

Medical 1051

Chapter 1051 Ten Thousand Medicines Pavilion (Part 2)

As for Zhou Xinqi's fans, there was nothing they could do to stop it at this point. All they could do was watch as Little Turtle's popularity gradually surpassed that of Zhou Xinqi.

When the last month arrived, Yan Xiaobao went to the Ten Thousand Medicines Pavilion during its busiest time. He was disguised, but his expression was one of determination, as he moved through the line leading to the cabin under the Tenth Stele without paying attention.

Once inside, he sat cross-legged, extended his hand, and placed it on the stone altar. As he once again entered that familiar void, a rumbling filled his mind.

In front of him were the flickering fragments of 1,000,000 medicinal plants and spirit creatures. His eyes focused, and his hands began to fly, reassembling the pieces.

1,000. 5,000. Ten thousand...

30,000. 50,000. 80,000

This was by far the most difficult test he had conducted. Soon, sweat dropped down his face, and his eyes filled with bloodshot lines. He looked insane, as if he'd forgotten everything else. He was completely immersed in reconstructing the plants and vegetation and the soul creatures. His hands were injured, his mind trembled, yet he pressed on.

Soon, the test was over, and Yan Xiaobao sat there, his hands trembling as he pieced together the final medicinal plant. As it happened, his vision blurred momentarily and then cleared as he found himself back in the little cabin.

Breathing heavily, eyes shining with satisfaction, he wiped the sweat from his forehead, clenching his fists. Ten steles, ten first places!

The three peaks of the South Shore of the Spirit Stream Sect were completely shaken.

Outside the Ten Thousand Medicines Pavilion, a buzz could be heard. People raced from all directions, and as they gathered, they saw Little Turtle's name in the first place on all ten steles. Gasps arose.

"Ten first places! Little Turtle actually did it!"

"The last time anyone in the Spirit Sect held first place on all the steles was a thousand years ago! How could I have imagined I would see such a thing in my lifetime!?"

Everyone was shouting in shock, despite many having predicted such an outcome, it was still a stunning event. Given what had transpired over the past three months, it was even more so, as one stele after another had fallen into Little Turtle's hands. No one could maintain their composure when they thought of it.

"Just who is this Little Turtle...? In less than half a year, he started from the third stele and then swept through all the remaining competitions. This guy is famous!"

"His skills with plants and vegetation have completely surpassed Zhou Xinqi's. Perhaps in the future, there will be a major pharmacist in addition to Zhou Xinqi!"

At the same moment that Little Turtle secured first place on all ten steles, the steles began to vibrate, releasing an intense rumbling that joined with the clanging sound of a large cauldron from the mountain.

It was as though someone was striking a massive log against a medicine cauldron. The dull booming spread throughout Xiangyun Peak, exhaling to fill the entire South Shore of the Spirit Stream Sect. It was accompanied by the medicinal fragrance that filled the area, making the mist surrounding Xiangyun Peak even thicker.

Atop Xiangyun Peak was an Immortal Cave, where Elder Zhou was feeding his prized Five-Colored Spirit Bird. When he heard the sound of the cauldron, his eyes lit up with surprise.

"Xiangyun Cauldron?" He sent out his divine sense and instantly discovered what was happening between the ten steles outside the Ten Thousand Medicines Pavilion. His expression instantly brightened, and he walked into the sky.

Next, Granny Sunx appeared with other Foundation Establishment elders. Everyone had heard the sound of the cauldron and was now heading in the direction of the Ten Thousand Medicines Pavilion, excitement showing on their faces.

The last to appear was Li Qinghou, who had been in meditation. Upon hearing the sound of the crucible, his face lit up, and he looked outward. Then, he transformed into a colorful beam of light shooting toward the Ten Thousand Medicines Pavilion.

As the sound of the cauldron echoed, the crowd grew more excited. Both the Outer Sect and Inner Sect disciples on Xiangyun Peak were completely shaken, and many began to make their way in the direction of the Ten Thousand Medicines Pavilion.

"That's... the sound of Xiangyun Peak's precious treasure, the Xiangyun Cauldron!"

"Someone inside the Ten Thousand Medicines Pavilion got first place on all ten steles! This hasn't happened in a thousand years! This is unheard of!"

Excitement even erupted at Green Crest Peak and Violet Cauldron Peak. Fatty Zhang, who was a charming and alluring woman, lowered her head. That woman was on whom Fatty Zhang had complained to Yan Xiaobao about. As soon as she heard the sound of the cauldron, her expression flickered, and she looked off into the distance. Fatty Zhang's face was shocked as it did the same.

"The sound of the Xiangyun Cauldron. Could it be that some disciple on Xiangyun Peak got perfect results on all tests?"

A similar scene played out on Green Crest Peak, causing astonishment among the elders and the Peak Lord there.

An increasing number of people filled the area around the Ten Thousand Medicines Pavilion.

Yan Xiaobao was amidst the crowd; when he heard the commotion, he looked up at the ten steles. Although he did not join in the shouting, an indescribable emotion filled his heart. He stood there with a smile on his face; it wasn't a smile of satisfaction or triumph, but a simple smile of pure happiness.

It had taken him over a year to create this miracle. He had started from the first stele, and then achieved first place on all ten steles. However, the stack of first-place positions meant nothing to him. More important was the fact that he had fully mastered plants and vegetation, and spiritual creatures, which were things an Apprentice Alchemist needed to master.

He had created an unprecedentedly profound foundation. As he recalled the long days and endless nights, he had spent so much time studying plants and vegetation and then soul creatures, Yan Xiaobao sighed emotionally.

Within the entire Spirit Stream Sect, not even any disciple in the Inner Sect had such a solid foundation in their skills with plants and vegetation. For now, Yan Xiaobao felt deeply satisfied.

Soon, numerous beams of light could be seen flying through the sky, all of them emitting powerful fluctuations in cultivation foundation. Among them were Elder Zhou, Elder Sunx... and, of course, Li Qinghou.

They looked at the ten steles, and at Little Turtle in the first place, their eyes beginning to shine brightly. Li Qinghou especially. The design of that Little Turtle first left him shocked, then he laughed loudly, with an odd expression on his face. He looked outward and saw Yan Xiaobao, a hint of almost imperceptible admiration appearing in his eyes.

After a long time, he lightly flicked his sleeve and left, feeling very pleased after guessing that Little Turtle belonged to Yan Xiaobao.

Soon, the other higher-ups left. However, more and more disciples from the Inner Sect appeared around Little Turtle. After all, they had all risen from the Outer Sect, and they knew full well that only Outer Sect disciples were allowed to challenge the steles. They also knew how difficult the challenge was.

"Anyone who can do something like this from the Outer Sect is absolutely a candidate..."

"Hmph. We are skilled alchemists, so what we care about are spiritual medicines. If you can't refine spiritual medicine, your incredible skills with plants and vegetation are meaningless!"

Some disciples from the Inner Sect clearly admired this Little Turtle, while others were disdainful of it. However, no matter how they felt, they were impressed and in fact, most of them were even a bit intimidated.

None of them knew just how skilled this person was in medicine, but with such a solid foundation, once this person became a skilled pharmacist, his path would undoubtedly be smoother.

The buzz continued until Zhou Xinqi finally appeared. She stood there, dressed in blue silk, scrutinizing Little Turtle. Slowly, the crowd quieted down, and all eyes turned in her direction.

Seeing Little Turtle in the first position on all the steles, an indomitable light appeared in her eyes. In the past, it was a complex expression that appeared in others' eyes when they looked at her, but now the situation was the opposite.

"Who are you...?" she whispered through clenched teeth. Though she was reluctant to admit it, she had made numerous attempts to match the mysterious Little Turtle's skills with plants and vegetation, but his capabilities were too profound. At present, she had no confidence in being able to surpass him. By now, that Little Turtle was completely etched into her heart.

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"You might be stronger than plants and vegetation, but just wait until you become a skilled pharmacist. I refuse to believe you'll surpass me when it comes to drug formulation!" She took a deep breath to calm herself down. She had already participated in the test and was promoted to a skilled pharmacist, so after her last glance at the Stele, she swirled and disappeared into the distance.

After giving the ten Steles one last look, Yan Xiaobao turned to leave. "This is just the first step in becoming a Master Alchemist!"

The issue of the ten Steles sparked months of unrest. People kept talking about it, especially when they went to the Ten Thousand Medicines Pavilion and actually saw the Little Turtle on the Stele.

Meanwhile, Zhou Xinqi's fans were combing through the sect, taking every possible strategy to attempt to figure out who the Little Turtle was. This was especially true for a young man surnamed Qian, who was furious about the matter.

The entire South Shore of the Spiritual Flow Sect was affected. While people continued to discuss the Little Turtle, Yan Xiaobao was in his courtyard, his eyes bloodshot as he controlled a leaf floating in front of him.

He was studying the heavy phase within lightness now. In fact, he had repeatedly tried to do so over the past half year, but only now could he achieve anything with it.

With the situation at the Ten Thousand Medicines Pavilion over, Zhou Xinqi's fans were constantly searching for him. A sense of crisis slowly accumulated inside him, so he decided to work through it within his abode, while making significant advancements in heavy within lightness.

"Weight within lightness relates to speed." Heavy within lightness... is about the method of control!" A thoughtful expression appeared in Yan Xiaobao's eyes as he contemplated everything he had recently understood.

"Perhaps you could say that this control is actually an eruption of internal spiritual energy!" Yan Xiaobao's eyes sparkled. He was now at the sixth level of Qi Condensation, with his internal spiritual energy like a vast river. When it came to Lightness-in-Heaviness, he could maintain it indefinitely and unleash shocking speed.

He had long understood that the so-called stage within heaviness was merely a way to utilize internal spiritual energy. It's as if a flat leaf can be used to lift a small twig into the air, but a rolled-up leaf might lift a small stone. Similarly, if you cut a leaf into strips and weave them into a rope, it could lift heavier objects.

Many materials are like this; in the end, the different weights that can be lifted simply depend on how to combine various elements.

Lightness-in-Heaviness is such a technique that, through mastering, you can reach a new stage.

Yan Xiaobao pondered this matter for a while, then waved his hand, causing another leaf to fly over as he began experimenting. Sometimes the leaf moved quickly, and sometimes it moved as slowly as if a mountain were crushing it. However, he wasn't getting the results he wanted.

After one attempt didn't work, he tried ten times. After ten attempts didn't work, he tried a hundred times. After a hundred attempts didn't work... he tried a thousand times.

He eventually forgot how many times he had tried. Soon, his courtyard was littered with the fragments of destroyed leaves, and he had to go out to find new ones. In the end, nearly all the spiritual plants on Xiangyun Peak were stripped of their leaves until one day, Yan Xiaobao's eyes shone as he struck a spell-like posture. Before him, the leaf floated gently, but when it fell to the ground, it sounded like a boulder.

A tremendous boom resounded, shaking the entire courtyard residence. It was as if the leaf weighed hundreds of kilograms.

"It worked!" Yan Xiaobao's eyes were bloodshot, but his expression was excited. He suddenly waved his hand, sending his little Wooden Sword flying. It transformed into a black streak, shooting through the air at astonishing speed. It was now more incredible than before, emitting a piercing whistle as it sliced through the air.

Then, when the massive boulder shattered into pieces, a loud boom erupted.

This incredible power was no longer equivalent to the sixth level of Qi Condensation. Even those at Level 7 Qi Condensation would be shocked by what had just happened. Yan Xiaobao looked extremely excited as he jumped up, stretched out his arms and legs, then maneuvered the Wooden Sword around the courtyard. Sometimes it flew swiftly through the air, and sometimes it awkwardly stopped in midair, stagnant.

The Wooden Sword underwent a complete transformation within the courtyard. Soon, Sword Qi swirled around the entire area, almost like a mighty wind. Yan Xiaobao was more excited than ever.

After a while, he waved his right hand, and the little Wooden Sword flew back into his hand. The elegant sword might not look as striking, but the truth was that, due to the elevation of the triple spirit, it far exceeded its previous level.

"If I can master weight within heaviness and lightness within heaviness, then by combining them, I'll be able to complete... the sole divine ability in the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Technique!" Yan Xiaobao took a deep breath, his eyes filled with anticipation.

"Summon Purple Qi's pot!" Yan Xiaobao put aside the Wooden Sword and then closed his eyes for a long time. Suddenly, he raised his right hand, pointing to the sky. Instantly, his previously invisible internal spiritual energy suddenly appeared in a dazzling flash, with thin spiritual energy swiftly forming the outline of a large pot.

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It's as if some mysterious force is guiding them, transforming them into specific shapes.

Incredibly intense pressure waves began emanating from the large cauldron, with spiritual pressure stronger than that of the Flying Sword.

The blood drained quickly from Yan Xiaobao's face, as the spiritual pressure in his heart had exhausted nearly eighty percent. At that moment, the large cauldron was fully formed and was emitting intense spiritual pressure. Yan Xiaobao gestured with his hand, slamming the Crucible to the ground.

When that happened, the large cauldron shattered, scattering large amounts of spiritual energy within.

A strong rumbling arose, and as cracks spread, the ground 300 meters in all directions cracking echoed.

Fortunately, the protective Spell of Xiangyun Peak almost immediately repaired the damage. Even so, quite a few Outer Sect Disciples nearby heard the low rumble and were shocked.

Yan Xiaobao took a deep breath. He never expected the Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning to be so impressive. Its singular attack seemed almost unparalleled.

"Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning is definitely worth being the sole divine ability in the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art. No wonder it can only be released after fully understanding 'heaviness within heaviness' and 'lightness within heaviness.'" Yan Xiaobao's eyes shone with a brilliant light, but almost simultaneously, he furrowed his brow. Although this divine ability was powerful, it consumed a lot of energy.

Yan Xiaobao knew that the reason he wasted eighty percent of his spiritual power, instead of more, was because it was so pure. Any other disciple who gained the divine ability revelation before Level 8 of Qi Condensation would deplete their inner spiritual energy. The only way to truly utilize this technique without incredible waste is to wait until Level 9 of Qi Condensation.

"According to the description of the Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning, it can be divided into high, medium, and low grades. The large cauldron I just made is low grade. If I can reach mid-level, I will be able to form two large cauldrons. By reaching a high grade, I can have three large cauldrons, and then combine them into one cauldron!" Standing there pondering for a while, Yan Xiaobao sat cross-legged and began breathing exercises. It wasn't until the moon was high in the sky that he finally opened his eyes, revealing the bright spirit light within. At present, his cultivation base had almost fully recovered.

"A divine ability like this can be used as a trump card. If Zhou Xinqi's fans mix with me, I can use it to crush them." Although Yan Xiaobao felt somewhat better, when he thought about an inner disciple named Qian, his brow furrowed.

"You must be at least at Level 8 of Qi Condensation to enter the inner sect..." When he thought of this, Yan Xiaobao worried as before. He glanced thoughtfully at his skin for a moment, his eyes shining brightly. With that, he stood up and walked forward a few steps, speeding up as he extended his hand with thumb and index finger. When the tips of the two fingers contacted each other, a black light flickered.

A cracking sound echoed in the air, accompanied by an explosive aura. Yan Xiaobao looked at his two fingers in surprise, then regained his composure.

"This is a killing move... I can use it to save my life." After some thought, he concluded the stronger the killing move, the better for him. Now, his main concern was the Immortal Eternal Life Skill.

After obtaining his Immortal Iron Skin, he had tried to continue cultivating the Immortal Eternal Life Skill, but found himself starting to feel hungry from the beginning.

Additionally, the Spirit Tail Chicken on the South Shore of Spirit Stream Sect was no longer an option. Relying only on ordinary spiritual food, he was sure it wasn't enough to stave off his hunger.

He had searched the mountains for food from other soul creatures, but ever since the chicken thieves became infamous, the three mountains on the South Shore began closely observing the places where all spiritual creatures were raised.

The anxiety on his face grew as he pondered the issue. Even as he thought about how to solve the intense hunger problem, he suddenly thought of longevity pills that extend life.

"Yes, that's right..." he said, his eyes starting to shine brightly. This pill not only increases one's cultivation base but also replenishes life energy. After obtaining his Immortal Iron Skin, he realized cultivating it actually requires life energy, which is why he was so hungry.

"I have made considerable progress in plants and herbs, and although I haven't advanced, I can still brew medicine myself. Moreover, although some Spiritual Medicines are very expensive, the actual ingredients are relatively cheap." Yan Xiaobao became more convinced that he had found a solution.

"Basically, I can brew medicine myself. This way, when it's time for the promotion test, I'll be more confident. Also, making Foundation pills in the future will be easier." Having made the decision, he resolved to think further about the matter. The next day, at dawn, he stood up.

"Mixing medicines requires recipes, and even without being promoted to a proficient alchemist, I can get medicines. All I have to do is go to the market at the foot of the mountain, where I'll be able to purchase any available random medicine recipes." Yan Xiaobao patted his satchel, thinking about how he hadn't spent much money since reaching Xiangyun Peak. As an Outer Sect Disciple, he received a stipend of Spiritual Stones every month, meaning he had accumulated quite a bit of savings.

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In fact, Yan Xiaobao was not very concerned about material wealth. He immediately flew from the courtyard to the path leading down the mountain.

During his entire time at Xiangyun Peak, this was the second time he left the mountain to go to the marketplace. The first time was when he bought medicinal herbs, needing to exchange for medicinal medicine. Almost instantly as he stepped out of Xiangyun Peak, two people suddenly flew towards a nearby courtyard residence.

"Brother Chen, are you going home?!"

"Brother Chen, Yan Xiaobao has left the mountain!" The two people were quite powerful, with exceptional cultivation bases at the Qi Condensation Fourth Level. They excitedly rushed into the courtyard, where a burly man could be seen sitting cross-legged in meditation.

The burly man was extremely muscular, broad as a bear, sturdy as a lion, and upon hearing what the two said, his eyes shone bright with light.

"Yan Xiaobao? So, he finally left the mountain, huh?!" The burly man laughed maliciously, then suddenly stood up. He appeared as massive as a mountain and had profound energy, stemming from the fifth level of Qi Condensation cultivation. As a result, he emitted a strong spiritual pressure.

This was none other than Chen Fei, who once worked in the regulatory department. However, they couldn't provoke Big Fat Zhang, let alone Third Fatty Black. On the other hand, although Yan Xiaobao seemed strong, they considered him relatively weak. Therefore, they had long planned revenge. Unfortunately, during that time, Yan Xiaobao never left the sect. Finally, even though Chen Fei had some connections, he dared not violate sect rules.

In reality, his biggest connection within the sect was his cousin, who was an inner disciple. Yet, his cousin did not care much for him, only providing limited help during his days as a servant.

Hence, they were forced to wait a full two years for Yan Xiaobao to leave the sect. Now, the moment they had been waiting for had arrived. Having recently reached the Qi Condensation fifth level, Chen Fei felt very confident. After asking around, he learned about Yan Xiaobao's cultivation level and also heard that he won first place in a recent contest, although rumors suggested he won purely by chance.

"Back then, he deceived all of us into believing he had mastered the heavy lightness technique. Humph! I can't believe he forced us to join the Outer Sect. Finally, I will vent my fury!" A hint of viciousness flashed in Chen Fei's eyes. His plan wasn't to kill Yan Xiaobao, but merely to crush his bones and sever his tendons, enough to leave him bedridden for at least a year.

Though the sect would surely investigate the matter afterward, because there were no witnesses, there wouldn't be any deaths involved, and since Chen Fei has connections within the sect, big problems would become small ones, which would then become easy to solve.

"You can't blame us if he hasn't taken precautions!" Chen Fei shuddered, immediately headed down the mountain, followed by his two friends. The three of them took the fastest route to a path they knew Yan Xiaobao would take returning from the marketplace, and waited there.

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The marketplace was not large, so Yan Xiaobao hadn't taken long to find two random Level 1 formulas. One could be used to replenish spiritual energy, and the other to replenish life energy. When it came to formulas enriching life energy, the advanced versions were very expensive. However, the lower level versions, although not very common, were mostly used by mortals for health and fitness purposes.

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Chapter 1055 Ambush

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Although most cultivators wouldn't find them useful, for Yan Xiaobao, they were like precious treasures. After using his turtle pot to triple the spirit enhancement of the pills obtained, they would yield completely different results.

Yan Xiaobao didn't even spend many spirit stones to acquire the medicinal plants needed to make spiritual medicine. Patting his happiness bundle, he started humming as he left the market. As he walked back along the path to the sect, he fantasized about what it would be like to make the medicine, and he was very pleased.

However, before he had walked far, his expression suddenly flickered, and he stopped in his tracks. Having reached the sixth level of Qi Condensation, his senses had become sharper, and he could immediately detect the breath of three people hidden in the nearby bushes. As they watched him approach on the path, their hearts were also at odds.

Seeing Yan Xiaobao stop in his tracks, Chen Fei and his two friends suddenly stood in front of him.

"Yan Xiaobao," he said viciously, "This day marks the end of our strife!" The smiles on their friends' faces were equally malicious as they expanded their flanks towards Yan Xiaobao. "Chen Fei?" Yan Xiaobao

blurted out, blinking. He quickly scanned Chen Fei and his two friends, and upon confirming their cultivation base level, he immediately relaxed.

"Yan Xiaobao, it's too late for you to beg for mercy even if you collapse to the ground. Your idea of forcing us into the Outer Sect will come at a price. I, Chen Fei, have been waiting a long, long time!" Laughing loudly, Chen Fei waved his right hand, releasing the power of the fifth level Qi Condensation. As a result, many leaves were swept into the air, creating an impressive scene.

"Since joining the Outer Sect, I've spent all my time practicing cultivation, and now I'm at the fifth level of Qi Condensation. Let me tell you, Yan Xiaobao, today you'll truly understand the meaning of being bullied. Your bones will be broken, your tendons will be severed!"

Chen Fei, with a smug attitude, laughed as he formed a spell gesture with his right hand, making a green Flying Sword appear. It was only about 15 centimeters long but emitted a cold, ancient air.

As for Chen Fei's two friends, they positioned themselves on either side of Yan Xiaobao, releasing their cultivation bases and creating their own Flying Swords, laughing maliciously.

Considering they had him surrounded and outnumbered three to one, they were completely confident they could crush Yan Xiaobao. Especially because their own analysis led them to conclude that Yan Xiaobao never fully mastered heavy-lightness as they originally thought.

"If you'd never left this mountain, you'd be safe. But you're here, outside the sect. Now you'll understand the great cost you'll pay for your mistaken ways!" Chen Fei felt somewhat better after venting like this, though anger still burned within him.

"Aren't you three afraid of violating sect rules by ambushing me here?" Yan Xiaobao asked, genuinely curious.

"Sect rules? Hahaha! We're now outside the sect. Besides, you simply don't match our skills. No one would blame us for breaking some bones and severing some tendons. At worst, we'd have to apologize, and the whole matter would be over." Chen Fei laughed proudly, imagining the scene of Yan Xiaobao smashing into the ground. He even prepared some good taunts for after defeating him.

However, when he noticed how calm Yan Xiaobao was acting, he suddenly realized something was wrong. Despite being surrounded on three sides, Yan Xiaobao's expression didn't change at all; in fact, he seemed to find the situation somewhat odd.

Yan Xiaobao, looking like a master, proudly said, "Oh, is that so. Then in that case, I feel much better."

Chen Fei's pupils contracted, and he felt more secure. But now wasn't the time to think about that situation.

"Attack!" he roared, performing a spell as he launched a Flying Sword strike at Yan Xiaobao. Meanwhile, his two friends also performed spell gestures and put their Flying Swords into action.

The three Flying Swords struck at Yan Xiaobao, who suddenly smiled. He didn't even craft a magical item; he simply stepped back. To Chen Fei and his friends, Yan Xiaobao seemed to vanish into thin air.

When he reappeared, he was next to a burly man at the fourth level of Qi Condensation. The man's eyes widened, but before he could do anything, Yan Xiaobao clenched his right hand and struck with a punch.

The fist moved with incredible speed, landing on the man's neck like a pole. The man's entire body was jolted, and as he bent backward, he coughed up blood. It was as if a massive object had slammed into him; he immediately flipped over, trampling on a nearby tree.

The tree shuddered, and the man coughed some blood and then collapsed, unconscious.

This sudden development left the man's companion completely shocked, staring at Yan Xiaobao. His thoughts seemed struck by countless bolts of lightning. Even in his wildest dreams, he would've never imagined Yan Xiaobao... could move so swiftly or unleash such astonishing power.

Chen Fei's face fell, gasping. He hadn't even thought of this, staring at Yan Xiaobao in disbelief.

Chapter 1056 Ambush (Part 2)

"You...."

"Too weak," Yan Xiaobao said, looking like a profound master, standing alone in the world, unable to find a worthy opponent. Sighing, he took a step forward and appeared directly in front of another Level 4 Qi Condensation cultivator.

The burly man let out a wild shout, causing the power of the cultivation base to surge, and the Flying Sword tilted towards Yan Xiaobao at the fastest speed. However, due to the Immortal Eternal Life Skill and his immortal iron skin, Yan Xiaobao's physical body had reached a shocking level. He easily dodged the sword and then attacked again with his right fist.

A heatwave burst forth, and the man let out a tragic scream. As he spun backward, blood sprayed everywhere. He had nothing to catch onto and fell about thirty meters away, his insides vibrating painfully. He couldn't even stand; he just lay there, seemingly struggling to keep his life.

"Too weak," Yan Xiaobao said, shaking his head. Then he turned to look at the trembling Chen Fei.

"You-you... you..." Chen Fei's thoughts were spinning, and he suddenly felt like a fool. He had now lost all confidence in winning; Yan Xiaobao suddenly turned into something like a beast.

Two punches easily knocked down his two friends; this in itself required an incomprehensible strength. Subconsciously swallowing, Chen Fei backed away; he didn't want to continue fighting, his only thought now was to escape.

However, before he could get very far, Yan Xiaobao flew forward at the fastest speed, clenching his fist to strike at Chen Fei. Before it landed, a flash flickered before Chen Fei, and a small shield met Yan Xiaobao's fist.

The ensuing boom made Yan Xiaobao sigh. He trembled slightly, but at the same time, the shield shook, was spun to the side, and its spiritual energy quickly dissipated.

Chen Fei now fled in fear. He had spent many merit points on that shield, and it should have lasted a while, even able to resist the sixth level of Qi Condensation. However, Yan Xiaobao severed the connection with it in one blow.

"Yan Xiaobao, you-you... pushed too far!!" he screamed.

"Hmph! Let me tell you, today you will truly understand the meaning of being bullied. Your bones will be broken, your tendons cut!" Yan Xiaobao happily saw the horror in Chen Fei's eyes more than ever. He would never give up such an amazing opportunity. Moreover, he wasn't merely repeating Chen Fei's words, he released his cultivation base and unleashed the power of the seventh level of Qi Condensation. A massive wind blew, hair flying around, as his energy surged.

"Sixth level of Qi Condensation..." Chen Fei gasped, eyes bulging, scalp tingling with fear. As Yan Xiaobao closed his fist again, he staggered. This time, he was powerless to stop it, and the fist struck him fiercely.

As he flew backward, his whole body vibrating, fresh blood spurted from his mouth. A tragic scream rang out. Regardless of how broad-shouldered like a bear or as stubborn as a lion he was, or if he was in the fifth level of Qi Condensation, it didn't matter. He now went all out to escape, his heart filled with intense pain, condemning himself for trying to ambush Yan Xiaobao... in a place rather far from this Sect.

However, Yan Xiaobao chased him like a beast, causing Chen Fei to scream, "Yan Xiaobao, aren't you afraid of violating Sect rules!?!?"

Yan Xiaobao cleared his throat, then repeated Chen Fei's words. "Sect rules? Hahaha! We are outside the Sect right now. Besides, you don't understand my skills at all. No one will blame me for breaking some bones and cutting some tendons. At worst, I'll have to make some apologies, and the whole matter will be over." Then he kicked out with his foot.

That kick sent Chen Fei flying into the air, where he coughed up another mouthful of blood. A touch of despair appeared on his face, and he screamed. However, before he could even land on the ground, Yan Xiaobao began pummeling him with more fists and kicks.

Chen Fei was terrified, unable to stop screaming. Soon, he was completely swollen from head to toe, his screams growing weaker.

His bones were broken, tendons severed, face ashen gray. Soon, he lay there, numb, staring fearfully at Yan Xiaobao.

Though Yan Xiaobao was pure, fair, and a bit thin, what Chen Fei saw was a vicious beast disguised in human skin. This was even more so when Chen Fei realized Yan Xiaobao hadn't even used any magical items. He crushed him with the terrifying power of his own body.

In the distance, two burly men at the fourth level of Qi Condensation regained consciousness. When they saw what happened, their scalps went numb, their hearts began pounding. They immediately pretended to lose consciousness again, not daring to move for fear of attracting Yan Xiaobao's attention.

Seeing Chen Fei nearly breathless, Yan Xiaobao finally lost interest. He dissipated his spiritual energy, then emptied their bags, taking the small shield. He snorted, continued along the small path.

As he watched Yan Xiaobao leave, Chen Fei wanted to cry, but no tears would come. "Who in the world told me that Yan Xiaobao's victory at Xiangyun Peak was pure chance!?!?"

If he'd always known how terrifying Yan Xiaobao was, even the threat of being beaten to death couldn't have convinced him to cause trouble.

As for the other two burly men, they frowned tragically, hearts filled with fear as Yan Xiaobao left.

"Mr. Chen, what should we do now...? Let's just leave it, let bygones be bygones. I heard it was Xu Baocai who did this." The two men anxiously awaited Chen Fei's response.

Chen Fei's heart was full of bitterness. After some thought, he gritted his teeth.

"I want revenge, but I can't handle it alone. What should I do...? I need to think...." Yan Xiaobao returned to the Sect, humming a little tune, feeling secretly pleased. After reaching his courtyard, he sighed.

"I practice immortal cultivation for eternal life. Those who are always fighting and killing are complete madmen."

He sat in the courtyard, started sorting through the various items Chen Fei and his friends had brought. They weren't wealthy at all, meaning Yan Xiaobao didn't actually achieve much, though he didn't care.

After finishing, he took out the medicinal plants he had just purchased and examined them carefully for a while.

Although he had a deep foundation in plants and vegetation, he actually didn't have much experience handling the plants themselves. Now able to examine these plants personally, his observations merged with the information already present in his mind. He even scratched the surface of some plants to inspect their internal structure.

After conducting some tests, a thoughtful expression appeared on Yan Xiaobao's face, and he took out the two random recipes he had acquired. After glancing at the recipe for supplementing spiritual energy, he focused on another recipe designed for mortals hoping to strengthen their bodies.

"Longevity Incense..." he muttered. This particular medicinal formula didn't require many medicinal plants, only seven. Moreover, there was nothing special about how they interacted. However, by using techniques of mutual reinforcement and restraint, it was possible to grind down the power of these seven medicinal plants into powder and then turn it into incense.

Two of these plants were even poisonous. If a cultivator were to consume them, it would only cause two weeks of diarrhea. However, for mortals, they would be deadly.

"There are many types of spiritual plants in the world. Some can be ingested directly, while others need to be refined into pills for optimal effect. There are many that, due to their toxicity, can only be used to make incense." For himself, Yan Xiaobao fetched the medicinal plants required for the Longevity Incense and began researching their details.

"I'm still not fully confident in this," he thought. "The most important consideration when concocting medicine is the success rate. Even the simplest level-1 spiritual medicine still has a high potential failure rate."

"I have 10 sets of each medicinal plant. I can't waste them." Yan Xiaobao was a cautious person, more confident before undertaking anything. This is exactly why he had already memorized all different types of plants and vegetation, and the current situation was no different. He didn't immediately attempt to concoct the medicine but first studied the medicinal formula.

Seven days passed. After fully absorbing the information in the medicinal formula, he closed his eyes, began further analyzing the problem. That night he finally opened his eyes. Then, after some thought, he made the recipe for a medicine supplementing spiritual energy and began reviewing it.

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Chapter 1057 Longevity Incense

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Another two weeks passed. Yan Xiaobao's eyes were bloodshot, but so far, he felt he had completely understood the various medicinal plants in these pharmaceutical formulas. After deep contemplation, he stood up and walked out of the courtyard.

The preparation of medicines required a pill furnace, but those were quite expensive, more than Yan Xiaobao could afford. Fortunately, in the Medicine Refining Hall, there were some pill furnaces for disciples to use in drug preparation, offered at only a few advantages in cost.

The Medicine Refining Hall is located on the east side of Xiangyun Peak, not far from where Yan Xiaobao resided. Unlike the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion, which is always crowded, the Medicine Making Hall is a relatively quiet and peaceful place. After all, even on Xiangyun Peak, the number of people qualified to make medicine is relatively small. Among these few, many already owned their personal pill furnaces and did not need to rent one here.

Yan Xiaobao paid for the right to use the facilities of the Medicine Making Pavilion for an entire month. He acquired a personal studio, completed the formation of a protective spell to prevent any external disturbances while he worked.

Grasping the wooden key he was given, Yan Xiaobao quickly found Studio 13 and walked inside. It wasn't very large and completely empty, apart from the pill furnace and the flames burning beneath it.

After sitting cross-legged, Yan Xiaobao took a deep breath and carefully examined the pill furnace. When he attempted to manipulate the flames with some spiritual energy, he found that he could make the fire hotter, filling the entire room with heat. Meanwhile, the pill furnace itself began to glow a bright red.

With his foundation in the Violet Qi Control Art, he conducted some tests and soon adapted to the high temperature. Before long, he became familiar with how to control the height of the flames. Finally, he patted his bag to produce various types of flora and vegetation.

"Longevity incense is important, it can't be the first on the list. First, I will familiarize myself with the general mixing process, then I will try. I will start with the Spiritual Enhancement Pills. This is a level-1 medicine, useful for the fifth level of Qi Condensation and below." Yan Xiaobao was now fully determined. With an expression very serious, he mentally reviewed the formula of the Spiritual Enhancement Pills, then began concocting.

He prepared the first medicinal plant, then waved his hand, causing the leaves to fall off. His eyes reflected intense focus as he released his inner spiritual energy, forming a powerful yet gentle force, pressing the leaves together to extract nine sap droplets, which he then dropped into the pill furnace.

A series of popping sounds could be heard, and a green mist instantly rose within the pill furnace. Yan Xiaobao's eyes sparkled, and once the mist truly appeared, his hands flew through the air, pulling out the stems and veins of the medicinal plants, then throwing them into the furnace. Occasionally, he adjusted the flame to ensure that the fog accumulating within the furnace increased more and more.

However, none of this mist escaped outside. When Yan Xiaobao pulled out the second medicinal plant, it condensed together, swirling around. After a brief catalysis, the medicinal plant bloomed spectacularly, the petals were plucked off, and placed into the pill furnace.

Time flew by. Yan Xiaobao was entirely focused on what he was doing, as he took out one medicinal plant after another. Shortly after, he was on the eighth plant, his eyes gleaming as he stared at the pill furnace. As he continuously adjusted the flame's temperature, sweat dripped down his face.

Two hours later, a low rumble could be heard from within the pill furnace. Black smoke poured out, absorbed by the room's spell formation. Yan Xiaobao choked and coughed as he stared at the charred dregs within the pill furnace, a frown appearing on his face.

"Failure..." he murmured softly. Sitting down, he rested his chin in his hand and began to think. After reviewing everything he had done, he did not immediately start another batch. After all, he was a cautious person, whether it was memorizing plants or concocting medicine, he always wanted to do it in the most careful way possible.

He pondered this matter for three whole days. During that time, he reviewed the memory of his first attempt at least a thousand times. This helped him identify at least fifty problematic areas. Finally, he took a deep breath, rested for a moment, and heated the furnace once more.

The actual time for producing contraceptive pills was not long. Four hours later, the pill furnace rumbled once again, and when the smoke dispersed, the dregs of the pill became visible once again.

At this moment, his stubborn determination arose again. After taking out the dregs from the pill furnace, he carefully examined them and compared them with the information he had collected so far on medicine preparation. Then he spent another ten days further researching the pharmaceutical formula, as well as the plants and herbs involved. Finally, with bloodshot eyes, he began his third attempt.

The third batch seemed much more stable, but just as the pill was about to solidify, everything collapsed, accompanied by a low boom. Yan Xiaobao leaped back, once again staring at the dregs. After deep contemplation, he sat cross-legged, closed his eyes, and pondered the issue further.

This time, he spent nearly half a month. His time in the Medicine Making Hall was almost up. Eventually, his eyes opened, and he gritted his teeth as he began the fourth batch.

Ultimately, his time was up, and the most recent batch was a failure.

If any skilled pharmacist could observe what was happening, they would find it hard to believe. Almost anyone else would have tried at least dozens of batches of medicine in a month, and at least some would have succeeded.

Chapter 1058: Longevity Incense (Part 2)

Even if they ultimately come up with just one pill, it still counts as a success.

After all, most people believe that medicine preparation is extremely difficult. If it wasn't the case, then all over Eastwood Continent there would be only two major pharmacists.

Even skilled pharmacists aren't very common, and most of them have no hope of ever becoming Master Alchemists.

Of course, the real reason is... most people simply can't access the resources needed to truly develop into skilled pharmacologists.

But in the end, if someone works in this field long enough, their chances of eventually becoming Master Alchemists grow much greater. Therefore, most believe the best way to improve the success rate in medicine preparation is by a lot of practice!

This is why most people merely pursue practice.

Once familiar with the process, your confidence in success will increase. Of course, at the same time, skilled pharmacists view failure as a routine matter. After a failure, one can start over again, gradually improving, especially for more common pills. Ingredients for such pills aren't very expensive and can be used as fuel for hard practice.

However, Yan Xiaobao's path is different from others. He goes much slower and spends more time analyzing the reasons for his failures rather than focusing on the actual preparation process each time.

This is largely related to his cautiousness. You might call him meticulous. While researching plants and vegetation, he only needs a little cautiousness. Now that he's attempting medicine preparation for the first time, his meticulous nature has sharply increased, becoming the most prominent feature.

Due to this cautiousness, he can identify more problem areas than the average person. In fact, the number of problems others might find can't even compare. He thinks and analyzes the issue in ways others wouldn't even consider, determining various fishy areas.

Because of his cautiousness, even the tiniest of issues are things he hopes to control before continuing any preparation. It is for these reasons he spends a lot of time thinking.

Months pass by; Yan Xiaobao's hair is disheveled and his face is covered with ash. He leaves the Medicine Making Hall exhausted and returns to his courtyard, where he sits and reflects.

"There are still nine problem areas. Once I solve these issues, I can continue medicine preparation." Through gritted teeth, he sits in the courtyard, eyes closed, analyzing materials, occasionally taking medicinal plants for observation and study.

Half a month passes, he suddenly rushes out and spends merit points, re-entering the Medicine Refining Hall.

The fifth batch... failed!

After analyzing the issue for seven days, he discovered more problems, resolved them, and then tried again.

The sixth batch... failed!

His eyes are bloodshot. Before attempting the seventh batch, he spent twenty days considering the issue.

Two hours into the process, there was no booming sound. Instead, a medicinal fragrance spread, and Yan Xiaobao's face lit up. Inside the pill furnace were two green pills. The seventh batch was a success!

He tried again, the eighth batch... success, producing three pills!

The ninth batch... success, producing five pills!

The tenth batch... also successful, but ultimately only produced one pill. It wasn't green, but black. Moreover, it had no medicinal fragrance, but rather a strange scent.

As Yan Xiaobao curiously pondered this matter, the entire Medicine Making Hall was stirred. There are no rats or mice on Xiangyun Peak. Such things can't exist at a cultivation site unless they're spiritual creatures. However, ants are common on the mountain.

Ants are part of nature, typically living in cracks and crevices of large boulders that might exist throughout the mountain range. They don't pose a problem to cultivators, essentially only part of mountain life. Therefore, most give them little attention.

However, today, the staff around the Medicine Making Hall were shocked to discover countless ants marching tirelessly toward the hall.

The disciples on duty were breathless; there were so many ants that determining their number was impossible. The sight alone was enough to make their scalps tingle. "What... what is happening!?"

Meanwhile, in various pill-making workshops, many disciples shouted in panic, explosions resulted from failed pill batches could be heard. Though pill-refining workshops are protected by spell formations, they are also built into the mountainside, allowing ants to easily enter through various small cracks in the mountain.

They all advanced toward a particular workshop.

That, of course, was the workshop Yan Xiaobao occupied. As he looked at the black pill, he manifested curiosity. Around this time, he noticed the commotion outside and quickly realized his workshop was filled with ants.

The ants seemed nearly frantic, all of them advancing directly toward him.

"A disaster of ants is striking Xiangyun Peak!" Yan Xiaobao shouted, jumping up. To his surprise, even when Yan Xiaobao jumped, the ants directly approached the black pill he held.

Yan Xiaobao's scalp went completely numb, and the first thing he thought to do was throw the pill. Almost the moment it left his hand, the ants shifted direction, converging upon it.

The pill was instantly engulfed, becoming a mass of ants, whose sight drained the blood from Yan Xiaobao's face.

After a moment, the ball of ants suddenly collapsed, hurrying back into cracks and crevices. The pill bore no trace.

In fact, the Medicine Making Hall had no ants at all. The ants came quickly and left quickly. Of course, many disciples were somewhat frustrated by the loss of their studied spiritual medicine, but they were

powerless to change this. Furthermore, as no major losses were ascertained, the disciples on duty decided not to report the strange incident.

Yan Xiaobao understood why the ants went crazy, but to others, all they saw were vast numbers of ants passing through.

Yan Xiaobao's heart was still pounding with fear. The pill he had just prepared seemed no different from any ordinary pill. However, he had focused on performing perfectly, and now considering it, he realized he had actually made some adjustments in the proportions during his Spiritual Supplement Pills batch last time.

"Could the final Spiritual Enhancement Pills be incredibly beneficial to ants?" Yan Xiaobao shook his head while pondering the impossibility. Not only could he prepare astonishing pills, but also concoct medicine pills that drive ants insane.

After leaving the workshop, he heard the frustrated murmurs of other disciples, feeling a bit guilty. He lowered his head and hurried away.

Days passed, and Yan Xiaobao confirmed that the events at the Medicine Refining Hall had not stirred any waves. Finally, he returned, using his merits, then chose a different workshop for medicine concoction.

This time, he began studying longevity incense.

Concocting incense and preparing medicine are two different things, requiring different techniques. Medicine is consumed, while incense is inhaled. Of course, the final form is also different, one being a pill, the other an incense.

Considering what happened the last time, Yan Xiaobao was extremely cautious regarding the workings of longevity incense. Two months passed, and after using ten batches of ingredients, he finally obtained seven sticks.

Feeling very satisfied with seven sticks of longevity incense in hand, he returned to his small cabin. After a triple spiritual enhancement, the longevity incense turned deep purple. Although the triple spirit

designs were a bit unclear, they were still visible. Additionally, the sensation he felt upon seeing the incense was entirely different from before.

Yan Xiaobao thoughtfully gazed at the longevity incense and realized that he was as different as ever. Before, he barely knew spiritual medicine, but after concocting some himself, his knowledge had grown. For instance, he understood that any type of spiritual medicine has impurities, which shouldn't be absorbed into the body, yet are difficult to separate. These impurities can accumulate in the body, ultimately becoming so-called medicinal toxins.

This is why many experienced members of the Inner Sect hesitated, advising that inexperienced disciples consume pills cautiously. In theory, most medicinal toxins can be expelled. However, if one were to consume too many medicinal medicines and accumulate too many medicinal toxins, it might affect their future cultivation.

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Chapter 1059: Violet Peak

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Therefore, based on the amount of impurities present in a given spiritual medicine, it will be classified into one of six different levels.

"Low, middle, high, advanced, premium, supreme..." he muttered softly, looking down at the longevity incense. If the medicinal content exceeds ninety percent, then it will be considered a toxic drug, not categorized into levels. Furthermore, such drugs will not be consumed unless absolutely necessary.

If the medicinal content is around eighty percent, it is considered low-level, the most common type of spiritual medicine. Sixty percent impurities are considered middle-level, and such medicines are uncommon. In fact, only true master pharmacists can produce such medicines.

Medicines with only forty percent impurities are high-level and are rare. Those with twenty percent impurities are considered premium, and if they have only ten percent impurities, they are supreme. These medicines usually only appear in large auctions.

Then there are those spiritual medicines with no impurities whatsoever, the legendary supreme medicines.

Before this, when he was working on spiritual medicines with spiritual enhancement, he didn't truly understand what he was doing. But after carefully studying the longevity incense, he realized it didn't make them stronger, unlike what it does with magic items. Instead... it actually improved the quality of spiritual medicine!

The longevity incense he held now only had forty percent impurities, which meant it was a high-grade medicine!

After realizing this, Yan Xiaobao was extremely excited. Then he reconsidered the matter and decided to head to Violet Peak. His goal was not to visit Big Fatty Zhang, but rather to go to the only Spirit Enhancement Hall on the South Shore of Spirit Stream Sect.

There, disciples of the Outer Sect could spend merit points to gain assistance from the elders of the Spirit Enhancement Hall for spiritual enhancement. Although failures still occurred, many disciples frequently visited the place.

After observing the Spirit Enhancement Hall and making some cautious inquiries, Yan Xiaobao was able to confirm that spiritual enhancement of spiritual medicines indeed reduced impurities and made them more effective.

Upon returning to Xiangyun Peak, Yan Xiaobao excitedly looked at the incense he made, and finally lit a stick, taking a deep breath. Almost immediately, he felt sated and satisfied. Moreover, as the aura of the incense spread within him, he felt warm and comfortable. It was as if the flame of his life force was burning hotter.

He continued to inhale the incense and continued cultivating the Immortal Eternal Life Skill. Once his hunger overcame him, a deep breath made it quickly vanish.

Seven sticks of longevity incense enabled Yan Xiaobao to cultivate the Immortal Eternal Life Skill for half a month. During that time, he could feel his Immortal Iron Skin becoming increasingly stronger.

He cheerfully held his bag and then went to the market to sell off some items he obtained from Chen Fei and his friends. Using these profits, he purchased ten sets of ingredients for longevity incense and started crafting again.

Due to his constant caution and attention to detail, his success rate in crafting longevity incense rose from 70% to 80%, eventually reaching 100%.

However, he was still not satisfied. Despite his 100% success rate, the resulting spiritual medicine's quality was merely low-level.

His skills could not be changed in a short period, leaving only one option: use spirit enhancement to remove impurities. As he cultivated using longevity incense, he deeply inhaled, feeling the true joy of heaven and earth.

His Immortal Eternal Life Skill improved daily, and his cultivation base steadily refined itself, nearing the big circle of Qi Condensation Level 6.

His greatest advancement lay in this Immortal Eternal Life Skill. With just a bit more effort, he could achieve significant success with his Immortal Iron Skin. Yan Xiaobao's body was now more resilient and durable than before, and when he used Throat-shattering Grasp, his fingers were darker than before.

But at that point, the effectiveness of the longevity incense slowly waned. Eventually, it had barely any effect, leading Yan Xiaobao to sigh. He realized that if you consume enough of any spiritual medicine, the body eventually adapts, and it loses its potency.

If he wanted to continue his cultivation, he needed a spiritual medicine better than longevity incense. Unfortunately, the formulas for such spiritual medicines were strictly controlled. Purchasing them from the market was impossible; they could only be obtained by achieving excellent results after promotion to skilled Pharmacist level.

The only alternate option was to go to a larger market, but such a place was far from the sect. After considering this matter, Yan Xiaobao lit up with excitement.

"I am ready to be promoted to skilled Pharmacist!"

Considering his experience in crafting medicines and his skills with plants and vegetation, qualifying for promotion shouldn't be too challenging. However, to be safe, he spent a few days buying some random medicinal formulas. After several concoctions and analyzing his failures, he felt more confident and then signed up for the Skilled Pharmacist promotion test.

Of course, the promotion test was not conducted for individual applicants. It was only administered once enough people registered. After waiting a month, while he was pondering some matters regarding spiritual medicines, the identity badge in his bag began to vibrate. When he pulled it out, an ancient voice filled his thoughts.

Chapter 1060: Violet Peak (Part 2)

"Tomorrow at dawn, head to the Journeyman Apothecary Hall where the skilled Pharmacist promotion test will be held." Journeyman Apothecary Hall is located on the southern side of Fragrant Cloud Peak. It is surrounded by dense trees and vegetation, accessible only via a narrow limestone path that winds off a main road running up and down the mountain. Unless the promotion test is underway, few people tread this path. However, when the test time arrives, it will be packed.

Besides the disciples taking the exam, some friends come to support the candidates, and even those lacking the confidence to take the test without first observing it.

From afar, Journeyman Apothecary Hall actually resembles a cross-legged meditating person. In front of this person is a pill furnace, beneath which lies the pathway to the main square.

On that main square, twenty pill furnaces are set up, all identical in appearance. Beside each pill furnace is a pouch containing various types of herbs and plants for medicine concoction.

At dawn, Yan Xiaobao, worried he'd get lost, arrived early. However, upon arrival, he discovered some people had arrived earlier. About dozens of people stood together in twos or threes, quietly chatting, and even some stood alone in front, cross-legged in meditation.

Yan Xiaobao wasn't someone who could sit like an idiot. After a glance, he saw Xu Baocai approaching. When Xu Baocai noticed him coming closer, he greeted with both hands, and the two began to chat. It was soon apparent that without Xu Baocai noticing it, hardly anything happened within the sect.

"Brother Bai," he said, "have you heard that about half a year ago, Chen Fei and his friends were mysteriously reduced to a bloody pulp? Since then, they've been bedridden and for some reason, utterly refuse to speak about the incident." While speaking, he cautiously watched Yan Xiaobao's reaction.

Yan Xiaobao dramatically gestured a greeting, preparing to boast about the sudden incident, when a buzz permeated the crowd. Simultaneously, Yan Xiaobao felt as if someone suddenly looked in his direction. When he turned his head, he saw a young woman walking towards him.

She wore the attire of an Outer Sect Disciple, but it did nothing to conceal her curvaceous figure. Her waist was slender like a willow, accentuating the remaining curves, making her appear extremely beautiful. She had long legs, a lively rear, and as she approached, people couldn't stop staring.

Her beautiful face and clear, white skin seemed so delicate it could be disturbed by a gentle breeze, exuding an allure capable of rendering any man terminally enchanted.

Yan Xiaobao was somewhat disdainful hearing people dramatically gulping, even Xu Baocai.

Xu Baocai licked his lips, his eyes filled with infatuation, "That's... Sister Du, Du Lingfei!" he excitedly whispered, "She's one of the top five hottest women on South Shore! She's my immortal beauty... oh, heavens, she's looking at me!!"

"She's looking at me!" Yan Xiaobao replied mockingly. He simply watched as Du Lingfei approached. Suddenly as she stared directly at Yan Xiaobao, her Phoenix-like eyes flickered with a fierce aura. She quickly recognized Yan Xiaobao's herbal and vegetation skills surpassed hers. Yet, she still harbored a complete disdain for him. She softly snorted and moved aside.

Xu Baocai was dumbfoundedly staring at her, totally forgetting about Yan Xiaobao's mocking. In fact, he seemed more infatuated than ever.

"So Du Lingfei is also taking the test..." Yan Xiaobao thought. After glancing at the twenty pill furnaces, he calmed himself and focused. "Ah, anyway, it doesn't matter. I'm not here to compete with her. This is an exam managed by the sect, not a contest. Everyone has the opportunity to be promoted."

Soon, Chen Ziang appeared, and when he noticed Yan Xiaobao, he hesitated for a moment and then grinned and greeted. Yan Xiaobao smiled, clasped his hands, and Chen Ziang then sat down to wait.

Eventually, even Zhao Yiduo appeared, whom Yan Xiaobao initially encountered outside the mission office. Then, more and more people began showing up, forming quite a large crowd.

Before long, the doors of Journeyman Apothecary Hall creaked open, and an old man walked out. His hair was completely white, and his sharp eyes silenced everyone upon appearance.

The old man's expression was calm. He clasped his hands behind his back, striding forward. He stopped at the square, surveyed all the Outer Sect disciples, then nodded and began to speak.

"My surname is Xu, I will oversee this exam, for promoting from Apprentice Alchemist to Skilled Pharmacist."

"The test will include one part on herbal and vegetation knowledge, another part on medicine concoction. To pass the herbal and vegetation part, just walk through the passage." Elder Xu seemed unwilling to provide any further explanation. After saying only three sentences, he simply closed his eyes and ignored everyone.

Just as Yan Xiaobao blinked, a young man with a square face stepped out from the crowd. After clasping hands and bowing to Elder Xu, he strode toward the passage leading to the massive pill furnace.

Upon entering the passage entrance, a beam of light appeared around him and then vanished. A moment later, the pill furnace vibrated and then emitted five low echoes.

Xu Baocai leaned over and whispered, "Five echoes mean his skills in herbal and vegetation cover the fifth volume..." He should absolutely know everything within this sect.

Yan Xiaobao blinked again. Before coming, he didn't know how the test would proceed. After hearing Xu Baocai's explanation, he examined the gigantic pill furnace and suddenly felt it must be connected to the stone stele outside the Ten Thousand Medicines Pavilion.

"What should I do now...?" He hesitated. "Zhou Xinqi's fans are still combing the peaks for me."

Soon, more people approached, most receiving five echoes. However, one of them received only four echoes, prompting Elder Xu to flick his sleeve and let that disciple spin around.

"Elder Xu!" the disciple exclaimed, his face flashing. "I thought the fourth volume on herbal and vegetation was the minimum requirement for taking the test!"

"The rules have changed. It's the fifth volume now."

"But..." the young man stared in shock, then clenched his hands painfully and bowed. He dared not say more.

This shift sparked whispers of discussion. Xu Baocai's eyes flashed in surprise; he suddenly pulled out a small notebook and began taking notes. Yan Xiaobao glanced and saw a page full of writing, each character like a fly's head. Clearly, it was a record of all matters related to the sect, regardless of size. Yan Xiaobao couldn't help but admire how seriously Xu Baocai treated the whole matter.

It was at this moment Zhao Yiduo stood and entered the passage. Six echoes rang, after which Elder Xu opened his eyes and nodded slightly. Zhao Yiduo clasped his hands and left the passage.

Chen Ziang's eyes flickered. He and Zhao Yiduo never got along, so he coldly snorted, entered the passage, and heard six echoes.

Giving Zhao Yiduo a meaningful gaze, then he sat cross-legged to the side.

Indeed, both Zhao Yiduo and Chen Ziang received six echoes, sparking envious whispers. Meanwhile, Du Lingfei's eyes glowed, she walked through the passage. As she did, six echoes were heard, prompting more envious glances from bystanders.

Murmuring conversations erupted instantly.

"Chen Zie, Zhao Yiduo, Du Lingfei are all outstanding talents in the Outer Sect. They've not only mastered the five volumes of herbal and vegetation but also the first batch of spiritual creatures. I'd say they have a 70% to 80% chance of passing the test and being promoted to skilled rank."

"From a historical perspective, anyone who's taken the skilled test already mastered six steles, as long as the disciple's performance in medicine concoction isn't lacking."

As everyone discussed these things, Yan Xiaobao bit down. Unfortunately, he was powerless against Zhou Xinqi's fans. Just as he was about to step forward, a figure appeared from afar, racing down the mountain path. It was a middle-aged man, his hair completely disheveled, but his eyes sparkling. Even before arrival, his voice rang out among everyone.

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