

Doctor 401

Chapter 401: The First Round of Medical Skills Exchange

Although Qian Haoduo was a honorary Elder of the Doctor Pavilion, he wasn't optimistic about the three disciples of the Doctor Pavilion participating in the medical competition. With his own wallet in mind, he decisively abandoned his support for the Doctor Pavilion and placed his bets on the Ghost Doctor Sect instead.

"I'm not joking!"

Fang Bai reached out, took the pen and paper from Qian Haoduo's hand, and signed his name with flourish. Then he wrote down the Ancient Medicine Sect he wanted to bet on, along with the amount and the odds, finally pressing his red thumbprint onto the paper.

At this time, on the list of gambling participants Qian Haoduo was holding, there were already dozens of guests who placed their bets, including Hua Tianhe, one of the four National Doctors, who also prominently placed a bet of one million.

Of course, Hua Tianhe bet on the Rejuvenation Hall winning the championship, and one million was merely a modest gamble for him; winning money was good, but losing wouldn't hurt him either.

The dozens of guests who participated in the bet, although they just signed and didn't go through any notarization, no one worried that there would be an issue with paying up after the medical skill competition ended.

Martial Artists value their word and reputation more than their lives. If any guest broke their promise, refusing to pay after losing the bet, they would be pointed at by thousands and carry a lifetime of infamy. Not to mention in the Ancient Martial World, they would even struggle to get by in ordinary society thereafter.

Furthermore, the guests willing to gamble were all wealthy individuals. To them, a few hundred million was but a small sum; they could afford the loss.

At the "World Traditional Chinese Medicine Conference" of past years, there have been many guests who gambled tens of millions, but like Fang Bai, betting over a billion on his first gamble was truly unparalleled.

Qian Haoduo, momentarily stunned by Fang Bai's bold move, was then filled with indescribable joy.

In Qian Haoduo's eyes, even though Wang Miaomiao had recently received personal guidance from Fang Bai, not even the most skilled Master could train a medical expert in such a short time. Therefore, unless a miracle occurred, the disciples from the Doctor Pavilion had almost zero chances of taking first place.

Moreover, Wang Miaomiao was a disciple of very mediocre talent, making her even harder to train. Qian Haoduo didn't believe that Fang Bai had the miraculous ability to turn decay into marvel.

Qian Haoduo silently did the math in his heart—once the Doctor Pavilion did not come first in the medical competition, at least one-third of the billion promised by Fang Bai would end up in his own pocket.

"You earn me twenty million, I earn even more from you! Heh heh... I'm going to make a tidy profit this time!"

In an instant, Qian Haoduo's gaze towards Fang Bai became greedy and fervent, as if he saw Fang Bai as a fat sheep waiting to be slaughtered.

Soon, the high-spirited and joyous Qian Haoduo walked away from Fang Bai and continued to encourage other guests to join in the betting.

A few minutes later, fifteen patients wearing hospital gowns gradually appeared on the main stage in the front.

The fifteen patients, both male and female, all in their twenties, were from various major hospitals in Yanjing, suffering from the common cold—headaches, fevers, runny noses, coughs... Their symptoms were generally the same.

After the fifteen patients took their seats on the specially arranged chairs on the stage, the ten judges responsible for evaluation came forward to measure their temperatures and check their symptoms to prevent any cheating.

After the judges finished checking, the fifteen disciples from the five major Ancient Medicine Sects would go to the patient they were assigned to treat according to their number and stand ready, waiting for the host to announce the start of the competition.

The first round of the medical skill competition was for the fifteen disciples of the Ancient Medicine Sects to use traditional Chinese medical treatments to cure the fifteen patients with colds. Whoever could cure their patient in the shortest time would advance to the next round.

The three who took the longest would be eliminated due to their lesser skill.

Ordinary physicians treating colds couldn't see a result in less than three to five days, but the fifteen disciples standing on the stage were all well-versed in both martial and medical arts, and their inherited medical expertise from the true Huaxia tradition was many times more advanced than that of ordinary physicians.

The disciples of the Ancient Medicine Sect usually kept a low profile and did not boast, but at this moment, for the benefit of their sects, no one would hold back. It was time to see whose medical skill was superior.

"The first round of the medical skills competition has officially begun."

Wen Yu's gaze swept over the three disciples from the "Doctor Pavilion" before he announced the start of the medical skills competition with a grave and solemn tone.

Upon hearing this, the fifteen disciples from the five major Ancient Medicine Sects acted one after another.

After a round of looking, listening, questioning, and pulse-taking, some began taking out their acupuncture kits, disinfecting the needles, and then swiftly inserting them into several acupoints on the patient's body.

Others rubbed their hands together until they were warm, then started to massage and knead the patient.

There were also those who took out elixirs they carried with them, allowing patients to swallow them...

The fifteen disciples from the Ancient Medicine Sects, like the Eight Immortals crossing the sea, each displayed their powers, using various methods to treat their patients.

Among the thousands of guests below the stage, some were not from the medical community and had been invited to the "World Traditional Chinese Medicine Conference" for the first time. They were amazed to see the bizarre and exotic means of treatment demonstrated by the fifteen disciples from the Ancient Medicine Sects, realizing that even a common cold could be treated in such ways.

Nangong Ming, the man in black representing the "Ghost Doctor Sect," was the last to make his move.

He walked unhurriedly toward the frail young man in front of him, scanned the man for a moment, and then with a swift motion of his right hand, he grasped the frail young man's wrist to feel his pulse; after a brief moment, he let go.

When Nangong Ming grabbed his wrist, the frail young man felt a cold breath seep through his wrist and travel through his body's meridians before it finally dissipated.

As the cold energy roamed his insides, the frail young man felt as if he was plunged into an icy pit, his body trembling slightly and overwhelmed with a feeling of despair and suffering worse than death.

After examining the frail young man's pulse, Nangong Ming had a clear understanding of his condition and didn't ask any further questions. He stretched out his palms and lightly patted the front, back, and head of the patient several times. Then, he slightly raised his hand to signal to the ten judges that his treatment was complete.

Usually, when a contestant indicates that the treatment is over, it means they have cured the patient's illness.

"You're kidding, he's done just like that?"

"It's been less than three minutes!"

"This person is extraordinary!"

"I wonder from where Sect Master Sikong has invited such a master!"

"Come on, let's go up and see if the patient's really cured!"

...

The ten judges, with a mix of emotions, approached the frail young man on the stage. Some felt his pulse, some measured his temperature, and some asked how he was feeling—all to determine whether his cold had indeed been cured.

"...It's truly miraculous! This doctor patted me a few times, and I sweated profusely; then, I felt much more relieved. The headache, cough, and various other symptoms have all disappeared... Brother, you truly are a Divine Doctor!"

The frail young man stood up, his spirit revived as he walked back and forth on the stage, looking nothing like his listless self from before. He gave Nangong Ming a thumbs up in admiration.

Chapter 402: Stunning Performance

Nangong Ming glanced at him indifferently, silent and aloof.

Knowing that Divine Doctors often have peculiar temperaments, the slender man did not take offense when he was ignored. With an awkward smile, he settled back into his seat to address the inquiries from the several judges beside him.

After the examination and questioning, all ten judges unanimously confirmed that Nangong Ming had successfully cured the patient within three minutes, securing the first place in the first round of the medical contest and advancing to the next round.

Nangong Ming's advancement had some impact on the other fourteen disciples of the Ancient Medicine Sect. A few of them became visibly anxious and made mistakes during their acupuncture procedures.

Wang Miaomiao let out a sigh of relief and eased her slightly tense mood. Holding two silver needles, she manipulated them with smooth, unhurried motions while softly comforting the patient under her treatment.

Wang Miaomiao's patient was a young woman around eighteen or nineteen, experiencing slightly more severe symptoms of a cold, particularly with frequent coughing. However, as Wang Miaomiao's acupuncture treatment progressed, the woman's symptoms notably improved and her cough gradually subsided.

The needling technique used by Wang Miaomiao was the "Taiji Needle" from the "Emperor's Ten Needles" passed down by Fang Bai. Despite involving only two silver needles, the exquisite technique combined with Wang Miaomiao's unique True Yuan, unlike other Martial Artists, achieved a therapeutic effect that was astonishing.

The "Emperor's Ten Needles" may sound simple, but their profound and extensive nature is beyond the understanding and imagination of ordinary people.

Based on Wang Miaomiao's current abilities and talents, Fang Bai had only taught her the first five of the "Emperor's Ten Needles" and provided a detailed explanation.

As for how much of the essence of these five needles Wang Miaomiao could comprehend, it would depend on her own insight.

Provided Wang Miaomiao could master the essence of the first five needles of the "Emperor's Ten Needles," it would be too bold to claim she could reach the extraordinary medical realm of "Revive the Dead, Flesh for Bones," but it was more than sufficient for her to become a renowned physician of her time.

"How do you feel now?"

A few minutes later, Wang Miaomiao removed the silver needles and asked her patient with a smile.

"Hmm... My head doesn't hurt anymore... My body doesn't feel uncomfortable... and I'm not coughing either... Wow, sister, you're really amazing! It seems like my cold is completely cured!"

The young woman assessed herself and then spoke with a face full of surprise.

She had previously been admitted to a hospital in Yanjing for her cold and had received IV treatments for two or three days without improvement. Following the persuasion of several doctors in the hospital, she and a dozen other patients with similar symptoms came here for what was dubbed "free treatment by renowned doctors."

However, it was only upon arriving here that the young woman realized that she and the other patients had become "test subjects" for the doctors to practice their medical skills.

Initially, the young woman and the other patients were strongly opposed to this idea. However, they complied after the hospital promised to cover all their inpatient expenses.

To the young woman's surprise, the graceful female doctor treating her used only two silver needles and, after a few short minutes of application, had cured the severe cold that had been tormenting her for days.

This effect was much better than receiving IV drips and taking medicine!

"Now that your condition is starting to improve, remember to drink plenty of boiled water and get enough rest when you go back. Don't eat foods that are too greasy..."

After putting away the silver needles, Wang Miaomiao gave the young woman a few more careful instructions.

"Yes, I'll remember! Thank you, sister!"

The young woman said with a grateful expression.

The doctors she usually encountered were mostly haughty and indifferent, but the female doctor before her was not only beautiful and kind-hearted, making people feel as though they were bathed in the warmth of spring, but also possessed such excellent medical skills...

How wonderful it would be if all the doctors in the world were like this! Even if it cost more money, and I had to stay a few more days in the hospital, I would be willing!

The young woman thought so in her heart.

Having cured her patient, Wang Miaomiao also raised her hand to signal to the judges that her treatment was finished.

The ten judges came forward and conducted a detailed examination of the patient according to the procedure, and in the end confirmed the validity of Wang Miaomiao's results, declaring on the spot her advancement to the next round.

Although Wang Miaomiao took a few minutes longer than Nangong Ming to heal her patient, her result was still the second best in the first round of the medical skills contest, exceeding the expectations of many guests present.

"This little girl Miaomiao... has Fang Bai trained her so well? To cure a patient with a severe cold in ten minutes, even I, Old Qian, would find it difficult to achieve!"

Qian Haoduo looked at Wang Miaomiao on the stage with surprise, his eyelids twitching involuntarily. Then, glancing at Fang Bai, who had an expression of composure, he suddenly had an ominous premonition.

Although Qian Haoduo was not short of money, if the "Doctor Pavilion Sect" won first place in the medical skills contest, his loss would be huge, so much so that he felt like crying.

Among the dozens of guests who placed bets, Fang Bai was the only one who bet on the "Doctor Pavilion Sect" winning first place.

This meant that if the "Doctor Pavilion" emerged victorious and took the first place in the medical skills contest, Fang Bai would gain an income of at least several hundred million from the hands of dozens of guests, including himself, a sum that was enough to turn heads with envy.

As the bookmaker, Qian Haoduo would end up being the biggest loser.

Thinking of this, Qian Haoduo started to feel restless, repeatedly taking out his handkerchief to wipe the cold sweat seeping from his forehead.

About half an hour later, twelve disciples from the five great Ancient Medicine Sects had completed their treatments, and according to the rules, the remaining three were eliminated.

The "Doctor Pavilion" had some reasons for not being favored by everyone initially, as among the three who were eliminated in the first round, two belonged to the "Doctor Pavilion," with only Wang Miaomiao advancing to the second round.

Wen Yu exchanged glances with the senior officials of the "Doctor Pavilion," their eyes filled with both regret and surprise.

The regret was that among the three disciples who participated in the contest on behalf of the "Doctor Pavilion," two were eliminated in the first round, leaving only Wang Miaomiao as the 'sole seedling'.

The surprise was that Wang Miaomiao's performance was extraordinarily good in the first round, exceeding their expectations. It seemed that Fang Bai's training of Wang Miaomiao in just over a day had paid off significantly.

"Miaomiao, the rise and fall of the 'Doctor Pavilion' for the next five years depends on your performance! Don't let us down!"

Wen Yu clenched her fist stealthily, silently cheering Wang Miaomiao on in her heart.

Fang Bai smiled and nodded at Wang Miaomiao, who was standing upright and formal, then gave her a thumbs-up to indicate she had done very well.

His smile and gesture greatly boosted Wang Miaomiao's confidence, making her stand even straighter.

After Nangong Ming finished his diagnosis and treatment, he had been paying close attention to Wang Miaomiao. When he saw Wang Miaomiao curing the patient with two silver needles, her skill so superb and extraordinary, it was unlike anything he had seen before, and his brow furrowed, his face turning solemn.

Chapter 403: The Second Round of Medical Skills Exchange

As one of the Hidden Sects, the "Ghost Doctor Valley" boasts a thousand-year legacy of Ancient Martial arts and medical skills, extensive and profound. However, according to Nangong Ming's knowledge, among the acupuncture techniques passed down within his sect, there was not a single one that could compare with the technique used by Wang Miaomiao.

What Nangong Ming was most worried about now was that if Wang Miaomiao had held back during her previous treatment, she would undoubtedly become a formidable opponent.

Before the medical skill competition, Nangong Ming was brimming with confidence, believing no one could challenge him and that the first place was rightfully his, but now his confidence was slightly shaken.

Nangong Ming had already promised the Sect Leader of the Ghost Doctor Sect, Sikong Lieyang, that he would help the sect claim first place in the medical skill competition. If he lost to Wang Miaomiao, he would face immense embarrassment.

For the esteemed core disciple of a Hidden Sect to lose in medical skills to a mere disciple from the secular Ancient Medicine Sect was something Nangong Ming could not accept.

To prevent this from happening, Nangong Ming had already decided that if he found Wang Miaomiao to be a threat to his claim of first place, he would stop at nothing to cause her trouble and ensure she couldn't participate in the final round.

His intent to kill, though well-masked on the surface, couldn't help but let some of the Killing Qi leak out, which Fang Bai sensed once again from his seat in the VIP area.

Fang Bai glanced at Nangong Ming, a trace of chill sweeping across the depths of his eyes.

Fang Bai and Wang Miaomiao weren't master and disciple, but they shared such a bond. If Nangong Ming dared to make any move against her, Fang Bai wouldn't care whether he was from the Hidden Sect or not; he would take him down just the same.

Fang Bai was also extremely protective, his friends and family being his Achilles' heel; harm them and you'd have bad luck.

The first round of the medical skill competition was relatively the simplest, with patients' conditions becoming increasingly complicated and treatment difficulties escalating in the subsequent rounds.

The twelve patients who came on stage for the second round all suffered from spinal problems.

The most common types of spinal issues are cervical and lumbar spine diseases, with primary symptoms including inability to stand straight, headaches, dizziness, blurred vision, memory loss, neck and shoulder pain, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, and weakness in the lower limbs, among others.

In more severe cases, it could even lead to paralysis.

For ordinary doctors, there is no definitive cure for spinal diseases—they can only resort to medication and methods such as acupuncture and massage to provide relief.

However, for disciples of the Ancient Medicine Sect with a heritage of ancient medical knowledge, spinal diseases are curable; it is merely a matter of how long the treatment takes.

When Fang Bai heard Wen Yu announce that the second round of the medical competition would involve treating spinal diseases, he couldn't help but smile slightly, while Wang Miaomiao, standing on the podium, also visibly relaxed.

Fang Bai, having interned in the acupuncture and massage department of Yanjing Hospital, dealt most frequently with patients suffering from spinal diseases, and his experience in treating such conditions was unrivaled.

Furthermore, among the medical knowledge previously imparted to Wang Miaomiao, the art of acupuncture and massage was a focal point of Fang Bai's teachings, especially the "Emperor's Ten Needles." Once the technique was perfected to the point of absolute mastery and with the aid of True Yuan, it could truly cure hundreds of diseases.

For the physicians of the Ancient Medicine Sect, the art of acupuncture and massage could be said to be the best method for treating spinal diseases. Therefore, in this round of the medical competition, Wang Miaomiao's advancement was without a doubt.

In the interest of fairness and impartiality, the disease to be treated in each round of the competition section was decided in advance by a consensus among ten judges and only announced just before the round began. This maximized the prevention of cheating, relying completely on the spontaneous performance of the competing Ancient Medicine Sect disciples.

Twelve patients with spinal diseases, mostly elderly, had severe conditions. Without assistance, they found it difficult to stand and walk upright.

At that moment, each of them was lying prone on a massage table, and they were wheeled onto the stage by the hospital nurses.

Before being brought here, the twelve patients had just undergone a comprehensive and detailed examination, proving that their conditions were roughly the same.

After Wen Yu announced that the second round of medical skill competition had officially started, twelve disciples of the Ancient Medicine Sect took out their needle boxes. Then, holding their breath and concentrating their True Yuan to the tips of their fingers, they pinched up the silver needles and

inserted them into the corresponding meridian acupoints of the patients with unique techniques, beginning the treatment.

The condition for advancing in the second round of the medical skill competition was to significantly reduce the symptoms within half an hour and enable the patients to walk independently for more than one hundred meters.

If these two conditions were not met within half an hour, the contestant would be eliminated.

Treating spinal diseases is a global challenge; even the most skilled doctors cannot cure it instantly but rather need a lengthy process of treatment and care.

To achieve significant therapeutic effects within half an hour was very difficult, therefore, when Wen Yu announced the diseases to be treated in the second round of the competition, at least half of the disciples from the Ancient Medicine Sect showed a change in their facial expressions, obviously unsure of themselves.

Even Nangong Ming put away his usual arrogant and disdainful attitude, becoming extremely cautious.

Nangong Ming's patient was an elderly man over sixty years old, lying on the massage table, continuously groaning, indicating his distress.

"Doctor, I feel very dizzy right now, like the world is spinning around me, I'm so uncomfortable I want to vomit... please help me..."

As Nangong Ming approached with the silver needles in hand, the elderly man weakly pleaded.

The old man's cervical spine problem was very serious. He had been hospitalized a couple of days ago due to dizziness and falls. He had undergone acupuncture, massage, and various physical therapies without any improvement. Upon hearing about the free treatment from a renowned doctor here, he didn't hesitate to come.

Nangong Ming ignored the elderly man's pleas, standing behind him with an expressionless face. He took out one silver needle after another from the needle box, his hands moving swiftly like lightning, inserting several needles into the vital meridian points around the neck, then gently twisting and lifting them.

Nangong Ming's needle technique was marvelous, and his application was fluid and graceful, a sight to behold. Some of the acupuncture experts in the audience couldn't help but marvel and feel inferior.

Even Hua Tianhe, known as the "First Person of Acupuncture in Huaxia," watched with shining eyes, secretly lamenting that the new waves of the Yangtze River push the old waves, and that he was indeed getting old.

Since Nangong Ming appeared at this "World Traditional Chinese Medicine Conference," he had been shrouded in mystery, attracting the attention of many guests.

Earlier, during the first round of medical skill competition, Nangong Ming had shown a small sampling of his medical expertise, which had already impressed many guests, but now, with his needle techniques on display, he astonished everyone. Any guest who understood the profoundness of his technique was utterly convinced.

"Such an outstanding disciple could never have been trained by the 'Ghost Doctor Sect.' Who exactly is this Nangong Ming? Could he really be from the legendary Hidden Sect?"

The very thought of the "Hidden Sect" made Hua Tianhe's heart sink continuously.

Chapter 404: The Stunning Needle Technique

"Hidden Sect" has always been a legendary existence for martial artists in the Secular Ancient Martial World.

Above worldly concerns and laws, disciples of the Hidden Sects are unparalleled in strength. To their eyes, the common folks are but ants, trembled solely by even greater powers.

Years ago, righteous powerhouses in Huaxia, led by the Prime Minister of the time, founded the "Dragon Guard," an organization aimed to prevent lawless behaviors of Hidden Sect's disciples practicing in the secular world, which could disturb societal stability.

In fact, the presence of "Dragon Guard" has proven somewhat effective.

Although the Hidden Sect disciples are powerful, they often practice alone in the secular world. If they disrupt social stability, the Dragon Guard, upon learning, will rise en masse to suppress their actions through sheer numbers.

Of course, Dragon Guard members refrain from harming Hidden Sect disciples unless absolutely necessary, to avoid retribution from the Hidden Sects.

In truth, Hidden Sects also abide by their own rules, restraining and balancing each other. Even the rational sects would not mobilize over minor injustices that don't hold moral high ground, lest they face condemnation from the other sects.

No matter what, to the Secular Ancient Martial World, Hidden Sects remain a fearsome and mighty existence. If Nangong Ming is indeed a disciple of a Hidden Sect, then with his support, who could possibly compete with Ghost Doctor Sect in the field of medical skill?

If he personally took action, could he contend with Nangong Ming?

Hua Tianhe glanced at Fang Bai, then turned his attention to Wang Miaomiao, admiring her treatment process.

If Nangong Ming's needling technique and hand skills are shockingly impressive, then Wang Miaomiao's technique is equally stunning.

Nangong Ming's needling, like flowing clouds and water, achieves fluency and splendor in one go.

Wang Miaomiao's needling, perfectly balancing speed and rhythm, hardness and softness, exudes an aura of overlooking the world with delicacy and beauty, providing a visual pleasure.

"Emperor's Ten Needles" is a needling technique created by Fang Bai after becoming the Immortal Emperor, beautifully merging the Martial Dao and the art of healing.

When "Emperor's Ten Needles" is performed by Fang Bai, the simple silver needles exude an invincible dominance – capable of both healing and combat, pushing the unity of martial and medical arts to the pinnacle.

Wang Miaomiao, a woman of gentle temperament, lacks the technique's inherent dominance when practicing "Emperor's Ten Needles," instead imbuing it with a woman's innate grace and gentleness.

Although Wang Miaomiao has yet to fully grasp the true essence of "Emperor's Ten Needles" or to unlock its complete healing potential, for treating common ailments, she is more than adequate.

"The needling techniques used by these two youngsters are unprecedented, unheard of – our land of Huaxia truly harbors hidden dragons and crouching tigers!"

Hua Tianhe's gaze shifted back and forth between Nangong Ming and Wang Miaomiao, overwhelmed by their exquisite needling techniques and filled with immense emotion.

Initially, Hua Tianhe harbored some hopes for Rejuvenation Hall to claim the top spot in the medical skill competition. Yet, having witnessed the needling skills displayed by Nangong Ming and Wang Miaomiao, he utterly relinquished such thoughts.

A master is known by their first move.

Hua Tianhe was a medical expert, and as soon as he saw the acupuncture performed by Nangong Ming and Wang Miaomiao, he knew that the other Ancient Medicine Sect disciples were far outmatched and not even on the same level of competition.

What Hua Tianhe could affirm was that, in this medical skills exchange, those who could make it to the end would inevitably be Nangong Ming and Wang Miaomiao.

That is to say, the first place in this medical skills exchange segment would come from either the "Ghost Doctor Sect" or the "Doctor Pavilion," two of the great Ancient Medicine Sects.

The "Ghost Doctor Sect," among the top five medical sects of Huaxia, was the most mysterious, and from the Sect Leader Sikong Lieyang down, all disciples acted in a manner that was both righteous and unorthodox. Their inherited cultivation techniques were biased towards the Yin and gentle, resulting in each disciple having a solitary, cold temperament that kept people at a respectful distance.

On the contrary, the "Doctor Pavilion" was the complete opposite. All the female disciples in the pavilion were gentle and amiable in their speech and behavior, giving others a feeling of spring breeze. It was the most popular among the top five Ancient Medicine Sects.

And the Pavilion Master of "Doctor Pavilion," Wen Yu, also had good relations with the leaders of the other Ancient Medicine Sects, so logically, Hua Tianhe hoped the "Doctor Pavilion" would claim the first place.

Not only could Hua Tianhe discern the outcome of this medical expertise competition, but many of the guests present could also see it coming.

Wang Miaomiao was originally just an ordinary disciple of "Doctor Pavilion." After meeting Fang Bai and undergoing his tutelage, she was able to deliver the stunning performance on stage.

The news that Wang Miaomiao had been taught by Fang Bai had already reached many guests through various channels, and they hadn't taken it seriously at first. They didn't think Fang Bai, no matter how skilled, could turn Wang Miaomiao into a medical expert in just over one night.

However, Wang Miaomiao's sudden rise at the moment made those guests marvel, beginning to look at Fang Bai in a new light.

Especially the Sect Leaders of the Ancient Medicine Sects, their gaze towards Fang Bai was now filled with fervor, as if they had discovered a new continent.

If Fang Bai could turn Wang Miaomiao into a medical expert, he might be able to train more medical experts like her. If they could recruit Fang Bai into their sect, the benefits to the sect were self-evident.

One way or another, they had to make a point of getting to know Fang Bai better!

This was what the Sect Leaders of the various Ancient Medicine Sects were thinking, except for that of the "Ghost Doctor Sect," Sikong Lieyang.

Qian Haoduo sat in the audience, and instead of being pleased with Wang Miaomiao's excellent performance, he was anxious and almost felt an urge to jump onto the podium and pull Wang Miaomiao down from the stage.

Despite being an honorary Elder of "Doctor Pavilion," Qian Haoduo was the last person who wanted "Doctor Pavilion" to win first place.

If "Doctor Pavilion" won first place, including Qian Haoduo, the vast majority of the guests betting would lose a large sum of money, particularly him, as the bookmaker, who stood to lose the most.

But despite the tension, Qian Haoduo was still confident that the final winner would be the "Ghost Doctor Sect." The sudden emergence of Wang Miaomiao would only add some complications to Nangong Ming's path to the championship.

Inside the conference center, it was as silent as a crypt. Over a thousand guests widened their eyes, intently watching the twelve Ancient Medicine Sect disciples compete in medical skills on the podium. Most guest's gazes were fixed on Nangong Ming and Wang Miaomiao.

Ten minutes later, Nangong Ming and Wang Miaomiao nearly simultaneously withdrew their silver needles, concluding their acupuncture treatments.

Chapter 405: Those Who Block My Path, Die!

Despite the acupuncture process lasting only a brief ten minutes, for Nangong Ming and Wang Miaomiao, it felt like an intense battle, with a serious consumption of True Yuan, leaving them with a sense of utter exhaustion.

After withdrawing the needles, both of them simultaneously let out a long sigh of relief, wiped the beads of sweat from their foreheads, and took a moment to quietly regulate their breathing before continuing with the treatment using massage techniques.

Massage therapy, although seemingly simpler than acupuncture, is actually quite complex and profound, involving many aspects of medical knowledge, such as the meridian system, acupoints, and

the subtleties of technique and pressure, etc. Only after mastering all this medical knowledge can one claim proficiency in massage therapy.

To become a renowned physician, guidance from a master is of course important, but one also needs to constantly explore and accumulate experience through practicing medicine, for some things can't be taught, they must be understood through personal insight and exploration.

Just like Wang Miaomiao, Fang Bai had introduced her to a whole new world of martial dao and medical knowledge, how far she could go from here was now up to her.

Ordinary Chinese medicine practitioners perform massage therapy by mastering the techniques, adjusting the pressure, and knowing the accurate meridian points on the body.

Disciples of the Ancient Medicine Sect on the other hand, assist their massage with True Yuan, thus achieving healing effects that are beyond the realm of possibility for ordinary practitioners.

Usually, when Ancient Medicine Sect disciples perform massage therapy on patients, they infuse their True Yuan into their palms, which then seeps slowly into the patient's body to relieve or even eliminate physical discomfort.

Massage therapy, clearly, is more taxing on True Yuan and mental energy than applying acupuncture.

After twenty minutes, regardless of Nangong Ming or Wang Miaomiao, signs of fatigue had appeared on their faces.

Nangong Ming was slightly better off, being far stronger than Wang Miaomiao. There was only a fine layer of sweat on his forehead and his breathing became a bit rapid. After a short period of breathing regulation, he returned to normal.

Wang Miaomiao, in contrast, was almost completely drenched in sweat, with wisps of white vapor rising from her hair, and an abnormal flush on her delicate face, clearly indicating an excessive consumption of True Yuan and physical overexertion.

After persevering through twenty minutes of massage for her patient, Wang Miaomiao sat down on a chair behind her, feeling as if a great burden had been lifted. She signaled the judges that her treatment was finished and began to close her eyes and regulate her breathing.

Just a moment before Wang Miaomiao finished her treatment, Nangong Ming also concluded his own.

Though he managed to finish a step ahead of Wang Miaomiao once again, there wasn't a trace of triumph on Nangong Ming's face.

Particularly when both patients treated by him and Wang Miaomiao almost simultaneously stood up from their massage tables, walking around the podium with expressions of comfort and joy, his hands hidden in his sleeves had already clenched into fists.

In Nangong Ming's view, although Wang Miaomiao was far behind him in martial dao, in the field of medical knowledge, she had become an imminent threat to him.

In the first round of medical skill exchange, Nangong Ming had a significant lead, but by the second round, that advantage had sharply diminished. Judging from the recovery of the two patients, the treatment effects of him and Wang Miaomiao should be about the same.

Nangong Ming had already boasted to the Sect Leader of the Ghost Doctor Sect, Sikong Lieyang, that he must secure first place in this medical exchange, but given the way things were developing, he wasn't really sure anymore.

Wang Miaomiao was an unpredictable factor, and what Nangong Ming feared the most was that during the final showdown of the medical exchange, Wang Miaomiao would pull out a surprise move, causing his own downfall.

"Whoever blocks my path shall die!"

Nangong Ming glanced at Wang Miaomiao and slowly sat down in the chair behind him, as the intent to kill began to spread in his chest.

In the world of the Hidden Sects, reason was never the primary concern; strength was the only language spoken there. To achieve one's goals, a path was carved with fists—where adversaries were to be killed and even Buddhas were to be slain if they blocked the way.

Had it not been for the mutual restraint and balance maintained among the major Hidden Sects to sustain the basic stability of the Hidden Sect World, the realm primarily composed of Martial Artists would have fallen into chaos long ago, affecting even the secular world with its ripples and shocks.

Coming from the Hidden Sects, Nangong Ming was accustomed to the harsh rule of the survival of the fittest. Though he was admonished by his mentor to stay low-key while traversing the secular world, killing a Martial Artist from the Secular Ancient Martial World didn't really weigh on his conscience.

The second round of the medical skills competition concluded on time after half an hour.

After scrutiny and judgment by the ten judges, Nangong Ming, Wang Miaomiao, and three others met the goal of alleviating the patient's symptoms and enabling them to independently walk for more than a hundred meters, advancing smoothly to the third round, while the other seven were regrettably eliminated.

Thunderous applause erupted on the scene, cheering for the exquisite medical skills of the five Ancient Medicine Sect Disciples who had advanced once again.

The five advancing Disciples belonged to three different Ancient Medicine Sects, with "Doctor Pavilion" Disciple Wang Miaomiao occupying one spot, "Shenxian Island" Disciple Gu Xie another, and the remaining three spots surprisingly all went to members of the "Ghost Doctor Sect."

The high level of medical skills of the "Ghost Doctor Sect" Disciples was evident from this.

The three "Ghost Doctor Sect" Disciples included the enigmatic Nangong Ming, Lei Bao, a Direct Disciple of Sikong Lieyang, as well as a Direct Disciple of an Elder.

Below the presiding stage, in the area where the five great Ancient Medicine Sect Disciples were seated, bursts of applause and cheers occasionally erupted; this was the Disciples of the "Doctor Pavilion,"

"Shenxian Island," and "Ghost Doctor Sect" cheering and rallying for their fellow Sect members who had advanced.

Only Fang Bai and Wang Miaomiao could sense the killing intent spreading through Nangong Ming's chest at the venue.

Although Nangong Ming did not look at Wang Miaomiao, she felt as though a sharp edge was at her back, as if an invisible Dashan was suspended above her head, threatening to crash down at any moment, putting her entire being on edge.

Wang Miaomiao didn't realize that this was a form of psychic pressure that Nangong Ming was imposing on her, a force on a spiritual level. It shared similarities with the Divine Sense focused by Fang Bai, yet its effect and capability were far from comparable to Divine Sense.

As this invisible pressure continued to grow, Wang Miaomiao's blood flowed faster, her heartbeat accelerated, her breathing grew more rapid, and her head began to spin slightly, making it impossible for her to concentrate.

"Cast aside distractions! Circulate your Cultivation Technique!"

Just as Wang Miaomiao was becoming somewhat dazed, Fang Bai's voice suddenly echoed in her ears.

His voice struck her like thunder, jolting her body, and she immediately snapped out of her groggy state.

Wang Miaomiao was a clever person; once she was clear-headed, she immediately knew that her mind had been affected by Nangong Ming's murderous intent.

She looked at Fang Bai, seated below the stage, with a bashful expression and then cast aside all distractions in her mind, focused her concentration, circulated the Cultivation Technique imparted to her by Fang Bai, and counteracted the psychic pressure Nangong Ming had imposed on her.

Chapter 406: The Third Round of Medical Skills Exchange

Wang Miaomiao's cultivation level was far under Nangong Ming's, but the cultivation technique she was currently circulating was created by Fang Bai, the former Invincible War Emperor. It was filled with an

aura of unrivaled dominance and an authoritative might that said "only I reign supreme." Despite being weaker, she managed to negate the invisible pressure imposed upon her by Nangong Ming.

"Could the cultivation technique this woman is practicing be of Heaven Rank?"

Nangong Ming's pupils suddenly constricted as he was inwardly shocked.

Nangong Ming was an Earth Level Martial Artist, cultivating an Earth Rank Technique. In his view, unless Wang Miaomiao cultivated a technique of a higher rank than his own, she wouldn't be able to withstand the mental pressure he was applying with her current realm and strength.

But Heaven Rank Techniques among the Hidden Sects were of the highest level, treasures that the major Sects and clans jealously guarded. How could Wang Miaomiao, a martial artist from the Secular Ancient Martial World, possess such a covetable high-rank technique?

Could it be that she encountered some fortuitous opportunity in the secular world?

Thinking this, Nangong Ming's heart began to race; his slightly closed eyes suddenly flew open, and he stared at Wang Miaomiao unblinkingly, filled with greed and heat.

If Wang Miaomiao had indeed found the legacy of a Heaven Rank Martial Artist, then she must possess more than just a Heaven Rank Technique; there were likely other cultivation resources left by a Heaven Rank Martial Artist on her.

Compared to the martial artists of the Secular Ancient Martial World, Nangong Ming was a formidable being, but in the Hidden Sects, he was no expert. He was confident that with his talent and aptitude, if he could obtain the legacy of a Heaven Rank Martial Artist, his power would surge dramatically in a short span of time.

In "Ghost Doctor Valley," there were many Martial Arts Techniques passed down, but only one was said to be of Heaven Rank and only accessible for cultivation and study by successive Valley Masters.

As a core disciple like Nangong Ming, whose status was even below the Elders of Ghost Doctor Valley, he had no chance to even glimpse their Heaven Rank Techniques.

And now, there might be a legacy item from a Heaven Rank Martial Artist on Wang Miaomiao, which for Nangong Ming was nothing short of thrilling news. How could he not be extremely excited?

At this moment, Nangong Ming's interest in competing for the first place in medical skills had vastly diminished. He even thought that if Wang Miaomiao was willing to hand over the Heaven Rank Martial Artist's legacy, how would it matter if he let her have the first place?

The silent confrontation between Nangong Ming and Wang Miaomiao was known only to them and Fang Bai sitting below the stage. The rest of the guests were oblivious; most of them were still whispering to each other, praising the excellent acupuncture and massage techniques displayed by Nangong Ming and Wang Miaomiao just moments ago.

After resting for half an hour, the five disciples from Ancient Medicine Sect began the third round of their medical competition.

The five patients being treated in the third round were all burn victims who had been admitted to the hospital not long ago. Their burns were predominantly on their palms and arms, with roughly similar areas affected.

The goal set by the ten judges for the five Ancient Medicine Sect disciples was to see who could achieve the best treatment outcome within a day and night, regardless of the treatment methods used.

That meant the five Ancient Medicine Sect disciples were to start treating the patients now, and by this time tomorrow, the results would be checked, and two winners would be selected by the ten judges to enter the finals.

Burns are not like colds or fevers; the treatment is not only troublesome but also time-consuming.

In the hands of an ordinary doctor, even with the best medicine and advanced medical equipment, such a short time of one day and night would hardly show any noticeable treatment results.

However, for disciples of the Ancient Medicine Sect, treating burns still involves some special medicines and methods.

For example, some Ancient Medicine Sect disciples might first use acupuncture and their own True Yuan to stimulate and repair the damaged nerves and blood vessels at the injury site, then apply a specially prepared medicinal powder or ointment to the affected area...

The medical sects to which Ancient Medicine Sect disciples belong generally cultivate spiritual medicine, and the medicinal powders or ointments made from these spiritual medicines often have miraculous healing effects. It's possible that within a day and a night, there could be significant improvement in the burns of the injured.

Especially in the Hidden Sect where Nangong Ming belonged, there are rare spiritual medicines that are hundreds of years old. The medicinal powders and ointments they produce have even better therapeutic effects.

To prevent the five competing Ancient Medicine Sect disciples from cheating, and adhering to the principles of fairness and transparency, the judges only allowed the five disciples to prepare the medicinal powders and ointments on the stage. The herbs needed could be sent to the stage by their respective medical sects.

To talk of fairness, it was still not fair.

The various Ancient Medicine Sects have different foundations. Taking the medicinal herbs for preparing powders and ointments for example, some sects provided herbs that were relatively older in drug age and naturally had better healing effects. This meant that the competing disciple from such a sect was more likely to win.

In response to this, the various Ancient Medicine Sects had no objections. If they lost, there would be no complaints. After all, who could blame others for having a deeper foundation than theirs?

Seeing that the disciples from other Ancient Medicine Sects had started sending up their medicinal herbs, Fang Bai's lips moved slightly as he communicated with Wen Yu in "Thread Condensation Sound Transmission," listing over a dozen herbs for her to have delivered to Wang Miaomiao on the stage.

"Thread Condensation Sound Transmission" is an extremely profound martial arts technique. Although Wen Yu was a Profound Level Martial Artist, she was not capable of it. Seeing Fang Bai perform it with ease, she couldn't help but be secretly astonished, and her understanding of Fang Bai's strength reached a whole new level.

At the same time, Wen Yu also hesitated whether to follow Fang Bai's instructions and send those more than a dozen herbs to Wang Miaomiao on the stage.

The herbs that Fang Bai mentioned, the Doctor Pavilion could procure, but the properties of these dozen herbs varied greatly. When combined, they might lead to severe conflicts and were not suitable for the preparation of medicinal powders or ointments at all.

If Fang Bai asked Wang Miaomiao to apply the medicinal powder and ointment made from these herbs to burn patients, it could very likely result in making the injury even worse!

However, Wang Miaomiao's amazing performances in the previous two rounds were proof enough of Fang Bai's profound medical skills. As the saying goes, "Extraordinary people do extraordinary things." Perhaps Fang Bai's methods could indeed yield unexpected results?

I'll take the risk!

After hesitating for a moment, Wen Yu finally decided. She instructed an elder beside her to gather the more than a dozen herbs mentioned by Fang Bai and then had them sent to Wang Miaomiao on the stage.

While Wen Yu was uncertain, Fang Bai had already conveyed the method of preparing the burn treatment ointment to Wang Miaomiao using "Thread Condensation Sound Transmission."

Wang Miaomiao now blindly and unconditionally trusted Fang Bai, treating his words as golden and indisputable truth, with no objections whatsoever.

After Fang Bai finished the sound transmission, Wang Miaomiao firmly remembered the method of preparing the burn ointment. She then began to utilize the dozen or so herbs and various utensils provided by the staff to prepare the ointment in front of thousands of guests.

Chapter 407: It's as easy as flipping his hand to kill you!

While Wang Miaomiao was busy at her end, Nangong Ming, likewise, carried out his concoction work methodically, and his speed was much faster than hers.

In the Hidden Sect World, the various sects and factions fought and competed against each other for their own interests, often resulting in casualties; therefore, disciples of the Hidden Sects always carried healing medicines on them.

Especially for a Hidden Ancient Medicine Sect like "Ghost Doctor Valley," its disciples were all capable of gathering materials from their surroundings and concocting various healing medicines as easily as if it were a common household task.

The medical skills Wang Miaomiao had learned before were very basic, only capable of treating minor ailments like colds and fevers, and she knew nothing about how to treat burn injuries. Although in the last two days under Fang Bai's guidance, she had touched upon treatments for various ailments, it still felt like a last-minute preparation for battle.

However, Wang Miaomiao firmly believed that as long as she followed Fang Bai's instructions carefully in preparing the ointment, even if it were a last-minute effort, she could achieve both speed and precision, advancing smoothly to the next round.

"The medicinal ingredients Nangong Ming is using to concoct burn healing medicines are all low-grade Spiritual Medicines with over two hundred years of medicinal age. I wonder if these Spiritual Medicines belong to the 'Ghost Doctor Sect' or if Nangong Ming brought them from the Hidden Sect..."

Fang Bai looked at the Spiritual Medicines displayed before Nangong Ming, considering whether he should find the time to plunder the lair of the "Ghost Doctor Sect" and also rob Nangong Ming to see if he could get some good items.

Back in the day, as the Immortal Emperor, Fang Bai had dominated the nine domains of the Immortal Realm, using Cultivation Resources that were of Imperial Grade and Immortal Grade. He had shown disdain for any Cultivation Resources of a lower grade.

But now, having reincarnated and starting from scratch, even the lowest-grade Cultivation Resources were indispensable treasures to him.

Moreover, the Cultivation Technique Fang Bai practiced was extraordinary, and each time he advanced a rank, he needed several times or even tens of times more Cultivation Resources than a regular Martial Artist for assistance.

The stronger his abilities became in the future, the more astonishing the amount of Cultivation Resources he would need for advancing.

On the presiding stage, five disciples from the Ancient Medicine Sect worked nervously yet orderly, distributing the medicinal ingredients in front of them according to certain proportions, then weighing, chopping, and finally placing them into the cauldrons to simmer the ointment.

Before long, various scents of medicine began to permeate from the cauldrons, some rich and some refreshing.

The medicinal ingredients used by the five Ancient Medicine Sect disciples were mostly Spiritual Medicines with a medicinae age of over a hundred years, each containing strands of Essence Energy, making one feel refreshed and invigorated upon smelling them.

The dozen or so Spiritual Medicines used by Wang Miaomiao, although slightly inferior in medicinae age compared to Nangong Ming's, resulted in an ointment under Fang Bai's secret guidance that was superior in treating burns.

Of course, only Fang Bai knew this fact; even Wang Miaomiao could not imagine the effectiveness of the treatment, she simply believed that following Fang Bai's instructions would keep her from being eliminated.

After the ointment was ready, it was set aside, and the five disciples from the Ancient Medicine Sect began acupuncture for the patients to stimulate the meridians and blood vessels of the burned areas before gently applying the ointment to the wounds and carefully wrapping them.

With all this completed, today's medical skill exchange session also temporarily came to an end. Next, everyone would wait until this time tomorrow to unwrap the bandages off the five patients' burn wounds to check the recovery.

To prevent any cheating during this period, the five burn patients would be arranged to stay together, guarded by ten highly respected judges.

Thousands of guests stood up and dispersed, and the five contestants on the chairmanship stage returned to their respective Medicine Sects.

Nangong Ming returned to the "Ghost Doctor Sect" with a gloomy face and exchanged a look with the Sect Leader, Sikong Lieyang; both of their expressions were somewhat grave.

"Brother Nangong, that woman from the 'Doctor Pavilion Sect' called Wang Miaomiao is not simple! Might there be any surprises in our contest for first place?"

After returning to their lodging, Sikong Lieyang had a disciple offer Nangong Ming a cup of tea and asked cautiously.

"That woman... she has guidance from a master!"

Nangong Ming sat in the chair, frowning as he spoke.

"Is Brother Nangong talking about Fang Bai?"

Many guests knew about Fang Bai advising Wang Miaomiao before the medical skill competition; of course, Sikong Lieyang had heard about it, too. However, like most of the guests, he did not take the matter to heart until Wang Miaomiao's stunning performance today made them realize Fang Bai's remarkable abilities.

"I suspect that Fang Bai might also have a Hidden Sect background!"

Nangong Ming said slowly.

"That can't be?"

Sikong Lieyang's expression changed slightly.

From the information he knew, Fang Bai had grown up among ordinary folk, coming from a very common family background. It was said he had suddenly risen to prominence in recent years after receiving guidance from a mysterious master. The likelihood of him being a Hidden Sect disciple was slim.

Could it be that the mysterious master who taught Fang Bai medicine and martial arts was a master from the Hidden Sect?

Nangong Ming glanced at Sikong Lieyang, his face expressionless as he said, "Can you discern Fang Bai's true strength?"

"He... isn't he a Profound Level junior rank Martial Artist?"

As Sikong Lieyang spoke, he noticed the mocking look on Nangong Ming's face and exclaimed in shock, "Could it be... could it be that he is concealing his true strength?"

Nangong Ming did not answer directly but smiled wryly and said, "It would be as easy as flipping his hand for him to kill you!"

Sikong Lieyang was currently a Profound Level mid-rank Martial Artist. For Fang Bai to kill him with ease, he must be at least a Profound Level high-rank Martial Artist.

And a twenty-something Profound Level high-rank Martial Artist was considered a prodigy even in the Hidden Sect. How could such a talent possibly be nurtured in the Secular Ancient Martial World?

The thought of Fang Bai possibly having a Hidden Sect background made Sikong Lieyang break into a cold sweat, feeling a sudden chill across his back.

The remarkable performance of Wang Miaomiao in the medical skill competition had prompted Sikong Lieyang, just like Nangong Ming, to develop an assassination intent towards her, aiming to eliminate this major obstacle on the "Ghost Doctor Sect's" path to victory.

If Wang Miaomiao were indeed taken out by the "Ghost Doctor Sect," and Fang Bai found out, he would likely intervene. The situation could then become very difficult to manage.

Although the "Ghost Doctor Sect" had the "Ghost Doctor Valley" as a supporting Hidden Sect, Sikong Lieyang was well aware that "Ghost Doctor Valley" prioritized its interests above all. Unless motivated by significant benefits, they would not likely clash with a Hidden Sect backing Fang Bai over a minor secular sect like the "Ghost Doctor Sect."

"If Fang Bai really is a Hidden Sect disciple, what should we do? If Wang Miaomiao wins first place, all my efforts will have been in vain!"

Sikong Lieyang, who had been full of ambition, was now feeling somewhat disheartened.

Chapter 408: Swallow Dance Breeze Fist

To secure the first place in the medical skill competition and become the leader of the five Ancient Medicine Sects for the next five years, Sikong Lieyang had made meticulous preparations, even going so far as to present several Wood Element Stones discovered by his disciples as a tribute to the Hidden Sect "Ghost Doctor Valley," in exchange for the assistance from Nangong Ming, a core disciple of the Valley.

If the first place in the medical skill competition ultimately went to the Doctor Pavilion, it would truly be a double loss for Sikong Lieyang.

"Sikong Lieyang, what do you mean by that? Hmph, do you think my medical skills are inferior to Wang Miaomiao?"

Nangong Ming's face immediately turned sour, and he hummed his dissatisfaction.

Realizing he had spoken out of turn, Sikong Lieyang hurriedly tried to appease him with a smile, "Elder brother Nangong, don't misunderstand, I didn't mean that..."

"Enough!"

Nangong Ming seemed to have no interest in Sikong Lieyang's explanation, cutting him off with a wave of his hand, "I have my own judgment about this matter; don't ask any further!"

After saying that, Nangong Ming no longer paid any attention to Sikong Lieyang and walked toward his own residence.

Nangong Ming was convinced that Wang Miaomiao must have obtained a Heaven Rank Martial Artist's treasure, and it agitated his heart. He planned to "visit" Wang Miaomiao that night to see if they could reach a mutual benefit agreement.

If Wang Miaomiao was willing to share the Heaven Rank Martial Artist's treasure with him, then he would be willing to give up the first place in the medical skill competition.

And if Wang Miaomiao refused to share, Nangong Ming wouldn't mind resorting to some harsh measures to force her compliance.

In the world of the Hidden Sects, where strength was revered and fists did the talking, Nangong Ming would do anything to achieve his goals, including killing Wang Miaomiao.

Nangong Ming's entire focus now lay on the Heaven Rank Martial Artist's treasure; whether the Ghost Doctor Sect could obtain first place or not was no longer of any importance to him.

Nangong Ming believed that as long as he could come to an agreement with Wang Miaomiao, even if Sikong Lieyang was dissatisfied, he would never dare to object.

"Every day he spends my money on entertainment, living extravagantly, but when it comes to taking a stand... Damned bastard! Pah!"

Watching the direction in which Nangong Ming disappeared, Sikong Lieyang spat fiercely on the ground, his face as dark as water.

...

Night fell, with the moon rising above the treetops.

At the far eastern end of the mountaintop, near a cliff, a slender young woman took advantage of the bright moonlight and the night wind to practice a set of fist techniques under an ancient pine, neither too fast nor too slow.

Her body was as light as a swallow, moving with the smoothness of flowing clouds and water. The night breeze caused her sleeves to flutter and her hair to fly, creating an aesthetically pleasing sight that brought visual delight to onlookers.

But when she threw her fists, they were charged with True Yuan, blending softness with strength, and a faint sound of breaking the air could be heard, revealing a hint of dominance.

The young woman was dressed in the unique white uniform of a Doctor Pavilion disciple, with willowy brows and phoenix eyes, her appearance both delicate and pretty—Wang Miaomiao.

At this moment, the fist technique Wang Miaomiao was practicing was the "Swallow Dance Breeze Fist" taught to her by Fang Bai.

"Swallow Dance Breeze Fist" was a common fist technique widely practiced in the Cultivation World before Fang Bai ascended to the Immortal Realm, particularly suitable for women.

However, what was considered a common fist technique in the Cultivation World had become equivalent to a Heaven Rank Technique in the current Secular Ancient Martial World.

Wang Miaomiao and Fang Bai, while learning this set of fist techniques, only knew that the techniques were profound and infinitely powerful, but had no idea that it was actually a Heaven Rank technique. Otherwise, they couldn't imagine how astonished they would have been.

To know, in the Hidden Sect World, Heaven Rank Techniques are extremely rare, only accessible to the leaders and top echelons of the major Sects and clans. Ordinary disciples can't even touch them.

For someone like Wen Yu, a master from the Secular Ancient Martial World, even Earth Rank Techniques were something they could only dream of, let alone Heaven Rank Techniques.

Completing the set of fist techniques, Wang Miaomiao was slightly breathless, walked to the flat rock beneath the ancient pine, and sat down cross-legged, quietly recuperating.

After circulating her True Yuan through several major and minor cycles, Wang Miaomiao's fatigue vanished. Opening her eyes, a satisfied smile appeared at the corner of her mouth.

From being an ordinary and overlooked disciple in the "Doctor Pavilion", she had leapt to a status on par with several of the Elders...

From an initial-stage Yellow Level Martial Artist, she had broken through levels rapidly, reaching the realm of Yellow Level Perfection...

Originally her medical skills had been mediocre, but now she could easily cure difficult and miscellaneous diseases, and she had a high chance of clinching the first place in this session's medical skills competition...

In this single day and night, Wang Miaomiao's status, Martial Dao, and medical skills had all made a monumental shift, completely altering her life's trajectory.

For Wang Miaomiao, all of this felt like a dream.

Fang Bai wasn't Wang Miaomiao's master; he had simply given her some casual advice because of her kind heart.

But in Wang Miaomiao's heart, she revered Fang Bai like a master, treating him as a divine being.

A gust of mountain wind brought a chill, but the jade pendant close to Wang Miaomiao's chest skin emitted a strand of warmth at that moment.

This strand of warmth quickly permeated Wang Miaomiao's body, driving away the invading cold, making her feel as comfortable as if she were in a hot spring.

"This jade pendant given by Doctor Fang is really magical!"

Wang Miaomiao's eyes shone brightly as she slowly took off a jade pendant strung with a red silk thread from around her neck, meticulously touching and examining it in front of her.

Fang Bai had given this jade pendant to Wang Miaomiao in the evening, urging her to always wear it close and telling her that in case of a life-threatening crisis, it would act as an "amulet" to save her life.

Wang Miaomiao didn't know that within this jade pendant, a strand of Fang Bai's Divine Sense had been infused, containing three strands of killing intent. Should she face a fatal attack, at the brink of life and death, the killing intent from the jade pendant's Divine Sense would be activated, launching a counterattack in an instant and saving Wang Miaomiao's life.

Fang Bai, having condensed Divine Sense, took advantage of his free time to use some Essence Stones he had on him, carving out numerous protective jade pendants to give to friends and relatives, ensuring their safety.

Each jade pendant carved by Fang Bai contained a strand of his Divine Sense and three strands of killing intent. As long as the wearer had the pendant, they would be safe from harm, unless attacked by a Heaven Rank expert.

Fang Bai had sensed that Nangong Ming harbored a killing intent towards Wang Miaomiao and specially gave her one of the protective jade pendants as a precaution.

Wang Miaomiao's cultivation technique, imparted by Fang Bai, was mystical and wondrous, able to communicate with heaven and earth, causing the Heaven and Earth Origin Energy to respond. Those who cultivated similar techniques shared a subtle connection and could sense each other's presence.

At that moment, through the jade pendant in her hand, Wang Miaomiao faintly sensed the breath of Fang Bai infused in it, and she could also feel that beneath the smooth exterior of the pendant, several intense and powerful strands of killing intent were hidden.

Once these strands of killing intent were activated, they would produce unimaginably powerful effects.

Chapter 409: Ulterior Motives

This little jade pendant might seem unremarkable to others, but in Wang Miaomiao's eyes, it was an invaluable precious treasure. After admiring it for a while, she carefully wore it close to her body.

"Junior Sister Wang, please wait a moment!"

Having sat under the ancient pine for a short time, Wang Miaomiao stood up and was about to leave the edge of the cliff when suddenly, a cold, emotionless voice rang in her ears.

"It's him!"

Upon hearing this voice, Wang Miaomiao's heart gave a sudden jolt, and she raised her eyes to look at a large rock tens of meters away.

A slender man emerged from the shadows behind that rock and slowly walked towards Wang Miaomiao.

Under the moonlight, one could see he was dressed in a black robe, with flowing long hair; his facial features were slightly discernible—it was Nangong Ming, representing the Ghost Doctor Sect in battle.

Nangong Ming wore a look of cold arrogance as he stepped closer to Wang Miaomiao. Before he even reached her, the chilling aura that permeated around him had already begun to press down on her.

If one observed Nangong Ming's steps closely at this moment, they would find the distance of each step he took was exactly the same, frighteningly precise—a feat not just any high-rank Ancient Martial artist could achieve.

"Senior Brother Nangong, is there something you need?"

Wang Miaomiao knew that Nangong Ming's appearance at this time did not bode well. She remained on high alert, quietly circulating the cultivation technique taught by Fang Bai, to counteract the overwhelming pressure Nangong Ming was exerting.

Both were Martial Artists of the Ancient Martial World, and they represented two of the five major Ancient Medicine Sects of Huaxia—the Doctor Pavilion and the Ghost Doctor Sect—so it was quite normal for them to address each other as junior sister and senior brother.

Nangong Ming stopped two yards away from Wang Miaomiao and, seeing her show no signs of distress under the pressure of an Earth Rank Martial Artist, clicked his tongue in wonder. He also became more convinced that Wang Miaomiao had to be practicing a Heaven Rank Technique, otherwise, she would have crumpled under the pressure by now.

"I would like to propose a trade to Junior Sister Wang, if you might be interested!"

Suppressing the excitement and heat in his heart, Nangong Ming spoke with a calm demeanor.

"A trade?"

Wang Miaomiao's brows knitted slightly as she shook her head, "I don't understand what you mean..."

Nangong Ming took a few steps closer and then asked in a low voice, "Have you ever come into possession of a Heaven Rank Martial Artist's legacy?"

Wang Miaomiao responded with confusion, "What Heaven Rank Martial Artist's legacy?"

Nangong Ming smirked eerily, "Why play dumb, Junior Sister Wang? You're merely a High Rank Yellow Level Martial Artist. If you haven't cultivated a Heaven Rank Technique, how could you possibly withstand my aura's pressure?"

He paused, then extended his right hand forward and said, "Doesn't your Doctor Pavilion really want to take first place in this session's medical skills competition? Lend me the Heaven Rank Technique you acquired for my perusal, and I will cede the top spot to you. How about it?"

"Senior Brother Nangong, you joke. I've never seen any Heaven Rank Martial Artist's legacy, nor have I practiced the Heaven Rank Technique you speak of. Your words are completely baffling to me! Also, I intend to earn the top spot in the medical skills competition with my own skills—I don't need you to hand it over to me. Goodbye!"

Wang Miaomiao was slightly taken aback as Nangong Ming had noticed that she was not practicing an ordinary technique. Of course, she would not reveal to Nangong Ming that the Cultivation Method she practiced was taught by Fang Bai, nor did she truly understand what Nangong Ming meant by the so-called legacy of a Heaven Rank Martial Artist.

In the deep silence of the night and far from the abodes of other Martial Artists, Wang Miaomiao feared that Nangong Ming, who had already harbored thoughts of killing her, might suddenly make a move to hurt her. After saying her piece, she prepared to bypass Nangong Ming and return to her dwelling.

"Hehe... the trade isn't concluded yet, why is Junior Sister Wang in such a hurry to leave?"

Nangong Ming waited until Wang Miaomiao was about to walk past him, then he reached out to block her path.

"There's nothing for us to talk about! Please step aside!"

Wang Miaomiao's eyebrows rose in indignation, as a glint of anger flashed in her pretty eyes.

Despite feeling wary of Nangong Ming's formidable strength, this was the headquarters of Doctor Pavilion, with over a thousand guests staying here. She didn't believe that Nangong Ming would actually dare to harm her.

But, the thought of Nangong Ming possibly being a disciple of a Hidden Sect—entities that disregarded worldly laws and could do anything—made Wang Miaomiao take an involuntary step back, her hand subconsciously touching the jade pendant around her neck.

Fang Bai had said that this jade pendant could protect her life. She wondered whether it could withstand an attack from Nangong Ming, even for a moment. If so, she might be able to summon her fellow sect members from the mountain top to come to her aid.

"Lend me the Heaven Rank Technique for a look, and I will let you leave immediately! Otherwise..."

As Nangong Ming spoke, he stepped forward, his footfall kicking up a cloud of dust and causing the nearby ground to tremble.

At the same time, an invisible, shadowless Martial Artist Aura, like a surging tidal wave, crashed down towards Wang Miaomiao.

Wang Miaomiao felt as though her body had been struck fiercely by an invisible mallet, grunting as her face lost color, her chest roiling with agitated energy and blood, nearly causing her to spit out a mouthful of fresh blood. She became unsteady on her feet and took six or seven quick steps backwards.

A thousand-zhang deep cliff lay not far behind her.

"Lend me the Heaven Rank Technique for a look, and I'll let you leave... I am a very impatient man, and I do not wish to repeat myself a third time!"

Nangong Ming stood with his hands clasped behind his back, seemingly proud and lofty, as his cold and icy gaze bore into Wang Miaomiao like two ice blades piercing straight to the heart.

Although Wang Miaomiao's Cultivation Method was special, there was a whole Profound Level realm difference between her and Nangong Ming, and the huge gap in strength meant that even a simple glance or breath from him was too much for her to bear.

If Nangong Ming truly intended to kill Wang Miaomiao, disregarding other factors, she would likely perish under his full-strength blow.

"I've already told you, I have never seen any Heaven Rank Technique. If you don't believe me, Brother Nangong, there's nothing I can do about it!"

As Wang Miaomiao spoke, she took measured steps backward, her fists clenched tightly as she vigilantly readied herself for any sudden attack from Nangong Ming.

Meanwhile, Wang Miaomiao released her own aura, hoping that Fang Bai could sense it and come to her aid.

Wang Miaomiao had never known Fang Bai's true realm of power, but she firmly believed that Nangong Ming was no match for him.

On the surface, Fang Bai appeared to be a sunny and good-looking youth, harmless to humans and animals, but the occasional hint of a domineering aura that he revealed made Wang Miaomiao feel an overwhelming presence, prompting an urge to prostrate and worship involuntarily.

"Take off your clothes!"

Nangong Ming suddenly took another step forward, barking the command sharply, his piercing and icy gaze falling directly on Wang Miaomiao's chest.

"What... what do you want to do?"

Wang Miaomiao was shocked and thought Nangong Ming might have had some dishonorable intention towards her.

"Don't flatter yourself; I have no interest in your body!"

Nangong Ming said coldly, his face filled with scorn: "I just want to see what precious items you are hiding on your person!"

Chapter 410: What a Big Talk!

Wang Miaomiao, amidst her tension, would occasionally touch the jade pendant hanging down to her chest. This action caught the eye of Nangong Ming, who thought that the Heaven Rank treasure left by a Martial Artist was hidden close to her chest.

Truth be told, although Wang Miaomiao was not an exceptional beauty, she could score a seven or eight out of ten for her figure and appearance. What's more rare was that she was dressed in a white blouse, which under the moonlight, made her seem even more lovely.

To most men, such a woman would stir their hearts. However, Nangong Ming, who had been obsessed with Martial Dao since childhood, saw even the most beautiful women as nothing more than skeletons wrapped in skin, and in no way comparable to a Heaven Rank Cultivation Technique.

Besides, with a powerful cultivation technique, one could cultivate formidable strength, and with formidable strength, wealth, status, and women would all come easily.

"Nangong Ming, don't push me too far!"

Seeing Nangong Ming's eyes fixed on her chest, Wang Miaomiao felt both embarrassed and angry. Her eyebrows raised in indignation, she glared at him and shouted, "I know you're strong, but this is the headquarters of Doctor Pavilion. If you dare to be disrespectful, hundreds of disciples of the Doctor Pavilion will not stand for it!"

"Hundreds of disciples?"

Nangong Ming scoffed disdainfully and sneered, "A mob, what would it matter if there were thousands? What I, Nangong Ming, wish to do, I will do. Who would dare to stop me? Who could stand in my way?"

His words were full of arrogance, but in Wang Miaomiao's view, his arrogance seemed incomparable to Fang Bai's imperial demeanor, as if he alone was supreme above all others.

It was like comparing a newly rich man worth hundreds of millions to a business tycoon with wealth in the hundreds of billions. Though both were rich, there was an essential difference.

"Heh, what a bold claim! You're not afraid of biting your tongue!"

Just then, a clear voice floated over from afar.

The voice seemed miles away one moment, but in the next, it echoed right by one's ear. Following that, a figure appeared at the edge of the cliff like a Nine Heavens Soaring Dragon, darting through the night with a speed indiscernible to the naked eye.

"Such a fast movement technique!"

Nangong Ming was shocked. When he focused his gaze, he saw a young man dressed in casual city clothes standing three yards away from him. The man's eyes, deep as the starry sky, were fixed on him, and the corners of his mouth were curled up as if mocking.

"Fang Bai, it's you..."

When Nangong Ming realized the person was Fang Bai, whom he somewhat feared, his pupils contracted slightly, and he clenched his fists, becoming as highly vigilant as Wang Miaomiao had been when facing him.

As the old saying goes, know your enemy and yourself, and you will never be defeated.

The first time Nangong Ming saw Fang Bai, he felt that the man was mysterious and unfathomable, concealing his true level of strength, which was what Nangong Ming feared most.

For a Martial Artist who couldn't even see through the strength of their opponent, how could they talk about winning?

"You are called Nangong Ming, right? I know you are not a disciple of the Ghost Doctor Sect; even the Ghost Doctor Sect couldn't possibly train someone as skillful as you!"

Fang Bai glanced at Nangong Ming, then walked past him to stand at the edge of the cliff, leaning with the wind over the abyss, his gaze lifted to the dazzling Milky Way in the endless night sky, as if admiring the magnificent night view.

Nangong Ming snorted coldly and responded indifferently, "You aren't a martial artist from the Secular Ancient Martial World either, are you? Such a young Ancient Martial expert, no sect in the Secular Ancient Martial World could train one! You are from a Hidden Sect, right?"

Fang Bai didn't pay attention to Nangong Ming's interrogation and replied indifferently, "As fellow martial artists, in consideration of the difficulty of your cultivation, I advise you: withdraw early and don't get involved in the affairs here! The first place in this medical skills competition belongs to 'Doctor Pavilion' and no one else!"

"What a joke! Who are you to tell me what to do? The first place in the medical skills competition is already in the bag for 'Ghost Doctor Valley'!"

Seeing Fang Bai's determined appearance, Nangong Ming's pride surged within him as he countered confrontationally.

"Fine then, we will each rely on our abilities to compete for first place in the medical skills competition! And one more thing..."

As Fang Bai spoke, he suddenly turned around, a flash of sharpness darting across his eyes like lightning, pointing at Wang Miaomiao and warning Nangong Ming, "From now on, you'd better stay far away from her. If I see you appear in front of her again, I'll throw you off this cliff to feed the wild dogs!"

After speaking, he waved his hand dismissively and said with impatience, "Get lost! Disappear from my sight within ten seconds... I am not a patient person, and I do not wish to repeat myself!"

The last sentence had just been said by Nangong Ming to Wang Miaomiao; now, Fang Bai returned it to Nangong Ming.

Nangong Ming never expected that such insulting and threatening words would be turned on him. His hands clenched suddenly, veins on his forehead exposed, as rage flared up in an instant.

Fang Bai was now standing at the edge of the cliff, only about two zhang away from Nangong Ming. With Nangong Ming's strength, with a full-force strike, not even a second would be needed to land a punch on Fang Bai's back and blast him away.

In Nangong Ming's mind, even if Fang Bai were stronger than himself, the difference wouldn't be that significant. A silent and sudden strike from him would catch Fang Bai off guard, making it very difficult to avoid.

An Earth Level beginner's all-out strike would be hard for even a mid-level Earth Rank expert to withstand without any defense, let alone Fang Bai, whom Nangong Ming didn't believe had reached the mid-level Earth Rank realm yet.

Nangong Ming looked at Fang Bai's back, his killing intent twisting and rising in his chest, his fist tightening and loosening, his palm sweating in an instant.

Right now was an excellent opportunity, yet Nangong Ming couldn't make up his mind to act, hesitating and not daring to strike.

Without absolute certainty, Nangong Ming rarely acted rashly. He knew that although there was hostility between him and Fang Bai and Wang Miaomiao, it wasn't a matter of life and death.

But if he struck, he would immediately become an irreconcilable enemy of Fang Bai and Wang Miaomiao.

If he had an overwhelming advantage in strength, Nangong Ming wouldn't mind silencing Fang Bai and Wang Miaomiao, but currently, he wasn't confident about handling even Fang Bai alone, not to mention with Wang Miaomiao added to the mix.

Therefore, Nangong Ming dared not place that bet; if he failed, he was likely the one to lose his life.

Moreover, Fang Bai was currently with his back to him, seemingly defenseless, yet Nangong Ming felt as if all his movements were within Fang Bai's control.

This feeling made Nangong Ming uncomfortable and uneasy, with a sense of being choked and a thorn in his back that he couldn't articulate.

"No matter how much Fang Bai protects Wang Miaomiao, he can't always be by her side. I will find an opportunity to act! Once I obtain the Heaven Rank Technique, I'll immediately return to the Hidden Sect for arduous cultivation! Once my cultivation reaches perfection and my strength greatly increases, I will then leave the mountains and eliminate Fang Bai to avenge today's humiliation!"

After a myriad of thoughts, Nangong Ming still gave up on the idea of a sneak attack on Fang Bai. With great restraint, he looked at Fang Bai and Wang Miaomiao unwillingly one last time, then quickly left the edge of the cliff.