest of the assistants looked at Lin Yanyu in surprise. They were obviously shocked by the courage he displayed.

#### Chapter 1059: A Stunning Pillfire City

Jiang Chen had a total of eighteen assistants since he was the lord of two arenas. Many were discontent because Lin Yanyu was clearly getting preferential treatment, but they didn't dare show it on their faces. After all, the arena lord was the one calling the shots. It was his right to distribute bounties to whomever he wanted. They could only follow his orders as they were only assistants.

However, the reality of things didn't lessen their dissatisfaction one bit. They belittled and looked down upon Lin Yanyu because of his age. How could someone as young as him receive so much preferential treatment? It was clearly because he was around the same age as the arena lord. They simply had more in common.

The arena lord announced that everyone was free to accept the sovereign missions, but nobody volunteered. They were certain that they couldn't handle missions of this caliber. Doing so would only be a waste of their time. Moreover, they had to pay up if they failed. It was obviously not worth it. The total amount of money they'd made from the previous days weren't even enough to pay for the compensation of a single mission.

Under Jiang Chen's encouragement, Lin Yanyu decided to accept the sovereign mission worth eighty million. Though it was one of the easier ones, this action still stunned the others. They didn't show it overtly, but they were quite shocked by his actions.

Jiang Chen glanced at the crowd after Lin Yanyu had taken the mission. "Anyone else?"

He didn't want leave room for contention. He knew full well that no other assistant of his was capable of taking on these missions. He was only asking as a courtesy. As expected, nobody else volunteered to take on the missions. It was clear that they felt the penalty for failure was too high for them to risk it. How could they have the courage to do so when the price of the bounty nearly caused their hearts to leap out from their throats?

Jiang Chen nodded. "Since nobody else is interested, we shall proceed as usual."

He accepted the remaining three bounty scrolls and placed them on the arena. Everyone was flabbergasted by this action. What's going on? Is the arena lord... going to accept all three missions? A pill dao mission worth 500 million was among the three missions. The other two were general missions worth 100 million and 200 million respectively. Their bounties added up to over 800 million in total!

"Is he going to accept them all?"

"That... that's way over the top!"

"There's no way he's going to leave them there. Surely he'll return them after 6 hours." The assistants were all speculating wildly. Jiang Chen's actions had bewildered them greatly. The person in question didn't care about their opinions. He sat on the arena and mused deeply with his eyes shut. The contents of these missions were already seared into his mind. He was coming up with ways to solve them.

The pill dao mission was quite difficult indeed. The 500 million bounty was a testament to its difficulty. Moreover, it was clearly written on the scroll that it'd been in circulation in the Temple for over 800 years. No one had been able to complete the mission in all this time. Truth be told, the mission wasn't all that complicated. It was just an ancient pill recipe with two missing ingredients. Unfortunately, both ingredients were critical to the production of the pill.

The mission hadn't been posted by Pillfire City. Instead, it was posted by one of the first rank sects in the Upper Eight Regions. He had no association with the sect, but it was situated a little closer to Veluriyam Capital. He would never consider accepting the mission if it was posted by Pillfire City. Solving the city's problems was the opposite of his goal. It'd be like raising a tiger that would bite off the hand that fed it.

I'm surprised that this ancient recipe found its way to the Divine Abyss Continent. It's only a sky rank pill, but not even heavenly pill immortals can necessarily complete this recipe. Jiang Chen wasn't completely certain, but based on the description, it should be the Ancient Reformation Pill. It was a very unusual pill. By ingesting it, one could regrow severed limbs and flesh. As long as one's soul remained intact, one would have the freedom to reconstruct one's body to any specification even if there was nothing that remained except bare bones. One could sculpt their body according to one's wishes.

It was classified as a sky rank pill, but was actually beyond that at empyrean rank. There was a few differences between sky rank and the empyrean rank. For example, a sky rank pill was still considered a mortal pill. It hadn't withstood the test of the heavenly laws. An empyrean pill however, had withstood the test and was baptized by the laws. Sky rank pills were actually the equivalent of emperor realm. Its name was only for vanity reasons. In reality, sky rank pills and spirit herbs were on the same level as the emperor realm.

The Ancient Reformation Pill was an empyrean rank pill in the heavenly planes. However, there were stronger variations of pill that went beyond the empyrean rank. It was a pill with various grades, the lowest of which was sky rank. Its highest grade went beyond the empyrean realm, and was a pill of the divine heavens.

It was meant for incredibly powerful martial dao masters. After the destruction of their bodies, these powerful souls could borrow the pill's power to reconstruct their bodies. It wasn't useful in real life or death situations, because true death was the destruction of both body and soul. The pill allowed for the regrowth of flesh and bones, but not the human soul. It was an incredibly useful pill, but paled in comparison to the Pinecrane Pill. The latter provided an advantage that the former simply couldn't.

Of course, the Ancient Reformation Pill was still incredibly useful, especially for powerful experts. Upon the onset of old age, experts could still evict their souls to take over a body better suited to their needs. However, this was an extremely dangerous process. Under normal circumstances, nobody would ever take such extreme measures. Any mistakes could lead to the shattering of the soul. The Ancient Reformation Pill made this process easier and safer. Moreover, it also accelerated the integration of body and soul.

Jiang Chen decided to accept the mission since it wasn't meant for Pillfire City. Then it was simply an easy profit of 500 million saint spirit stones. Moreover, he might actually find use for the pill in the future. The ingredients for the pill varied according to its rank. The one before him was obviously one of the lower grade recipes. In fact, it just might be the lowest grade one.

He combined his previous research on the Ancient Reformation Pill's recipe with the ingredients found on the recipe and quickly came up with the two missing ingredients. The principle behind the pill was all the same, regardless of its grade. As long as one understood the principle, coming up with the two missing ingredients wasn't a difficult task at all.

Pill dao might seem complicated, but as always, the difficulty was only relative to one's knowledge. For those without knowledge, even the simplest of questions would stump them. For those with knowledge, even the hardest of questions would be a stroll in the park.

Jiang Chen was done making sense of the Ancient Reformation Pill's mission. He also had some initial thoughts about the other two missions from the general zone. One of them was related to formations. It was still in the middle of conceptualization, and his mission was to complete it.

Jiang Chen was incredibly shocked when he took a closer at the formation. Its theory clearly had something to do with the Ancient Crimson Heavens Sect! After some analyzing, he realized that it was actually one of the sect's ten great Crimson Heaven Formations! He'd been too busy in the recent years to study the every formation from the sect, but he did pay some attention to its formation disk.

Every single one of the formations it could simulate was incredibly powerful. Its strength would be incredibly frightening if Jiang Chen could somehow extract all of its power. Mm. This formation is incredibly rare indeed. Jiang Chen noticed that the faction who posted the bounty was also another first rank sect.

There were eight first rank sects in total in the Upper Eight Regions. There was the Eternal Celestial Capital, the Ninesuns Sky Sect, the Moon God Sect, and the Great Yu Skysword Sect [1], which was the sect that posted the Ancient Reformation Pill bounty.

The formation mission was also posted by another first rank sect. It was situated in the eastern region and was named the Celestial Cicada Court. Jiang Chen couldn't help but praise Pillfire City for the range of their influence. The Great Yu Skysword Sect was situated closer to Veluriyam Capital, yet one found their mission in Pillfire City. The Celestial Cicada Court was also situated far east, and was incredibly far away from the city. And yet, they too had posted a mission in the city.

One had to praise the city for their excellent execution of information and cultural exchange. They were now the true core capital in the Upper Eight Regions. Their influence reached every corner of the region except the south, which was under the jurisdiction of Veluriyam Capital. Other than that, there was no corner which their influence didn't reach. It was incredibly frightening. The more Jiang Chen understood about the city, the more alarmed he became. If the city had a complete fallout with Veluriyam Capital, the latter would surely eat a greater loss. That was an unarguable fact.

#### Chapter 1060: Jiang Chens Decision

Jiang Chen was a little shaken by Pillfire City's range of influence. Veluriyam Capital's residents often felt a common sense of superiority. The city was the heart of the Upper Eight Regions, a dominant beacon in its heartland. But the sheer force of comparison made Jiang Chen change his opinion. Pillfire City had been grossly underestimated by at least a portion of Veluriyam's populace. Not that they were country bumpkins exactly, but they were just a bit too arrogant.



“The Celestial Cicada Court, hmm...” Jiang Chen silently made a note of the name to himself. If he had the chance, he absolutely needed to make a trip there. This formation piqued his interest in them. If the Celestial Cicada Court was related to the Ancient Crimson Heavens Sect, that was very good news. He would take on this mission for sure.

The remaining mission was one that related to blacksmithing and refining. Issued not by a first rank sect, but by a faction slightly lesser that specialized in the forging of legendary arms. In the Upper Eight Regions, many sects had their own blacksmith. However, most were a far cry from elite. The cream of the crop was, instead, largely attracted to this particular faction. Whenever he checked a mission’s issuer, Jiang Chen was astounded time and again by Pillfire City’s ascendancy.

On the surface, the city was a faction founded on pills. In actuality, its prestige and authority extended to every other aspect and sphere of martial dao as well. This was one of the keystones for the city’s success. Invisibly and without notice, it spread its tendrils of power to every vocation and faction.

Jiang Chen had no plans on accepting this mission. Though he had reasonable knowledge of forging a weapon, he didn’t want to be involved in this particular affair. First, the difficulty of the task was clearly commensurate with its reward. If he accomplished something that a faction specialized in forging weapons could not, it would be too astounding and bizarre. Second, he did not want to reveal too many of his skills or attract pursuers. Finally, and most importantly, the faction in question was very intimate with Pillfire City. It was reason enough for Jiang Chen’s natural dislike. Thus, he decided to pass the mission up. Let someone else solve the problem for once!

His musings complete, Jiang Chen opened his eyes once more. Taking the weaponsmithing mission in hand, he headed straight towards Assistant Temple Master Gao.

“Arena Lord Shao, have you decided this quickly already?” The assistant temple master asked jovially.

“I’ll take on the other three, but I have no expertise with this one. I’ll leave it to my fellows.” Jiang Chen cut to the chase.

Assistant Temple Master Gao blinked. He seemed to recall that Jiang Chen had taken four sovereign missions. How come only one was coming back? Was the young man keeping the other three? Both the temple master’s face and eyes changed color. “Are you absolutely sure about taking on the other three sovereign missions, Arena Lord Shao? Is that what you mean to do?”

Silence on that front was affirmation enough. Jiang Chen countered instead with a question. “Are all the issuers here at the Temple?”

“Of course they are,” Assistant Temple Master Gao smiled. “We wouldn’t have given you the missions otherwise. We bring out only ones whose bounties can be cashed in immediately.”

“Good.” Jiang Chen nodded. Being able to cash in the reward in person was best. He had no love for long-term relationships.

The temple master was floored by the young man before him once again. He knew better than anyone what sovereign missions signified. In past years, most had gone either failed or unclaimed. In a single Bounty Arena, it was considered quite good if two or three such missions were completed, out of ten

issued. Why had this young man kept three out of four? Was he able to complete a whopping seventy-five percent of the sovereign missions? That proportion was jaw-droppingly high. Incredible, truly.

Still, the Temple Master retained his composure in the face of private amazement. He was a high-ranking member of a notable organization, after all. "Arena Lord Shao, if you're sure about taking on those three missions you have, then I will arrange for you to meet your clients immediately. You can discuss the details with them face-to-face."

Jiang Chen thought about it. "Let them come tomorrow. I need a day's time to think things over."

"A friendly reminder, Arena Lord Shao. The amount of time you have to give up your mission is six hours. If you give me an answer tomorrow, and you change your mind then..." The assistant Temple Master was charitable enough with the warning.

Jiang Chen laughed. "No worries. Even if I do, the saint spirit stones I've made over the past couple of days should be enough to pay the associated fees."

Assistant Temple Master Gao was not in a position to say anything further. Instead, he smiled once more. "I'll offer my congratulations to Arena Lord Shao ahead of time, then. However, do let me note down the identification numbers on the three missions you have right now. For reference and convenience, you understand."

"Not a problem." Jiang Chen didn't object.

The young lord was quite relaxed as he returned to his arena. The Ancient Reformation Pill was missing only two ingredients, a conclusion that he'd come to already a while prior. As for the Celestial Cicada Court's incomplete formation, Jiang Chen had pretty concrete plans for it. He had seen the formation already, after all, and there was no difficulty in it for him. The bounty reward wasn't actually in his pocket just yet, but it was as good as done.

Finally, he had no intention of interfering in the mission he'd given to Lin Yanyu. At most, he might give an inspirational hint at an important time. It was a great opportunity both to test his disciple, and for Lin Yanyu to improve his own skills.

Outrageous news tended to spread quickly. At the end of the allotted six hours, most returned their mission scrolls to the temple. Twenty-four sovereign missions had been issued, but only eight had been accepted. Out of those eight, Jiang Chen had singlehandedly taken three. Both these facts had spread almost instantaneously through the entire Bounty Arena. It made Jiang Chen the focus of the proceedings.

The other arena lords and their assistants were now looking at him with extreme shock. Not everything changed for the worse, though. The other bounty issuers, having heard this news, collectively rushed over to Jiang Chen's two arenas.

Business suddenly boomed, as it were. The sovereign missions aside, the other missions were just the same as before. The level of the bounty had simply been restricted to six or above.

This burst of bustling activity delighted all the assistants at either of Jiang Chen's two arenas. It was their time to shine! There was no better moment to rake in the profit. The other arena lords looked at the

young man with great anguish. Most of them had chosen to return the sovereign missions' scrolls completely. True to their name, none of them were easy to complete.

Any returned mission was eligible to be taken by the declining arena lord's fellows, however. This regulation worked to the seniors' considerable benefit. In the moments that followed, taking several of the declined missions was exactly what they did. Jiang Chen himself refrained from stealing their thunder. He had garnered enough attention already. He knew that accepting three sovereign missions was alarming enough. His peers would kill him if he grabbed any more—if not physically, then through looks of envy. Better to leave well enough alone.

Shortly thereafter, a new rumor began to circulate: the mission Jiang Chen had taken involving the Reformation Pill was the mission king of this Bounty Arena. It was so-called because of the sheer payout. A tidy sum of five hundred million! The number two mission belonged to Emperor Peerless, clocking in at a ludicrous four hundred million.

Pill King Blue Phoenix and Master Wang Xuotong had both snatched up three hundred million bounty missions for themselves as well. Among the mission-takers, Pill King Blue Phoenix had the largest number of missions. Four in total, to be precise. Two from his initial allotment, two transferred from the pool of rejects. Both Emperor Peerless and Master Wang Xuotong had three. Adding Jiang Chen's own three made thirteen.

The ratio of accepted sovereign missions to total elicited sounds of awe from the audience. Compared to its usual incarnations, this Bounty Arena had a shockingly high rate of sovereign mission acceptance. More than half had been received.

"The three seniors' presence has made this Bounty Arena extraordinary. As expected from one worthy to be held every several hundred years!"

"Pill King Blue Phoenix singlehandedly took four sovereign missions! No surprise there. After all, he's ranked thirty-sixth in the Hall of Millennial Legends, a man veritably equal to a pill emperor."

"Emperor Peerless took three as well. Martial dao missions are much harder than others, you know, but I guess it's worth it to get His Majesty to teach you."

"That, er, Arena Lord Shao. He's a real black horse, huh? Who would've thought that an arena lord as young as him would accept three sovereign missions as well? He's even got the mission king! My heavens, it makes me jealous just to consider it."

"Tsk tsk, five hundred million. If I had that much money, I could break through to emperor realm just like that. The Bounty Arena is really great for getting rich quick, eh?"

"Agreed. Time to work hard to join the next one."

"Saying that is easy. Do you really think the Bounty Arena is a place where you can commit wholesale robbery just like that? If you're a talentless hack, you won't even get to be an arena lord, much less make any money."

"Ah, I suppose. Arena Lord Shao is young, but he waded through countless people to get there. The very fact that he holds mastery over two arenas explains a lot."

“I respect him a lot for it. He is a most promising new talent.”

“I wonder if Arena Lord Shao has a cultivation partner? My sister is young and pretty, and pretty talented too.”

“Heh, you’re here dreaming about becoming his brother-in-law, but he might not be willing!” The audience was embroiled in excited chatter and discussion.

The issuance of the sovereign missions sent the Bounty Arena’s atmosphere soaring to new heights. The percentage of missions accepted, furthermore, broke the record set over the past few centuries. It increased the public’s expectations in the event. The arena lords for this Bounty Arena included both honorable seniors and auspicious juniors. This contrast was enjoyable to watch by itself. The increased enthusiasm reached not only the crowd, but the eyes and hearts of the Temple of Cleansing Fire’s elite as well.