

My Master 411

Chapter 411: I Didn't Boast, Did I?_4

Elder Huan Kong didn't answer, but his meaning was very clear. Yes, you are asking for too much!

"Too much? I don't think it's too much at all. Just calculate how many people from Thousand Caves Door have achieved enlightenment through debating with me," Cao Zhen said, beginning to tally with his fingers. "At least one or two... about ten people, right?"

So many people, all of them Cave Masters, have achieved enlightenment because of me. How much has the strength of your Thousand Caves Door improved thanks to their enlightenment?

Could it be that Elder Huan Kong believes that the enlightenment of a Cave Master from your Thousand Caves Door is not as valuable as those Spirit Grasses?"

"I did not say that... Fine, we can provide the medicinal herbs that Peak Master Cao wants, but we do not have the Traceless Herb; Peak Master Cao will need to find another way for that."

Elder Huan Kong's heart was bleeding. He felt that Cao Zhen hadn't debated enough on the art of commerce; his haggling was completely that of a merchant!

These materials, even if their Thousand Caves Door were to give them away, would be painful to part with.

Yet, he couldn't really argue otherwise because, after all, Cao Zhen had indeed led many Cave Masters of their Thousand Caves Door to enlightenment.

Although he was one of the Elders of Thousand Caves Door, he didn't have the authority to use so many materials directly. After submitting an application to the Cave Master, he gave the materials to Cao Zhen quite quickly.

Receiving the medicinal herbs one by one, Cao Zhen's mood significantly improved. He said with a sincere face, "Elder, let me tell you the truth; actually, our visit wasn't specifically to engage in debates

with you. We just wanted to go to the Capital City to celebrate the coronation of the new emperor of the Guardian Immortal Imperial Dynasty. This was just on the way."

"Peak Master Cao, your requested herbs have been given to you. I'm old and have things to tend to, so I will not see you out," Elder Huan Kong said, his face as black as the bottom of a pot. What do you mean by this? Are you suggesting that just any envoy from Four Treasures Peak could overshadow our entire Thousand Caves Door at the Guardian Immortal Imperial Dynasty?

At this moment, he truly didn't want to see Cao Zhen any longer.

"Alright, alright, Elder Huan Kong, please feel free to attend to your matters," Cao Zhen said nonchalantly as he walked out, not caring much since he had already taken the herbs. Whether Elder Huan Kong believed him or not was no longer his concern.

As he walked, he turned to the side to ask Wu Jianzi, "What are your plans next? Are you going back to your Sword Sect?"

"No, I have already informed my master that I take you as my Pathfinder. In fact, this time I came down from the mountain for two reasons: one is to participate in debates, and the other is to attend the coronation of the new emperor in the Capital City of the Guardian Immortal Imperial Dynasty, just like you, Senior Cao."

"Oh? You're also going to attend the emperor's coronation? That's perfect; we can go together."

Elder Huan Kong's face suddenly turned even uglier. Sure enough, I knew it; you were in cahoots from the start. Now that you're leaving, you don't even bother to hide it, directly leaving together.

Watching a completely satisfied Cao Zhen turn around and leave, he couldn't help but feel uncomfortable no matter how he looked at it.

Cao Zhen came to their Thousand Caves Door and severely trampled on them—not just once, but countless times. And in the end, as Cao Zhen was leaving, they still had to thank him by rewarding him with a collection of precious medicinal herbs. What kind of situation was this!

After leaving Thousand Caves Door, Cao Zhen took out his Flying Boat and directly controlled it to fly toward the Capital City.

He had already planned to make Thousand Caves Door pay for this journey when he was crafting the Flying Boat, which is why this Flying Boat consumed more materials than the previous one and was also faster.

One day later, at Thousand Caves Door.

Although Cao Zhen had left, the debates between the various Immortal Sects had not ended. At the entrance of Thousand Caves Door, a team of Disciples still stood guard, waiting for others to come and debate.

At the entrance of Thousand Caves Door, a man wearing a bizarre long robe, half black and half white, approached and gave a salute: "Qing Mozi from the Pen and Ink Sect has come to debate at Thousand Caves Door."

"Please..." The Disciples of Thousand Caves Door quickly welcomed Qing Mozi into the Immortal Sect.

Elder Huan Kong was still in charge this time.

Soon, within Thousand Caves Door, thirty-six Cave Masters who were adept in calligraphy and painting prepared the Dao discussion platform with their Disciples.

Looking at the barely more than ten Disciples in front of the discussion platform, Qing Mozi shook his head slightly and said: "I'm pressed for time, so it's better if all those proficient in calligraphy and painting come together to debate."

Pressed for time!

Elder Huan Kong rubbed his forehead. Now, just hearing these three words made his head ache.

However, as hosts, they couldn't outright refuse someone who wanted to debate with them.

It didn't take long for the Cave Masters and their Disciples from the other thirty-five caves to arrive at the platform.

Qing Mozi stepped into the center of the platform, took out his personal writing and painting supplies, including pigments, from his Qiankun Bag, looked around, and said with an air of arrogance: "Fellow practitioners, when it comes to calligraphy and painting, our works speak for us. Let us do calligraphy and painting on the spot and see whose work is superior."

After a brief pause, he then addressed everyone around him: "All the Cave Masters from Thousand Caves Door are also invited to participate."

No sooner had he finished speaking than an angry expression appeared on the faces of the people from Thousand Caves Door—a display of arrogance!

This Qing Mozi was far too arrogant, as arrogant as Cao Zhen, challenging all the adepts of the art of calligraphy and painting of Thousand Caves Door directly.

Chapter 412: I Really Didn't Brag, Right?_5

Make a move?

There was no way their Cave Master would make a move.

To do so, even if it meant a victory over Qing Mozi's junior, would not sound good spreading out.

Moreover, their disciples had recently witnessed Cao Zhen painting and writing calligraphy. Although they hadn't achieved enlightenment, they had still gained quite a lot.

They wouldn't necessarily lose too miserably.

Indeed, they hadn't expected to win.

Although the Pen and Ink Sect was not one of the top ten Immortal Sects, and its overall strength couldn't compare with the Thousand Caves Door, the Pen and Ink Sect specialized in the cultivation of the Painting Way and Calligraphy Dao. When it came to these arts, their disciples stood almost no chance of defeating those carefully chosen by the Pen and Ink Sect to venture down the mountain.

However, they quickly realized that they were grossly mistaken.

Qing Mozi's calligraphy was exceptional.

Such writing was second only to Cao Zhen's, among those they had witnessed!

One by one, the Cave Masters looked at the writing before them and felt inferior.

"Worthy of being a high disciple of the Pen and Ink Sect in the way of calligraphy, we of the Thousand Caves Door admit defeat." Several Cave Masters of the Thousand Caves Door sportingly conceded.

Their disciples, losing to those of the Pen and Ink Sect, though ignominious, was not too shameful.

Qing Mozi, looking at the characters written by the disciples, whom the Cave Masters of the Thousand Caves Door had chosen to debate with him, shook his head dismissively, "To tell the truth, your writing is far too inferior.

Now, we are going to compete in the Painting Way, so Cave Masters, please make your move.

Rest assured, since it's I, Qing Mozi, who is actively requesting you to participate, I will not accuse you of bullying the weak. In fact, when I went to the Hundred Peaks Sect before, the Hundred Peaks Sect also sent a Peak Master to debate with me."

"Peak Master?"

"The Hundred Peaks Sect had a Peak Master debate with you?"

The people of the Thousand Caves Door showed surprise upon hearing this, but their hearts were somewhat joyful.

If the Hundred Peaks Sect sent a Peak Master to debate with someone's disciple, that would be considered bullying the weak; if the Hundred Peaks Sect were defeated, that would be a great embarrassment.

Qing Mozi wouldn't have mentioned this unless he had won, right? Except...

No, wait!

The expressions of the crowd changed abruptly. The Hundred Peaks Sect had Cao Zhen!

While Qing Mozi's calligraphy was indeed outstanding, Cao Zhen's writing had nearly reached the pinnacle. If the person sent by the Hundred Peaks Sect was Cao Zhen, then Qing Mozi surely wouldn't have won.

As if aware of what everyone was thinking, Qing Mozi continued, "At the time, I lost to that Peak Master. Afterwards, I was so impressed that I acknowledged Peak Master Cao as my Pathfinder right on the spot.

So, Cave Masters, please feel free to make a move. I, Qing Mozi, made the same request to other Immortal Sects to have seniors such as Peak Masters and Cave Masters engage with me. I, Qing Mozi, am prepared to face defeat."

"Pathfinder?"

The people of the Thousand Caves Door were shocked: "You're saying Cao Zhen is your Pathfinder?"

"Correct, it was under the guidance of Peak Master Cao's calligraphy and painting that I realized the path I should follow, hence I recognized Peak Master Cao as my Pathfinder," Qing Mozi asserted with a look of respect, smiling, "You've all heard of Peak Master Cao's great name as well, right? Such a person, even if he ranks as the Peak Master of the Hundredth Peak within the Hundred Peaks Sect, with his

talent, must have already been widely known. Unfortunately, I left the mountain too late, and only came to know of Peak Master Cao's existence when he intervened; I had even been disrespectful to Peak Master Cao before."

The faces of the people from the Thousand Caves Door had all turned to expressions of shock; Cao Zhen, that Cao Zhen, was no longer among them, yet they were still hearing tales of his name!

Qing Mozi actually recognized Cao Zhen as his Pathfinder!

Seemingly oblivious to the changes in the expressions around him, Qing Mozi continued with an admiring tone, "My achievements today are largely thanks to Peak Master Cao. In fact, before that, my understanding of calligraphy and painting wasn't as profound. But Peak Master Cao's calligraphy and painting led me to epiphanies. From then on, I understood much more.

Thereafter, as I traveled and debated with others, my knowledge of calligraphy and painting improved day by day, reaching the level I have today.

Still, my calligraphy and painting are far inferior to those of Peak Master Cao.

I wonder how much of Peak Master Cao's skill has been passed on to his disciple."

"Cao Zhen's disciple?" Elder Huan Kong finally spoke out, his voice slightly trembling. It was unclear whether he was frightened or angered by the mention of Cao Zhen's name.

"You didn't know? The Debate Team from the Hundred Peaks Sect has already descended the mountain and visited many Immortal Sects. Among them is a disciple called Xiang Ziyu, who is a disciple of Peak Master Cao. No matter which Immortal Sect or opponent he faces, he has never been defeated and is acclaimed as a Heavenly Pride who appears once in a millennium."

As Qing Mozi spoke, he seemed to realize something and mumbled to himself, "That's true, I only learned of Xiang Ziyu through the constant debates at various Immortal Sects. It's understandable that you haven't heard of him.

However, I believe it won't be long before you meet Brother Xiang Ziyu. Judging from the time, they should be nearing the Thousand Caves Door by now."

Elder Huan Kong was almost driven mad. Not only had Cao Zhen come to the Thousand Caves Door and triumphed, but now he had sent over the disciple whom he had acknowledged as a Pathfinder to trample over the Thousand Caves Door once more. And to top it off, he was sending another of his disciples over.

He...

Wait, what did Qing Mozi say just now?

He mentioned the Hundred Peaks Sect's Debate Team, so Cao Zhen was indeed not part of the Debate Team; he truly was a member of the delegation heading for the Capital City.

So he...

He's even more despicable!

Chapter 413: I Wasn't Bragging, Right_6

Traveling from the Hundred Peaks Sect to Capital City would not normally involve passing through Thousand Caves Door; on the contrary, it would pass by another Immortal Sect.

Yet Cao Zhen didn't go to other places; he specifically came to Thousand Caves Door. His intentions were clear—he was deliberately coming to Thousand Caves Door!

After Qing Mozi finished his lengthy speech, he remembered the true purpose of his visit today. He continued to address everyone, "All right, having said so much, let's finish our discussion on the Painting Way. All the Cave Masters, please feel free to make your moves."

As he spoke, he had already picked up his brush to start painting.

Elder Huan Kong understood the Painting Way but was not as adept as the various Cave Masters. He watched as Qing Mozi began to paint, waited a while, and when Qing Mozi's painting began to take shape, he secretly asked the Cave Masters in charge of painting caves, "Fellow Masters, how is Qing Mozi's painting? Do we have any chance of victory?"

He could tell that Qing Mozi's level was extremely high and also realized that none of their disciples from Thousand Caves Door could defeat Qing Mozi in the Painting Way.

Since Qing Mozi had mentioned going to other Immortal Sects and how people of higher status from those sects would take action, it was natural for Thousand Caves Door to let their Cave Masters take part as well, but only if they could defeat Qing Mozi.

"Difficult..."

The brows of the Cave Masters from the painting caves furrowed tightly as Qing Mozi's painting neared completion, their expressions becoming increasingly grim.

"We are probably no match for him."

"Given more time, I might not be weaker than him, but due to the enlightenment from Cao Zhen's painting, it has been only a few days..."

Hearing the Cave Masters' words, Huan Kong cursed inwardly, calling it a cunning plot.

Cao Zhen was too cunning; he must have known that two of their Cave Masters had an enlightenment because of him, so he quickly had Qing Mozi come to debate.

After all, enlightenment was a momentary thing, but fully understanding the content of enlightenment and improving completely because of it also took time.

Cao Zhen was exploiting this exact period!

"Forget it, if none of you are confident, then let's not take action."

Thousand Caves Door had lost another debate.

The Cave Masters all admitted that their paintings were no match for Qing Mozi's, not to mention their disciples.

Qing Mozi came in haste and left just as quickly.

However, a day after his departure, someone from Thousand Caves Door came forward to debate once more, this time on the way of Military Law.

Moreover, like Qing Mozi, the disciple from War Edge Sect, Jiang Yan, also demanded that all the Military Law disciples gather together for a collective debate of Doctrine at the Thousand Caves Door.

On the vast Dao discussion platform, the disciples from the Military Tactics Cave fell one by one in less than half an hour before Jiang Yan.

Full of sighs, Jiang Yan shook his head, "Your disciples are far too lacking. The way of Military Law cannot tolerate a single mistake..."

With that, he looked up at the Cave Masters and said, "I wonder if the fellow Cave Masters would like to discuss the Dao with me? Along my journey, I have discussed the Military Law with the elders from various Immortal Sects."

The Cave Masters from the Military Law Cave exchanged glances, feeling puzzled; what was with the people coming to debate this time? Why were they all so arrogant, so keen on challenging the Cave Masters?

After pondering for a moment, Cave Master Qi Bing stepped forward and declared, "Since that is the case, this Cave Master will engage with you in a discussion on the path of Military Law."

Their Cave Master was reluctant to make a move, but the problem was, they of the Thousand Caves Door had been losing continuously, and they truly needed a victory.

Speaking of which, he even owed his thanks to Cao Zhen, for it was through Cao Zhen that he had an enlightenment, and his understanding of the path of Military Law deepened considerably; moreover, Cao Zhen had also shared some knowledge on the path of Military Law that day.

He was sufficiently confident in his ability to defeat Jiang Yan.

He quickly ascended the Dao discussion platform and, looking at Jiang Yan, loudly pronounced, "The military is a matter of vital importance to the state, the ground of life and death, the path of survival or ruin. It must be thoroughly examined."

Jiang Yan was instantly stunned, staring blankly at Cave Master Qi Bing. Weren't these the opening lines from the military treatise that Peak Master Cao had given him? How did Cave Master Qi Bing know about them?

Several Cave Masters from the surrounding spiritual seats nodded subtly to each other, as after their debate with Cao Zhen, they had specifically studied the path of Military Law that Cao Zhen had spoken of.

It was perfect for confronting Jiang Yan, and indeed, judging by Jiang Yan's reaction, he was clearly shaken.

The Thousand Caves Door could finally secure a victory.

Jiang Yan was bewildered for quite some time before he asked with surprise and suspicion, "Have you also read 'The Art of War by Sun Tzu'?"

"What 'The Art of War by Sun Tzu'?" Cave Master Qi Bing looked at Jiang Yan with a befuddled expression.

"The words you just spoke, they are the beginning of Sun Tzu's 'The Art of War,'" Jiang Yan asserted directly, "Therefore, measure in terms of five things, use these assessments to make comparisons, and thus find out what the situation is: The first is moral influence, the second is weather, the third is terrain, the fourth is command, and the fifth is doctrine."

Cave Master Qi Bing was also taken aback; these words had been spoken by Cao Zhen too. So, the words Cao Zhen said were taken from 'The Art of War' and were then used against them?

"So those words come from 'The Art of War,'" Cave Master Qi Bing sighed and said, "We have not seen 'The Art of War' but some days ago we encountered a Peak Master from the Hundred Peaks Sect. He debated with us and mentioned these words. We were greatly enlightened and remembered some of them."

Although they lost to Cao Zhen, it was because of him that they came to know these words, and because of him, they gained a deeper comprehension of what the path of Military Law is; they too would acknowledge this!

Jiang Yan came to a sudden realization: "I see, so it was because you met with Peak Master Cao. No wonder you knew these phrases; in all likelihood, no one else in the world knows these words besides Peak Master Cao."

"What do you mean by that?" Cave Master Qi Bing felt a premonition of something bad.

Jiang Yan folded his hands in salute, raising them above his head and declared with utmost respect, "Peak Master Cao granted me 'The Art of War' to study, and it was only after seeing 'The Art of War' that I understood what the true path of Military Law was, realizing how limited and narrow my previous understanding of Military Law had been.

It was after I saw 'The Art of War' that I completely confirmed my own Military Law path."

Elder Huan Kong, listening to Jiang Yan's words, found them increasingly familiar and couldn't help but ask, "So, you acknowledge Cao Zhen as your Pathfinder?"

"Exactly," Jiang Yan nodded emphatically, "Though I have not yet returned to the Sect, I have already informed my Master, and he too has approved of Peak Master Cao being my Pathfinder."

Elder Huan Kong instantly threw his head back, they had been duped again; they had fallen for it yet another time. This Jiang Yan had also recognized Cao Zhen as a Pathfinder.

Jiang Yan had said it himself: Cao Zhen directly handed over 'The Art of War' to him, whereas Cave Master Qi Bing and the others had only heard a few phrases from Cao Zhen. One had seen the complete Military Law, and one had only heard a portion of it; wasn't the outcome of who would be victorious or defeated obvious?

He just couldn't understand—just how many people had Cao Zhen become Pathfinder for? Whoever came as a Pathfinder, it was Cao Zhen. Whoever came for a Dao debate, the Pathfinder was Cao Zhen!

Chapter 414: Grand Preceptor, I am Now the Peak Master of Four Treasures Peak_1

Cao Zhen's newly refined Flying Boat was significantly stronger than before, and it also benefitted from the addition of Wu Jianzi.

He had never known what realm of cultivation Wu Jianzi belonged to until Wu Jianzi began to control the Flying Boat. It was then that he realized Wu Jianzi had reached the Perfect Completion Golden Core stage.

Ten Golden Cores, each one an exceptional Golden Core!

The Flying Boat, naturally, operated based on the controller's cultivation base—the higher the cultivation, the faster the flight speed.

The group left the Thousand Caves Door and arrived at the Capital City in only seven days, much faster than they had anticipated.

During this journey, Cao Zhen had seen many cities, with several being prosperous. However, neither the bustling Set Soil City nor the provincial Yong Feng City could compare to the Capital City.

Astounding!

From atop the Flying Boat, he could see the outline of the Capital City in the distance, and the only thought echoing in his mind was of shock.

Majestic and imposing.

From the Flying Boat, it was apparent that the Capital City was a perfect square, surrounded by towering walls that stretched into the distance. By estimation, any one side of the city's walls spanned over a hundred miles.

"Let's descend," Lan Pili suddenly spoke after the Flying Boat had been flying down for a while, "According to the rules of the Guardian Immortal Imperial Dynasty, within ten miles of the Capital City, unless under special circumstances, no one is allowed to fly above ground."

Cao Zhen nodded in understanding. There had been flight regulations on Earth, so it was not surprising for the Guardian Immortal Imperial Dynasty to have similar rules.

After securing the Flying Boat, he stepped down and, like Wu Jianzi and the others, started walking toward the Capital City.

The official road outside the Capital City was exceptionally wide. He estimated that even eight horse-drawn carriages could travel side by side without issue.

Even before entering the Capital City, he could sense its prosperity.

Along the official roads, there was a constant stream of travelers, and it was evident that these people were living comfortably—at least their clothes bore no patches, nor did he see anyone who seemed malnourished or emaciated.

Cao Zhen nodded slightly. In such an ancient agricultural society, being able to provide enough food for the people was no easy feat. Other places aside, judging from this area alone, the Grand Preceptor seemed to manage the Guardian Immortal Imperial Dynasty quite well.

Eventually, he reached the outskirts of the Capital City.

The Capital City of the Guardian Immortal Imperial Dynasty, with its lofty walls and a lengthy moat encircling it, appeared much like those of ancient Earth.

Beneath the towering city gates, two squads of soldiers guarded each entrance, inspecting the travel permits of everyone seeking to enter.

Cao Zhen once again sensed the distinctiveness of the Guardian Immortal Imperial Dynasty, the equality between Immortals and commoners.

The gates of the Capital City had no special entrances for Immortals; there was only one entrance per gate, and Immortals, too, had to queue and await their turn with the common folk.

The Capital City was indeed bustling—on every side it had eight gates, making thirty-two gates in total. But even so, Cao Zhen and his entourage waited approximately the time it takes an incense stick to burn before it was their turn to enter.

After inspecting the document Lan Pili presented, the soldiers guarding the gate stepped aside and pointed inward, saying, "After entering the city, continue straight for ten miles, then turn left into Immortal Hosting Street. Keep going along the road, and you will find the Immortal Market."

Lan Pili did not reply but simply nodded in acknowledgment before leading Cao Zhen and the others into the city.

The moment they entered, Wu Jianzi turned to Cao Zhen with a polite fist and palm salute, "Elder Cao, during this visit to the Capital City, I must meet with an old friend of my Master. After I have seen the Elder, I will find you at the Immortal Market."

"No trouble at all, attend to your matters first," Cao Zhen gestured with his hand in farewell to Wu Jianzi, then continued walking in the Guardian Immortal Imperial Dynasty's most important city.

The streets within the Capital City were also extraordinarily wide, yet walking here sometimes still required dodging pedestrians.

There were simply too many people in the Capital City.

He remembered seeing a report on Earth that, at the height of its prosperity, Chang'an City of the Tang Dynasty had a population of a million people.

He did not know how many people lived in this Capital City, but judging from the crowds he saw along the way, he felt the population here must far exceed that of ancient Chang'an City.

Because there were so many people and flying was not an option, their progress on foot was slow. Moreover, as it was the disciples' first time in the Capital City, they too were astonished by its prosperity and walked curiously, looking around just like Cao Zhen.

The group walked for the time it takes two incense sticks to burn before they finally arrived at the Immortal Market.

Cao Zhen previously thought Yong Feng City's Immortal Market was large enough, but now, after arriving in the Capital City, he realized what truly large meant.

Though the Grand Preceptor always said that Immortals were no different from mortals, it was evident that the Immortal Market was distinct from other buildings.

Clearly, the Grand Preceptor knew that despite treating Immortals the same as mortals, the daily cultivation practices of Immortal Cultivation practitioners or their other activities still could affect the common people, so a separate area for the Immortal Market was still designated.

No sooner had the Hundred Peaks Sect disciples approached the entrance of the Immortal Market than a middle-aged man in official attire, who looked utterly ordinary except for the constant smile on his face, came forward to greet them. This smile wasn't obsequious but rather one of warmth.

Chapter 415: Grand Preceptor, I am Now the Peak Master of Four Treasures Peak_2

He gave a cupped fist salute to everyone and said, "Capital City, Immortal Reception House Master, Du Changsheng greets all of you. May I know from which Immortal Sect do you hail?"

"We are from the Hundred Peaks Sect." Lan Pili once again produced the documents given by the Hundred Peaks Sect when they left, handing them over to Du Changsheng.

After taking a quick glance at the documents, Du Changsheng returned them to Lan Pili and said, "So you are immortals from the Hundred Peaks Sect. Please come inside, we have already reserved a separate residence for the Hundred Peaks Sect."

The Guardian Immortal Imperial Dynasty's new emperor was ascending the throne, and the Grand Preceptor had invited all the Immortal Sects within the Guardian Immortal Imperial Dynasty. At the same time, the people from Immortal Reception House had also arranged accommodation for each sect.

Cao Zhen and Lan Pili followed Du Changsheng, heading towards their lodgings.

As they walked, Lan Pili casually asked Du Changsheng, "May I know which sects from the Guardian Immortal Imperial Dynasty have already arrived?"

"People from the Four Extremes Sect and Tai Yi Gate, which are also among the top ten Immortal Sects, have already arrived, and besides them, there are also the Dual Polarity Sect, Clearfall Sect..." Du Changsheng did not hesitate and started listing the names of various Immortal Sects.

"Oh, it seems that not even half have arrived yet. It looks like our Hundred Peaks Sect is actually quite early," Lan Pili remarked as they arrived at a separate residence and stopped.

Pointing towards the residence, Du Changsheng said, "My friends, this will be your separate residence. If you have any problems, feel free to come to me. I will not go in, so you may allocate the rooms amongst yourselves."

As one of the top ten Immortal Sects, the Hundred Peaks Sect indeed held some clout, having been assigned an entire separate residence exclusively for their members.

Cao Zhen didn't particularly care where he stayed; as for the others, it was not his concern, and everything would be arranged by Lan Pili anyway.

After everyone had allocated their rooms, just as they were about to enter and check the progress of their disciples' talisman crafting, alchemy, and artifact refining using the Zhonghua Cloud, a voice carried over to them.

"I heard that the Hundred Peaks Sect has arrived; may I know which Dao Companion it is?"

"Would the Dao Companion from the Hundred Peaks Sect step out for a greeting?"

The voice was clearly coming from outside the separate residence.

Cao Zhen opened his door and stepped out again, only to see Lan Pili, who had also emerged.

"Peak Master Cao, as we are both the principal envoy and deputy envoy, let's welcome these Dao Companions together," Lan Pili suggested to Cao Zhen, then explained, "These are people from other Immortal Sects who, knowing that the Hundred Peaks Sect has arrived, specifically came to see who is leading the group."

Cao Zhen, with indifference, shrugged his shoulders and stepped out.

Suddenly, he stopped short, surprised to find more than thirty people standing outside the residence. He initially thought there would be around ten people, but there were unexpectedly far more.

Did they have so much free time that they weren't cultivating? Knowing that people from the Hundred Peaks Sect had arrived, they immediately came over.

Cao Zhen scanned the crowd but couldn't recognize anyone, not even knowing which sects they belonged to or how many sects these thirty-plus people represented.

They didn't know these people, and these people also didn't know him, but many knew Lan Pili.

Among the group, a man dressed in a black robe, sporting a goatee, with a lean figure, addressed Lan Pili, "I wondered which Dao Companion from the Hundred Peaks Sect had come. It turns out to be Peak Master Lan.

Peak Master Lan, this person accompanying you, who might that be?"

Cao Zhen found the man's tone somewhat strange, as there was a hint of sarcasm.

Lan Pili gestured towards Cao Zhen and introduced, "This is Peak Master Cao from the Four Treasures Peak of our Hundred Peaks Sect."

"Oh? So it's Cao Sibao." The man turned to Cao Zhen and saluted with a cupped fist, smiling, "Speaking of which, I've met quite a few peak masters from the Hundred Peaks Sect, but this is the first time I am meeting one from the Four Treasures Peak, even the previous peak master.

After all, it seems that the people from Four Treasures Peak seldom venture out of the mountains."

Cao Zhen frowned slightly. It was his first time being addressed as Cao Sibao, which wasn't particularly flattering or commonly used.

This person had just arrived and immediately started calling him by this moniker. Although such a reference was not outright offensive, it was clearly deliberate.

Having no relation with this man and just meeting him for the first time, the man had already started the mockery, obviously, the reason lay with Lan Pili standing beside him.

Cao Zhen sent a mental message asking, "Old Lan, do you have a conflict with him?"

As the time spent with Lan Pili increased, their casual references to each other had become Old Lan and Old Cao.

"I have a small conflict with him, but a bigger one lies with our Hundred Peaks Sect," Lan Pili explained secretly. "This man is the Pavilion Master of Thunderbolt Tower from the Clearfall Sect, Li Qinglei.

"Our Hundred Peaks Sect is divided into one hundred peaks, whereas the Clearfall Sect is made up of forty-nine pavilions, with Thunderbolt Tower ranking thirty-ninth."

Cao Zhen soon understood and asked secretly, "Are you saying that our Hundred Peaks Sect has a conflict with their Clearfall Sect?"

"Exactly," Lan Pili said. "Although the Clearfall Sect did not make it into the top ten Immortal Sects, it remains just below that tier.

When the top ten Immortal Sects were chosen, our Hundred Peaks Sect was going through a low period. However, thanks to the profound foundation of our sect, we still made it among the top ten."

Chapter 416: Grand Preceptor, I am Now the Peak Master of Four Treasures Peak_3

At that time, the Clearfall Sect was on the rise, and they always believed that they could become one of the top ten Immortal Sects. Yet, it was our Hundred Peaks Sect that ended up being one of the top ten, leaving the Clearfall Sect out in the cold.

Of course, the Clearfall Sect wouldn't accept this lying down. From then on, they compared themselves to our Hundred Peaks Sect at every turn. Whenever there was a chance, they would definitely try to outdo us.

"I understand now. The Thousand Caves Door wants to compete with us to see who is the number one Mixed Clan in the Guardian Immortal Imperial Dynasty, while the Clearfall Sect wants to oust our Hundred Peaks Sect to become one of the top ten Immortal Sects."

Cao Zhen asked somewhat curiously, "So, how bad is our relationship with them?" He had already seen the relationship between his Hundred Peaks Sect and the Thousand Caves Door. Although there was competition, it was still a gentlemanly one.

Lan Pili explained, "It's about the same as with the Thousand Caves Door, or perhaps, a bit worse. However, even with the struggles, we're all esteemed and virtuous sects. It's more about outcompeting

the other. Although there's certainly no shortage of scheming against each other, no one really goes so far as to harm one another."

As the two conversed, Li Qinglei had already started addressing the crowd, "Fellow Dao Companions, perhaps some of you are unclear about who Peak Master Lan is. Allow me to introduce him to everyone.

Everyone should know that the Hundred Peaks Sect has one hundred peaks, and among them, Peak Master Lan is the Peak Master of Lightning Peak, which I remember is ranked ninety-third."

While speaking, he put on an expression as if he had just suddenly remembered something, as if struck by a realization, and said, "Oh right, it seems that the Hundred Peaks Sect has just re-ranked its peaks. Peak Master Lan, what is Lightning Peak's current ranking?"

"Still Ninety-Three Peak." Lan Pili looked annoyed at Li Qinglei. The other's intention was clear: he was deliberately using Lightning Peak's ranking to make a point.

Around them, many who didn't recognize Lan Pili heard this and instantly understood. Ninety-Three Peak was among the lower ten peaks of the Hundred Peaks Sect.

Although the Hundred Peaks Sect was one of the top ten Immortal Sects, there was a big difference in the strength of its peaks. The strength of the Peak Masters of the Top Ten Peaks or even the Upper Fifty Peaks naturally went without saying.

But as for the lower fifty peaks, especially the lower ten peaks, their Peak Masters' strength was much, much inferior. Some were not even among the strongest in minor sects and clans.

Lan Pili, being only the Peak Master of Ninety-Three Peak, meant that this time the Hundred Peaks Sect's mission likely would not be led by him. So, was it all resting on a Peak Master of a mere spiritual place?

Many eyes turned to Cao Zhen.

They were aware that the Hundred Peaks Sect had one hundred peaks, and they knew that Flying Immortal Peak was the strongest. They were aware of the presence of Five Elements Peak, and they also knew about the Top Ten Peaks of the Hundred Peaks Sect.

Beyond that, at most, they were familiar with the Top Twenty Peaks of the Hundred Peaks Sect, or the names of the Top Twenty Peaks sounded familiar to them.

But as for the rankings of other peaks, they were not so clear.

After all, with so many Immortal Sects in the Guardian Immortal Dynasty, and with ten major Immortal Sects to consider, it was impossible for them to be well-informed about every single sect.

As the crowd's gaze moved towards him, Li Qinglei also looked at Cao Zhen, with a smile on his face, he asked, "I wonder what the ranking of your Four Treasures Peak is now within the Hundred Peaks Sect?"

Cao Zhen answered calmly, "Our Four Treasures Peak is ranked one hundredth."

One hundredth?

Many people around were stunned. If Lightning Peak, ranked ninety-third, was already quite low, then a ranking of one hundred was, frankly, as low as it could possibly get.

Even if this person was a Peak Master of the Hundred Peaks Sect, being last on the list meant there was a limit to how powerful he could be.

A Peak Master ranked one hundredth would be the weakest among all the envoys and deputy envoys present, and it was likely that many disciples were stronger than this Peak Master of the Hundredth Peak.

What was going on with the Hundred Peaks Sect this time?

Even though an envoy mission wouldn't send their strongest people, they should send someone at least somewhat competent, right?

A Peak Master of the Ninety-Three Peak and another of the Hundredth Peak—what did this mean? What was the Hundred Peaks Sect thinking?

"One hundredth peak..." Li Qinglei chuckled lightly, without saying more, but the implication was clear to everyone.

When Lan Pili saw Li Qinglei's reaction, a roar of anger rose in his heart, and he grumbled dissatisfiedly, "Li Qinglei, if you're going to speak, do it properly. What's this supposed to mean? Looking down on us? Ridiculous, you yourself are only the Pavilion Master of the thirty-ninth rank."

Their Clearfall Sect totaled forty-nine pavilions, or say fifty pavilions. Converted to their Hundred Peaks Sect standard, that would be about the level of the eightieth pavilion.

If it weren't for the special circumstances of this Hundred Peaks grand competition where there was no competition among Peak Masters, his Lightning Peak could have surely risen to around the eightieth rank.

Moreover, there was Peak Master Cao nearby.

He still had some trouble understanding how Peak Master Cao's Four Treasures Peak had fallen to the last place.

If the disciples of Peak Master Cao had performed normally and had the right tactics, even if they couldn't push into the Upper Fifty Peaks, reaching somewhere in the fifties or sixties should have been no problem at all.

For the Pavilion Master of the thirty-ninth pavilion of the Clearfall Sect to mock their ranking, Li Qinglei was the real joke.

"My Thunderbolt Tower is ranked thirty-ninth, but no matter how you look at it, it's a bit higher than your Lightning Peak." Li Qinglei sneered, then continued with a strange tone, "Now that the disciples of all the great Immortal Sects have descended the mountain to exchange their opinions, I imagine many have made their way to your Hundred Peaks Sect. I wonder, how many rounds has your Hundred Peaks Sect won in these discussions?"

Chapter 417: Grand Preceptor, I am Now the Peak Master of Four Treasures Peak_4

Disciples would descend the mountain to discuss Dao. In general, the disciples of a Sect who follow the same Dao would go to discuss it with each other, for surely one cannot go and debate with those of another Sect who may practice the Dao of spearmanship when one practices the Sword Dao or the Dao of painting and calligraphy.

However, it is different for a Mixed Clan like the Hundred Peaks Sect or the Thousand Caves Door. A Mixed Clan has disciples following almost every kind of Dao; if your Immortal Sect practices a particular Dao, others will come to discuss that Dao with you.

Take the Military God Peak, for example. The Hundred Peaks Sect has only this one peak following the Military Law path, yet those who practice the Military Law path would still engage in discussions.

Therefore, every time there's a discussion of Dao, the various Mixed Clans often find it quite brutal.

After all, their heritage is too mixed and heterogeneous, which makes it hard for them to excel at any one thing.

Lan Pili burst into laughter upon hearing Li Qinglei's question, "How many did our Hundred Peaks Sect win? I'll give you..."

Before Lan Pili could finish speaking, Du Changsheng, who had not been away for long, hurried back. Seeing the gathered crowd, he showed no sign of surprise.

After all, whenever someone from an Immortal Sect arrived previously, those who had already arrived would go to see who it was.

The arrival of the Hundred Peaks Sect, one of the Top Ten Immortal Sects, made it all the more normal for individuals from other sects to come and look.

He didn't pay attention to these people from other sects, but quickly walked up to Lan Pili and bowed, saying, "Peak Master Lan, the Grand Preceptor summons you."

"The Grand Preceptor?" Lan Pili was momentarily stupefied.

The surrounding people were all equally stunned.

The Grand Preceptor wanted to see someone from the Hundred Peaks Sect? Generally speaking, after they arrived in the Capital City and settled down, they would all pay a visit to the Grand Preceptor.

They all had paid their respects to the Grand Preceptor, but none of them had actually seen him.

They even suspected that with the Qiankun small epoch approaching, perhaps the Grand Preceptor couldn't suppress it and had fallen into slumber.

After all, the Grand Preceptor's strength was truly terrifying.

But now, the Grand Preceptor had taken the initiative to summon Lan Pili of the Hundred Peaks Sect, which clearly meant he hadn't fallen asleep.

Within their Sects, many masters had already gone into slumber, and those who hadn't were wary of exposing themselves, fearing detection by the Heavenly Dao, and had gone into seclusion instead.

The Grand Preceptor's strength was even greater, and yet he had not only managed to stay awake but also actively summoned others!

Moreover, it was peculiar that the Grand Preceptor wanted to meet with Lan Pili. Why him?

If it were a Peak Master from the Top Ten Peaks of the Hundred Peaks Sect who had come, it would have made slightly more sense for the Grand Preceptor to summon them.

Lan Pili was merely a Peak Master of the Ninety-Three Peak, what merit did he have to be summoned by the Grand Preceptor?

Was it just because he belonged to one of the Top Ten Immortal Sects?

Now, only the Hundred Peaks Sect among the Top Ten Immortal Sects had arrived; both the Four Extremes Sect and Tai Yi Gate, also listed among the Top Ten, had sent their representatives, yet there was no sign of the Grand Preceptor summoning them.

Pointing to himself in disbelief, Lan Pili asked, "The Grand Preceptor wants to see me?"

As far as he knew, the Grand Preceptor seldom met with anyone, so why would he summon him?

With certainty, Du Changsheng nodded and said, "That's right, the Grand Preceptor wants to see you. Not just Peak Master Lan, but also Peak Master Cao, as well as everyone from the Hundred Peaks Sect, the Grand Preceptor wishes to see all of you."

"What!"

Surprised, those around exclaimed in shock — not only was the Grand Preceptor summoning Lan Pili, he wanted to see the other members of the Hundred Peaks Sect as well, even the disciples!

What was the Grand Preceptor planning to do?

Seeing Lan Pili still in a daze, Du Changsheng hastily urged, "Peak Master Lan, please hurry."

"Yes, Peak Master Lan, let us set off quickly. It's not good to keep the Grand Preceptor waiting," added Cao Zhen, nudging Lan Pili to move faster as he himself was eager to ask the Grand Preceptor for favors.

"Let's go, I will take our disciples there immediately," said Lan Pili as he called over to the disciples of the Hundred Peaks Sect, still full of doubts. The Grand Preceptor summoning them?

Was it because of what they did on the way?

But that seemed improbable.

Though they had done quite a few things, that was the Grand Preceptor — a few words of encouragement would have sufficed, why would he summon them in person?

Filled with questions, Lan Pili promptly followed Du Changsheng out of the Immortal Reception House.

The people of the Hundred Peaks Sect left, yet the members from the other Immortal Sects didn't disperse, instead gathering at a distance, discussing in hushed tones.

"What do you think, why would the Grand Preceptor expressly summon the people from the Hundred Peaks Sect alone?"

"It doesn't make sense; he wants to meet not only the Peak Masters from the Hundred Peaks Sect but even the disciples."

"Actually, we all know why we've come to Capital City this time. No one has sent their strongest members, but don't you think the two Peak Masters sent by the Hundred Peaks Sect are a bit weak?"

"Indeed, a Peak Master from Ninety-Three Peak and another from the Hundredth Peak, what does that count for? At the very least, they should have sent a Peak Master from a peak ranked in the seventies to lead the group."

"Yet, that's how the Hundred Peaks Sect operates, and the Grand Preceptor wants to see them, which is an obvious sign of him lifting up the Hundred Peaks Sect!"

"I still don't understand, why would the Grand Preceptor specifically favor the Hundred Peaks Sect?" Li Qinglei's face showed a complex expression, and there was even a hint of envy.

The people from the various Immortal Sects of the Guardian Immortal Imperial Dynasty had a complex feeling towards the entire persona of the Grand Preceptor.

To them, the Grand Preceptor was indeed someone who was a headache and even detestable, yet everyone had to admit that the Grand Preceptor was the foremost person of the Guardian Immortal Imperial Dynasty.

Being summoned by the Grand Preceptor was undeniably a matter of great pride.

"What has the Hundred Peaks Sect recently done to warrant a summons from the Grand Preceptor?"

Chapter 418: Grand Preceptor, I am Now the Peak Master of Four Treasures Peak_5

"I don't know, I haven't heard of the Hundred Peaks Sect doing anything significant lately."

"Let's head back first and gather some information."

"We'll go back and do some investigating too."

After discussing, everyone went their separate ways.

After Cao Zhen and the others left the Immortal Reception House, they, led by Du Changsheng, boarded carriages and went off into the distance.

The Capital City was really too vast, even riding in carriages it took them half an hour before the carriages finally came to a stop.

Cao Zhen looked up and an expression of surprise crossed his face upon seeing the residence in front of them.

Before them, they were neither within the Imperial Palace nor at a particularly vast estate; instead, it was a rather ordinary-looking residence.

He could tell that the area was residential, likely where the officials of the Guardian Immortal Imperial Dynasty lived, but this residence, at least from the outside, did not appear to be much larger than the others.

Outside the residence, a servant who seemed to have no cultivation base at all saw the arriving carriages, and after everyone alighted, he turned and pushed open the door, saying, "The master is waiting for you inside, please come in."

Cao Zhen and the others stepped into the courtyard.

It was evident that this yard was inhabited year-round, as it was filled with traces of daily life; however, the style of the yard and the pavilions and buildings within it showed that the residence had been standing for a long time.

With the servant guiding them, they made their way to a guest hall.

Cao Zhen finally met the Grand Preceptor, the most prominent figure of the Guardian Immortal Imperial Dynasty.

At the high seat of the hall, the Grand Preceptor looked exactly as he had on the day Cao Zhen saw him, except that today, the Grand Preceptor was dressed in the simplest of linen robes, emitting no intimidating aura whatsoever. However, the disciples from the Hundred Peaks Sect, upon seeing the Grand Preceptor, felt an invisible pressure bear down on them, like children who had erred and then faced their strict tutor. They even dared not breathe too heavily after entering the hall.

"Please have a seat," the Grand Preceptor gestured casually, and the visitors carefully took their seats on the chairs that had been prepared for them.

Once he was fully seated, Cao Zhen looked back at Lan Pili and the disciples, sighing inwardly, is this necessary?

The disciples hardly allowed themselves to sit properly in the chairs, was it necessary to be so frightened?

The Grand Preceptor, no matter how powerful, was still human.

Besides, he was there to settle accounts with the Grand Preceptor!

If they lost their nerve, how could they confront the Grand Preceptor about their grievances?

The Grand Preceptor's gaze swept over everyone and he nodded slightly, "You have done well. I am aware of what happened on the road.

It pleases me that you stepped forward to protect the citizens of the Guardian Immortal Imperial Dynasty when they were in danger.

In our Guardian Immortal Imperial Dynasty, good deeds are always rewarded. I have already ordered the rewards to be prepared according to our laws. Peak Master Lan, you may now return to the Immortal Reception House, where someone will give the rewards to the Hundred Peaks Sect."

"Thank you, Grand Preceptor."

Everyone quickly bowed in thanks.

Lan Pili was somewhat puzzled, was the Grand Preceptor's summoning truly just for the deeds they had done on the road?

After uttering those few words, he allowed them to leave; there seemed no need to summon them at all.

The rewards could be collected back at the Immortal Reception House; they didn't need to come here for that.

As he was wondering, the Grand Preceptor's calm voice, devoid of any fluctuations, came again.

"Peak Master Cao, please remain. I have something to discuss with you."

Lan Pili froze instantly. The Grand Preceptor wanted to see Cao Zhen? Alone? What could the Grand Preceptor possibly have to discuss with Cao Zhen?

The Grand Preceptor rarely summoned anyone, and when he did, the meetings were brief.

But now, keeping someone back alone – that was extremely rare.

Though puzzled, Lan Pili did not dare to linger any longer and quickly led the disciples out of the hall.

Once out of the hall, and as the door closed behind them, he let out a long breath and turned back to see that many of the disciples' clothes were drenched with sweat.

The Grand Preceptor, although he had only exchanged a few words with them – words of encouragement at that – had everyone on edge.

Lan Pili felt his own back was somewhat wet, let alone the disciples.

Suddenly, he began to realize something.

The Grand Preceptor summoned them in such a hurry, only to speak a sentence before letting them go, yet he retained Peak Master Cao. In other words, the Grand Preceptor did not truly wish to summon them; it was mainly for Cao Zhen. They were merely brought along incidentally.

What does the Grand Preceptor want to discuss with Peak Master Cao?

In the room, the Grand Preceptor gently picked up the teacup and took a light sip, looking at Cao Zhen who was still standing nearby and said with a smile, "Sit down and have some tea."

Cao Zhen glanced at the teapot placed to the side, gently picked it up, poured into his own teacup, and then picked it up and took a sip.

Since only the two of them were in the room now, he naturally had to pour and drink the tea by himself.

After Cao Zhen set down the teacup, the Grand Preceptor finally began to speak, "I must thank you for the matter concerning Tuoyu."

"The Grand Preceptor is being too polite; it really wasn't a big deal," Cao Zhen immediately perked up, the serious matter was beginning.

"No, this thank you still needs to be said," The Grand Preceptor's eyes, which appeared no more ordinary than any others, gazed toward Cao Zhen, slowly beginning to speak, "If it weren't for you, my disciple might have died. Even if she didn't die, she would have been lucky to survive but would end up crippled.

It's precisely because of your presence that her cultivation base was barely preserved. She just needs to slowly continue her cultivation for a period of time, and she can recover."

Cao Zhen wasn't surprised at all that the Grand Preceptor knew all of this; with Tuoyu close to death after such a major incident, it would've been impossible for Fang Tuojie not to report everything to the Grand Preceptor.

Not to mention him concocting pills, Fang Tuojie probably even told the Grand Preceptor about his heretical Golden Core.

However, those were not the main point. The point was...

Cao Zhen looked at the Grand Preceptor and asked with a smile, "Then, Grand Preceptor, how do you intend to thank me?"

The Grand Preceptor seemed somewhat surprised by Cao Zhen's directness, a look of astonishment crossing his face. After a brief moment of thought, he spoke in a low voice, "How about this, I will give you three days' time, during which you will not leave my side."

Cao Zhen was momentarily taken aback, then swiftly realized the significance. Such a reward was truly generous!

The Grand Preceptor, being the foremost expert of the Guardian Immortal Imperial Dynasty, would allow him to be by his side for three days straight, 24 hours each day, observing the Grand Preceptor's everyday routine.

Observing the every action of such a master is in itself a form of cultivation. As for how much one can comprehend, that depends on each individual's innate insight and fortune.

This opportunity was indeed rare.

With the Grand Preceptor's cultivation base, it is likely that no one else in the entire Guardian Immortal Imperial Dynasty, aside from his direct disciples, could enjoy such treatment.

The problem was, such a reward might be perfect for others, but it was completely useless to himself!

He was connected to Zhang Daoling!

Could the Grand Preceptor be stronger than Zhang Daoling?

Moreover, he vaguely sensed that the Grand Preceptor's cultivation base might not have reached the level at which the Heavenly Dao suppresses it; it seemed like only a little bit more before the Heavenly Dao would suppress it.

So, was Lan Pili's guess wrong before?

The Grand Preceptor's cultivation base may not be as high as people imagined; rather, the Grand Preceptor might have some special secret technique that could greatly enhance his combat power during battle.

Otherwise, if the experts of the Hundred Peaks Sect had already gone to sleep, why had the Grand Preceptor not? Could it be that the Grand Preceptor had a secret technique to deceive the Heavenly Dao?

He was leaning toward the former hypothesis.

Therefore, he didn't need to follow the Grand Preceptor around for three days.

After thinking it over, Cao Zhen spoke up, "I really am not interested in being a lapdog to anyone. How about this, I have five disciples in the Hundred Peaks Sect. How about letting them follow the Grand Preceptor instead, for three days' time?"

After all, if someone is to follow the Grand Preceptor, does it matter who it is?"

He himself was connected to Zhang Daoling, but his disciples were not. Giving this opportunity to his disciples was naturally better than anything else.

The Grand Preceptor immediately laughed. Hearing Cao Zhen haggle, not even a hint of anger appeared on his face. He looked at Cao Zhen with a kindly expression and chuckled, "This is the first time someone has told me, the Grand Preceptor, to change the reward I've offered. You are quite interesting."

Interesting, indeed.

Others trembled in fear upon seeing him, but Cao Zhen from the start to finish didn't show a hint of fear; he even called following in his wake akin to being a lapdog.

It had been so many years since anyone had dared to speak to him like this, but Cao Zhen did it so naturally.

However, that condition...

Chapter 419: Proud Ambition_1

Capital City, Immortal Reception House.

The Immortal Reception House was not like any ordinary inn, with nothing but rooms.

Inside the Immortal Reception House, there were many pavilions and towers where people from various Immortal Sects could gather to chat or discourse on the Dao.

Following the departure of the people from the Hundred Peaks Sect, some returned to their respective courtyards, burning their Sect's chart or contacting their Sects through other means, while others gathered to discuss matters of the Immortal Cultivation world.

Cultivators are human too, and they gossip as well.

"Have you heard? This time, the disciple from the Sword Sect, Wu Jianzi, was more dominant than any previous successor of their Sect. He debated the Dao with many great Immortal Sects and nearly never took more than a day; he even discoursed with the Elders of each Sect."

"I also heard about this matter. That Wu Jianzi is indeed unmatched."

"Speaking of Wu Jianzi, I'm reminded of something. I've only heard about it, but it seems that Wu Jianzi was defeated by a Peak Master from the Hundred Peaks Sect during a discourse."

"Wu Jianzi lost to a Peak Master of the Hundred Peaks Sect? Impossible. Although the Hundred Peaks Sect is one of the top ten Immortal Sects, their Sword Dao is quite ordinary. How could they possibly defeat Wu Jianzi?"

"As far as I know, when Wu Jianzi went to the Traceless Gate to discourse on the Dao, even Elder Sword Silkworm showed up to debate with him, and in the end, he still lost to Wu Jianzi."

Leaving aside the Sword Sect, within our Guardian Immortal Imperial Dynasty, Traceless Gate is definitely one of the top three Sects in terms of Sword Dao. If their Elder couldn't beat Wu Jianzi, the Hundred Peaks Sect stands even less of a chance."

"This rumor is not credible; it's some baseless gossip that someone started."

"Speaking of the Hundred Peaks Sect... they've returned..."

Suddenly, someone noticed the return of the gentlemen from the Hundred Peaks Sect, and immediately, all eyes turned towards them.

"Strange, why is one of the two Peak Masters from the Hundred Peaks Sect missing?"

Out of curiosity, someone approached Lan Pili and asked, "Peak Master Lan, why hasn't Peak Master Cao returned?"

Lan Pili did not know what the Grand Preceptor wanted to discuss with Cao Zhen, but he knew very well that if the Grand Preceptor wished to harm Cao Zhen, he would not be able to stop him, and neither would anyone in the whole world.

Besides, they had established merits along the way and even helped save a disciple of the Grand Preceptor; it was impossible for the Grand Preceptor to act against them.

So, he simply led his disciples back to their quarters.

Hearing the inquiry, he glanced around and calmly said, "The Grand Preceptor has kept Peak Master Cao to discuss something."

Leaving those words behind, he led the people from the Hundred Peaks Sect back to the separate courtyard prepared for them.

"What? The Grand Preceptor has kept Peak Master Cao?"

"How is that possible? What does the Grand Preceptor have to discuss with Peak Master Cao?"

The people from the various major Sects all around were surprised.

"That's the Grand Preceptor, and it's already very strange that he proactively summoned the people from the Hundred Peaks Sect. They say that the Grand Preceptor may be intending to elevate the Hundred Peaks Sect, but why would he keep Cao Zhen?"

"Cao Zhen is just the one hundredth-ranking Peak Master of the Hundred Peaks Sect, and there are disciples who might not even compare to us. Why would the Grand Preceptor keep him?"

"If the Grand Preceptor really wanted to favor the Hundred Peaks Sect and had to keep someone, it should have been Lan Pili from the Lightning Peak, who ranks higher. Why did he keep Cao Zhen instead?"

"Strange, too strange."

In the somewhat empty grand hall, after Lan Pili and the people of the Hundred Peaks Sect left,

Cao Zhen was sitting in his chair, pouring himself another cup of tea, thinking the Grand Preceptor had found him interesting, so he should agree to his request.

It seemed the preparations he made on the road were unnecessary.

When the time comes, he decided to have Ling Xi and the others come; the only problem was not knowing where the kid Xiang Ziyu had gone off to.

Under Cao Zhen's expectant gaze, the Grand Preceptor shook his head slightly, refusing, "This Grand Preceptor has no interest in babysitting someone else's child. The reward can only be for you alone. If you don't want it, then choose something else."

"Alright, let's choose a different reward then," Cao Zhen sighed inwardly, not rushing to mention what reward he wanted but instead began with praise, "On my way here, I noticed just how vast our Guardian Immortal Imperial Dynasty's territories are, and the prosperity of each city I saw.

Especially this Capital City, the pinnacle of opulence. Obviously, our Guardian Immortal Imperial Dynasty is extraordinarily affluent. Surely, you, Grand Preceptor, must have quite a stock of materials.

Our Hundred Peaks Sect is located in a remote area, and my Four Treasures Peak is ranked last, with very limited resources. How about you provide me with some medicinal herbs instead?"

Cao Zhen smiled and took out a long piece of paper from his bosom, handing it over to the Grand Preceptor.

The paper was very long, and instead of simply being paper, it was more accurate to call it a scroll, densely covered in writing.

Before coming to the Capital City, he had already planned to ask the Grand Preceptor for favors, and if he were to ask for something, it would naturally be spiritual medicine. To make it convenient, he had written down all the spiritual medicine he needed while on the road.

The Grand Preceptor raised his hand and drew the list through the air to the desk before him. He looked down at the black characters on the paper, showing a surprised expression for the first time since meeting with Cao Zhen and the others.

After a brief pause, he looked up, seemingly trying to see through Cao Zhen with a curious stare.

Chapter 420: Proud Ambition_2

For a long while, he finally spoke with some confusion, "The quantity and variety of these spiritual medicines are immense, and many of them are extremely rare."

Indeed, the number of these spiritual medicines was astronomical, and many people would never be able to accumulate such an amount in their entire lives, let alone some smaller sects that, even if they pooled all their resources, could not gather as many.

But no matter what, these are spiritual medicines. Spiritual medicines, after all, are spiritual medicines; even if they are rare, there is still a chance to collect them.

However, to follow me, to observe by my side for three days, such an opportunity is not available to everyone, and once missed, there would never again be such a chance.

"You are a smart person, yet you chose the spiritual medicines, which is beyond the Grand Preceptor's expectation."

In his view, Cao Zhen was a very intelligent person, even to the point of wisdom. With Cao Zhen's wisdom, he could not possibly be unaware that observing by his side for three days could increase one's cultivation foundation.

Foundation, that was a significant capital for future breakthroughs.

To not follow him for three days, but instead choose spiritual medicines, was obviously putting the cart before the horse.

He was truly puzzled; such a wise Cao Zhen would make this choice.

Cao Zhen intentionally sighed and said helplessly, "Grand Preceptor, I have just told you I have five disciples, but these five disciples are too special; four of them are Ancient Immortal Bodies, now Waste Bodies."

Although others say they are not suited for cultivation, say they cannot cultivate,

no matter what, I am their master. Being their master, then I have to find some ways for them."

"So, you want to perform alchemy for them, to help them break through, to enhance," the Grand Preceptor recalled what his disciple had told him and was aware that ordinary people couldn't change the situation of the Ancient Immortal Body, now the Waste Body not being able to cultivate, through the use of pills.

But Cao Zhen's level of alchemy could achieve that.

Just that...

The Grand Preceptor walked down from his seat, slowly speaking as he walked, "You are a good master; even if your disciples are Ancient Immortal Bodies, now Waste Bodies, you have not given up on your disciples.

But at the same time, you are not a good master.

If you are not strong enough, how good can your disciples be? With your intelligence, you should know this principle, yet you still do it. So what's your trump card?"

As he spoke, he had already approached Cao Zhen, stopped gently before him, and with an even gaze asked, "Which era do you come from?"

With Cao Zhen's intelligence, why would he refuse his own reward?

Furthermore, Cao Zhen was only a Hundred Peaks Sect Peak Master ranked at one hundred, yet he possessed such a level of alchemy; there was only one reason then.

Cao Zhen was a reincarnated being with Great Ability; therefore, he did not care about spending three days following him, feeling that by relying on himself, he could break through all the way.

Cao Zhen had long been used to others thinking he was a reincarnated being with Great Ability. Without any surprise or hesitation, he said frankly, "I come from the Taichu Era. I am a disciple of the Early Doctrine, from the Natural Hall."

"The Taichu Era?"

The Grand Preceptor's brows slightly furrowed, immersed in thought, but no matter how hard he tried, he could not recall the Taichu Era.

If he could not remember the Taichu Era, let alone a sect from that era.

Taichu...

Listening to the name, it should be a very ancient era. The history of immortal cultivation is vast and long, so it's not surprising that there are eras he does not know of.

The Grand Preceptor no longer dwelled on what period the Taichu Era might be; he looked at Cao Zhen and calmly asked, "I wonder how you view the Guardian Immortal Imperial Dynasty?"

Cao Zhen also put on an indifferent look and said, "To tell the truth, I quite like the current Guardian Immortal Imperial Dynasty."

Talk about other things, and he really might give himself away, but speaking of societal issues, with the perspective of a modern person looking at the current Guardian Immortal Dynasty, is like bringing a dimensionality reduction attack.

"The Guardian Immortal Imperial Dynasty, the two most important points are one, the laws; everything depends on the law, governing by law. As long as everyone obeys the law, the entire dynasty will not be in chaos, and the dynasty could be relatively fairer."

Another point is equality for everyone.

In fact, obeying the law is also for equality. In my view, these are not bad things."

Cao Zhen spoke and paused slightly, and the more he conversed with the Grand Preceptor, the more he let himself go, asking, "Grand Preceptor, do you know of an era called the Sun God Era?"

"The Sun God?" The Grand Preceptor once again wore a contemplative look. After a long while, he shook his head and said, "I do not know of this Sun God Era. Is there something special about that era? Why do you suddenly mention that era?"

"Because, that era is quite interesting." Cao Zhen thought of the novels he had read before and started to ramble on, "In the Sun God Era, there was a person who was quite interesting. His life's dream was to hope that all under heaven could become like dragons."

The Grand Preceptor suddenly laughed, though it was not clear what his smile meant; he knew only that he was laughing, and while laughing, he said, "This person's idea is indeed interesting."

"What are your thoughts, Grand Preceptor?" Cao Zhen looked at the Grand Preceptor, internally rolling his eyes, your repeated 'interesting,' exactly how many meanings does 'interesting' have?