

Medical 1061

Chapter 1061: Dragons and Phoenixes Among Men

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"I, Han Jianye, spent seven years in secluded meditation, finally achieving a major breakthrough in the realm of plants and vegetation. At last, I stepped back into the world, not just as a skilled Pharmacist, but as the top skilled Pharmacist in the entire test!" He appeared very proud and distinguished as he flickered towards the massive pill furnace in the air.

Elder Xu paid no attention to the man, not even opening his eyes. However, the rest of the crowd seemed stunned upon hearing Han Jianye's name.

"Han Jianye? Who is he? I've never heard of him before."

"Considering his age, he must have become an Outer Sect disciple seven or eight years ago... Aiming to become a top skilled worker is not an easy task."

Even as everyone expressed shock, Han Jianye walked into the passage, looking very proud and confident. Almost immediately, powerful reverberations began to echo into the sky.

One echo, two echoes... five, six, seven... Before anyone in the crowd could even react, eight echoes emerged from the pill furnace.

Elder Xu opened his eyes, gazing at the middle-aged man with a smile of admiration.

"Five kinds of plants and vegetation, three kinds of spiritual creatures," he said. "Excellent!"

Han Jianye looked excited and bowed his hands in tribute to Elder Xu. Then he turned, his pride evident as he glanced at Du Lingfei and the others. He folded his arms confidently and sat down at the center, in front of most of the pill furnace.

Finally, gasps could be heard from the crowd, along with the bustling sound of conversations.

"Eight echoes! Not only has he mastered everything about plants and vegetation, but he has acquired three volumes of spiritual creatures!"

"It seems he might truly do as he says and become a top skilled Pharmacist!"

As Yan Xiaobao witnessed the event unfold, he felt very uneasy. Therefore, when everyone in the crowd started to get excited, he could hardly believe it.

"He only mastered three volumes of spiritual creatures, right?" he asked Xu Baocai. "Why is everyone making such a fuss?" If he remembered correctly, when it appeared on the third stele of spiritual creatures, more than a thousand people were listed as having passed it. Even the tenth stele had been passed by hundreds of people.

Xu Baocai rolled his eyes, more contemptuously than Bai Zhaochun. Of course, he didn't dare to emit that kind of contemptuous sound, but instead cleared his throat and said: "Brother Bai, you just don't understand. Mastering all five kinds of plants and vegetation is difficult to achieve. The amount of spiritual creatures is even harder! Even mastering one of them is enough to make you a subject of envy. Obviously, mastering three is even more shocking. Do you think everyone can make perfect choices like Zhou Xinqi or Little Turtle? Look, forget about those two. Across all Xiangyun Peak, perhaps less than fifty people have passed all five steles of plants and vegetation and all five soul creatures!

"Each of these people is a dragon and phoenix among mortals. Think about it! There are many names on those steles, but those lists have been around for thousands of years. Moreover, many of these people have already moved to the Inner Sect, leaving only their names in the Outer Sect!

"Furthermore, you only need to master five volumes to partake in this test. This guy has eight! As he said, he will certainly become a top skilled Pharmacist, which will earn him 5000 merit points."

Although if you paid close attention to Xu Baocai's words, there was actually a bit of disdain, Yan Xiaobao didn't really notice. His eyes flashed with an excited look, and he said to Xu Baocai, "Did you just say Zhou Xinqi and Little Turtle are perfect choices? Are they really that amazing?"

"Of course! Especially Little Turtle. He's absolutely astonishing. He is the first in a thousand years to rank first on all ten steles. Brother Bai, I have to say, you really shouldn't aim too high." Even if contempt in

Xu Baocai's heart rose to new heights, Yan Xiaobao felt a bitter smile. The more he stayed by Xu Baocai's side, the more he liked him. Patting his shoulder, he suddenly stepped forward.

As Yan Xiaobao walked towards the passage, Xu Baocai was stunned. Of course, Yan Xiaobao was known for his skills in plants and vegetation because he defeated Du Lingfei. He would eventually participate in this exam.

However, what happened next caused Xu Baocai's eyes to swell. Yan Xiaobao proudly walked into the passage, and then a flash could be seen, followed by a low echo starting.

One, two, three... six, seven, eight!

Everyone became very quiet. Yet, the echoes did not stop. The ninth echo sounded, and then... the tenth!

Rumbling!

When the tenth echo reverberated, Elder Xu's eyes opened, flashing with unprecedented brightness. He looked at Yan Xiaobao, utterly shocked.

It must be noted that among the thousands of Outer Sect disciples on Xiangyun Peak, it is nearly impossible for one to master all ten volumes, including five plants and vegetation, and five spiritual creatures. In fact, all of them have already taken this test. For those patiently waiting who have already mastered all ten parts, this is something Elder Xu had never seen before, until today.

Even Zhou Xinqi only participated in the exam after mastering nine.

As Du Lingfei stared at Yan Xiaobao standing in the passage, her eyes widened. Although she already knew his skills in plants and vegetation far exceeded hers, she never thought he would reach such an astonishing level. Not only did he completely master plants and vegetation, but he also had amazing skills in spiritual creatures.

Chapter 1062: Dragon Among Men (Part 2)

Her thoughts were spinning, and she was powerless, only staring blankly. She couldn't help but recall when she once challenged him to a competition in the skills of plants and vegetation, and how cautiously and even nervously he inquired about her ranking. Then she remembered how anxious he looked when he agreed to compete.

Since then, she realized that Yan Xiaobao's nervousness at the time was just a front, hiding the smile blooming in his heart.

"Damn it, Xiao Bao!" she thought, gritting her teeth.

Chen Zie and Zhao Yiduo also gasped in surprise, staring at Yan Xiaobao.

As for Han Jianye, who had spent so many years in secluded meditation, he began to tremble. When he realized that Yan Xiaobao was undoubtedly his lifelong major rival, he glared at Yan Xiaobao, his thoughts spinning, a wave of shock hitting him.

"The most important part of the pharmacist's test is potion concoction!" he thought. "He might be strong, but I refuse to believe he can surpass me in potion making. I spent seven years in secluded meditation just to take first place in this test!"

Meanwhile, the Outer Sect disciples around were out of breath, even dumbfounded.

"That's... ten responses! This means he has also mastered all five volumes of spiritual creatures! He passed all the steles outside the Ten Thousand Medicines Pavilion! There are not even fifty disciples in the entire Outer Sect who can do that!"

"This guy has incredible patience! He waited to pass all ten steles before taking the promotion test!"
"Don't tell me... he's the Little Turtle!?!!" The crowd was in an uproar.

Of course, the most eye-opening was Xu Baocai, who was looking at Yan Xiaobao with wide eyes as if on the brink of collapse. Just a moment ago, he had scorned Yan Xiaobao for not considering mastering the three volumes of spiritual creatures, but now, he clearly had every right to that attitude...

"The mastery of plants and vegetation, and spiritual creatures... Yan Xiaobao was clearly just messing around with me! But this is incredible. He's only been in the sect for a few years! Could it be... he really is the Little Turtle?" Out of breath, Xu Baocai took out his little notebook and began jotting down the new developments. Deep inside, he was glad he chose to resolve issues with Yan Xiaobao and also glad he hadn't said anything too mocking before.

Even as everyone was expressing their shock, Yan Xiaobao walked out of the passage, sighing. In fact, if there was a way to hide his achievements with the ten steles, he would have done so. After all, among Zhou Xinqi's fans were also Inner Sect disciples.

Unfortunately, there was nothing he could do. He couldn't give up the promotion. Although he was forced to reveal the truth, seeing the crowd's excitement and hearing people shouting his name, he was genuinely touched.

"What wonderful fellow disciples. Ah, if only everyone were like this!" Emotional, he sighed and amidst the crowd's gaze, he chose a pill furnace and sat down.

Elder Xu looked thoughtfully at Yan Xiaobao. A faint smile flashed across his face but quickly vanished. Regaining his composure, he said calmly, "In the bag before you, there are ten sets of medicinal plants you can use to make ten kinds of level-1 spiritual medicine, specifically Inkspirit Incense!

"You will be judged based on your success rate, needing at least two successes to pass. The one with the most successes... will receive 5,000 merit points! You can start immediately."

In response to Elder Xu's explanation, the Outer Sect disciples in the audience began to get excited.

"This test is to make Inkspirit Incense!"

"Inkspirit Incense is not the hardest level-1 medicine to make, but it's not easy... It's unlike spirit condensing incense or other spirit medicines that many apprentice alchemists have."

"Hmph. They're just improving the qualification methods in test potion making. Can't you see what's happening? Previously, they needed four volumes of plants and vegetation, and now it's five. They've

even increased the difficulty of crafting spiritual medicine. It's expected things will continue to get tougher in the future."

As everyone discussed the matter, those sitting in front of the pill furnaces in the square had very serious expressions. Although some of them smiled bitterly when hearing the test involved Inkspirit Incense, they did not allow themselves to get distracted and instead opened their bags and began inspecting the medicinal plants.

Xu Baocai had previously mentioned the 5,000 merit points issue. Now that Yan Xiaobao heard Elder Xu's confirmation, his heart was pounding. His merit points were already quite low, and he needed to obtain the medicine formula and medicinal plants.

"If I can earn these 5,000 merit points, it will save me a tremendous amount of time and effort." With this thought, Yan Xiaobao opened the bag which contained ten sets of medicinal plants along with a piece of jade that held the formula for the Inkspirit Incense.

He didn't start concocting the medicine immediately but instead settled his Qi and cleared his mind before beginning to study the formula.

He took a substantial amount of time, as was his habit when concocting medicine. Even the smallest question about anything needed complete analysis until he felt entirely confident.

His initial research took him only two hours.

By then, Du Lingfei and everyone else had already finished inspecting the plants and begun the actual potion making. In fact, most of them had already completed more than half of their first batch.

Soon, everyone except Yan Xiaobao was in the midst of concocting medicine. Yan Xiaobao was the only one sitting there, thoughtfully gazing at the jade. The sight made Xu Baocai somewhat astonished.

By that point, the first batch of spiritual medicines was emerging. All the pill furnaces except Yan Xiaobao's were rumbling. As black smoke rose, most of them wore long faces, indicating their first batch had failed.

Han Jianye, on the other hand, raised his head and laughed heartily. His pill furnace was trembling, and a medicinal aroma began to spread. Shockingly, a 3-inch long stick of Inkspirit Incense appeared.

The surrounding Outer Sect disciples craned their necks to see.

"He succeeded on the first batch!"

"This Han Jianye definitely has a talent for potion concocting!"

A look of excitement appeared on Han Jianye's face, and he glanced at the other examinees. His gaze lingered on Yan Xiaobao for a moment, and when he realized he was still studying the medicine formula, his eyes filled with a disdainful expression. Finally, he took out the second batch of plants and began the second batch of concocting.

Du Lingfei and everyone else wore ugly expressions and gritted their teeth as they started working on the second batch.

Time flew by. By the end of the fourth hour of the test, most of the group had completed their second batch. A sullen rumbling sound could be heard... not a single tester succeeded.

Around this time, Yan Xiaobao put down the jade. His mind was now infused with the medicine formula for Inkspirit Incense. However, just as everyone thought he was about to start, they were stunned to see him take out a medicinal plant and begin to study it closely.

"What is Yan Xiaobao doing? He's already studied the medicine formula for four hours! What's the point of studying the plants?"

"I know it's a test, but does he have to be this slow...?"

When he saw others beginning their third batch, Xu Baocai's eyes were filled with incredibility.

At the sixth hour of the test, the audience was left waiting in bewilderment. By now, 18 examinees had all failed. Soon it was 8 hours, then 10 hours. Eventually, four people managed to concoct the Inkspirit Incense, including Du Lingfei, Chen Ziang, and Zhao Yiduo.

The aura of the incense spread all around. Han Jianye proudly laughed as he became the first to concoct a second stick of Inkspirit Incense. Looking proudly around, his disdain for Yan Xiaobao grew.

By this time, Yan Xiaobao was studying the fourth medicinal plant. Occasionally, he would even tear a hole in the plant, shocking the audience. Even Elder Xu took notice.

Time flew by. Soon, twelve hours had passed. Everyone besides Han Jianye who had succeeded at concocting their sixth batch of spiritual medicine had failed, with Han Jianye being the sole successful one.

This caused a stir and even earned a slight nod from Elder Xu.

"This Han Jianye has already concocted three sticks of incense! No one else has even more than one!"

"In past tests, two successes meant you passed the test, and four successes made you a contender. All Han Jianye has to do is concoct one more stick to become a chosen candidate!"

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Chapter 1063: The Last Batch

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While everyone was discussing the issue, they saw a hint of confidence in Han Jianye's eyes. He said softly, "I will definitely concoct the fourth Inkspirit Incense. I will be selected, I will become a top-tier skilled Pharmacist!"

With a flourish, he waved his sleeve and began studying his seventh batch.

Du Lingfei, her face pale and teeth clenched, started her own seventh batch.

When the fourteenth hour arrived, Du Lingfei's eyes sparkled with excitement as the fragrance of pills began to waft from her cauldron. Even though black smoke was billowing from everyone else's seventh batch, she was the only one to succeed!

"I have reached the minimum threshold, but merely improving is not enough!" Du Lingfei tempered her excitement, took a deep breath, and began another batch alongside the equally pale-faced Han Jianye.

In the sixteenth hour, more rumbling sounds were heard... everyone faced failure.

Up to now, out of the nineteen others taking the exam besides Yan Xiaobao, Han Jianye had three successes, Du Lingfei two, and Chen Zinan and Zhao Yiduo each had one; the others... nothing but failures.

As for Yan Xiaobao, he was studying the last medicinal plant.

"This test is too difficult..."

This was the thought running through the minds of the Outer Sect disciples among the audience. They could feel the pressure of anxiety. Most examinees had only two sets of ingredients left. Apart from Du Lingfei and Han Jianye, who had already reached the minimum requirement and Chen Zinan and Zhao Yiduo, who had achieved some success, the other examinees must successfully use two sets of ingredients, or they would fail completely.

The remaining disciples were now very nervous. Essentially, the ninth batch was the most critical; if they failed, Elder Xu would not let them waste the tenth set of reserved ingredients.

If the ninth batch failed, then... their exam would be a complete failure.

Filled with worry and tension, everyone was entirely focused on their ninth batch... every step was given complete and thorough attention; those who had already met the minimum requirement hoped for a better final performance, while those who hadn't had to do everything in their power just to pass.

On the other hand, Yan Xiaobao... sat there holding the last medicinal plant. Clearly, he was contemplating some important issues about the plant, his brows furrowed in deep thought. So far... few people paid attention to him.

The eighteenth hour seemed to pass slowly. This was the moment everyone was waiting for. Soon, the rumbling sounds began. As for the disciples who hadn't succeeded at all, they stood up, faces pale, and gave a pained smile. After shaking hands with Elder Xu, they dejectedly left the square.

The disciples left one after another until soon, only six people were left concocting potions.

Soon, the rumbling sounds from the pill cauldrons of the six test-takers reverberated, but only one cauldron emitted a medicinal fragrance, and it belonged to Zhao Yiduo.

Zhao Yiduo clenched his fists tightly, panting, with bloodshot eyes. He was now more excited than before; he had met the minimum requirement. With two successes, he passed!

Some people were excited, while others were despondent. Five people failed, two of them being disciples who hadn't succeeded even once. Sighing, they stood up and left.

Chen Ziang could not be more outstanding. He glared at Zhao Yiduo, his heart filled with bitterness and anxiety. Then he looked at the bloodshot last group of medicinal plants.

Du Lingfei frowned, then closed her eyes to think. Han Jianye felt the least pressure among everyone, yet he was not happy with only three successes. He wanted to break through and be selected.

"The final batch!" When they looked at the square, people took a deep breath. Five people remained. Han Jianye, Du Ling Fei, Zhao Yiduo. Of course... Yan Xiaobao

Three of them had met the minimum requirement. Chen Ziang had one chance to do so. As for Yan Xiaobao... people didn't even notice him, and in fact, they began to wonder why he even came. After eighteen hours, all he had done was study the drug formula and medicinal plants. Some even wondered... if he was just there as part of the excitement.

Du Lingfei and the others began to focus entirely on their tenth and final batch of spiritual medicine, with unprecedented seriousness. Everyone watched with fixed gazes as the twentieth hour slowly passed.

Then rumbling sounds could be heard from Zhao Yiduo's pill cauldron, followed by black smoke rising. He sighed. He had failed the final batch, but at least he still met the minimum requirement.

At almost the same moment Zhao Yiduo failed, medicinal fragrance began to disperse from Chen Ziang's pill cauldron. He wasn't the only one; medicinal fragrance also wafted from Du Lingfei and Han Jianye!

At that moment when they realized they had succeeded, the faces of the three were filled with joy!

"I did it! Four Inkspirit Incenses! I've taken the top spot!" Han Jianye stood up, his excited laughter echoing all around. Du Lingfei let out a sigh of relief. Although she hadn't reached the selection level, three successes were still surprising.

Chen Zinan almost felt as if he had come back from the dead and began to laugh.

So far, the feelings that had been suppressed in the four of them for the past two hours finally erupted.

"What a challenging trial! Despite the difficulty level, Han Jianye's ability to succeed four times in a row shows that he's truly a chosen one!

Chapter 1064: The Last Batch (Part 2)

"Du Lingfei achieved three successes, while Chen Zinan and Zhao Yiduo both achieved two... They've all met the requirements for promotion. I bet if the test weren't so challenging, they might have achieved four successes!"

Even as everyone began discussing the matter, with the friends of the testers cheering supportively and Elder Xu nodding approvingly at Han Jianye while preparing to announce that the test had concluded... Yan Xiaobao was moved. After thoroughly researching the final herb and resolving all his queries, Yan Xiaobao continued to completely ignore all the commotion around him. Fully absorbed in the information on the jade, he was completely immersed in the Dao of herbs and foliage, entering almost into a trance.

No lightning or thunder could break his concentration, nor did he see the results of others' brewing efforts.

Of course, this drew some attention from the audience, including Xu Baocai. Curious expressions were clearly visible on their faces as they wondered why Yan Xiaobao spent so much time on his initial observation.

"This Yan Xiaobao is too slow. Everyone else is done, and he's just starting. Shouldn't the test be over by now?"

"Hmm. You know, I don't think I've ever heard about any time limit in the skilled pharmacist promotion test..." It's unclear who said this last sentence, but when people heard it, they turned toward Elder Xu with blank expressions.

Elder Xu hesitated slightly, but indeed, the skilled pharmacist promotion test had no time limit. Therefore, he continued standing there watching Yan Xiaobao brew the medicine.

Han Jianye wasn't worried at all, even coldly smiling with disdain flashing in his eyes. Initially, he feared Yan Xiaobao might be a formidable opponent, but after this part of the test concluded, he was confident Yan Xiaobao couldn't surpass him.

Du Lingfei furrowed her brow; no matter how she thought about it, Yan Xiaobao was mistaken.

Yan Xiaobao's movements were incredibly fast, his eyes shining. To him, the entire world consisted only of that pill furnace. Various medicinal plants rapidly changed form as he kneaded them into paste, broke them into powder, or made other preparations. Then, after placing all ingredients into the pill furnace, he made a spell gesture with his right hand aimed at the pill furnace, causing the Earth Flames below to blaze brightly.

Two hours flew by, and soon an intense medicinal fragrance wafted from the pill furnace. Yan Xiaobao waved his hand, causing a four-inch-long strap of Inkspirit Incense to fly out. Once it landed in his palm, he checked it and then frowned.

The audience's faces grew serious, and Elder Xu's eyes glittered. Yet, as everyone expected Yan Xiaobao to start his second batch, they realized instead that he was simply... studying the incense.

"What is he doing??"

"He succeeded! Why hasn't he started his second batch?"

Everyone watched in amazement.

As for Yan Xiaobao, he looked at the Inkspirit Incense with great dissatisfaction. Though he did succeed, he knew that according to the ingredients used, the incense should be seven inches long.

"What went wrong?" he wondered. Then he pondered the matter... for six hours.

Just as everyone reached the end of their patience, Yan Xiaobao's eyes gleamed. He prepared the second set of ingredients and commenced brewing. Everyone in the audience watched his work anxiously.

Another two hours passed. This time, when the five-inch-long stick of Inkspirit Incense flew out, the medicinal fragrance was even more powerful than before.

Du Lingfei's expression flickered, while shock was evident on the faces of Chen Ziang and Zhao Yiduo. As for Han Jianye, his eyes glimmered, yet his demeanor remained calm. Only he knew that internally, he began to feel anxious.

Of course, his anxiety stemmed not just from Yan Xiaobao's two successes but also from the potential of continued success!

Under everyone's stunned gaze, Yan Xiaobao flicked his sleeve, sending out a third set of medicinal plant ingredients. His third batch was now commencing, with all the Outer Sect disciples closely observing.

Two hours passed in silence. Suddenly, the pill furnace trembled, unleashing a fragrance more potent than ever before, resulting in a six-inch-long stick of Inkspirit Incense!

"Three consecutive successes! How... can this happen!?!?"

"How did Yan Xiaobao do it? Could it be that he has previously brewed Inkspirit Incense?!?" Surprised exclamations erupted due to the consecutive successes; it was hard for people to believe what they saw.

As she stared at Yan Xiaobao, Du Lingfei's Qi was dressed in ragged pants. Chen Zinan and Zhao Yiduo both wore dismal expressions.

"Three consecutive successes..." Han Jianye thought as he clenched his fists, his eyes now bloodshot. "He must be familiar with Inkspirit Incense. Well, he's fortunate with this batch, but the next will tell a different story!"

Just as everyone was anticipating Yan Xiaobao to begin his fourth batch, he held up the six-inch-long Inkspirit Incense stick and then frowned, thoughtfully rubbing his chin.

Then everyone waited for ten hours.

If such a thing had occurred during the first batch, everyone might have left. But seeing Yan Xiaobao achieve three consecutive successes, they knew a fourth success would elevate him beyond the others, reaching Han Jianye's level. It was something everyone eagerly wanted to witness.

"Yan Xiaobao has taken too long! It's merely a level-1 spiritual medicine! Why does he need so much time to ponder it??"

Du Lingfei and Han Jianye were certainly the most invested, staring steadfastly at Yan Xiaobao, unwilling to leave.

At that moment, Yan Xiaobao's eyes gleamed. As he waved his hands, his eyebrows flickered, and when he began his fourth batch, herbs and foliage flew out. Everyone was now watching with full excitement.

Two hours later, a rumbling sound echoed, but not of failure. Instead, a powerful medicinal aroma spread, filling the entire area instantaneously. Then, to everyone's astonishment, a seven-inch-long stick of Inkspirit Incense emerged!

Fourth batch, once again successful!

The audience went wild.

"Four consecutive successes!"

"I can't believe such a thing really happened... How many times will Yan Xiaobao actually succeed!?!"

"Two successes are the requirement to pass, while four gives you choice! If I recall correctly, Sister Zhou Xinqi achieved seven successes during her promotion!" As the crowd clamored, Du Lingfei's expression grew extremely unsightly. Though she realized Yan Xiaobao's mastery over herbs and foliage far surpassed hers, seeing the vast gap between them and the medicine concoction filled her with complex emotions.

As for Han Jianye, he gritted his teeth, clenching his hands into fists. He trembled, unwilling to believe what he was witnessing. Yet, everything was happening before him, so it was undeniable.

"Four successes! Four successes must be his limit. Any further attempts will surely fail!"

Everyone in the audience now speculated frantically about how many successes Yan Xiaobao might achieve. Then, they realized Yan Xiaobao was simply staring at the Inkspirit Incense.

"What's he doing? He's conducting more studies?!?" Though slightly frustrated, the audience had no intention of leaving. Instead, they remained seated watching, eager to see the outcome of Yan Xiaobao's next attempt.

Sixteen hours passed before Yan Xiaobao finally took a deep breath. His eyes were completely bloodshot. Although no one realized it, the fourth batch he made was on the verge of failing.

"This Inkspirit Incense is far more challenging than any other spiritual medicine I've concocted in the past." Yan Xiaobao was cautious and meticulous. Reflecting on all his previous batches produced, he pinpointed the issue and after ensuring he could prevent it, began the fifth batch.

He paid no heed to any discussions around him; his focus on brewing medicine exceeded imagination. No word was spoken unless he was absolutely confident of success when he began concocting.

Everyone in the audience had remained there so long that they were exhausted and struggled to maintain focus, yet they all craned their necks to see what was happening.

It wasn't long before more rumbling sounds were heard. With the medicinal fragrance wafting strongly, its aroma enveloped everyone present, leaving them awestruck.

The fifth batch was successful!

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Chapter 1065: Absolute Confidence

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Han Jianye sat there dumbfounded, his heart filled with bitterness. After a long time, he merely sighed quietly.

This was the moment the crowd had been waiting for. Yan Xiaobao waved his hand and began the sixth batch.

Not long after, more rumbling could be heard, and the scent of incense spread. The sixth batch was successful!

Yan Xiaobao's eyes sparkled. He didn't pause for a moment, instead pulling out more medicinal plants and starting his seventh batch. However, almost at the same moment he started the seventh batch, a pungent smell suddenly wafted out. It was very faint, only detectable by Yan Xiaobao, but it made his heart start to pound.

He made a spell gesture with his right hand and pointed, lowering the temperature on earth. After carefully handling the ingredients, he successfully completed the seventh batch!

However, this rod was only three inches long, containing many impurities, making it of low grade, nearly on the verge of being toxic. Yet, as far as the audience was concerned, it still counted as a success!

At this point, the audience completely understood what transpired. Everyone was breathlessly excited, especially Xu Baocai, his eyes filled with incredulousness.

"Seven successes... My God! Yan Xiaobao actually succeeded seven times!"

"He's as good as Sister Zhou Xinqi! I recall hearing that the only person who exceeded eight successes was a disciple named Wang Qingshan many years ago, who's now a supreme elder in the traditional echelon!"

"Nine successes... completely unheard of. No one has ever done it!"

The audience was in an uproar, but Yan Xiaobao sat quietly, watching the pill furnace. His eyes were bloodshot, and so far, he hadn't even thought about the test. He was engrossed in the thought of concocting medicines, analyzing from all angles the reasons for the near failures. Next, he took out the ingredients and started checking them again, trying to determine the cause.

"This spiritual plant is called Inkspirit, and each Ink Element is slightly different..." He held the ink spirit in his hand, continuing to observe and analyze.

Time passed, and more bitter smiles could be seen on the audience's faces as they realized what was happening. Although they were excited, Yan Xiaobao's medical concoction was so slow that it could make one grow furious enough to sprout a boar's bristle.

However, no one was willing to leave. The outer sect disciples were all sitting cross-legged there, some meditating while waiting for Yan Xiaobao. Others were extremely tired, sleeping near the nearby boulder.

A strange expression appeared on Elder Xu's face. He coughed dryly and sat there cross-legged, waiting.

Of course, neither Du Lingfei nor Han Jianye would leave. Although Yan Xiaobao had exhausted them physically and mentally, they had no choice but to sit in silence.

Everything was very quiet, except for the occasional snoring. However, people were still waiting, watching Yan Xiaobao. Xu Baocai was among them.

Hours passed, some woke up from their sleep to find Yan Xiaobao sitting there pondering. They couldn't help but sigh.

"I can't believe he's still studying."

"The sun has risen..."

Finally, after more than twenty hours, Yan Xiaobao suddenly raised his head, his eyes bloodshot. Yan Xiaobao was panting. So far, he focused on adjusting everything else. He didn't even worry about whether he would succeed. His eyes were bloodshot, and his thoughts centered on one thing: how to be completely and utterly confident!

Unless he was completely confident, he wouldn't start the next batch!

In the process of making medicine, his careful and cautious personality was fully displayed.

Yet, even after all his thoughts, he still couldn't figure out how to solve the issue without first standardizing the Ink Elements within the Inkspirit. Although this wouldn't be considered altering the medicine formula, it would make slight adjustments. After some thought, Yan Xiaobao's eyes flickered with determination.

"The only solution is to adjust the formula according to the specific situation!" He quickly crushed the Inkspirit.

Although Yan Xiaobao didn't send it into the pill furnace, when the juice flowed out, a crushing sound could be heard. Instead, he solidified the air in front of him and began making adjustments here and there.

Most of the audience was surprised but didn't really understand what he was doing. Even Yan Xiaobao himself didn't think his actions were anything special; he merely felt this was the best course of action given the circumstances.

However, Elder Xu opened his eyes, a flash of shock in them. Although Yan Xiaobao had succeeded seven times consecutively, he was a bit astounded, yet what he was doing now was even more astonishing.

"Yan Xiaobao is actually trying to adjust the medicine formula! Unbelievable! No wonder the Peak Lord told me to keep an eye on him when he left the mountain!" Elder Xu continued to watch Yan Xiaobao silently.

After a while, Yan Xiaobao waved his hand, expelling the extra Ink Elements, leaving a drop about the size of a fingernail. After sending it into the pill furnace, he produced the rest of the medicinal plant ingredients, then began his eighth batch!

The pill furnace turned bright red instantly. This time, it didn't need two hours. After enough time for two incense sticks to burn, the pills trembled, and the fragrance of medicine spread. The eighth batch was successful!

Elder Xu looked at the pill furnace, and what he saw was a seven-inch-long Inkspirit incense stick, black with purple spots!

Chapter 1066: Complete Confidence (2)

"This is almost middle level!" Elder Xu thought, his eyes sparkling.

Yan Xiaobao could still say that this Inkspirit Incense was different from the others. Although he was initially confused, he suddenly realized why all the other spiritual medicines he had produced before were of low grade.

"The medicine formula is not standardized... If you adjust things according to your current needs, you can concoct... middle-grade spiritual medicine or even higher!" Yan Xiaobao suddenly felt as if the world had opened up to him. Feeling extremely excited, even before the crowd could burst into uproar, he started his ninth batch!

Everyone was breathless, and no one spoke. They were all completely and thoroughly shaken. They might have been excited earlier, but now, having witnessed Yan Xiaobao's consecutive eight victories, they were in complete and utter disbelief.

Not only did he surpass Zhou Xinqi, but now he was almost entirely on par with the seasoned Wang Qingshan from the traditional echelon!

Before everyone could recover from the shock, Yan Xiaobao quickly began concocting the next batch. He used only the time it took for an incense stick to burn before hearing the rumbling coming from the pill furnace and releasing a powerful medicinal aroma. The ninth batch... was successful!

"This is unheard of!!"

"No one has succeeded nine times, especially with the Inkspirit Incense! Yan Xiaobao spent a long time contemplating, but... but his success rate is astonishing!"

Xu Baocai's thoughts were spinning, his jaw hanging open. Du Lingfei felt her heart filled with panicked shock, unable to help but recall the competition and how Yan Xiaobao analyzed the grafting of plants.

Han Jianye just sighed painfully. Though he was disappointed, he was no longer angry. If Yan Xiaobao had slightly surpassed him, he might have continued to bear a grudge, but now, he had to admit he was defeated...

"Even if just once successful, Brother Bai would do something no one has ever done, not even in ancient times! He... will create miracles!"

"The boy's current test was worth it. We've been stuck here for days, but absolutely worth it!"

At present, Yan Xiaobao was the known center of attention. Everyone was breathless, their eyes flickering with strong anticipation. Even Teacher Xu was greatly shocked, staring wide-eyed.

At last, Yan Xiaobao was moved. As he crafted the final set of ingredients, his eyes sparkled with focus. After organizing them in the order he was about to use them, he began feeding them into the pill furnace and performed double-handed spell gestures to trigger the Earth Flames.

Time became completely silent. The only thing the audience could hear was their heartbeat while waiting for the incense stick to burn.

Inside the pill furnace, a strong rumbling could be heard. No fail-smoke poured out, nor did a medicinal aroma. Everyone was shocked.

"Did he fail?" Xu Baocai thought, his tongue clinging to his mouth.

Yan Xiaobao stared in shock, but then suddenly became aware of what most likely happened, his eyes began to shine.

At this point, all the viewers could see glittering light emerging from joints and cracks in the pill furnace. Elder Xu suddenly leapt forward toward the pill furnace, where lay a one-inch-long Inkspirit Incense stick, entirely violet-colored. His eyes jumped in delight.

"Middle grade!" he laughed. He flicked his sleeve, collecting the concocted furnace and Inkspirit Incense sticks.

"The final round of testing is over. Yan Xiaobao, Han Jianye, Du Lingfei, Chen Ziang, Zhao Yiduo, you five are all promoted to skilled Pharmacists! Yan Xiaobao, you achieved first place, earning a remarkable score of 5000 points!"

The crowd dissolved into a frenzy of commotion, voices echoing in all directions.

"Ten successes! He achieved ten successes!"

"Moreover, the last batch... middle-grade! He's merely a skilled Pharmacist, but already able to make middle-grade spiritual medicine!"

Xu Baocai, Du Lingfei, Han Jianye, and everyone else were utterly stunned.

A bit reluctantly, Yan Xiaobao watched as the only middle-grade spiritual medicine he ever concocted was swiped away by Elder Xu. He wanted to express his dissatisfaction, but Elder Xu seemed too imposing, evidently refusing to let the incense return.

Yan Xiaobao sighed and left the square, exhausted. As he walked through the crowd, people looked at him with excitement and admiration. Clearly, his ten consecutive successes were no fluke, and something an ordinary disciple could never achieve.

"Congratulations on the miracle, Brother Bai! It's unprecedented!"

"Congratulations, Brother Bai, I truly admire you!"

"Brother Bai, I have some questions about plants and vegetation, do you think you could help a young sister out...?"

Yan Xiaobao blinked. He was so focused on medicine concoction that he completely adjusted to everything else. After seeing the commotion he caused, he swiftly clenched both hands and bowed to the audience in salute.

At this moment, he felt elated. When no one knew who Little Turtle was, he never found the right opportunity to debut. Now he had it, he was experiencing the feeling he had hoped for.

As for the young disciple requesting his help, Yan Xiaobao immediately nodded to agree. Moreover, for all disciples calling him Brother Bai, he requested they call him Yan Xiaobao, lest people wouldn't know his full name.

Just as he felt particularly proud of himself, he suddenly noticed a group of young people glaring at him. Yan Xiaobao immediately recognized them as one of Zhou Xinqi's loyal fans. Yan Xiaobao's face flashed; he quickly extricated himself from the crowd and then rapidly left.

After hurriedly returning to his small cabin, he realized he felt a bit dizzy. Spending days concocting medicine had left him completely exhausted, and he immediately fell asleep on the bed.

He slept for two days straight.

On the afternoon of the third day, he opened his eyes, feeling refreshed. Then he recalled how he personally crafted a middle-grade spiritual medicine, and how Elder Xu took it. Sighing, he looked at his identity badge, confirmed that 5,000 merits had been added, and then felt a bit better.

With these merits, he could continue his pharmaceutical research, which would also aid in cultivating the Immortal Eternal Life Skill. Next, he quickly set off from his residence, retrieving seven or eight medicine formulas from the sect. After selecting one for energy replenishment, he spent some merits acquiring an abundance of medicinal plants.

The entire process proceeded quickly, but he was nervous the entire time. No matter where he went, it seemed people recognized him, and he even noticed some of Zhou Xinqi's fans coldly sneering and glaring at him, then using jade to transmit messages to their cohorts.

Yan Xiaobao tensely gathered all the medicinal plants he needed and went to his courtyard residence, rather than the Medicine Refining Hall. Using his remaining merits, he bought an entire year's access to secluded time and then hid away.

"I was a bit careless this time... Hmph. Just wait until I emerge. I will make major advances in my Immortal Iron Skin, and if anyone provokes me... Well, if you come to me once, I'll take you out. If you band together... then I'll just call upon the Peak Lord!" Coldly snorting, he began concocting medicine in the workshop.

He could imagine, during the two days he slept, that news spread of his promotion to a skilled pharmacist. In fact, before long, the entire Xiangyun Peak was discussing it.

Of course, that was precisely what happened. Moreover, many people already speculate Yan Xiaobao... is Little Turtle!

Too many coincidences leave little room for any other explanation. Not only did he demonstrate astonishing natural talent with plants, vegetation, and spiritual creatures, but Yan Xiaobao also concocted a mid-grade spiritual medicine. He even succeeded ten consecutive times in passing the skilled pharmacist exam.

Zhou Xinqi's fans and Du Lingfei's fans alike immediately began to take action. Yet, none realized how cautious Yan Xiaobao was; he would never return to his residence but rather remain at the Medicine Refining Hall. Then they found out he bought an entire year of time in a workshop, they instantly grew outraged.

However, the Medicine Refining Hall was not somewhere they could intrude. Additionally, Yan Xiaobao's new identity instilled fear. While they couldn't do anything to him, if they rudely taught him a lesson, the sect wouldn't worry. After all, provoking someone above your skill level would get you what you deserve.

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Chapter 1067: Immortal Life

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However, there was nothing to be done now, so the group gathered to capture Yan Xiaobao reluctantly dispersed. Yet, one of them, a young man with a pimpled face, looked at the Medicine Making Hall with a cold grin.

"Do you think hiding there makes you safe from me? I don't care that you beat up my cousin Chen Fei. However, you bullied my beloved young Sister Zhou, and also the Miss Du whom I cherish most. Moreover, my favorite, Young Miss Hou, also won't stop talking about you. Yan Xiaobao, you may have a talent for plants and vegetation, but killing you will not be any trouble for me at all!" The young man sneered coldly. He was none other than Qian Qianjin's inner sect disciple!

Yan Xiaobao spent carefree days in the Medicine Refining Hall, whether mixing medicines or cultivating his Immortal Life Technology. As the years went by, he truly made a leap in the Immortal Eternal Life Skill.

His skin became tougher and more durable, and he could move faster than before.

"In two more days, my Immortal Iron Skin will be complete!" Yan Xiaobao took a deep breath, his eyes gleaming with excitement.

However, on the evening of that very night, suddenly, a green beam shot from the mission office towards the medicine hall. It completely bypassed the shields around the pavilion and appeared inside Yan Xiaobao's workshop.

Yan Xiaobao was shocked as he stared at the command badge now hovering before him! The command medal was black, with the character "justice" at its center, exuding a desolate and melancholic aura.

As Yan Xiaobao stared at it in shock, a cold voice echoed in the workshop.

"Outer Sect Disciple Yan Xiaobao. After an investigation in the Judicial Hall, it has been confirmed that, after several years in the sect, you have completed only one task, which was the cultivation of spiritual plants. Due to violating sect rules, you are required to take on a mandatory sect mission, starting three days from now!"

Judging from the cold and sinister nature of the voice, if Yan Xiaobao refused to comply, he would receive the harshest punishment!

"Hall of Justice!" Yan Xiaobao's eyes widened, and his heart began to thud loudly. Meanwhile, the command badge turned into a black light and then disappeared.

Everything went silent. When he took out his identity medal, various emotions flickered across Yan Xiaobao's face. As expected, he found an additional mandatory mission added.

He had completely forgotten about the rule regarding the minimum number of missions required of disciples each year. However, the sudden arrival of the command medal from the Judicial Hall was something Yan Xiaobao found very strange.

After some thought, he left his workshop, walked out of the Medicine Refining Hall, and headed up the mountain.

"Something isn't right. Why do I feel a cold wind running down my back...? Alright, I have been in the sect for many years now and have never proactively visited the Peak Lord. I might as well pay my respects and see if I can figure out what's going on." Yan Xiaobao wrapped himself in his cloak as he traversed the mountain. Finally, he found Li Qinghou's Daoist assistant, only to discover that Li Qinghou had left the sect months ago.

Yan Xiaobao felt very uneasy and tense. He did not return to the Medicine Making Hall but went to look for Xu Baocai. After all, Xu Baocai knew everything happening within the sect, so perhaps he would have some insight into the situation.

Xu Baocai was still an Outer Sect Disciple, living in a different area of Baishan Village. It was nighttime by then, and not many people were out. Soon, Yan Xiaobao reached the vicinity of Xu Baocai's dwelling.

This residence was not as isolated as Yan Xiaobao's, gathering with seven or eight people. Now it was dark, and firelight could be seen flickering from a few courtyards.

Yan Xiaobao lowered his head to appear inconspicuous. He did not knock on the door but flew over the partition wall, then saw Xu Baocai bent over a small notebook, writing.

"Xu Baocai," he murmured.

Xu Baocai was startled, but upon seeing who had come, he said, "Oh, hey, Brother Bai."

A bit puzzled, he stood up and invited Yan Xiaobao into his room.

"Brother Bai, weren't you secluded in meditation at the Medicine Making Hall?" he asked curiously, "What are you doing here?"

"Xu Baocai, how much do you know about the Judicial Hall?" Yan Xiaobao immediately asked.

Seeing the stern expression on Yan Xiaobao's face, Xu Baocai could tell something was amiss, and he quickly replied, "The Hall of Justice? Well, there's a southern hall and a northern hall, and they're responsible for managing two different parts of the sect. They oversee Outer Sect disciples and servants, but they usually don't do much unless there's a serious violation of sect rules.

"If violations occur, they hold significant authority. They can impose various punishments. In fact, they even have the power to execute traitors. Essentially, the Hall of Justice is like a sword suspended over the necks of Outer Sect Disciples, ensuring that none of us dare to break sect rules.

"If anyone does so and is noticed by the Judicial Hall, they will face swift and severe punishment...

"Of course, despite the Judicial Hall having considerable power, it is limited. As long as you don't break sect rules, you won't have to worry about them at all." As usual, Xu Baocai continued to provide Yan Xiaobao with a very detailed description of the Hall of Justice, based on everything he knew.

Chapter 1068: Immortal Life_2

He even continued to tell Yan Xiaobao about the terrifying fate of disciples who had conflicts with the Judicial Hall.

"Five hundred years ago, a traitor rose within the Spiritual Sect. The Judicial Hall tracked him for seven days, finally killing him and eradicating his soul!

"Three hundred years ago, an Outer Sect disciple openly violated sect rules. Although the Judicial Hall gave him a chance to repent, he ignored it. In the end, the Judicial Hall reported the matter to the sect, and the disciple was punished in the Black Wind Abyss; to this day, he's still ravaged by the fierce winds.

"One hundred years ago, the Zhou Mountain Society planned an armed rebellion. Despite the Judicial Hall's warning, they refused to back down. When they eventually took action, the Judicial Hall executed all the cultivators of the Zhou Mountain Society, leaving only mortals."

As Yan Xiaobao listened, his expression became more unpleasant than ever, and his heart began to pound.

"Are you telling me that generally the Judicial Hall will issue a warning first, and only if you do not repent will they take severe punitive measures?"

"Yes, precisely. It's one of the restrictions on the Hall of Justice. Otherwise, they would have too much power." So far, Xu Baocai had already guessed that the Judicial Hall must have set its sights on Yan Xiaobao. However, matters related to the Judicial Hall were sensitive, and Xu Baocai was smart enough to keep an eye on his own interests. Therefore, although he told Yan Xiaobao what he knew, he dared not get further involved.

Finally, just as Yan Xiaobao was about to leave, Xu Baocai hesitated for a moment while thinking about Yan Xiaobao's plant and vegetation techniques, then suddenly whispered: "Brother Bai, did you happen to know? An Inner Sect disciple from Green Crest Peak named... Qian Dajin? He's Chen Fei's cousin, who also happens to be a member of the Judicial Hall."

After the time it takes for a stick of incense to burn, Yan Xiaobao left. As he walked along the sect's path, he looked up at the moon, thinking about everything Xu Baocai had said, only confirming what he had already suspected. Finally, he sighed.

"I haven't offended anyone in the sect!" he thought, gritting his teeth. "Except for Chen Fei, only Zhou Xinqi's fan... Qian Dajin. Qian Dajin!" Back at the medical turret, he sat cross-legged in the workshop, staring at the pill furnace. Then his face twitched slightly.

"Clearly, my failure to complete one sect mission each year is just an excuse. Unless someone specifically investigates, such a thing won't come to light, and even if it does, it's not a big issue. Besides, I'm surely not the only one in the sect who has done that. Since Qian Dajin is a member of the Judicial Hall, he's using his public office to avenge personal grievances!" After careful consideration, Yan Xiaobao's eyes reddened.

"If I continue to carry out this mission, he'll surely ensure that something happens at some point. Why would he go through all this trouble? But he still has to be careful to ensure the sect doesn't find out. In general, I still have the initiative.

"If I ignore the mission order, then I'll fall into his hands. He can control this initiative and use his position in the Judicial Hall to directly punish me!"

Yan Xiaobao thought from many angles but found no perfect solution. Finally, he took out his identity badge and checked the mission. It took him a moment to realize there was a familiar name in the mission description.

"Hou Yunfei?" Yan Xiaobao recalled the first time he became an Outer Sect disciple, his eyes widened as Hou Yunfei's sect detail was given to him. Then, he closed his eyes to think further.[1]

The mission didn't seem difficult. A few years ago, Hou Yunfei accepted a mission outside the sect, checking back for news every month. For disciples accepting long-term missions, this was a common arrangement.

However, two months ago, contact was lost, and no news returned.

Therefore, this new mission was passed down. Three Outer Sect disciples would be dispatched for investigation, with no specific details on what clues to gather.

Missions like this are common in the sect. All disciples have to do is investigate, find some clues, and then return to the sect to let others follow up.

Also, as far as the sect is concerned, a missing Outer Sect disciple isn't a very important matter. Of course, they are still disciples, so eventually, the matter must be handled.

This is why such missions exist in the first place.

Yan Xiaobao further thought, weighing all the options and facts, gritting his teeth.

"Alright, I'll accept the mission." Gasping, his eyes bloodshot, he immediately began formulating more pills. If he were to complete a mission, then he needed to make significant breakthroughs on his Immortal Iron Skin.

Two days later, Yan Xiaobao's body was trembling, his skin vibrating. Suddenly, a wave of darkness spread across him, soon dissipating. However, if observed closely, you might barely see red streaks flashing across his body.

"Black is iron, red is bronze!"

When he pressed his skin, a metallic sound rang out. Next, he stood up, confirming he was much faster than before.

After several tests, he leaped into the air, pinching his thumb and forefinger together. This time no cracking sound occurred, but a low booming did. The sounds weren't loud, but Yan Xiaobao could say his movement was at least twice as fast as before.

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"Break through my immortal iron skin!" he thought excitedly. So far, he felt more confident about the mission.

"This is too bad, I can only concoct a level-1 spiritual medicine suitable for the fifth level of Qi Condensation and below," Yan Xiaobao stood in the workshop feeling a little disappointed. However, with limited time, he couldn't possibly produce a second-level spiritual medicine suitable for level 8 Qi Condensation and below.

As a result, his planting base couldn't make much progress and remained within the large cycle of Qi Condensation Level 6.

"At dawn tomorrow, I will leave the sect..." he thought anxiously. This was the first time he would truly leave the sect since joining, and he didn't feel safe at all. In fact, he even took the shield he obtained from Chen Fei and enhanced it threefold spiritually. Yet, it didn't make him feel very safe. Next, he enhanced spiritually the leather jacket he wore in the competition.

After much deliberation, he went out at midnight and found Big Fatty Zhang, borrowing his big black pot, which was said to be filled with earth spells. Even so, he couldn't feel at ease. But there was nothing more he could do. Looking extremely anxious, he returned to the apothecary in the hospital instead of his courtyard, where he awaited the sunrise.

"Qian Dajin, wait until I enter the Foundation. Then I will tell you a thing or two!" Yan Xiaobao was more nervous than ever, his eyes completely bloodshot. After all, he feared death, and now that he was no longer a newcomer to this sect, he knew very well how the cultivation world operated.

The whole night, his imagination ran wild with all the bad things that might happen, until finally... the sun rose. At dawn, when the first rays of sunshine came into the sky, Yan Xiaobao felt his identity badge

start to vibrate. He stood at the front of the courtyard, reflecting on the story of his home from the past two years, then let out a long sigh.

"I definitely need to be extremely careful. I absolutely cannot lose my little life..." Yan Xiaobao wore a very anxious expression on his face. He was wrapped in eight layers of leather coats and carried Big Fatty Zhang's huge black iron pot on his back. Although he was actually relatively thin, dressed in such a manner made him look almost spherical.

Yan Xiaobao left Xiangyun Peak with a very serious expression, heading toward the gate marked by the South Shore boundary. Along the way, many disciples who saw him were shocked by his unusual appearance.

The whole time, he frowned miserably, waving goodbye to everyone he met whom he knew. Soon, he was approaching the gate, and then he saw two people already ahead of him. One was a young man sitting cross-legged in meditation. The other was a young woman pacing back and forth in front of the gate, but she hadn't noticed him yet, though she seemed familiar.

"Du Lingfei?" he thought, a trace of shock on his face.

Just then, Du Lingfei also saw him, her jaw dropping. Then she noticed what he was wearing, furrowing her delicate eyebrows.

"Are you the last one in the team investigating Brother Hou's whereabouts?" she asked.

"Yes, what a coincidence..." he replied with a dry cough. Then he watched Du Lingfei walk toward the young man. Though his face showed no expression, a murderous aura burst from him, and the moment Yan Xiaobao saw him, he opened his eyes and glanced back with a mysterious smile.

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Chapter 1070: Like an Accident

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Yan Xiaobao's heart twitched. After analyzing the issue, he concluded that Qian Dajin's simplest approach would be to place a friend within the mission group. Then, once they all leave the sect, that friend could secretly strike against him.

At this moment, he found both Du Lingfei and this young man suspicious. However, he acted very relaxed, even smiling warmly at the young man.

"Yan Xiaobao is at your service," he said. "Brother, you are...?"

The young man smiled and replied: "Feng Yan from Green Peak."

Yan Xiaobao quickly clasped his hands tightly. "Oh, Brother Feng, I should have known it was you. At first glance, you are clearly an extraordinary individual. This is my first mission outside the sect, so I really hope you can show me how it's done, Brother Feng." Yan Xiaobao took only a moment to assess Feng Yan's cultivation base, which was at the seventh level of Qi Condensation.

"No problem. You're flattering me." A trace of disdain flashed in Feng Yan's eyes. He agreed to accept the mission solely because Inner Party Disciple Qian Dajin had promised him the profits of secretly assassinating Yan Xiaobao.

As far as he was concerned, this wasn't difficult. All he had to do was be careful and make it look accidental; Yan Xiaobao might as well be already dead.

The only thing he needed to watch out for was ensuring Du Lingfei didn't see him. Of course, because of Qian Dajin's involvement, he mostly trusted that Du Lingfei had taken the mission for his sake.

As for Du Lingfei, she was currently frowning. She never expected that accepting a mission outside the sect would trap her with someone she despised the most. After all, no one forced her to take this mission; she chose it herself. Though there could be some danger involved, it was a relatively simple mission and would grant reward points.

She had been stuck at the fifth level of Qi Condensation for quite some time and needed some Cloudsoaring Incense to break through, which certainly required points. When she thought about Cloudsoaring Incense, her disdain for Yan Xiaobao intensified.

"Lily mouse!" she thought, glaring at Yan Xiaobao with disgust. She especially despised the spherical appearance of all his clothes and the black iron pot, which made him seem even more afraid of death than ever before.

Coldly snorting, she completely ignored Yan Xiaobao, turned to Feng Yan, and clasped her fists.

"Brother Feng, now that we're all here, please deploy the wind vehicle. The sooner we finish this mission, the sooner we can return."

Feng Yan smiled slightly, then patted his satchel, causing a beam of white light to fly out. As the beam transformed into a small white boat about 6 meters long, a gust could be felt.

Waves of spiritual power emanated from the boat, creating an extraordinary pressure.

Yan Xiaobao took one look and immediately blurted out, "Mr. Feng, what is this?"

It was the first time he had seen such a thing. As the boat hovered in mid-air, it was clear it was some type of vehicle. Even as Du Lingfei's eyes flickered with disdain, Feng Yan laughed.

"This is a wind vehicle. When a task requires us to be a certain distance from the sect, we can rent ships from the sect to make things easier. We can save some of our own spiritual power at the cost of some spirit stones." Subsequently, he jumped up, then descended into the ship.

Du Lingfei hurriedly followed, as did Yan Xiaobao. The boat wasn't very large and was somewhat cramped, but still, there was enough space for the three of them. Yan Xiaobao sat at the back and began to study the ship more closely. The more he looked at it, the more he realized it truly was an incredible item.

"Someday," he murmured, "I will buy one for myself."

Seeing Yan Xiaobao look like a complete country bumpkin, Du Lingfei couldn't help but sarcastically say, "Even if you sell yourself into slavery, you couldn't afford it!"

Yan Xiaobao looked at Du Lingfei, lifted her up in his gaze, and then nodded.

"True. But if I sell you, I could definitely afford it."

"You!" Du Lingfei's phoenix-like eyes widened, just as Feng Yan caused the windscreen to fly far off from a prism-like light beam.

As they flew by at the fastest speed, racing through the sky, a shield appeared around the hull, forming a wind-proof barrier. Although they could hear the wind hitting the shield, inside the ship it was very calm.

Meanwhile, back at Fragrant Cloud Peak, at the Journeyman Apothecary Hall, Teacher Xu, who was responsible for supervising the tests, was looking at the jade sliding plate and frowning slightly.

"The Judicial Hall circumvented Xiangyun Peak to force Yan Xiaobao to accept an external mission?" After further inspecting the jade sliding plate, his frown gradually faded. After studying the task details, he realized that despite the potential dangers, it wasn't life-threatening.

Then he thought about what Li Qinghou mentioned regarding Yan Xiaobao's personality. "If the kid is somewhat lazy, then some punishment isn't unnecessary."

Finally, he set the jade sliding plate aside and continued blending medicines.

Meanwhile, Qian Dajin stood outside the Immortal Cave of the Inner Sect, watching the ship fly off into the distance, a hint of a cold smile on his face.

"With Feng Yan's cultivation base, secretly killing Yan Xiaobao should be as easy as flipping a hand. Yan Xiaobao... you may have special skills with plants and vegetation, but unfortunately, you will never have the chance to do anything. You're already dead!" A sinister gleam appeared deep within Qian Dajin's eyes. He smiled, turned around, and walked back to his Immortal Cave.