

A Demoness 211

Chapter 211: A Test From The Gathering

The sky was boundless. Jiang Hao sat cross-legged and remained calm. Gui had glanced at him before saying she knew about the whereabouts of the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower. It made Jiang Hao feel like she knew about his identity.

However, that was impossible! Only he and Hong Yuye knew about this undercover mission. No one else could have guessed that he was involved. Besides himself, the only person who knew about his undercover mission here was Hong Yuye. Others couldn't possibly be aware.

When Gui finished speaking, others looked at her in shock.

Dan Yuan was also surprised. "Oh?" he said.

"I wonder if you have heard anything about it, Friend Jing," said Gui.

"Why would you think I would know about it?" Jiang Hao asked.

"Because if you live in the south and have connections, you might know a thing or two about such a big thing," said Gui.

She looked at Dan Yuan. "I contacted some friends and found out that there is indeed a Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower in the southern region. I think I can guess where it is."

"Senior, may I speak candidly?" asked Gui.

"If you're not worried about the others finding out, you can speak freely." Dan Yuan smiled.

The others listened quietly. This was valuable information that they were getting for free.

“Heavenly Note Sect,” Gui said solemnly. “After multiple investigations, I have concluded that there is a ninety percent chance that the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower is in the Heavenly Note Sect. It seems that there are some related treasures that can reveal the whereabouts of the Heavenly Fragrance Dao

Flower in the Heavenly Note Sect.”

Jiang Hao understood why she had glanced at him. If he could find the location of the flower, then it would mean he had considerable influence.

The southern region was vast, with various powerful sects. There were countless disciples in the Primordial Spirit Realm or above. Jiang Hao didn’t really have a network or connections. He raised the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower, but he couldn’t really tell them about it.

‘It seems I have to make them believe that I’m reliable. Otherwise, they will just look down on me.’

“Heavenly Note Sect?” Dan Yuan was doubtful. “I passed by the Hidden Cloud

Prefecture many years ago. The Heavenly Note Sect was a very small sect at that time.”

“It used to be a small sect indeed, but it rose rapidly in recent decades and is now considered a big sect when it comes to members and the scale of influence. However, it lacks a strong foundation. I heard that the reason behind the Heavenly Note Sect’s rise is their Sect Master, Tianyin Hong. It is said that this person is incredibly powerful. The more battles they fought, the stronger they became. The person is shrouded in mystery,” said Gui.

“There are many sects in the southern region, right? There are Azure

Mountain, the Sunset Immortal Sect, and the Blackheaven Sect. Haven’t they tried to find out more about the flower?” asked Xing.

Gui shrugged.

“Do you have any understanding of that area, Jing?” asked Dan Yuan.

Jiang Hao shook his head. He had already claimed not to know anything about it, so there was no point in revealing it now. It might backfire.

After a moment, Dan Yuan turned to Gui. “Someone will go to the Heavenly Note Sect to confirm this. If it’s true, you can tell me what you want, and I’ll try to give it to you. If the person finds some clues, I can still provide you with the help you need. But if the information is wrong, we’ll have to wait for another opportunity to find out more.”

Gui nodded.

“I don’t have anything else to talk about for now.” Dan Yuan looked at the four people.

After that, they talked among themselves.

“Which one of you has the Heavenly Saint Spiritual Technique?” asked Gui.

“Give me some time, and I can obtain it for you. If others can get it faster, that would be fine with me.”

Gui looked at the other two people.

Xing shook his head.

“I have it,” said Jiang Hao slowly.

Since he was going undercover, he had to make a deal with them. He needed to make them trust him.

Jiang Hao was worried about what Dan Yuan had said. Somebody would be coming to the Heavenly Note Sect to confirm the whereabouts of the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower.

“What do you want in exchange?” Gui asked.

“The Star-Moon Cultivation Technique,” said Jiang Hao.

Gui frowned and looked at Xing.

“I have it, but it’s only till the Golden Core Realm,” said Xing.

Gui and Xing turned to Jiang Hao.

“That’s fine with me,” said Jiang Hao.

He didn’t know what he wanted for himself. He just recalled that he lacked the Star-Moon Cultivation Technique after the Lifeblood Refinement Realm. So, he just wanted to try his luck and see if they had it.

‘The Star-Moon Lifeblood Refinement Technique that I gave to Lin Zhi is barely enough to reach the Foundation Establishment Realm. With this, he can cultivate up to the Golden Core Realm. He can decide what he wants to do after that.’

“In that case, I want the Greater World Mental Energy Technique,” said Xing.

“Deal.” Gui nodded.

While Jiang Hao was still wondering how to hand over the technique, Dan Yuan waved his hand, and each of them had a stone tablet in front of them. “You can imprint the content on it. If you forget, you can exchange it again next time,” a voice reminded them.

Jiang Hao nodded and reached out to touch the stone tablet. Soon, he recalled the content of the Heavenly Saint Spiritual Technique.

After a while, he withdrew his hand. Fortunately, his divine sense remembered these things quite clearly, especially after going through them once.

As Jiang Hao finished, the stone tablet flew to Gui. Gui's stone tablet flew to Xing, and Xing's stone tablet floated to Jiang Hao.

Jiang Hao touched the stone tablet. He saw the technique appear before his eyes, and the words flew toward him.

He gained a deeper understanding of the Star-Moon Cultivation Technique. He also confirmed that the technique given to him was genuine and had no flaws.

These stone tablets were treasures.

As the transaction concluded, Gui turned to Jiang Hao. "Friend Jing, there's one more thing I would like to ask for your help with. I have been chasing after a dragon lately, and it may have fled to the Hidden Cloud Prefecture. I can't travel there right now. Can I ask for your assistance? I will provide the location.

We can discuss the rewards later."

"Okay." Jiang Hao nodded.

Jiang Hao understood that Gui was testing him, so he couldn't refuse. If I refuse, they might get offended and not include him in their discussions

He had no choice but to agree.

As for how he could handle such a task, he could only wait and see.

Right now, making a good impression and staying out was important. 1–1(couldn't be kicked out after coming so far.

If his undercover mission failed, he didn't know what Hong Yuye would him.

"There's something I need to remind you of," Liu suddenly said. "I heard something while I was overseas. It is said that the Heavenly Fate Misfort Pearl has reappeared, but the specific location is still unknown."

"Now that you mention it, I also recall that some sects have been on edge lately. They say that disaster is imminent. They might be referring to He Fate Misfortune Pearl," said Xing.

"Is the Heavenly Fate Misfortune Pearl that terrifying?" Gui asked.

The group turned their gazes toward Dan Yuan. Jiang Hao followed suit, immersing himself in the conversation to blend in..

Chapter 212: Delighted to Meet the Demoness

They all looked at the calm Dan Yuan. He appeared at ease and exuded great power. It seemed that nothing could faze him.

For a moment, Jiang Hao was curious about how strong this person was. He might not be as strong as Hong Yuye.

"The Heavenly Fate Misfortune Pearl is a dangerous object. Once it appears in the world, it will bring about a crisis. Its origins trace back to ancient times, and its formation led to the crumbling of the earth. Forget about small sects... even huge sects like the Clear Sky School might not be able to withstand the effect of the Heavenly Fate Misfortune Pearl. The best way to prepare to withstand it is to find a way to seal it. Some people seek it out to use it. They might want to find out its whereabouts through us. But it's best for us not to get involved in this matter. Even sensing the Heavenly Fate Misfortune Pearl near us will have an immense impact. If you encounter it, it is best to quickly get away and inform others so that sects like Clear Sky School can suppress and seal it. We should stay away."

Jiang Hao was quite surprised to hear that. Dan Yuan's first thought was to be safe in instances like these.

"Well... If there's nothing else, we'll meet next time," Dan Yuan said to everyone.

After seeing Dan Yuan leave, Jiang Hao also left the chat.

Gui told him that she would contact him soon with the details.

Jiang Hao nodded. He felt bitter that he couldn't really leave the sect.

Exiting the stone tablet, Jiang Hao looked out of the balcony. The starry sky and the silvery moonlight illuminated everything.

"I hope Gui can delay for a while." Jiang Hao sighed.

He thought about the latest gathering. He had gained some important information from it.

Liu was well-informed about overseas matters but nothing else.

Xing was in the eastern region and might have some connection with the Bright Moon Sect.

Gui was the same as last time. She was from the Heavenly South Prefecture and might have some connection to either the Heavenly Saint Sect, the Sunset Immortal Sect, or the Blackheaven Sect.

Since she didn't already have the Heavenly Saint Spiritual Technique, it was unlikely that she was from the Heavenly Saint Sect. She must be from either the Sunset Immortal Sect or the Blackheaven Sect. She was the only one who knew about the location of the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower.

'She might not be unable to travel to Hidden Cloud Prefecture. She intentionally wants me to do her work so that she can find out my exact

location...

Although he had the Nine Rings of Heaven and Earth, who would help him take the ring somewhere else so that he could travel undetected?

He couldn't ask Xiao Li or the spirit beast...

Lying on the bed, Jiang Hao looked at the ceiling with a frown. 'Dan Yuan also said someone will be visiting the Heavenly Note Sect to verify Gui's information. That is troublesome...'

If the person was powerful, they would be able to find the location easily and reveal his identity too. He had to inform Hong Yuye.

After all, she claimed the flower as her own. From Dan Yuan's words, it was evident that the visitor wouldn't hesitate to act against the Heavenly Note Sect.

Jiang Hao sat up. "How will I inform Hong Yuye?"

Hong Yuye always visited him out of the blue. He had never called her over.

Jiang Hao sighed. He hoped she would appear soon.

Hong Yuye might have sensed something. It was highly likely that she would come to find him soon.

He couldn't do anything about that. So, he got up and started making talismans. He was almost penniless now and needed to sell more talismans.

The Red Lotus gave no blue bubbles. It was expensive to buy. He didn't know if it would give off blue bubbles in the future.

Early the next morning, Jiang Hao put down his brush. He had made a Hundred Thousand Swords Talisman. He planned to continue to learn about new talismans.

'Now that I think about it, I haven't seen Senior Sister Leng Tian in so long... The spirit beast said a woman had visited and called for him. It might have been her.'

From the people who visited him, it would be either Zhou Chan or Leng Tian. Since the spirit beast already recognized Ming Yi, and Zhou Chan had already met him, the only one left was Leng Tian.

As he walked out of the room, Jiang Hao saw the beast still staring fondly at the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower. Its tongue almost reached the petals.

He walked over and intended to kick some sense into the beast. However, just as he was about to swing his foot, he realized that the beast had disappeared from its spot.

Then a white figure appeared, bloodied and bruised. The beast was hanging from the ceiling.

Jiang Hao was astonished. It had happened too quickly.

"Do you think tomorrow it may be you hanging in place of that beast?" said a voice behind him.

Jiang Hao turned and saw a beautiful figure standing in his courtyard. She wore a red and white dress.

"Greetings, Senior." Jiang Hao felt glad to see her today.

As for the threat, he didn't know what to say. She might actually hang him from the ceiling if he failed in his job.

“This is the first time I find you so happy to see me,” said Hong Yuye in amusement.

Jiang Hao tried to remain calm.

“I attended the secret gathering on the stone tablet. They know that the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower is in the Heavenly Note Sect. According to Dan

Yuan, someone will come to investigate soon. In their eyes, the Heavenly Note

Sect is just a small sect. I think he wants to send someone to take away the

Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower.”

Hong Yuye sat in her chair. “Hmm... What are you worried about?”

“The person might be powerful, and perhaps the Heavenly Note Sect won’t be able to defend the flower,” Jiang Hao said in concern.

“Then... will you defend it?” Hong Yuye asked with a smile.

Jiang Hao’s mouth twitched. “As a late-stage Foundation Establishment Realm cultivator, I have the intention but lack the ability.”

He simply didn’t have that kind of strength.

“Are you suggesting that I take action?” Hong Yuye asked.

Jiang Hao nodded. “After all, it is your flower, Senior.”

“That’s true.” Hong Yuye stared at Jiang Hao. “Are you worried that my flowers will be taken away, or that you will be taken away?”

“Of course, the former, Senior,” said Jiang Hao half-heartedly.

The Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower was very important to him, but he wouldn’t give his life for it. He needed to defend himself.

“Your lies are getting weaker,” said Hong Yuye. She waited for Jiang Hao to brew some tea..

Chapter 213: How Do You Plan To Thank Me?

After a while, Hong Yuye picked up the teacup and took a sniff.

“The Thousand Flower Snow tea has a better scent than the Red Sleeve tea and the Snow Queen Spring.”

Jiang Hao breathed a sigh of relief. Thousand Flower Snow tea cost 200 spirit stones, and he had already bought some beforehand. He hadn’t brewed it until now.

“Besides someone trying to steal my flower, is there anything else?” asked Hong Yuye after a while.

Jiang Hao hesitated and decided not to tell her about the task Gui was going to give him. That matter was related to him alone, and Hong Yuye probably wouldn’t get involved in it.

He needed to find himself a suitable undercover route and blend in with the group.

Reclusive, powerful, and mysterious—that was what he had to make himself appear as. As long as they thought he was all of those things, things would go smoothly. However, he had to make sure he didn’t steal the limelight from Dan Yuan in the process.

“There is nothing else that is important, but I have some guesses about their backgrounds,” Jiang Hao said.

Hong Yuye wasn’t interested. After finishing her tea, she walked to the bathroom, glanced at the wooden tub, and then returned to the second-floor balcony. Jiang Hao stood behind her. He didn’t want to stand beside her and get pushed down like last time.

“What about your condition? Are you cured of the poison?” she asked.

“Yes, Senior. Thank you.”

“In that case...” Hong Yuye turned around and looked at Jiang Hao with a smile.

“How do you plan to thank me?”

That caught Jiang Hao off guard.

“Soon, I will come to take a bath here. Prepare silver moon flower petals for me,” Hong Yuye said. “Any problem?”

“Um...” Jiang Hao felt a bit worried. He didn’t know how many spirit stones the silver moon flower petals would cost. Just as he hesitated, an overwhelming aura oppressed him.

“No problem,” he hurriedly replied.

“Good.” Hong Yuye smiled and disappeared in a red shadow. “If you’re not prepared, I’ll shred a layer of your skin.”

Jiang Hao breathed a sigh of relief as she disappeared. He hadn’t thought about thanking her.

Hong Yuye's cold demeanor had made him act in the same way. He sighed and decided to inquire about silver moon petals. He hoped the price wouldn't be outrageous.

He headed to the Snow Lotus Pavilion.

"Ten spirit stones?" Jiang Hao was quite surprised by the price. It was cheap. But soon, he realized that he had misunderstood. "It's for one petal. We usually sell them in sets of ninety-nine petals."

In other words, it was 990 spirit stones for one set. "Can I take a look at the petals?" Jiang Hao asked.

"Of course."

The flower petals were pure white but not very large. Jiang Hao estimated that it would take about nine petals to fill his palm. The wooden tub would require thirty to forty handfuls of petals to fill everything.

In other words, he would need about three thousand spirit stones.

Compared to the information about the poison, spending three thousand spirit stones was nothing. He could have been dead by now.

Leaving the Snow Lotus Pavilion, Jiang Hao decided to sell the talismans he had recently made. Tomorrow, he would start making more powerful talismans, which would bring him more spirit stones. He decided to buy a set of ninety-nine petals first to ensure he had them in case Hong Yuye suddenly appeared.

While setting up his stall, a Foundation Establishment Realm cultivator walked in front of Jiang Hao's stall and observed the talismans. "Do you have the Hundred Thousand Swords Talisman?" he asked.

Jiang Hao shook his head. "For now, no."

"If you don't have it, just say so. What do you mean by 'for now'? Do you expect me to believe that a Foundation Establishment Realm cultivator could make the Hundred Thousand Swords Talismans?" said

Duan Guan as he stared coldly at Jiang Hao. "Be more practical when doing business and don't be so presumptuous."

Jiang Hao was stunned. He wondered if the person was doing this on purpose to provoke him. 'Is he from the Heavenly Joy Pavilion?'

"I'll take ten Healing Talismans and ten Ten Thousand Swords Talismans." Duan Guan threw down six hundred spirit stones, picked up the talismans, and turned to leave.

Watching the person leave, Jiang Hao couldn't help but sigh wearily. The customer seemed hard to get along with but seemed to have a lot of spirit stones. They didn't have any grudges against each other, so why was he acting that way?

Finally, he took out six Healing Talismans and six Ten Thousand Swords Talismans and laid them on display.

He still had around ten talismans remaining. They were not easy to sell. After a long time, he only managed to sell five talismans, totaling 750 spirit stones. He still needed two hundred more to buy the flower petals. He thought that if he came back tomorrow, he could earn enough.

On his way back, Jiang Hao unexpectedly ran into Liu Xingchen.

"It's been a long time since I last saw you, Junior Brother Jiang," Liu Xingchen said.

"Greetings, Senior Brother Liu. It's been quite a while," Jiang Hao replied politely.

"I've been busy with the affairs relating to the heavenly Saint Sect. Thankfully, we managed to kill and capture some enemies, and we also caught the traitor who leaked information. The Hall of Merit has listed the top ten rankings for this achievement. Congratulations, Junior Brother Jiang, for not making it to the top ten this time."

"Senior Brother must be joking. Last time was just an accident."

“But your achievements are not insignificant. You ventured into the Devil’s Den. I’m sure you’ve gotten some benefits from it. This time, I did see someone in the top ten who seemed interesting,” said Liu Xingchen. “Do you remember Bai Ye?”

Jiang Hao’s heart missed a beat at the name, but he remained calm.

“I remember,” Jiang Hao said calmly.

“Bai Ye used to keep a low profile, but since the Heavenly Saint Sect’s attack, he has been pretty active. He made it to the top five. I also found out about his cultivation realm. He is in the late stage of the Primordial Spirit Realm. I think he was trying to make it to the top ten,” said Liu Xingchen in admiration.

‘Late stage of the Primordial Spirit Realm..

He was two stages higher than Jiang Hao. He needed to wait a bit longer to reach that stage.

He was in the top five because of his contributions. If he were harmed, it would be troublesome for Jiang Hao. The Law Enforcement Hall would seriously investigate the matter.

‘I will wait a few years until I can reach the late stage of the Primordial Spirit Realm...

Now that Bai Ye was in the top five, the consequences of killing or harming him would be unimaginable.

Jiang Hao realized that the rules of the Heavenly Note Sect protected him, but they also restrained him from taking action against others.

However, there was one thing he had to be careful about. He had to make sure Bai Ye was no longer on the top ten disciples list. Otherwise, it would be even more difficult to deal with him.

“So... just reaching the late stage of the Primordial Spirit Realm is enough to get into the list as the tenth top disciple of the sect?” Jiang Hao asked.

As far as Jiang Hao could remember, Man Long had held the tenth position for the longest time. He was the only senior Jiang Hao knew from that list. He had hardly heard of the others.

“In theory, yes. But it might not always be like that. The tenth-ranking top disciple, Man Long, is now at the peak of the Primordial Spirit Realm. However, it was you who helped capture Xuanyuan Tai, and he reaped the benefits and rewards. Those rewards and resources helped him advance to the peak of the Primordial Spirit Realm. So now, if you want to pursue the position of the tenth-ranking top disciple, you need to be at least at the peak of the Primordial Spirit Realm or beyond. Achievements may earn you points, but strength is most important. Bai Ye is probably older than Man Long, so he’s at a disadvantage. I heard that he is close to advancing to the next stage,” Liu Xingchen explained.

“The tenth-ranking disciple is already at the peak of the Primordial Spirit Realm?! What about the one who ranks first?” asked Jiang Hao. The gap in strength was too huge.

“The first disciple is said to be a senior from White Moon Lake. She might have already transcended the Spiritual Refinement Realm,” Liu Xingchen said.

Jiang Hao couldn’t believe it. “The difference between the top ten disciples themselves is so great!”

Liu Xingchen smiled. “Sometimes, the first place is far ahead. Unfortunately, my strength is still not enough. Otherwise, I would also like to pursue the position of one of the top ten disciples. I heard they have many privileges and even the possibility of receiving personal guidance from the Sect Master.”

The top ten senior disciples attracted a lot of attention. However, they could keep the sect safe with that kind of strength.

Jiang Hao thought for a while. It was difficult to make it to the top ten when such talented people were already too far ahead..

Chapter 214: Breaking All Laws With A Single Strike

Becoming one of the top ten disciples had its perk. If he could reach that level by increasing his cultivation, he would have thought about it.

However, as far as anyone was concerned, he was in the late stage of the Foundation Establishment Realm. To suddenly advance to the Primordial Spirit Realm would arouse suspicion.

It was difficult to become one of the top ten disciples. But if he could somehow manage it, his status would be elevated, and he would encounter fewer troubles.

Even the Pavilion Master of the Heavenly Joy Pavilion wouldn't dare take action against him. The only problem was that he would be on some people's radar.

It would be quite useless to reach that status. If he continued to keep a low profile, others would seek him out to cause trouble.

For example, people kept causing problems in the Spirit Herb Garden.

However, if he were to become one of the top ten disciples, who would dare go against him or cause trouble at the Spirit Herb Garden?

Would Bai Ye have the audacity to use various techniques against him at that time?

"Is it possible for Bai Ye to succeed?" Jiang Hao suddenly asked.

Currently, he was no match for Bai Ye, and it would be difficult to stop him if he were to make a breakthrough now.

Bai Ye's techniques were too powerful. Even Manlong might not be a match for him.

"I know very little about Bai Ye, since he rarely goes out. But as for whether he can succeed or not, I do have some guesses," Liu Xingchen casually said. "I think it is difficult for Bai Ye to succeed. When I was investigating the traitor, I encountered Manlong, and we chatted for a while. He said that Bai Ye is not an easy person to provoke. Although his cultivation level is average, if someone wants to defeat him in his own domain, they will have to go all out, and even then, the odds would be three to seven, with Bai

Ye having the advantage. If you take him into an unfamiliar environment, even Manlong could defeat him barehanded.”

“When challenging the top ten disciples, the location is chosen by the challenger. So, even if Manlong loses this time, he could defeat Bai Ye the following year and reclaim his position as one of the top ten disciples. As for Bai Ye, he can’t afford to lose.”

Jiang Hao nodded.

Even if he knew where Bai Ye was, he couldn’t just go there. He didn’t know what technique Bai Ye would use in his own territory. That was troublesome.

However, it seemed Bai Ye wasn’t very talented in cultivation. He must be using other means to advance in his cultivation realm. Jiang Hao recalled the nutrient bead from before.

‘If he continues his research like this, how terrifying would he become in the future?’ wondered Jiang Hao.

For him, Bai Ye was far more terrifying than Manlong.

Jiang Hao understood Manlong a little. He advanced fast and had talent. However, Bai Ye was a different matter. Jiang Hao couldn’t see through him at all.

Most importantly, Manlong hadn’t attacked him, but Bai Ye had.

“Does one have to be a direct disciple to become one of the top ten disciples?” Jiang Hao asked.

“No.” Liu Xingchen smiled. “Anyone from the inner sect is fine as well, as long as they are strong enough and not too old. However, it was not easy to become the lead disciple. Even if he won the ranking of the tenth disciple, he would still have to take the first three tests.’

Jiang Hao had a rough understanding of the situation. The top ten disciples were definitely very powerful. He could strive for that kind of goal, where he could become so powerful that he could break all laws with a single strike and remain unscathed. However, it wasn't time yet.

With the speed of his advancement and Han Ming as a competitor, he had a chance. It would be good if he could always be above Han Ming.

Junior Brother Jiang, do you plan to go out of the sect in the near future?" asked Liu Xingchen. "The Law Enforcement Hall asked me to inquire."

"I don't have any plans of going out." Jiang Hao was surprised. "Why would they suddenly ask me that?"

"They want to earn money from you, Junior Brother Jiang. You've done well.

They're worried that they won't be able to earn money if you're off the list. After all, judging from the last mission, Law Enforcement Hall had made a killing. Although it was just a few thousand spirit stones, you returned the money very quickly. They were impressed."

Jiang Hao was speechless. If it wasn't for Liu Xingchen, he wouldn't have been able to stay on the watch list.

"If there's a chance, I'll look for traitors and try to build a relationship with them."

After that, Liu Xingchen said goodbye and left.

'I need to think about what to do with Bai Ye. He might win. If he has a backup plan, Manlong might not be able to snatch back his position even next year,' thought Jiang Hao. 'No one knows what kinds of benefits Bai Ye would receive. He manipulated everything by learning about the environment. If I seal my five senses, will I be safe from him?'

Along the way, Jiang Hao thought of ways to deal with Bai Ye. Jiang Hao realized that he needed to get stronger. In the face of absolute strength, all methods and techniques were useless.

Right now, he was still weak. He could withstand Bai Ye's constant stealthy attacks, but he was unable to launch a counterattack.

Jiang Hao thought of Liu Xingchen. Liu Xingchen was not far from advancing to the middle stage of the Primordial Spirit Realm. He should reach the late stage soon.

At that time, he might even become one of the top ten disciples. From the looks of it, that might be a good thing.

The stronger Liu Xingchen was, the easier it would be for him to help Jiang Hao. The only thing he needed to be cautious about was to prevent Liu Xingchen from pulling him into trouble.

When Jiang Hao reached the Spirit Herb Garden of the Cliff of Broken Hearts, he saw two Golden Core Realm cultivators standing at the entrance. One of them seemed a little tipsy. The other one had a tanned complexion. The former was a man, and the latter was a woman.

Jiang Hao had seen these two people before. The one who was a little drunk was Jiu Wu, and the dark-skinned one was called Fei Zhu. Both of them were True Disciples of the Cliff of Broken Hearts.

"Greetings, Seniors," said Jiang Hao politely.

It wasn't unusual for seniors to visit the garden. He didn't pay much attention to them.

They didn't pay any attention to him either. They just nodded.

Jiang Hao entered the garden.

Jiu Wu narrowed his eyes. "Isn't that Jiang Hao who once made it to the top ten disciples list?"

"Yes, it's him. He manages the Spirit Herb Garden. He was lucky to encounter some good things when he ventured out of the sect. Now, he is in the late stage of the Foundation Establishment Realm," said Fei Zhu.

“Perhaps he relies on his luck since he knows his own abilities are not good enough. Staying here is safer for him,” Jiu Wu said.

“Yes, I heard that he is a bit righteous and very naive. It’s better for him to stay here.” Fei Zhu nodded.

They didn’t discuss him further. Jiang Hao was just like any other ordinary disciple, after all. He might not even be here next time.

That’s how it was on the path of cultivation. People you used to know would disappear without a trace. Never to be seen again..

Chapter 215 The Demoness Kills with a Flick Of A Finger

Jiang Hao paid no attention to what others felt about him. If he constantly cared about the opinions of others, he would not be able to cultivate in peace.

The sect was vast, and the majority of people who knew him did not like him. Their words were mostly unpleasant. It was best to ignore them.

He had ignored them for many years. As long as others didn't pay attention to him, he was good.

He saw Ning Xuan in the Spirit Herb Garden. He had met her before in the Devil's Den. She was talking to another senior in the early stage of the Primordial Spirit Realm.

Jiang Hao greeted them respectfully when he reached them.

Watching them leave, Jiang Hao was somewhat concerned. Judging from their actions, it seemed that they were planning to do something in the Spirit Herb Garden.

'I hope they don't bring me any trouble.'

After thinking about it for a moment, he started tending to the spirit herbs.

Cheng Chou suddenly ran up to Jiang Hao. "Senior Brother Jiang, there is one spirit herb in very poor condition."

Jiang Hao was not surprised. Such things were common in the Spirit Herb Garden.

After some investigation, he found that it was a newly transplanted spirit herb that was not adapting well to the soil and spiritual energy.

"No need to worry." Jiang Hao began to tend to the spirit herb. He suddenly remembered something. "Is it the end of the year already?"

"Yes. It's December." Cheng Chou nodded.

"You can inform Junior Sister Xiao Li that she can leave in half a month for her visit."

Cheng Chou seemed skeptical but still nodded in agreement.

After tending to the spirit herbs, Jiang Hao observed Cheng Chou for a moment. "Although it's a bit rushed, it should be enough. Before you set off, I'll assist you in your advancement."

Cheng Chou was startled. He bowed to Jiang Hao gratefully. "Thank you, Senior Brother Jiang."

Jiang Hao didn't say anything more.

Initially, he had no plans to guide Cheng Chou.

When he was taken away by the people from the Law Enforcement Hall, the spirit beast had found him in a cell and helped him.

It was only at that time that he decided to guide Cheng Chou in his cultivation.

Cheng Chou had been reliable and helpful. Jiang Hao couldn't send Xiao Li out for a visit to her house alone, after all.

Jiang Hao felt that helping Cheng Chou was the right thing to do.

Cheng Chou finished his work with an anxious heart. When he returned home, he doubted whether he had imagined the whole thing.

At the same time, he felt that Jiang Hao had offered to help just as a formality. Such empty promises were common in a demonic sect.

When the time came, they always had excuses.

However, his expectations and anticipation grew. He was looking forward to advancing to the Foundation Establishment Realm.

The happiness almost made him forget himself.

Fortunately, after spending a long time with Jiang Hao, he had learned to contain his happiness and appear indifferent.

"Senior Brother Cheng, what's making you so happy?" Lin Shan, a cultivator at the eighth stage of the Lifeblood Refinement Realm, looked at Cheng Chou and smiled.

Cheng Chou touched his face and hastily said, "Nothing... nothing."

"Nothing? I thought you were going to laugh. It seems like something great has happened." Lin Shan chuckled.

Cheng Chou felt quite embarrassed. "Where is Junior Sister Xiao Li?"

"She just came out of the cafeteria and probably went somewhere else for a stroll." Lin Shan sighed. "Junior Sister Xiao Li is really something. She treats this place like her own backyard, without any concerns. Others can only dream of something like that."

Cheng Chou nodded.

Xiao Li had been like that from the beginning. Although she listened to Senior Brother Jiang, she didn't care about others at all.

The other inner sect disciples rarely came to the area, so nobody paid any attention to loiterers.

Cheng Chou was curious whether Xiao Li would successfully advance to the fourth stage of the Lifeblood Refinement Realm this time. If she could, there was an 80-90% chance that Junior Sister Xiao Li would become a True Disciple.

Thinking about Xiao Li's terrifying abilities, Cheng Chou's joy wilted in his heart.

'Calm down,' he thought to himself. 'You will be stronger once you reach the Foundation Establishment Realm.'

He had to stay on guard and avoid trouble. After bidding farewell to Lin Shan, he went to look for Xiao Li.

In the distant woods, Jiang Hao stood on a tree branch, gazing at Cheng Chou.

"Master, what are you looking at?" the beast asked.

"I'm observing a person," Jiang Hao said.

"Are they good or bad?"

"They're okay." Jiang Hao turned around and walked away.

The rabbit quickly followed. "Master, how about observing me?"

Jiang Hao glanced at the beast and chuckled.

In the following days, Jiang Hao occasionally observed Cheng Chou and talked to him to ask about the situation outside the sect. He found no problems at all... until the seventh day.

After Jiang Hao finished watering the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower, he felt a sense of impending disaster.

Anxiety arose in his heart, as if a presence far beyond his strength had locked onto him.

'They're here.'

Jiang Hao suppressed his fear and quickly left the courtyard. He headed toward his master's house.

He had to seek his master's help if he wanted to survive. However, no matter how fast he walked, the inexplicable feeling continued to surround him.

'What level of existence is this?'

Just the aura was enough to overpower him.

The Hong Meng Heart Sutra was operating by default. He couldn't sense the enemy or escape.

'Where are they?' Jiang Hao searched around. But still, he found nothing.

He realized that he couldn't face this person directly, even if they were after the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower. He couldn't do anything.

At the same time, at the Hundred Flowers Lake, Baizhi knelt in front of Hong Yuye.

"Sect Master."

As the Acting Sect Master, and an Elder, Baizhi would never retreat in the face of a challenge.

"The person is quite strong." Hong Yuye was sitting in the pavilion.

"The Guardian Array has already been activated. All that's left is for the Sect Master to give an order," Baizhi said, bowing her head.

"The person is from the northern region. We don't know which sect he belongs to." Hong Yuye poured herself a cup of tea. Her slender index finger reached into the cup and stirred the tea.

Then, with a flick of her finger, the tea flowed out of the cup, dividing into seven water droplets in midair.

The fourth water droplet soared.

The opponent was furious and wanted to kill.

"Deactivate the Guardian Array," Hong Yuye said calmly.

With another flick of her finger, the first water droplet flew into the sky.

Boom!

There was thunder above the clouds.

Baizhi didn't understand the Sect Master's intentions at first, but soon she saw a collision of forces in the sky.

The opponent seemed surprised.

Then the second water droplet flew into the sky.

Boom!

The opponent seemed amazed.

The third water droplet followed.

Another boom sounded. This time, the opponent was angry.

The fourth water droplet soared.

The opponent was furious and wanted to kill.

The fifth water droplet flew into the sky.

The opponent was bloodthirsty and furious now.

The sixth water droplet flew into the sky.

The sky roared, thunder raged, and Baizhi felt the opponent's unwillingness.

The seventh water droplet shot into the sky.

The power of the opponent dissipated. They were helpless and angry.

Baizhi snapped back to reality. She looked at the Sect Master in fear and admiration.

The Sect Master killed enemies while casually enjoying her tea!

"Capture him and lock him in the Lawless Tower." Hong Yuye sipped her tea.

"Understood."

After Baizhi left, Hong Yuye set down her teacup. She gazed at the calm lake surface, then pressed her hand against her red lips and coughed twice.

Chapter 216 The Spirit Beast Disappeared Again

At the Cliff of Broken Hearts, Jiang Hao stopped by a large tree. It wasn't far from his master's residence. But as soon as he arrived, the sense of being targeted by a terrifying power disappeared.

When he looked up, he noticed flashes of lightning in the sky. If his guess was correct, someone had engaged with the person who had come after him.

Before long, the thunder in the sky began to dissipate, and the sense of danger was gone.

'It's over?' Jiang Hao found it hard to believe.

Perhaps, in the eyes of others, it was just thunder in the sky. But he knew that the person who had come after him must have been very powerful, especially since they had locked on to him from the beginning. His strength would have made no difference if the enemy had attacked him.

'The gap in strength is too big. I need to find a way to become stronger as soon as possible,' Jiang Hao thought.

He stayed rooted to the place for half a day before heading to the Spirit Herb Garden.

Three days later, Jiang Hao still didn't sense any danger or hear any news about the terrifying encounter. The Heavenly Note Sect paid no attention to it. Even those at the stone tablet were quiet. Everything felt like an illusion.

Now that things had returned to normal, he waited patiently for either the Heavenly Note Sect or Dan Yuan to say something about the incident.

Jiang Hao found Cheng Chou in the Spirit Herb Garden.

"Senior Brother Jiang?" Cheng Chou seemed excited, but he quickly restrained himself.

"Let's go to your house. I will help you advance to the Foundation Establishment Realm," Jiang Hao said calmly. With his current cultivation at the early stage of the Primordial Spirit Realm, it was not difficult for him to assist someone in the ninth stage of the Lifeblood Refinement Realm to reach the Foundation Establishment Realm.

Cheng Chou suppressed his excitement and nodded.

In a small courtyard, Cheng Chou sat cross-legged and circulated his Heavenly Sound Hundred Revolutions technique. Jiang Hao watched him and occasionally gave instructions.

"Your mind is a bit restless, and it's causing the Hundred Sounds in your body to fail to resonate," Jiang Hao commented. He waited for Cheng Chou to calm down.

After a long time, Jiang Hao saw that Cheng Chou's aura had stabilized, his power was balanced, and the Hundred Sounds had reached the most harmonious state.

"Not bad," Jiang Hao said. With Cheng Chou's talent, achieving such a balance in the Hundred Sounds was indeed commendable.

After waiting for some time, Jiang Hao said, "Open your mouth."

Whoosh!

A pill flew into Cheng Chou's mouth. The pill's power immediately disrupted the balance of his cultivation.

"Don't worry too much. Maintain the previous power balance and feel the changes in your body. No need to worry," Jiang Hao reassured him. The immense power caused Cheng Chou to feel pain, but he gritted his teeth and continued to maintain the previous balance of his power.

In his view, he was lucky. He had a senior who was guiding him. It was an advantage that the others didn't have. This also meant that his success rate was higher than the others.

However, the tremendous pain almost overwhelmed his consciousness. It was the first time he had experienced how difficult it was to advance to the Foundation Establishment Realm.

After a long time, he felt the pain starting to fade away. His body was filled with a completely new strength, far beyond what he had imagined. He couldn't have dreamed that he would possess such a level of power.

His advancement to the Foundation Establishment Realm was successful!

When he woke up, he realized that the sky had already darkened and Jiang Hao was no longer by his side.

He was filled with gratitude. As he stepped out, he saw two people standing at the door. It was Senior Brother Mu Qi, whom he occasionally met in the Spirit Herb Garden, and Senior Sister Miao Tinglian.

"Senior Brother Mu... Senior Sister Miao, greeting." He bowed to them.

"I told you he would reach the Foundation Establishment Realm," said Miao Tinglian with a smile.

"Indeed," said Mu Qi with a friendly smile. "You are Junior Brother Cheng Chou, right? The one who works at the Spirit Herb Garden?"

"Yes," Cheng Chou said as he bowed his head.

"We discovered that you were advancing to the Foundation Establishment Realm," said Mu Qi. "Do you want to come with us to meet the Cliff Master?"

Since he had advanced to the Foundation Establishment Realm, he would become an inner sect disciple. They headed to Ku Wu Chang's house.

"Are you saying you want to continue working in the Spirit Herb Garden, just as you did as an outer sect disciple under Jiang Hao's supervision?" Ku Wu Chang asked.

"Yes," Cheng Chou said as he knelt on the ground.

"Junior Brother Cheng wants to continue doing what he did before as an outer sect disciple without interfering with Junior Brother Jiang's duties," Mu Qi explained.

Many people in the Cliff of Broken Hearts knew that Jiang Hao liked to stay in the Spirit Herb Garden. Although others were not familiar with Jiang Hao, no one competed with him. However, since the long-term guardianship of the Spirit Herb Garden only required one inner sect disciple, after confirming that Cheng Chou had advanced successfully, Jiang Hao went to the market to sell talismans. While setting up his stall, he encountered the client from before.

additional person needed to be approved.

Ku Wu Chang looked at Cheng Chou indifferently.

"You often take care of Xiao Li. Is that correct?"

"Yes."

"Continue doing that."

"Then I will take Junior Brother Cheng to find a new place to live," said Mu Qi.

As for Xiao Li, he had occasionally heard Miao Tinglian mention her. If what she said was true, Xiao Li could be the next True Disciple.

...

After confirming that Cheng Chou had advanced successfully, Jiang Hao went to the market to sell talismans. While setting up his stall, he encountered the client from before.

"Didn't you say you didn't have the Hundred Thousand Swords Talisman last time? You made it sound as though that was a temporary issue. You still don't have it today. Remember not to brag so much next time."

In the end, he bought all the talismans again.

Jiang Hao had enough spirit stones to buy a second batch of silver moon petals. However, it was barely enough.

The next day, Cheng Chou informed him that he could continue working in the Spirit Herb Garden.

He also mentioned that the Cliff Master had mentioned Xiao Li.

Jiang Hao didn't find that surprising. It was inevitable for others to find out about Xiao Li's unique capabilities.

Since the Cliff Master had no intention of intervening, that was fine.

What surprised Jiang Hao was that Cheng Chou had chosen to stay in the Spirit Herb Garden. Although having a helper would make things much easier for Jiang Hao, people usually strove for higher status and positions. One should always aim high.

He had thought Cheng Chou would have left the Spirit Herb Garden after advancing to the Foundation Establishment Realm. Jiang Hao had to admit that it was good to have Cheng Chou around.

Jiang Hao suddenly realized that, with Cheng Chou around, he might be driven to the mines one day. That wouldn't be bad, either.

Three days later, Xiao Li appeared in front of Jiang Hao. She was full of excitement. She had already reached the fourth stage of the Lifeblood Refinement Realm. She had been in the Heavenly Note Sect for more than two years.

Jiang Hao was concerned to see that she was wearing the ring he gave her around her neck again. Fortunately, the ring looked like a necklace, so it didn't look strange.

"Are the things ready?" Jiang Hao asked her.

"Yes. I have prepared everything they like to eat and put it in the storage treasure," Xiao Li said.

Jiang Hao nodded and gave Cheng Chou some spirit stones and talismans.

After seeing them off, Jiang Hao sighed wearily. As time passed, Xiao Li's parents grew older. There might come a day when she might not see them again. Every visit could turn out to be the last one.

When he returned to the courtyard, Jiang Hao saw a figure in a red and white dress crouching beside the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower.

He instinctively looked for the spirit beast. Sure enough, he saw it floating in the river.

"Greetings, Senior." Jiang Hao respectfully greeted her.

"Are the Silver Moon Petals ready?" Hong Yuye stood up and asked.

Chapter 217 The Demoness Wasn't Breathing

Under the setting sun, Hong Yuye stood gracefully. Her figure blended with the evening sun like a dreamy shadow.

"I'm ready." Jiang Hao lowered his head.

The Heaven Extinction Gu poison was ineffective against the person in front of him. It required all his willpower to resist her charm. He always felt that the repression of such emotions would rebound in a very disastrous way.

"Prepare the hot water. I want to take a bath." Hong Yuye walked to the bathroom.

It wasn't difficult to prepare the hot water. After a moment, Jiang Hao stood in front of the wooden tub as the clear water slowly emitted steam. He tested it with his hand and found the temperature slightly hotter than usual. It was for the best. It wouldn't cool down quickly.

He then scattered the silver moon petals into the water.

"Senior, it's ready." Jiang Hao walked out of the bathroom.

Hong Yuye stood up and slowly walked into the room.

"Guard the door," she said.

Jiang Hao breathed a sigh of relief. He was grateful that he didn't need to stay inside this time. Hearing her take a bath was torture for him. If he were in the room, he would want to turn around and look. That was inappropriate and embarrassing.

He stood at the door and took out the Fine Grade Six Talismans book, intending to study the Hundred Thousand Swords Talismans. He had been humiliated several times in the past few days for not having those talismans.

The material cost for the last three talismans in the set was considerable— a hundred spirit stones per stack, with a market price of around sixty. The first three talismans in the set were the Healing Talismans, the Ten Thousand Swords Talisman, and the Earth-Shaking Talisman. The Earth-Shaking Talisman could cause the surrounding earth to tremble and shake, but its effect was not very strong.

The last three talismans were the Hundred Thousand Swords Talisman, the Earth-Crushing Talisman, and the Force-Deflection Talisman. The Hundred Thousand Swords Talisman was an advanced version of the Ten Thousand Swords Talisman, and the Earth-Crushing Talisman was an advanced version of the Earth-Shaking Talisman that could not only cause vibrations but also collapse and shatter the ground. The Force-Deflection Talisman was a defensive talisman, particularly effective at deflecting physical impacts.

In Jiang Hao's opinion, the Hundred Thousand Swords Talisman was the best, while the other two were somewhat difficult. So, he decided to learn the Hundred Thousand Swords Talisman first and consider whether to learn the other two, depending on how they would sell.

With his decision made, Jiang Hao sat cross-legged and entered a state of clear and pure meditation. He activated the Clear and Pure Heart ability.

This ability made him forget about time, and he didn't regain consciousness until midnight. He glanced outside and realized that it was past midnight.

'The spirit beast hasn't returned yet?' Jiang Hao was surprised.

Just as he was about to get up, he discovered himself standing in front of the bathroom. It was only then that he recalled that Hong Yuye had come to take a bath. But... It was already so late. Wasn't she done?

He knocked on the door. "Senior?"

No one responded.

He knocked twice more. "Senior, are you inside?"

Still, no one responded.

He hesitated a moment. "Senior, I'm coming in."

Creak!

Jiang Hao slowly opened the door and glanced inside. He was startled. There was a woman in the wooden tub.

"Senior?" Jiang Hao called out again. The woman didn't move in the tub, so he walked in.

Hong Yuye was so strong that she could completely mask her aura. However, this time, it was different. He couldn't even sense her breathing. It was as though she was dead.

Taking a deep breath, Jiang Hao approached the edge of the wooden tub and reached out his hand toward the woman's neck.

He wanted to check her pulse to make sure she was okay.

Just as his hand was about to touch her neck, Hong Yuye suddenly turned and looked at him. Her eyes slowly opened.

Their eyes met.

"Senior, I can explain!" Jiang Hao said.

Bang!

As soon as he finished speaking, Jiang Hao crashed into the wall. A searing pain spread throughout his back.

Jiang Hao was on the ground and in extreme pain.

"Close the door," said Hong Yuye calmly. "Turn around with your back to me. Use your technique to heat the water in the tub."

Jiang Hao struggled to get up. He didn't dare refuse.

After closing the door, he sat cross-legged and used his technique to protect it from the ground to the wooden tub behind him.

"You really are bold," said Hong Yuye.

"Senior, this is a misunderstanding," Jiang Hao said.

"Misunderstanding?" Hong Yuye's voice was calm.

At this moment, the sound of water splashing in the tub reached Jiang Hao's ears. An image of Hong Yuye pouring water on her body flashed through his mind.

He shook his head to brush off the thought.

"Senior, you've been here for more than half a day. I called you, but you didn't reply. I only came in to check on you because I was worried. I called you several times..."

"So, you thought I was dead?" Hong Yuye asked.

"I never had such an intention, Senior," Jiang Hao said in embarrassment.

He did think she was dead because he couldn't sense her aura or her breath. However, the fact that she didn't even move when he called her and came into the room was strange.

"Someone locked onto the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower a few days ago, and then the power disappeared. Was it you, Senior?" Jiang Hao asked.

"You'll have to ask your sect about that," Hong Yuye said.

Jiang Hao couldn't really ask that. He didn't know how powerful the Elders of the twelve branches were.

Splash!

The water splashed in the tub.

"Next time, just use one set of silver moon petals. Two sets are too many," said Hong Yuye.

Jiang Hao nodded.

He hadn't known that the petals would bloom.

Splash!

The water splashed again. Hong Yuye was coming out of the tub.

Jiang Hao heard the sound of bare feet stepping on the ground.

"What were you listening to?"

Jiang Hao was suddenly startled by the crisp, questioning voice.

"Nothing." Jiang Hao calmed his mind.

Hong Yuye walked past him. She was already dressed, but she was barefoot.

Jiang Hao caught a faint whiff of a fragrance that was unique to her.

He exhaled and calmed himself. Then he followed her out.

"Do you remember what you just saw?" Hong Yuye asked.

"I didn't see anything, Senior," Jiang Hao said hurriedly.

There had been too many silver moon petals, so he hadn't seen anything at all.

"If you do that again next time, I'll dig out your eyes." Hong Yuye turned around and smiled.

Before Jiang Hao could answer, Hong Yuye sneered. "Don't worry, I won't. But you'll definitely wish I had gouged out your eyes."

Jiang Hao lowered his head and dared not speak.

Chapter 218: What Would She Have Done To Him If He Had Seen Her?

Silver sand was scattered in the courtyard.

Jiang Hao stood by the peach tree and saw Hong Yuye sitting on a wooden chair. She activated some formations in the courtyard and caused the ground to glow faintly.

The light was soft and faint, only enough to see the surroundings. The rooms also had similar formations.

"The tormatrons are nidden under tne grass and trees "" Hong yuye calmly asked. "Are you worried that the light is too conspicuous?"

"With such an important flower in the courtyard, it's better to be cautious," Jiang Hao said while preparing tea for Hong Yuye.

When the tea was ready, Hong Yuye took a sip from the teacup. "Have you planted any other strange things recently?" "No." Jiang Hao shook his head.

Even if there were, he wouldn't tell her.

After a long time, Hong Yuye finished her tea. "Your ability to hide treasures is worse than I thought."

She glanced at the location where Jiang Hao had hidden the Nine Rings of Heaven and Earth.

Jiang Hao pretended not to know anything about any treasure.

"Take care of my flower. It has been four years, but there has been no progress." Hong Yuye stood up and disappeared on the spot.

Only after Hong Yuye left did Jiang Hao breathe a sigh of relief. He recalled the moment when he had seen her in the wooden tub. If there hadn't been too many silver moon petals, what would he have seen?

What would she have done to him if that had happened? He didn't want to find out.

As for Hong Yuye laying there lifeless, he didn't know if she had done it intentionally, or it had just happened.

He couldn't do anything about it. He needed to get stronger.

Now he needed to focus on Bai Ye and study the requirements for becoming one of the top ten disciples. He could pursue that path in the future.

After that, he should be able to stay peacefully in the Heavenly Note Sect.

However, because of the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower, more and more people would target him nonetheless.

Powerful individuals outside the southern region would start to become aware, and they would inevitably send more people after him. He hoped he would find more helpful people like Liu Xingchen.

'I wonder if these people are all just... fish being reeled in by Elder Baizhi. She is indeed terrifying.'

Jiang Hao returned to his room to make talismans. He only heard the sound of the spirit beast returning to the courtyard when it was already dawn.

It said that it stayed at a friend's place.

Jiang Hao smiled knowingly. It had probably woken up in the middle of the night and had trouble finding its way back.

The danger mentioned by Dan Yuan had already disappeared, so Jiang Hao could only wait for the follow-up meeting.

He also wanted to see when Gui would come. If there was no news from them, that would be the best.

He could continue taking care of the Spirit Herb Garden and accumulate his cultivation. In the meantime, he could also make talismans to earn spirit stones.

Two peaceful months passed, and Jiang Hao stood in the courtyard. The Immortal Peach Tree had grown to the height of a child. It had been growing faster lately.

Unfortunately, there was no progress with the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower. He continued watering it every day. It seemed that its natural growth was very slow.

Before heading to the Spirit Herb Garden, Jiang Hao checked his attribute panel.

[Name: Jiang Hao]

[Age: 24]

[Cultivation: Early Stage of the Primordial Spirit Realm]

[Cultivation Method: Heavenly Sound Hundred Revolutions, Hong Meng Heart

Sutra]

[Divine Ability: Nine Revolutions Death Substitution (unique), Daily Appraisal,

Clear and Pure Heart, Reappearance of Hidden Spirit, Divine Might]

[Lifeblood: 63/100 (can be cultivated)] [Cultivation: 62/100 (can be cultivated)]

[Divine Abilities: 2/3 (unobtainable)]

‘Twenty-four years old...’ Jiang Hao couldn’t help but feel a bit emotional. He vaguely remembered when he had reached his Foundation Establishment Realm at the age of nineteen.

Now, five years had passed, and he was in the early stage of the Primordial Spirit Realm.

If everything went smoothly this year, he should be able to advance to the middle stage of the Primordial Spirit Realm.

He suddenly remembered Han Ming.

‘I wonder how Junior Brother Han is doing. He is now twenty-three years old, so he probably still has some time before reaching beyond the late stage of the Foundation Establishment Realm. I wonder if he will come to challenge me again.’

Han Ming made things interesting. If he approached him again, he could defeat him with just three moves.

Jiang Hao smiled and left the courtyard. He headed to the Spirit Herb Garden.

On the way, Jiang Hao asked the spirit beast about Lin Zhi’s situation.

“The situation is not good,” the spirit beast said. “Occasionally, I go to teach him martial arts. At first, I taught him fist and foot techniques. Then I realized that he always took a beating, so I taught him some body-refining techniques. After learning that for half a month, I found that he has no talent.”

“And then?” Jiang Hao asked.

Jiang Hao only occasionally paid attention to Lin Zhi and left the spirit beast to guide him.

Whenever he had time, Jiang Hao went to see if the spirit beast had done a good job. So far, the beast had done admirably.

The spirit beast sighed. "I am teaching him how to endure beatings," it said.

"He got beaten up again but managed to avoid getting hit in the vital organs." Jiang Hao nodded but didn't say anything.

It was good for Lin Zhi to learn that. He got beaten up a lot, and he was still at the Lifeblood Refinement Realm.

However, his Star-Moon Lifeblood Refinement Technique had reached the second stage. By the ninth stage, he would probably be able to advance to the Foundation Establishment Realm.

As for the subsequent techniques, Jiang Hao left them with the spirit beast. It would teach him when the time came.

Compared to Lin Zhi, Chu Chuan was making more progress. He was about to reach the third stage of the Lifeblood Refinement Realm. He had been cultivating for only one and a half years.

Jiang Hao suddenly felt a faint aura from the stone slab.

'It seems it's time for the third gathering.'

He had been waiting for a long time.

This gathering came earlier than expected, probably due to the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower.

In the evening, when he returned to his residence, Jiang Hao took out the stone slab and checked it. The gathering would begin at midnight tonight.

‘I need to prepare and be ready to respond to their questions.’

He wanted to make them curious. He needed to prepare something about his background, location, and his purpose.

When midnight came, Jiang Hao entered the stone tablet.

He was somewhat looking forward to Dan Yuan’s response and also wanted to confirm with him whether the person had died, escaped, or been captured.

The Heavenly Note Sect liked capturing enemies alive. In their eyes, capturing someone alive was more valuable than killing them.

Not only could they imprison them in the Lawless Tower, but they could also force the person’s sect to pay a ransom.

If there was no ransom, they could be thrown into the mine for free labor. In short, the Heavenly Note Sect enjoyed squeezing out all the gains they could get from their prisoners..

Chapter 219: Undercover Character Isn ‘t Working Out

Entering the public area, Jiang Hao saw the familiar faces of Dan Yuan and the others.

At the moment, it was still just the four of them.

According to the information he had obtained from the stone tablet, there should be at least two more people. But they hadn’t appeared yet.

“Senior Dan Yuan, greetings!” the group respectfully greeted.

“Do any of you have any questions regarding your cultivation?” Dan Yuan asked.

It seemed that this was a benefit they received for free. For three consecutive times, Dan Yuan had always answered questions about cultivation.

This was beneficial. Unfortunately, Jiang Hao hadn’t asked anything yet, except about the Snow God Pill.

This time, Gui and the others shook their heads. Jiang Hao followed suit.

“If there are no questions, let’s move on to other matters.” Dan Yuan looked at Gui. “Gui, you can ask for anything.”

Gui was delighted. The others understood why Dan Yuan was making the offer. It meant that the information about the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower being in the Heavenly Note Sect was indeed correct.

“So... if the information is correct, has the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower been taken away?” asked Xing.

Dan Yuan shook his head. “He hasn’t returned. The task I intend to give you is related to that. Please try to find information about the person I sent there. Like last time, your information can be exchanged for something else.” The others were somewhat surprised.

First, the fact that the person had failed meant that the Heavenly Note Sect was far from being as simple as they had thought.

Secondly, any piece of information they provided could gain them something big.

Jiang Hao was also thinking about whether he could exchange information to learn something about Hong Yuye. However, the risk was too great.

‘What should I ask?’

“Can I accumulate the rewards?” Jiang Hao asked.

“Of course.” Dan Yuan nodded.

Jiang Hao was tempted, but he still didn’t know what had happened to the person.

He had wanted to find out from Senior Dan Yuan, but it seemed that he didn’t know about it either.

Why did they have to go to inquire about it?

“Senior, why don’t the people behind that person send someone else to inquire in the Heavenly Note Sect?” Gui asked.

Jiang Hao quietly waited for the answer.

“Perhaps they have already gone.” Dan Yuan smiled. He didn’t seem to care much about it.

Jiang Hao wasn’t quite sure about Senior Dan Yuan’s intentions, but his words made Jiang Hao curious.

It meant that someone might have already gone to the Heavenly Note Sect. Two months had passed since the last incident. It was long enough for someone to come to the sect to investigate.

‘I need to find out what kind of person has been sent this time and maybe kill them. That way, I can still be on the suspect list and continue with my undercover operation,’ thought Jiang Hao.

The discussion on the matter ended, and Dan Yuan no longer mentioned anything else.

Gui looked at Jiang Ha. "Give me some more time, and the location of the dragon will soon be determined. I will contact you before the next gathering." "Okay," Jiang Hao said.

"In a few years, the Bright Moon Sect will hold a Dao Conference. It is said that many sects have been invited. If they perform well, they might even enter the Immortal Mansion and Mystic Realm," Xing said.

"There is a group of people overseas who seem to be searching for the

Heavenly Fate Misfortune Pearl, but there has been no trace of it so far. According to some people, it's best if no one finds it. If this thing appears, it will be a disaster for everyone," Liu said.

Jiang Hao just listened. He neither interrupted nor inquired more about it.

After discussing it for some time, Gui suddenly looked at Jiang Hao. "Friend Jing, how much longer will you stay in the Hidden Cloud Prefecture?"

"I will leave once I finish what I came here to do," Jiang Hao said calmly.

This was something he had planned in advance. He came here to do his own business, something that others wouldn't inquire about. He hoped they didn't find out that he was related to the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower.

The gathering ended quickly because there wasn't much information or anything to discuss. Sitting in his room, Jiang Hao began to think about the gathering.

From what Dan Yuan said, it seemed that there was another spy sent to the Heavenly Fragrance Dao Flower.

As for the Dao Conference of the Bright Moon Sect, Jiang Hao didn't care. He didn't plan to go. The Heavenly Fate Misfortune Pearl was no issue either.

He continued to strengthen the seal every day and added more than a hundred layers in a few years' time. However, Gui's matter was a concern. If that wasn't handled properly, it would have repercussions.

During the gathering, he didn't engage in conversations with others or display his value. If this continued, they might stop inviting him to the gatherings, which would result in the failure of his undercover mission.

'I need to find a way to make myself seem important. Perhaps I can inquire about the situation of the previous attacker to establish my status in the gathering. But if Gui's plan fails, I won't be able to create a good impression.' It was already dawn by the time he was done.

Early the next morning, after tidying up the courtyard, Jiang Hao went to the Spirit Herb Garden.

Today was the day when Xiao Li and Cheng Chou would return. It had been two months since they had been gone. Jiang Hao was starting to worry.

"Senior Brother Jiang, this is for you." Xiao Li quickly ran over and handed him a pastry. Then she gave another to the spirit beast behind him. "This one is for the beast."

"Call me Big Brother from now on. I will protect you," the spirit beast said with its chin raised.

"Let's split it in half... half for me and half for you," said Xiao Li.

"What? This is disrespectful," said the beast haughtily.

"I'll take the left half, and you take the right half." Xiao Li held the spirit beast with one hand and started dividing the pastry.

The spirit beast didn't protest.

Jiang Hao didn't pay them much attention and instead looked at Cheng Chou. He had some minor injuries to his body. He wasn't as injured as he had been before.

"How are they?" Jiang Hao walked into the Spirit Herb Garden with the pastry in his hand. Every time Xiao Li returned from her visit, he would ask Cheng Chou for an update about her family.

"The situation is not very good." Cheng Chou glanced at Xiao Li, making sure she was occupied. "Her parents' health is very poor, and they have a new illness. It's like adding insult to injury. When we came back, they looked reluctant. It seemed they were thinking they wouldn't see Xiao Li again."

As Jiang Hao walked through the Spirit Herb Garden, bubbles flew to him and merged into his body.
[Strength +1] [Cultivation +1]

[Spirit +1]

Jiang Hao examined the pastry in his hand and activated the Daily Appraisal.

[Red Bean Cake: A pastry made with great effort by Miao Xiang. It has been contaminated with a hallucinogenic poison due to Xiao Li placing poisonous herbs around the beans.]

He put the pastry in his mouth and chewed it. He realized that the taste was better than before.

"Is there anything else?" Jiang Hao asked.

"They want to see you, Senior Brother Jiang," Cheng Chou said..

Chapter 220: A Slap In The Face

"They want to see me?"

In the Spirit Herb Garden, Jiang Hao stopped in his tracks. He was surprised.

‘Why would they want to see me?’

However, one thing was clear. They didn’t have much time left.

It was all thanks to Xiao Li that they had been able to live relatively better lives in the past few years, but they didn’t have more time now.

“Yes, they want to see you,” said Cheng Chou. “In their eyes, you are Xiao Li’s senior. When Xiao Li visits them, she always mentions you. She tells them about how you scold her, buy her food, and take care of her. She also bragged about the golden ring you gave her. Her parents listen to everything. They know Xiao Li is doing well because of you, Senior Brother Jiang. They might not have much time left, so they want to meet you.”

“I will consider it,” said Jiang Hao.

Currently, he couldn’t leave the sect. Going outside would expose him to various dangers. Some people were always trying to target him.

Without Hong Yuye, anyone could find his location. Once found, he would face attacks. Even if he could go outside, he would put Xiao Li and Cheng Chou in danger. So, without a way to avoid being detected, he wouldn’t leave the sect.

The ones who were most likely keeping an eye on him were the Sunset Immortal Sect and the Heavenly Saint Sect. There was also the Heavenly Joy Pavilion, which was after him.

Once discovered and attacked, he might not even have the time to escape. He was still too weak.

“Senior Brother Jiang, will Xiao Li never grow up?” Cheng Chou hesitated and asked.

It had been two years, and every time Xiao Li returned, she would compare her height. But each time, there was no sign of her growing taller. Although she would often stand on tiptoe and tell her elderly parents that she had grown an inch taller, it wasn't really true. They humored her, but they knew.

Jiang Hao looked at Cheng Chou in confusion.

"The two elders want to see Xiao Li grow up, but she hasn't grown taller in the past two years," said Cheng Chou. "This is the time when children grow a lot..."

"It's because of her special constitution that she grows very slowly," Jiang Hao said.

Cheng Chou talked at length about the two elders and their declining health. After that, Cheng Chou went to attend to his duties.

Jiang Hao sighed and continued to tend to the spirit herbs.

Lian Daozhi had taken away the Tomorrow Night Autumn Flower. Jiang Hao remained vigilant. He didn't know if Bai Ye had any follow-up plans.

During this time, he even appraised the Red Lotus Flower to see if the antidote he used to dispel the poison of the Heart Demon had somehow turned into a new poison.

The result showed that it was just an ordinary Red Lotus Flower.

He only hoped to study the nameless manual a bit longer to find something in his surroundings.

At noon, Jiang Hao went to the market to set up his stall.

In a span of two months, he had bought a packet of silver moon petals and saved up to 1,500 spirit stones. He also had many talismans left.

He waited for the insulting customer to visit, but he hadn't shown up. He was setting up his stall when he heard the familiar voice.

"It's been a few months already. Don't tell me you still don't have the talismans! I bet you won't have them even after a few years. Young people these days don't know how to be realistic and polite," said the senior at the Golden Core Realm.

Jiang Hao looked up and saw that it was indeed the insulting customer from before.

He silently took out the Hundred Thousand Swords Talisman. "Is this what you want, Senior Brother?"

Duan Guan had intended to buy all the other talismans as before when he was surprised to see the Hundred Thousand Swords Talisman. "Just one? Did you just bring one to show off?"

Jiang Hao took out ten Hundred Thousand Swords Talismans. "How many do you want?"

Duan Guan's mouth twitched. "Since you know how to make the Hundred

Thousand Swords Talisman, does that mean you can also make the

Earth-Shattering Talisman?"

"I have it here." Jiang Hao took out an Earth -Shattering Talisman. "What about the Power-control Talisman?" Duan Guan gritted his teeth.

"I don't have those." Jiang Hao shook his head.

He did have it, but he just decided not to tell Duan Guan because he was being very arrogant. He was here to earn spirit stones, not to argue.

"Hmph!" Duan Guan left behind 1,260 spirit stones and bought all of Jiang Hao's talismans.

Jiang Hao felt like he had earned half a month's worth of money and could close his stall for the day. He had over 2,700 spirit stones in total.

He was surprised that, despite the senior's arrogance, he was quite wealthy. "Junior Brother Jiang, it's been a long time." Leng Tian walked over to him.

"Senior Sister Leng, it's good to see you," Jiang Hao greeted her.

Leng Tian's cultivation had reached the late stage of the Foundation Establishment Realm. Her progress had been faster than most people's. She was still a little away from reaching the peak. It seemed that her advancement wasn't just because of her talent but also might have been because of lucky encounters.

"Are you closing your stall, Junior Brother Jiang?" Leng Tian asked softly.

"Senior Sister Leng, what talismans do you need?" Jiang Hao still had some on him.

"Hundred Thousand Swords Talismans and Healing Talismans. Five each," Leng Tian said.

Jiang Hao nodded. He had them.

He earned another 290 spirit stones. Now he had almost three thousand spirit stones.

"Are you going back now, Junior Brother Jiang?" Leng Tian asked.

"I heard from the spirit beast that someone was looking for me before. Was it you, Senior Sister Leng?" Jiang Hao asked.

"Yes. There's something I wanted to ask you. It's related to the talismans you were selling before."

"I'm heading back. If it's convenient for you, you can come to my place, and we can discuss it," Jiang Hao said casually.

Leng Tian readily agreed.

A moment later, they reached Jiang Hao's house.

Upon entering, Leng Tian felt as if she had stepped into a cave. The spiritual energy here was dense, and it made people feel calm. Cultivating here would surely yield twice the results with half the effort.

Ordinary inner sect disciples wouldn't have such a dwelling. She didn't ask about it. It was best to pretend to not know anything.

"Senior Sister Leng, are you looking for the broken talisman from before?" Jiang Hao asked as they entered the hall.

"No." Leng Tian sat at the table. "Those are yours. I came here to ask if you still have an interest in that type of talisman."

"Hm?" Jiang Hao was somewhat surprised. "You have them?"

Obtaining such a talisman was rare. Having another one was simply close to impossible..