

Three Realms 141

Chapter 141: The Wishing Tower

The Wishing Tower was located on the west side of the Skylaurel Kingdom. This side had always been one of the most bustling areas of the capital.

The Wishing Tower was indeed a tower, and was also one of the sacred places of the Skylaurel Kingdom.

The Wishing Tower would always be quite lively every year during holidays, especially during the Mid Autumn Festival. The Wishing Tower was thronged with people then. In the Skylaurel Kingdom, the laurel tree was the national tree and it had much to do with the Mid Autumn Festival.

Laurel trees had been planted in abundance around the Wishing Tower, and the laurel flowers had already bloomed and were exuding a faint fragrance that wafted through the air for ten li.

The Mid Autumn Festival was almost here, and the half month before and after this time was the most happening, most interesting, part of the year for the Wishing Tower.

Jiang Chen finally understood what the Wishing Tower was all about, after asking around.

It turned out that the Wishing Tower was a ceremony that had been passed down in the Skylaurel Kingdom for a thousand years. Anyone from the royal family, to the most impoverished citizens, could place their unresolvable wishes in the Wishing Tower.

A reward would be promised for every wish.

Whoever helped materialize this wish would receive that reward. Of course, every wish placed into the Wishing Tower would be strictly reviewed to ensure that it deserved the corresponding reward.

The Wishing Tower was open once a month.

But during the Mid Autumn Festival, it would be continuously opened for half a month, and the levels which were open would be very high.

There were sixteen levels in total for the Wishing Tower.

On an ordinary day, dependent on the month, the Tower would be opened up to the sixth level, with the eighth level being open at the highest.

During the new year, the Tower would normally be opened to the tenth level, or even the twelfth level.

The Tower would be opened everyday during the month of Mid Autumn, with the highest level being the tenth, eleventh, twelfth, and even higher levels being opened.

Even the sixteenth level would be opened on Mid Autumn's day.

Of course, no one had ever been up to the sixteenth level. No one was even sure if there were any wishing scrolls on the sixteenth level.

Even if there were, that would be a wish that stretched up to the heavens, with basically no one able to resolve it. It was all abstract representation at that level.

If you handed in a wish scroll to the Wishing Tower, you needed to pay a fee. However, the fee wasn't high, and wishes could be handed in everyday with no restrictions.

If you wished to select a wish scroll, you'd have to wait until the Wishing Tower was open for business.

Today for instance, was an opening day with the advent of Mid Autumn's day, and the scene was quite animated and stirred up.

Of course, it wasn't just anyone who could select a wish scroll. Fees had to be handed in for selecting a scroll, and were much higher than those for handing in a wish scroll.

Ten silver had to be forked over for entering the first level.

Twenty silver for the second.

Fifty silver for the third.

A hundred for the fourth.

The fifth...

Ten thousand silver for the tenth level, with it becoming even more expensive as the level increased.

One had to say, the Wishing Tower was very interesting, but also very pricey.

"Who thought of the Wishing Tower? This is a furious accumulation of wealth by unfair means!" Qiao Baishi sighed in appreciation.

A sea and mountain of those who wanted to go in and select scrolls had formed in front of the Wishing Tower. It was apparent to see that the revenue from just one day of being open was astounding.

Qiao Baishi had always thought that the Hall of Healing made good money, but this Wishing Tower made even more, and made it quite easily to boot.

When the doors opened, the crowd surged forward with cries and yells, eager to send their money inside.

"Young master, let's go have a gander?" Qiao Baishi thought that with the honored master's temperament, he would be rather interested in this.

"Let's go and take a look."

Since Jiang Chen wanted to play, he naturally wouldn't consider anything below the tenth level. He took the direct path up, and arrived at the tenth level.

Ten thousand silver would allow you to select one wish scroll at the tenth level.

If you were unable to complete the scroll you selected, the ten thousand silver wouldn't be refunded.

Of course, if you were able to complete the wish, then the rate of return would be at least a hundred or a thousand times greater than this fee, or possibly even greater.

One had to say, there really were plenty of people with money in the Skylareland Kingdom. There were still quite a few people at the tenth level.

Banknotes worth tens of thousands of silver were continuously handed over.

Some even threw their lot in with one cast of the die, and handed over several tens of thousands of silver, buying a heap of scrolls, and then looking them over one by one in a corner.

These people were normally merchants and the big fish in the business world.

These kinds of people had money but low status in society. They were unable to receive any recognition, and couldn't make it into the upper class circles — they were completely unable to make it into the circle of nobility.

They were trying their luck in coming to the Wishing Tower, trying to see if any prominent character had handed in a wish here that they could help fulfill.

Of course, this possibility was quite low. Normally speaking, the higher level a wish was, the harder it was to fulfill it. If it was a mission that even high officials and noble lords couldn't fulfill, then these big fish in the business world likely had no hope of materializing them either.

Jiang Chen observed for a moment at the door to the tenth level and lifted his head to look up, "What's the highest level that's been opened today?"

"Greetings, the Wishing Tower is opened up to the twelfth level today."

Jiang Chen nodded, "Let's go to the twelfth level."

Jiang Chen wasn't short on money. Although he'd cooperated with the Hall of Healing for a short period of time, it had also helped him accumulate a lot of wealth.

The price of selecting a scroll in the twelfth level was already as high as fifty thousand silver.

"Honored guest, would you like to try your luck?" The administrator of the twelfth level greeted them quite courteously.

Jiang Chen took out a banknote for a hundred thousand silver. "Let's play for a round or two."

There were large banks within the alliance of the sixteen kingdoms and thus banknotes could be circulated between kingdoms. A note for a hundred thousand silver was enough for two scrolls on a twelfth level.

A sexy hostess led Jiang Chen and the others into the inner lobby.

The interior of the Wishing Tower was sumptuously furnished, with each level possessing its own unique character. The twelfth level of the Tower was simple and unsophisticated, boasting of an antique flavor that was permeated with a stately bearing.

Many racks were set up in the lobby. Different areas and different racks represented different wish origins.

There were scrolls from the government, the military, the four great sites, and all sorts of major agencies and organizations.

The wishes that were placed on the twelfth level were all of a very high level. Basically, any that could be fulfilled would bring astonishing rewards.

Jiang Chen had listened conscientiously along the way. He'd heard that someone had selected a wish and had received the status of a fifth rank noble from the identity of a commoner.

It wasn't that Jiang Chen valued the identity of a noble, but that within the Skylaurel Kingdom, particularly the capital, it was difficult to take even a single step without the status of a noble.

He didn't even have the right to purchase a manor, to speak of nothing else.

Take Tang Long for instance. He'd joined the military already and had become one of the border patrol Wyvern Knights. But he lacked the status of a noble, and thus could only stay within the slums.

This was the reality of the Skylaurel Kingdom.

Even if Jiang Chen viewed fortune and riches as dung and dirt, he was still unable to avoid this reality.

How should he obtain a noble's position in a short amount time? He was wholly uninterested in the status of a noble of the ninth or eighth rank.

He should at least obtain one of the fifth rank, if not third or fourth, right? Even if the fifth rank posed a bit of difficulty, then one of the sixth rank was his bottom line. He would have no interest in anything lower.

Jiang Chen would absolutely not select a scroll from the military. He was completely uninterested in matters of war. He'd already become weary of mobilizing the million strong Swordbird Army to fight the Darkmoon Army just once or twice. At the end of the day, the circumstances had called for such action.

He temporarily didn't want to have anything to do with the government.

Jiang Chen had gotten tired of matters of politics in the Eastern Kingdom. He knew that that was a minefield — that a slight move on one part might affect the whole.

If he intervened brashly, he would very possibly draw the fire onto himself. Although he wasn't afraid, he'd come to the Skylaurel Kingdom to develop himself, not to raise trouble.

What remained would be the four great sites, the great agencies, and the organization.

Although these powers didn't seem as impressive as the government or military, they actually secretly held the life of the kingdom in their hands.

Jiang Chen paced back and forth for a bit. These scrolls weren't divided up carefully, and thus it was impossible to know who had handed in which scrolls.

Jiang Chen selected two at random.

The contents of the first one made him laugh involuntarily.

It was obviously from a woman. Her wish was to always appear young, and hope to maintain the looks of a twenty to thirty year old for the next thirty years.

The origins of this scroll was an a Ning surnamed elder in the Azure Heaven Southern Palace.

The rewards of this scroll were indeed quite eye popping. If this wish could be fulfilled, he would directly become the elder's follower and receive the status of a sixth rank noble.

Jiang Chen sighed in resignation. This fifty thousand silver had been a fruitless endeavor. It wasn't impossible to appear young forever, and there were indeed many pills to retain youthful looks.

However, Jiang Chen had no desire to spend so much time and effort on a silly woman. He was about to throw the scroll back when he suddenly flicked a glance at Qiao Baishi at his side.

His hand pausing slightly, and he threw the scroll at Qiao Baishi. "Baishi, this may be suitable for you."

Jiang Chen had no time to concoct some pills for retaining looks, but Qiao Baishi had the time to.

Qiao Baishi took the scroll and also laughed wryly. "Young master, I know nothing of the art of looking young. Besides, being a follower for this elder, I can already imagine that she must be an excessively narcissistic bitter woman in the throes of early menopause. I think I'll pass?"

"Haha, you can avoid being a follower, but being a noble of the sixth rank is not bad."

Just as Jiang Chen had said, there was no benefit in being the follower of an elder. This kind of narcissistic female elder would also be very difficult to serve.

However, the status of a sixth rank noble had quite an allure. Quite a few number of people had come with Jiang Chen to the Skylaurel Kingdom this time.

They had to be settled somewhere.

The more noble identities they obtained, naturally the better. Approaching this from many venues, if this method didn't work, then perhaps another would.

The most important thing was to temporarily assure themselves of a noble's status so that they could establish a foothold within the capital.

They couldn't very well continue to live in hotels everyday.

Chapter 142: The Wish Scroll

Jiang Chen was also similarly stunned when he opened the second scroll.

He had thought that after reaching the twelfth level, the level of wishes within the Tower would be high end, high class, and grandiose.

He discovered that he'd been sadly naive.

The two scrolls that he'd selected had been enough to thoroughly destroy his illusions.

The first one was from some narcissistic female elder from the Azure Heaven Southern Palace who fantasized about retaining her youthful looks. That wish had been from a self-absorbed woman who was exceedingly sentimental about being youthful and beautiful.

The second wish scroll was actually from an alcoholic.

This person had once tasted a kind of wine somewhere called the Nine Magnificence Dew Wine. He'd only had a small bit, a mere half cup and had never tasted it again after traversing a thousand mountains and ten thousand bodies of water.

He'd reminisced over the taste of the wine continuously, and it nearly turned into an internal demon of his after decades.

Therefore, this wish scroll was to once again taste the Nine Magnificence Dew Wine and resolve his many years of yearning.

Anyone who could help him resolve this wish could find him at the Myriad Treasures Palace, and the identity of this wisher was actually a vice head of the Myriad Treasures Palace.

The reward that he'd promised was actually a middle to upper management position within the Myriad Treasures Palace and the bestowment of the identity of a fifth rank noble. These motions were even more generous and ostentatious than those of the female elder from the Azure Heaven Southern Palace.

The two wishes made Jiang Chen speechless beyond belief.

Women were born with a love for beauty and alcoholics a love for wine.

"What in the seven hells. All random things exist alright. I'd thought that on the twelfth level of the Wishing Tower, the wishes contained would all be quite high class. Geez, I was seriously too naive." Jiang Chen sighed.

Qiao Baishi and Gouyu were equally speechless when they saw the scroll.

They'd also discovered at the same time, that the lifestyles of those with power and those without were completely different in the capital of the Skylarell Kingdom.

Those who could issue such a boring wishes were undoubtedly those with exceedingly high amounts of power. They would certainly wield large amounts of resources in their hands and control an extremely strong level of influence.

Otherwise, they wouldn't portion out one of their appointments for nobles onto such a boring wish.

Even though this wasn't considered extremely extravagant, but the operating styles of the powerful and influential were truly on another level.

"Young master, how about we select a few more?" Qiao Baishi was also someone who wasn't short on money.

"Let's go with these two." Jiang Chen waved his hands. These two wishes were personal in nature, and thus a bit easier to fulfill in comparison to those that were embroiled in the conflicts between power and influence.

"These two?" Qiao Baishi was slightly startled. "But we..."

"It's just refining pills and making wine, that won't be a challenge for us." Jiang Chen stuck the two scrolls beneath his armpit and walked towards the front counter.

"Greetings sir, what can I do for you?" The receptionist at the front counter was also exceedingly polite. He spoke in soft tones that were quite pleasing to the ear.

"I can fulfill both of these wishes, is there a time limit?" Jiang Chen asked.

"Hello, there is theoretically no time limit, but naturally the faster the better as others may also select the same wish, giving rise to potential competition. When there is competition, whoever fulfills it first will receive the reward."

"That is to say that I can't take these scrolls with me?" Jiang Chen nodded.

"Yes, my apologies, but you cannot remove these scrolls. Please come back if you fulfill a wish. We will review it strictly through various extensive methods. Of this you can be rest assured of. The Wishing Tower is a tradition that we've passed down for a thousand years and have always maintained a standard so high that not even a drop of water could pass through. We've never ever had errors committed."

"Most excellent, then let's decide on these two wishes."

"Very good, I'll register them, please wait a moment." The various procedures were completed shortly.

"Sir, please store these documents away carefully, they will be your proof of validity later on. In addition, do you require any other services?"

Jiang Chen chuckled, "I'll take a look around."

In all matters, more than enough is too much. Jiang Chen naturally had much more advantage than the others in selecting wish scrolls, but if his performance was too heaven defying, it would attract much too much attention and that wouldn't lead to anything good.

He only wanted to obtain a noble's status to settle down within the capital. Making a name for himself could only come after his foundations had been laid firm.

Otherwise, if his reputation was too eye catching, it would attract the attentions from various sides and incur unnecessary trouble.

There were simply too many examples of shooting down the bird who takes the lead.

Jiang Chen had no desire to become the center of attention after arriving at a foreign environment and having not yet stabilized his foundations. Roasting himself on the rack brought no advantages to him.

After selecting his wish, Jiang Chen took a spin around the various levels of the Wishing Tower, deciding to leave after seeing increasingly greater amounts of people pour in.

They left the Wishing Tower with some difficulty. After Jiang Chen made it to the bottom of the tower and breathed in the refreshing, faint laurel fragrance in the fresh air, he sighed involuntarily, "To think that this country would be so fervent about the Wishing Tower!"

After being passed down through a thousand years, the Wishing Tower was no longer a simple location for fulfilling wishes. It was a type of heritage and a type of psychological support.

Just like many kingdoms celebrated the new year for a justified reason, this was a type of cultural inheritance.

Everyone from the monarch down to ordinary citizens were willing to be a part of this. This was also why the public was so enthusiastic when the Wishing Tower was opened.

After returning to the hotel, Jiang Chen locked himself in his room and took out brush and paper, putting down some sketches and words.

The millions of years of memories ingrained in him from his past life had encompassed almost all professions, with winemaking also one of the professions that he'd spent quite some time researching.

This was because many practitioners were very interested in the contents of a cup. The life of a practitioner was long and endless, and the long road of training sometimes passed by arduously.

Therefore, wine was naturally an item that practitioners could not do without.

Drinking wine, tasting wine, and appreciating wine were a particular affection shared by many practitioners.

But the most important thing was, many pill masters like to connect making wine and refining pills, perfectly combining the two types of art.

Infusing spirit medicine into wine would make the end product both satisfy a craving and have the effects of medicine.

Jiang Chen had conducted quite a bit of study in this regard in his past life.

He wasn't unfamiliar with the name of Nine Magnificence Dew Wine. In reality, this had been a wine that he'd oft created in his past life.

Except, the Nine Magnificence Dew Wine of his past life was naturally not something that the vice head of the Myriad Treasures Palace had the right to sip. The Nine Magnificence Dew Wine was divided into the common, spirit, saint, earth, and heaven ranks.

In Jiang Chen's past life, he'd studied the history of this wine quite a bit as well as all its ranks.

What he was curious about now was whether the vice head of the Myriad Treasures Palace had tasted the common rank or spirit rank of the wine?

It was naturally impossible for him to have tasted any greater.

Jiang Chen suspected that it was very likely the spirit rank. If it'd only been the common rank, it wouldn't have been enough for the vice head to yearn after constantly. He was a vice head after all, and wouldn't have such a limited breadth of experience.

The Nine Magnificence Dew Wine could be more accurately named as the Nineflower Dew Wine. The heart of this wine was combining the essence of nine flowers to create an exceedingly wondrous wine that was unforgettable after the first sip.

This type of wine had a unique fragrance, making it difficult for one to forget after one taste.

Jiang Chen could understand the sensation that the vice head had described, because the taste of the Nine Magnificence Dew Wine was truly very unique, making one unable to forget it for the rest of their lives after the initial sip.

Drinking wine was a sort of addiction at the end, and this Nine Magnificence Dew Wine was the kind to make someone unknowingly yearn for it. The drinker would always pine after it after having it once.

It would seem that the vice head of the Myriad Treasures Palace was surely one who enjoyed fine wine. Otherwise, he wouldn't pay such an exorbitant price and yearn for a mouthful of the Nine Magnificence Dew Wine with his every thought and breath.

Jiang Chen wrote out the crafting recipe for the common and spirit rank Nine Magnificence Dew Wine, recalling it from his memory. As for saint level, that was temporarily unnecessary.

The ingredients for the Nine Magnificence Dew Wine were difficult to collect.

Even if he did collect nine kinds of flowers, if he didn't pick the right supplementary ingredients and they slightly conflicted with the main ingredients, then the wine would turn out to be a complete waste.

The ingredients for the common rank Nine Magnificence Dew Wine and spirit rank Nine Magnificence Dew Wine were completely different.

Of course, the ingredients for a common rank Nine Magnificence Dew Wine weren't those of rare or precious plants. It wouldn't be that difficult to collect them.

It was the nine main ingredients of the spirit rank Nine Magnificence Dew Wine that would take some effort in gathering. The selection of supplementary ingredients would even more so it would be a true test of skill.

The supplementary ingredients of the Nine Magnificence Dew Wine were to enhance the fragrance of the nine types of flowers. They were to fuse the scent of the nine kinds of flowers and fully assimilate their scent into the taste of wine, so that they wouldn't be separate from the taste of the wine.

Each flower needed one supplementary ingredient, but more than due care had to be taken in the selection of every supplementary ingredient. They absolutely couldn't conflict with any of the other main ingredients.

This was a true test of skill.

The knowledge and skill contained within was something that many crafters were unable to gain a complete handle on for the entirety of their lives. This was also the reason why this wine was rarely passed down through the ages and why there was almost none of this wine in existence.

An ordinary person would be able to enable his offsprings and generations of descendants to enjoy eternal fortune and prosperity if they could simply grasp this skill.

The wish scroll gave Jiang Chen some inspiration.

If he wanted to establish a foundation within the capital in the short term, perhaps the art of crafting wine would be a good decision.

All other venues would more or less become embroiled within all sorts of struggles. The art of crafting wine was relatively simple.

The practice of drinking was quite prevalent within the Skylareland Kingdom. All men tended to drink, and drink fine wine at that. Even the majority of the women had a sip or two.

The eight personal guards came back later that night, all bringing back some useful information, more or less.

One could see that they had tried quite hard today.

Of course, Jiang Chen knew that they needed this kind of training. Having been born from such a small place, there would be no place for them in a place like Skylareland Kingdom if they didn't go out and train for a bit.

Over the next few days, Jiang Chen delegated the eight personal guards to buy ingredients separately. He chose mid sized spirit medicine shops, instructing them to avoid the large sized ones if possible.

Most of the ingredients had been purchased after a day. There were still two supplementary ingredients that were unavailable even in the large stores.

Jiang Chen felt it a bit odd. Although these supplementary ingredients were a bit uncommon, they weren't to the point of being unpurchasable everywhere.

He asked around privately and finally understood that it wasn't that there were none of the ingredients available, but that all major storefronts had hidden them and weren't selling them.

The reason was simple. The Azure Heaven Southern Palace planned to hold a great exhibition in the capital in a few days. The contents of this exhibition would be rich, with the Southern Palace sending out many spirit alchemists at that time.

Apart from the public clinic, there would be all sorts of transactions and pill medicine exhibition displays.

It would seem then that many of the best items wouldn't be sold in the lead up to the event. The shopkeepers all wanted to see if they could sell them for even higher prices due to storing them up previously for the transaction fair.

Chapter 143: To Slap or To Be Slapped?

As one of the four great locations of the Skylareland Kingdom, the Azure Heaven Southern Palace had an enormous reputation. Its influence was almost unmatched within the southeastern region of the Skylareland Kingdom.

In comparison to the tyrannical reputation of the Azure Heaven Northern Palace, the Southern Palace appeared much more practical and friendly.

Of course, this had something to do with its location as well.

The capital of the Skylareland Kingdom was in the southeastern region of the kingdom. This region was where the core of the royal family's power was located.

It was obviously impossible for the Southern Palace to be as domineering and bratty as the Northern Palace.

Within a kingdom, the power and influence of the royal family was still paramount. If the Southern Palace didn't keep a low profile to the side of the royal family, how would the latter tolerate their existence?

How would an outsider be allowed to snore next to your bed?

Therefore, in stark contrast to the tyrannical domination of the Northern Palace, the Southern Palace had an exceptionally good reputation, and was the location out of the four that was most willing to enter society.

The Qingyang Valley kept as low a profile as they could. Their members almost never made an appearance in society, and very rarely formed relationships with those in the outside world.

Apart from recruiting, they had almost no business with the outside world.

The Myriad Treasures Palace both spanned the greatest breadth of all of the locations and was involved in every field, but emphasized doing business.

As opposed to saying that the Myriad Treasures Palace was a site for conducting rituals, it would be more accurate to say that it was a place that the Precious Tree Sect had established to do business within a common kingdom.

In addition, the areas that the Myriad Treasures Palace were involved with were quite broad.

Pills, spirit medicine, spirit weapons, martial methods, secret arts, talismans and seals, spirit creatures...

All sorts of popular fields, non mainstream fields — there was almost no business that the Myriad Treasures Palace didn't partake in.

Since the two supplementary ingredients he needed could be obtained in a few days at the exhibition, Jiang Chen wasn't in a hurry because of just a few additional days.

These merchants were simply trying to raise prices by not selling their wares now. Although Jiang Chen could still purchase them by bidding a high price, he stuck to his principles of keeping a low profile, and didn't wish to draw overt attention.

He wouldn't be able to start making wine the instant he'd purchased these two supplementary ingredients anyways.

After all, making wine required the use of a wine distillery and all sorts of equipment.

Equipment was easy to take care of, but finding a wine distillery would take more time. It was a good thing that the atmosphere of enjoying wine within the Skylaurel Kingdom was quite prevalent, and that there were many wine distilleries up for rent.

Over the next couple of days, Jiang Chen sent out his people to ask around, finally finished negotiating with a wine distillery that had come down in the world, and signed a short term lease agreement with it.

After everything had been readied, the great exhibition from the Southern Palace proceeded as planned.

Jiang Chen brought his followers to the exhibition location early that morning.

Apart from the Myriad Treasures Palace being right outside the capital, none of the core territories of the other four locations were in the capital. But as great powers within the kingdom, they all had their own turf within the capital.

The Azure Heaven Southern Palace was no exception.

Jiang Chen had thought that he'd come quite early, but discovered that he wasn't the earliest when he arrived. When they arrived, there were already many present.

All sorts of booths and transaction counters were decked out in full array, and the entire scene was bustling.

Jiang Chen's goal this trip was the two supplementary ingredients.

When he arrived at the transaction area though, there were so many rows of booths that it was difficult for his eyes to take in.

However, he also knew that the two supplementary ingredients were relatively uncommon, and thus ordinary booths wouldn't have them. Only those belonging to the great powers would have them in stock.

Therefore, he made directly for the VIP area.

The VIP area was filled with the influential powers and great merchants of the Skylarell Kingdom.

Anyone who could have a booth in the VIP area was basically at an awesome level of existence.

It went without saying that the Southern Palace would have spots. The other three locations had also received invitations and sent many representatives.

When Jiang Chen and the others neared the VIP section, a pair of eyes immediately discovered them from a spot inside the transaction area.

This person was a disciple of the Northern Palace, and had participated in the battle pursuing Jiang Chen's group. However, this person was only of the true qi realm, and wasn't too conspicuous.

When this person saw Jiang Chen, his head retracted slightly, and he lowered his head. He walked to the side of one of the people in charge on the Northern Palace side and murmured a few words next to the person's ears.

This person was also roughly twenty or so years old, and had look of cunning shrewdness on his face. When he heard the words of his peers, his eyes formed into a long slit as he glanced semi unwittingly in Jiang Chen's direction.

He only gave a hasty flick and retracted his gaze, obviously afraid of acting rashly and alerting the enemy.

He then said a few words to his peer and nodded his head slightly, speaking a few words in exhortation — plainly already formulating some sort of scheme.

Jiang Chen's attention naturally didn't take heed of all of this.

"Do you have Bluelily Grass and Wooden Pellets?"

"No!"

"Boss, how much are you selling these Bluelily Grass and Wooden Pellets for?"

"Eh, this is just a sample, it's not for sale."

"Brother, what price are the Bluelily Grass and Wooden Pellets going for?"

"My apologies, someone's already reserved these items and I can't sell them!"

"Boss..."

"My apologies, I don't have any Bluelily Grass or Wooden Pellets."

Jiang Chen only discovered that something was afoot after he started inquiring about the two ingredients. He could've brushed it off as the merchants stockpiling and not selling if he hadn't been able to purchase these two items two days ago, the merchants wanting to obtain a high price.

But the transaction fair had started already... then, did they still wish to raise their prices? Business had never seemed to be done in this fashion, starting from ancient times.

The items were right there, but they had all sorts of excuses for not selling.

If everyone was doing so, then he'd let it go. But everyone was conducting their purchasing and selling of all sorts of spirit medicines quite smoothly. Although their prices veered on the high side, no one had run into the same baffling treatment that Jiang Chen had run into.

Every store he walked into would either not sell, or would find all sorts of excuses.

This was truly strange. Jiang Chen hadn't thought that he'd be able to draw such hatred, being a newly person arrived in the capital, such that all the merchants would unite against him.

The first being that Jiang Chen thought of was the Azure Heaven Northern Palace.

He took another look at the Northern Palace booths. They appeared quite busy and crowded, with plenty of people standing in front of them and bustingly with activity.

Qiao Baishi walked up at this moment and said lowly, "Young master, your subordinate just handed over some silver and asked these merchants. It seems that... the merchants have formed an accord in that they won't sell anything that you wish to buy to you."

"Why is that?"

"I think the Azure Heaven Northern Palace is purposefully making life difficult for you." Qiao Baishi speculated.

"The Northern Palace?" Jiang Chen's gaze turned cold. He hadn't fully collected on the debt for the Northern Palace irritating him last time — did these fellows want to give him trouble within the capital?

Old and new grudges surged up together as a bit of killing intent flashed through Jiang Chen's eyes.

“Mm. Who else is there apart from the Northern Palace? It’s impossible for these merchants to not give the Northern Palace face. It’s rather normal for the four great sites to give each other face. After all, we have no influence or power within the capital, and no one would be willing to offend the Northern Palace over this small matter.”

Jiang Chen also felt that Qiao Baishi’s analysis made a great deal of sense. But the Northern Palace was truly being too childish by playing this hand.

“If they’re unwilling to sell to me what I want to buy, will they still refuse to sell if someone else buys for me?”

Qiao Baishi smiled ruefully, “I seemed to hear that the Azure Heaven Northern Palace has released word that they’re buying Bluelily Grass and Wooden Pellets at a high price. They’re buying up all of these two items today, and will pay double.”

“Tsk tsk, they’re willing to pay a high price.” Jiang Chen smiled coldly. “This is to say, they’re going to buy whatever I want?”

“Ai, come come come. We’re purchasing Bluelily Grass and Wooden Pellets at high prices. Our Azure Heaven Northern Palace is willing to buy as much stock as there is!”

A fellow suddenly cupped his hands by his mouth and started hollering and yelling by the booths of the Northern Palace.

He smirked and winked in Jiang Chen’s direction as he yelled, obviously purposefully displaying his strength.

“Damn it!” Gouyu couldn’t help it but want to grip her sword handle.

“Don’t be rash.” Jiang Chen flung out his sleeve and halted Gouyu’s action of fumbling for her sword

“They go too far in their bullying!” Princess Gouyu was indeed quite ticked off as her chest heaved, obviously heavily angered.

Jiang Chen smiled faintly, as he walked over with slow steps and stood in front of the Azure Heaven Northern Palace booth.

“You’re planning on cornering the market aren’t you? If I recall correctly, this is a transaction fair held by the Southern Palace, when was it the Northern Palace’s turn to behave wildly?” Jiang Chen asked faintly.

“Kid, you can eat out of the wrong bowl but you can’t say the wrong words. This is normal purchasing behavior. What cornering the market? Don’t spew blood from your mouth.” The person in charge smiled coldly at Jiang chen.

“Tsk tsk, isn’t it said that the Northern Palace won’t dare admit to their deeds? You guys even dare do things like killing and looting others, but don’t dare admit to these sort of acts? Normal purchasing behavior? Doesn’t your face flush red when you utter these words?” Jiang Chen laughed contemptuously.

The face of the person in charge darkened, “What? Do you see a rule that says we can’t make our purchases? Make your own if you have the skills to. This is fair competition!”

“Fair competition?”

“Indeed.” The person in charge strutted. “It isn’t that I, with the Zhang surname, hold you in contempt, but if you can buy the Bluelily Grass and Wooden Pellets here today, I’ll crawl out from here!”

The person in charge had a sharp eye and he could tell that Jiang Chen likely didn’t have much of a position within the capital. Otherwise, he wouldn’t use this short of method to purchase these two items.

A person who utterly lacked methods like this fellow was on a completely different level to his Northern Palace. How would the merchants of the transaction fair today not give face to his Northern Palace and sell the two items to Jiang Chen instead?

Therefore, the person in charge felt greatly assured when he spoke these words. He wanted to leverage his actions in this matter to suppress Jiang Chen and curry favor with his senior brother Liu who was already in the spirit realm.

Although senior brother Liu hadn’t come today, if he did this matter well, it would surely travel to senior brother Liu’s ears.

The person in charge had committed these actions to fawn over a spirit realm practitioner, and had raised such a fuss.

He also firmly believed this because he’d been in this line of business for so many years and had deep and vast connections. Those who’d appeared here today were all old faces. They all met regularly and frequently, therefore who would deny him this face?

Besides, this kid looked like a foreigner. Even if they weren’t his old pals, these merchants wouldn’t offend him, a disciple of the Northern Palace, for a foreigner.

Jiang Chen looked at this person and then looked at the expressions of the merchants surrounding them, watching them with the look of enjoying a good show. A trace of a smile appeared on the corners of his lips.

“Crawl out? Are you sure?”

The person in charge puffed out his chest, “Yes. If you can buy them, I’ll crawl around this transaction area three times. What will you do if you can’t buy them?”

Since he was going to suppress Jiang Chen, the person in charge didn’t want to simply ban him from the market. The more he humiliated Jiang Chen, the more capital he’d have in the future for currying favor with senior brother Liu.

Not only did he wish to force out Jiang Chen, he also wanted to make use of the opportunity to thoroughly stomp on him, utterly shaming him, and making it so that he had no face to stay in the capital anymore.

Chapter 144: A Crude and Simple Way of Face Slapping

At the end of the day, Jiang Chen was someone who'd lived two lifetimes. Therefore, how could he possibly be provoked by such childish tactics, and from someone who was jumping around like a clown to boot?

Jiang Chen smirked disdainfully, "I'll be unable to buy it? Is there anything that isn't for sale beneath the heavens?"

The person in charge scoffed coldly, his eyes sweeping across all of the other merchants, obviously warning them to not sell to Jiang Chen at any cost. Otherwise, it'd be a denial of face for him and for the Northern Palace.

Except, Jiang Chen ignored his small moves, as a hint of a meaningful smile clung to the corner of his lips throughout all of this.

His leisurely gaze swept across all of the merchants. They either averted their gazes, didn't even lift their heads, or smiled ruefully and shook their heads.

It was apparent that if they were to choose, they wouldn't stand on the side of a foreigner.

Even if they weren't necessarily on the best of terms with this person from the Northern Palace, and weren't of the same mind as this person in charge.

However, the circumstances demanded thus. These were the hidden rules.

The Northern Palace representative was obviously well aware of this. His confidence was bolstered even more upon seeing everyone's reactions, and he smiled arrogantly at Jiang Chen in a display of power.

The meaning was obvious: Well? Why don't you try and buy something?

Jiang Chen remained as noncommittal as the wind and clouds, barking out a laugh as he took a slight step into the center.

He raised a single arm, a pill bottle appearing in his hand. His voice was level, a smile teasing the corners of his mouth as he said calmly, "I have a supreme rank Vast Ocean Pill here that can instantly recover seventy percent true qi. I don't need to elaborate more on the value of this pill. With this pill, I will trade it for ten blades of Blue Lily Grass and twenty Wooden Pellets. First come first served, with no waiting around after the time limit."

Those small moves and tricks, and so-called hidden rules of business were actually all extremely weak, having only to do with personal considerations.

There were no hidden rules that couldn't be broken in the face of absolute profit. Besides, those hidden rules weren't dependable at all.

A supreme rank Vast Ocean Pill could instantly recover seventy percent true qi.

In the qi replenishing pill realm of the entire sixteen kingdom alliance, pills apart from the Vast Ocean Pill could at most recover forty percent of true qi.

A pill master could occasionally go above and beyond and produce a pill that recovered fifty percent true qi.

However, recovering seventy percent was unheard of.

The Hall of Healing had actually started producing the Vast Ocean Pill in the Eastern Kingdom a few months ago, but its production numbers weren't high yet and a pitiful amount had trickled into the Skylaurel Kingdom.

But once the Vast Ocean Pill had made its entrance, it had made exceedingly great waves in the Skylaurel Kingdom. It'd become the height of fashion, and it was difficult to find even a single pill in the entire upper class society of the kingdom.

This was no wonder. After all, the amount produced by the Hall of Healing wasn't even enough to satisfy demand within the Eastern Kingdom itself. There were countless orders.

The numbers of pills that had made their way into the sixteen kingdoms was incredibly low.

Therefore, although the Vast Ocean Pill had a great reputation within the Skylaurel Kingdom, the number of people who possessed this pill were exceedingly few.

Plus, no one had ever heard of a supreme rank Vast Ocean Pill that could recover seventy percent true qi.

The entire transaction area suddenly became deadly quiet after Jiang Chen had spoken, and a solemn stillness reigned supreme at the scene.

Everyone seemed to shut their mouths with great accordance.

"Supreme rank Vast Ocean Pill? Spontaneously recover seventy percent true qi?" Someone's mind finally started moving again.

"In exchange for only ten blades of Bluelily Grass and twenty Wooden Pellets? This... is this a joke?"

"No way? The value of ten blades of Bluelily Grass and twenty Wooden Pellets aren't even worth an ordinary Vast Ocean Pill? A supreme rank? Is this really right?"

"Could this young man have gone mad and is speaking crazy nonsense?"

Words could be nonsensically spoken, but there was no faking a pill. Jiang Chen didn't indulge in meaningless boasts, but merely tipped the bottle so that a supreme rank Vast Ocean Pill landed in the heart of his palm.

When the pill appeared, everyone's eyes simultaneously focused on him.

In the span of an instant, everyone's breathing became hurried and their eyes became fervent.

It really was the Vast Ocean Pill!

The color and luster, the presence, the purity, and that appearance that was full of spirit power, it was like a pill filled with the presence of life, full of heart moving vigor and vitality.

This kind of temptation was like a beautiful woman with a lithe figure and wondrous curves, wearing only a thin veil of clothing and the splendor underneath moving in and out of sight, making it almost impossible for someone to resist and made one's blood vessels involuntarily pump out blood.

Could anyone withstand such temptation?

For some so-called face? So-called hidden rules? To beat down on a foreigner for that bunch of jerks from the Northern Palace?

That was obviously was laughably ridiculous.

Business was business. Profit was always first.

“Brother, do you mean that? I, I’m willing to offer twenty blades of Blue Lily Grass and fifty Wooden Pellets to trade. No matter how much you need, just tell me and I’ll help you gather it.”

“Don’t listen to him, this is our Southern Palace territory. There’s no one here with more stock than us. Brother, we can discuss however much you need.”

“Please, aren’t you fellows ashamed of yourselves to be talking about spirit medicine in front of us Qingyang Valley disciples? Don’t you feel shamefaced? Who amongst you lot has higher quality Blue Lily Grass and Wooden Pellets than our Qingyang Valley?”

Qingyang Valley?

Jiang Chen couldn’t help but look in that person’s direction. It was a middle aged man who was dressed like a farmer and was the type who couldn’t be able to be picked out in a crowd.

However, this person’s eyebrows were currently dancing with pleasure as he had a face full of ardent eagerness. When he saw Jiang Chen’s gaze land on him, he nodded and bowed even more fawningly, giving off the appearance of being overwhelmed by an unexpected favor.

“This fellow probably doesn’t know of the agreement between me and Elder Fei? Otherwise how could he have dared joined forces with the Northern Palace earlier and refuse to sell to me?”

Jiang Chen paid no heed to small matters such as these at this moment but smiled faintly. He didn’t say yes or no, but merely watched this group of people.

“Brother, how about this. Give my Southern Palace some face and you can come find me whenever you need any spirit medicine, and I’ll give you ten percent off everything.”

“I will say it again. All of you need to step aside when it comes spirit medicine in the Skylareland Kingdom. What does the Qingyang Valley do? We specialize in cultivating spirit medicine, that’s our trade.” The farmer-esque Qingyang Valley middle aged man said with a look of pride.

“Psht! Look at you strutting around! What precious thing hasn’t our Myriad Treasures Palace seen? You only grow some some spirit medicines, why don’t you compete in some other area with our Myriad Treasures Palace?” A Myriad Treasures Palace disciple opened his mouth to retort and then immediately faced Jiang Chen, his face wreathed in smiles. “This brother, surely you’ve heard of the Myriad Treasures Palace’s reputation. We do great business, particularly in appreciation of exotic and bizarre treasures such as this supreme rank Vast Ocean Pill. This pill is hard to obtain within the Skylareland Kingdom, and it’s not worth it for you to trade it for mere Blue Lily Grass and Wooden Pellets. How about this, my Myriad Treasures Palace will give these items to you for free. Treat it as a sign of friendship. I only have one request, and it’s to consign your supreme rank Vast Ocean Pill. If we auction it off at the auction fair this autumn, we may be able to obtain an extraordinary price. What do you say? Not only do you not

lose, but you also stand to profit greatly. And by attracting such a VIP to the Myriad Treasures Palace, I can gain face and revenue. It's a win-win situation!"

This disciple was most definitely from the Myriad Treasures Palace. One could see that he was adept at doing business. His words were logical and reasonable, and paid heed to personal considerations and business. This made even Jiang Chen feel a bit tempted.

At this time, the one who was the worst off was that person in charge of the Azure Heaven Northern Palace. His face was as dark as if someone has splashed ink onto his face.

All of the merchants had betrayed him in the midst of battling and vying with each other to offer benefits to that person, practically wishing to serve themselves up on a silver platter.

What was this?

This was slapping his face, leaving not the slightest shred of face for him, a disciple of the Azure Heaven Northern Palace!

But he also knew the reason for these people losing their composure. If it was anyone else, he would've surely done the same thing.

Who could resist a supreme rank Vast Ocean Pill?!

Seeing that the atmosphere at the scene was becoming more and more fervent, his face burned with increasing heat. He wanted to slip away before anyone paid attention to him to avoid losing more face.

One had to know, he had spoken great words just now. If Jiang Chen could purchase Bluelily Grass and Wooden Pellets here, then he'd crawl around the transaction area three times!

Now, under these circumstances, not to mention selling, there was a huge group of people crying and wailing to pounce on the offer by giving it to Jiang Chen for free. He'd truly lost a lot of face this time.

"Eh? Brother Zhang, where are you going?"

It was a damned pity that a piercing voice traveled to him when he was halfway out of the door.

Someone had snitched on him!

This disciple of the Northern Palace dearly wished to crawl into a crack in the ground. His entire being stiffened where he stood. He could neither walk on nor retreat.

His expression was like someone had clapped a basin of feces and pee onto his face, the epitome of being bedraggled.

"I... I'm going to the latrines." The person in charge with surname Zhang spoke with a bitter face and a conflicted expression.

This repressed excuse resulted in a wave of sarcastic jeering from all those assembled. Since the hidden rules had been broken now, people no longer had anything they were concerned about.

Jiang Chen smiled, "Your brave and lofty words just now don't seem to have much use. I'd really thought that your Northern Palace could corner the market in a domineering fashion. It looks like you only wrapped yourself in tiger skin to intimidate others."

"You... brat, don't you get uppity!"

"Who's being uppity? Who was throwing his weight around just now? Who was it who said that if we could buy these two items, he'd crawl three times around this area?" Gouyu couldn't help but take a step forward, plant her hands on her waist and hector, "Now, are you going to crawl around the transaction area three times by yourself, or should I find a rope and lead you around for three circles?"

"I..." As a disciple of the Northern Palace, it was the first time that this person in charge with surname Zhang had lost so much face. He looked around desperately in all directions, sending out all sorts of pleas for help, hoping that someone would lend him a helping hand.

But who would help him out of a bind in this moment?

Everyone was but an acquaintance to each other in setting up booths here to do business. They could help him bully a foreigner. But now that they knew that not only could they not bully the foreigner but should fawn on him instead, whoever spoke up for disciple Zhang would be have to be missing half a brain.

When a wall is about to collapse, everyone gives it a push. Although no one was stepping forward to give it a push, the expressions on their faces clearly showed that they were watching a good show which was not too much different from pushing down a wall together.

"Forget it, forget it. A bunch of people who forget honor at the prospect of profits and have no loyalty to speak of. I, the disciple of the Northern Palace, would rather die than be humiliated."

The fellow stiffened his neck and simply decided to play the rogue, jeering at Jiang Chen, "Either you chop off my head with one stroke or forget about making me, a disciple of the Northern Palace, bend my knee and bow to you! That's completely impossible!"

Chapter 145: Hitting Someone in Addition to Slapping Face

"You're making a fool of yourself!"

Just as everyone was thoroughly speechless at this Northern Palace disciple's shameless tactics, a cold admonishment traveled in from afar.

A middle-aged man walked out with large strides, wearing an apricot colored robe shortly thereafter.

All of the representatives of various powers had gazes filled with hints of both respect and fear when they saw this person. Some even looked at that Northern Palace disciple with the air of delighting in his misfortunes.

They all knew that this fellow was about to be punished..

An apricot colored robe represented that one was an administrator of the Azure Heaven Southern Palace. There were also three short swords embroidered onto the chest of this administrator's robes. It

was obvious that he was one who was in charge of penalties and punishment, and was someone with great power and influence.

That disciple of the Northern Palace hastened to greet the administrator, saying in a fawning tone, "Sir Bei, you've arrived."

Sir Bei was expressionless as he shot cold looks at the Northern Palace disciple, "I've always heard that the Northern Palace had an insufferable style in the western part of the kingdom, a style as if no one could beat them. It now looks like the rumors are true. To think that you even dare to cause trouble at a grand exhibition that my Southern Palace is holding in the capital, beneath the feet of the royal liege. Your boldness knows no bounds!"

"I, I..." The Northern Palace disciple's face turned ashen as his legs trembled from fright, and he almost cried out in his anxiousness.

"Come!" Sir Bei's face was darkened.

Several disciples enforcing the law immediately surged out from the back like wolves and tigers.

"Take him away and cane him a hundred times. If he dies, feed him to the dogs. If not, tell him to get the hell out of the capital! Kill him and his friends on sight if they are seen again at one of my Southern Palace's pill exhibitions!"

Sir Bei coldly gave the cruel order.

"Ah, Sir Bei, don't beat me, don't beat me!" The Northern Palace disciple started crying in his desperation. "I'm the nephew of Elder Huyan of the Northern Palace, don't beat me..."

"Another hundred strokes!" Sir Bei's expression was wooden.

"Sir Bei, you are... you are slapping Elder Huyan's face!" The Northern Palace disciple screamed shrilly. Another hundred strokes made for two hundred in total. At best, he'd be crippled if not dead.

A trace of a cold smile appeared on Sir Bei's frozen face as he waved his hand, "Haul him out and beat him until he's dead!"

The disciple that had faced off with Jiang Chen along with a couple of his followers were hauled out like dead dogs amidst a din of dreadful howls.

Sir Bei's gaze was severe as it swept the scene. "Remember this, whoever dares to cause trouble at a grand occasion held by the Southern Palace will pay the price."

"No matter how great your status or your backer, I am the keeper of the law for the Southern Palace. Threatening me with your patrons? That's meaningless to me."

This Sir Bei's thunderous methods displayed to everyone his coldhearted impartialness.

Some fellows who were not quite on the straight and narrow also proceeded forth cautiously.

Sir Bei's gaze fell onto Jiang Chen's body and he nodded slightly. "Young man, you're not at fault for the matters of today. My surname is Bei, if you run into any more difficulties here, you can directly report it to me. I represent the Southern Palace and apologize to you for the matters of just now."

This Sir Bei was incorruptible and unmoved by entreaty. Jiang Chen was slightly surprised to see Sir Bei apologize to him.

“Sir Bei speaks too gravely. The bad eggs of the community still number amongst the few. However, I rather admire Sir Bei’s just methods and impartialness.”

“Nothing can be accomplished without norms or standards. The reputation of my Azure Heaven Southern Palace is at stake. How would I let it be ruined by an evildoer?”

Jiang Chen nodded. One had to say, he had quite a bit of goodwill towards this Sir Bei. It had been particularly satisfying to see the Northern Palace fellows dragged out like dead dogs.

“No matter the case, I still thank Sir Bei for administering the law justly.” Jiang Chen cupped his hands.

Sir Bei waved his hands, “Buying and selling fairly is the most basic matter. Be at ease, no one will dare to be up to anymore shenanigans here. However, although they won’t look to me for an answer after killing a disciple of the Northern Palace today, it’s very likely that they’ll come looking for you. You must be prepared.”

Jiang Chen was rather touched that a senior executive of the Southern Palace, a keeper of the law, could speak so candidly without reservation.

“Sir Bei is right in your reminders. I will pay attention.”

The Northern Palace causing trouble for him? Flames of anger rose up from his heart whenever he thought of the four words, ‘Azure Heaven Northern Palace’ and of that group of disciples that had attempted highway robbery that day when they were heading for the capital.

Jiang Chen hadn’t forgotten this old grudge. He was only waiting until after he found his footing in the Skylaurel Kingdom. When he did so, he would surely make the Northern Palace pay ten times over.

One had to say, Sir Bei’s influence was quite frightening. After making an example of the Northern disciple, everyone was much more honest within the transaction area.

Although they all knew of the extreme temptation from Jiang Chen’s Vast Ocean Pill, no one dared threaten Jiang Chen at this time.

Jiang Chen finally decided to purchase the needed Blue Lily Grass and Wooden Pellets from the Myriad Treasures Palace disciple.

The disciple didn’t wish to take Jiang Chen’s money, but Jiang Chen insisted on paying.

Jiang Chen was a particular person. He didn’t wish to receive another’s largesse for no reason at all. Not to mention that this bit of money was as simple and easy as pulling off a hair off his thigh to him.

He had decided to transact with this disciple of the Myriad Treasures Palace because the disciple was a smart person, and Jiang Chen liked dealing with smart people.

After obtaining the items he needed, Jiang Chen wasn’t willing to waste anymore time in the transaction area. He walked out with Gouyu and the others, heading outside.

The Myriad Treasures Palace disciple also followed him outside, calling out to Jiang Chen, "Brother, please hold for a moment."

Jiang Chen stopped. He knew that the Myriad Treasures Palace was one of the great powers within the capitals, and was one of the four great sites that the Precious Tree Sect had established within the Skylaurel Kingdom. It was also the only one out of the four great sites to be entrenched within the capital.

Since he wanted to operate within the capital, there would only be benefits from having a good relation with the Myriad Treasures Palace.

"Brother, I'm called Fengyan, a disciple of the Myriad Treasures Palace. I'm truly sorry about what happened just now. Although the four great sites compete against each other, in the shadows, no one is willing to offend each other. So when the Northern Palace fellow wanted to buy the Blue Lily Grass and Wooden Pellets, we..."

"It's alright, it's not your fault." Jiang Chen also knew that this was part of the hidden rules of the transaction area.

"I feel even more ashamed now that you've spoken as such. Brother, you're quite generous. I, Fengyan, would love to have you as a friend. Why don't we find a place and I'll treat you to some good wine?"

"Let's not for now, I'll remember Brother Feng's good intentions. I'm sure I'll have more dealings with the Myriad Treasures Palace in the future, and will need Brother Feng to take care of me in the future." Jiang Chen also said politely.

"Haha, if brother is willing to honor the Myriad Treasures Palace, the Palace would surely be graced by your presence. Oh right, we've chatted for so long, but I've yet to ask your name."

"I'm called Jiang Chen."

"Jiang Chen." Fengyan nodded slightly. "A good name."

He then seemed to suddenly recall something as his expression changed slightly and he asked hoarsely, "Jiang Chen? Brother, are you from the Eastern Kingdom?"

Jiang Chen was privately startled. Had his reputation already traveled to the Skylaurel Kingdom? This Fengyan was just a disciple of the Myriad Treasures Palace, how could he already know of him?

Jiang Chen wasn't sure whether to be happy or depressed, but he still smiled. "To think that Brother Feng has heard of my name?"

Fengyan was even more enthusiastic. "Brother Jiang, do you know how great your reputation is? The Skylaurel Kingdom is amongst the top in the alliance of the sixteen kingdoms and thus naturally knows everything that happens within the alliance. Due to its business needs, our Myriad Treasures Palace needs intelligence from all aspects, so brother Jiang's name is like a thunderclap piercing our ears within the Myriad Treasures Palace."

To say that his name was a thunderclap piercing their ears was obviously a nicety, but Fengyan's desire to become friends with Jiang Chen truly did become stronger when he heard Jiang Chen's name.

In all honesty, all the intelligence reports from the Eastern Kingdom had molded Jiang Chen into a mythical figure. He had suppressed the Long family's rebellion single-handedly, annihilated the Darkmoon Kingdom's million strong army, and shot down the first general of the Darkmoon Kingdom...

All sorts of rumors made Fengyan have no choice but to value Jiang Chen highly.

Fengyan was a smart man. He didn't think that he, a disciple of the Myriad Treasures Palace and an upper class level personage within the Skylaurel Kingdom, had any sort of right to look down on this genius who had come from the Eastern Kingdom.

Although the Skylaurel Kingdom was many times stronger than the Eastern Kingdom within the alliance of the sixteen kingdoms, even the weakest countries had geniuses.

Jiang Chen's genius was obviously not something that he, Fengyan, could dismiss. On the contrary, Fengyan had put together the observations of just now and his combined intelligence to think carefully and felt even more so that he should strike up a friendship with Jiang Chen.

"Brother Jiang, I still repeat what I said earlier. If you consign the Vast Ocean Pill to our Palace and place it on auction, you will surely receive an excellent price for it and heighten your fame at the same time."

Jiang Chen knew that Fengyan was indeed sincere and nodded, "Brother Feng, I'll be sure to come visit you at the Myriad Treasures Palace when I'm done with the things at hand."

Fengyan was even happier after receiving Jiang Chen's assent.

The two were chatting when a shout sounded from the side. "Damned bitch, why don't you say another word? Trying to bluff me with a broken piece of wood?"

"Stop immediately!"

Fengyan and Jiang Chen couldn't help but look over when they heard the yelling.

They saw a young man in a red colored robe that was embroidered with blue lines hectoring loudly. A fragile and delicate girl was kneeling down in front of him.

The young girl sobbed as she stubbornly hung onto the youth's calf and refused to let go.

"Return my Black Spirit Wood to me." The young girl's voice was low and her voice shook, but her demeanor was abnormally stubborn, as if she would never let go before having taken her item back.

"Didn't I already return that broken piece of wood to you? Do you not believe that I'll beat you to death right now if you don't let go?"

The young girl only shook her head, "You didn't take this one away. Return the one you took."

"Screw you, dumb bitch. I'm a vaunted disciple of the Azure Heaven Northern Palace, why would I want your broken piece of wood? Look at you dressed up in rags like a begging slut. Are you trying to blackmail me?"

"Him again!" Jiang Chen hadn't even spoke before Gouyu, behind him, was already groping for the shortsword at her waist. That fellow who hailed from the Northern Palace was the senior brother Kuang who had wanted to rob them last time.

Jiang Chen also felt his killing intent increase greatly when he saw this person. When he looked again at the young girl, he discovered that the young girl was Tang Long's fiancée.

Both sides were his acquaintances.

Senior brother Kuang's eyes glared when he saw someone approach, but his expression changed greatly when he saw that it was Jiang Chen. He flung Tang Long's fiancée away with a slap.

"Get the hell out of my way. I don't have the time to waste here with you." He lifted his feet up and planned on running further in.

"Brother Feng, can the Northern Palace also rob others in broad daylight in the capital?" Jiang Chen asked faintly.

Fengyan started and said, "Security within the capital is quite good. If the Dragonteeth Guard knew of such robbery, the culprit would either be thrown in jail or executed immediately."

Jiang Chen nodded and lifted off his toes, swooping down like a falcon as he blocked senior brother Kuang's way. "This world is such a small place, to think that we'd meet again."

Chapter 146: Not Just Beating Someone, But Also Killing Someone

Although senior brother Kuang had just displayed a malicious looking face towards Tang Long's fiancée, when it came to Jiang Chen, he was not the slightest bit ferocious. Senior brother Kuang had already almost died twice beneath Jiang Chen's hand.

The first time had been because Jiang Chen didn't wish to make enemies and didn't deal a fatal blow due to a desire to merely issue a warning.

The second time, Jiang Chen had intended for senior brother Kuang to die, but the latter had been saved by his senior brother Yi Qiansui.

He hadn't died from his great misfortune, and senior brother Kuang had forgotten this matter altogether a few days later. But who would've thought that he'd run into Jiang Chen again today?

"Get out of the way!" Senior brother Kuang roared lowly. "Kid, you have offended my senior brother Liu, and he's also in the capital right now. If you recognize the circumstances you're in, you still have time to get the hell out of here."

"Hand over the item." Jiang Chen said faintly.

"What item?" Senior brother Kuang played dumb and asked.

"Cut your blather, the Black Spirit Wood."

"Black Spirit Wood? I don't know what you're talking about! If you don't get out of my way, I'm going to sue you for robbery!" Senior brother Kuang grimaced with a smile. "This is the territory of the Azure Heaven Southern Palace. My Northern Palace is of the same breath and branch as the Southern Palace. We are as dear to each other as members of the same family. Do you believe that with just one word from me, there will be several hundred Southern Palace disciples rushing out to attack you?"

Senior brother Kuang was well versed in the art of strutting around on borrowed influence. Except, he hadn't entered the transaction area just now and hadn't known what had happened.

"Of the same breath and branch? Dear to each other like members of the same family?" Jiang Chen laughed contemptuously. If they really were as dear to each other like members of the same family, then how would Sir Bei have given the order to cane that Northern Palace disciple to death?

"I don't want to talk empty nonsense. Are you handing over that Black Spirit Wood or not?"

Senior brother Kuang looked at Jiang Chen and then looked at the young girl, thinking, "Can it be that these two know each other? Just where does this kid come from that he knows such a downtrodden girl? Judging from the girl's looks, she should be at the very bottom of the totem pole. How much of a background can this kid have?"

When his thoughts travelled here, senior brother Kuang hardened his heart, "Stop spewing out blood. I have a stick of Black Spirit Wood here that I dug out from an old forest deep in the mountains. Who the hell do you think you are to make me hand it over? Do you want to rob someone in the capital? Does law and order exist anymore?"

When a petty fellow bites you, only death awaits.

"A robber crying 'catch the thief'!" Jiang Chen's brow creased faintly, but he broke out into a smile instead. "Good, very good. I had been worrying about what excuse to use to tally up our old debts. However, you've rather helped me resolve this difficult problem."

"What... what do you want to do?" Senior brother Kuang's facial expression changed greatly.

"Do what?" Jiang Chen advanced forward in a threatening manner. "Stopping someone to rob them, if I recall correctly, you can be executed where you stand? Brother Yan, such a regulation exists within the kingdom's laws, correct?"

Fengyan opened his mouth and had wanted to speak a conciliatory word when a notion flashed through his mind. He said instead, "Such a regulation does exist within the kingdom's laws. Except, brother Jiang..."

"Then things are easy with this law."

Jiang Chen smiled beatifically as he stomped down with both feet, struck out with two fists to both the left and right and sent two punches flying out.

One was as if a hundred flowers had blossomed, and the other was as if ten thousand souls laid in hibernation.

It was the boxing mysteries from the "Divine Aeons Fist".

Senior brother Kuang's strength was far below that of Jiang Chen's, and fear grew within his heart now that Jiang Chen had backed him up against a wall.

Senior brother Kuang had no time to even react to these incredible boxing techniques before he'd taken both fists to the chest, flying out backwards like a kite with a broken string.

Jiang Chen leapt up and dashed up to senior brother Kuang, and was about to extend a hand and take back the Black Spirit Wood.

A harsh yell sounded from behind him, "Stop!"

Whoosh whoosh whoosh sounded out in the next second as six Dragonteeth Guard members, dressed in light yellow robes, shot to the scene like sharp arrows.

The six Dragonteeth Guard surrounded Jiang Chen.

"Who are you and how dare you kill someone in broad daylight?" A Dragonteeth Guard interrogated.

"In response to you sir, this person was committing robbery in broad daylight and I was forced to make a move to take back what is mine."

"A robbery in broad daylight? Do you have any proof?"

"There's a stick of Black Spirit Wood in his possession, that's the evidence. The owner of the Black Spirit Wood is still here, she's the witness."

"You're the witness? Are you sure that this person stole your Black Spirit Wood?" The Dragonteeth Guard pointed at senior brother Kuang's body and asked.

Tang Long's fiance looked at Jiang Chen with a face full of gratitude as she lightly bit her lip, nodding very firmly, "Yes, this was the villain that stole my Black Spirit Wood."

Since a murder was involved, the deputy of the Dragonteeth Guard didn't dare to make an easy judgment. Not to mention that his eyes were keen and he recognized that the accused was a disciple of the Northern Palace. He likely couldn't listen to a one-sided story.

He immediately said, "A case involving a human life should be treated with the utmost of care. The rights and wrongs are convoluted, and I cannot listen to only your side. I feel that you must come back to the Dragonteeth headquarters with me and wait there to regain your innocence until a full investigation of this matter is conducted. If the truth is not as you've said, then murdering someone is a heinous crime."

Jiang Chen smiled faintly, "There's no problem for me to go back with you, but can I be allowed to leave behind a few words?"

Jiang Chen also knew that since the Dragonteeth Guard had appeared, he would be defying the law if he refused to make this trip with them which would undoubtedly give rise to greater conflict.

Since he'd just arrived in this place, he had no need to create such a great disturbance.

When the Dragonteeth Guard saw that Jiang Chen was unrushed and unhurried with an uncommon air, he didn't dare to offend Jiang Chen either and nodded.

Jiang Chen walked up to Fengyan, "Brother Feng, although you're an eyewitness, but I wouldn't untowardly ask you to be a witness. There's a list here, please give it to your vice head Shi of your Myriad Treasures Palace. If he won't receive you, tell him that it has something to do with the Wishing Tower."

“Oh?” Fengyan was startled. He had indeed been worried that Jiang Chen would ask him to be a witness, and had been quietly calculating if it was worth it to offend the Northern Palace in order to gain Jiang Chen as a friend.

Seeing that Jiang Chen didn’t intend ask him to be a witness, his heart lightened, but also felt slightly disappointed at the same time. Jiang Chen only wanted him to deliver a list, that wasn’t anything difficult.

“Brother Jiang, please be at ease. I will, rest assured, deliver this list with the fastest speed possible to vice head Shi.”

“Baishi, take this list and conceal the key ingredients. Go have a chat with Elder Ning of the Azure Heaven Southern Palace.” Jiang Chen gave another list to Qiao Baishi.

This list contained a pill recipe that Jiang Chen had prepared previously, called the “Four Seasons Eternal Spring Pill”. It was precisely what Jiang Chen had prepared for Elder Ning.

Elder Ning had made a wish of everlasting youth in the Wishing Tower. Although Jiang Chen hadn’t had much interest in this matter to begin with, he then immediately thought about how he could give this opportunity to Qiao Baishi.

By now, Qiao Baishi was Jiang Chen’s trusted confidante and knew the deep meaning behind Jiang Chen’s action. He nodded slightly as he took the recipe. There was no longer a need for heroic utterances now to prove his loyalty to Jiang Chen.

Having concluded his instructions to Gouyu and Qiao Baishi, Jiang Chen turned to Xue Tong, “Xue Tong, go find the Qingyang Valley’s stronghold within the capital and pass on a message to old man Fei that I’ve been invited in for a spot of tea by the Dragonteeth Guard. He can do what he sees fit to do. If he’s still thinking about the Renewal Purity Pill, then he needs to get the hell into the capital immediately.”

Jiang Chen also knew that he’d just arrived in the Skylare Kingdom and was unfamiliar with the people and the territory. He had yet to build up his networks. If he was taken away by the Dragonteeth Guard and if the Northern Palace intervenes, he, Jiang Chen, would more or less end up with the short end of the stick.

The Dragonteeth Guard may decide cases according to the law, but that was with the one caveat that the Azure Heaven Northern Palace didn’t intervene.

Once the Northern Palace intervened, if Jiang Chen didn’t have any other methods, then with his identity as a newly arrived foreigner, he was sure to end up with a terrible fate.

At this moment, Jiang Chen naturally didn’t mind making use of someone else’s strength.

Jiang Chen had reincarnated not as someone who went about with brute force. He was combining all of his advantageous factors to eliminate all disadvantageous factors. He of course knew the value of leveraging other people’s strength.

Having concluded his instructions, Jiang Chen gallantly returned to the side of the Dragonteeth Guard and smiled faintly, “Let’s go. I’ll also say this, I hope you can decide the case according to the law. This young girl is a witness, I also hope that she doesn’t suffer from any unfair treatment.”

The deputy of the Dragonteeth Guard didn't dare lose his alertness when he saw Jiang Chen's uncommon demeanor. "My Dragonteeth Guard is impartial and objective when deciding cases. You don't need to worry about this."

....

In some luxurious apartment within the capital.

Some youths wearing the robes of the Azure Heaven Northern Palace were drinking toast after toast and having a great time.

Suddenly, a subordinate walked in and murmured a few words into the ear of a scar-faced youth. The youth's face immediately changed.

"What?" The scar-faced youth surged to his feet, his eyes full of a violent light, and his face darkened so much that it was like he wanted to eat someone. "What did you say? Say that again?"

The subordinate was so frightened that his expression changed greatly and he stammered, "This... is the news that's just come back, senior brother Zhang Meng was caned to death by the lawkeeper of the Southern Palace at the transaction area, and senior brother Kuang was also beaten to death with one punch by someone on the street."

"What did you say?" A youth whose gender was hard to discern, dressed in a fey manner, shot out a violent beam of light from his eyes. "Zhang Meng was beaten to death?"

"Speak clearly, what exactly happened?"

The subordinate strived valiantly to control his nervous emotions and said, "This was what happened, senior brother Zhang Meng saw the brat that you senior brothers attempted to take down last time... and then..."

This subordinate stammered and finally clearly explained all that had happened.

The womanly youth was indeed the senior brother Liu, Liu Can, who had chased Jiang Chen into the Qingyang Valley and had almost been slapped to death by Elder Fei. This person's training had broken through the ranks of half step spirit dao and had now entered into the first level of the spirit realm. He was now the leader of the group.

Liu Can didn't mind the fact that senior brother Kuang was dead, but Zhang Meng was different. Zhang Meng was Liu Can's younger cousin, and the two had entered the Azure Heaven Northern Palace together when they were small.

Zhang Meng was also quite gifted in the area of business. The path of training could not be walked without money. The fact that he, Liu Can, had had such accomplishments in the field of training, could not be overlooked by Zhang Meng's contributions in the area of money.

Liu Can had always treated Zhang Meng as his own younger brother. When he suddenly heard that Zhang Meng had been beaten to death by the lawkeeper, even he was dazed, despite being a spirit realm practitioner.

"That kid again." Liu Can ground his teeth as the flames of anger danced in his eyes. "You were lucky last time and fled to the Qingyang Valley. If you'd cowardly hunkered down in the Qingyang Valley, I wouldn't have been able to do anything to you. Now that you've come to your death in the capital, I'll write my damn name backwards if I can't kill you!"

The scar faced youth, Yi Qiansui, was one of the killers that had originally pursued Jiang Chen.

He said, "Senior brother Liu, this fellow is a bit strange. How could he emerge unscathed after falling into old man Fei's hands in the Qingyang Valley?"

"Yes. Old man Fei is renowned for being tricky to handle. He doesn't even give face to our Northern Palace head. How would he let this kid swagger into the capital like this and not be a medicine servant for twenty years?" The person speaking was one of the half step spirit realms that had also been chasing Jiang Chen originally, that triangular eyed youth.

Liu Can snorted coldly. "Old man Fei can throw his weight and power around in the Qingyang Valley, but his broken rules are of no use within the capital. This time, no matter who this fellow's backer is, I'm going to be the death of him."

Yi Qiansui also chuckled. "I'd thought that this fat meat had flown away, but who knew that we'd regain it right after losing it. Looks like we made the right choice in coming to the capital this time around."

Chapter 147: The Matter Grew Big

"Senior brother Liu, we're here this time to support the first prince. If we handle this matter through the first prince and the Dragonteeth Guard exerts some pressure, we can absolutely swallow that kid. When that happens, his goods..." The triangular eyed youth volunteered this plot to Liu Can.

When they, practitioners of the half step spirit realm, fought ceaselessly over splitting up the spoils of battle, it had instead given Jiang Chen the opportunity to slip through the cracks and get away.

Now that Liu Can had risen to the first level of the spirit realm and that his training had greatly increased, he had overwhelming power and thus the others had naturally made him their head. They no longer dared to talk about equal division.

Liu Can nodded his head viciously, "The first prince has far reaching ambitions and is not terribly interested in money. However, there's two beauties among that kid's followers, and their looks are indeed not bad. They've got quite an exotic air about them. The first prince likes this sort of thing. If we can offer those two to the first prince, this would be quite a favor."

"Alright, it's settled then. The beauties will be given to the first prince, and we'll still split up the kid's items according to our agreement last time. How about that?" Yi Qiansui slapped the table and called out.

Everyone's gazes looked towards Liu Can in unison. All was empty talk if senior brother Liu didn't nod his head.

Liu Can had also considered the needs of the people, and that he must give them some reward if he wanted them to do everything in their power. He immediately nodded, "Alright, we'll proceed according

to last time's agreement. All of you will receive two spirit beasts, and everyone can make a copy of any martial methods or secret arts."

There was a fundamental difference between a half step spirit realm and first level spirit realm after all. Everyone was overjoyed to hear that Liu Can had agreed.

"Senior brother Liu, this matter should not be delayed. Let's go visit the first prince right now!"

...

Two hours later, at the manor of the first prince of the Skylaurel Kingdom.

"Liu Can, this person you speak of, do you know his background?" First prince Ye Dai smiled faintly.

"Background?" Liu Can started. "We rushed to the capital after receiving the first prince's summons and truly haven't had the opportunity to inquire this matter. Can it be that this kid has a mighty background?"

First prince Ye Dai was the prince with the greatest repute amongst all the princes in the Skylaurel Kingdom, the favors of tens of thousands focused on him alone. He was one of the hottest contenders to be the next king.

His complexion was as clear as jade, his gaze as clear as the stars. His every movement and gesture appeared graceful and dapper.

"He doesn't have much of a background, but is indeed a bit interesting. It's a pity that he's meant to be an enemy and not a friend."

"Your Highness, why do you say so?" Liu Can was vaguely startled.

"This person comes from the Eastern Kingdom, and is a legendary figure within the Eastern Kingdom a while ago. His name is Jiang Chen, and he once suppressed the attempted uprising of the Long family within the Eastern Kingdom."

"Eastern Kingdom?" Liu Can had been worried that he'd antagonized someone he couldn't afford to. His heart lightened when he heard the Eastern Kingdom. "That tiny ass kingdom? As legendary as he could've been in a small kingdom, that should be his limits."

The first prince Ye Dai smiled, "Intelligence indicates that the first one that this person visited in the capital was number four from our family."

"The fourth prince, His Highness Ye Rong?"

"Indeed, our number four usually reveals nothing of himself and seems exceedingly low key. But you'd be gravely wrong if you think he's someone who's accepted his lot in life. Why did this Jiang Chen come to the Skylaurel Kingdom? Number four must be up to something in the background."

Liu Can was deep in thought, "Your Highness, do you mean? We should..."

Liu Can paused and raised his right hand, making a downward chopping motion.

“Jiang Chen killed a disciple of your Azure Northern Heaven Palace, the law of the land will not condone his actions. Your Northern Palace won’t just roll over and play dead, will it?”

Liu Can beamed happily. Although the first prince didn’t say it literally, but this was already a very clear indication. This was hinting for them to make an issue out of this and assign Jiang Chen to death.

“Please be at ease, Your Highness. Where would my Northern Palace put our face if we let some outsider brat strut around within the Skylaurel Kingdom? We’ll lodge a serious complaint with the Dragonteeth Guard and ask them to arbitrate with justice, blood for blood!” A sinister smile was displayed on Liu Can’s face.

“There are many of our own on the Dragonteeth Guard’s side. I will instruct the others to pay attention to this matter. The four great sites are strongholds that the Precious Tree Sect has set up within the Skylaurel Kingdom. Beating one of the disciples of the four great sites to death is a slap in the face to the Skylaurel Kingdom, and even more so, a slap to the face of the Precious Tree Sect!” Ye Dai’s tone was grave.

Liu Can rejoiced privately. He was greatly reassured with the first prince’s guarantee.

“Heh heh, Jiang Chen is it? The legendary character of the Eastern Kingdom is it? Now that you’ve come to my Skylaurel Kingdom, you have to sit even if you’re a dragon, and lie down even if you’re a tiger. This time I’m going to humiliate you slowly, torture you, and then kill you. I’ll take your women and steal your fortune!”

...

Jiang Chen sat on a chair with his eyes closed. It’d been about two hours since he’d been brought here.

This room had bright windows and a neat chair, the chair was even made of high quality golden rosewood.

No one had come to question him or talk to him since he’d been brought here.

Jiang Chen knew that this was the silent treatment.

Before the Dragonteeth Guard had sussed out his background, they could only use this kind of method that neither offended nor kissed up to him.

He also knew that after these two hours had passed, everyone on all sides would start making their moves. What needed to be investigated would also pretty much be investigated.

What happened next would absolutely not be as peaceful as things had been.

Flinging all those random thoughts to the back of his mind, Jiang Chen calmed his mind according to the art of Boulder’s Heart and organized the happenings of the past couple of days in his mind.

The door was pushed open with a creak.

A group of Dragonteeth Guard rushed in. The person at the head had a particular pattern embroidered on the chest of his pale yellow Dragonteeth Guard robes. His looks were a bit sinister and his mouth drooped down slightly. His eyes in particular had a gloomy look that made one shiver all over, but not

from cold. He gave others the terrifying feeling of one's hair standing on end, as if one was facing a viper.

All the other Dragonteeth Guards automatically stood to the side or behind this person.

"General Lu, this is the one." One of the captains spoke fawningly in front of this person like he was currying favor.

"You're called Jiang Chen? You're from the Eastern Kingdom?" General Lu, who possessed a sinister expression, asked in a gloomy tone.

"Indeed."

"You beat a disciple of the Northern Palace to death, did this occur?"

"I beat to death a criminal who was committing a robbery in the street." A trace of wariness rose in Jiang Chen's heart when he heard the other's tone.

"Bullshit! The identity of a Northern Palace disciple is noble and lofty, why would he possibly commit robbery in broad daylight?"

"A noble identity means one won't commit robbery in broad daylight?" Jiang Chen flicked a light glance at the other person. "Please forgive me for not fully comprehending your logic."

"Kid, this is our General Lu, you better behave yourself! What are you being cocky for?" A Dragonteeth Guard behind General Lu shouted out.

"Being cocky? Dealing with the matter as it stands is called cocky?"

Bam!

General Lu slammed his fist onto the table. "Jiang Chen, I don't like to waste time in empty blather. You beat a disciple of the Northern Palace to death and now they are asking me for the killer. You better admit to your guilt and submit to whatever judgment there will be so that we can handle this matter fairly and impartially. If you continue to put up a stiff resistance..."

"General Lu is it?" Jiang Chen spread out his hands, cutting the other off. "Don't you give me this spiel either. It was proper self-defense for me to beat a criminal to death. I acknowledge no guilt. In addition, your words have already shown your bias, what further talks will there possibly be of handling this matter impartially? Aren't you embarrassed from saying such things?"

"This means that you intend to stubbornly resist to the end?" General Lu laughed coldly in succession.

"Jiang Chen, we can give you one last chance. You killed someone in broad daylight, do you admit to that or not?"

Jiang Chen shook his head lightly. "I have nothing to admit to."

"Very good! It looks like you won't give up your false hopes until all is over, and have hardened your heart to fight against the Dragonteeth Guard. Take him away and place him into the Black Dungeons!"

The Black Dungeons were where the Dragonteeth Guard kept the repeated offenders of severe crimes.

Once someone was sent to the Black Dungeons, they almost never made it back out alive again.

There was basically only one possibility of being able to walk out of the Black Dungeons, and that was being dragged out to be executed.

The other possibility was that one went in on their two feet and laid down to become a corpse on their way out.

Several of the Dragonteeth Guard held Jiang Chen under guard and arrived at the Black Dungeons' area.

"Damn it, this place always feels sinister whenever we walk close to it. The back of my neck and head are tingling with cold." One of the Dragonteeth Guard complained.

"Sigh, stop complaining. Hurry up and throw this kid in there so we can report back to General Lu."

"I say kid, is there anything valuable on you? Hurry up and hand it over. Perhaps if we're in a good mood, we'll carry a few messages for you with your last words."

"Indeed, indeed. When you're in the Black Dungeons, not even your bones will be left to you, much less your valuables. You'd be bringing a gift in for those scum if you brought in anything good."

Their words were already treating Jiang Chen as a dead man.

Jiang Chen kept as cool as a cucumber as he smiled faintly. The Dragonteeth Guard in charge of escorting him were all obviously small characters. There was no point in verbally sparring with them.

"Yo, kid! You have some courage huh? Don't blame me for not reminding you. Even if you were born and raised in the Skylaurel Kingdom, the only path for you would be death once you've offended the Northern Palace, moreover you're actually a foreigner. Unless you're one of the disciples of the three great sites and had a great patron backing you up, you're dead."

"Number seven, stop talking nonsense with him! Would he be sent to the Black Dungeons if he had a great patron? General Lu himself is personally presiding over this case, doesn't that make this case quite apparent? Then on top want him dead, there's no way he would be allowed to continue living."

"Heh heh, this kid is quite tough when it comes to it. He's not begging for mercy even now."

"Alright, we have arrived at the Black Dungeons area. Let's stop for a moment." The captain waved his hands and looked at Jiang Chen, sizing him up. "Kid, let's speak frankly. There's no way you can leave after having arrived here. You have two options. One, quietly hand over anything valuable on you and save us the effort of searching you. The second choice will be a bit offensive. If you don't quietly hand things over, then we'll have to do it ourselves. I'll warn you beforehand, things won't be that civilized if we have to take things into our own hands."

"Are you sure that you're the Dragonteeth Guard and not disciples of the Northern Palace?" Jiang Chen asked faintly.

"What do you mean?" The captain asked blankly.

"The disciples of the Northern Palace are skilled in committing robbery. Does what you're doing count as blackmail and extortion? Or is it just blatant robbery?" Jiang Chen asked leisurely.

“Kid, looks like you’ve thoroughly hardened your heart!” The captain flourished his sleeves, “Then don’t blame us for being unkind. Number six and seven, strip him!”

“Halt!” A stately voice sounded at this time.

Chapter 148: Undercurrents Billow and Surge

A tall and enormous figure strode in from outside the door as soon as this voice had sounded. Judging from his uniform, he was placed at a noticeably higher rank than those present. His eyebrows were as thick as silkworms and he exuded a feeling of justice despite not having expressed anything.

“Commander Tian?”

When the Dragonteeth Guards saw this person, their faces all changed slightly as they instantly cleaned up their previously scoundrelly act and stood in a line with their gazes lowered, saluting the person who’d arrived.

“Tsk tsk. You guys are becoming too big for your britches eh? Blackmail and extortion. You’re my troops alright. Definitely showing off the pride of the lofty Dragonteeth Guard.”

“Commander, we...” Beads of sweat had gathered on the captain’s forehead as he was frightened to the point of almost peeing himself.

“What? Still want to argue? Do you think I’m deaf and haven’t heard anything?” Commander Tian’s gaze turned cold.

“No, no Commander Tian, we were wrong. We deserve to die.” The captain’s legs bowed as he abruptly kneeled down.

“Commander Tian, we were wrong. Please forgive us this once on the basis that we have followed you for seven to eight years.” Several of the Dragonteeth Guards also kneeled down and continuously knocked their heads against the ground.

It was said that nothing is like having a man on the spot to give orders.

Although General Lu’s position was high, a full level higher than a commander’s, but even his high position was of no use in keeping these fellows in line.

Commander Tian was the person who kept them in line and their real supervisor. Of the people in this group, whether it was the captain or team members, they all fell within Commander Tian’s jurisdiction.

How could they not be afraid that the commander had stumbled upon this ugly matter? Besides, they were very well aware that he abhorred evil as a deadly foe, and was renowned for being coldly impartial.

Once Commander Tian wanted to levy a punishment on them, even pleas for leniency from those in even higher positions wouldn’t necessarily be useful, much less than one from General Lu.

Commander Tian had a fiery temper. When ignited, he would butt heads with even a general, not to mention that General Lu was actually only a vice general.

“All of you, get the hell up! Are all my men as cowardly and timid as you guys?” Commander Tian roared.

When the Dragonteeth Guard heard Commander Tian roar at them, they were rather happy instead. They knew that if the commander was yelling at them, this meant that he wasn’t thoroughly enraged.

Once the Commander was thoroughly enraged, there wouldn’t even be a chance for him to roar at you even if you wanted him to.

The group of people meekly got up and carefully stood to the side, not daring to even breathe too loudly.

“Put this person in the single holding cell first.” Commander Tian instructed calmly.

“But...” The captain was a bit hesitant.

“What? Is there a problem?” Commander Tian rolled his eyes and asked in return.

“General Lu is personally handling this case, and...”

“What? Do you think that you can ignore my commands now that you’ve latched onto General Lu?”

The so-called single holding cell was a separate area within the Black Dungeons.

This has been readied for special individuals, and was equivalent to a VIP room within the Black Dungeons. Once within the single holding cell, this meant that this person was under a protected status within the Black Dungeons.

Otherwise, when held with another group of desperados within the Black Dungeons, anyone would lose at least a layer of skin, if not die outright.

Although the single holding cell wasn’t too large, it was a separate space and could bypass harrassment from other prisoners. It was indeed VIP treatment within the Black Dungeons.

“I’ll say this one last time. Take him to the single holding cell.” Commander Tian said emotionlessly. “You can choose to listen to General Lu and bear the consequences yourself.”

The Dragonteeth Guards looked at each other and were quite conflicted. General Lu’s position was higher and his backing was greater. This was a foregone conclusion.

However, Commander Tian was their real superior and treated them quite well normally. Out of the one hundred commanders within the Dragonteeth Guard, Commander Tian was renowned for favoring his own people, and often talked back to even generals for the benefits of his own men.

They truly did support a supervisor like him from the bottom of their hearts.

If they listened to General Lu and threw Jiang Chen into the Black Dungeons, they would then be thoroughly offending Commander Tian.

Afterwards, if Commander Tian wrote up their extortionist tactics displayed just now and handed it to a supervisor for the Dragonteeth Guard, what awaited them would be stern military punishment.

At the very least, they would lose their title as the Dragonteeth Guard, and at the very worst, they would be executed!

The matter of extortion and blackmail could be a small or large matter. If no one pursued it, then nothing would come of it. As soon as someone seized upon it however, then it'd become a great matter.

It'd be even worse when it was one's own supervisor doing the investigating.

Everyone knew that Commander Tian was renowned for shielding his men's shortcomings and taking care of his troops. If there was a subordinate that even he himself was publicly accusing, how disgusting and unpalatable would this person be?

Anyone who could make it to be a member of the Dragonteeth Guard couldn't be a fool.

After hesitating for a slight while, the captain said hastily, "Commander Tian, we're all your troops. Of course we listen to you."

"Commander Tian, please be at ease. We won't speak of this matter outside, and definitely won't let General Lu know."

"Yes, we listen to Commander Tian."

Commander Tian had been listening with narrowed eyes. If these fellows had hesitated too long, he absolutely wouldn't have minded using the coldest and cruelest methods to kick them out of his team and use military law to ensure that they could never receive another chance.

Seeing that they hadn't hesitated too long in the end, Commander Tian nodded his head slightly. "Even if you guys don't speak of this matter, this can't be kept under wraps for too long. However, if General Lu has any opinions whatsoever, tell him to come find me. You guys were in charge of this case in the beginning, right? That Lu person is simply stretching his hand out too far."

"Yes yes, regardless, we won't run our mouths when we leave from here." The captain promised.

They definitely wouldn't speak of this. If they spoke of it, they would displease both sides and create further trouble for themselves.

Of this, Commander Tian was quite assured of.

"I'll take over. All of you are dismissed." Commander Tian waved his hand and sent the fellows on their way.

When the Dragonteeth Guard had left, Commander Tian said to Jiang Chen, "Jiang Chen, I won't speak unnecessary words. I owe a great debt of gratitude to the fourth prince. You are his honored guest and so I won't let you suffer here. I've just taken a look at this case just now and it's quite complicated. There's certainly someone up to something behind the scenes. If the Azure Heaven Northern Palace hangs onto this matter with a death grip, I'm not sure if the fourth prince can hold up beneath the pressure."

So Commander Tian was actually one of fourth prince Ye Rong's men, Jiang Chen smiled with understanding. "Tell the fourth prince that if he's not at liberty to intervene in this matter, he can just

wait and see. I won't blame him. I'm rather curious though, just who is General Lu? What relations does he have with the Northern Palace?"

Commander Tian sighed lightly, "It's a long story. The Northern Palace has always been domineering amongst the four great sites and have always subtly styled themselves as the first amongst the four. Whether it's the Northern Palace or General Lu, they're all quite close to the first prince. The first prince is one of the hot contenders to be the next ruler and the one with the highest amount of support."

Jiang Chen had an overall understanding after Commander Tian's simplified summary.

Whether it was the Northern Palace or General Lu, the great backer behind them was the first prince of the Skylaurel Kingdom and a contender to be the future Crown Prince.

"This is to say that my careless execution of a robber unintentionally triggered both veiled strife and hidden struggles between the princes?" Jiang Chen couldn't help but laugh ruefully. He hadn't thought either that the situation within the Skylaurel Kingdom was this sensitive, and that a small matter could cause such large ripples.

"It would likely be a small exaggeration to say that this gave rise to a conflict between the princes. But it's obvious that the first prince wishes to make use of this opportunity to suppress the fourth prince. This has been clearly indicated from various details."

Suppress the fourth prince?

Jiang Chen was a bit ticked off. Make an example of me because of conflicts between you princes? So what if you're the first prince?

It wasn't that Jiang Chen liked to cause trouble, but that the Northern Palace had been the one to start this entire matter.

"Does this count as beating the dog before the lion? I'm that poor dog and the fourth prince is the lion?" Jiang Chen laughed coldly.

Commander Tian stared dumbly for a second and also laughed ruefully. "The first prince kills decisively. In his eyes, there's no one who cannot be sacrificed. If he wishes to kill someone, it's as easy as stepping on an ant for him."

"An ant?" Jiang Chen smiled in his anger. "Good, very good. What a fantastic show of beating the dog before the lion. However, even if he views me as a chicken waiting for the slaughter, I'm afraid he's going to be disappointed this time."

"Oh?" Commander Tian's eyes gleamed.

Jiang Chen laughed faintly before he sat down crossed legged with a flourish, simply deciding to close his eyes and speak no further.

Commander Tian opened his mouth but ultimately decided not to ask further. He cupped his hands to say, "Brother, my power is limited with regards to matters above me and I cannot intervene. Here however, even if General Lu makes an appearance to suppress me, I still won't let you suffer one iota. My power can only reach this far."

"Alright, Commander Tian has a great heart. I, Jiang Chen, will remember this favor." Jiang Chen nodded calmly. He also knew that Commander Tian spoke truly and was a person of solid character.

...

A female disciple was standing outside the door of a certain room within one of the strongholds of the Southern Palace within the capital. She spoke respectfully, "Elder Ning, there's a man around 30 or so years old who petitions to see you."

"A man?" A gentle yet somewhat lazy voice traveled out from within. "Who is it?"

"Your disciple has ignorant eyes and couldn't recognize him. It looks like he's not one of the nobles of the kingdom."

"Did he say why he wished to see me?" Elder Ning asked again.

"He did, it seems to have something to do with the Wishing Tower. However, he didn't go into specifics on precisely what. He only wanted your disciple to notify you as soon as possible and was afraid that a delay would bungle matters."

"The Wishing Tower?" Elder Ning's originally noncommittal voice suddenly became a little unsettled.

"Are you sure you've heard correctly?"

"Your disciple heard very clearly. He did indeed mention the Wishing Tower."

"Hurry, bade him come in. And, no one is allowed to disturb me while I receive my guest." Elder Ning threw off her usual lethargy and gave hasty orders.

"Yes." The disciple was a bit baffled. Why did Elder Ning turn into someone else when the Wishing Tower was mentioned?

Footsteps sounded outside the courtyard after a moment. An exceedingly magnetic voice rang out, "Foreigner Qiao Baishi petitions to see Elder Ning."

"Come in."

The lazy voice caused Qiao Baishi's body to shudder vaguely, involuntarily reacting in a way that he shouldn't have.

Chapter 149: Ordering Around Two Heavyweights

Qiao Baishi recollected his senses and pulled himself together before pushing and entering through the door. What greeted him was a fragrance that gladdened his heart and refreshed his mind, giving him the feeling of having mistakenly stumbled into a lady's boudoir.

He lifted his head to see a well arranged room. It was akin to the room of an unmarried girl from a respectable, cultured family. There were several hints of the charming playfulness of a young girl amidst luxurious opulence.

If he hadn't seen it with his own eyes, Qiao Baishi would've been hard pressed to believe that this was the room of a middle aged female elder.

“Qiao Baishi? Hehe, can it be that I know little of what goes on in this world recently? When did our Skylaurel Kingdom gain another young, handsome genius in the world of pills?”

Qiao Baishi was thirty some years old and it wasn't quite a stretch to label him as a young, handsome genius.

Qiao Baishi cupped his hands and chuckled, “Your praise is far too high, far too high. It's rather Elder Ning who is a national beauty and possesses the wondrous reputation of an unaging legend. Although I've always humbly abided in the Eastern Kingdom, I too have long admired your name.”

That so-called “unaging legend” was naturally fulsome flattery.

But these two words had flair and innovation to them. They were different from the usual tripe.

Indeed, when Elder Ning heard these words, she was naturally pleased and a smile like spring blossomed on a face from which age was impossible to discern.

“An unaging legend? Who said that? How come I've never heard it before?” Elder Ning's exquisite eyes danced. Light rippled through her naturally mesmerizing eyes, as though water would drip out at any point.

“Eh? Elder Ning has never heard of this before? But of course, elder, you are a sage, indifferent to wealth and fame, aloof and detached from public opinion. You no longer care about your reputation in the outside world.”

Another wave of fulsome flattery came crashing over and the smile on Elder Ning's face became even more unconcealed.

“Hehehehe...” Elder Ning smiled. “Qiao Baishi, is it? You are truly an interesting person. Did you say you come from the Eastern Kingdom just now?”

“Yes.”

“The Eastern Kingdom is quite far from here, what brings you to the Skylaurel Kingdom?”

“Would you believe me if I said I was attracted by your fame? You probably don't know that in the noble circles of the Eastern Kingdom, all of us admire your sketches in private. The noble circles take pride in collecting your sketches. Although I too desire to collect them, unfortunately, my funds are low and I have no way of competing with those great nobles. I truly hold regrets within my heart. However, now that I've been received by you in person, I will have much to boast about when I go back this time.”

Qiao Baishi scratched his head quite “honestly” when he spoke of this and laughed dumbly.

One had to say, women should never listen to men's lies. Qiao Baishi's lies had reached the level of being truer than the truth, giving Elder Ning no choice but to believe his words.

Elder Ning was obsessed with beauty and was exceedingly narcissistic. Add that to the fact that she did possess uncommon beauty and was talented at dressing herself up, she looked twenty years old even at an age greater than forty.

This was what she'd always been proud of.

She'd had a stiff face on originally and wanted to see what this foreigner had come for, but now that Qiao Baishi had flattered and teased her, she was all giggles and a flutter, unable to remain reserved even if she wanted to.

Retracting her smile with some effort, she patted her chest, "Alright, Qiao Baishi, I admit that I'm starting to admire you a bit. Did you say you were here on behalf of the Wishing Tower?"

"Yes." Qiao Baishi didn't deny this at all. "I'm here to grant Elder Ning's wish."

"What?" Elder Ning found it even more difficult to remain reserved. She surged to her feet and padded over with her bare, jade-like feet. "You can grant my wish? Do you know what wish I've made?"

"Of course! You wish to remain ever young and maintain an unaging appearance for the next thirty years."

"You... you really have the methods to do that?" Elder Ning's eyes widened greatly as fervent expectation suffused her charming eyes. Her expression was one anxious for a personal favor and worried that she would lose it, as if deathly afraid that Qiao Baishi would give a negative answer.

"If I didn't have the ability to, how would I dare call upon you?" Qiao Baishi smiled.

"But, why me?"

Qiao Baishi spread out his hands. "There are not that many why's and how's. There's a saying in our Eastern Kingdom that women are in charge of appearing as beautiful as flowers, whereas men are in charge of earning money and supporting the family. Women exist to be beautiful and to pursue beauty is both part of their innate nature and their responsibility. Men have the heaven sent task of thinking of various methods to protect a woman's beauty."

"Haha what!" When had Elder Ning ever heard such refreshing words before? She was so delighted that flowers were blooming in her heart. She was also filled with curiosity towards Qiao Baishi at the same time, but she spoke in false, cute anger, "Don't you tease me and exaggerate as if we're husband and wife."

"Heh heh, I spoke in error. However, should it not naturally be the greatest wish of all men beneath heaven to fulfill Elder Ning's wishes?"

Elder Ning was so amused by these words that she couldn't stop smiling and laughing as she completely discarded the image of a demure lady. She was beside herself with joy and was almost capering with joy on the spot.

"Mm mm, Qiao Baishi, I realize that I admire you more and more. I've decided that no matter whether or not you can help me fulfill my wish, I will hire you to be my assistant. And, I will help you obtain the identity of a fifth rank noble to the best of my abilities. You are simply too interesting!"

Elder Ning had promised the position of a sixth rank noble and simultaneous recruitment as a follower on the wish scroll.

But now, the position of follower had turned into assistant and the sixth rank noble had risen to a fifth rank noble. One could see from this just how amused Elder Ning was by Qiao Baishi.

Qiao Baishi made use of every single second, sighing, "Elder Ning, to be honest, this matter had been one hundred percent assured of success. But, I have a business partner who's gotten himself into a bit of a sticky situation. Now, I have a pill recipe in my hands for retaining youthful looks named the Four Seasons Eternal Spring Pill, but it lacks that last bit of medicinal lead."

"What sticky situation?" Elder Ning was a bit panicked when she heard these words.

"Well, here's the situation. My friend obtained this recipe through a fortuitous encounter. He gave me the recipe, but didn't give me the last ingredient. He was waiting for me to finish gathering money before giving me the last ingredient."

"Money isn't an issue. How much is he asking for?" Elder Ning wasn't short on money at all.

"I've already gathered the money, but now he's been caught up a matter that seems a bit tricky to handle." Qiao Baishi said with a bit of depression.

He was purposely taking this circuitous path to make Elder Ning's heart anxious, to make her curious, make her itch in the heart but be unable to scratch it, and to make her ask voluntarily.

"Just what has happened?" Elder Ning was frantic. "I have quite a network within the Skylareland Kingdom. What matters can possibly exist that my Southern Palace can't handle?"

"He killed someone."

"So he killed someone. How big of a matter is this? I'll immediately send someone to bring him out. The Dragonteeth Guard locked him up right?" Elder Ning was quite straightforward.

"He killed a robber."

"A robber? Since when was it a crime to kill a criminal? Does the Dragonteeth Guard even know how to handle their cases anymore?"

"The main thing was that the robber he beat to death comes from quite a strong background." Qiao Baishi continued to lead her on.

"A strong background? As strong as this background is, is it bigger than even mine, an elder of the Southern Palace?" Elder Ning snorted delicately and was a bit displeased.

Qiao Baishi sighed, "To speak candidly, he beat to death a disciple of the Northern Palace."

"The Northern Palace?" Elder Ning exclaimed softly, and then immediately nodded meaningfully. "I truly do believe you now. The Northern Palace has always had the style of bandits and villainous thieves."

"Ai, I've heard that the Northern Palace is giving the Dragonteeth Guard a lot of pressure to make this case of justified self defense into one of murdering someone on the street. They seemed to have sent out the tough message to discourage anyone of even thinking about going against them in this issue, no matter who it is who makes an appearance or how much face this person can command."

"Such an egotistic tone!" Elder Ning was long since become drunk on the brew that Qiao Baishi had been offering. How would she possibly give thought to the idea that the connotations of Qiao Baishi's words were to direct her to a certain conclusion and even to purposefully stoke her anger?

"I'd like to see how this is the case. This is still the land of the Ye family and the territory of the Skylaurel Kingdom. So the Northern Palace runs rampant in the western region of the kingdom, do they seek to blot out the sky with one hand in the capital as well?"

"Qiao Baishi, I'll write a note for you. Give it to the Dragonteeth Guard and have them handle the case impartially."

Elder Ning was an elder who had actual power within the Southern Palace. Her position was high and her influence strong. She was ranked slightly lower than only a few people. Her words held great authority within the Southern Palace, and she was a notable character within the Skylaurel Kingdom.

Her note wouldn't be any less important than those of nobles and officials holding power at court.

Qiao Baishi was overjoyed upon hearing these words, "Things will be easy with the elder's personal note. This is the recipe that I've received. I offer it to you for your perusal first. Once my friend is released and the recipe is combined with the last ingredient, then the Four Seasons Eternal Spring Pill will come to fruition!"

Elder Ning happily accepted the recipe, the evaluation of Qiao Baishi in her heart rising another level again. She thought that Qiao Baishi was definitely sensible since he didn't attempt to hide or withhold the recipe. Who would've thought that a man from a small place like the Eastern Kingdom would have a greater bearing than the men of the Skylaurel Kingdom?

...

The capital, in the Myriad Treasures Palace.

There were two people who held actual power within the Myriad Treasures — one of them was the head, Zhuge Yan, and the other was the vice head Shi Xiaoyao.

At this moment, vice head Shi Xiaoyao was sitting in his yard and leisurely tasting wine.

This time every day was the moment he enjoyed fine wine. He had maintained this habit for decades, unshakable under any circumstances. He'd still have to have his wine even if the sky was caving in.

It wasn't until he'd drank the last drop of wine, put down the wine cup and smacked his tongue and lips that he sighed, "Fine wine must be had, but it's a pity that although there is much fine wine beneath the heavens, only their taste is good. Those that are fine to the point of striking one's heart and soul are as rare as the feathers of a phoenix and horn of a unicorn. What a pity... a pity... when can I have another sip of the Nine Magnificence Dew Wine?"

Like a blemish in an otherwise perfect thing, vice head Shi gave a drunken belch. This kind of life was most satisfying and enjoyable to him.

Seeing that at last, he had finally finished drinking his wine, a follower cautiously approached him. "Sire, there's a Myriad Treasures disciple called Fengyan waiting outside, asking to see you. He's waited for about an hour upon hearing that you were tasting wine inside."

"Fengyan?" Vice head Shi narrowed his eyes. His mind did seem to remember that there was a such a disciple within the Myriad Treasures Palace.

Except, there were thousands and tens of thousands of these sorts of disciples within the Myriad Treasures Palace. Shi Xiaoyao could only remember his name.

“What, do you think that I have that much time on my hands? So much so that even an ordinary disciple can come and ask for an audience?” Shi Xiaoyao’s temper was even more proud and aloof than Elder Ning’s.

“No... not at all. Your subordinate also hinted to him that with his status, he had no right to directly ask for an audience. But, no matter what I said, that fellow wouldn’t leave. He seemed quite anxious from his appearance.”

“When did our Myriad Treasures Palace accept such a disciple who doesn’t understand the rules?” Shi Xiaoyao’s face darkened as he became unhappy.

“He said he was so bold as to ask for an audience because of a Wishing Tower matter.” The subordinate had to respond honestly.

“What? Wishing Tower?” Shi Xiaoyao who had originally been lethargic seemed as though he had been suddenly been revived and pumped full of blood. His body sprang up like a spring. “Where is he? Quick, send him in. What the hell are you guys doing, why didn’t you notify me of such a big happening earlier?”

Chapter 150: Vice Head Shi is Quite Enraged

“Disciple Feng Yan greets Vice Head Shi. Your disciple is fearful because he has requested for an audience above his level. I ask that the vice head’s pardon this disciple’s crime of impoliteness.” Feng Yan immediately knelt on the floor in fear when he entered, making his posture quite low.

He also knew that the vice head’s temper was erratic, and that he was renowned for not being easy to get along with; he’d taken a risk in paying a formal visit. If he angered the eccentric vice head, life wouldn’t be easy for him.

“Cut your blather, I don’t buy any of this.” Shi Xiaoyao flourished his sleeves and lifted Feng Yan’s body up. “Stand up properly and explain to me, what’s going on with the Wishing Tower? If you dare to hoodwink me, heh heh, do you dare to believe that I won’t skin you alive and pull out your tendons, right here, and right now?”

This wasn’t a threat. Duping the vice head was absolutely a towering, heinous crime. There wouldn’t even be a venue for an appeal if he was killed.

Feng Yan’s position in the Myriad Treasures Palace wasn’t high, and he had no backer. If this wasn’t true, he wouldn’t go to the transaction area to conduct business. Any self respecting disciple would be contemptful of anything that required him to put his face on the line like this.

It was precisely because Feng Yan had no status and no patron, that he’d always liked to take risks, believing that money came from danger.

He’d chatted up Jiang Chen partially because of his own consideration of this aspect; he wanted to wrestle a future through his interactions with Jiang Chen.

Shi Xiaoyao had spoken. Feng Yan thus knew that he was an arrow that had left the bow already, and that had no possible return.

He simply bolstered his courage and spoke truthfully, "In response to your sir, your disciple has met a unique person at the transaction fair of the Azure Heaven Southern Palace. He gave me a list and told me to convey it to you sir. He said to mention the Wishing Tower if you weren't willing to meet. Your disciple was requested by others to do this thing, and had originally also thought of this matter as a bit ridiculous. However, this person took out a Supreme Rank Vast Ocean Pill as if it was nothing to him, making your disciple unable to dismiss this matter very easily."

"A Supreme Rank Vast Ocean Pill?" Even Shi Xiaoyao was a bit startled by this. "Does such a thing actually exist in our Skylareel Kingdom?"

"Your disciple has little learning, and it was also the first time that I've seen such a thing. That was indeed a Supreme Rank Vast Ocean Pill, and it could recover seventy percent true qi instantaneously."

Shi Xiaoyao waved his hands, "This doesn't count as little learning. I've lived a darned long period of time, and have never seen a pill that could recover seventy percent true qi in the field of qi replenishing pills. However, as good as this Vast Ocean Pill is, it's only useful in the true qi realm. It's still of little value in the spirit realm."

"The Headmaster's words are logical." Feng Yan could only go along with Shi Xiaoyao's tone.

"Where is this list that you spoke of?" Shi Xiaoyao had flagging interest. He had walked through countless places over these years, but had never had another sip of the Nine Magnificence Dew Wine.

He didn't think that a person who Feng Yan had randomly met would be able to fulfill his wish for him.

Feng Yan carefully took out the list and handed it over respectfully to the vice head.

Shi Xiaoyao took the list, flicked a glance at it when he opened it, and his brows suddenly arching slightly.

As he continued to read further, Shi Xiaoyao's brows unconsciously knit into furrowed rows. When he got halfway down the page, Shi Xiaoyao abruptly surged to his feet and reached out to grab Feng Yan by the throat.

"Speak, where is this person? Where is he? Hurry and speak!"

This unexpected move greatly startled Feng Yan. He thought that Shi Xiaoyao wanted to wipe him out.

Upon seeing that spittle was flying wildly from Shi Xiaoyao in his haste to find out where Jiang Chen was, Feng Yan finally vaguely understood that perhaps there was something uncommon about this list.

Shi Xiaoyao seemed to have realized that his sudden, abrupt moves may have frightened Feng Yan. He immediately released his hand lamely and mumbled, "Don't be so cowardly will you? I could wipe you out with a flick of my finger if I wanted to. Not bad, not bad, you're called Feng Yan is it? You've accomplished a great deed this time. I'll make you an administrator after this."

It was as if Feng Yan had been electrocuted all over by this small speech, and he was utterly dumbfounded. When vice head Shi had leapt up just now, he'd thought that everything was over. Who would've thought that his next words would be to make him an administrator?

The great rises and falls of life truly came too abruptly.

Giving an ordinary disciple the position of an administrator all of sudden was equivalent to suddenly rising more than three levels, like a carp making its way up a waterfall, hoping to become a dragon.

"What? Are you shocked senseless, or beside yourself with joy?" Shi Xiaoyao raised his hand, preparing to fling a slap over.

Feng Yan was rudely awakened as he hastily spoke, "He... he's been taken away by the Dragonteeth Guard."

"What?!" Shi Xiaoyao sent the chair next to him flying with one kick. "What the hell, which f*cking idiot had such nerve? Didn't you tell them that this person had connections with me?"

"I... your disciple didn't dare say. What if he was a fraud? Wouldn't that have besmirched your noble reputation?" Feng Yan was also quite regretful at this moment. Why hadn't he had a stiffer attitude in the beginning, and said a few words in Jiang Chen's defense?

Shi Xiaoyao hopped up on one foot and cursed loudly. "Useless dunce! Go now and get the hell over to the Dragonteeth Guard! Tell them to immediately release that person, right now!"

The vaunted vice head of the Myriad Treasures Palace was an esteemed personage within the Skylaurel Kingdom, especially within the capital. Any random word from Shi Xiaoyao was enough to send tremors through the capital. Even the general director of the Dragonteeth Guard had to give him some face.

After all, the Dragonteeth Guard only took care of things for the royal family, whereas the Myriad Treasures Palace took care of things for the Precious Tree Sect.

Although the Skylaurel Kingdom was great, it was still a kingdom that depended on the Precious Tree Sect. Without the patronage of the Precious Tree Sect, what right would it have to number amongst the foremost within the sixteen kingdom's alliance?

Having received Shi Xiaoyao's order, Feng Yan was greatly reassured. He knew that this was a chance. If he could handle this matter appropriately, then the position of administrator might very well materialize thanks to Jiang Chen.

"Your disciple will go now and convey your words."

"Get the hell over there now!"

Although he was being cussed at left and right, Feng Yan's heart was as sweet as if he'd drunken honey. He knew that after he'd held on for so many years, he was finally seeing a glimmer of a chance.

"Just what did Jiang Chen write in that list? Why was it like the vice head had seen a pill of eternal life when he read it?" Although Feng Yan was curious, he didn't dare to ask too many questions. He knew that it was enough to finish the tasks within his responsibilities. He should never ask about matters that he shouldn't know about.

...

The capital, one of the Qingyang Valley's strongholds.

"Kid, you better take a good look at what this place is if you want to cause trouble. The territory of the Qingyang Valley isn't a place where you fellows can behave as you want to." A Qingyang Valley disciple said with a very irked tone.

"Cut your blather. I'll say this again, I'm here to deliver a message." Xue Tong's brow was also vaguely furrowed.

"Why don't you stop joking around and look at yourself in the mirror. The likes of you sending a message to Elder Fei? Do you know Elder Fei's status? He's the head instructor of the Qingyang Palace. Is he someone you can meet just because you want to?"

Xue Tong was also startled. They'd known that the strange old man was a senior executive within the Qingyang Palace, but they hadn't thought that he'd be the head instructor!

At this moment, Wen Ziqi made a courteous greeting. "Big brother, we're really here to bring a message to Elder Fei. How can we make you believe us?"

"How could we believe you?" The disciple's tone turned slightly better when he saw that Wen Ziqi was a gentle beauty. "He just said that all of you had passed through Qingyang Valley earlier and talked with Elder Fei. Who are you kidding with these words? Foreigners have to be a medicine servant for twenty years when they enter the Valley, that's the rule. And yet I see that none of you are past twenty years old?"

Wen Ziqi smiled ruefully. No wonder the other didn't believe them. That was the rule!

They couldn't fault him either. None of them were over twenty years old. No one would believe them if they said that they'd been medicine servants for twenty years.

"Big brother, the young master of my house isn't an ordinary person. He has an agreement with Elder Fei. Besides, your Elder Fei has two medicine boys called Big Egg and Second Egg. This is true, right?"

"You know Big Egg and Second Egg?" The disciple was startled. Big Egg and Second Egg had always remained within the depths of the Valley, and never ventured out. Those who'd never entered the Valley truly wouldn't know of them. Could this group of people really have something to do with Elder Fei?

Upon seeing that he was hesitating, Wen Ziqi smiled slightly. "I also know that your Elder Fei has been searching for the Mystic Ruler Grass all these years. This is also true, right?"

"What?" The disciple was greatly startled. "You know even this?"

"Not only do we know this, but we also know that Elder Fei wishes to refine the Peaceful Ruler Pill. It's a pity that the Mystic Ruler Grass is just too difficult to find, and thus Elder Fei is still empty handed to this day."

"This... this... this, can you really..."

Qiao Shan had always been an impatient sort, and couldn't hold it in anymore. "This, this, this, what? You're the one with all the useless blather. Our young master has said, 'if Elder Fei is still thinking about what he wants, then get the hell to the capital immediately.' If he's late, he won't even be able to find a place to cry."

Qiao Chuang patted the counter and raised his voice. "Did you hear that? Do we need to repeat it again? The young master of my house is a friend of many years with your house's old man Fei. It's your house's old man who went out on a limb to beg our house's young master. Don't go and think that it's our young master who's sucking up to old man Fei. You get my drift?"

These two brothers both had brash personalities. They swaggered out the door after saying their piece.

As the captain, Xue Tong could only laugh ruefully and shrug his shoulders, saying to the disciple, "My two brothers are a bit more crude. However, although their words are a bit piercing to the ears, they speak the truth. This matter is of great urgency. If Elder Fei wants what he desires, then he must immediately make it into the capital and tell the Dragonteeth Guard to hand over our young master."

"Remember, delays spoil an important affair. You won't be able to redeem yourself even if you have ten heads to spare." Guo Jin also sighed lightly and walked away, shaking his head.

The Qingyang Valley disciple was completely befuddled as he watched the strange group of youths walk away. He couldn't recover for the longest time.

When he finally sorted out his thoughts, his expression suddenly changed drastically. "This is bad, these people were so detailed about Elder Fei's matters. Their words are likely true. What Dragonteeth Guard, can it be that their young master has offended the Dragonteeth Guard and they're waiting for Elder Fei to go and save him?!"

"Can it be that their young master has what Elder Fei wants?"

"This is bad, activate the thousand li transmission skill immediately, and ask Elder Fei to travel to the capital as soon as possible!"

...

The Black Dungeons area of the Dragonteeth Guard.

General Lu was currently in the midst of throwing a fit. "You dumb animals dare to agree outwardly, but disagree at heart. You dare give this kid a single holding cell, when I told you to put him into the Black Dungeons? What? Do you think I want this kid to have a vacation in the Black Dungeons?"

The faces of the Dragonteeth Guards were all ashen from their fear as they cowered on the ground.

Commander Tian stood with a ghastly pale face to the side, "General Lu, don't beat around the bush. They're my men, it's I who had them do so."

Commander Tian lived up to his reputation of shielding his own men alright. He stood out at this moment in order to shoulder all the responsibility, making the other Dragonteeth Guards feel quite grateful.

“Tian Shao, what do you mean by this? Is it that I, a general, can’t even command the men beneath you?” General Lu’s tone turned frosty.

“Vice General Lu, I truly don’t recall that I had a character such as you as one of my supervisors. The general of my troop is surnamed Qiu, and the vice general is surnamed Chen. I truly don’t know what basis Vice General Lu has to command my men on.”

Tian Shao’s tone was neither rushed nor hurried, neither cringing nor arrogant, and wasn’t stopped in his tracks by General Lu’s aura, but rather argued with logic and reason.