

Martial Arts 281

Chapter 281: Potential Points, 20 Million!

Why say that?

In the association, the price of a low-grade True Qi Pill is 100,000 Contribution Points, which can provide 100,000 Potential Points.

A top-grade True Qi Pill is valued at 1.2 million Contribution Points, although it is very rare to find one.

According to the price calculation, a top-grade True Qi Pill should provide at least 1.2 million Potential Points.

In reality, it only provides one million.

"It seems that top-grade True Qi Pills have a premium price."

Chen Fan thought.

On the one hand, top-grade True Qi Pills are indeed difficult to refine. Even if the alchemists in the association have mastered alchemy to perfection, the probability of refining top-grade pills is only about twenty percent. If you count the pill formation rate, it's even lower. Rarity makes it precious, which is understandable.

On the other hand, and more importantly, the effect.

A few days ago, Xia Tian, who came for the assessment, mentioned that a low-grade True Qi Pill can only restore 50 True Qi, while a top-grade True Qi Pill can restore 1000. Moreover, the restoration speed of the latter is more than ten times faster than the former.

Time is life, especially in combat.

Whoever restores True Qi faster and more, has a greater chance of winning.

Therefore, it is not difficult to understand why the price of top-grade True Qi Pills is much higher than that of low-grade True Qi Pills.

"One million points, so be it."

Chen Fan accepted the reality.

Anyway, the True Qi Pills he was about to refine would be of top-grade, even celestial-grade quality.

These two bottles of True Qi Pills must not be wasted.

He poured the remaining dozens of pills into his mouth.

He glanced at his Potential Points, which had increased by nearly twenty million.

"It's time to start refining True Qi Pills."

Chen Fan put down the bottle and placed the prepared medicinal herbs into two Alchemy Furnaces.

He started refining.

The facts were just as he expected.

Even refining two furnaces of pills simultaneously wasn't too difficult for him at the moment. He was still quite at ease.

"It seems I can add another Alchemy Furnace."

Chen Fan muttered to himself, "Once I finish refining this batch of herbs, I'll ask the president to add another Alchemy Furnace."

The Beast Tide could erupt at any moment; he had to quickly improve his strength.

It took him longer than expected to refine a single celestial-grade True Qi Pill.

It took forty-five minutes in total before the two Alchemy Furnaces emitted a crisp sound, indicating that the pills were ready.

"Good thing I refined two furnaces together, otherwise the efficiency would have been halved."

Chen Fan felt relieved.

If he refined three furnaces at once, it would have taken fifteen minutes per furnace.

Although it seemed as efficient as refining Qi Blood Pills before, the Potential Points gained from the two were worlds apart.

Chen Fan opened the Alchemy Furnace, and immediately a rich elixir incense several times stronger than before filled the entire Alchemy Room.

Two furnaces, twenty pills, five celestial-grade True Qi Pills, and fifteen top-grade True Qi Pills, just as expected.

Chen Fan picked up a hot True Qi Pill and put it into his mouth.

[Consumed a top-grade True Qi Pill, Potential Points increased by 4 million!]

"Four million?"

Chen Fan smiled.

This is fine, isn't it?

If a top-grade True Qi Pill can restore 1000 True Qi, then a top-grade True Qi Pill can restore 4000, right?

True Qi, which is 40,000 True Qi Value. Even he only had a little over 30,000 True Qi in his meridians now.

"This kind of quality True Qi Pill should be for True Essence Realm Martial Artists." Chen Fan looked at the celestial-grade True Qi Pill beside him. "Let's try this one."

He picked up a celestial-grade True Qi Pill.

Like the Celestial-grade Qi Blood Pill, the surface of the elixir had a film, one red and one gold.

Under the light, it shimmered beautifully.

"No matter how nice it looks, it's still meant to be eaten."

Chen Fan popped a celestial-grade True Qi Pill into his mouth and swallowed it with a gulp.

Before he could fully savor it, information flashed in his mind.

[Consumed a celestial-grade True Qi Pill, Potential Points increased by 20 million!]

"Twenty million points!"

Chen Fan couldn't help but laugh out loud.

If the Potential Points of a celestial-grade True Qi Pill had exceeded ten million, he would have been very satisfied.

Considering the relatively high probability of celestial-grade True Qi Pills appearing at thirty percent.

In the end, each contained twenty million Potential Points.

"One furnace of True Qi Pills, ten pills, three celestial-grade True Qi Pills, yielding 60 million Potential Points, plus the remaining seven top-grade True Qi Pills with 28 million Potential Points, totaling close to 90 million! Round it up, and it's nearly a hundred million!"

Chen Fan was shaken.

He glanced at the Potential Points necessary for his next body enhancement, one hundred million.

A few days ago, when he was clearing meridians, one hundred million Potential Points seemed insurmountable.

Now, it looked like a matter of refining one furnace of True Qi Pills.

And he was refining two furnaces simultaneously now!

"Hiss..."

Thinking of this, Chen Fan gasped.

Even if each subsequent body enhancement required ten times the previous Potential Points, it seemed like he could enhance two or three times at once?

After all, one hundred billion Potential Points is just a matter of refining a hundred furnaces of True Qi Pills.

The herbs he had on hand were down to seventy-six sets, which seemed a bit low, but let's not forget, there were still ten thousand sets on their way.

A thousand sets should arrive by tomorrow!

That equaled a thousand billion Potential Points!

Of course, time would be necessary.

If he refined three furnaces simultaneously, it meant one furnace every fifteen minutes, four furnaces an hour.

Even if he worked non-stop twenty-four hours a day without any mistakes, he could only refine 96 furnaces, consuming 96 sets of herbs.

That's only a tenth of the daily supply from the headquarters.

"Time, it's all about time..."

Chen Fan sighed lightly.

This is precisely what he was most short of.

If he could stretch one minute into two, it would be great.

"Forget it, better not fantasize about such things and continue refining pills."

Chen Fan checked the remaining herbs and figured it could all be refined by tomorrow morning.

With so many furnaces of pills, it would undoubtedly be more than enough for him to break through to the True Essence Realm.

After consuming the remaining elixirs, Chen Fan immersed himself into his pill refinement.

As the sun set, the twilight glow painted the earth.

Anshan City regained some of its usual vitality. There were some people walking on the streets, but compared to the previous day, they still looked quite deserted.

As pedestrians conversed, their gazes intermittently shifted upwards.

Their eyes were filled with a mix of curiosity and fear.

Meanwhile, in the Awakened Association hall, dozens of Awakened, both standing and sitting.

"What exactly is happening on that mountain top? Why haven't we heard anything yet?"

"Yeah, it's been almost four or five hours. Logically speaking, someone should have come down by now."

"The President went up earlier too, but he hasn't returned, and nobody is answering his calls."

"Could something really have happened?"

The atmosphere suddenly tensed.

"That can't be, right? Brother Yan is up there, and so are Fang Yun and Ma Sheng. They're genuine C-level Awakened. What could possibly go wrong?"

"Yes, it shouldn't be, right?"

"Brother Hua Jun, do you think we should go up and check?" Someone looked towards the man seated on the north side.

In an instant, dozens of eyes focused on the handsome man.

Among all the people present, only he was a C-level Awakened and also held the position of vice president here.

Hua Jun furrowed his brows and remained silent.

"Brother Hua Jun, I think if something really did happen, it wouldn't hurt for us to go up and take a look," the man who spoke earlier suggested cautiously.

"I agree. After all, whatever commotion was there has died down for quite some time now."

"What if nothing's wrong and we're just overthinking things? If Brother Yan sees us going up, he'd probably be happy. But if we just stay here, doing nothing, then...?" The man trailed off.

The others nodded in agreement.

Yes, Anshan City was technically Yan Ming's territory. If they could build a good relationship with him, why wouldn't they?

And if something did happen, they would have time to plan accordingly, right?

"Alright, let's go up and take a look."

Hua Jun finally slapped the table, making up his mind.

The group surged out of the association and headed towards the mountain top.

With each step they took, they carefully observed the surroundings, moving as one.

Halfway up, a timid voice suddenly called out from above.

"Is it, is it the awakened adults?"

Hearing this voice, Hua Jun and the others were nearly scared out of their wits, a few of them even fell to the ground.

More than ten armed guards timidly emerged from behind some large rocks.

"Ahem, yes, it's us."

Hua Jun straightened his chest, coughed, and asked, "We heard quite a commotion up here around noon. What exactly happened? Do you know?"

The lead guard, with a look of extreme fear, glanced up and said, "We, we saw, the City Lord and the others, they..."

"What happened to them? Why are you stuttering?" Hua Jun reprimanded.

The dozens of guards, like frightened birds, all knelt on the ground in terror.

The guard who spoke was in tears. "The City Lord and the others, they are all dead!"

"What!"

Hua Jun and his group were astounded.

"Brother Yan and the others, dead?"

"Dead?"

"How, how could this be?"

Hua Jun gaped, blinked twice, and asked, "Do you know what you're saying?"

"Sir, I know. Even if I had ten lives, I would never dare speak such curses about the City Lord and the others. I saw it with my own eyes: the City Lord was killed by a martial artist with a knife. If you don't believe me, you can ask the others."

"I saw it too."

"Awakened adults, we all saw it, we all saw it."

"Not just the City Lord, Lord Fang and the others were killed too."

The dozen guards cried out in fear, releasing all the terror they had held in.

Since noon, they had been hiding here, not daring to move, fearing the knife-wielding man might be nearby and cut them down without a word.

After waiting for what felt like forever, they finally saw someone coming up the mountain.

Chapter 282: Alarming Sounds and Panicked Cranes

"Brother Fang and the others are dead too?"

"How is this possible!"

The Awakeners nearly jumped out of their skins after hearing the guards' words.

What kind of joke is this?

Brother Fang's superpower is Metalization. Not to mention firearms, even if he faced a direct hit from a cannon, it wouldn't scratch him.

Brother Ma's Gravity Superpower is even more terrifying. It's said that even Elite-Level Fierce Beasts would be crushed into meat paste by one shot of his Gravity Cannon.

And Brother Yan, even more so.

How could they possibly die? Or rather, without significant prowess, who could kill all three of them together?

But looking at the guards' behavior, they didn't appear to be lying.

For one thing, they wouldn't dare say such things even if they had the courage of ten lions.

Suddenly, someone seemed to realize something, and their face changed dramatically. "What about the president? Did you see our president?"

The leading guard was startled, then nodded, his voice hoarse. "President, he... he's missing."

"Missing?"

Hua Jun was puzzled. "What do you mean?"

"After we saw the City Lord and the others were killed, the President, he suddenly vanished from the spot."

The Awakeners looked at each other.

So, the President ran away?

But under those circumstances, running was indeed the best option. After all, even the City Lord and a few others together were no match for that assailant, and the President's abilities were far inferior to any of the three.

"Since the President has already escaped, why hasn't he answered our calls until now?"

"Yeah, it's been almost half a day!"

"Could the President still be fleeing from that person?"

They were puzzled.

Many of them had instant teleportation items, let alone the President.

Once instant teleportation items are used, it typically means survival, as even if the pursuer also has such items, they wouldn't know which direction you ran, right?

"And then... and then you just hid here?" asked Hua Jun.

"Later, that assailant disappeared too..."

"The assailant disappeared as well?"

"Could it be that he went to chase after the President?"

The Awakeners were stunned.

"I... I don't know."

The guard swallowed saliva and said tremblingly, "We thought he had left and just took a breath, but the next second, he reappeared over there and even glanced over here at us."

"What!"

The Awakeners were shocked.

"He glanced over here? So, he found you?"

"Yes, he must have found us."

The guard spoke with lingering fear, "We were so scared that we couldn't move or stand, and when we thought we were dead, he just left, though he took the City Lord and the others' bodies."

But we still didn't dare to move, afraid he might come back."

The Awakeners present were stunned.

This made no sense at all.

Since he had the strength to kill Brother Yan and the others, killing these guards would be a piece of cake.

Most importantly, he discovered them. Why didn't he kill them?

After all, they had witnessed his actions. Leaving survivors meant his identity would be exposed, right?

In fact, Chen Fan, after killing Gao Jinming and returning to the scene, did intend to kill these guards.

But then he thought, even if he killed them, he wouldn't be able to protect his identity because Du Hao was still alive.

Secondly, he wasn't the type to kill indiscriminately.

Since they didn't cause him trouble, he let them be.

"Do you think that guy was already exhausted?" Someone had a sudden realization. "Because of that, he didn't have time to deal with these guards and chose to leave quickly?"

This statement immediately resonated with many Awakeners.

"That makes sense. If it were me, I wouldn't leave witnesses unless I couldn't manage it."

"Exactly. Even if the assailant was formidable, killing Brother Yan and the others must've come at a great cost."

"That's it!"

The more they discussed, the more excited they became. Even the guards who were kneeling down began questioning if they had missed a golden opportunity.

Only Hua Jun and a few other Awakeners remained solemn.

Instinctually, they felt things weren't that simple.

If the assailant had been exhausted, then why would the President choose to run rather than fight? Wouldn't the President, being present, have a better grasp of the situation?

"What exactly happened? Tell me everything from the beginning." Hua Jun pointed to the leading guard.

"Y-Yes."

The guard quickly recounted everything he had witnessed.

As he spoke, the Awakeners' eyes began to fill with fear.

Was that guy even human?

He was hit by Brother Ma's Gravity Cannon multiple times without the slightest injury?

The most terrifying part was, he later swung a Sword Qi that was three or four meters high, instantly killing the well-defended Brother Fang with one strike?

And Brother Yan?

He too was killed with a single stroke?

Of course, they were also puzzled as the guards mentioned seeing about six people. Who were those two others, and where did they come from?

After the guards finished speaking, the atmosphere turned silent once more.

Awakeners fell into silence.

Thinking about their earlier words, they felt ashamed.

Exhausted?

Have you ever seen someone exhausted who could kill Brother Yan with one strike?

If he was exhausted, then how powerful must he have been at his peak?

"Brother Hua, what should we do next?"

"Yes, Brother Hua, something so serious happened in the city, the City Lord and the others are dead, the President is now missing..."

"Brother Hua, I think we should report this as soon as possible. This is terrifying."

"Could it be the work of evil cult Awakeners?"

"What! Evil cult! The evil cult is targeting us?"

The atmosphere turned panicky.

Evil cultists capable of killing the City Lord could easily kill them too.

"Everyone quiet down."

Hua Jun shouted, "What happened here today must not be mentioned to anyone, understood? Especially you!"

He looked at the group of guards. "If I find out you leaked any information, you know the consequences."

"We don't dare."

"We won't say a word."

The guards trembled with fear.

"As for what happened here," Hua Jun looked at everyone. "I will report to headquarters immediately. With such a serious incident, headquarters will definitely send Hunters. You don't need to scare yourselves."

"Hunters!"

Indeed, hearing these words, the previously anxious Awakeners' eyes lit up.

"Brother Hua, is it true that headquarters will send Hunters?"

"What else would they do?"

Hua Jun glanced at them. "In broad daylight, killing C-level Awakeners in the city is a serious matter. Headquarters will not ignore it."

If it indeed involves the evil cult, headquarters will surely send Hunters."

After these words, the Awakeners visibly relaxed, gazing at Hua Jun with admiration.

Hunters!

They are the elite of the Awakeners!

Each is powerful and wields a Demon-Breaking Soldier, lethal against Awakeners.

Great!

With the Hunters, they wouldn't fear the assailant anymore.

Of course, even if the Hunters eliminate the assailant, it wouldn't change the fact that Anshan City's defense forces had weakened.

In past beast tides, Yan Ming and others intervened, and they managed to fend off the dangers.

But now, with them dead, if another beast tide occurred, who could fend it off?

Worrying about beast tides might seem paranoid.

In these times, nothing is impossible.

Realizing this, some Awakeners' eyes flickered.

Maybe it was time to take their families and leave Anshan City for somewhere else.

Otherwise, if danger struck, it might be too late.

...

Time flew by, and before long, it was the next afternoon.

"Bang!"

Two bursts were heard almost simultaneously.

"Finally done."

Chen Fan stretched and loosened his muscles.

All 80 batches of herbs were refined.

Apart from the first two furnaces of Top-grade True Qi Pills,

The other 78 were Celestial Grade, Top-grade True Qi Pills, a ratio of 3 to 7, not bad.

Chen Fan stepped forward and opened the Pill Furnace.

Strong Elixir Incense filled the air.

He swallowed both batches of pills and looked at the panel,

Potential Points: 7.1 billion

"7.1 billion."

Chen Fan's lips curled.

With so many Potential Points, breaking through the Chong and Dai Meridians, and even the tough Ren and Du Meridians should be manageable.

"Since everything's ready, let's begin."

Chen Fan decided.

Breaking through to the True Essence Realm, whether dealing with Du Hao or facing the impending beast tide, would give him more security.

Trying to learn all the cultivation techniques before breaking through wasn't practical.

Though it had the highest cost-effectiveness, he lacked the Experience Points, unless he could find that black ball again, which was impossible to guarantee.

For now, he had to convert resources into combat strength quickly.

His gaze went to the Realm section.

To activate the next acupuncture point required 24 million Potential Points.

million.

For someone who could only refine Qi Blood Pills before, it was astronomical.

But now, not so much.

With a thought, he allocated 24 million Potential Points.

Chapter 283: Eight Meridians Connected!

[Expenditure of 24 million Potential Points to clear the Qi Acupoint.]

[True Qi increased by 58 points]

[Constitution increased by 20 points]

[Strength increased by 21 points]

[Agility increased by 22 points]

Feeling the changes within his body, Chen Fan smiled slightly.

There are still two acupoints left, and the entire Chong Meridian will be cleared.

As the Huiyin Acupoint was breached, the True Qi within Chen Fan surged yet again, joyfully flowing into the Chong Meridian.

Chen Fan looked at the panel,

Realm: Mid Stage of Meridian Refining (0/30 million)

"30 million Potential Points, not as much as I imagined."

Chen Fan muttered, then with a thought, he added 30 million Potential Points.

In his mind, several lines of information appeared.

[Expenditure of 30 million Potential Points to clear the Dai Meridian Zhangmen Acupoint]

[True Qi increased by 70 points]

[Constitution increased by 22 points]

[Strength increased by 21 points]

[Agility increased by 22 points]

"70 points of True Qi, it seems that the boost from clearing the entire Dai Meridian is similar to the Chong Meridian."

Although the effect of a single acupoint in the Dai Meridian is stronger than that of the Chong Meridian, the Dai Meridian has far fewer acupoints, almost the fewest among the Eight Extraordinary Meridians.

Potential Points were consumed at a visible rate,

billion, 6.9 billion, 6.8 billion, 6.7 billion,

finally, when it hit 6.7 billion, the entire Dai Meridian was also cleared.

A plus sign appeared behind the Realm.

He could break through to the Late Stage of Meridian Refining.

Chen Fan took a deep breath and decisively chose yes.

The next moment, a massive surge of heat erupted from his heart, flowing throughout his body.

This was a transformation from the inside out, not just the body, but also the True Qi and spiritual power within, underwent a world-shaking change.

After a moment, everything calmed down.

"Phew..."

Chen Fan slowly exhaled.

His clothes had been soaked with sweat in just a few seconds, sticking to his body.

Chen Fan didn't care much about this, he looked at the panel,

Realm: Late Stage of Meridian Refining (0/50 million)

True Qi: 35,750/4,256 (+740%)

Level: 29 (0/1 billion)

Constitution: 11,800

Strength: 27,400

Agility: 9,500

Spirit: 224,400

Potential Points: 6.7 billion

Experience Points: 34,200

Having consecutively cleared two meridians, his Primordial True Qi had reached over 4,000 points, and the total amount of True Qi in his body exceeded 35,000.

Compared to the previous total amount of True Qi, it had increased by nearly 10,000 points!

And this was just the beginning. Once the Ren and Du Meridians are cleared, the enhancement would be even more terrifying.

Chen Fan's gaze fell on the Realm section,

He could see that clearing the first acupoint of the Ren Meridian required 50 million Potential Points.

The Ren Meridian had more than twenty acupoints, which meant clearing this meridian would require over a billion Potential Points.

The Du Meridian, the last and most difficult meridian among the Eight Extraordinary Meridians, was two to three times as hard to clear as the Ren Meridian; thirty billion Potential Points might not even be enough.

"Fortunately, I still have over 60 billion Potential Points left. Breaking through to the True Essence Realm today is a sure thing."

Chen Fan smiled slightly.

He looked down,

Among the four Basic Attributes, the Spirit Attribute was the highest, and by a terrifying margin!

Chen Fan nodded in satisfaction; once he had enough points, he could exchange for Spirit Secret Manuals like the [Undying Seal Technique]. Oh, and there was also [Sun Observation Technique].

The earlier [Moon Observation Technique], after cultivating to the Perfection Realm, had directly reduced the Experience Points required to cultivate other techniques by 20%.

As for the [Sun Observation Technique], it would likely have such Traits as well. Given his current dire need for Experience Points, it was as if providing timely help in a snowstorm.

The second highest attribute was the Strength Attribute, nearing 30,000 points.

Chen Fan glanced at the [Dragon Elephant Wisdom Skill] still completing, if this technique was unlocked and learned, then the Strength Attribute would exceed 100,000 points!

At that time, a single body enhancement would bring an increase of several tens of thousands of points!

However, the Constitution and Agility Attributes weren't as impressive.

Especially the Agility Attribute, which was the only one among the four Basic Attributes that hadn't broken the 10,000-point mark yet.

"Who would've thought that after all this, the Agility Attribute would still be my weakest link."

Chen Fan said with a wry smile.

"It seems I'll need to study more Body Technique Martial Arts later on. Otherwise, the gains from each enhancement will be too low."

Taking a deep breath, he focused again on the Realm section.

With a thought, he added 50 million Potential Points.

Another flood of True Qi, like Jianghai, appeared within him, easily clearing the first acupoint.

[Expenditure of 50 million Potential Points to clear the Ren Meridian Huiyin Acupoint]

[True Qi increased by 100 points]

[Constitution increased by 30 points]

[Strength increased by 31 points]

[Agility increased by 32 points]

"Huh?"

Seeing the lines of information in his mind, Chen Fan was surprised.

The boost from the Ren Meridian is not small.

The final acupoint of the Dai Meridian only increased True Qi by less than 80 points after being cleared.

But the first acupoint of the Ren Meridian increased True Qi by 100 points all at once.

Not just that, but the increments in Constitution, Strength, and Agility Attributes were more significant too.

"It feels like the improvement of a single Ren Meridian acupoint might match that of two or three previous meridian acupoints combined?"

Chen Fan thought to himself.

If that were the case, it was no wonder that the difficulty was so high.

Continue clearing the meridian.

[Expenditure of 51 million Potential Points to clear the Ren Meridian Qugu Acupoint]

[True Qi increased by 101 points]

[Constitution increased by 33 points]

[Strength increased by 32 points]

[Agility increased by 31 points]

The speed at which Potential Points were consumed was more than twice as fast as before.

Finally, after spending a total of 1.5 billion Potential Points, the last acupoint of the Ren Meridian was also breached.

[Cleared the entire Ren Meridian]

[True Qi increased by 500 points]

[Constitution increased by 35 points]

[Strength increased by 36 points]

[Agility increased by 32 points]

"500 points?"

Chen Fan's eyes widened.

He didn't expect that clearing the entire Ren Meridian could increase Primordial True Qi by so much. If you included the True Qi gained from clearing the 24 acupoints, it was nearly 3,000 points!

3,000 points of Primordial True Qi...

Chen Fan took a deep breath.

Before clearing six meridians, his Primordial True Qi was over 4,000 points, including several hundred points from a Cloud Jade Fruit.

And now?

A single Ren Meridian was almost equivalent to the total of the previous six meridians!

Chen Fan eagerly looked at the panel,

Realm: Late Stage of Meridian Refining (0/100 million)

True Qi: 62,042/7,386 (+740%)

Sure enough, his total True Qi had reached over 60,000, almost twice as much as before!

"Over 60,000..."

Chen Fan murmured.

With over 60,000 True Qi, aside from the Windward Slash, which he could not fully unleash, he could use all of his other active Martial Arts Skills.

Even the Flaming Arrow, which consumed 30,000 True Qi with each shot, he could fire two arrows directly.

As for Windward Slash, to execute the Fifth Strike, it needed 160,000 True Qi. Currently, he could only perform the Third Strike.

But even the Third Strike had a thirtyfold increase in Saber Technique power, and the Sword Qi's size wasn't 3 meters but 9 meters, roughly the height of three floors. Just imagine, such immense Sword Qi slashing down; even a Commander-level Fierce Beast would be in grave danger, let alone an Elite-level one, which would be cut in two with one slash.

In addition, there's another terrifying active skill, the Golden Bell Shield's Rebound.

The 9th Floor of the Golden Bell Shield had a Rebound Trait of 5 layers; once actively triggered, any close-range attack would be returned with 50% of the True Qi within his body.

That is to say, if he were attacked, he could rebound over 30,000 points of True Qi damage!

Most Late-stage Meridian Refining Martial Artists had less than 10,000 points of True Qi in their bodies. One can imagine the miserable fate of anyone hit by this.

"If I can also clear the Du Meridian, the True Qi in my body will be close to 100,000 points. By then, I should be able to execute the Fourth Strike of Windward Slash."

Chen Fan's eyes were filled with anticipation.

"Continue."

[Expenditure of 100 million Potential Points to clear the Du Meridian Changqiang Acupoint]

[True Qi increased by 200 points]

[Constitution increased by 50 points]

[Strength increased by 52 points]

[Agility increased by 53 points]

"200 points!"

Chen Fan's eyes lit up; the amount of True Qi added by the Du Meridian was twice that of the Ren Meridian!

Does this mean that the enhancement from clearing the entire Du Meridian would be equivalent to the total of the previous seven meridians?

Thinking this, he swallowed his saliva.

With approximately 5.2 billion Potential Points left, clearing the Du Meridian should be more than enough.

Time slowly passed,

Every tick on the panel represented the disappearance of over a billion Potential Points.

Soon, from the previous 5 billion points, it reduced to less than 1.5 billion points.

At that moment, the final acupoint of the Du Meridian was also breached.

[Cleared the Du Meridian]

[True Qi increased by 1,000 points]

[Constitution increased by 60 points]

[Strength increased by 62 points]

[Agility increased by 66 points]

Several lines of information appeared in his mind.

Chen Fan immediately felt hundreds more strands of True Qi within his body.

These True Qi circulated through the Eight Extraordinary Meridians, from the soles of the feet, to the calves, thighs, waist, back, head, and back down again, forming a circuit.

"This should be what the association refers to as a Circulation."

Chen Fan's breathing became several times faster.

According to what a few presidents in the association said, once a Martial Artist clears the Eight Extraordinary Meridians, the True Qi within the body forms a circulation path.

If one manipulates the True Qi to follow this circulation, it's called a Circulation.

This might not seem remarkable,

But what if running a Circulation could increase a Martial Artist's Primordial True Qi?

Exactly, that's the biggest difference between a Meridian Refining Martial Artist who has cleared the Eight Extraordinary Meridians and one who hasn't!

For those who haven't fully cleared the Eight Extraordinary Meridians, the only ways to increase Primordial True Qi are aging or consuming Heavenly Materials and Earthly Treasures. The former is less challenging but time-consuming, while the latter is quicker but far more difficult.

However, for Meridian Refining Martial Artists who have cleared the Eight Extraordinary Meridians, on top of those methods, they can also increase their Primordial True Qi by running Circulations, with no upper limit!

This point made many Meridian Refining Martial Artists green with envy, but most were thwarted by the last two meridians, left only to lament.

Chapter 284: True Essence Realm!

However, this method is not as wonderful as imagined. The reason is that each time the primordial true qi increases is fixed, but the number of meridian circulations for the next time will be more than the last time.

For example, a Meridian Refining Realm martial artist who has unblocked the Eight Extraordinary Meridians, at the start, the primordial true qi in the body will increase by a point for each meridian circulation.

Next, the true qi needs two meridian circulations to increase the primordial true qi by a point in the body.

Then it would take three or even four meridian circulations to increase the primordial true qi by a point.

And so on, in the future, it might take tens or even hundreds of meridian circulations to increase the primordial true qi by a point.

But compared to those trapped by the Ren and Du Meridians, this is already much happier.

Moreover, if you learn some heart methods that make the true qi circulate faster, the efficiency will be greatly improved.

As long as the true qi in the body accumulates to a certain extent, one can try to open up a sea of qi in the dantian. The more true qi one has, the higher the probability of a successful breakthrough.

Once the breakthrough is successful, one can absorb the true qi from the True Qi Pill, convert it into true essence, and replenish the sea of qi. The true qi accumulation speed will be several times faster than in the Meridian Refining Realm.

However, opening up the sea of qi is more difficult and dangerous than unblocking the Ren and Du Meridians. Generally, there will be True Essence Realm martial artists protecting the law nearby. If there is any danger, they can stop it in time.

But Chen Fan does not plan to find the True Essence Realm martial artist from the association for protection because it's unnecessary.

He looked at the panel,

Realm: Late Stage of Meridian Refining (+)

True Qi: 116726/13896 (+740%)

Having unblocked the Eight Extraordinary Meridians, his primordial true qi is close to 14,000 points, and the total amount of true qi in his body is close to 120,000 points.

Aside from the Fifth Strike of the Windward Slash, he could perform any other martial skill without any pressure.

At the same time, a big plus sign appeared after the realm.

Chen Fan clicked on it,

[True Qi value is greater than 25,000 points, the success rate of the breakthrough is 100%. Do you wish to proceed?]

"It seems that as long as a Meridian Refining martial artist has more than 20,000 true qi in their body, they can have a 100% breakthrough to become a True Essence Realm martial artist."

Chen Fan murmured.

For an ordinary Meridian Refining martial artist, it's still very difficult.

Without any fortunate encounters, a Meridian Refining martial artist unblocking the Eight Extraordinary Meridians can get at most about 12,000 points of primordial true qi. The remaining nearly double amount must be achieved by having two heart methods reach perfection, or three to four heart methods reach great success, and entering the hall.

Heart methods are inherently the most difficult to cultivate among various martial arts, let alone cultivating multiple methods at once. If the true qi conflict arises, damaging the meridians would be considered light.

Therefore, most Meridian Refining martial artists begin to try breakthroughs when they have about 12,200 true qi in their bodies.

As long as they succeed and step into the True Essence Realm, the speed of true qi growth will be much faster. With more true qi, the combat power will naturally increase several times.

Chen Fan looked at the two options in front of him, hesitated for a moment, and then chose to proceed.

For the same reason, he did not have that many experience points to improve too much martial arts, and with the crisis approaching, failing to make every effort to increase his strength could result in a disaster.

At the moment he chose to proceed, the scattered true qi in his meridians rushed wildly towards one direction.

Dantian.

It was like a whirlpool, with the absorbed true qi spinning rapidly in a clockwise direction.

The initial speed was not fast, but as more true qi poured in, the spinning speed increased rapidly.

And what astonished the most was that even though the amount of absorbed true qi increased, the size of the whirlpool did not change.

Soon, all the true qi within Chen Fan's body gathered at the dantian, and the spinning speed of the whirlpool suddenly accelerated to the point where it became indistinguishable.

A flash of white light.

At the dantian, there suddenly appeared a spherical space, with a colorless stream flowing quietly at the bottom, presenting a picture of tranquility.

As for the previous whirlpool of true qi, it had completely disappeared, as if what had happened earlier was just an illusion.

"Is this the Elixir Field and Sea of Qi? And are those flowing streams true essence?"

Chen Fan looked at the alternate space, his eyes filled with astonishment.

This scene gave him an utterly unreal feeling. Yet he could genuinely feel the existence of this alternate space and freely control the white stream flowing within it.

He suddenly reacted and quickly looked at the panel,

Realm: True Essence Realm·First Realm (1%) (+)

True Essence: 1167/138 (+740%)

Level: 29 (0/1 billion)

Constitution: 14,100

Power: 32,900

Agility: 11,400

Spirit: 269,300

Potential Points: 1.5 billion

Experience Points: 34,200

"True Essence Realm."

Chen Fan took a deep breath. Indeed, he had become a True Essence Realm martial artist.

It's just that, what does True Essence Realm-First Realm mean?

Chen Fan frowned.

There is also a 1% behind it.

"?"

He glanced at the Sea of Qi in the dantian and the true essence flowing slowly within it, and had an epiphany.

Could this 1% be the percentage of true essence relative to the Sea of Qi in the dantian?

He looked again at the true essence in the sea of qi. Its volume did indeed appear to be 1%.

"Which means I must fill the entire spherical space with true essence before I can breakthrough. So, what exactly does this First Realm signify?"

Chen Fan clicked on it.

He quickly understood.

It turns out that the realm division of the True Essence Realm no longer follows the early, mid, and late stages but is divided into realms, like the First Realm, Second Realm, Third Realm, and so forth, with no limit.

When a True Essence Realm martial artist fully fills their Elixir Field and Sea of Qi with true essence, they can choose to condense a Martial Arts True Pill. If successful, they can breakthrough to the next realm, the Celestial Human Realm.

Celestial Human Realm martial artists can mobilize the Power of Heaven and Earth. As long as the heaven and earth energy around does not dry up, they do not need to worry about being unable to perform martial skills, and the power of these skills is not something True Essence Realm martial artists can compare to.

However, it is easy to imagine that the success rate of condensing a Martial Arts True Pill in the True Essence Realm First Realm is quite low. Consequently, many True Essence Realm martial artists choose to continue compressing their Sea of Qi to make their true essence more refined, making it easier to step into the Celestial Human Realm in the future.

"From this perspective, it's the same as opening up the Elixir Field and Sea of Qi in the Meridian Refining Realm. The more true qi, the higher the success rate."

Chen Fan murmured.

Because of the panel, he could intuitively see the success rate of his breakthroughs, but he was not a gambler.

He would not attempt a breakthrough until the success rate reached 100%.

He wondered if the quality of the Martial Arts True Pill would be related to the amount of true essence.

Thinking of this, he looked at the next line,

The previous 160,000 true qi had now turned into 1,600 true essence.

Clearly, one drop of true essence equals 100 true qi.

"1,600 true essence points only filled 1% of the Sea of Qi; to fill it completely, 160,000 true essence points are needed." Chen Fan muttered, thinking this might be a bit too much.

160,000 true essence points are required to have the chance to condense a Martial Arts True Pill.

Did other True Essence Realm martial artists need this much true essence when they first reached the requirement to condense their Martial Arts True Pill?

Could it be that the more true qi one has while breaking through in the Meridian Refining Realm, the more true essence is needed to fill the Sea of Qi in the True Essence Realm, far exceeding the martial artists of the same realm?

"Maybe I should ask a True Essence Realm martial artist later." Chen Fan thought of Chang Fei.

By comparing himself with the other, the differences would become evident.

Looking over the remaining basic attributes, Chen Fan scanned through them briefly, finding nothing unexpected, and then his gaze returned to the plus sign next to the realm.

If he guessed correctly, by clicking the plus sign, he could consume potential points to increase the percentage in front.

He tried clicking on it,

[Every 1 billion potential points spent will increase primordial true essence by 1%. Do you wish to proceed?]

"Spending 1 billion to increase primordial true qi by 1%?"

Chen Fan's eyes lit up.

Previously, in the Meridian Refining Realm, spending 1 billion potential points could only unblock one acupoint, gaining about 100 points of true qi.

Now, 1 billion potential points could increase primordial true essence by 1%, equating to 1.36 points, or 136 points of true qi.

This is just the beginning. As his primordial true qi increases, 1% might become 2 or 3 true essence points.

If he learned more heart methods and consumed more heavenly materials and earthly treasures, 160,000 true essence points might not be that difficult to achieve.

"The president said the package from the headquarters would arrive in the evening, containing not only weapons and medicinal materials but also a Cloud Jade Fruit. I should eat that fruit first and then continue to improve. For now, I will try to run meridian circulations to increase primordial true essence."

After all, even a little is food, and this is also a limited way to increase primordial true essence.

He sat cross-legged, controlled the true essence, and moved from the Sea of Qi, flowing through the Eight Extraordinary Meridians, and finally returning to the Sea of Qi. The process took about two minutes.

At the moment it returned to the Dantian Sea of Qi, he clearly felt the primordial true essence in the Sea of Qi had increased by a drop, and the total true essence grew by nearly ten drops.

This made him very happy and full of motivation. After all, using 1 billion potential points to increase primordial true essence by just over one point was the same as saving an extra billion points.

He mobilized the true essence again. This time, it ran two meridian circulations, taking four minutes, and increased by another drop of primordial true essence.

While Chen Fan was engrossed in this process, a tall man wearing a trench coat and a mask walked up to the Anshan City Martial Arts Branch Association.

He looked up, his gaze falling on the large characters above, his pupils contracted, and he nodded.

Seeing this, a woman immediately greeted him enthusiastically, "Sir, welcome to the Anshan City Martial Arts Association. How can I assist you?"

The man's mouth curled into a sneer, "Do you have someone named Chen Fan here?"

"How do you..."

The woman realized she had misspoken and quickly stopped, staring at him warily.

"It seems this is the place," the man said, "Take me to him."

Chapter 285: Something's Not Right

"Take, take you to see him?"

Upon hearing the request of the strange man in front of her, the woman's face was filled with awkwardness.

She indeed recognized Chen Fan, but they were merely acquaintances who exchanged nods. Admittedly, the latter never seemed like a pretentious person; he would always give her a slight smile whenever they met.

But after all, he was a bona fide Entry Force Martial Artist! He was not someone people like them could just meet whenever they wished.

Moreover, the man before her was of unknown origin, and he wore a mask...

The man frowned at her hesitation.

At this moment, a man in his early thirties, dressed in a suit and tie, walked over.

"Xiaoxu, what's the matter?"

As he spoke, the man cast a curious glance at the masked man.

"Manager Wang, this gentleman wishes to find someone here," the woman said hurriedly.

"Find someone?" Manager Wang looked the masked man up and down and said to the woman, "Alright, I got it. Leave this to me, you go and attend to others."

"Yes, thank you, Manager Wang." The woman looked at him gratefully and quickly ran off.

"May I know your name, sir, and who you are looking for in our association?" the man asked with a smile.

The masked man frowned, appearing somewhat impatient, "Where is Chen Fan?"

"Chen, Chen Fan?"

A look of caution flashed across the man's eyes as he said, "Sir, might I ask what you need with Mr. Chen?"

"Why?"

The masked man let out a playful smile, "Do I need to report to you first before I can find him?"

"I didn't mean it that way, sir," the man smiled and said, "It's just a rule of our association. If you don't tell us the reason, we can't report it to the higher-ups. We ask for your understanding."

"Report to the higher-ups?"

The masked man muttered under his breath.

It seemed unrealistic to rely on these people to find that kid's whereabouts.

Very well, then I'll seek out the chairman first. If the chairman cooperates, that would be best. If he's too clever for his own good, don't blame me for using some methods.

"For you to demand a reason from me, you don't have that qualification. Who is your chairman here? Tell him to come out and see me immediately."

As soon as these words were spoken, the surroundings fell silent. Many staff members and martial artists cast astonished glances their way.

Who the hell was this guy?

How could he be so arrogant?

In all fairness, the man did exude an aura of danger.

The man was a bit taken aback but forced a smile and said, "Sir, if you want to meet our chairman, at least give me a business card? Otherwise, it would be difficult for me to..."

He hesitated.

"A business card?"

The masked man sneered, "Just tell him someone from headquarters is here, waiting in the lobby."

"What! He's from headquarters!"

"Headquarters!"

"Oh my god, he's from headquarters!"

Instantly, the sound of discussions filled the air.

At first, the martial artists who felt a bit annoyed by this man's attitude now looked at him with eyes full of admiration, as if they'd seen their idol.

They had always dreamed of going to headquarters, even if just to take a look.

And this man was actually from headquarters. Could his status and strength be trivial?

"Headquarters."

Manager Wang was also shocked, his eyes bulging like saucers.

"What? You don't believe me?"

The masked man squinted.

"No, no, I believe you, Elder Xiao. Please wait a moment; I'll go notify the chairman right away."

With that, Manager Wang turned around and hurried upstairs, not even bothering to take the elevator.

"Hmph."

The masked man Xiao Hong swept his gaze across the room, and no one dared to meet his eyes or even breathe heavily.

Seeing this, the disdain in his eyes grew stronger.

A bunch of local martial artists who had not seen much of the world.

It wasn't even half a minute before hurried footsteps sounded from upstairs, and those familiar with them immediately recognized them as Chairman Sun Wei's.

Soon, Sun Wei arrived in the lobby in a hurry. Seeing the figure standing there, exuding a powerful aura, especially those eyes that gave off a strong sense of oppression.

Without a doubt, he must be a powerful martial artist!

His pupils instantly dilated, and he quickly walked forward, bowing with reverence, "I didn't know the senior was visiting. I apologize for not meeting you earlier. Senior, please."

Sun Wei said, making a gesture of invitation.

At this moment, he was extremely nervous inside.

He couldn't have imagined that after Xia Tian and the others left, another person from the headquarters would arrive, and this one's aura was even stronger than Xia Tian's.

Could it be...a True Essence Realm Martial Artist?

The thought crossed his mind.

"Are you the chairman here?"

Xiao Hong looked down at him from his standing position and asked.

"Yes, yes." Sun Wei nodded continuously, beads of cold sweat inadvertently falling from his forehead.

The others were even more awestruck upon seeing this.

This was the demeanor of a powerful martial artist! Even the chairman had to be respectful and dare not offend him in the slightest.

"Hmm."

Xiao Hong nodded, "You have someone named Chen Fan in your association, correct? Where is he? Take me to him immediately."

"Ah?"

Sun Wei's mouth opened wide with surprise on his face.

This guy was here to find Brother Chen?

"What 'ah'?"

Xiao Hong's face turned cold, "Do you not understand human language, or do you need me to repeat myself?"

"No, no, I understand, senior."

Sun Wei waved his hands frantically.

"If you understand, then take me there now."

Xiao Hong said.

Indeed, he was here under Ling Yu's orders to take Chen Fan, who was practicing alchemy, back to Jiangnan City.

If Chen Fan cooperated, that would be best.

If he refused, he would first make him suffer a bit and then make him comply.

Before he set out, Ling Yu specifically instructed him not to reveal his true identity. Hence, he wore a mask. Otherwise, if the matter got out, it would be hard for Ling Yu to explain, and he would be the one to suffer.

"Well..."

Sun Wei hesitated for a moment, thinking that maybe it was Chairman Chang who sent this man to take Brother Chen to headquarters? But why didn't Brother Chen mention it yesterday? Perhaps Chairman Chang only decided today?

Although he was reluctant to part with Chen Fan, going to headquarters would be safer and beneficial for Chen Fan's development.

But why was this man wearing a mask?

To be safe, he tentatively asked, "May I know your name, senior? What is the reason for taking our Brother Chen?"

Xiao Hong shot him a cold glance.

Had it been before, he wouldn't have even bothered to look at, let alone answer the questions of a mere Transforming Force Martial Artist.

But to prevent complications, he decided to answer.

"It's a direct order from the chairman to bring Chen Fan to the headquarters base. It's an urgent matter and cannot be delayed. Do you understand?"

"An order from the chairman?"

"Heaven, the headquarters sent someone to take Chen Fan away!"

"Headquarters values Chen Fan so much!"

Everyone around was filled with envy.

For one, headquarters was a hundred times safer than Anshan City! Not to mention all the various powerful martial artists there.

"An order from the chairman? You mean Chairman Chang?"

Sun Wei asked subconsciously.

"Hmm."

Xiao Hong responded, urging, "I've told you what you need to know. Now, isn't it time to take me to him?"

"Yes, yes."

Sun Wei quickly agreed, but internally he had doubts.

Strange, because during his last call with Chairman Chang, Brother Chen had clearly stated he wouldn't go to headquarters in the short term. Chairman Chang had understood and said that if Brother Chen changed his mind, he could inform him anytime.

And when Brother Chen returned at noon yesterday, he hadn't mentioned leaving. They even had private opportunities to talk. If Brother Chen had said anything to Chairman Chang, he would have informed him, surely.

But he didn't.

Why had Chairman Chang suddenly sent someone to take Brother Chen?

Maybe it was a sudden event, and there was no time to notify him.

Chang Fei headed toward the elevator.

"Things are going smoother than I thought."

Xiao Hong noticed, a smirk forming under his mask.

Next, he should be able to meet that alchemy kid.

Being able to refine nine top-grade True Qi Pills in one furnace, that's indeed a remarkable skill.

Once he brings this kid back, having him refine pills for Ling Yu would not only benefit Ling Yu, but Xiao Hong would also have enough True Qi Pills to potentially break through to the True Essence Realm.

Thinking of this, his arms shook with excitement.

Suddenly, Sun Wei in front halted, as if he remembered something important.

"What's wrong?"

Xiao Hong's voice was cold.

"Senior, you haven't told me your name yet,"

Sun Wei said with a smile.

He remembered Chen Fan, who liked to wear a mask when out, hiding his identity.

This person in front of him also wore a mask, probably for the same reason.

Of course, it was personal freedom; he had no right to interfere.

But since this person was now taking Chen Fan to headquarters, shouldn't he at least know who the person from headquarters was?

Even if it wasn't said now, it had to be said when they met Chen Fan later, right?

Xiao Hong's expression changed, and his voice grew colder, "What do you mean by asking that? Do you think I'm lying to you? Or don't you trust the headquarters?"

"No, no, senior, I meant no disrespect,"

Sun Wei was startled and quickly said, "I was just asking."

"Don't ask unnecessary questions. My identity is a secret of the headquarters, understand?"

"Yes, yes."

Sun Wei heard this and became even more uneasy.

Even if what this person said was true, if his identity was so confidential, then Chairman Chang would have specifically called to explain, wouldn't he?

Chapter 286: Are You That Chen Fan?

But until now, he hadn't received any call from the headquarters at all.

What was strange was that this person seemed to know a lot about Chen Fan. If he wasn't from the headquarters, then where could he be from?

"No, this whole situation feels weird."

Sun Wei decided he should call Chairman Chang to verify this situation.

Better safe than sorry. If Chairman Chang confirmed that this person was indeed sent by him, it wouldn't be too late to take him to see Chen Fan.

The two of them entered the elevator, and Sun Wei led him to a room on the second floor.

"Senior, Brother Chen lives here. Please wait a moment."

Sun Wei said with a smile, turning around to knock on the door.

"Brother Chen? Brother Chen?"

He called out a few times but got no response from inside.

"Could it be that he's not in?"

Sun Wei knocked on the door a few more times, still getting no response.

Suddenly he slapped his thigh and said, "Oh, I just remembered, Brother Chen went out hunting this morning and hasn't come back yet,

Senior, how about you come to my office and have a seat? I'll give Brother Chen a call and have him come back as soon as possible?"

Sun Wei's face was filled with an apologetic smile, but he was incredibly anxious inside.

Chen Fan was in the alchemy room doing alchemy. Even if he weren't, he wouldn't appear here.

So he intentionally brought this person here, hoping to use the opportunity to make a call and buy some time.

Sun Wei wondered if his acting was good enough to fool the other party.

"Is that so?"

Xiao Hong spoke and then fell silent for a moment before asking, "Then why didn't you remember that when we were downstairs?"

"Senior, I've just been too busy and forgot," Sun Wei laughed it off, "Don't worry, if you can't wait, I can call Brother Chen right now. If he hears about this, he won't take long to return."

As he spoke, he pulled out his phone.

It was also good to inform Brother Chen about this matter in advance, so if he didn't know, he could contact Chairman Chang himself.

But just as he pulled out his phone, his arm was grabbed by the person in front of him.

"S-Senior?"

Sun Wei looked up, confused.

"No need."

Xiao Hong held his hand tightly.

There was no way he would give Sun Wei the chance to make a call before things were settled; otherwise, it would be easy to leave a clue. This time, if things went wrong, it would be tough to succeed again in the future.

Besides, was Chen Fan really not in the branch office at this moment?

Perhaps not.

"Sun Wei, do you think it's possible that Chen Fan didn't go out but is somewhere else in the association?"

Xiao Hong stared dead into his eyes, "For instance, in the cultivation room, or perhaps in the alchemy room?"

When the words 'alchemy room' were spoken, a flash of panic crossed Sun Wei's eyes.

"Hahaha, how could that be?"

He quickly regained his composure and laughed it off, "I'm really not mistaken this time. Brother Chen truly went out to hunt. I'm not lying when I say he is our branch's most diligent fierce beast hunter."

"You're lying."

Xiao Hong's words sent Sun Wei into a cold sweat.

"Lying? Senior, what are you talking about?"

Sun Wei forced a smile, "Weren't you looking for Brother Chen? I'll call him right now, and you can speak to him directly."

But Xiao Hong acted as if he hadn't heard and continued, "He's currently in the alchemy room, isn't he?"

"Boom."

Sun Wei's mind buzzed.

He had been seen through? When? Was it when the alchemy room was mentioned?

"Seems like I guessed right."

Xiao Hong's voice was icy.

Before entering the elevator, he had keenly noticed a slight change in Sun Wei's demeanor after he inquired about his identity to no avail.

To others, this tiny change might be negligible, but not to Xiao Hong. As a Meridian Refining Martial Artist who had connected the Eight Extraordinary Meridians two months ago and was just a step away from the True Essence Realm, he missed nothing.

The subtle shifts in an Entry Force Martial Artist's attitude were impossible to miss.

Thus, when Sun Wei knocked on the door and claimed to have forgotten, Xiao Hong had already become suspicious.

Latterly, when he mentioned the alchemy room, Sun Wei's transient panic almost betrayed him.

Combine that with the fact that Chen Fan was indeed a very skilled alchemist, and it was only reasonable that he would spend a lot of time in the alchemy room, wasn't it?

"So tell me, where is the alchemy room? Don't tell me there isn't one here."

"There is an alchemy room, but senior, Brother Chen is really out hunting. He isn't in the alchemy room." Sun Wei responded with a bitter smile, trying to pull his arm back, but it wouldn't budge.

The unease in Sun Wei's heart grew stronger.

Wasn't it normal to call Chen Fan and communicate this beforehand? But this person in front of him seemed to want to prevent that at all costs.

Such behavior wasn't typical, was it?

A flash of frostiness came into Xiao Hong's eyes, "I'm short on time and can't afford to play games. This is your last chance: tell me where the alchemy room is, or take me there now, or I promise you will regret it."

"Senior, you?"

Sun Wei's eyes widened.

This was a blatant threat!

This guy, was he really sent by headquarters? Was he really sent by Chairman Chang to take Brother Chen away?

He had a bad feeling that something would go wrong if he took this person to Chen Fan.

"You really are one to never give up, are you?"

Xiao Hong sighed, exerting a bit more force on Sun Wei's arm, and several strands of blue-green true qi flowed into Sun Wei's body.

"What did you do to me?"

Sun Wei was shocked, looking at his arm in terror.

Something was moving beneath his skin as if it could break out any moment. Within a split second, that something was spreading from his arm to his entire body, making its way through him. It felt like power, but the sensation was far more pronounced.

Could this be true qi?

"What did I do? You'll know soon enough."

Xiao Hong's lips curled into a smile.

"So, so cold."

Suddenly, Sun Wei shivered. He felt the strands of true qi turn cold as ice, freezing his blood vessels.

What terrified him most was that these cold strands moved through his body, freezing everything in their path.

Sun Wei's body shook uncontrollably, and frost formed on his eyebrows and beard, his face turning deathly pale.

"Cold? That's right.

Xiao Hong sneered, "Under the influence of my Profound Yin True Qi, how could you not feel cold?"

"Profound Yin True Qi?"

Sun Wei looked at him in disbelief.

He couldn't believe that this man wasn't from headquarters. They were all from the Martial Arts Association. Why would he do this to him?

Just because he didn't immediately take him to see Brother Chen? But he had said he'd call first! Could this guy not wait for even that?

"Yes, Profound Yin True Qi." Xiao Hong's face twisted with a sinister smile, "Initially, I didn't want things to escalate to this point. If you had obediently taken me to him, I would've simply taken him away. But you had to play smart, so don't blame me for this."

"Anyone who falls victim to my Profound Yin True Qi will first feel a chilling cold that seems to freeze their insides. For someone like you, merely an Entry Force Martial Artist, you'll be frozen to death within minutes."

'What... do you... want? Who...who are you?'

Sun Wei gritted his teeth, trembling, "You're not from Chairman Chang, are you? Who are you really?"

"Hehehe, you're right. I'm not from Chairman Chang," Xiao Hong chuckled, "But it's impossible for you to know my real identity."

"The feeling of having Profound Yin True Qi invade your body is terrible, isn't it? If you want to suffer less, then quickly take me to see him."

"You!"

Sun Wei did his best to hold firm.

This guy was certainly up to no good.

Taking him to see Brother Chen would be like leading a lamb to the slaughter.

Even though he knew this resistance might be futile – anyone in the association could point out where the alchemy room was – he couldn't betray his friend.

"So you're still not getting it, huh?"

Feeling provoked, Xiao Hong's face darkened, "Oh, I forgot to mention that the true qi I infused also carries cold poison. If I let it activate, your innards will liquefy, and you'll die in agony. Want to experience that?"

Upon hearing this, Sun Wei's face changed drastically.

The thought of his organs turning to blood was enough to send shivers down his spine.

"Looks like you've got a brain. Now take me there."

Xiao Hong was satisfied with Sun Wei's expression, "Once I find Chen Fan, I'll retrieve the true qi from your body. If you don't cooperate, I'll just ask others where the alchemy room is."

Sun Wei hesitated, using all his remaining strength to say, "Brother Chen... really isn't in the alchemy room." He sighed inwardly.

Brother Chen, I've done all I could.

I hope you'll be able to survive this situation.

"Fine. Seems like you need to be taught a final lesson!"

Xiao Hong's face turned vicious.

Since that was the case, he would eliminate this obstinate man.

"Are you the one looking for me?"

A figure suddenly appeared at the stairway.

"Brother Chen!"

Sun Wei's eyes lit up before turning anxious, "Brother Chen, run! You need to run!"

Chen Fan, however, seemed unfazed, locking eyes with the masked man in front of him.

"Oh? So you are Chen Fan."

Xiao Hong's face lit up with glee.

Chapter 287: No! You Are Not Chen Fan!

He initially thought it would take some effort to find Chen Fan, yet who would have expected the latter to appear right in front of him!

Isn't this the epitome of 'searching high and low only to find it effortlessly'?

"Chen Fan, will you come with me willingly, or do you want to end up like him? Must I forcefully make you obedient?"

Xiao Hong asked with a smile.

Clearly, he wore an expression of being absolutely confident.

Before coming here, Ling Yu had informed him about Chen Fan's strength. He was not convinced and had specially looked up information about Chen Fan in the system.

He had to admit, it was quite surprising.

A mere young man had already reached the Meridian Refining Realm, and it only took a few days for him to progress from Transforming Force to Meridian Refining.

Such speed was unheard of, not only for him but in the entire Jiangnan Sub-district Martial Arts Association there wasn't a second person of this caliber.

But, that was it.

He himself was undeniably a late-stage Meridian Refining Martial Artist, having traversed through the Eight Extraordinary Meridians.

It wouldn't be an exaggeration to declare that in the association, he was undoubtedly the number one below the True Essence Realm!

With such abilities, capturing a newly inducted Meridian Refining Martial Artist should be a breeze.

The thought of taking Chen Fan back and getting an endless supply of top-grade True Qi Pills made Xiao Hong tremble with excitement.

"Oh, where do you intend to take me?" Chen Fan spoke, glancing at Sun Wei whose lips were bluish from the cold, a slight flick of his finger sent a silent thread of True Essence into his body, tightly wrapping the strands of Profound Yin True Qi.

"You'll know once you come with me."

Xiao Hong, oblivious to it, boasted, "Don't worry, the place you're going isn't some perilous den; it's much safer than here. Once there, you'll just need to focus on refining top-grade True Qi Pills, don't worry, we won't mistreat you."

Sun Wei, hearing this, widened his eyes in shock.

A top-grade True Qi Pill!

Brother Chen could refine top-grade True Qi Pills?

Last time Elder Xia came, he mentioned that even the headquarters couldn't refine many top-grade True Qi Pills.

Brother Chen really?

No, how did the person in front know Brother Chen could refine top-grade True Qi Pills? Even he wasn't aware of this.

Chen Fan also thought about this.

The number of people knowing he could refine top-grade True Qi Pills was three: Chairman Chang, Elder Tang, and Elder Luo.

How did this person know he could refine top-grade True Qi Pills? Moreover, looking at his attire, it was clear he wanted to keep his identity hidden.

Did they inform others at headquarters, who then hatched this cunning plan, or was Chairman Chang and Elder Tang just pretending?

His face gradually grew serious as he asked, "Who told you I could refine top-grade True Qi Pills?"

Xiao Hong was briefly stunned and laughed eerily, "That you needn't concern yourself with. All you need to do is cooperate obediently."

"What if I don't cooperate?" Chen Fan questioned.

"Hahaha."

Xiao Hong laughed dismissively, "Do you think you have a say in this matter?"

He shoved Sun Wei forward, "See this guy's condition? Painful, isn't it? He was hit by my Profound Yin True Qi. If I wish, I can trigger the cold poison within him anytime, causing unbearable pain until his internal organs turn to blood and death ensues. How about it, want to experience such a sensation?"

"This is your backup plan?"

"You could say so."

Xiao Hong shrugged.

Indeed, this was his backup plan. He had anticipated Chen Fan wouldn't cooperate willingly.

Hence, infusing some Profound Yin True Qi into his body would make him compliant, willingly becoming an alchemy tool.

"Brother Chen, don't worry about me, hurry, escape! Leave now!"

Sun Wei urged.

He didn't know what was happening.

But for this masked man to come alone indicated his great strength, even if not a True Essence Realm Martial Artist, he was at least a late-stage Meridian Refining Martial Artist.

Brother Chen had just entered the Meridian Refining Realm; how could he be an opponent?

"Instead of worrying about others, you better worry about yourself first."

Seeing Sun Wei's reaction, Xiao Hong's face took on a sinister look.

With the main target found, keeping Sun would reveal his information, better to kill and set an example.

With this thought, he immediately detonated the cold poison hidden in those strands of true qi.

Within three seconds, Sun Wei would die in agony.

One second passed,

two seconds passed,

three seconds passed,

Sun Wei was still standing fine, eyes wide.

"You?"

Xiao Hong was shocked, "You're unharmed?"

The same bewildered Sun Wei shook his head.

He really was unharmed?

Not only unharmed, but his senses surged back gradually.

"Impossible!"

Xiao Hong's face changed.

He clearly detonated the cold poison; even a strong constitution would only endure for several seconds, but no reaction at all was outrageous!

"Wait, could it be...?"

His eyes widened aghast.

He felt his own true qi was being suppressed by another massive qi, unable to move.

Even the detonated cold poison dared not act before this massive qi.

"Wha- when?"

Xiao Hong looked around in fear.

When did this massive qi enter Sun Wei's body? He hadn't noticed at all! He hadn't released his grip since the beginning!

The opponent could silently infuse qi into Sun Wei's body.

Could he have ambushed him in that moment?

Total panic at the unknown made Xiao Hong break out in cold sweat.

Where was that person hiding?

"Are you looking for me?"

Chen Fan's voice suddenly emerged.

"You?"

Xiao Hong looked puzzled.

Suddenly, his eyes widened, filled with disbelief and terror.

"No, impossible."

This kid was merely an early-stage Meridian Refining Martial Artist, how could he wield qi outside his body?

Even if he had enough qi, could he do so unnoticed?

"You've already answered your own question, haven't you?"

Chen Fan calmly observed him, "There are only three of us here."

These words caused Xiao Hong to stagger back several steps.

This guy, how did he grasp his thoughts?

Was he truly the hidden master?

"???"

Sun Wei looked confused.

What situation was this?

Brother Chen scared him with mere words?

Strangely, his body felt better, no longer frozen stiff.

"Are you afraid?"

Chen Fan said, "If you're scared, answer my questions honestly."

"Stop your tricks!"

Xiao Hong yelled, eyes blood-red, "You think you'll scare me? Dream on!"

"Since you refuse to come willingly, don't blame me for being rude!"

With that, he kicked off the ground, a fierce wind swirled, charging at Chen Fan, his right palm carrying dense blue-green qi.

But a figure moved faster than him.

As the two crossed paths, Chen Fan's right hand flicked like lightning at his chest.

The next moment, Xiao Hong was immobilized, his body frozen mid-charge.

His eyes bulged like bells.

"Bro- Brother Chen?"

Sun Wei was prepared to shout a warning, but turned to see the masked man frozen.

Chen Fan stood unharmed behind him.

"Brother Chen, are you okay?"

Sun Wei asked cautiously, startled.

"Nothing happened," Chen Fan smiled, "Sorry temporarily, Chair Sun, this person came for me and involved you."

"Brother Chen, no, but what about him?"

Sun Wei shook his head repeatedly, glancing at the motionless masked man in fear and curiosity.

"I've immobilized him."

Chen Fan explained, "Killing him is too easy; I want to know who told him I could refine top-grade True Qi Pills."

Chen Fan's eyes flashed coldly.

He operated on the principle of avoiding conflict unless provoked.

Others could plot against him but should be ready for consequences.

If related to Chairman Chang, he would not tolerate!

"Im- immobilized?"

Sun Wei looked stunned at the immobilized Xiao Hong.

The feared opponent fell to Brother Chen's simple effort?

Was he dreaming?

Was the enemy weaker than imagined, or was Brother Chen's strength unfathomable?

"Who- who are you?"

Xiao Hong's voice suddenly arose, now uneasy and fearful.

He couldn't discern their actions; by the time he realized, he was immobilized.

Normal immobilization allowed qi flow to break free, but now his qi was unresponsive!

Not only immobilized, he was cut off from his meridians!

Chapter 288: Toil for Me Like an Ox or Horse, You Wish

"You come looking for me, and you still ask who I am?"

Chen Fan turned around and looked at the other person's face.

"No, no way! No way!"

Xiao Hong said in a panicked voice, "How could you be that Chen Fan! You can't be that Chen Fan!"

In the headquarters' files, Chen Fan was clearly just an Early-stage Meridian Refining Martial Artist.

But this guy in front of him is a True Essence Realm Martial Artist! Absolutely a True Essence Realm Martial Artist!

Otherwise, how could he, a Late-stage Meridian Refining Martial Artist who has opened the Eight Extraordinary Meridians, be subdued without any resistance?

"He is Chen Fan, Brother Chen."

Sun Wei stepped forward, looking at him with an expression of disbelief.

"..."

Xiao Hong seemed to be choked and fell silent.

Yes, before this Sun guy, when he saw this person appear, he called out "Brother Chen," and asked him to leave quickly. In that situation, it was impossible for him to be acting to deceive himself.

But, how could this be?

"Brother Chen, help me remove the mask from his face and see who this guy really is."

Sun Wei said.

"Chairman, let me do it."

Chen Fan shook his head.

After all, the other party is a Meridian Refining Martial Artist; there are a hundred ways to kill Sun Wei.

"Okay, okay."

Sun Wei nodded awkwardly.

"No, no, don't, don't!"

Xiao Hong shouted like a pig being slaughtered.

But it was of no use.

In the next moment, the mask on his face was removed, revealing a face full of terror.

"You, who are you?"

Sun Wei had an extremely shocked expression.

Seeing this, Chen Fan slightly relaxed. In that case, there were ways to make this person tell the truth, but since the chairman could recognize him, it would save a lot of trouble.

"Chairman, who is he?"

"He is Xiao Hong from the headquarters."

"A Late-stage Meridian Refining Martial Artist who has long dominated the top rank of the monthly contribution points list for Meridian Refining Martial Artists in our association, the number one below the True Essence Realm."

After finishing, Sun Wei's mind went blank.

He had always respected this strong man from the rankings immensely.

Not just him, but the vast majority of martial artists in the association often mentioned this person during their leisure.

Dominating the top rank for several months straight, what kind of strength is this?

Moreover, it's said that the headquarters also highly value this person, spending a lot of resources to cultivate him. If any Meridian Refining Martial Artist is most likely to break through to the True Essence Realm, it's this person.

But what just happened completely overturned the image of this person in his mind.

He not only did such a cruel thing to a companion but also wanted to take Brother Chen away to make him refine top-grade True Qi Pills for him.

This, was this really the strong man he had always respected? Simply, completely without any bottom line!

"Someone from the headquarters."

Chen Fan's eyes showed a hint of coldness.

This matter is indeed related to the headquarters? What do they want? Inviting him to refine pills was refused, so they resort to such despicable means to force him?

"Tell me, who sent you?"

Chen Fan's voice carried boundless coldness, causing even Sun Wei to shiver.

"I'll tell you! I'll tell you!"

Xiao Hong was someone who could read the situation. At this moment, he was like fish on the chopping block, awaiting slaughter.

It was better to reveal everything; maybe he could still save his life.

"Brother Chen, this matter really isn't my fault; I was used by others." He complained, "As long as you are willing to let me go, I will tell you everything I know!"

"You still want to negotiate with me?"

Chen Fan's eyes showed intense killing intent. "Do you think I only know one acupoint technique?"

Xiao Hong's face turned pale.

He knew that acupoint techniques could make people wish for death while being unable to die, and compared to that, his Profound Yin True Qi seemed very basic.

Thinking of this, he no longer hesitated and shouted urgently:

"It was Ling Yu, Ling Yu sent me!"

"What, who did you say?"

Sun Wei was shocked.

Chen Fan glanced at Sun Wei, wondering if this person was also from the headquarters?

But among the three people present yesterday, none had that name.

What is Ling Yu's background? Where did he get this information?

"That's right, it's him!"

Xiao Hong said through gritted teeth, "Ling Yu somehow found out that Brother Chen could refine top-grade True Qi Pills, and he secretly came to me, told me this information, and asked me to bring you to him to refine top-grade True Qi Pills for him. I refused at that time."

"Really?"

Chen Fan sneered.

"Would you really have been so kind?"

"Brother Chen, everything I said is true." Xiao Hong said without thinking, "We are all part of the same association; how could I do something so unethical and without a bottom line?"

"You still know that what you did was unethical and without a bottom line?" Sun Wei said angrily.

"I was also forced." Xiao Hong cried, "You might not know, Ling Yu is a once-in-a-million martial arts genius, born with all eight meridians open. While we have to struggle hard to open the meridians, he can circulate and increase True Qi just by reaching the Meridian Refining Realm, so he is now a True Essence Realm Martial Artist."

"Moreover, he is Chairman Shi's closed-door disciple; the two are as close as father and son. No matter how you look at it, I wouldn't dare offend him."

"So you agreed to it?" Chen Fan asked.

"Yes, Brother Chen, what choice did I have?" Xiao Hong sighed, "He specifically told me that if you were unwilling to come, to use some methods to bring you over. Basically, everything I did was under his instruction; I was just a knife in his hand."

"You really absolve yourself cleanly." Sun Wei gritted his teeth, "Even if this was Ling Yu's idea, you are not completely innocent."

"That's right, I admit, I did have a thought." Xiao Hong looked at Chen Fan in fear, "I am now at the Late Stage of Meridian Refining. If I want to open up the Elixir Field and Sea of Qi, I can do it anytime. But I heard that before opening the Sea of Qi, the more True Qi in the body, the more True Essence after reaching the True Essence Realm, so I have been delaying."

"What did you say?"

Chen Fan interrupted him, "Different True Essence Realm Martial Artists have different capacities in their Sea of Qi?"

"Yes, yes?"

Xiao Hong stammered, wondering why he, a True Essence Realm Martial Artist, was asking him this.

"Alright, continue." Chen Fan knew in his heart.

It seems his previous guess was correct.

When a Meridian Refining Martial Artist breaks through to the True Essence Realm, the proportion of True Essence in the Sea of Qi is 1%.

Although it's 1%, the amount of True Essence varies greatly.

This is only in the First Realm of True Essence; if it reaches the Second Realm or Third Realm, the gap will only widen.

"Yes, yes." Xiao Hong murmured in his heart but continued honestly, "I haven't chosen to break through because I'm worried about not having enough True Qi Pills to consume. Because, once reaching the True Essence Realm, solely relying on cultivation to fill the Sea of Qi is extremely difficult."

If there is a sufficient supply of True Qi Pills, the efficiency will be much different. Ling Yu also made me do this for this reason. I did have a thought in my mind, but who wouldn't be tempted in such a matter?"

He looked at Sun Wei, "Chairman Sun, you are probably still an Entry Force Martial Artist, right? If there were a large number of top-grade Qi Blood Pills in front of you, wouldn't you be tempted?"

"Hmph, don't think everyone is like you." Sun Wei snorted, "I'll naturally strive for what's mine; if it's not mine, I won't have any crooked thoughts. Besides, because of Brother Chen, I am not lacking top-grade Qi Blood Pills now."

Hearing this, Xiao Hong was stunned, then showed a strong look of envy and glanced at Chen Fan with a bitter smile, "Yes, you have close access, of course, you wouldn't lack top-grade Qi Blood Pills."

If Sun Wei was a Meridian Refining Martial Artist now, he probably wouldn't lack True Qi Pills either.

"So you don't know how Ling Yu got this information?" Chen Fan asked.

"This, I really don't know." Xiao Hong said fearfully, "I asked at the time, he didn't say, and I didn't dare continue asking."

"Alright, I'll ask you again, are you sure it was that Ling Yu who instructed you to do this?"

"I'm sure!"

Xiao Hong hurriedly said.

In his heart, he cursed Ling Yu and all his ancestors.

Damn it, why did he have to find him? If it weren't for what he said about Chen Fan having no strong protection around him and only being at the Early Stage of Meridian Refining, he wouldn't have rushed here and hit a brick wall.

To put it bluntly, he might lose his life here.

In such a case, why protect Ling Yu? Better to save his own life first!

"Alright,"

Chen Fan nodded, "I'll contact headquarters later, and you'll confront Ling Yu. If you're lying, you know what your fate will be."

Hearing this, Xiao Hong's face changed dramatically.

Contact headquarters? Confront Ling Yu? If this matter spreads, even if Chen Fan lets him go, Ling Yu might not spare him!

This Chen guy, he's pushing him to a dead end!

"Brother Chen, can you not do this?" He pleaded, "Today's incident was indeed my fault; just ask for anything you want, as long as I have it, I'll give it to you. Even serving you is fine,

Look, you lack a Late-stage Meridian Refining Martial Artist follower, right? As long as you spare me, I swear, from now on, I will serve you loyally!"

"Serve me loyally?"

"That's right, even if you want me to be your horse or cow." Xiao Hong showed a look of expectation.

If he could stay beside Chen Fan, it wouldn't be bad; at least he wouldn't have to worry about True Qi Pills anymore.

"Serve me loyally, you think you are worthy!" Chen Fan sneered.

Chapter 289:: Xiao Hong, How Are You in Anshan City?

Hearing such sharp words from Chen Fan, Xiao Hong's face turned red, wishing he could find a crack in the ground to crawl into.

When had he ever suffered such humiliation?

In terms of status, at headquarters, he was second only to those few True Essence Realm Martial Artists, such as the chairman.

Even if he encountered other Meridian Refining Realm Martial Artists, they would have to respectfully call him Brother Xiao, not to mention those below the Meridian Refining Realm.

But in front of this person, he had no way to retort.

Because the disparity in strength was so vast that he hadn't even noticed when the other person made their move.

"Brother Chen is right," Sun Wei said with lingering fear, "if we keep someone like this around, who knows when he'll stab us in the back. We should just let headquarters deal with him."

"No, no!"

Xiao Hong's face changed drastically, and then he showed a pleading look, "Brother Chen, Brother Chen, I beg you, please don't report this to headquarters. If they find out, I'm done for!"

"Who is your brother?" Sun Wei interjected.

Do you think you can address him as Brother Chen?

Xiao Hong's face immediately turned sullen and he said, "Well then, Big Brother Chen, Grandpa Chen, it's all fine, just don't spread this around, I beg you. I'll follow you like a horse or a dog if you agree."

"Do you think that's possible?"

Chen Fan looked at him like he was an idiot and asked, "If my strength was less than yours, and I begged you to let me go, would you listen and let me go?"

"This..."

Xiao Hong instantly looked like a rooster with its throat grabbed, and after a while, he said quietly, "I admit, I wouldn't let you go, but I wouldn't harm you either, would I?"

"So, you're saying I should be grateful that you've made me an alchemy tool?" Chen Fan nearly laughed out of anger.

"No, it's not, I..."

"Enough, I don't have the patience for your nonsense here."

He interrupted Xiao Hong, who wanted to say something more, and frowned, "In a moment, I'll take you to see Chairman Chang. You'll repeat everything you just told me, word for word."

"What! Chairman Chang?"

Xiao Hong's face went completely pale.

"Grandpa Chen, Grandpa Chen, please, let me go!"

He cried out, "I know my mistake, I really know my mistake. As long as you pretend nothing happened, from now on, I'll do whatever you ask without a single complaint."

It was conceivable that once this matter got out.

The people in the association would talk about him behind his back.

How would he ever show his face again?

This was worse than killing him ten or a hundred times!

Of course, headquarters wouldn't kill him over this matter, after all, he was the most likely candidate to break through to the True Essence Realm next.

"Must I resort to certain methods before you'll obediently cooperate?"

A flash of killing intent appeared in Chen Fan's eyes.

All of Xiao Hong's hair stood on end, and his heart skipped a beat.

It felt like the one standing before him was not a person, but an incredibly terrifying beast.

"This is the last time I'm saying this."

Chen Fan extended a finger and said coldly, "I'm not asking for your opinion; I'm telling you to follow my orders obediently. If you don't agree, I don't mind letting you taste the feeling of an unbearable itch all over your body that you can't scratch with your hands, making life worse than death."

Hearing this, Sun Wei swallowed a mouthful of saliva.

"I, I..."

"Hmm?"

"I agree, I agree, isn't that enough?" Xiao Hong had no other choice and pleaded, "Grandpa Chen, if I do this, it will offend Ling Yu completely, and he definitely won't let me off easily."

"And what does that have to do with me?"

Chen Fan's eyes showed intense coldness, what he needed to understand now was how this guy named Ling Yu knew he could refine top-grade True Qi Pills.

Was it really just Ling Yu's own idea to send this guy, with no connection to others?

He still harbored doubts about people like Chairman Chang.

Given his current strength, even if he couldn't compete with headquarters, he had the confidence to challenge them, especially since the others had already come to his doorstep.

If he didn't respond, it would only make the mastermind behind the scenes more blatant!

So, no matter who it was, if they dared stretch a hand at him, they must be prepared to have their entire arm chopped off!

Under the puzzled gazes of some nearby martial artists, Chen Fan dragged the immobile Xiao Hong to the meeting room.

Besides this, Sun Wei was also present.

He licked his lips, feeling extremely anxious inside.

Chen Fan took out his phone and dialed Chairman Chang's number.

It barely rang twice before it was answered, with Chairman Chang's delighted voice coming through.

"What's up, little brother Chen? Do you have some good pill formula to sell to headquarters again? Don't worry about the price, as long as you have it, headquarters wants it."

Chairman Chang sat in his chair, smiling.

"Chairman Chang, is it convenient for you right now?" Chen Fan's voice was calm.

"Yes, it is, what's the matter?"

Chairman Chang immediately straightened up, even someone as insensitive as him could sense something unusual in Chen Fan's tone.

His heart jumped to his throat.

What's going on? Could headquarters have done something to displease Brother Chen?

Was there a problem with the weapons and equipment sent over? But that shouldn't be the case, those items were all inspected by him and there couldn't be any issues unless someone had the audacity to tamper with them midway, but that's impossible, right?

"Chairman, let's switch to a video call. I have something very important to tell you."

"Alright, I'll prepare right away."

Chairman Chang's tone became serious as well, and he hung up the phone.

"Brother Chen, the video call is ready, but this matter probably doesn't involve the chairman," Sun Wei said cautiously.

Anyone could see that Chen Fan was genuinely angry this time.

He was also very angry, because if Chen Fan hadn't arrived in time, his life might have ended right there.

However, headquarters was still headquarters; it wouldn't be good if their relationship was soured because of this incident.

"Yes, I also hope that's the case, but..."

Chen Fan didn't finish his sentence.

"Sigh." Sun Wei sighed softly, unsure of what to say.

Standing on the side, maintaining a posture of striking, Xiao Hong was now drenched in sweat.

Soon, Chairman Chang sent the video call, and as the video connected, he wore a puzzled look upon seeing the scene in the conference room.

"Xiao Hong, you're here too?"

"Yes, yes, Chairman."

Xiao Hong's smile was worse than crying.

If time could turn back, he would rather risk offending Ling Yu than coming here.

The next moment, Chairman Chang sensed something was wrong.

"Why are you standing there without moving, and in that position?"

Chairman Chang's brows furrowed.

"He's been immobilized by me."

Chen Fan's voice sounded.

"Immobilized by you? What? Immobilized by you!!"

Chairman Chang stared at Chen Fan with wide eyes, an expression of disbelief on his face.

The association had many martial arts that could immobilize someone, even make life worse than death.

That wasn't strange.

What was strange was that Xiao Hong was a bona fide late-stage Meridian Refining Martial Artist, having opened the Eight Extraordinary Meridians too!

But what about Chen Fan?

If he remembered correctly, Chen Fan had just broken through to the Meridian Refining Realm a few days ago, right?

Meaning, he should still be an early-stage Meridian Refining Martial Artist at most, so how could he immobilize Xiao Hong?

Even if Xiao Hong wasn't paying attention and got ambushed, how long could Chen Fan's pitifully small amount of True Qi control him for?

But the scene before him, from the moment he noticed it till now, had lasted five to six seconds, and the actual time was probably much longer.

"Chairman, he's right, I've indeed been immobilized by him."

Xiao Hong smiled bitterly and said honestly, "Brother Chen's strength far surpasses mine. Before I even realized what happened, I was immobilized by him. Not only can I not move my body, I can't even mobilize the True Qi within."

"What!"

Hearing this, Chairman Chang's head buzzed.

Xiao Hong was a late-stage Meridian Refining Martial Artist!

He actually said his strength was far inferior to Chen Fan's?

Did he hear wrong? Or did the sun rise in the west today?

After a momentary daze, Chairman Chang regained his composure, focusing on Chen Fan, "Brother Chen, what's going on here?"

Everything about the current situation seemed off.

For instance, wasn't Xiao Hong always at headquarters? How did he end up in Anshan City?

"Chairman, I think you should listen to what he has to say first."

Chen Fan turned to Xiao Hong.

Xiao Hong's face turned red again, burning hot.

"Alright."

Chairman Chang said nothing more and turned his gaze to Xiao Hong, "Speak, what exactly is going on? Why aren't you at headquarters? How did you end up here?"

The atmosphere in the meeting room suddenly went extremely quiet, leaving only the sounds of their breaths.

After a moment, Xiao Hong broke out in tears, "Chairman, this really wasn't my doing, I was manipulated into making a huge mistake."

Chairman Chang's face changed.

He had already sensed something serious was going on.

Hearing this, combined with Chen Fan's dark expression, a thought unbidden crossed his mind.

Could it be that Xiao Hong came all the way from headquarters to Anshan City just to trouble Brother Chen?

The thought made his scalp tingle.

"Stop crying!"

He snapped, "What exactly happened? Speak truthfully from start to finish."

"Yes, yes."

Xiao Hong sniffed and said tearfully, "It started when Ling Yu found me last night..."

Chapter 290: One Who Invites Trouble Has Only Himself to Blame

"Ling Yu?"

Chang Fei was puzzled. How could this matter be related to Ling Yu again?

"Yes, yes."

Xiao Hong gritted his teeth and said, "Chairman, just last night, Ling Yu suddenly approached me, asking if I wanted an unlimited supply of top-grade True Qi Pills. I said I definitely did, I dream about it,

but the association only has so many top-grade True Qi Pills. Even you, Chairman, are not well-off."

"And then?"

Chang Fei was shocked and quickly asked.

"Then, Ling Yu said he had a way to ensure I never had to worry about not having enough top-grade True Qi Pills again. I was overjoyed and immediately asked him what his way was."

Xiao Hong glanced at Chen Fan, tears streaming uncontrollably, "He said that the Anshan City Martial Arts Branch Association had a very skilled alchemist who could refine top-grade True Qi Pills, and every pill in a batch would be of top grade.

At that moment, I felt something was not that simple. If it really was as good as he said, why wouldn't he keep it to himself instead of telling me?

Later, I finally understood."

"What did you understand?"

Chang Fei's eyes were filled with coldness.

He had vaguely guessed what had happened.

This Xiao Hong had run all the way from the headquarters to Anshan City, truly intending harm towards Brother Chen.

No wonder Brother Chen's face was so terrifyingly grim at this moment.

"I understood that Ling Yu, that despicable and shameless guy, wanted to use me. He said that although Brother Chen's alchemy skills were impressive, his martial arts strength was not. We could bind him in a hidden place and make him continually refine True Qi Pills for us. That way, we would have an endless supply of top-grade True Qi Pills."

"Did Ling Yu really say that?" Chang Fei stared intently into his eyes and asked.

"Chairman, even if I were fearless, I would never dare to deceive you in such matters,"

Xiao Hong cried.

"Every word I said is true, not a half-word lie."

"Alright, continue."

Chang Fei's eyes were icy.

"Yes, Chairman. When I heard him say this, I was shocked and said, 'How can we harm a brother? Although we are strangers, we are all part of the association.'

Moreover, since Brother Chen can refine top-grade True Qi Pills, we can buy them from him honestly with money. Why use such means? If others found out, we would be in serious trouble."

Xiao Hong licked his lips and continued, "But that Ling Yu said, 'The top-grade True Qi Pills are expensive. If we buy them, we don't know how much we will have to spend, and the quantity is limited. It's better to capture him and only pay for the herbs, and then we could get a large number of top-grade True Qi Pills. Isn't that great?'

"So you were tempted?"

"No, Chairman, I'm not that kind of person!" Xiao Hong shouted his innocence. "I refused immediately, but who knew Ling Yu would threaten me, saying he had already informed me. If I didn't follow his plan, the consequences would be severe.'

"Chairman, you know Ling Yu is a True Essence Realm Martial Artist. His strength is higher than mine, not to mention his status. I didn't dare disobey."

"So, I had no choice but to agree to him. I came all the way from the headquarters, intending to abduct Brother Chen. But before I could make a move, Brother Chen had already pinpointed my acupoints. Chairman, you know what happened next."

Xiao Hong looked very aggrieved.

"Why didn't you mention what you did to Brother Sun?" Chen Fan asked.

"Hmm?"

Chang Fei looked over again.

"I, I..."

Xiao Hong had no choice but to recount what he had done to Sun Wei.

"Xiao Hong!"

Indeed, the anger in Chang Fei's heart flared up.

This guy really tried to harm members of the same association, targeting the Branch Office Chairman!

This Xiao Hong was utterly lawless!

"Chairman, I know I was wrong! I really know I was wrong!"

Xiao Hong cried out, desperate to kneel and beg for mercy if he could move.

"Chairman, I was blinded by greed. I was solely focused on finding Brother Chen to take him away. That's why I made such a terrible decision. Chairman, I was wrong, and I am willing to accept punishment from the headquarters!"

"Blinded by greed? You always find excuses for yourself!"

Chang Fei gritted his teeth, his eyes showing his desire to tear him apart.

This guy clearly intended to kill! He knew the person in front of him was a fellow association member and still acted so viciously. What a beast!

Of course, more than that, he was worried about Chen Fan's opinion of the headquarters because of this incident.

From the current perspective, this was already an evident matter.

"Brother Chen..." Chang Fei took a deep breath.

"Chairman Chang,"

Chen Fan raised his hand, signaling him not to speak, and said, "I have a question that I can't figure out. I hope Chairman Chang can answer it."

"Brother Chen, please ask."

Chang Fei said hurriedly.

To make amends, he would answer ten questions, even one hundred questions, without hesitation.

"Only Chairman Chang, Elder Tang, and Elder Luo knew I could refine top-grade True Qi Pills. So how did Ling Yu know about it?"

"It's my fault."

Chang Fei said slowly, "Ling Yu is very talented, so he has always been by the President's side for training. Didn't we agree to give you three Demon-Breaking Arrows before?

Such items are very precious in the headquarters, and even I need the President's permission to use them. So I told him about you. Ling Yu probably learned about it from the President."

"Is that so?"

The suspicion in Chen Fan's eyes had not dissipated.

"Brother Chen, I understand your doubts. You wonder if I or Elder Tang have orchestrated this? Actually, there's no such possibility."

Chang Fei smiled bitterly, "I'm not such a person, and since Elder Tang received your pill formula, he has been in the Alchemy Room with the others, researching night and day. Even putting aside their motives, they don't have the strength for it."

If you don't trust me, I can confront him to see if I orchestrated this from behind the scenes?"

"No, no."

Xiao Hong hurriedly said, "Brother Chen, this matter has nothing to do with the Chairman and the others. We hid it from them. How could we let them know?"

This was all Ling Yu's doing from beginning to end. I was just a pawn in his hand. Brother Chen, please don't blame the wrong people!"

The meeting room fell silent again.

Xiao Hong's eyes were filled with anxiety. He was really scared Chen Fan would blame Chang Fei because that would worsen his situation when he returned to the headquarters.

Chang Fei was also highly stressed.

His defense seemed weak.

He couldn't find a better way to prove his innocence.

Thinking of this, he said, "Brother Chen, let me take an oath. If I was behind this, I would be devoured by Fierce Beasts and die miserably. Would you believe me then?"

Chen Fan frowned.

The cycle of karma was unavoidable, especially for martial artists possessing extraordinary power. They were particularly fearful of such vows, typically made with a clear conscience.

So, was Ling Yu really behind this?

Or was someone more powerful orchestrating it?

It wasn't that he was paranoid, but that he always considered the worst-case scenario.

"Alright, Chairman Chang, I will trust you this once. As for what to do next, I don't think I need to remind you, right?" Chen Fan said.

Sun Wei couldn't help but widen his eyes.

Brother Chen's tone? It sounded like he and Chairman Chang were equals. But Chairman Chang was a True Essence Realm expert!

Suddenly, he shivered and looked at Xiao Hong.

Yes, this guy was a late-stage Meridian Refining Martial Artist but had no power against Brother Chen.

So, Brother Chen was also a True Essence Realm Martial Artist!

Sun Wei was shocked into silence by his thought.

"Alright, I'll call the President and have him bring Ling Yu here. We need to clarify everything."

Chang Fei looked deeply at Chen Fan.

He had always considered Chen Fan's alchemy talent extraordinary, but from the recent events, it seemed his martial arts talent was equally impressive!

He might also be a True Essence Realm Martial Artist, or else how could Xiao Hong, who was only second to a few in strength, not stand a chance against him?

Ling Yu, you have caused a great disaster!

Even if the President pleaded for you, it wouldn't pacify his anger.

Alas, some bad deeds are forgivable, but this one is not.

He sighed and, in front of Chen Fan, took out his phone and dialed Chairman Shi Tao's number.

Hoping to resolve this matter smoothly.

Otherwise, the headquarters would lose not just an alchemy master but also a martial arts genius, potentially more powerful than Ling Yu!