

Three Realms 541

Chapter 541: Attacked By All Sides

“Ole brother Dan Chi, this Jiang Chen is simply too perverse, isn’t he? His level seems beyond what we should have in the Myriad Domain!” Wei Wuying was the first to step forth and start trouble. When he saw that even Wei Xing’er could only hold down third place with such an exemplary display of skill, and Wei Qing could only manage fifth place with his stable performance, he couldn’t accept the situation. Although there were two more rounds to go, who knew if Jiang Chen would still set such a ridiculous standard of performance?

Even though the Regal Pill Palace would still demonstrate a strong overall strength without Jiang Chen, the Walkabout Sect would absolutely have a chance of challenging them then. With Jiang Chen so far in the lead, it didn’t seem as if there was any doubt about the champion of the genius group. The additional fifty points he would receive then would create a further advantage for the Regal Pill Palace in the final rankings of the Pill Battles. The only way for Wei Wuying to prevent this was to step forth and question Jiang Chen.

When Wei Wuying stepped forth, so did Tristar Sect Head Zhu. His ambitions for the champion’s seat was still burning brightly as he smiled. “I also find this to be rather odd. Jiang Chen hails from the sixteen kingdoms, and even if he’s had the benefit of being trained in the Regal Pill Palace, he still shouldn’t be displaying such a stunning performance.”

The others smiled and didn’t say a word. Wang Jianyu of the Sacred Sword Palace had always been at odds with the Regal Pill Palace, so he chose to jump on the bandwagon as well. “The two sect heads make sense, Jiang Chen is indeed a suspicious character.”

The Sacred Sword Palace had always ranked near the bottom in the Pill Battles rankings, and were mostly just here to make up the numbers. They had no real ambitions in this regard. However, when this matter had to do with the Regal Pill Palace, their intrinsically hostile relationship left the Sacred Sword Palace with an obligation to step out to support an objection against their hated enemy.

The family heads of the Great Cathedral stayed silent, merely smiling. Only Honored Master Tian Ming of the Dark North Sect chuckled. “What is there to be suspicious about or not? The Pill Battles are a tradition left behind from the time of the Myriad Empire. Are you possibly suspecting him of cheating?”

Dan Chi smiled faintly. “If you three have such effort to spare in suspecting Jiang Chen, why don’t you spend it teaching your own disciples? Is it important why Jiang Chen’s performance is so heaven defying? Ask not where heroes come from. It’s not at all important where Jiang Chen comes from and why is he such a genius.”

Dan Chi wasn’t someone who could be easily sliced and diced. He would never allow these fellows to use this as an opportunity to create trouble. As long as Jiang Chen hadn’t cheated, it was irrelevant how insane or suspicious his performance was.

“That’s not how things often go though. There’s always something sinister at play when things appear out of the ordinary. I rather think we should investigate this.” Wang Jianyu chuckled.

Dan Chi’s face grew cold. “Wang Jianyu, don’t tell me you’re jealous?”

Wang Jianyu smiled. "My Sacred Sword Palace has never had much ambition in the Pill Battles. What jealousy is there to speak of? I'm merely speaking out of a sense of fair play."

"Fair play? Well, that is certainly a grave matter. I welcome Palace Head Wang to come out with any evidence of Jiang Chen cheating, so I can expel such a cheating disciple from my Regal Pill Palace. But if not, it would be wiser if you shut that mouth of yours in case others make it out to be a case of jealousy. We're all heavyweights of the Myriad Domain after all, and can't make a fool of ourselves in front of the juniors."

Honored Master Tian Ming also smiled. "I say, don't be so caught up in Jiang Chen's performance. It's not a bad thing for the Myriad Domain to produce such a heaven defying genius! Do you want our Myriad Domain to always be a nobody, or worse, be disqualified the next time the domains are drawn?"

Wei Wuying smiled sinisterly. "Old Tian Ming, you always wear the same pants as Dan Chi. You can save those words of yours, hmm?"

Palace Head Zhu nodded. "I advocate investigating this Jiang Chen."

Palace Head Dan Chi's face darkened. "Investigate what? Jiang Chen's background is clean, so what's there to look into? I only say this, bring out whatever evidence you've got, or stop worrying if you have none. Have the Pill Battles devolved to the point where those who excel are suppressed? If everyone thinks my Regal Pill Palace is being superfluous, then just say so. Why bother scrounging around for such a crude excuse?"

Wei Wuying sneered. "A clean background? And who can prove that? Jiang Chen is from the sixteen kingdom alliance, that's already half a desolate wilderness to begin with. I'm sure everyone remembers the last gathering where we discussed whether or not to exile them, and almost everyone agreed. The reason? Is it only because the sixteen kingdom alliance is weak? Who doesn't know that that's the fringe territory where the ancient demon tribe is sealed? Who can guarantee that those from the sixteen kingdoms don't have the background of the demon tribe?"

The expressions of the sect heavyweights drastically changed as those words rang in the air. It was apparent that the words "ancient demon tribe" had left a deep feeling of danger in them, and it seemed that none of them were exempt from this reaction.

Sect Head Zhu immediately interjected. "Sect Head Wei's words aren't without reason. The ancient demon tribe may be dead, but it hasn't collapsed yet. It would only require the slightest opening for them to rise from the ashes again. Even the slightest spark can ravage the plains with fire. I also feel that we must stay guarded against this."

Wang Jianyu was happy to add fuel to the flame, laughing, "We must be cautious about the remnants of the demon tribe. Out of considerations of security, I recommend making a thorough investigation. We'd rather kill a thousand erroneously rather than letting one free! That Jiang Chen's perverse potential is something that our Myriad Domain level could not have cultivated." **nOve-lb-1n**

Even the family heads from the Great Cathedral didn't remain neutral this time and nodded as well. It was apparent that they didn't dare relax their guard when it came to the ancient demon race, even if they didn't necessarily feel that Jiang Chen had anything to do with them. They would investigate things thoroughly now rather than let anything slip by.

When Dan Chi saw that four out of the six great sects were advocating for investigating Jiang Chen, he was completely incensed and knew that they were meaning to band together to suppress Jiang Chen. However, Dan Chi wasn't just any easy pickings. He was well versed in these battles, snorting coldly in response, "If you wish to look into even someone with a clean background, then I'd like to ask, is the background of every disciple you recruit clean and pure? Sect Head Zhu, why don't you tell me where your Ding Tong is from? Has anyone heard of him before?"

Sect Heads Zhu's face stiffened as a strange look flashed through his eyes. "Ding Tong is one of our Tristar Sect disciples."

"Is that so? Then will Sect Head Zhu tell us more about this disciple's background? I'm all ears."

Sect Head Zhu snorted coldly. "Is there a need to do so?"

Dan Chi laughed heartily. "Since you want to investigate Jiang Chen, I can reel off his background at any time. Why can't you do the same for Ding Tong so everyone can verify his background? Or is it because the Regal Pill Palace is the champion that you want to suppress us?"

These words stumped Sect Head Zhu into speechlessness.

Wu Weiying was delighted to blow up this matter even more. Jiang Chen and Ding Tong were both ranked higher than Wei Xing'er anyways. If both of them could be kicked off, then she would be the current champion. He grinned, "Dan Chi makes sense as well. If we investigate Jiang Chen, we naturally need to look into Ding Tong as well. To be honest, I've heard of Jiang Chen before today, but I've never heard of Ding Tong. Have any of you heard of him?"

Everyone was familiar with Jiang Chen's name from when the Regal Pill Palace allied with the Precious Tree Sect, but Ding Tong was a true dark horse in that no one had ever heard of him before the Pill Battles.

Wang Jianyu of the Sacred Sword Palace was on good terms with Tristar Sect Head Zhu. He smiled, "Don't be distracted by Dan Chi, everyone. He's merely purposefully stirring up the waters and making the situation murky to distract from the real problem here."

Dan Chi shot a cold glare at Wang Jianyu. When all was said and done, the latter was still a sect head! Yet here he was, being so openly shameless as to publicly tout a set of double standards. Dan Chi shook his head with a light sigh. "No wonder the Sacred Sword Palace has never sought to better themselves. With a sect head such as you, even those below you know nothing better because of the unworthy example you set at the peak."

Wang Jianyu was enraged. "Dan Chi, do your words indicate that you think your Regal Pill Palace already reigns over my Sacred Sword Palace?! Since we're all here today, why don't our two sects finally decide who truly owns that spirit vein, huh!?"

When the Sacred Sword Palace and Regal Pill Palace fought over the spirit vein years ago, Wang Jianyu had continued to bear a grudge ever since the former Regal Pill Palace Head had suppressed him in that fight. He'd always wanted an excuse to strike back and gain face, so relations between the two could truly only be described as acrimonious in the extreme.

Dan Chi smiled coolly. "There are naturally many opportunities for your Sacred Sword Palace to strive for glory in the Myriad Grand Ceremony. Have you already made up your mind to disturb the proceedings of the Pill Battles today?"

The family head of the Sacred Elephant family of the Great Cathedral rose to his feet at this moment to try to smooth things over. "Everyone, let's not bicker and argue here. Investigating whether someone is of the ancient demon race is easy enough. Although it had many branches, the lineage of the ancient demons are still quite different from us humans. Since Jiang Chen and Ding Tong's backgrounds are suspect, in my view, they should both be tested. Otherwise, it would be unfair to both the Regal Pill Palace and Tristar Sect. Ole brother Dan Chi and Sect Head Zhu, what do you say?"

Dan Chi nodded, "I agree wholeheartedly with the Family Head's words."

Sect Head Zhu hesitated momentarily and also nodded. "Then let us test both of them."

There were naturally many ways to test bloodlines in the Myriad Domain. Jiang Chen and Ding Tong were summoned and notified of the controversy between the great sects. When Jiang Chen saw that Palace Head Dan Chi had already agreed, he didn't say anything else. He had nothing to do with the ancient demon race anyways, but it was a good thing he hadn't assimilated the dragon blood. It would be difficult to explain the presence of a dragon bloodline when it was detected. Even if he wasn't of the ancient demon race, it would still be very astonishing to possess the bloodline of the dragon race. Up until now, Jiang Chen had only assimilated the blood of the Golden Cicada. Although that could also be detected, it was noticeably different from the ancient demon race, and was a very pure bloodline to boot. Plus, those of the Myriad Domain might not necessarily recognize this particular bloodline.

As for the Firelizard and Raven King cores, although he'd refined them, they hadn't contained their respective bloodlines. As such, it wouldn't be reflected in Jiang Chen's blood, so he wasn't opposed to the testing.

It was rather Ding Tong who was further irritated when he heard that he had to undergo testing. His second place ranking already irked him, but since all the six great sects' heavyweights were present, his belly full of ire had to go unappeased. Resigned, he could only agree to undergo testing.

Blood samples were quickly taken, and all of the heavyweights participated in testing Jiang Chen's blood. Their final conclusion was that it was completely void of even traces of the demon race's bloodlines. Since there was no demon lineage in his blood, Wei Wuying could no longer find any more excuses.

Chapter 542: Ding Tong Extends an Invitation

"Hmph, even though Jiang Chen isn't from the demon race, there's still something noticeably off about his bloodline. Can't you see it?" Wei Wuying was still unwilling to accept this outcome.

Wang Jianyu nodded. "Indeed. Although this is the bloodline of the human race, there are some odd components to it. In my eyes, this bloodline is still worthy of investigation."

The Sacred Ape family head from the Great Cathedral suddenly laughed out loud. "The two of you should stop raising objections just for the sake of opposing the Regal Pill Palace. It's a very common thing for cultivators to assimilate the bloodlines of various animals. Almost all of the disciples of my

Great Cathedral have assimilated similar bloodlines. Are you going to look into each and every single one of them?”

Someone had finally stepped out to speak in defense of fairness. He sighed, “Still, this bloodline is very rare. Even in my eyes, it’s still a very impressive lineage. No wonder Jiang Chen’s potential in pill dao is so high, this bloodline could be the reason why!”

The Sacred Elephant family head also sighed. “You’ve really found a treasure this time, ole brother Dan Chi. Are you willing to give Jiang Chen over to my Great Cathedral? Demand whatever price you will, his bloodline is a great match for the style of our sect!”

Dan Chi chuckled and declined resolutely. “Family Head, I might be able to painfully part with anything else, but I’ve gone to the depths of antagonizing the Ninesuns Sky Sect for him. Would I part with him that easily?”

The Sacred Elephant family head seemed to have anticipated this response as he huffed out lightly. “What a pity. Ai, it seems like my Great Cathedral should have a broader vision. We let the Regal Pill Palace pick up a treasure this time.”

Wei Wuying had played the role of a petty person the entire time, but he had yet to give up hope. “There’s no problem with Jiang Chen, but we still need to look at Ding Tong’s bloodline.”

Ding Tong’s bloodline was also quickly analyzed, and surprisingly, although he didn’t have any lineage from the ancient demon race, the energy within his bloodline was abnormally strong. It actually surpassed all the geniuses in the Myriad Domain. The vitality and life-force in Ding Tong was thrumming with vigor, a level that exceeded even the extreme limit of the Myriad Domain. He didn’t seem like someone from the Myriad Domain at all.

“Well now this is odd. How could such a sophisticated bloodline appear in the Myriad Domain?” The Sacred Ape family head was a bit suspicious as he examined Ding Tong. The latter only snorted coldly as he retained his usual dismissive look in front of the sect heads. Jiang Chen also felt it odd, just what was Ding Tong’s background?

Tristar Sect Head Zhu sneered coldly. “Well? Is there the lineage of the ancient demon race in Ding Tong’s bloodline? If there isn’t, can we end this farce already?”

Wei Wuying was currently the epitome of awkwardness. He’d been the one raising the greatest fuss, but the tests had proven that neither Jiang Chen or Ding Tong were of the ancient demon race despite the irregularities in their blood. There was no reason for them not to participate if they weren’t of that ancient demon race. After all, bloodlines were a different matter for martial dao geniuses, and everyone had their own gifts. No one could guarantee that everyone’s bloodline was of pure human and without the slightest bit of impurity. Even his Walkabout Sect often absorbed the bloodlines of poisonous materials to enhance their own body’s ability in dispelling poison. When it came down to lineage, theirs actually veered more on the edge of evil than anyone else’s.

Dan Chi laughed coldly and flicked a glance at Wei Wuying. “Aren’t you quite disappointed now, Sect Head Wei?”

The other had an incredibly thick skin, slipping on the veneer of a satisfied, happy chortle. "I am quite gratified! That these two young geniuses aren't of the ancient demon race, this is simply the great fortune of the Myriad Domain!"

Dan Chi then looked at Wang Jianyu and spoke faintly. "Ole Wang, what a waste of being the villain this time, hmm?"

Wang Jiangyu snorted coldly. "It's not like I had any ulterior motives. Everything I did was for the greater good. I can face myself with a clear conscience."

Witnessing this exchange, Jiang Chen almost wanted to harrumph. These old fellows were one more shameless than the other. They were plainly suppressing those who were different from them, but they wanted to wrap it up in the outfit of righteous justice.

After the hubbub had died down, the day's competition took a break, and everyone returned to their respective areas for a quick rest.

Jiang Chen inquired after the situation in the elders' group, learning that their competition had been exceedingly fierce. Even Elder Yun Nie, with his tremendous pill dao ability, had only won second place. An elder from the Walkabout Sect had actually used the barest of advantages to win out over Elder Yun Nie. This had cast a slight pall over the elders from the Regal Pill Palace. It was a good thing that the young geniuses had performed above their usual level, including even Jiang Chen. Everyone's scores were good, and Shen Qinghong's were actually the lowest amongst the four. But even so, because of his advantage when it came to a tie, he ranked number seven.

A first, fourth, sixth and seventh, these rankings were absolutely unheard of. Not only had the team of geniuses not been left in the dust, but they were greatly in the lead.

Palace Head Dan Chi summoned everyone together to give them a little pep talk. "Everyone, there are multiple factors at work in the Pill Battles. It's said that the elder from the Walkabout Sect has absorbed a skyfire acclaimed as one of the utmost sources of fire beneath the heavens. Although this skyfire isn't ranked highly, its power is easy to imagine. Therefore, it's only due to luck that he's ranked first for now. Our Regal Pill Palace still holds the overall advantage in the Pill Battles. n.-0ve**l**in

"For the young geniuses, everyone has acquitted themselves well. Your results have been nothing but a pleasure. If you can maintain this advantage, then our Regal Pill Palace can still leverage our greatest advantage to take home the championship this time." He turned towards Jiang Chen, "Jiang Chen, it's impossible to not incite jealousy from others when you're so extraordinary. I hope the bloodline testing didn't result in any psychological pressure on you."

Jiang Chen smiled nonchalantly. "Such desperate actions from cornered beasts aren't worth bothering with."

Palace Head Dan Chi laughed with admiration. "Fantastic! This is the bearing of a true expert indeed! The more composed you are, the less they can do anything to you. In the end, they can only slink away in envy and jealousy.

"Mu Gaoqi, you have brought glory for the Regal Pill Palace this time. Elder Yun Nie truly had impressive forethought in accepting you as a disciple."

Mu Gaoqi smiled honestly, "The third topic of spirit herbs is my forte. I must take advantage of the opportunity to consolidate my position and advance myself further."

His stunning results in the second round of cauldron preheating had been entirely due to Jiang Chen. Although he'd only grasped a third of the True Fires of Ninety Nine that Jiang Chen had passed onto him, that had been enough for him to make a great showing in the second round. His results had sent him flying into second place, lifting his overall ranking from tenth to fourth. The third round of cultivating spirit herbs was what he was most skilled at. He was an innate wood constitution of high order, a gift that was a perfect match with cultivating spirit herbs. This advantage bred great confidence in him for raising his ranking further. He even hoped to make it into the top three this time! He knew that he didn't have much hope when compared with Brother Chen, but he wasn't satisfied simply trailing behind Ding Tong at number two and Wei Xing'er at number three.

"Shen Qinghong, your martial dao potential is extraordinary and your pill dao potential first rate. You need to use this advantage well and utilize the Pill Battles to temper your strength of heart. This will only bring benefits to you with no downfalls. If you are fortunate enough to find enlightenment in the Pill Battles and benefit from an enhanced mental state, then your future accomplishments will exceed even your master Elder Lian Cheng. But if you don't, everything that you have built will not be enough to prevent you stumbling in front of obstacles of your own making."

Dan Chi was quite sharp when it came to assessing people, and his diction and choice of words was carefully precise. He wanted to give pointers to Shen Qinghong, but whether or not Shen Qinghong could actually take in his words would be up to him. After all, he was Elder Lian Cheng's disciple, and Dan Chi couldn't overstep his boundaries to truly use harsh methods to force Shen Qinghong to shape up.

"Ling Bi'er, your martial dao potential is extraordinary, as is your pill dao potential. Right now, you and Shen Qinghong are on very similar levels. In the same vein, you also have an internal dilemma to resolve. However, it differs from Shen Qinghong's burden, and I'm reassured to see how you're handling it. Your calm personality guarantees that your performance will not skew wildly from one extreme to another."

Ling Bi'er had suffered multiple hardships since her youth, fostering her steady personality. Palace Head Dan Chi had naturally picked up on that strength of hers, and had spoken to each of the youngsters before he was done. As for the four elders, they were all notable characters and held high positions in the Regal Pill Palace. The palace head naturally wouldn't need to talk to them, and their performance had been more or less stable.

In terms of overall ranking, even if they hadn't overtaken the Walkabout Sect, at least they weren't losing. Add that to the genius group's performance, it seemed that as long as they maintained their current course for the next two rounds, they still had high hopes of taking home the championship.

Everyone returned to their lodgings after the meeting wrapped up.

Jiang Chen had returned and was sitting down cross legged when a message glyph suddenly flew into his room.

"Jiang Chen, dare you come out for a meeting?" The glyph was from Ding Tong.

Jiang Chen's thoughts raced. Ding Tong had shown him a flash of killing intent before, and so Jiang Chen's wariness against this person was even higher than against Wei Qing of the Walkabout Sect. What does he want with this late night invitation? He wanted to turn it down, but after spending a moment in thought, still walked out. Ding Tong flashed out from behind a column when Jiang Chen reached the side pavilion.

"So you really did dare come." Ding Tong's tone was dispassionate as he remained fully hidden in the inky shadows.

Jiang Chen responded faintly, "What insights would Daoist Ding like to impart with this late night summoning?"

Ding Tong's gaze raked over Jiang Chen's body like knives in the night sky, hovering around him like blades. It was enough to force someone's hairs to stand on end.

"I'll give you a suggestion." Ding Tong said quietly.

"What?"

"Quit the Regal Pill Palace and Pill Battles." There was an indisputable sense of arrogance in Ding Tong's tone, as if he were issuing orders.

Jiang Chen broke out into a smile. "On what basis?"

Ding Tong responded coldly. "You'll regret it if you refuse."

Jiang Chen smiled casually. "I don't even know how to write the word regret. What else do you have to say in the middle of the night? Might as well let it all out at once."

"Leave the Regal Pill Palace and join the Tristar Sect. I will guarantee you a life of riches that will be more than ten times what you would have had in the Regal Pill Palace."

"You sure talk big." Jiang Chen smiled slightly.

"You don't believe me?" Ding Tong's gaze chilled.

Jiang Chen waved his hand. "It doesn't matter if I do or not. I seek prosperity, but don't need anyone to bestow it upon me. With that domineering tone of yours, you're likely no Tristar Sect disciple either. I have one word of advice for you. Although the waters in the Myriad Domain aren't deep, they're not something that just anyone can play in. Be careful of drowning here if you don't pay attention." He refused to listen to any more nonsense after that and drifted inside.

"Jiang Chen, since you refuse to see the error of your ways, then Mt. Rippling Mirage will be your resting place!" This was a barely concealed warning and a blatant threat.

"Ding Tong, if you have the spare effort to think of me, why don't you have a good ponder on how to hide your fox's tail?"

Chapter 543: Jiang Chen's Strange Actions

In the instant Jiang Chen had felt Ding Tong's hostility before the Pill Battles, he'd known that there could be no compromise with him. Ding Tong hadn't come calling because he truly wanted to recruit

Jiang Chen, but rather because he'd realized that it wasn't possible to surpass Jiang Chen in the Pill Battle Rankings. This was nothing more than an intimidation tactic to scare Jiang Chen into backing out.

Did he think Jiang Chen a three year old child, to be hoodwinked by these kinds of tricks? Nevertheless, Ding Tong's actions were certainly enough to keep Jiang Chen on his guard. His origin was a complete mystery, and Jiang Chen had enough cause to suspect that he wasn't actually part of the Tristar Sect. His participation in the Pill Battles was probably part of some unspeakable conspiracy as well. The only thing that remained shrouded was whether Ding Tong was keeping the Tristar Sect in the dark, or were they in on the plan as well?

As far as Jiang Chen could tell, especially with the suspicious behavior Sect Head Zhu had shown, he felt it likely that the Tristar Sect was in it up to their ears. Sect Head Zhu hadn't been as calm as Palace Head Dan Chi when Ding Tong was undergoing the bloodline tests, even though he'd hid it well. Jiang Chen's God's Eye had reached a level where that slight flicker in Sect Head Zhu's emotions had been clear as day. However, at this point, all this was merely suspicion and supposition. It wasn't enough to create a plausible argument. Besides, this plot seemed to implicate many, and his current identity and status weren't enough to persuade the crowd of his words. He might even cause the Regal Pill Palace to fall into an awkward situation. Moreover, he was already under general suspicion due to his outstanding results. If he decided to try and point out something amiss about Ding Tong, it would only look odd to onlookers.

As a result, Jiang Chen decided to do nothing for now and just silently observe Ding Tong.

After a night of rest, the competition continued bright and early the next day. The third round involved spirit herbs, and Mu Gaoqi's eagerness for battle was on the verge of exploding.

However, this competition of spirit herbs wasn't just simply cultivating a spirit herb or two.

"Now, please enter each area according to your number. There, you will find three thousand seeds. Your task is to locate the five seventh level saint rank seeds hidden among them. Each seedling must correspond to the five elements of metal, wood, water, fire, and earth. Then, you must germinate those seeds within seven days."

When the rules were announced, it was apparent that this was one of the more complex rounds. Not only did they have to pick out only five seeds from three thousand, but they had to make sure that the seeds corresponded to the five elements, which had further implications when they had to be cultivated into seedlings. And to boot, all of this had to be completed in seven days!

"Remember, there are 600 total points that one can win in this round. Identifying the five seeds will result in 100 points, each seed being worth 20 points. Growing each seedling earns you 100 points. However, don't think that simply growing a seedling nets you the full hundred points. The quality of the seedling is paramount. If the seedling is of lower rank, you will receive 30 points. Middle rank seedlings will earn 60 points, and upper rank, 80 points. Only supreme rank seedlings will you earn the full 100 points.

"Therefore, if you want to receive all 600 points, you must identify the five correct seeds and raise them to be supreme rank seedlings. Of course, if you identify the wrong seeds from the beginning, then your efforts for the latter half will all be for naught. Remember, seventh level saint rank seeds. If you pick the

wrong rank or attribute, you'll forfeit all your points. This round is where the wheat will be separated from the chaff. If you don't acquit yourself well, you could lose a great deal of points and see your ranking fall drastically."

Everyone stood at solemn attention. If they performed well in this round, they could seize a lot of points. But if they didn't, they would lose quite a bit instead. This was truly a double edged sword.

"Do you see the ground beneath your feet? This area is where you'll be cultivating your spirit herbs. All of the materials you need have been made ready for you. Finally, there are no restrictions on using any heaven defying materials you already own. Apart from not leaving this area, there are no other restrictions on this round."

Every area was covered in seals that cut off communication to the outside world. Each candidate could use any method or technique they wanted, but they couldn't ask for outside help.

"Alright, the competition and time of seven days starts... now. You are now forbidden from leaving for the next seven days. If you set even a toe outside this area, you will be deemed as having cheated and will receive a zero for this round."

The costs of cheating were high. Once someone was deemed as having cheated, they would basically have to withdraw from the Pill Battles. There was no way they would be able to obtain a decent ranking.

Jiang Chen closed his eyes and took a moment to breathe, listening closely to all the rules. The more one prepared, the more likely that they would be able to save time later. As such, there was no need to start at a frantic pace. It wouldn't be too late to make his move after he'd carefully heard all of the details. He only slowly opened his eyes after the examiner announced the start of the round.

There were a full seven days to this round with a lot of flexibility. This was why Jiang Chen wasn't overly focused on speed. Haste made for waste.

Three thousand seeds were an astonishing number to comb through. Pill masters with slightly lower cultivation levels would find it very difficult to pick out the 5 seventh level saint rank seeds of the five elements—and this was from the perspective of the Myriad Domain geniuses. If it were up to those from the Precious Tree Sect to attempt this, possibly even Forefather Thousandleaf would be unable to accomplish this. But of course, this was as easy as a simple twitch of his fingers to Jiang Chen. No matter what level the seeds were, he only needed to touch them, perform a simple examination, and take a sniff to be able to determine their level. Even if there were the occasional ones he was uncertain of, he'd be able to draw a firm conclusion after taking another look.

He'd gone through all of the seeds in roughly fifteen minutes, selecting about twenty likely candidates and sweeping the rest to the side.

Of these twenty, he had selected high, low, and medium saint rank seeds. The only requirement they had was to select seventh level saint rank seeds that corresponded to the five elements. He'd actually locked onto the proper five seeds a long time ago, but had suddenly thought of something else as he'd selected the seeds.

Jiang Chen took a look at the current conditions. It was already difficult enough to cultivate all five into supreme rank seedlings. It was also apparent that the organizers were quite stringent, and that almost

no one could walk away with full points under these conditions. However, Jiang Chen was striving for full marks.

He also knew that if he could gain full points in this round, his score would leave everyone else behind in the dust. This opportunity was just far too good to pass up. His pill dao potential had been thoroughly revealed in the previous two rounds anyways, so he didn't mind exposing himself a bit more.

His strange actions baffled Palace Head Dan Chi. "What's Jiang Chen doing? He's selected so many seeds; is he planning on cultivating all of them and then picking the successful ones?" He was puzzled, and couldn't fathom what Jiang Chen was planning.

It wasn't that this method wasn't allowed. If anyone really could cultivate large numbers of seeds into seedlings and then pick out the five correct choices, there was nothing in the rules against it. At the same time, it was an impossible task. And the reason for that was threefold.

First, the materials provided had been precisely portioned out. They were just enough to cultivate the minimum 5 seventh level saint rank seedlings. There just weren't enough for cultivating all twenty seeds.

One could alleviate that problem by forking over money for materials, but the second problem still remained. Everyone only had that bare patch of dirt to work with. There was only so much space, and it certainly wasn't big enough to house more than five seeds.

Third, raising seedlings required infusion of one's energy. An overly dense concentration of seeds was bad for the development of the spirit herbs, and if they didn't receive enough spirit energy over the seven days, then there may not even be five seedlings at the end.

To use an analogy, the degree of comfort between having five people in a house and fifty in the same house were completely different. With the same amount of resources and space, the more seeds that were cultivated, the less spirit power and space were available for each seed, and that would affect their rate of development.

Therefore, Palace Head Dan Chi couldn't understand Jiang Chen's actions no matter how he thought about it. If he hadn't known that Jiang Chen wasn't the sort for tomfoolery, he would've thought that his disciple was playing with fire.

Naturally, there were others who thought precisely that, such as Wei Wuying, Tristar Sect Head Zhu and Wang Jianyu from the Sacred Sword Palace. Jiang Chen's performance had been so stunning before that he naturally attracted many gazes in this round. Wei Wuying was utterly delighted to see Jiang Chen behave so erratically. He hadn't thought that Jiang Chen would have such sophisticated methods when he witnessed the cauldron preheating round earlier, but he was absolutely sure of his judgement on Jiang Chen's current actions. Jiang Chen was going against every ounce of basic knowledge of spirit herb cultivation. The result was obvious, all actions that went against common knowledge were destined to be fruitless.

However, they'd learned their lesson this time, and didn't make a dig at Jiang Chen or jeer at him. They only watched him coldly, prepared for a good show. If Jiang Chen came crashing down in this round, then his previous advantages would have been rendered meaningless.

“You won’t find trouble if you don’t go looking for it. This Jiang Chen is too full of himself and has gone courting death!” Wei Wuying was completely looking down on Jiang Chen now. He didn’t believe that such random crazy actions would result in a high score!

Sect Head Zhu was also privately rejoicing, only wishing that Jiang Chen would continue this run of madness and hand the championship over to Ding Tong. As for Wang Jianyu, he had no ambitions when it came to the Pill Battles. The only thing he wanted to see was the Regal Pill Palace’s abject humiliation.

Chapter 544: Art of Spirit Reaping

These fellows who were delighting in the misery of others were also privately observing Palace Head Dan Chi’s reaction. Dan Chi’s expression never flickered from a solemn gaze; he was obviously unsure of what Jiang Chen intended. Thus, they realized that Jiang Chen was absolutely going rogue and this wasn’t something that the Regal Pill Palace had arranged for beforehand. Since it wasn’t a hidden special technique of the Regal Pill Palace, they were now certain that Jiang Chen was trying to cast around for a way forward.

To put it bluntly, they figured he was hoping to get lucky by cultivating all his spirit seeds and picking the best from them. It wasn’t that the results would not be accepted, but the plan had some severe caveats in terms of sufficient space, materials, soil and time. But during a competition, all of the above were limited. Jiang Chen was simply dooming himself with his actions! So what if he was lucky and able to germinate his seeds, would their quality be acceptable then?

With inferior quality lower or mid rank seedlings, his score wouldn’t be that high either. If the top geniuses put on a good performance, they could absolutely leap past Jiang Chen in one go. Of course, even as the center of attention, Jiang Chen was completely lost in his own world, paying no heed to the reactions of the outside world.

It was no wonder that no one understood what he was doing. The technique he was using this time was far more unique than what he’d used previously. It didn’t resemble the techniques of the Myriad Domain at all, not even the most extraordinary ones. Of course, he needed some extra materials other than the ones provided, so he took them from his storage ring.

He divided his area into two, and planted twenty seeds in one half. His actions looked random, but he was actually laying down a small spirit reaping formation in this half, creating a formation of the five elements. These twenty seeds weren’t his main focus.

The focus of his attentions lay in the other half, where he also set down the same spirit reaping formation, but instead accompanied by the 5 seventh level saint rank seeds this time. They were the true stars of the show.

The two formations formed a link, a one way transmission of energy from one half to the other. The right half was the true focal point of the energy, nurturing the five seventh level saint rank seeds. The left half would merely collect the spirit power produced by the twenty seeds and funnel it to the five seeds of the five different elements on the right. In spirit herb cultivation, this technique was called the Art of Spirit Reaping. To put it simply, it used the characteristics of spirit herbs to form a nurturing formation of the five elements. The theory behind this wasn’t complicated, but an exact, precise

calculation of space, spirit herb characteristics, terrain, and usage of materials was needed to set up the formation.

The slightest deviation would result in completely wasted efforts.

At the end of the day, this was still a highly technical and difficult undertaking. It was likely that no one apart from Jiang Chen could use these methods in the Myriad Domain. There may not even be anyone who could understand what he was doing.

Wei Wuying and Sect Head Zhu were almost dancing in joy. They'd seen Jiang Chen planting the spirit seeds with their own eyes. Although Jiang Chen's methods looked mysterious, they didn't believe that Jiang Chen would be able to do anything now that he'd mucked it up this much!

Jiang Chen didn't do anything else after making his preparations. This technique had a particular advantage over the ones his competitors were using; he didn't need to keep an eye on his seedlings all the time. As a result, he decided to sit down cross-legged and start meditating.

Seven days was a long time, and he didn't want to waste all this time. The formation had been set up and he'd done all he could. All that remained was to patiently await the fruits of his labor.

Jiang Chen didn't believe that he couldn't cultivate supreme rank seedlings out of mere seventh level saint rank seeds in seven days after he'd used the Art of Spirit Reaping. After all, if it wasn't for his desire to obtain all the points in this round, he wouldn't have used such a complicated technique. At the very least, using the same methods as the others, he would've definitely produced upper rank seedlings, and he had a decent chance of obtaining supreme rank seedlings. However, if he wanted to guarantee supreme rank seedlings, the conditions imposed by the organizers were far too restrictive. Of this, he was quite certain. In addition, his technique could also give him some free time. He wouldn't need to constantly keep an eye on it, making his job much easier than the others.

Apart from Jiang Chen, Mu Gaoqi was also in his element. Like wings added to a tiger, the advantages of a wood constitution of high order were clearly noticeable. He only needed to quickly observe with his consciousness to easily identify which seed had the most potential.

Cultivating the seeds came even easier. He didn't need any special techniques, as he easily grasped each seed's special characteristics and used the simplest method to appropriately handle them. Everything was completed flawlessly. This was his advantage, an advantage that no one else could possibly emulate. Mu Gaoqi's techniques were far beneath Jiang Chen's, but his innate potential gave him a leg up that Jiang Chen didn't possess.

Apart from Mu Gaoqi, Ding Tong was the only other with an apparent advantage. He'd brought over a spirit liquid from somewhere that induced the growth of spirit herbs. Although this wasn't an advantage innately from his potential, it was certainly an advantage that came from one's resources.

The seven days started passing one by one, with changes seen every day in the competitors patches of dirt. On the other hand, the first three days passed and absolutely nothing could be seen on Jiang Chen's side.

He wasn't worried at all, but Palace Head Dan Chi was! Three days had passed already, and the seeds of all the other top geniuses had started sprouting already. Tender new shoots could be seen poking

through the ground, their elemental leanings very apparent. Jiang Chen however, still somehow remained steady and completely confident.

In the eyes of Wei Wuying and the others, this behavior was just indicative of Jiang Chen giving up on himself. The fourth day had already dawned, and his seeds had yet to make a move. What was this if not making a mess as he gave up? There were only a little over three days left. Even if Jiang Chen had a divine ability at his disposal, could he make spirit herbs grow at a crazy speed? This obviously went against common sense.

Palace Head Dan Chi was also having trouble understanding this move of Jiang Chen's. He trusted Jiang Chen very much, and still felt that Jiang Chen had some sort of plan even though the latter was behaving this way. However, there was no proof of said plan, even as the remaining time waned. If it wasn't for Jiang Chen's coolly composed expression, he would've suspected that Jiang Chen wanted to forfeit the race.

"This Jiang Chen must've absorbed some heaven defying fire to put on such a performance in the first round of fire control, and obtain stunning results in the second of cauldron heating. But, his true form is coming to light in the third round. It looks like he doesn't have any experience in cultivating spirit herbs in the sixteen kingdom alliance and is completely helpless. He can only muck around blindly. Hmph! How does one amount to anything in cultivating spirit herbs without at least three to five years of learning?" Wei Wuying was already certain that Jiang Chen had never learned how to cultivate spirit herbs, and his perfect scores in the first two rounds had been nothing but a fluke.

Sect Head Zhu's thoughts were similar, and he was naturally delighted beyond words when he saw Jiang Chen with still no real progress. He was most happy to see Jiang Chen perform below his usual standard, because that would send Ding Tong up to the champion's seat.

Wang Jianyu of the Sacred Sword Palace wasn't even paying attention to his own sect's geniuses anymore. He spent most of his efforts paying attention to Jiang Chen. It was obvious that his interest in suppressing the Regal Pill Palace was greater than watching over the development of his own disciples. "Hmph, this kid is rather good at playing the mysterious card, hmm? It's already the fourth day, and his seeds are the only ones that haven't sprouted at all. The others have more or less sprouted, and here he sits, pretending to be calm. He even has the mind to meditate!"

He wanted to burst out laughing. If it wasn't for the fact that they were in the middle of a competition, he would've started jeering at Palace Head Dan Chi already. Cultivating martial dao in the middle of the Pill Battles, this Jiang Chen is such a weird freak.

However, Jiang Chen's seeds finally sprouted on the afternoon of the fourth day.

"Hmph, it's too late now. He's almost an entire day behind the others. There's only seven days total; how can he possibly catch up, starting so much later than everyone else?" Wei Wuying was a bit startled to see Jiang Chen's seeds sprout. He had postulated that Jiang Chen didn't know how to cultivate spirit herbs at all, but it looked like his thoughts were wrong.

On the fifth day, when everyone took a look at Jiang Chen's area again, they noticed that there were 20 seeds that had all sprouted on the left hand side, and only five seeds on the right. Astonishingly, the five on the right had grown furiously in the span of a night, and their height had pretty much caught up to

the others. Although there was still a bit of a distance between them and the seedlings of the top geniuses, it was apparent that Jiang Chen's seedlings were catching up at a furious rate.

This finally made Dan Chi's slightly furrowed brow smooth out as he inwardly brushed away the sweat from his forehead. "Jiang Chen, that kid! Just what is he up to with this move? He truly started scaring me."

The others were greatly astonished. They almost couldn't believe their eyes. Jiang Chen's seeds had sprouted a full day later than the others, but their growth had already caught up to everyone else's, and were continuing to grow at that incredible rate! Those who had been waiting to see Jiang Chen make a fool out of himself all felt that subtle prick of being played by him.

On the sixth day, Jiang Chen's spirit herbs overtook the majority of the other seedlings and began showing signs of reaching the level of the top geniuses. Moreover, Jiang Chen's seedlings looked distinctly superior to everyone else's crop, whether in terms of color, luster, and vitality. Even Ding Tong, the one who'd been in the lead before Jiang Chen had caught up, had seen the gap of his advantage shorten to almost nothing.

Dan Chi smiled, he knew that Jiang Chen must've used some esoteric technique this time. Those seemingly ludicrous actions must have been the components of a highly sophisticated technique that no one else could understand. Dan Chi also naturally attributed all of this to the mysterious Elder Shun. He was happily going down the path that all of Jiang Chen's marvelous techniques had been passed down from Elder Shun.

Chapter 545: A Triple Champion

Time swiftly progressed until the seventh and last day dawned. The participants all had extremely solemn expressions on their faces. That is, all of them, apart from Jiang Chen. He was completely confident in his results. Under the yoke of the Art of Spirit Reaping, the five seventh level saint rank seeds had grown exceptionally well. Even if the judging was to start at that very moment, they would be identified supreme rank spirit herbs.

The twenty seedlings in the left half were shrunken, as if they really hadn't gotten the chance to grow. That was only natural, since the formation was siphoning the spirit energy they produced and using it to fertilize the five seedlings in the other half. The growth of the twenty seedlings had been purposefully stunted. They had only grown so as to keep the formation active. However, removal of the five seedlings that was the recipient of their energy would allow the twenty undernourished seedlings to return to their original vitality. In the end, they would be none the worse for wear.

On the seventh day, the heavyweights of each sect started craning their necks to examine each of the candidates' seedlings. Although they were too far away for a detailed observation, the color and size of the seedlings could allow them to form a rudimentary judgement.

Jiang Chen's seedlings had soared ahead of all the others. The most astonishing thing about his crop was they their growth had been evenly distributed across all the seedlings. As if they'd shaken hands on an agreement, each of the seedlings were even in height, size, looks, luster and quality. They were flawless. This kind of balanced development was the most frightening aspect of his seedlings.

In contrast, although Ding Tong's seedlings had had the aid of a heaven defying spirit liquid, there was still obvious individual differences between all of his seedlings. This was enough to demonstrate that his abilities had yet to reach perfection. In contrast, Mu Gaoqi had performed extremely well, ending up neck and neck with Ding Tong.

Although Wei Xing'er possessed an innate constitution of fire, it didn't prove to be an advantage in this round of spirit herb cultivation. Her performance was just passable, yet Wei Qing's crop was only surpassed by Jiang Chen, Ding Tong, and Mu Gaoqi.

The seventh day finally came to an end, and the candidates were all instructed to vacate their area. A loud hubbub occurred as the candidates made their way out of their respective areas. Once again, each of the crop yields were carefully scored, and their totals tallied. Jiang Chen once again took home full marks for this round with no contest at all, becoming a stunning triple champion. His overall score was an absolutely flabbergasting 1400 points. His grasp on the champion's seat was almost a sure thing.

Ding Tong was runner up for this round, but he'd only received 540 points in this round for a total of 1,270, placing him second overall.

The most surprising result came from Mu Gaoqi. He'd actually received 540 points as well, and his overall score had shot up to a stunning 1,250 points, vaulting him into third place overall!

Wei Qing had leveraged his performance in this round to overtake Wei Xing'er, taking the fourth place in rankings with 1,220 points.

Wei Xing'er was now in fifth place with 1,200 points due to mediocre performance in the third round.

Ling Bi'er had done better than Wei Xing'er, closing the gap and now occupying sixth place overall. She was just 10 points behind.

Next, Shen Qinghong, Zhu Feiyang, Lin Hai, Yuan Yuan and Wang Han actually all had identical scores: 1,180 points, and occupied the seventh to eleventh positions. That did mean that the difference between Wei Xing'er's fifth ranking and Wang Han's eleventh rank was simply a matter of 20 points. It also meant that one of the top geniuses was destined to be pushed down to eleventh. A single rank's difference may be small, but there was a world of difference in the level of treatment between tenth and eleventh.

The top ten could enter Mt. Rippling Mirage and harvest for twenty days, but the next ten could only enter for ten days and then only after ten days had elapsed for the top ten. It was obvious that their chances of getting anything good would be greatly decreased.

Therefore, after the three rounds were over, the competition for the top ten instantly heated up. The struggle over number ten was actually fiercer than the struggle over the championship. With how things had developed, the championship was originally up to the top four candidates. However, Jiang Chen's momentum in taking full marks for each round was slowly sending his competition up a wall. Those going up against him could only feel a deep sense of helplessness. No matter how optimistic they tried to be, they had to admit that as long as Jiang Chen performed at his usual level in the fourth round, there was almost no hope for them to seize the championship from his hands.

Ding Tong in particular had a belly full of ire and nowhere to vent. He'd almost gone on a rampage when he learned that Jiang Chen had taken full marks again. He'd used a heaven defying spirit liquid in this round, barely skirting the lines of cheating. Even with that, he'd not only failed to close the distance between them, but the gap had widened instead. What was the point of the fourth round if this sort of pattern continued?! n-/OvE**ll**1n

Ding Tong was here for the championship. Taking home second place would be nothing but a humiliating failure. But sadly, the only thing he could do when faced with this kind of Jiang Chen was to huff, puff and glare. On the other hand, it was Mu Gaoqi who surprised everyone. Apart from Palace Head Dan Chi knowing what had happened behind the scenes, all the other heavyweights of the sect found this batch of Regal Pill Palace candidates to be incredibly mystifying.

"Dan Chi, your Regal Pill Palace is quite odd. Shen Qinghong and Ling Bi'er have the biggest reputations, but the true talents seem to be this Jiang Chen and Mu Gaoqi. Was this a facade to allow them to shine brilliantly?"

Dan Chi only smiled and refrained from commenting when he was asked these kinds of questions.

"We all know of Jiang Chen's background, but where did this Mu Gaoqi come from? The Regal Pill Palace disciples truly take our breath away in astonishment."

Dan Chi smile faintly. "Wei Wuying, do you want to investigate Mu Gaoqi now? I'm afraid you'll be sorely disappointed. He's always been a Regal Pill Palace disciple, he's just kept a lower profile."

Mu Gaoqi's sudden rise and unimpeded momentum to reach the top three was now forcing Wei Qing and Wei Xing'er of the Walkabout Sect to occupy fourth and fifth. Wei Wuying was finding this a rather bitter pill to swallow.

However, Mu Gaoqi's heaven defying performance in the spirit herb cultivation round was above reproach, and the farce of investigating Jiang Chen couldn't be repeated on Mu Gaoqi. It would only invite contempt and scorn. Face was as thin as tree bark, and although Wei Wuying was thick-skinned, he wasn't that shameless.

Instead, it was Wang Jianyu who spoke sourly. "One at fifth level origin realm and the other at third level origin realm. Are the pill dao geniuses of the Regal Pill Palace all cultivated on the foundation of sacrificing martial dao?" At this point, he was reduced to nitpicking, like looking for a bone in an egg.

"Ole Wang, this should resonate deeply with your Sacred Sword Palace! Sacrificing pill dao for martial dao—why else does your Sacred Sword Palace always come in last at the Pill Battles?" Dan Chi laughed softly, obviously not leaving Wang Jianyu any face.

The latter snorted coldly, "Martial dao strength is ultimately the support for the establishment of a sect. As strong as pill dao is, it will never amount to much!"

Dan Chi was quite contemptuous of this kind of perspective. "There's only a few years until the Myriad Grand Ceremony. We'll see just how much weight your so-called martial might holds then!"

Whether folks accepted it or not, Jiang Chen's dominating score was evident, and brooked not an ounce of skepticism.

After seven days of spirit herb cultivation, many of the candidates were exhausted, and so the competition was paused for everyone to rest for a day. This was a perfect time to adjust themselves, but it didn't matter to Jiang Chen. His performance in the three rounds had left him assured that the championship was already in the bag.

The fourth round was one of pill refining, and he believed that as long as he performed up to his usual standards, the championship wouldn't go to anyone else. Pill refining was one of his strengths, after all.

"Brother Chen, a triple champion! That's wonderful! I knew those people were just gifting you the spirit stones, hahaha!" Mu Gaoqi looked sincerely happy for Jiang Chen.

"You're performing well, Gaoqi. It looks like your strength of heart has increased. Keep your cool and you may remain number three after the fourth round."

Mu Gaoqi was in noticeably good spirits. He laughed, "Brother Chen, my goal before was to enter the top ten. Now, it looks fully attainable, so I don't have any mental pressure and can display my abilities to their fullest. Everyone is strong in refining pills, but I'll try my best to remain in the top ten and go for top five!"

"Mm, Wei Qing and Wei Xing'er from the Walkabout Sect are all strong opponents. It's a logical outcome if any of you three can make it into the top ten. However, I believe that you'll be able to widen the gap between you and the others in at most ten years."

An innate wood constitution of high order was a rare existence in even the Upper Eight Realms, and was absolutely a potential that lorded over everyone else in the Myriad Domain.

Ling Bi'er came to visit as they were chatting, and Mu Gaoqi smiled ambiguously when he saw her. He chuckled, "I'll go away now, Brother Chen."

Jiang Chen pretended that he was going to smack Mu Gaoqi a good one when he saw how the latter's smile was asking to be hit. Mu Gaoqi ducked, clutching his head, and scurried off with that cheeky grin still plastered on his face.

"Junior brother, it looks like that little scamp Mu Gaoqi is truly looking up to you." Ling Bi'er also smiled softly when she saw Mu Gaoqi thus. She felt that relationships between fellow sect disciples should indeed be this heartwarming.

"Please take a seat, senior sister Bi'er."

Ling Bi'er nodded slightly. "Congratulations to you, junior brother. It looks like you've locked in the championship of the Pill Battles already."

Jiang Chen didn't put on airs as he nodded with a smile. "The palace head and Elder Yun Nie have given their marching orders, I dare not return without it!"

Ling Bi'er immediately felt her heart lighten when she saw how serious Jiang Chen was. She somehow felt a boundless source of magic from Jiang Chen, that somehow anything that was impossible would be possible if he put his hand on it. After repeated psychological impacts, she now had great confidence in Jiang Chen. Perhaps he really could cure the Divine Befuddlement Miasma that had tormented her father for more than ten years. When she thought of this, Ling Bi'er had to suppress the urge to sob.

Jiang Chen's image had become greater and greater with increasing clarity in her heart. He would unconsciously float to the top of her mind every day and night.

The two of them looked at each other, and Ling Bi'er somehow felt a bit shy when she met Jiang Chen's relaxed and easy gaze. She hadn't had much of a purpose in visiting him this time, merely wanting to take a look at Jiang Chen and congratulate him.

It was at this time that a sweet and soft voice travelled in from outside. "Senior brother Jiang Chen, little sister Wei Xing'er is so bold as to come visit you."

Chapter 546: Temptress Wei Xing'er

Wei Xing'er?

An alluring face immediately surfaced in Jiang Chen's mind. Wei Xing'er exuded a naturally seductive presence, one that came from deep within her very bones. Her every movement and gesture gave others the feeling of an intimate seduction.

When Ling Bi'er heard Wei Xing'er introduce herself, her brows knit together as her face grew cold. She was obviously not kindly disposed to this name.

"Senior sister Ling Bi'er, do you know this woman?" Jiang Chen asked in a low voice.

Ling Bi'er was silent for a moment before responding, "We shouldn't talk about people behind their backs, but junior brother, you should be careful of this woman."

She wasn't the sort to gossip about others behind their backs. Even when she found some matters to be the height of distastefulness, she still wasn't willing to voice her opinions on them. In reality, Wei Xing'er had the reputation of a damnable temptress in the Myriad Domain. She possessed a fair face, but a foul heart.

Opening the door, Jiang Chen was greeted by Wei Xing'er leaning on the doorframe, a hint of a tantalizing smile on her face and the look in her eyes so piteous that it seemed as if tears would fall any second. Her sinuous waist was resting on the side of the door, further showing off the curves of her body and exuding amorous charms. Her body was perfect no matter what angle one assessed her from. When combined with her gorgeously stunning face, she was a head turner that everyone yearned after.

However, when her limpid eyes caught sight of Ling Bi'er behind Jiang Chen, she instantly froze. Her alluring posture instantly fled from her body, only to be replaced with the hostility of a fighting cock. It was as if there was a quality to Ling Bi'er that made Wei Xing'er spontaneously overflow with enmity.

"Tsk tsk, I hadn't thought that the Myriad Domain's acclaimed icy beauty would be here feasting on meat close at hand. Ling Bi'er, don't tell me you're longing for love!" *n//OvElbIn*

Ling Bi'er seemed to know of Wei Xing'er's madness as she flung a quick riposte, "Impossible person." She ignored the weighty hostility emanating from Wei Xing'er after speaking and spoke to Jiang Chen, "I'll be going now, junior brother, you be careful."

Wei Xing'er instantly glared ferociously. "Ling Bi'er, exactly what do you mean by that!?"

Ling Bi'er ignored her and drifted away after stepping through the door, leaving behind a furious Wei Xing'er. She'd never liked Ling Bi'er's proud stature. She'd always felt that Ling Bi'er was just putting on an act and pretending to be all high and mighty just to attract male attention. Yet somehow, all those men were suckers for abuse and fought each other daily to draw closer to Ling Bi'er.

Although Wei Xing'er was equally a man's lady, many liked her for her open personality. To put it bluntly, they just wanted her for her body. There was even a saying amongst the young folks of the Myriad Domain, saying—take Ling Bi'er for your goddess, take Ling Hui'er for a wife you can groom, and take Wei Xing'er for your whore.

Even with her reputation, she'd never actually known a man, but her reputation and popularity was on a completely different level than Ling Bi'er's. But whether she was jealous or angry, none of that would change the truth. This was why she'd exploded with enmity at the sight of Ling Bi'er.

Wei Xing'er smiled charmingly after seeing Ling Bi'er drift off. "Jiang Chen, are you interested in chatting for a bit?"

"About what?" Jiang Chen smiled faintly and showed no desire to keep her at arm's length.

"What would you like to chat about?" Wei Xing'er focused her eyes on him with great tenderness, light dancing on her brows as her words filled with some ambiguous hints.

Jiang Chen spread his hands out. "Miss Wei has come to find me, yet asks me what to chat about. This is posing a difficult question indeed."

Wei Xing'er chuckled. "Don't be so serious!"

Jiang Chen smiled casually, but was unwilling to relax his guard. This temptress had a natural sense of seduction to her, and her every dimple and laugh was designed to catch one off guard. If it wasn't for Jiang Chen's Boulder Heart and his solid strength of heart, he likely would've succumbed to her temptation already. How could he not tell that she was trying to seduce him?

"Jiang Chen, Xing'er might actually be older than you by a year or two in terms of age. You can call me older sister Xing'er. Do you know? I once swore a vow that if a man can beat me in the Pill Battles, I would give myself to him and be his dao partner." Wei Xing'er's voice was sweet and soft, with every word and phrase possessing a kind of unique charm that gently pressed each syllable into the other's heart. She leaned slightly forward as she spoke, sending a cloud of fragrance over and causing the glorious scene beneath the nape of her neck to come tantalizing into view, showing half of her cleavage.

To a hot-blooded cultivator, this kind of situation would've been fatally tempting. But her actions didn't seem enough in front of Jiang Chen. He just seemed surprised, "Then it seems that both Ding Tong of the Tristar Sect and Wei Qing of your sect are lined up in front of Miss Wei as well."

Wei Xing'er burst out in laughter. "You little imp who doesn't understand flirting! If Xing'er liked them, would I be here talking to you?"

"Eh..." Jiang Chen was speechless.

Wei Xing'er rolled her eyes at him and stuck out a slender finger to poke at the air above Jiang Chen's forehead. She pouted, "I knew it! Ling Bi'er must be talking about me behind my back and made you

biased against me. Hmph, all of those dirty men out there who want to sleep with me, but how would I be the type of person to let them succeed!”

She extended her pure-white arm as she spoke, showing that its skin was as flawless as a white lotus root. There was a spot of red on her arm. “This is my chastity dot. If I lost my virginity, I would lose this dot as well. Jiang Chen, Xing’er also struggled for a long time before coming here. Xing’er knows that you may look down on me because of rumors from the outside world, but Wei Xing’er is someone who dares to love and hate passionately. I happen to like young geniuses like you, and those so-called men of the Myriad Domain aren’t worthy of conquering me at all.”

Wei Xing’er’s tone became a bit dejected as her words came to this point. “Look into my eyes if you don’t believe me. They won’t lie if I speak the slightest false word.”

She stepped in front of Jiang Chen at this time and exhaled a fragrant breath. Her firm and perky chest was almost touching Jiang Chen as she looked deeply into Jiang Chen’s eyes, as if not allowing him to look away.

Jiang Chen’s face was coolly composed, and his eyes didn’t evade her gaze. Their eyes met, and emotions rippled through her eyes as if her grievances were wrestling to get out. There were three parts sorrow, three parts passion, and a few more parts of a seductive beauty that invited pity. That tender gaze was like the strongest alcohol, as if to look at her eyes was to become drunk. Her gaze became even more blurred over after a while, and the seductive look on her face even more intense. The fragrance emitting from her lips seemed to be capable of melting the entire world. Jiang Chen’s body swayed and wavered, his gaze fogged over as if he was under a spell. It was almost as if he’d lost his soul.

Wei Xing’er retracted the seductive look on her face as a smile curved her lips. “Hmph, as much as a genius as you are, you’re still a little unlearned. A man who hasn’t known the pleasures of women is at most just an unweaned brat. You’re a little too young to be playing cool with me.”

She smiled arrogantly as she reached out and patted Jiang Chen’s face lightly. “Little fellow, you should rejoice that I actually like your face. Otherwise, things wouldn’t be as easy as becoming muddleheaded for a few days. You’re the luckiest person out of all the victims to fall for my Azure Smokesnare Powder.”

She started dragging Jiang Chen as she spoke, planning on placing him back on the bed. But as she pulled at him, she realized that he wouldn’t budge at all. She seemed to be hauling on an enormous boulder that weighed hundreds of kilograms. She actually stumbled herself and fell back into his embrace, with those half covered globes crashing on his broad chest.

“Ah!” Wei Xing’er cried aloud and realized that a hand had been clamped tightly around her wrists in a death grip.

“Now that wasn’t very nice, Miss Wei!” The bespelled Jiang Chen had firmly caught her with arms like steel as a sharp look blazed out of his eyes. How was this someone who was enthralled?

When Wei Xing’er had flung an art of seduction at him earlier, she’d thought that she had Jiang Chen in the bag and so had relaxed her guard. This move had always worked on males both young and old. She’d never failed, so who would’ve thought that Jiang Chen would be completely fine after she’d employed the Smokesnare Powder?!

In terms of cultivation, Wei Xing'er was close to the sage realm. Her level was much higher than Jiang Chen, but here she was, immobilized by him!

"You..." Shock filled her eyes. "Why are you perfectly fine?!"

"What do you think would happen to me?" Jiang Chen's tone turned frosty. "Using the Azure Smokescreen Powder to make me spend the next couple of days in a fog so I perform below my standard in refining pills—you thought you'd benefit then, didn't you!"

Wei Xing'er possessed an indolent nature, and when she saw that even her Smokesnare Powder couldn't do anything to Jiang Chen, she knew that he was different from the others. She tittered, "Alright, Xing'er concedes. I can't seduce you, I can't poison you. You can do whatever you want with me now."

Her eyes looked up at him, a throbbing seductiveness back in them as she gave off the impression that Jiang Chen could punish her any way he wanted to. He was immediately left speechless yet also inwardly on his guard. This temptress had a very flexible personality, and a tough character to break. This move of allowing Jiang Chen to do whatever he wanted looked like a lazy way out, but it was one that was difficult for him to respond to.

There wasn't enough of a crime here to kill her, and if he punished her or injured her in any way that impacted her performance in refining pills, the Walkabout Sect would surely use this as an excuse to make trouble for him.

A gentleman did not bicker with a woman. It wasn't that he was unable to use poison in kind on her, but how would he resolve the situation then? He stared blankly for a while, but couldn't think of how to proceed.

Wei Xing'er smiled alluringly. "If you can't think of what to do with this older sister, then let me tell you something. My body is pure, and if you'd like, just take me. I'm a weak woman and will have to find shelter in a man's embrace sooner or later. Why not let you take the advantage? I already like the way you look. I couldn't even bear to use too much poison when I used it against you. How else do you think you escaped the strength of my Smokesnare Powder?"

Jiang Chen remained at a loss for words, but suddenly reversed his grip and reached around her, spanking her butt three times in a row. He didn't hold back his strength, so the three smacks damaged her skin and flesh, but not her bones or tendons.

"Wei Xing'er, your moves are useless on me. I'll let you go this time, but if there's a repeat occurrence, I won't let you off the hook then!" He pulled open the door and made a gesture of showing his guest the door. "You can see yourself out!"

Wei Xing'er stood there, stunned after her spanking. Although she gave the outside world the impression of a lascivious and scheming woman, she'd never really been touched by a man before. The sensitive areas about her body were even more of a taboo area, and if any man tried making moves on her there, they would quickly be dead or crippled.

But today, the taboo zone that was her butt had just been spanked crisply, like teaching a child a lesson!

Chapter 547: The Way of Divergent Pills, Jiang Chen Finds an Opening

Even with Wei Xing'er's coquettish and wanton personality, she was still stunned by Jiang Chen's three spankings. She'd never known shyness in her life, but she'd completely lost her composure now. Her almond-shaped eyes glared at Jiang Chen. "You... you dared hit me there!"

Jiang Chen snorted coldly. "What are you still here for? Haven't you been spanked enough?"

Wei Xing'er grew incensed. "Hmph! Just you wait, Jiang Chen! One day I'll make you drink the water with which I wash my feet!"

She flushed red and turned to flee. She even viciously slammed the door shut on her way out.

Jiang Chen's expression was indifferent as he murmured to himself, "This Wei Xing'er seems to think that the greatest beneficiary of her using the Azure Smokesnare Powder would have been the Walkabout Sect. In reality, had she succeeded, Ding Tong would've been the one lucking out instead."

However, if Jiang Chen had been successfully disabled and prevented from participating in the fourth round, it certainly would've impacted the overall scores of the Regal Pill Palace. At that point, it may have been possible for the Walkabout Sect to surpass the Regal Pill Palace. Jiang Chen frowned as his train of thought ran into darker straits

This Wei Xing'er possessed a wanton and indulgent personality. If Jiang Chen hadn't known how to read people or if Ling Bi'er hadn't reminded him beforehand, or even if he'd been unaware of the Walkabout Sect's deft use of poison, then he may not have been as guarded as he had been. Thankfully, since he'd been forewarned, that Smokesnare Powder hadn't posed a threat to Jiang Chen.

But even so, he still didn't dare relax his guard around her. Her natural sense of seduction came from her inherent glamour constitution. Her every gesture and look, even her words were suffused with the skills of charm. Strung together, they were enough to boil a man's blood and overcome his reason with lust.

This small interlude wasn't enough to disabuse Jiang Chen of his sense of self. He sat down cross legged to recompose himself, and shortly forgot about the entire matter.

The candidates all reconvened after a day, gathering in the most holy of halls in the Rippling Mirage Hall, the Dan Li Palace. It was a sacred place for the refinement of pills and pill competitions.

A thousand refining formations glittered within the hall. Each formation was enclosed by restrictions that clearly separated its interior and exterior. Once again, the elders took the left side, and the geniuses the right.

"All candidates, enter your respective refining areas according to your number."

The candidates only took a short while to find their respective formations. Entering their formation would activate the restrictions, sealing them inside.

"From this moment on, no one can leave this area until the competition is over. If you attempt to leave on your own, you will be attacked by the formation."

Everyone was well aware of this rule, and so weren't surprised by the announcement.

“Once again, a perfect score in this topic of refining pills is 600 points, same as the previous topic of spirit herb cultivation. Similarly, there are also three sections within this one round, each worth 200 points. Your time for this round has now been extended to half a month.”

This meant that the candidates couldn't leave this area for the next half month.

“The first section consists of completing pill recipes. There are ten incomplete recipes in front of you, each missing a variety of ingredients. Your task is to fill in the missing pieces. Keep in mind that a recipe may be missing more than one ingredient. There may even be up to three ingredients that have been removed. Incorrect answers and omissions will both be regarded as failures, earning you no points for that recipe. This round has a total of 200 points available, meaning each complete and correct recipe will earn you 20 points.”

Ten recipes worth 20 points each. These rules were rather straightforward, but the caveat was that incorrect answers or omissions would also dock all the points that could be earned from that recipe. This was a much more difficult requirement to satisfy for the pill masters.

“The second section deals with the analysis of pill medicines and recipes. Each of you will be given a pill. Your task is to analyze the pill and reconstruct the recipe by writing down the ingredients. Once again, this section has a total of 200 available points. With ten ingredients for each recipe, each correct ingredient can net you 20 points. However, each incorrect answer will result in a 20 point deduction. The more incorrect answers you put down, the more points you will be docked. So remember, if you are not confident in your answer, don't write down the ingredient.”

Everyone listened to these rules with solemn faces. This section was even stricter than the previous, with points being docked for incorrect answers. If one answered eight correctly yet two incorrectly, this meant that one would only earn six answers' worth of points. That would greatly affect their final score. As such, it would be most prudent to leave answers blank if they weren't sure of their choice. The only silver lining was that even if they lost all their points for this section, their winnings from the previous section would be untouched. Otherwise, their score for this round could even dip into the negatives.

Jiang Chen remained as serene as a mountain. No matter how strict the rules, they wouldn't be able to affect his ability. The strong would always remain the strong. As long as his pill dao foundation remained intact, it wouldn't matter how stringent the rules became. In the end, this competition tested one's foundations, and he was confident in his.

“The third and final section will test your skills in pill refining. Once again, a perfect score is 200 points. This section will not only test your ability to refine pills, but also your logical reasoning skills. Each of you will receive a list of refining ingredients. From that, you will have to craft a pill recipe, then refine the pill according to your recipe. The resulting pill will be evaluated according to a grading scale ranging from A to D. A grade of D will be considered as 50 points, C as 100 points, B as 150 points, and A as 200 points.

“You might be curious about how the grading scale evaluates your pill. I can tell you that if you refine a pill of the true saint rank, then even if the pill is a lower rank pill, you will receive a grade of A and the corresponding 200 points.”

“If the pill is an upper tier saint rank pill, it must at minimum be an upper rank pill to receive full marks.

“If the pill is a mid tier saint rank pill, then it must at minimum reach supreme rank of great perfection to be awarded full marks.”

The mention of “true saint rank” and “saint rank” referred to the classification of the pill itself. Whether the pills were successfully refined or not, each pill was strictly classified within a larger framework of pill dao. As for lower, mid, upper, and supreme tier—those were the categorizations that dealt with the quality of the refined pill. Even mortal rank pills could be divided based on their quality. Jiang Chen naturally understood this theory. Generally speaking, it seemed that the higher the pill’s level was, the greater its chance of receiving an A grade. But if the pill level wasn’t high enough, then it was up to the quality of the refined pill to determine the final grade.

With the rules of the competition announced, the pill refining round could begin.

The first segment was one of recipe completion.

Ten recipes were arrayed in front of Jiang Chen. Everyone had the same set of recipes, making the competition quite fair.

When it came to pill recipes, it really wasn’t easy to stump Jiang Chen. Setting aside the fact that he’d seen most of them before, even if he hadn’t, he could easily extrapolate the missing ingredients from the ones left in the pill recipe.

He took less than two hours to finish completing the recipes, but he didn’t dare be careless and carefully checked everything over once. Due to the rules of this segment, overlooking even one ingredient or answering one incorrectly meant that he would forgo all the points for that recipe.

Jiang Chen didn’t wish to make a mistake in this area. Nevertheless, there were still two recipes in front of him that were so obscure that he wasn’t a hundred percent sure he had extrapolated the right answers.

Of course, he wouldn’t waste any more time here. Even if he didn’t get those correct, he would only lose 40 points in total. Given that he already held an almost 200 point lead over second place, he could afford a 40 point loss. Besides, what guarantee was there that Ding Tong would claim the full 200 points for this section? At the very least, Jiang Chen didn’t think it possible.

Still, there was no such thing as an absolute. If Ding Tong had done his research properly, a healthy dose of luck would make it possible for him to correctly fill out all the recipes in this first section. Although Jiang Chen had known much in his past life, he still hadn’t devoted much time to researching pill recipes in this life. Most of his accomplishments had come from relying on his formidable memory. But if he’d had a couple of decades to devote to research, Jiang Chen firmly believed that no recipe in the Divine Abyss would be capable of stumping him.

He entered the second section right after he’d checked over his answers from the first. This section involved analyzing pill medicines and recipes, which was actually the reverse process of refining pills. One had to deconstruct a refined pill, distilling its essence down to its core ingredients and then reconstruct the pill recipe.

Jiang Chen loved this kind of pursuit in his past life. He would always summon his pill dao disciples to join him in deconstructing a pill he'd newly received and then reconstruct its recipe. This test wasn't foreign to him at all.

A pill cauldron was also needed to deconstruct pills, but the procedure involved in it was diametrically different than the process of refining pills. If nothing else, it required a far more delicate touch.

Ordinarily speaking, there weren't that many pill masters in the Divine Abyss Continent who were willing to spend time and effort to analyze pills. It was a frustratingly complex process that devoured one's energy and mental strength. It was only because of the almost preposterous amount of spare time Jiang Chen had at his disposal in his previous life that he'd immersed himself in the pursuit of deconstructing pills.

However, when he'd braced himself for the task of delving into the pill analysis and picked up the pill he'd been allocated, he couldn't help but burst out in laughter. He actually recognized this pill!

"The Skyheart Rebirth Pill!"

Jiang Chen immediately recognized the pill that rolled around in his hand. It was one of the hallmark products of the divergent pill faction. The effects of this pill were actually similar to the One Buddha Powder that Jiang Chen had introduced in the Eastern Kingdom, but far more advanced. In terms of level, if the One Buddha Powder was level one, then the Skyheart Rebirth Pill was at least level twenty. This pill was used for calming the heart and mind. It was extremely useful to powerful cultivators for suppressing internal demons and clearing the consciousness of stray thoughts.

Contextually, this pill was a rare treasure in this world. It was almost nonexistent in the Myriad Domain.

"Could it be that this pill is a part of the Myriad Empire's legacy, and that the various sects are unable to put it to use?" Jiang Chen's guess was correct. There were many legacies that had been left behind by the mighty Myriad Empire in the Rippling Mirage Hall. Lifting the restrictions and selecting the appropriate test items from within required the combined efforts of the six great sects. It also had the added benefit of ensuring that no one would be able to cheat. However, as long as the pill appeared in the Pill Battles, it would then be spread to the rest of the Myriad Domain.

Chapter 548: The Longevity Pill

Since Jiang Chen recognized this Skyheart Rebirth Pill, he didn't need to spend too much effort on it anymore. The process of deconstruction was still needed to figure out the ingredients though, since there was the chance that substitute materials may have been used in the making of this particular pill. If he'd simply put down the original ingredients, it may be marked as incorrect. As such, he decided to unravel the pill's true ingredients by breaking it down to its basic elements.

The analysis and distillation process went relatively smoothly, since he already knew this was the Skyheart Rebirth Pill. When he was done, he was sure that no substitute materials had been used in the making of this pill. Jiang Chen knew that he wasn't being overly cautious, since this was a pill from the divergent pill faction. Its ever-changing style and peculiar use of ingredients made it a difficult pill to analyze. He had to remain vigilant.

After deciphering the ingredients, Jiang Chen wrote the dozen ingredients down. This segment had been surprisingly easy.

“Heh heh, who would’ve thought that I’d luck out in this section. However, it seems that many will fall in this section. The divergent pill faction’s pills are the hardest to identify. It would not be unreasonable to anticipate that many will be stopped short here.” Jiang Chen naturally wasn’t delighting in the misery of others, but was actually worrying about Mu Gaoqi and Ling Bi’er. If they recognized the style of this pill, then they would be able to forge onwards. But if they treated it as an ordinary pill, then it would be incredibly difficult to analyze. However, Mu Gaoqi and Ling Bi’er weren’t ordinary geniuses. If this stumped them, then it was highly likely that everyone would be equally stumped by this divergent pill faction’s pill.

Jiang Chen didn’t continue dwelling on his thoughts, and composed himself before advancing to the third and last section. With the lead he’d secured from the second section, Jiang Chen was fairly certain that he’d locked in the championship of the genius group.

There were a full hundred ingredients arrayed in front of him for the third section.

“This segment not only tests one’s powers in pill refinement, but also their ability to theorize logically, their observation, as well as their fundamental knowledge.”

With so many materials, there were more than just one or two pills that candidates would be able to refine. As Jiang Chen’s eyes swept over the ingredients, the names of several pills flashed through his mind, but were quickly discarded all one by one. They all came to about mid tier saint rank, so he would have to refine a supreme rank pill to gain full marks. Jiang Chen wasn’t willing to take this risk. It was a risk since he only had enough ingredients at his disposal for at most three pills. It would be a bit difficult to ensure the production of a supreme rank pill from just three pills.

He quickly came up with an upper tier saint rank pill recipe. He only needed to refine an upper rank pill to win 200 points. Jiang Chen thought about it some more and then looked at the ingredients again, still choosing to discard it. “Logically speaking, it’s not difficult to refine an upper rank Phoenix Croon Pill. It’s at eighth level saint rank, but the Fledgling Phoenix Grass here isn’t of the best quality. Some unwanted developments might happen if I were to refine it.”

Jiang Chen wanted a slow, but inexorable finish. In the end, he decided not to go with the Phoenix Croon Pill. He looked at the hundred ingredients, in no hurry to make a move. He knew that since the organizers had made a rule about a true saint rank pill, it was possible to create a pill recipe that would result in a true saint rank pill. Then, even if he refined a lower rank quality pill of that level, he would still take home full points. In other words, if he could create a pill recipe that gave him a true saint rank pill, he would gain full points no matter what level his completed product was.

In the world of pills, pills were divided into mortal, spirit, saint, true saint, earth, and heaven rank pills.

Saint rank pills corresponded to the origin realm of cultivation, and true saint to the sage realm. That meant that ordinary sage realm cultivators utilized pills of the true saint rank. In addition, each rank was further divided into lower, mid, and upper rank levels.

Jiang Chen kept combining and recombining the ingredients in his mind.

He had completed the first and second section in the record time of less than a day, so he had plenty of time to kill on this last segment. Naturally, all the sect heavyweights were keeping a close eye on him. When Palace Head Dan Chi witnessed Jiang Chen's overbearing momentum and the speed at which he'd blasted through the first two segments, he was immensely gratified. His actions in recruiting Jiang Chen and allying with the Precious Tree Sect were being validated as incomparably wise.

With the painful lessons from the first three rounds, Wei Wuying and the others were now numb to Jiang Chen's brilliance. They were convinced it was impossible to speculate or evaluate Jiang Chen with their logic. After all, he'd caught up and surpassed the others after starting off much later than any of them in the previous round of spirit seed cultivation! They'd never heard of anything of the sort before. Now, even as they watched him explosively sprint through the first two sections of the fourth round, they didn't dare bring up any suspicions of cheating. All they could do was bury it deep in their hearts and try to focus on their tasks.

Of course, that didn't mean to say that they weren't hoping that Jiang Chen would become caught up in his arrogance, overestimate himself, and fail to perform at the level he'd demonstrated before. But their hopes seemed doomed, since his demeanor was as solid as Mt. Tai. It didn't seem like his performance would be marred in any way.

Wei Wuying couldn't help but complain in his heart, "That brat Dan Chi really lucked out this time. What kind of monstrous character is this Jiang Chen? I don't believe that a mere sixteen kingdom alliance could've raised this kid. What a pity that Xing'er didn't get anything from him when she went to probe him. Even her charm skills couldn't shake him! Just what is with him?!"

Almost no male in the Myriad Domain could withstand Wei Xing'er's charm skills. Jiang Chen was in the prime of his hot-blooded youth, how had he not been conquered, especially considering that he'd never tasted a woman before?

Wei Wuying really wanted to sit Wei Xing'er down for a chat and go over what had happened, but she was his junior after all. Although she wasn't directly related to him, some things were still a bit awkward to speak of.

Sect Head Zhu was even more depressed. "Ai, it's looking more and more impossible to shake the Regal Pill Palace's position in pill dao through this time's Pill Battles. How will I explain this to the Sky Sect when I return? Although they didn't send their best in the form of Ding Tong, this genius is still someone who has some stature in their sect! I'd thought that he would leave the rest of the geniuses in his dust as he took the genius' championship, but who knew that no matter how well he did, Jiang Chen would still one up him? No wonder the Regal Pill Palace went to the lengths of allying with the Precious Tree Sect for him. He's once again thrown the Sky Sect's plans for the Myriad Domain into disarray..." *no ve. 11b-1n*

Although the Tristar Sect was one of the fourth rank sects in the Myriad Domain, it had only accomplished their feats with the hidden help of the Sky Sect. The Tristar Sect was an important pawn of the Sky Sect in the Myriad Domain, and Ding Tong had been specially charged with helping the Tristar Sect set up the board for their next move. However, no one had anticipated that he would be met with setback after setback on his first stage in the Mt. Rippling Mirage Pill Battles. Jiang Chen's absolutely stellar performance was actually firmly suppressing Ding Tong!

“It all comes down to the fact that the upper echelon of the Sky Sect underestimated the heights of the Myriad Domain. Even setting Jiang Chen aside, there’s still Mu Gaoqi, Wei Xing’er, and Wei Qing in the mix. Although Ding Tong is ahead of them, he doesn’t possess the absolute advantage that Jiang Chen is displaying.” Sect Head Zhu sighed inwardly. He too felt deeply helpless at the appearance of Jiang Chen, a genius rarely seen even in a hundred years.

As Wang Jianyu of the Sacred Sword Palace witnessed Jiang Chen’s rise to claim the championship, he too found it difficult to accept. His envy of such a genius had been overwritten by his desire to kill Jiang Chen and root out this competition. “Jiang Chen is a treasure that Dan Chi picked up in the sixteen kingdoms alliance, and it looks like he’s able to affect the entire fortunes of the Regal Pill Palace. The growth of such a person only forebodes ill for my Sacred Sword Palace. If a chance arises, I must eliminate this person and suppress the Regal Pill Palace’s fortunes.”

The four family heads of the Great Cathedral were equally shocked at Jiang Chen’s dominating performance. However, the Great Cathedral had always set itself up as the top sect in the Myriad Domain, so even if they had certain thoughts, they definitely wouldn’t express them. Besides, they were too busy plotting on how to headhunt Jiang Chen and lure him over to the Great Cathedral. They were well aware that their weakness lay in their lack of a heaven defying level pill master. Once this hole was plugged, the Great Cathedral was destined to make it into the ranks of the third rank sects in the next couple of decades.

Jiang Chen spent several hours putting his thoughts in order. Suddenly, inspiration struck and he slapped his leg. This is it! “A true saint rank pill!”

The name of a pill flashed through his mind, floating upwards out of his memories. “The Longevity Pill!”

If a sage realm cultivator used this pill, it would increase their lifespan from five hundred to eight hundred years. This actually wasn’t much to a cultivator of that realm, but it was an incredibly tempting thing if that much lifespan appeared at the end of one’s life, when they were decrepit and aging. Their hopes of breaking through would reignite, and if they managed to do so, the breakthrough would provide a further boost to their longevity.. When all was said and done, this wasn’t simply a matter of increasing one’s life to eight hundred years. “Eh, although the Longevity Pill is technically a true saint rank pill, it actually approaches the level of an earth rank pill. Surely the organizers hadn’t done this on purpose...”

Jiang Chen suddenly began to hesitate. He trusted that since the organizers had arranged for a true saint rank pill to be possible out of all these combinations, it wouldn’t be the pill he’d just thought of. Rather, it should’ve been a pill that was barely on the cusp of a true saint rank pill. The Longevity Pill was a pseudo earth rank pill already, which usually meant that only those in the emperor realm had the right to use it. Although it wasn’t solidly in the earth rank level, it wasn’t too far off. In addition, only those in the sage realm could take this particular pill. If anyone of a lower realm consumed the pill, its effects would immediately force them to explode. If anyone of a higher realm, such as the emperor realm, took it, then they would only receive an increase in lifespan of twenty years.

Jiang Chen sank into a mire of irresolution. He knew that once the Longevity Pill was introduced into this world, it would cause an immense uproar and unfathomable consequences. But then, another thought struck him. “I’ve continuously kept a low profile since I’ve reincarnated. It’s about time I showed off

some of my skills after entering the Regal Pill Palace. Although there may be some negative fallout from bringing this pill into this world, there will no doubt be some opportunities that also arise. At the very least, it's going to fill my coffers to bursting. I'll never have to worry about resources no matter where I go!"

When his thoughts reached this point, Jiang Chen's resolution hardened. No matter what, he was going to refine this Longevity Pill!

Chapter 549: Rich Fruits of Achievement

Jiang Chen was a practical man of his word. He took out the Skyweave Cauldron and meditated for a moment, mentally simulating the process of refining the Longevity Pill a few times until he was utterly confident. He opened his eyes, ready to begin.

He first circulated the fires within himself and once again used the True Fires of Ninety Nine to preheat the cauldron. When the cauldron resonated, Jiang Chen randomly picked up two ingredients and threw them in carelessly.

These two ingredients weren't actually for refining the Longevity Pill. When he threw them in, he secretly shot out several beams of fire as well, turning them into ash. He then haphazardly threw in some more ingredients, using the flames in his body to repeatedly turn them into ash. He knew that he needed to conceal his true actions from the others, he couldn't allow anyone to derive the pill recipe and ingredient list of the Longevity Pill from his actions. He was sure that the various heavyweights would be keeping an eye on him. Given the impact that this pill would have on the world, there was no doubt people would go insane trying to copy it.

This was why he was purposefully confusing their eyes and ears by mixing in irrelevant materials in his refining process. It would keep the others from copying him. Although countless people would attempt to discern the original components of his pill and then deduce his recipe after it was made, it wouldn't be an entirely simple matter. After all, this was a pseudo earth rank pill, and not so easily reconstructed.

If any such pill could be successfully broken down, then there wouldn't be such a thing as unique pill recipes in this world. It would also invalidate the preciousness of pill recipes. The pill recipe would always be the most useful way to refine a pill. Reverse engineering wasn't impossible, but many pills had ingredients which couldn't be separated into their parts after they'd been combined.

The more sophisticated a pill, the more this was so. Of course, there were no absolutes in life. It all depended on one's prowess. A divine level expert analyzing a pill of the mundane world would be able to parse apart even the most obscure recipe. However, Jiang Chen firmly believed that his sleight of hand would thoroughly obfuscate the recipe for this Longevity Pill.

Furthermore, even if someone had the luck to deduce the recipe, replicating this pill refining would take an identical technique and control over fire. After all, ingredients weren't the only things that determined a successful pill refining. The pill master's techniques, idiosyncrasies, control of fire, and all sorts of details would determine the fate of a cauldron of pills.

Jiang Chen put in the ingredients for the Longevity Pill in an orderly fashion only after he had done all he could in concealing his actions. He also knew that what he'd done would more or less affect the quality of the pill, but he had confidence that although there would be some flaws, he would still be able to

successfully refine a pill. Since as long as he succeeded, he'd be able to take home full marks even if it was of lower rank, thanks to the innate level of this Longevity Pill.

The organizers may not recognize the pill, but they would definitely be able to detect its level. At pseudo earth level, even the lowest level version would stand out like a crane amongst chickens after Jiang Chen took it out. Thus, its refining process was quite extraordinary and required a great deal of effort. Even Jiang Chen didn't have complete confidence in his success. After all, his cultivation level was only fifth level origin realm. Refining a pseudo earth level pill was like reaching for the moon. If it wasn't for his solid foundations from his past life, he wouldn't have the slightest possibility of success.

It was a good thing that the Skyweave Cauldron and Lotus granted him advantages that no one else had.

The Longevity Pill was one that gathered together materials that could extend one's lifespan and created an effect that truly fought the heavens for more years of life. After Jiang Chen tossed in all the ingredients, he began manipulating the fires within his body to slowly fill the area around the Skyweave Cauldron. The Longevity Pill was a pill that required long, meticulous work.

If the fire was too strong, then the refinement was doomed to fail. The pill needed a comfortable pace to ensure refining. Jiang Chen focused his attentions wholly on controlling the flames.

If there was the slightest detail amiss in refining the Longevity Pill, the spirit nature of the ingredients would dissipate due to the heat and decrease the chance of actually forming a pill. This was akin to cooking food. Some dishes needed to be quickly stir-fried with screaming hot flames, and others needed to be left to simmer into a delicious broth. The Longevity Pill was precisely the kind that needed to slowly simmer to reach perfection.

All the various ingredients were slowly melting within the Skyweave Cauldron, their spirit power seeping out drip by drip. At this critical moment, it wasn't just a matter of control over fire, the pill also needed Jiang Chen's unique techniques to continuously purify and manipulate the spirit power that was being produced.

This pill used quite a number of ingredients, and every drop of the spirit power contained within them had to be fully utilized. Once lost, the chances for successfully refining this pill would drop drastically. The nine ingredients turned into nine streams of vivid spirit liquid within the Skyweave Cauldron, rushing to and fro the cauldron as if dragons gambolling in the sky.

Jiang Chen didn't dare relax an iota of his focus. This was the most crucial moment for the Longevity Pill. If any one of the spirit flows escaped his control, then all of his previous effort would be for naught. Controlling nine streams of spirit power at the same time was a bit rough even for Jiang Chen. He began perspiring slightly because of his nervousness, and God's Eye stared down brightly at the depths of the cauldron. It was by far the most taxing refining process he'd undertaken since he'd set out on his journey, and the most difficult pill he'd attempted in this life. The level of the Longevity Pill far surpassed that of the Hexarune Dragon pill, and was far more complex to boot.

Three days passed... then five days... seven days...

As the days flew by, the end of the purification process drew closer. Even with Jiang Chen's incredible strength of heart, the evening of the seventh day had brought him near the end of his rope. But he knew, it wasn't yet time to relax. There was still room for mistakes to occur. The last step of this difficult

purification process was to combine the spirit flows together. As long as they could be gathered and seamlessly melded together, the following steps would be easy. However, the process of coalescing these nine flows would be the most dangerous. If he'd misjudged their relative proportions, they would start fighting each other as soon as they came into contact.

Under those circumstances, the best case scenario was a refining failure. At worst, the cauldron would vanish in an explosion that would no doubt harm the pill master. Jiang Chen had to admit, this latest stunt of refining the Longevity Pill was risky. After seven days of purification, the ingredients had been distilled to the very essence of spirit power and were particularly lively. In truth, if he'd misjudged the proportions at any time over the past seven days, that would've led to an imbalance between the nine spirit powers and resulted in them attacking each other instead. That would have spelled immediate failure.

Palace Head Dan Chi had been observing the proceedings from above and had placed the majority of his attentions on Jiang Chen these past few days. He was greatly astonished to see sweat bead his disciple's forehead.

Never once had Jiang Chen displayed anything other than pure confidence and complete assurance. But now, he was showing signs of a struggle?

"What's going on here?" Palace Head Dan Chi was slightly taken aback. With Jiang Chen's strength, an upper tier saint rank pill would be no trouble at all! Even if he wanted to refine a lower tier true saint rank pill, it would not be so difficult as to make Jiang Chen go to this level of effort. But how would Dan Chi know that Jiang Chen wasn't refining anything akin to a lower tier true saint rank pill? He was going far beyond the horizon, all the way to a pseudo earth rank pill!

Jiang Chen formed a hand seal and commanded one of the spirit flows to move. Each hand seal was as comforting as the spring breeze, without the slightest bit of error to them. The nine spirit forces were now at their friskiest. If Jiang Chen formed his hand seals too quickly, it would impact the operating speed of the cauldron and cause flaws to form when the ingredients melded together.

The nine flows of spirit power continuously converged on the center of the Skyweave Cauldron at a perfect speed and angle under the command of Jiang Chen's string of nine hand seals.

"Meld, meld!" Jiang Chen chanted inwardly, his mind completely focused on the task at hand. He didn't dare spare the slightest thought for anything else, and the thought of the effort of seven days straight coming to a head made his emotions ripple slightly. But he also knew that if he couldn't control his emotions and let it affect his refining, his efforts over the past seven days would go down the drain. Therefore, Jiang Chen activated Boulder's Heart and adjusted his mindset to completely wipe out his emotions, like a dried up well devoid of ripples, before thoroughly melding the nine flows together.

Wham!

The Skyweave Cauldron suddenly began trembling as the nine converged spirit forces resonated with each other. The force of their resonance caused the cauldron to shiver along with them.

Any other ordinary pill master would've thought that something had gone wrong, but Jiang Chen knew better. This was the resonance that should occur with the melding of various sources of spirit power for

the Longevity Pill. As long as the forces of resonance didn't exceed a certain degree, that meant that there was no problem with this melding.

The resonance rang out for three breaths of time before slowly subsiding. Jiang Chen's heart had been in his throat, and slowly started to settle back to its original position. It had been a long, arduous ride, but the nine spirit forces of the Longevity Pill had finally successfully melded together.

The most difficult process had been successfully completed, and all that was left was to control the fires to nudge the spirit power into coalescing into pills. "Almost none of the spirit power from the ingredients had been lost from the cauldron. As such, there should be three or four pills from this batch."

According to the rules, pill masters could keep the pills produced from this section. This was also a form of reward for the candidates. When Dan Chi saw Jiang Chen's expression relax, he knew that Jiang Chen must've made it past the most difficult stage. "Just what is Jiang Chen refining? I saw him throw in at least twenty ingredients before he started. Just what complex pill is that to need so many ingredients?"

Most pills needed at least five ingredients, and at most around ten. Those which required more than ten were extremely complicated pills. Those that required more than twenty ingredients were a rarity in Regal Pill Palace history.

Jiang Chen's cauldron of Longevity Pills were officially finished after roughly five more days. The results slightly surprised him; there were actually four pills! He'd thought that they would all be lower tier, but hadn't thought that there would be two which barely scraped the threshold for mid tier. "Mm! My efforts haven't been wasted. If it wasn't for me spending so much time on focusing on the purity of the pills, they likely wouldn't have reached mid tier."

Jiang Chen was naturally gratified when he saw his results. This was the highest rank of pills he'd refined since reincarnating!

Chapter 550: Verbal Sparring

The fourth round had a time limit of fifteen days. Of those fifteen days, Jiang Chen had used one to complete the first two sections, and twelve refining the Longevity Pill. In total, he had spent thirteen days completing this round. He'd lost his advantage in speed for this round, as there were at least twenty participants who'd finished before him. However, apart from a few who stood around with noncommittal expressions on their faces, most of them looked a bit dejected.

It was apparent that the difficulty of this section had forced everyone not to perform up to their usual standards. After all, the pursuit of refining pill had never focused on speed, but rather the type of pill and their effects. As such, the first to complete may not necessarily be the best level pill presented. It was up to the judges to decide on the grades of A, B, C and D.

In addition, whether it was the first two sections of completing the pill recipe or deconstructing the pill had been difficult for them as well. No one dared say that they were fully confident in taking home all the points.

Jiang Chen didn't want to waste the last two days, so he decided to meditate in the competition area. Time was too precious to waste two days in pointlessly waiting for the competition to end.

True to the rules, the contest ended two days later. With the restrictions lifted, everyone left their areas. All of the answer sheets were taken away, and only one pill needed to be left behind to qualify as a result of the third section, no matter how many pills the cultivator refined. Jiang Chen stored three of his pills and left one lower rank as his result.

“All contestants are to return to the main lobby in the Rippling Mirage Hall to await the scores. Please be warned that the wait time will be longer this time, as we need to tally up the overall scores of this time’s Pill Battles in addition to the scores of the fourth round.”

All of the candidates filed into the main hall after this announcement boomed through the competition area.

“Brother Chen!” Mu Gaoqi trotted up to Jiang Chen from behind, an excited look on his face, “Brother Chen, was the pill from the second section from the divergent pill faction?”

When Jiang Chen saw Mu Gaoqi’s brows dancing on his face, he knew that the latter had done well. He smiled, “Does that mean you were able to decipher its ingredients?”

Mu Gaoqi chuckled. “Not entirely, but I judged that it was from the divergent pill faction and so could identify roughly eight ingredients. I think I got those right.”

If he had been able to deduce that it was from the divergent pill faction, then that knowledge alone would be able to give Mu Gaoqi quite an advantage. n/-o//v.(e--l))B-)l//n

“It was indeed a product from the divergent pill faction, the Skyheart Rebirth Pill.” Jiang Chen nodded and clapped Mu Gaoqi on the shoulder. “Let’s go.” He was quite satisfied that Mu Gaoqi had been able to reach that conclusion.

“Hmph! Jiang Chen, stop acting as if you’re all that! That pill was taken from a sealed off, taboo area. It’s not something that can be found anywhere in the Myriad Domain. As if you would be capable of analyzing it for what it is!” A jeering voice rudely interrupted their conversation from behind. Jiang Chen didn’t even need to turn around to know it was Wei Qing. Jiang Chen only smiled in response. The truth would be far more convincing than any debate now, so he couldn’t be bothered to argue.

Ling Bi’er also caught up to them. “Junior brother, what ingredients would you say that the Skyheart Rebirth Pill possesses?”

She too had deduced that it was a product of the divergent pill faction, but the Skyheart Rebirth Pill was something outside her knowledge. It was impossible for her to know of it. But even though she didn’t know what pill it was, she could still analyze what ingredients the pill was made of. Even if she couldn’t fully deconstruct it, each additional ingredient she could identify was another twenty points.

“How many ingredients did you identify, senior sister?”

“I’m only confident about seven of them. I wasn’t sure about the remaining three, so I didn’t dare write them down.” Ling Bi’er responded honestly. They would be docked points if she wrote down the wrong answers, so Ling Bi’er had taken the same path as everyone else and refrained from haphazard answers.

“Let’s go out and chat.” Jiang Chen only reeled off the ten ingredients after they’d left behind those behind them.

Mu Gaoqi was delighted. "Haha, Brother Chen, then all eight of the ones I identified should be right! What a pity that there were two more, but they're too obscure that I didn't figure them out at all. My dao cultivation is still too shallow."

Ling Bi'er was also quite admiring, but also felt gratified. "The seven I identified were all correct as well, but I still fell behind junior brother Mu."

But she didn't envy him. The three of them chatted and laughed as they arrived in the main lobby. When Shen Qinghong saw them moving as a group, he felt greatly put out. He was foremost amongst the younger generation of the Regal Pill Palace, but he was actually feeling quite ostracized at the moment. However, he wouldn't express his jealousy in front of his peers. "You must have performed quite well, given how lighthearted you all are."

Jiang Chen smiled casually as Ling Bi'er also smiled faintly. It was Mu Gaoqi who nodded with a smile, "Senior brother Shen, we're discussing the contents of the fourth round."

Unfortunately, Shen Qinghong wasn't in the mood to discuss it. He hadn't performed poorly, but neither had he done well. He had no hope for duking it out for the championship and had come to terms with it. He would be satisfied if he remained in the top ten. In his eyes, pill dao was merely an auxiliary skill in the end. In the world of martial dao, it was martial dao geniuses who would greet the world with a proud smile. They alone would be able to call themselves the masters of the world. Therefore, he never put down the feeling of superiority in his heart.

When he saw that Ling Bi'er was willing to give up on herself and lower herself to mix in with Jiang Chen and Mu Gaoqi's crowd, he was a bit envious. Although, he'd never admit anything of the sort to himself. He only felt that she was wallowing in the behavior of a degenerate.

Those from the Walkabout Sect also arrived at the same as the Regal Pill Palace disciples. The Walkabout Sect was last time's runner up, so they took the seat beside the Regal Pill Palace. Wei Qing's gaze was cold as he cast a look of death at Jiang Chen, revealing a hint of a cruel smile. Jiang Chen knew that Wei Qing truly hated him by now, but what did he care? He best not want to cause trouble, or I don't mind sending him off on his final journey inside Mt. Rippling Mirage. He'd already slain a Walkabout Sect elder, so he didn't mind adding a mere Wei Qing to his list.

The disciples from the Tristar Sect also walked in. Zhu Feiyang flicked a glance over at Shen Qinghong. "Ole brother Qinghong, you're ranked as the top genius in the Regal Pill Palace at the end of the day, yet why do I see that you're ranked last amongst your fellows in the first three rounds?"

This was an open provocation, almost an outright attack on Shen Qinghong. In response, Shen Qinghong laughed disinterestedly, "Zhu Feiyang, you don't seem to have the best score amongst your sect either."

Zhu Feiyang laughed heartily, "Junior brother Ding Tong's potential is extraordinary. It's not a big deal that I've come up short next to him, but it's a different case that you're last amongst the four from the Regal Pill Palace."

Wei Qing also snorted coldly off on the side. "Perhaps the great Sir Shen is displaying his might and glory as the great senior brother and letting his junior brothers take their turn in the limelight. That's also possible."

“Hahaha, old brother Qinghong, is that so?” Zhu Feiyang was smiling in an extremely exaggerated fashion, his expression and tone full of mockery.

Wang Han of the Sacred Sword Palace also walked over with a smile. “Your reputation is so great as the first genius of the Regal Pill Palace, but your pill dao scores are pretty much the same as mine. Ole brother Qinghong, it’s not that I want to shake your confidence, but there really isn’t a place for you on the list of geniuses of the Myriad Domain.”

Zhu Feiyang and Wang Han had already broken through to the sage realm and were truly in first level sage realm, but Shen Qinghong was still separated by that final step. It was that separation of a line that made the other two feel so full of superiority. As for Wei Qing, his cultivation level was lower than Shen Qinghong’s, but everyone knew that his skill with poison let him rank amongst the top geniuses. Even Zhu Feiyang and Wang Han would rather offend Shen Qinghong twice over before even thinking of offending Wei Qing.

The three of them had actually reached an unspoken accord that they would target Shen Qinghong and incite internal conflict in the Regal Pill Palace. Shen Qinghong was proud and arrogant, and his face grew ashen when so many banded together to bully him, but he was left without a riposte.

Jiang Chen suddenly snorted coldly. “If I recall correctly, this is the Pill Battles of Mt. Rippling Mirage, not the Myriad Grand Ceremony. Isn’t it too early for you all to flaunt your martial might?!”

Wang Han was the direct grandson of Wang Jianyu and held great enmity for the Regal Pill Palace. When he saw Jiang Chen butting in, his gaze grew cold and he shouted, “And who the hell are you? Do you even have the right to talk when the top geniuses are talking?”

Zhu Feiyang sighed. “Kids these days have no respect for the rules and seniority. Ole brother Qinghong, as their senior brother, have you not been teaching them properly?”

Wei Qing added fuel to the flames off on the side as he chuckled. “Perhaps the great Sir Shen harbors hate in his heart because he feels that his beauty has been seized from him!”

These fellows were becoming more and more outrageous as they spoke. Mu Gaoqi’s face had gone beet red with indignation. If it wasn’t for his low status, he would’ve broken out in loud curses a long while ago. Ling Bi’er frowned slightly and was about to speak up when Jiang Chen smiled faintly. “And here I thought you self-styled top geniuses were actually something. Don’t tell me you’re acting this way because you can’t afford to lose at the Pill Battles!”

He relaxed into a chair after speaking. “Flustered with rage, the faces of some petty villains are certainly an ugly thing to see. Tsk tsk, so the so-called top geniuses of the Myriad Domain have only this little bit of self-restraint!”

Jiang Chen didn’t glare maliciously or speak gruffly, but those offhand words made them snap their mouths shut instantly.

“Brat, what are you prancing around for? The scores aren’t even out yet. Do you think that you’re destined to have the highest scores in the end just because your ranking was high in the first couple of rounds?” Wei Qing would never accept Jiang Chen no matter what.

Jiang Chen laughed leisurely. “Regardless of whether or not I have the highest score, there’s no doubt in my mind that I’d only be ranked higher than you all.”

Wang Han sniffed derisively. “In the world of martial dao, pill dao is ultimately just embellishment, a superfluous auxiliary skill. The ones who will truly command the world are martial dao geniuses. Kid, it’s not that I want to affect your confidence, but pill dao geniuses have been destined to cower at the feet of martial geniuses since ancient times to eke out a living. You won’t be an exception either.”

Zhu Feiyang also nodded slightly. “These words make great sense. Kid, only when your name graces the Myriad Dragon Rankings will you barely obtain the right to talk to us. Right now, you are far, far away from such an achievement.”

Jiang Chen remained composed, but couldn’t help but let out a bark of laughter. “You talk as if you really think you’re martial dao geniuses.”

Everyone frowned at those words. This kid really had an exaggerated opinion of his abilities! Is he overconfident because his Pill Battles results are excellent, and he actually thinks he’s something? Or has he forgotten that anyone here can torture him to death after he enters Mt. Rippling Mirage?

It was at this moment that Elder Yun Nie brought the other elders in their direction. The other young men were more or less wary when they saw Elder Yun Nie, retreating to the side after a cold snort.