

# The Heavens 901

## Chapter 901: A Thorough Investigation

Meng Hao silently clasped hands and bowed deeply to the Grand Elder, who looked on with a kind smile as Meng Hao left.

Finally, the Grand Elder was the only one who remained in the temple. Gradually, the kind look faded away, to be replaced by a tranquil calm. However, deep within his eyes, a sinister coldness flickered, something no one would be able to detect.

He turned, and headed deeper into the temple.

A cold voice suddenly echoed out within the temple, causing the Grand Elder to stop in his tracks for a moment.

“Thank you.”

“I’m not helping you,” the Grand Elder replied, “I’m just following the clan rules. Everything... is for the clan!”

Meng Hao sped through the ancestral mansion in a bright beam of light until he reached his Immortal’s cave. As soon as he set foot into the courtyard, he saw Fang Xi sitting there quietly in front of the meat jelly and parrot.

Considering how mentally preoccupied he was, Meng Hao walked past them and sat down cross-legged in his residence. Eyes glittering, he pulled out the box containing the Nirvana Fruits and looked down at it.

“Contrary to expectation... the Grand Elder really did hand it over to me....

“Nothing he said in the temple seemed fake, but I still can’t shake the feeling... that there was more to what he was saying than what was on the surface.”

Meng Hao wasn't acting paranoid. After stepping into the cultivation world, things had not always gone as he had expected. He knew that if he wasn't constantly on the alert, he could easily have ended up perishing on multiple occasions.

He was also aware that he was in danger here in the Fang Clan. If he wasn't cautious in everything, he could easily find himself in a deadly situation.

"There must be something wrong with the Nirvana Fruits themselves!" he thought, his eyes glittering. He was still sticking to his original judgement of the Grand Elder; none of the things the old man had said could change that. Finally, he looked down at the box and slowly opened it up.

A faint pressure began to emanate from within the box as Meng Hao looked in thoughtful silence at the two withered fruits inside. Each of them was about the size of an infant's fist.

The blood in his veins surged, a bloodline connection to the fruits that caused Meng Hao to suddenly feel a twinge of doubt regarding his judgement.

"These truly are Nirvana Fruits, and they're definitely stimulating my blood. It seems like... they really are the Nirvana Fruits I produced all those years ago.

"Don't tell me that I really was thinking too much into things?" He sighed and then slowly picked one of the Nirvana Fruits up. As soon as he touched it, the reaction from his blood was even stronger, as if it longed to assimilate the fruit. He placed it directly in front of his face and looked at it closely.

"I need a lot of Spirit Extract to return these Nirvana Fruits to their original state. At that point, I can absorb them...." He sighed again and then began to place the Nirvana Fruit back into its box. It was at this point that, all of a sudden, his hand stopped in place, and a bright gleam appeared in his eyes.

"Wait, something's off. The aura of Time on these Nirvana Fruits... is not that of only a few hundred years!!" Panting, he slowly lifted the Nirvana Fruit back up and stared at it closely. After a long moment, a grim expression filled his face.

Meng Hao had cultivated the magic of Time in the past, and had used Time-based divine abilities. Therefore, there were few people who could accurately judge matters of Time the way he could. Although the auras of the Nirvana Fruits were incredibly weak, they had been perfectly preserved inside the jade box. Because of that, the aura of Time was still there, and even though it was almost impossible to detect, Meng Hao... could sense it!

This was something that nobody, not even the Grand Elder, could possibly have predicted.

“It’s time to find out exactly how old these particular Nirvana Fruits are!” He performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, unleashing Time magic. He made a sealing mark, and then the light of augury could be seen in his eyes as he slowly stripped away the layers of mystery that surrounded the fruit.

100 years. 200 years. 300 years....

Two hours passed, after which Meng Hao began to breathe heavily.

“10,000 years already!” By this point, he could determine with absolute certainty that this Nirvana Fruit was not his. A cold light flickered in his eyes, and after taking a deep breath, he continued to utilize Time magic to determine exactly how old the Nirvana Fruit was.

15,000 years. 20,000 years. 25,000 years....

If Meng Hao didn’t possess eighty percent of the power of a true Immortal, and have an Immortal meridian inside of him that was eighty percent complete, then he definitely would not have been able to use Time magic for such an extended length of time. The sun soon set, and the moon rose high into the sky. A tremor ran through Meng Hao; his cultivation base was almost thoroughly exhausted... However, he was finally able to roughly determine the true age of the Nirvana Fruit.

“More than... 100,000 years!!”

Meng Hao panted, and a look of disbelief could be seen on his face. He then glanced over at the second Nirvana Fruit. To his senses, both seemed to be exactly the same.

“They both exceed 100,000 years!

“These aren’t MY Nirvana Fruits! Whose are they?” Meng Hao’s eyes flickered, and as of this moment his faith in his own judgement was stronger than ever. The Grand Elder definitely had some sinister motive in giving him these Nirvana Fruits.

“The problem doesn’t lie with the Spirit Elixir, nor in the words he spoke. Instead... the problem lies in that which I would least suspect... the Nirvana Fruits themselves!” His face darkened.

“Now that I think about it, one of the things he emphasized the most, the part that seemed to be spoken out of care for me, was the part about absorbing the Nirvana Fruits as quickly as possible. That part... is definitely suspicious!” Killing intent flickered in Meng Hao’s eyes. As of now, he was certain that if he tried to absorb the Nirvana Fruits, he would find himself in some sort of deadly crisis.

Snorting coldly, Meng Hao put the Nirvana Fruits back in the box, then strode out into the courtyard and interrupted the duel between Fang Xi and the parrot and meat jelly.

“Fang Xi,” he said, “have you heard of anyone else in the clan producing Nirvana Fruits?”

Fang Xi looked completely exhausted, although a gleam of stubbornness and even excitement could be seen in his eyes. When he heard Meng Hao’s question, he gaped in shock.

“No, I haven’t,” he replied. “Only Nirvana Flowers, but those are kind of useless. The only person to ever produce Nirvana Fruits is you.... Eee? Wait, now that I think about it, there’s a rumor that the first generation Patriarch produced Nirvana Fruits. Why, what’s wrong?”

Meng Hao’s eyes flickered, and he promptly avoided answering the question. However, more feelings of suspicion rose up in his heart.

“The Nirvana Fruits of the first generation Patriarch,” he thought. “They would definitely be considered a precious treasure. Why would the Grand Elder give them to me? Apparently, these Nirvana Fruits are incredibly ancient, over 100,000 years old....”

Starting the next day, Meng Hao made his way around the ancestral mansion filled with doubts, although no trace of his feelings could be seen on his face. He met quite a few clan members, and went to quite a few different buildings. He did his best to act exactly as a clan member would who had been missing for years, and finally returned to the clan. For example... he thirstily devoured information about the clan’s history.

Everything he did seemed completely normal, and not suspicious in any way. Days passed. About a week later, Meng Hao’s interest in the Clan History Pavilion seemed to grow deeper.

Much of the information about the clan's history was recorded there, and Meng Hao often showed up to pore through the records, which no one found strange. There were a vast quantity of jade slips filled with information about past events. Unfortunately, there wasn't much information about clan Patriarchs, usually just a sentence or two, or a brief description.

Half a month passed. Occasionally, the Grand Elder would kindly summon him and remind him to concoct the Spirit Elixir as soon as possible, and then absorb the Nirvana Fruits. In the end, Meng Hao finally managed to piece together a relatively intact story from all of the scattered bits of information he had found.

Currently, he sat cross-legged in his residence, eyes closed as he reviewed all of the information he had gathered in the past days.

"A sixth generation Patriarch, with an exceedingly high cultivation base, went into secluded meditation for a single day... and suddenly died!

"A tenth generation Patriarch was also in secluded meditation... and suddenly died!

"The same thing happened to a thirteenth generation Patriarch and a sixteenth generation Patriarch. Both of them went into secluded meditation and then... suddenly died!

"It wasn't just them. In the past 100,000 years, there were other Chosen and various clan members who went into secluded meditation and then mysteriously died."

All of this was information he had discovered in the jade history slips, tiny clues and scraps of knowledge that at first seemed unremarkable.

Although they didn't seem out of the ordinary when taken alone, Meng Hao, being in the crisis that he was, had discovered all the information and organized all the clues. In the end, an intense desire to kill rose up in his heart.

"Roughly 30,000 years ago, the frequency of the sudden deaths decreased. Nowadays, they rarely occur." When he opened his eyes, they shone with a bright light.

"After tracking down more information about those ancestors who had died... there was one common factor connecting all of them together. Some of them went directly into the Ancestral Treasure Pagoda, and others traded merit points to acquire rewards from the same pagoda.

“That’s definitely suspicious. Throughout the past 100,000 years, many clan members have earned rewards from the Ancestral Treasure Pagoda. These people were the only ones who died suddenly. It does seem suspicious, but somewhat circumstantial.

“Until....” Meng Hao patted his bag of holding to produce a jade slip. His eyes began to glow coldly.

“Until I found out this bit of information about the last clan member to suddenly die, 30,000 years ago, information recorded in the diary of his son!

“Just before dying, he managed to pass word to his son that he was going to assimilate an object belonging to an ancestor. It was something no one in the past had ever succeeded in doing. Furthermore, anyone else who had attempted to accomplish the same feat had died. However, word had been passed down by one of the ancestors that if someone could successfully absorb it, it would solve the riddle of the Fang Clan bloodline!”

Meng Hao took a deep breath and closed his eyes. After a moment, they opened again, and were extremely calm. There were no waves of shock or astonishment as he looked down at the jade box.

“If my speculations are correct, most, if not all, of those people suddenly died for exactly the same reason. And that reason was none other than these two Nirvana Fruits!

“These Nirvana Fruits... originally belonged to that ancient ancestor!” A cold smile broke out on Meng Hao’s face.

“The Grand Elder is pushing me to absorb them because he wants me to experience that same sudden death!

“The Grand Elder gave me the Nirvana Fruits in front of everyone, so that it would be no secret. All the things he said, even that biased oath, all seemed extremely aboveboard and honest.

“Therefore, if I died while absorbing the Nirvana Fruits, just like everyone else who has attempted to do so, he would have done nothing except lead me in that direction with his words. Any blame for my death would have been placed solely on the Nirvana Fruits.

“Quite a flawless plan. I would die a meaningless death, and the Grand Elder might even hold an incredible funeral service for me....” Meng Hao’s smile became even colder than before.

## Chapter 902: The Fang Clan’s Dao of Alchemy

The Grand Elder didn’t think he had underestimated Meng Hao, but in the end... that is exactly what he had done.

To the Grand Elder, Meng Hao was simply a member of the Junior generation. However intelligent he might be, he was still just a Junior.

He could never have imagined that Meng Hao had cultivated Time magic, and that because of his unbridled persistence, would need only half a month to sift through the vast clan histories and piece together random clues into the truth!

The two Nirvana Fruits were exactly what Meng Hao had speculated; items belonging to the first generation Patriarch that had been left behind as precious treasures. However, one clan member after another had suddenly died while trying to absorb them. Eventually, they became something like taboo objects.

30,000 years ago, the clan had clamped down on all information regarding the two Nirvana Fruits, and they had been put into long-term storage in the Ancestral Treasure Pavilion. Despite being objects from that first generation Patriarch, they were completely useless.

Nowadays, it was possible that there were a few people in the clan who knew that one of the Patriarchs had left Nirvana Fruits behind, but it would be easier to find a phoenix feather or a qilin horn than to find someone who remembered about those clan members suddenly dying.

Not even Meng Hao’s father would be aware of such a thing.

Were it not for Meng Hao’s suspicious nature, and his ability to use his Time magic to determine the true age of the Nirvana Fruits, then even if he did search through the clan histories, he would never have been able to detect all of the random, inconspicuous clues that he had.

“Well then, what about MY Nirvana Fruits,” he thought. “Are they still around... or not?” He looked down at the jade box, a complicated expression on his face. As of now, Meng Hao realized that all of the spectators who had looked on as the Grand Elder handed him the jade box must have thought that the Nirvana Fruits really did belong to him.

Sometimes, if everyone believes something to be true, then the matter basically becomes true, and cannot be changed.

After a long moment of thought, Meng Hao looked down at the two Nirvana Fruits, and his eyes began to glitter.

“In terms of value, these two Patriarch’s Nirvana Fruits are surely priceless.... Based on all the clues I pieced together, those clan members who suddenly died all ended up as desiccated corpses, as if their life force had been sucked away.

“From the look of it, the Nirvana Fruits can’t be restored simply by feeding them some Spirit Elixir as the Grand Elder suggested. Doing that will probably only revive them temporarily. Absorbing them during that period of brief restoration will most certainly lead to death.

“That’s because fundamentally, they are still dry and withered. Unless.... I can truly and completely restore them. Perhaps... then I actually could absorb them.

“Of course, there must have been clan members who came to that same conclusion, and yet they also failed. Perhaps my line of thinking is just as flawed as theirs.... In that case, perhaps it’s simply impossible to gather enough Spirit Elixir to restore them completely!

“If that’s the case, then there are two possibilities. One is that not even the Fang Clan... can afford the terrifying wastage of resources that would be required to get enough medicinal plants. After all, the supply of medicinal plants is not infinite. Perhaps it’s really impossible to restore the Nirvana Fruits completely, even if you use substitute ingredients in the Spirit Elixir.

“Even more likely than that possibility is the second possibility. Perhaps these Nirvana Fruits were withered from the very moment they were created.” Meng Hao’s eyes flickered for a moment, after which he patted his bag of holding to produce the copper mirror.

“There’s always the chance that I really could restore the Nirvana Fruits to a state of completeness!” Meng Hao was panting, and a strange gleam could be seen in his eyes. Then he thought about his beloved spirit stones, and he gritted his teeth in hesitation.

“There are plenty of Chosen in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, and in the future, I should have plenty of chances to bleed them dry of spirit stones. But if I could restore these two Patriarchs’ Nirvana



Fruits, then absorb them... then it would be the greatest good fortune I could get here in the Fang Clan!

“Time to go to where they concoct pills around here!” As of this moment, a gleam of determination could be seen in Meng Hao’s eyes.

The next day at dawn, he walked out of his residence to find that Fang Xi was nowhere to be seen.

In the end, Fang Xi felt that he had made great strides in his gift of the tongue, and was ready to graduate to the next level. Therefore, he had decided to test his debating abilities out on the masses.

The meat jelly and the parrot, claiming that it was time to test him out, had gone along to supervise.

The courtyard was silent as Meng Hao transformed into a beam of light and flew toward the direction of the clan’s Pill Concocting Quarter.

The Fang Clan was an enormous clan, so they naturally had their own Dao of alchemy, and had set up their own Dao of Alchemy Division. Every cultivator there was drawn from the Fang Clan itself, and no matter what bloodline they came from, once they were inducted they belonged solely to the Dao of Alchemy Division.

The clan’s Dao of Alchemy Division was set up outside the ancestral mansion, in its own area. It was almost like a sect, with mountains winding about in all directions, dotted with various pavilions and buildings. Radiant light shone up into the air, and the place pulsed with energy.

The Dao of Alchemy Division was made up of more than 100,000 alchemists, ensuring that the aroma of medicinal pills would always waft about and never disperse. It was always possible to see the colorful aura of medicinal pills, which was beautiful beyond compare.

The Fang Clan’s Dao of Alchemy Division had a strict division of ranking among alchemists. It was not like the Violet Fate Sect, which simply divided the higher levels into Furnace Lords and Violet Furnace Lords. In the Fang Clan, the alchemists were organized into nine tiers.

Tier 9 was the absolute peak, whereas tier 1 was the level for novices. Underneath the alchemists were vast numbers of apprentice alchemists, roughly 1,000,000 in total.

When practicing cultivation, medicinal pills were an absolute necessity. That was even more true in the Immortal Realm, in which cultivators cultivated boundless Immortal qi. There simply wasn't enough Immortal qi in the Ninth Mountain and Sea to support all of the cultivators, which meant that they needed to rely on the assistance of the power of plants and vegetation within medicinal pills to condense the vast amount of Immortal qi that they needed.

Because of that, alchemists occupied a very lofty position. Of course, not every clan member was gifted in the Dao of alchemy; people with such talent were not common. This was especially true of tier 6 alchemists, who were quite rare. When it came to tier 9 alchemists, there was only one in the entire Fang Clan, and he was referred to as Pill Elder.

For the most part, he only concocted pills for the clan Patriarchs who were in secluded meditation for long periods of time.

From the moment Meng Hao flew out of the ancestral mansion, he could see the mountains that made up the Fang Clan's Dao of Alchemy Division. As he neared, he could sense a terrifying spell formation that had been set up to block the entrance to the mountains, so he produced his jade identity plaque, whereupon the spell formation flickered. After confirming Meng Hao's identity, bright light spread out over him, stimulating his blood flow. Finally, he was allowed to enter.

The aroma of medicinal pills washed over Meng Hao, and he felt enlivened. It was a very familiar scent, and it instantly made him recall the Violet Fate Sect. He took a deep breath, and immediately began to analyze what different medicinal plants he could detect in the air, and how they had been blended together.

When it came to the Dao of alchemy, even Pill Demon had to admit that Meng Hao exceeded him. His pill concocting skill had reached a terrifying level.

Mountains could be seen in all directions, and Meng Hao could sense the aura of numerous alchemists. There was also the heat of Earthly fire, making the entire place quite hot. He could see alchemists moving about to and fro among the mountains, although it was more common to see apprentice alchemists in their unique jackets, flying back and forth in beams of colorful light between the various regions that comprised the Dao of Alchemy Division.

"I wonder what the alchemists here are like..." thought Meng Hao, his eyes gleaming with anticipation.

Clearly, the Grand Elder had made arrangements in advance, because as soon as Meng Hao entered the Dao of Alchemy Division, a middle-aged man flew toward him from a nearby mountain. He landed in front of Meng Hao and then looked him over, sizing him up.

“You’re Fang Hao? The one with the 30,000 meter Bloodline Gatebeam?” The man wore a long green robe, and his expression was one of arrogance. The collar of his robe was embroidered with five golden dragons, indicating that he was a tier 5 alchemist.

Meng Hao nodded.

“I really don’t know what the Grand Elder was thinking,” said the man, looking at Meng Hao a bit impatiently. “It doesn’t matter you have a 30,000-meter Bloodline Gatebeam, this is the Dao of Alchemy Division. If you want to study pill concocting, having a strong bloodline won’t help you one bit.

“You need to be gifted in the Dao of alchemy to study pill concocting. Can you concoct pills?”

This question caused Meng Hao to hesitate. The Dao of alchemy was vast and limitless, so he wouldn’t dare to say that he thoroughly understood pill concocting.

“I understand something about it,” he responded.

“Something?” The man didn’t seem too pleased. He himself had been immersed in the Dao of alchemy for many years, and the more he understood about it, the more he realized how boundless it was. Even an entire lifetime of hard work was not enough to grasp a tiny corner of it. If someone asked him how much he knew, he would never dare to say that he knew ‘something.’ At most he would say that he understood ‘a bit.’

And yet this young man standing in front of him, a Chosen with a 30,000-meter Bloodline Gatebeam, actually dared to say that he understood ‘something’ about the Dao of alchemy. Obviously, he knew nothing!

“How many years did you spend formally studying pill concocting?” the man asked coldly, his expression even more displeased than before.

Meng Hao hesitated for a moment and then said, “In terms of formal studying, I guess a little more than a year....”

The man's face darkened, and he impatiently threw a bag of holding toward Meng Hao.

"Inside, you'll find the formula for the Spirit Extract that the Grand Elder wanted you to have, plus ten sets of medicinal plants." The man then waved his hand and sent a wooden placard in his direction.

"Concocting Spirit Extract is much simpler than concocting pills. Just follow the description in the formula and you'll be able to concoct it with no problem. If it's too difficult for you, find an apprentice alchemist to make it for you. If you want to study the Dao of alchemy, you need to start by learning to identify medicinal plants. Take that placard to Alchemy Lodge Peak #7191. Study there for about a hundred years, then come back and find me." With that, the man turned, took about seven or eight steps, then stopped and looked back.

"Don't forget," he said, "the Dao of alchemy is vast and mighty. In the future, if someone asks you about it, don't give such a wildly arrogant answer. You think that after studying for a year you can know 'something' about the Dao of alchemy?!"

"Furthermore, your 30,000-meter Bloodline Gatebeam doesn't mean anything here. Here, you're not a Chosen, you're just a regular clan member. If you don't have the natural talent, then there's no need to stick around here wasting the clan's resources! Just go back to wherever you came from!"

Having finished reprimanding Meng Hao, the man turned and transformed into a beam of light that shot off into the distance.

Meng Hao smiled wryly. He felt that his answer had been quite appropriate, but it had ended up irritating the man. Meng Hao scanned the bag of holding with divine sense, then pulled out the formula. He looked it over, and found that the Spirit Extract really was incredibly simple to concoct. One didn't need to be an alchemist to concoct it; even an apprentice alchemist could do so.

However, the medicinal plant ingredients were quite expensive, including some medicinal plants that were considered quite rare on Planet South Heaven.. There were enough sets of ingredients to produce ten batches of Spirit Extract.

There was one plant that only had three leaves, and emitted Immortal qi.

“Three Immortals Leaf!” he thought, his eyes glittering. Seeing that particular plant helped him understand exactly what resources were at the disposal of the Fang Clan’s Dao of Alchemy division.

“If I can have access to plants like Three Immortals Leaf, that means this Dao of Alchemy Division is like a Holy Land!” Meng Hao’s eyes glittered, and his breathing sped up a bit. He actually wasn’t sure exactly what level his Dao of alchemy had reached. After all, when it came to many of the medicinal pills that were frequently used to gauge the strength of someone’s Dao of alchemy, he had always lacked some of the key ingredients, and had never had the chance to concoct them.

“Well, I might as well go see how strong my Dao of alchemy is in comparison to the Fang Clan’s Dao of alchemy!” Clutching the wooden placard in his hand, he followed the map toward Alchemy Lodge Peak #7191.

### Chapter 903: A Brief Glimpse of Cutting Edge Talent

The mountains that made up the Fang Clan’s Dao of Alchemy Division stretched out boundlessly in all directions. There were 10,000 mountains in the inner region that were occupied by alchemists, which were surrounded by 100,000 additional mountains.

The higher a given alchemist’s ranking, the closer that alchemist could get to the center of all the mountains.

The 100,000 outer mountains were divided into ten districts, which were areas in which apprentice alchemists studied. They were known as Alchemy Lodges, and were comprised of 10,000 peaks each.

Meng Hao’s destination was Alchemy Lodge Peak #7191.

Thankfully, there was no prohibition on flight here, otherwise it would have taken Meng Hao a very long time to reach his destination. He shot forward at top speed and, with the help of the map, soon reached an ancient and primitive-looking mountain peak.

The peak was not sharp and tall, and in fact, it appeared as if the top had been directly cut off to create what looked like a huge public square. Currently, several hundred people sat cross-legged surrounding a raised central platform, listening to an old man give a lecture about medicinal plants. He wore a long robe, the collar of which was embroidered with a single golden dragon.

The old man rambled on and on, occasionally holding out a medicinal plant. Every so often, one of those plants would bloom, and would be surrounded by multicolored light. The audience members were apparently experiencing significant enlightenment as they watched.

In the audience of hundreds of cultivators could be seen men and women, old people and young, all of whom were members of the Fang Clan, come here to study pill concocting. Of course, everyone had to start out as an apprentice alchemist.

No one paid much attention to Meng Hao's arrival. He sat down off to the side to listen to the old man's lecture.

"This is Godshine Flower," the old man said coolly, "which is also known as Sunbirth Leaf. On any given day, its medicinal strength is at its peak at high noon. Make sure to pay close attention to this flower's vein pattern, because it looks very similar to Godrain Flower." With that, he pulled out another medicinal plant and began to introduce it.

Occasionally, the old man would look out at the crowd, and when he saw the earnest expressions of the faces of the apprentice alchemists, he felt quite a sense of accomplishment.

He was a mere tier 1 alchemist, and had virtually no hope of ever being promoted for the rest of this life. Therefore, he had been assigned to deliver lectures on plants and vegetation to the apprentice alchemists. It was only during times like these that he could enjoy the sensation of a crowd looking at him enviously.

Even as he continued his lecture, a glimmer of displeasure suddenly flickered within him. He had just seen a young man in the audience frowning at what he was saying. At first, he didn't pay the matter much attention, but over the course of the next two hours, he realized that the young man had frowned seven or eight times.

That made the old man more and more irritated. He had been giving lectures here for many years, and every single apprentice alchemist looked at him with deep respect and courtesy. Even Chosen from other clans' Dao of Alchemy Divisions would recognize his authority in this place.

The old man had never encountered someone like Meng Hao, who frowned at what he said. The more he saw this happening, the more offensive he found it.

Meng Hao continued to listen to the lecture. Eventually the old man began to talk about Brightmoon Vine, and Meng Hao frowned again. He could clearly tell that this old man had an incorrect

understanding of plants and vegetation. He was making mistakes that, if the audience of apprentice alchemists paid attention to, could cause problems for them in the future. They might even pay heavy prices before they understood the truth.

“This type of tree grows in the frigid weather of regions that were once extremely hot. It is called Midwinter Tree. When it is burned, it can produce a type of sap that is considered a precious treasure, the name of which is Midwinter Sap!” As soon as he finished speaking, he saw Meng Hao frown yet again. That made it more than ten times in which Meng Hao had frowned. At long last, the old man couldn’t take it any more. Face cold, he pointed directly at Meng Hao.

“You! What’s your name!?” he asked, his voice rumbling like thunder. The surrounding apprentice alchemists had just been listening to his lecture in a virtual trance, and were instantly shocked. They quickly followed the line of the man’s finger to see Meng Hao.

“Meng Hao,” replied Meng Hao coolly. “Or, you can also call me Fang Hao.”

“You have no regard for your elders and betters! In my role as an alchemist, I will ask you, an apprentice alchemist, a question. Let’s see if you dare to stand up and answer!” The old man chuckled coldly.

Meng Hao had no desire to get into an argument with the old man, so he casually stood up.

“Do you acknowledge your error?” the old man demanded. “Well, too late! Let me ask you: why was your attention wandering during my lecture? Why did you keep frowning? If you don’t enjoy listening to my lectures here, then you can just get lost! You’re not permitted to stick around here and annoy people!

“You’re name’s Fang Hao, huh? From now on, you are not welcome here!” He snorted coldly. This old man was not a tolerant person, so Meng Hao’s continued frowning had really been a provocation, or even a challenge.

Meng Hao frowned, and an icy coldness could be seen within his eyes. He looked at the old man for a moment, but didn’t say anything. As he turned to leave, the old man snorted again.

“Did I say you could leave? If you can’t explain why you were frowning just now, then I’ll throw you out! You can’t just walk away!”

Meng Hao stopped in place and slowly looked back at the old man. Then, he began to speak, his voice calm.

“The first time I frowned was when you mentioned Sunbirth Leaf. Although that leaf’s medicinal strength is indeed greatest at high noon, that is not a suitable time to harvest it, let alone to use it to concoct medicine. At that time, the Yang energy in the leaf is too intense. If you concoct medicine with it then, and it is not the primary ingredient, then it doesn’t matter. However, if you use it as the primary ingredient, the concoction will fail! The correct time to harvest said leaf is at a specific time AFTER high noon!”

Meng Hao’s voice boomed out in all directions as he took a step forward toward the man.

The old man’s face darkened, and he was just about to say something when Meng Hao continued to speak.

“The second time I frowned was when you talked about Groundfall Root. What you said was completely incorrect. You said that Groundfall Root contains an aura of rot. However, true Groundfall Root is the part that connects the plant to the ground. Half an inch is underground, the other half is above ground! If you harvest the incorrect part of the plant, then any pill you concoct will be black and full of toxins. It would be detrimental to anyone who consumed it.”

As he spoke, he took another step forward, and his energy surged.

The old man’s face flickered. When it came to Sunbirth Leaf, he had an argument that he could make in his defense. But when it came to Groundfall Root, as soon as the words left Meng Hao’s mouth, his heart began to thump. He suddenly remembered that when he had attempted to concoct a pill with Groundfall Root in the past, the result was exactly as Meng Hao had described.

“The third time I frowned was when you brought up Tenderwillow Branch. The first half of what you said about it was absolutely correct. If you take nine of its leaves and refine them together, it will form a true Tenderwillow Leaf. However, you missed something very important; it is vital to collect some of the soil from beneath the tree itself and combine that into the mixture. The reason is that the soil in areas where Tenderwillow Branches grow, when compounded with wood and metallic elements, can purify the metal portion, leaving behind a newborn plant!”

As Meng Hao took another step forward, the old man’s face flickered again. Beads of sweat broke out on his forehead, and he subconsciously took a step backward. As Meng Hao neared, the man sensed an amorphous energy that filled him with fear.



Most importantly of all, what Meng Hao had said about the Tenderwillow Leaf left him completely shocked. It was actually the first time he had heard of such a thing. However, it suddenly caused him to think back to a time when he had been invited to visit another alchemist, who at the time happened to be concocting a pill with Tenderwillow Leaf. He had actually put some soil into the mixture. At the time, the old man had been confused as to why he would do that, but too embarrassed to ask about it.

“The fourth time I frowned was when you spoke of Cloudsipping Grass. How could that grass possibly grow inside of clouds, which is exactly what you said? That’s nothing but sheer and utter nonsense! It’s a grass that grows in mountain streams, surrounded by wisps of cloud and mist. THAT’S why it’s called Cloudsipping Grass!” The next step Meng Hao took left the old man completely ashen-faced. Yet again, he subconsciously stepped back. He suddenly remembered that Cloudsipping Grass was exactly as Meng Hao had just described it. When he had talked about it earlier, he had intentionally spouted some hogwash; his explanation actually had nothing to do with reality. That was because he had no idea what the plant really was.

“The fifth time I frowned was when you talked about the Tree of Nine Eyes....

“The sixth time I frowned was because of what you said about Gauzewood Moss....

“The seventh time I frowned....”

Every time he spoke, Meng Hao took another step forward, and the old man’s face grew paler as he fell back in retreat. His expression soon became one of panic, which caused the surrounding apprentice alchemists to stare in shock.

“The twelfth time I frowned was because you said that Brightmoon Vines have flowers that bloom with two different colors. One color is toxic, the other isn’t. You spoke of the plant’s medicinal properties, but then never explained how to tell the difference between the two. That is why I frowned!” Meng Hao advanced with each of his explanations, and the old man fell back. By this point, Meng Hao was now standing on the platform.

“The last time I frowned was when you talked about Midwinter Sap. I have no idea from whom you learned about plants and vegetation, but even though Midwinter Sap can be produced by burning it with a cultivation flame, that will produce an inferior product. The highest quality Midwinter Sap requires magically induced lightning to create!” With that, Meng Hao flicked his sleeve.

Voice echoing, he continued, “The Dao of alchemy is vast and limitless. The number of medicinal plants is like the water in the sea. No one can remember all of them, and the mistakes you made are not unforgivable. However... we are in our clan’s Dao of Alchemy Division. The apprentice alchemists here to listen to your lecture are all fellow clan members. If you know something, then talk about it. If there’s something you’re not clear about, no one will make fun of you for that. That being the case, there is absolutely no reason to make up random garbage! If you do that, these apprentice alchemists might end up paying with their lives because of the mistakes they will make in the future!”

Meng Hao’s words were spoken with little courtesy. Originally, he had intended to simply leave. However, the old man had aggressively provoked him, and as such, he laid bare all of the reasons why he had frowned earlier.

The old man opened his mouth to respond, but there was nothing he could say. His mind spun as he realized that there were indeed aspects of his speech in which he didn’t know what he was talking about. However, he had fallen into a habit of lecturing on those things merely based on his own personal experience and judgement.

Currently, his face was as pale as death, and he was trembling. There was nothing he could do to refute Meng Hao’s stern criticism. In fact, for some reason, the feeling he got when he looked at Meng Hao was the same feeling of awe he’d had years ago when he was an apprentice alchemist looking at the full alchemists.

Everything Meng Hao had said left him shaken, and actually answered many questions that he himself had wondered about.

In the silence that followed, the surrounding hundreds of Fang Clan apprentice alchemists began to talk.

“Fang Hao.... I just remembered! He’s the one with the 30,000-meter Bloodline Gatebeam! His bloodline is inconceivably strong! It’s that Fang Hao!!”

“It’s really him! He came from Planet South Heaven. Supposedly, he experienced some kind of Seventh Year Tribulation. Now he’s back, and not only does he have a strong bloodline, he also managed to silence an alchemist on the subject of plants and vegetation!”

“He’s the eldest grandson of the direct bloodline! His bloodline is even stronger than Prince Wei’s. I can’t believe he’s here in the Dao of Alchemy Division!”

“After hearing him talk about all those different medicinal plants, I suddenly feel like I understand them far better than I did before! Could it be that Fang Hao is also an alchemist?”

Meng Hao was just about to leave when the trembling old man stepped forward. Clasp hands, he bowed deeply to Meng Hao.

“Alchemist Fang. Sir, you were right to chide me. My name is Fang Qun, and everything was my fault. Would you mind staying for a moment and clearing up some of my confusion, Alchemist Fang? I... I actually have some questions about plants and vegetation that I hope you can help me with.” Although Fang Qun seemed a bit embarrassed to say these things, he didn’t hesitate to speak them.

His words caused instant excitement among the surrounding apprentice alchemists. They could clearly see that Meng Hao’s skill with plants and vegetation far exceeded that of Fang Qun.

The idea of being able to hear a lecture by an alchemist like that was a rare opportunity, and true good fortune.

“Please, Alchemist Fang, stay for a bit. Give us some pointers!!”

“Alchemist Fang, we have a lot of questions about plants and vegetation! For the sake of us fellow clan members, could you stay and dispel some of our confusion...?”

Everyone began talking at once, clasp hands and bowing. Meng Hao stopped in his tracks and looked around for a moment before nodding.

A cheer of excitement rose up from the enthusiastic crowd.

Chapter 904: Now Let’s Throw Down

“Heavenrain Leaf veins will only appear when they are soaked by heavy rainfall. As far as what types of medicinal pills can be concocted with those veins, I know of 87,645 different types....

“Golden Mean Tree cannot be used as a primary ingredient. However, you can add it to the mix during the concocting process to increase metal-type energy. Furthermore, it will add a golden color to the medicinal pill.”

Meng Hao was currently standing on the platform. He had just introduced a variety of unique medicinal plants that were easily misidentified, and was now fielding questions from the apprentice alchemists.

Fang Qun sat down below, constantly asking questions about various plants and vegetation that he wasn't clear about. He seemed very excited.

"Milky Way Stone isn't really a type of rock. It's actually a type of sea moss that grows in the narrow crevices rocks. Furthermore, the more cracks a stone has, the higher the quality will be.

"Nine Dragons Spice is not naturally occurring. No, it is actually the result of a graft of nine different medicinal plants. The grafting formula is actually a secret, so all I know about it is from my own conclusions based on what I've heard about the pill itself; I can't actually be 100% certain of the exact method of grafting."

Meng Hao spoke patiently to the apprentice alchemists and the excited Fang Qun. The sky was growing dark, but the audience didn't seem tired at all. Quite the opposite. Many of them were excitedly recording the information Meng Hao was giving them onto jade slips.

Soon, the moon hung high in the sky, and yet, nobody had left. Eventually, passing apprentice alchemists from nearby mountains noticed that something was going on, and came over. When they saw that an alchemist was listening to this lecture about plants and vegetation, they were shocked. That was especially true after many of them recognized Fang Qun. In the end, these curious newcomers... didn't leave either.

It didn't take long before the mountain platform was packed tight with, not several hundred people, but several thousand. All types of questions were asked, and there wasn't a single one that Meng Hao couldn't answer.

Some people even started to intentionally ask trick questions, but Meng Hao didn't even need to think before providing an answer. Everything he said was correct and complete, which caused even the questioners trying to trip him up to feel completely astonished.

Eventually, the mountain was packed. The new arrivals, who of course didn't want to leave, had to float in the air nearby to listen.

Meng Hao tried to conclude the lecture on numerous occasions, but there were too many people in the audience, and too many questions. He wanted to leave, but considering that he was trying to rise to prominence in the clan, the Dao of alchemy was probably his best chance to do so. Therefore, he stayed.

Gradually, an entire night passed, and to these alchemy cultivators, Meng Hao's lecture was almost like a sermon about the Dao. More and more apprentice alchemists crowded around. By the time the sun rose, there were over 10,000 people present.

That in and of itself sent the surrounding areas into a commotion. More people approached to hear Meng Hao's lecture, and to ask questions. However, from start to finish, there seemed to be nothing Meng Hao didn't know, and no question that he couldn't answer, or even give him the slightest pause.

Shock spread through all hearts, and soon, some of the other alchemists in the area who had been preparing to give their own lectures noticed. At first they chuckled coldly, but soon their eyes grew wide with disbelief.

"His skill with plants and vegetation... it's actually... it's actually incredibly high!!"

"Heavens! The questions are never-ending, and they touch upon virtually all aspects of plants and vegetation. But this guy can actually answer all of them! What an incredible knowledge base!"

Gradually, the size of the audience grew. Meng Hao spoke for three days straight, and eventually, there were 30,000 people in attendance. The entire world of the apprentice alchemists in the Dao of Alchemy Division was shaken. There were even many tier 1 alchemists who came. As for the tier 2 alchemists, however, most stayed in the inner mountains. They rarely interfered with the affairs of the outer mountains, nor did they pay too much attention to what happened there. After all, most alchemists spent their time in seclusion, concocting pills.

"Three Immortals Leaf is a rare medicinal plant. I would never have expected the Fang Clan's Dao of Alchemy Division to be able to grow them. If you use this medicinal plant as the main ingredient, a vast amount of medicinal pills can be concocted. Although I haven't personally concocted anything using Three Immortals Leaf, I'm aware of around one thousand pill formulas that use it.

"Sun Blossom? That's a legendary medicinal plant that has long since gone extinct. Naturally, I've never laid eyes on one, but I've heard that if you add Sun Blossom to a medicinal pill, you are certain to produce a one hundred percent consummate pill."

Meng Hao was now seated cross-legged on the platform, smiling as he spoke. Everyone in the audience was still excited. Even after three days, they didn't seem tired at all. All of them were deeply aware that this was a very rare opportunity for them.

Meanwhile, word spread to the Fang Clan ancestral mansion. Fang Yunyi sat in his Immortal's cave, listening as an apprentice alchemist gave a lively description of Meng Hao's lecture on plants and vegetation.

Fang Yunyi's face darkened, and then after a moment, broke out into a cold smile.

"What does that prove?" Fang Yunyi said coldly. "Any tier 2 alchemist from the inner mountains of the Dao of Alchemy Division could go out and give a lecture on plants and vegetation. Any one of them would draw a crowd of tens of thousands, or even more.

"Piddling Meng Hao. You come here from a backwater place like Planet South Heaven, so even if you have a bit of skill, it's still bound to be quite limited. You just joined the Dao of Alchemy Division and are already acting so arrogantly? You're nothing but a loser who thinks he's hot stuff." He still constantly brooded over the events that had taken place on Planet South Heaven, and hated Meng Hao to his bones.

He really wanted Prince Wei to go punish Meng Hao. Unfortunately, Prince Wei never did anything, no matter how Fang Yunyi pushed the subject. Now, just as he was managing to quell his frustration, this apprentice alchemist came to tell him about the waves Meng Hao was making in the Dao of Alchemy Division. Finally, he snorted and sent the apprentice alchemist away, then sat there frowning.

"This damned Meng Hao, I can't just let him trot around so happily!" Grinding his teeth, Fang Yunyi produced a transmission jade slip, imprinted it with divine sense as well as some various promises, and then threw it out.

The jade slip immediately shot into the air.

Shortly thereafter, somewhere within the 10,000 inner mountains of the Dao of Alchemy Division, on one particular mountain that was fairly close to the outer mountains, a middle-aged man was concocting some medicinal pills. He wore an alchemist's robe that had two golden dragons embroidered on the collar.

The pill furnace in front of him glowed bright red, and flickered with light. A medicinal aroma wafted out from the furnace, which surrounded the entire mountain and seemed to nourish all of the vegetation in the area.

In the middle of his concocting, a jade slip suddenly appeared. It floated there off to the side, but the middle-aged man ignored it completely, instead continuing with his pill concocting. Two hours passed before the bright red color of the pill furnace began to fade away. When the furnace cooled completely, the man began to murmur to himself.

“I’ve been working on this batch of Mortality Convergence Pills for three months. It’s too bad I wasted so many ingredients.... I wonder if I succeeded this time. If not, I’m going to have to go get some more medicinal plant ingredients.” The man frowned and then waved his hand, causing the jade slip to fly over. After scanning it with divine sense, his eyes began to glitter.

“Fang Hao? Even I’ve heard of that name recently. He had a 30,000 meter Bloodline Gatebeam. However, in the Fang Clan, you can’t only rely on your bloodline.

“Fang Hao might be a Chosen....

“But this is the Dao of Alchemy Division, and things are different here. Nobody cares if you’re a Chosen or not. Furthermore, I have no conflicts with Fang Yunyi, and considering what he’s offering me, it won’t hurt to help him out this once.” He hesitated for a moment and looked at the pill furnace. If this batch of pills went bad, then he would have to go get more medicinal plant ingredients, which he really didn’t want to do. He thought for a moment, then decided not to refuse Fang Yunyi’s request. He quickly headed toward the outer mountains.

“What kind of ability could some trifling clan member from Planet South Heaven have? Besides, skill with plants and vegetation is a low-level fundamental skill, that’s all. Any tier 2 alchemist could get a whole bunch of apprentice alchemists to gather around them.

“As for the tier 1 alchemists, well....” He snorted coldly. In the Fang Clan’s Dao of Alchemy division, the only tier 1 alchemists who were stationed in the outer mountains were the ones who had no hope of advancing to the next tier.

“7191.... Right, I remember. That place is overseen by Fang Qun.” The man chuckled. Fang Qun was the lowest ranking of all the tier 1 alchemists. The fact that he had passed the test was a completely lucky break.

The man flew out of the inner mountains at top speed. Whenever any apprentice alchemists saw him, they respectfully clasped hands and bowed. He hurried to the outer mountains as quickly as possible, and after enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, he caught sight of Alchemy Lodge Peak #7191. The first thing he saw was the crowd of tens of thousands of apprentice alchemists packed together. It almost looked like a static cyclone.

The sight of it caused the middle-aged man to give a cold harrumph. He was actually a bit offended. Whenever he went to the outer mountains to give lectures, he would usually draw a crowd of about 10,000. However, there were clearly about 30,000 apprentice alchemists in attendance here.

The man neared, but because all of the apprentice alchemists were paying close attention to Meng Hao, no one noticed the newcomer.

The man frowned and then snorted coldly, the sound of which echoed out and caused numerous nearby apprentice alchemists to turn around in shock. When they saw him standing there, their faces fell and they quickly clasped hands in greeting.

“Greetings, Alchemist Xuzhong!”

“It’s Alchemist Fang Xuzhong!!”

It didn’t take long before everyone was turning to Fang Xuzhong and bowing in greeting. He nodded back proudly, and proceeded forward. People backed up, creating a path that he followed all the way to the mountain peak, where he stood on the platform next to Meng Hao.

He looked Meng Hao over a few times.

All of the apprentice alchemists, and even Fang Qun, rose to their feet, bowing to Fang Xuzhong with clasped hands.

Meng Hao was the only one who remained seated. It was obvious that this man came with ill intentions, and the measuring look in his eye also contained a bit of scorn.

“So you’re Fang Hao?” he asked coldly.



Meng Hao nodded, after which Fang Xuzhong smiled, and the disdain therein was clear. He waved his sleeve and coldly announced, “You’re only an apprentice alchemist, and yet you dare to give a lecture about plants and vegetation? How scandalous!

“However, I won’t make things hard for you. I’ll ask you about three types of medicinal plants, and if you can’t answer, you will put end to this commotion immediately, and focus on being a good apprentice alchemist instead of arrogantly assuming the mantle of a full alchemist!” After saying these things, Fang Xuzhong suddenly recalled an additional requirement that Fang Yunyi had laid out.

“Also,” he added coldly, “for however long you sowed chaos in the Dao of Alchemy Division with your lecture, you will kneel here for the same length of time!”

Meng Hao looked at the arrogant man standing in front of him, and frowned.

“I’m just an apprentice alchemist and you’re a full alchemist. Doesn’t this count as bullying? Also, what happens if I answer your questions correctly?”

“Then you can continue your lecture!” replied Fang Xuzhong with a cold laugh.

Meng Hao hesitated, as if he was debating whether to accept the challenge. Then he looked around, as if he was considering the face he would lose in front of all these people if he didn’t accept. Gritting his teeth, he produced a bag of holding and put it down off to the side. Eyes bloodshot, he looked over at Fang Xuzhong.

“I came here with good intentions to explain matters of plants and vegetation to fellow clan members. You’ve come to stop me. If I lose the challenge, you want me to kneel here in humiliation. However, if you lose, there is no loss on your part. That’s not really fair. Why don’t we REALLY throw down? If you match the number of spirit stones in that bag of holding, then I’ll accept your challenge!

“If not, then I might as well just leave.”

Fang Xuzhong frowned. Coming as he had in his role as a full alchemist really was a case of the big bullying the small. There were a lot of people watching, and he had to consider how the matter would affect their view of him. However, if he didn’t get Meng Hao to kneel, then he wouldn’t be meeting the requirements laid out by Fang Yunyi. Finally, he looked at Meng Hao and laughed coldly, imagining what it would look like when he was humiliated and kneeling on the ground. He

would definitely have to make Fang Yunyi give him an extra bonus as a reward. Without further hesitation, he pulled out a bag of holding and threw it down next to Meng Hao's.

He said nothing, but his eyes glittered coldly.

Meng Hao took a deep breath and licked his lips. A bashful smile appeared on his face, and he even looked a bit embarrassed.

“Many thanks, Alchemist Fang. Now, let's throw down.”

Chapter 905: Plant and Vegetation Throwdown!

Alchemist Lodge Peak #7191 was now surrounded by tens of thousands of apprentice alchemists, all of whom were staring fixedly at Meng Hao and Fang Xuzhong on the platform.

It was especially interesting that there was a wager between the two of them, and the apprentice alchemists couldn't wait to see what happened. Many could read between the lines, and knew that Fang Xuzhong had intentionally come here to stir up trouble with Meng Hao. However, considering that it didn't affect them personally, those people were even more excited than the others. They wanted to see who exactly was better when it came to knowledge of plants and vegetation.

If Meng Hao hadn't just given a three-day lecture on the subject, the apprentice alchemists would not have hesitated even a moment to say that Fang Xuzhong would prevail. Now, however... it was hard to say.

Meng Hao looked extremely bashful as he embarrassedly scanned Fang Xuzhong's bag of holding with divine sense. Then he licked his lips and looked back over at Fang Xuzhong. He felt luckier with every minute that passed. He had never imagined that, having only been in the Dao of Alchemy Division for a few days, there would already be someone who came looking to deliver up spirit stones.

When he realized what he was thinking, he suddenly felt a bit more embarrassed.

Seeing all the eyes focused on him, Fang Xuzhong snorted coldly. He had been immersed in the Dao of alchemy for many years, and was highly proficient when it came to skill with plants and vegetation. As the saying went, his proverbial pill furnace glowed with the bright green of perfection. Actually, he was already qualified to be promoted to a tier 3 alchemist, and as such, was absolutely confident in being able to win the bet.

Were it not for the fact that he was badly in need of alchemy resources, he would never have come here. After all, participating in something like this was really beneath his status.

His expression proud and lofty, Fang Xuzhong raised his hand high and then smacked his bag of holding. Instantly, a medicinal plant appeared in his hand. It was green, and looked no different from an ordinary blade of grass. He waved his hand, sending it flying through the air to hover in front of Meng Hao.

“I won’t make things hard for you,” he said coolly. “I’ll show you three medicinal plants. You simply have to tell me their names and properties. This is the first one.” From his perspective, this plant in and of itself was enough to stump his opponent. He planned to show this Fang Hao the height of the Heavens and the depths of the Earth. He would help Fang Hao to know exactly how vastly separated the two of them were in terms of qualifications.

As a tier 2 alchemist, he wanted to ensure a quick victory. Considering his status in the Dao of Alchemy Division, knocking his opponent out of the competition with a single blow would be the most suitable result.

Fang Xuzhong smiled coldly, swished his sleeve, then clasped his hands behind his back and looked arrogantly at Meng Hao. “Forget about this guy,” he thought. “Not even a tier 1 alchemist would recognize this medicinal plant.”

Meng Hao was smiling just as before as he looked at the medicinal plant.

All of the apprentice alchemists were also staring at it, trying to guess what it was. The tier 1 alchemists in the area were also digging through their memories, and yet, none of them could recall even the slightest scrap of information about a plant like this.

Immediately, a buzz of conversation rose up.

“This can’t be right. That medicinal plant doesn’t look special at all. It doesn’t even look like a medicinal plant! Is it just an ordinary plant from the mortal world?”

“I might not have incredible skill when it comes to plants and vegetation, but I know a bit. However, this plant... is something I’ve never seen before.”

“He definitely deserves to be a tier 2 alchemist. He pulled out a medicinal plant that nobody even recognizes!”

Fang Xuzhong looked haughtily over at Meng Hao.

“If you don’t recognize it, then kneel upon this mountain peak for three days, and then screw off.” Almost as soon as the words left his mouth, however, Meng Hao suddenly looked up at him and chuckled.

“Alchemist Fang, I never imagined that you would actually possess this type of Wind Spirit Grass. Such a plant is useless for medicinal purposes. However, when struck by a strong wind, it will blossom with a Spirit Flower. That flower can bloom with up to seven colors, with seven being the optimal number. That medicinal flower is one of the most important ingredients used when concocting wind-type medicinal pills.

“Unfortunately, Alchemist Fang, this particular plant of yours has a lot of imperfections. It will only produce a three-colored flower.”

Meng Hao’s words left the surrounding apprentice alchemists in shock. Even the tier 1 alchemists were astonished. They had never even heard of Wind Spirit Grass, although many knew of Wind Spirit Flower. At this point, they suddenly had an epiphany, and realized the origin of Wind Spirit Flowers.

It was at this point that Meng Hao blew onto the blade of grass. Because of the level of his cultivation base, that breath was like a gale force wind. A rumbling sound filled the area, and then the blade of grass began to wriggle and sway back and forth. Everyone watched as a three-colored flower bloomed at the tip of the blade, and a medicinal aroma filled the area.

“It really has three colors!”

“Fang Hao’s skill with plants and vegetation is astonishing after all! He didn’t just recognize that plant, he was able to judge its nature entirely!”

The surrounding crowds were in an uproar. The tier 1 alchemists were now looking at Meng Hao with complete and utter respect. In the Fang Clan’s Dao of Alchemy Division, powerful alchemists were treated with fervor and veneration.

Fang Xuzhong's eyes widened, then he stared dead at Meng Hao, and a serious look spread out across his face. The Wind Spirit Grass might seem like an ordinary medicinal plant, but it was actually a line of demarcation when it came to determining skill with plants and vegetation. Even many tier 2 alchemists wouldn't know much about it. Even more shocking to him was how his opponent had identified how many colors the flower would bloom in. That was something that only tier 3 alchemists should be able to do.

"So, this guy has some skill after all," he thought. "It seems I need to take things a bit more seriously." Fang Xuzhong waved his hand to pull the Wind Spirit Grass back into his bag of holding, from which he then produced another medicinal plant.

This plant had more than one hundred leaves, which formed the shape of a triangle. The stamen of the plant's flowers were long and almost looked like tentacles as they drifted back and forth.

A single look at this medicinal plant, and it was clear that it was beyond ordinary. Everyone looking at it also felt a faint sense of danger.

"In order to avoid any accusations of bullying," said Fang Xuzhong, "I will not require you to explain the properties of this plant. Merely telling me its name will suffice." He stared icily at Meng Hao. Although he didn't say anything further, inside, he was laughing coldly. In his opinion, he had underestimated his opponent a bit when it came to the first medicinal plant. However, with this second one, he was completely confident that he could secure victory.

"When I first got this medicinal plant," he thought, "I didn't have any idea what it was. It was personally grown by one of the tier 5 alchemists, and I had to spend a small fortune to acquire it.

"It's completely one-of-a-kind. Not a single manual of plants and vegetation will contain a description of it. It was grafted together from a variety of other medicinal plants, using the top-secret technique of a tier 5 alchemist.

"I simply can't believe that an inconsequential apprentice alchemist will be able to identify it!" Smiling coldly, Fan Xuzhong lifted his chin and stood there, hands clasped behind his back as he looked at Meng Hao.

He could visualize his opponent with tears streaming down his cheeks, racking his brains as he tried to identify the plant. He would probably spout a bunch of nonsense, for which Fan Xuzhong had already prepared appropriate words of response.

Everything was completely quiet. All eyes were focused on the medicinal plant. Because of the vague sense of danger it emanated, everyone was now paying close attention to it. Gradually, the medicinal aroma wafting out from the plant vitalized the minds of all present.

“What medicinal plant is that!?!?”

“I’m pretty sure I’ve never seen it before, although something about it seems familiar. How strange!”

Even the tier 1 alchemists were all frowning and trying desperately to recall what this plant was. Some people even pulled out jade slips containing information about plants and vegetation, which they began to search through for clues.

“That plant is even more mysterious than the Wind Spirit Grass from before!!” As the members of the audience began to speculate further about the plant, Meng Hao looked at it, and his eyes began to shine.

“I never imagined that the Fang Clan’s Dao of Alchemy Division would be so skilled with plants and vegetation,” he said. Immediately, the audience went silent, and everyone looked at Meng Hao.

Fang Xuzhong laughed coldly.

“Can you identify it, or not? There’s no need to be deliberately cryptic.”

Meng Hao chuckled in response.

“This medicinal plant is something I doubt you could grow,” he said. When the onlookers heard this, they didn’t think too much of it. However, Fang Xuzhong’s heart began to thump.

“It has no name,” Meng Hao continued slowly. “Or, perhaps you could say... the only person qualified to name it, is the alchemist who created it.”

When Fang Xuzhong heard this, his face flickered. Meng Hao’s two sentences were like lightning bolts striking his brain. How could he ever have imagined that his opponent would be able to pick up on the clues with just a glance? He quickly prepared to retrieve the plant and put it away, since Meng Hao’s first two sentences had already revealed the truth regarding the name of the plant.

He recalled how the first time he had ever laid eyes on this plant years ago, he had stared in shock. To him, it had seemed like some strange and miraculous item. It wasn't until the tier 5 alchemist explained the plant to him that he understood the truth, and prostrated himself in admiration.

"Just how skilled is this Fang Hao?" he thought. "He actually recognized the plant! Dammit! No, I really have to pull a fast one!" Feeling more on guard than ever, he immediately had the urge to slander his opponent. However, in the Dao of Alchemy Division, reputation was extremely important, and with so many people looking on, word would spread quickly.

Fang Xuzhong gritted his teeth, and was just about to retrieve the medicinal plant and put it away when suddenly, Meng Hao started talking again.

"This is a medicinal plant produced by a grafting technique. Let me see.... It seems to be grafted from nineteen different medicinal plants. Those nineteen plants consist of Watershed Root, Spiritdream Grass, Mount Heaven Leaf, Mortality Bloom...." Meng Hao calmly listed all nineteen varieties of plants.

Fang Xuzhong's eyes widened, and he began to pant. He subconsciously staggered backward several steps, his expression one of disbelief. As for the next plant he had planned to pull out, Meng Hao had just mentioned it in the list he had rattled off, so Fang Xuzhong had no choice but to abandon any idea of using it. How could he have ever imagined that this person could possibly...

Could possibly name all of the plants that made up the graft! Fang Xuzhong's mind was spinning. Of course, he couldn't be absolutely certain as to whether what Meng Hao had said was completely correct or not, because only the tier 5 alchemist who created it would be able to verify it.

After all, this was... a top secret technique!

Eventually Meng Hao reached his conclusion and said, "...afterwards, use the magic of the four seasons, invert Yin and Yang, graft three plants simultaneously. Combine all nineteen medicinal plants, do not allow them to be touched by the sun, allow the Yin qi to coalesce, which completes the process.

"Because this medical plant was created by grafting nineteen other plants together, if it is used in pill concocting, there are many possible transformations. An ordinary alchemist would probably be incapable of using it to concoct anything at all. Presumably, the alchemist who gave you this medicinal plant also gave you a pill formula specifically designed to be used with it.

“Tell me, Alchemist Fang, am I correct?” Meng Hao smiled and looked at Fang Xuzhong.

Meng Hao’s words were followed by deathly silence. Everyone was looking at Fang Xuzhong, whose face flickered back and forth between various emotions. He felt like lightning was crashing around in his head, and without realizing it, he stepped backward. He was now looking at Meng Hao with wide eyes, as if he were some type of evil spirit.

Chapter 906: The First Waves

“Impossible! This is Impossible!!” Fang Xuzhong’s heart trembled violently. He had no idea how the medicinal plant had been grafted together and no way of knowing whether Meng Hao was correct or not. However... based on his skill in the Dao of alchemy, he was fairly certain that what Meng Hao had said was true.

Most importantly, the tier 5 alchemist from whom he had acquired this medicinal plant had indeed given him a pill formula to use with it. Furthermore, the words that alchemist had used to describe the plant were exactly the same as the words Meng Hao had uttered just now!

“You...”

The surrounding apprentice alchemists noticed Fang Xuzhong’s pale face, the fact that he had backed up, and his facial expression. Virtually all of them understood exactly what it meant; Meng Hao had been completely correct in what he had said.

There was no other reason for Fang Xuzhong’s expression to change the way it had.

“Fang Hao was right again!!”

“Not even Alchemist Fang Xuzhong is capable of outdoing Fang Hao when it comes to plants and vegetation!!”

“It’s a good thing I kept good notes from when Fang Hao was lecturing about plants and vegetation earlier. I’m going to go back and review them thoroughly!”

The surrounding apprentice alchemists were abuzz. After all, as mere apprentice alchemists, they didn’t really understand much about alchemy. Even the tier 1 alchemists were panting and looking



on with wide eyes. Then they exchanged glances, and saw similar looks of disbelief on each other's faces.

They were alchemists, and though they might only be tier 1, their knowledge base far exceeded that of apprentice alchemists. Since they couldn't identify the medicinal plant Fang Xuzhong held in his hand, they initially hadn't felt that there was anything special about it. However, after Meng Hao spoke, and especially after he revealed the grafting technique, their minds trembled.

"Uh... that grafting technique is a top secret method of a tier 5 alchemist!!"

"Nineteen medicinal plants! I'm afraid only a tier 5 alchemist could create something like that. But... but Fang Hao is so inhuman that he actually... easily identified the grafting method by simply looking at the plant!!"

"Just what is the full extent of his skill in plants and vegetation, and his Dao of alchemy? How frightening! It's almost like no secrets that relate to plants and vegetation can be kept from him!!"

Because of their advanced understanding, the tier 1 alchemists were thoroughly astonished.

Fang Xuzhong's face was pale white as he looked at Meng Hao, who in his view had become completely inscrutable and terrifying. He could never have predicted that anyone would be able, with a single look, to see through an alchemist's top secret technique and reveal the grafting method.

To him, such a thing was vastly terrifying.

As of this moment, he knew that he was absolutely no match for Fang Hao when it came to skill in plants and vegetation. He simply didn't stand a chance of winning when up against an inhuman like this in a competition.

"Damn you, Fang Yunyi!" he thought. "You just wait until I get back. I'll teach you a thing or two!" Fang Xuzhong was filled with bitterness, as well as a sudden, bone-deep hatred of Fang Yunyi. As for Meng Hao, he didn't dare to hate him.

Because the Dao of Alchemy Division had its own way of doing things, he could ignore the fact that Meng Hao was Chosen. However... after getting a sense of Meng Hao's skill with plants and vegetation, he was frightened to death.

“With skill like that,” he thought, “even if he’s not very good at pill concocting, he’ll still rise to complete prominence.... Furthermore, what if he’s just as gifted in pill concocting? That would be petrifying. He’ll certainly exceed me in the Dao of Alchemy Division. Now, thanks to Fang Yunyi, I’ve offended him. It definitely wasn’t worth it....”

Fang Xuzhong took a deep breath, gritted his teeth, and was just about to admit defeat when suddenly his heart quivered. He suddenly realized that this defeat could actually be turned into an opportunity. He hesitated for a moment, then clasped hands and bowed to Meng Hao.

“Alchemist Fang, your skill in plants and vegetation is profound. I’m no match for you. I was crude and rash earlier, and I hope you can look past that. Please take the spirit stones in that bag of holding as my gift to you upon our first meeting. I admit defeat....” His words sent the apprentice alchemists into an uproar. However, the tier 1 alchemists had already surmised that he would take such action.

There would obviously be something wrong with any of them who would still feel confident enough to continue even when faced with someone so inhuman as to be able to identify a top secret grafting technique.

“However, I would also like to ask for some pointers, if that’s okay. I... I saw a medicinal plant a while back. I’ve asked many people about it, but no one can tell me exactly what it was.” Fang Xuzhong once again clasped hands and bowed. “Alchemist Fang, if you can help me out a bit, I’d be more than happy to give this grafted medicinal plant to you as an expression of my thanks.”

Meng Hao’s expression was as calm as ever. However, inwardly, he sighed, thinking that he should have acted a bit weaker earlier. Showing off so much had only deprived him of a chance to fleece this fat sheep.

“It’s too bad,” he thought. “I have a lot more spirit stones in my bag of holding, and I was planning to con this guy even harder. Now I’ve lost the chance.” Feeling a bit depressed, he waved his hand to collect Fang Xuzhong’s bag of holding. After scanning it with divine sense and seeing how many spirit stones were inside, he felt a bit better.

Then he looked up at the grafted medicinal plant. He knew that the value of such a plant would be significant. Besides, the grafting techniques that had been used were intriguing. As a result, he nodded to Fang Xuzhong.

Fang Xuzhong's expression brightened, and he immediately produced a jade slip from his bag of holding, which he respectfully handed over to Meng Hao, who accepted it and scanned it with divine sense.

Immediately, an image of a violet flower appeared in his mind, growing on top of a tiny, hand-sized horse, which was galloping at top speed.

That was all he saw before the image vanished.

Meng Hao's expression became more serious, and he scanned the jade slip again. After a moment of thought, he asked, "Where did you see this?"

"On an island in a sea district here on Planet East Victory. I just randomly happened to see it, and chased after it for a while to no avail. I asked some of the local fisherman about it, and all of them reported seeing it before on occasion.

"However, even after returning to the location on a few times, I was never able to find it again." Fang Xuzhong had shown this jade to slip to numerous alchemists, but none of them had ever been able to identify it. The best he had gotten were speculations that it was some type of rare medicinal plant.

"I think that horse is actually the root of the medicinal plant," said Fang Xuzhong.

"You would be wrong," said Meng Hao, shaking his head. "That's not a medicinal plant. It's... a medicinal pill! A sentient medicinal pill!"

"What!?!?" exclaimed Fang Xuzhong, feeling both shock and disbelief. None of the numerous alchemists he had asked about this image had ever come to the conclusion that it was a medicinal pill. No matter how you looked at it, the only answer that made sense was that it was some kind of medicinal plant.

"How is that even possible?" said Fang Xuzhong, mostly to himself. "Medicinal pills are medicinal pills! They're concocted by people! How could a medicinal pill come to life?"

"Such things do exist," said Meng Hao. "I've seen them." Without providing any further explanation, he handed the jade slip back to Fang Xuzhong, then clasped hands and bowed to the crowd. Finally, he turned and left.

Even after Meng Hao left, Fang Xuzhong was still in a state of disbelief. The surrounding apprentice alchemists all began disperse excitedly.

Soon after, Fang Xuzhong returned to his residence, whereupon he took out Fang Yunyi's jade slip and then grimly transmitted a stream of divine will into it.

Meanwhile, Fang Yunyi was in the ancestral mansion, meditating in his residence as he waited for news from the Dao of Alchemy Division.

"Alchemist Fang Xuzhong is a tier 2 alchemist. His skill in the Dao of alchemy is incredible. Once he shows up, that Meng Hao will definitely get put in his place. Forcing him to kneel there for three days will definitely lighten my heart a bit." He chuckled coldly, and he felt incredible anticipation for the moment when he could visit the Dao of Alchemy Division and personally look at Meng Hao kneeling there.

"Your dad was there on Planet South Heaven, and that's why you could be so arrogant and despotic. But here, you're an outsider. Let's see you try to be pompous here!" A wide smile appeared on his face. It was at this point that his expression flickered as he produced a jade slip from his bag of holding. Then he laughed out loud.

"Alchemist Fang sent me a message!" His expression one of anticipation, he sent his divine sense into the jade slip. After a moment, the jade slip began to glow, and an illusory version of Fang Xuzhong's face appeared. His expression was grim.

As soon as he saw Fang Xuzhong's expression, Fang Yunyi gaped in shock. Before he could even say anything, Fang Xuzhong had already begun to speak.

"Fang Yunyi, what enmity is there between us?! You set me up, you bastard! You wanted me to humiliate Fang Hao? His skill in plants and vegetation is inhuman! Fang Yunyi, I'm not going to forget the trouble you've caused me!"

Fang Yunyi's face fell.

"Alchemist Fang, this...."

“Don’t call me Alchemist Fang! From this day forth, when you want pills concocted, don’t come looking for me! Furthermore, none of my alchemist friends will concoct for you either!

“Fang Yunyi, what you’ve done is far too excessive!” Fang Xuzhong glared at Fang Yunyi for a moment, then gave a cold snort and severed the divine will connection.

Fang Yunyi’s face flickered with various emotions, and then suddenly, he shot to his feet and pulled out another jade slip, which he used to connect with the apprentice alchemist he had sent away earlier. After finding out what had happened between Meng Hao and Fang Xuzhong in the Dao of Alchemy Division, his face darkened. He wrathfully smashed the jade slip, and his face twisted with rage.

“Meng Hao!” he howled, and his hatred for Meng Hao grew even more intense.

In the Dao of Alchemy Division, everyone watched Meng Hao leave, and then dispersed. It didn’t take long before Meng Hao’s name began to be spread by all of the apprentice alchemists who had been present. The story of the bet between Meng Hao and Fang Xuzhong was especially popular.

When the apprentice alchemists from the outer mountains learned that Meng Hao had actually defeated Fang Xuzhong in terms of plants and vegetation, it only made Meng Hao all the more mysterious, and the subject of even more debate.

He had a 30,000 meter Bloodline Gatebeam, he had experienced the Seventh Year Tribulation, was the eldest grandson of the direct bloodline, and was a Chosen of the Fang Clan.

Word of all of these things spread, and soon, Meng Hao’s name began to rise to prominence among the apprentice alchemists. There were even some low-level alchemists who took note.

In the ancestral mansion, Fang Wei’s father and grandfather sat in a temple, their faces grim as they listened to a tier 1 alchemist retell the story of what had happened that day at the Dao of Alchemy Division.

After a long moment, the tier 1 alchemist left. Fang Wei’s father, Fang Xiushan, looked incredibly gloomy.

“Dad, if that son of a bitch keeps doing things like this, it’s going to cause waves of disturbance....”

“It doesn’t matter,” the old man said somberly. “He won’t live much longer. Besides, even if he becomes famous in the Dao of Alchemy Division, the rules of the Fang Clan are clear; anyone who practices cultivation must contribute merit points.

“He just arrived, and will be provided with a set monthly allowance of merit points. It doesn’t matter if it’s in terms of cultivation or pill concocting, he won’t be making any waves.

“Besides, if he wants to earn more merit points, he’ll have to accomplish tasks set forth by the clan.... When that happens, it doesn’t matter if he’s avoided death so far, he’ll be on the outside, where accidents can happen at any time.”

Chapter 907: I Definitely Don’t Want It!

Meng Hao had returned to his Immortal’s cave residence. He already had some idea as to what would be happening right now back in the Dao of Alchemy Division, and some of those things were exactly what he wanted.

“My cultivation base isn’t good enough to help me rise to prominence in the Fang Clan, but since they have their own Dao of alchemy, why not rise to prominence there? That can make me just as popular and famous.

“The higher my status in their Dao of Alchemy Division, then the higher my status will be in the clan in general.

“The Dao of alchemy.... If I could become the most powerful alchemist in the Fang Clan, then I would definitely be super famous. When I control the entire Dao of Alchemy Division, then finding out what happened to my two Nirvana Fruits won’t be very difficult!” His eyes gleamed, and a cold smile appeared on his face.

After a moment, Meng Hao closed his eyes and rotated his cultivation base, as well as his Immortal meridian. The portion of it which remained illusory was slowly becoming solid.

“I still need more time before my Immortal meridian is full and complete. When that happens, I’ll be a true Immortal!” He took a deep breath. Outside, it was gradually growing dark, and the moon had risen. Meng Hao’s eyes finally opened, and he waved his hand, causing the ten sets of ingredients for Spirit Elixir to emerge.

Meng Hao looked them over carefully, then examined the formula for a while.

“This formula is pretty simple,” he thought. “Also, the Spirit Elixir it produces won’t be very high quality.” Eyes glittering, he produced the jade box and took out the Nirvana Fruits. After examining them for a bit, he tried his hand at concocting the Spirit Elixir.

First, he made one batch using the method described in the formula. To Meng Hao, that method was simply too basic. After concocting the first batch, he decided to use his own method. He altered the formula a bit, then produced a total of nine batches of Spirit Elixir, each one slightly different than the others.

Then, he carefully dripped them onto one of the Nirvana Fruits one batch at a time, and observed the various reactions.

He was immediately able to see signs of restoration on the fruit. By the time the ninth batch of Spirit Elixir had been absorbed, the Nirvana fruit was no longer cracked and wrinkled, and in fact looked wholly recovered. It even emanated a splendorous light that strongly stimulated the blood in Meng Hao’s veins.

He even had the mistaken feeling that he should immediately absorb the Nirvana Fruit into his body. He quickly closed his eyes and suppressed the impulse to try it out. After four hours, the Nirvana Fruit slowly began to wither back up. By the time six hours had passed, it had returned to its original dried-up shape.

“If I had actually tried to absorb it,” he murmured, looking at the withered fruits, “then I would have been turned into a desiccated corpse just now. A sudden and unexpected death.

“If I want to absorb these Nirvana Fruits, then I need to truly restore them so that they aren’t dangerous. Of these nine batches of Spirit Extract, the seventh was the strongest. It was around twice as strong as any of the others.” He looked down at the final remaining set of ingredients. After a moment of hesitation, a gleam of determination appeared in his eyes.

“This formula still isn’t good enough. The medicinal plants used to concoct the Spirit Elixir can actually be substituted with other medicinal plants.” Meng Hao sank into contemplation regarding the combination of medicinal plants. After enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, he gritted his teeth and pulled out a Sun Blossom and a Reincarnation Leaf, legendary medicinal plants that were extinct in the outside world. After adding them to the formula, he began to concoct more Spirit Elixir.

This time, it took him two full days to complete the concoction. When the medicinal plants were finally refined into a liquid, he ended up with a glob of emerald-green fluid about the size of a fist, which he then placed into a small bottle.

It was filled with dense Immortal qi, and because it contained Sun Blossom and Reincarnation Leaf, it meant that this bottle was shocking in terms of both quality and value.

Enduring the pain in his heart, Meng Hao produced the copper mirror and duplicated it, then very carefully poured a single drop from the bottle onto one of the Nirvana Fruits. It instantly returned to life, and began to glow with scintillating light.

However, Meng Hao knew that the fruit had not truly recovered. He continued to pour one drop after another onto the fruit, a total of one hundred. When the liquid was completely absorbed by the Nirvana Fruit, it gradually began to transform. Although it was difficult to describe the exact nature of the transformation, Meng Hao was just barely able to detect some sort of life force from within.

“It’s working!” he thought, his eyes flickering. However, his heart then began to twinge with pain. Duplicating that single bottle of Spirit Elixir had removed a distressing amount of spirit stones from his bag of holding.

He clenched his jaw.

“It’s just a bit of money, right...?” he said through gritted teeth, and then duplicated another bottle. Time passed. Five days.

“Dammit! Do you absorb Spirit Elixir or spirit stones!?!?”

“Y-y-you’re... you’re still absorbing the Spirit Elixir!?!?”

“It-it... it’s like I’ve fallen into a bottomless pit!!

“Argh, my spirit stones!!”



Meng Hao's eyes were bloodshot as he stared at the Nirvana Fruit. During these five days, he had depleted the number of spirit stones in his bag of holding by half. He had duplicated an ocean of Spirit Elixir, all of which had been absorbed by the Nirvana Fruit. The life force inside of it was growing stronger, but there seemed to be no end in sight. Meng Hao could clearly sense that it was thirsty to absorb more Spirit Elixir.

If you calculated exactly how much Spirit Elixir the Nirvana Fruit had absorbed, anyone in the Fang Clan would have been shocked. Furthermore, that Spirit Elixir was of the finest quality. A few bottles might not have been a big deal, but for most people, it wouldn't just be a problem of spirit stones; they simply would never be able to gather that many medicinal plants. Especially not the Sun Blossoms and Reincarnation Leaves.

"Only when it reaches the point that it can't absorb any more Spirit Elixir, will I know that it's fully restored!" Meng Hao's heart dripped with blood, and he ceased duplicating the Spirit Elixir. He quickly packed the Nirvana Fruit up and then closed his eyes.

After a moment, he opened his eyes again and then frowned.

"This isn't the right method. I need to increase the Spirit Elixir's power. To do that, I need to replace all of the current medicinal plant ingredients. If I can create an even more powerful Spirit Elixir, that would be the best thing. Although it might cost more spirit stones to duplicate on an individual basis, overall, I'll be able to save a lot of resources."

Meng Hao took a deep breath and then rose to his feet, ending the current madness of duplication and concoction. He was now preparing to make another trip to the Dao of Alchemy Division, and figure out a way to get the medicinal plants he needed.

"Unfortunately, I don't have the clan merit points I need.... However, that problem is solved easily enough." Eyes shining brightly, he turned into a beam of light that shot toward the Dao of Alchemy Division.

People recognized him almost as soon as he arrived. That was especially true when he reached Alchemy Lodge Peak #7191. The apprentice alchemists there, including the old alchemist Fang Qun, immediately rose to their feet excitedly, clasped hands, and invited him onto the platform.

Meng Hao didn't decline, but instead took his place and began to lecture about the Dao of alchemy, and even asked the apprentice alchemists to go invite others to come listen.

“All of this is for the clan,” Meng Hao announced in a profound voice. “I hope that, even with my meager skills, I can help to advance our clan’s Dao of alchemy.” His voice seemed to be full of loyalty and righteousness toward the clan.

The apprentice alchemists were getting excited, and immediately took out jade slips to inform their friends, who quickly hurried over, and also spread the word.

Over the course of the following four hours, the mountain peak came to be surrounded by tens of thousands of onlookers, who packed together to listen to Meng Hao lecture about plants and vegetation. Many among the audience were people who had heard of the events that had previously occurred, and were skeptically listening to Meng Hao for the first time. However, after listening for only a short time, their eyes went wide, and they were quickly absorbed in the information, seemingly entranced.

Meng Hao lectured for an entire day, after which he started to look a bit tired.

“Ladies and Gentlemen of the clan, it’s not that I don’t wish to continue, but I really don’t have enough time. I have to go do some tasks for the clan. Next time I’m free, I’ll be sure to come back.”

No matter what the crowd said to try to get him to stay, Meng Hao refused, and immediately left the Dao of Alchemy Division.

Later, for no apparent reason, Fang Xi suddenly became interested in the Dao of alchemy. He pulled some strings to get a chance to become an apprentice alchemist, and went directly to Peak #7191, quickly becoming familiar with some of the apprentice alchemists there.

In the following days, whenever Meng Hao returned, Fang Xi was in the crowd. Every time Meng Hao showed up, it was evening, and he would only talk for four hours before leaving.

Of course, each and every time, he would stop right at a critical moment in the lecture, which made the apprentice alchemists even more excited to hear what was next. He would always appear to really wish to keep lecturing, but be unable to because of Clan assignments, and would leave.

On one particular occasion, he lectured for about six hours before preparing to leave. It was at this point that one of the apprentice alchemists called out in a loud voice.

“Fang Hao, isn’t the point of performing clan assignments to get merit points? How about I give one of my merit points to you, and you keep talking for two hours! What do you think?!” This apprentice alchemist was none other than Fang Xi. From the look on his face, he was prepared to go all out, to pay any price necessary to gain more knowledge of plants and vegetation.

As soon as the words left his mouth, the surrounding apprentice alchemists hesitated for a moment. However, there were a few others who immediately voiced their approval, calling out to Meng Hao, who stopped in his tracks.

“Oh, I don’t think that’s a good idea....” he said hesitantly.

“What’s not good about it!?” hollered Fang Xi at the top of his lungs. “Fang Hao, your skill in plants and vegetation is so high that even a tier 2 alchemist is no match for you! If you’re willing to sacrifice your own merit points for the clan, and for us, then we’re willing to do the same thing for you! If we weren’t, it would be a huge shame for us!”

Other apprentice alchemists began to chime in.

“That’s right! Fang Hao, during these days, we’ve personally witnessed the sacrifices you have been making for the sect, and for us. We’re all very grateful....”

“Fang Hao, you’re a Chosen, and yet, you’re not arrogant at all! No matter what questions we come up with about plants and vegetation, you patiently answer them all! You deserve to get merit points from us!”

“That’s right! Anyone who refuses to part with their merit points should just get the hell out of here! The most valuable thing in the world isn’t bullying other people! It’s knowledge!!”

As the atmosphere in the area grew more passionate, Meng Hao’s face filled with emotion. Finally, he took a deep breath and stood tall on the platform, nodding his head.

“Very well,” he said, sounding determined. “Thank you for your support, everyone. Since all of you demand this, then I will forgo any service to the clan, and will instead personally impart all of my knowledge of plants and vegetation to all of you!”

“For two hours, I’ll charge only one merit point per person! Don’t offer any more! If you do, I won’t accept!”

The surrounding apprentice alchemists all had strange looks on their faces. Some were actually looks of disdain; how could people not have at least some idea of what had just happened?

Chapter 908: Medicine Pavilion

Immediately, conversations rippled through the crowd.

“He’s actually charging a fee!!”

“Doggone-it! How shameless! How fake!”

“Let’s go to some other peak. None of the other alchemists charge merit points!”

Almost immediately, tens of thousands of apprentice alchemists flicked their sleeves and left. Meng Hao watched them leave and sighed.

“These Fang Clan people are so stingy,” he thought. “There were so many people before, but as soon as I mentioned charging merit points, so many of them just got up and left....”

In the end, only about a thousand people remained behind. To them, one merit point wasn’t very much; considering it was Meng Hao who was lecturing, they felt it was worth it.

This time, Meng Hao lectured for six hours, after which, he collected several thousand merit points, then left the Dao of Alchemy Division and returned to his Immortal’s cave. A few hours later, Fang Xi returned, looking both excited and cautious at the same time. The parrot perched on one of his shoulders, the meat jelly on the other. He looked very proud of himself.

“Coz! We really made a profit this time!”

Meng Hao laughed, and his eyes glowed with bright light. In the Fang Clan, merit points were essentially the same thing as spirit stones, or even Immortal jades. Anything you wanted required an exchange of merit points.

Meng Hao waved his sleeve, producing a jade medallion. After scanning it with divine sense, he partitioned a hundred merit points and transferred them to Fang Xi.

“We need to make sure the apprentice alchemists you hired don’t get discouraged. Tell them that the better they do in promoting me, the more merit points they can earn.”

Fang Xi was actually quite excited. He had never before thought of using such a method to earn merit points. Normally speaking, the most he could ever get in a one-month period was about five hundred. But just now, it only took about six hours to make several thousand. To him, it made Meng Hao even more enigmatic than before.

It was at this point that Fang Xi said, “Coz, I promised them ten points apiece....”

“Don’t be stingy, Fang Xi,” Meng Hao replied, sounding very solemn. “Look, don’t take this the wrong way, but you’re simply too stingy. You need to think big! It’s just a bit of money, right?! If cultivators like us are constantly thinking about material things, then how can we ever increase our cultivation base?”

Fang Xi gaped for a moment in hesitation, but couldn’t hold back from carefully saying, “Coz, what I mean is... you didn’t give enough. I promised them ten per person, and I hired 173 people....”

Meng Hao’s face immediately flickered, and he said nothing for a moment.

His silence caused Fang Xi to immediately get nervous, and he quickly continued, “Coz, I know I messed up. Next time I hire them, I’ll tell them it’ll be fifty per person.”

Meng Hao’s cheek suddenly twitched. Taking a deep breath, he looked at Fang Xi and sincerely said, “Fang Xi, listen. You haven’t lived the hard life, so you don’t know how difficult things can be. Do you know what cultivators like us use up the most? Resources! Spirit Stones! Immortal jades!

“If you want to be stronger than everyone else, then you need more spirit stones! More resources! That’s the path to power!

“Now, don’t take this the wrong way, but you need to learn how to work hard and live a simple life! Be diligent, thrifty! Learn how to take only one merit point, and split it ten ways! That’s how cultivators like us can reach the top and stay there!” Meng Hao patted Fang Xi’s shoulder. Suppressing the inward pain he felt, he took out his command medallion and once again sent his divine sense out, causing a thousand merit points to transfer over.

“Remember what I just told you,” Meng Hao urged. “One merit point, split ten ways.... You can’t just throw your money away!”

Fang Xi gaped at Meng Hao in utter shock. The words he had spoken just now were the complete opposite of what he had said before. And yet, both made sense.

In the end, Meng Hao couldn’t hold back from adding, “Next time you hire people, it’s one merit point per person. That should be enough.”

Sighing, he turned and headed into his residence.

Of the more than three thousand merit points he had started out with, he now had less than half left. It was quite a blow.

Add to that the fact that later that night, Meng Hao had to duplicate more Spirit Elixir to use on the Nirvana Fruit, and the result was that by the following day, his bag of holding once again seemed sadly shrunken. By that time, Meng Hao truly felt as if he were about to go crazy.

He loved spirit stones, and loved being wealthy. Furthermore, what he loved least was spending his spirit stones....

To him, it felt like draining out his own blood.

At dawn, Meng Hao emerged. When Fang Xi saw him, he stared in shock.

“Coz, what’s wrong?” he asked, concerned.

Meng Hao’s eyes were completely red, and his expression had become somewhat vicious. He took a deep breath and cleared his head. Deep within his eyes, a brilliant light flickered.

“I HAVE to get rich! I HAVE to get merit points!!”

Meng Hao returned to the Dao of Alchemy Division, and to Peak #7191. Yet again, he lectured about plants and vegetation. However, this time, there were actually fewer people than last time, only about nine hundred.

There wasn't much he could do. In order to get as many merit points as possible, he lectured for an entire day before leaving in exhaustion.

Each time he came after that, there were fewer people. After about a month, there were just over four hundred people who came, causing Meng Hao to sigh. The ones that stayed behind were the original group of apprentice alchemists, the ones whose fervor toward Meng Hao was the most intense.

Among their number was also tier 1 alchemist Fang Qun, who fairly worshipped Meng Hao.

After finishing his lecture, Meng Hao didn't leave. Instead, he went to Fang Qun's Immortal's cave and directly asked some questions.

"Fang Qun, in the Fang Clan's Dao of alchemy division, how do apprentice alchemists get promoted to full alchemist?"

Fang Qun always treated Meng Hao very respectfully. Despite his surprise about the question, he quickly answered.

"To become a full alchemist, you have to concoct at least a thousand tier 1 medicinal pills, and must also pass through the first level of the Medicine Pavilion.

"The first thing to do is pass through the Medicine Pavilion. That indicates that your skill with plants and vegetation has reached the level of a tier 1 alchemist.

"Unfortunately, it's very difficult. Anyone in the Dao of Alchemy Division who hasn't studied plants and vegetation for at least ten years would have a very hard time passing the first level. Take me, for example. I can concoct tier 2 medicinal pills, although my success rate isn't very high. However, despite my best efforts, I barely passed the examination of the Medicine Pavilion. Due to my lack of skill in plants and vegetation, I wasn't able to get past the second level, and in the end, I became a tier 1 alchemist." Fang Qun chuckled bitterly.

"Medicine Pavilion?" asked Meng Hao, his eyes sparkling. "How do you get into it?"

“It doesn’t matter if you’re a full alchemist or an apprentice alchemist, anyone can enter the pavilion at any time. The Medicine Pavilion was set up in the past by a Patriarch of the Dao of Alchemy Division. It tests everything that you can think of, and has nine levels, which corresponds to the nine tiers for alchemists.

“Anyone who feels confident enough, can pay one hundred merit points to go to the inner mountains and take the Medicine Pavilion trial by fire.

“It’s extremely hard,” said Fang Qun, lowering his voice. “Of all the apprentice alchemists from Peak #7191, only about seven or eight might be able to attempt it, and that would only be after another ten or more years of study. As for the rest, most would need dozens of years of study before they could even think about trying. If you were to try to brute-force imprint your memory with knowledge, your mental world would burst from being overwhelmed by the infinite possible varieties of plants and vegetation. Unless your cultivation base is at an unfathomable level, of course.”

Meng Hao knew that when it came to plants and vegetation, there were endless variations, which were hard to imprint with spiritual sense. After hearing Fang Qun’s explanation, Meng Hao began to mutter to himself. Then, a plan started to form in his mind.

“Is there any other way to become a full alchemist?” Meng Hao asked.

“Other ways...?” Fang Qun thought for a moment, and then his eyes brightened. However, they grew dull again just as quickly. “There is, but it’s too difficult. In fact, it’s impossible to succeed that way.

“For tens of thousands of years, there have been three specific medicinal pills in the Dao of Alchemy Division which, if any full alchemist or apprentice alchemist can concoct, will allow them to immediately be promoted to tier 8 alchemist. That person would instantly become famous in the entire clan.

“Those three pills are famous pills concocted by past Patriarchs. Unfortunately, even though they left pill formulas behind after they perished, no one has been able to successfully concoct them.

“In all of Planet East Victory, even the Medicine Immortal Sect is only capable of concocting two of those pills. Of course, even though the Medicine Immortal Sect has its roots in the Fang Clan, and



might even be considered a branch of the sect and a part of our Dao of alchemy, they are still almost considered outsiders. The fact that they can concoct pills that we cannot is somewhat disgraceful.

“That’s why those three pill formulas were placed in the Pill Pavilion. The clan has posted incredible rewards for concocting them. Supposedly, the reward for even the most simple of the three includes Immortal jade, tons of spirit stones, and 5,000,000 merit points, not to mention vast quantities of medicinal plants, magical items, and technique manuals.

“Unfortunately, after all these tens of thousands of years, nobody has ever succeeded. Even our only tier 9 alchemist, Pill Elder Fang Danyun, had to admit that he can’t concoct them.”

Fang Qun shook his head.

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered and then almost seemed to glaze over.

“Another thing: because the cost of the medicinal plant ingredients is so high, anyone who attempts to concoct the simplest of those pills is must put up 1,000,000 merit points as a collateral. Regardless of whether they succeed or fail, the merit points will be erased.”

When Meng Hao heard that, he felt like someone had grabbed him by the neck and started squeezing down tightly. It took him a long moment before he could breathe again.

“Merit points! Merit points again!!” He suddenly frowned, and pushed down the impulsive feelings rising up in his heart. After spending a bit of time planning, his eyes began to glitter.

“Take me to the Medicine Pavilion!” he suddenly said.

“You... you want to try to challenge the Medicine Pavilion!?” asked Fang Qun, looking shocked. Then, he suddenly looked excited. He was well aware that he had no idea as to the limits of Meng Hao’s skill in plants and vegetation.

“Try to challenge the Medicine Pavilion?” Meng Hao replied, sounding surprised. “What, are you going to pay for it? Nah, I’m not going to try to challenge it, I’m just going to take a look at the first level.” With that, Meng Hao flew out of the Immortal’s cave.

“Uh... no, I’m not going to pay for it....” Fang Qun hurried to follow as Meng Hao shot through the mountains.

Soon, two mountain peaks appeared ahead of Meng Hao, between which was an enormous treasure pavilion, floating there in mid air, emanating brilliant and colorful light. Clouds and mist floated around it, and it truly looked like an abode of Immortals.

Two old men sat cross-legged outside of the treasure pavilion, next to an enormous stone slab.

“This is the Medicine Pavilion,” Fang Qun said softly, a pious look in his eyes. “According to the stories, this pavilion is actually a magical item, a precious treasure that the first generation Patriarch brought from off planet. It was originally owned by someone else, and had always attempted to fly away to rejoin him. However, after the Patriarch passed away in meditation, it has remained locked in place here, floating in midair and unable to go anywhere.”

Meng Hao’s eyes flickered, and he flew up into the air directly toward the Medicine Pavilion. As soon as he got close, an incredibly powerful medicinal aroma hit him in the face. In the blink of an eye, he sensed millions upon millions of different types of medicinal aromas all mixed together.

“So many types of plants and vegetation!” thought Meng Hao with a gasp. He was still outside, and yet could already tell how terrifying it must be inside.

As he neared, the two old men who acted as guards outside the Medicine Pavilion opened their eyes. They appeared to be incredibly ancient, as if they were Immortal Divinities with unfathomable cultivation bases. From what he could tell, they were even more powerful than the Grand Elder.

His face solemn, he clasped hands and bowed.

The two old men looked over Meng Hao, and it almost seemed as if they could see through him. Finally, they retracted their gazes and closed their eyes. Meng Hao took a deep breath and then looked at the huge stone stele that rested off to the side.

The stone stele was divided into nine levels, upon each of which were written names. The first level had the most names, hundreds of thousands of them. After the first level, the higher you went, the fewer names there were, and some of the names were gray-colored. On the ninth level, there were ten names, with nine being gray, and one shining brightly.

Fang Danyun!

Chapter 909: Cheating!

[/expand]

In the Fang Clan's Dao of Alchemy Division, there was currently only one tier 9 alchemist, the man known as Pill Elder... Fang Danyun.

Meng Hao looked at the ten names on the ninth level of the stone stele, and suddenly thought of his master Pill Demon.

"From my current perspective, it's now obvious that Pill Demon's skill in the Dao of alchemy vastly exceeded any standards for Planet South Heaven. Were it not for the fact that he lacked certain medicinal plant ingredients, he would surely have been able to concoct some medicinal pills that were famous in all the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

"Now, he's a member of the Kunlun Society, with even more resources at his disposal and able to focus completely on the Dao of alchemy." When Meng Hao thought of his master, he couldn't help... but also think of a certain woman. It was Chu Yuyan, who had left with Pill Demon to go to the Kunlun Society.

"Waiting to meet out in the big wide world... is a beautiful type of regret." Meng Hao shook his head. To him, emotions were not everything. In this life, it was enough for him to have only Xu Qing.

Even more important was to accomplish something incredible, all on his own.

"I'm going to become the richest person in all the Ninth Mountain and Sea!" he thought, his eyes filling with determination as he strode into the Medicine Pavilion.

As soon as he entered, a gentle light swept over him, and his identity jade medallion flew out. Glittering light could be seen as one hundred clan merit points were deducted from within.

Meng Hao's heart twinged in pain. Those one hundred merit points represented lecturing to a hundred apprentice alchemists for two hours.

“No pain, no gain!” he thought. “I’m going to go for it!” Gritting his teeth, he continued onward into the Medicine Pavilion. Suddenly, he found himself surrounded by thick mists that made it difficult to see.

After a moment, a glowing light appeared in front of him, within which were 1,000 types of medicinal plants. It was hard to see them clearly, as they were obscured by mist. Simultaneously, an archaic voice echoed throughout the first level.

“One hundred breaths of time. Identify at least 900 medicine plants and imprint them with divine sense. You will be given ten sets; completing nine of them will count as passing the level.”

As soon as the voice finished speaking, the mists covering the 1,000 medicinal plants vanished, leaving them clearly visible. Meng Hao’s gaze passed over them, and he immediately recognized all of them. However, he did not imprint any of them with divine sense, but instead committed all 1,000 plants to memory.

One hundred breaths of time quickly passed, and the light flickered. The 1,000 medicinal plants vanished, to be replaced by another set of 1,000.

Meng Hao quickly looked them over, and his eyes sparkled as if with electricity. After committing the medicinal plants to memory, he waited for the hundred breaths of time to end, and the third set of 1,000 medicinal plants to appear.

In this manner, he consumed all ten opportunities that he was given. After being shown 10,000 medicinal plants, he was wrapped up by a gentle force, and, in the blink of an eye, sent flying out of the first level of the Medicine Pavilion, to appear outside.

Fang Qun was waiting outside, filled with anticipation. As soon as he saw Meng Hao appear, his jaw dropped. Whenever anybody passed the first level, glowing lights would appear. And yet, the first level looked exactly the same as when Meng Hao had entered it.

Fang Qun gaped in shock, and was about to step forward when Meng Hao suddenly strode directly back toward the entrance, paid his one hundred merit points, and entered the Medicine Pavilion again.

Inside, he once again memorized the 10,000 medicinal plants that were shown to him, and was expelled. Gritting his teeth, he went in again.

Twice, three times, four times.... In a relatively short period of time, Meng Hao entered ten times. His merit points were vanishing rapidly. However, he stuck with it. Fang Qun was struck dumb, and could scarcely believe that Meng Hao couldn't pass the first level of the Medicine Pavilion. And yet, here he was watching the bizarre scene play out right in front of him.

"What exactly is he doing?" thought Fang Qun. In his estimation, it should be a relatively simple matter for Meng Hao to pass the first level of the Medicine Pavilion. He just couldn't figure out why he would want to go in at the same level over and over again.

Time passed. Meng Hao, seemingly bewitched, tried out the first level ten times, twenty times, thirty times. In the end... he entered the first level a hundred times.

That was 10,000 merit points, and considering he hadn't even earned 20,000 merit points over the last month or so, that meant he had now depleted his supply by more than sixty percent.

"100 times!" he said after appearing outside. He looked over at the Medicine Pavilion and took a deep breath.

After taking the examination over 100 times, he had been shown 1,000,000 medicinal plants. However, many of those were actually duplicates. After some thought, he looked at the more than 4,000 merit points he had left, gritted his teeth, and entered the Medicine Pavilion yet again.

After passing through 40 more times, Meng Hao had less than a hundred merit points left. The two old men sitting outside the Medicine Pavilion watched his odd behavior with fascination. They could clearly sense the determination that filled him.

"140 times! You would think that 1,400,000 medicinal plants would appear. But in reality, when you eliminate the repetitions, there were only about 1,000,000.

"From all those 1,000,000 medicinal plants, each section of the test only selects 1,000. All you need to do is recognize 900, and then, do that nine times.... In other words, in any given test, you actually only have to identify about 8,100 medicinal plants correctly!

"When you think about it that way, it's not really that hard." Meng Hao mused thoughtfully. In particular, there were about 5,000 medicinal plants that recurred most often in the test, which had special significance. These were plants that were easily confused with others.

Eyes glittering, he turned and left, followed by Fang Qun. Fang Qun wanted to ask some questions, but after seeing Meng Hao's thoughtful look, he hesitated, and then decided not to interrupt.

Evening was falling, but Meng Hao did not return to his Immortal's cave. Instead, he accepted Fang Qun's invitation to stay at his Immortal's cave for the night. During that time, he did not practice cultivation, but instead took out a jade slip and began to analyze and record information from his 140 examinations in the Medicine Pavilion, and to gather together information about the most common medicinal plants to appear.

Day and night, he classified and categorized the different plants. Three days later, he emerged, his expression one of exhaustion, and yet with brightly gleaming eyes.

"Measly Medicine Pavilion," he thought. "I'm going to help all of the apprentice alchemists who listen to my lectures pass the first level of the Medicine Pavilion. When that happens, there will definitely be a huge increase in my audience." He laughed heartily, and his eyes shone with anticipation and determination. To do something like he was doing was something no other alchemist would ever think was possible.

The reason Meng Hao could do it was because his skill in plants and vegetation had reached a completely terrifying level. Because of that, he was capable of memorizing and then organizing all of those 1,000,000 medicinal plants.

Of course, other high level alchemists might be able to do the same thing. However, they would never think to use the same method, to waste such energy and such a large amount of merit points, to organize all that information for the purpose of cheating.

After spending a few more days organizing all of the information and data, Meng Hao was completely confident. The next time he went to lecture the more than 400 fanatical apprentice alchemists, all the content was regarding information about those specific medicinal plants.

He especially focused on the most common plants, as well as the ones that were most easily misidentified.

This was a method that focused specifically on memorizing correct answers. Meng Hao completely forgot any exhaustion he felt, and committed himself to lecturing. A month later, the number of apprentice alchemists didn't increase, but neither did it decrease.

By the time that month ended, Meng Hao had finished introducing all of the plants that most commonly appeared in the Medicine Pavilion test. After finishing a lecture, he would wave his hand, and use the magic of a divine ability to cause 1,000 medicinal plants to appear.

“Next, I’ll give you a little test,” he said. “I’ll give you two hours to try to identify as many of these 1,000 medicinal plants as possible. Mark down any that you don’t know. When the time limit is up, I’ll give you the correct answers.”

This was a completely fresh and new experience for these apprentice alchemists, but as for Fang Qun, he looked on with wide eyes. After listening to Meng Hao’s lectures for a month, he was starting to feel a bit apprehensive. After all, he had passed through the first level of the Medicine Pavilion, and was starting to pick up on what Meng Hao was doing. This was especially the case when Meng Hao started using the same testing method as the first level of the Medicine Pavilion. It was at this point that he started panting, and a look of astonishment could be seen on his face.

“Don’t tell me... he actually went through the first level of the Medicine pavilion more than a hundred times just to be able to see all the test’s contents!

“That’s... that’s basically the same as just seeing all the answers! Now that he’s giving specific lectures about the answers, these apprentice alchemists will have a much, much higher chance of passing the examination. That’s... that’s cheating!

“It’s even more so the case considering he’s using the same testing method as the Medicine Pavilion, just to get them used to it...” Fang Qun couldn’t help but gape in shock.

Two hours later, the images vanished, and the apprentice alchemists began to ask questions about the medicinal plants they couldn’t identify. Meng Hao emphasized various key points, and then waved his hand again, causing another set of images to appear.

It was in this fashion that time slowly passed. Meng Hao rarely returned to his Immortal’s cave. Most of his time was spent in the Dao of Alchemy Division. Eventually, he reduced the amount of time he gave the apprentice alchemists from two hours to one hour. Then to the time it takes an incense stick to burn. Then half that amount of time.

By the time another month had passed, Meng Hao had reduced the time limit to one hundred breaths.

His audience gradually got used to it, and eventually started to get excited about the continually increasing number of medicinal plants they could identify, and the continuously increasing speed at which they could identify them. Actually, it was virtually impossible for them NOT to identify the medicinal plants, because during that time, Meng Hao lectured exclusively on the contents of the Medicine Pavilion examination.

During that three month period, the apprentice alchemists gave most of their merit points to Meng Hao. In exchange, there were more than a hundred among the group who had reached the point of being able to identify more than 900 medicinal plants in one hundred breaths of time.

On that day, Meng Hao ceased lecturing. Instead, he looked seriously at all of the four hundred members of his audience.

“Your merit points have not been spent in vain,” he announced. “Right now, all of us are going to the Medicine Pavilion to participate in the first level examination. Trust me, at least twenty percent of you will definitely pass!” In response, the apprentice alchemists looked at him with shock and hesitation.

“Fang Qun, lead the way!” said Meng Hao, waving his hand. Fang Qun gritted his teeth, nodded, and walked forward. The four hundred unconfident apprentice alchemists then followed his lead to the Medicine Pavilion.

Meng Hao flew along with them.

Along the way, more than a few people noticed what was going on, and when they heard that the group was going to the Medicine Pavilion to take the examination, they began to laugh out loud.

“How long have they been studying? And they think they can take on the first level of the Medicine Pavilion?”

“Without studying about plants and vegetation for dozens of years, how could you possibly succeed in the Medicine Pavilion? Do you people want to just throw away their merit points or something?”

“That’s funny. A lot of them have barely studied plants and vegetation for three years, right?”

More and more apprentice alchemists took note. All of them wondered what the reason was for all of this, and they began to laugh and ridicule them.



## Chapter 910: Rocking the Pavilion

The ridicule caused many of the four hundred apprentice alchemists to feel very embarrassed, and even hesitant. They weren't confident in their chances of success at all, but Meng Hao was very enthusiastic about the whole matter. Were it anyone else, they would think they were intentionally being set up to look bad.

"Ignore all of them! Trust me!" cried Meng Hao, his expression solemn. The four hundred apprentice alchemists gritted their teeth.

They still weren't confident, and yet, were still interested in knowing how far away they were from being able to succeed in the first level of the Medicine Pavilion.

The sound of the onlookers' mockery rang out, and there were quite a few people who decided to follow along to see what happened when the group tried to pass the examination in the Medicine Pavilion. There were some tier 1 alchemists who recognized Fang Qun and, when they saw what was going on, shook their heads.

"Fang Qun is really too shortsighted. Those are apprentice alchemists from Peak #7191, right?"

"Although it's true that an alchemist lecturer will receive a reward if any apprentice alchemist from their peak passes the first level of the Medicine Pavilion, these people only have a few years of experience with the Dao of alchemy; they definitely have no chance of succeeding."

"I heard that Fang Hao took over for Fang Qun over the past few months to give lectures at Peak #7191. He even started charging merit point fees. What a joke."

Surrounded by laughter and ridicule, Fang Qun and the four hundred apprentice alchemists slowly passed into the inner mountains and then appeared in front of the Medicine Pavilion. Although some of the alchemists in the inner mountains noticed them passing by, none took an interest.

Granted, there were four hundred people all going to take the test together, but that wasn't something unheard of. After all, there were many, many people who were members of the Dao of Alchemy Division. Furthermore, the Medicine Pavilion was a mysterious place; entrance was not limited to a single person. Even 10,000 could enter at one time if they wished.

The interior of the pavilion would appear empty to each participant, as if they were taking the test alone.

The four hundred apprentice alchemists gritted their teeth, paid their merit points, and were about to step into the Medicine Pavilion when Meng Hao took a deep breath and called out.

“All of you, remember, just do things the way you normally do, and you won’t have any problems!”

The four hundred apprentice alchemists gave nervous, forced smiles to Meng Hao as they clasped hands and bowed to him. Then, clenching their jaws, they entered the Medicine Pavilion one after another. In the blink of an eye, four hundred people vanished.

By this point, a few thousand people had gathered to watch, and were all laughing and joking.

Fang Qun was extremely nervous. Many of the people who had gathered were familiar with him, and he could clearly hear their jokes, but there was nothing he could say in response.

Meng Hao’s expression was calm as he floated there in midair looking at the Medicine Pavilion.

Meanwhile, inside, the four hundred apprentice alchemists inside all faced empty mists. Then, 1,000 medicinal plants appeared in front of them, and the vast majority were shocked.

“Huh? How come it’s exactly like the tests Alchemist Fang gave us?”

“This seems... actually, kind of simple! I know almost all of these....”

“One hundred breaths of time? I’ve practiced so many times, I’m used to it!” Virtually all of the apprentice alchemists were shocked and excited. Earlier, they never believed that they could succeed, but now they suddenly felt hope.

Time passed by.... One thousand breaths.

Of course, the onlookers were all still laughing about the matter.

“I really don’t get what Fang Qun is thinking. And as for all those apprentice alchemists, they don’t know the height of the Heavens and the depths of the Earth. There’s no way they can succeed.”

“Time’s almost up. They’ll be coming out soon. If even one of them succeeds, I’ll beat myself to death.”

It was at this point that a beam of light appeared on the first level. Instantly, the laughing was silenced.

“Wow, somebody actually succeeded? Well, I guess out of four hundred people, it was inevitable that someone would get lucky....”

“It’s possible that person is a Chosen in the Dao of alchemy. It’s a given that someone like that would perform shockingly.”

Even as the discussions broke out, silence once again reigned as a second beam of light appeared on the first level.

After that, a third, fourth, and a fifth.... 113 beams of light appeared in the blink of an eye. They formed a dazzling spectacle that could be seen from quite a distance away.

The onlookers were deathly quiet and stared with gaping mouths. Their eyes were wide and filled with disbelief, and their minds roared.

This vastly exceeded anything they could have ever imagined, and they could hardly believe it.

It was at this point that, from within the dazzling lights, four hundred apprentice alchemists appeared. The ones who had succeeded in passing the first level were wild with joy. As for the ones who had met with failure, they weren’t dejected at all. Instead, their eyes shone brightly with hope; they knew that they had come very close to succeeding.

All of them rushed over to Meng Hao and began crying out excitedly.

“That was so simple! I actually identified all of them!!”

“I did it! Hahaha! I passed! I’ve only studied the Dao of alchemy for three years, but I passed the first level of the Medicine Pavilion and I succeeded!!”

“Thank you, Alchemist Fang! Thank you!!”

Fang Qun was equally excited.

Meng Hao smiled widely, then cleared his throat. After glancing over at the shocked onlookers, he looked back at the apprentices and then put a solemn expression onto his face.

“What’s there to be excited about? What’s the surprise?”

“During these three months, you paid a few hundred merit points to listen to my lectures about plants and vegetation, so the big surprise would be if you didn’t pass the measly first level of the Medicine Pavilion.

“Now, all of you, tell me. Was it worth it to spend those merit points on listening to my lectures?”

The instant the question left his mouth, the more than four hundred apprentice alchemists joined their voices into a mighty roar of approval. All of the onlookers began to tremble inwardly.

Meng Hao laughed heartily, then turned to leave, sure that this matter would quickly turn into a massive wave that swept through all of the Dao of Alchemy Division.

“I need to stop giving lectures for a few days,” he thought. “I’ll wait a bit... and then there will surely be more people willing to fork over their merit points.” His eyes glittered with anticipation.

However, Meng Hao had actually underestimated the matter. Over the course of the following days, the Dao of Alchemy Division was struck by a massive tempest. After all, four hundred people had simultaneously taken the Medicine Pavilion examination, and then more than one hundred had successfully passed.

That in and of itself was not shocking. However, when you took into account the amount of time those test takers had been studying the Dao of alchemy, it was completely astonishing.

Those who had studied the longest had five years under their belt. The shortest amount of time any of them had studied was three years. An event such as this was enough to cause shock even among the alchemists of the inner mountains.

It eventually reached the point that the Alchemist Council, which was responsible for the operational affairs of the Dao of Alchemy Division, called a session to discuss the matter. Nineteen alchemists converged in the meeting location; these were the Pavilion Elders of the Dao of Alchemy Division.

All of these nineteen Pavilion Elders were tier 8 alchemists!

Deep in the inner mountains, on the cloud-cloaked peak of a tall mountain, was an ancient temple. Ten enormous statues stood guard outside the temple, each one of which represented a glorious past alchemist of the Fang Clan's Dao of Alchemy Division.

This was the location where the Alchemist Council held their session. In the main hall of the temple, nineteen enormous seats floated in the air, in the middle of which was an enormous illusory pill cauldron that emanated flickering light.

The seats were occupied by ancient old men with extraordinary cultivation bases, and whose Dao of alchemy could shake Heaven and Earth. Any one of these old men could be the founding Grandmaster of an alchemic sect.

"Fang Hao arrived four months ago from Planet South Heaven," said one of the old men, whose face was covered with wrinkles. He barely seemed to have the energy to open his eyes, but a strong medicinal aroma was eternally attached to him. "With a 30,000-meter Bloodline Gatebeam, he is a Chosen of the clan. Later, the Grand Elder from the main clan arranged for him to come to the Dao of Alchemy Division. Therefore, tier 5 alchemist Fang Huiguo took responsibility to send him to Alchemy Lodge Peak #7191!"

"I made some of my own inquiries, and also got some answers from Fang Huiguo. Fang Huiguo believed that while Fang Hao might have some understanding regarding pill concocting, he was also wildly arrogant. Let's ignore his subjective presumptions for now. Within two hours of Fang Hao's arrival at Peak #7191, he discovered twelve areas in which tier 1 alchemist Fang Qun made errors in explaining plants and vegetation. Fang Hao then personally gave a lecture about the subject that attracted tens of thousands of spectators.

"Tier 2 alchemist Fang Xuzhong was incited by the main clan's Fang Yunyi to challenge Fang Hao, making a wager regarding plants and vegetation. Fang Hao easily defeating him, instantly

identifying the top secret grafting technique of a tier 5 alchemist, and also revealing the collocation technique. I personally went to verify that the collocation technique was indeed correct!

“Later, he used his plant and vegetation lectures to collect merit points from the audience....” At this point, the old man paused. Some of the other elders began to chuckle.

“His audience dwindled to only a few hundred people, and his profit ranged only in the tens of thousands of merit points. Unsatisfied, he went to the Medicine Pavilion, where he took the examination 140 times in a row.

“He didn’t pass, not even once. However, that was because he intentionally failed. After finishing, he organized all the information about plants and vegetation from the exam and began to lecture the apprentice alchemists of Peak #7191 regarding... all of the test material from the first level of the Medicine Pavilion.

“In this way, by developing a cheating technique and preparing the apprentice alchemists for the test by training them in the test method. He then took four hundred people to the first level of the Medicine Pavilion, and over one hundred of them succeeded.

“Ladies and Gentlemen, these are the results of my investigation into Fang Hao. What do all of you think?” The old man’s voice was cool the entire time. Even he found Meng Hao to be somewhat amusing.

People immediately began to voice varying opinions.

“Is the kid crazy or something? I can’t believe he charged merit points for lectures on plants and vegetation! Why didn’t I think of that when I was his age!?”

“Amusing, but in the end it was cheating. He should be punished somehow. Perhaps have him clear out the pill rubbish receptacles?”

“No way! A punishment like that is too severe. Let me handle it. I’ll have him try to concoct some of my pills for me; I’ll show him a thing or two.”

“That’s not really cheating. To be able to memorize all of the medicinal plants from the first level of the Medicine Pavilion shows that he has a terrifying level of skill with plants and vegetation. I’m curious to see what level he could get to in the pavilion if he really tried.”

There were differing views on the matter. Some of them thought it was nothing more than a small matter, and were actually interested in Meng Hao. Others thought he was a problem waiting to happen, which should be punished and dealt with immediately.

Eventually, everyone finished speaking without reaching a consensus. Located in the middle of the nineteen chairs was an old man who wore a long robe and had flowing white hair. He hadn't spoken the entire time and was instead sitting there with his eyes closed. Finally, his eyes opened, and they seemed to be filled with starlight. It was as if all the heavenly bodies had been shockingly fused together, and existed inside of him.

He cleared his throat.

In that moment, all of the other elder alchemists quieted down and looked at the old man with expressions of ardor and veneration.

"He's nothing more than a member of the Junior generation," the old man said slowly. "Let him do as he pleases. Although, the rules of the first level of the Medicine Pavilion will need to be changed."

In response to his word, all of the Pavilion Elders bowed their heads in acquiescence.

As they did, a strange light appeared in the old man's eyes.

"Kunlun Society alchemy methods... and some vestiges of the Demon Immortal Sect. Interesting. Very interesting."