

Three Realms 761

Chapter 761: The Goldencrown Cloudcrane

One had to admit, the scene which young master Ji San had delivered a sound face slapping to Wang Teng had been very memorable. The feverish atmosphere of the auction instantly chilled the moment he upped the bid. Although Wang Teng still wanted to cross paths against young master Ji San a little longer, he was once bitten, twice shy. He too was worried that he would be tricked by the young master again. Most importantly, they had reached the bottom of their pockets after the farce that was the Longevity Pill. There was no way he could afford tens of millions for the Skysnatcher Cauldron.

Two great clan members at the back tentatively increased the price twice for the cauldron, but both their attempts were thwarted by a Ji San who looked like he would devour them alive. In the end, young master Ji San successfully took home the Skysnatcher Cauldron at the price of fifty six million saint spirit stones. Although Joined Ridges Pavilion young master wasn't too pleased with this final price, it was almost at his target goal. Most importantly, he couldn't fault young master Ji San for winning the bid. The Longevity Pill wouldn't have ended at such an insane price if young master Ji San hadn't competed for it.

Jiang Chen let out a sigh of relief when he saw that young master Ji San had successfully won the Skysnatcher Cauldron. Upgrading his equipment was a necessity if he were to establish himself in Veluriyam Capital, and the cauldron was one equipment he absolutely needed to improve. Although the price of fifty six million saint spirit stones was a little higher than he would've liked, it didn't make that big of a dent in his current wealth. This cauldron was absolutely worth hundreds and thousands times the cost in his hands.

After the Skysnatcher Cauldron was bid, the sixth auctioned item showed up on stage. It was an ancient formation disk that caused the crowd to fight crazily for it once more. This time, Jiang Chen showed no interest even though this type of formation disk was very rare. He had obtained several himself at the forbidden grounds of the Ancient Crimson Heavens Sect. The quality of this formation disk was about the same level as the Minor Artifice Formation, and that made it of little value to him. After all, Jiang Chen possessed the Ancient Crimson Heavens Sect most precious Ancient Crimson formation disk. It was capable of emulating the ten great formations of the Ancient Crimson Heavens Sect! To this day, Jiang Chen was only able to use it once and barely summon ten to twenty percent of its true strength, but there was no denying its might.

But to other people, this formation disk was without a doubt a precious treasure. The price quickly soared to over sixty million saint spirit stones. In the end, the disk was won by a great clan member at the price of eighty million saint spirit stones. The greatest advantage of such formation disk was that it could instantly be deployed. Unlike the normal formations, it neither needed a formation flag or set up to be deployed. This instantaneous reaction saved time, and while it might not be able to kill the enemy in the critical moment, it would be able to delay the enemy long enough to save one's life. After all, even the strongest expert would be caught by surprise if a formation had suddenly appeared out of nowhere. An abrupt moment of surprise might be all that was needed to save a person's life in battle.

Two more items was put up after the ancient formation was won, but Jiang Chen was still uninterested in either of them. Jiang Chen held no expectations whatsoever considering that the auction was about to end.

However, his heart skipped a beat when he heard the name of the ninth auctioned item from the Joined Ridges Pavilion young master. "The ninth auctioned item is a Goldencrown Cloudcrane."

A Goldencrown Cloudcrane! Jiang Chen couldn't help but cast a glance at young master Ji San after he heard these two words. Now this was what young master Ji San should spare no effort in obtaining, no matter what! He never imagined a coincidence like this would happen. He'd just been thinking about the Pine Crane Pill when the Longevity Pill had been auctioned. He'd never thought that a spirit beast like the Goldencrown Cloudcrane would then show up in an auction like this.

The Goldencrown Cloudcrane's rank wasn't too high, and its combat power was average at best. However, it was an incredibly rare species. It was a species of the Cloudcranes, but the one with a golden crown on its head was incredibly rare. Every part of a Goldencrown Cloudcrane's body was precious. There was even a wealthy man who'd once used the feathers to weave a robe that was impervious to water and fire, and also reduced all metal attribute attacks by half. It was incredibly precious equipment. Moreover, the Cloudcrane's flesh was also extraordinarily tasty. It was publicly acknowledged as a delicious delicacy in the world of martial dao. The heart especially, was a famous medicinal ingredient in the pill making industry.

The two main ingredients of the Pine Crane Pill was the Invisible Chameleon Cloudpine pine cone and the Goldencrown Cloudcrane heart. This was why Jiang Chen had been startled when he heard the Goldencrown Cloudcrane being announced. As the last item of the auction, it was obviously set at an expensive price. Its starting bid was thirty million saint spirit stones, and many parties were bidding madly for the creature.

Unexpectedly, young master Ji San himself didn't seem all that interested in this item at all. He wore an indifferent look on his face, and his mind didn't even seem to be on the auction anymore. Jiang Chen couldn't help but sigh helplessly on the inside when he saw this. This was what the young master should've staked his life to bid, but the man himself was showing no reaction at all.

Jiang Chen was hesitant. Should he remind this fellow to make a bid? After all, a creature like the Goldencrown Cloudcrane was a priceless creature that could only be encountered serendipitously. There might not be another in ten or even twenty years. But how should he remind the young master? Would young master Ji San suddenly bid for a spirit animal he had zero interest in at all? Would he even listen? Jiang Chen wasn't sure either how he should answer young master Ji San if pressed for a reason.

After all, Jiang Chen couldn't tell him about the Pine Crane Pill. The pill's influence was too great, and even he dared not imagine the consequences if its existence were to be revealed. That being said, Jiang Chen couldn't help but feel a bit impressed by young master Ji San's spirit and heart when he recalled that the young master had won the Skysnatcher Cauldron on his behalf without asking a single question. A moment of hesitation later, Jiang Chen ultimately decided to give young master Ji San a reminder. "Young master Ji San, this Goldencrown Cloudcrane is very important for you. You should bid on it. If you still have enough spirit stones, you should be ready to do everything in your power to win this Goldencrown Cloudcrane."

Jiang Chen's reminder obviously caught young master Ji San off guard. He hadn't hesitated at all when he bid on the Skysnatcher Cauldron for Jiang Chen earlier. However, he couldn't help but feel a bit of puzzled astonishment this time, because he couldn't fathom how this Goldencrown Cloudcrane could be useful to him in any way. "My friend, it's not that I don't trust you, but this spirit animal can only be used to weave a feathered robe. It's not all that useful to me, not to mention only a single one isn't even enough to weave a complete robe," young master Ji San labored to explain his thoughts.

"Young master Ji San, you were willing to spend a hundred million saint spirit stones to bid for the Longevity Pill earlier, weren't you? I can tell you now that this Goldencrown Cloudcrane is worth that price more than the Longevity Pill is. If you trust me, then bid for the Goldencrown Cloudcrane. If you don't, the just pretend that I've not said anything. I'm just reminding you out of goodwill." This was as far as Jiang Chen could advise him. n--Ove**ll**In

If young master Ji San trusted him, then he could consider revealing more of the secret. If young master Ji San couldn't trust him, it still wouldn't change the fact that Jiang Chen had reminded him out of a sense of obligation. Morally speaking, Jiang Chen would be in the right. After all, he didn't need to say anything in the first place.

Young master Ji San had helped him bid for the Skysnatcher Cauldron, but Jiang Chen had saved him from the trap that was the Longevity Pill as well. The exchange of favors was equal at best, and Jiang Chen owed Ji San nothing at all. Young master Ji San pondered over the choice for a moment. Although a brief moment of hesitation did pass through his mind, he ultimately decided to trust Jiang Chen. Trust the people you chose, and forego the ones you doubt.

He had chosen to trust Jiang Chen once on the Longevity Pill, so what was the harm in trusting him once more? If he were to lose, he might as well lose completely. And in the same vein, a total victory was better than a partial victory. When his thoughts travelled to this point, young master Ji San once again displayed his ultimate dandiness and declared, "Sixty million!"

Everyone was guessing that the next bid was going to be forty million or so, but his bid had suddenly come in and shattered everyone's expectations. He even casted a taunting glance at Wang Teng after making the declaration. His meaning was obvious. I'm making another bid, and I dare you play this game with me again!

Wang Teng's face was livid. This auction was a complete wash. He had sunk all of his money into the Longevity Pill, so where on earth was he going to find the spare change to accept Ji San's challenge? Moreover, he suspected that young master Ji San was only trying to drag him down further. He had already fallen for the ploy once, and Wang Teng would rather suffer a bit more humiliation than lose even more money. He couldn't afford tens of millions at the moment anyways.

Jiang Chen was amused when he saw young master Ji San's actions. He was inwardly impressed by the young master. As expected, there were no easy pickings amongst the great clans at all. Young master Ji San's unpredictable actions was obviously a cat and mouse tactic. He wanted very much to win the Goldencrown Cloudcrane, but had purposely taunted Wang Teng into bidding against him. As a result, Wang Teng actually didn't dare to raise the bid. After all, Wang Teng had suffered a loss in Ji San's hands already. He was still reeling from the blow right now.

That being said, though Wang Teng didn't try to compete this time, there were a few great clans who were also interested in this auction. In the end, young master Ji San won the Golden-crown Cloudcrane at the tall price of eighty million saint spirit stones without even batting an eyelid. He left all other bidders in dust. This outcome stunned everyone present. The foremost clan was still the foremost clan alright! His ability to spend spirit stones like water was shocking.

He had casually raised the bid of a mere Longevity Pill to a hundred million saint spirit stones. Although he didn't win it in the end, his charisma was undeniably astounding. Now, he had spent slightly over a hundred million to buy a single cauldron and a single spirit animal. It was unlikely that an ordinary clan member could do the same. It was obvious that young master Ji San had prepared more than enough money to win the bids with ease. He had become the main focus of the event and Joined Ridges Pavilion's favorite customer. Young master Ji San had not only made two amazing final bids himself, he'd also been the number one contributor in raising the price of the Longevity Pill to one hundred and twenty million saint spirit stones.

Joined Ridges Pavilion only wished that they could find a way to better welcome such a wonderful customer. This extraordinarily entertaining auction ended perfectly with the wide smile on Joined Ridges Pavilion's young master's face. They were obviously the biggest winner of this auction.

The most dejected of them all was without a doubt Wang Teng's group. Although everyone else had splashed out just as much money to win, they had at least gotten what they wanted. However, the bid he'd won had belonged to him in the first place, and as a result he had to hand over a twenty percent commission for free. That twenty four million saint spirit stones! Wang Teng was enraged when he saw young master Ji San's smile, "Ji Ole Third, I dare you to smile again when your clan lord's cultivation dissipates!"

He was feeling pretty wretched, and so he left the scene with his subordinates and a dark look on his face. Meanwhile, young master Ji San made his way leisurely outside the entrance, waiting for Wei Jie and Jiang Chen outside the courtyard.

Chapter 762: The Generous Young Master Ji San

Jiang Chen saw the young master waiting for them outside the entrance, but didn't approach him. Instead, he sent a message, "Let's find a quiet place to speak, young master Ji San."

Young master Ji San waved his paper fan and showed no change on his expression despite having heard Jiang Chen's voice. A moment later, he transmitted, "Wei Jie, I'll be booking a table at Little Leisurely Clouds. Follow me there."

Little Leisurely Clouds was an extremely high class restaurant in Veluriyam Capital. It was an exquisitely built building at a quiet location, and its rules of reception was exceptionally strict. It wasn't a place where common folk could get a table. In fact, even a ninth rank aristocratic family member might not be able to reserve a table in Little Leisurely Clouds. Only a great clan member could reserve a table for certain. Even Jiang Chen was a little surprised when he arrived at Little Leisurely Clouds with Wei Jie. He didn't think that such a tasteful restaurant existed in a place as expensive as Veluriyam Capital. Situated between hills and rivers, the restaurant gave off an incredibly pleasing atmosphere. From Wei Jie's reaction, it would appear that even he didn't have the chance to frequent Little Leisurely Clouds often.

The duo had just arrived at the entrance when a steward welcomed them with a professional smile, "My apologies, but are you two young master Ji San's friends?"

Wei Jie nodded, "Has young master San arrived?"

"Young master Ji San is waiting for you two upstairs. Please, follow me." This manager obviously held a high position in Little Leisurely Clouds, but the fact that he had welcomed them personally was a great honor. Wei Jie understood that this honor wasn't granted on behalf of him, but young master Ji San. The foremost clan in Veluriyam Capital still held great influence.

The dishes were already set on the table when they arrived at an exquisite room. The young master's tall figure was standing beside the table, a hint of anxiety spilling from his normally calm expression. It was obvious that young master Ji San was extremely concerned about the Longevity Pill. Seeing that Jiang Chen had come together with Wei Jie, young master Ji San immediately instructed the steward, "Thank you for your service, but we won't be needing it for now. We will take care of ourselves."

The steward was a very discreet person, and understood that he or the staff wasn't to be privy to the guest's private talks. He immediately smiled, "Please enjoy your meal."

Once all Little Leisurely Cloud staff had exited, young master Ji San waved his hand, "What is your friend called, Wei Jie?"

Wei Jie still looked a little uncomfortable in young master Ji San's presence, but quickly answered, "He is the new guest pill king House Wei has hired. You can call him Pill King Zhen, young master."

Young master Ji San nodded before examining Jiang Chen for a brief moment with a complicated look. He greeted Jiang Chen, "I apologize for being ill-informed, for this is the first time I've heard of your reputation, Pill King Zhen. May I have the pleasure of knowing who your master is?"

Young master Ji San's tone was a little probing, but Jiang Chen didn't mind such little transgressions. At the very least, this young master Ji San hadn't greeted him with the hypocritical, 'it's an honor to meet you at last' when he didn't even know of Jiang Chen. From this angle, he judged that young master Ji San was at least an aboveboard person who didn't beat around the bush too much.

"Young master Ji San, there are no outsiders here," Jiang Chen smiled, "So let's not beat around the bush trying to probe each other's background, shall we? I'm very sure you won't know my master even if I were to tell you."

Jiang Chen made himself at home and took a guest seat with a flourish, presenting the upper rank Longevity Pill he had prepared since long ago. He pushed the pill bottle gently and sent it sliding towards young master Ji San. No words were as persuasive as reality. The only reason young master Ji San was trying to delicately probe him was because he suspected Jiang Chen's claims of possessing the Longevity Pill. In that case, there was nothing more persuasive than putting the Longevity Pill on the table.

As expected, young master Ji San lifted an eyebrow instantly and grabbed the pill bottle with a bit of agitation. He gave it a little sniff, and joy immediately blossomed on his face. He could say at least that this pill presence was on point. Moreover, this pill was indeed of a higher grade than the one auctioned by Joined Ridges Pavilion. Obviously in a hurry, young master Ji San tipped out the upper grade Longevity Pill and gently rolled it around in his hand. He probed it continuously with his consciousness.

The more he looked, the more he lost his serious expression and relaxed. The joy on his face grew clearer and clearer.

“Good, good, good! This pill is genuine. It is definitely the Longevity Pill. True enough, it’s even better than the one auctioned by Joined Ridges Pavilion. You are a man of your word, Pill King Zhen.” The clouds on young master Ji San’s face faded quite a bit, and even his smile had turned courteous, “Wei Jie, your House Wei has finally found a reliable pill king. I must congratulate you.”

His one line caused their rather stiff relationship to thaw a little. Wei Jie hastily replied, “Pill King Zhen is the biggest reason we were able to settle our internal strife. His pill dao talent is immeasurable.”

Young master Ji San nodded with a smile and played with the Longevity Pill admiringly for a long time. The joy on his face looked just like a child who had just obtained a delicious sweet for the first time.

“Pill King Zhen, if those three middle rank Longevity Pills could be sold for a sum of a hundred twenty million, then they would be worth forty million each. Therefore, your upper rank Longevity Pill would be worth at least fifty million. So here, take your Skysnatcher Cauldron. We’ll save each other the trouble and cliché of exchanging money!” This young master Ji San was a surprisingly refreshing character. He took out the Skysnatcher Cauldron and pushed it directly to Jiang Chen.

Jiang Chen cast a glance at the Skysnatcher Cauldron, feeling rather impressed by young master Ji San’s heroic character. He had spent fifty six million saint spirit stones to win this cauldron. However, this upper rank Longevity Pill’s true value was in reality only worth two to three million saint spirit stones.

The reason its price had been raised to such insane heights earlier was purely because the Majestic Clan had manipulated young master Ji San’s anxiety and butted heads with him. There was no doubt that Jiang Chen would benefit greatly if he were to exchange this upper rank Longevity Pill for a Skysnatcher Cauldron just like that. But Jiang Chen understood that he couldn’t accept this trade, at least not like this. Instead of putting away the Skysnatcher Cauldron in a hurry, he looked at young master Ji San with sincere eyes. “Young master Ji San, I am very much impressed by your heroism. However, you’ll be suffering a huge loss if we trade this way, and as such I cannot accept this trade with a good conscience.”

Young master Ji San frowned, “Money is not a problem for me, my friend. You can set yourself at ease if your qualms lie purely in the difference between prices. I make my friends completely based on my own preferences, and it is not uncommon for me to spend tens of thousands in one go.”

Jiang Chen smiled faintly and replied, “It is not just a problem of the price difference.”

“What is the problem then?”

Jiang Chen spoke seriously, “It is exactly because you’re such a heroic character that I don’t wish to take advantage of you, young master Ji San. If you were a vile person like Wang Teng, not only would I take full advantage of you, I’d be laughing behind your back too.”

Young master Ji San laughed loudly in agreement upon hearing Jiang Chen’s description of Wang Teng, “Well said! That Wang Teng is pretty vile alright.”

“I see that your mind is set on the Longevity Pill, and I’ve seen you willing to suffer through Wang Teng’s wiles and part with a hundred million saint spirit stones just for it. May I ask why?” In reality, Jiang Chen

already knew the truth, since Wei Jie had told him about this earlier. But he couldn't let young master Ji San think that Wei Jie was a blabbermouth, which was why he had purposely feigned ignorance and asked this question.

As expected, the young master was caught off guard momentarily before he cast a thoughtful glance at Wei Jie. He nodded and responded slowly, "Wang Teng brought this up multiple times at the auction, and the rumors have already spread throughout Veluriyam Capital. I suppose it is unlikely that the news will be hidden for much longer. Yes, it's true. The Coiling Dragon clan lord is nearing the end of his lifespan, and he will lose all of his cultivation in three years time. So when I heard of the miraculous abilities of the Longevity Pill, I thought..." Young master Ji San halted at this point. There wasn't any need to speak on.

"Young master San, I suspected so, which is also why I've stopped you from fighting for the Longevity Pill against Wang Teng. If you spent over a hundred million on this Longevity Pill and discovered later that the pill was in fact, completely useless for an emperor realm cultivator, you would've become the laughingstock of the entire Veluriyam Capital." Jiang Chen understood that the truth was a little cruel, but he didn't wish to lie to young master Ji San either.

Young master Ji San's expression changed abruptly when he heard this. All smiles on his face vanished immediately as his complexion took on a shade of deathly white. "Pill King Zhen, is there any... basis behind your claim?"

Jiang Chen declared without batting an eyelid, "I can speak with my life as a guarantee that the Longevity Pill is almost completely ineffective for an emperor realm cultivator. In fact, the side effects might be even greater than usual. It may even have the opposite effect." *nove.lb.in*

Young master Ji San stared closely at Jiang Chen's eyes. It was obvious that he was trying to discern whether Jiang Chen was telling the truth. Jiang Chen sighed softly, but never once broke eye contact with young master Ji San. He simply looked back at him calmly. Young master Ji San's expression transformed from joy, to shock, to disappointment and finally to despair. He looked lost and completely downcast. "How could this be? How could this be? Is this truly the fate of our Coiling Dragon Clan?" Young master Ji San muttered bitterly.

Wei Jie wanted very much to console young master Ji San, but when he thought of his inferior status and useless words, he wasn't quite sure what to say. Although young master Ji San had lost his composure for a moment, it lasted only for an instant. He quickly regained his cool and pushed the Skysnatcher Cauldron towards Jiang Chen. "Pill King Zhen, the truth is a little cruel, but your honesty is something I admire. Take this Skysnatcher Cauldron, and I will take this Longevity Pill back with me." A price gap of several tens of millions really was nothing to young master Ji San.

Jiang Chen looked a little surprised. He thought that he had made the pros and cons clear, and that this Longevity Pill no longer held any meaning to the Coiling Dragon Clan. "Young master Ji San, you absolutely must not make a gamble with the Longevity Pill. This is my sincere advice," Jiang Chen advised.

Young master Ji San sighed helplessly, "You may not understand the Coiling Dragon Clan's situation, Pill King Zhen. Our clan lord has only three years time left, so even if I don't take this risk, the only thing the clan lord can do is await his death. If that is the case, I may as well try."

“Forget three years, even three days may be enough for a miracle to happen in the world of martial dao. The Longevity Pill may be useless for your predicament, but it’s not like you don’t possess a sliver of hope right now, young master Ji San,” Jiang Chen thought for a moment and ultimately decided that he could divulge a bit of the secret. He could see that this young master Ji San was a frank and candid person. Jiang Chen was also willing to give him a little hint based on his generosity alone.

As expected, the light of hope dawned once more in young master Ji San’s eyes when he heard this, “What do you mean by that, Pill King Zhen?” He immediately grew animated the second he heard that there was hope yet.

“Do you remember the last item you won?” Jiang Chen asked with a smile.

“The Goldencrown Cloudcrane?” Young master Ji San looked moved. He was just about to ask Jiang Chen the reason why he had spent eighty million on the spirit animal. He had simply refrained from doing so because of the matter of the Longevity Pill.

“Exactly, the Goldencrown Cloudcrane,” Jiang Chen nodded, “An extraordinary teacher taught me pill dao when I was young, and he once told me that there are all kinds of pills that can extend one’s lifespan in this world. He said that the Longevity Pill can extend a sage realm cultivator’s lifespan around five to eight hundred years, but an equivalent pill can do the same for an emperor realm cultivator...”

“What?” Young master Ji San immediately jumped to his feet. Wild joy filled his eyes, and incredulity riddled his face, “Does such a miraculous pill really exist in the world?”

Even Wei Jie was shocked as he stared at Jiang Chen in astonishment.

Chapter 763: News of the Pine Crane Pill

It was obvious that Jiang Chen’s sudden reveal of something this stunning had greatly surprised both young masters. The appearance of the Longevity Pill had already caused a sizable shock to the pill industry, despite the fact that it could only extend the life of a sage realm cultivator. It was amazing, but it wasn’t so great that it could overturn the entire pill industry. But to claim that there was a pill that could extend even the life of an emperor realm cultivator? If such a pill truly existed in the world, wouldn’t the order of pill dao be shattered that very instant?

Even someone as widely read as young master Ji San couldn’t help but feel that Jiang Chen’s claims were over the top. He couldn’t help but doubt. “Pill King Zhen, I’m not doubting you, but is there really such an amazing pill in this world?”

“I really don’t know if such a pill exists in this world, but that extraordinary master of mine did tell me this. Moreover, he was the one who’d refined the Longevity Pill that I gave you just now. He gifted me just nine words: The world is big, and its wonders are endless.”

Both young master Ji San and Wei Jie exchanged a glance. They almost believed Jiang Chen completely now. The Longevity Pill was a piece of solid evidence that supported his words! Who would’ve believed that there was a sage realm pill that could increase a sage realm cultivator’s life by five to eight hundred years before the appearance of the Longevity Pill? If a sage realm cultivator could extend their lifespan, then why not an emperor realm cultivator?

“Pill King Zhen, did that extraordinary senior leave behind the pill that can extend an emperor cultivator’s life?” Young master Ji San was quite moved by Jiang Chen’s claims.

Jiang Chen smiled wryly in response, “Back then, I told him that sure, I’ll believe that the sage realm Longevity Pill exists, but a pill that extends an emperor realm cultivator’s life? Why don’t you refine one and show me? My teacher said that it was very difficult to refine the pill, but not impossible. However, he couldn’t do anything without the ingredients in hand.”

Naturally, Jiang Chen couldn’t explain his memories from a past life. Therefore, he claimed that all of his knowledge had come from this mysterious teacher. The world of martial dao was enormous anyways. No one could prove that such an extraordinary teacher didn’t exist in the first place.

Young master Ji San wasn’t disappointed by the answer. He fired off another question, “May I know what the pill that can extend an emperor realm cultivator’s life is called?”

“The master says that the pill is named the Pine Crane Pill.” There was no need to hide the pill’s name.

Young master Ji San slapped his thighs and wore a look of joy, “Good, what a good name that is! The pine and crane that extends life! This name is full of profound meaning. It may very well exist in this world.”

Wei Jie abruptly recalled something and asked, “Brother Zhen, the Pine Crane Pill... did you tell young master Ji San to bid for the Goldencrown Cloudcrane because it is an ingredient of the Pine Crane Pill?”

Young master Ji San was so excited that he hadn’t made the connection himself. Now that he was reminded by Wei Jie, the realization struck his head like a bolt of lightning. He whipped his head around to stare expectantly at Jiang Chen.

Jiang Chen nodded, “Although my master hadn’t told me the refining method, he did mention that the Pine Crane Pill has two main ingredients. The first is the pine of an Invisible Chameleon Cloudpine, and the second, the heart of a Goldencrown Cloudcrane. Both ingredients are absolutely irreplaceable in order to refine the Pine Crane Pill.”

“The Invisible Chameleon Cloudpine, the Invisible Chameleon Cloudpine...” Young master Ji San was overjoyed. “Good, good, good! The Coiling Dragon Clan will employ every tactic at our disposal and scour the entire Divine Abyss Continent for this Invisible Chameleon Cloudpine!” He suddenly recalled something and asked, “Pill King Zhen, your master must be a supreme expert who has withdrawn from the world. Fortune truly smiles upon you! Is it possible for you to contact him and request his aid in refining this pill?”

Jiang Chen smiled wryly, “I’ve no idea where he went since we’d parted ways. He is incredibly elusive, and it would be very difficult to find him. That being said, there is such a thing as fate in this world. You have run into the Goldencrown Cloudcrane during the auction in Veluriyam Capital today. This means that the heavens haven’t closed all doors for the Coiling Dragon Clan yet. Anything is possible in three years time.”

“You’re right, you’re very right!” Young master Ji San’s eyes turned red with excitement. Jiang Chen’s words resonated with the core of his heart. “Anything is possible! The heavens haven’t yet closed all

doors to the Coiling Dragon Clan yet!” He repeated. “Well said, Pill King Zhen! Why haven’t I met someone as wondrous as you before!”

Young master Ji San was feeling much, much better after obtaining this information. He personally poured a cup of wine for Jiang Chen and said, “Come, come! I shall toast three cups of wine to you, Pill King Zhen! I’ll drink first.”

Young master Ji San might looked like a cultured gentleman, but the way he drank wine was straightforward and unhesitating. He knocked back three cups of wine in no time at all. Jiang Chen echoed his sentiments and downed three cups of wine as well.

Young master Ji San cast another glance at Wei Jie without the previous distant feeling and indifference he’d held. Instead, he said, “Wei Jie, everyone in the Coiling Dragon Clan has been incredibly prejudiced against House Wei. We had no way of confirming if your family had truly been bought by the Majestic Clan either. But today, it would seem that the facts speak louder than words. I shan’t be a pretentious person and apologize for my past behavior. From today onwards, you are my most trusted person, Wei Jie!”

Young master Ji San carried himself with a bearing that was impossible to ignore every time he spoke. His frankness, genuine sincerity and behavior overwhelmed Wei Jie with every word. “Young master Ji San, it was our fault for using the wrong person and causing the clan lord’s condition to worsen. House Wei has always blamed itself for this terrible mistake. Wei Tiantong may have been sending all sorts of signals to the Majestic Clan all these years, but the mainstream forces of House Wei haven’t forgotten the care the Coiling Dragon Clan has shown us over the years. There is absolutely no way we’d seek to change allegiances.” Wei Jie’s response was also full of great sincerity.

Although the long period of misunderstanding wasn’t something that could be resolved with just a word or two, this was still a turning point and a good beginning. Now that the misunderstanding had finally been resolved, the atmosphere turned harmonious with the aid of wine.

“Pill King Zhen, thanks are unnecessary when it involves favors. Regardless of the outcome, I still owe you a big favor.”

“It’s alright, young master Ji San. If the situation turned out for the better, it will benefit Veluriyam Capital greatly. I am happy to see this outcome myself,” Jiang Chen wasn’t trying to play things off. If the Coiling Dragon Clan successfully solidified its position, House Wei and Jiang Chen’s attempt to establish himself in Veluriyam Capital would obviously benefit from it. If the Majestic Clan were to become the number one clan in Veluriyam Capital, and if the Coiling Dragon Clan were to crumble to dust, the next person on the chopping block would most likely be House Wei. If House Wei were to crumble, then his plans to establish himself in Veluriyam Capital would also end in failure. Therefore, he had every reason to support the Coiling Dragon Clan.

He only needed a short period of study to find the method to refine the Pine Crane Pill. After all, he had memorized its pill recipe. The Pine Crane Pill might be a high level pill, but it was ultimately just an emperor level pill. It wasn’t an empyrean level pill. It would be incredibly difficult for Jiang Chen to refine an empyrean level pill with his current strength. Even a single attempt would likely strain him quite a bit. But Jiang Chen was ninety percent confident of his chances of refining an emperor level pill.

If necessary, he could borrow his 'extraordinary master's' title and refine a Pine Crane Pill himself. There were no problems there.

However, Jiang Chen understood that the Pine Crane Pill carried great influence. The moment it was revealed, it would absolutely cause an earthquake in the pill industry. This was absolutely not alarmist talk. Emperor realm cultivators were the true masters of each region. Their needs for the Pine Crane Pill would absolutely make it the legendary pill of the pill industry of this world.

"Young master Ji San, you absolutely must keep news of this pill a secret. There'll be endless trouble if its existence were to be revealed." After a moment of thought, Jiang Chen ultimately decided to give young master Ji San a reminder.

Young master Ji San answered seriously, "My mouth is sealed. Even if the Pine Crane Pill is refined one day, I wouldn't announce it to the whole world either."

"Indeed. Its existence involves too much, and its exposure would make us the target of a great deal of attacks," Jiang Chen absolutely wasn't exaggerating when he said this.

Young master Ji San knew Jiang Chen's words to be true, and nodded with a serious expression on his face. Then, the trio then brought up House Wei's matters and talked about the Taiyuan Tower that was about to open in two days' time. Young master Ji San looked extremely interested and promised to support House Wei with a group of people on the day of the opening. Naturally, Wei Jie was extremely pleased by young master Ji San's promise. They had unknowingly accomplished something big for House Wei!

Of course, Wei Jie also understood that he was simply bathing in Jiang Chen's limelight. If it wasn't for Jiang Chen, young master Ji San would never have forgiven the misunderstandings of House Wei, much less come to congratulate them. The gathering at Little Leisurely Clouds ended with all sides pleased. Everyone felt like they had returned with full pockets.

Young master Ji San's cheerful mood was almost a foregone point. Ever since he learned about the Pine Crane Pill, his entire person grew spirited, and he felt as if his fighting will had grown by leaps and bounds. He didn't fear obstacles; he only feared that no light existed at the end of the tunnel. If there was hope, then even the hardest predicament had an ending.

Wei Jie was even happier than young master Ji San. The resolution of the misunderstanding between House Wei and the Coiling Dragon Clan was absolutely the best news they had heard for the past couple of years.

Jiang Chen's gains were quite decent as well. His new friendship with young master Ji San was beneficial to his attempts to further his network within Veluriyam Capital. As long as he remained useful to the Coiling Dragon Clan, his status in Veluriyam Capital would only solidify further. At that point, he wouldn't need to fear much even if his identity were to be exposed one day. With an ally like the Coiling Dragon Clan, he could entrench himself in Veluriyam Capital without needing to worry about the Eternal Celestial Capital or the Ninesuns Sky Sect. Most importantly, the Coiling Dragon Clan's support would smoothly pave his path towards establishing himself in Veluriyam Capital. On the way home, Jiang Chen didn't forget himself despite being in a cheery mood. On the contrary, there was yet one more trouble that was plaguing his mind.

The Longevity Pill.

Jiang Chen's powerful intuition told him that the three Longevity Pills that had suddenly appeared in the auction today was absolutely not as simple as they seemed. The appearance of the three Longevity Pills proved that the Eternal Celestial Capital had begun stirring waves in Veluriyam Capital. The fact that these three Longevity Pills could appear without a hitch also proved that their network in Veluriyam Capital couldn't be underestimated. In fact, Jiang Chen suspected that the Eternal Celestial Capital had already found a backer in Veluriyam Capital.

"Brother Zhen, why do you look so gloomy despite all the good things that happened today?" Wei Jie looked curious.

"Young master Wei, you too saw the Longevity Pills auctioned today. I suspect that they are but pieces laid to test the waters of Veluriyam Capital. I am certain that the Longevity Pill will enter Veluriyam Capital's market in full force after today, and that the pill industry in Farmer God Market will grow very interesting in the near future. I only hope that the worst case scenario won't happen..." Jiang Chen sighed.

Chapter 764: Bad News Before the Day of Opening

"Why do you say that?" Wei Jie's heart suddenly pounded when he heard Jiang Chen's serious tone.

Jiang Chen had been considering this matter along the way and analyzed it repeatedly. When he added Wang Teng and his group's behavior at the auction to his analysis, he couldn't help but smell a thick sense of conspiracy, one that had to do with him. "Young master Wei, don't you think Wang Teng's actions were a little strange today?" Jiang Chen asked. Surprised, Wei Jie pondered for a moment, but couldn't figure out Jiang Chen's meaning.

"Why did Wang Teng try to induce Sikou Nan and young master Ji San to bid for the Longevity Pill? Moreover, Wang Teng didn't look like he was just trying to anger or embarrass young master Ji San. It felt that he was trying to build marketing momentum for the Longevity Pill," Jiang Chen's tone was serious.

Wei Jie's expression changed the moment he heard this. He was quick to pick up on things, and he immediately comprehended Jiang Chen's implied meaning. "Brother Zhen, you mean... that the auction of the Longevity Pill was planned by Wang Teng all along?" Wei Jie was quite shocked by this revelation.

Jiang Chen narrowed his eyes slightly and spoke in a frigid tone, "I hope it's just my imagination, but I just couldn't shake off this idea when I noted Wang Teng's actions. Although I disrupted his plans at the end and stopped him from embarrassing young master Ji San, if this is true, he still managed to achieve his goal."

"Brother Zhen, don't you think that your assumption is a little too farfetched?" Wei Jie still looked a little doubtful.

Jiang Chen nodded, "It's just an assumption so far, but think about it, the Eternal Celestial Capital has the ability to refine the Longevity Pill. However, would Veluriyam Capital allow the Eternal Celestial Capital to openly corner their pill market? Of course not, not to mention that the Eternal Celestial

Capital themselves wouldn't dare do so. But despite this obstacle, they still wish to enter the market. What do you think they would do to achieve that goal?"

The doubt on Wei Jie's face slowly disappeared as he listened to Jiang Chen's reasoning. Instead, it was replaced with a look of gravity. "They would find an intermediary, a powerful force who's willing to cooperate with them in Veluriyam Capital."

"That's right," Jiang Chen nodded, "Now, the Longevity Pill has been successfully auctioned off at Joined Ridges Pavilion. Do you think they could've built such an enormous momentum in such a short time if they weren't aided by someone from within Veluriyam Capital? Which power is the most suitable to become an agent in Veluriyam Capital? The Coiling Dragon Clan? It is true that the Coiling Dragon Clan stands as the most obvious candidate, but they are currently embroiled in their own troubles and suffering from internal strife. In that case... an ambitious clan who has every intent to compete for the status of number one clan in Veluriyam Capital would undoubtedly be the most suitable candidate."

With this deduction, that the Majestic Clan was this candidate was almost a certainty. Combining his understanding with Wang Teng's performance today, Wei Jie believed Jiang Chen's deductions almost completely. "The Majestic Clan... the Longevity Pill..." Wei Jie muttered and sighed to himself, "If that really is the case, then the Majestic Clan is seriously going to earn a fortune this time."

"If this is true, this fortune will also become a central pillar in the Majestic Clan's attempt to challenge the Coiling Dragon Clan in the future," Jiang Chen's irritation reached a new high. It would be stranger still if he wasn't infuriated by the fact that something belonging to him was being manipulated by the Eternal Celestial Capital and the Majestic Clan as they liked.

Jiang Chen returned to his own accommodations after parting ways with Wei Jie. There were only two days left before the opening of Taiyuan Tower. He had made preparations on every front. Everyone had gone through a series of strict training regimens and acquired new identities. Now, the only thing they needed to do was await Taiyuan Tower's opening. Huang'er was very happy for Jiang Chen, seeing that all of his preparation were proceeding smoothly.

Taiyuan Tower's signboard was installed in the last two days, and several recruitment notices were put out in serious fashion as well. All of these preparations were of course, a smokescreen for his subordinates so that they could openly and justly enter Taiyuan Tower with their new identities and not be discovered by House Sikou.

All of his Regal Pill Palace sect members had been assigned to work behind the scenes on logistics and finances. Jiang Chen had passed the authority over finances completely to Rong Zifeng. This was also a show of great trust in Rong Zifeng. Rong Zifeng himself didn't think that Jiang Chen would trust him this much, so he was overflowing with pride, excitement and gratitude towards Jiang Chen. In reality, the person Jiang Chen trusted the most was Shen Trifire, but Jiang Chen's plans for Shen Trifire were set on him becoming a pill king as soon as possible. Therefore, there was no need to put Shen Trifire in charge of such affairs. The other ten sage realm cultivators were handpicked by Jiang Chen to guard the store, welcome customers and receive items.

The fact that a newly established pill store had ten sage realm guards obviously meant that it was no ordinary store. But it wasn't that eye catching either, since there was no emperor realm cultivators present. Jiang Chen didn't bother worrying about opening day decorations, popularity and attractions.

He had almost no connections in Veluriyam Capital, so naturally he had no channels he could draw on. There was nothing he could do about it even if he wanted to, so he simply entrusted all that to House Wei.

Taking House Wei's current situation in account, Jiang Chen didn't feel like his situation would improve by much. After all, the current House Wei had almost no weight in the pill industry, not to mention House Wei itself was currently in decline. Many people believed that House Wei would find it very difficult to maintain their status as a ninth rank aristocratic house in the near future. Moreover, while House Wei was still blindly loyal to the Coiling Dragon Clan, in the public's eyes, the Coiling Dragon Clan had lost trust in House Wei since a long time ago.

Therefore, there really weren't many who were willing to build a close relationship with House Wei. The number of people willing to show up on the day of the opening would likely be few and far in between. After all, everyone knew that House Wei had become a thorn in the Majestic Clan's side. Veluriyam Capital was a place where news spread quickly. It was now common knowledge that House Wei had refused to rent their store to House Tong, refused Wang Teng's invitation and even eliminated a pill king spy that Majestic Clan had sent into their midst...

The day before the opening, Jiang Chen led his people and officially entered the Farmer God Market.

He had to admit that House Wei's store at the Farmer God Market was an excellent location. It was large and quite strategically located. It was so good that it even exceeded his expectations. Even Jiang Chen felt a tinge of excitement the night before the opening. After arriving at Veluriyam Capital for such a long time, he was finally taking the first step in establishing his own force here.

The next day morning, Jiang Chen woke up very early. The team he brought over the previous night was already busying themselves. Considering how big their store was and that today was their first day of business, there were naturally many things to do. House Wei's men also showed up one after another. Wei Jie was the first person to show up. However, he also brought rather bad news with him.

"Brother Zhen, House Tong has gone too far! I'm not sure how, but somehow they managed to buy the store across from Taiyuan Tower and turn it into a pill store too. They've also chosen to open today. They sent their invitations to all the reputable factions in Veluriyam Capital last night."

Jiang Chen was surprised when he heard this. Everything about the news was just too startling. House Tong had chosen today of all days to open their store? It was obvious they were purposely butting heads against House Wei. This was surely the first sign of a string of attempts to beat down Taiyuan Tower! A slow burning anger rose inside Jiang Chen's heart. He had been quite low key since he arrived at Veluriyam Capital, and truly hadn't provoked anyone on his own accord. But even then, trouble just kept coming in droves.

He could pretend it was nothing if House Tong had only opened a pill store on the opposite side of Taiyuan Tower. But the fact that they had chosen to open their store on the same day and sent out their invitations overnight was a blatant display of their true intentions. They were absolutely trying to make life difficult for Taiyuan Tower and drag them into an open confrontation! As fury started to ignite within him, Jiang Chen cast a glance at Wei Jie. "When did we send out our own invitations?"

“We’ve sent out our invitations three days ago. Every letter reached their destination..” Wei Jie smiled wryly, “However, it would seem that the situation is still extremely disadvantageous to Taiyuan Tower. Brother Zhen, this isn’t your fault. The real fault lies on us, House Wei and our situation for the past few years...”

Jiang Chen waved his hands and said, “Save such disheartened words for later!”

Naturally, Jiang Chen knew that House Tong hadn’t done this to butt heads with ‘Pill King Zhen’. In the eyes of those aristocratic families and great clans, ‘Pill King Zhen’ wasn’t really all that important. They might not even think much about him at all. The reason House Tong had done this was to attack House Wei! The mastermind behind their actions was definitely the Majestic Clan. House Tong was a core subordinate for the Majestic Clan. While it might appear on the surface that House Tong was leading the charge, there was a high probability that the Majestic Clan was the one pulling the strings in the dark.

“What do we do?” Wei Jie himself wasn’t quite sure what to do. He was most worried about his guests running over to the opposite store, leaving an empty Taiyuan Tower behind. If that happened, it would be an enormous stain on House Wei’s reputation. It would also be the biggest blow to the newly opened Taiyuan Tower.

The Majestic Clan had seriously infuriated Jiang Chen with this tactic, and he sneered, “What do we do? We do nothing at all! This is the perfect opportunity for us to see who we can trust, who are just opportunists, and who can’t be trusted!”

Wei Jie smiled wryly, “That’s true. Today’s situation is the best chance to test their loyalty.”

House Lord Wei Tianxiao also arrived while they were talking. As he greeted them, he wore a forceful smile on his face. When he, Jiang Chen and Wei Jie were alone in a room, Wei Tianxiao’s expression immediately dissolved to utmost seriousness. “Pill King Zhen, I’ve just received confirmation that the neighboring pill store is controlled by the Majestic Clan. Even though House Tong is its apparent owner, they are just the pawn. Most importantly, they will also be revealing a most astounding pill for sale today.”

“What?” Jiang Chen frowned as a bad premonition rose in his heart.

“The Longevity Pill!” Wei Tianxiao couldn’t help but cast a glance at Jiang Chen when he said this. The Wei father and son were the only ones who knew of Jiang Chen’s true identity in the entirety of House Wei. Naturally, they knew where the Longevity Pill had really come from as well. The Longevity Pill had come from the Regal Pill Palace, but it was Majestic Clan property now. Both Wei father and son was very unhappy with the injustice Jiang Chen was being served. Surprisingly, Jiang Chen didn’t look astonished at all. Instead, a look of understanding crept across his face as he cast a knowing glance at Wei Jie. Wei Jie let out a long sigh, “Just as we thought, this is the worst case scenario.”

Jiang Chen had already suspected earlier that the Majestic Clan was colluding with the Eternal Celestial Capital. Now, reality had proven that everything was progressing towards the worst case scenario! The Majestic Clan’s momentum would be doubled with the Longevity Pill. It was an important card in their plans to replace the Coiling Dragon Clan as the foremost clan. If the Longevity Pill were to dominate Veluriyam Capital’s market, the income it would bring would be astronomical. Flames of fury leapt and roared within Jiang Chen. He absolutely couldn’t accept this outcome.

Chapter 765: The Aggrieved Wei Father and Son

You destroyed my sect, stole my pill recipe, and now use my things to strut in front of my doors. Even Buddha struck back after being hit thrice! How could Jiang Chen possibly take all of this lying down?

“Majestic Clan... you’ve truly enraged me!” Jiang Chen’s smile turned vicious in his anger. He looked at the Wei father and son as he remarked faintly, “Come what may. We’ll just do our part well and react accordingly to other matters.”

His tone may have sounded calm, but the flames of his rage had thoroughly been stoked. He was already crafting his counterattack. It was at this time that another large disturbance broke out outside. It seems that many voices had risen in anger. “Let’s go take a look.” Jiang Chen’s expression darkened as he led the way.

Outside the door, those of Taiyuan Tower were furiously yelling at those from across the street. None of the ten sage realm cultivators Jiang Chen had chosen were easy characters. They’d all rolled up their sleeves and were having the time of their lives cussing at the workers across the street. The opposing party wasn’t giving up easily either. They had a bit more people and gave back as good they got, speaking so rapidly that spittle flew everywhere. The scene was akin to two groups of harlots meeting in the street and erupting into conflict. Their battle strength was off the charts as the insults and curses grew ever dirtier with each minute.

Those in the know recognized them for sage realm cultivators, and those who didn’t simply thought that street thugs were duking it out publicly. When the Taiyuan Tower group saw Jiang Chen and House Wei walk out, their morale grew as they gave vent to their feelings with increasing ferocity. Over on the House Wei’s side, Wei Qixia rolled up his sleeves and was about to dive into the fray when Wei Jie held him back. “Qixia, what’s going on?”

Qixia huffed back out, “Take a look at that, young master! This House Tong is simply too much! We’re Taiyuan Tower, and they’ve gone and called themselves Taiyuan Lodge. They’re obviously trying to show us up!”

Wei Jie was shocked as he looked across the street. Indeed, the store sign that had just been hung up was carved with large letters—Taiyuan Lodge!

Jiang Chen was utterly and thoroughly enraged. Taiyuan Tower was a name that had been derived from his father’s title in his past life. Of all his bottom lines, this one was absolutely inviolate. How dare this House Tong shop use the same name and make such an obvious target out of Taiyuan Tower? Jiang Chen suddenly exploded with thick killing intent. He glared at the shop sign, anger consuming his thoughts, “House Tong! Majestic Clan! Do you two think you’re worthy of using the word Taiyuan? Blasphemy against the Celestial Emperor, heresy against the gods! I, Jiang Chen, will let you know what divine retribution is!”

He’d already been in a state of extreme irritation, and now things had progressed far beyond the point of no-return. He mentally pronounced a death sentence on the Majestic Clan pill shop. Even if he had to reveal his identity, even if he would become Veluriyam Capital’s number one public enemy, he would annihilate them! His father was taboo in Jiang Chen’s heart, whether in this life or past. It was a forbidden zone that no one could trespass. Whoever did so would die!

Jiang Chen stared coldly at the store across from him. Some fellows dressed in luxurious clothing sauntered out from within. It was the House Tong father and son, as well as some heavyweight elders from the family. All of them had haughty, arrogant expressions on their faces as they strutted forward. The look in their eyes and their posture were full of provocation.

“What’s all this racket about?” A House Tong elder put on the show of lecturing his own men. “Don’t forget yourself. What’s all this fighting with some random strays off the street for? Don’t throw away face for Taiyuan Lodge!”

This was a backhanded way of insulting Taiyuan Tower, a way of mocking House Wei and the new pill shop. As for Jiang Chen? They couldn’t even be bothered with him. Indeed, the House Tong group were all rather pleased with themselves and stopped jeering and catcalling, putting on the expressions of a victor and standing behind their house lord.

Wei Tianxiao reigned in his anger and glared at the House Tong house lord. “What do you mean by this, old Tong? We named our shop Taiyuan Tower and you name yours Taiyuan Lodge? Are you trying to gross out the public?”

Tong Xianwei flicked a dismissive glance at Wei Tianxiao, speaking brazenly, “Wei Tianxiao, are you trying to get one up on us? Taiyuan Lodge is a name we settled on long ago. I haven’t taken you to task for your transgression yet, and here you are trying to question me first?”

Faces over on the House Wei’s side all turned furious when they heard this. This House Tong was truly shameless to voice words that completely flipped the truth around in such a self righteous fashion!

Wei Tianxiao smiled through his anger. “Tong Xianwei, you’re the house lord of a ninth ranked aristocratic house. Do you really plan on embarrassing yourself like this? House Wei sent out the invitations a few days ago, and everyone knew of Taiyuan Tower’s opening in the Capital. You sent yours out only last night and purposefully made your opening day the same as ours. You even chose the spot in front of ours and picked a similar name. Just how much do you admire House Wei, hmm?”

Tong Xianwei laughed riotously, “Admire House Wei? Wei Tianxiao, take a piss if you want a mirror to look at! House Wei is acclaimed trash in the arena of pills, so what need does my House Tong have to look up to you? What degree of idiocy have you fallen to if you think that?”

Young lord Tong Yun of House Tong snorted derisively off on the side, “Father, what need is there to speak with this declining family? Even if they imitate us, without any skills to back themselves up, they can only watch us grow rich. Why don’t we take a seat and watch the show, and see how many days it takes for this so-called Taiyuan Tower to close up shop!”

“Haha, my son speaks well. House Tong is gracious and won’t take them to task for copying us. Everyone, get ready, our honored guests will soon visit. We have a very important mission to greet them all today, so everyone should be prepared.” Tong Xianwei threw a supercilious smile over at House Wei.

Many guests arrived one after another, but they were unwilling to approach the shops when they saw House Wei and House Tong screaming at each other in the street. However, those on the House Tong’s side had sharp eyes and approached the guests, leaving the latter with no choice but to walk into Taiyuan Lodge. Some did so apologetically, others guiltily, but none dared look over at House Wei.

The Tong father and son duo were standing at the front door in high spirits, full of energy and ambition as they welcomed the guests from all sides. Almost all of these guests had received both sets of invitations, but most of them chose to head into Taiyuan Lodge. Some neutral guests gave into peer pressure when they saw most people heading to Taiyuan Lodge, creating a very disparate distinction between the two shops. House Tong's Taiyuan Lodge was bustling and had a fervent atmosphere. Apart from their diehard supporters, most of the guests had also chosen them.

If one looked at percentages, ninety percent of the guests had chosen to head into Taiyuan Lodge, and only ten percent into House Wei's Taiyuan Tower. This was an extremely awkward and unpleasant scene, but the Wei father and son still had to remain standing at their door to welcome their guests. Their hearts were dripping blood, but they had to put on looks of warm welcome and force themselves to smile broadly. One side of the street was all a hustle and bustle, and the other side looked almost abandoned, the sparrows pecking around in the courtyard.

The Tong father and son continuously flung challenging looks at their Wei counterparts as they welcomed their guests, a look of petty victory clear on their faces. At this time, another disturbance grew at the street entrance. Everyone looked over to see the young lord of the Majestic Clan arriving with a large horde of Majestic Clan executives and members in tow. The emergence of the Majestic Clan resulted in quite a grand scene, and the Tong father and son hurried to walk up to them.

"The young lord of the Majestic Clan brings great honor to Taiyuan Lodge with your personal appearance!" Tong Xianwei was quite adept at flattery.

"Brother Wang, Taiyuan Lodge has drawn quite a crowd today, everyone's shown us a lot of face because of the Majestic Clan!" Tong Kun also followed up with more fawning words. **nOve)(B)1n**

Jiang Chen wasn't unfamiliar with the Majestic Clan young lord Wang Teng. It was his third time running into the young lord now. Wang Teng halted at the door to Taiyuan Lodge with a faint smile on his face. He nodded, "Not bad, the arrangements are well done. Taiyuan Lodge must have an auspicious beginning if it wishes to grow big and become a heavyweight pill faction." When he finished, he seemed to register the existence of House Wei across the street for the first time. He flicked a glance at the Taiyuan Tower sign and asked with incredibly insincere confusion, "What's going on here?"

"Oh, it's like this. The opening of our Taiyuan Lodge might have caused others to grow jealous. Some dejected houses seemed to have imitated us and opened something called the Taiyuan Tower. It's truly both a laughable and maddening occurrence. What an affront of the young lord!" Tong Xianwei hastened to explain.

Tong Kun also piped up, "Don't worry, Brother Wang. A shop like this won't survive for long. Just treat it as some comedic relief for the opening of our Taiyuan Lodge, some free entertainment for everyone. It's good to have a laugh now and then. We'd have to pay a circus if we wanted one to come perform."

Wang Teng's expression was distant as he nodded, "It's best if there's a minimum of this sort of bad culture. That father and son looks a bit familiar, they should be some respected personage in the Capital. How could they have done something so shameful? Go investigate which great clan they belong to."

These words weren't spoken particularly forcefully, but they just so happened to be loud enough to travel across the street. The Wei father and son were fit to burst. This Majestic Clan was simply too shameful, and that Wang Teng brat too good at acting! What "looks a bit familiar"? They were a ninth ranked aristocratic house, how could Wang Teng possibly not recognize them? Besides, it'd been the Majestic Clan pulling all the strings behind the scenes, but now they were pretending that they didn't know anything at all. Just who were they putting on this act for? They were the ones who'd copied House Wei, Taiyuan Tower, and purposefully pitted themselves against House Wei! But now it was House Wei in the wrong?!

Even Jiang Chen couldn't bear watching any longer, much less House Wei. As he watched how much of an air Wang Ten was putting on and the cocky Tong father and son, his plan for counterattack finished forming in his mind.

Chapter 766: Jiang Chen Loses His Cool

Tong Kun knew that the young lord was of a mind to work over the Wei father and son when he heard those words. He chuckled and put on a scathing tone, "There might be some things you're unaware of, young clan lord. That father and son across the street are actually people of some importance. They're actually a ninth ranked aristocratic house—House Wei under the Coiling Dragon Clan's banner."

"House Wei?" Wang Teng was nonplussed. "Isn't House Wei a premier house beneath the Coiling Dragon clan? How could they sink to such a depth?"

"Who knows? Perhaps they've been irrelevant in the area of pills for too long and have thrown away the dignity befitting a ninth ranked aristocratic house. Maybe the desire for money has driven them crazy?" Tong Xianwei chuckled. "Young clan lord, please come this way. There's no need to dirty your ears with this kind of talk."

Wang Ten sighed on purpose, gracing the Wei father and son with a look of grave disappointment as he lifted his feet to walk inside.

"Pretentious posers," Jiang Chen smirked coldly. House Wei didn't even bother accompanying those two words; it was everything they wanted to say. Everyone present heard him, as the words hung in the air like an iron weight Wang Teng's look of noncommittal elegance instantly dropped off his face as the Majestic Clan group simultaneously halted, glaring back over at House Wei with looks of concerted fury.

"Who was that?!"

"Which bastard spoke just now?!"

"Step out if you dare!" Those of the Majestic Clan were more than used to getting their way in Veluriyam Capital. The seven emperors rarely intervened in the mundane world, so the capital was normally left in the hands of the great clans, of which the Majestic Clan stood at the foremost. House Wei didn't dare say anything in front of them, even at a situation like today's. Therefore, while Jiang Chen's insult had been a sweet thrill, it undoubtedly set the scene ablaze.

Jiang Chen smiled faintly in the face of such an imposing atmosphere and walked forward, his tone as casual as ever, "Did I speak incorrectly? My Taiyuan Tower has spent at least a month preparing for our opening and sent out the invitations long beforehand. We also thought of the store's name well in

advance. Who's the one copying here? Who's the one shamelessly imitating the other? Don't try to talk yourself out of this in such a ludicrous fashion. Everyone here knows what's really going on. Alright then, you copied us, so what's with this act huh? You won't be satisfied until you grind your imitation in our face, huh? You'll die if you don't strut around like you're actually something, is it?"

Jiang Chen had been harboring a bellyful of rage, and he would've cussed out the clan lord of the Majestic Clan himself, much less their young clan lord. Their usage of "Taiyuan" had deeply triggered him. How could such vile, base characters defile his father's title? He felt so much better after letting loose on them. He'd kept a low profile ever since he'd entered the Capital, and had held it all in even if he'd experienced a bit of suffering. But now, he would stay quiet no more! It was one thing for the Majestic Clan to use the Longevity Pill to stir up waves, and another thing to imitate Jiang Chen and open a Taiyuan Lodge. Even then, they would compete on basis of true skill, and Jiang Chen might have been fine with that in the end. However, these fellows had gone too far. They'd stolen his shop name, robbed him of the Longevity Pill, and then wanted to follow up all that with a kick to his head! This was the spark that set alight all of Jiang Chen's accumulated rage! If even this can be tolerated, then what else is left?!

Pin drop silence reigned for a long moment after Jiang Chen's words, and was promptly shattered by the loud abuse rising from the other side after they gathered their wits.

"And who the hell are you, brat? What kind of right do you have to speak here?"

"No respect for your superiors, ah? I think you're looking to die, brat!"

"Young clan lord, I'll go destroy that brat and teach House Wei some manners!"

Jiang Chen snorted coldly and readied himself. He wouldn't give a damn even if they erupted in open hostility today. The gods fought over each worshipper, and humans fought over their principles. He truly couldn't take this lying down any longer. There was no need for him to endure things. Just as the situation started to reach a dangerous precipice, a loud shout broke the air. "Wang Teng, you've been quite full of yourself lately! What show are you planning on putting on today?"

House Wei was delighted; they recognized that voice. It was young master Ji San's voice!

Ji San was striding in from the distance, a large group of people with him. His retinue was a good six times greater than Wang Teng's. Not only did they include his personal guards, but many of them were also Coiling Dragon Clan confidantes. Quite a few of them were all great personages in Veluriyam Capital, and they were all walking over to Taiyuan Tower.

When he saw Ji San appear, Wang Teng's face sank. "Ji Ole Third, there seems to be none of your business here, hmm?"

Young master Ji San laughed heartily, "What nonsense are you sprouting? House Wei is a ninth ranked aristocratic house under my clan's banner. I've specially come here on the day of Taiyuan Tower's opening to prevent any riffraff from making trouble. Just as I thought, I happened upon some unsavory scenes."

He was someone from the great clans alright. Ji San had taken control of the situation as soon as he opened his mouth, instantly clapping Wang Teng with the label of "riffraff". When it came to throwing

his weight around as a rich second generation, young master Ji San was an acclaimed adept in the Capital. It would be exceedingly difficult for Wang Teng to gain the upper hand against Ji San. n/-0)-17/-e(-1./B..1))n

“Ji Ole Third, this is the opening day for Taiyuan Lodge, I can’t be bothered to bicker with you!” Wang Teng snorted coldly.

Ji San wasted no time in firing back, smiling lazily, “Taiyuan Lodge? Never heard of it. I’ve only heard of Taiyuan Tower opening today. What kind of cheap imitation is Taiyuan Lodge? Wang Teng, this is another one of your harebrained schemes, is it? Your Wang family always loves playing these dirty little tricks. Can’t you actually amount to something instead of wasting time and effort on these petty schemes? Can’t you be a bit more aboveboard? Do you think the likes of you actually has a chance of replacing my Coiling Dragon Clan as the top clan in the Capital?” Young master Ji San’s eloquence was quite off the charts, and everyone’s hearts trembled as the barbs kept coming. The Majestic Clan and Coiling Dragon Clan had always fought overtly and in the shadows, but no one had ever dared to openly speak of it. Young master Ji San was acting out of the ordinary today!

Wang Teng laughed coldly, “Ji Ole Third, you seem to be sticking your nose where it doesn’t belong! You can’t even handle affairs at home, and you want to interfere in my clan’s matters? You better go back and make your preparations. Who knows, your own backyard might be set afire one day.”

These words were obviously picking at the Coiling Dragon Clan’s wounds, hinting that they would lose power soon and fall into the shambles of internal conflict. As soon as the clan lord’s cultivation dissipated, they would surely sink into civil conflict. Young master Ji San waved his fan with a smile, “Even if we’re on fire, we’ll certainly take you down burning with us. Of that you can be sure of.”

These words were a blatant threat. You think your Majestic Clan is something? If my Coiling Dragon Clan falls into disarray, we’ll drag you straight down into hell with us! Indeed, Wang Teng’s face changed slightly. He really didn’t dare fire back. It wasn’t as if similar things hadn’t happened in the Divine Abyss Continent before. Some experts would do crazy things right before they died. Sometimes they would hack their way into their enemies’ home and slaughter whoever they saw, committing suicide and taking down the strongest character on the enemy’s side. In this way, the enemy would be hurt almost as equally as them, and both sides would come out even in the end. This would prevent one’s own faction from being suppressed after the expert’s death. This kind of destructive ending was prohibited by the rules, but no one could guarantee that something like this really wouldn’t happen.

“Ji Ole Third, don’t try that shameless act with me. It’s useless on me! Today is the Taiyuan Lodge’s grand opening. You say that the Lodge is copying the Tower? I say the Tower is copying the Lodge! We can sit here and trade empty words all day, but it’s all just talk. We should have a contest of pills! If I recall correctly... House Wei has always been a non mainstream force when it comes to pills?” Wang Teng’s words took a turn as he diverted his firepower into another direction. Aren’t you trying to prove that you’re actually something? Have a contest of pills if you dare then! One had to say, this was quite a vicious move. Everyone knew that House Wei almost had no standing in the world of pills, and House Tong had always had a decent level of achievement in this arena. With the Taiyuan Lodge’s grand opening today, all of the guests had basically gone over to their side and hadn’t chosen Taiyuan Tower. This was evidence of House Tong superiority over House Wei and an example of how the Majestic Clan had surpassed the Coiling Dragon Clan! This was why Wang Teng was acting so triumphant.

Tong Xianwei also called out, "The young clan lord is right. Justice is determined by the people, and the fact that most chose to enter our Taiyuan Lodge explains everything."

One had to say, the truth was very disadvantageous for House Wei, but it had also been carefully manipulated. Firstly, many of the customers had heard that Taiyuan Lodge was going to introduce an earth shattering pill today, and everyone wanted to be the first to lay eyes on it. Secondly, they all knew that the Majestic Clan was behind Taiyuan Lodge, and only House Wei stood behind Taiyuan Tower. There was no other power supporting it in the shadows. Thirdly, House Wei was in an awkward situation in Veluriyam Capital. They'd fallen out of favor with the Coiling Dragon Clan, and hadn't switched to the Majestic Clan. Without a backer, House Wei was in a very delicate position. With House Tong and the Majestic Clan on one side, and only House Wei on the other, the natural risk averse tendencies of people would lead them to choose Taiyuan Lodge. This was the cruel nature of reality.

Young master Ji San also knew that the Coiling Dragon Clan had to bear a large portion of the responsibility for why House Wei was in this awkward position. Jiang Chen cast a glance at Wei Jie and the latter immediately understood. He spoke loudly, "The guests have only been hoodwinked. You say your pills are much better and that you didn't copy us, but just what kind of pills can you bring out, hmm?"

Ji San also fixed his gaze on Wang Teng after he heard Wei Jie speak, "Right, Wang Teng, how can you prove it's not you copying us after all that talk?"

Wang Teng was delighted to hear all this. "What, is a mere House Wei really planning on challenge House Tong to a contest of pills?"

Jiang Chen spoke faintly, "Stop bringing House Tong into this again and again. Just say the Majestic Clan already. Who doesn't know that they're actually the ones behind all this? House Tong? And what is House Tong? Dare you swear to the heavens that the true boss behind Taiyuan Lodge isn't the Majestic Clan?"

Ji San laughed loudly, "Well said! Straight to the point. Wang Teng, everyone knows that your Wang family likes to play these shallow tricks!"

Chapter 767: Showdown Proposal

Jiang Chen tearing off Wang Teng's mask of hypocrisy twice in succession infuriated the latter to no end. He'd never thought that a trivial pill master from House Wei would have the gall to offend the dignity of a scion from a great clan like him, and two times in a row at that! When had trivial pill kings from aristocratic houses become so bold? Ordinary guest pill kings only participated in matters related to pills, rarely involving themselves in the struggles between houses and clans. It was only natural for them to leave a backdoor for themselves, just in case the house they followed fell into ruin. They could then turn elsewhere and carve out a new living. Guests pill kings, in the end, were guests after all. Very few would choose to die together with their houses.

But this inexplicable pill master from House Wei seemed to defy convention, raining down abuse on him instead. Apart from anger, Wang Teng also couldn't believe his ears. His gaze suddenly chilly, he stared at Jiang Chen and spoke coldly, "A tiny pill master like you? Why don't you first consider your status before intruding in a conversation between great clans? Are you even qualified to interrupt?" Then, he

fixed the House Wei father and son with a penetrating gaze. “No matter what, your House is still a ninth rank aristocratic house. Do you not understand even the most basic of manners? It seems someone needs to teach your house a lesson on how to behave!”

Young master Ji’s ire was roused at those words. “Wang Teng, is there no end to the nonsense you can spout? House Wei is a faction under my clan’s banner. If they required manners, we’ll be the ones who’ll take charge of teaching them. As a matter of fact, I’ve always admired Pill King Zhen, and I’ve consulted him multiple times on pill matters. His words may be unpleasant to hear, yet they’re still irrefutable. Isn’t your clan the one posing as a saint while acting like a villain? Isn’t yours the hand in the shadows? Wang Teng, it’s not that I look down on you, but you’re truly afraid to swear beneath the heavens’ watchful eyes. Your clan will forever be unable to act fairly and honorably, to face the public candidly.”

This was classic reverse psychology. It wasn’t very subtle, but it aimed straight at Wang Teng and cut off his retreat. If he admitted to anything, then the Majestic Clan would indeed be lacking forthrightness and uprightness. If he didn’t admit anything, then he’d appear to be weighed down by a guilty conscience. After all, the Taiyuan Lodge really did belong to the Majestic Clan. House Tong was merely the sidekick standing in front of the stage and raising a racket in their stead.

Wang Teng was clearly not longer eager to continue this line of conversation. He smiled, still as cold and arrogant as ever. “Ji Ole Third, you can’t conceal your guilty conscience no matter how much you squabble. When it comes to the pill business, what matters are the pills, not how much of a spectacle you make of yourself. If you’re certain of your skills, then take out a peerless pill and let us compete. If you don’t have the skills, then continue to feast on empty wind while you watch my Taiyuan Lodge make a fortune.”

Young master Ji laughed boisterously. “Does that mean you admit that Taiyuan Lodge belongs to your clan?”

“And what of it? Ji Ole Third, don’t take offense, but it’s rather embarrassing to watch you quibble over these trifles like a common street urchin.”

Without waiting for young master Ji to speak, Jiang Chen responded, “Well said. What matters are the pills themselves. Mighty young master Wang, since you’re so full of confidence, with the street packed so full of guests, we might as well have a pill contest right here. What do you say? Words alone hold no weight.”

A pill contest? Young master Ji, as well as father and son from House Wei, were all stunned by his words. All of them turned to look in Jiang Chen’s direction. Jiang Chen nodded at them, full of confidence.

Jiang Chen certainly couldn’t stay low-key any longer now that the situation had developed to such a degree. If he were to let Taiyuan Lodge have a successful opening, then it would certainly suppress his Taiyuan Tower in the future. It would be much more difficult for him to grow. Since they’d already dropped the act, he might as well throw everything he had in rather than letting them grab him by the throat in the future.

Wang Teng sneered at his words. “A contest of pills? Ji Old Third, does this underling of yours speak for you?”

“Wang Teng, don’t put me in your shoes. This Taiyuan Tower is House Wei’s property, it isn’t my place to decide in their stead.”

Wang Teng looked at father and son from House Wei, his eyes full of derision. “What say you, House Wei?”

Wei Tianxiao also realized there was no turning back, now that things had reached such a degree. If he were to fall back half a step here, they would never reverse Taiyuan Tower’s fortunes in the future.

“Why not, let’s have a contest,” Wei Jie took the initiative. “Why would my Taiyuan Tower be afraid of some bandwagoner?”

Wang Teng clapped, his smile a grim slash. He looked at Tong Xianwei. “House lord Tong, please invite all the guests inside to come back out. We’ll wage a contest right here in the market street for all to see. Let us see who is the real thing between Taiyuan Lodge and Taiyuan Tower!” It wasn’t blind arrogance on Wang Teng’s part. He truly had a basis for his confidence. Not only did he have the Longevity Pill as a marquee item for today’s opening, he also had several choice pills developed in the last few years up for display. They had been planning on launching them together in the wake of the Longevity Pill’s prominence, seizing the opportunity to break into the market and instantly build a name for Taiyuan Lodge. This wasn’t something Wang Teng had come up himself on the spur of the moment. Rather, it was a plan the Majestic Clan’s strategic council had come up with after repeated simulations and strict calculations. Therefore, Wang Teng felt very emboldened, especially with the Longevity Pill in hand, a pill that could almost topple the established order in the pill world. A mass launch was definitely bound to create a craze.

Tong Xianwei naturally knew the basis for the Majestic Clan’s confidence. He secretly sneered to himself at the thought that the reckless House Wei actually wanted to have a pill contest with the Majestic Clan. “Alright, I’ll go invite them.” Tong Xianwei was all smiles. The sidelong glance he shot at House Wei sent the clear message that he was looking at idiots. You can’t blame anyone else for the oncoming public humiliation. You’re feeling proud of yourself right now, but you’ll be crying until no tears are left in just a bit. Also, young master Ji, you want to wade in these turbid waters too? We’ll also slap your face in a little while, two for the price of one!

As the news that Taiyuan Lodge and Taiyuan Tower were going to hold a public pill contest in the streets spread, the guests in Taiyuan Lodge all filtered outside, brimming with interest. Jiang Chen signaled Wei Jie with his eyes. Catching his meaning, Wei Jie also called out all the customers who’d gone inside Taiyuan Tower.

The streets were suddenly drowning in people, approximately three thousand strong. The number kept increasing as others had caught wind of this and rushed to watch the show. Even those who hadn’t been invited came of their own volition. In normal circumstances, a showdown between House Tong and House Wei would be attractive enough already. But now, they also represented the Majestic Clan and the Coiling Dragon Clan standing at their backs, which made it all the more dramatic. One could almost say this was a head-on collision between the Majestic Clan and the Coiling Dragon Clan.

Just the build up was enough to make hot blood thrum in their veins, to say nothing of the eventual result. Opening on the same day with almost identical names, fighting each other tit for tat, any and

every detail was proof this was a fight both sides would see to the bitter end. Out of those two pill factions, only one would be left standing!

No matter which side fell, it would be a significant change to the current landscape. Would the Coiling Dragon Clan suppress the Majestic Clan, or would the Majestic Clan overthrow the Coiling Dragon Clan? A collision like this at the very summit of Veluriyam Capital was very attractive. Soon, almost ten thousand people were crowding around these two stores. It was fortunate the avenue in the market was very wide, but it was still extraordinarily crowded, the sea of men packed like sardines.

Young master Ji was also aware that this matter might very well have a negative impact on the Coiling Dragon Clan if it were to be blown out of proportion. If Taiyuan Lodge were to gain the upper hand today, the Coiling Dragon Clan would also lose face. However, seeing Jiang Chen's calm and confident manner, young master Ji became a little more confident without any apparent reason. He originally had some misgivings, but now he tossed them aside. What was the use in hesitating anymore? Retreating now would be an admission of fear. In any case, the Coiling Dragon Clan's situation was already bad. The worst that could happen was that it would become a little worse, but what did that matter?

The most important factor was that young master Ji was particularly confident in Jiang Chen. Their meeting in Little Leisurely Clouds had definitely imprinted this Pill King Zhen from House Wei in young master Ji's mind. The information about the Pinecrane Pill in particular had impressed the young master even more. He had the nagging feeling this Pill King Zhen would continue to bring him pleasant surprises.

"So, Wang Teng, how do you wish to compete?" Since Ji San had made his decision, he didn't hesitate in stepping forward and showing his support for Taiyuan Tower.

"And how do you want to compete?" Wang Teng's smile was cutting, his eyes a little contemptuous.

Ji San swept his eyes across the sons of great clans present at the scene. "Mere words carry no credibility. If there is to be a contest, we first need to find arbitrators. My first proposal is, why don't we have some judges?"

"That's for the best, or else you might refuse to acknowledge your defeat." Wang Teng would naturally not be opposed.

The influence of the two strongest clans in the Capital was naturally nothing to be scoffed at. It took no time at all to select nine judges. Each of the judges were advanced pill kings. Even the worst among them was a seventh rank pill king. The highest ranked judge was actually a ninth rank pill king. With but a single step forward, he would be able to assume the mantle of a pill emperor. These judges all enjoyed outstanding reputations in the pill world. There was no need to be worried about partiality. The dao of pills had its own rules. At the very least, the pill kings had their professional integrity. They would never be partial to a certain side because of the degree of their relationships.

Of course, it was not to say that relationships wouldn't play a little part, but none of these nine pill kings were especially close to either clan. The issue of impartiality was henceforth settled. The most important thing was that everyone had a discerning eye when it came to such contests. Favoritism would be very easy to detect. If a pill king were truly to be partial under several thousand pairs of watchful eyes, his credibility would plummet, damaging his personal reputation.

“Esteemed pill kings, since we are to have a contest, then we can’t be the ones to decide the rules. I would like to trouble the nine of you to formulate the rules of this competition,” Ji San proposed.

Wang Teng wasn’t one to fall behind, quickly nodding, “Each of you is a leading figure in the world of pills. The Majestic Clan has full trust in you. I apologize for troubling you this time.”

The spectators also made their views known, “Indeed, you nine pill kings are all great figures, everyone can trust you. You should be the ones to make the rules.”

“Esteemed pill kings, don’t fail to live up to everyone’s expectations!”

There was no need for House Tong and House Wei to speak anymore. Things had already progressed to where it was no longer a mere showdown between their two subordinate houses. It was more of a confrontation between the Coiling Dragon Clan and the Majestic Clan. While this confrontation might not influence the final situation, it would at least somewhat represent its future direction.

Neither wanted to lose; neither could afford to lose. Seeing that Wang Teng looked like he still had cards left to play, the majority of the crowd felt that the Majestic Clan had come prepared. Their odds of winning should be somewhat higher. After all, merely judging by their staffs and their styles, the Taiyuan Lodge that the Majestic Clan operated was on a completely different level compared to House Wei’s Taiyuan Tower.

Chapter 768: Let’s Go A Little Mad With the Gamble

When everyone looked over at the Taiyuan Lodge side, they immediately glimpsed several pill kings in their midst. The highest ranked one was obviously a high order one, and there were two more mid order ones at fifth and sixth rank pill king. There were even low order ones acting as assistants. That a pill king was acting as an assistant was a mark of how deep Taiyuan Lodge’s pockets were!

When their eyes swivelled over to Taiyuan Tower, the contrast was stark and jarring. They didn’t have a single person dressed in the clothing of a pill king! Jiang Chen stood next to the Wei father and son, wearing a set of casual clothes. It was difficult for anyone to match his appearance to that of a pill king’s. The blatant contrast caused a significant bias in the winning predictions of everyone present. Given House Wei’s lackluster performance in the pill arena as well as the Majestic Clan’s insatiable expansion in recent years, there didn’t seem a need for careful analysis. Even a three-year-old child knew which side victory was favoring. Some of the more reserved and mature onlookers shook their heads inwardly. The normally elegant young master Ji San had been far too brash this time. He’d finally fallen into the Majestic Clan’s trap.

"To think that the Coiling Dragon Clan is finally about to abdicate its status as the number one clan of Veluriyam Capital after two hundred years..."

"Ah, it's truly a shame that the Coiling Dragon Clan's lord is facing his twilight years."

"As the foremost clan, though the Coiling Dragon Clan is a little forward, it has never tyrannized anyone. If the Majestic Clan really replaces it, I'm afraid that the situation in the Capital will become worse than before!" Many of the onlookers mulled over the tradeoffs in their hearts. They did not wish to see a drastic shift to the order within Veluriyam Capital. Such a change often necessitated much strife, conquest, conflict, bloodshed in its name...

As the foremost clan, the Coiling Dragon Clan had maintained reasonable order within Veluriyam Capital, and was a force to be reckoned with in the Upper Eight Regions. The Veluriyam Capital owed much of its past two hundred years of stability to the prominent work of the Coiling Dragon Clan. A change in leadership, to the Majestic Clan, birthed uncertainty in the hearts of many. After all, from what could be seen of its actions thus far, the Majestic Clan was without a doubt greedier, more profit-oriented, even tyrannical. Thus, though many of the guests chose Taiyuan Lodge, it didn't mean they were actually loyal to the Majestic Clan. Their choice was merely an instinctive act of self preservation, a selection of the more favorable choice between the Majestic Clan and House Wei. At the bottom of their hearts, at least half of those present did not wish for the Coiling Dragon Clan to be replaced by the Majestic Clan.

The nine judges huddled together for only a short while before they drafted an outline for the contest. "Young master Ji San, young master Wang, we have the outline for the contest." A ninth rank pill king with shockingly bright white hair walked towards them.

"Pill King Yu, please speak." Neither Ji San nor Wang Teng dared flaunt their stature in front of the pill king, and showed only the utmost respect.

"Since today is the opening ceremony for both of the stores, and a store opening is naturally accompanied by new kinds of pills, the first round of the contest will be about pills. Each side will bring out three pills to be evaluated by all nine of us judges. The side that receives more votes will be counted as the victor for this round," Pill King Yu said. It was a predictable suggestion. Both stores were pill shops, so what would one bet on, if not for pills? This round was essential.

"There's a first round, so there must be a second as well. What's the topic of the second, if I may ask?" Wang Teng smiled slightly.

Pill King Yu declared, "Besides attractive pills, talented employees are important as well. Therefore, we believe that a competition between pill kings will be appropriate for the second round. Strong talent signifies a flourishing store—an indisputable fact, no?"

Every pill shop had its own in-house experts. Big stores had pill kings, but even the most insignificant of stores hired a few pill masters to hold down the fort. It was undeniably true that talented people formed the backbone of a pill shop. Any pill shop would be quite popular with a genius pill king sitting inside. A genius pill king was actually even more enticing than a desirable pill.

Pills were made by people. Even the hardest pill only took three to five years to make. But the development of a pill king took at minimum 30 to 50 years. It was not uncommon for ten times that time span to pass again before a pill king reached a high rank. A competition between pill kings? Everyone found the details of the second round amusing, especially those on the Taiyuan Lodge side. Insults and jests started to fly.

"Pill king? House Wei's Taiyuan Tower has a pill king?"

"Isn't this too hard on Taiyuan Tower? Haha, a competition between pill kings? We'd have to wait until House Wei finds a pill king first!"

"Look, you can't say things like that. Perhaps House Wei is requesting a pill king from the Coiling Dragon Clan as we speak."

"Do Coiling Dragon Clan's pill kings have any relation to House Wei?"

However, those on House Wei's side were unexpectedly calm. There was none of the panic and tension on their faces that Taiyuan Lodge wished to see. Young master Ji San was the first to speak, interjecting softly, "Pill King Yu, excuse my verbosity. Taiyuan Lodge has many pill kings, but do any of them have tokens identifying their employment? If not, doesn't that count as cheating? If that is permissible, then I take it that I can call in support from the Coiling Dragon Clan's pill kings?"

The question was certainly reasonable. Glancing at Wang Teng, Pill King Yu nodded, "Young master Wang, are all of these pill kings representative of Taiyuan Lodge?"

Wang Teng spoke equally unassumingly, "Is this round by specific designation? Or random selection?"

Pill Master Yu looked at House Wei, seeking their opinion.

"It is best for the contestants to be designated specifically, lest there be cheating," Wei Tianxiao hurriedly responded.

Wang Teng scoffed in disdain. Cheating? Aren't you guys overestimating your importance? Implying that we need to cheat to beat House Wei ... what a riot. Wang Teng directed his question at the mass of pill kings behind him with a turn of his body. "Which of you is willing to take the stage?"

"I am!"

"Young clan lord, send me!"

"Is there a need to fight? Of course it's me." The pill kings scrambled over one another in their bids for the position, save for the higher-ranked pill king who stayed silent. Clearly, as a seventh rank pill king, he held himself in too high an esteem to make such a public appearance. Wang Teng had a sudden stroke of inspiration. "Does House Wei have a pill king?"

"Wang Teng, your eyesight isn't very good, hmm? This humble one is House Wei's guest pill king and am the sitting pill king at Taiyuan Tower." n)-O*Ve*l*l*1n

"You?" Wang Teng flicked a cold glance at Jiang Chen. How could he not know who Jiang Chen was? He had only asked the question in order to shame House Wei. In truth, Wei Tiantong and Pill Master Yu's prior failure had already drawn attention to House Wei's new pill king. Wang Teng looked over Jiang Chen coolly. The latter didn't have three heads and six arms, nor did he appear to be an amazing pill dao prodigy. There was nothing for Wang Teng to beware of. He spoke to the sixth rank pill king, "Pill King Rong, you go. Teach this kid a lesson in life."

The chosen pill king's face lit up. "Understood. I will not fail my mission."

After both sides locked in their choices, everyone focused their attention upon Pill King Yu again. The first round was a comparison of pills, the second round was a competition of pill kings, but what of the third? "We have rounds one and two, so there must be a round three, right?"

Pill King Yu nodded, "If each side wins a round within the first two rounds, then we naturally will have a deciding third round. But, if one side wins two in a row, then the third round is unnecessary. Still, let us mention it in passing. It will be a round based on personal judgments from the nine judges. The content being judged can be discussed when the time comes."

All three rounds had been explained. "So, do both sides understand the rules?" Pill King Yu asked.

House Wei nodded in agreement, but Wang Teng was not content. "The rules are quite clear, and the nine pill kings are all pillars of the pill world. There is nothing for us to be concerned about. But, since it's a competition, there should be some stakes as well. What's in it for the winner? What happens to the loser?" He curved his lips in a grin.

This was the crux of the issue.

This extensive setup Wang Teng had orchestrated wasn't simply for fun or show. His ultimate objective was to close Taiyuan Tower before it even had a chance to open, and thereby stomp House Wei into the ground completely. It would also be a slap to the face for the Coiling Dragon Clan.

"What do you want?" Ji San asked scornfully.

"Everyone knows the old adage that a mountain has no room for two tigers, not to mention two stores directly facing each other with similar names! I suggest... winner takes all," Wang Teng laughed.

"Take all of what, exactly?"

"It's very simple. The loser closes shop and removes their store sign. They're also forbidden from appearing within a thousand metres of the winner's store." Wang Teng had everything thought out already.

"You call that 'winner takes all'?" Jiang Chen smirked before young master Ji San had a chance to respond.

"Then what do you propose?" Wang Teng sneered.

"Winner takes all should be absolutely everything, including the deed to the properties!" Jiang Chen's words bewildered not only the onlookers, but House Wei as well. This was not within their original plans. Seeing Wei Jie and Wei Tianxiao's quizzical looks, Jiang Chen conveyed, "Lord Wei, if I lose, I will recompense House Wei with the formula for the Longevity Pill."

The formula for the Longevity Pill. Wei Tianxiao was instantly reassured at these words.

The others present wore astonished expressions. The bystanders were especially dazed, a strange suspicion popping into their heads. Was House Wei's mysterious pill king yet another double agent from the Majestic Clan? Why else would he up the ante in such an absurd way? Everyone knew that House Wei's Taiyuan Tower would be the loser. Since their loss was assured, wasn't it too much to offer up the property deed to the store as well?

After all, the store was located in one of the best spots in Farmer God Market. Moreover, House Wei's store occupied a rather large area, and excelled in many aspects. Even the Majestic Clan had salivated over the store for a long time. Wasn't House Wei's pill king delivering the goods right to the door then? The previous pill king from House Wei was already suspected of being an undercover agent from the Majestic Clan. Given the current way of things, that the same thing was happening again was a natural conclusion for the onlookers to draw. The more they mulled it over, the more it appeared to be the case.

Chapter 769: Wang Teng, You Can't Afford the Bet?

Jiang Chen didn't care what the bystanders thought. His gaze was so intense that Wang Teng found it difficult to avert his eyes. One was an unknown pill master, and the other was a young lord of one of Veluriyam Capital's foremost clans. For any normal person, the two weren't even on the same level. But, to everyone's surprise, the guest pill king of House Wei was fearlessly looking straight at Wang Teng.

Suddenly, Jiang Chen smacked his forehead with a laugh. "I almost forgot. The store opposite isn't actually the Majestic Clan's property. I don't think young clan lord Wang can actually make any decisions here. Well now, since you can't afford to make the bet, let's pretend I didn't say anything." Jiang Chen's words took a drastically different turn, tugging at the hearts of their onlookers yet again.

What was this? From his tone, it seemed that House Wei's guest pill king really did want to pick a fight with the Majestic Clan. He really wasn't an undercover agent? The challenge wasn't particularly clever, but it was still sharp as a sword. The attack was a direct jab at Wang Teng, who found it difficult not to engage. As large as Veluriyam Capital was, how many people in it dared to say "you can't afford to make the bet" to the Majestic Clan?

Was there a bet that the Majestic Clan couldn't afford?

Though the store didn't belong to the Majestic Clan, there were countless methods to take possession of it! Even though Wang Teng had reminded himself time and again to keep calm, he couldn't help but feel fury eat away at him because of Jiang Chen's attitude. Sneering, he turned his attention the Wei father and son. "Wei Tianxiao, no wonder House Wei has been more dead than alive. Bad upbringing and manners can't be helped. Since when can a guest pill king act on House Wei's behalf?"

Wei Tianxiao was cautious by nature, but he was surprisingly calm in that moment. He knew there was no backing out now. The Majestic Clan wanted to seize this opportunity to utterly crush House Wei. Even if Jiang Chen hadn't made his promise about the Longevity Pill, they would still have to step up to the plate. Steeling himself for the worst, he smiled faintly. "Young clan lord Wang, there's no problem with being forthright if you really can't afford to make the bet. We at House Wei are not in the habit of forcing people's hands. As for Pill King Zhen, I have already given him full authority for today's matters. Anyone whom we entrust a position with has House Wei's complete trust."

It was another mention of "you can't afford to make the bet"! Perhaps he might have begrudgingly endured things if the words had come from anyone else, but what kind of person was Wang Teng? Was he someone that a ninth-ranked house could say "you can't afford to make the bet" to? Where was his dignity? Wang Teng's angry grimace was telling of his extreme displeasure, his eyes glinting with disdain. "Good, very good, House Wei has some guts alright! If you really must give this store as a present to me, I'm happy to take it."

Still, he couldn't figure out House Wei's intentions. Using the store as the ante had been wholly unexpected. The stakes were too high for them. From Wang Teng's perspective, House Wei was blustering with all their might; they had no bite. They were feigning aggressiveness in order to force him to step back. But, what did they take him for? How could Wang Teng not take the bet? n)-OVeℓ&1n

Jiang Chen smiled coldly. "I wouldn't hurry to accept if I were you. The winner is still undecided. If you want to put the property itself on the line, you should first acquire the rights to Taiyuan Lodge. Otherwise, who do we collect from if you're betting with someone else's belongings?"

He spoke as if House Wei's victory over the Majestic Clan was assured. Wang Teng's anger no longer knew any bound. He had never before been met with such arrogant provocation in Veluriyam Capital. Indeed, the Majestic Clan didn't own Taiyuan Lodge. It was also true that the Majestic Clan had used forceful means to coercively rent the premises for a time. He scanned the surroundings for the owner of the store. It belonged to another ninth-ranked aristocratic house, not subordinate to either the Majestic or Coiling Dragon Clan.

"House Lord Teng, I am willing to use my family's store in the Heaven Road section of the Farmer God Market as collateral. If I lose your store today, then that store will belong to you. As you know, it's located in a superior position and occupies a larger area." In his anger, Wang Teng was willing to pledge a superior store as collateral.

The lord of House Teng wasn't comforted, however. He had no interest in meddling in these factional affairs. He complained with a wry face, "Young clan lord Wang, it's not that I don't trust your word, but something like this... there is no guarantee in a verbal promise."

Wang Teng was enraged by these words. This house lord's distrust was blatant. How could an entity as great as the Majestic Clan lose to a mere House Wei? Though the store was collateral, that was only in name. What else did he need aside from a verbal promise?

Ji San chuckled at the scene. "Wang Teng, you're gambling in such a carefree way with someone else's property. Generosity at the expense of others... truly a masterful plan. If you lose, you can just up and leave. Since there's no guarantee, are you expecting House Teng to pry that store from the Majestic Clan's hands?"

Ji San was adept at finding weaknesses. His commentary was clean and upright, and drew much cheering and applause from the crowd. After all, the Veluriyam Capital had twenty-eight clans. Though many of the other clans couldn't compare to the Majestic Clan, that didn't mean the latter held absolute power either. Wang Teng's attitude carried an overbearing overtone that, alone, was enough to cause mild dissatisfaction amongst onlookers. He'd thought he was giving sufficient face to the lord of House Teng, but Ji San's interjection made him look like a menacing bully instead. He suppressed the boiling anger in his heart, glancing at Ji San coldly. "Ji Ole Third, I'm not the type of person to cheat others out of something as insignificant as this. You on the other hand... what will you placate House Wei with after they lose the store, hmm?"

"Don't try to change the subject by mentioning unrelated things. No guarantee, no bet," Young Master Ji San smiled serenely. Wei Tianxiao loudly backed him up. "Young master Ji San has the right of it. Any bets that House Wei makes must be transparent and open. We cannot allow young clan Lord Wang to wager the property of others."

Wang Teng had been backed into a corner by Ji San and Wei Tianxiao's verbal barrage. "Get some pen and paper." If he was going to leave some proof, he was going to be unequivocal about it.

"We are cultivators, what need is there for pen and paper? Even if written proof exists, what can House Teng do to you if you want to get out of it?" Young Master Ji San grinned coolly. "Cultivators are beholden to different rules. A heavenly oath is far more convincing than any contract."

House Lord Teng's eyes brightened, looking to Ji San with gratitude. Clearly, he was very supportive of an oath. Jiang Chen frowned. "Wang Teng, you are the young lord of a clan, yet you fuss like an old woman. Are we betting or not? If you aren't confident enough in your chances, then say so earlier. Why waste everyone's time?"

Wang Teng was so angry he almost spat blood. If looks could kill, everyone standing by House Wei would be a fresh corpse. Forcing himself to calm down with some effort, he locked eyes with Wei Tianxiao. "Wei Tianxiao, you're freely taking potshots now, but just wait a while and I'll show you what for. You won't even be able to cry!" Saying this, he turned to the lord of House Teng. "Lord Teng, if you want a heavenly oath, I'll give it to you. But you will soon know that your worry is unnecessary. The Majestic Clan's victory is certain."

In that moment, Wang Teng was filled with fortitude and pride, brimming with determination. He swore a heavenly oath with the crowd as witness. Wang Teng did not leave any textual loopholes in the oath, and expressed that if House Teng's store really was lost to House Wei, he would reimburse House Teng with the Majestic Clan's better premises within the Farmer God Market. With the oath made, Wang Teng cheered up greatly. "The wager is set. Now, let's see what other tricks you have up your sleeve!" He looked contemptuously at his opposition.

"Pill King Yu, with both the stakes and the rules in place, why don't we begin? Time is money. I'm sure this true for everyone." Having lost the advantage in the verbal exchange, Wang Teng had a lot of frustration bottled up. He eagerly awaited a crushing, convincing victory against House Wei. He could almost taste the pleasure of taking their store for himself.

Pill King Yu reiterated the rules and the wagers for clarity. "No final questions from either side, yes? Then the competition begins!"

An empty space was quickly cleared. The nine judges fanned out in a solid line; the betting parties separated themselves to either side. Taiyuan Lodge had the absolute advantage in both line up and formation. "For the first round, each side must submit three types of pills. Remember, there is no need to deceive us with rare pills. The pills must be suitable for mass production and sale. Our purpose is not to view your personal pill collection, but rather to compare the quality of each side's pill supply," Pill King Yu warned sternly.

A duel between two pill stores had to involve pills actually available for sale. There was no point in bringing out the pills that were rare and sought-after, those kept solely in personal collections. After all, those pills were hardly representative of a shop's capabilities.

Ji San had wanted to secretly return the Longevity Pill he'd accepted from Jiang Chen to bolster his side, but Pill King Yu's words forbade it. From his perspective, Taiyuan Tower had no way of making the Longevity Pill. However, Jiang Chen had no intention at all of using the Longevity Pill from the beginning. The situation wasn't even close to dire, so why expose himself? Moreover, it wasn't as if the pills he'd prepared earlier were ordinary either.

He quickly picked out three types of pills. The Heptarune True Dragon Pill for breakthroughs, the Tiger Eruption Pill for battle strength, and the Half-Step Immortal Elixir Pill for poison. As for the cosmetic Aeons Evergreen Pill, Jiang Chen decided against taking it out in front of the judges. The pill kings here

were all male, and this kind of pill held no attraction for them. To the contrary, it was possible that they would deem it as unorthodox tomfoolery.

For the sake of fairness, the three pills weren't taken out simultaneously by both sides. Rather, they were presented one at a time, and neither would know what pill the other would bring. The Heptarune True Dragon Pill Jiang Chen chose for the first round was placed in a jade box, labeled with Taiyuan Tower as its origin, and brought before the nine pill kings.

Each of the nine judges began to investigate and examine the two pills. They were all well-traveled and knowledgeable. Though the grade of pill presented was high on both sides, they were not shaken. After about fifteen minutes, voting began among the pill kings.

It wasn't long before the results were out. As the first of three pills in the first round, Jiang Chen's Heptarune True Dragon Pill scored the initial victory with a 6-3 advantage!

Chapter 770: Losing to Oneself

"The pill, the Heptarune True Dragon Pill, is excellent in quality, and a wonderful pill for the tribulations that come from breakthroughs..." Pill King Yu took the forefront on behalf of the judges to explain why the Heptarune True Dragon Pill had won Taiyuan Tower the first round.

The fact that Taiyuan Tower had scored first blood took many onlookers aback. A murmur began to circulate quietly among the crowd. It was obvious that no one had thought that Taiyuan Tower would actually possess skill. This Heptarune True Dragon Pill did indeed seem quite good, and the fact that it scored first blood seemed to be deserved.

However, this was only the first round of the first stage of the match. One had to win at least two out of three rounds in order to win the first stage. House Wei had won the first round, but could they win a second time? For a moment, the onlookers who thought that this was going to be a one-sided battle grew a little more hopeful. They were hoping that House Wei could surprise them even more and make this bet more entertaining.

Both sides presented their second pills amidst such expectations. This time, Jiang Chen presented the Tiger Eruption Pill. He wasn't very sure that this pill would win because he hadn't expected to fight a pill battle during the grand opening and thus, hadn't prepared a particularly powerful pill to stun the crowd. This Tiger Eruption Pill was a result of his own improvisations of a pill from a rather neglected branch of knowledge in the field. Although it wasn't bad, there was no telling if it could beat the Majestic Clan's selection. As expected, his opponent had come prepared. Their second pill was obviously an entire level higher than the Tiger Eruption Pill.

The Majestic Clan had actually produced the True Emperor Pill! The True Emperor Pill was a quasi-emperor rank pill that could increase one's chances of reaching the emperor realm by ten to twenty percent. Although listed as a true saint rank pill, the market viewed it as an emperor rank pill and priced it accordingly. The True Emperor Pill beat the Tiger Eruption Pill immediately after it appeared.

"The True Emperor Pill is a pill any peak sage realm cultivator must have. It is incredibly sophisticated and difficult to refine. Although Taiyuan Tower's Tiger Eruption Pill is also a worthy pill in its own right and an interesting improvisation, it cannot close the level gap. Taiyuan Lodge wins this round," Pill King Yu announced the result of the second round.

Jiang Chen wasn't that angry to lose to the True Emperor Pill. He could refine this pill himself if he wanted to. After all, Taiyuan Tower had just taken its first steps. He hadn't planned to kick things into high gear immediately. However, this consideration caused him to suffer quite the disadvantage.

The first stage of the match was now a 1-1 draw. The onlookers were actually disappointed to see Taiyuan Lodge winning the second round. They'd been hoping to see Taiyuan Lodge lose the first stage. House Wei's pill master was almost fated to lose against the Majestic Clan's pill king in the second stage. This outcome was almost a sure certainty. Now that Taiyuan Lodge had taken back a round, momentum was obviously back on Taiyuan Lodge's side. They were disappointed to see the Majestic Clan reassert control once more. This was because everyone knew that the Majestic Clan had prepared a trump card. Everyone in Veluriam Capital had heard the rumors.

House Wei was also feeling a slight bit of anxiety. It was obvious that they were slightly worried about how the situation was progressing. Although they had managed to score a draw after the first two rounds, Taiyuan Tower almost had no chance of victory if Taiyuan Lodge were to produce the Longevity Pill. The situation could change if Jiang Chen produced a Longevity Pill himself, but it was highly unlikely for him to do so.

Jiang Chen himself had thought of this possibility. He was also hesitating whether he should reveal his Longevity Pill. In the end though, he decided against the impulse. As everyone expected, the Majestic Clan produced the Longevity Pill amidst much cheering. The moment the Longevity Pill showed up, every pill king present was conquered. This was a truly unique pill, in fact, the only pill to cause a ripple of shock in the pill industry for the past few hundred years or so. It wasn't that there were no other pills that increased one's lifespan in the market, but their effects were all average and forgettable.

The Longevity Pill's appearance had immediately filled up this void. Although it only worked for sage realm cultivators, that was impressive enough already. Jiang Chen knew that the third round was looking bad for him the second he saw his opponent produce the Longevity Pill. He had sent in the Half-step Immortal Elixir Pill, and would have likely won if his opponent had offered any other pill. However, no matter how impressive the Half-step Immortal Elixir Pill was, it was simply not as shocking as the Longevity Pill.

There was no need for a comparison at all. The judges' opinions were unanimous. Although they were very impressed by the Half-step Immortal Elixir Pill, they had all cast their votes for the Longevity Pill. Pill King Yu announced, "I never thought that Taiyuan Lodge would produce the Longevity Pill. I believe all of you have heard of this pill by now. It is most definitely a revolutionary pill. Although Taiyuan Tower's Half-step Immortal Elixir Pill was also excellent and made with astounding skill, it is ultimately a shade paler compared to the Longevity Pill. Therefore, Taiyuan Lodge wins this round!"

The color on the Wei father and son's faces immediately drained when they heard this. Meanwhile, a cheer broke out from Wang Teng's corner. House Tong was especially pleased as they laughed raucously. Even Wang Teng couldn't hide the smile on his face. However, young master Ji San exclaimed, "Wait!"

The judges looked surprised for a second, then Pill King Yu asked indifferently, "Are you questioning my judgment, young master Ji San?"

Young master Ji San hastily replied, "I have no questions regarding your judgment, but I do have a question regarding the Majestic Clan's pill. As we all know, Wang Teng spent 120 million saint spirit stones to win the bid of three Longevity Pills during the Joined Ridges auction. The rules of this stage of the match is that the sect must be able to mass produce and sell the pills they show."

Pill King Yu thought that young master Ji San's words had a lot of sense to them, and so he turned towards Wang Teng. "Young master Wang, young master Ji San's question is reasonable. How do you answer?"

If the Majestic Clan had gone against the rules, then they would be declared the loser instead. If that happens, then House Wei's Taiyuan Tower would turn the tables and win the first stage of the match with a 2-1 victory instead. Wang Teng smiled faintly and clapped his hands, "Bring over a batch of Longevity Pills and show them to Pill King Yu."

Someone came over immediately and displayed twenty Longevity Pills at once! Now even young master Ji San was a little tongue tied. Pill King Yu nodded slightly and acknowledged Wang Teng's proof. He was going to declare Taiyuan Lodge the winner of the first stage. But before he could answer, Jiang Chen suddenly asked, "I would like to ask just one more question: did Taiyuan Lodge really refine these Longevity Pills themselves?"

Jiang Chen didn't believe that Taiyuan Lodge could refine the Longevity Pills. These Longevity Pills had most likely been refined by the Eternal Celestial Capital before they were entrusted to the Majestic Clan to be sold in Veluriyam Capital.

Wang Teng sneered, "I don't think we need to prove this to you, do we? Are you saying that we need to report our store's sources to you?"

Pill King Yu also nodded, "The rules only says that the pill must be an item that can be mass produced and sold. The number Taiyuan Tower produces is enough to prove them abiding by this rule."

Wang Teng smiled and said, "The rules do say that the pill must be capable of being mass produced, but it never said that we must be the one to do it. We have our channels and our connections. They represent our abilities too!"

Although this logic was a little shameless, it was still acceptable. Pill King Yu ignored Jiang Chen and declared, "Taiyuan Tower is the victor of the first stage!" Seeing Pill King Yu making his declaration, Jiang Chen didn't say anything else even though he was frustrated. The reason he'd even spoken up was because he was a little put off by the Majestic Clan beating him with his own pill. It wasn't that he couldn't take a defeat with grace.

Although he'd lost the first stage, this battle was far from over. His first loss was also a suitable reminder to himself that he should treat the next two stages seriously and not underestimate the enemy. His loss couldn't be chalked up to a lack of skill. The Majestic Clan had used his own goods to beat him. He could even say that he had beaten himself, not the Majestic Clan. After all, hadn't the Majestic Clan won the first stage using the Longevity Pill? And who was the real master of the Longevity Pill? Although Jiang Chen knew that the Majestic Clan had won this stage in a rather dishonorable manner, arguing further would only leave a bad impression on the judges.

“The first stage of the battle has concluded. The second stage will be a battle between pill kings. Just like before, the stage will be conducted in three rounds. The contestant who wins two rounds wins the second stage.”

The entire pill battle had three stages; the side who won the majority would be declared victor. The same went with the three small rounds in each stage.

“Sigh, House Wei’s foundations are ultimately too shallow. They’ll probably lose horribly.”

“I know right? I doubt they can even survive this second stage.”

“Sigh, have you guys ever heard of this pill king from House Wei? He seems pretty young.”

“I actually suspect he’s a Wang family spy. Why else would he have bet his own store? Oh poor House Wei, they’ve actually gone and made the same mistake twice.”

“Wei Tianxiao’s cultivation is strong, but as a house lord he seems a little naive.”

“The Pill King Rong that the Majestic Clan just sent out seems to be a sixth rank pill king. He’s only one step away from becoming an upper rank pill king. But I heard that this pill king from House Wei is a second rank pill king?”

“A second rank pill king versus a sixth rank pill king... where on earth does House Wei get their confidence from? Have they given up already?” The crowd buzzed with the rising and falling voices of hushed murmuring.

Both sides of this conflict looked nervous, but they were surprisingly silent. Pill King Rong walked over and cupped his fist towards the nine judges, “Please forgive me for my performance today, seniors.” He then turned to glance at Jiang Chen with a bit of a nasty smile. “Tell me your name, brat. I don’t bully nameless people.”

Jiang Chen smiled indifferently and answered, “The master and the servant are just the same, eh? If you want to fight, then fight already. Save the drivel for the mirror.”

Surprisingly, Pill King Rong didn’t grow angry, cackling oddly instead. “No wonder the young master told me to teach you better manners. You are as arrogant as you appear.”

“A dressed up animal dares to talk about teaching manners? What a joke,” Jiang Chen’s words were aimed at Pill King Rong, but his eyes had swept briefly and indifferently across Wang Teng’s face.

He cupped his fist towards the nine pill kings and said, “Please start the competition, venerable pill kings.” Jiang Chen had a stomach of anger to vent after losing the first round.