

## Three Realms 781

### Chapter 781: A Grand Victory

Wang Teng was indeed able to act according to his status as a young clan head. He didn't lose his temper, even though his fury and indignation were dangerously close to erupting. He was especially upset after noticing Ji San's secret arrangements. He knew that the unexpectedly silent young master was definitely waiting for him to commit an irredeemable act.

Ji San would definitely grasp the opportunity to relentlessly attack Wang Teng as soon as the latter turned hostile. And with that, Wang Teng would've fallen right into the opponent's trap. His dark expression made no secret of his anger, but his voice was still as indifferent as ever. "A gambler must be willing to accept losses, but House Lord Tong's words just now are not without reason. I'm not questioning the judges, but the intentions of this pill king from House Wei. Does no one find it odd that this man of unknown origins suddenly shows up at our Veluriyam Capital and starts stirring up trouble? I'm beginning to suspect him of being a spy dispatched by some other power. Otherwise, how could such a pill dao genius be unknown?"

This slander was executed rather poorly, but implicating Jiang Chen was better than offending the judges. Ji San had been biding his time all this while, and laughed out loud at this point. "That's one of the best jokes I've heard in years! Wang Teng, no matter how eloquent your words, it all boils down to you being a sore loser. I've always known that you won't accept defeat with grace. I guess people didn't misjudge you after all."

The young master also felt it to be somewhat of a shame. He had been expecting Wang Teng to flip out and perhaps even renege on the deal. Sadly, that wily fellow had avoided that trap after all.

"Ji Ole Third, I don't think this matter concerns you in any way." Wang Teng was visibly trying to suppress his displeasure.

"How can I not be concerned? Pill King Zhen is my friend and House Wei an aristocratic house under our Coiling Dragon Clan. Am I not supposed to speak up for them and let you push them around as you wish?" Ji San held the solid advantage and as such, his tone of voice was quite leisurely.

Wei Tianxiao couldn't keep quiet anymore, "Since the young clan lord Wang admits that a gambler must be willing to accept losses, I hope you'll stop deflecting so ridiculously. Pill King Zhen's origins are completely unrelated to this wager. The Veluriyam Capital has stood tall in the Divine Abyss Continent for tens of thousands of years—agents of various powers have always walked among us—and yet the Capital has remained completely unaffected. None of us are interested in listening to your baseless alarmist theories."

Ji San turned to the judges with a smile. "Honored judges, can we consider the victor to have been determined? Isn't it time Taiyuan Lodge honored their wager?"

Pill King Yu nodded and cast his gaze toward Wang Teng. "Young master Wang, the results are decided. Please proceed with the transaction if you still acknowledge our position here as judges. Otherwise, we'll simply have to act according to the law. A cultivator should always act with a clear conscience and take responsibility for his decisions, be it with delight, gratitude or vengeance. Please avoid wandering from the main subject!"

Pill King Yu's words contained a fair amount of both admonition and threat. He did indeed somewhat despise Wang Teng's actions. Add to that his admiration for Jiang Chen, Pill King Yu was already inwardly inclined to stand on the latter's side.

"Indeed. A gambler must be willing to accept his losses. Why the need for such nonsense?"

"Stop wasting your breath. Why did you bet if you can't afford to lose? If we remember correctly, the whole wager was your Taiyuan Lodge's idea."

"That's right. Here we have a powerful and influential major clan turning hostile after losing a bet. How shameful!" The tens of thousands of spectators broke into an uproar. Admonishing voices could be heard from all directions, and there was no way to discern their origin.

It was true that most of the audience were just here to observe the lively activities. But these neutral cultivators were not without the capacity to differentiate right from wrong. They'd seen how unbridled the Majestic Clan had acted in the beginning. The clan was the one who'd first provoked the other party and cause a scene. They were also the ones to propose the bet. They were obviously the ones who wanted to suppress Taiyuan Tower. They'd gone for wool but come home shorn. Now that House Wei's pill king had turned the tables on them, they want to renege on their debt by distorting the truth. The audience couldn't accept this.

*You can be arrogant and tyrannical, but you can't openly trample public opinion. You can't insult the rules approved by the people!* A gambler had to be willing to accept his losses. No one would just stand by and watch as the Majestic Clan refuses to abide by such a basic rule. They weren't sympathizing with the weak. They'd uphold the same values even if Taiyuan Tower had lost.

The crowd was getting worked up and their voices of condemnation came down like a monsoon rain. Wang Teng's fury burned even hotter under this shower of recrimination, but he had no place to vent. He turned around with a stormy expression. "Sort out our things and have our men depart. Let them have the store!"

The House Tong lord was now panicking, "Young clan master, what will our House Tong do if we hand over the store..."

Wang Teng's expression was black as he glared at the head of House Tong. However, the house lord was adamant. This was no small matter—this store was House Tong's most prized possession—their losses would be colossal if he simply gave up a core asset like this. It would be greatly detrimental if they were to lose it just like that. Even if Wang Teng incurred divine wrath because he'd reneged on the heavenly oath, it still wouldn't bring profit to House Tong. Therefore, he had to obtain tangible compensation from Wang Teng at all costs. He'd mustered up the courage even in the face of Wang Teng's murderous glare.

"House Lord Teng, are you afraid that I'll renege on the debt?" Wang Teng's composure was eroding like a dam of sand.

"Wang Teng, it seems you're not afraid of being judged by the heaven and earth. Could it be that you're thinking of reneging on your wager?" Ji San chuckled, "Why are you trying to bully House Lord Teng in front of so many people? Just compensate him immediately for his shop and people may yet consider you a straightforward person."

“Indeed! If you slip away afterwards, how can House Tong knock on your Majestic Clan’s doors and demand compensation? You can’t bully people that way!”

“Wang Teng, please don’t embarrass the great clans so.” Those with the courage to speak out were mostly clan members. The Majestic Clan was indeed arrogant, but those other clans were not to be trifled with.

Wang Teng was helplessly adrift in a sea of castigation. He had no choice but to dispatch someone and publicly hand over the shop to House Tong. He was close to weeping blood after arranging everything. The people from Taiyuan Lodge had completely retired. They’d just started opening for business but now, they were being forced to withdraw in misery.

This was the most humiliating moment of his life.

Undisguised killing intent radiated from Wang Teng as he glared at Jiang Chen and House Wei. “Well done, House Wei. I’ll remember you lot!” With that, he waved his hand, “Move out!”

Wang Teng’s entourage duly followed. Gloomy and dejected, they closely resembled defeated gamecocks.

Jiang Chen suddenly spoke, “Hold it!”

Wang Teng, hoping for a chance to vent his anger, paused his steps with a cold smile. “What now?”

Jiang Chen pointed at the shop sign, “You’ve forgotten something!”

The audience broke out into loud laughter. Wang Teng’s countenance turned frosty as he ordered Tong Xianwei, “Retrieve it!”

Tong Xianwei leapt up and swiftly removed the sign. He glared daggers at Jiang Chen, “Brat, keep your eyes open. Some powers simply have no future. Don’t keep walking down the wrong path, lest it be too late by the time you realize.”

It was unknown whether he was referring to House Wei or the Coiling Dragon Clan. Jiang Chen only smiled indifferently, for he couldn’t be bothered to debate with this person. His conflict with Wang Teng wasn’t to help House Wei, but simply because Wang Teng had crossed his bottom line!

“Haven’t you lot suffered enough humiliation today?” Ji San let out a cold laugh.

Tong Xianwei indeed didn’t dare behave atrociously in front of this young master. He could only shuffle behind Wang Teng and leave. Pill King Yu approached Jiang Chen after Wang Teng’s entourage had departed, “Pill King Zhen, you’ve truly broadened this old man’s horizons today. Please come drop in for a chat when you have the time.”

“Indeed, Pill King Zhen has earned great fame in a single battle. Who would’ve thought that the Deviant Pill Faction would finally produce such a genius. Now we’ll see who dares to say the Deviant Pill Faction is a heretical school!” The speaker was a Deviant Pill Faction fanatic.

The other pill kings also came forth with congratulations of their own.

Ji San laughed out loud, “Everyone, Pill King Zhen has won glory and fame in a single battle today. I’d also like to take this opportunity to announce Taiyuan Tower officially open for business! Since everyone is already here, why not come in for a drink? How delightful would it be to sit and discuss pill dao at leisure!”

Ji San, an expert at building up the atmosphere, began tending to the guests. It wasn’t unreasonable for him to speak on behalf of House Wei. After all, he was their direct superior.

The Wei father and son gave a cupped fist salute in each direction. “Everyone, please take care of our newly established Taiyuan Tower.”

“House Lord Wei, please allow us to have a word with Pill King Zhen.”

“Indeed. House Lord Wei, we’ve always been devout followers of the Deviant Pill Faction. Please have Pill King Zhen give us some pointers.”

“House Lord Wei...” Many fans of the Deviant Pill Faction were present. These people were all incredibly excited as they crowded madly around the house lord. The ambience suddenly became full of passion and enthusiasm. Seeing what was going on, Jiang Chen smiled and held up his hands. With that, the die-hard fans of the Deviant Pill Faction, who viewed Jiang Chen as a god, began to calm down.

“Everyone, it’s somewhat late today and our Taiyuan Tower’s opening ceremony still needs to be completed first. I’ll hold lectures on pill dao at Taiyuan Tower for three consecutive days starting tomorrow. Those of you who are interested are welcome to attend.”

Cheers erupted from the audience. The Wei father and son were also secretly delighted after seeing this passionate and cheery mood. All sorts of feelings welled up in their hearts.

Despite all the twists and turns, Taiyuan Tower’s opening ceremony was truly one of the most successful events they’d seen. With the Majestic Clan acting as a free stepping stone, Taiyuan Tower’s opening ceremony was destined to become one of the Veluriyam Capital’s most popular topics. Nothing made for better advertisement than such an effect. They’d gambled somewhat they first initiated cooperation with Jiang Chen. But as things stood, this gamble had already paid off handsomely, and then some!

Many of the uninvited guests lingered around the Taiyan Tower’s doors, while the invited guests entered the store without the slightest bit of hesitation. They’d previously entered because of obligation. But this time, everyone was curious about this mysterious pill king and were more or less entertaining thoughts of befriending him. Unlike before, they were now far less willing to offend House Wei. Moreover, young master Ji San was present. They’d be asking for trouble if they refused to enter. It was highly unwise to offend the young master.

“Pill King Zhen, allow me to accompany you for a drink this time. It was wonderful to see Wang Teng so upset, hahaha!” Young master Ji San patted Jiang Chen’s shoulders with all the familiarity of a friend before dragging him inside.

## Chapter 782: Feted on All Sides

For a moment, the Wei father and son played second fiddle while young master Ji San and Jiang Chen bathed in the limelight. Jiang Chen was especially popular. Almost every guest who had shown up wanted to greet him and introduce themselves. Thankfully, Jiang Chen had a good memory. Although

there were literally almost two thousand guests present, he was able to memorize all of their names and faces after a brief introduction.

Jiang Chen had seen countless grand spectacles in his past life, so naturally he wasn't subject to stage fright. In fact, one might even say he was handling this situation with ease. His composure had surprised even the Wei father and son duo. They knew that Jiang Chen was from a small place called the Myriad Domain. They'd thought that he would display a bit of apprehension at being met with such a scene. They'd never imagined that he would be able to deal with this situation as perfectly as he did. He didn't act obsequiously nor superciliously, nor did he make himself appear unapproachable or insincere to others. Even the Wei father and son themselves found it very difficult to achieve such perfect balance during socialization. For a time, the atmosphere was incredibly harmonious.

The judges, young master Ji San, Jiang Chen, Wei Tianxiao and a few other clan members sat together at one table. With this kind of lineup, even House Wei could only act as attendants to the real heavyweights. While they were seated, Pill King Yu and Jiang Chen kept up a steady discourse of pill dao between them. Jiang Chen gave both questions and answers, and he showed no pressure at all despite communicating with someone as great as Pill King Yu. This scene made even the great scholars of pill dao present at the scene feel incredibly surprised.

"House Lord Wei, you've truly picked up an incredible talent," Pill King Yu smiled wryly. "Even I'm feeling tempted to bring Pill King Zhen into my fold."

The Wei father and son smiled politely in response, but gave no answer. It was young master Ji San who borrowed courage from the alcohol strumming through his veins and smiled, "No way, no way! House Wei had been in a slump for so many years when it comes to pills, and it is only now that their luck had finally changed. You can't do this to House Wei, Pill King Yu!"

Pill King Yu smiled in response, "How would I dare to do so when you've spoken, young master Ji San. Speaking of which, why are you still at second rank despite your true strength, Pill King Zhen?"

Jiang Chen smiled, "I've never cared too much about such titles. Back then, my teacher taught me not to care too much about worldly fame. That being said, I wasn't able to shed my attachment entirely. Otherwise, I would've stayed away from the mortal world and found myself a quiet place to cultivate and prove my dao."

Everyone laughed in response to his words.

Pill King Yu sighed, "Your teacher must be a particularly skilled person who lives beyond this world. How else could he have produced a genius like you?"

This so-called teacher was a fictional character that Jiang Chen had always used as an excuse, so he followed Pill King Yu's line of thought after hearing his praise and nodded, sighing, "It is unfortunate that he had only taught me ten years of pill dao. How good would it be if I could study a hundred years of pill dao under him?"

If he could climb this far in just ten years time, then the heights he could attain after a hundred years of study was literally unthinkable.

The Deviant Pill Faction pill king was eighth rank pill king, Lu Fengzi. He was commonly known as Pill King Lu Feng. Currently, he was scratching his cheeks and staring at Jiang Chen, eyes bright with eagerness, "Pill King Zhen, is it possible for you to contact your teacher?"

Jiang Chen smiled, "Why do you wish to meet him, Pill King Lu Feng?"

"I want to learn from him too, even if it's just for three to five years. If three to five years is too long, then three to five months is good enough too!" Lu Fengzi was a diehard fan of the Deviant Pill Faction. Ever since he'd discovered that Jiang Chen was a representative of the faction, he could hardly sit still. Everyone was laughing loudly at his comments, but Lu Fengzi looked utterly serious and hopeful when he said this to Jiang Chen. It was obvious that he wasn't joking.

Jiang Chen replied a bit apologetically, "I'm sorry, Pill King Lu Feng. I haven't seen him in a very long time already. I'm not sure myself where he is right now."

But young master Ji San suddenly asked, "Didn't he leave behind any methods to contact him?"

Seeing the passion in the young master's eyes, Jiang Chen couldn't help but smile, "Young master Ji San, are you hoping to learn pill dao from my teacher too?"

Young master Ji San chuckled, "Even if I wanted to, he would find my miniscule pill dao talent undesirable! Plus, I highly doubt that I could beat the queue to become your teacher's disciple."

The reason he asked this question was because he was thinking about the Pinecrane Pill. Jiang Chen once told him that his teacher knew how to refine the Pinecrane Pill. The young master had never forgotten about that tidbit. Seeing the brimming curiosity in everyone's eyes, Jiang Chen knew that his fictional teacher had tantalized the crowd. At this point, he had no choice but to continue the lie no matter what.

"I do have one method to contact him, but I've never used it in my life. He warned me not to contact him unless I was in the most critical of dangers. Moreover, he told me that I could only contact him that one time. Once this method is used, I can never go find him again. That is why I've never used this contact method, nor did I dare use it. By preserving it, I am preserving the memory of our time together." Jiang Chen's words sounded incredibly truthful. No one could voice any doubts regarding its authenticity.

Lu Fengzi looked a little dejected when he heard this, "Does this mean I will never have the chance to learn from him?"

Jiang Chen smiled, "The world of martial dao is like the heavenly dao, always leaving a sliver of hope. There will always be a sliver of hope. Come, everyone, let us drink!"

Everyone raised their cups in response. No one could overlook Jiang Chen's existence nor underestimate him after today's battle, even without taking his mysterious and powerful teacher into account. After all, it was easy to come to the conclusion that his master was absolutely beyond the level of pill kings. He must be, at minimum, a pill dao emperor, or perhaps someone even greater than a Titled Great Emperor. ~~noVe)b/In~~

Even a veteran pill king who'd lived for over a thousand years like Pill King Yu looked incredibly fascinated by the possibility Jiang Chen's teacher represented, "The Divine Abyss Continent is as vast as

the sea. The human domain may not even stretch over even a tenth of the entirety of Divine Abyss Continent's map. Pill King Zhen's teacher may be an extraordinary expert who has shunned all worldly affairs. He should be a Titled Great Emperor at minimum. In fact, he may even be an expert greater than that!"

Titled Great Emperors were the greatest experts in the Upper Eight Regions. The seven most powerful people in Veluriyam Capital were the seven great emperors, and they were all Titled Great Emperors.

Was Jiang Chen's teacher even more powerful? The crowd couldn't help but feel this claim to be a little exaggerated. Was there really such a powerful expert in the Divine Abyss Continent? Every person present was a reputable figure in Veluriyam Capital. All of them looked incredibly wary when this topic was brought up.

"Pill King Yu, aren't Titled Great Emperors the greatest existence in Divine Abyss Continent?" A pill king asked curiously.

Pill King Yu smiled wryly, "I'm not sure about this myself. But I have heard from others that this is not the end for the people of the Divine Abyss Continent."

"What else is above this level? If a cultivator aspires to rise higher, then they must break through the dao of heaven and win its acknowledgement."

"Those who are successful are called empyrean experts! It is said that there were a lot of empyrean experts back in the ancient times, and almost every great force on Divine Abyss Continent back then possessed a great number of empyrean experts." Everyone started discussing the topic fervently.

Pill King Yu smiled at Jiang Chen, "Pill King Zhen, has your teacher ever told you about this?"

In Pill King Yu's opinion, Pill King Zhen's teacher was certainly no ordinary person to have known the solution to the Ingenious Decan Pill Enigma. He might very well be one of those legendary empyrean experts who shied away from worldly affairs. All eyes turned to Jiang Chen. It was obvious that they were very curious about this topic.

Jiang Chen rubbed his nose and smiled wryly, "Everyone, please don't forget that I only spent ten years with my teacher. I was quite young back then too, so I wasn't that interested in those affairs. That being said, he did mention that Divine Abyss Continent is so big that it exceeds my imagination. There are plenty of incredibly mysterious hidden experts in this world. Unfortunately, I didn't know what level of cultivation he was in at the time." His explanations were intentionally vague. No one could pick fault from it.

Pill King Yu said, "Setting aside his cultivation level, his attainment in pill dao alone is absolutely an achievement that all pill kings must look up to. In fact, I doubt anyone of us could analyze the pills we'd given you as a test as easily as you did."

Pill King Lu Feng also nodded, "That's true. If I was in your place, I dare say that I am a bit better than that Pill King Rong, but the gap between our skills wouldn't have been nearly as big. How did you do it, Pill King Zhen?"

Jiang Chen smiled wryly on the inside when he saw yet another question being thrown at him. He had already reined in his performance during the earlier bet, but that didn't stop everyone's curiosity from

shooting through the roof. He had no choice but to keep weaving more lies, “During the ten years I learned pill dao with my teacher, I had to memorize all kinds of pill recipes almost everyday. In ten years time, my teacher had made me memorize at least one hundred thousand types of pill recipes. Therefore, I’d learned of most of the pills you’d shown me before.”

An uproar broke out after those present heard Jiang Chen’s explanation. In the world of pill dao, most pill masters possessed their own particular inheritance. However, the passing down of such inheritances between pill masters had always been a delicate topic. They would never allow a pill recipe to disseminate unchecked to the public. Even for the likes of a pill king, the number of pill recipes they’d truly mastered didn’t exceed ten thousand, even if they could retain quite a number in their heads. Moreover, most of these pill recipes were common knowledge in the greater world.

However, the number of unique and exclusive pill recipes that they truly possessed absolutely didn’t exceed a hundred. However, this Pill King Zhen claimed to remember a hundred thousand pill recipes. It was more than a little shocking.

Seeing everyone’s stunned expressions, Jiang Chen immediately understood that the number he reported was too shocking. In reality, the number of pill recipes he remembered, including those from the empyrean plane and the worldly planes beneath the empyrean planes, across millions of years were well beyond a million. He had purposely reported a small fraction of that number already, but it still stunned everyone present into dead silence. It was obvious that everyone was shocked by his claim. What did one hundred thousand pill recipes mean? It meant that Jiang Chen was literally a walking treasure vault of pill recipes. Hell, even actual treasure vaults of pill recipes wouldn’t contain so many!

Jiang Chen was already starting to regret his decision a little. He smiled wryly, “Please don’t look at me like that. In reality, my teacher told me that most of the pill recipes I memorized are just run-of-the-mill recipes. The only reason he told me to memorize them is so that I can better master the basics of pill dao. Most of those pill recipes have no real use behind them.”

Despite his best efforts to explain things, the others hadn’t felt any better. In fact, they were all shaking their heads with wry smiles and feeling extremely conflicted on the inside.

#### Chapter 783: Will You Be My Master?

Jiang Chen’s speech evoked myriad thoughts in his listeners’ hearts. Some were envious, others jealous, and yet others harbored malicious designs. Comparison between people was often the source of negativity. Judging from Pill King Zhen’s appearance, he likely didn’t exceed a hundred years of age. He was incredibly fortunate to have gained the favor of such a great pill expert. A expert capable of passing down a hundred thousand pill recipes at once was no ordinary pill master. What ninth rank pill king? He was likely unqualified to serve even as a student to such a master!

The Wei father and son however, felt enveloped by happiness. They knew that Jiang Chen was capable, but did not expect this kind of serendipity to happen in Jiang Chen’s youth. Jiang Chen had told them before about his childhood, and how he had received tutelage in pill dao from an extraordinary man. His story was very credible. If not from an extraordinary pill master’s teachings, how else would Jiang Chen have learned such earth-shattering pill techniques with his identity as someone from the Myriad Domain? However, it wasn’t until today that they realized the full extent of the amazing fortune Jiang Chen had encountered.



Pill King Yu sighed softly, looking at the Wei father and son. "House Lord Wei, even I cannot resist saying another few words of congratulations to you."

"House Wei has truly found a treasure this time," Ji San laughed.

Pill King Lu Feng incessantly poured wine into his mouth in excitement. He was more enthusiastic than anyone else present. "Pill King Zhen's master must have been a legendary forefather of the Deviant Pill Faction!" He exclaimed happily as he drank.

Everyone nodded their heads in approval of the pill king's conclusion. During the banquet, Jiang Chen told a few more stories about pill dao tradition, which elicited many exclamations from the pill kings. The banquet lasted more than two hours before it began to disperse.

Upon their departure, the pill kings each left Jiang Chen their contact details. Every one of them emphasized the necessity for Jiang Chen to visit when he had time. Politely assuring them that he would certainly take them up on their offer, Jiang Chen escorted them out. Seeing that the pill kings had filtered out, the other guests could not stay for much longer either and separately bid their farewells. As for the pills, the ones that had been rolled out earlier were all sold out.

Many guests who wished to buy some of Taiyuan Tower's pills after the meal had to leave disappointed. Everyone knew the pills were of the Deviant Pill Faction, and wanted to take them home to study. Moreover, everyone present had seen Jiang Chen refine the pills firsthand. Out of a feeling of felicity, they hoped that they would be able to figure out the method of refining through only one viewing. If that were the case, then the pill would become theirs, an easy way to success.

Jiang Chen more or less knew of their thoughts, but he was keenly aware that it was not possible for even these pill kings to steal his knowledge. If it was as easy as that to steal from the Deviant Pill Faction, then it would not be called deviant. Not to mention the various countermeasures Jiang Chen had implemented during the refining performance... it wasn't that easy to take what was rightfully his.

After the guests all dispersed, Jiang Chen exited the store, only to find that several hundred people still congregated around Taiyuan Tower's entrance. None of them were willing to leave. They broke into loud shouts upon seeing Jiang Chen.

"Pill King Zhen, are you going to give a lecture now?"

"Yes, Pill King Zhen, there aren't many people around in the store. Why not speak for a while!"

"Pill King Zhen, is Taiyuan Tower still hiring attendants?"

"Pill King Zhen, I wish for you to be my master, please accept my worship!"

"Me as well! Pill King Zhen, I am still young, and I am also quite talented, please do consider me..." These people were evidently the most faithful of faithful in terms of their attitude to the Deviant Pill Faction. None of them wanted to leave; they were unified in the singularity of their thought—they wanted Jiang Chen to be their master.

The Wei father and son didn't know what to say. They felt quite happy, of course, but also a little heartache. House Wei had been unsuccessful in the pill arena for so many years, so much so that they

were almost forgotten. Now, in only a day's work, the situation had totally changed. The throng of people at Taiyuan Tower's door refused to scatter, and all of it had been brought about by Jiang Chen.

Jiang Chen smiled upon seeing their enthusiasm. "Friends, it is late in the day, and Taiyuan Tower has yet many things to deal with. There is no time to lecture today. Please feel free to come at daybreak tomorrow morning."

"We will not leave. Even if it's until tomorrow, we are happy to wait here!"

"Yes, we must show Pill King Zhen our sincerity. Not just one night—I would stay even if I have to stay three years!"

"Yes, I've made it a goal that no matter what, I must enter Taiyuan Tower. Even as the lowliest of apprentices, I would be satisfied if I could see Pill King Zhen every day!" Thankfully, they'd remained fairly civil, and did not force Jiang Chen to lecture immediately. If they had, Jiang Chen would have been in a pickle. After all, they wanted to listen, and their very presence was in support of Taiyuan Tower.

Glancing across the street, Jiang Chen suddenly had an idea. "I am greatly moved that you've been able to wait until now. The store opposite us is also property of Taiyuan Tower now, and we will set up a branch store there. Anyone interested is free to apply for an interview when the time comes. But, I'm warning you right now—whether you're eligible or not depends on your actual skill. We have a set of qualifications that you must reach."

Everyone was ecstatic upon Jiang Chen's words. "Amazing news, Pill King Zhen! Please believe in us. We will become great students of the Deviant Pill Faction!"

"Long live the Deviant Pill Faction!"

Jiang Chen could only force a smile at such an animated scene. He had initially chosen the Deviant Pill Faction on a whim. That it would have so many loyal adherents in Veluriyam Capital was wholly unexpected. He waved at the crowd before returning inside Taiyuan Tower. As he did so, however, a person stumbled out from inside. It was Pill King Lu Feng from earlier. He tiptoed as he pulled at Jiang Chen's sleeve, his expression playful. "Pill King Zhen, may I have a moment?"

His eyes darted around, and his actions were suspicious. It didn't seem to Jiang Chen that he meant any harm, however. Not quite able to guess his intentions in the moment, Jiang Chen was also loathe to anger an eighth rank pill king. He could only acquiesce, following the other man to a secluded corner. Pill King Lu Feng scratched his face, and his lips moved, but he seemed a little embarrassed still.

"Pill King Lu, there is no problem in being upfront with what you need," Jiang Chen smiled. "If there is a pill you're interested in, I can give you a few more with no problems."

Pill King Lu Feng hastily shook his head. "That's not what I want."

"Then what?" Jiang Chen was somewhat unsure.

Pill King Lu Feng placed a hand to his head suddenly, and a look of great resolve entered his eyes. "Pill King Zhen, will you be my master?"

The words he spoke were utterly shocking. Jiang Chen almost saw stars twinkling around him, as if he'd been struck over the head. Was it possible that he'd misheard? Master? An old man with a white beard,

over a thousand years of age, wants me to be his master? Though Pill King Lu Feng was not quite as old or qualified as Pill King Yu, he had lived for at least a millennium. Taking a white-bearded student... Jiang Chen was amused by the thought. However, Pill King Lu Feng didn't look like he was joking. Though the old man scratched at his ears and chin, his expression was genuine.

"Pill King Zhen, in learning, the one who knows more is always the master. Ole Lu has no other talents except a willingness to learn. I have always been a firm admirer of the Deviant Pill Faction. Please take this old good-for-nothing as your student!"

Jiang Chen hurriedly interrupted, "Please, an elder like you should not say such things. It is fine for us to exchange information on the matter of pills, but I cannot be your master. To not respect one's elders so is to cut one's life short."

"It is hardly disrespectful! Your skills are better than mine, and you are my better in pill dao. The heavens and earth would agree that I should seek you as my master! Should the relationship between master and student be decided on age alone?" Pill King Lu Feng pressed anxiously.

The old man was certainly adept at persuasion. The reason why Jiang Chen didn't want to take a student was actually not because of age, but because he didn't know Pill King Lu Feng's background. The old man's nature seemed the impish type, filled with simplicity. He was likely the kind of person that submerged himself in pill dao, but was conversely not good with social niceties. Even so, Jiang Chen didn't want to accept someone whom he had no knowledge of as a student. He preferred to know people's backgrounds thoroughly before entering a relationship with them. "Pill King Lu Feng, I haven't yet made my mark here in Veluriyam Capital. Wouldn't I become the laughingstock of the city if I accepted you as my student? With your eminence, taking me as your master is bad for your reputation as well. I beg you to reconsider."

Pill King Lu Feng's beard bristled, "As you just said, empty fame is useless. Ole Lu has never paid that any mind. Pill King Zhen, are you afraid that I will betray you? That I will defraud you, perhaps? Please rest assured. He who teaches even a day may be considered a father for life. If Ole Lu forsakes my master, let me receive the judgment of heaven and earth, and not be reincarnated for a hundred generations!"

The old man seemed dead set on his choice of master, so much so that he'd made such a grave oath. What was more, his first response after making the oath was to chuckle. "I've made up my mind anyway. Even as an attendant, I must stay at Taiyuan Tower. The guys outside... they're the same as me. They all want you as their master. Heh heh, Ole Lu is a bit cleverer than that! I've made a pre-emptive strike, haha!"

Pill King Lu Feng displayed his satisfaction openly on his face, as if Jiang Chen had already agreed.

Jiang Chen was at a loss for words. This old man was so stubborn, and his skin so thick. From the looks of it, he wasn't planning to leave until Jiang Chen agreed to his demands. Seeing such obstinacy in seeking a teacher was a first for Jiang Chen. In the moment, he was unsure of anything to say. Just as they were at a standstill, the voice of Ji San traveled in from outside. "Pill King Zhen, where are you hiding? I would like to drink some more with you."

Hearing Ji San's voice approach, Jiang Chen gestured helplessly to the old pill king. "Pill King Lu Feng, we can discuss the matter at length later."

Pill King Lu Feng was not at all perturbed by it, chuckling cheerfully. "What is there to be afraid of? Young master Ji San is no stranger. It is good that he's here! He can mediate for me."

The old man's voice was quite loud, and he made no sign of hiding anything. He felt that having Jiang Chen as his future master was a very honorable thing. Following the sound of his voice, Ji San saw the duo of Jiang Chen and Lu Feng sitting in a corner, and asked curiously, "Pill kings, how come you're hiding here?"

"Young Master Ji San, how fortuitous of you to arrive just now. I asked Pill King Zhen to become my master, but he doesn't seem interested. Can you help me persuade him? If you help me pull this off, then Ole Lu will owe you big time!"

#### Chapter 784: The Level of Alertness Rises

Ji San was stupefied at Pill King Lu Feng's sudden outburst. "...You want him to be your master?" The suspicion was clear on his face.

"Yes! What kind of expression are you making? Is finding a master for Ole Lu so off-limits?" Lu Feng was a little displeased.

"It's not that it's off-limits, it's just ..." Ji San smiled wryly. He left the rest of his words unsaid, turning to Jiang Chen instead. "Pill King Zhen, as people go, Pill King Lu Feng is fairly genuine. He has always come and gone alone in Veluriyam Capital, and conducted only his business. He is not subservient to another faction."

Though Ji San was not openly pleading with him, it was nevertheless a subtle request on the pill king's behalf. Pill King Lu Feng's eyes brightened at his words, and looked appreciatively at Ji San. "Yes, yes, I mean absolutely no malice. Young master Ji San can vouch on my behalf. Besides, with Taiyuan Tower so recently established, you still need people, right? I am a pill-refining fanatic, and I would be just as happy to help you out as an assistant! If you are still not convinced, feel free to order Ole Lu about as you see fit for a decade or so. It won't be too late for us to hold the master-disciple ceremony until after you are satisfied with your inspection."

The old man was willing to make significant concessions for the pursuit of knowledge. His words would be jaw-dropping to over half of Veluriyam Capital's residents. An eighth rank pill king, in the top 50 among the pill kings of the capital, was willing to be someone's apprentice for free!

A pill king of his caliber was a truly influential figure in this city! Even ninth ranked houses wouldn't necessarily be able to request his services. The only ones who possessed the size and ability to attract eighth rank pill kings were the great clans, and even then the relationship was more a partnership than employment. Under typical circumstances, it was unheard of for any clan to simply dictate and order an eighth rank pill king about. Moreover, Pill King Lu Feng was a fairly notable pill king among his fellows of the same rank.

"Honored master, Ole Lu has a store here in Farmer God Market as well. Though it is not in such a good location, our business has always been prosperous. If you'd like it, that store will be yours from here on out. You can treat it as a gift of apprenticeship from your future disciple." Lu Feng had put everything on the table in an effort to convince Jiang Chen.

The degree which he was willing to go to surprised even Ji San. Being acquainted with the store in question, Ji San was aware of its booming business. Though it wasn't among the first-rate stores in Veluriyam Capital, it comfortably sat between first- and second-rate stores in terms of size.

Moreover, its ranking wasn't for lack of ability, but because of Lu Feng's unfettered and unruly nature. It left him seldom impressed with other people, indirectly preventing him from joining any factions of note. Without a patron, using wits alone to rise to the top of Veluriyam Capital was a particularly difficult endeavor. This was the reason that Pill King Lu Feng had no top tier classification despite his fame. In fact, the Coiling Dragon Clan had once tried to recruit Pill King Lu Feng's services, but had been refused.

"Pill King Zhen, in theory I shouldn't be interfering in your affairs. However, I will say that this is the first time I have seen Pill King Lu Feng truly give someone his full respect. His sincerity is obvious. Why not think it over? Well, this is merely my thoughts from the perspective of a friend, haha. Whether you wish to take him as your student... that's still up to you." Ji San spoke once more on the pill king's behalf. He had already subconsciously given Jiang Chen the label of being part of the Coiling Dragon Clan's camp. Given that Pill King Lu Feng wanted to seek a master, he too would naturally be grouped with the Coiling Dragon Clan in the future. It was certainly not a bad thing for his clan.

Jiang Chen sighed lightly. From the pill king's stance, he knew that it would be impossible to refuse. It wasn't that Jiang Chen thought himself unqualified as a master. His point of hesitation was, as Ji San said prior, loyalty and reliability. If Pill King Lu Feng was really reliable, what harm was there in taking him as a student? Taiyuan Tower was newly established. At a time like this, it was definitely good for an expert to join.

Reaching a decision, Jiang Chen nodded slightly to the pill king. "Pill King Lu Feng, that you would seek me as your master is indeed a little bizarre. However, your rare candor has impressed me. Why don't we count you as a student in name first? Let's have a period of observation in which both of us are free to renege at any time. How do you feel about that?"

Jiang Chen didn't speak in absolutes, rather leaving a loophole. That way, there was a way out if they were truly incompatible.

"Yes, that's that then!" Pill King Lu Feng was very pleased. "I will not go back on my word! I have a very good eye for people, and I feel that you are absolutely qualified to teach me. At least in the matters of the Deviant Pill Faction, there is ample room for me to learn from you."

Jiang Chen laughed in exasperation. He knew that Pill King Lu Feng sought him as a master because of the "mysterious master" he'd mentioned. Rather than seeking a master, it was more that he was seeking a "master's master". Unfortunately, the mysterious master had been wholly fictitious on Jiang Chen's part. It was hard to say if Pill King Lu Feng would be as sure about taking Jiang Chen as his master if he knew that the latter's master did not exist. Such things didn't need to be mentioned, of course.

"Young master San, you should serve as the witness. Supervise him to make sure the honored master doesn't go back on his word." Pill King Lu Feng was still a little worried, and wanted to drag Ji San into this as well. n-/0V&ℓ&In

Ji San smiled, "There is no need to worry as long as you don't have a change of heart. Pill King Zhen is a kind man, and will be convinced over time by your goodwill."

Pill King Lu Feng laughed proudly. "Ole Lu is not someone who chops and changes with the wind. From now on, I will only be faithful to the Deviant Pill Faction. It shall not change, not even if a blade lands on my neck!"

Saying so, he turned and knelt to Jiang Chen. "Master, please receive these kowtows [1] from your disciple!"

Jiang Chen hurried to cut him off, "Pill King Lu Feng..."

"No, honored master, please do not call me that. From now on, Ole Lu is enough. Calling me a pill king is putting me on a pedestal. In front of master, I dare not call myself a king."

"Um..." Jiang Chen was at a loss for words.

And so an absurd master ceremony was completed under Ji San's watchful eye. Elated, Pill King Lu Feng's face split in a cheeky grin, "Master, if you have any commands for me, just say the word. Ah yes, that kid Wang Teng. He suffered a big defeat today, and will definitely come to make trouble in the future. Master, you must be on your guard." With the ceremony concluded, the old man immediately put himself in the shoes of a good disciple, and began to think on Jiang Chen's behalf.

Ji San nodded in agreement. "Pill King Lu Feng, now that you've admitted Pill King Zhen as your teacher, it is right that you should shoulder some of his burdens. Particularly in the matter of Wang Teng, he will try to avenge himself tenfold on you."

"Let him try!" Pill King Lu Feng was red with enthusiastic anger and cursed loudly. "I didn't deal with anything before, but from now on, the master's business is Ole Lu's business. If he dares challenge the honored master, then I'll beat him senseless!"

Though Pill King Lu Feng's martial ability could not be said to be the very best in Veluriyam Capital, he was still an emperor realm expert. Compared to members of the younger generation such as Wang Teng, he was markedly stronger. However, to say that the pill king could beat Wang Teng up was an exaggeration. The latter's followers weren't just for show.

"Pill King Zhen, you have done the Coiling Dragon Clan a great service in crushing the Majestic Clan's plot. I will make a request for some emperor realm experts to keep watch here upon my return, to safeguard against any issues Wang Teng may cause." As a wealthy dandy of the capital, Ji San was familiar with all the methods of his peers.

Wang Teng had failed today, but he was unlikely to just slink away and nurse his wounds. A wave of mad vengeance was sure to follow. Perhaps not with pills, but certain darker acts could not be ruled out. To put it in a less palatable way, if a strong assassin took out Pill King Zhen, then the Majestic Clan would easily recoup both their losses and enact some interest as well. Ji San was keenly aware of this, hence his continued reluctance to depart. He knew better than anyone that Pill King Zhen of Taiyuan Tower was of great importance in the Coiling Dragon Clan's future conflict against the Majestic Clan.

Pill King Lu Feng nodded as well. "Young master Ji San has the right of it. The Majestic Clan has always been narrow-minded and intolerant. There is no way they would just take a loss like that. It's better to send in some experts to deal with their inevitable response."

Though Jiang Chen was confident in his own skills, he knew the way that these powerful factions tended to act. The Eternal Celestial Capital and the Ninesuns Sky Sect, for example, acted with pure arrogance. Even with the vastness of the Myriad Domain and the numerous sects within, destruction was but a word away. How could a Taiyuan Tower that'd just opened be comparable to them?

Given Wang Teng's overbearing style, Jiang Chen could already imagine the endless acts of revenge. But, he hadn't gotten to where he was today because of unnecessary fear and caution. Back in the Myriad Domain, he couldn't act as he'd desired because he was afraid of affecting his fellow sect members. Now that the sect had fallen, he no longer had anything to chain him down, and there were far fewer worries in his heart.

What about the Majestic Clan? Using my Longevity Pill, stepping on my Taiyuan Tower, am I supposed to smiling at you after that? Regardless of how pleasant his temperament was, Jiang Chen was no pushover.

"Young Master Ji San, I leave this place in your care. I need to make a few preparations. I shall give open lectures over the next three days."

Pill King Lu Feng was positively aglow after hearing this. "Yes, yes, the lectures! What a thing to look forward to. Honored master, what will you talk about? Why not let me know ahead of time, and let me give the lectures in your place? How about it? It's said that the students should undergo the toil when the master has a troublesome affair."

Ji San nodded before he turned to Jiang Chen. "Pill King Zhen, don't worry about the safety of Taiyuan Tower. Leave it entirely to me."

It wasn't an idle boast. At the very least, a scion of the Coiling Dragon Clan had this much courage and power. Taiyuan Tower had earned preeminent accolades in the conflict against the Majestic Clan this day. This alone was enough reason for Ji San to petition experts from the clan to act as their back up.

True to Ji San's words, the Coiling Dragon Clan's executives sent a team immediately when they learned about the matter at Taiyuan Tower. A clan elder who was eighth rank in the emperor realm personally kept guard on the premises. Due respect was fully shown.

"Young master San, the clan's leadership know of the happenings here. You did well. Many seniors in the clan are praising you." This elder in particular was named Ji Tianya. Though he wasn't at the very top in the clan, he was nevertheless a weighty personage.

With him at Taiyuan Tower, not even the most discreet assassin could succeed. After all, it was still Veluriyam Capital. There was a limit to the amount of plotting one could do. Passing this limit would provoke displeasure and ire from the makers of the law - that is, the seven emperors.

It's actually a process of three bows, with three kowtows each

Chapter 785: Becoming Sworn Brothers

Thanks to the Coiling Dragon Clan's powerful protection, several devious plots that the Majestic Clan hatched in secret didn't come to fruition. Jiang Chen took advantage of the security to make sufficient preparation for his upcoming lectures. He organized many Deviant Pill Faction case studies and materials. He lectured for four hours straight every day for three days in a row. On the first day, there were only around two thousand people who came to listen. On the next day, the number swelled to roughly four thousand. As the saying went, news passed quickly from mouth to mouth.

On the third day, he had more than tens of thousands of listeners. Seeing how popular Jiang Chen's lectures were, Taiyuan Tower took the opportunity to promote their creations to the crowd. They sold all the pills they promoted and took advance orders, filling up the books for the next half year. *novelB-*  
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This popularity made the Wei father and son grin from ear to ear. For a time, they were flooded with emotions as they watched Jiang Chen lecturing eloquently from a speaker's platform. They never imagined that a mere coincidence would bring a completely twist the fate of House Wei.

Thanks to Jiang Chen, House Wei had successfully suppressed their civil strife.

Thanks to Jiang Chen, House Wei had won back the Coiling Dragon Clan's goodwill.

Thanks to Jiang Chen, House Wei was finally rising as a new power in the pill industry in the Farmer God Market. These were things they hadn't even dared to imagine in their heads just a few months ago. They couldn't even dream up these scenes when they slept.

"Everyone, time is unfortunately limited, so this is as far as I will speak today," Jiang Chen announced from the speaker's platform. His three day lecture had finally reached its end. The audience beneath him however, cried out loudly.

"Pill King Zhen, I'm begging you, please continue your lecture for a few more days!"

"Pill King Zhen, Veluriyam Capital has not heard such interesting lectures for many years!"

"Pill King Zhen, I'm your die hard supporter from here on!"

"Pill King Zhen, please accept me. You will need a great amount of manpower since you've just won Taiyuan Lodge for yourself. I'm willing to work as a shop assistant!"

"Pill King Zhen, I don't need any salary. I can work for free!" One had to admit that the Deviant Pill Faction was rather glamorous. After three days of lectures from Jiang Chen, the ancient and mysterious faction that was this school of thought had caused an immediate sensation in Veluriyam Capital. It had attracted countless new diehard supporters.

It was obvious that all of these people thought of Jiang Chen as their idol now. Jiang Chen smiled, "We will of course recruit some new employees. But we have so many in the audience, and we obviously can't employ everyone present today, can we? We will open for recruitment tomorrow, and everyone will get their chance to prove their worth. Don't be sad if you're not chosen, for there are plenty of chances still in the future. As for the lectures, I unfortunately have plenty of work to do. It is obviously not very realistic for me to give a lecture every day. If fate wills it, then I may lecture for a few days again someday."



It was obvious that Jiang Chen didn't have the time to speak every day. If it wasn't for the sake of burnishing the Taiyuan Tower's new reputation, where would he even find the motivation to give a lecture in the first place? In reality, Jiang Chen wasn't entirely fond of events that constantly put him in the limelight too much.

As the saying went, a tall tree attracts the wind. On the surface, the Majestic Clan was the only party Taiyuan Tower had offended that day. But Taiyuan Tower had been in the limelight for several days, and there was no telling if the numerous big players at Farmer God Market were jealous about the attention the store had gotten. Therefore, Jiang Chen ultimately decided to keep a low profile for a time after their perfect opening. He planned to properly digest all of the gains they'd gotten for the past few days.

The speed at which Taiyuan Tower had risen had in fact far exceeded his preliminary expectations. There was no need to rise too quickly. A power that rose too quickly would definitely attract the attention and suppression of all existing powers. Jiang Chen didn't want Taiyuan Tower to come under attack because they'd stood out too much.

The Wei father and son went forth to welcome him the moment Jiang Chen walked down the stage. Right now, Jiang Chen was their lucky star and the living Bodhisattva they absolutely needed to care for.

"You've worked hard for the past few days, Pill King Zhen. It is all thanks to you that Taiyuan Tower can have a future like today!" Wei Tianxiao praised from the bottom of his heart.

"Pill King Zhen, young master Ji San has come again today. He's waiting for you inside," Wei Jie said.

For the past few days, young master Ji San had spent almost all his time lazing inside Taiyuan Tower. Natural, Jiang Chen wasn't unaware of young master Ji San's intentions. He gave the duo a smile before walking inside. They accompanied him as well. The relationship between House Wei and the Coiling Dragon Clan had been repaired these past few days, with the clan sending some higher ups over to chat with House Wei and reassure them that House Wei had once again become the Coiling Dragon Clan's trusted ally.

Once the trio had entered the store, young master Ji San spoke to Wei Tianxiao, "House Lord Wei, please arrange a private room for us."

Wei Tianxiao nodded and went to take care of this request personally. It only took a few moments for the private room to be readied. Young master Ji San smiled, "May I ask you to join me for a chat, Pill King Zhen?"

Jiang Chen more or less understood what the young master wanted, so instead of giving an excuse and shrinking away, he nodded as he gestured, "After you". Young master Ji San cast a glance at the Wei father and son, "You are no outsiders to me, so come in as well."

Wei Tianxiao looked overwhelmed by the favor young master Ji San showed him. He carefully followed behind the duo. After they had all walked into the private room, young master Ji San spoke with a serious expression, "I wasn't going to act so presumptuously, Pill King Zhen, but my clan lord personally asked to see me yesterday. He asked about Taiyuan Tower, I told him many good things about Taiyuan Tower, and he brought up the matter of the Longevity Pill on his own accord..."

"You didn't give him the Longevity Pill, have you?" Jiang Chen looked alarmed.

Young master Ji San sighed, "I wanted to, but I ultimately managed to hold myself back. I was afraid that the clan lord may not be able to resist the pull. From what I've seen, he is in a very dangerous state. At the end of our discussion, he told me frankly that he had deduced the exact date he would begin losing his cultivation. In the best case, he has a year left before it starts. If not, it may happen in just half a year."

"That soon?" Wei Tianxiao was stunned. His face turned pale in an instant. Jiang Chen didn't say anything in return. He only nodded slightly in response.

"There are no outsiders here, Pill King Zhen, and I wish to be upfront with you. The Pinecrane Pill you mentioned to me last time gave me a sliver of hope. I know that this pill is a vague hope at best, but even vague hope is still hope, isn't it? If I may ask, are you sure your master knows how to refine the Pinecrane Pill?"

Jiang Chen had already mentioned this back at Little Leisurely Clouds. Therefore, he nodded solemnly. "Judging from his tone, my teacher should know how to refine the Pinecrane Pill."

"In that case, can you... try to contact your teacher?" The young master sounded a little tentative. He immediately tried to reassure Jiang Chen, "I know that your master gave you only one chance to contact him, and I know that it will be a grievous pity to use up this chance. But the Coiling Dragon Clan is willing to compensate you in any way. As long as it is within our abilities, we will compensate you no matter what you ask!" Young master Ji San sounded absolutely serious.

Jiang Chen said nothing and pretended that he was absorbed in deep thought. This so-called teacher and so-called chance were all but lies that he had made up earlier. The reason he'd done so was to halt the pestering questions and introduction requests from the pill kings. He wasn't planning to change his story now either.

Observing Jiang Chen's silence, young master Ji San said urgently, "Pill King Zhen, if my clan lord can extend his life for another thousand years, he most definitely will become a Titled Great Emperor and rise as the eighth great emperor of Veluriyam Capital in the future. When that happens, he can even bestow the position of a ninth rank aristocratic house onto you without any problems whatsoever."

The Wei father and son were both moved by his promises. This reward was extremely generous. A thousand gold taels were easy to find in Veluriyam Capital, but the same couldn't be said of land. There were countless rich people who wanted to buy a piece of land for themselves, but were denied.

Without hundreds or thousands of years of accumulation, it was almost impossible for a person who had no foundation in Veluriyam Capital to mold themselves into a ninth rank aristocratic house. There were almost no one who managed to do so from scratch. Which clan wasn't the result of generations of legacies? Which one of them hadn't slowly climbed up to where they were through painstaking effort? The Wei father and son very much wanted to beg Jiang Chen's favor on behalf of the young master, but they also realized that they had no say in this matter. Three pairs of eyes stared straight at Jiang Chen.

Jiang Chen sighed softly, "Young master Ji San, can you find the Invisible Chameleon Cloudpine? If you can't find this ingredient, then it is all for naught no matter what I say or do."

"I've already posted the bounty notice. Anyone who brings this fruit to us shall be rewarded with one hundred million saint spirit stones. There is always hope when the rewards are so ample." Young master

Ji San's eyes were afire with determination. But Jiang Chen didn't think that the Invisible Chameleon Cloudpine would be found that easily. It might not be found even with the lure of a hundred million saint spirit stones. After all, sky rank spirit herbs could only be found by chance.

Of course, he possessed a Invisible Chameleon Cloudpine himself. It was just that he wasn't so close to young master Ji San that he would produce the ingredient now. Moreover, his intentions might be misconstrued if he were to bring it up now. It just didn't feel like the right time to do so. Left without a choice, Jiang Chen could only say, "You have done much for Taiyuan Tower as of late, young master Ji San. Although your request troubles me, it is not right for me to turn you down either. I will contact my teacher once you've gathered these two ingredients."

He didn't bring up the matter of a reward. Young master Ji San was overjoyed when he heard this, "Pill King Zhen, the Coiling Dragon Clan will never forget this favor. With heaven and earth as witness, I swear that the Coiling Dragon Clan owes you a great favor regardless of the outcome."

Jiang Chen smiled, "Young master Ji San is a person of great heroism, and I'm doing this because I admire your character. Favors actually come second to this."

Young master Ji San sighed, "No wonder people always say that you can make acquaintances easily, but not true friends. There are some people with whom you can interact with forever, but not come to a true understanding with each other. But there are some people whom you may do everything for them, even if you've only met them briefly. You are one such person, Pill King Zhen. I have another presumptuous request to make, Pill King Zhen."

"Please speak it, young master Ji San."

The young master smiled. "You and I hit off quite well from the beginning, and I am of the intention to become sworn brothers with you. Is that an honor I may ask of you?"

The Wei father and son were shocked. Although young master Ji San hadn't yet been chosen as the successor of the Coiling Dragon Clan, he was publicly the most favored candidate. There were very, very few people whom the young master acknowledged in Veluriyam Capital. Even they were just subordinates who didn't have the qualification to speak with him on equal footing. A person whom the young master was willing to become sworn brothers with hadn't ever appeared in the entire Veluriyam Capital, until this day.

Jiang Chen hadn't expected young master Ji San to bring up such a request. When he noted young master Ji San's absolutely sincere face, he too became overwhelmed by great emotion. He laughed, "No, it is my honor to become sworn brothers with you."

"Good, very good! Hahaha! I have made countless friends in my entire life, and now I have finally found a brother whom I can show complete devotion too! House Lord Wei, please make some preparations and allow us to borrow your treasured land for a moment. I would like to burn some incense in prayer to heaven and earth and have them as witnesses of the day I become sworn brothers with Pill King Zhen!"

Chapter 786: Imperial Advent Defense Talisman

Wei Tianxiao was secretly delighted with how things had turned out. For him, the fact that Jiang Chen, a guest pill king of House Wei, had become sworn brothers with young master Ji San, would provide

nothing but benefits. With this, they'd inadvertently drawn closer to the Coiling Dragon Clan. He hurriedly replied, "I'll make the necessary arrangements immediately. Jie'er, accompany me. As brothers, Pill King Zhen and young master Ji San will undoubtedly have things to discuss."

Wei Jie nodded and followed his father out of the secret chamber. Jiang Chen was inwardly satisfied after seeing how considerate the father and son were. As a person capable of leading the family to its current ninth rank status, Wei Tianxiao had a decent grasp of the atmosphere. no\7e)\b)In

The house lord had understood Jiang Chen no longer needed to hide his identity from the young master now that they were about to become sworn brothers. And so, he'd actively withdrawn to allow them space for such a conversation. Their absence would more or less reduce the potential awkwardness.

Young master Ji San, however, wasn't one to look too deeply into such things and was positively brimming with delight, "Brother Zhen, I, Ji Ole Third, am a free and easy-going person. I'm also known for my love of making friends and have indeed made quite a few acquaintances over the years. But those who have my absolute trust are few and far between, to say nothing of becoming sworn brothers. I don't know why but I feel that I can trust you, an outsider, with my life. I guess this is fate! Brother, I swear that this has absolutely nothing to do with your master..."

Young master Ji San was obviously worried that Jiang Chen would misunderstand him. Jiang Chen laughed. In truth, he quite admired the young master's candid personality. At least in comparison to Wang Teng's sinister and arrogant nature, this young master was frank and upright. Two lives of experience had made Jiang Chen rather adept at judging people. People like Ji San could indeed be treated as a brother.

"Young master San, I'm greatly ashamed after hearing your words. I'll not hide such things from you any longer since we're to become sworn brothers," Jiang Chen sighed.

"What is it?" Young master Ji San stared blankly.

"Actually my surname name isn't Zhen. It's Jiang. My name is Jiang Chen. "

Young master Ji San paused, "Jiang Chen? Why does the name sound so familiar? ...what?! You're that Jiang Chen? The Jiang Chen for whom the Eternal Celestial Capital has offered a great bounty?"

Jiang Chen laughed wryly, "I hadn't expected myself to be so famous that even the scion of a great clan has heard of it."

Ji San was flabbergasted, "Brother, you... you're not really Jiang Chen are you? This isn't a jest, is it?"

Jiang Chen replied firmly, "It's the absolute truth. It's just that I was forced to assume this alternate identity due to my circumstances."

"Who would've thought? Who would've imagined? This wouldn't have occurred to me even if you cracked open my skull. Jiang Chen? Haha... this makes things even more interesting." Young master Ji San continued loudly, "I don't care if you're Zhen Shi or Jiang Chen. You're my sworn brother either way! Hereafter, as long as you're within Veluriyam Capital, you'll be under the protection of the Coiling Dragon Clan. If those from the Eternal Celestial Capital dare act up here, I'll make sure they never leave!"

He wasn't just boasting. As one of the most powerful clans, the Coiling Dragon Clan was still highly capable despite having been rather subdued in the recent years. Jiang Chen was moved after seeing Ji San's attitude towards him. The motive didn't matter anymore because Jiang Chen could see the latter's good faith and sincerity in his behavior. This was something a heartless and cold man like Wang Teng sorely lacked.

"Brother, don't worry—Veluriyam Capital is our domain—the Eternal Celestial Capital definitely can't do whatever they want here!" Young master Ji San repeatedly reassured Jiang Chen, afraid the latter wouldn't believe him.

Jiang Chen nodded, "The Veluriyam Capital's fame is enough to deter any and all open approaches from the Eternal Celestial Capital. But in truth, they've already arrived in the shadows."

"Eh?" Surprise and puzzlement were written all over Ji San's expression.

"Taiyuan Lodge opening its doors with the Longevity Pill as their main product is definitely related to a secret partnership between the Majestic Clan and the Eternal Celestial Capital. The Longevity Pill was robbed from our Regal Pill Palace and then shamelessly used to suppress its disciples."

Naturally aware of the incident regarding the Regal Pill Palace, Ji San cursed, "The Eternal Celestial Capital's invasion of the Myriad Domain did draw quite a bit of criticism in the Upper Eight Regions. Brother, don't be discouraged. With your aptitude, you may yet rebuild the sect as long as you lay low for a few hundred years!"

"Brother Ji, please rest assured, I won't lose heart. One day, I'll definitely exact from the Eternal Celestial Capital the price and interest for the atrocities they committed toward the Regal Pill Palace." Jiang Chen's words were unquestionable and resolute.

"That's the ticket! If one day I inherit the position of clan lord, I'll definitely lend you a helping hand in honor of our brotherhood. May I die a horrible death if I renege on my words!" Ji San so thus expressed his stance.

"Since that is the case, I'll thank Brother Ji in advance. But due to the magnitude of this matter, I'm unwilling to drag you into this unless absolutely necessary. Revenge is a dish best served cold. I'll bear with the Eternal Celestial Capital's arrogance for the time being. Once the time is right, I'll collect both principal and interest not only from the Eternal Celestial Capital, but also the direct perpetrators, the Great Scarlet Mid Region."

Young master Ji San nodded, "Brother, how did you become affiliated with House Wei after arriving at Veluriyam Capital?"

Jiang Chen laughed wryly before recounting the tale of that fateful encounter. Young Master Ji San sighed, "This is truly the work of fate. Who would've guessed House Wei would stumble into such great fortune. Even our Coiling Dragon clan is being taken along for this profitable ride. This must be divine providence. Oh yes, brother, you're still looking for a few of your peers, correct? I'll also help you look into the matter of the missing sect disciples."

Jiang Chen nodded, "A batch of them were successfully rescued, but two are still missing. No one knows where House Sikou has hidden them."

Ji San spoke angrily, “House Sikou is a devoted follower of the Majestic Clan. They’ve found recent success in trafficking slaves and various cultivation resources. House Sikou and House Tong are the right and left arms of the Majestic Clan. We need to knock them off their pedestal sooner or later!” He was also apparently quite discontented with House Sikou.

“Brother Ji, there’s no rush in this matter. You should focus on locating the Invisible Chameleon Cloudpine. As soon as you find the pinecone, I’ll contact my master and beseech him to refine a Pine Crane Pill.”

Ji San was greatly delighted, “Brother, you’re my lucky star! It was only due to your kind warning back at the Joined Ridges Auction that I was able to avoid being tricked by Wang Teng’s group. It would’ve been quite troublesome otherwise. My judgment was clouded by the allure of the Longevity Pill back then and had lost all reasoning. It was fortunate that you were there to expose them and allow me to extricate myself.”

Ji San had actually started to view Jiang Chen favorably since then. After that, Jiang Chen had astonished the young master time and time again until the latter was thoroughly captivated. However, Ji San had never guessed that such an uncanny pill king was actually a young sect disciple from the Myriad Domain.

Jiang Chen laughed, “I wasn’t specifically trying to help you back during our first encounter. I simply felt indignant that Wang Teng was using my Longevity Pill to throw his weight around and thus stood out to uphold justice. After all, the enemy of my enemy is my friend.”

“Haha, what great reasoning! This is certainly a novel way of thinking. That’s why I say that our brotherhood is predestined by the heavens!” Ji San was ecstatic, “Brother, your identity cannot be revealed for the moment. While the Eternal Celestial Capital wouldn’t dare barge into Veluriyam Capital to cause trouble, it’s easier to evade a spear out in the open than guard against a dagger from the back. I feel your safety is not guaranteed at Taiyuan Tower. Why not follow me back to the clan manor?” This was actually an invitation from the young master.

Jiang Chen replied with a smile, “I thank Brother Ji for his thoughtfulness. But if I hide within the clan manor and spend too much time in peace, I fear I’ll lose my vigilance. Such dangerous environments are better able to arouse one’s potential and will also serve as a reminder that I have a vendetta to pursue. Furthermore, I still need to look after my fellow disciples.”

Jiang Chen naturally wouldn’t seek asylum at the clan lord’s manor. This went against his nature and burdened him with additional obligations. After entering the clan manor, there would no doubt be various social conventions he would have to follow. He’d also have to respect the rules of the manor, something Jiang Chen didn’t particularly enjoy.

Ji San deliberated momentarily before guessing Jiang Chen’s concerns. He didn’t insist on the matter and instead took out a certain item, placing it before Jiang Chen. “Brother, this is an ‘Imperial Advent Defense Talisman’. You can activate it in times of need to summon a defense worthy of a great emperor. It can be used three times, but I’ve already used it once so there are two charges remaining. As the elder brother, I’m worried about your safety, be it regarding the Eternal Celestial Capital or the Majestic Clan. Keep this talisman on you for protection.”

Jiang Chen was astonished, "I can't accept this! How can I rob you of your lifesaving treasure?! Not to mention it was bestowed upon you by the clan lord himself"

"Its fine, its fine. At worst, I'll just go and ask for another one. I heard the clan lord has five in total. He's already given out three of them, so he probably has two left. As long as I perform a meritorious deed, he'll surely give me everything I want, to speak nothing of a mere Imperial Advent Defense Talisman." Ji San wouldn't hear of it and insisted on giving the talisman to Jiang Chen.

Jiang Chen could only accept it after several failed attempts at refusing the gift. It was definitely a great item, far surpassing escape glyphs. Escape glyphs might sometimes fail to break through emperor level domains. But this Imperial Advent Defense Talisman boasted of emperor level defenses and could save one's life at a critical juncture. It was easily sufficient to deal with an ambush from even an emperor realm cultivator. In conjunction with the various treasures and methods in Jiang Chen's arsenal, this talisman was another great increase to Jiang Chen's strength. It was akin to granting wings to a tiger.

"Brother Ji, I'll definitely remember this favor." Jiang Chen nodded as he put away the talisman.

"We're brothers! Your words are best kept for strangers. In truth, if you hadn't given our Coiling Dragon Clan a flicker of hope, it'd likely have collapsed after a year. Its disciples would then scatter to the four winds and I, Ji Ole Third, will probably end up as a corpse on the streets."

The young master continued, "I assure you, these words are not of an alarmist. The Veluriyam Capital's civil conflicts are much more chaotic than they seem on the surface."

As a clan scion, Ji San naturally had deep feelings regarding these matters.

#### Chapter 787: Mutual Love, Huang'er's Background

The news of young master Ji San and House Wei's guest pill king, Pill King Zhen, becoming sworn brothers spread through Veluriyam Capital like wildfire. However, one of the two involved, Jiang Chen, was mysterious beyond belief. He seemed to have vanished from Taiyuan Tower. In reality, Jiang Chen was cultivating in seclusion inside House Wei's secret base.

Ten days of seclusion later, Jiang Chen successfully broke through the shackles of third level sage realm and ascended to fourth level sage realm. He had finally become an authentic earth sage realm cultivator. Although the ascension from mortal sage realm to earth sage realm looked like a minor step on the surface, Jiang Chen could feel that his strength had undergone a major growth. But despite feeling the vigor of an ascension coursing through his veins, Jiang Chen wasn't entirely satisfied with this outcome, "It's still not enough. I may be able to fight against a peak level sage realm cultivator, and I may even have a real chance to win against one, but an emperor realm cultivator would still be beyond my personal ability."

Jiang Chen had keenly felt the lack of his martial strength ever since entering Veluriyam Capital. Even a random bystander at Veluriyam Capital would be considered extraordinary if they were dropped into the Myriad Domain.

"Sir Jiang, you shouldn't push yourself too much in the cultivation of martial dao. Please remember that you've only started cultivating for several years, and that your attainments today is something most people would never achieve in a lifetime. With your talents, your name would spread throughout the

world in just ten to twenty years time. There is no need for worry.” Huang’er immediately reassured him with advice when she saw him frowning.

Huang’er’s voice was to Jiang Chen’s ears as the melodious sound of ‘Ethereal Soothing Melody’ was to others. She could always calm him down no matter how restless he was feeling. As of late, the duo had noticed that they shared a vague but deeply in tune rapport with each other when it came to any movement, word and glance. They just hadn’t said anything about it. It was an incredibly subtle and indiscernible feeling, but it was enough to bathe them in happiness.

“Thank you, Huang’er,” Jiang Chen felt his mood improve as he gazed at Huang’er’s exquisite countenance.

“There’s no need to thank me,” Huang’er smiled faintly, “You haven’t stopped saying that ever since we met. Or are you trying to tell me that I should thank you everyday for saving my life?” Huang’er’s smile seemed capable of enchanting everything that existed in this world. For a brief moment, Jiang Chen was completely infatuated by her smile.

Suddenly, the impulse to hug Huang’er struck him. It wasn’t a physiological reaction, but an eruption of emotion that came from the bottom of his heart. Jiang Chen took a step forwards and grasped Huang’er’s soft and delicate hand.

Huang’er smiled faintly, but didn’t respond to Jiang Chen’s gesture with shyness or embarrassment. Instead, she murmured softly, “Did you know that I’ve been waiting for this for half a year now, Sir Jiang?”

Jiang Chen’s entire body trembled when he heard this. “Huang’er, you...”

Huang’er smiled joyfully and rested her unparalleled face lightly against Jiang Chen’s broad chest. She listened to Jiang Chen’s heartbeat as she breathed in his scent. The world might be large, but at this moment, she feared nothing. Even if she was plagued by a deadly illness, even if her past was dreary and painful, nothing could ruin this moment for her. “You saved my mortal body back then, but I was unmoved. Now that you’ve saved my despairing soul, how can I ever live apart from you, Sir Jiang?”

Huang’er voice was as soft as the mellow cries of a skylark. Gentle but not overly intimate, her confession of love was unlike that of an ordinary girl. It was a confession that belonged to Huang’er alone.

Infinite love abruptly overflowed from the depths of Jiang Chen’s heart. The girl before him had always stayed by his side despite having to brave through a thousand obstacles and hardships on a journey of untold length. He hadn’t feel too many stirrings back when they were still journeying across the land, and had only now noticed how difficult it had been for the two of them to be here together. This journey had also unnoticeably decreased the distance between the two of them time and again. Now that the last curtain that hid the truth was finally unveiled, they discovered with matching hearts that they could no longer bear to be apart from each other.

For a long moment, infinite happiness wrapped around Jiang Chen. There were no worries in the whole wide world that could deter this one moment of soft and tender love. True love was ever so beautiful that even a solitary encounter was testament to how precious it was.



"I am a fool, Huang'er. My sect's troubles have blinded me, and you suffered because of it." The tendrils of regret slipped into Jiang Chen's heart.

Huang'er smiled softly, "Do you take me for one of those delicate little flowers? I've wandered across the lands with Elder Shun since I was eleven years old and spent several years in the Eastern Kingdom. Elder Shun wouldn't stop saying that there is a sliver of destiny lying somewhere amongst the Eastern Kingdom that would cure my sickness, but little did I know that his words would actually come true. I've wondered often since if the heavens had also gifted me a fated marriage? Teehee... I'll be spending a lifetime with you, Jiang Chen, and you're not allowed to turn me away, okay?"

There was nothing Jiang Chen loved more in Huang'er than her temperament. Magnanimous, perceptive, sometimes with a touch of the haughtiness of a girl, but never losing the elegance of a noble lady. Every one of Huang'er's qualities were the qualities he appreciated the most in both lives.

"Who in the world could possibly turn you away, Huang'er?" Jiang Chen sighed.

"I don't care if others turn me away." Huang'er smiled before she suddenly straightened her expression. "I suppose I cannot call you 'Sir Jiang' from now on, so what exactly should I call you? If I remember correctly, you are a few months older than I am. Then I shall call you Brother Chen [1] just like the womenfolk would call their partner."

Jiang Chen nodded. He was currently wrapped in happiness, and he enjoyed this emotion very much. Honorifics were entirely secondary to him right then.

"Brother Chen, I've never told you about my past, have I? It's not because I wanted to hide it from you, but because I was afraid it would involve you in danger. However, I feel that it's no longer something that I should keep from you." Huang'er's tone grew a little heavy. The slight wrinkle of her eyebrows was a clear indication of her hesitation and worry.

Jiang Chen said, "Huang'er, you can tell me later if you find it uncomfortable to talk about."

"I want to tell you," Huang'er's tone was unexpectedly firm. Rather than taking the easy way Jiang Chen had offered her, she soldiered on. "One day, I might be forced from your side, and if I disappear, you won't even know where to find me if I don't tell you now."

Jiang Chen was shocked, "What do you mean?"

Huang'er put her finger on Jiang Chen's lips, "Listen to Huang'er first, Brother Chen?"

His heart immediately turned gentle at the touch of her hand, and so Jiang Chen acceded to her request.

"Brother Chen, I am born in a place called the Myriad Abyss Island; specifically, the Eternal Divine Kingdom of the Myriad Abyss Island. You must remember this name. If one day I've suddenly vanished from your side, then this is the place you must go to find me."

"The Myriad Abyss Island, and the Eternal Divine Kingdom?" Jiang Chen muttered, "What is this place? Is it part of the Upper Eight Regions? Or is it somewhere else?"

"It is neither part of the Upper Eight Regions, nor a part of any human or foreign races' domain. The Eternal Divine Kingdom is the true heart of the Divine Abyss Continent, and there aren't many in the

entire Upper Eight Regions that know of this place. This is because most people aren't qualified to enter the Myriad Abyss Island even within the Upper Eight Regions!"

"Is it a place that's beyond this plane?" Jiang Chen was surprised. Huang'er's explanations had given him some inspiration. He couldn't help but recall his Celestial Emperor father from his past life.

"No, it is still on the Divine Abyss Continent, but there are very few people who are aware just how large the Divine Abyss Continent truly is. The Upper Eight Regions and the middle and lower regions combined may not even amount to a thousandth of the landmass that is the Divine Abyss Continent."

"What?!" Jiang Chen was completely stunned.

"This domain of the Upper Eight Regions, treated as the heart of the land, is but the territory of mankind. Humans are used to calling all other territories that are not theirs as the desolate wilderness, but in reality there were at least tens to hundreds of domains out there that are just as big as the humans' domain. There are hundreds of small and large races that live in those domains, and some of them are even stronger than humans!"

"I guess I really am a frog at the bottom of a well," Jiang Chen mocked himself. It had been many years since he'd arrived in this world. But he had never known much about Divine Abyss Continent to begin with. It wasn't that he didn't want to learn more about Divine Abyss Continent, but that information about it was a little scarce. His ability to look deep into this continent was extremely limited, and he wasn't able to learn more even with the unparalleled knowledge he possessed from his past life.

Now that he was being enlightened by Huang'er, Jiang Chen finally realized just how small the place he was living in truly was. What Eastern Kingdom? They were practically as small as a single leaf floating atop a vast sea. Even the Myriad Domain was but an insignificant, tiny place. Even the so-called heart of the land, the Upper Eight Regions was but only a piece of land that belonged to humans. According to Huang'er, there were at least hundreds of such lands belonging to countless foreign races across the Divine Abyss Continent.

"Brother Chen, you are absolutely not a frog at the bottom of a well considering your level of knowledge and bearing. I'm guessing that the stranger who taught you is no ordinary person, but he simply didn't have the time to teach you everything..." n./0ve**l**1n

Jiang Chen blushed with shame. For the longest time, he had been using this excuse to cover up his identity from his past life. He had used the same excuse back when he faced Elder Shun too. Now, he found it a little difficult to continue that lie. That being said, now that he and Huang'er had fallen in love with each other, he could no longer lie to her with the same excuse. "Huang'er, actually, that stranger thing is just an excuse that I use. He doesn't actually exist."

"Ah?" Huang'er let out a soft exclamation, "Then..."

Seeing the puzzlement in Huang'er's eyes, Jiang Chen smiled wryly, "I said that because the truth is too unbelievable. After I was beaten severely by the monarch of the Eastern Kingdom, my soul had experienced a sudden awakening as it drifted along in a foggy haze. Many strange memories that far exceeded the level of Divine Abyss Continent suddenly popped up inside my head."

Although Jiang Chen still couldn't tell her about his past life, his tactful explanation wasn't really a lie either. After all, from the standpoint of those minor overlords of the Eastern Kingdom, that was what had exactly happened.

A long while later, Huang'er finally revealed an intelligent smile, "To think that such a strange thing could happen in this world! You can say that something good indeed came out of your misfortune, Brother Chen. Perhaps in the past you were an expert from a higher plane that exceeded the level of Divine Abyss Continent. Perhaps you have awakened your past memories thanks to the power of reincarnation."

A woman's intuition was quite ridiculously accurate. Huang'er's careless analysis had struck the bullseye. That was exactly what had happened, wasn't it? Jiang Chen nodded, "That is my guess as well. It's just that this experience is so unbelievable that I've been using a mysterious teacher as my excuse all this time."

Huang'er could understand his feelings very well, and she replied in an understanding tone. "As you should, or you would've been hounded by countless evil people who would wish to rob you of your memories." Huang'er's eyes were brimming with happiness as she said this. She could feel Jiang Chen's trust in her when he shared his secret with her. It made her feel both proud and happy at the same time.

It's a much more intimate title in Chinese than it would appear here

Chapter 788: Myriad Abyss Island, Eternal Divine Kingdom

"Huang'er, just what kind of place is the Myriad Abyss Island and Eternal Divine Kingdom?" Jiang Chen continued to ask.

"The Myriad Abyss Island is the true core of the Divine Abyss Continent. It's said that invaders from another continent attacked the Divine Abyss Continent long ago, causing a great battle to take place. After that great battle, the status quo of the Divine Abyss Continent was forever shattered. The powerful factions were decimated, and the strong hid away in various forgotten corners of the continent. Some left their legacies behind, but others, not even that. But the place that most of those people retreated to was the Myriad Abyss Island."

"The ancient masters all went to the Myriad Abyss Island? What for?" Jiang Chen was startled, suddenly remembering the Ancient Crimson Heavens Sect back at Mount Rippling Mirage.

"The Myriad Abyss Island is within an endless ocean, without border or boundary. The great power of the Divine Abyss Continent binds it, essentially preventing any outsiders from discovering its existence. According to legend, the interdimensional invaders weren't able to find the whereabouts of any who entered the Myriad Abyss Island. As long as the island stayed hidden, the Divine Abyss Continent was no longer particularly attractive, not enough to draw the attention of very strong dimensions, anyways."

Jiang Chen frowned. "Did the ancient experts of the Divine Abyss Continent lose all their courage and hot-bloodedness after a single battle? An invasion of a primordial threat... surely, even hiding wouldn't have been the best method for self-preservation?"

"I've only heard Elder Shun speak of these myths in passing. Whether there were any other motives behind their actions, well, I'm not sure either." Huang'er sighed softly.

Jiang Chen paused, not saying anything more. He had spoken so quickly just now due to indignation. In his past life, worlds had crumbled apart before the cataclysm. However, his father, the Celestial Emperor, had not shrunk from the challenge despite its vastness and difficulty. Thus, Jiang Chen was both surprised and speechless at the ancient cultivators' choice to hide themselves within the Myriad Abyss Island and never again make an appearance, simply because of an interdimensional invasion. However, he remembered soon after that Huang'er was also from the Myriad Abyss Island. He may have unintentionally troubled her with his words. "Huang'er, I spoke too emotionally. Please don't take it to heart," Jiang Chen said apologetically.

Huang'er smiled sweetly at him in response. "You spoke only the truth. Why would I take that the wrong way? I don't have much worth remembering from my life there, anyway. The past few years away from that place have been much more comfortable. It's helped distance me from those troubles, and forget my illness."

"Since you don't like it there, we'll never go back." Jiang Chen consoled her.

Huang'er's bright eyes dimmed a touch, as if in recollection of something unpleasant. Her delicate face was marred by a faint shadow.

"Huang'er?"

Huang'er sighed quietly once more. "Brother Chen, I don't want to go back at all. But in the Eternal Divine Kingdom, on the Myriad Abyss Island... my destiny lies there. I wonder if I can ever shake off its chains."

"Destiny?" Jiang Chen smiled faintly. As the son of the Celestial Emperor in his previous life, his horizons had been as broad as the heavenly planes themselves. Though he knew of a certain inertia in the heavenly dao, there was no such thing as a fixed, unshakable destiny. The heavenly dao always left the slightest of possibilities so that those constrained by it may cast off its yoke.

The strong practiced martial dao in order to break free from the bonds of fate. The weak were bound by fate, left to struggle eternally in a sea of bitterness. The fate he had been doomed to bear in his previous life was an inability to cultivate. However, it had been forcibly overturned by his father. He had been able to live a million years with the body of a mere mortal. This was a classic example of breaking free of destiny. Thus, Jiang Chen did not believe at all that a place like the Divine Abyss Continent had a destiny that could not be changed.

"Huang'er, destiny is but a trial from fate. There is no destiny that remains endless and unbroken. What of the Myriad Abyss Island? What of the Eternal Divine Kingdom? Even the Eternal Divine Kingdom may not be so everlasting before the heavenly dao. So tell me, what destiny could it impose on you?"

A hint of sadness crept into Huang'er's beautiful eyes. "Brother Chen, do you remember when you diagnosed me with the Generation Binding Curse, and guessed the things that happened in my parents' generation?"

Jiang Chen nodded. The Generation Binding Curse was a curse born out of obsession. Another woman besides Huang'er's mother had loved her father deeply, but was unrequited, and burned her soul away to cast the curse. Huang'er had been afflicted with the curse as an unborn fetus, and carried the curse with her from the day of her birth.

"All those years ago, my father was once betrothed to the woman who cast the curse. Alas, he was rebellious in his youth, unwilling to be held to the engagement. He met my mother after he'd travelled away from the Myriad Abyss Island, and they'd eloped together. They returned when my mother was pregnant, and faced the combined fury of both factions. Because of it, my parents were imprisoned within a prison called the Boundless Prison on the island, doomed to suffer for the rest of their days. As for me, I was seen as living proof of their crime and was promised to a certain genius of that woman's family as a vessel for dual cultivation, in order to compensate them. I was ceaselessly bullied and despised at home. The only one who cared for me was Elder Shun..." Huang'er's eyes reddened despite her usually calm demeanor. It was difficult for her to speak so plainly regarding the injustices in her life.

All these years, she and Elder Shun had only each other to depend on. Of course, she had used her disease as a reason for their escape from the island, but wasn't the root of that flight her desire to escape from destiny's shackles? The years she'd spent drifting around... though much of it was filled with moving here and there, her disposition now was much brighter than it had been back at Myriad Abyss Island.

But Huang'er knew in her heart that this life of escapism had an end, someday. Her ordinary days would be over when the Myriad Abyss Island sent people to investigate her whereabouts. All her happiness, all her longing for a better future... they were as transient as clouds. This was because the might of the Myriad Abyss Island was unimaginable to those residing in the human domain. The experts of the Upper Eight Regions were completely impotent before those of the Myriad Abyss Island.

Jiang Chen was silent for a long while. He had guessed Huang'er to be a distinguished lady because of the way she spoke and the way she carried herself. It was impossible for her mannerisms to have been developed with a commoner's family. But he had never imagined that this gentle, graceful girl, who had always seemed to possess poise and dignity, had such a troubled past. The entrapments that fate had laid for her rivalled those of his past life.

Though he had been cursed with a yin constitution, it had merely prevented him from cultivation. He still had a father who'd spoiled him without limit, who'd extended his lifespan and allowed him to enjoy an existence far above that of many others. He had countless resources from the heavenly planes, countless tomes and experts at his perusal and disposal. Besides his inability to cultivate, he had all of the treatment due the son of the Celestial Emperor.

But, besides the curse itself, Huang'er had such a miserable destiny as well. From birth, she had been designated as a mere vessel for cultivation. But the unfairness in her life had not caused the clever girl to wallow in self-degradation, instead nurturing a pure and noble personality. Much like the lotus, she was someone who'd risen out of the mud, but remained unstained.

Jiang Chen took a deep breath. "Huang'er, how strong is your family? What about the family whose daughter your father was engaged to? Are they strong enough for your family to offer a girl of its direct line as a cultivation vessel?"

The thought highly perplexed Jiang Chen. Regardless of what family Huang'er had come from, it was a family that was willing to place their own son into Boundless Prison, and give away their granddaughter as a mere tool. How hard-hearted did one have to be to go through with those actions? What use was a family like that, even if it grew in might?

Huang'er clearly didn't want to hide any more secrets from Jiang Chen. Hazy teardrops dotted her eyelashes. "In the Myriad Abyss Island, my family is roughly equivalent to House Wei in Veluriyam Capital. The other family, a great clan. There are several top-level rulers within the Myriad Abyss Island above them, and they are reputed to be the true masters of the Divine Abyss Continent."

"True masters? How strong are they; possibly empyrean cultivators?"

"I've heard that they are great empyrean experts, but rumors have spoken of them being divine experts instead."

Jiang Chen was a little shocked. "I thought the Divine Abyss Continent was an ordinary dimension, limited to just mortals? How come divine experts also exist here?"

From his previous life, the worlds of the heavenly planes were the divine experts' stage, hence Jiang Chen's surprise. There were nine ranks of divinity, and beyond them was mastery of the heavenly planes. Lordship over a set of heavens meant commanding a realm. The lord of a group of worlds was an emperor within the heavenly planes. Jiang Chen's father in his previous life was the master of the Taiyuan Realm, or the Taiyuan Celestial Emperor.

Within the Taiyuan Realm were innumerable mundane dimensions, but their strongest experts held great empyrean as their highest rank. Empyrean experts were experts that had received affirmation from the heavenly dao. They lived extremely long lives, held empyrean decrees, and were accepted by the heavens. But the empyrean rank was only preparation for the divine realm. It was also called demi-divine.

Nevertheless, there was a world of difference between empyrean experts and divine experts. One within the divine realm was someone who had truly passed the heavenly dao's trials, and they lived as long as the heavens and the earth, shining with the brilliance of the celestial bodies. Only in the divine realm could one be said to have broken the bonds of mundanity. Empyrean experts, on the other hand, had only just received their qualification to try for the test. To put it another way, they were apprentices and reservists for the divine realm.

Typically, for a large mundane dimension, empyrean experts were not lacking, but divine experts could not exist.

If one did appear, the walls of the dimension would destabilize. The existence would interfere in the normal operation of the dimension, and the cultivator would be forced to ascend to the world of the heavenly planes. Of course, the worlds of the heavenly planes had many minor heavenly planes as well, different from ordinary dimensions. The dimensional rules for a minor heavenly plane could accommodate divine experts, but even so, the heavenly plane was only a small world within the heavenly planes, and had no right to compete with a set of worlds. One set of worlds in the heavenly planes could only have a single master. The ruler of a minor heavenly plane had to take orders from that master.

Many experts from ordinary dimensions chose to take a gap period within a minor heavenly plane, and only tried to make their way in the greater world of the heavenly planes after their strength had stabilized. A place like the Divine Abyss Continent, however... Jiang Chen had always thought it to be an ordinary dimension, and thus couldn't hold any divine experts. This was the basic knowledge he'd gained from his previous life.

#### Chapter 789: News of Elder Shun

The conversation with Huang'er astounded Jiang Chen greatly, but his curiosity about the Divine Abyss Continent grew as well. He'd traveled step by step, beginning from the Eastern Kingdom to the four great sects of the sixteen kingdom alliance, until he'd found out about the Myriad Domain. After entering the Regal Pill Palace, he'd discovered that the Myriad Domain was only a small area on the fringes of the human domain. The Upper Eight Regions was the core of the human' domain, where the race reigned supreme. But now, Huang'er's words had toppled his conception of the Divine Abyss Continent yet again. The human domain amounted a drop in the ocean compared to the entirety of the landmass. Though it wasn't exactly insignificant, it could never again be seen as the core in Jiang Chen's mind, at least not compared to Myriad Abyss Island.

Noting Jiang Chen's odd behaviour, Huang'er was worried that she had damaged his proclivity for optimism. "Brother Chen, your talent is exceptional. The Divine Abyss Continent will not be able to limit you. I've no doubt that you can contend with even the master of Myriad Abyss Island one day," she encouraged.

She didn't speak solely to console him. As someone who'd been born on Myriad Abyss Island, Huang'er was quite knowledgeable and had seen many things, including countless geniuses. However, none impressed her as deeply as Jiang Chen did. The things that happened to him were almost mythical in the telling, shaking the girl's heart time and time again. Jiang Chen's occasional strokes of divine inspiration only served to enhance the impact he had, even on someone from Myriad Abyss Island like Huang'er. Understandably so, since even a place like Myriad Abyss Island was incomparable to Jiang Chen's previous life.

Jiang Chen gave her a candid smile when he heard her words. "Huang'er, you don't need to worry about me. No one will take you from my side - not Myriad Abyss Island or the Eternal Divine Kingdom, nor anyone else."

If another had used the same confidence while speaking, Huang'er would perhaps have simply laughed. But they held a different weight when coming from Jiang Chen. She trusted him unconditionally.

Huang'er's beautiful eyes lit up with joy, but she became more serious after it passed. "Brother Chen, please promise me something."

"Go ahead."

"If I disappear suddenly one day and am taken away back to Myriad Abyss Island, you must promise me that you won't follow until you've become stronger than a Titled Great Emperor!"

"Titled Great Emperor?" Jiang Chen was startled.

"Yes. There are many powerful experts on Myriad Abyss Island. For the younger generation, reaching the emperor realm is rudimentary in terms of showing one's strength. On the Island, emperor realm is just another realm. One is not qualified to be called a great emperor simply for having achieved it. Great emperor is a title of honor is unique to the human domain." n).0V e1B1n

Huang'er's removal of the veil of mystique surrounding Myriad Abyss Island caused Jiang Chen to feel a kind of anticipation.

When I become a Titled Great Emperor one day, where do I go then? The worry was always on his mind. Jiang Chen's vision was not limited to the human domain. His eyes were focused on the heavenly planes. Now that he'd heard of a place like Myriad Abyss Island, he did not feel defeat and helplessness, but rather the satisfaction of a fulfilled expectation.

"Brother Chen, Huang'er has never asked anything else of you. You must agree to this." It was rare for Huang'er to be this stubborn about something. Her bright eyes gazed at Jiang Chen with a kind of earnest determination.

"Huang'er..." Jiang Chen was about to go on, but Huang'er's slender, pearlescent hands clasped over his mouth. She shook her head slightly. "Promise me."

Seeing her persistence, Jiang Chen knew he couldn't persevere with sheer obstinence. "I promise," he sighed softly.

Huang'er let out a breath of relief. "Brother Chen, this is a promise you must hold fast to."

"Huang'er, don't worry. Rather than looking for you when the time comes, it's better to not let them take you away. After I cure you of the Curse, we'll brave Myriad Abyss Island together, and turn that place upside down! What do you say?" Jiang Chen's high spirits were infectious. Huang'er broke into a smile as well.

As the two of them were speaking, a message glyph came from outside the secret room. It was Shen Trifire. "Senior brother, Pill King Lu Feng has come to visit."

Jiang Chen nodded, and walked outside, Huang'er close behind him.

Pill King Lu Feng was in a good mood as of late. He spoke exultantly when he saw Jiang Chen, "Master, I have attempted to absorb the reflections of pill dao you've given me over the past half-month, and have learned much from them. I'm eager to try out my newfound knowledge! Please give me some opportunities for field work."

Translated, that was a request for a pill recipe from Jiang Chen. The Deviant Pill Faction's recipes didn't circulate very often in the outside world. Recipes of higher quality were even more pitifully rare. The pills featured by Taiyuan Tower—whether it was the Half-step Immortal Elixir Pill, the Heptarune True Dragon Pill, the Tiger Eruption Pill, or the Aeons Evergreen Pill—were all classics of the faction. Pill King Lu Feng had an itch in his heart that could now only be satisfied by hands on work.

"I can give you the recipe for a pill, and if you do well, we can list it as one of our featured pills as well." Jiang Chen laughed.



"What? Master, please get to the point. I don't like to be tantalized so." Pill King Lu Feng's impatience was plain to see.

"The Skyheart Nirvana Pill," Jiang Chen announced smoothly. He'd seen the pill at the Mt. Mirage Pill Battles. Though it wasn't a high-rank pill, it enjoyed widespread distribution.

"That's great, master. Ole Lu will refine it with care—I won't let the Deviant Pill Faction down!" Pill King Lu Feng was as excited as a child who'd just received a piece of candy.

"Before you rush off with happiness, there's something I'd like you to pay attention to."

"What is it?" Pill King Lu Feng blinked.

"Keep an eye out for something called the Requiem Wood. If you receive any news through your channels, I will teach you two more pill recipes which are better than the Skyheart Nirvana Pill in every way."

"Requiem Wood?" Pill King Lu Feng was amazed. "That's not something that's easy to find."

"You know what it is?" Jiang Chen was similarly astounded. The Wood was an esoteric item, so he was just trying his luck. He didn't expect Pill King Lu Feng to have actually heard of it.

"Four or five years ago, a bounty appeared in the Upper Eight Regions, also seeking the Requiem Wood. The person who found it would be rewarded with an emperor relic! The news shook the Upper Eight Regions at the time, and searching for the Requiem Wood became one of the most popular tasks in the Upper Eight Regions."

Jiang Chen's insides churned at Pill King Lu Feng's words. Four or five years ago was the time Elder Shun had departed from the Myriad Domain. Back then, Jiang Chen had still been with the sixteen kingdom alliance, and it was at Eternal Spirit Mountain that he'd first met with Huang'er and the elder. After that, Elder Shun had entrusted Huang'er to him before traveling the world in search of the Requiem Wood. Alongside him was the former Purple Sun Sect disciple, Chu Xinghan. Based on the timeframe, the reward for the Requiem Wood must have been set up by Elder Shun.

Standing beside Jiang Chen, Huang'er briefly froze as well. They exchanged a glance, and discovered implicitly that their line of thought led to the same place. Pill King Lu Feng only then noticed a stunningly beautiful girl by Jiang Chen's side. He was overwhelmed by her remarkable appearance and manner. Staring dumbly at Huang'er, he stuttered, "Master, is this ... your wife?"

"... Not at all, don't be rude," Jiang Chen scolded.

Pill King Lu Feng chuckled for a while, scratching at his head. "Master-wife, please forgive Ole Lu's impudence. I'm a rough man, don't take my words too seriously." He saluted to Huang'er.

The latter smiled faintly back. "Pill King Lu Feng, did you see the one who listed the Requiem Wood's bounty in person?"

The pill king's expression blanked momentarily before he sighed, "No, I haven't. What right do I have to request a visit of someone so much my senior? An emperor relic... even the seven emperors of our Veluriyam Capital may not, well..." Pill King Lu Feng trailed off. Something like that was beyond his realm of comprehension.

"Ole Lu, you should secretly try to keep track of any information about the Requiem Wood. Remember, if you have any news, notify me at the first opportunity."

"Master, you can rest easy. I'm not much interested in that emperor relic. As pill kings, the dao of pills is the only truth for us," Pill King Lu Feng laughed.

"Don't worry, if you really do get the Requiem Wood, you'll receive appropriate rewards as well." Jiang Chen casually waved a hand, throwing a jade token towards Pill King Lu Feng. "This is the Skyheart Nirvana Pill's recipe. Feel free to study it as much as you want. Remember, once you accept this legacy, you cannot betray it your entire life. If you do, even if the heavenly dao does not strike you down, I shall!"

"Master, you look too lowly on Ole Lu's morals. We pill kings are always loyal to pill dao and our traditions. How could I betray it? If Ole Lu forsakes my master and my tradition, then let me be crushed into pieces, and perish under heavenly lightning!" Pill King Lu Feng loudly proclaimed.

"Good, if you maintain your loyalty, there will be far more surprises than you've ever dreamed of." Jiang Chen didn't forget to make a promise alongside his warning. Sure enough, Pill King Lu Feng scuttled away joyfully. His expression was sweeter than if he had drunk honey.

"Was that Elder Shun?" Jiang Chen looked at Huang'er.

She nodded, "It must be him, but I wonder where he's gone now?"

"For someone capable of giving away an emperor relic, Elder Shun's surely not just a great emperor realm cultivator, is he?" Jiang Chen laughed.

Huang'er inclined her head in confirmation. "Elder Shun is the foster father of my father, and the teacher who'd initiated my father into martial dao as well. He broke the fetters of the emperor realm over a thousand years ago, and received an empyrean decree."

"So he's an empyrean expert, then?" Jiang Chen was moved.

"Mm. Empyrean experts are common on Myriad Abyss Island, but they hardly ever leave. For them, any place outside the Eternal Divine Kingdom is too mundane. They are almost never willing to come out, because they are fearful of being tainted by the karma of the lower realms, and thereby have their cultivation progress affected."

Jiang Chen smiled faintly, "Assigning truth where there is none."

He was quite disdainful of that so called phenomenon. Smiling softly back, Huang'er nodded as well. She shared similar thoughts. Elder Shun had wandered the human domain for ten years, bringing her with him, but she hadn't seen any such 'karma of the lower realms' affecting him. His cultivation was as robust as it had always been. To put it more plainly, it was just a type of estrangement between castes. Those within Myriad Abyss Island looked down on the entire world outside.

"Huang'er, do you think Elder Shun has secretly gone back to Myriad Abyss Island?" A sudden thought flashed across Jiang Chen's mind. It was difficult to find the Requiem Wood in the human domain, but Myriad Abyss Island was so much superior. Perhaps it was possible to find the Wood there!

Chapter 790: Mu Gaoqi's Whereabouts

Jiang Chen's words reminded Huang'er of just such a possibility. Concern flashed across her face. Huang'er knew that Elder Shun would almost certainly visit the domains of various races or even go back to Myriad Abyss Island if he couldn't find the Requiem Wood in human territory.

"Let's hope the elder didn't go back to Myriad Abyss Island," Huang'er spoke worriedly.

"What's wrong with returning there?"

"He'll definitely be viewed as a traitor for taking me from the Island. His fate will be even worse than my parents' if he is captured. My father and mother were only imprisoned within Boundless Prison but Elder Shun... he'll be executed." Huang'er's voice began to tremble as her exquisite countenance turned somewhat pale.

She'd been dependent on Elder Shun through many life and death situations, so it came as no surprise that she couldn't accept even the thought of such a conclusion. Jiang Chen lightly grasped Huang'er's hands and consoled her with a gentle tone. "Don't worry, Elder Shun is a man of great wisdom. He has a clear idea of what he should and should not do."

Huang'er tried visibly to calm down and nodded lightly. She was worried that Jiang Chen would be overly concerned about her. "Brother Chen, I'd always believed that my ailment would never be cured, until that fateful day when you told me about the Generation Binding Curse and that it could be cured with the Requiem Wood. Please rest assured that Huang'er will strive to live on. When I'm cured of the Generation Binding Curse, I must go to Boundless Prison to rescue my parents from their agony." Huang'er's tone was serious and her eyes resolute.

Jiang Chen nodded, "Indeed. How can one watch as their parents fall into the depths of misery? Fret not, Huang'er, I'll definitely accompany you to rescue your parents one day."

At this point, Jiang Chen felt his chest tighten. The fate of his father, whether from his past life or current, was still a mystery to him. It still was a sore spot. But he still had a long ways to go before reaching the Celestial Emperor's level. Before then, it would be futile to worry excessively. But he also shared familiar sentiments with his current father, Jiang Feng. After all, it was said that blood runs thicker than water. With the latter's blood coursing through Jiang Chen's current physical body, how could he sever such a filial relationship? What's more, Jiang Feng had taken care of him in many ways back in the Eastern Kingdom. The fatherly love that Jiang Chen had experienced in his life had not been missed one whit in this life. It was difficult to imagine Jiang Chen surviving the initial hurdles from his present life without a father like Jiang Feng. He recalled how his father had departed for the upper regions in search of his mother, leaving only a letter to explain the situation.

Many a year had passed with neither news nor contact now. He himself had arrived at the Upper Eight Regions after much hardship, constantly on the run. He then had to devote all his efforts on gaining a foothold in Veluriyam Capital. He simply hadn't found the time to inquire about Jiang Feng's whereabouts. Now that Taiyuan Tower was on the right track, it was high time to focus on finding his father. Too many years had passed already. Concern clenched Jiang Chen's heart whenever he thought about it; especially just how much he had sacrificed on his fateful journey from the Myriad Domain to the Veluriyam Capital.

He recalled how his father had charged into the Upper Eight Regions with merely a spirit realm cultivation level. His journey, even from a distance, looked fraught with danger, like a three year old child seeking to enter a dragon's pond or tiger's lair. Heavens only knew how many people of the origin realm or even the sage realm died everyday in the Upper Eight Regions, to say nothing of a mere spirit realm cultivator. Seeing Jiang Chen in a daze, Huang'er hurriedly inquired as to what was weighing on his mind.

Jiang Chen sighed, "Huang'er, you likely know of my father, the Duke of Jiang Han, back when you were in the Eastern Kingdom. He left after accompanying me to the Skylaurel Kingdom with only a letter to explain that he was going to the Upper Eight Regions to search for my mother. Most importantly, he didn't leave a keepsake. Looking for him now is like searching for a needle in a haystack."

At that moment, Jiang Chen told Huang'er about the contents of his father's letter. Huang'er naturally knew about Jiang Chen's backgrounds, but she'd always thought his father was still in Skylaurel Kingdom. She never expected his father to have already left. "Brother Chen, you and your father are truly affectionate people. As the saying goes, the heavens provide for the fortunate. His love for your mother will surely move the heavens. Since we already know that your mother is from the Upper Eight Regions, it's only a matter of time before we find them," Huang'er consoled.

The two suddenly realized the many similarities between their lives. Their parents' marriages had both been sabotaged by other parties. The comparable fates and the similar obstacles they'd faced created a strong resonance between Jiang Chen and Huang'er.

At this moment, one of Jiang Chen's followers approached. "Pill King Zhen, young master Ji San has dispatched some people to Taiyuan Tower. They claim to be here on urgent business."

Jiang Chen had previously chosen ten from among the batch of slaves and contracted them to serve Taiyuan Tower for twenty years. They had now become his reliable aides. Jiang Chen dared not be negligent after hearing that young master Ji San had an urgent matter to discuss. He couldn't ignore the young master's matters since they were, after all, sworn brothers.

"Brother Chen, the state of affairs within Veluriyam Capital is rather complicated. You must be careful," reminded Huang'er.

Jiang Chen promised to be so and walked out into Taiyuan Tower's main hall. He then proceeded to follow young master Ji San's aides towards the Coiling Dragon Clan manor. This was his first time calling upon the manor of a great clan. But Jiang Chen wasn't nervous at all. Truth be told, he didn't have a reason to be. He'd already experienced many grand spectacles during his past life. A mere clan manor was rather insignificant by the standards of the heavenly realm. noVE/lb/1n

The clan manor of the Coiling Dragon Clan was located in one of the most preeminent districts of Veluriyam Capital. The large palaces and wide courtyards were constructed in the shape of a coiling dragon. It was an overwhelming sight to behold. Although the world viewed the Coiling Dragon Clan as a waning power, it still looked very well organized on the surface. The security was strict, looking impenetrable from the exterior or within its walls. One couldn't even hope to draw a comparison between such a clan manor and that of a ninth rank aristocratic house.

“Pill King Zhen, young master Ji San has arranged for you to freely enter or exit the clan manor with this token. You’ll have unimpeded access everywhere except for certain restricted areas.” The leader among young master Ji San’s followers was a sixth rank emperor realm cultivator. He naturally knew Jiang Chen as young master Ji San’s sworn brother and treated him with due courtesy.

Jiang Chen smiled, “I’m grateful for this great favor, Captain Mo.”

“Haha, I’m merely passing on young master Ji San’s generosity. Moreover, with Pill King Zhen’s current status, I feel you’re absolutely worthy of this honor.” Captain Mo was quite polite to Jiang Chen. He obviously viewed Jiang Chen with a certain degree of admiration and wanted to become friends. As expected, nothing obstructed them as they chatted on the way to young master Ji San’s residence.

Young master Ji San’s position in the clan was indeed extraordinary. Amidst the vast and maze-like Coiling Dragon Clan Manor, his residence was located in a peaceful location surrounded by a bustling neighbourhood. It was like a completely different world within.

“Brother Ji, you seem to be living quite a comfortable life.” Jiang Chen saw that young master Ji San’s residence was ten times bigger than his own back at the Regal Pill Palace. They’d obviously made meticulous plans for efficient space utilization to be able to build such a residence.

“Haha, you can move in and live with me if you like it. I was bored to death during your closed door cultivation. Come, come, come... take a look at what I’ve prepared for you.” Young master Ji San dismissed his followers with a wave of his hand. He then dragged Jiang Chen by the hand to a secret chamber. Once inside, Jiang Chen noticed a person restrained inside. He was kneeling, half conscious, on the floor like a dead dog, not able to offer so much as a thread of resistance.

“Brother, guess who this is!”

Jiang Chen was startled after seeing his face. How could it be him?! This was obviously Boss Li from the Myriad Puppets Pavilion. Back when Jiang Chen had gone to the Myriad Puppets Pavilion to investigate the fate of the Regal Pill Palace disciples, he’d wanted to buy the disciples back. But the Myriad Puppets Pavilion had so many rules and regulations in place that Jiang Chen had been forced to utilize a more violent approach.

Jiang Chen still had no idea what he could do with those slaves still hidden within House Wei’s secret area. He wasn’t willing to return them to the Myriad Puppets Pavilion but was also worried that, after failing to find them, the Pavilion might activate the seals and kill them off. Then, he’d have inadvertently harmed these people. “Isn’t this Boss Li from the Myriad Puppets Pavilion?”

“Haha, your memory is quite good. It is indeed that old bastard. This loyal dog of House Sikou has been managing the Myriad Puppets Pavilion for many years now. It’s normally quite difficult to make a move on him because he lives in seclusion. Taking advantage of this rare and coincidental opportunity, I dispatched my men to abduct him from a brothel in secret. Brother, didn’t you want to inquire about the fate of your two fellow disciples? Ask him all you want. He’s been afflicted by one of our Coiling Dragon Clan’s abilities which not only compels him to answer questions in all honesty, but also ensures that he’ll remember nothing afterwards.”

Although Jiang Chen was no stranger to such arts, he felt a rush of excitement within his heart. He approached and nudged the captive's chin with his foot. "Boss Li, how's business at the Myriad Puppets Pavilion recently?"

Boss Li replied in an apathetic tone, without a shred of trickery. "Business has been terrible. The recent robbery lost us several old customers and has massively affected trade." Young master Ji San laughed as he clapped Jiang Chen's shoulder. "Take your time with him. He'll remain in this state forever unless we release him."

Jiang Chen nodded before continuing, "Do you remember the batch of slaves you acquired from the Myriad Domain?"

"I do. Those slaves from the Regal Pill Palace were purchased from the Great Scarlet Empire. Unfortunately we failed to realize their potential value and missed the opportunity to obtain the recipe for the Longevity Pill!"

"How so?" Jiang Chen asked.

"We only later came to know that an elder named Yun Nie and a youth named Mu Gaoqi amongst them possessed the recipe to the Longevity Pill. But it turns out that these two people had already been sold to Pillfire City. Thus we missed a golden opportunity to obtain the recipe for the Longevity Pill!"

Jiang Chen frowned, "What kind of place is Pillfire City?"

Young master Ji San spoke from the side, "Pillfire City is a major power in the Upper Eight Regions. Though not as powerful as Veluriyam Capital, it's not too far off—one occupies the north and the other is located in the south—both are superior powers within the Upper Eight Regions. The Pillfire City is one of the most authoritative powers in the dao of pills and dominates at least seventy percent of the human race's pill dao market!"

"It's that powerful?!" Jiang Chen was dazed, but he felt slightly relieved after knowing that Elder Yun Nie and Mu Gaoqi had been sold to the Pillfire City. At least now he knew of their whereabouts.