

## Three Realms 1121

### Chapter 1121: Jiang Chen Sets Off

Inside the Moon God Palace, the three sectmasters and six holy maidens were all gathered. Jing Tianbo had returned to the palace with Jiang Chen.

"Honored sectmasters, I have brought Sir Shao with me. Sir Shao, please make your greetings to the honored sectmasters," Jin Tianbo indicated.

Jiang Chen smiled and walked forward. He cupped his hands together in a salute and bowed slightly. "Wandering cultivator Shao Yuan greets the sectmasters and holy maidens of the Moon God Sect."

Jiang Chen had enough perception to note that the younger-looking girls were the new holy maidens of the Moon God Sect. A sweeping glance later, his eyes were captured firmly by the girl at the center. Although her features didn't share too much resemblance with his father, Jiang Chen was certain that she was his sister because of her temperament. His heart moved by the revelation, a trace of gentleness flashing through his eyes.

The young girl he was looking at was none other than Xu Qingxuan. Her first impression of Jiang Chen was much better than her first impression of Pill King Ji Lang. For starters, the young man didn't hold himself in a pretentious or honeyed way. His actions and words were open and straightforward. Although his sweeping gaze was a little brazen, and his eyes seemed to have paused on her a longer than usual, Xu Qingxuan didn't sense any indecency or ugliness from him. In fact, she even noticed a glimmer of gentleness flashing through his eyes.

This was a bit of a surprise. The average man would either pretend to be calm, eager to show off, affect remoteness, act pretentiously, or even stare at her boldly with open lust. However, all she felt from this young man was a kind of gentleness that felt as warm as the sunlight. For some reason, she was reminded of the gentleness her mother displayed when affectionately caressing her cheek.

"You look very young, Sir Shao." The senior sectmaster examined Jiang Chen critically for a moment before asking with a smile, "If rumors don't deceive, I heard that you made quite a name for yourself during the Bounty Arena event at Pillfire City?"

"Not really, I just got lucky, that's all. The only reason I stood out is because the seniors relinquished their stage to a junior."

"Good. You are neither servile nor overbearing, and you do not allow success to go to your head. I can be sure that you're no normal person from these qualities alone, Sir Shao."

"You praise me too much, sectmaster."

After exchanging pleasantries and some tentative questions over tea, the senior sectmaster finally broached the main topic. "I have heard that Sir Shao is a genius in pill dao, and Pill King Blue Phoenix thinks quite highly of you. We invited you today, Sir Shao, in hopes that you can help us see if something is afflicting our Moon God Precious Tree. For the past few years, the Moon God Precious Tree has lost a lot of leaves and looked like it was aging for some unknown reason."

Jiang Chen put down his cup of tea. "Seeing is believing. Please allow me to see the Moon God Precious Tree first before I give you an answer."

The sect admired his pragmatic attitude. The senior sectmaster personally led the way to the location of the Moon God Precious Tree. Surprisingly, the Moon God Precious Tree was shorter than the Precious Tree Sect's Precious Tree of Rosy Dawn. On the other hand, the Moon God Precious Tree was noticeably more valuable than the latter, be it in terms of quality or rank.

Unplanned praise gushed out as Jiang Chen looked upon it. "The Moon God Precious Tree is great tree of pure yin without parallel! It's no wonder that the sect's inheritance has been passed down for so long. It's all thanks to this tree."

After the compliments, Jiang Chen set to work and circled the tree a couple of times, making a general inspection. Pill King Blue Phoenix and the others had done the same before, but none of the sectmasters stopped Jiang Chen. They simply stood off to the side and observed the pill king's actions closely in silence.

Jiang Chen's knowledge was much richer than the other pill kings, and the things he looked out for was just as many. However, he didn't find any problems with the tree despite all of his inspections. There was nothing wrong with the air, soil, fengshui or surrounding environment. This meant that he could almost exclude all external factors.

Jiang Chen then inspected the tree for internal factors. Although the Moon God Precious Tree looked to be in slight decline, he couldn't find any signs from its growth rings and trunk that the tree was approaching the end of its lifespan. It was obviously still in the prime of life. This meant that he could exclude all internal factors with certainty. So the Moon God Precious Tree wasn't even close to reaching the end of its life. If it wasn't internal, then it must be external. But he had already eliminated most external factors from the equation.

This is strange. Jiang Chen frowned at the Moon God Precious Tree and sank into a daze. He couldn't discover any external or internal factors that might've affected the tree negatively. He even wondered if someone had damaged the tree on purpose, but again he couldn't find any such signs on its surface. A closer inspection didn't yield any other clues.

For a time, Jiang Chen was stumped by the problem in front of him. Most problems were obvious to him at first glance due to the sheer wealth of knowledge he possessed, so this was the first time he couldn't immediately identify a problem. The Moon God Precious Tree's problem must be very well hidden. Sighing softly, he stepped away from the tree and stopped in front of the Moon God Sect crowd.

"How is it?" the senior sectmaster asked anxiously.

Jiang Chen thought for a moment before replying, "Maybe you'll think that this is an excuse to cover up my incompetence, senior sectmaster, but I can tell you with certainty that the Moon God Precious Tree itself doesn't show any signs of aging or deterioration. It is still in the prime of life, so to speak. I've excluded most external from the equation, so I must admit that I'm a little stumped right now."

Although he hadn't located any external or internal causes, the Moon God Precious Tree was indeed losing leaves and weakening. It was a fact that Jiang Chen couldn't ignore.

“But...”

Jiang Chen waved his hands. “I know, the Moon God Precious Tree is losing leaves and weakening somehow. There must be something that is causing this. However, the cause of its deterioration is well concealed and not a regular reason. Therefore, I’ll like to request for a prolonged stay and observe the tree for while longer. Is that acceptable, senior sectmaster?”

The senior sectmaster pondered for a moment. Whatever her reservations might be, Sir Shao did seem more reliable than that Pill King Ji Lang. At the very least, everything he had said was clear cut and honest. He didn’t throw out confusing and specious statements that prevented them from understanding what he was expressing. Nodding, the senior sectmaster responded, “In that case, we shall impose on you for a little while longer, Sir Shao. The Moon God Precious Tree is our totem treasure. If you are able to resolve our dilemma, we are willing to pay almost any price you ask for.”

Jiang Chen waved his hands. “We can talk about my reward later. If you don’t mind, you may depart and tend to your tasks. You only need to leave one or two behind.”

The senior sectmaster pondered again before agreeing. “Alright. Ah Yuan, please stay here and keep Sir Shao company.”

Ah Yuan was a holy maiden raised by the senior sectmaster herself.

“But master, I still have a lot of homework to do. Can’t you find someone else instead?” Ah Yuan was a little reluctant. Shao Yuan might have a bit of a genteel bearing, but he was also rather plain and unattractive.

Jiang Chen had disguised himself before coming here. He hadn’t put on an exceptionally opulent outfit, nor had he disguised himself to look like a handsome and elegant young man. Admittedly, he looked unattractive to girls, particularly young girls. However, he didn’t mind this rejection at all. He simply stared at the Moon God Precious Tree as if he hadn’t heard Ah Yuan’s rejection.

“I’ll stay.” Someone volunteered suddenly. When the crowd turned to look at the volunteer, they were surprised to find that it was Holy Maiden Qingxuan, the disciple of the second sectmaster, and the most talented and outstanding holy maiden to date in the sect.

The crowd was slightly taken aback. What was Qingxuan trying to do? She had looked down on someone like Pill King Ji Lang, but now was volunteering to stay behind with this strange male? What on earth was she playing at?

“Qingxuan, stop fooling around.” The second sectmaster had always intensely disliked men. This was especially true when the men in question were trying to approach her favorite pupil.

Xu Qingxuan was the disciple she treasured the most. How would she possibly allow the girl spend time alone with a man? However, her disciple proved unusually stubborn this time.

“Please let me stay behind, master. Your disciple promises that she’ll be a good girl and not give you trouble, okay? I just want to know if this guy is putting on an act or not.”

Everyone knew of Xu Qingxuan's temper. She might be naive, but one couldn't deny that she had a certain cleverness. Some called her devious, but they couldn't deny that she had an innocence within her. Some called her antisocial, but she could leave a deep impression when she spoke.

"Come then, Number Two. If Qingxuan wishes to stay, then just let her be. What, do you lack that much confidence in your favorite pupil?" The senior sectmaster said with a half smile on her face.

The second sectmaster couldn't say anything against that. She shot Xu Qingxuan a glare. "Remember your promise and don't cause trouble. Otherwise, I'm not promising you anything else in the future, you hear?"

"Don't worry." Xu Qingxuan chuckled.

Everyone eventually vacated the premises. Although the second sectmaster looked a little reluctant, she ultimately remembered her place and didn't stay behind to supervise the two of them.

Jiang Chen sat cross-legged under the Moon God Precious Tree and stared fixedly at it.

"Alright, stop pretending already. Now speak, why have you asked me to stay behind? You're pretty bold, aren't you? It takes courage to send me a private message right before my master. Aren't you afraid that she'll give you a good beating?" Xu Qingxuan snorted cutely.

Jiang Chen smiled calmly. "Xu Qingxuan, your mother's name is Xu Meng, isn't it?"

"You... don't bring up my mother!" Xu Qingxuan frowned slightly. "I'm warning you. Even if all of the Blues humiliate her, an outsider like you doesn't have the right to do the same!"

Jiang Chen shook his head. He waved casually and dropped a storage ring in front of Xu Qingxuan.

"There's something inside this storage ring. If you truly wish your mother well, then make sure to give it to her."

"What... what do you mean?" Xu Qingxuan was completely befuddled.

But Jiang Chen had already changed the subject. "Let's talk about the Moon God Precious Tree. How do you normally take care of the tree? What kind of people are the caretakers?"

"There's someone who tends to the Moon God Precious Tree every day. The caretakers are always the same people. That being said, one of the disciples who tended the tree passed away a few years ago, so a new disciple was sent to tend the tree."

"Hmm?" Jiang Chen frowned a little when he heard this. He seemed to have caught a clue.

## Chapter 1122: A Deeply Confused Holy Maiden Qingxuan

Men were quite attractive when deep in thought. Surprisingly, Xu Qingxuan kept her mouth shut while Jiang Chen was contemplating deeply. All she did was stare at Jiang Chen while contemplating something.

First impressions were sometimes very important. The holy maiden couldn't help but feel that Pill King Ji Lang was too boastful and excessively vain no matter how she looked at him. The image of him being first under the heavens rubbed her entirely the wrong way. Meanwhile, Shao Yuan didn't use any

flowery speech or wear flamboyant clothing. He didn't even flatter her in any form or manner either. Because of that, Xu Qingxuan noticed that he was truly engrossed with the Moon God Precious Tree instead of anything else.

She'd initially had her doubts about Shao Yuan, especially since he'd told her to remain through a mental message. She was completely on her guard. If he made any unwanted advances at her, she'd immediately resort to violence. However, things went completely against her expectations. He did hand something over to her, but it was meant for her mother. This unexpected outcome piqued her interest.

While she was completely engrossed with her own thoughts, Jiang Chen suddenly nodded and approached her. "Gather the caretakers of the Moon God Precious Tree. All of them. Leave no one behind."

Xu Qingxuan was upset that she was being ordered around by Jiang Chen. She was a holy maiden! Her authority was second only to the sectmasters. She was always the one who gave orders and not the other way around. A change flickered through her expression. She was about to fly into a rage, but she quickly noticed that he wasn't looking at her at all as he was completely engrossed with the tree. She swallowed her grievances and reluctantly left to do Jiang Chen's bidding.

The servants immediately carried out the holy maiden's orders. It didn't take long before all of the caretakers were summoned. When the sectmasters heard that Jiang Chen had asked to see the caretakers, they returned for a look. They were worried that Jiang Chen would push the blame onto these disciples.

According to various tests done by the other pill kings, there were no signs of tampering with the tree. If Pill King Shao Yuan pushed the blame to these innocent caretakers, it'd be incredibly unsightly. The sectmasters would never allow that to happen. It might cause the disciples to grow suspicious of each other, resulting in internal conflict within the sect.

Jiang Chen was a little taken aback when he noticed the sectmasters' return. However, he kept his calm and made no intentional glances at Xu Qingxuan. However, he couldn't help but have an inkling of worry that his sister might hand over the storage ring to her master. Fortunately, Xu Qingxuan did no such thing. She walked up to the sectmasters and acted as though nothing had happened between them.

"It was Sir Shao who gave me the order to assemble the caretakers."

The second sectmaster frowned. "What does he want?"

She wasn't worried that Jiang Chen had done something to her beloved disciple because it hadn't been long since they left. Even if he was up to something, there wasn't enough time for him to try any monkey business. She wasn't happy about the series of events, but she didn't pursue Xu Qingxuan about this matter.

Xu Qingxuan shook her head innocently. "He didn't tell me. Since he's the pill king and not me, I had no choice but to follow his orders."

The senior sectmaster approached Jiang Chen and spoke in a roundabout way. "Sir Shao, I guarantee that there's no problem with the disciples who are charged with the care of our tree. Many pill kings have inspected our tree and ruled out foul play."

Jiang Chen nodded without saying anything.

The caretakers had grave expressions on their faces. They were incredibly worried and anxious. Their conscience was clear, but they couldn't help but worry because they were now suspects. The Moon God Precious Tree was simply too important to the sect. Nobody could afford to be careless. Therefore, they were all filled with grievances at Jiang Chen. He was clearly trying to create a problem out of thin air.

Jiang Chen swept his gaze across the caretakers. There were twelve in total. They worked in two shifts, one in the morning and one at night. The caretakers didn't dare to say a word when his gaze swept past them. However, their eyes communicated their resentment perfectly.

Jiang Chen stopped abruptly when he set his gaze upon one of the caretakers. His expression immediately softened. "There's the problem," he clapped.

"What?" The senior sectmaster was taken aback.

The others stared at Jiang Chen nervously. They didn't believe him at all.

"Holy Maiden Qingxuan, you mentioned that one of the caretakers had to be replaced years ago due to an unfortunate incident. She was replaced by this big sister over there, right?" Jiang Chen pointed at a particular caretaker.

Xu Qingxuan stared at the caretaker, completely dumbfounded. "How did you know?" She had mentioned that one of the caretakers had been replaced, but she hadn't mentioned who!

The senior sectmaster was completely astounded. "Sir Shao, how did you know?"

The caretaker was incredibly nervous and so full of dread that she immediately broke into tears. "S-sectmaster! T-this disciple is innocent! I swear to the heavens that I've not done anything to harm our sect's precious tree! Wuuu!!"

The second sectmaster glared at Jiang Chen angrily. "Sir Shao, haven't I told you that none of our caretakers are possibly at fault? Many pill kings have already concluded that there are no signs of foul play with our precious tree. Please stop trying to raise false alarms."

Jiang Chen shrugged with a wry smile. "When did I ever say that she harmed your tree? Didn't you arrive at that conclusion yourself?"

The second sectmaster was still fuming with anger but the caretaker had stopped crying. She glared at Jiang Chen resentfully. If you don't think that I've harmed the tree, why point me out!?

Jiang Chen smiled awkwardly. "Ah, yes. What is your name?"

"Xu Shan." The caretaking replied angrily.

Jiang Chen nodded and turned to face the senior sectmaster. "Senior sectmaster, I must congratulate the Moon God Sect. You have a very unique genius among your disciples."

"What do you mean?" The senior sectmaster was baffled.

"Also, I've found the source of the problem." Jiang Chen grinned.

The crowd was now completely mystified. What exactly did he mean?

Xu Qingxuan couldn't put up with this any longer. "Hey! Can you stop speaking in vague terms? Stop trying to play us for a fool like Pill King Ji Lang! Don't make us look down on you!"

The senior sectmaster immediately reprimanded her. "Qingxuan, is this how you're supposed to speak to a honored guest?"

Xu Qingxuan snorted and glared at Jiang Chen meanly. Jiang Chen was relieved to see how straightforward his little sister was. It meant that she'd retained some of her natural kindness and wasn't completely brainwashed by the sect yet. He didn't retort and turned to face the senior sectmaster. "It's very simple. The problem still lies with Big Sister Xu Shan. However, she didn't do it on purpose. In fact, she's the victim."

"Oh? Please explain," the senior sect master replied with humility.

The crowd collected themselves and listened earnestly. Xu Shan had also stopped crying and stared at Jiang Chen anxiously. She wanted to hear what he had to say. After all, he'd mentioned that she was an innocent victim.

Jiang Chen didn't leave his listeners hanging. "There's a bloodline called the Reverse Yin Yang Bloodline. Most women have bloodlines that are yin in nature, but there are also a few that have yang dominated. However, there's also a very special bloodline that allows one to freely switch between yin and yang blood. This is the Reverse Yin Yang Bloodline. I believe that Big Sister Xu Shan is in possession of this unique bloodline. Unfortunately, her blood could also be incorrectly identified as a mixed, useless bloodline, leading to a conclusion that she doesn't have much potential in martial dao. It's the reason why she was chosen as the caretaker of the Moon God Precious Tree, right? After all, it doesn't take much technique to take good care of the tree."

The sectmasters didn't have much of an impression of Xu Shan. After all, who would possibly pay attention to such an insignificant character? Taking care of the tree was a menial job. It may seem like an important task, but it was often delegated to high born sect members with low talent.

Others reacted rather blandly, but Xu Shan was completely dumbfounded. Sir Shao's words were like he'd investigated her. Her clan had determined that she possessed a useless bloodline, which devalued her status within the clan greatly. If it wasn't for her clan's influence, she would never have been given the task of a caretaker.

Xu Shan was completely overcome by her emotions. Sir Shao was saying that she was in possession of a unique bloodline instead of a useless one! Her mind was in shambles. She was excited, yet also worried that that Sir Shao had made a mistake. She didn't want to get her hopes up for nothing. Meanwhile, the crowd was in a stupefied daze.

The senior sectmaster sucked in a deep breath after some moments had passed. "Sir Shao, how confident are you with your theory?"

"It isn't a theory. I'm merely stating the facts." Jiang Chen replied blandly.

Theory? Are you kidding me? I've already gone through all the theories and found nothing wrong. Why even bother with theories? He'd quickly got his certain answer when he laid eyes on Xu Shan.

The culprit was definitely Xu Shan's bloodline!

The crowd remained a little unconvinced despite Jiang Chen's confidence in the matter. Were things really as simple as that? Even though they remained somewhat unconvinced, they couldn't help but admit that no pill king before him had offered a theory from this angle!

#### Chapter 1123: Shocking the Entire Sect

Though Sir Shao Yuan's words erred on the side of the preposterous, he did open up an entirely new angle of attack. This was an approach that had never been tried before. The suspicions about him began to loosen. Could this young man possibly be speaking the truth? His confidence made it difficult to imagine he was just making it up. Unlike Pill King Ji Lang, he had spoken with surety.

The senior sectmaster took in a deep breath. "Sir Shao, if it is really as you say... how should we fix the problem?"

Jiang Chen waved a hand. "There's nothing to fix. The effects so far have been superficial at best and no lasting damage has been done. But... Big Sister Xu Shan won't be able to take care of the Moon God Precious Tree any more." He turned to the girl in question. "Your Yin Yang Reverse Bloodline should be well taken care of. Get a set of martial methods and principles tailored to you, and your future accomplishments will be limitless."

He looked back at the Moon God Sect's senior sectmaster. "That's at least part of the reason I was congratulating you, sectmaster. With this Yin Yang Reverse Bloodline in your Moon God Sect, you're sure to witness the birth of a new great personage sooner or later."

These words were like a clap of thunder, exploding within close vicinity of the audience. If it really was as Jiang Chen said, then Xu Shan's talent had been wasted for a long time. The senior sectmaster felt her ears ring. Too much information too quickly had that kind of effect, and she could scarcely take it all in. Had it really taken so little to find the reason for the Precious Tree's problem? And they'd received a martial dao genius on top of that? What kind of bloodline was the Yin Yang Reverse Bloodline? Despite her breadth of experience, she had never heard of such a thing. Was it really as wondrous as the young man was saying?

Xu Qingxuan had never heard of it, either. Probably none of the sectmasters have. But it was simply inconvenient for them to say that outright. She didn't care about that, though. She had few concerns to consider.

"Sir Shao, you've certainly been the most reasonable one so far, but... why does your theory sound like something out of a myth? What is the Yin Yang Reverse Bloodline? Can you tell me?"

It was impolite for Xu Qingxuan to ask this of him, given that Jiang Chen was a guest. However, her personality had naïve innocence woven into it. Any listeners would only hear the cute temperament of a little girl, taking nothing serious from the gesture.

Jiang Chen had a rather good impression of his little sister. Since she asked, he was ready to show off a bit. He knew that the better his performance was, the more likely that Xu Qingxuan might bring his storage ring to mother. It was an important outcome to ensure. Sinking into thought for a moment, he



turned back to Xu Shan, his tone deliberate. "Big Sister Xu Shan, you're still very young, yes? Thirty at most, I'd wager."

It was normal for girls to find talk of their age embarrassing at any time. In the world of martial dao, thirty was equivalent to a child in normal terms. A very early stage of life. Even so, Xu Shan still visibly reddened. Her voice was as small as an ant's. "I'm twenty-eight this year."

"Hmm, twenty-eight. Good, you haven't missed the best time to cultivate yet. It would be a great shame if you were over sixty instead... both for you, and your bloodline." Jiang Chen carried on. "When you cultivated during your childhood, it must have been very difficult to gather spirit energy. Scattered energy was only one symptom, though. Oscillating between a hot dantian and an icy one must've been another. It had no pattern whatsoever, right?"

Xu Shan's eyes lit up. "Yes, yes, you know everything about it! What... what problem do I have?"

"The Yin Yang Reverse Bloodline is liable to cause such chaos if you don't have a good grasp of its characteristics. You need a set of cultivation methods tailored to you. If you go about it the normal way, you won't even get a fifth of the results of other people. In other words, even though you're one of the Moon God Sect's best talents, you've been reaping very little returns from your work. I'm not wrong about that, am I?"

Xu Shan began to cry once more. She'd experienced a great deal of abuse because of her cultivation. Remembering back on it saddened her. Being laughed at by one's peers, being abandoned by one's family, being sidelined by everyone in general... this kind of mass rejection was hard for anyone to deal with, much less a girl.

Nobody had cared about her feelings these past few years. Nobody had cared about her suffering. And yet, a total stranger had been the one to speak these caring words to her. And a prominent pill king, at that! Her past anguish was brought to the forefront again. It was very cruel to be presented with such awful outcomes despite her prime talent.

Xu Shan had been aiming resentment at Jiang Chen at first. She thought that he was putting on an act in order to push the blame onto her, that she was going to be made a scapegoat. She felt ashamed to have thought that, now. She had been wrong about this Sir Shao, her mindset too narrow. From beginning to end, the young pill king had shown zero antagonism towards her. Quite the opposite, he actively proved her innocence. If this had occurred in private, Xu Shan would've had no qualms about kneeling down in gratitude to him.

Each and every cultivator dreamed of becoming a genius one day, regardless of gender. Xu Shan's had been crushed before it could bloom. How painful it must have been! The silence from the audience following the revelation was palpable. The senior sectmaster sighed softly. Her mouth moved as if to say something, but she swallowed those unformed words.

The second sectmaster, on the other hand, seemed dissatisfied still. "Your version of things is untested. Do you have any proof?"

Jiang Chen bore no goodwill towards the second sectmaster, who was also Xu Qingxuan's master. This woman was indubitably a Blue Moon forefather, and the person responsible for shattering his father

and mother's marriage. It was more than likely that she had also ordered his mother's house arrest and his little brother's exile as of late. On what basis could he have a good impression of her?

Still, he had no desire to engage in open warfare with her. "As a pill master," he smiled faintly, "My job is to speak the truth. Whether you accept it or not is another matter. I had no intention of receiving any reward from you from the start. If one day I am proven correct, then do try to remember that Elder Jing Tianbo tried to help once upon a time. If not for his sake, I wouldn't be here."

His speech was a little pretentious, but he couldn't exactly reveal his true intentions here. It was better to be circumspect and indirect. The jig was up if they found out that he was here for his mother. He didn't want to waste all the effort he'd put in so far. Failure was not an option. Jiang Chen had no fear of antagonizing these people here. The only thing he was scared of was his parents' inability to reunite once more. To him, it was a weighty matter of filial piety.

The senior sectmaster stopped the second sectmaster with a look. She stepped forward in inquiry. "Sir Shao, your explanation is very reasonable indeed. There's just one question I'd like to ask: why does the Yin Yang Reverse Bloodline conflict with the Moon God Precious Tree? How should someone with the bloodline go about their cultivation?"

These were honest questions.

"No matter whether it's leaning towards yin or yang reverse, the bloodline is intensely potent either way. Naturally, it does far more damage to the tree during yang reverse. The Moon God Precious Tree is a spirit plant characterized by extreme yin. The pure yang energy from the yang reverse process intrinsically inhibits it. You people know that already to a degree, yes? You've never sent male disciples to care for this tree, correct?"

The senior sectmaster looked thoughtful. Her expression shifted from confusion to conviction.

"As expected, Sir Shao, you're a man of many talents and experiences. I'd wager that only you could've found the cause for our problem. We hereby thank you for your assistance. If you'd like any reward, feel free to let us know. We have both spirit stones and spirit herbs aplenty, and no sum is too great for your taking."

Jiang Chen knew the promise was mostly only lip service. The sect wasn't likely to comply with any outrageous demands. But he wasn't here for a reward in the first place. "Never mind," he waved a hand dismissively. "I've said before that material rewards are not my reason for coming here. I'm just glad that you believe me enough to trust me, senior sectmaster."

"Hmm, alright. And the matter of the Yin Yang Reverse Bloodline, if I may be so bold?" the senior sectmaster added.

Jiang Chen nodded. "I'll do a write up in a bit. Big Sister Xu Shan will understand as soon as she sees it. The Yin Yang Reverse Bloodline only looks chaotic, but there will be no problems whatsoever if she just follows the directions. When she grasps its principles, she'll catch up to everyone else in no time—or pass them, really. Perhaps the Moon God Sect will gain another holy maiden in five years' time."

"Is that really possible?" The senior sectmaster was amazed. There were high standards for becoming a holy maiden, both talent and bloodline wise.

Jiang Chen laughed heartily. "If you don't believe me, then why not entrust Big Sister Xu Shan to me? I'll provide her with a splendid future. I daresay you'll regret it down the line, though!"

The girl in question let out a soft chirp, her face immediately reddening at those words. She clutched at the hems of her clothes, made anxious by the suggestion.

The senior sectmaster smiled. She could take an obvious joke. If this Sir Shao hadn't described the Yin Yang Reverse Bloodline in such exaggerated terms, she would've had no problem handing Xu Shan over to him. But now, regardless of his claims' truthfulness, she wasn't willing to part with a potential holy maiden genius. Thinking this, of the sectmaster tossed Xu Shan a meaningful glance. What she saw unsettled her. Both Xu Shan's expression and body language communicated embarrassment, but also a subdued, impulsive willingness to leave. That wasn't a good sign.

This was not the time to call her out on it, though. From Xu Shan's perspective, she'd just been rescued from the brink of uselessness and turned into a treasure. Anyone would feel overwhelming gratefulness in her situation. The sectmaster could also see that Sir Shao's joke wasn't exactly a call for ownership. Instead, it was an offer to help her cultivation, a chance at a brilliant future in martial dao.

To the side, Xu Qingxuan looked dumbfounded. She looked back and forth between Jiang Chen and Xu Shan. Suddenly, she became inexplicably unhappy. Not because of Xu Shan's Yin Yang Reverse Bloodline, but rather Jiang Chen's joke. The noble impression that he'd finally managed to erect in her heart showed signs of crumbling.

Girls' hearts were eclectic things. Upon discovery of a man's uniqueness, a girl tended to overanalyze each little action and statement that they made, imagining infinite possibilities. In other words, an overactive imagination. Not that Xu Qingxuan's heart was moved, per se. The displeasure arose almost entirely out of her feminine instinct.

#### Chapter 1124: The Kiss Had Nothing to Do With Love

The senior sectmaster personally attended to Jiang Chen, and the latter stayed at Moon God Palace for another an hour. After refreshing himself with tea and snacks, Jiang Chen wrote down the appropriate cultivation method. His knowledge from his previous life was useful in this situation. He'd seen at least three with the Yin Yang Reverse Bloodline in his millions of years. In essence, the key to cultivating the Yin Yang Reverse Bloodline was timing. The cultivator would cultivate the arts of absolute yin at certain times and absolute yang at others.

When the arts of absolute yin and absolute yang was cultivated to the point where they began to fuse with each other, the bloodline would then start displaying its terrifying potential. It was to the extent where even someone with a top rate bloodline like Xu Qingxuan might not necessarily be able to surpass her.

After Jiang Chen passed what he wrote onto Xu Shan, he reminded her, "Big Sister Xu Shan, the Yin Yang Reverse bloodline is somewhat difficult to identify, but it is not as complicated to cultivate as you may think. You won't encounter any problems now that you possess the proper cultivation method and awareness of your bloodline. As long as you follow these instructions and cultivate hard for the next five years, your bloodline will fuse together and generate enough potential to makes the entire world

envious. Remember, you don't need to feel self conscious. On the contrary, you should feel proud of yourself because you possess one of the greatest bloodlines there is in the entire world."

For a genius suppressed for a long time like Xu Shan, the rebuilding of one's confidence was of paramount important. If she lacked conviction, she might not be able to soar to the top as he told her she would. Cultivation was not an easy thing. And now, Xu Shan's mind was a complete blank because excitement had taken over both her heart and body. She could only nod repeatedly in acknowledgement of Jiang Chen's words.

Jiang Chen knew that Xu Shan might not be able to remember anything he said because she was overly emotional right now. So, he turned around to face the senior sectmaster. "Senior sectmaster, her martial dao talent is perfectly fine. However, your aid is necessary to rebuild her confidence."

The senior sectmaster looked thoughtful. She was growing more and more impressed by this young man. His outstanding ability and self-conduct were clear for all to see. There were very few in the martial dao world who would do so much for a person they just met. Xu Shan wasn't an ugly woman, but her features were at best above average out of all of the female disciples. There was no reason Jiang Chen would set aside the prettier holy maidens of Moon God Sect and flatter Xu Shan alone if that was his intention.

This meant that Sir Shao was purely working from an angle of morality. He had absolutely no intentions of flattering Xu Shan and winning her favor, not to mention that she was neither exceedingly beautiful nor important enough to warrant some attention.

After finishing his cup of tea, Jiang Chen rose to bid his goodbye. The senior sectmaster personally saw him out, and Xu Shan insisted on walking with him a bit longer after they reached the entrance. The senior sectmaster was a little worried about Xu Shan, but she wasn't completely ignorant of the ways of the world. Sighing softly, she gave permission to Xu Shan to do as she pleased and left with her attendants first, leaving Xu Shan alone to send off Sir Shao.

Jiang Chen smiled when he saw the determination on Xu Shan's face. "Sister Xu Shan, you don't have to see me out. Just remember what I said and be confident in yourself. Your bloodline is one of the best bloodlines there are in the entire world."

Xu Shan nodded with reddened cheeks. Jiang Chen casually waved her goodbye and just about to step outside. Suddenly, Xu Shan broke into a small run and planted her soft, red lips against Jiang Chen's cheeks. Then, she drew back like a frightened rabbit and ran away embarrassedly before Jiang Chen could do anything.

Jiang Chen was a bit taken aback. He never imagined that Xu Shan would show him her gratitude in such a bold manner.

"Sir Shao, Xu Shan will never forget about the kindness you showed me today. In the future, you only need to say the word and I'll do my best to repay the favor I owe you today even at the cost of my life."

Jiang Chen relaxed when he heard Xu Shan's determined voice. It at least proved that she wasn't lacking in confidence, and that a long period of oppression had only served to ignite her ambition and her will to turn the tables. Her fighting will wasn't lost, and Jiang Chen was sure that she could become a new holy maiden in three to five years if she maintained this outlook.

.....

Meanwhile, Xu Qingxuan was feeling a little down. That shouldn't have been the case, in fact she should've been happy since the Moon God Precious Tree was finally free from its ailments. But still, she couldn't help but feel a bit annoyed when she thought about that guy.

He's probably the only man who's never tried to curry favor with me from the moment he set foot in the sect. Normally Xu Qingxuan disliked having people fawning over her, but Pill King Shao Yuan was an exceeding outstanding person, so the complete lack of special attention had disappointed her a little. It wasn't that she was attracted to him, it was just in her nature as a girl to enjoy the attention of others.

I'm an outstanding person, right? He should've at least treated me with a bit of courtesy, right? But Jiang Chen had ordered her around like a servant girl from the start. After all was said and done, he'd left without even bidding goodbye. Hmph, that self-important guy. Who knows, maybe he was planning to enter the Moon God Sect from the beginning. Xu Qingxuan recalled the storage ring Jiang Chen asked her to pass on to her mother.

Suddenly, a strong surge of curiosity made her itch to check the storage ring and uncover its mysteries. Still, she wasn't a girl who lacked principles. Her curiosity gripped her, but she didn't check the storage ring without permission.

Xu Qingxuan returned to her home gloomily and discovered the door of her mother's wooden house was closed.

"Mother, Xuan'er has returned." Xu Qingxuan greeted her mother dispiritedly before pushing through the door.

Holy Maiden Xu Meng was leaning against the window and staring at the beautiful scenery outside. Suddenly, she sighed. "Xuan'er, the magpies have been playing in the trees for a whole day. Has something happened?"

Xu Qingxuan was startled. Her mother's words was obviously not directed at anyone in particular, but... she did have some news with her. She lightly clenched the storage ring in her hand and hesitated. She didn't know if she should pass it to her mother.

"Xuan'er, I see that you're not looking so jewel. Is the Moon God Precious Tree still sick? You don't have to worry about it. You're just a young girl, and there are always things to worry about. Leave it to the sectmasters to worry about the tree."

Xu Qingxuan was a little angry when the tree was mentioned. "Mother, let's not talk about the tree, okay? We've found the root cause of its sickness."

"Oh? Then why are you still looking so depressed?" Holy Maiden Xu Meng didn't ask about the tree. She had zero interest in the Moon God Sect right now. The only thing she cared for was her daughter's feelings.

"Ai, it's all because of..." Xu Qingxuan was about to speak Shao Yuan's name, but in the end she stopped herself from doing so.

"What is it? Did someone make you unhappy?"

"Yeah, that guy was pretty terrible." Xu Qingxuan muttered. She didn't really have a problem with Jiang Chen. It was just a nagging discomfort. For some reason, she couldn't get over the fact that he had treated Xu Shan with great courtesy, but not her, the foremost holy maiden of the Moon God Sect.

Truthfully, Xu Qingxuan wasn't unaware of Jiang Chen's attention. However, the attention she felt from him wasn't the admiration between a man and a woman, but a casualness that only existed between two people who were very familiar with each other. Generally speaking, this familiarity only existed between family members. No pretenses, no courtesies, and no affectations.

"What guy?" Holy Maiden Xu Meng smiled. "Strange. I thought your Moon God Sect normally forbade men from entering the core area, don't they?"

"Ai, I didn't know you're so gossipy, mother. We were inviting people to take a look at the Moon God Precious Tree, remember? That guy, well, it turns out he actually has some skill."

"Who on earth are you talking about..." Xu Meng said with a half smile on her face. She had no qualms with her daughter exploring the depths of love at all. After all, her daughter was over twenty years old already. In fact, she didn't even want her daughter to become a holy maiden in the first place. In Xu Meng's opinion, there were almost no normal people in the entire Moon God Sect. Nearly all of them were stone-hearted cultivators who had traded away their humanity for cultivation.

"Come on, tell me. Is he that Pill King... someone from Pillfire City? I think I heard his name being mentioned this morning."

"No, not him." Xu Qingxuan didn't feel an ounce of goodwill towards Pill King Ji Lang. "That guy's just a self-centered braggart with no real knowledge."

"Oh? Then who is it that you're talking about?" Holy Maiden Xu Meng didn't look like she would stop until she got the truth out of Xu Qingxuan.

"Mother... just don't ask. He's more interested in you than he is in me, you know."

Holy Maiden Xu Meng's face changed abruptly. "Xuan'er, how can you make such a distasteful joke to your own mother?"

"I'm not joking. I think that guy has a screw loose in his head. At first he told me to stay behind, and I thought he was going to confess to me or something like those other terrible men, but... he asked me if I'm Xu Meng's daughter before giving me a storage ring. He told me to give it to you."

"What did you say?" Xu Meng immediately grew agitated. "Where is the ring? Quickly, show it to me. What else did he tell you?"

"He didn't say anything else. He simply told me to give you the ring if I truly care. Hmph, as if I need him to tell me that." Xu Qingxuan pouted. Complaints aside, she didn't dilly dally. She passed the storage ring to her mother.

When her mother accepted the ring and checked its contents, a shudder coursed through her entire body. A look of wild joy abruptly colored her features. She took out the item from the ring, which turned out to be a single earring. Holy Maiden Xu Meng's hands and lips shook uncontrollably as she clutched the earring. It was obvious that her emotions were completely out of control.

“Mother, what... what’s wrong?” Xu Qingxuan was frightened by her change.

“It’s him... it’s him... Xuan’er, this is your father bringing me a message! This... this earring is what I used to wear back at Jiang Han Province. When Moon God Sect took me away, the earring was lost in the scuffle. This is it, there’s not mistake. Xuan’er, your father... your father has finally come to find me!” Xu Meng sounded incoherent. She was on the verge of a complete emotional breakdown.

#### Chapter 1125: Holy Maiden Xu Meng Crazy With Joy

Xu Qingxuan walked over to her mother and wanted to take a closer look at the earring. However, Xu Meng held it firmly in her hand and kept staring at it as though it was her sole source of happiness and the most precious thing in the world.

“Mother, can’t you let me take a small peek at it?” Xu Qingxuan’s curiosity was piqued. It took some time before Xu Meng could finally loosen her grip and place the earring gently into Xu Qingxuan’s hands. Her mother was treating it as the most fragile thing in the world.

Xu Qingxuan was also assailed by emotions. She understood that the earring represented the love and yearning between her parents. It was the symbol of hope. She didn’t dare to be careless when she was given the earring. It didn’t seem to be anything special, just a semi-precious accessory from the secular world. A true cultivator would never bother wearing such a thing.

“Xuan’er, this earring is definitely real. Who told you to give this to me? W-what did he look like? He could very well be your father!” Xu Meng could no longer keep her composure.

“Ah mother, that man is very young. He isn’t even thirty years old yet. A fellow disciple called Xu Shan is twenty-eight years old, yet he called her big sister. This means that he isn’t even twenty-eight yet. How could he possibly be father?” Xu Qingxuan didn’t want to pour cold water on her mother, but she felt obligated to tell the truth.

Xu Meng wasn’t disheartened. “Even if he isn’t your father, he’s definitely your father’s friend. Otherwise, how can you explain this earring? Why would he especially bring it to me?”

She’d made a rather good point.

Xu Qingxuan sighed gently. “Mother, there are some things which I’ve yet to tell you. A few days ago, I sent someone to investigate the Eastern Kingdom. The Jiang Han territory continues to exist, but it doesn’t go by the surname of Jiang anymore. The duke of Jiang Han and Jiang Chen are longer there. The investigator said that they must’ve perished when the Eternal Celestial Capital attacked the Myriad Domain.”

“No! Impossible! This earring doesn’t lie!” Xu Meng remained resolute. “Your father is fine and so is your brother!”

“Mother, why don’t you check if there’s anything else in the storage ring?” Xu Qingxuan didn’t try to argue with her mother. There was little meaning in trying to disprove her mother’s staunch beliefs. Xu Meng suddenly recalled that there was something else in the ring. She took a glance and noticed a small note inside. Hardly able to contain herself, she immediately opened it.

Thirty years apart, thirty years of longing. Now I dwell in Frostmoon City, for I long to see you again. Only two sentences were written on the paper. There was no inscription, name, or anything to help identify the sender. However, Xu Meng immediately slumped to the ground and cried her heart out after reading it.

“Xuan’er, it really is your father! It’s his handwriting and his manner of speech! Xuan’er, I need to descend the mountain! I need to go to Frostmoon City!” She’d lost all strength from her limbs due to the great waves of emotion, but her voice remained incredibly resolute and unwavering.

Xu Qingxuan noted that there was no endearing words or pledge of eternal love within the two sentences. However, it contained all the pain and longing from their thirty years of separation. This was a great love that didn’t require grandiose gestures or flowery words.

Xu Qingxuan was deeply moved. If it really was her father’s handwriting, then the love between her parents must be greater than anything else. They’d gone against all odds just so they could once again protect and care for each other. Not even time and space could separate them.

Jiang Feng’s short message had been written after much deliberation. He’d previously written a letter filled with tens of thousands of words, but he realized that thirty years of longing couldn’t be properly expressed with ink and paper. He quickly came to realize that words were superficial. He didn’t know what his wife was thinking right now, but he was certain that her feelings hadn’t changed.

If so, what was the point of writing so many words? After a lot of back and forth, he decided to write just two sentences. If their hearts were truly aligned, his wife would understand the depth within the two lines of words and come to meet him. If they were fated not to meet, she could keep it as a memento. Knowing about each other’s safety was a million times better than knowing nothing about the other at all.

Xu Meng grabbed her daughter’s hands tightly. “Xuan’er, didn’t you say that you’ll take mother down the mountain for some fresh air this morning? Well, mother has changed her mind. I want to go. Now!”

Xu Qingxuan understood that her mother had good reason to be excited, so she quickly spoke words of comfort. “Mother, since things are already at this point, I’ll find a way to make it happen. However, we must remain vigilant and take things one step at a time. First of all, we need to consider if this is a trap or some kind of cruel joke. It’s unlikely, but we need to be mentally prepared. Secondly, we must also take father’s safety into consideration. If the sectmasters finds out that father has contacted us, the consequences would be unimaginable. Thirdly, we must also consider how we can let both of you reunite. I’ll make sure to make it happen even if I’ll be punished for it.”

“No! I cannot be so selfish! Both your father and I would never let you take punishment for our sake. We’ll wait. One day, you’ll become a sectmaster and you can then decide our fates.”

Xu Qingxuan shook her head. “It’ll take many centuries and millenniums before that happens. The sectmasters are still young, so it’ll be many years before they retire. Neither of you have attained emperor realm either... I’m afraid time is not on your side...”

Xu Meng had abstained from cultivation. She had the talents of a holy maiden, but because of neglect in her martial dao, she hadn’t even attained origin realm yet. As for Jiang Feng...



Xu Qingxuan hadn't met him yet, but the Eastern Kingdom was a place with limited martial dao aptitude. Even if he had a breakthrough, he was likely an origin cultivator at the very most. She couldn't help but worry about this problem. Her parents didn't have a lifespan as long as hers due to their limited cultivation level. They couldn't afford to wait for too long.

Deeply touched by the love her parents had for each other, she began to make bold elopement plans for them. She was determined to fulfill her mother's wish even if she'd be punished for it. She understood that her mother was going to reach the very limit of exhaustion one day. Her everyday life was filled with sadness and misery. Waking up everyday was a challenge in itself.

"Mother, don't worry. I'll make the arrangements. We'll leave by day break tomorrow." Her mind was set. She'd carry out her plan.

"Xuan'er, you must plan carefully. You mustn't get yourself entangled in my matters. The Moon God Sect doesn't contain even a shred of compassion. Once you're of no value to them, they have no qualms throwing you away like trash. Mother has experienced it firsthand," Xu Meng suddenly said. It was the first time she'd ever badmouthed the sect and served as a reminder for her daughter.

"Mother, don't worry... I know what I'm doing."

"Xuan'er, even if we take a trip down the mountain, how are we supposed to find your father in a city as big as Frostmoon City?" Xu Meng was at a loss.

"Mother, I know where they are. The messenger Shao Yuan and Emperor Peerless are both currently staying at the sect's first division at Frostmoon City. Father must be there too."

The second sectmaster had extremely high expectations for Xu Qingxuan. Because of that, she'd begun to control and scrutinize her disciple's every move. Xu Qingxuan found this very difficult to get used to. The second sectmaster was incredibly strict because she didn't want her disciple to walk down the same path as the mother. When Xu Qingxuan asked for permission to take her mother down the mountains, her master turned her down without a second thought or consideration.

"Qingxuan, you need to think this through. Ill fate is as persistent as red dust. Let your mother's misfortune serve as a bitter lesson for you!" The second sectmaster warned sternly.

Xu Qingxuan respected her master greatly and rarely went against her master's orders. However, today was one of those rare days. She glared at her master fiercely. "Honored master, can you really blame my mother for her actions? She was merely an infant when she left the Moon God Sect! How could she have known? What happened after that was a continuation of fate!" She felt that it was time speak a word on her mother's behalf.

The second sectmaster stared at Xu Qingxuan in utter disbelief. She never imagined that her obedient disciple would actually talk back at her! Xu Qingxuan hadn't said anything wrong, but to the second sectmaster, it was an act of defiance and disrespect.

"Qingxuan, have you finally learned to disrespect your master?" Her voice was harsh and cold.

Xu Qingxuan held her head high, exposing her snowy white neck. "Honored master, I've had enough! Everyone has been criticizing my mother ever since the day I could speak! They clearly know that it wasn't her fault, yet they continue to blame, belittle, and mock! Has nobody once thought that she was

actually innocent? Even if she was at fault, at the end of the day, she's still my mother! Moreover, hasn't she given a holy maiden to the sect as a replacement already? She has repaid her debts to the sect and then some!" Xu Qingxuan yelled at the top of her lungs, venting her frustrations and anger that had accumulated over the years.

The second sectmaster was completely dumbfounded by her disciple's sudden outburst. Xu Qingxuan's words had thawed some of the compassion that she'd long sealed in ice. Indeed, had Xu Meng truly sinned?

Was it really appropriate to blame everything on her? Even if she'd truly sinned, hadn't her sins been washed away when she gave her daughter, an even more impressive holy maiden, to the sect? The second sectmaster was suddenly at a loss for words. She understood her disciple very well. Xu Qingxuan would definitely rebel if pushed too far.

The second sectmaster let out a long sigh. "You may make a trip down the mountain with your mother. But remember, you must be back within three days and you mustn't leave the confines of Frostmoon City. Otherwise... you'll be punished according to sect rules."

#### Chapter 1126: On the Verge of Coming Out

Xu Qingxuan's first and only time getting angry at her master had achieved rather unexpected results. For once, her master had acquiesced. She was surprised, to be sure, but also a little contrite.

"I'm sorry, master. I lost control of my emotions just now." As a fundamentally kind-hearted girl, she decided to apologize after the fact.

The second sectmaster looked bleak. Xu Qingxuan's tirade had seemingly struck a chord. "You can go, Qingxuan."

Xu Qingxuan's heart was filled with uncertainty by her master's display. Not daring to say anything further, she merely nodded and walked out. When she mentioned the incident to her mother, Xu Meng was just as startled as her daughter. She did not believe that the Blue Moon forefather could suddenly have had a change of heart. It was virtually impossible to appeal to her conscience. It's more likely that she was worried about Qingxuan's potential rebelliousness. Xu Meng was deeply prejudiced against the Moon God Sect. This was especially true for the forefather of the Blues, the second sectmaster.

It was scarcely dawn the next day when Xu Meng began to hurriedly put her baggage together. Aware exactly how anxious her mother was, Xu Qingxuan did not delay a single moment. She woke up just as early as her mother had, and led the way down the mountain after a very brief wash-up.

The gatekeeping disciples all showed mild surprise at the supposedly grounded Holy Maiden Xu Meng's departure, but with Holy Maiden Qingxuan as her guide, who dared stop her? The journey out of the Moon God Sect's mountainous domain was surprisingly smooth.

Elsewhere, within the sect's sacred grounds...

The forefather of the Blue Moon faction occupied in a lofty position, looking into the direction that Xu Qingxuan had departed in. Her expression was stoic and impenetrable. It was hard to tell what she was really thinking.

"Forefather, you could've stopped them from leaving if you're not happy about it. I think that Xu Meng is a bad influence on Holy Maiden Qingxuan. In my opinion, we should permanently separate the two. Why let them see each other?" An old woman stood behind the forefather of the Blues, her voice as discordant as a broken cymbal.

Though the forefather of the Blues was named such, she still appeared rather youthful. Despite her age, she'd retained much of her charm. The Blue Moon forefather sighed softly at the old woman's words. "Sure, it's easy enough to physically separate them. But it's much more difficult to cut off their connection in Qingxuan's heart. We've tried to brainwash her for so many years, yet she is still closest to her mother. It's something in her blood, and nothing that a crude barrier will do."

"I'm simply worried that that witch Xu Meng will lead Qingxuan down the wrong path too," the old woman muttered. "Qingxuan is such an innocent girl. For her to be exposed to the karmic ties of the world... it is not good for her cultivation, not good at all."

"Hmph. Qingxuan's own fortunes will decide for her. If she really lacks even the littlest bit of mental fortitude, that means she wasn't the best holy maiden candidate after all." The forefather's words became chilly. She was transparently disgusted with the possibility. Once probability became certainty, she would toss Xu Qingxuan aside without hesitation. There were other holy maidens to pay attention to. The forefather was at the peak of her power and had plenty of time to find a different successor.

"Shall I keep watch and follow them?" The old woman volunteered.

"No need. Unless I go personally, there won't be any results from it." The Blue Moon forefather shook her head, visibly disdaining the suggestion.

The old woman sighed again. "I really do hope that Qingxuan understands what's good for her. She better avoid any self-degradation."

"Granny Ku, don't prattle on about Xu Meng in front of Qingxuan any more. Qingxuan, she... she's becoming more and more rebellious. Honestly, about Xu Meng, about the past... strictly speaking, Xu Meng wasn't entirely at fault. It was the capriciousness of fate."

This was a rare impartial remark.

"Don't blame yourself, forefather," the old woman beseeched promptly. "Even if it was fate, that just means Xu Meng has a bad destiny. It was a result of evils she committed in her past life. So, it doesn't matter. It's still her fault. If she sincerely admits her mistakes and wholeheartedly listens to your arrangements to atone, then she could've become one of the Blues' best assistants to our very own Qingxuan. What a shame that she's given up on herself and wallows in filth. She doesn't think about how to change. How wrong she is!"

The granny had resorted to sophistry. To her, the reasoning of the Blue Moon faction was truth incarnate. That Xu Meng missed her husband and was unwilling to compromise with the Moon God Sect was an original sin.

This was an awfully shameless form of logic and very high-handed. After all, Xu Meng had been lost since childhood. Her life and growth had nothing to do with the Moon God Sect. What sense of commonality and identity could she feel towards it?

Quite the opposite in fact: the appearance of the sect had completely destroyed her life, turning it flatly upside-down. Her freedom was taken away, her marriage and family shattered. Xu Meng was the biggest victim in all this. And yet, the Moon God Sect had made her daughter their holy maiden. They were reaping the fruits of Xu Meng's labor.

Xu Meng couldn't remember how many days she'd not departed the Sacred Blue Moon Mountain. The sight of the cityscape before her was somewhat surreal. She hung tightly onto Xu Qingxuan's arm.  
"Xuan'er, am I dreaming?"

"Look, mother. There's so many people on this street. Some are crying, some are laughing, some are shouting, and some are hawking their wares. Doesn't seem like a dream to me. This is real, right. We're already at Frostmoon City." Xu Qingxuan was a little tense. Her parents' reunion had been a dream of hers since time immemorial, so she couldn't help her anxiety when the time actually came. She wanted to know what her father looked like. However, she was also worried that this was all a deception. She could take it psychologically, but could her mother do the same?

I hope this is real, I really do... mother is such a kind person. The heavens wouldn't toy with her any more than it already has, no way. Xu Qingxuan tried to convince herself.

Before long, Xu Qingxuan and her mother arrived at the gates of the first division. Holy Maiden Qingxuan's descent upon Frostmoon City was a piece of tremendous news. Countless cultivators were mobilized by it from every direction, vying for a closer look. Everyone wanted to know what the so-called foremost holy maiden of the Moon God Sect looked like. How awe-inspiring was her presence, really?

The density of curiosity caused the streets near the first division to become increasingly crowded.

"Wow, it's an immortal beauty in the flesh!"

"Huh? How come there are two of them? And they look so alike, too."

"They look like sisters! Even a single one is exceedingly rare, much less a pair."

"That's their foremost holy maiden, alright. I have no words to describe her with!"

The holy maidens of the Moon God Sect paid great attention to the nurture of their disposition and temperament. When their appearance was added to the mix, the ensemble was positively breathtaking. In the eyes of earthly cultivators, a holy maiden of the Moon God Sect was an otherworldly immortal. The Moon God Sect actively encouraged this kind of perception in order to maintain its veneer of mystery and grandeur.

Xu Qingxuan's unannounced appearance within Frostmoon City heated up the atmosphere. Every observer present thought it was worth their while. As expected, the holy maiden's manner, posture, and demeanor were perfect beyond criticism. A wave of people suddenly rushed out from the first division's gates. At their head was Third Master Jing, who paused momentarily upon seeing Xu Qingxuan.

The third master was the vice head of the first division, but he had only seen the holy maiden once before, in passing. It was the first time he had the chance to take a good look at her. For a moment, he lost his composure.

“Thank you for gracing us with your presence, Holy Maiden Qingxuan. I do apologize for my lack of decorum.” Apologizing profusely for his lack of manners, Third Master Jing ushered Xu Meng and Xu Qingxuan inside. There was a wave of disappointed sighing in the street as the young holy maiden exited their vicinity, the crowd’s eyes clearly yet unsated.

Xu Qingxuan didn’t feel much about the third master’s niceties. She cut straight to the chase. “Is Pill King Shao Yuan here or not?”

“Ah, yes, he is.” Third Master Jing quickly nodded. Coincidentally, a person came into view at the end of a hallway ahead. It was Jiang Chen.

The young man himself was greeted with a welcome sight. Xu Qingxuan had in tow a woman who looked exactly like her. The only differences were an increase in both maturity and tenderness. His heart shook. Mother?

Still, he kept both his wits and composure. It wasn’t the right time for them to reveal to each other their identities. There was too much of a crowd.

“Holy Maiden Qingxuan, I’ve waited for you awhile.”

Xu Qingxuan petted her mother’s back very softly, a gesture meant to calm her down. Xu Meng retained her poise, knowing the inconvenience that stemmed from the excessive onlookers. She pushed down the emotions that were welling up within her, and strode in arm-in-arm with her daughter. The strength in her feet waned with each step, and she found it more and more difficult to move. Emotional exertion, rather than physical weakness, sent her into temporary shock.

Jiang Chen was assured all the more by this display that she was indeed his biological mother. He felt both anguish and relief. His mother was evidently just as excited as he was. Like his father, she could hardly contain herself. The span of three decades was not nearly enough to break the bonds of love. Love was an overwhelmingly potent force, the unrelenting drive behind their looming reunification.

Third Master Jing was astute enough to wave and shout in dismissal. “All of you can go now.”

The first division’s personnel dispersed immediately. The third master looked back at Jiang Chen fawningly. “Brother Shao, I’ll take my leave now. Just let me know if you need me.”

Jiang Chen didn’t oppose Third Master Jing’s self-expulsion. There was no need for any outsiders in their vicinity.

After no one remained in their general surroundings, Xu Qingxuan tossed Jiang Chen a slightly resentful glare. “You’re the messenger, right? Can you tell us who sent you now?”

Jiang Chen smiled wryly. “Come with me.”

Xu Meng couldn’t wait any more. “Brother Shao,” she asked frantically, “do you... do you know my husband? Are you acquainted with my dear Feng?”

“Er, please.” Jiang Chen hastily interrupted. “Really, please don’t call me ‘brother Shao’.”

“What?” Xu Qingxuan was instantly displeased. “You’re not happy with an honorific like that? Do you know how much of an unseen advantage you have over me because of it? It’s an entire generation’s worth, you know?”

“I would, ah...” Jiang Chen laughed helplessly. “Really prefer not to at all, if I can.”

The bravest man in the world wouldn’t let their mother call them ‘brother’. That was too much chaos for any man to handle.

#### Chapter 1127: Reunited

Xu Qingxuan’s lip curled, but she didn’t give him a reply. She supported her mother as they walked towards the back garden. “Mother, you absolutely must stay calm, alright? No matter what happens, please remember that your daughter is right by your side.”

Xu Meng nodded repeatedly while saying, “I know, I know.” However, she literally couldn’t be more nervous than she was right now.

They quickly arrived at the entrance to the garden. A person suddenly ran out from behind a nearby flower rack and screeched to a halt, staring at Xu Meng and Xu Meng only. They felt as if the entire world had come to a standstill as they stared into each other’s eyes. It had been thirty years. It had been an eternity.

Xu Meng’s tears fell like raindrops as she whispered, “My dearest Feng.”

“Meng’er!” Jiang Feng shed manly tears, and he rushed forwards to hold Xu Meng in a tight embrace. He was afraid that a sudden breeze would suddenly rip away the scene in front of his eyes like a dream.

They had been separated for thirty years and were reunited thirty years later. The outpour of emotions was something no language in the world could possibly describe. The only way they knew to express it to the utmost was to hug each other as tightly as they could.

“My dearest Feng, Meng’er isn’t dreaming, is she? Meng’er definitely isn’t dreaming, is she?” Xu Meng whispered quietly and shakily.

“It is not a dream, Meng’er. I’m sorry to have kept you waiting for so long. The heavens have taken pity on us and reunited our family once more. This is fate, Meng’er. This can be nothing else but fate.” Jiang Feng’s voice was just as shaky and emotional as Xu Meng’s.

Xu Qingxuan’s eyes turned a little wet. Her body trembled a little with emotion. The human heart was made of flesh, so how could she not be overjoyed to see her father and mother reuniting with each other once more? She had never seen her mother as happy as she was today since young. It was as if her entire body was smiling and reverberating with happiness. It was a kind of happiness that Xu Qingxuan had never seen until now.

Xu Qingxuan wiped the tears from her eyes for a second before abruptly recalling that Jiang Chen was right beside her. She hurriedly tamped down her feelings and shot a slightly chastising glance at him. However, she noticed that his eyes were red as well. “Hey, don’t you think you should be... somewhere else? This is a private matter, you know. Also, what on earth are you crying about?”

Xu Qingxuan was confused by Jiang Chen's reactions. I'm crying because my parents have reunited with one another, but why are you, a messenger, crying? Don't you think you're a little too absorbed in the drama?

Jiang Chen was greatly amused by Xu Qingxuan's reaction. "Is there a rule that says that your parents can't be my parents?"

At first, Xu Qingxuan didn't understand his meaning. What? My parents are your parents? Are you taking advantage of me, boy?

She thought so was because the parents of one's spouse counted as the other spouse's parents as well. However, when she saw that Jiang Chen was completely serious and not looking like he was taking advantage of her in the slightest, her mind abruptly turned blank. There was a buzz inside her head, but she was unable to decipher its meaning immediately.

"Oh Holy Maiden Qingxuan, foremost holy maiden of Moon God Sect. Do you think I'm worthy enough to be your older brother?" Jiang Chen smiled faintly.

"What? You..." The answer cut through the fog in Xu Qingxuan's head like lightning.

My brother? Shao Yuan is... my... brother? Xu Qingxuan turned to look at her father, then back at Jiang Chen. For a time, she was completely speechless.

By now Jiang Feng and Xu Meng had managed to rein in their emotions a little. Their father happily led their mother by the hand towards them. "Meng'er, today is truly the happiest I've ever been in the past thirty years, for we are not the only ones who have reunited with one another. Chen'er, come quickly and pay your respects to your mother!"

Jiang Chen dared not dilly dally as he smiled at Xu Meng, strode towards her and knelt on the floor, kowtowing. "Your child, Jiang Chen, greets you, mother."

Xu Meng's emotions skyrocketed yet again as her eyes turned red. "Jiang Chen? You're... you're Chen'er?"

She flung herself at Jiang Chen and hugged him. She pulled him to her bosom and rained kisses on him. For an instant, Xu Meng felt as if she had travelled back in time nearly thirty years ago. At the time, Chen'er was but a breastfeeding baby and knew only baby talk. It was as if time had rolled back to nearly thirty years ago.

"Oh, Chen'er, my poor child. I have done so much wrong to you and your father. Come, Chen'er, let me see you." Xu Meng shed tears while holding Jiang Chen's head.

This was obviously not the time to care about his disguises, so Jiang Chen pulled off his mask and revealed his true face. It was obvious that he resembled both his father and his mother, excluding the parts of his figure that had developed from his growth. He had sharp, straight eyebrows that framed bright eyes, a sharply defined face, and a bearing that bespoke of something extraordinary. He was starting to look like a man who surpassed the greatest young geniuses in the Upper Eight Regions in every way.

Xu Qingxuan was completely stunned as she stared at the face that shared a bit of resemblance to hers. Is he really my older brother? Is he really Jiang Chen? I didn't realize my brother is this handsome and graceful! His cultivation is nothing like the small place they call the Eastern Kingdoms at all... Her thoughts were in disarray.

Xu Meng smiled through her tears and nodded repeatedly, "Good boy, good boy. You share your father's features, but you are even more handsome than he is."

Jiang Feng chuckled foolishly. "But of course! He is my son, isn't he? Meng'er, you may not know this, but our son is not inferior to... to... he's not inferior in the slightest..."

The man looked at Xu Qingxuan with eyes filled with fatherly love. Xu Meng finally realized something and beckoned her daughter to come closer. "Xuan'er, what are you waiting for? Come and pay your respects to your father!"

Xu Qingxuan wasn't heartless. Looking embarrassed, she walked closer towards them before kneeling. "Father, I've been jealous of you for the longest time, you know? Mother misses you every day. But it's all worth it to see how happy she is today."

"Haha, good, good! It didn't occur even in my dreams that I, Jiang Feng, would have such an amazing son and daughter. Meng'er, everything we've endured until now is worth it. Chen'er, you are your sister's elder brother. You better take good care of her from here on out, you hear?" Jiang Feng said.

Jiang Chen smiled slightly. "I don't know, father. My sister is the holy maiden, so maybe she is the one who should be taking care of me."

Xu Qingxuan snorted softly. "You're a smooth talker, I see. You want me to call you my brother? Well, don't say I didn't give you a chance. Beat me at something and I'll do that without qualms."

He smiled. "Of course. But how should we compete?"

"Don't you even think about pill battles. Let's compete in martial dao!" Xu Qingxuan knew that there was no way she could beat her stinky brother in pill dao.

Xu Meng put on a straight face and chided. "Xuan'er, stop it. How can you talk to your brother like this?"

Xu Qingxuan giggled. "Oh mother, it's only been minutes since you've seen your son and you're playing favorites already! Hmph, I don't care. He must beat me first if he wants me to call him brother. Otherwise, I'll add the word 'stinky' and call him 'stinky brother' every time we see each other!"

Xu Meng looked a bit embarrassed as she looked at Jiang Feng. "My dearest Feng, I'm sorry. I think I spoiled Xuan'er too much. She's not a bad person, but she can be pretty sharp tongued sometimes."

Jiang Feng laughed loudly. "She's a girl, isn't she? It won't do if she doesn't have a bit of a temper. Chen'er, you better work hard to earn your status, you hear? It won't be easy to be Qingxuan's brother."

Xu Meng rolled her eyes at Jiang Feng. "What kind of father are you? Stop sowing discord between our children!"

Jiang Feng couldn't stop smiling. "I'm just kidding, Chen'er. You have nothing to be worried about at all. Sure, Xuan'er is a holy maiden, but Chen'er is no small fry himself. Do you know that Chen'er has a



second identity? He's Pill King Zhen, also known as the young lord of Sacred Peafowl Mountain, Veluriyam Capital."

"What?" This time Xu Qingxuan was completely stunned. "What did you just say, father?"

Jiang Feng rubbed his own nose. "Well Chen'er, please explain things to your sister, will you?" He threw the responsibility to his son.

Jiang Chen smiled wryly. "It's a long story, and I still need to keep this identity a secret. I had to do something in Pillfire City earlier, and Veluriyam Capital and Pillfire City are sworn enemies. That's why I disguised myself as Shao Yuan now." "Are you really Pill King Zhen?" Xu Meng cocked her head and stared at Jiang Chen. "Did my stinky brother really beat that Pill King Ji Lang?"

"Your one and only," Jiang Chen joked. He didn't put on airs. He briefly explained his experiences, with a white lie that the reason he possessed his extraordinary talents today were all thanks to his non-existent "teacher".

A story made up of half-truths and half-lies was generally more interesting than the truth itself. Xu Qingxuan was quickly absorbed in Jiang Chen's legendary tale.

"Brother, you mentioned that a mysterious old man had taught you your martial dao and pill dao, right? Did he come from Myriad Abyss Island? Does Myriad Abyss Island really exist in this world?"

"It does. It definitely exists." This was one thing Jiang Chen could ascertain because Huang'er herself came from Myriad Abyss Island.

A hint of fascination passed through Xu Qingxuan's clear eyes. "It would be worth all the hardships of cultivation if I can visit that mysterious place one day."

Jiang Chen smiled. "Don't worry, you'll definitely be able to go there one day."

"Really? Did you teacher promise to bring you there, brother?" The light of expectation appeared in Xu Qingxuan's pupils.

"We don't need his help. We can go there ourselves when our strength reaches a certain level. There are no place in the world that's inaccessible if you have enough strength."

Before Xu Qingxuan knew it, she was starting to address Jiang Chen willingly as her brother.

Xu Meng was very gratified to see how excellent her son had turned out. She looked at her daughter. "Xuan'er, from today onwards, you are to remember that your surname is Jiang. The name I gave you at your birth, is Jiang Xuan."

However, Jiang Feng remarked, "Names are unimportant, we are. There is no need to be hasty, Meng'er. Xuan'er is still a holy maiden of Moon God Sect, and it isn't something we can change immediately."

Jiang Chen agreed with his father's sentiment. "Mother, for now sister's name is among the lower priority. Incidentally, would you happen to know where our younger brother is?"

Xu Meng's eyes brimmed with infinite sadness once more. It was one of the wounds she suffered during her miserable life, and one that wasn't healed just yet.

## Chapter 1128: Homeward

Xu Qingxuan quickly interjected when she saw her mother's heartbroken figure. "Stop asking mother about our younger brother. When the sect expelled him, mother was under house arrest and didn't get to see him off. She wasn't allowed to have any form of contact with him at all..."

Therefore, nobody had any leads on his whereabouts.

"Meng'er, could the Moon God Sect have... expelled him from their territory and sent someone to secretly..." Jiang Feng suddenly added.

Xu Meng immediately shook her head. "The sect is definitely capable of such acts if there are no possible repercussions, but they didn't resort to such measures because of Xuan'er. They didn't want her to hold a grudge against them. That loss would outweigh the gain. It's also why I was never harmed even though they slandered me and put me under house arrest for so many years."

"I see. That's good to hear." Jiang Feng bore great hatred for the Moon God Sect, but it wasn't appropriate for him to spew hatred against the sect as his daughter was a holy maiden.

"As long as my younger brother is alive, we'll find him one day. I assure you." Jiang Chen said convincingly. He was extremely resolute. His family of five would one day be complete without a single missing member.

The family spent the rest of the day in great harmony after their reunion. Xu Meng was worried at first that her daughter might kick up a fuss or do something out of character, but that didn't happen. Her daughter was very sensible. They stayed indoors for three whole days to enjoy this hard-earned familial bliss. They didn't even take a single step out of the first division.

"Mother, I promised master that I would leave for only three days. Will you be... going with father to Veluriyam Capital?" Xu Qingxuan knew that she'd have to ask this sooner or later.

Xu Meng was hesitant. If it were up to her, she'd definitely choose to always follow her husband instead of staying in a forsaken place like the Moon God Sect. But what of her daughter if she left like this? She loved her daughter just as much as she loved her husband and son.

Jiang Feng smiled as he held Xu Meng's hand. "Meng'er, Jiang Chen and I have already discussed this. We will return to the Capital first, while you and Xuan'er return to the sect."

Xu Meng was taken aback. She thought that her husband would insist on taking her away.

"Father, you should take mother with you. The sect will not punish me too harshly. A little bit of punishment is nothing for my parents' sake." Xu Qingxuan was determined.

"If we take mother with us right now, that would be eloping. It'd be dishonorable to mother and puts you in a difficult situation. Father doesn't want to elope with mother like a good-for-nothing. One day, father and I will come to the sect and openly ask for her. Nobody will be able to or dare hinder us then!" Jiang Chen was even more steadfast. His voice was filled with sway and dominance.

Jiang Feng nodded. "Meng'er, this is a promise from Chen'er and I. The day will not be too far away. We have to protect your reputation and prevent Xuan'er from getting dragged in. We must do this in an upright and honorable manner so that we may come together openly as a family again."

Xu Meng didn't want to be separated from her husband again, but she was sensible enough to understand that if she insisted on leaving with her husband, it would negatively affect her daughter and cause an enormous mess in the grander scheme of things. It wasn't time to show their cards yet. Jiang Chen still couldn't afford to reveal his identity as there was no guarantee that the Moon God Sect would yield just a young lord of Sacred Peafowl Mountain.

Once his identity was exposed, Pillfire City would absolutely try to hunt him down madly during his journey back to the capital. Moreover, Pillfire City was the first place he'd have to pass through on his way back.

Xu Meng couldn't bear to be separated. Tears dotted her face as she bid farewell. In spite of that, she was in a much better mood this time compared to thirty years ago. After all, they were only parting today for the sake of a better tomorrow.

Jiang Chen was also a little depressed after he sent his mother and sister off. He'd made such a decision due to the lack of a better choice. As a son, he didn't want to see his parents apart from each other. But due to various complications, they had no choice but to bide their time for now. But he didn't intend to sit idly by and wait. He was going to pick up the pace and reunite his entire family within five years at the latest.

Emperor Peerless also knew about Jiang Chen's family situation. He offered words of comfort when he saw how depressed Jiang Chen was. "Little brother, I don't know how to console you, but if you need my help, all you need to do is ask. I'll invite every eminent wanderer in the cultivation world and we'll pressure the Moon God Sect together!"

The emperor's words lifted Jiang Chen's spirits. "Old Brother Mo, don't worry. A small matter like this doesn't need such drastic actions. This trip has left me with few regrets. I've found both my parents and now they know about each other's existence. I only have a small small regret left, but I'll soon find a way to fix it. Old Brother Mo, you must be getting anxious after so many years of waiting. Tomorrow, we shall journey back to Veluriyam Capital!"

Third Master Jing was depressed when he heard that they were leaving. If possible, he'd rather have them stay permanently in Frostmoon City, but that wasn't realistic. He didn't know for certain who Jiang Chen was, but he had a few hunches. All he knew was that Brother Shao definitely had an extraordinary background. Otherwise, there was no way Emperor Peerless would willingly be the young man's henchman.

At the beginning, Jiang Chen's impression of Third Master Jing was so rotten that he'd almost killed the man. But as time went on, they slowly became friends.

"Old Third, I once considered you an enemy, but now I think we can say that we're friends. I'll spare you the common courtesies. Holy Maiden Qing Xuan will keep an eye on your matters from now on." Jiang Chen turned to face Captain Gu. "Captain Gu, you are now Emperor Peerless' foster son. Nobody in the Moon God Sect will give you trouble anymore. However, you should become more sociable and open, make more friends. It'll only benefit you."

Gu Xintang listened to Jiang Chen's advice intently and nodded with affirmation as he'd also realized that Sir Shao was the true leader of the group. Even his foster father followed his lead and acted according to his wishes.

"If you face any problems, seek out Holy Maiden Qing Xuan." Jiang Chen advised once again.

Third Master Jing and Gu Xintang had both contributed a lot to the family's reunion. Since they were both of the Blues, it was a given that they'd seek Holy Maiden Qingxuan's help. She'd also help them because of their involvement in her parent's matters. After that, Jiang Chen handed a single Pinecrane Pill to both of them.

"These pills are for you. Remember, you mustn't show it to anyone or you'll bring doom down upon yourselves. I won't tell you the name of the pill as neither of you need to use it for now. If you're still in the emperor realm after a few thousand years and your lifespan is at its end, you may consume the pill and extend your lifespan by at least thousand more years."

A pill that extended an emperor cultivator's life by a thousand years? Complicated expressions crossed Gu Xintang and Third Master Jing's faces. Their breathing grew more rapid as well.

"You heard that right. Emperor realm, not sage realm. Remember, you have to keep it a secret, or else..." Jiang Chen patted their shoulders without finishing his sentence.

"Mm." Third Master Jing and Gu Xintang nodded. They'd realized the pill's value. There was a similar pill called the Longevity Pill for the sage realm. It'd taken the martial dao world by storm in recent years. However, nobody had ever heard of a similar pill for the emperor realm. This was truly an eye-opener. They never imagined that there'd be one for emperors too! It was a priceless pill that no amount of money could possibly buy.

"Don't look down on this pill. It isn't something that can be mass produced. It's completely different from the Longevity Pill. The raw ingredients for this pill are already worth a million times more than the Longevity Pill. It's also extremely difficult to obtain. There's only a few of these in the world."

Both now understood just how precious the pill was. To put in into simpler terms, it was a lifesaving pill. Jiang Chen didn't say anything else. He waved them goodbye and left immediately after.

Their group consisted of Emperor Peerless and his wife, Jiang Chen, his father, and also Liu Zhen. There was only five in the group, but the cultivation differences between them couldn't be any greater. Long Xiaoxuan couldn't be bothered to travel such long distances, so he hid himself on Jiang Chen's body and continued to loaf around. Their group had a very interesting lineup.

Liu Zhen was the weakest amongst them, but that didn't affect his status in the group. Jiang Chen was rather kind to him, while Jiang Feng didn't neglect his brother just because he'd reunited with his son. He showed Liu Zhen a lot of care throughout the journey.

Liu Zhen was in a very complicated mood all along. He was excited but also deeply moved. If he hadn't insisted on saving Jiang Feng, his life would likely be vastly different right now. He'd have to spend the rest of life in self-blame and would never be acquainted with eminent figures like Emperor Peerless and Jiang Chen. He was completely overwhelmed.

They arrived in Pillfire City territory after leaving the Tilted Moon Region. Jiang Chen had no business in the city, so he led the group right across the territory. After a month, they arrived at the heartland of the Upper Eight Regions. They were right between Pillfire City and Veluriyam Capital.

“Old Brother Mo, this should be the Great Yu Upper Region where the Great Yu Skysword Sect is located, right? I accepted money from the sect, but I’ve yet to refine the pill they requested. Why don’t we stop by their sect for a moment? It won’t take more a week before we can depart again.” Jiang Chen wasn’t the sort to break his promises.

The emperor was in a light mood. His dao partner’s injuries had been stabilized. The only issue that remained was the root of her injuries. He naturally wouldn’t mind one or two small detours. He chuckled.

“We shall go wherever you want to go. The Skysword Sect is one of the most famous sects in the Upper Eight Regions. A short visit would be interesting.”

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Elder Lu of the Great Yu Skysword Sect was under a lot of stress lately. He’d already paid the bounty, yet the Ancient Reformation Pill was still nowhere to be seen. He was contemplating if he should request a refund from the Temple of Cleansing Fire and get them to hunt down the scammer by name of Shao Yuan. However, Pill King Shao Yuan suddenly arrived at the Great Yu Skysword Sect on this day. The smoldering fire of anxiety within Elder Lu’s heart was instantly extinguished upon news of his arrival.

#### Chapter 1129: Great Yu Skysword Sect

The Great Yu Skysword Sect was firmly top three amongst all first rank sects. It was singular in its pursuit of sword dao, and made mighty because of it. The entire sect acted with a uniform style of efficiency and sharpness. Jiang Chen was happier to deal with sects like these. They tended to lack plots and stratagems as there was little to worry about in terms of curveballs.

The ceremony that greeted his arrival was stately and grand. Understandably so, for the Ancient Reformation Pill was a burning need for them.

“Haha, I didn’t expect Brother Mo to have come with Sir Shao Yuan. We are truly honored to receive you both.” The person responsible for their reception was, surprisingly, the sect’s third sword emperor and great emperor, Han Qiansui. He was also the clan brother of the Great Yu Skysword Sect’s leading great emperor, Han Qianzhan.

Both Qianzhan and Qiansui were outstanding geniuses of the sphere, representatives of the pinnacle of sword dao prowess. They served as the sect’s pillars and cornerstones. And so, Emperor Peerless’s acquaintance with the man was completely understandable.

“Brother Qiansui.” He laughed. “it has been at least several centuries since our last meeting. How is your older brother, Qianzhan? Not coming out to receive an old friend is a little ill-mannered, no?”

His words revealed a familiarity with multiple leaders of the sect and his behavior was more casual because of it.

"My brother has entered sealed door cultivation for many years now." Han Qiansui smiled in kind. "Unfortunately, only I am available to welcome you two this time." [1]

"Well, never mind." Emperor Peerless waved a hand. "I was hoping for another chance to see his face. The sealing of his doors is an unforeseen damper on things. Shame, maybe next time."

Han Qiansui nodded, then saluted Jiang Chen with a cupped fist. "I have long heard your name, Sir Shao. Our humble Skysword Sect has waited many moons for your eventual arrival."

"It's my fault," Jiang Chen coughed apologetically. "My personal affairs regretfully held me up."

Han Qiansui was a little surprised at the youth's mildness. He'd expected a much more intolerable temper from the exceptionally young and adept genius. Why else would he have delayed his trip so? But it seemed that his guess missed the mark by a mile.

"Are the materials all ready?" Jiang Chen asked.

"Yes, absolutely." Han Qiansui affirmed. "Do you need additional preparations, Sir Shao? Do you need to select an auspicious day, perhaps?"

"I'm just refining some pills, right?" Jiang Chen burst out in laughter. "No need to be so particular about everything. If the materials ready, then you can take me to them now."

"Now?" Han Qiansui smiled wryly. "We're in a bit of a rush, but we can easily spare a few bits of time here and there. It's late in the day. Let us enjoy a refreshing evening and rest to conserve our strength. We can begin tomorrow."

Jiang Chen was happy enough to listen to the arrangements of his hosts.

"Then let it be as you wish, Sect Head Qiansui." There was little difference whether he began today or tomorrow. The Ancient Reformation Pill was a difficult one, but Jiang Chen was supremely confident in his own skill. Three days if he was lucky, five to seven if not.

During the welcome meal, Han Qiansui marveled at the fact that Jiang Chen and Emperor Peerless treated as Jiang Feng and Liu Zhen as equals, despite their differences in strength and position. He was clever enough, however, to avoid probing them on the subject or even pointing it out. He merely treated the entire party with equal politeness and no preferential treatment. Jiang Feng and Liu Zhen were given the same respect accorded to their companions.

Jiang Feng's emotions were a bit stirred up, but as he was ultimately benefiting from the ability of his son, he didn't consider it too closely. Liu Zhen, on the other hand, was almost brought to tears by the scene. He was being given the chance to publicly dine in the company of great emperors! He'd never imagined that he could one day sit together with experts of such caliber. They were even toasting to him. He was close to being hysterical. For this, his entire life had all been worth it.

The night passed merrily.

Waking up the next day, Jiang Chen was personally led into the pill room by Han Qiansui. Every kind of material was prepared for him, with plenty of each kind to spare.

"Sir Shao, do you need some other pill kings to help you out? Do you have any other special needs?"

"The bounty mission from before," Jiang Chen smiled, brushing past the question, "mentioned both the pill and the recipe. I'll get you the recipe in a bit."

Han Qiansui was overjoyed. "Very good, Sir Shao. You are a man of your word. Then, I'll wait outside for your good news."

Refining pills was Jiang Chen's original line of work and expertise. But even so, he didn't appreciate strangers' observation and participation. After all, many methods that he used during the process would only scare and alarm others. Therefore, it was better to avoid having any kind of an audience in the room during the refining phase.

The Ancient Reformation Pill was a pill with incredible effects. One could almost say magical. Its materials were prohibitively expensive. From this, the Skysword Sect's wealth and endowment was palpable. The pill had also existed since ancient times. Experts back then used them to reform their physical bodies when said bodies crumbled. It was a sort of miracle pill.

Jiang Chen examined each and every material carefully to make sure they were untampered and sound. Only after that did he began to heat up his cauldron.

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Three days went by, resulting in the successful refinement of a cauldron of Ancient Reformation Pills. Jiang Chen received a little more than he'd expected with four pills being refined. He stashed three of them unceremoniously into his own bags and put the remaining pill into a pill bottle, then recovered his breath and stamina before leaving the room.

Han Qiansui had been waiting outside quite a while. Anticipation was written all over his face and a sliver of unease as well.

"How did you do, Sir Shao?" He gulped down a mouthful of saliva.

Jiang Chen casually tossed up the pill bottle in hand. "Congratulations, Sect Head Qiansui. I did just as I promised. Here is the Ancient Reformation Pill you wanted." He took out a corresponding pill recipe as well. "Here's the complete recipe. Please take it for safekeeping."

Han Qiansui was overjoyed. He snatched the bottle and recipe out of Jiang Chen's hands excitedly. "You perform miracles everywhere you go, Sir Shao. I've just received news about you from the Tilted Moon Region. Countless pill kings couldn't find the problem with the Moon God Sect's Precious Tree, but you solved it in the blink of an eye. You are a true master!"

It had been a month or two since Jiang Chen's diagnosis of that tree. It was unsurprising that news would've spread here by now.

"How is the Moon God Precious Tree doing, nowadays?" Jiang Chen asked, curious.

"I hear that it's been restored to its former vigor. Because of it, your fame is being spread far and wide across the Upper Eight Regions' northern reaches."

"Undeserved," Jiang Chen smiled. "I was just a bit luckier than the rest."

"No, no, no. It wasn't just luck. You are a pill dao legend for sure, Sir Shao. Nobody can deny that. It's widely held public opinion that you are definitely above a pill king. You could easily be crowned a pill emperor. Even the emperors who live secluded lives can't deny this."

Having the Ancient Reformation Pill finally in his hands thrilled Han Qiansui. His admiration for Jiang Chen was heartfelt. Anyone else who received such praise would be uncontrollably ecstatic, but Jiang Chen was mostly unaffected. 'Easily be crowned a pill emperor'? Pshaw. Sheer vanity and air.

Jiang Chen's true ability was much greater than that. He was one of the best at pill dao in the heavenly planes, how was he be a mere pill emperor? Pill emperors weren't worthy to be his pageboys in fetching firewood!

"Sect Head Qiansui, I'm glad to have done my part. I think it's time for me to depart."

"Sir Shao, you are in too much of a hurry," Han Qiansui urged. "You have done us a great favor, and we must be a proper host for you. Please, stay a few more days and let us entertain you. There's no need to be shy."

The Skysword Sect was direct in all their dealings. They found it disconcerting to be unable to repay their debts. Jiang Chen was a bit embarrassed.

"Sect Head Qiansui, you're making me all flustered. I mostly refined the pill for the bounty attached."

"The bounty means nothing," Han Qiansui shook his head. "The mission wouldn't have been left untaken for eight hundred years otherwise. In the end, it's your skill that's carried the day. You've done much better than those fame-chasing pill emperors could ever do. In my opinion, you're the best there is!"

"You speak too highly of me," Jiang Chen roared with laughter.

Regardless of how he tried to refuse, Han Qiansui's passion was unabated. Jiang Chen was asked again and again to stay for a few days. Helpless, he settled for agreeing to three more. Finally placated, Han Qiansui departed with joy on his face. Calling for a steward, he instructed the man to take good care of their guests.

The degree of hospitality that the Skysword Sect showed was indisputably great. The sect attached an enormous amount of importance to this batch of guests, the same that would be given to the heads of another first rank sect.

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In a certain secret realm deep within the sacred grounds of the Skysword Sect, a sealed door disappeared without warning. Han Qiansui's figure shot into the now-clear opening. His voice trembled when he reached the entrance of a specific abode. "Eldest brother, the heavens have taken pity on us. We finally have an Ancient Reformation Pill. It's been eight hundred years, and now you can finally see daylight once more!"

"Hmm?" A somewhat hoarse sound responded from within. "Qiansui, has the person that Elder Lu told me about finally come?"



“Yes, yes. I persuaded him many times before he finally acquiesced to staying three more days. Eldest brother, we of the Skysword Sect have a top-notch martial dao heritage in the Upper Eight Regions, but we’re missing a real meister of pills. If we can get Sir Shao to stay with us, then our advancement will know no bounds!” Han Qiansui had spent so much effort on keeping Jiang Chen around a bit longer for a very utilitarian reason. He wanted to make Jiang Chen’s acquaintance and ideally even recruit the pill king.

The hoarse voice from within the cavernous abode was the Skysword Sect’s sect head, Han Qianzhan. He had explored a secret realm about a thousand years ago. During his time there, a demonic poison had unexpectedly infected his body. It caused his flesh to begin to rot, and no matter what suppressive method he used, he could not stop the poison’s force.

As a great emperor, it was difficult for him to find a different body to take. That was why he’d announced his retirement into closed door cultivation, for which he should be undisturbed. He stayed like that for several centuries. Later on, Han Qiansui had then made a key discovery: the Ancient Reformation Pill, and its ability to reconstruct and reform bodies. That was why this Skysword Sect had looked for the pill at all costs.

#### Chapter 1130: The Great Yu Skysword Sects Hearty Invitation

Han Qianzhan rasped out again. “Qiansui, let me try out the Reformation Pill first.”

Qiansui sent the Reformation Pill behind the doors. “Big brother, I’ll wait for you outside. I heard that this Reformation Pill is of exquisite workmanship, so it should take effect immediately.”

Han Qianzhan responded with a grunt of acknowledgement. He was consuming the pill already.

As Han Qiansui waited for his older brother outside, every second felt like an eternity to him. They had gotten the Ancient Reformation Pill alright, so all that was left was to see how effective it was. If the pill was really effective, his older brother would be able to recover his strength. This meant that the situation in the sect could be completely stabilized. If they could persuade Sir Shao to join their sect after that, their sect would more than double in strength. Nothing could stop their rise then!

Time passed by slowly.

A loud, exuberant roar suddenly blasted out of the cave, which was followed by a carefree laugh.

“Hahaha, Qiansui, this Reformation Pill truly is as amazing as you say. The effects are immediate!” Han Qianzhan shot forth from the cave. His naked, reformed body was completely exposed beneath the sun, and he looked like a primitive barbarian because of it. His muscles rippled with explosive strength and his body looked like it’d been cast of iron. He presented an absolutely perfect sight.

“Big brother, your clothes.” Han Qiansui hurriedly tossed a set of clothes to his older brother.

“Give me a minute!” Han Qianzhan roared with laughter again. He took leaping strides towards a lake and flung himself into the water.

“Let me wash away these years of bad luck first. Qiansui, you did very well this time! I’ll thank you well in the future.” Han Qiansui brimmed with excitement. The past several hundred years had been the lowest point of his life. At his worst, he’d practically been a bag of bones barely held together by a sack

of rotting skin. Anyone who saw him would've thought that he was a demon. However, that was all in the past now. Han Qianzhan had returned to the world!

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"What? Sect Head Qianzhan wishes to hold a banquet for me?" Jiang Chen's mind whirled with Han Qiansui's message. He highly doubted that Han Qianzhan would exit his seclusion just to treat a pill king.

"That's right. My elder brother is extremely impressed by your talents, Sir Shao. Please, you simply must attend." Han Qiansui was very sincere.

Although Jiang Chen didn't know why Han Qianzhan had suddenly exited his sealed door cultivation, he had no reason to turn down the invitation.

"If Sect Head Qianzhan so insists, then I will respectfully accept this invitation." He nodded on the spot.

News of Han Qianzhan exiting his seclusion shocked the entire Skyword Sect. After all, no one had seen Sect Head Qianzhan for a very, very long time. Some of the disciples who'd joined the sect later didn't even know what the sect head looked like. All they knew was that the Great Yu Skysword Sect had a great emperor called Sect Head Qianzhan, and he was indisputably the strongest sect head and great emperor to ever exist in sect history.

Emperor Peerless was a little surprised by this invitation as well. Han Qiansui had just treated them, and now his elder brother wanted to do the same? Something else is in play here. Still, he knew that Skysword Sect wasn't a dishonest or ungrateful sect. So, he agreed to go as well.

Jiang Feng discussed this with Liu Zhen for a bit. In the end, they decided against attending the feast. They felt that their strength was too low, and they were certain to feel pressure if they came face to face with the senior executives, especially Sect Head Qian Zhan, of the Skysword Sect. Unlike last time, Han Qiansui wouldn't be the only person who was attending. It seemed that every senior executive in Skysword Sect would be present as well.

Madame Yun also turned down the invitation saying that she wasn't feeling well enough. In the end, Jiang Chen and Emperor Peerless were the only ones who came to the feast.

When Jiang Chen finally saw the legendary sect head of Skysword Sect, a bit of surprise grew in him. It wasn't Han Qianzhan's cultivation that sparked this emotion, but the man's body. Emperor Peerless was unaware of the signs because he had never come into contact with the Ancient Reformation Pill, but Jiang Chen was the refiner of this pill. Han Qianzhan's body was extremely strong and had a prowling vitality to it. These were obvious signs of consuming the Ancient Reformation Pill. However, Jiang Chen didn't point this out. The sect must have their own reasons for keeping this a secret, so he had no intentions of exposing this and souring the atmosphere.

Han Qianzhan treated them passionately and generously during the feast. He called Emperor Peerless a brother and treated Jiang Chen with great courtesy. However, he didn't mention anything else except his thanks during the feast. Even when they were chatting about nothing in particular, he only recounted some interesting stories of the world. Naturally, the story they focused the most on was Jiang Chen's inhuman performance at the Moon God Sect.

“Do you know that you’re famous in the entire Upper Eight Regions, Sir Shao? One man is extremely angry because of this.” Han Qiansui suddenly chuckled.

“Who?” Jiang Chen was slightly taken aback.

“Pill King Ji Lang of Pillfire City, of course.” Han Qiansui sighed softly. “It’s rumored that you went to the Moon God Sect right after Pill King Ji Lang and the other pill kings departed. You weren’t separated by more than half a day. Pill King Ji Lang failed to find anything wrong with the tree, but you found the root of its sickness in no time at all. As a result, Pill King Ji Lang is deeply humiliated by your success. The cherry on top is that Pill King Blue Phoenix can’t stop singing your praises when he heard that you were the one who cured the Moon God Precious Tree.”

“I hear that Pill King Blue Phoenix is the one who recommended Sir Shao in the first place.” An esteemed elder smiled. “A person who is both talented and popular like you is hard to come by. Come, allow me to offer you a toast, Sir Shao!”

“You shower me with too much praise.” Jiang Chen smiled and drank the toast.

Han Qiansui sighed. “The fact that Pill King Blue Phoenix’s recommendation came out ahead only serves to humiliate Pill King Ji Lang further. That’s why the latter has a lot to complain about Pill King Blue Phoenix right now. I heard he’s declared that he will take out Pill King Blue Phoenix, and you all know how hot tempered Pill King Blue Phoenix is. I’m almost certain that great drama is right around the corner of Pillfire City.”

When Jiang Chen recalled Pill King Blue Phoenix, he couldn’t help but feel a bit concerned. “Pill King Blue Phoenix is a senior of virtue and prestige. Pill King Ji Lang couldn’t possibly attack him directly no matter how much hatred is there, right?”

“Ai, who knows? That being said, Pill King Blue Phoenix is a veteran representative of Pillfire City and sits very high up on the totem pole. If Pill King Ji Lang really tries to harm him, he may very well provoke the ire of every other veteran pill king in Pillfire City. I doubt that even Emperor Pillzenith’s successor can do as he wishes in this matter.”

“Say, speaking of Pill King Ji Lang, don’t you think he’s a bit unlucky as of late? He is exceedingly talented and full of mettle, but for some reason this former ‘invincible’ legend has suffered two losses in a row for the past few years, although his second loss was purely accidental. Sir Shao just happened to be at the wrong place at the wrong time.”

Truthfully, Jiang Chen fostered no goodwill towards Pill King Ji Lang. His only impression of the pill king was that of an overly arrogant person who was too fond of pretending.

“It doesn’t matter. I’m just doing what I’m supposed to be doing. Pill King Ji Lang’s feelings are none of my concern.” Jiang Chen raised his cup. “Let’s talk about something else, shall we? Let’s drink some more!”

“Yeah, let’s drink!” The feast only ended when everyone had enjoyed it to their heart’s content.

“Please stay behind for a little longer, Sir Shao. My older brother would like to discuss something with you in private.” Han Qiansui whispered to Jiang Chen at the end.

"Sir Shao, I have some amazing tea leaves at my place." The sect head walked over with a smile. "Would you like to taste them? It should neutralize the wine in our bellies a bit."

Jiang Chen agreed immediately because he knew that Han Qianzhan must have something to say to him. "In that case, allow me to impose on you both a little longer. How about you, Old Brother Mo?"

"I'm coming too. Brother Qianzhan, am I invited too?" Emperor Peerless chuckled.

"Of course you are! In fact, I would be offended if you didn't ask." Han Qianzhan laughed heartily.

Inside a private room, Han Qianzhan raised his cup after tea was served.

"Sir Shao, I've never been a person to beat around the bush, so allow me to thank you for your Ancient Reformation Pill. Without it, I would still be stuck in a dark and lightless residence and afraid to show anyone my face."

"Hmm?" Jiang Chen was startled. He didn't think that Han Qianzhan would reveal this of his own accord.

"It is a long story. Back then, I..." Han Qianzhan summarized his close call all those years ago. Traces of lingering fear flitted through his face when he talked about the demonic poison that plagued him before.

Jiang Chen hurriedly walked forwards and put a hand to Han Qianzhan's hand, feeling his pulse. Jiang Chen nodded a while later. "Thankfully, the demonic poison was flushed out completely after your body was constructed. Congratulations, Sect Head Qianzhan."

Han Qianzhan clasped his hands together in thanks. "It's all thanks to your miraculous pill, Sir Shao. You saved my life."

"You praise me too highly, Sect Head Qianzhan," Jiang Chen responded hurriedly.

However, Emperor Peerless interrupted with a smile. "There's no need to be humble, brother. Brother Qianzhan is not a person who speaks carelessly. When he does, it's truth that comes from the bottom of his heart. I would've died too if you hadn't saved me. We owe you one, and it's nothing we feel ashamed about."

"Oh? Were you saved by Brother Shao as well, Brother Mo?" Han Qianzhan looked slightly surprised. At his side, Han Qiansui shared the same feeling. They realized that this must be the reason why Emperor Peerless always followed Sir Shao's words.

Emperor Peerless briefly relayed when he and Madame Yun had been schemed against by a friend.

"Sir Shao is truly amazing. We are right to call you a miracle worker!" The Han brothers praised after the story.

Emperor Peerless waved his hands. "Brother Qianzhan, surely you haven't treated us to a feast and invited us here for a simple expression of thanks, have you? Let us be frank with each other. There are no outsiders here."

Han Qianzhan laughed in response. "You are just as forthright as you are before, Brother Mo! In that case, I won't beat around the bush any longer. I am extremely impressed by Sir Shao's pill dao talents,

and I wish to invite Sir Shao to join the Skysword Sect. Would you like to create something big with us, Sir Shao?"

Both Jiang Chen and Emperor Peerless were stunned by this. An invitation to join Skysword Sect. My word... Both men smiled wryly in response.

"Brother Qianzhan, you are a forthright person, so I'll be forthright with you as well. Unfortunately, there is no way my brother will, or can, join the Skysword Sect." Emperor Peerless responded directly.

"Could we ask why?" Both Han brothers were a little disappointed.

"I should tell you the reason myself, sect heads." Jiang Chen sighed with helpless smile. "I'm deeply grateful for your invitation, but my real name isn't Shao Yuan. I'm Pill King Zhen of Veluriyam Capital and the young lord of Sacred Peafowl Mountain. So, you can imagine how Emperor Peafowl would react if I were to join you."