

The Gate 961

[The Gate Of Good Fortune](#)

Chapter 961: You got quite the courage

“You?” Shi Yisheng, who was following Shi Tianhe, immediately recognised Ning Cheng with a sweep of her gaze.

Ning Cheng was a tiny Dao Sculpting Holy Emperor. Yet, Shi Yisheng immediately found him in the crowd, which caused Shi Tianhe to frown slightly. “Yisheng, who is he?”

She naturally knew about Shi Yisheng’s arrogance and personality. As such, Shi Tianhe knew that Yisheng wouldn’t care about a rogue cultivator for no reason.

Shi Yisheng looked at Ning Cheng before sneering and saying, “His name is Ning Cheng, but his other identity, which I believe everyone here knows, is Ji He.”

“Yisheng, did you say he is Ji He?” Another middle-aged woman beside Shi Tianhe asked in astonishment.

Not many people knew about Ning Cheng. But when it came to Ji He, pretty much everyone in this place knew about him.

This person had not only reached the top ten in the Grant Essence Great Meet but had also snatched the first spirit spring of the Extraterritorial Spirit Spring. He’s the only one in the Grand Essence Realm who can take out the Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pills. He suppressed Ji Pingzhong, one of the 12 Grand Essence Sacred Children, into obedience and forced him to the tenth spirit spring. Ji He even killed Guo Haoge, another one of the 12 Grand Essence Sacred Children. What’s more, Ji He killed Man Jiuren and got chased into the Land of Broken Laws by Man Huishan, the clan leader of the Barbarian Dragon Clan, one of the top ten forces.

These feats weren’t even the end of it. There were rumours that another one of the 12 Grand Essence Sacred Children, Huo Erqi, died to Ji He in Grand Essence Mystic Realm. In any case, Ji He had taken out quite a lot of spirit grasses at that time. One could even say that he had a grudge against the 12 Grand Essence Sacred Children and other geniuses.

Ji He had appeared only for a short time yet had done so many ridiculous things. But more importantly, every single thing he did invoked cold sweats down anyone’s back.

Shi Yisheng had kept her voice restrained, but no one in the hall was a pushover. Therefore, the moment Shi Yisheng’s words ended, all eyes fell on Ning Cheng.

Ning Cheng had done so many things and still dared to appear in the City Lord’s banquet in such a manner. He indeed had a lot of courage. From the looks of it, Ning Cheng came with Jian Sanshan. Although Jian Sanshan had some fame to his name, it would be almost impossible if he wanted to protect Ning Cheng in such a place.

“How do you know that he’s Ji He?” Shi Tianhe stared at Ning Cheng. She vaguely felt that this person was somewhat familiar.

Shi Yisheng swept another glance at Ning Cheng. Only then did she reply. "Holy Emperor Barbarian Dragon had been chasing after Lifeless Poisonhand and Heartless Monk in the Grand Essence Ruins. It was actually to find him because he killed Man Jiuren. He later disguised himself as Ji He to participate in the Grand Essence Great Meet. When Holy Emperor Barbarian Dragon learned about him, he immediately gave up waiting in the Grand Essence Ruins to rush to Heaven Essence Sacred City."

"Many people had already guessed that Ji He must be Ning Cheng in disguise, but they still don't know much about him. Even I just happen to know about him a bit more than others. This person definitely isn't ordinary and has a lot of courage. He had publicly offended Lifeless Poisonhand and Heartless Monk during the Grand Essence Ruins' exchange. But now, Lifeless Poisonhand turned into flying ash under Man Huishan's hands while Ning Cheng is still alive and well. Plus, he still dared to come here."

Shi Tianhe and the other middle-aged female cultivator beside her exchanged glances, and their gazes on Ning Cheng instantly brightened up. As long as they took down Ning Cheng and handed him over to Man Huishan, they could definitely obtain many things. But more importantly, this little cultivator had the Emyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pill on him.

As Shi Tianhe thought of this, the others naturally would have also thought about it. If this wasn't the City Lord's mansion, someone might have already made a move against Ning Cheng.

"Did he offend you?" Shi Tianhe spoke up with a cold tone.

Shi Yisheng naturally understood the meaning of these words. It was an attempt to find an excuse to take down Ning Cheng. She thought about it for a while but couldn't think of anything that Ning Cheng did that might have offended her.

A cold snort came over, followed by a powerful surge of aura.

When the people staring at Ning Cheng felt this powerful aura surging over, they all assumed that someone would be unlucky even before today's banquet. This was because this powerful aura came from Tong Mingzhe, one of River Luo Sacred Sect elders. But he also had another identity; that is, he was the late Guo Haoge's master.

Ning Cheng had killed Guo Haoge while impersonating Ji He. Yet, Ning Cheng still dared to appear at the Heaven Essence Sacred City's City Master's mansion. It definitely wasn't just an ordinary surge of boldness. But, with Tong Mingzhe's early-stage Dao Essence cultivation, he could easily slap Ning Cheng into dust with a wave of his hand.

However, many people who understood Tong Mingzhe's personality knew that he wasn't interested in avenging his disciple. Instead, he wanted the Emyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pill on Ning Cheng.

Looking at the many people who wanted to swallow Ning Cheng whole, Jian Sanshan shook his head speechlessly. From what he saw, Ning Cheng had offended too many people here. Even if he wanted to help Ning Cheng, he didn't dare to say half a word.

When Tong Mingzhe was about to rush over to grab Ning Cheng, a few more people walked into the hall. Three people within this group immediately attracted everyone's attention. In fact, one could say that these three were the representatives of the three different regions of this realm.

“City Master Le.....”

“Holy Emperor Barbarian Dragon.....”

“Sect Master Fei.....”

Once these three people came in, a crowd of people immediately stood up to greet them. Jian Sanshan, however, had a mouthful of bitterness; he didn’t expect that Man Huishan would come here.

Thinking about the feud between Ning Cheng and Man Huishan, he subconsciously glanced at Ning Cheng. However, he found Ning Cheng completely calm, not even showing a hint of panic. Ning Cheng even turned his head to look at Jian Sanshan with a smile and asked, “Is he Heaven Essence Sacred City’s City Lord Le, Le Jiesheng?”

Although he asked that question, Ning Cheng wondered if Carole had shared his map with Man Huishan. Otherwise, how did this old bastard get out of the Land of Broken Laws so quickly?

As for feeling afraid, he honestly wasn’t at all. Although he felt annoyed with Shi Yisheng’s antics of turning everyone’s attention to him, it didn’t bother him. As long as he took out his pill sage’s qualification token, no one here would dare to make a move against him.

Jian Sanshan secretly praised Ning Cheng’s nerves of steel and had no choice but to introduce the newcomers to him. “On the far left, the one with long hair and black beard, he is City Master Le. Of the other two, you already know one of them, Barbarian Dragon Clan’s Dragon Emperor. As for the other, he is the sect master of the Profound Moon Spirit Sect, Fei Feng.”

Ning Cheng was only a Dao Sculpting Holy Emperor, yet he could still sense that Man Huishan’s cultivation had increased. This fellow seemed to have gained more benefits than him in the Land of Broken Laws. Back then, he was at the peak of Dao Essence; now that his power has risen, he most likely had become a Dao Fusion powerhouse.

The majestic aura from Le Jiesheng and Fei Feng wasn’t any weaker than Man Huishan beside them. It meant that both of them were also Dao Fusion Holy Emperors. Sheng Houtian said that Le Jiesheng was a Dao Essence cultivator, indicating a lag in his information.

“Brother Jian, isn’t the sect master of Profound Moon Spirit Sect surnamed Qi?” Ning Cheng asked with a frown.

Jian Sanshan admired Ning Cheng’s calmness more and more. Even in such a situation, anyone else would be more concerned about Man Huishan. Yet, surprisingly, Ning Cheng showed more concern about Profound Moon Spirit Sect’s Sect Master, Fei Feng.

It was a good thing that he also knew a bit of Ning Cheng’s past. Ning Cheng and Qi Shisanxing were friends, so he naturally would be concerned about Qi Shisanxing’s old man. After all, Qi Shisanxing’s old man was none other than the previous Sect Master of the Profound Moon Spirit Sect.

“I heard that Profound Moon Spirit Sect’s previous Sect Master, Sect Master Qi Changgui, suffered some problem during his secluded cultivation session. So Grand Elder Fei Feng had to take up the position as the new sect master. However, the Profound Moon Spirit Gate kept this matter very low-key, so even I don’t know the full details.”

After hearing Jian Sanshan's reply, Ning Cheng suddenly felt a little strange. *A Dao Fusion cultivator facing problems during a retreat?* There was still the fact that Shisanxing hadn't come looking for him after separating back then. *Was it also because of this matter?*

As the three Dao Fusion Holy Emperors entered, Tong Mingzhe, who wanted to immediately grab Ning Cheng, stopped himself. *To snatch someone within the guest hall during the City Lord's banquet and in the presence of the City Lord himself would clearly mean that he didn't give any face to the City Lord.* He could still catch Ning Cheng, but he first had to inform Le Jiesheng as a sign of respect.

Man Huishan's gaze swept around the guest hall and quickly landed on Ning Cheng. He gave a cold snort, "You really are like a ghost, popping up everywhere, just like an ant."

Although he wanted to grab Ning Cheng immediately and take him away, Man Huishan honestly didn't want to see Ning Cheng right now. Because of the soul oath from back then, even if Ning Cheng pointed his nose at him and cursed aloud, he couldn't touch a single hair on Ning Cheng's head.

Ning Cheng sneered back with the same disdain, "Barbarian, you just took the words right out of my mouth. How come the Land of Broken Laws didn't let trash like you die? The saying must be true, I guess, that trash can survive for a thousand years."

"You...." Man Huishan's face turned blue with anger. He was at the Clan Leader of the Barbarian Dragon Clan, *the Dragon Emperor*. Plus, he was now a Dao Fusion powerhouse. On the other hand, Ning Cheng was a mere early-stage Dao Sculpting Holy Emperor. Yet, he dared to curse at him, a Dao Fusion Holy Emperor. It would be a strange matter if he didn't get angry.

Shock ran through the entire guest hall. Ning Cheng, a tiny Dao Sculpting Holy Emperor, dared to speak to Dragon Emperor Man Huishan in such a manner. *What the hell were this fellow's guts made of?*

But what stunned everyone was that Man Huishan actually held back and didn't make any moves against Ning Cheng. With Man Huishan's personality, he should have already killed Ning Cheng. At most, he might have given some face to Le Jiesheng before killing him. But Man Huishan didn't do anything at all, which seemed genuinely bizarre to everyone.

"Humph." Le Jiesheng stared at Ning Cheng with a cold snort, and his powerful spiritual consciousness suppressed Ning Cheng. "A mere Dao Sculpting ant. How dare you be so bold. Someone, throw him out of my mansion...."

He thought that Man Huishan was concerned about his face, so he didn't make a move against Ning Cheng. Ning Cheng was a mere Dao Sculpting Holy Emperor; how could he compare to Man Huishan, the head of the Barbarian Dragon Clan? By saying this, Le Jiesheng also wanted to get Man Huishan to accept his favour.

"Hehe, City Lord Le sure likes to show his imposing side. To throw people out for the slightest transgression, could it be that City Lord Le really thinks that the Illusionary Fruit Orchard is your Le Clan's property? Or does City Lord Le think you can completely disregard the entire world by reaching the Dao Fusion Realm?" A sneering voice emerged, interrupting Le Jiesheng's words.

When Le Jiesheng heard those words, his face changed. Immediately, he saw two men, one tall and one short, walk in. Seeing those two men, he quickly stepped forward and cupped his fists. "Le Jiesheng

greeted Master Sheng, greeted Protector Guo. Just now, this Dao Sculpting ant dared to be rude to Grand Essence Sea's Holy Emperor Barbarian Dragon, which was why I felt enraged."

Even if he had ten thousand times more courage, he could never dare disregard Pill Union's Second Union Head, Sheng Houtian. Don't look at the fact that he had just advanced to the Dao Fusion Realm. In front of the Pill Union's power, he was still a nobody. Not to mention the Pill Union's hidden power and influence, just Protector Guo beside Sheng Houtian could finish him off instantly. After all, that person was a late-stage Dao Fusion Holy Emperor.

"Why did I hear that it was the barbarian who was rude to my brother, Ning Cheng, first. Wasn't it the reason why my brother had to clap back? Could it be that if someone is a Dragon Emperor, he is a guest, but if my brother is not a Dragon Emperor, he should be thrown out?" Even though he was a little weaker than Le Jiesheng in cultivation, Sheng Huotian's aura was much more potent than Le Jiesheng at his peak.

Sheng Huotian's brother? From what they could see, Ning Cheng had only recently advanced to the Dao Sculpting level. *Since did he have such a powerful older brother?* One had to know that Sheng Houtian wasn't just a Dao Transformation Pill Sage but also the Second Union Head of the Pill Union. Even if the ten major forces' sect masters and clan leaders had to meet him, their combined statuses would still remain inferior to him.

Yet, these two people, who couldn't be more different, were actually brothers. The thought of it turned the entire guest hall silent; one couldn't even hear anyone breathing in the hall.

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Chapter 962: Dao Fruit Wine

Although he didn't understand why Ning Cheng was brothers with Sheng Houtian, Le Jiesheng quickly reacted and said, "So Brother Ning is a friend of Lord Sheng. I was negligent before."

Even Ning Cheng had to admire Sheng Houtian. Such a person was too dangerous to have as an enemy. No wonder Le Jiesheng weighed the pros and cons so quickly. The Pill Union wasn't a part of any of the ten great sects and forces. Yet, it wasn't any inferior to the ten major factions at all. In fact, in certain respects, the Pill Union was even more powerful than those forces. On the other hand, Le Jiesheng was just a city lord. Even if he was a Dao Fusion cultivator, he was still much weaker than the combined strength and influence of the Pill Union.

Le Jiesheng seemed to have seen the wind and bowed down to Sheng Houtian, but the pride of a powerhouse in his bones made him not take Ning Cheng seriously at all.

Le Jiesheng could bend and stretch depending on the situation without affecting his dao heart, even when yielding at the surface. This made him even more terrifying than Sheng Houtian in certain respects.

After saluting Sheng Houtian, Le Jiesheng also cupped his fists towards Ning Cheng. "Brother Ning, I was wrong just now. Even if I wanted to drive you away, I should have looked for a justifiable reason."

Ning Cheng simply gave a curt but cold reply. "I don't have many brothers, but you're definitely not qualified to be my brother."

The crowd immediately went into an uproar. A Dao Sculpting Holy Emperor had just said that a Dao Fusion powerhouse wasn't qualified to be his brother. It was simply too arrogant.

Le Jiesheng's face turned cold, and a murderous aura started to overflow from him. He didn't care about temporarily bowing his head to Sheng Houtian. But Ning Cheng, a mere Dao Sculpting Holy Emperor, dared to ridicule him; this was simply seeking death.

"Haha....." Sheng Houtian walked to the seats marked for the Pill Union and sat down. He then swept his gaze towards the still standing Tong Mingzhe and spoke up with an icy tone. "This sage likes to see who dares to touch my brother today."

"Looks quite lively." With another voice, several Holy Emperors walked into the guest hall. This sudden interruption immediately diffused Le Jiesheng's anger for the moment.

What puzzled Ning Cheng was that the group leader was only a Dao Raising Holy Emperor. Considering this fact and the venue, this person most likely was a powerful alchemist. Moreover, this Dao Raising Holy Emperor looked relatively young with a unique dao rhythm surrounding him. Ning Cheng was a Dao Transformation Pill Sage, so he quickly understood that the aura surrounding him was an alchemic dao rhythm.

Ning Cheng's courage and guts had already won over Jian Sanshan. Still, when Sheng Houtian stepped forward, Jian Sanshan immediately breathed a sigh of relief. He couldn't have imagined that Ning Cheng and the Pill Union's Second Union Master would have such a deep friendship. If that was really the case, other sects would have to be much more scrupulous if they wanted to move against Ning Cheng.

The hatred between Man Huishan and Ning Cheng would never resolve as Ning Cheng had killed Man Huishan's son, Man Jiuren. But for other sects, if they were to offend Sheng Houtian for the sake of a dead person, it would only bring negative consequences for them. It even had the potential to turn other sects against them.

"Brother Ning, that person is the youngest Dao Transformation Pill Sage in the Grand Essence Realm, Jing Han. A Holy Emperor with the highest chance of becoming a Dao Essence Pill Sage. Plus, he's also an elder of the Great Spirit Pill Sect. The two pill sages behind him are also from the Grand Spirit Pill Sect." Jian Sanshan sent Ning Cheng a sound transmission.

Ning Cheng nodded. His alchemic dao rhythm wasn't very conspicuous because of the nature of his Dao. It became even less noticeable after going through the alchemic epiphany and becoming a Dao Transformation Pill Sage. But looking closely at the alchemic dao rhythms surrounding Jing Han, Ning Cheng realised that Jian Sanshan was right. Jing Han was a Dao Transformation Pill Sage.

"Not bad; this person is indeed a strong alchemist."

"The Great Spirit Pill Sect isn't a big sect, but because the Grand Essence Realm's youngest Dao Transformation Pill Sage, Jing Han, comes from the Great Spirit Pill Sect, it makes it no less than the ten great forces." Jian Sanshan sighed.

He was a Dao Transformation Pill Deity himself. As such, he naturally knew how difficult it was to become a Dao Transformation Pill Sage. Because of this, he treated Jing Han with admiration and adoration usually reserved for venerable seniors.

Ning Cheng showed a faint smile. "It's not bad to be a Dao Transformation Pill Sage, but it's too much to say that he's the youngest Dao Transformation Pill Sage, right? I'm also a Dao Transformation Pill Sage, and I believe that I'm much younger than him."

Jian Sanshan smiled and didn't answer Ning Cheng's words. He didn't believe Ning Cheng's words.

However, he had indeed befriended Ning Cheng for a similar reason. Apart from Ning Cheng's Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pill, Ning Cheng also had high alchemic skills. An alchemist with poor talents in alchemy couldn't have quickly found the central refining point of No Furnace. With his abilities, even if becoming a Dao Transformation Pill Sage wasn't possible, Ning Cheng still could obtain the title of a Pill Sage.

Every alchemist had their arrogance; even Jian Sanshan wasn't an exception. As such, it wasn't surprising to him that Ning Cheng had set his goal to become a Dao Transformation Pill Sage.

Once Ning Cheng took a look at Jian Sanshan's expression, he understood that Jian Sanshan didn't quite believe him. Therefore, he had to take out a light golden qualification token and say, "Brother Jian, what I said is true."

Jian Sanshan's initially unconcerned gaze fell on the qualification token in Ning Cheng's hand, and he instantly froze as if struck by lightning. He was a Dao Transformation Pill Deity and naturally understood that this light golden qualification token was definitely a genuine Dao Transformation Pill Sage's token.

Ning Cheng put away the Dao Transformation Pill Sage's qualification token and showed a warm smile. "Brother Jian, now do you believe that I wasn't lying to you?"

Jian Sanshan finally took a deep breath and stared at Ning Cheng with a fiery gaze. "I finally understand."

He now understood why Sheng Houtian had called Ning Cheng his brother, even going so far as to offend Le Jiesheng. He also understood why Ning Cheng wasn't afraid of Man Huishan.

The fact that he was close to Sheng Houtian made it worth investing in a relationship with Ning Cheng. Let alone the fact that Ning Cheng was a Dao Transformation Pill Sage. Even if Ning Cheng and Sheng Houtian weren't close, any Pill Union-certified Dao Transformation Pill Sage wasn't someone others could bully. As long as Ning Cheng had the Dao Transformation Pill Sage's token, anyone targeting Ning Cheng would become the Pill Union's number one enemy.

Although he was also a Pill Union-certified Dao Transformation Pill Deity, his status was still far below a Dao Transformation Pill Sage. On the other hand, Ning Cheng was a Pill Union-certified Dao Transformation Pill Sage.

"Brother Ning, it's truly my luck to be friends with you." Jian Sanshan finally calmed down. However, although he looked calm on the surface, he still couldn't keep his heart from beating wildly.

Jian Sanshan recalled a pill Ning Cheng had given him two days ago once he eventually calmed down. At that time, Ning Cheng had merely said that it was the highest grade of pills that he had refined till now and gave him one from the batch. Now that he thought about it, how could Ning Cheng, a Pill Sage, give out an ordinary pill to a Dao Transformation Pill Deity like him?

Immediately, Jian Sanshan took out the jade bottle. He had planned to wait until the end of the City Lord's banquet before taking out the pill and discussing it with Ning Cheng. He thought that Ning Cheng wanted his help to look at the strengths and weaknesses of the pill and then give him some pointers. But now, he understood that this definitely wasn't the case.

"Violet Heaven Pill?" Jian Sanshan's spiritual consciousness swept inside to look at the pill and almost screamed out.

The Violet Heaven Pill was a dao pill that gave Dao Raising Holy Emperors a better chance at reaching the Dao Transformation Realm. But more importantly, this pill was precisely what he needed urgently. Ning Cheng obviously understood his need, which was why he had given one to him.

"Brother Ning, thank you." Jian Sanshan excitedly put the jade bottle away.

In the past, it was always him helping others refine pills. He got showered with thanks and gifts and many other benefits in return. But now, he was the one thanking Ning Cheng in the same way. He had only helped Ning Cheng because he also needed Ning Cheng's help. However, his help was only a minor one, yet Ning Cheng had given him a reward that far exceeded it by tens of millions of times.

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Jing Han seemed to enjoy quite a high status. The warm greetings were only second to Sheng Houtian and Le Jiesheng. At this moment, City Lord Le Jiesheng completely ignored Ning Cheng and personally guided Jing Han to the Great Spirit Pill Sect's seating area.

Once the crowd finally settled down, Le Jiesheng stood up from the main seat and cupped his fists towards everyone. "Many thanks to all the sect masters, venerable seniors and the strongest alchemists of the Grand Essence Realm for coming to my Heaven Essence Sacred City's City Master's mansion as guests. We will begin with a serving of spiritual fruits and dao fruit wines....."

With a gesture from Le Jiesheng, a group of the pretty-looking female cultivators walked into the guest hall carrying jade trays. Each tray had an assortment of fruits and wines, which the female cultivators gracefully offered to the guests.

Ning Cheng's heart twitched when he heard about dao fruit wines. If one used dao fruits to craft wines, wouldn't that be more interesting than a pill? Once you ate pills, it was the end of it. Plus, pills usually had no taste. You couldn't even taste the dao fruit used for refining the pill. It was primarily because dao pills assisted in sensing the laws of the dao fruits more clearly. The taste of the dao fruit or the other ingredients had no part in it.

But wine was different. Not only would it have the taste of the dao fruit, but it also contained the laws of the dao fruits used to produce it. This Le Jiesheng had quite the scheming mind. This dao fruit wine alone made it so that the trip here wasn't a waste of time. Most likely, only Le Jiesheng, with his access to the orchard, could use dao fruits to make wine.

"There are quite a few who use dao fruits to make wine, but the only one who can bring it out to entertain guests is City Lord Le." Jian Sanshan sent a sound transmission to Ning Cheng.

Using dao fruits to make wine and bringing it out to entertain so many people could indeed be considered generous.

Soon the jade trays containing dao fruit wines and spirit fruits arrived before him. Ning Cheng's spiritual consciousness swept through them and found only a very faint aura of laws, disappointing Ning Cheng a bit.

But looking at the cup of wine in front of him, Ning Cheng suddenly thought of a way to get rich in his heart. If he could craft dao fruit wines from the fruits and keep the balance of laws and taste, it would definitely be a hundred times more popular than dao pills.

The more Ning Cheng thought about it, the more he felt it was feasible. He even forgot that he was still sitting in the City Lord's banquet as he lifted the cup of dao fruit wine and took a large sip.

The wine indeed tasted excellent; hints of mellow and rich aura of the spirit and dao fruits rushed down his throat. However, the faint aroma of spirit fruits and the vague aura of laws made Ning Cheng very disappointed. One could craft such wine without effort, even from the most ordinary spirit fruits.

Using dao fruits to make such wine was, at best, just an eye-catcher. It didn't give one any experience of the dao fruits' laws or even the fragrance. One could even go so far as to say that it was a waste of resources.

"Hmph, truly vulgar and ignorant of the world. Before City Lord Le could even finish his words, he couldn't wait to drink the dao fruit wine. Disgraceful to the core." Shi Yisheng's voice emerged.

She and Ning Cheng had already clashed in the Grand Essence Mystic Realm when Ning Cheng had disguised himself as Ji He. As such, she seized every opportunity to drop stones on Ning Cheng.

Jian Sanshan, who sat beside Ning Cheng's side, also raised his cup and took a sip before speaking with a slightly drunk voice. "City Lord Le's dao fruit wine is just too fragrant. I couldn't help but take a sip."

Le Jiesheng laughed and lifted his jade cup, and said, "I'm just here to celebrate the Illusionary Fruit Orchard where everyone can reap a great harvest. Plus, it's also to celebrate the success of Alchemy Discourse."

As the first cup of wine went down, the atmosphere in the guest hall also started to heat up. Everyone started to court the various alchemists. As for pill sages like Sheng Houtian and Jing Han, people kept toasting them. Even Jian Sanshan had many people come over to greet him.

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Chapter 963: Exchanging the 5-Elements Heavenly Fruit

While greeting the Holy Emperors politely toasting to him, Jian Sanshan didn't forget to send regular sound transmissions to Ning Cheng. He also gave him a brief introduction of the pill sages within the crowd.

With Jian Sanshan's introduction, Ning Cheng learned that at least three other Dao Transformation Pill Sages were here apart from him. Sheng Houtian and Jing Han made up two of the three, while a red-faced, middle-aged man was the third. This red-faced, middle-aged man was called Lei Shamu, a Dao Transformation Holy Emperor and a Dao Transformation Pill Sage.

There were also at least a dozen Dao Sculpting and Dao Raising Pill Sages here. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that nine out of ten known pill sages from all over the Grand Essence Realm had come here. Looks like these pill sages attached great importance to the Alchemy Discourse.

"Brother Ning, I have great admiration for you for beating down Lu Yixian and making him not even dare talk nonsense about you. You even occupied the premier spirit spring at the Extraterritorial Spirit Spring. This Percy would like to toast to you." A rugged-looking man with a full beard raised his wine cup and walked towards Ning Cheng. As a Dao Transformation Pill Sage, this was the first person to toast to him.

Ning Cheng felt a little strange. Percy looked as if he had just advanced to the Dao Sculpting Realm like him. For him to toast him in such a blatant manner, wasn't it a slap in the face of Man Huishan?

Jian Sanshan knew that Ning Cheng was unaware of many things. Therefore, he simply sent him another voice transmission. "Brother Ning, Percy is one of the 12 Grand Essence Sacred Children, ranked second. He comes from a mysterious sect, the Void Star Sect."

No wonder this fellow radiated so much happiness after he defeated Lu Yixian. By now, he had long since learned the names of all the 12 Grand Essence Sacred Children. Percy was ranked second among them, just behind Lu Yixian. Ning Cheng simply smiled, picked up his wine cup and drank it down in one gulp. He guessed that Percy hadn't come here to look for him because he defeated Lu Yixian. In other words, Percy had most likely had something else going on.

"Fellow Daoists." Just as Percy was about to continue, Jing Han suddenly picked up another wine cup and stood up.

In the crowd's eyes, Jing Han was the youngest Dao Transformation Pill Sage in the Grand Essence Realm. Therefore, no one would fail to show their respect when such a person stood up. Even the Dao Fusion experts who hadn't stood up for others raised their wine cups to show appreciation. *Once Jing Han became a Dao Essence Pill Sage, who could guarantee that they wouldn't end up begging for his help?*

"My Great Spirit Pill Sect has obtained an Emyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pill, and this pill is indeed remarkable. It helps the Sea of Consciousness expand while also purifying and strengthening one's spiritual consciousness. One could even say that it's the most powerful spiritual consciousness elixir I have ever seen....."

When Jing Han spoke about the Emyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pill, a slightly weird atmosphere emerged in the guest hall. Many people's gazes quickly shifted to Ning Cheng.

Jing Han had come in a little later and didn't know that Ning Cheng was Ji He. Nor did he know that Ning Cheng had the authentic Emyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pills on him.

"But now my Great Spirit Pill Sect has derived the recipe for the Emyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pill from this pill....." The following words immediately ignited the atmosphere of the guest hall.

Sure, Ning Cheng possessing the Emyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pill might be a good thing for them. But most people thought that Ning Cheng had obtained those pills from the Grand Essence Mystic Realm. As for Ning Cheng refining the Emyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pill, not many people

believed it. It was the same even for Jian Sanshan. It was why he had initially only wanted to ask Ning Cheng for two Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pills.

Now that Jing Han possessed the recipe for the Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pill, it would be strange if it didn't cause a stir.

When the chatter in the great hall had died down a little, Jing Han continued. "My Great Spirit Pill Sect has decided to make the Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pill public. We want all the cultivators in the Grand Essence Realm to benefit from it."

A more enthusiastic atmosphere rose as numerous Holy Emperors praised Jing Han and the Great Spirit Pill Sect's contribution to the Grand Essence Realm.

Ning Cheng, however, frowned. The method and refining of the Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pill were highly complex. Moreover, once the pill formed, it left no trace of the individual medicinal components. He was confident that no one could deduce this pill recipe unless their alchemy comprehension far surpassed Pill Sage Min Kong and his combined. Ning Cheng would never believe that Jing Han, a mere Dao Transformation Pill Sage, could figure out the Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pill's recipe.

But Jing Han had spoken with such conviction. *Did he really deduce it?* But then the next question would be, where would he obtain the Divine Chalcedony for it?

"However, the spirit grasses used to refine the Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pill are too precious. Therefore, the Great Spirit Pill Sect can only sell this spirit pill using unorthodox means. In addition to spirit crystals, we will require at least a few spirit grasses from the prospective buyers to complete the refinement. Like the Flowerless Flower, the Clear Rainbow Buddha Pomegranate....."

Ning Cheng laughed coldly in his heart when he heard those words. Most of the spirit grasses that Jing Han had quoted had nothing to do with the Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pill. In fact, only two spirit grasses in that list were used in the Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pills. In other words, these spirit grasses were either what Jing Han personally wanted or what the Great Spirit Pill Sect wanted.

"The Illusionary Fruit Orchard is about to open, and I believe that many of these spirit grasses will appear in it. If you need the Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pill, my Great Spirit Pill Sect will work with you."

After Jing Han finished his words, Ning Cheng finally understood that this fellow was banking on other people's harvest from the Illusionary Fruit Orchard.

"Pill Sage Jing, I'm afraid you still don't know that Ji He, the first one to possess the Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pill, is also here....." Tong Mengzi's voice rang out. Apparently, he also understood Jing Han's purpose. Since Ji He was here, the Great Spirit Pill Sect's version was the one who was pirating 'his' stuff. But if the pirated version wanted to sell well, it was only natural that the genuine version had to be curbed.

Jing Han's words stalled. He was well aware of his Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pill's recipe. In truth, the side effects of the Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pill refined through his deduced

formula were simply too great. In fact, there was a heaven and earth difference between the effects of his pill and the genuine pill. If he could have caught Ji He, his Great Spirit Pill Sect would have already captured Ji He a long time ago. Unexpectedly, Ji He had come to this place. So his gaze immediately swept out to try to find him.

This time, Ning Cheng didn't even wait for others to come forward to point at him. He gestured to Percy that he would talk to him later and then took the initiative to step forward and bring out a jade bottle.

"Fellow Daoists, you have guessed correctly. The Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pill has indeed flowed out of my hands. I still have five Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pills inside this jade bottle in my hand. Unfortunately, these five Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pill are also the last ones in my possession. Of course, I haven't seen the Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pills Refined by Pill Sage Jing Han, so I dare not say how the effect of his pills compares to that of mine. But I believe that the pill sages here are not vegetables either, so a comparison of the two pills will easily tell you which one is better."

Ning Cheng held up the jade bottle in his hand as he spoke. "I just want to see what I can get for these five Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pills; one of them is even of high quality."

Ning Cheng felt confident that if Jing Han wanted to sell fake Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pills, he would have to purchase the real pills out of his hands. Otherwise, the Great Spirit Pill Sect wouldn't be able to eat at all.

"I want it; what's the price?"

As soon as Ning Cheng's words came out, numerous cultivators stood up, and the atmosphere again charged up.

Jing Han stared at Ning Cheng and frowned. After a moment, he suddenly said aloud, "This fellow daoist is holding up unknown pills in his hands, claiming that it's the Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pills. The Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pill is something that no one here has probably ever seen except for the Star Stepping Tower's master and myself. I don't know if he's lying either. How about this, you bring those so-called Empyrean Consciousness Pill over to me for inspection. We can determine its authenticity."

Since Ning Cheng wasn't a Dao Transformation Pill Sage, it wouldn't be rude for Jing Han to say this. Moreover, it was not rude but also seemed righteous on the surface. Even if someone knew exactly what he had on his mind, they would dare say it.

The people in the guest hall immediately wore a bemused expression, intending to watch from the sidelines. They all knew what kind of person Ning Cheng was. A madman who dared to chide someone like Man Huishan and didn't even put Le Jiesheng in his eyes. Moreover, he was even brothers with Sheng Houtian, a Dao Transformation Pill Sage, and the Second Union Master of the Pill Union. Therefore, even if Jing Han had the intention to bully him, Ning Cheng wouldn't give a damn about him.

But things happened out of everyone's expectations. After Ning Cheng heard Jing Han's words, he quickly clasped his fists and said to Jing Han. "It's only natural for Pill Sage Jing to check. It's just that these pills of mine are too precious. I was planning on relying on these few pills in exchange for cultivation resources, in case....."

Jing Han's face turned cold. "Tell me what you want me to press into your face before you feel at ease?"

Ning Cheng hurriedly shook his head. "How dare I let Pill Sage Jing press something into my face. Wouldn't that make me too blind?"

Jing Han's expressions eased a little. But before he could continue speaking, Ning Cheng's volume picked up. "How about an exchange of equal value. I heard that the Great Spirit Pill Sect has a lot of 5-Element Heavenly Fruits. I'll exchange these five pills for fifty 5-Element Heavenly Fruits....."

Everyone sucked in a deep breath of cold air. This fellow had really dared to ask for fifty 5-Element Heavenly Fruits for five pills. *It was simply too much.*

A thin layer of frost started to form on Jing Han's face. Again, before he could speak, Ning Cheng suddenly poured a pill from the jade bottle. "Everyone can take a look. A genuine Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pill. It's definitely not a fake."

As soon as the pill came out, Jing Han's eyes tightened. The pill Ning Cheng had taken out was indeed a genuine Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pill. Although it was only a medium-grade pill, it was the real deal.

"I only have two 5-Element Heavenly Fruits. If you want to exchange them, let's get on with it. If not, then forget it." Jing Han clenched his fists. A Dao Sculpting Holy Emperor dared to speak like that in front of him, a Dao Transformation Pill Sage. Just that alone had already provoked his dignity.

Ning Cheng sighed and placed the jade bottle in his hand in front of Le Jiesheng. "Alright, two means two. Who let you be a Dao Transformation Pill Sage? I guess even I have to suck up to it. Let's get on with the exchange. I've already placed my items in front of City Lord Le, and I hope that City Master Le will testify to it."

Jing Han didn't expect Ning Cheng to be so malleable, dropping from fifty to two in an instant. Seeing Ning Cheng place the pills in front of Le Jiesheng, Jing Han quickly took a deep breath and took out two jade boxes before placing them in front of Le Jiesheng. In the same movement, he took away Ning Cheng's jade bottle.

Ning Cheng raised his hand and swept away the two jade boxes while feeling wildly happy in his heart. He used only four pseudo-low-grade and one middle-grade Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pills for two 5-Element Heavenly Fruits. Those five pills were from when he researched the Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pills recipe. In effect, they were nothing but wastes, which he never thought would be of any use until now.

If Jing Han didn't use his Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pill for swindling, Ning Cheng would have used the actual recipe for the exchange. But not only did this fellow use his pills to cheat, but he also took the opportunity to enrich himself and tarnish his name and that of Pill Sage Min Kong. If he didn't screw him over, Ning Cheng wouldn't even feel right about himself.

Jing Han opened the jade bottle. However, he only saw one medium-grade Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pill when his spiritual consciousness swept inside. Seeing the other pills inside, his face instantly soured like a pig's liver.

"Good, very good." Jing Han put the jade bottle away and swept a cold gaze at Ning Cheng.

No one present was a fool. One look at Jing Han's expressions, and they understood that Ning Cheng had offended another one, this time, a Dao Transformation Pill Sage. This fellow's courage truly covered the sky.

Since Holy Emperor Extreme Void had previously received benefits from Ning Cheng, he immediately decided to stand up and intervene. "City Lord Le, everyone here has come for the Illusionary Fruit Orchard. We've all eaten the spirit fruits and drunk your dao fruit wine. Why not watch the talented alchemists of our Grand Essence Domain compete for the dao fruits while discussing the dao? Wouldn't it be great?"

[The Gate Of Good Fortune](#)

Chapter 964: Distribution of proceeds from the orchard.

Le Jiesheng had a good head on his shoulders, so he naturally understood what was going on. Therefore, as soon as Holy Emperor Extreme Void words came out, he stepped forward and said aloud. "Holy Emperor Extreme Void is right. It is indeed a pleasure to taste wine while enjoying the easy harvest of heavenly treasures by my Grand Essence Realm's alchemists."

After saying this, Le Jiesheng raised his hand, and two green flags landed in the middle of the hall, two feet apart from each other.

A moment after the two green flags planted themselves in the ground, a giant three-dimensional crystal screen appeared in the middle of the hall. In the crystal screen, one could see twelve entrances. These twelve entrances looked like gates within a misty immortal island, almost like a dream.

A semi-circular orchard gate appeared below the three-dimensional crystal screen a few moments later, with strong spacial fluctuations coming from inside. It created a contrasting feeling when combined with the image on the crystal screen. Especially as it looked as if it led to the deepest recesses of the abyss.

Ning Cheng recalled his conversation with Sheng Houtian and understood that these twelve gates on the screen should lead to the first level of the Illusionary Fruit Orchard. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that those twelve entrances were the actual entrances to the Illusionary Fruit Orchard.

Ning Cheng had never seen the opening of the Illusionary Fruit Garden before. But he understood that the circular gate below the large three-dimensional screen was the entrance to the first examination. It was also a part of a more extensive teleportation array.

"That's the first level of the Illusionary Fruit Orchard. Only pill deities who can refine a furnace of twelve top-quality Dao Sculpting Spirit Pills can enter through those gates. I can't refine twelve top-quality Dao Sculpting Spirit Pills yet, but I still want to give it a go." Jian Sanshan whispered to Ning Cheng while pointing to the image on the screen.

"Alchemists wishing to enter the Illusionary Fruit Orchard, please step forward." After Le Jiesheng finished speaking, he cupped his fists towards the crowd.

"Haha, I'll go first." A slim Dao Raising Holy Emperor walked out. He first cupped his fists towards the crowd before stepping up to Le Jiesheng and giving him a storage ring. "Great Bear Seven Peaks' Liang Qizhe greets City Lord Le. I'll be taking 10% more this time."

Le Jiesheng put away the ring. He then took out a somewhat large looking storage bag. He handed it to Liang Qiuzhe with the words, "Many thanks, and congratulations to Pill Deity Liang. I believe you will be able to advance one more level this time."

Ning Cheng asked with some confusion, "Brother Jian, what do Lian Qiuzhe's words mean?"

Only then did Jian Sanshan recall that Ning Cheng was an actual Dao Transformation Pill Sage. Ning Cheng obviously would enter the deeper parts of the Illusionary Fruit Orchard. He had initially thought that Ning Cheng wouldn't go inside, which was why he had never mentioned the intricacies of the Illusionary Fruit Orchard. Now that Ning Cheng asked, he quickly replied. "Since City Lord Le and his clan watches over the Illusionary Fruit Orchard, they get to dictate the distribution for each alchemist entering the Illusionary Fruit Orchard. The current agreed-upon share is twenty-eighty. That is, the alchemist gets to keep 20%, and the City Master's house gets 80% as payment for watching over the Illusionary Fruit Orchard....."

Ning Cheng immediately frowned, "The Illusionary Fruit Orchard's entrance is already controlled by the City Lord. Yet, he still requires such payment?"

Jian Sanshan had to explain, "Looking after the Illusionary Fruit Garden isn't an easy task, especially since the guardian can't steal or take anything from inside it. Even if they want to enter, they would have to do so with the others when it's time for the orchard to open. Besides, the Le Clan isn't the permanent guardian. Don't ask me, as I don't know how the Grand Essence Domain distributes its guardianship rights or the distribution ratio. However, I heard that it's a joint decision by all the top powers of the Grand Essence Domain. If you don't want to pay a certain amount of spirit crystals before entering, you will have to adhere to the 20-80 split, irrespective of your background."

"When Liang Qiuzhe spoke about an extra 10%, he meant that once he entered the Illusionary Fruit Garden, he wanted to claim 30% of the harvest instead of the usual 20%. But since he wants to claim 30%, he would have to pay five million spirit crystals. The storage ring he gave to City Lord Le should contain five million spirit crystals or something of equivalent value. If he wanted to take 40%, then he would have to give up ten million, 50% would mean twenty million, and so on for higher shares."

Ning Cheng sucked in a cold breath. *Wasn't this simply robbing people of spirit crystals?*

At this moment, more and more alchemists walked into the entrance under the crystal screen in the middle of the main hall. Ning Cheng found that most alchemists didn't pay any spirit crystals. Apparently, they intended to split the harvest according to the 20-80 rule. As for those alchemists who paid, they all publicly stated the extra share they needed.

"The truth is, City Lord Le is already quite generous with his distribution plan. After all, the alchemists who can enter the orchard are just a minority. Even in the best-case scenario, only twelve can enter. Plus, at the end of the banquet, City Lord Le even gives them considerable gifts." Jian Sanshan continued.

"Then, how does City Lord Le know how many spirit grasses or dao fruits the alchemists obtained after going inside?"

Jian Sanshan showed a warm smile, "The Illusionary Fruit Orchard opens only once every hundred years. As such, there's already a ceiling to the number of spirit grasses anyone who goes inside can get."

Besides, didn't you see how City Lord Le gives a storage bag to each person? That's because after entering the Illusionary Fruit Orchard, one simply cannot use any type of spacial storage device. Even if you possessed a top-quality True Spirit World, it wouldn't be possible to use it inside. You can only put the spirit herbs you obtain into that storage bag. It makes it clear as to how many spirit herbs each person obtained."

"There's no danger inside the Illusionary Fruit Orchard, so the alchemists can easily collect the spirit grasses once they enter. Normally, the alchemists would put what they need into the storage bag before entering, like pills, furnaces....."

Ning Cheng felt secretly glad that he asked Jian Sanshan about these matters. He wondered why Le Jiesheng gave each person a storage bag, especially the kind where anyone's spiritual consciousness could sweep in. Turns out, it was the only way to store things and also keep everything transparent.

The Illusionary Fruit Orchard didn't allow the use of spacial storage devices, so he wondered if his Mysterious Yellow Bead would work in the Illusionary Fruit Garden. But Ning Cheng quickly cast this thought aside. Since the Illusionary Fruit Garden didn't allow the use of spacial storage devices, it meant that a great powerhouse must have set it up.

In other words, who could tell if this powerhouse had secretly set up a monitoring array or something similar to it inside? He might as well be cautious and not use the Mysterious Yellow Bead and just go with the storage bag like the others.

"I want 80%." Jing Han's voice suddenly rang out at this time.

Ning Cheng saw Le Jiesheng pick up Jing Han's storage ring and looked at it for a long time before nodding. "Good, I hope Pill Sage Jing can keep up the good work."

"80%? How many spirit crystals would it require?" Ning Cheng truly felt the itch to see how many spirit crystals Jing Han had put inside the storage ring.

Jian Sanshan whispered in Ning Cheng's ear once again. "Normally, you can't use spirit crystals to ask for an 80% share. People usually use other treasures of equivalent value. Besides, even a Dao Transformation Pill Sage like Jing Han can only ask for 80% at most. Any more than that, even if he put in heavenly treasures, City Lord Le might not agree to it."

At this moment, there were already over seventy people who entered the Illusionary Fruit Orchard. Ning Cheng decided it was time to enter and stood up before saying to Jian Sanshan, "I'll go in first. You can follow me."

Seeing Ning Cheng stand up and walk towards Le Jiesheng, all eyes immediately focussed on Ning Cheng. It didn't matter how bold Ning Cheng was or how strong Ning Cheng's backers were. Just because Ning Cheng had the Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pills on him was enough for everyone to focus on his every action.

Le Jiesheng seemed to have forgotten what Ning Cheng had said earlier. Without waiting for Ning Cheng to speak, he smiled and took the initiative. "Since this is the first time that Alchemist Ning has come to my City Lord's mansion to participate in the Illusionary Fruit Orchard. I, the City Lord, have really been remiss in my duties. I'm not even aware of Alchemist Ning's rank."

Ning Cheng took out a light blue qualification token and said, "City Lord Le has spoken too highly of me. I just got lucky in passing an assessment for this and would like City Lord Le to check it."

A hint of contempt flashed past the corner of Le Jiesheng's eyes. *How could a mere Dao Sculpting Pill Deity's qualification token be worthy of his inspection?* There were plenty of Dao Sculpting Pill Deities in here.

He directly took out a storage bag and handed it to Ning Cheng and said, "Then, congratulations in advance to Pill Deity Ning for obtaining many dao fruits."

Everyone in the hall naturally knew that Le Jiesheng was mocking Ning Cheng. *Congratulating a Dao Sculpting Pill Deity for obtaining dao fruits from the Illusionary Fruit Orchard?* It was just short of slapping the pill deity in the face. To get dao fruits from inside, one had to be at least at a pill sage; a Dao Sculpting Pill Deity was simply too far behind.

Ning Cheng didn't care and said with a smile, "Many thanks, City Lord Le. Dao fruits are of great use to me. But in case I get many dao fruits inside, taking out too many would always hurt a little in my heart. Therefore, I would also like to take something out that could be converted to spirit crystals so that I wouldn't have to share too much of my harvest."

When Ning Cheng said this, someone in the hall finally couldn't help but laugh aloud.

Le Jiesheng still had a faint smile on his face, "Oh, what Pill Deity Ning does make sense. I wonder how much Pill Deity Ning wants to take away?"

Ning Cheng hesitated for a while before taking out a jade bottle and saying, "I thought I didn't have any more Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pills on me. I never thought I would find another bottle of Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pills; what a stroke of luck. There are a total of six pills in here, and they're all top-quality Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pills....."

The smile on Le Jiesheng's face instantly narrowed as he raised his hand and grabbed the jade bottle held out by Ning Cheng. Because he had superficially advanced to the Dao Fusion level, his Sea of Consciousness wasn't stable at all. Even after several hundred years, he couldn't stabilise it. It wasn't an exaggeration to say that although he was a Dao Fusion cultivator, he still couldn't compare to a genuine Dao Fusion expert.

And a spirit pill like the Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pill was precisely what he needed right now. Previously, when Ning Cheng had taken out the Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pill and sold it to Jing Han, he almost choked himself to death. He hated himself because he couldn't grab it back then. Now that Ning Cheng had once again taken out six top-quality pills, he couldn't stay calm even if he looked calm on the surface.

Ning Cheng let Le Jiesheng grab his jade bottle and didn't care about others' reactions.

Jing Han, who hadn't entered the first level's assessment area, also saw Ning Cheng take out another bottle of Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pills. Seeing that, he couldn't stop his hands from shaking in anger.

Ning Cheng had previously stated that the ones sold to him were the last few, but now he found 'another' bottle. If he could do something right now, he would have immediately killed Ning Cheng.

Le Jiesheng opened the jade bottle and his spiritual consciousness swept in. A refreshing sensation that made his Sea of Consciousness feel as if it had been infused with a revitalising aura emerged, and Le Jiesheng's heart filled up with joy. *This was what he needed.* No matter what, he had to do everything to keep these six Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pills.

"You can take 60% of your harvest from the Illusionary Fruit Orchard." After taking in a deep breath, Le Jiesheng quickly capped the jade bottle and spoke up with a deep voice.

Ning Cheng immediately held out his hand, "Forget it, I don't even know if I can reach the first level. And even if I did, a bottle of Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pills would only allow me 60%. I might as well keep this bottle of Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pills and exchange it later with another pill sage for dao fruits. By the way, I exchanged two dao fruits with the generous Pill Sage Jing Han a few moments ago. Is City Lord Le bullying me for not having seen the world?"

"How much do you want?" He knew that if he didn't put the jade bottle back into Ning Cheng's hands, everyone would most likely condemn him. But Le Jiesheng still didn't hand over the jade bottle.

Ning Cheng sighed and said, "I suddenly have some regrets. I can most likely only enter the first level with my alchemy level, the best-case scenario. But even in that case, I would only obtain some ordinary spirit grasses. I heard that the Great Spirit Pill Sect spent tens of millions of top-grade spirit crystals to purchase a single Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pill. Moreover, it was only a high-quality pill. Here I am with top-quality pills and even six of them..... Oh my, just how many top-grade spirit crystals would it fetch? I wonder why I feel so confused about it? As even if I get all the spirit grasses and dao fruits inside, it still feels that I would be at a loss."

[The Gate Of Good Fortune](#)

Chapter 965: Barging into the Illusionary Fruit Orchard

The people in the hall couldn't help but sneer internally. A loss? It's only because you are an idiot that you suffer a loss. No wonder he was so bold, daring to directly offend so many influential people. Turns out, this person was an idiot.

"Fine, you can have all of it. I don't want any of the spirit herbs you obtain in the Illusionary Fruit Orchard." Le Jiesheng didn't even wait for Ning Cheng to say something to contradict him before stating it publicly.

In any case, behind Ning Cheng stood Sheng Houtian, an existence that wouldn't allow him to bully Ning Cheng.

Ning Cheng frowned and seemed to have some regrets. But after a moment, he sighed again before speaking, "These six Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pills of mine were originally for me and my friend Jian Sanshan. His share....."

Le Jiesheng was all too familiar with Jian Sanshan. He had come to a few banquets in the past. However, he never managed to enter the Illusionary Fruit Garden. From that, it was evident that his claim to fame came entirely from a rubbish pill like the Harmonious Heaven Pill.

The Harmonious Heaven Pill was a spirit pill that aided in sensing the path to the Dao Essence Realm. However, Jian Sanshan was merely a Dao Raising Holy Emperor at best. Therefore, even if his

pill *could* help sense the path to the Dao Essence Realm, it would be pretty strange if it had no after-effects or hidden dangers. Besides, no one had heard of anyone advancing to the Dao Essence Realm using the Harmonious Heaven Pill.

“Okay, I agree.” Le Jiesheng again replied without hesitation.

It made no difference to him if Ning Cheng and Jian Sanshan wanted 10% or 100% of the harvest. These two people can’t even enter the first level of the Illusionary Fruit Orchard.

“Then, many thanks, City Lord Le.” Ning Cheng clasped his fists in thanks and waved to Jian Sanshan to follow him.

The reason he had taken out the Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pill was that he knew that Le Jiesheng wouldn’t be able to refuse it. His Sea of Consciousness had already grown incredibly powerful over the last few years. As such, he had already sensed the subtle instability in Le Jiesheng’s recent Dao Essence advancement. *Faced with not losing anything at all and gaining six Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pills, how could Le Jiesheng not hasten to agree?*

“That idiot.” Seeing the six pills that she also needed urgently, put away by Le Jiesheng, the middle-aged woman from 9-Revolutions Sacred Dao Pond cursed in a hateful voice.

However, Shi Yisheng spoke up from the side, “Senior Aunt Tai, Ning Cheng isn’t like others. In the few times I observed him conduct exchanges, he has never suffered a loss. Even Man Huishan is helpless against him. How could he do such an idiotic thing?”

Shi Tianhe spoke up in a deep voice, “Yisheng is right, this one called Ning Cheng, he’s inscrutable.”

The middle-aged female cultivator quickly realised a few things and nodded while glancing at Ning Cheng.

After Le Jiesheng collected the six Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pills, he also sensed something weird with the situation. For Ning Cheng to say those things, he most likely was confident enough to enter the first level. Otherwise, why bother talking about distribution.

But even if Ning Cheng could enter the first level, so what? The six Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pills were something that he needed no matter what.

Not only did Le Jiesheng realise something weird about the situation, but most of the cultivators in the hall also started to feel something fishy with what happened just now. Ning Cheng might be a low-level cultivator, but he had managed to escape from Man Huishan. *How could he not realise Le Jiesheng’s intentions?* The only possibility was that Ning Cheng really could enter the Illusionary Fruit Orchard’s first level. Maybe he could even enter the second level.

Man Huishan, on the other hand, laughed coldly in secret but didn’t say anything. He chased Ning Cheng for several years and knew about Ning Cheng much better than anyone here. Ning Cheng was slippery as an eel and cunning as a fox. *Why would such a person take out six Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pills for no reason at all?* If it were him, he would never have agreed to it, even if he craved the Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pill.

But when Man Huishan thought of not agreeing, he subconsciously glanced at Le Jiesheng before internally sighing. *Would he really not agree?* If Ning Cheng had put six of those pills before him, he most likely would have agreed to any condition Ning Cheng proposed. He would have agreed even if he knew that Ning Cheng was taking advantage of him.

Ning Cheng took out the Primal Chaos's First Furnace and put it into his storage bag. When the crowd saw Ning Cheng's Primal Chaos's First Furnace, they couldn't help but snigger again. Although this Primal Chaos's First Furnace didn't look too bad, it definitely didn't deserve the name 'First Furnace'. Yet, he dared to engrave the words 'Primal Chaos's First Furnace' on it; *was he not afraid of being struck down by lightning?*

Ning Cheng didn't care about what others thought. He simply closed the storage bag and walked through the open entrance like the other alchemists.

The moment Ning Cheng stepped through the entrance, the scene in front of him changed. Another large hall appeared in front of him. He didn't see any 'wall' in the hall in front of him, but instead, he saw a mountain cliff. No, more precisely, the four walls of the hall were four different mountain cliffs. The cliff walls had twelve gates, 3 on each wall. And just as Sheng Houtian mentioned, each gate had twelve pill slots. A void was above the twelve gates, where the hall's ceiling should have been.

More than eighty alchemy masters had entered this hall before him, and they all had already finished picking their own spots. Everyone had their pill furnaces out in front of them and ready to go. Apparently, they were all waiting for some sign from the Illusionary Fruit Orchard to begin refining.

When Ning Cheng saw that Sheng Houtian hadn't come in, he probably guessed some of the reasons for his choice. After all, Sheng Houtian had been famous for a long time and was also the second union master of the Pill Union. If he came in, and the level he reached here wasn't as good as the younger generation, it would immediately tank his reputation. At the same time, Pill Union's reputation would also take a massive dive.

"Brother Jian, you can stay next to me," Ning Cheng whispered to Jian Sanshan, who nervously kept close to Ning Cheng.

Jian Sanshan had no intention of staying away from Ning Cheng. Ning Cheng was a genuine Dao Transformation Pill Sage, which meant that following Ning Cheng and refining pills under him would be the best option.

After another half-an-incense stick worth of time, the gate through which everyone entered this hall slowly faded away into thin air.

The many alchemy masters immediately perked up and activated their pill furnaces as soon as the gate disappeared. They all understood that the rush to reach the medicinal gardens had begun.

There were only twelve gates here, but more than eighty pill deities and pill sages. It meant that whoever refined a batch of top-quality Dao Sculpting Spirit Pills first would be the first to enter the Illusionary Fruit Orchard's first level. In any case, the first to enter would get to harvest the most precious and the most amount of spirit herbs.

“Brother Ning, you’re a Dao Transformation Pill Sage. Try to refine the most difficult Dao Sculpting Spirit Pill that you can.” Jian Sanshan sent Ning Cheng a voice transmission after seeing Ning Cheng take out the Primal Chaos’s First Furnace.

“Why?” Ning Cheng looked at Jian Sanshan in confusion. *Didn’t he say that as long as one could refine twelve top-quality Dao Sculpting Spirit Pills, one could step through a gate?*

Jian Sanshan also took out his pill furnace while sending sound transmissions to Ning Cheng. “At each level, you can open the gate as long as you refine the specific grade of pills. However, there is a difference in the preciousness and quantity of spirit herbs behind each gate. It’s all dependent on the level of spirit pill you refine and the difficulty of refining that pill. If you refine higher level and more complex pills, then you would find more precious and more numerous spirit herbs inside.”

Ning Cheng already understood that these gates were a part of a teleportation array. But unlike regular teleportation arrays, they required pill aura to activate. But from Jian Sanshan’s reply, he also understood that different pills would lead to different coordinates. In other words, higher complexity pills would teleport you to an area with more precious spirit herbs.

Ning Cheng originally wanted to casually refine a batch of ordinary Dao Sculpting Pills. But after listening to Jian Sanshan’s words, he immediately took out the spirit grasses needed to refine the Primordial Cleansing Pill.

The Primordial Cleansing Pills was only a Dao Sculpting Spirit Pill. The primary spirit herbs were the Purple Current Pistle, the Single Essence Zoysia, and a dozen other auxiliary herbs. But although classified as a Dao Sculpting Spirit Pill, the difficulty in refining it was comparable to that of a middle-grade Dao Raising Spirit Pill. It wasn’t an exaggeration to say that the Primordial Cleansing Pill was at the very top of all Dao Sculpting Spirit Pills. More importantly, it allowed Dao Sculpting Holy Emperors to have a higher chance of epiphanies directly in line with their dao intents. Whether you used the pill in secluded cultivation sessions or to attain enlightenment of spirit techniques, this pill’s effects far surpassed every other pill in the same rank.

Seeing that Ning Cheng had chosen to refine the Primordial Cleansing Pill, Jian Sanshan could only let out a sigh. Ning Cheng was probably the only one who decided to refine the Primordial Cleansing Pill for the first level’s gate. Even Jing Han wouldn’t dare to refine such a pill here.

Although he felt eager to see how Ning Cheng refined the Primordial Cleansing Pill, Jian Sanshan knew that now wasn’t the time for it. He had to start refining his own pills. But what he chose to refine was a far cry compared to Ning Cheng. It was the Dry Ration Pill, an ordinary spirit pill for restoring spirit essence.

At this moment, every alchemist had immersed themselves in refining pills and no longer paid any attention to the people around them.

Jian Sanshan, like the other alchemists around him, had also forgotten about everything else and focussed everything on refining the Dry Ration Pill in the furnace in front of him. He and Ning Cheng had become friends, and he didn’t want to make himself look too rubbish in front of Ning Cheng. If Ning Cheng entered the fourth level of the Illusionary Fruit Orchard, it would be too embarrassing if he couldn’t even enter the first level.

Unfortunately, the more he wanted to succeed, the more mistakes he made. His pill art couldn't gather refined essences, causing the pill aura to spill out of the furnace. Sensing the changes, Jian Sanshan could only sigh. He understood that it would be impossible to refine twelve top-quality Dry Ration Pills in this batch.

At this moment, Ning Cheng's voice transmission suddenly arrived in his ears. "There is a gap in your pill art, causing your pill aura to overflow. Use your spirit sense to gather and lock up the pill liquid, then use this pill art as follows: 'Spirit Nourishing Divine Air, True Extreme Fire.....'"

Jian Sanshan felt overjoyed. Even though he didn't know why or how Ning Cheng could keep an eye on his pill furnace while refining pills, Ning Cheng's voice transmission had convinced him.

In just a few breaths of time, the scattering pill aura gathered back, and the resulting actions even increased the grade of the pills forming inside. As long as Jian Sanshan followed the instructions, he felt confident that this batch would produce twelve top-quality Dry Ration Pills. Fortunately, Jian Sanshan held back his inner excitement and carefully carried out all the instructions.

In the guest hall of the City Lord's mansion, all the people kept a close eye at the three-dimensional crystal screen in the middle of the hall. Although they couldn't see the face of each pill master, they could clearly see more than eighty alchemists refining their pills in front of the twelve large gates.

"It looks like there's quite a fight for the twelve doors to the first level this time." Holy Emperor Extreme Void smiled as he saw the pill aura visibility overflowing from the alchemists' furnaces on the large crystal screen.

"I bet the first one to open the gate would be Great Spirit Pill Sect's Pill Sage Jing Han. He's a Dao Transformation Pill Sage, after all. His alchemy talent should put him in the top spot here." A Dao Transformation Holy Emperor spoke up with a sigh of admiration.

"Not necessarily, Senior Lei Shamu is also a Dao Transformation Pill Sage. His understanding of alchemy shouldn't be any weaker than that of Pill Sage Jing Han....."

The crowd watching in the guest hall were still in the middle of their discussion when Ning Cheng stood up.

"Who's that person? What's the point of standing up so early? It's only been a while, not even a third of an incense stick. Did he fail to refine a pill? That's just too much. Right, this guy must be..... a pity about the bottle of Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pills, though....." A Dao Raising Holy Emperor, who thought that Ning Cheng had stood up, stopped halfway through his words.

The crystal screen only let people see the figure of the alchemist, but not their face or appearance. He only guessed that it was Ning Cheng. But then he remembered that Ning Cheng's Empyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pills had gone to City Lord Le. *What's the point of feeling pity about it?*

Besides, it wasn't difficult to guess that the one who stood up was Ning Cheng. That's because, among those who dared to enter the Illusionary Fruit Orchard, Ning Cheng was the only Dao Sculpting Pill Deity. The rest were all at least at the Dao Raising Pill Deity level.

[The Gate Of Good Fortune](#)

Chapter 966: The Thirteenth Gate

“Something’s not right, right? He should have been teleported out after failing? How come he wasn’t teleported out? Huh.....”

Without the need for this Holy Emperor to continue, all the people in the guest hall saw twelve green lights shoot out from Ning Cheng’s pill furnace. These twelve green lights surprisingly didn’t shoot out towards any of the twelve gates. Instead, they moved towards the void above the twelve gates.

Once these twelve green lights shot into the void, a new gate suddenly appeared above the twelve existing gates within the void itself. Moreover, it was double the size of all the twelve gates put together.

“Someone actually opened the Illusionary Fruit Orchard’s thirteenth gate?” With a face full of excitement, Sheng Houtian abruptly stood up.

Le Jiesheng, who always had a smile on his face, also stood up, but with a shocked expression. He even muttered, “The rumours about the Illusionary Fruit Orchard having thirteen gates is actually true.”

Not only Sheng Houtian and Le Jiesheng, but almost everyone in the hall no longer wanted to indulge themselves in the dao fruit wine. They all stood up with a mixture of surprise and shock as they stared at the thirteenth gate on the crystal screen.

Excitement and disbelief filled the entire hall.

After a long period of shocked silence, Holy Emperor Extreme Void finally let out a long sigh. “Legend has it that the Illusionary Fruit Orchard has a thirteenth gate, containing countless spirit herbs now extinct in the Grand Essence Realm. It’s just that no one has ever managed to open it. Never did I think that someone would open it today.”

“It’s definitely Pill Sage Jing Han; only he can refine the most difficult Dao Sculpting Spirit Pill in such a short period.” Immediately, someone said with eagerness.

Many had to agree with this statement. At least in public, only Pill Sage Jing Han had this ability.

Le Jiesheng clenched his fists and suddenly felt some regrets. What Jing Han had given him was indeed precious. *But even if it was valuable, it couldn’t be as worthwhile as the spirit herbs behind the thirteenth gate of the Illusionary Fruit Orchard, right?* What’s more, Jing Han was a Dao Transformation Pill Sage. It meant that he definitely wouldn’t stop at the first level. *Didn’t it also mean that he would uncover more valuable spirit herbs the higher he climbed?*

It was only after a while that he comforted himself. Luckily, whatever spirit grasses and dao fruits Jing Han harvested, he would at least get 20% of it. Although not much, it at least gave him something.

However, a dark red-faced man from the Immortal Corpse Sect had a cold smile hanging at the corner of his mouth. *Grand Spirit Pill Sect’s Pill Sage Jing Han? Oh, don’t even dream about it.* Fortunately, no one took notice of his Immortal Corpse Sect’s Dao Transformation Pill Sage, Dou Jiangshi, participating in the Illusionary Fruit Orchard.

Although Dou Jiangshi only had a Dao Sculpting Pill Sage’s qualification token, his alchemy prowess had definitely reached that of a Dao Transformation Pill Sage. It’s just that he didn’t go to the Pill Union to take the assessment because of a lack of time.

The Immortal Corpse Sect wanted to grow to the same level as the ten major forces in the Grand Essence Realm. And they all pinned their hopes for it on Dou Jiangshi, who was suited to all of Immortal Corpse Sect's cultivation techniques, including the Immortal Corpse Sect's alchemy arts.

This time, his Immortal Corpse Sect had brought Dou Jiangshi to the Illusionary Fruit Orchard to collect large amounts of resources. All to help him in alchemy and refine more spirit pills and even dao pills for the Immortal Corpse Sect. Unexpectedly, Dou Jiangshi was so accomplished in alchemy that he even managed to open the rumoured thirteenth door of the Illusionary Fruit Orchard.

"Fellow Daoist Chun, you seem to hold a different view. Could it be that the alchemist who opened the thirteenth gate is from your Immortal Corpse Sect?" A middle-aged man sitting close to the dark red-faced man let out a chuckle and deliberately asked.

He was Holy Emperor Gai He of the Violet Mist Immortal Valley, which had been at odds with the Immortal Corpse Sect due to a spirit crystal mine.

The dark red-faced man from Immortal Corpse Sect replied with a light tone. "Who can say for sure about such matters? Maybe it's my Immortal Corpse Sect; maybe it's not? But in any case, it definitely wouldn't be your Violet Mist Immortal Valley's turn."

Gai He's expressions turned sullen, and he couldn't retort even if he wanted. His Violet Mist Immortal Valley simply didn't have any accomplished alchemists, which was why he had to come here to buy dao fruits.

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A Dao Sculpting Spirit Pill, no matter how complex, didn't pose any problems for Ning Cheng. If he hadn't helped Jian Sanshan, he could have finished refining it in a quarter of an incense stick.

But even after helping Jian Sanshan, Ning Cheng didn't need to spend too much time refining the Primordial Cleansing Pill. He had just stood up and was about to collect the pills when he saw the twelve pills shoot up straight from the pill furnace.

Immediately afterwards, Ning Cheng's gaze changed as he saw a new door suddenly appear in the void above the twelve existing doors. A pale green passage then suddenly materialised in front of him, leading all the way to this new gate.

A thirteenth gate? Ning Cheng looked around in confusion. The rest of the alchemists were still concentrating on refining their pills, so none of them noticed it. Even Jian Sanshan, who sat beside him, focussed all his attention on his batch of pills.

Ning Cheng quickly understood that it must have resulted from an isolation restriction. Even if he opened the gate, it wouldn't affect the rest of the alchemists. Perhaps the other alchemists couldn't even see him at all.

Ning Cheng sucked in a deep breath. No matter what was going on, this gate had opened after refining a batch of top-quality Dao Sculpting Spirit Pills. If the same rules still apply, he should be the only one who could enter this gate.

Thinking of this, Ning Cheng didn't hesitate and immediately stepped onto this green passage and entered this thirteenth gate. After Ning Cheng went through this gate, the gate again disappeared into the void as if it never existed. No one else realised that Ning Cheng had already left.

One incense stick after Ning Cheng entered the thirteenth gate, a zombie-faced man suddenly stood up. Twelve black lights shot out of his furnace and landed on the first gate on the left side of the wall directly in front of him.

The gate abruptly opened, and a passage emerged from the foot of the entrance to his feet. The zombie-faced man swept a glance at the surrounding alchemists with disdain before walking down the path with his head held high. A moment later, he entered the gate and disappeared. The gate also disappeared the moment he walked through it.

The moment this zombie-faced man disappeared, Jing Han raised his hand and stood up as well. As twelve pills from his furnace shot out towards a gate, he swept a glance at the many alchemists still refining their pills. A moment later, he took a step forward and prepared to step onto the passage that appeared in front of him.

However, when his feet touched the passage, his expressions suddenly changed. He noticed that only eleven doors remained of the original twelve. It meant that someone had entered the Illusionary Fruit Orchard Before him.

Jing Han's expressions turned hideous. There were only two Dao Transformation Pill Sages here. But Lei Shamu was still refining his batch of pills. In other words, someone who wasn't a Dao Transformation Pill Sage had entered the first level of the Illusionary Fruit Orchard Before him.

This was simply a slap to his face. He was the youngest and the most promising Pill Sage in the Grand Essence Realm, yet someone had actually short-changed him. Not only would he obtain inferior spirit herbs to the fellow who entered before him, but even his reputation would also fall a lot because of this incident.

Thinking of this, Jing Han no longer dared to stay here much longer. He absolutely couldn't let this person enter the second level before him. With a flash of his body, he disappeared directly inside the gate.

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After Ning Cheng entered the herb garden, he immediately stopped in shock.

Before entering this place, the most valuable spirit grass garden he had seen was the one left behind by Pill Sage Min Kong in the Grand Essence Mystic Realm.

But only when he came here did he realise that Pill Sage Min Kong's garden couldn't even compare to a tiny corner of this herb garden. The spirit herbs in this garden weren't just rare, they were all borderline extinct species. Many of them were herbs that he had read about but simply couldn't obtain. Either because only a few of them existed or they had already gone extinct. Yet, those sage spirit grasses were in this garden in abundance.

Nirvana Flame Fruit, Thunder Immortal Fruit, Soul Seizing Fantasy Ginseng, Measureless Jewel Flower.....

These were things that could only be imagined but not what could be seen. Ning Cheng felt ecstatic on seeing those herbs. He even started to feel even more confident about entering the third level to find the Exquisite Star Golden Hidden Leaf.

Ning Cheng was about to open the storage bag in his hand when he suddenly felt something wrong. His spiritual consciousness could communicate with his storage ring, as well as the True Spirit World.

As soon as Ning Cheng raised his hand, a long spear artefact suddenly emerged from the storage ring in his hand. He looked at the spear in confusion, wondering in his heart. *Didn't people say that once one entered the Illusionary Fruit Orchard's first level, one couldn't use any other type of spacial storage? How come he could still use his storage devices?*

Ning Cheng quickly cast away the doubt. In any case, using personal storage devices was a better option anyway. That way, he wouldn't need to put the spirit herbs in the storage bag and instead directly transplant them into the True Spirit World.

Scouring the spiritual grass garden, Ning Cheng worked as a professional gardener. Even if there were more spirit grasses here, he swept everything away without leaving a single trace.

Ning Cheng secretly celebrated that he could use the True Spirit World here in his heart. Otherwise, his storage bag wouldn't be able to hold so many spirit grasses.

Ning Cheng finished collecting all the spirit grasses and stood facing another gate an hour later. Unlike Sheng Huotian's description, there was only a single door here instead of nine.

Ning Cheng guessed that this should be because he had not come in through those twelve doors. It also meant that this one wasn't one of the original nine doors either.

This time, Ning Cheng didn't think much and refined the Nine Orifices Heart Pill. The primary spirit grass for the Nine Orifices Heart Pill was the Nine Orifices Spirit Glaze. It was a spirit pill classified as the best Dao Raising Spirit Pill. It was also one of the most complex Dao Raising Spirit Pill when it came to refinement. The Nine Orifices Heart Pill wasn't a dao pill. Yet, it allowed a Dao Raising cultivator to sense the path to the Dao Transformation Realm, giving them a slightly higher chance to reach the Dao Transformation Realm. Moreover, it can cleanse the essence spirit and purify the meridians as an auxiliary effect.

This pill had a high price attached to it as well. Apart from the difficulty in refining it, the Nine Orifices Spirit Glaze, an expensive item with a sky-high price, also played a huge part. The primary reason is the almost extinct nature of the Nine Orifices Spirit Glaze in the Grand Essence Realm. But in the Illusionary Fruit Orchard's first level, Ning Cheng had obtained at least a dozen stalks of Nine Orifices Spirit Glaze. He wouldn't mind parting with a few anyway. In any case, the more complex and more valuable the pill he refined, the better it would be for him. Especially as it meant reaching areas with more valuable spirit herbs after opening the door.

Ning Cheng's refining time was even shorter because he didn't need to help Jian Sanshan this time. Again, in less than a third of an incense stick, twelve top-quality Nine Orifices Heart Pills shot out from Ning Cheng's pill furnace and landed directly in the recesses on the gate. The gate immediately opened, and the rich scent of spirit herbs wafted out from behind it.

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Jian Sanshan finally snapped out his pill art, and twelve top-quality Dry Measure Pills shot straight out of the pill furnace. Jian Sanshan stood up in surprise. As long as the Dry Measure Pills could shoot out of the pill furnace by itself, it meant that he could enter the Illusionary Fruit Orchard.

Sure enough, he saw three doors still unopened on the right wall. A moment later, a passage directly extended from one of the doors as if guiding him towards it.

Jian Sanshan strongly suppressed his inner ecstasy and walked into the Illusionary Fruit Orchard one step at a time. At this moment, his admiration for Ning Cheng could hardly be described in words. He was sure that Ning Cheng had already entered the Illusionary Fruit Orchard before him. *Just how robust was his understanding of alchemy that he could not only refine a batch of top-quality Dao Sculpting Spirit Pills. But even instruct him at the same time, in mid-refinement?*

Refining twelve top-quality spirit pills in a single furnace, he, Jian Sanshan, had done it occasionally. But it was only due to luck. But he believed that he would be refining top-quality spirit pills regularly from today onwards. If nothing else, it was because of the pill art that Ning Cheng had taught him.

[The Gate Of Good Fortune](#)

Chapter 967: Extinct Spirit Herbs

Ning Cheng had just stepped through the door when he felt as if he had overlooked something important in the previous level.

Ning Cheng was just about to turn back when several oppressive auras bound him in place. The gate behind him disappeared at the exact moment, and six human-shaped golems suddenly appeared out of thin air and surrounded him on all sides.

Golems belonged to the category of puppet arts in the cultivation world. But to control them, one needed to be not only proficient in puppet arts, but one also had to have high attainments in artefact-crafting and array formations.

Judging by their auras, even if these six golems couldn't use any law-related techniques, their physical attacks would be on par with ordinary Dao Sculpting Holy Emperors. Depending on the controller, they could even dish out power levels close to late-stage Dao Sculpting cultivators.

Ning Cheng immediately brought out a medium-grade spear-type spirit artefact and shot out several spear traces. His Seven Bridges Spirit Technique couldn't help him here; besides, casting it for these puppets would be akin to playing the lute to a cow. Perhaps when he learned the Seven Bridges Spirit Technique thoroughly, he could use the Seven Bridges to sweep away these golems. However, he couldn't do it right now.

Time Wheels might be the best means of dealing with them, but Ning Cheng didn't want to use it here either. Time Wheels would sweep through everything in their path and reduce them into nothingness. This was a herb garden, and if he carelessly used Time Wheels here, it might just wipe out many spirit herbs, leaving him with a far lesser harvest.

“Boom-Boom-Boom.....” The spear traces blasted at the golems, temporarily pushing them back and stalling them for some time. One of the spear traces hit a golem’s shoulder joint, shattering its arm below the joint.

Ning Cheng breathed in a sigh of relief at that sight. These golems weren’t as sturdy as their oppressive auras.

But the next instant, Ning Cheng froze. The shattered arm of the now-one-armed golem quickly reassembled itself as a clear stream of rich spirit aura poured into the golem’s body from the herb garden’s soil. A moment later, the arm reattached itself to the golem’s broken shoulder, looking as good as new.

So that was it. Ning Cheng stared blankly at the golems tore through his domain and surrounded him again. He finally understood what he had overlooked in the previous level.

It was something that nourished and preserved so many rare spirit herbs. Since so many spirit herbs could grow here, it meant that there must have been a powerful spirit source underground. It was like Pill Sage Min Kong’s spirit grass gardens in the Grand Essence Mystic Realm. It also had a dense spirit source that helped grow those spirit grasses. Most likely, it was an underground spirit vein.

The thing that he had missed in the previous level was that spirit source, just like the one in the medicinal garden in front of him. He only realised it just now because that golem had used spirit aura coming from underground to repair itself. But more importantly, he also sensed a wood-origin aura from that strand of spirit aura.

At this moment, the six golems started pressing towards him. Fortunately, these golems couldn’t use any spirit techniques and could only suppress Ning Cheng using their physical strength.

Ning Cheng understood from the previous strike that these golems didn’t pose too much of a threat to him; even their physical strength was only average at best. Therefore, Ning Cheng shattered each golem individually by gathering his strength into six focused spear strikes.

These spear strikes even caused the space to tremble, forcing the six golems advancing towards him to stop. An instant later, Ning Cheng’s spear strikes crushed the six golems, bringing out ear-piercing sounds akin to breaking porcelain.

“Boom-Crash-Skeet.....” The six golems quickly shattered under Ning Cheng’s spear, and their broken bits scattered on the ground.

However, before Ning Cheng could even take a breather, he stared at the six shattered golems in surprise. Bursts of wood origin spirit aura gushed out from the ground and rapidly poured into the six golems’ broken bits. The bits started to tremble and then quickly reassemble themselves back into six golems.

Such a powerful recovering ability? Ning Cheng thought as he immediately brought out the Nameless Flame and threw it towards them. The Nameless Flame landed on top of one of the still-reforming puppets, and the recovery speed slowed significantly. However, what surprised Ning Cheng was that the Nameless Flame couldn’t burn the puppet at all, only slowing down its recovery. *Just what were those golems made from to have such powerful resistance?*

Since it can't be burned at once, might as well take the time to burn it slowly.....

Ning Cheng had just thought of this when a colossal hourglass appeared out of thin air in the distance. The hourglass remained suspended in the air, seemingly because of a formation. However, the fine sand inside of it kept trickling down.

What's going on? Could it be that he would be teleported out of the medicinal garden once the time indicated by the hourglass ended?

Ning Cheng's heart tightened as he thought of this. The more he thought about it, the more he felt it was the most likely outcome. These golems weren't powerful in battle, but dealing with them would slow him down considerably.

It was already tricky reaching here, and he hadn't even entered the dao fruit orchards. He hadn't even found the Exquisite Star Golden Hidden Lead yet, so how could he leave?

Ning Cheng no longer wanted to waste time with these golems and threw out the Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan King. He gave it the order to quickly bind those golems and rushed straight towards the medicinal garden. Ning Cheng didn't dare to gamble right now as getting teleported out would delay things for him by a lot.

The spirit herbs here were of a higher grade than the previous one. But the garden itself was sectioned into three parts, each locked behind a forbidden formation.

Ning Cheng no longer cared about harming the spirit grasses and directly used Time Wheels to break open the formations. He wanted to remove the formations covering the three sections in the shortest possible time, collect the spirit grasses, and head to the next level.

By the time Ning Cheng's time wheels blasted open the garden's formations, the rattan king had finished binding the six golems, preventing them from moving.

Although the Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan King hadn't reached a high level yet, its restrictive ability could still easily restrain the six golems. In any case, it prevented them from recovering over and over again.

Ning Cheng also sensed the Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan King frantically absorbing the puppets' all-too-familiar wood origin spirit aura through his connection. But he didn't concern himself with it. It wasn't like the spirit aura here was his. Only the Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan King was his, and the more it could absorb and grow, the better it would be for him.

Only half an incense stick worth of time remained in the hourglass when Ning Cheng collected all the spirit herbs from the three sections.

Ning Cheng hurriedly rushed to the Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan King to help it finish off the six golems. But he found the six golems utterly ruined at this time. They showed no movement, nor was there any more spirit aura pouring into them to repair them.

At this moment, the Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan King had already reached the full circle of Starry Sky Rank 8. Its body even started to show signs of an imminent breakthrough.

Ning Cheng was about to put away the Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan King. He intended to first come out of this place before releasing the Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan King to face its tribulation. It wasn't a good idea to confront a tribulation in this place, but the next best option would be to use the Mysterious Yellow Bead. However, since a great power had obviously set up this place, Ning Cheng didn't dare to openly use the Mysterious Yellow Bead.

However, the Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan King, which always obeyed Ning Cheng's command, surprisingly didn't let Ning Cheng put him away. Instead, it sent him an eager message.

"There's a wood origin-attributed spirit vein below?" Ning Cheng muttered to himself in shock.

Sure enough, the feedback he received from the Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan King confirmed it once again. There was indeed a wood origin-attributed spirit vein underground.

Ning Cheng took a deep breath. No wonder the spirit herbs here grew so lush. It was all because of that spirit vein. Looking at the sand about to run out, Ning Cheng forcibly held back his inner greed. He immediately grabbed the Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan King and the six golems' remains before heading straight to the next door.

Suppose he possessed a spirit vein like this. In that case, he could easily open up a vast spirit herb garden in the Mysterious Yellow Bead. Even the dao fruit tree he had planted in the chunks of law soil that hadn't yet bloomed would quickly blossom and bear fruits.

But it was still good that he couldn't move the wood origin-attributed spirit vein right now. First, he didn't have the time. Second, this wood origin-attributed spirit vein definitely ran through the entire Illusionary Fruit Orchard. Therefore, even if he didn't dig it up here, he could try at the next level just as well. But more importantly, he didn't know the consequences of pulling out this spirit vein.

Once he took out the spirit vein, it might alert the entire Grand Essence Realm. At that point, it wouldn't matter even if he was a Dao Transformation Pill Sage. Even if he had Sheng Houtian to protect him, he wouldn't be able to withstand the wrath of the entire realm directed his way.

Standing in front of the gate leading to the third level of the Illusionary Fruit Orchard, Ning Cheng directly took out the ingredients for the Harmony Bodhisattva Pill. The primary spirit herbs required for the Harmony Bodhisattva Pill were the Heaven Harmony Immortal Grass and the Bodhisattva Dust Lotus. The former, a currently extinct spirit herb outside.

The only reason why Ning Cheng had them was because he had harvested them from this level. From this, one could only imagine the number of spirit grasses already extinct within the Grand Essence Realm outside.

The Harmony Bodhisattva Pill was a top-of-the-line Dao Transformation Spirit Pill. Taking this pill would help the cultivator highlight the deficiencies in one's dao heart and cultivation methods. That way, the cultivator could take corrective measures in time before attempting to advance to the Dao Essence Realm. The value of a single Harmony Bodhisattva Pill was simply something that couldn't be measured in spirit crystals. Even the currently non-extinct Bodhisattva Dust Lotus wasn't something easily obtainable, even for the ten major forces. But more importantly, even if you had all the ingredients, this pill was simply too difficult to refine, even for pill sages.

However, Ning Cheng had no problems in refining the Harmonious Bodhisattva Pill. He managed to refine them just when the sand within the hourglass was about to run out. Ning Cheng didn't even wait and rushed up to the gate, just behind the pills, and passed through the moment it opened.

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In the guest hall of City Lord's mansion, the crowd was still discussing who had opened the thirteenth door. The discussion had already gone on for several hours, but no one could come up with a conclusion. Even the pill deities who failed in the pill refinement and got teleported out had no idea about who opened the thirteenth door of the Illusionary Fruit Orchard.

"I've heard that the medicinal gardens behind the thirteenth door of the Illusionary Fruit Orchard are very different from those behind the other twelve gates. I heard that they're all filled with extinct or extremely precious spirit herbs. If any alchemist obtains these, he would be of immense merit to my Grand Essence Realm. Even more so if he decides to take out these spirit grasses to pass on to the future generations." A tall, purplish copper-faced man spoke up in a gruff tone.

Everyone here knew this speaker, the Profound Moon Spirit Gate's current Sect Master, Fei Feng. Grand Elder Fei Feng had taken up the mantle of Profound Moon Spirit Gate's Sect Master after the previous Sect Master, Qi Changgui, suffered an accident.

There were no fools here either, and everyone understood what Fei Feng meant by those words. *No matter who entered the thirteenth gate, the rare and extinct spirit herbs he obtained should be taken out and distributed to everyone.* Spreading these rare spirit herbs to everyone ensured that they didn't go extinct again.

Although it sounded noble on the surface, it was all to serve his selfish interests by evoking everyone's greed. *Would a major force willingly hand over the rare spirit herbs their alchemist obtained to others?* Fei Feng only said this because his Profound Moon Spirit Gate didn't have any accomplished alchemists.

"Sect Master Fei's words make sense. No matter who it is, they should stand for the perspective of my Grand Essence Domain and the Grand Essence Realm. After all, we're all cultivators of the Grand Essence Realm." Shi Tianhe of 9-Revolution Sacred Dao Pond was the first to stand out and concur.

"Hehe, I'm afraid that even if this alchemist came out with all those rare spirit herbs, the Profound Moon Spirit Gate might not have enough resources to bid for them." A Dao Transformation Holy Emperor from the Great Spirit Pill Sect let out a chuckle. Although his cultivation couldn't compare to Fei Feng's, his Great Spirit Pill Sect was just as strong because of Jing Han.

Fei Feng gave a cold snort. "The Illusionary Fruit Orchard was originally established by the great sages of our Grand Essence Realm. They left it here to develop our Grand Essence Realm and ensure that spirit herbs didn't go extinct. Since the thirteenth gate has opened, we should follow the wishes of our Grand Essence Realm's ancestors. How can we talk about bidding for them?"

[The Gate Of Good Fortune](#)

Chapter 968: The Strange Crystal Barrier

"If it doesn't belong to you, trying to take it by force might end up in you breaking your teeth. If it's my Immortal Corpse Sect's alchemist who entered the thirteenth gate, my Immortal Corpse Gate isn't going to act with such generosity and take out those rare spirit herbs. I'd like to see who dares to snatch them from my Immortal Corpse Sect?" A dark red-faced man spoke up with an equally cold laugh.

Fei Feng felt annoyed in his heart, but he didn't say anything else. There was a 90% chance that the pill sage who entered the thirteenth gate was Jing Han from the Great Spirit Pill Sect. As such, he didn't understand why the Immortal Corpse Sect had spoken so blindly as to help the Great Spirit Pill Sect.

However, the Immortal Corpse Sect was a bizarre sect that no one wanted to touch. While he was the only functioning Dao Fusion Holy Emperor in the Profound Moon Spirit Gate. It hadn't been too long since he became the sect master of the Profound Moon Spirit Gate either, which meant he didn't have the same kind of influence and deterrence as Qi Changgui enjoyed. Plus, he also didn't have the same strength as Qi Changgui. He had come to the City Lord's banquet in Heaven Essence Sacred City only for one purpose, which was to gather as many dao fruits as he could. That way, he could at least cultivate a force that purely belonged to his side of the family.

Therefore, when Immortal Corpse Sect's Chun Fei spoke up, he didn't pay much attention to him.

"Let's not argue over such things for now. Once someone enters the third level of Illusionary Fruit Orchard, all the pills they refine will appear on the crystal screen. If there really are extinct spirit herbs there, the alchemist would definitely incorporate them in the pills to get to more precious areas. Look, someone has already appeared on the second level of the Illusionary Fruit Orchard. It looks like the alchemist who opened the thirteenth gate. I'm sure it's only a matter of time before he enters the third level of the Illusionary Fruit Orchard." A woman finally spoke up to stop the escalating arguments.

Although this woman was *only* a Dao Transformation Holy Emperor, no one dared to raise or even express any objection. Everyone here knew this woman, the Pill Union's Deputy Union Head, Holy Emperor Qing Yi. But more notably, she was a highly accomplished Dao Transformation Pill Sage and the public face of the Pill Union.

Holy Emperor Qing Yi's words quickly quelled the arguments. And as if on cue, nine doors appeared in the second level of the crystal screen, and an alchemist landed before them. This alchemist quickly checked his surroundings before taking out his pill furnace to refine pills.

Just as this alchemist began to refine pills, blocks of text appeared right in the middle of the upper half of the crystal screen. It only contained the name of pills.

"How's that possible?" A Dao Transformation Holy Emperor uttered in a shocked voice.

It indeed shouldn't be possible because the Illusionary Fruit Garden's crystal screen would only display the name of the pills when the door to the third level opened. It had never shown pill names before the third level, at least not in its recorded history.

Right now, the alchemist before the nine gates on the second level of the Illusionary Fruit Garden had only sat down. This alchemist hadn't even begun heating up his pill furnace. *So how could pill names appear on the crystal screen?*

"Harmony Bodhisattva Pill? Did... Did I read it right? It's really *the* Harmony Bodhisattva Pill....." The guest hall could no longer remain calm. The text clearly showed a name, 'Harmony Bodhisattva Pill'.

"There truly are extinct spirit herbs inside. Harmony Bodhisattva Pill requires the Bodhisattva Dust Lotus. But Bodhisattva Dust Lotus has long been extinct in the Grand Essence Realm. It actually reappeared inside."

A burst of exclamations and whooshes of deep breaths rang throughout the hall. A vast majority even stood up in excitement.

Apart from the top Holy Emperors here, the hall was full of pill deities or pill sages. As such, everyone naturally knew about the primary spirit herbs required for the Harmony Bodhisattva Pill.

"The second one, Nine Orifices Heart Pill. Oh heavens, the Nine Orifices Divine Glaze is another extinct spirit herb....."

"The third one, Primordial Cleansing Pill. Although this Dao Sculpting Spirit Pill's ingredients aren't extinct or even rare, the difficulty in refining it is comparable to that of an ordinary Dao Transformation Spirit Pill. This person actually used this pill to open the first level of the Illusionary Fruit Orchard. No wonder this person could open the thirteenth gate of the Illusionary Fruit Orchard....."

It was no longer possible to calm the excitement and disbelief rampaging through the hall. Everyone felt like a cat's claw kept scratching at their hearts. All of them were clear that a powerful fellow had appeared among the alchemists that entered the Illusionary Fruit Orchard this time. But more importantly, this fellow had opened the most valuable part of the Illusionary Fruit Orchard, the hidden medicinal gardens with extinct spirit herbs.

Why did these spirit herbs go extinct? It was simply because they were too valuable; everyone would immediately dig them up to refine them if they found them in the wild. Another reason was that these spirit herbs were challenging to grow and required careful monitoring. Both these factors ultimately resulted in those spirit herbs going extinct.

Whoever opened the Illusionary Fruit Orchard's hidden medicinal gardens would get at least 20% of it. But more importantly, a significant portion of those spirit herbs would also go to the Le Clan. This, in turn, would propel the Le Clan into a leading clan within the Grand Essence Realm even faster.

"Union Head, our Pill Union's medicinal gardens don't have the Nine Orifices Divine Glaze or the Bodhisattva Dust Lotus. Yet, this person managed to refine those two pills. From this, it's more likely that this alchemist obtained even more extinct spirit herbs." The Pill Union's Deputy Union Head, Holy Emperor Qing Yi, also couldn't hold back her excitement. She even sent a voice transmission to Sheng Houtian.

Sheng Houtian secretly frowned as he guessed that it should be Ning Cheng who opened the thirteenth gate. But whether this was a good or a bad thing for Ning Cheng, he didn't know. Therefore, when Holy Emperor Qing Yi sent the transmission, he could only sigh. "No matter who this person is, my Pill Union will stand on his side."

"Yes." Although Holy Emperor Qing Yi felt puzzled by the response, she still replied affirmatively.

If Holy Emperor Qing Yi could think of this matter, who else couldn't think of it? Everyone started speculating about how many extinct spirit herbs this alchemist obtained after opening the thirteenth gate.

.....

Ning Cheng didn't know that the people outside knew that he obtained many extinct spirit herbs. But even if he did, he couldn't care less about it. The spirit herbs obtained from the two previous medicine gardens had already given him a huge surprise.

He needed dozens more resources to cultivate than others. Plus, he also had many others around him who needed an equally large amount of resources. Therefore, even if this place contained a hundred times more spirit herbs, it wouldn't be too much for his needs.

At this moment, Ning Cheng had already refined a batch of top-quality Harmony Bodhisattva Pills, opened the door to the Illusionary Fruit Orchard's third level, and entered it. He once again spotted another suspended hourglass. Going by the previous experience, Ning Cheng estimated that this hourglass gave him about an hour's worth of time, which gave him a bit of relief.

Fortunately, there weren't any puppets here to keep him distracted. He should have enough time to search for what he wanted with an hour to squander. Even if he couldn't find what he wanted on this level, he could quickly collect the spirit herbs here and enter the fourth level.

As he came close to the medicinal garden, Ning Cheng could finally see the spirit herbs' silhouettes growing inside. However, a crystal-like barrier covered the entire area. Moreover, there weren't many spirit herbs behind the crystal-like barrier. At most, he could only count about a hundred or so, far less than the number of spirit herbs in the two previous levels.

This caused Ning Cheng to feel a slight disappointment. However, when Ning Cheng moved closer, his heart started to pound with excitement once again.

The garden only contained a hundred or so spirit herbs. But every single spirit herb inside was either incredibly precious or a treasure extinct outside.

Buddha Light Shoots, Unfretted Dragon Leaf, Bright Cicada Rattan, Reincarnation Tears....

Especially the Reincarnation Tears, a spirit flower even more precious than many dao fruits. It had gone extinct in the Grand Essence Realm a long time ago.

Ning Cheng's gaze quickly swept up from these extinct spirit herbs in the front to the back of the garden. The one sweep immediately made him even more ecstatic, as the back actually had a row of dao fruit trees. These dao fruit trees weren't very tall and numbered around a dozen. However, the Falling Scar Dao Fruit Tree was the worst of those dao fruit trees.

Ning Cheng immediately thought back to when Kong Ning had asked him to borrow points for a Falling Scar Dao Fruit.

Even Kong Ning, a disciple from a major sect, had to go through so much for a single Falling Scar Dao Fruit. Yet, just how many Falling Scar Dao Fruits were in front of him? Just the one's visible amounted to twenty or thirty.

Unfortunately, Ning Cheng's surprise quickly subsided as he swept his gaze through the spirit grasses and dao fruit trees a few more times. He didn't see the Exquisite Star Golden Concealed Leaf. The only reason why Ning Cheng hastened through the previous levels was for the Exquisite Star Golden Concealed Leaf, a spirit herb he needed the most. Alas, he didn't find it here.

Ning Cheng quickly settled his mind. What he wanted might not be at this level, but that didn't mean that the next level also didn't have it. So, just like before, he decided to take away all the dao fruit trees and spirit grasses on this level and then head to the next level. In any case, these spirit herbs were still quite useful for him.

Whether restrictions common to medicinal gardens or various types of defensive formations, Ning Cheng had broken too many of them. Even in the second level, he had easily blasted open the three formations covering the three sections. As such, Ning Cheng didn't put this crystal-like barrier to heart.

However, when Ning Cheng was about to strike the restrictions, his spiritual consciousness quickly zoomed in on the crystal-like barrier. What he saw immediately stopped him from taking action. It was a kind of forbidden restriction that he had never seen before, one filled with incredibly violent power.

Even without taking any action, Ning Cheng knew what would happen if he did. If he forcibly tried to break these crystal-like barriers, the violent power would immediately destroy everything within the medicinal garden.

After looking at it for a few minutes, Ning Cheng carefully placed his hand on top of the crystal-like barrier. *That same faint flow of spirit aura?*

Ning Cheng immediately took his hand back and took out a ruined golem he collected from the previous level from his ring. He immediately understood a few things. This crystal-like barrier that protected the spirit herbs had the same source powering them. That is, this crystal-like barrier wasn't a restriction at all, but rather it was another type of puppet. It had nothing to do with protective formations. In fact, it used the same refining techniques as the ones used to refine those golems from the previous level.

If he attacked forcibly, this crystal barrier would repair itself automatically as long as the attack didn't go over its repairing threshold. If the attack exceeded its repairing capacity, the violent aura contained within it would immediately detonate and turn everything to dust.

Thinking of this, Ning Cheng immediately took out his spear and stabbed it at this crystal barrier without using too much strength. Sure enough, although it created a visible dent in the crystal barrier, the barrier almost instantly repaired itself to its original state.

Ning Cheng finally understood why the six humanoid golems, which didn't pose much of a threat to him, appeared in the previous level. Most likely, the great power that had set up this medicinal orchard had done it with purpose.

That is, he wanted those who managed to enter this place after him to learn the puppet art from these six golems and then use it to open this crystal barrier.

However, if one thought about it realistically, the great power that set up this place had no intention of letting anyone open this crystal barrier. At the very least, that great power had no intention to let others take away these spirit herbs.

That's because no one could learn that puppet art in just one hour unless they were also accomplished puppet masters who walked the path of puppetry. In fact, even for those masters, the possibility to learn the intricacies of a different puppet art was an impossible matter, given the time constraint. Plus, one can't forget that one needed to be a powerful pill sage to enter this area. *Would such a pill sage use their already limited time to learn puppetry? Even as an auxiliary support skill? And even if they could, could their mastery over puppetry reach such high levels?*

Ning Cheng's heart went cold but soon fired up once again. Since he came here, he had to find the Exquisite Star Golden Concealed Leaf. It was a spirit grass that carried the laws of heaven and earth, which meant it was most likely to appear on the fourth level.

He again started to ponder what the expert who set up this place meant by placing the crystal barrier here. *If this fellow didn't want people to enter the next level, why would he put golems in the previous level for people to learn from?*

Maybe that's how those great powers thought. If they didn't give people a slight possibility of a way out, it might affect the dao hearts of the coming future generations. *Wasn't it similar to the saying: "The heavenly dao never ends; there's always a path forward"?*

Whatever the intention, he had to reach the next level.

[The Gate Of Good Fortune](#)

Chapter 969: The Real Illusionary Orchard

Thinking of this, Ning Cheng put aside all his thoughts and focussed on the mangled golem he collected from the previous level.

For other pill sages, perhaps their journey would end here. However, Ning Cheng wasn't like the others. That's because he cultivated the Mysterious Yellow Origin Cultivation Method, the Mysterious Yellow Formless. With Formless, as long as something tangible could be derived from something without form, it would extract it and present it to him as something distinct.

The only concern was whether he could actually comprehend the puppet art and break the crystal barrier on this garden before time ran out.

Ning Cheng focussed his consciousness on the mangled golem, and his spiritual consciousness broke through the obstructing restrictions within it without the slightest concern. Some of the restrictions that others would have to slowly peel and unravel lasted only a moment under the brute force of Ning Cheng's spiritual consciousness. This fact also highlighted the might and usefulness of the Dark Nether Devouring Spirit.

When Ning Cheng immersed himself consciously in using the Mysterious Yellow Formless, Mysterious Yellow Origin Aura almost immediately surrounded him. In just a few moments, the means of refining the golem gradually started to form in Ning Cheng's mind.

At this moment, the entire medicinal garden had grown unusually silent, except for the sound of leaking sand.

Ning Cheng wasn't only a pill sage; he was also an accomplished artefact-crafting master. Although puppetry art could be considered as a separate path, in the end, it still was a branch of artefact-crafting.

With the help of origin derivation, Ning Cheng finally opened his eyes after just over half an hour. He finally understood how to refine this humanoid golem by himself.

However, Ning Cheng didn't feel happy about it. Just because he could refine such a golem didn't mean that he could break this crystal barrier.

That's because he had only figured out the rough outline of how to craft the golem, not how to provide the golem with spirit aura. He also hadn't come up with a solution to why the six golems could self-repair so quickly.

Without understanding all of these, even if he could craft these humanoid golems, he simply couldn't use them at all. What's more, the grade of humanoid golems he could make with what he comprehended would be pretty low. At the very least, it definitely wouldn't compare to the six humanoid golems.

He also had a vague feeling that even if he figured out how the humanoid golems received spirit aura or repaired themselves so quickly, he couldn't break the barrier. At least not with what he learned in the past half an hour.

Whether in theory or in practice, he couldn't accomplish such a daunting task. At least not unless he had a time disc that he had heard about from Cang Wei. Unfortunately, that kind of object was simply too precious. At the very least, he hadn't seen or heard about anyone using it.

Ning Cheng sighed and threw out all the other five shattered humanoid golems from his ring, again studying the pile of broken golems for another half an incense stick of time.

However, noticing the sand within the hourglass trickle down one particle at a time, Ning Cheng couldn't help but grow more and more anxious. A few moments later, he sighed and finally gave up studying the puppet art. Instead, he transmitted a spirit sense message to the Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan King. "When you bound these golems before, did you find anything unusual?"

The Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan King was revelling in the joy of its significant increase in strength. As long as it could successfully cross the tribulation after coming out of this place, it would become a Starry Sky Grade 9 Demon Vine. It was just a matter of waiting for some time before it reached Grade 9. Compared to the long years it spent growing up on its own, it couldn't help but laugh out loud at its past self's foolish dreams.

It felt that it had made the right decision in following behind its owner; *no, he should be addressed as 'Master', maybe 'Lord' would be better. Perhaps it should adopt Big Brother Chasing Bull's way of addressing Ning Cheng.* As long as it followed its Lord, it might even gain the chance to shape its dao and become a humanoid.

Therefore, when Ning Cheng asked, how could it dare be slow and hurriedly send back a spirit sense message. It quickly told Ning Cheng everything it found, every single minute detail.

These golems could absorb wood origin-attributed spirit essence. However, they could only do so because they all had a starry sky demon rattan growing inside each of them, serving as their core. It was the Invisible Stone Rattan.

A lightning bolt instantly crossed through Ning Cheng's mind, and it felt as if he had come close to seizing something important. Ning Cheng immediately stood up. "Tell me about this Invisible Stone Rattan. What does it do?"

More spirit sense messages poured in from the Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan King. "I don't know too much about it apart from my inherited memories, but it is an extremely rare starry sky demon rattan. No, it's more appropriate to call it a demonic seed and an extremely bizarre one at that. Its main body is a stone-like seed, and the stalks that grow out of it are invisible. But although invisible, it has a powerful ability to survive, even greater than us ghost rattans. Moreover, just like its invisible stems, its invisible roots can also freely extend up to hundreds of miles."

"The easiest and quickest way to exterminate the Invisible Stone Rattan is to suck out all the vitality and spirit essence from the seed. This way, the Invisible Stone Rattan would die a true death and will no longer be able to absorb spirit essence, which is what I did."

Ning Cheng laughed aloud; *what was the meaning of getting it all together at the last minute?* This was it. He had thought of all the means, but he simply never imagined that these golems would have Invisible Stone Rattan seeds powering them. That expert had implanted those Invisible Stone Rattan seeds into the golems during the refinement process. That way, once the Invisible Stone Rattans sprouted, it would form invisible rhizomes inside the golems. These rhizomes would act as the veins and meridians in a human body. They would also provide the golems human-like movements.

Even if he burnt and shattered the golems, as long as he couldn't suck out the vitality within the seeds, it would continue absorbing spirit essence. Eventually, it would bring the golem back to life again. He did notice the dead Invisible Stone Rattan inside the puppet. But he thought it was just another material used to make the golem. He never expected it to actually be a demon seed.

Whoever refined these golems was definitely a talented genius. Not only was this person a genius, but he also had a deep understanding of the Invisible Stone Rattan. He could even control the way it grew. Unfortunately, these golems met their counter in the hands of the Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan King. The only reason it took some time for the ghost rattan to take it down was that it was still not strong enough. If it was a Grade 9, even just an early stage, then the Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan King could quickly suck them dry no matter how many of these golems appeared.

Ning Cheng looked at the hourglass and found that he still had about an incense stick worth of time left. If he timed it tightly, he should still be able to open the fourth level of the Illusionary Fruit Orchard before the sand ran out.

If he didn't know anything about this crystal barrier, Ning Cheng couldn't have done anything and would have given up. But now that he knew that this crystal barrier was shaped out of Invisible Stone Rattan's stems, he now had a way to deal with it even without the Ghost Rattan King. Not to mention now, when he had the Ghost Rattan King with him.

"Dark Crow, this crystal barrier is also formed by Invisible Stone Rattans. I will use a formation to cut off its connection to the spirit source underground for a few breaths. You have to suck out the vitality in those Invisible Stone Rattans and kill them in the shortest possible time." Ning Cheng directly called out for the Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan King's help.

If the Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan King couldn't do it, he could still break those Invisible Stone Rattans, but it would take much more than one incense stick of time.

The Ghost Rattan King also wanted the spirit essence and vitality stored inside the Invisible Stone Rattan's seed. Even if it couldn't use it right now, it could use it when advancing to the Starry Sky Grade 9 Demon Plant by storing it inside itself.

While others couldn't find the existence of the Invisible Stone Rattan, the Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan King had no issues with it at all. Therefore, as soon as Ning Cheng called for its help, it immediately stretched out its entire root system, covering the whole crystal barrier in just an instant.

The Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan King then quickly locked onto all the Invisible Stone Rattan seeds in the crystal barrier in another breath. The crystal barrier immediately issued a buzz followed by a tremor. Apparently, these Invisible Stone Rattan seeds had some form of instinctive intelligence and could sense danger.

Ning Cheng also didn't waste any time and took out an array flag and threw it down. In slightly less than ten breaths of time, the spirit aura around the crystal barrier weakened considerably.

"Devour!" Ning Cheng immediately shouted. But even before Ning Cheng's command, the Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan King had already started to frantically absorb the wood origin-attributed spirit essence and vitality within the Invisible Stone Rattan seeds.

The Invisible Stone Rattans essentially had no combat ability, and their most significant role was to assist. In fact, it was only suitable for playing the assist role, whether to help the golems or assist with the crystal barrier.

With Ning Cheng's formation isolating it from the underground spirit vine, the Ghost Rattan King immediately started sucking out everything inside the seeds.

In just half an incense stick worth of time, the crystal barrier cracked open.

A breath later, the crystal barrier completely disappeared with a click. The rich smell of spirit herbs and the fragrance of dao fruits rushed out, making people feel fresh and refreshed.

From the beginning, until Ning Cheng opened the crystal barrier, the puppet art that one was supposed to comprehend and use here wasn't even used at all. In fact, if Ning Cheng guessed it correctly, the expert wanted to purposely trick people into wasting their time researching the puppet art. With only an hour to study and comprehend the puppet art, it would be nothing more than a worthless effort to even attempt it. The glimmer of possibility left by that great power who set up this Illusionary Fruit Orchard was nothing but a lie.

Ning Cheng sighed; working with other people, at least one would end up teaching you something unknown. He only had an Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan King with him right now. Yet, it not only taught him a lesson at this time, but it also helped him a great deal.

After breaking this crystal barrier, Ning Cheng didn't even bother to think about things and directly threw out more array flags. He wanted to take away this medicinal garden in its entirety, no longer feeling even half embarrassed about it now.

It only took a few moments for Ning Cheng to set up the formation. With a burst of clicking sounds, he directly moved the garden into his True Spirit World.

Since the garden had gone, it also meant that all the spirit grasses and dao fruits had also gone. Ning Cheng, however, didn't feel too happy, as the entrance to the fourth level of the Illusionary Fruit Orchard didn't appear as expected.

Looking at the trickling sand with less than half an incense stick worth of time left, Ning Cheng once again started to grow anxious. Even if he found the entrance to the fourth level, he most likely didn't have the time to refine the pills required to open the door.

Ning Cheng's spiritual consciousness no longer held back and blasted out, scanning every corner of this level. His powerful spiritual consciousness's assaulting ability immediately became apparent at this time.

In about ten breaths, an extremely well-hidden formation appeared within Ning Cheng's spiritual consciousness. Since he couldn't find an obvious gate standing here, he wouldn't let go of any place that could potentially lead to the fourth level. Ning Cheng didn't even think about it and threw out an array flag.

Fortunately, the hidden formation wasn't powerful, so it didn't take too much time to open under Ning Cheng's array flags. It was another garden, a dao fruit orchard to be exact, and filled with only dao fruit trees.

Ning Cheng immediately rushed over and looked at the rows of dao fruit trees in front of him in shock. Just a rough sweep indicated about 50-60 trees.

What was going on here? He found no fourth level, no fifth level, let alone a sixth level, unlike what he had heard. After breaking the crystal barrier on the third level, it should have theoretically led him to the door to the fourth level. But it didn't; instead, he found another garden on the same level with many dao fruit trees, with grades ranging from Dao Sculpting to Dao Transformation. But even so, there weren't more than ten of each. There were even a few dao fruit trees that Ning Cheng couldn't recognise among them.

From the looks of it, that previous garden was just a distraction. This orchard in the front was most likely the real orchard.

Ning Cheng looked back at the trickling sand and found that he had just about a quarter of an incense stick worth of time.

Not good, Ning Cheng quickly realised a few things. These two gardens were linked together. Once the sand finished trickling down, he would still be teleported out if he couldn't open it and move to the next level.

[The Gate Of Good Fortune](#)

Chapter 970: Body Possession

Ning Cheng's first thought was to dig up all the dao fruit trees, but he had only dug up a few before realising that it might not be possible. The dao fruit trees here were different from the previous medicinal gardens. Each group had a unique restriction protecting them. Just removing the restrictions and digging out a group took a little more than half an incense stick worth of time.

Just then, the Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan King sent him a spirit sense message. “Master, you just need to weaken the restrictions. I can dig out those dao fruit trees safely.”

Ning Cheng’s heart moved. By himself, it wouldn’t be possible to dig them all up within the time limit, but with the Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan King, he could.

Thinking of this, Ning Cheng threw out a large handful of formation flags which quickly weakened most of the restrictions around the individual groups. Just when he noticed that the sand in the hourglass had almost finished trickling down, the central node connecting all the restrictions suddenly let out a ‘click’ and shattered.

The moment the restrictions shattered, the Underworld Crow Ghost Rattan King’s roots, which it had already stretched out in preparation, dug into the soil and swept away all the dao fruit trees.

Ning Cheng looked back at the trickling sand and found that he still had a few breaths, although the sand had almost finished trickling down. Ning Cheng’s spiritual consciousness immediately selected a random batch of low-grade spirit grasses collected earlier and put them into his storage bag. The sand also finished trickling down when he finished, and Ning Cheng suddenly felt a powerful force wrap around his body.

Looks like it was about time to teleport out. Ning Cheng had just thought of it when a ghost-like aura suddenly rushed into Ning Cheng’s Sea of Consciousness, not giving Ning Cheng time to react at all.

If not for the fact that Ning Cheng let his guard down as he was about to be teleported out, this ghostly aura couldn’t have invaded Ning Cheng’s Sea of Consciousness. One could say that this ethereal aura chose the most opportunistic time.

A violent tearing power suddenly erupted in Ning Cheng’s Sea of Consciousness. It felt like he had fallen into a huge blender and was about to be swallowed by a terrifying power.

Immediately afterwards, Ning Cheng felt his control over his body growing weaker and weaker as if his soul was about to leave his body.

“Huh, what a powerful Sea of Consciousness, what a powerful spirit soul and spirit sense.....” A startled voice resounded deep within Ning Cheng’s consciousness.

“No. This is the Starry Sky Sea of Consciousness? Wait, eight different elemental spirit roots, each top-grade, oh heavens.....” This voice no longer had any surprise in it; rather, it dripped with ecstasy. It felt like a man about to die of thirst in the desert suddenly saw a huge lake of water right in front of him.

Body possession?

Ning Cheng immediately understood. He had previously experienced body possession attempts; as such, he quickly realised that someone wanted to take possession of his body.

Daring to seize this father’s body, seeking death. Even if I have to fight with my life on the line, I will end you.

Everlasting Blue Thunder Fort, protect my Purple Palace and my Sea of Consciousness. Celestial River, burn this bastard to death for me.....

Ning Cheng's Everlasting Blue Thunder Fort instantly condensed in his Sea of Consciousness, forming a fort out of thunder arcs around it. In the same instant, the flames of the Celestial River erupted with berserk rage, wanting to incinerate everything in its path.

What he was most unafraid of was someone trying to take possession of his body. Even so, he never expected to encounter such a situation in this place. In just an instant, Ning Cheng finally understood the purpose of the Illusionary Fruit Orchard.

Most likely, the Illusionary Fruit Orchard was built by this fellow trying to seize his body. Although outwardly, it looked as if he created this space to contribute to the Grand Essence Realm. But more likely, it was to find a suitable body to take over. The target, the pill master who could open the thirteenth gate of the Illusionary Fruit Orchard, which coincidentally was him.

"Wait-wait, I don't want my Sea of Consciousness to be destroyed. If you don't resist, I will even let you reincarnate or even forge a body for you." When Ning Cheng activated the Everlasting Blue Thunder Fort and the Celestial River Flame, a voice rang out in Ning Cheng's Sea of Consciousness.

Ning Cheng felt so angry that he even laughed out aloud. *This bastard actually treated his Sea of Consciousness as his and said such shameless words.*

"I have waited for one million and nine thousand years for someone to open the thirteenth gate. Originally, I opened the Illusionary Fruit Orchard once every ten thousand years. I then changed it to one thousand years, then again to one hundred years. But I still couldn't find the person I had been waiting for. I would have given up in a few years, but heavens took pity on me and sent you to me. Your Starry Sky Sea of Consciousness is perfect, and I don't want to ruin it because of my attacks. You're also the most powerful spirit soul I have ever seen, so I hope you won't make a move either; I'm willing to....."

This spirit soul that wanted to take over his body hadn't even finished speaking when Ning Cheng's Celestial River Flame blasted out. "Cut the crap. Do you still have to act so shamelessly? When did my Sea of Consciousness become yours? Whether my Sea of Consciousness is Starry Sky or not, whether it is perfect or not, when did it become your business? Die to this father....."

"Boom....." A sharp tongue of flame suddenly rushed out and coiled around Ning Cheng's Celestial River Flame.

A terrifying scorching heat accompanied the tongue of flame, and Ning Cheng's Sea of Consciousness rumbled for a moment. Ning Cheng's eyes flashed. He understood that the flame coiling around his Celestial River in his Sea of Consciousness was the same grade as the Celestial River Flame. Otherwise, he wouldn't have felt that terrifying scorching sensation.

It could be said that if it wasn't for the Celestial River Flame and the Everlasting Blue Thunder Fort, his Sea of Consciousness might have already collapsed. *No, he absolutely couldn't let this spirit soul continue to fight in his Sea of Consciousness. Although this was his territory, he had to end this fight quickly.*

"You actually possess a spirit-grade Celestial River Flame..... Oh heavens, is that the Everlasting Blue Thunder Fort? Wait, I can even feel a hint of origin aura....." The spirit soul's voice in Ning Cheng's Sea of Consciousness grew even more excited, and he couldn't contain himself from what he found in Ning Cheng's Sea of Consciousness. In fact, even Ning Cheng could feel the spirit soul's ecstasy.

As long as he seized Ning Cheng's body, all of these would become his.

"You better stop, or I can destroy your spiritual consciousness and Sea of Consciousness in an instant." After this spirit soul controlled himself, an even more terrifying aura filled Ning Cheng's Sea of Consciousness. It felt as if it would devour Ning Cheng's entire Sea of Consciousness in the next moment.

"Dark Nether Devouring Spirit Scroll?" Ning Cheng spoke up in shock.

The Dark Nether Devouring Spirit Scroll was just too familiar to him. He had not only obtained his technique but had even spent a significant amount of time improving it to fit his needs.

"Hehe, you also know about the Dark Nether Devouring Spirit Scroll? That couldn't be better. Since you know about the Dark Nether Devouring Spirit Scroll, you should know that as long as I cast the Dark Consciousness Storm and trap your spirit soul, you would no longer be able to attack me at all. In fact, once I drag you into the Dark Consciousness Storm, you could only let me abuse and kill you."

"If I were to then devour your spiritual consciousness, your Sea of Consciousness wouldn't even be enough for a single gulp. The only reason I didn't do this is that I don't want to damage such a perfect Sea of Consciousness." When the spirit soul in Ning Cheng's Sea of Consciousness saw that Ning Cheng knew about the Dark Nether Devouring Spirit Scroll, his tone immediately relaxed.

The ignorant were fearless; he was afraid that Ning Cheng wouldn't know about the power of the Dark Nether Devouring Spirit Scroll. Now that he knew that Ning Cheng knew about it, he felt relieved instead.

Ning Cheng sneered in his heart. After knowing that the other party could also use the Dark Nether Devouring Spirit Scroll, he also understood why the other party hadn't attacked immediately. It's just that Ning Cheng didn't know if this fellow was also the one who created the Dark Nether Devouring Spirit Scroll or someone who simply came across it by chance. After all, the original technique significantly changed the user's spiritual consciousness and left behind some fatal after-effects.

When Ning Cheng devoured another person's spiritual consciousness back then, it caused a trace of foreign spiritual consciousness to fuse with his Sea of Consciousness. No matter what he tried, he couldn't expel it. In the end, if not for the Emyrean Consciousness Transmutation Pill, Ning Cheng couldn't have resolved that hidden fatal problem. Judging by how this fellow spoke about his Sea of Consciousness, it most likely indicated that his own had collapsed. *Perhaps it had swallowed too many foreign spiritual consciousnesses that he couldn't expel, which caused his fall.*

"You wouldn't dare to use the Dark Nether Devouring Spirit Scroll here. If I'm not wrong, you must have swallowed too many cultivators' spiritual consciousness, which resulted in your fall, right?" Ning Cheng replied with disdain.

"You really do know about it." The spirit soul calmed down even more after confirming that Ning Cheng knew about it. "That's right; that's the reason why I'm not willing to devour your spiritual consciousness. But you should know that if I were to devour your spiritual consciousness, even if you possessed the Everlasting Blue Thunder Fort and the Celestial River, you wouldn't be able to escape. Moreover, even if I don't devour your spiritual consciousness, I can still finish off your spirit soul with the Spiritual Consciousness Storm."

“You must have been looking for alchemists to take over, to solve the hidden danger of the Dark Nether Devouring Spirit Scroll, right?” Ning Cheng asked as he prepared his attack.

He was least afraid of someone trying to take possession of his body, but this spirit soul was the most powerful one he had ever encountered. After all, an ordinary spirit soul trying to take over his body wouldn’t last for a moment or three after entering his Sea of Consciousness. Ning Cheng had never seen one as strong as this spirit soul still hidden yet trying to take over his body. Especially one that could even confront him head-on without missing a beat.

This spirit soul also didn’t seem to not want to destroy Ning Cheng’s Starry Sky Sea of Consciousness, as it already considered it his own. As such, his tone calmed down even more and said, “That’s right. You have a good head on your shoulders. My search for a genius alchemist was indeed to take over his body to solve the hidden danger of the Dark Nether Devouring Spirit Scroll. As long as you give your body to me, I will help you leave behind your alchemic heritage and will also guarantee to not exterminate you.”

Ning Cheng showed a warm smile, “Care to answer another question for me? I have an eight-line spirit root. According to common knowledge, I should be the weakest in cultivation. But you seem to be a bit too happy about it; why?”

The spirit soul listened to Ning Cheng’s question and spoke up in a soft voice, “That’s because people are ignorant and stupid. Those who want to truly go after the heavenly dao can only do so with a full set of spirit roots; quality doesn’t matter. In fact, the best spirit root within heaven and earth isn’t a single-line pure spirit root but a full set of balanced spirit roots. You not only have a full set of balanced spirit roots, but your eight spirit roots are also pure. Once I obtain your body, I will naturally chase after the limits of the heavenly dao. To be honest, your Sea of Consciousness is the purest and the most powerful I have ever seen. If it were an ordinary person, I could have already taken over their body a long time ago.....”

As the spirit soul said those words, the Dark Nether Devouring Spirit Scroll suddenly rolled out. Spiritual Consciousness Storms and Spiritual Consciousness Cuts blasted towards Ning Cheng’s Sea of Consciousness entirely without caring about the world.

“Just die already.....” The spirit soul grunted with jealousy as it attacked without any warning. *A mere Dao Sculpting more dared to bargain with him. With this body, along with the Celestial River Flame, the Everlasting Blue Thunder Fort, and that Origin Aura, how could he possibly leave the other party alive?*

Ning Cheng’s disdainful voice emerged amidst the chaos, “I already knew that an old bastard like you wouldn’t keep your words. Spiritual Consciousness Storm, Dark Nether Spirit Devourer, devour”

“You actually cultivate the Dark Nether Devouring Spirit Scroll as well? It’s impossible, absolutely impossible.....” The spirit soul in Ning Cheng’s Sea of Consciousness let out a startled cry filled with disbelief.

How could a Starry Sky Sea of Consciousness be so pure after cultivating the Dark Nether Devouring Spirit Scroll and devouring spiritual consciousnesses?

Plus, he could tell that Ning Cheng’s mastery over the Dark Nether Devouring Spirit Scroll was even more powerful than his. If his version of the Dark Nether Devouring Spirit Scroll was a stream, then Ning Cheng’s version was like a raging river. Not only did it carry a terrifying devouring aura, but it also carried a crushing momentum with it.