

Three Realms 1111

Chapter 1111: A Deep Love Between Father and Son

Staying temporarily within Gu Xintang's residence, Jiang Chen took meticulous care of his father every day. Under his attentive ministrations, Jiang Feng's wounds healed very quickly. He was mostly healed after roughly four days. Physically and psychologically, he was no different from most other cultivators.

During this entire time, Jiang Chen kept completely silent. He told the older man nothing of their current circumstances. Jiang Feng cooperated by reciprocating that silence, asking no questions whatsoever. He knew that his son urgently wanted to treat his injuries.

The silence lasted until the day of Jiang Feng's recovery. On that day, he let out a soft sigh. "Chen'er, I didn't expect us to reunite here, of all places. Why did they take me to the Moon God Sect? Why did they just toss me into the Sable Cells? I only went to the Heavensfall Society to gather some information. Is there something different about the Tilted Moon Region?" Jiang Feng was still utterly lost as to the reasons for having been put through this entire experience.

He'd drifted about the Upper Eight Regions for numerous years, making contacts through an entire gamut of channels. Though he had often been deceived, this kind of ordeal was new to him. Simple information-gathering had led to him being mired in unexpected trouble.

Jiang Chen tossed his father a complicated look. "Father, perhaps you still have the wool over your eyes. You don't know that you came too close to the truth for comfort."

"What do you mean?" Jiang Feng's face froze.

"What you've been seeking for all these years... is with the Moon God Sect. You stumbled upon their secrets. What better reason could they toss you into the Sable Cells for?"

Jiang Feng's expression changed drastically as he jumped out of his chair. "Chen'er, what did you just say? What I've been looking for... is with the Moon God Sect? Your mother, is she really from here?"

Jiang Chen nodded. "Indeed."

Jiang Feng was in literal shock. He was in a great disarray, punctuated by outbreaks of foolish giggles, incomprehensible mutters, and stoic stares. He recovered himself a little only after a long while.

"Chen'er, are you sure that your mother is at the Moon God Sect still?" He grabbed his son's hand. "How did you find out?"

Jiang Chen cut straight to the chase. "When I was at Veluriyam Capital, I heard a certain piece of news. Several decades ago, a holy maiden from the Moon God Sect was lost to the mundane world. This inspired me to come to the Tilted Moon Region in search of more information. Never in my wildest dreams did I imagine that you'd come as well, nor that you wouldn't know mother was with the Moon God Sect!"

"This must be the will of heaven! Chen'er, heaven itself wants our family to get back together. Who can refuse the decree of the divine?" Jiang Feng's lips trembled and he was greatly excited. He badly wanted to grow a pair of wings and set out right this moment to find his wife again.

Jiang Chen, on the other hand, looked more conflicted. "Father, that's only part of it." He let out a long sigh.

"Oh? What else is there? Is your mother... not doing well?" Jiang Feng's voice trailed off, shaking. He was most worried not about not being able to find his wife again, but rather finding her in unhappiness. Or worse, that she'd forgotten about him altogether.

"I don't think... 'not doing well' is the right way to put it, but I can't say that she's amazingly well either. Perhaps she pines for you every day, father, just like you do her. But she has no control over her own fate, and can't leave the Moon God Sect."

"Why?" Jiang Feng was incensed. "The people at the Moon God Sect are a bunch of bullies. If your mother isn't willing to stay, why are they stopping her from leaving? Don't they know that you can't force a horse to drink water? Don't they understand that she doesn't care about being some holy maiden?"

Jiang Chen hastily tried to calm his passionate father down. "Dad, take a deep breath and relax. Mother isn't their holy maiden at the moment."

"Oh? How do you know? If she's not, all the better. There should be much less resistance for our family reunion, then." Jiang Feng was visibly pleased.

Jiang Chen knew that it was his father's dream to see that happen. However, what he didn't know was that their family didn't quite include the number of people that he'd expect.

Technically, they were now a family of five.

The complexity of Jiang Chen's expression did not escape his father. Jiang Feng's voice cracked.

"Chen'er, are you keeping something important from me? Is... your mother..."

"No, no. She's with the Moon God Sect, and not as their holy maiden. But, er, there's someone else who is, who makes it very hard for mother to leave them."

"Why should that person matter to her?" Jiang Feng shook his head.

"Not just to her, but to us as well. Because... the current holy maiden of the Blues is your daughter and my sister. And mother, well, she was originally supposed to be the holy maiden for the Blue Moon faction..."

"What? What'd you just say? Your sister? My daughter?" Jiang Feng's eyes widened. What he'd just heard was absolutely astounding. Without a doubt, this information was simply too incredible. Jiang Chen had experienced similar emotions when he'd first heard about it as well, so this was nothing unexpected. Jiang Feng positively reeled with confusion.

"How can you have a sister?! How would your mother have married someone else and have children with him? You're lying, this is all fake, Chen'er, it must be!" He sounded like a raving madman.

Jiang Chen smiled wryly. "Father, I didn't say anything like that. Her child is also yours, but no one knew about it back when you first separated. There's another thing, actually. Mother gave birth to fraternal twins, one boy and one girl."

This revelation hit Jiang Feng on the head like a hefty club. He saw stars in front of his eyes. Should he be feeling happy? Bewildered? He was still for a long while before coming to his senses. Excitement flared in his eyes. "Chen'er, is everything you've said true?"

"You can trust it completely. I've verified these secrets with many people. The Moon God Sect prefers to keep them hidden, but even secrets have keepers."

"Good, great, amazing!" Suddenly, Jiang Feng began to cackle loudly. The skin around his eyes became reddened, and tears pooled at their corners. Though men were usually stoic and unyielding, there were certain soft subjects that could bring them to tears.

Jiang Feng had gone through a great deal. He had planned for and anticipated the worst. Hearing that his wife was still alive cheered him up quite a bit. Not only that, but she'd also given him a pair of children. Two pieces of wonderful news! In that moment, he felt that every trial and tribulation had been worth it.

"So you're saying, Chen'er, that we're not a family of three anymore? Instead, we're a family of five?! What excellent news. Let's go find your mother immediately!" Jiang Feng was being very impulsive.

"Easy, father," Jiang Chen cautioned hastily. "Mother is the previous holy maiden of the Blue Moon faction, and younger sister is the current. They surely have a formidable amount of protection around them. If we just go looking for them willy-nilly, then we won't be able to see them at all. Worse, we'll have given away our goal, lowering our chances to be reunited with them."

Having seen a fair bit himself, Jiang Chen knew well the barriers for relationships between those of different social classes. His father was just some origin realm cultivator. The Moon God Sect cared little for individuals of that caliber. The Blues, for one, was less than willing for their two generations of holy maidens to have any connections with such a man. Thus, recklessly heading in could only result in closing off future paths towards his mother and sister. That was a much graver matter than just not being able to see them for the time being. To achieve a proper family reunion, they needed to wait for the right time and approach.

Jiang Feng had made the rash suggestion based on his emotions alone. Cooling off was enough for him to agree with his son. Going now would result only in the opposite of what they wanted.

"What do you think, Chen'er? My head is a little messed up. I'd rather listen to your ideas," Jiang Feng declared decisively.

"We need to be in this for the long haul. Father, I promise that no matter how much resistance, I'll see this through and get you and mother back together. I'll make our family whole again. And I'll find my younger brother..." Jiang Chen hadn't wanted to add the last part, but he decided that it was too important to omit.

"Find your younger brother? What do you mean?" Jiang Feng's tone darkened. Jiang Chen let out a soft sigh. He laid out what'd happened.

Jiang Feng adopted an ugly look at the situation. "Is the Moon God Sect this cold-blooded?"

"They are. As is any first rank sect. Don't worry, father. The heavens are watching over our entire family. Even if my little brother has been exiled from the Tilted Moon Region, I'm sure he's safe and sound

elsewhere. It's very possible that these troubles are only trials on his road to greatness." Jiang Chen could only try to comfort his father this way.

Jiang Feng nodded. "You're right. Back in Jiang Han province, you wallowed in ignorance under my protecting eye. After you went to the capital, you suddenly wisened up. And look how well you've turned out, now! You know, I've been hearing about your exploits at the Precious Tree Sect, then the Regal Pill Palace, and then your grudge with Eternal Celestial Capital... a first rank sect even has a bounty on your head, eh? Is all of this true?"

As a wanderer, Jiang Feng had been privy to a reasonable amount of information from the jianghu while on the road. The size of the bounty on Jiang Chen's head had alerted the entire world to his existence. He'd thought that it was merely someone with the same name at first, but a cursory examination revealed that the Jiang Chen on Eternal Celestial Capital's hit-list was his son!

This had scared him into a cold fright. He had to start hiding his name and identity because of it. It wasn't that he was scared of being captured by the Eternal Celestial Capital, but that he was worried that he would be used to blackmail his son. Thankfully, Jiang Feng was so insignificant that few people even noticed him. He managed to avoid the most unfavorable outcomes.

He hadn't heard any more news of Jiang Chen, after that. He thought constantly of his son, but the presence of the bounty from Eternal Celestial Capital remained an assuring sight. As long as the bounty was still there, his son was safe. Truthfully, Jiang Feng sometimes felt proud of his son. A first rank sect hadn't managed to touch his son after how many years? He didn't know where his son had ended up, but he'd maintained a strong faith that his son was alright!

Chapter 1112: An Excited Jiang Feng

One had to say, Jiang Feng's intuition was quite strong.

"Chen'er, I've let you down. I wasn't there to support you in your time of need for so many years." Jiang Feng blamed himself. "I really feel that I've let you down. I've let your younger brother down too..."

Jiang Chen was gripped with emotion. "Father, you took care of me for many years already. You even waited until I could stand on my own before you came out to look for mother. I should be the one apologizing."

"What are you saying? What a childish thing to say. You have nothing to apologize for. Do you think I could've escaped the Sable Cells if not for you? Do you think I would've learned about your mother's whereabouts without you? Chen'er, if I had to choose the two things I take pride in the most in my life, it would be knowing your mother and raising a good son like you."

At this point, Jiang Feng had completely forgotten about his former identity as a duke in the Eastern Kingdom. It was only after he left the Eastern Kingdom and the sixteen kingdoms alliance did he learn about the vastness of the world and his own insignificance. He finally understood why those people had worn that expression when they took away his wife.

They had the right to be proud. Compared to them, the Eastern Kingdom was lesser than even frogs at the bottom of a well.

“What happened with the chase from the Eternal Celestial Capital, Chen’er? How did you manage to avoid them?”

The conversation would drag on for a very long time if he were to go into every detail, so Jiang Chen gave his father a quick summary. “It’s true that they pursued me, but they didn’t give me too much trouble. Thanks to a series of coincidences, I eventually entered Veluriyam Capital.”

“So you did end up at the Capital? I heard that the Eternal Celestial Capital blocked the way to Veluriyam Capital to prevent you from entering that region.”

“They did. If young master Wei of Veluriyam Capital hadn’t lent me his aid, I wouldn’t have been able to enter Veluriyam Capital.”

“Good, good. The heavens help the worthy, like you said earlier. Where did you go after? You’ve changed a lot after these years. I almost didn’t recognize you.” Jiang Feng was very excited. After all, it was every father’s ambition and greatest happiness to see their son grow into success, a dragon amongst men.

“I’ve barely left Veluriyam Capital since I arrived there. For the past couple of years, I’ve built my own force, made my own connections and even built an important identity in Veluriyam Capital. I’m also known as Zhen Shi, or Pill King Zhen.”

Jiang Feng’s heart skipped a beat as disbelief shone from his eyes. “What did you say, Chen’er? Pill King Zhen? The one who defeated Pill King Ji Lang of Pillfire City?”

Jiang Chen smiled ruefully. “So you’ve heard about that too, father?”

“Who hasn’t? Everyone in the Upper Eight Regions is talking about this. Chen’er, are you really that Pill King Zhen?”

Jiang Chen smiled and didn’t deny it. “Yes, that’s me. I used an alias because I didn’t want to expose myself too soon and affect the grand plan to rebuild the Regal Pill Palace. I didn’t want to drag Veluriyam Capital into my troubles either.”

Jiang Feng sucked in a deep breath. The shocking news made him felt a little dizzy, and he had to repeat the gesture multiple times before he finally managed to rein in his emotions. As his spirits surged, he threw a punch at Jiang Chen’s shoulder.

“Good boy! I never thought my son could be this impressive until today, my good man! Pill King Zhen, is it? Hahaha, the famous Pill King Zhen is actually my son! If only I can see the faces of those Moon God Sect people when they learn about this! Speaking of which, I’ve also heard that you’ve been chosen as the young lord of Sacred Peafowl Mountain by Emperor Peafowl!”

Jiang Feng might have travelled to many places to inquire about his wife’s whereabouts, but that didn’t mean he didn’t pay attention to world news. Jiang Chen being chosen as the young lord of Sacred Peafowl Mountain had happened many years ago. It had spread to every corner of the human domain, especially since he’d gone into the Veluriyam Pagoda right after the fact.

The years he spent inside Veluriyam Pagoda were more than enough time for the news to spread to all corners of human territory. At the time, Jiang Feng had simply treated it as gossip. Not even in his dreams had he ever imagined that Pill King Zhen was his son!

Jiang Chen didn't deny this either. He nodded. "That's true. But, the amount of responsibility I have to shoulder is proportional to the greatness of this status."

"What's a young man to fear about shouldering responsibilities? I hear that Emperor Peafowl is the number one great emperor of Veluriyam Capital and the representative of their unparalleled status. This means that Veluriyam Capital will fall under your rule eventually, right? Hehehehe. If that's the case then, what's a mere Moon God Sect?!" Jiang Feng's tone brimmed with pride. What father wouldn't be happy to hear such feats from their own son? How would he not hold his head high with pride?

All these years, his heart had ached every time he recalled his wife's background and the disdainful looks of the bastards who took her away. That feeling of being looked down on like an ant had been a constant torment to his soul. He knew that it was a gap that could almost never be surmounted. Jiang Feng admitted to it. That was why his only hope was that his wife hadn't discarded her love towards him.

However, equality in status was the basis of every marriage since the ancient times. If his wife really was the descendant of a top faction, could they really have a happy ending even if he found her in the end? If Jiang Feng were to be frank with himself, he thought highly of his chances. However, all of his worries and depression were dispelled when he learned of his son's current status. None of this was a problem any longer.

As he'd mentioned earlier, what was a Moon God Sect when his son ruled over Veluriyam Capital itself? One Veluriyam Capital was at least worth two first rank sects, and the Moon God Sect was at most one first rank sect. They were completely incomparable to Veluriyam Capital.

As the saying went, a father rides on his son's success. Now that Jiang Feng's son was the future ruler of Veluriyam Capital, who in the Moon God Sect would dare stop him from reuniting with his wife? Who dared keep the father and mother of Veluriyam Capital's ruler apart? Jiang Feng's blood boiled with passion when his thoughts traveled to this point.

He finally understood why his son was so calm all this time. He finally understood why he didn't think their family's reunion was a big issue, and why he'd dared make that bold promise. His son wasn't running his mouth, but actually had the power to make their dreams a reality! Jiang Feng felt much better after knowing all this. If one of his sons wasn't still missing, he might have laughed like a madman there and then.

"Oh right, Chen'er. I noticed that the experts of the Ten Ultimates seemed terribly afraid of you when you were there. Those are some of the fiercest and most dangerous criminals in the Sable Cells, so why were they afraid of a half-step emperor realm cultivator?" Jiang Feng suddenly recalled the situation when they escaped the Sable Cells and voiced his doubts to Jiang Chen.

"Heh heh, they're only a little bit wary of me. Old Brother Mo is the main reason why they were as meek as they were. Old Brother Mo is a great emperor and the one of the top cultivators in the wandering cultivator community: Emperor Peerless."

“Ah? Emperor Peerless?” Jiang Feng’s mouth fell open. Of course he had heard of the great Emperor Peerless! How could he not know when he was a wandering cultivator himself? He’d just never imagined that his son would be powerful enough to invite a great man like Emperor Peerless to rescue him, not to mention that the great emperor looked like he didn’t mind listening to Jiang Chen’s orders.

“Chen’er, I heard that Emperor Peerless is a loner of sorts, so how did you...” Jiang Feng sounded a little doubtful.

“Father, Old Brother Mo and I got along well the moment we meet each other. We admire each other very much and so have a close friendship. His troubles are my troubles, and I’m sure that Old Brother Mo will treat my troubles with equal seriousness.” Jiang Chen didn’t see anything wrong with their current friendship. A different person might think that Jiang Chen was the one benefitting because Emperor Peerless was a great emperor, but Jiang Chen himself didn’t think this was the case at all.

In fact, neither did Emperor Peerless think so either. Disregarding that Jiang Chen had saved him and Madame Yun from a deadly poison, the lad had even cured his wife of her illness and released them from a lifetime of pain and suffering. Even if the emperor excluded these from the equation, he was still certain that it was only a matter of time before Jiang Chen’s pill dao and martial dao talents exceeded his. This was even before accounting for the mysterious expert behind the young man’s back. These were all things Mo Wushuang couldn’t compete with Jiang Chen in the slightest.

Of course, Emperor Peerless hadn’t thought that much about things. He’d simply thought that Jiang Chen was a worthy person to be friends with the moment Jiang Chen had gifted him the Pinecrane Pill.

Jiang Chen relaxed a little when he heard his son’s reassurances. He felt very proud that his son was able to call a great emperor his brother. It proved just how excellent his son was. Had Jiang Chen been another young man, he might not even dare to breathe loudly in the presence of a great emperor, much less becoming brothers with one. If one had neither the ability nor the backing, a great emperor wouldn’t bother to even acknowledge a person’s presence.

Father and son chatted idly with each other for a moment before Jiang Feng asked about his younger brother, Jiang Tong and nephew, Jiang Yu. Jiang Chen told him everything that had happened in the sixteen kingdoms alliance.

When Jiang Chen had returned to Skylareland Kingdom, he learned that Jiang Tong and Jiang Yu had long since vanished from public eyes alongside the Precious Tree Sect. They hadn’t been attacked by Eternal Celestial Capital. Jiang Feng felt even better when he heard that his brother and nephew were fine. However, he wasn’t much interested when Jiang Chen talked about Jiang Han province and the Jiang family. He had given up on those people a long time ago.

Jiang Chen could sense that his father’s horizon and psyche had changed entirely after spending so much time away from the sixteen kingdoms alliance. Naturally, it was a gratifying change. A while later, Jiang Chen took his father to Emperor Peerless so the latter could express his gratitude.

Emperor Peerless had a rough idea of Jiang Feng’s identity by now and didn’t put on airs before the man. “Brother Jiang Feng, I’m calling you my brother, but I’m also calling your son my brother. Wouldn’t you say that the seniority between us has gone completely out of whack?” He cracked a joke and chuckled.

Jiang Feng also laughed. "There is nothing wrong if we keep it separate. Normally, we both should address you as our senior, but my son would be troubled since you address each other on equal terms. Therefore, if you may forgive my impertinence, I would like to address you as Old Brother Mo too."

Emperor Peerless laughed loudly. "As it should be, as it should be! Congratulations for raising a good son, my man. Oh, how blind and foolish the Moon God Sect must be!"

Chapter 1113: A New Problem

Emperor Peerless was clearly calling the Moon God Sect blind for not noticing Jiang Chen's potential, but the latter didn't say anything and laughed inwardly to himself. It wasn't really the Moon God Sect's fault. His bloodline had genuinely been very mediocre when he was young. If he really was a genius, the sect would've taken him away long before. There was no chance he'd be left behind in the Eastern Kingdom.

Jiang Chen smiled awkwardly and changed the topic. "Old Brother Mo, I believe you have a rough understanding of my family issues by now. There's yet another stumbling block before me. The Moon God Sect has been keeping very close tabs on my mother and sister. We must come up with a plan so that our family can reunite."

Emperor Peerless laughed. "You have two choices. You can barge your way in or have an open, frank discussion with them."

Barging in clearly wasn't the smartest idea. There was no way Jiang Chen would even consider it. He wouldn't mind it if he was the only concerned party, but that wasn't the case. He couldn't afford to take such drastic measures when his parent's happiness was at stake. Moreover, barging his way into a first rank sect was easier said than done. Even if he somehow succeeded, who could guarantee that he'd successfully leave with his mother and sister? This option wasn't even worth considering. Having a discussion with them was a prickly matter as well. How was he supposed to tackle the subject?

Reveal his identity as the young lord of Sacred Peafowl Mountain? That would expose everything! That clearly wasn't going to work. He couldn't afford to reveal his true identity. First of all, setting aside that he might not be able to stabilize the uproar in Veluriyam Capital once his identity was revealed, the Ninesuns Sky Sect and the Eternal Celestial Capital would surely band together and launch an assault on him. His sway as the young lord of Sacred Peafowl Mountain would dwindle as a result as well.

He wasn't powerful enough to ignore those repercussions yet. Revealing his identity would cause more problems than it would solve. He was merely the young lord of Sacred Peafowl Mountain and not the true leader of Veluriyam Capital. Moreover, the power struggle between the great emperors of the capital had yet to be resolved.

"Little brother, your identity should be enough to get you a meeting with them," the emperor advised.

Jiang Feng shook his head before Jiang Chen could reply. "Chen'er can't do that. If his identity is exposed, it will implicate not only Sacred Peafowl Mountain, but also the Regal Pill Palace. I can't allow Chen'er to sacrifice his future over something like this. At most, I'll just wait a few more years. I've already waited decades for this moment. A few more years wouldn't hurt."

He desperately wanted to see his wife and reunite his family, but he understood how complicated the situation was. Maybe it wasn't time for them to reunite just yet. He was just relieved to finally locate his

wife. A few more years of waiting was acceptable. After all, that time frame wasn't even that long in the cultivation world.

Jiang Feng's injuries were almost fully healed after a few day's rest in Gu Xintang's residence. And so, Jiang Chen decided to return to Frostmoon City to make some long term plans. He also asked Gu Xintang if he'd ever get the chance to meet the Blue Moon's holy maidens. Unfortunately, not even the hallmaster of Bleakmoon Hall would be able to meet a holy maiden, let alone a mere guard captain like him.

Holy maidens were potential sectmasters. They were very isolated from the outside world and shrouded in mystery. Other than the sectmaster who personally instructed them, not even their parents were allowed to see them often. Holy maidens with high potential would go through long periods of observation until the next sectmaster was singled out.

The Moon God Sect had four sectmasters in a rising hierarchy as there was four factions within the sect. The Purples, Blues, Indigos, and Reds formed a council where each faction had their own representative. Of course, the council wasn't entirely harmonious either. Regardless, holy maidens were far beyond the reach of the common people. Only those with insurmountable power within the sect could have an audience with them, except when the holy maiden voluntarily showed herself.

Holy maidens were extremely mysterious in this sect. They were very different from the true disciples of other sects because they were women. Upon entering the cultivation world, they'd cause a huge commotion throughout region. In the Upper Eight Regions, many sought glory by courting the Moon God Sect holy maidens. Technically, the holy maidens had sworn to never marry, but sometimes there were exceptions. Those who lost the running to become sectmaster were allowed to marry. Of course, the requirements for such arrangements were incredibly high. The average Wang, Chen, and Lin could only dream about marrying a holy maiden.

Even those who lost in the running had extremely high standards. First of all, their partners must have a similar background of affluence and power, and they had to be equipped with talent and good looks. Most important of all, they had to remain faithful unto death. Infidelity was regarded as treason against the sect.

The Moon God Sect was the only matriarchal sect in the Upper Eight Regions. Marriage was seen as a sacred matter and was thus subject to many inflexible and rigid rules. Jiang Chen's mother, Xu Meng, was a good example. She had been left behind in the secular world during infancy, so the matter should've come to a rest with that. However, the sect wouldn't allow it. When they received news that one of their holy maidens had been desecrated, they viewed it as an immense humiliation. They'd rather kidnap or kill her than to allow her to commit further debauchery in the secular world. For the sake of pointless vanity, they were willing to separate a pair of lovebirds and destroy their family.

Jiang Chen asked Third Master Jing the same questions in Frostmoon City. The latter smiled wryly and shook his head. "Brother Shao, if you need help with anything else, I'll help you in a heartbeat. But if you wish to see a holy maiden... I'm afraid it's beyond my abilities. Neither I, Captain Gu, or the hallmaster of Blackmoon Hall can help you with that. Even the forefather of House Jing, who's a sect elder, would have to ask for permission from the holy maiden before they can meet."

It was only then that Jiang Chen realized how difficult it would be to get an audience with the holy maidens of the Sect. Conventional ways were no longer an option. He'd have to blaze a much more unorthodox path.

"Third Master Jing, if getting an audience with a holy maiden is so difficult, what about the former holy maiden, Xu Meng? That should be easier, right?" Jiang Chen tried again.

"Aii it would definitely be easier if it were any other former holy maidens. Unfortunately, Holy Maiden Xu Meng is under heavy surveillance. The sect doesn't allow her to come into contact with the outside world. Moreover, she doesn't want to see any of the members of the sect due to her deep hatred for them. The sect has ruined her life and separated her family. Her son is also missing and nobody even knows if he's still alive..." Third Master Jing didn't withhold any information and told Jiang Chen everything he knew.

Getting an audience with a former holy maiden wasn't any easier than a current one. Jiang Chen was running out of options. Did he really have no other choice but to meet with them? Was it even possible to have an effective talk with such a rigid and inflexible sect?

The Tilted Moon Region had good relations with Pillfire City due to their close proximity. There was no guarantee that they might show a young lord of Veluriyam Capital face either. He tried tackling the matter from multiple angles, but there just wasn't any other way.

"Maybe I should just barge into the Blue Moons and kidnap your mother?" Emperor Peerless suggested.

"That wouldn't be appropriate." Jiang Chen immediately shook his head. "First of all, it's too risky. Going in is relatively safe when you're alone, but the same can't be said when you have to escape with another person. Secondly, it makes things difficult for my little sister. It'll be even harder for us to meet in the future. Lastly, this will also affect Third Master Jing and Gu Xintang."

The third master was somewhat touched by those words. He'd been genuinely worried when Emperor Peerless had voiced his suggestion. He was deeply impressed that Sir Shao hadn't forgotten about him even in a situation like this! He might be a scoundrel, but he wasn't the kind of person that couldn't tell chalk from cheese.

Since the group couldn't think of an appropriate course of action yet, they had no choice but to wait for an opportunity. In the meantime, Jiang Chen transferred energy to his father everyday to reshape his body and bloodline. He didn't hesitate to use his treasure trove of useful items on his father. After all, the man was only in his fifties. That was still young in the cultivation world. As long as his foundation was solid, it was completely normal for him to catch up to the other experts at his age.

When Palace Head Dan Chi had broken through the sage realm at a hundred years old, he was considered a peerless talent in Myriad Domain. Jiang Feng was already an earth origin cultivator. With Jiang Chen's help, he shouldn't have any problem breaking through the sage realm within three to five years. There was no shortcut in attaining the emperor realm, but Jiang Chen had plenty of resources, pills, spirit stones, and equipment.

He also had in possession the true dragon, golden cicada, and astral white tiger bloodline. His father could choose to whichever one to refine and instantly become a peerless talent in the entire Divine Abyss Continent. Jiang Chen was relieved that he'd refined the Five Dragons Opening Heavens Pill for his

father back then. It was just a tiny pill, but it was enough to set up a solid foundation for Jiang Feng. Otherwise, there was no way Jiang Feng could reach the earth origin realm within a decade. This was already a very astonishing cultivation speed and no doubt that it was thanks to the Five Dragons Opening Heavens Pill.

“Haha, Chen’er, it’s normally the father who paves the road and sets up a training plan for his son. But in our family, the father is the one who gets to enjoy such fortune instead.” Jiang Feng sighed deeply. Everything had changed ever since his son reentered into his world. His bleak and dull life was now full of light and color.

Liu Zhen envied the father and son for reuniting, while Jiang Chen didn’t forget to repay Liu Zhen for not forsaking his father. The young lord imparted a lot of fortune to Liu Zhen. A lot of them were opportunities that Liu Zhen wouldn’t have even dreamed about. This excited him greatly. Meeting Jiang Feng was the turning point in his life. Liu Zhen had never asked to be compensated for his dedication, but he’d received it nonetheless.

Chapter 1114: New Troubles

Liu Zhen was floored when he learned of Jiang Chen’s true identity. The young lord of Sacred Peafowl Mountain was the highest status that existed in the Upper Eight Regions! It was an unimaginable height to a small wandering cultivator like him. But now, living proof of that height was standing right in front of him!

Naturally, Liu Zhen was overwhelmed by emotion and excitement. He knew that this was a turning point, his one and only chance to turn around his miserable life. If he successfully seized this opportunity, he would be able to rewrite his life into something completely new and even take full revenge against those who had shamed him in the past.

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On this day, Third Master Jing hurriedly sought out Jiang Chen. “Sir Shao, are you free right now?”

“What is it?” Jiang Chen knew that something had happened from his hasty expression.

“Something’s happened to Captain Gu...” Third Master Jing sounded a bit depressed. “He’s been beaten up in Frostmoon City.”

“Captain Gu is a member of the Moon God Sect and a captain of Bleakmoon Hall, isn’t he?” Jiang Chen looked startled. “Isn’t that breaking sect laws? Has the sect taken action against the offender?”

Third Master Jing smiled wryly as he sighed. “The thing is, the culprit belongs to the Moon God Sect as well.”

“Where is he now? How badly is he wounded? Come, let’s go to him.” Jiang Chen wasn’t an ungrateful sort. Gu Xintang had done a lot of work to save Jiang Chen’s father. Although it was inconvenient for him to interfere with Moon God Sect’s internal matters, he couldn’t sit by and do nothing now that Third Master Jing had come to him for help.

“Should we ask Emperor Peerless to join us too?” Third Master Jing reminded.

Jiang Chen knew that Third Master Jing had actually been looking for Emperor Peerless and not him. This was a fight after all. If a captain in Bleakmoon Hall couldn't beat his opponent, there was no reason for Third Master Jing to believe that Jiang Chen could do the unexpected. On the surface, his combat ability appeared even less than Third Master Jing and Gu Xintang.

Jiang Chen nodded and went to inform Emperor Peerless. The great emperor frowned. "Who attacked him? Little Gu is an honest man. Why would anyone bully someone like him?"

Third Master Jing smiled ruefully. "Well, in our city, honest men are the easiest to bully."

The third master himself looked shamefaced when he said this. After all, he had bullied so many honest men in the past that he cultivated an ill reputation. If Jiang Chen hadn't taken him down a peg, he might have continued his villainous ways. Recently however, the third master was acting a lot less like the scoundrel he used to be and seemed like he wished to turn over a new leaf.

Emperor Peerless was very unhappy, to say the least. He'd already mentioned admiring Gu Xintang back at the Ten Ultimates. Granted, that had been the Sable Cells and not Frostmoon City. No one in Frostmoon City knew that Gu Xintang was a man who'd earned the great emperor's appreciation. This still greatly displeased the great emperor. He angrily had the third master lead the way.

Third Master Jing and Gu Xintang shared a firm bond of friendship with each other. Faction wise, they were both Blue Moon members. The one who'd beat up Gu Xintang this time belonged to the Purple Moons, so the fight wasn't just a matter of personal grudge, but of orthodoxy as well.

Purple Moon and Blue Moon were the two most popular factions in Moon God Sect at the moment. Purple Moon had the greatest foundation while Blue Moon had produced the strongest holy maiden in the sect's history, Holy Maiden Qingxuan. Both factions constantly butted heads because of this.

Surprisingly, the location of the beatdown was in a bustling area in Frostmoon City. Gu Xintang was currently surrounded by a group of men while his were sprawled all over the ground. His attackers were obviously Bleakmoon Hall enforcers as well, but their attire was slightly different from his. Patently, they belonged to another squad.

Among them, a man with an aquiline nose was ordering his men to attack Gu Xintang while he stood with folded arms. Gu Xintang was visibly hurt, but he hadn't surrendered to his enemy and was fighting with all his might. The man with an aquiline nose was surnamed Sun and he was yelling viciously, "Gu Xintang, I warned you a long time ago to stay away from Ah Li! Have you checked yourself in a pool of pee, you worthless fool? How do you think you're in any way worthy of Ah Li?!"

Gu Xintang couldn't spare the energy to answer the taunt because he was being attacked on all fronts. However, it was obvious from his look of grief and indignation that he held a deep hatred of this man.

"Brothers, beat him as hard as you can! He'll think that I'm a pushover if he isn't taught a lesson." The man with an aquiline nose was also a Bleakmoon Hall captain. He was slightly higher than Gu Xintang in the ranks, and had great backing and a wide personal network in Moon God Sect.

The advantages he possessed made him extremely arrogant and willful. The Ah Li mentioned was Gu Xintang's partner. They loved each other and had even been preparing to formally commit each other as

dao partners. However, Sun had appeared out of nowhere one day, taken one look at Ah Li, and unceremoniously tried to take her from Gu Xintang.

Although Ah Li didn't like Sun at all, she found it difficult to do anything when he shamelessly dogged her steps every day. She had no choice but to hide from him, but Gu Xintang didn't have the same luxury. They were both captains of Bleakmoon Hall and had to see each other everyday. This resulted in Sun verbally attacking Gu Xintang every chance he had.

The two rivals had run into each other today, and Sun decided that the opportunity was ripe for a beating. They weren't within sect territory, so this didn't count as infighting. Even if it did count, he could easily use his connections and scrub his crimes clean. It was the advantage of being a widely connected and very underhanded man. Sun had obviously planned on giving Gu Xintang a thorough beating from the start because the men he'd brought were all extremely powerful fighters. Caught off guard, Gu Xintang wasn't a match for Sun's devious schemes at all. Captain Gu's original plans were to eat lunch and drink with Third Master Jing. When the third master saw what was happening to his friend, he immediately escaped to bring back reinforcements.

Sun was aware that Third Master Jing was Gu Xintang's best friend. However, he couldn't attack Third Master Jing as he could the latter. Third Master Jing was the vice head of the first division. Things would not be nearly as simple if he beat up Third Master Jing in Frostmoon City because the man had considerable backing himself. He might not wield as much power as Sun did in the Moon God Sect, but that didn't mean he couldn't stir the pot if he really wished to. This was why Sun didn't stop Third Master Jing from leaving. He'd simply laughed at the vice head and called him chicken in leaving his brother behind to suffer. He also took the opportunity to taunt Gu Xintang that his friends were all trash and cowards.

While Sun was hooting at Gu Xintang, one of his subordinates suddenly walked over and reported in a low voice, "Captain Gu, Third Master Jing has returned."

"He's nothing." Sun smiled disdainfully in response. "Don't tell me he's planning to take revenge? I let him go earlier is because he's the vice head of the first division. If he's stupid enough to get back into the fight, then beat him up as well!"

"I think he brought some people with him..."

Sun sneered. "So what? Who can he bring from that mere first division of his? Here in Moon God Sect, he'll have to bring the holy maiden herself to stop me. Otherwise, all other small fries are just..."

"Are just what?" A cold voice cut through the air powerfully. It forcefully slammed into Sun's chest like an invisible sword. Sun paled and felt a burst of pain and upheaval in his chest. In the next moment, he spat out a mouthful of blood. The technique that transformed voice into thunder had, of course, been executed by Emperor Peerless.

The emperor walked into the fray without even stopping. With incredible ease like a tiger in a flock of lambs, he grabbed the cultivators surrounding Gu Xintang and threw them away like rag dolls. The enforcers were scared witless and weren't able to resist at all.

Gu Xintang immediately relaxed when he saw Emperor Peerless, but his wounds made him wobble about and look deathly pale. He clutched his wounds and leaned powerlessly against a wall. The captain flashed a ghastly smile. "Thank you for helping me, senior."

Emperor Peerless waved his hands in response before striding straight towards Sun. "What's your name?"

Sun was greatly surprised to see the reinforcements Third Master Jing had brought were able to throw his men around like rag dolls. How on earth had he managed to get someone as strong as this?

Sun hadn't brought many men with him, but they were all seventh level emperor realm that were as strong or stronger than Gu Xintang. However, none of them had been able to put up even a bit of resistance before this stranger at all. This made the color drain from his face. He was slightly stronger than Gu Xintang, but that was all. If his companions couldn't withstand a single blow from the stranger, then there was no reason that he would be able to even if he hadn't endured that vocal blow from earlier.

"My... my name is Sun Yuan. I'm a descendant of the Sun Family of the Moon God Sect. My aunt is the previous generation's holy maiden, and my cousin is one of this generation's holy maiden. As for me, I'm..."

Emperor Peerless immediately slapped him across the face before with a sneer. "You what? Do you think you can escape punishment by blabbing all this?"

Sun Yuan was stupefied and frightened by Emperor Peerless' boldness as he clutched his face. He never imagined that the stranger would dare to slap him after he reeled off his background!

"How... how dare you slap me? Do you know who I am?!" Sun Yuan cried out. This was obviously the first time he'd taken a loss like this.

Emperor Peerless responded indifferently, "If you can beat up others, why can't I beat you up?"

"I... Gu Xintang is nothing compared to me! He doesn't even deserve to pick up my shoes!" Su Yuan yelled hysterically.

"In my eyes, you are the one who don't deserve to hold his shoes. How much do you think you're worth without your family and without those relatives of yours?" Emperor Peerless was a wandering cultivator, so what he couldn't stand the most were arrogant, out-of-control fops who did whatever they wanted just because they were backed by their families. Ordinarily speaking, he might have chosen to stay out of all this. But he had indeed taken a liking to Gu Xintang; at the very least, he was very satisfied with the captain's performance back in the Sable Cells. Naturally, it was only right to return the favor and back up the captain.

Chapter 1115: A Great Emperors Backing

Walking over as well, Jiang Chen looked at Sun Yuan coolly. Generally speaking, he didn't approve of useless dandies like him. The world was full of people like this. Sun Yuan was simply of a slightly higher level than most of those fops.

“So, you’re Sun Yuan, hmm? I don’t know how strong your aunts and uncles and whatever the rest of your family are, but I’ve seen more than my fair share of dandies like you. If you beat up someone today, you should be prepared to be beaten up by someone else tomorrow. It’s all well and good when you bully someone, but you’re crying foul when we put you in your place?” The sarcasm hung heavy on his face.

Having gotten his breath back, Gu Xintang strode to take his place beside Jiang Chen.

“Sun Yuan,” he glared at his fellow captain. “Ah Li and I love each other. No matter how shameful you plan on being, we will always be of one mind. If you want to be an obstacle to our relationship, then I’ll fight you to the death, regardless of the cost!”

“Good!” Emperor Peerless laughed, applauding loudly. “This is the kind of statement I approve of. Sun Yuan, mark my words! My little friend Gu’s problems are also mine. If you think your family is so great, then call up all your relatives. Why don’t you see for yourself how easy I am to deal with, or not?”

The emperor’s words commanded a great deal of authority. Jiang Chen clapped as well. “As expected of a worthy senior. Little Gu, you should thank Senior Peerless right now.”

Gu Xintang felt immensely grateful. He rushed up hurriedly. “Thank you very much, Senior Peerless.”

Senior Peerless? Sun Yuan blinked. Who was that? Was there a ‘Senior Peerless’ in Frostmoon City? Did the Moon God Sect have someone like that? ...no, right?

It was at this time that one of the smarter folks in the crowd remembered something important. His face changed color, and he rushed to Sun Yuan’s side, murmuring a few words in the latter’s ear. Sun Yuan’s face colored as well when he heard the details. He gave Emperor Peerless a conflicted look. He knew now who the old man before him was.

Mo Wushuang, Emperor Peerless! One of the most influential characters among wandering cultivators. The discovery was extremely embarrassing for him. Should he press on? Back off? Throw down a few harsh words? But he’d be in a lot of trouble if he couldn’t take back a hard attitude. Angering this titan of the wandering cultivation world meant that he could possibly be swatted to death.

Sure his was a prominent family, but he wasn’t really all that important in the family’s grand scheme of things. They might feel pity at his death, but it was doubtful that they would attempt to avenge him with all resources at their disposal. After all, he was only one of the backup talents of middling proficiency in the Sun family. There was a reasonable gap between him and the top geniuses. It was unrealistic to ask his family to feud with a great emperor realm cultivator on his behalf.

But was he going to turn tail and flee? Where would his dignity be then? How would he live it down once he returned to Bleakmoon Hall? If Gu Xintang gained the upper hand... if Gu Xintang’s guests delivered such a withering blow... how would he fight with him for Ah Li then? Sun Yuan sank into a period of brief conflict.

Emperor Peerless ignored the youngster. “Little Gu,” he turned to his acquaintance. “I asked whether you had a dao partner, back at your place. You answered me that it’s easy to find the right person, but hard to have a marriage after your heart. Is this crook the obstacle to that?”

Gu Xintang nodded. "He's completely unreasonable. Ah Li and I made private vows to each other long ago. Our commitment holds true unto death. Sun is a player and has ruined the innocence of countless maidens. How honest can he really be?"

A man like Sun Yuan never stuck with a single girl. He wanted to seize Gu Xintang's woman solely because Ah Li's appearance caught his fancy. The raw lust and possessiveness on display was absolutely despicable.

Emperor Peerless nodded back. "I see. Well then, I shall host your wedding. Hold it right here in Frostmoon City and pick a good day for you. I'd like to see if there's someone fool enough to try to ruin your marriage."

It was better to demolish ten temples than a single marriage; such went a piece of ancient conventional wisdom. Breaking the relationships of others was typically seen as something negative, almost criminal.

Sun Yuan's eyes burned with hatred. He knew that Emperor Peerless was giving him a public beating, but he didn't dare resist a bit.

"You over there, Sun something-or-other. Mark my words. If you or anyone wreck Little Gu and Ah Li's relationship, I'll make sure they don't even have a full corpse left.." The emperor's gaze was bottomless, his tone frigid. Sun Yuan was shaken to the core. He glared viciously at Gu Xintang, who scowled back without fear.

Emperor Peerless's backing allowed Gu Xintang to face Sun Yuan without worry. Before now, he had never backed off from the other man, even without outside help. It was even more unlikely that he would do so given the emperor's assurance.

"Well? Scram!" Emperor Peerless growled.

Sun Yuan was about to utter a snappy retort or three, but his lackies permitted him no such opportunity. They lugged and dragged him away in a scramble.

"Young master Sun, don't be too rash!"

"Young master Sun, give Senior Peerless some respect."

"Yes, young master Sun. We can make other plans after we go back. Making trouble here will only end in our own suffering." The people who spoke up were clever enough. They knew that falling out with a great emperor was likely to lead to swift and immediate death. Even a delayed death would be a luxury then.

Sun Yuan's anger didn't make him mentally disabled. He understood as well as his cronies that he had no right to challenge a great emperor. Thus, he could only take the easy way out and stormed out. The youth's lack of popularity in Frostmoon City showed. The bystanders boo'ed in their wake. Clearly, they also intensely disliked those who tried to budge into others' relationships.

Gu Xintang was the picture of gratefulness. "Senior Peerless, I... as your junior, I do not know how I can thank you. When Ah Li and I officially get married, we will surely invite you to the banquet and toast you more than a few times."

“Hahaha, I’d be happy to oblige when that happy day comes. Don’t worry, Little Gu. Even if your sect head is the one opposed to it, I’d still champion the cause on your behalf. The Sun family is nothing to worry about. They’re not exactly above the Moon God Sect’s rules, are they?”

Gu Xintang nodded. Emperor Peerless’ promise shored up his confidence.

“Go back and make preparations. Pick a good day, and the sooner the better. I will personally preside over your wedding and bear witness for you.”

This was amazing news for Gu Xintang. Thanking Emperor Peerless, Jiang Chen, and Third Master Jing, he left immediately after with his subordinates. He wanted to tell Ah Li as quickly as possible about the change in their situation.

Just as the captain had said, he and Ah Li bore mutual affection for one another to the point of inseparable closeness. She was overjoyed at the announcement and excitedly asked for all the details. She cried tears of happiness as she listened to Gu’s retelling of today’s events over and over again.

“Xintang, we have to thank Senior Peerless properly. Rather than picking the perfect time, why not let decide upon things here and now? Let’s have our ceremony in three days. That’s enough time for us to prepare. We’re cultivators and don’t need pomp and circumstance for our wedding. It’s just something symbolic, you know? It’s just to tell the world that I am yours from this day forward!”

His partner’s considerate words moved Gu Xintang greatly. His resolve to protect Ah Li for the rest of his life strengthened because of it. The date of the ceremony was thus decided. Word went out very quickly of it. Both Gu Xintang and Ah Li were only middle management within the Moon God Sect, so their ceremony made few waves. The captain had only average connections, and his circle of friends was not particularly large. Ah Li had a reasonable amount of relational prestige within the Sect, but wasn’t particularly prominent.

Ah Li’s family had originally felt uncertain towards Gu Xintang. Their opinion was that although Gu was an excellent young man, he lacked the foundations and backing within the Moon God Sect that would assist with future advancement. Though Sun Yuan was a bit of a scoundrel, he had considerable support from his family, and so his future within the Sect was comparatively brighter. This all changed when Ah Li brought back news of the recent changes, particularly those regarding Emperor Peerless. All opposition from her family disappeared overnight.

They all sang a different tune: Gu Xintang was the perfect match for her. No one said another word about his lack of backing. With a great emperor backing him up, how could anyone complain otherwise?

Sure, the great emperor didn’t belong to the Moon God Sect, but how many great emperors did the Sect have? Given their extremely low numbers, could they afford to disrespect Emperor Peerless? Changing her family’s mind made everything else much easier.

Third Master Jing’s family hadn’t cared much about his relationship with Gu Xintang prior either. Since learning about Emperor Peerless’ support of Gu, they suddenly summoned the third master for a good lecture on maintaining the relationship he already had with the captain.

From these two turnarounds, it was evident that even though Emperor Peerless was a wandering cultivator, he still had remarkable influence. He could affect the Moon God Sect’s various factions,

despite not being one of their great emperors. Because of this, Gu Xintang and Ah Li's ceremony had significantly more attendees than expected. The guests who'd come to offer their congratulations were only passing acquaintances, making the captain feel it both strange and remarkable.

Emperor Peerless clearly hadn't made his offer in a spur-of-the-moment decision. Rather, he did so because he saw the genuine affection between Gu Xintang and Ah Li. He saw something of his past self and Madame Yun in this couple. When he had courted Madame Yun many years ago, the faction she'd belonged to didn't think much of him either. Emperor Pillzenith's interference in their relationship, moreover, was a spitting image of Sun Yuan's actions. Thus, the emperor cared much more about Gu Xintang's marriage than he let on. He felt empathy with one of his kind.

Because of this, Gu Xintang and Ah Li's ceremony was greatly livened up. Several of the Moon God Sect's elders showed up to further boost the occasion. Naturally, Captain Gu wasn't the person who commanded their respect; they had come because of Emperor Peerless.

Chapter 1116: The Thorny Problem of the Moon God Sect

The grand ceremony ended on a high note amidst great hustle and bustle. Gu Xintang and Ah Li were in absolute bliss. Emperor Peerless and Madame Yun announced during the event that they were taking Gu Xintang as their foster son. Jiang Chen was a bit surprised by the sudden announcement as the emperor had said nothing beforehand.

Jiang Chen knew that the emperor must've seen a shadow of his past self with Gu Xintang. It was why this matter had resonated with him greatly. Announcing Gu Xintang as his foster son might seem like a simple affair, but it actually served as a strong warning for everyone. Any attempt to separate the lovebirds would be a direct slap to the emperor's face.

Although Gu Xintang had been relatively unknown before this, he instantly became the hot topic of the Moon God Sect. Even those who weren't particularly fond of him before had changed their opinions. Fate worked in mysterious ways. Simply knowing the correct person was enough to bring an enormous change in one's life.

Before this incident, Gu Xintang lacked upward momentum within the sect. Ah Li's family hadn't been too fond of him because of it. However, everything changed once he became the emperor's foster son. Everyone had to take into account that his foster father was Emperor Peerless. Not even the Moon God Sect could possibly disregard someone with that kind of background. Other than the sectmaster, nobody would ever dare to bully him. One's position rises with one's background. There was no better example of this than Gu Xintang.

Meanwhile, the emperor fielded numerous callers after the ceremony. Various Moon God Sect elders swarmed towards him with invitations to all kinds of events and dinners. The first to issue an invite was Third Master Jing's clan. The clan elder was completely astounded when he learned that Third Master Jing and Emperor Peerless had once been enemies and were now friends. He gave the third master a stern talking to and ordered him to invite the emperor and Sir Shao over for a banquet no matter what. Everybody wanted to win over the wandering great emperor, and he didn't reject any of these invites.

Jiang Chen didn't like participating in these sorts of events, but for the sake of gathering more information about his mother, he reluctantly joined too. After a few busy days of socializing, Third Master Jing suddenly approached Jiang Chen in secret.

"Sir Shao, you are the same Sir Shao who participated in Pillfire City's Bounty Arena, yes?" Third Master Jing asked carefully.

"That's me, why do you ask?" Jiang Chen was caught by surprise.

"I'm only trying to confirm something. I heard that you resolved a sovereign pill dao mission that had remained unsolved for over eight hundred years?" The third master was being very enigmatic.

"Yes." Jiang Chen didn't deny things.

The third master nodded and mused deeply. "Sir Shao, one of my family's forefathers just mentioned that the Moon God Sect has sent many invitations to pill kings of Pillfire City lately. It seems like they've encountered some kind of difficulty. The senior executives have even begun employing their connections to search for peerless pill dao experts."

Jiang Chen's interest was piqued. "Why are they searching for pill dao experts?"

Third Master Jing shook his head. "I have no idea. From what I've learned, this matter is of extreme importance. Even the three sectmasters are in great distress. They've issued a non-negotiable command that a pill king who can solve the problem must be found within three months."

Jiang Chen pondered for a moment. "Who did they invite?"

"The best pill kings we have in the Tilted Moon Region are from the Moon God Sect. Clearly, they were unable to solve the problem or the sect wouldn't have called for outside help. I hear that they've cordially invited various pill kings from Pillfire City like Pill King Ji Lang, Pill King Blue Phoenix, Pill King Ancient Moon, and Pill King Horizon..."

These were very famous quasi-pill emperors from Pillfire City. Jiang Chen recognized a few of those names. Pill King Ji Lang was one of his old rivals. He'd thoroughly humiliated the pill king back at Saint Peafowl Mountain and built his reputation entirely on the basis of the blow he'd dealt to Pill King Ji Lang. There was no way the name would be unfamiliar to him.

Pill King Blue Phoenix was someone he'd grown acquainted with at the Bounty Arena. The pill king had a rotten temper, but he was also someone with principles and shunned all evil influences. He was a bit more conservative than most, but he was a morally righteous pill dao expert. Jiang Chen also knew about Pill King Ancient Moon and Pill King Horizon, but they weren't acquainted. He simply knew them through their fame as half-step pill emperors.

"Did they only invite pill kings from Pillfire City?" Jiang Chen asked.

"There are a few more cities in close proximity, but the pill kings from Pillfire City are a lot more reliable. The pill kings from the other regions aren't exactly better than those from the Tilted Moon Region." Third Master Jing recounted things accurately.

Pillfire City's field of influence was too wide-ranging. The upper, middle, and lower regions around the city no longer possessed any extraordinary pill dao talents because the truly talented had all been

recruited by the city. It was pointless to invite pill kings from other regions when the pill kings from Pillfire City were present. Nobody could possibly be better than the city's elites.

"That isn't exactly true. Pillfire City has a high pill dao standard, but that doesn't mean they're capable of everything. Why didn't they seek help from further regions?"

Third Master Jing sighed. "Everybody trusts Pillfire City in these surroundings. Their web of influence is simply too large. By the way, Sir Shao, are you perhaps interested?"

Jiang Chen gave the suggestion some thought. "What kind of opportunity is there? Will I get an audience with a holy maiden?"

Third Master Jing smiled wryly. He didn't expect Jiang Chen to be so persistent when it came to the holy maiden. "I'm not certain what opportunities there'll be, but since the sectmaster takes this matter very seriously, there's a chance that the holy maiden might be involved."

Jiang Chen nodded. "Then I shall offer my assistance."

The third master was elated. "Wonderful! No problem shall remain unsolved with Sir Shao's help! Every senior executive in the sect has the right to recommend one person. My patriarch is a sect elder and possesses an empty recommendation spot. So, he wanted see if you're interested."

Under normal circumstances, Jiang Chen wouldn't even bat an eye at the opportunity. But since the Moon God Sect was taking the issue very seriously, he had no choice but to show interest. He couldn't let a chance to infiltrate the sect slip by. Things would turn for the better if he could somehow connect with his sister. He was only worried that he wouldn't get the chance to see or pass a message to her.

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The sacred ground of the Blue Moons.

The morning breeze chased away a lingering moon in the sky. It was the hour of breaking down, one in which coolness still lingered in the air. A woman dressed in gray sat in front of a table with a slightly melancholic expression. She was holding a scauper in her right hand and a one foot tall wood carving in her left. The carving was made from Goldmoon Maple, an extremely precious wood.

She'd carved the image of a young and handsome man into the wood. If Jiang Feng was present, he'd immediately realize that it was an image of him in his twenties. The woman meticulously guided every stroke of the scauper. Her eyes brimmed with love and tenderness when she concentrated on the carving. It rather seemed like she was helping her lover put on clothes instead.

Her fingers were long and slender, and her complexion was as fair as polished jade. She wore an extremely plain jade bangle on her wrist that actually looked slightly cheap. But it only accentuated the jade-like qualities of her skin. Her gray attire wasn't a good match for her beauty, but even the most mismatched clothes couldn't hide her elegance and gracefulness. Unchallengeable grace just seemed to radiate naturally from her.

Identical wood carvings with the same face, size, expressions and detail could be seen all over her room. There was also two smaller wood carvings among them. One of them was a carving of a youth, while the other was a carving of a child still in his diapers. She'd poured her heart and soul into these carvings.

As the sun rose, various forms of life began to awaken from their slumber. Creak! A wooden door was pushed open to fill the wooden house with a ray of morning light and warm the woman's face.

"Ah?!" The woman was mildly startled and accidentally cut her left hand with the scauper. Blood immediately poured from her wound. The person who pushed the door open was a girl with remarkable resemblance to the woman. The girl's features were less graceful, which accentuated her childish looks.

"Mother, what's wrong? Did you cut your hand?" The girl was very concerned. When she saw her mother's bleeding hand, she immediately looked for a medicinal box to treat the wounds. After the wound was handled appropriately, the girl knelt before her mother and began shaking her mother's legs affectionately. "Mother, you've not slept for a night again!" Her sweet tones held a few hints of blame. "Xuan'er is really worried about you when you're like this!"

"Aii... silly child. Mother is fine. Don't about me. Go, quickly. Your master is waiting for today's training." The woman in grey sighed gently. A smile could only be seen on her face when her daughter was around.

"Mother, this is too unfair! You always coop yourself up in this hut to carve his figure! Xuan'er knows that you can't forget about father, but... you should take care of your body so that you can one day reunite!" The girl was worried and anxious, almost on the verge of tears. It pained her greatly to see her mother tormenting herself this way.

Chapter 1117: Two Generations of Holy Maidens

If Jiang Feng was present, he would've been so emotional that he might not have been able to speak. This woman was none other than the beloved wife he had missed day and night for almost thirty years, the previous Blue Moon holy maiden, Xu Meng.

Almost thirty years had put plenty of distance between them couple, but it never managed to pull Xu Meng's thoughts away from the Eastern Kingdom. She missed her distant husband and the child who'd lost his mother since infancy, Jiang Chen, nearly every minute and every hour.

Xu Meng wore a distressed smile as she murmured seemingly to herself. "Xuan'er, I'm just so incredibly biased. One of your brothers lost me when he was just a baby, and your twin brother was chased out of the sect and abandoned to survive on his own when he was just twelve years old. I don't even know where he is. I'm only able to stay by your side now. Don't you think I'm biased?"

The girl she was speaking to was the new Blue Moon holy maiden, Xu Qingxuan. The girl was respectfully addressed as Holy Maiden Qingxuan, and she was the most talented and outstanding holy maiden of this generation.

Xu Qingxuan felt as if knives were slashing across her heart. She knew that her mother's longing for her family had slowly transformed into an internal demon that no one could dispel unless her mother and father could meet again one day. Although she occasionally felt curious about the father she'd never met, the entire faction, from her martial dao master to her etiquette teachers and even her servants, worked hard to brainwash her. They told her that her father was of filthy, lowly blood. They told her that the sect had saved them, mother and daughter, from his tainted world and helped them cut ties with her lowly father, preventing them from succumbing to his world.

The brainwashing wasn't completely ineffective. Sometimes, she would wonder if her father really as bad as they said. But if he is, why isn't mother able to forget him despite so many years? And so, her father was a body of contradiction in her head. On one hand, he was the embodiment of all the faults her people described, and on the other, he was what her mother described him as. Sometimes, she felt it would be nice if she could meet her father for real. All her doubts would be solved this way.

As for her brother...

Xu Qingxuan had no idea what her brother at the Eastern Kingdom was like. She only thought that the place he lived in was so lowly that it could almost be forgotten. Her twin brother was fifteen minutes older than she was. Though they were both born in the Moon God Sect, the number of times she was able to see him were far and few in between.

Ever since her bloodline had been tested, she'd been protected like a princess. Ever since her twin brother's test took place, he was thrown away like trash. Their fates had completely branched off since, and Xu Qingxuan slowly forgot about her twin brother over time. After all, her twin brother had been forced to leave them at a very young age. As they'd never met each other since, her impression of her twin brother was extremely blurry.

But Xu Qingxuan knew that her mother had never ceased viewing her twin brother as a son. To her mother, there was nothing more cruel than watching her own flesh and blood being isolated, chased out of the Moon God Sect, out of the city and not being able to do anything about it.

Xu Meng had tried to escape the Moon God Sect to seek out her husband and her son multiple times, but the sect never allowed her to take a step out of their sight. She'd managed to exit the main doors a few times, but after several failed attempts, she was restricted to the point where she wasn't even able to walk out of Blue Moon territory. She was watched very heavily by the faction because of her escape attempts, and was now viewed as the shame of the faction instead of a former holy maiden. In their eyes, a Moon God Sect holy maiden who couldn't forget a man of lowly blood was a corrupt holy maiden and sacrilege to the sect. If she wasn't the mother of Xu Qingxuan, she might've been executed already. To the Blues, Xu Meng had lost all value the moment she gave birth to Xu Qingxuan. She was no longer needed in the line of inheritance. Currently, her only remaining identity was the birth mother of Holy Maiden Qingxuan. If it wasn't for this identity, she wouldn't be allowed to reside in Blue Moon territory at all.

But no matter how much the outside world disliked, scorned and disparaged Xu Meng, Xu Qingxuan never grew distant or felt disdain for her own mother. Although she had been brainwashed countless times since she was born and had been told by many that her mother was impure and the shame of the sect, the young girl had inherited her mother's natural kindness and purity. The brainwashing failed to subvert her nature. Mother and daughter was connected by blood, and the love between them surpassed all slander.

Xu Qingxuan's heart ached when she saw how sad her mother was and she tried for consolation. "Wait just a bit longer, mother. When Xuan'er becomes the sectmaster of the Moon God Sect, no one in Blue Moon will be able to confine you or put you on house arrest any longer. Xuan'er will be able to take you anywhere you want to... Xuan'er is happy as long mother is happy."

Xu Meng smiled. She was very glad to see that her daughter had grown up to become a sensible person. Although her daughter underwent brainwashing every day, she hadn't lost her nature. It was a very commendable thing. She saw herself in her daughter when she noted how well-behaved her daughter was and Qingxuan she hadn't lost her kindness despite her environment.

When she caressed her daughter's cheeks and stared at her face, Xu Meng could almost recall the happy days she'd spent with Jiang Feng shortly after their marriage. Back then, Xu Meng had been just as young as her daughter, the difference being that there were more hints of a noble, heroic air in her daughter's bearing.

"Xuan'er, you should leave now. Your master will grow anxious if you don't hurry," Xu Meng said lovingly as she stroked her daughter's beautiful hair gently. She sighed softly. "Please don't be jealous of your father or your two older brothers. I miss them, but that doesn't mean I don't love you as much. All of you are my heart, and it feels that it'd rip in two if I lost any one of you."

Xu Qingxuan nodded understandingly. "Mother, Xuan'er knows of your love for father. The others may not understand it, but I really do. Mother's background isn't something you chose, but your love for father is something you chose. They kept saying that you are the shame of the sect, but if it wasn't for them you would never have wandered into the secular world in the first place, would you? They are the ones who had caused all this sadness!"

Xu Qingxuan wasn't devoid of sense. She was very much on her mother's side in this regard.

"My good daughter, I'm so glad you understand. I would be able to die with peace given your understanding. That being said, please don't ever disdain your father. If it wasn't for him, you wouldn't exist. No matter what happens, he is your one and only birth father. This is something that cannot change no matter how much they scorn or look down on him. Despite his humble birth, your father is a man amongst men. He was willing to give up everything to fight for the woman he loves. If you ever meet a man like this in the future, you must grab hold of him and cherish him greatly. You mustn't forget that even the strongest man in the world might not be willing to lay his life down on the line for a woman he loves. A man's background and strength may not be his own choices, but his courage and attitude are. Xuan'er, you're still very young. You will understand my words one day." Xu Meng's statements were slightly radical. She was talking to the Moon God Sect's holy maiden, and the holy maiden was absolutely forbidden from falling in love of her own accord. Only the holy maidens confirmed not to become sectmaster were allowed to love and marry.

Holy Maiden Qingxuan's tender cheeks turned pink. "Mother, you can't let master hear this or she'll be angry with you again."

Xu Meng smiled faintly. "I'm just teaching my own daughter a lesson. What does she have to be angry about? Alright, Xuan'er, you should hurry off. She'll really be angry if you're any later" Xu Meng pushed her daughter's shoulder gently.

Xu Qingxuan sighed quietly. "Mother, just let me stay by your side for a little while longer. Master has been pretty busy as of late because something's gone wrong with the sect's tree of inheritance lately. Everyone in the sect is working hard to solve this, but a solution hasn't been found just yet."

Xu Meng cared nothing for the problem just mentioned. In fact, she didn't want to listen to anything related to the Moon God Sect. The only thing she was interested in was news regarding the sixteen kingdoms alliance and the Eastern Kingdom. However, there were almost no one in the entire Tilted Moon Region who'd ever heard of the Eastern Kingdom. As for the sixteen kingdoms alliance, who in their right minds would visit such a small place far from civilization?

Xu Qingxuan herself knew that her mother wasn't interested in such things, so she giggled. "Mother, do you think I should beg master to take you down the mountains for a breath of fresh air?"

Xu Meng shook her head. "No, it's alright. Your master's going to scold you again if you do that, and I have no intentions of letting my daughter be scolded. If you really are concerned for my well being, just remember to visit Myriad Domain when you're sent into the world for training and visit the Eastern Kingdom of the sixteen kingdoms alliance. Specifically, you should inquire about the Jiang Han province."

Xu Qingxuan's face was a little strange when she heard this. Truthfully, she had inquired about the Jiang Han province through other channels, but what she'd learned shocked her greatly.

The Jiang Han province still existed to this day, but it didn't belong to the Jiangs any more. Everyone in the Jiang family was either dead or had left, and the Jiang bloodline had terminated a long time ago. But dare she tell her mother about this?

The only thing sustaining her mother through the years was her towards the Jiang Han province. If she learned that her husband and oldest son was possible be dead already, she might actually crumble on the spot. Xu Qingxuan knew that a person's flame of life was soon to extinguish the moment they'd lost all will to live.

Chapter 1118: Moon God Precious Tree

How could Xu Qingxuan possibly tell her mother this development? She didn't want to lose her mother. For Qingxuan, her mother was the dearest person in the world. She was closer to her mother than her master. In her heart of hearts, she firmly believed that mother wasn't at all like how the Blues described her to be. Personality and character were embodied in one's words and actions.

The Blue Moon faction's members denounced mother every single day, but she never said a bad word about them in return. Though mother was very unsatisfied with the Moon God Sect and thought that they had destroyed her life, she had never uttered a single profanity against them. How could a mother like that be as awful as they described?

As mother and daughter chatted, the voice of another woman came from outside. "Holy Maiden Qingxuan, the second sectmaster noticed that you haven't come yet. She told me to come fetch you."

Xu Qingxuan made a silly face then kissed her mother on the cheek. "Mother," she laughed, "I'm giving you a kiss in father's place. I hope that you'll have a nice day today! I'm off to see how master is doing."

The girl walked out, closing the door of the wooden cottage behind her. "Senior sister Xie," she inquired of the woman who'd spoken a moment earlier. "Why has master summoned me so early today?"

“Yeah, it’s a bit off, isn’t it? I hear it’s because a certain Pill King Ji Lang has arrived from Pillfire City. Master is interested in meeting him. Right! She called for you because she wants you to meet him as well.”

“I’m not interested in meeting a man.” Xu Qingxuan pouted.

“Hehe, Pill King Ji Lang isn’t just any man. He’s Emperor Pillzenith’s personally cultivated disciple and heir! People call him the ‘Invincible Pill Legend’. Many of our sectmasters show him a lot of respect! Actually, according to rumors... Pill King Ji Lang once said that if he were ever to look for a dao partner, he would definitely come to the Moon God Sect for one of our holy maidens.” The senior sister Xie’s tone was tinged with infatuation.

Xu Qingxuan was completely disinterested. “Why do I care? My goal is to become the next sectmaster. I’m not interested in some smelly man. ‘Invincible Pill Legend’, hmph! Wasn’t he beaten by a Pill King Zhen from Veluriyam Capital a few years back? Am I remembering incorrectly?”

“Ha, I didn’t say that you should marry him! The second sectmaster couldn’t let you go anyways. Never mind that, Qingxuan! Hurry and go. She’ll scold you again if you’re late.”

The second sectmaster was second in rank within the Moon God Sect and one of the Blue Moon forefathers. Once upon a time, she had been the one to discover Xu Meng, but her failure to keep the girl safe was also the reason why the latter had been lost to the mundane world. Despite this, she hadn’t taken responsibility for the mistake. Instead, she considered it Xu Meng’s fault for polluting the Moon God Sect’s treasured bloodline with a mortal man’s blood. To this end, she attempted to brainwash Xu Qingxuan by teaching all of the Blues that Xu Meng had brought shame to the Moon God Sect. This transferred to Xu Qingxuan herself as well: the second sectmaster lambasted her mother every day in the girl’s presence, and drilled it into her head that she needed to do well to atone for the crimes of her mother.

The propaganda didn’t succeed in turning Xu Qingxuan against Xu Meng, but it left a shadow in the young girl’s mind. Xu Qingxuan felt that if she did not become the best holy maiden the sect had ever seen, then her mother would bear eternal shame and guilt.

The Moon God Sect had a certain Moon God Precious Tree that had been passed down for countless generations, over tens of thousands of years. Legend had it that it was originally a species growing in the Jewelled Celestial Palace that’d managed to take root here on the Divine Abyss Continent, growing into a precious tree over time.

The Moon God Precious Tree was also a totem of the sect, one of the paramount symbols of its superiority. It was a miraculous specimen. Purple in spring, indigo in summer, blue in autumn, and red in winter. Its shades clearly demarcated the changing of seasons. In this way, the tree could almost be used to tell the seasons. It was superbly accurate. The four colorful factions of the Moon God Sect also originated from the tree’s prismatic behavior.

Unfortunately, it had begun to display bad symptoms as of late. The colors were as brilliant and clear as usual, but the leaves were wilting day by day. The Moon God Precious Tree’s foliage was usually extremely lush and vibrant. However, it was slowly losing its vigor everyday. Already, it had fewer than half of the leaves than it did at its prime. This fact made the entire sect rather fearful. After all, the

Precious Tree had been passed down as the sect's symbol for countless years. When the totem developed a less-than-symbolic problem, an irrational fear was struck into the hearts of every sect member, from the sectmasters to the lowest disciple.

Reacting like that was completely natural. The seriousness of the problem, once understood, compelled them to find a collection of pill masters and spirit botanists to diagnose the tree. Each of the experts had their own version of the reason for it. Their explanations differed from each other's every time. When a solution was asked of them, the most that any of them could do was stammer. No one had a clear-cut answer.

The Moon God Sect understood then that these people were completely unreliable. That was when they'd begun to find help in the outside world. During this period, their cry for help reached Pillfire City. For their part, the city was the very image of sympathy. A number of pill emperor-level pill kings came to the Moon God Sect to give their own versions of the diagnosis for the Moon God Precious Tree. This time, Pill King Blue Phoenix, Pill King Ancient Moon, Pill King Void had answered the call. Any of them were half step pill emperors. That these people were gathered in a joint diagnosis really showed how much the Moon God Sect valued the tree.

Following closely behind her master, Xu Qingxuan was a little curious about the fact that so many pill kings had come from afar. She hoped that these people would be able to treat the Moon God Precious Tree, but didn't have much interest in the pill kings themselves.

In her eyes, pill kings were all old, wizened men with plenty of white hair and long beards. These people matched her expectations exactly.

Pill King Ji Lang was the exception. He looked reasonably young, broad-shouldered and quite tall. His posture and bearing distinguished him from the crowd. However, Xu Qingxuan found the man's appearance to be oddly repulsive. She didn't know why, but her subconscious gave her that impulse. It was an inexplicable feeling. Each time her eyes brushed over the seemingly-polite smile on Pill King Ji Lang's face, she felt a shudder of disgust run down her spine.

Still, as a prominent member of the Moon God Sect, she was one of the hosts. She had to maintain a degree of basic civility and polity towards visiting guests. She refrained from responding to his icebreakers or shows of courtship, and exhibited only what was essential for greeting.

For his part, Pill King Ji Lang was positively charmed by the young girl's demeanor. He tried to find opportunities every so often to strike up a conversation with her, and win her over with a display of his dazzling expertise. Unfortunately, Xu Qingxuan failed to offer him any such windows.

It was at this time that someone suggested the group to go look at the Moon God Precious Tree. This new topic fired the pill king up. He knew that the entire Moon God Sect was heavily invested in the matter of the Precious Tree. If he could use his talents to find the reason for the tree's disease, he would definitely be able to make a strong impression in front of the pretty girl.

He knew also that the best holy maidens from the Sect were not married off. But there were always exceptions to every rule. He, Pill King Ji Lang, was the future lord of Pillfire City! A holy maiden that he took a special interest in might not be so far off after all. Given the Moon God Sect's position and strength, it was difficult for it to refuse the demands of a giant the likes of Pillfire City.

Pillfire was very close to being one of the strongest factions of the Upper Eight Regions, and in fact, the entire human domain. The Moon God Sect, on the other hand, was a little behind the middle of the pack for first rank sects. A single Pillfire City could match three Moon God Sects. A difference like that meant that the former had the absolute advantage in any struggles of power. Thus, though Pill King Ji Lang had an itch in his heart, he was in no hurry at all to act on it, nor was he discomposed.

The pill king was a very clever man. He didn't hastily begin his examination once in front of the tree, but rather sat down cross-legged a little away from it. Once at rest, he settled into a period of meditation. This was but a ruse: his real intent was for the others to go first. When the others failed and he came forward, his competence would be further heightened through the comparison.

Even if there were results from the joint diagnosis, his personal ability would hardly be shown off in a group effort. Pill King Ji Lang didn't want those old coots to ride his coattails. The older pill kings—Blue Phoenix, for example—weren't nearly as petty as Pill King Ji Lang. They were thinking nothing of the sort. The Moon God Sect's courtesy blew away all thoughts of holding back. They began to look for symptoms immediately. Furthermore, pill kings of their caliber had an odd, but common, line of thought. The more complicated the subject or problem, the more curious they were about it.

A full two hours passed by. The pill kings went over the tree again and again, forming and demolishing a score of hypotheses, but ultimately came up fruitless.

"Dear sectmasters, we apologize for our lack of skill. We have tested for every variety of problem that can occur to spirit plants and precious trees, but none of them matches the issue here," Pill King Blue Phoenix sighed. "Looks like our incompetence has let you down."

"Don't be so humble, pill kings." The main sectmaster of the Moon God Sect smiled faintly. "At least you've eliminated them as possibilities. That a worthwhile work in its own right."

The process of elimination was also a functional method to diagnose problems with.

"Pill King Ji Lang hasn't made his move yet, no?" To the side, the second sectmaster also smiled. "He looks like he's preparing for something. Perhaps meditation will assist in sharpening his judgment? A kind of emotional preparation, maybe?"

Pill King Blue Phoenix pressed his lips together, but stayed silent. Internally, he began to swear. What 'emotional preparation' was there? It's all a facade! The pill king understood Pill King Ji Lang reasonably well. He knew that the man enjoyed pomp and circumstance. It was much more likely that the other pill king thought a communal diagnosis would be devaluing to him. His current actions were a veneer, presented only to show how special he was.

At this time, Pill King Ji Lang's eyes opened. "My fellow pill kings," he pretended to be confused. "Have you finished your diagnosis? What're the results like, if I may ask?"

Several of the other pill kings from Pillfire City were greatly upset by the words. What was Ji Lang playing at? Enough with the charade. Fakery made one a lightning rod for divine justice! They didn't believe that the pill king had missed a word of the conversation.

Pill King Ji Lang smiled slightly, then nodded. "If that's so, then I'll put my humble abilities to the test. The Moon God Precious Tree is supposed to be an ancient heirloom, and is surely more than several

dozen thousand years advanced in age. Compared to human cultivators, they're the achievers of a truer kind of eternal life."

The pill king was quite adept at making pleasant word salads.

Chapter 1119: Utterly Shameful

Pill King Ji Lang had spent so long setting the scene for himself for this one moment. Everyone, including Pill King Blue Phoenix, was staring at him. These veteran pill kings wanted to see how Pill King Ji Lang would treat the Moon God Precious Tree too. Truthfully, they were all on the same skill level as the pill king, but unlike them, Pill King Ji Lang was young and Emperor Pillzenith's chosen successor. That was why he put on airs and acted arrogantly.

If he could treat the Moon God Precious Tree, they'd swallow their complaints and let his shortcomings slide by. But if he couldn't treat the Moon God Precious Tree, then they would have words about his attitude.

As time ticked on, Pill King Ji Lang's expression grew more and more serious. He'd been full of confidence and certainty at first, but soon discovered that he was unable to diagnose the condition that plagued the Moon God Precious Tree despite scouring through a lifetime of knowledge. He slowly panicked.

He'd wasted a great amount of effort to promote himself as he'd thought this was his opportunity to enhance his reputation and win the heart of the pretty girl who'd caught his eye. If he really failed to treat the Moon God Precious Tree, then everything he did earlier would be nothing but a joke. He might turn into a laughingstock.

Sweat began to pour down Pill King Ji Lang's back. He forced himself to inspect the Moon God Precious Tree again from the beginning, but the result was the same as before.

Two hours passed. Three hours passed. The three sectmasters of Moon God Sect had put great expectations on Pill King Ji Lang. As time went on, however, their expressions grew more and more severe as disappointment flashed through their faces.

Although they didn't go so far as to label Pill King Ji Lang as a show-off with no true skill, their opinion of him had dipped severely. Everyone said that Pill King Ji Lang is an amazing pill king, but truthfully? This is all he can manage. He's not so different from others.

The worst part of it all was the ridiculous self promotion he'd done earlier to prepare the 'climax' of the show. The start had been impressive, but the end was like constipation. Nothing had come out. The feeling of being raised into the air before being dropped to the ground was very, very depressing to say the least.

When four hours passed, everyone's patience had dried up completely. If Pill King Ji Lang wasn't a representative of Pillfire City, the Moon God Sect members present would have already declared an end to this farce. After all, no one wanted to see Pill King Ji Lang humiliate himself any further.

Finally, the pill king let out a cough but maintained a self-important look on his face. He declared leisurely, "Dear sectmasters, I wasn't able to discover the root cause of the Moon God Precious Tree's sickness despite using everything I've learned. However, I did discover some suspicious clues. The

problem though is that I cannot deduce anything from these clues in such a short time, so I'll have to return to Pillfire City to look up a few references and confirm my thoughts. I am sure that I will come up with an answer to your problems one day."

His words sounded mighty impressive, but anyone who mulled over his words carefully would discover that they were empty words that might as well have been left unsaid.

For starters, there was nothing concrete in his statements such as the use of words like "clues" and "suspicious". His so-called deduction and looking up references could only be performed after he returned to Pillfire City. Even his promised "answer" had an indefinite deadline. "One day"? The day he found an answer might not come even after Moon God Precious Tree had lost all of its leaves.

Still, the sectmasters of Moon God Sect maintained a polite tone out of consideration for Pillfire City's face. "In that case, we wish for you to bring us good news as soon as possible, Pill King Ji Lang."

"Of course, of course. Ji Lang will do his absolute best to find out the root cause of the Moon God Precious Tree's sickness." Pill King Ji Lang expressed.

However, Pill King Blue Phoenix couldn't stop himself from saying, "Pill King Ji Lang, please forgive my curiosity. What exactly are the suspicious clues you've found? Why don't we exchange our knowledge and pool our wisdom since we're all here? Brainstorming sessions can often generate unexpected ideas."

Pill King Blue Phoenix's attack was a bit harsh. This irritated Pill King Ji Lang because this question took away his chance to walk away without looking bad, and he wasn't sure if Blue Phoenix had done it on purpose or not. What he'd said earlier was nothing more but a way to excuse himself from this embarrassing scene without losing face. But Pill King Blue Phoenix had pulled the carpet out from underneath him.

"Hehe, this involves much technical knowledge that'll take a long time to explain. If you have the time to, feel free to discuss with me in Pillfire City." Now that was a little too shameless. Luckily for him, Pill King Blue Phoenix didn't pursue the matter any further. He simply smiled and remained silence.

The senior sectmaster of Moon God Sect sighed. "To think that the Moon God Precious Tree would be so difficult to treat that all pill kings present are stumped by it! If that is so, then is there anyone in this world who is capable of treating it? Ai. If you have anyone on your minds, please don't hesitate to recommend them, honorable pill kings."

Her question was wasted on Pill King Ji Lang because he thought that no one in the world was better than himself. Therefore, he would never recommend another pill king for a job.

"I guess the only one left to invite is Emperor Pillzenith himself." Pill King Ancient Moon mused. "However, the great emperor has been cultivating in seclusion for many years. I doubt it'll be easy to request his presence."

"Perhaps it's all a matter of fate. Maybe we aren't meant to treat the Moon God Precious Tree?" Pill King Void was apparently a fatalist.

Pill King Blue Phoenix thought for a moment before he suddenly sighed softly. "If I must make a recommendation, there is one such person on my mind. However..."

“However?” the senior sectmaster asked with sudden interest. Unless she was mistaken, it sounded like the person the pill king wished to recommend was very impressive.

“No, it’s nothing. It’s just that he is the first person that came to my mind when it comes to solving this seemingly impossible conundrum.”

“Is that so? Are you referring to a certain pill emperor you know, brother?” Pill King Ancient Moon sounded curious as well.

Pill King Blue Phoenix shook his head. “No, he’s not a pill emperor, but I’m sure you’ve all heard of him before. Not long ago, Pillfire City held the Bounty Arena at a once-in-a-millennium level. I know one of the arena lords, and his skills impressed me to no end. He was able to solve a bounty that no one was able to solve for eight hundred years with ease...”

“Oh? Is that true?” The sect heads of Moon God Sect sat high up on the totem pole, so they seldom paid attention to secular matters.

Pill King Ancient Moon also remembered. “I’ve heard of this. He is an extremely young genius who goes by the surname Shao. Shao Yuan. Am I right?”

Pill King Blue Phoenix nodded. “Unfortunately, he has gone elsewhere already. I’ve not heard of him after the shocking display of skill at Pillfire City.”

Pill King Ji Lang couldn’t help but interrupt. “Don’t you think you value him a little too highly, Pill King Blue Phoenix? Shao Yan was able to stand out was because many powerful pill kings in Pillfire City didn’t participate in the Bounty Arena. If they did, he wouldn’t have had the chance to show himself off.”

Naturally, Pill King Ji Lang was displeased to hear Pill King Blue Phoenix recommending an outsider to the Moon God Sect. Ji Lang was publicly hailed as the number one pill king in Pillfire City and second only to a pill emperor, so he thought of Pill King Blue Phoenix’s praise of an outsider as a slap to his face and an attempt to undermine his reputation. Pill King Blue Phoenix didn’t retort and smiled calmly instead. “I’m just bringing this up as requested. The Moon God Sect can decide if their own accord whether or not to accept my recommendation.”

Seeing that the pill kings of Pillfire City weren’t acting that amiable with each other, the senior sectmaster knew that it was time to cut the consultation short. She smiled. “Thank you very much for your help today, everyone. Please join us at the Moon God Palace and we can continue our discussions there.”

Pill King Blue Phoenix clasped his hands together. “I’m ashamed that I wasn’t able to find anything that could help, so please allow me to turn down this invitation, senior sectmaster.”

“We shall be taking our leave as well.” Pill King Ancient Moon and Pill King Void felt the same way. Moon God Sect had invited them over with great respect, but they weren’t able to help in the end. None of them were shameless enough to continue to impose on their hosts.

However, Pill King Ji Lang smiled. “Then I shall trouble Moon God Sect for a little longer.”

He had a thick skin and an ulterior motive for staying. He wanted to get closer to Xu Qingxuan. The pill king had been thoroughly bewitched today. There were a couple of other holy maidens who had

attended the gathering, but for some reason he lusted for Xu Qingxuan, the holy maiden who'd showed up the latest. What was even more striking was that Xu Qingxuan was the only one most disgusted by his actions.

Pill King Ji Lang actually spent another half day in Moon God Sect. However, he realized there wouldn't be much of an opportunity for him as he didn't see any chances to progress. And yet, he wasn't disappointed. There hadn't been a woman who'd managed to escape his clutches yet, and that wasn't going to change even if the other party was a holy maiden of the Moon God Sect.

He made up his mind to visit the Moon God Sect and conquer Holy Maiden Qingxuan the moment he discovered the root cause of the Moon God Precious Tree's sickness. Still, dreams and reality were two different things. He had to admit that a problem he couldn't solve on-site was only going to become even more impossible after he returned to Pillfire City. As time dragged on and interest waned, he would only grow less eager to ponder this problem.

After sending Pill King Ji Lang off, the three sectmasters and the holy maidens gathered together, feeling downcast. It was obvious that the departure of Pillfire City's pill kings had left their hopes in tatters once more. If even these top rate pill kings could do nothing to cure the Moon God Precious Tree, they really couldn't think of anyone else who could deliver them from the encroaching despair.

The senior sectmaster sighed quietly. "Speak your mind, everyone. Does anyone have an idea to share? Does anyone have an amazing pill king in mind? It doesn't matter who they are, we can no longer afford to be choosy. We must do everything we can to try cure the Moon God Precious Tree."

The third sectmaster mused, "I feel that Pill King Ji Lang made a frivolous statement. I believe Pill King Blue Phoenix's suggestion is worth consideration."

"But he only gave us a name. Even he doesn't know where this Pill King Shao Yuan has gone to. Our sincerity is useless when we can't even find the man in the first place."

Suddenly, Xu Qingxuan spoke up. "Wasn't Pill King Ji Lang beaten by a genius from Veluriyam Capital. Maybe we should switch up our mindset and consider pill kings from other factions?"

Chapter 1120: Jiang Chens Recommendation

Xu Qingxuan had truly given them a new perspective on things. The crowd recalled the story of how Pill King Ji Lang had lost to Pill King Zhen of Veluriyam Capital all those years ago. It was a story that took the entire Upper Eight Regions by the storm. Pillfire City had killed many people in order to stifle the rumors, but to no avail.

In the end, the city refused to acknowledge the loss and claimed that Veluriyam Capital had cheated by researching the Longevity Pill beforehand, while Pill King Ji Lang had little to no time for preparation and thus failed the incredibly easy task due to lack of enthusiasm. This statement of theirs was utterly unconvincing, but it was enough to stifle heated discussions. Eventually, people began to forget about Pill King Ji Lang's humiliating loss.

Pill King Zhen? Veluriyam Capital was genuinely a great distance away from Tilted Moon Region. If they sought the Capital's help, it'd be a great form of disrespect to Pillfire City. After all, their borders was right next to each other. Pillfire would definitely take offense if they hired help from that far away. Being

neighbors with the city wasn't always a good thing. The sectmasters exchanged glances without saying anything.

The second sectmaster smiled wryly. "Qingxuan, your suggestion isn't bad, but it doesn't suit our situation very well if you take everything into account. It's basically a slap to Pillfire City's face."

"Why must we consider the city's face? What's wrong with hiring someone else if the city is incompetent? It's not as though we sought Veluriyam Capital for help first!" Xu Qingxuan had made a good argument.

"What do you all think?" the second sectmaster asked ruefully.

The senior sectmaster sighed. "We might consider asking Pill King Zhen of Veluriyam Capital for help, but only as a last resort. Before that, we should consider Pill King Blue Phoenix's suggestion and find the genius Shao Yuan."

"Yes. If he's really as great as the pill king says he is, maybe a miracle will happen?"

The sectmasters quickly came to a unanimous decision. They'd seek Pill King Shao Yuan's help first, just as Pill King Blue Phoenix had suggested. They wholeheartedly believed that Pill King Shao Yuan would show up if the reward was high enough, even if his whereabouts were currently unknown.

An announcement was made while they were in the middle of their discussion. "Esteemed sectmasters, Elder Jing asks for an audience."

"Elder Jing?" The senior sectmaster was a little taken aback. "What's he doing here?"

"He wishes to recommend a pill king."

Elder Jing? An image of Elder Jing flashed across the three sectmasters' minds. Indeed, there was an Elder Jing among the elders of the sect. However, he didn't particularly stand out among the jury of elders. He wasn't exactly the cream of the crop. That was why they were a little taken aback when Elder Jing wanted to recommend someone. However, they needed all the help they could get. If they denied him of his audience, who'd ever recommend a pill king again?

"Send him in," the senior sectmaster ordered.

Elder Jing was the Jing forefather and held a seat in the Moon God Sect's council of elders. However he didn't get to see the sectmasters very often.

"Jing Tianbo pays his respects to the three sectmasters and the holy maidens."

The holy maidens were second only to the sectmasters. Their authority was just above the elders, but it was mostly just a symbolic gesture as they held no true power for the time being.

"Elder Jing, you may rise. We heard that you're recommending a pill king?" The senior sectmaster wasn't exactly enthusiastic, but there wasn't any hostility in her voice.

Jing Tianbo nodded. "Yes. This subordinate is here for that reason."

"Oh? The pill king you're nominating. Where is he from?" She followed up warmly.

“This subordinate doesn’t know.”

How dare you recommend someone without knowing his background first? The senior sectmaster was starting to feel annoyed. “What rank pill king is he then?”

Jing Tianbo found himself in an increasingly awkward situation. He didn’t actually know what rank the person in question was. He suddenly found himself incapable of answering.

“Then you should at least know what school of pill dao he’s from, right?” The sectmaster was on the verge of kicking him out.

Jing Tianbo smiled wryly. “I heard that his origin is extremely mysterious. This subordinate hasn’t made the proper inquiries. However...”

“Elder Jing! You are too rash!” The second sectmaster suddenly yelled as she could no longer hold back her anger. “If you’re going to recommend someone, you should at least research his background first! How dare you recommend someone you don’t even know a thing about!? Do you even know what you’re doing?”

Jing Tianbo was terrified. Cold sweat immediately poured from his forehead. “This subordinate realizes his mistake. But...”

“That’s enough! I’ve heard enough from you. Elder Jing, you may take your leave. The sect is in urgent need of a pill dao expert, but not every Wang, Chen, or Lin has the right to enter our sect and point fingers!”

Color drained from Jing Tianbo’s face. The entire incident was leaving a bitter taste in his mouth, but he didn’t dare to go against the sectmaster’s orders. He flashed a wry smile and bowed deeply. “This subordinate has overstepped his boundaries, I ask for your forgiveness. Aii...”

Jing Tianbo didn’t have enough authority to speak. Otherwise, he could’ve added a few more words. Unfortunately, he didn’t have the courage to do so. He was genuinely intimidated by the wrath of the three sectmasters.

However, Xu Qingxuan suddenly spoke up. “Elder Jing, the pill king that you’re recommending, what is his surname? You should at least know that much, right?”

Jing Tianbo quickly answered. “He goes by the surname of Shao! Maybe the sectmasters have heard of him too? A captain from the Bleakmoon Hall was recently declared as Emperor Peerless’ foster son, right? Sir Shao has accompanied the emperor throughout his stay in our region. A few months ago, they’ve even attended the Bounty Arena in Pillfire City together and raised an enormous commotion there!” Jing Tianbo didn’t dare to linger once he was done and immediately backed towards the exit.

“Wait!” The senior sectmaster yelled excitedly. The other two sectmasters were also brimming with excitement.

“Elder Jing, did you just mention that he goes by the surname of Shao? Is his full name Shao Yuan?” The senior sectmaster asked agitatedly.

“That is correct. Senior sectmaster, you know of Sir Shao Yuan too?” Jing Tianbo was a little taken aback. He didn’t expect the sectmasters to care about such mundane affairs. And it was true, the sectmasters

genuinely knew nothing about this pill king. The only reason they even knew of his name was because they'd just come to a decision to seek his help.

Pill King Blue Phoenix had strongly recommended Pill King Shao Yuan. He held Sir Shao in such high regard that Sir Shao seemed like the only person he revered in the pill dao world. No ordinary person could possibly gain so much respect from a proud and acclaimed pill king like Blue Phoenix. The sectmasters of Moon God Sect couldn't help but have a paramount of respect for Shao Yuan. Initially, they were worried they'd fail to locate the enigmatic pill king, but unexpectedly, he was right on their doorstep! Finding him hadn't taken the slightest effort!

"Elder Jing, you've done us a great service. Quick, go get Pill King Shao Yuan!"

"Please hurry. Tell him that we're willing to give him any reward for his services! As long as he finds out what's wrong with the Moon God Precious Tree, he can ask for any amount of spirit stones from us."

Jing Tianbo breathed a sigh of relief and laughed inwardly at himself. If he'd known earlier that this would happen, he should've just mentioned Sir Shao's full name. It would've saved him an earful.

The sectmasters exchanged glances once Elder Jing had left. The second sectmaster was still a little skeptical. "Isn't this too much of a coincidence? I can't help but suspect that something is amiss."

"I concur. However, Emperor Peerless has been in Frostmoon City for quite some time. Since Sir Shao and the emperor are well acquainted, it isn't that suspicious to see them together."

"Who cares if it's a coincidence or not? Our main concern is his ability to cure our Precious Tree! Does anything else really matter if he can solve our problem?" The senior sectmaster ended the argument. The crowd nodded in agreement.

"Senior sectmaster, how should we welcome him? Should we show him as much hospitality as Pill King Ji Lang, or would that too excessive?"

"Mm, that's true. His fame is nothing when compared to Pill King Ji Lang's."

The senior sectmaster's face darkened. "Who cares if he's famous or not at a time like this? Pill King Ji Lang is famous, yes. But what has he done for us?"

"Jing Tianbo has already left. He'll surely inform Sir Shao of our predicament. Sir Shao might hold it against us if he realizes that we're showing him less hospitality than the other pill kings. This might end up working against our favor."

The discussion on hospitality was from henceforth put to rest. If the guest didn't put forth his best simply because he wasn't shown enough hospitality, all their efforts would go down the drain.

Jing Tianbo quickly brought the news to the first division. Jiang Chen was thrilled. He turned around to face Jiang Feng.

"This is our chance! Father, I'll make sure hand over your token to little sister. We can only hope that she'll hand it over to mother."

Jiang Feng nodded resolutely. "She will. We share the same righteousness in our blood because she's my daughter. Of that I have no doubt."

Jiang Chen nodded. He hoped that it'd be the case. He was worried that his sister might've lost her innocence after being constantly brainwashed by the sect. Could she possibly remain kind, gentle, and magnanimous as how his father described his mother?

Jiang Chen brought along his father's token and left with Jing Tianbo without hesitation. He didn't bring a single person with him. Not even Emperor Peerless. The more people there was, the bigger the chance that something could go wrong.

They soon arrived at the entrance of the Moon God Sect. It was his second time here, but he was in a completely different mood this time. He was determined to deliver the message to his mother so that his parents could reunite. The desire to do so burned fiercely inside of him. It was his responsibility as their son and his greatest wish.