

Doctor 1051

Chapter 1051: Giving You a Chance

Second You's meaning was clear to Fang Bai. The few alchemists and artifact refiners in the Martial Artists Trading Market were like local snakes, and him, an outsider who rented a stall for business, was akin to stealing their livelihood, which would inevitably arouse their hostility and even provocation.

Second You was telling Fang Bai that when faced with provocation, he should yield when it was time to yield and bow his head when it was time to bow his head, avoiding confrontation and acting rashly, otherwise he would end up at a disadvantage.

"Brother You, thank you for the warning. I know what to do,"

Fang Bai patted Second You on the shoulder, smiling as he spoke.

Fang Bai didn't like to cause trouble, nor was he afraid of it. He simply wished to quietly craft elixirs and refine artifacts for others in the Martial Artists Trading Market, earning some cultivation resources for his own use and wanting to avoid any conflict with anyone.

However, should anyone provoke him, he wouldn't be polite either. Once they touched his bottom line, he would surely retaliate.

Second You, seeing that Fang Bai was willing to listen to his advice, appeared very pleased and said, "Senior Bai, is there anything else I can help you with? I, Second You, may not have many skills, but having mixed in this Martial Artists Trading Market for many years, I do have some connections."

Fang Bai thought for a moment, then asked, "Brother You, the cultivation resources you earn from your stall here in the market, are they enough for your cultivation needs?"

Second You shook his head and sighed, "Not enough! Far from enough! My stall doesn't have much to offer, so very few martial artists ever visit... cough, to have a customer like you, Senior Bai, once a year would mean I'm lucky."

Second You was a Heaven Level Perfection powerhouse, looking next to break through to the Desolate Level Realm, therefore the cultivation resources he needed were substantial. However, as he was not a disciple of any prestigious sect, but an individual cultivation martial artist, he had to find his own ways to gather the necessary resources.

Each year, Second You would take some time to explore hidden and dangerous places, searching for items of interest to martial artists, which he would then bring back to trade at the market.

For instance, the furnace he traded with Fang Bai was something he stumbled upon by chance, initially thinking it a common furnace. Unexpectedly, Fang Bai took interest in it, trading a medium grade spiritual medicine for it.

This one deal brought Second You an income equivalent to tens of thousands of low-level Essence Stones or dozens of low-level elixirs, which could support his cultivation resource needs for half a year.

And for a martial artist preparing to break through to the Desolate Level Realm, a minimum of tens of thousands of low-level Essence Stones or hundreds of elixirs were needed each year just to maintain the most basic cultivation requirements, showing that the resources Second You usually earned were far from enough.

Fang Bai, seeing Second You sighing with a troubled expression, said, "I'm going to give you an opportunity now, to earn at least one hundred thousand low-level Essence Stones in ten days, if you're willing to do it."

With Second You's ability, earning twenty thousand low-level Essence Stones in a year would be cause for utmost gratitude, and the prospect of earning one hundred thousand in ten days was something he couldn't even dare to imagine. At Fang Bai's words, his eyes widened with excitement and he asked urgently, "Senior Bai, what do you need me to do?"

"Very simple!"

Fang Bai pointed at the martial artists who were coming and going in the distance and said, "You attract customers for me. Once a deal is made, I'll give you a commission based on the situation. The more customers you bring, the more commission I'll give you."

When Second You heard that the task was to attract customers, he couldn't help but make a bitter face, "But... what if I can't bring even a single customer?"

In fact, what Second You was most worried about was that if the few alchemists and artifact refiners in the market found out he was attracting customers for Fang Bai, would they bear a grudge against him?

Not only were those few alchemists and artifact refiners Desolate Level Martial Artists, but they also had extensive connections within Purple Flame City, someone he absolutely couldn't afford to offend.

"Take this, and when you meet a customer who wants to have pills crafted or artifacts refined, show them this and tell them I made it."

Fang Bai said and casually tossed a bottle of elixirs to Second You.

"Mid-grade Gathering Yuan Pill?"

Second You stretched out his hand to take over the bottle of elixir and, when he saw the writing on the body of the pill bottle, he couldn't help but exclaim in surprise.

"Open it and see."

Fang Bai smiled and nodded toward the pill bottle.

Second You glanced at Fang Bai, then with trembling hands, he removed the cork. When he sensed the rich Essence Energy that wafted out from within the bottle, he was certain it was a Mid-grade Gathering Yuan Pill without a doubt, his breath became rough, and his face turned red with excitement.

"Now, do you have the confidence to attract customers?"

Fang Bai asked.

"Yes!"

Second You took a deep breath, trying to suppress his excitement, then he lifted his head proudly and, with a forceful slap on his chest, said.

Second You was a smart man. When he heard that this bottle of Mid-grade Gathering Yuan Pills was refined by Fang Bai, he knew his opportunity had come. If he could seize this opportunity, perhaps there would be a significant turning point in his life.

An alchemist capable of refining Mid-grade Spirit Pills was not found in Purple Flame City, nor in Thousand Lakes Country. As far as Second You knew, only some nations or second-grade Sects, or even higher level Sects, would have Mid-grade Pill Masters.

What a Mid-grade Alchemist meant for Martial Artists was self-evident.

Second You never expected that Fang Bai, a Martial Artist at the high ranks of the Heaven Level realm, could refine Mid-grade elixirs. This exceeded his usual understanding.

Upon further thought, Fang Bai must have hidden his true strength; perhaps he was a Desolate Level Martial Artist or even higher in Cultivation Level.

Second You did not doubt that Fang Bai was a Mid-grade Alchemist because anyone who could casually produce a bottle of Mid-grade Gathering Yuan Pills to confidently entrust to someone else was no one other than a Mid-grade Alchemist—no one else had such a demeanor.

What excited Second You the most was that there was now a friendship with Fang Bai. With this friendship, he feared that not many in Purple Flame City would dare to provoke him. Furthermore, he wouldn't have to worry about the resources needed for his future cultivation.

Second You clenched the Mid-grade Gathering Yuan Pill tightly in his hand and turned to stride away, ready to draw customers over.

He was no longer afraid of offending those low-level alchemists and Artifact Refiners. Despite how those few alchemists and refiners might strut around the Martial Artists Trading Market acting all high and mighty, when faced with Fang Bai, wouldn't they have to obediently call him Senior?

After Second You left, Fang Bai sat down in front of his stall, calmly waiting for customers.

Fang Bai believed that each Martial Artist who saw his bottle of Mid-grade Gathering Yuan Pills would be enticed and then follow Second You over.

Just as Fang Bai had expected, it didn't take long for Second You to return with a group of Martial Artists, most of whom were Heaven Level Martial Artists with strength comparable to Second You; there were also a few Desolate Level Martial Artists among them.

These weren't just any customers Second You had pulled from the Martial Artists Trading Market, but rather some friends he had made previously.

Second You was a Martial Artist who valued friendship deeply. Now that Fang Bai was stationed at the Martial Artists Trading Market offering his services for pill refinement and Artifact Refining, it was an opportunity not to be missed, and naturally, Second You would first think of his friends.

Chapter 1052: Business Comes Knocking

Second You had no trouble persuading his group of friends at all; he simply took out the bottle of mid-grade Gathering Yuan Pills that Fang Bai had given him and shook it, then said, "Anyone who wants to try their hand at alchemy or artifact refining, follow me." Consequently, his friends, like cats that had caught the scent of fish, scrambled excitedly to follow him to Fang Bai's stall.

"Ladies and gentlemen, this is Senior Bai!"

Seeing Fang Bai smile approvingly at him, Second You knew he had done a satisfactory job, and his spirits lifted. He puffed up his chest and announced loudly, "Friends, take a look at this bottle of mid-grade Gathering Yuan Pills in my hand. They were refined by Senior Bai himself. Since Senior Bai can produce mid-grade elixirs, then low-grade ones would undoubtedly be even easier for him..."

Second You may have looked unprepossessing, but he certainly had a way with words. His impassioned speech convinced his friends to see Fang Bai as a rare talent who mastered both mid-grade alchemy and

artifact refining. They bowed with hands clasped, addressing him as "Senior Bai," their demeanor exceedingly respectful.

You should know that among the alchemists and artifact refiners originally at the Martial Artists Trading Market, only those who could produce low-grade elixirs or spiritual artifacts. According to Second You, as long as martial artists provided the necessary materials, this "Senior Bai" in front of them was able to refine mid-grade elixirs or spiritual artifacts, a prospect that truly moved their hearts.

Before now, not a single mid-grade alchemist or mid-grade artifact refiner existed in the entire Purple Flame City or even in Thousand Lakes Country. Fang Bai's sudden emergence excited the group of martial artists that Second You had brought. They all eagerly presented the spiritual medicines and materials for refining artifacts they carried, asking Fang Bai for help in refining elixirs and spiritual artifacts.

The vast majority of martial artists were Heaven Level martial artists, who usually did not dare to venture into dangerous territories or blessed lands, so they did not possess many high-grade cultivation resources. Consequently, most requested the refinement of low-grade pills and spiritual artifacts.

Among the crowd, several Desolate Level martial artists remained doubtful and hesitated to speak up. They decided to first observe Fang Bai's alchemy and artifact refining skills before deciding to commission him to refine elixirs and spiritual artifacts for them.

As an alchemist or artifact refiner, the higher the cultivation realm, the stronger the control over Essence Energy, leading to better proficiency in alchemy and artifact refining. In this world, alchemists and artifact refiners had at least a Desolate Level realm of cultivation. Fang Bai, boasting Heaven Level Perfection yet claiming to be able to refine mid-grade Spirit Pills and spiritual artifacts, was truly unprecedented and hard for people to trust without proof of his extraordinary talent or the possibility of concealing his true cultivation level.

"Senior Bai, your elixir..."

With some reluctance, Second You handed the bottle of mid-grade Gathering Yuan Pills back to Fang Bai, wishing they were his own. In the Martial Artists Trading Market, a bottle of mid-grade pills could exchange for a hundred thousand low-grade Essence Stones or over a hundred bottles of low-grade pills, more than enough to satisfy his cultivation needs for several years.

Mid-grade pills or Essence Stones were suitable for Desolate Level or even higher realm martial artists' cultivation, whereas Heaven Level martial artists like Second You typically used low-grade Essence Stones or pills for cultivation.

Thus, Second You longed for Fang Bai's bottle of mid-grade Gathering Yuan Pills, hoping to exchange them for the resources he needed for cultivation.

But Second You also understood that mid-grade pills were rare and expensive. Fang Bai had entrusted him with that bottle of mid-grade Gathering Yuan Pills only in hopes of using the pills to attract customers, not out of generosity to gift it to him.

Now Second You had successfully brought the first batch of customers to Fang Bai; it was time to see Fang Bai's skills.

If Fang Bai could produce pills and spiritual artifacts that satisfied this group of martial artists, then through word of mouth, his reputation would quickly spread and bring him more customers.

But if Fang Bai's abilities were found lacking and the pills and spiritual artifacts he crafted failed to meet the customers' expectations, then his bad reputation would spread until no customers visited, leading to the closure of his stall.

Second You was very much hoping for Fang Bai to establish himself in the Martial Artists Trading Market because Fang Bai had promised him a reward of no less than a hundred thousand low-grade Essence Stones within ten days. This was a huge temptation for Second You.

Second You silently prayed as he returned the bottle of mid-grade Gathering Yuan Pills to Fang Bai, both for Fang Bai's success and his own.

"Keep this bottle of elixir; consider it a part of the compensation I'm paying you in advance,"

Fang Bai said with a smile to Second You.

The friends who had been dragged over by Second You looked enviously at him, thinking that this guy had stumbled upon incredible luck, and just the thought made their mouths water.

"Senior Bai, I have a few stalks of Fusion Essence Grass here, and I'd like to request your help in refining Gathering Yuan Pills. What do you think?"

A lean and dark-skinned martial artist pushed through the crowd and approached Fang Bai, presenting several stalks of Fusion Essence Grass.

Like Second You, the lean and dark martial artist had attained the realm of Heaven Level Perfection. He probably wanted to refine Gathering Yuan Pills in preparation for his future assault on the Desolate Level Realm.

"Four stalks of four-hundred-year-old Fusion Essence Grass... well done, Hei Tan, where did you steal this Spiritual Medicine from?"

Second You couldn't help asking.

The lean and dark-skinned martial artist was an old friend of Second You, and because of his dark complexion, he was nicknamed "Hei Tan." Everyone had called him that for decades, to the point where they had forgotten his real name over time.

The four stalks of four-hundred-year Fusion Essence Grass that Hei Tan produced were among the finest of the lower-grade Spiritual Medicines, with significant value in the Martial Artists Trading Market. Nobody expected the usually quiet Hei Tan to have such a valuable item hidden away.

However, in the Martial Artists Trading Market, Hei Tan was known as a crafty thief and had once been severely reprimanded for stealing from a Desolate Level Martial Artist. The thief was caught by the victim and taught a harsh lesson, but like an indomitable cockroach, Hei Tan was back to hopping around in no time.

Seeing Hei Tan take out the several stalks of four-hundred-year Fusion Essence Grass, the first reaction of Second You and the other martial artists was that it could very well be another one of Hei Tan's stolen goods.

Hei Tan glared at Second You and said irritably, "Scram, Second You! I risked my life to pick these four stalks of Fusion Essence Grass from deep within the mountains. I neither stole nor robbed them, so don't accuse me wrongly!"

Second You glanced at Fang Bai, seeing that he was examining the Fusion Essence Grass offered by Hei Tan. He dared not continue to make a ruckus and grunted twice, then kept silent and stood by Fang Bai's stall like a guardian deity, as if the stall were owned by his own family.

"Brother You, how do the alchemists and artifact refiners here charge for their services?"

Fang Bai still had to consult Second You on these matters.

"They take at least three out of ten, or at most, four out of ten,"

Second You explained. "For example, with Hei Tan's four stalks of Fusion Essence Grass, if you can refine ten pills, it's enough to give him six or seven, keeping three or four as your compensation for refining the pills. And if someone wants you to refine a Spiritual Artifact, you can ask them to prepare one-third more materials, as your payment."

Chapter 1053: Alchemy

In his previous life, Fang Bai, whether it was in the Three Thousand Great Worlds or after ascending to the Immortal Realm, saw that both Alchemists and Artifact Refiners who served Martial Artists by refining elixirs and weapons usually charged a commission of thirty percent, similar to what was customary in the True Martial Realm.

It seemed that the rules of the Martial Dao World were quite universal.

"This... Brother Hei, you are my first client, so I'll give you a discount. Twenty percent will suffice."

Fang Bai said to Hei Tan with a smile.

"Thank you, Senior Bai!"

Although Fang Bai had given a discount, not much joy showed on Hei Tan's face; he just clasped his fists towards Fang Bai to express his gratitude.

Previously, Hei Tan had hired two Alchemists from the Martial Artists Trading Market to refine elixirs several times, but the highest success rate was only thirty to forty percent. After deducting the payment for the Alchemists, what he received was pitifully little.

Hei Tan was helpless about this, as he knew that in this world, all Alchemists had low success rates in elixir production. A fifty percent success rate was enough to be called a prodigious talent in the Alchemy Realm.

Hei Tan handed Fang Bai four stalks of Fusion Essence Grass, each accompanied by some auxiliary Spiritual Medicines, making a total of four sets of materials for refining Gathering Yuan Pills.

If Fang Bai's success rate in Alchemy was one hundred percent, these four sets of materials could produce forty Gathering Yuan Pills.

Of course, Hei Tan dared not even dream of a one hundred percent success rate. He calculated that if Fang Bai's success rate reached about thirty percent, these four sets of materials could produce about a dozen Gathering Yuan Pills. After deducting Fang Bai's fee, he would have around ten pills, which he would be extremely grateful for.

Furthermore, an Alchemist's success rate was influenced not only by their Cultivation Level and control over Essence Energy but also, sometimes, by luck. A thirty percent success rate was considered very fortunate. If luck was poor, a success rate of ten to twenty percent was also possible, meaning even fewer Gathering Yuan Pills for Hei Tan.

Additionally, when Martial Artists hired Alchemists, they not only had to pay a hefty fee but also had to bear certain risks. Therefore, even if Fang Bai's success rate was very low, Hei Tan would have no choice but to accept his misfortune with resignation.

"Brother Hei, please wait here! Your Elixirs will be ready within two hours."

Fang Bai said, then turned and entered the small house behind him.

Including Second You and other Martial Artists present, everyone watched as Fang Bai closed the door of the small house and looked at each other with faces full of astonishment.

"Other Alchemists take at least two hours to produce a batch of Elixirs, and Senior Bai is saying he can produce four batches in just one hour? Did I hear that correctly?"

Hei Tan scratched his head and said to Second You standing beside him.

In Hei Tan's experience, producing Elixirs was a very time-consuming and mentally exhausting task. Producing a batch in two hours was considered efficient; sometimes, it took ten to twelve hours to produce a batch, which was also normal.

Now, Fang Bai claimed he could produce four batches in one hour, which made Hei Tan feel somewhat unreliable and began to regret it a bit.

Hei Tan really wanted to ask Fang Bai to return those four stalks of Fusion Essence Grass and find another Alchemist to refine the Gathering Yuan Pills, but he feared offending Fang Bai and reluctantly resigned himself to his fate.

"Senior Bai can refine medium-grade Gathering Yuan Pills, so refining low-grade elixirs shouldn't be a problem, and the success rate will definitely not be low."

Hei Tan comforted himself inwardly.

Second You was actually unsure inside, but thinking of the bottle of medium-grade Gathering Yuan Pills Fang Bai had given him, he decided to stand by Fang Bai. Patting Hei Tan on the shoulder, he said solemnly, "Don't worry, Senior Bai is very capable. He said he would produce pills within two hours, and he will certainly succeed! Just wait here with peace of mind!"

Hei Tan made a calm appearance and nodded, "I also believe in Senior Bai's abilities. If I can get a bottle of Gathering Yuan Pills this time, I will bring all my Martial Artist friends to Senior Bai."

Usually, a bottle of elixir contains ten pills. If Hei Tan gets a bottle of Gathering Yuan Pills, it would mean Fang Bai's pill-success rate had reached about thirty percent, which is indeed worth pulling business for him.

Afterward, everyone on the scene held their breaths, their eyes fixed on the small hut where Fang Bai was located, waiting for his emergence.

"Senior Bai, you can't mess up this first transaction! Whether your reputation soars and your business booms all depends on this!"

Second You thought to himself inwardly.

Among all the Martial Artists present, Second You was the most eager for Fang Bai's business to thrive because then he could receive more benefits from Fang Bai, and as his fame rose, having been one of the first to recognize him, Second You's own reputation and status in the market would also rise.

After entering the hut, Fang Bai sat cross-legged in front of the cauldron he had exchanged from Second You. He gently placed his right palm on the cauldron, circulated the Fire-based Technique "Nine Revolutions True Fire Art," stimulated the Fire Primordial Qi, and channeled it through his palm into the cauldron to preheat it.

Using his Divine Sense, Fang Bai observed the situation inside the cauldron and could see that under his continuous injection of Fire Primordial Qi, a red flame began to rise within.

The Nine Revolutions True Fire Art was a Fire-based Technique created by Fang Bai in his past life. When operated, the Fire Primordial Qi it generated could destroy heavens and boil seas, annihilating everything. However, with his current cultivation level, he could only perform the first level of the technique, suitable only for refining medium-grade elixirs or medium-grade Spiritual Artifacts.

Once Fang Bai's cultivation level reached the Innate Realm, the Nine Revolutions True Fire Art would transform and progress to the second layer. At that point, the Fire Primordial Qi he generated would turn from red to orange, and its power would increase several times.

In just a few moments, the temperature inside the cauldron rapidly increased to a level that could easily melt Spiritual Medicines.

Boom!

Fang Bai's left palm reached out, lightly tapped on the cauldron, and with a soft sound, the heavy cauldron lid, weighing dozens of pounds, was lifted by the impact of the Fire Primordial Qi and floated three feet above the cauldron.

As quick as lightning, Fang Bai grabbed a bunch of Fusion Essence Grass along with more than a dozen auxiliary Spiritual Medicines, shattered them section by section with Essence Energy, and then successively threw them into the cauldron.

When the last section of Spiritual Medicine was tossed into the cauldron, the floating cauldron lid fell, securely sealing the mouth of the cauldron.

Fang Bai continued to stimulate the Fire Primordial Qi, while also releasing Wood Element Qi to analyze the properties of each Spiritual Medicine inside the cauldron, which would be essential in reasonably matching the melted medicines into a medicinal liquid. This process would significantly affect the success rate and the quality of the elixirs.

This test was a measure of an Alchemist's precise control over Essence Energy—those who controlled it well produced higher quality elixirs.

Similarly, among low-grade Alchemists, those who refined low-grade elixirs with better quality were naturally more sought after by Martial Artists for their significant auxiliary effects in cultivation.

In this Martial Artists Trading Market, among the two low-grade Alchemists, the one whose elixirs were of superior quality, as a result, had much better business than the other.

Chapter 1054: The Pill is Formed

Several stalks of spiritual medicine were thrown into Fang Bai's cauldron, and under the fierce flames inside, they gradually melted into droplets of medicinal liquid. Eventually, the droplets fused together to form a fist-sized globule of trembling liquid, suspended among the flames in the cauldron, brimming with pure and rich Essence Energy.

To melt several stalks of spiritual medicine into a blob of medicinal liquid was the extremely crucial first step in the process of making elixirs. Success in melting indicated that the alchemy was half successful, but there was still some distance left to reach the final formation of the pills, so Fang Bai dared not slack off even a bit.

Under Fang Bai's precise control of Essence Energy, the fist-sized blob of medicinal liquid slowly divided into ten equal parts. Then, subjected to the high temperatures of the flames of the Nine Revolutions True Fire Art while swirling and turning, their volume gradually shrank, changing from a liquid to a solid state before finally solidifying into ten crystal-clear elixirs, each rich with dense Essence Energy...

Throughout the entire process of alchemy, Fang Bai precisely controlled both Fire Primordial Qi and Wood Element Qi using two corresponding cultivation techniques, while also probing the cauldron's interior with his Divine Sense, making timely adjustments according to the situation, ensuring not a single error occurred.

This was Fang Bai's first time crafting elixirs for someone else, and the process was brief but could be described as perfect. Even Fang Bai was very satisfied with himself.

"Open!"

Seeing that the elixirs within the cauldron had formed, Fang Bai withdrew his Essence Energy and gave a light shout, his left palm striking the cauldron once more.

Bang!

The lid of the cauldron once again shot up high, and ten Gathering Yuan Pills, glittering with luminous light and rich with Essence Energy, burst forth from within.

Fang Bai stood up, reached out his hand to catch the ten Gathering Yuan Pills, and after a glance, a smile of satisfaction appeared on his lips. He took out a jade bottle that had been prepared in advance and sealed the ten pills inside.

With Fang Bai's cultivation level, crafting a furnace of low-grade elixirs wouldn't use up much of his True Yuan, so he didn't stop to rest but immediately began crafting the next batch...

While Fang Bai was engrossed in alchemy within his little hut, Second You and other martial artists waited outside patiently. They estimated that nearly half a two-hour period had passed and so their gazes were drawn to the tightly closed door of the cabin.

"It takes a day for an average alchemist to craft four batches of elixirs. Senior Bai would certainly be much faster than an average alchemist... Ahem, well, ... when Senior Bai said he could make four batches in half a two-hour period, it was assuming everything went smoothly. If there's a little hiccup or trouble during the process, it might take a bit more time. So, everyone, please be patient... please be patient..."

Second You was now acting as if he were Fang Bai's "spokesperson," loudly comforting the martial artists present, especially Hei Tan, who had handed over four stalks of Fusion Essence Grass to Fang Bai for elixir making.

Hei Tan's mood was complex, filled with nerves and anticipation, but since he had already entrusted the spiritual medicine to Fang Bai, the outcome was now out of his hands.

Under everyone's watchful gaze, the door of the hut was suddenly pulled open from the inside, and Fang Bai's tall and straight figure stepped out, holding two jade bottles designed specifically for storing elixirs.

Seeing the confident smile on Fang Bai's face, Hei Tan couldn't help but let out a sigh of relief, his eyes immediately fixating on the two jade bottles in Fang Bai's hands, his expression revealing excitement.

The smile on Fang Bai's face meant that the alchemy had gone smoothly, and the two bottles in his hands suggested that he had crafted more than just ten elixirs.

"Hei Tan, from your four sets of alchemy materials, a total of twenty Gathering Yuan Pills have been produced. As per our prior agreement of taking twenty percent, I will keep four, and here in this jade bottle are the sixteen for you to check," Fang Bai said with a faint smile on his face. As he spoke, he gave a slight toss, and two jade bottles flew towards Hei Tan.

In reality, Fang Bai had produced forty Gathering Yuan Pills, achieving a one hundred percent success rate; he had told Hei Tan it was only fifty percent because he didn't want to shock the world and be considered a freak.

After all, in this world, an alchemist with a thirty to forty percent success rate is considered extremely high; fifty percent would make one a prodigious talent in the Alchemy Realm. Before Fang Bai, no alchemists in the True Martial Realm had ever reached a one hundred percent success rate.

But Fang Bai had done it.

However, Fang Bai was well aware of the principle "the taller the tree, the more likely it is to be blown over by the wind." He knew that with his current strength, he was not yet invincible in the True Martial Realm, so it was better to keep a low profile.

Had he not wanted to quickly establish a reputation to obtain a large amount of cultivation resources, Fang Bai wouldn't even want to publicize a fifty percent success rate.

Hei Tan caught the two jade bottles thrown by Fang Bai, his hands trembling slightly as he removed the stoppers. Strands of Essence Energy immediately began to waft out from inside the bottles, eliciting amazement from the surrounding martial artists.

Judging from the Essence Energy emanating from the bottles, they indeed contained low-grade Gathering Yuan Pills. However, their purity was beyond that of ordinary low-grade elixirs, qualifying as superior among the lower tier. Fang Bai's Gathering Yuan Pills were far superior to those of other alchemists in the Martial Artists Trading Market.

A success rate as high as fifty percent and elixirs of excellent quality – these were goals all alchemists dreamt of achieving, and Fang Bai had reached them both, leaving the martial artists in the audience tremendously excited and stirred, their gazes filled with respect and adoration for Fang Bai.

One could imagine the immense sensation that would be caused by the arrival of a mid-grade alchemist with a success rate as high as fifty percent in Purple Flame City; the name "Bai Fang" would undoubtedly spread throughout the whole of Thousand Lakes Country in no time, becoming a target for various powers to court.

In Thousand Lakes Country, the strength of a mid-grade alchemist might not be the strongest, but their status was undoubtedly the most revered. Even the Sect Master of Purple Flame Sect, the most powerful third-level sect in Thousand Lakes Country, would not dare to put on any airs in front of a mid-grade alchemist and would have to show them due respect.

In the entire Thousand Lakes Country, low-grade alchemists were already a scarce existence, and there was only one mid-grade alchemist – currently the Elder of Tribute of Purple Flame Sect, whose position was second only to the Sect Master. He was respected above tens of thousands, lofty and unapproachable, with no one daring to provoke him.

From this, one could see that the emergence of "Bai Fang," a mid-grade alchemist, would create huge ripples in Purple Flame City.

For a Heaven Level martial artist like Second You, the mid-grade alchemist of Purple Flame Sect was reclusive and never appeared publicly, a mysterious figure.

It was said that the mid-grade alchemist only produced mid-grade elixirs exclusively for the upper echelons of Purple Flame Sect to cultivate with. Other disciples of Purple Flame Sect or martial artists external to the sect who wanted their elixirs would have to offer compensation that appealed to him.

That mid-grade alchemist of Purple Flame Sect stood aloof and shrouded in mystery. People like Second You had neither seen him in person nor could they afford to seek his services, so they never even entertained the idea of asking him to make elixirs for them.

Now, with Fang Bai appearing as a mid-grade alchemist in the Martial Artists Trading Market, right before their eyes, and even helping Hei Tan among them to refine elixirs – while only charging a fee equivalent to that of the other two low-grade alchemists in the market – Second You and the others felt as if they were dreaming, experiencing an almost surreal sensation.

Chapter 1055: Rising Fame

With Hei Tan's example before them, the martial artists present no longer doubted Fang Bai's alchemy skills. One by one, they took out the spiritual medicines they had brought, clamoring and crowding around Fang Bai's stall, requesting him to refine elixirs for them.

"Senior Bai, this junior, Tie Hai, greets you respectfully. I have a low-grade Spatial Ring here; could it be upgraded to a mid-grade one? If possible, I am willing to offer a fist-sized Space Stone as compensation."

A brawny, dark-skinned martial artist with a full beard called out loudly from the crowd.

This broad-shouldered martial artist was named Tie Hai, and he was one of the few Desolate Level Martial Artists at the scene. Previously, by a stroke of luck, he had acquired a Space Stone, so he came to the Martial Artists Trading Market of Purple Flame City and asked two Artifact Refiners there to craft a Spatial Ring each for him.

Unfortunately, those two Artifact Refiners were of low grade, and their success rate in crafting was very low. Ultimately, after consuming several batches of Tie Hai's crafting materials, only two low-grade Spatial Rings were crafted, much to Tie Hai's distress.

During subsequent uses, Tie Hai found that the storage space of the low-grade Spatial Rings was too small to meet his needs. So, in recent days, Tie Hai returned to the Martial Artists Trading Market of Purple Flame City, hoping to encounter a higher-grade Artifact Refiner, to either upgrade his Spatial Ring or to craft a new one using the remaining few Space Stones.

Tie Hai and Second You had once teamed up to train in some perilous locations of the True Martial Realm and were considered comrades who had shared life-and-death experiences. When wandering in the arena earlier, Second You ran into Tie Hai. Hearing Second You mention that Fang Bai could refine mid-grade elixirs and Spiritual Artifacts, Tie Hai was initially skeptical. However, after seeing the mid-grade Gathering Yuan Pill that Second You produced, he was greatly impressed and followed Second You to Fang Bai's stall to find out if this "Senior Bai" mentioned by Second You truly possessed the skills or was merely boasting.

Though Tie Hai appeared rough, he was meticulous at heart. Upon reaching Fang Bai's stall, he stood calmly in the crowd, observing quietly until Fang Bai successfully refined more than a dozen Gathering Yuan Pills for Hei Tan. Only then did he become excited, convinced that "Senior Bai" was genuinely skilled.

In Tie Hai's eyes, since "Senior Bai" held dual roles as Alchemist and Artifact Refiner, and considering his remarkable alchemy skills, his artifact refining skills must also be exceptional. Therefore, he felt at ease and loudly inquired Fang Bai.

Some martial artists nearby, hearing the words "Space Stone," became instantly agitated.

Space Stones, the main material for crafting Spatial Spirit Devices, were said to have fallen from extraterrestrial realms, scattered across the True Martial Realm, and were incredibly precious. To obtain even a piece was considered an extraordinary opportunity.

Tie Hai was usually low-profile and inconspicuous, so it came as a surprise that he possessed a Space Stone.

Before coming to the True Martial Realm, Fang Bai had once received a Space Stone, but later used it to craft several Spatial Rings which he gave to close friends and relatives, leaving none for himself. At this moment, upon hearing "Space Stone," his interest was piqued, and after glancing at Tie Hai, he smiled and nodded, saying, "Brother Tie, upgrading a low-grade Spiritual Artifact to a mid-grade one is entirely feasible. If you trust me, hand over your Spatial Ring along with the auxiliary materials."

"I naturally trust Senior; otherwise, I wouldn't have come! Please proceed, Senior!"

As Tie Hai spoke, he raised his left hand, and a flash of light passed by. When the onlookers focused their eyes, they saw a black ring emitting a faint glow flying out of Tie Hai's hand, heading towards Fang Bai.

"Senior, this is my Spatial Ring."

While speaking, Tie Hai tossed another object towards Fang Bai—an egg-sized item glowing with a golden aura. On seeing it, everyone knew it was Fine Gold.

Fine Gold was an indispensable auxiliary material for refining Spiritual Artifacts, similar to gold in the Secular World, and also served as the "currency" for various transactions among ordinary citizens of the True Martial Realm, hence it was not difficult to acquire.

Fang Bai received the Fine Gold and smiled at Tie Hai, saying, "Brother Tie, please wait a moment."

Then to Second You, he said, "Brother You, if there are any friends who wish to have elixirs or artifacts refined, take their materials for now, and when I call you from inside the hut, you can bring the materials in... As for my fees for alchemy and artifact refining, have you collect them first and then hand

them over to me later. Remember, for alchemy, take three-tenths; for artifact refining, collect one piece of the main material."

After finishing, Fang Bai nodded smilingly to the martial artists gathered before his stall and turned to re-enter the hut.

Assigning Second You to collect the materials was a sign of Fang Bai's trust in him. It took Second You a while to come to his senses, followed by a surge of joy.

"Fellow friends, you all heard what Senior Bai just said, right?"

Second You bowed deeply towards the hut where Fang Bai was, then suppressing the excitement in his heart, he faced the envious glances from the group of martial artists before the stall and cleared his throat before speaking loudly, "Anyone who wants Senior Bai to refine elixirs or artifacts, please hand your materials over to me as per the rules..."

Fang Bai had just refined Gathering Yuan Pills for Hei Tan, impressing every martial artist present with his rapid alchemy speed and high success rate in pill formation. No one doubted his abilities anymore.

Thus, before Second You could finish speaking, martial artists, unable to contain their impatience, eagerly took out their materials for alchemy and artifact creation, surging towards him and surrounding him, each desperately trying to be at the front to have Fang Bai refine elixirs or Spiritual Artifacts for them sooner.

"Everyone, please, no scrambling, form a line, one at a time..."

Surrounded by layers of martial artists, Second You was far from annoyed; instead, he was exceedingly excited.

He knew that from this moment on, Fang Bai was firmly established in the Martial Artists Trading Market. If Fang Bai successfully refined a Spiritual Artifact for Tie Hai afterward, his reputation would thoroughly flourish and spread throughout Purple Flame City in the shortest amount of time.

By then, it could be anticipated that Fang Bai's stall would become the busiest in the Martial Artists Trading Market. Not only would this greatly enhance Fang Bai's reputation, but Second You himself would also bask in reflected glory.

Fang Bai had previously promised Second You one hundred thousand Essence Stones. Second You had already decided he wouldn't accept them under any circumstances, as that would mean Fang Bai owed him a favor.

Second You understood that in terms of long-term benefits, having a mid-grade Alchemist and Artifact Refiner owe him a favor was far more valuable than receiving one hundred thousand low-grade Essence Stones. At least, in the future, when he approached Fang Bai for alchemy or artifact refining, Fang Bai would likely find it awkward to refuse and also wouldn't charge him too high a fee.

Soon, piles of materials for alchemy and artifact refining accumulated in front of Second You, each pile marked with names and dimensions to avoid any mix-ups.

The martial artists who delivered the materials, eager to secure an early spot with Fang Bai, went out of their way to ingratiate themselves with Second You, with some even offering Essence Stones and other cultivation resources as "bribes" to Second You.

Chapter 1056: Can't Sit Still Anymore

Second You was a clever man. He firmly rejected the martial artists' attempts to "bribe" him; he did not want to leave any bad impressions in Fang Bai's mind.

After some deliberation, Second You decided to let the martial artists on the scene draw lots to determine the order for alchemy and artifact refining. This way, it was all down to luck, and no one could complain.

There were dozens of martial artists present, and Second You wrote dozens of numbers for them to draw. Consequently, some were jubilant while others sighed in disappointment, but no one raised any objections.

Second You arranged the refining materials that the martial artists had provided in front of the cabin, according to the order of the numbers they drew, waiting for Fang Bai's use.

Fang Bai was upgrading Tie Hai's spatial spirit device from a low-grade spiritual artifact to a mid-grade one. In the eyes of Second You and the other martial artists, this task seemed far more difficult than the elixir refining he had done for Hei Tan and was expected to take more time.

But to everyone's surprise, Fang Bai only took a few hundred breaths before he called Second You into the cabin, clearly indicating that the artifact refining was complete. The speed was astonishingly fast.

"How could it be so quick... it couldn't have failed, could it?"

Tie Hai looked at the cabin where Fang Bai was and couldn't help feeling somewhat anxious.

Originally, it had taken a whole day for an artifact refiner in the Martial Artists Trading Market to make Tie Hai's spatial ring, and even though upgrading a spiritual artifact was simpler than making one from scratch, surely it couldn't be done in just a few hundred breaths?

The cabin where Fang Bai was seemed to be isolated from the outside world by some kind of formation. The martial artists outside couldn't sense any essence energy fluctuations from inside the cabin, nor could they hear any noise.

"Could it be that Senior Bai is not only an alchemist and an artifact refiner but also an array master?"

Tie Hai thought to himself.

Second You soon came out of the cabin, and Tie Hai looked at him nervously. Seeing Second You's radiant and spirited appearance, an expression of sheer joy, he let out a sigh of relief, knowing that Senior Bai must have succeeded in upgrading his artifact, or else Second You wouldn't look so ecstatic.

"Brother You, how did it go?"

Although he was convinced that Senior Bai had successfully upgraded his spiritual artifact, Tie Hai still couldn't resist stepping forward to ask.

Tie Hai was a Desolate Level martial artist, while Second You was just a Heaven Level martial artist. There was a significant gap in their realms, and in the past, Tie Hai had addressed Second You bluntly by name, taking the position of a senior. But now, he was calling him "Brother You," with a newfound respect in his demeanor.

Second You understood that the change in Tie Hai's attitude towards him was entirely because of the respect for Senior Bai. If it weren't for the fact that he had known Senior Bai earlier and gained his trust, he would still be nothing in Tie Hai's eyes.

"Brother Tie, congratulations, your space ring is now a mid-grade spiritual artifact!"

Second You laughed heartily, raising his left hand and tossing a ring towards Tie Hai.

Tie Hai caught the ring and examined it. Once he confirmed it was his space ring, he injected a strand of essence energy into it and discovered that the inner space of the ring had increased several folds, a feature only found in a mid-grade space ring. He was overjoyed beyond measure.

He quickly dripped a drop of his blood essence onto the Spatial Ring, then slipped it back onto his finger and called out loudly toward the direction of Fang Bai's cabin, "Thank you, Senior Bai! I must take my leave first! If in the future there's a need, I will return to seek guidance!"

Having said that, he performed a distant fist-and-palm salute in the direction of the cabin and then turned away, leaving with utter delight.

The other martial artists watched Tie Hai's departing figure with unhidden envy, their gazes returning to the cabin carrying an even deeper respect.

Second You delivered the next batch of alchemy materials into the cabin and then tiptoed out, standing guard at the cabin door with his head held high and his chest puffed out.

Second You's expression may have been solemn, but his heart was bursting with joy. He thought that getting to know Senior Bai might be the most crucial turning point of his fate. Considering Senior Bai's skills in alchemy and artifact refining, there would surely be no lack of cultivation resources in the future. Just a few handouts from Senior Bai would be enough for his own cultivation needs.

Moreover, Second You knew that Senior Bai must be concealing his true capabilities. As a medium-grade alchemist and artifact refiner, he must at least be a Desolate Level martial artist, perhaps even more powerful. As long as he maintained a good relationship with him, perhaps one day, in a good mood, Senior Bai might give him some pointers that would benefit him immensely.

In the following time, Fang Bai would refine an elixir or spiritual artifact every half-hour on average, although most of what he crafted were low-grade elixirs and artifacts, with only a very few being medium-grade.

The rewards Fang Bai received were mostly comprised of low-grade elixirs, low-grade artifact materials, and low-grade Essence Stones. Although these low-grade cultivation resources were useless to him, he accepted them, knowing he could exchange them for medium-grade resources later on.

Fang Bai's speed and success rate in alchemy and artifact refining were stunning. Some martial artists would tell their friends about Fang Bai after leaving satisfied, and as word spread from one to ten and ten to a hundred, his reputation quickly made its way throughout the entire Martial Artists Trading Market in no time.

Before long, Fang Bai's stall was surrounded by martial artists who had heard the news and came crowding around.

Some of these martial artists came upon the recommendations of friends to seek Fang Bai's alchemy and artifact refining services. Others came out of curiosity, deciding that if Fang Bai was as formidable as the rumors suggested, they certainly would become his customers.

Second You kept receiving the artifact materials passed over by the martial artists, and upon receiving Fang Bai's summons, he would bring the materials into the cabin. Then he would carry out the completed elixirs and spiritual artifacts to the martial artists. Despite being extremely busy, he was happier than ever because the better Fang Bai's business went, the more he stood to gain in the future.

Unbeknownst to Second You, at this moment, not far from the crowd, in a corner stood three men and one woman martial artists, watching with ugly expressions on their faces. They would occasionally whisper amongst themselves, their eyes flickering with resentment and jealousy.

"Look, the two alchemists and two artifact refiners that were originally in our trading market are unable to sit still anymore!"

"That Senior Bai Fang is a medium-grade alchemist and medium-grade artifact refiner, far surpassing those four in skill!"

"Indeed, I heard that Senior Bai arrived here only half a day ago, and he's already taken away most of their business. No wonder they can't sit tight!"

"They seem very unwilling to accept this!"

"What can they do about being unwilling? If they're not as skilled, whom can they blame? Survival of the fittest is the way of this world. With their lower grades, what ground do they have to compete with a more formidable peer? Just watch, the business of those four will eventually be completely taken over if this continues!"

"However, Senior Bai is an outsider, whereas those four have been operating in Purple Flame City for many years and have some connections. They are unlikely to let this slide so easily!"

...

Some martial artists noticed the group of three men and one woman in the corner gesturing and whispering among themselves.

Chapter 1057: Killing Someone with a Borrowed Knife

The three men and one woman were two low-grade Alchemists and two low-grade Artifact Refiners from the Martial Artists Trading Market.

Before Fang Bai opened his stall, their business had been booming. But before long, as Fang Bai's reputation spread throughout the entire Martial Artists Trading Market, the Martial Artists who had previously gathered at their stalls left one after another, flocking towards Fang Bai's stall.

"So, someone is actually stealing our business!"

When the four of them learned that a "colleague" named "Bai Fang" had settled in the Martial Artists Trading Market and caused their business to slump, they couldn't help but feel secretly annoyed.

The four had been operating in the Martial Artists Trading Market for decades; their roots were deep, their connections broad, and with the support of the Purple Flame Sect behind them, they were firmly established as the local bosses.

Although there was competition among the four, when faced with outside rivals, they became united by a common hatred, banding together against outsiders.

Previously, other Alchemists and Artifact Refiners who had tried to establish themselves in Purple Flame City ended up being driven out by various means at the hands of the four.

But now, learning that the so-called "Bai Fang" was actually a mid-grade Alchemist and Artifact Refiner, the four of them felt it was a big problem.

If "Bai Fang" were a low-grade Alchemist or Artifact Refiner, the four of them would not have hesitated to join forces and provoke him, doing everything they could to make him look foolish and force him to leave Purple Flame City for lack of a place to stay.

The trouble now was that "Bai Fang" turned out to be a mid-grade Alchemist and Artifact Refiner, truly not someone they could contend with. If they dared to provoke him, it would surely backfire.

Moreover, it was foreseeable that once the Purple Flame Sect learned of such a mid-grade Alchemist and Artifact Refiner in the Martial Artists Trading Market, they would definitely do everything in their power to recruit him and treat him as a distinguished guest.

What the four now hoped most was that "Bai Fang" would agree to join the Purple Flame Sect and become an Elder of Tribute, exclusively creating Elixirs and refining Artifacts for the disciples of the Purple Flame Sect.

In that case, their business would not be affected too much and would continue to thrive.

However, if Bai Fang refused the Purple Flame Sect's overtures and insisted on staying in the Martial Artists Trading Market to make Elixirs and refine Artifacts for others, then their business would certainly fall drastically and become thoroughly depressed.

With mixed emotions, the four followed a group of Martial Artists to Fang Bai's stall and quietly observed from a corner. Seeing Fang Bai's astonishing efficiency and success rate in Alchemy and Artifact Refining, all four were utterly shocked.

"If Bai Fang continues to make Elixirs and refine Artifacts here, then we likely won't have a place in Purple Flame City anymore! What should we do?"

One of the female Alchemists in the group looked towards Fang Bai's hut with a grim expression as she spoke.

"What can we do? We can only hope the Purple Flame Sect takes him away! Hey, it's really hard to understand. With his skills as a mid-grade Alchemist and Artifact Refiner, why would he stay in a small place like Purple Flame City? He belongs in a second-tier or even a first-tier grand sect!"

The man with the dark face who spoke was her brother. The siblings, Wu Biao and Wu Mei, both possessed Dual Attribute Innate Spiritual Roots and the strength of Desolate Level Martial Artists, each a low-grade Alchemist.

"Yu Dajiang, you always have ideas; think of something quickly to drive that guy out of the Martial Artists Trading Market!"

Standing to the left of siblings Wu Biao and Wu Mei was a short and plump middle-aged Artifact Refiner, about fifty years old, who turned his head to look at the gray-haired sixties Artifact Refiner beside him and said expectantly,

The short and plump Artifact Refiner was named Ma Bao, while the elder with half-gray hair was named Yu Dajiang. Both were low-grade Artifact Refiners and were also Desolate Level Martial Artists.

"There is indeed an approach I can think of that would certainly drive that Bai fellow out of Purple Flame City!"

Yu Dajiang twirled his beard, the corners of his mouth revealing a mysteriously confident smile.

"Brother Yu, please do tell!"

Wu Biao, Wu Mei, and Ma Bao's eyes lit up as they asked in unison.

Driving away "Bai Fang," securing their own interests, had become the shared immediate goal of the four of them.

He-he-he," Yu Dajiang chuckled softly, "As far as I know, the current Elder of Tribute of the Purple Flame Sect, Hong Qitian, is a man with a narrow heart and petty mind. If we find Hong Qitian and tell him there's an Alchemist who has come to Purple Flame City whose skills in Alchemy are superior to his, and then insinuate that if this Bai Fang gets recruited by the Purple Flame Sect, it would threaten his position in the Sect, what do you think... Hong Qitian would do?"

"I get it..."

Wu Mei suddenly realized even before Yu Dajiang finished speaking, "So Brother Yu intends to use another's hand to kill! Ha-ha, what a brilliant scheme!"

Wu Biao sneered sinisterly, "Knowing that he might have a strong new rival, Hong Qitian will be extremely nervous and will do everything in his power to prevent Bai Fang from joining the Purple Flame Sect!"

Ma Bao smiled wickedly and said, "The best way to prevent that is to make Bai Fang disappear from this world. Hong Qitian is a mid-tier Vast Level power, while that Bai Fang... I reckon at most he's a Desolate Level strongman! As long as Hong Qitian is willing to make a move, Bai Fang's death is certain!"

Wu Mei looked at Yu Dajiang with a smile, "Brother Yu has had dealings with that Hong Qitian, so we'll entrust this matter to Brother Yu to visit the Purple Flame Sect this time."

"That's easy to say, but..."

Yu Dajiang said somewhat hesitantly, "As you all know, Hong Qitian is greedy by nature and has a huge appetite. Meeting him is easy, but to actually persuade him to act against Bai Fang, we'll need to present him with a sizeable gift. How about this: each of us will provide ten thousand medium-grade Essence Stones, and I will deliver them to Hong Qitian. Do any of you have objections?"

Ten thousand medium-grade Essence Stones were equivalent to a million low-grade Essence Stones, which wasn't a small sum. Although Mai Bao and the others felt the pinch, they agreed for the sake of long-term considerations.

Though they mostly received low-grade Essence Stones and low-grade Spiritual Medicines as payment for refining Elixirs and tools for others at the Martial Artists Trading Market, they had deliberately exchanged for a good amount of medium-grade Essence Stones and medium-grade Elixirs from other regions for their own Cultivation, so each could afford to contribute the ten thousand stones.

The four temporarily left the scene, gathered the Essence Stones, and handed them over to Yu Dajiang, who quickly took the Essence Stones and departed for the Purple Flame Sect located in the core area of Purple Flame City.

Meanwhile, Fang Bai, engrossed in refining Elixirs and Spiritual Artifacts in his cabin, was not distracted and thus unaware of the plot being hatched against him by Yu Dajiang and the others.

Two hours later, as dusk approached, the number of Martial Artists in front of Fang Bai's booth showed no sign of dwindling; on the contrary, there were even more.

Typically, an Alchemist or Artifact Refiner, after crafting a few batches of Elixirs or several Spiritual Artifacts, would take a break to recover the expended Essence Energy.

But Fang Bai had been refining non-stop for a whole day without rest, and when he had emerged just once, there was no hint of fatigue on his face, to the amazement of the Martial Artists present.

Chapter 1058: Elder of Tribute of Purple Flame Sect

"Brother You, tell the friends waiting outside that we're done for today. Those who want alchemy or artifact refining, come back tomorrow!"

After crafting yet another furnace of Spirit Pills, Fang Bai addressed Second You who had entered the hut to collect the pills.

Second You nodded, took the elixirs, exited the hut, and relayed Fang Bai's words to the many Martial Artists waiting in front of the stall.

Though the Martial Artists were deeply disappointed, they had no choice but to sigh and leave, preparing to come early the next morning to queue up.

Continuously performing alchemy and artifact refining throughout the day had depleted some of his Essence Energy, so after the Martial Artists dispersed, Fang Bai stayed inside the hut to circulate his cultivation technique and recuperate.

Meanwhile, Second You busied himself outside, clearing up the clutter and tidying things on behalf of Fang Bai.

As for his own stall, considering it had nothing of value, he had long since given up on it, casting the thought far from his mind, too lazy to bother with it.

As Second You was bending over to pick things up, he suddenly sensed a terrifying Martial Artist Aura pressing towards this area. The sensing was like a tsunami raising an immense wave roaring over; it felt as though doomsday was approaching.

Second You was shocked, lifted his head toward the source of the aura, and saw a purple-robed elder over sixty striding over with the vigor of a dragon and the ferocity of a tiger. Just moments ago, he was still hundreds of meters away, but in the blink of an eye, he had already reached their vicinity, his speed bafflingly rapid.

Although the elder appeared frail, he seemed to harbor the power to upend mountains and overturn seas within his body. With every movement, he exuded an invincible and domineering aura as if no one could stand in his way.

His piercing eyes sparkled with a sharp gleam like two swords, as if they could penetrate the heart. When Second You was swept by his gaze, he felt a tingling in his scalp and a sudden chill made the hairs on his body stand on end. His body involuntarily shivered as if pricked by the elder's gaze.

Within the elder's Martial Artist Aura was a combination of fire and wood Essence Energy, meeting the basic requirements of an Alchemist. If he truly were an Alchemist, then given the powerful Essence Energy he demonstrated, it was clear he was not merely a low-tier Pill Master.

On the chest of the purple-robed elder's attire, there were seven small but conspicuous red flames embroidered.

"Purple Flame Sect... seven flames... it's an Elder of the Purple Flame Sect... Fire and wood attributes... It's... It's Hong Qitian, the mid-tier Alchemist Elder..."

Second You, staring blankly at the purple-robed elder now less than ten yards from him, absent-mindedly murmured, the broom in his hand falling to the ground unnoticed.

Although Second You had never interacted with disciples of the Purple Flame Sect, he had long heard of Elder Hong Qitian of the Purple Flame Sect. Even though he had never seen Hong Qitian in person, by piecing together various factors, he deduced without a doubt that this purple-robed elder before him was Hong Qitian.

First, the style of the purple-robed elder's attire and the flames at the chest indicated he was a disciple of the Purple Flame Sect;

Second, the higher the status of a disciple in the Purple Flame Sect, the more flames would be embroidered on the chest of their attire, and only Elders could adorn their chest with seven flames;

Third; the purple-robed elder cultivated both fire and wood, matching the essential conditions of an Alchemist.

Second You made his deduction based on the aforementioned three points.

Indeed, Second You's judgment was correct. The man in the purple robe was the Elder of Tribute of Purple Flame Sect, Hong Qitian, a medium-grade alchemist revered throughout the entire Purple Flame Sect and even in Thousand Lakes Country.

Hong Qitian came here, naturally because he had been instigated by Yu Dajiang, preparing to drive away Fang Bai to prevent any threat to his own status.

As the saying goes, professionals are rivals.

As the only medium-grade alchemist in Thousand Lakes Country, Hong Qitian held a lofty prestige amongst the martial artists and enjoyed the generous treatment provided by Purple Flame Sect. Suddenly, a rival alchemist capable of threatening his prestige and status emerged, which was something he absolutely did not want to see.

Thus, when Yu Dajiang approached Hong Qitian and gave him a sum of cultivation resources before slyly suggesting that Bai Fang was arrogant and proclaimed himself as the number one alchemist in Thousand Lakes Country, Hong Qitian was immediately enraged.

Hong Qitian knew that if Bai Fang drew the attention of Zu Tiangang, the Sect Master of Purple Flame Sect, Zu would certainly intervene personally to recruit him. By then, dealing with Bai Fang would become much less straightforward. Therefore, Hong Qitian rushed to the Martial Artists Trading Market as soon as he could, hoping to eliminate this hidden danger before Sect Master Zu Tiangang could act.

Yu Dajiang, naturally leading the way for Hong Qitian, was a shrewd man. After pointing out the exact location of Fang Bai's stall, he hid himself from sight, so that even if Hong Qitian failed to deal with Fang Bai, he would not have to worry about retaliation.

After hearing from Yu Dajiang that the "Bai Fang" might just be a Desolate Level Martial Artist, Hong Qitian held some contempt in his heart. He thought to himself that as a mid-tier Vast Level Martial Artist, he could easily annihilate a Desolate Level Martial Artist with one punch. If "Bai Fang" would listen to him and willingly leave Purple Flame City, good. If not, Hong Qitian was determined to teach him a lesson.

When Hong Qitian arrived in front of Fang Bai's stall, he saw Second You packing up at a glance. Recalling the description Yu Dajiang had given of this "Bai Fang," he knew this man was not Bai Fang.

"Bai Fang, get your ass out here!"

Hong Qitian's gaze shifted and fell on the small cabin where Fang Bai was. Sensing the fluctuations of Fire and Wood Essence Energy within, a sharp light flashed in his eyes as he shouted coldly.

Amidst Hong Qitian's shout was infused a trace of a Vast Level Martial Artist's True Yuan, and the sound immediately rolled out thunderously, surging tumultuously towards the small cabin where Fang Bai was.

Although Hong Qitian's roar was not directed at Second You, Second You was still shaken by the thunderous sound wave, his blood churning and Essence Energy stirring, and he violently spat out a mouthful of fresh blood. He staggered backward, clearly having sustained serious injuries.

In the eyes of Hong Qitian, a mere Heaven Level Martial Artist like Second You was no different from an ant. Hong Qitian didn't care whether he lived or died, so when Second You suffered serious injuries, Hong Qitian showed no disturbance, his gaze only fixed on that small cabin.

With that fierce shout, Hong Qitian's direct aim was at Fang Bai. His intention was to severely injure Fang Bai, to intimidate him, and to let Fang Bai experience his strength. After issuing a few threats, Hong Qitian had no doubt Fang Bai would obediently leave Purple Flame City.

Strangely, the sound wave powerful enough to severely injure a Desolate Level Martial Artist, upon entering the small cabin, disappeared as if sinking into the sea, stirring not even a ripple. And there was no reaction from Fang Bai inside the cabin either.

"Elder Hong, what are you trying to do? Senior Bai is both a mid-grade alchemist and a mid-grade artifact refiner. If he joins the Purple Flame Sect, his status would be above yours. If you injure him, aren't you afraid that the founding master of the Purple Flame Sect will be displeased with you?"

Struggling to stand, Second You steadied himself, wiped the blood from the corner of his mouth, and said loudly while clutching his chest.

Chapter 1059: True Skills

Hong Qitian's booming shout just moments ago instantly made Second You realize that the Elder of Tribute from the Purple Flame Sect, now at the zenith of his power, was here for Bai Fang. Seeing his ferocious demeanor, it was clear that he intended to severely harm Bai Fang.

"It's highly unlikely for Hong Qitian to leave the Purple Flame Sect; he couldn't have known so quickly about Senior Bai setting up a stall to conduct alchemy and artifact refining... Humph, it must have been those siblings Wu Biao and Ma Bao, and Yu Dajiang, who saw Senior Bai taking their business and deliberately resorted to such a despicable trick. Those two bastards! Dishonorable and shameless!"

Second You's thoughts raced, and he quickly understood the situation.

Second You was a man of loyalty. Fang Bai had treated him well, and he couldn't bear to see him being bullied and oppressed by Hong Qitian. Thus, he invoked the name of Sect Master Zu Tiangang from the Purple Flame Sect, hoping to deter Hong Qitian.

Hong Qitian's gaze was fixed tightly on the small hut. He was quite astonished that his Sonic Wave Strike hadn't inflicted any injuries on Fang Bai, and he knew this opponent was not as simple as Yu Dajiang had described. Either his true strength was not inferior to his own, or he had cultivated some special cultivation technique that could resist his sonic attacks.

Although surprised, Hong Qitian maintained a calm demeanor, a cold smile on his face, as he replied sternly to Second You, "What does it matter if Sect Master Zu knows? Before he arrives, I have plenty of time to kill your so-called 'Senior Bai.' Hehe, tell me, when Sect Master Zu arrives and sees that Senior Bai has already perished, do you think he would really get angry at me over a dead man?"

"So ruthless!"

Second You looked at Hong Qitian's sinister appearance and couldn't help but gasp in shock.

If Hong Qitian truly made a move to kill Bai Fang, then even if Sect Master Zu Tiangang arrived later and felt irritated, considering the interests of the Purple Flame Sect, he would most likely not take his anger out on Hong Qitian. After all, Hong Qitian was the only mid-grade alchemist in the Purple Flame Sect. Angering him, and risking his departure from the sect, would be an unbearable loss for the Purple Flame Sect.

Second You glanced over at the small hut where Fang Bai was, unsure of his current condition. After a moment's thought and clenching his teeth, he proclaimed loudly, "Elder Hong, there is virtue in mercy. You and Senior Bai are both alchemists, and there may even be some past connections between you. There's no need to be so ruthless, right?"

Hong Qitian said, "I am not one to kill the innocent without reason. Tell that Bai Fang, if he wants to live, he must roll out of Purple Flame City within half a 'two hours,' the farther the better! If he dares to step into Purple Flame City again in the future, I will not spare him a path to life!"

"This..."

Second You turned to look at the hut, knowing he had no right to speak on this matter. It was up to Fang Bai to respond.

In his heart, Second You didn't want Senior Bai to leave Purple Flame City. After all, Senior Bai had already become quite well-known and his business was booming. As long as he helped Senior Bai, he wouldn't have to worry about a source for his cultivation resources. However, if Senior Bai left, it would mean that his own source of cultivation resources would be lost, and he would have to continue operating the small stall.

Unless he was determined enough to follow Senior Bai and leave, with Senior Bai's capabilities, wherever they went it was estimated they wouldn't have to worry about cultivation resources.

Of course, that was only if Senior Bai was willing to take him along.

But Second You also knew that if Senior Bai didn't want to leave, Hong Qitian, with his temperament, might indeed be willing to kill.

"Creak!"

The door of the small hut opened softly, and Fang Bai emerged looking relaxed, wearing a white robe instead of his usual cyan outfit.

Fang Bai, with his sword-like eyebrows and starry eyes, his lips red and teeth white, was originally a handsome young man. Now, clothed in a snowy white robe, he seemed to emanate an additional hint of Immortal Qi, appearing even more extraordinary and detached from the world, like a celestial child descended to the mortal realm. Even Hong Qitian was taken aback, thinking to himself that this young man's bearing was truly unique in his life, and with his identity as an alchemist and artifact refiner, he could captivate countless female martial artists.

"Senior Bai..."

Second You let out a sigh of relief upon seeing Fang Bai finally appear. Despite his grave injuries, he pushed through and walked quickly to Fang Bai, gesturing towards Hong Qitian with a backward flick, "That is Elder Hong of the Purple Flame Sect, an Elder of Tribute. He shares the same rank in Alchemy with you, Senior Bai, as a mid-grade Pill Master..."

"I know."

Fang Bai smiled and patted Second You's shoulder, transferring a wisp of Chaos Origin Energy into his body before speaking, "Brother You, let me handle the matters here. You go inside the little house and treat your injuries!"

As Second You felt Fang Bai's light pat on his shoulder, he experienced a strange surge of Essence Energy entering his body, bringing with it an indescribable warmth and comfort. The internal organs, damaged by Hong Qitian's Sonic Wave Strike, were rapidly healing, and the pain was swiftly subsiding. His scattered and chaotic Essence Energy also gathered back into his Qi Sea, purer and more abundant than before, evoking the sensation of undergoing a metamorphosis.

"Senior Bai, you..."

The miraculous changes happening inside his body left Second You dumbstruck. He couldn't believe that such transformations were brought about by the Senior Bai before him.

"Even the best Healing Pills in the world probably don't have such a magical healing effect, do they?"

With each breath, Second You could feel his injuries healing, and he understood that what Senior Bai had demonstrated previously was merely the tip of the iceberg of his abilities, a true unfathomable depth.

"Go on! Stay inside and treat your own injuries!"

Fang Bai's voice rang out once more by Second You's ear.

"Ah? Oh..."

Fang Bai's words seemed to cast a spell, Making Second You instinctively respond before he scurried into the little house. There, he sat cross-legged on the ground, began to circulate his Cultivation Technique, and quickly entered a profound state of Cultivation, where he lost himself completely.

Unknowingly to Second You, the Chaos Origin Energy was the purest Qi between heaven and earth. That Fang Bai had transferred a wisp of it to heal his injuries was an immense fortune.

Experiencing severe injuries from Hong Qitian's Sonic Wave Strike, Second You had thought he would need at least ten days to recover, if not half a month, and even then, his future Cultivation might be greatly hindered. Little did he know that this misfortune had turned into a blessing.

The wisp of Chaos Essence Qi that Fang Bai had transferred into Second You's body could fundamentally improve his physique and aid him in breaking through to a higher level, far surpassing the effects of any Elixir he could take. If he cultivated diligently in that little house, his strength would undoubtedly rise to a new level, leaping from the Heaven Level Realm to the long-desired Desolate Level Realm.

This was something Second You never expected or even dared to imagine.

"Elder Hong, if you want me to leave Purple Flame City, you'll have to show me some real skill first!"

Fang Bai faced Hong Qitian with a smile that bore an undisguised touch of contempt and mockery.

"I fear you won't be able to handle it if I show you my true skill!"

Hong Qitian, a man of proud heart and temperament, grew furious with Fang Bai's provocation. His face clouded with anger, he clenched his fists, and his aura as a Martial Artist surged, enveloping the area within dozens of yards.

Chapter 1060: On the Shore of Fire Lake

In the True Martial Realm, the cultivation level of a low-grade Alchemist or Artifact Refiner was at least at the Desolate Level Realm because only a Desolate Level Martial Artist could externalize True Yuan to ignite and shape fire, which are the most basic prerequisites for Alchemy and Artifact Refining.

Whereas a mid-grade Alchemist or Artifact Refiner usually possessed a cultivation level at the Vast Level Realm, otherwise they couldn't control Essence Energy with greater precision to enhance the quality of Elixirs or Spiritual Artifacts.

From this, Hong Qitian deduced that although the fellow called Bai Fang had concealed his cultivation level, he must be a Vast Level Martial Artist.

However, Hong Qitian didn't believe that Bai Fang's strength could contend with his own.

After all, in Hong Qitian's eyes, Bai Fang, who had disguised himself, appeared to be only about forty years old. At such an age, only second-rate Sects or even more powerful Sects with abundant foundations could cultivate a Vast Level Expert, otherwise becoming a Vast Level Martial Artist would be as difficult as ascending to the heavens.

Take Hong Qitian, for example, he was also considered to have exceptional talent, but when he advanced to the Vast Level Realm, he had already passed his eightieth year, and now that he had reached the mid-stage of the Vast Level Realm, he was over a hundred years old.

However, as Martial Artists cultivate, they absorb the Heaven and Earth Origin Energy, and their flesh undergoes numerous temperings, thus appearing much younger than their actual age.

For instance, Hong Qitian was over a hundred years old but only looked like a vigorous elderly man in his sixties.

Hong Qitian felt that Bai Fang must be a newcomer to the Vast Level, as the saying goes, a new-born calf is not afraid of tigers. Due to his young age, relying on his formidable strength, he was arrogant and spoke recklessly, not even considering an elder from the Alchemy Realm like himself.

Of course, Bai Fang's arrogance and reckless speech were just what Hong Qitian had heard from Yu Dajiang. He came to find Bai Fang now, wanting to give this ignorant junior a harsh lesson and then expel him from Purple Flame City to eliminate any threat to his own position.

Hong Qitian initially thought that by releasing his Martial Artist Aura, he could intimidate Bai Fang and make him embarrass himself greatly, but unexpectedly, Bai Fang, enveloped in his Martial Artist Aura, remained unflustered. Although his black hair fluttered and his clothes billowed, his body stood firm and unyielding like a pine.

"This... this kid is not simple; I've underestimated him!"

Hong Qitian was inwardly shocked and immediately discarded his previous contempt, his face starting to turn solemn.

"If you want to drive me out of Purple Flame City, then defeat me first! Otherwise, don't bother me again!"

Bai Fang left Hong Qitian with a scornful glance, then his figure leapt high up, skimming over the tall walls of the Martial Artists Trading Market, and with a few bounds, he was already a kilometer away, heading in the direction of the east side of the city.

"Hmph, overestimating himself!"

Hong Qitian snorted coldly, leaping onto the wall top, squinting to look at Bai Fang's retreating figure, then he pursued.

Although it was already dusk and the Martial Artists Trading Market was close to closing time, with most Martial Artists already dispersed, there was still a small number who noticed the commotion between Hong Qitian and Bai Fang and watched from a distance.

If Hong Qitian didn't chase after Bai Fang, those Martial Artists would surely think that he, the revered Elder of Tribute and mid-stage Vast Level Expert of the Purple Flame Sect, was scared of an emerging talent. If this were to spread, it would be a blow to Hong Qitian's reputation.

Therefore, Hong Qitian had to chase after Bai Fang and had to exert all his might to defeat him; otherwise, he would be unable to save face.

Fang Bai took the lead with Hong Qitian trailing behind; the two powerhouses dashed towards the outskirts of Purple Flame City like lightning, leaving only an indiscernible afterimage in their wake.

Some martial artists were eager to follow and watch the excitement, but when they chased out of the Martial Academy Trading Market, they couldn't spot Fang Bai or Hong Qitian anywhere, nor could they capture even a hint of their auras, so they regretfully gave up.

Ten miles east of Purple Flame City lay the bank of Fire Lake.

Fang Bai stopped at the edge of the lake and turned to face the closely pursuing Hong Qitian.

The so-called Fire Lake earned its name because the lake water was as red as fire. When the wind blew, the waves churned, resembling ascending, burning flames.

Moreover, the temperature of Fire Lake's waters was incredibly high, remaining in a year-round state of boiling. Even a Desolate Level Martial Artist standing by the lake would feel as though they were next to a massive pit of magma, struggling to endure the scorching heat.

Fang Bai knew there must be something unusual about the lake, but currently, his goal was Hong Qitian; after dealing with Hong Qitian, he planned to explore the lake.

On the way here, Fang Bai hadn't employed any movement technique. By simply circulating Wind Essence Qi within his body to glide through the air, he easily left Hong Qitian behind, and this was with Fang Bai holding back; otherwise, Hong Qitian wouldn't even be able to catch a glimpse of his shadow.

Hong Qitian had been chasing Fang Bai, using up all his strength as if his life depended on it, yet he was still eating dust behind Fang Bai, growing more and more astonished. It was then he realized Fang Bai's strength was not inferior to his own. He began to regret blindly trusting Yu Dajiang's words and seeking trouble with Fang Bai without first investigating him.

Now, however, Hong Qitian was in too deep to back out, and the inevitable battle between him and Fang Bai was unavoidable.

If he won, his current reputation and prestige would remain unaffected.

If he lost, it would be a blow to his face, and his reputation and prestige would plummet.

Moreover, Hong Qitian understood that once the Purple Flame Sect learned of this mid-grade Alchemist and Artifact Refiner called "Bai Fang," they would surely make attractive offers to win him over. If he were defeated by Bai Fang in the upcoming duel, his standing within the Purple Flame Sect was certain to fall below Bai Fang's.

Thinking of his already more than a century lifespan, the idea of being subordinate to a man in his forties was somewhat hard to accept. If it really came to that, he would rather resign from his position as Elder of Tribute at the Purple Flame Sect and take a similar position at a Sect in another country.

Yet, the status and treatment given by other Sects might not match those offered by the Purple Flame Sect, and having served as the Elder of Tribute in the Purple Flame Sect for decades, Hong Qitian had grown fond of this place and didn't want to leave.

Hong Qitian still held onto a sliver of hope that maybe Fang Bai was merely an early-stage Vast Level Martial Artist who had mastered some high-level secret movement technique, and that's why he was left behind. When it comes to true combat power, he was sure Fang Bai was no match for him.

Hong Qitian silently prayed that his hopes would come to fruition.

However, Hong Qitian knew all too well that just by relying on that marvelously unique movement technique, Fang Bai had already secured an invincible position in their duel.

Because even if Fang Bai couldn't defeat him, he could use his superior movement technique to keep up and wear down Hong Qitian's Essence Energy. Meanwhile, not being able to catch up with Fang Bai was an inevitable predicament.

"Fang Bai, our strengths are comparable. If we fight, it's unlikely we'll determine a winner in a short time. How about we return to Purple Flame City and announce that we ended in a draw?" Hong Qitian suddenly said, showing a sign of weakness.