

Rebirth Of The Urban Immortal Cultivator

Chapter 81: Return To Chu Zhou City

Three days later, in front of the Ivy League High School...

Chen Fan leaned against a tree trunk on the opposite side of the school entrance as he watched the boys and girls enter and leave the school.

It had been three months since he had left for Qin Yang County.

Although it was only three months which meant a few dozen classes and a few tests to the ordinary students, it meant a lot to Chen Fan's cultivation. By then he had advanced into the late-stage of Foundation Establishment and his Dharmic powers had increased by three to five times.

He had created the precious Soul Forming Pills from the Senna plant, upgraded his soul energy into immortal will, and he had also created the Essence Gathering Pills and more Dharma Artifacts. Last but not least, he had attained Immortal Enlightenment after he had stumbled upon the fire rock.

The moment Chen Fan reached the Immortal Enlightenment Level, he immediately felt relieved of any stress that plagued his body and mind.

Ever since he was reborn, his mortal body and worldly mind had given in under the primordial need of surviving. He had been the almighty North Mystic Celestial Lord, and when he was first reborn, even an ordinary person with a normal weapon would have killed him.

In order to survive and prepare himself for the journey ahead, Chen Fan cultivated hard almost every day.

Once he knew about the Yin Crystals, he left Hu Dong province and went to Zhong Zhou. After the eventful journey, he had finally reached the Immortal Enlightenment and was powerful enough to defend himself against most enemies.

With the Li Fire Golden Eyes, he would no longer need to worry about the revengeful Hong Sect much less ordinary people in his day to day life.

With the newly found confidence, Chen Fan straightened his back and walked toward the school entrance.

Before he even reached the gate, a group of girls walked out of the threshold, and the one walking in the middle was an attractive looking young girl.

The girl's eyes paused on Chen Fan's face for a second and then she exclaimed: "Chen Fan?"

"When did you come back?"

This girl was Jiang Churan. It had only been three months, but she seemed to have matured a lot, in a good way.

The girls around Jiang Churan were all from her class. They regarded Chen Fan with curious glances.

"His name sounded familiar. Is he Ran-Ran's boyfriend?"

A girl with elegant features asked curiously.

"Hum.. maybe a classmate?" A nerdy-looking girl said as she pushed her glasses up.

"I didn't know Ran-Ran had other boy friends other than Li Yichen." A girl with cute eyes covered her mouth to suppress a giggle.

Chen Fan had been away for too long.

For the busy high school students, three months was long enough to make them forget about most things in their life that were insignificant.

Just three month ago, Chen Fan had made a name for himself by defeating Si Yinxia and became Xu Rongfei's rumored boyfriend.

However, in the three months that followed, many other boys had become as popular as he did. By then, only a few people who knew him personally would have remembered him.

While the girls were guessing who the boy was, Jiang Churan walked over to Chen Fan and gazed at Chen Fan with a curious look on her face.

Three months ago, Jiang Churan had only met Chen Fan a few times, and then Chen Fan disappeared for three months. There had been many things happening in the three months of Chen Fan's absence.

"You have been away for too long. Things are different now."

She heaved a sigh and then said, "Did you just get back? Does my mom know you are here?"

Chen Fan's was still levelheaded as usual. He said calmly, "I have just arrived Chu Zhou City today, and haven't got a chance to tell her yet."

"I was just going to ask you to take me to her."

"Get ready for some mom talk. She was not very happy with you leaving without a word." Jiang Churan said as some reservation flashed across her face. "Umm... I have something to do. Maybe you should visit her yourself?"

"Oh? Why?" Chen Fan asked quietly.

A black Audi pulled over to the school entrance and from the back seat emerged a familiar face.

It was Li Yichen!

Li Yichen was also taken aback by the sight of Chen Fan. After a few seconds of pause, a smirk broke over his face.

"Ah-Ha! Isn't it Mr. Chen, the exchange student?"

He turned around and held the car door open for Jiang Churan.

"Ran-Ran, let's go."

"The chef is about to start working at the Misty Shore. If we don't hurry, we might miss it."

Jiang Churan nodded and then hurried to enter the car without even saying bye to Chen Fan.

Li Yichen didn't spare Chen Fan a glance either. He went back to the car with a smug smile.

The black Audi drove away, leaving Chen Fan in a plume of dust.

The girls who accompanied Jiang Churan watched the event unfold from the beginning to the end. A girl said seriously: "The Misty Shore! That's the best restaurant in Chu Zhou City. A meal would cost over a few thousand yuan."

"I have heard that their Chef is from France. She is so lucky to be able to eat authentic French food made by a French chef!"

"No kidding! If my boyfriend could bring me to those places, I will marry him right now!" The girl with cute eyes said with hearts in her eyes.

“Dream on!” The other girl rolled her eyes at her. “Li Yichen had been courting Ran-Ran for a while now, and just recently she had agreed to go on dates with him. I bet he can win you over with just a popsicle.”

The girls laughed and joked with each other as they walked pass Chen Fan. One of the girls didn’t forget to take a jab at Chen Fan.

“Are you also courting Ran-Ran? Just forget it; that ship has sailed.”

The girls quickly disappeared, leaving a wave of musical laughter.

Chen Fan stood still under the tree, reflecting on what had happened.

“Jiang Churan is finally seeing Li Yichen now?”

“It was just like what had happened in my last life. They are going to go to the same university and live happily ever after.”

Chen Fan heaved a long sigh.

“Fate carried such great gravity that without my interference, everything is going to be exactly the same as last lifetime.”

Chen Fan’s heart was filled with strong emotions. But it wasn’t because of Jiang Churan.

Jiang Churan was just the girl that he used to like. However, it had been five hundred years ago, and by then, he practically felt nothing for her.

What made him so emotional was the palpable weight of fate.

If Jiang Churan’s walked the same path as she did in the last life, what about Xu Rongfei, Xiao Qiong, and his mom? Are they going to retrace their footsteps and walk the same line as they did five hundred years ago?

“Looks like I need to cause more butterfly effects. ” Chen Fan cracked a smile and left the school.

It had been five months ever since his rebirth, and three out of five months he had spent outside of the Chu Zhou City. While he was at the Chu Zhou City, he did very little to change the things around him.

He might have just affected the fate of Old Man Wei, Zhou Tianhao, A’Xiu, and Master Wu.

Since Jiang Churan was unable to accompany him, he decided to meet Auntie Tang by himself.

He thought of asking for the key of the mansion back from Jiang Churan, but he thought better of it.

He should be able to enter any house without using a key anyways.

Chen Fan walked toward the Lakeside Community as he dialed Auntie Tang's number.

Auntie Tang picked up the phone, and despite her scolding, she wasn't able to hide the excitement in her voice. She went on and on, blaming Chen Fan for leaving without notice, and for cutting off contact with everyone.

Chen Fan was lighthearted by the overprotective Auntie.

When Zhen Jiulin called the school to ask for an extended leave for Chen Fan, he had told everyone that Chen Fan was chosen to be sent to the Qingang Middle School as an exchange student. Qingang Middle School was located in a neighboring province and was well known for its quality of education and strict rules. The students were only allowed to leave the school twice a year, and their contact with the outside world was completely cut off.

Auntie Tang had bought into the made-up excuse, and she had reassured Chen Fan's mother that her son didn't simply go missing.

After agreeing to join Auntie Tang for supper in two days, Chen Fan decided to return to his rental property, the Lakeside Community.

As soon as he reached the entrance to the community, he felt something was amiss.

Using the Immortal Will, Chen Fan sensed that there was someone inside of his supposedly empty room.

"Why is she here?"

Chen Fan opened the door and saw a girl lay on a sofa. The heating was cranked all the way up, and the room was cozy. The girl was wearing a small tank top and a pair of shorts, revealing her hourglass shape and smooth bare naked skins. She was watching Tv while shoveling a handful of chips into her mouth.

"AHRR!"

The girl was startled by Chen Fan; she panicked and fumbled to get up.

In her stupor, she fell from the sofa and face planted to the carpeted floor.

“Ouch!”

The girl rubbed his forehead and shouted.

Chen Fan had so many questions that he was not sure where to start.

“Why are you here, Ziqi?”

The silly girl was his colleague at the Coco bar.

“Oh! It’s you!”

Ziqi was confused when he saw Chen Fan. “I live here. Why do you have the key to my house?”

“You live here?”

Chen Fan asked incredulously.

He finally realized that he had underestimated how many things could have changed in three months.

Chapter 82: Fear Me!

Chapter 82: Fear Me!

After talking to Ziqi, they realized that they had both been hoodwinked by the landlord.

Auntie Tang thought that the house was rented as one unit; however, when Chen Fan was away, the landlord had subleased a room in the house to the girl.

The Lakeside Community was mid range development in the Chu Zhou City. It was fully furnished and therefore was highly sought after by renters.

To rent the entire house would cost over two thousand yuan; however, renting a single room would be much more affordable. So affordable that even Ziqi had risen to the bait.

“Where is the landlord?” Chen Fan asked.

“She had immigrated to the US. Her son is a permanent residence in the US. She is back only once or twice a year to collect rent.” Ziqi said as she looked at Chen Fan cautiously.

Although it had been three months since the last time she saw him, Ziqi didn't forget who Chen Fan was.

He had kicked Boss Yang out of the Coco bar with only one word and brought Brother Dong to his knees.

Rumor had it that he was friends with Zhou Tianhao, the magnet of the Chu Zhou City.

Zhou Tianhao had heard many stories about Zhou Tianhao. Therefore she knew that Zhou Tianhao was a very influential figure in the city. Although she knew from common sense that elements in some of the stories were exaggerated, she could still feel the hefty clout of Zhou Tianhao in the Chu Zhou City.

After Chen Fan had claimed the bar was under his protection, she had ceased to see any unsavory characters at the bar. Even Brother Dong had changed his attitude toward Sister Yin on his occasional visits. With business booming, Ziqi got a raise and therefore could afford to live somewhere more expensive.

Otherwise, she could never afford to live in a mid tier community with her previous salary.

"She is gone to the US?" Chen Fan grunted.

He conceded that it was impossible for him to tack down the landlord.

If the landlord were still in Jiang Bei, Chu Fan should be able to locate her in no time thanks to his newly acquired resources.

"Xiao Fan, are you going to kick me out?" Ziqi plastered on a sad face while glancing at Chen Fan's face surreptitiously.

"Waah! I have paid a year worth of rent ahead of time. Five thousand of those came from Sister Yin. If you kick me out of here, I won't even have enough for tuition."

"Fine, fine." Chen Fan was amused by the girl's distress. "I won't kick you out."

No one would care if she paid rent or not. She didn't have the official leasing contract, and therefore it was illegal for her to stay in there.

Chen Fan stood up and said, "I have other places to stay; I am just here to pack up some of my stuff."

"Have you eaten? It's on me. We have lots to catch up."

"Really?" A smile broke over Ziqi's face. She shouted excitedly: "Awesome! Why don't we invite Sister Yin as well?"

“Sure.” Chen Fan said.

Since Chen Fan had already acquired the Yin Crystals, he should be able to complete Misty Mountain Array. Therefore, he would give away this ordinary house to someone in need of accommodation in a heartbeat.

When they arrived at the entrance to Chen Fan’s mansion at the top of the mountain, surprise started to flicker in Sister Yin’s eyes.

She always had very complicated feelings toward Chen Fan.

Chen Yin first befriended Chen Fan and helped him because she felt in debt to him for his rescue. After getting to know the boy, the boy started to grow on her, and she decided to take him under her wings.

However, what had happened at the Coco Bar revealed that Chen Fan didn’t need any protection at all.

“I was convinced that Chen Fan was a rich kid who is bored of his bubble and sought some thrill in the real world.”

Sister Yin thought to herself many times.

From then on, she cut off from Chen Fan completely.

She believed that since the two of them belonged to two different worlds, there was no reason to force friendship upon each other.

The more she saw of the real world, the more disillusioned she was about befriending someone who was out of her league. The more she forced to become a friends, the more hurtful it would be in the end when reality sunk in.

They found a mom and pop restaurant near the community and ordered food.

Chen Fan had ordered many dishes, and most of them were Ziqi’s favorites. However, he barely moved his chopsticks during the entire time.

Ever since he had used the Essence Gathering Pill, eating was unnecessary for Chen Fan. He only sampled a couple of dishes for their flavors.

“Xiao Fan, when are you going to come back to Coco? Li Li, Nan Nan and the rest of them miss you a lot.” Chen Yin said casually.

She had spent enough time with Chen Fan to know that despite his wealthy background, he was very down to earth. Other than his slightly reserved personality, no one would know he was a blue-blooded teenager from a rich family.

“No kidding! I miss you too.” Ziqi grabbed another crayfish and started working on it.

“Sure, I can go visit you guys.” Chen Fan said gently.

After the meal, the three bid farewell to each other and parted their ways.

In the afternoon, Chen Fan returned the Ivy League High School.

After reporting to Miss. Xiao, Chen Fan arrived at his classroom.

The classroom didn’t change at all, and neither did his classmates. Despite a few brief surprised glances, no one seemed to have taken notice of him.

Everyone, except for Jiang Tanqiu.

“Oh-Shit, Man, You are finally back! I thought you were dead!

“They told us that you were sent to Qingang Middle School as an exchange student. How was it?” Jiang Tanqiu asked as he squeezed his face. “I have heard that school is hell! It’s like a prison in there.”

“About right.” Chen Fan said despite the fact that he had never been to the high school.

It wasn’t until the teacher came into the classroom did Chen Fan finally realize that the final exams were on their way. The first semester of his grade twelve was almost over.

Chen Fan also found out that Jiang Tanqiu had spent most of his time on his cellphone during breaks.

“Who are you talking to, new girlfriend?”

Chen Fan asked surprisingly.

“You bet! It’s that girl you met at the Coco Bar. She finally agreed to see me.” Jiang Tanqiu said with a smug smile; she was his dream girl.

“Xiao Qian?” Chen Fan was shocked.

In Chen Fan’s past life, Jiang Tanqiu had got himself into trouble because of her. In the end, Jiang Taniu was thrown behind the bar for seven years and ruined his otherwise promising life. Xiao Qian, on the other hand, had a new boyfriend as soon as Jiang Tanxiu went to jail. She didn’t visit Jiang Tanqiu even once during the seven years of incarceration.

During their last encounter, it was obvious to Chen Fan that the girl was all over Brother Qi. He had never expected that she would eventually get together with Jiang Tanqiu.

“As fate would have it...”

Chen Fan lamented quietly in his mind.

He wondered if this meant that without his interference, Jiang Tanqiu would meet the same miserable end as he did during Chen Fan’s last life.

He hurt people for Xiao Qian and was sent to jail because of it. However, he had to watch the girl he cared so much about betraying him and marry someone else. Even in his thirties, he would have achieved nothing in his life and waste his time with his equally deadbeat high school friend.

“Jiang Churan will take the same path and so will Jiang Churan. To alter the course of their lives was never my intention.

“Does that mean that I would end up meeting the same fate as well? In a few years, my life will crumble, and I will again leave this world to follow Cangqin?”

The thought amused Chen Fan; he chuckled.

“What’s so funny?” Jiang Tanqiu looked up at him curiously.

“Ah, nothing. I am just laughing at myself for being so sentimental.” Chen Fan shook his head and then murmured, “It must be my teenage hormones that are given me these false signals.”

He ignored the confused look on Jiang Tanqiu’s face and continued: “Fate is a bitch.”

“I, Chen Beixuan had traveled the Universe for over five hundred years, and every time my life was hanging on a thread, I was able to turn the situation around using my power and abilities. I was at the apex of any form of existence in the universe and was destined to lord over the world.

“The very concept of Cultivation was to fight against one’s fate. The end goal of any cultivator was to reach the Tribulation and become an immortal that defies any law of physics that bind them to their fate.

“Fate is not final; it is dependent on choices.

“I could have killed Xiao Qian and Li Yichen, and if I do that, I would have altered their fate.”

Chen Fan pondered on as his eyes start to glint like sharp steel.

“Therefore, fate is not predetermined; it can be changed with enough power.”

“In this Universe, strength is the only currency. If I was powerful enough, I could have already finished the Tribulation Transcendence instead of being reborn into the mortal world.

“Xiao Qiu, do you know what is the most important thing in the world?” Chen Fan turned around and asked Jiang Tanqiu.

“What is it?” Jiang Tanqiu asked with a confused face.

“Power and nothing else matters.” Chen Fan said slowly but firmly.

“In the entire Universe, only power can make me strong, and only power can make me immortal.”

Jiang Tanqiu lacked the ambition, vision, and experience of Chen Fan. He was not a cultivator; the only power he could obtain was brute strength. That was only if he hit the gym every day.

Without any luck, he would never even get near the secrets of Internal Force.

It wasn't until the class was almost over, that Chen Fan found out someone was missing.

“Where is Si Yinxia?”

Ever since the auction party, Si Yinxia had been focusing all of his attention on his studies, hoping to regain some of his dignity and self-confidence from academic excellence. He had never missed any classes, much less the math class from the Old Scholar Din.

Jiang Tanqiu's face darkened as he heard the question. Even as he was about to reply, they both heard a familiar voice at the door.

“I am sorry, Mr. Din, I am late.”

It was Si Yinxia.

He looked completely different than he was three months ago.

The bouts of defeats had taken a toll on his spirit three months ago. When Chen Fan left the school, Si Yinxia looked downcast and depressed all the time.

However, Si Yinxia stood confidently at the entrance as light flashed in his eyes.

Chen Fan's attention was piqued as he found the glinting confidence in Si Yinxia's eyes very familiar.

Chen Fan had seen this kind of confidence in many people's eyes, and they were all successful men and women who dominated their field.

"That's fine; come in now."

Old Scholar Din was a retired Math professor from Chu Zhou University. He was rehired by the Chu Zhou City as a math teacher. As one of the strictest teachers of the school, no one could escape his ire if caught by him being late regardless of the student's family background and grades.

He was one of the most experienced teachers at the school; therefore, the school, as well as the parents, trusted him.

However, Old Scholar Din didn't reprimand Si Yinxia but only regarded the boy with a kind and approving gaze.

Si Yinxia nodded politely and walked to his desk.

Chen Fan could sense many eyes were following Si Yinxia's movements.

The boys were jealous, but the girls' stares were filled with fervent infatuation.

Si Yinxia scanned the classroom as he walked over to his seat, His glance paused on Chen Fan less than a fraction of a second, it was as if Si Yinxia didn't even notice Chen Fan.

Once Si Yinxia was seated, Old Scholar Din put down the textbook and announced: "I know some of you are jealous that Si Yinxia is able to be late and not be reprimanded.

"I want to make it clear.

"If anyone of you who could become the number one student of the city, I will even let you have a party at the swimming pool if you want. "

The old professor's said with a solemn face.

Scared by the overbearing voice of the professor, none of the spoiled teenagers dared speak up against him.

Chen Fan finally knew what had given Si Yinxia that unshaken confidence.

Soon, the math class was over.

Ji Xingyu was about to start to fill Chen Fan in on what had happened during the three months; they heard Ji Xingyu's sharp voice.

"It's almost final, boss. What do you think? Can you still take the number one spot?"

"Why of course!" A girl named Wang Chenchen shouted. "Si Yinxia was the number one of the entire city; he had even beat Zhu Xiaofen from the Chu Zhou City No.1 High School. Those nerds at the No.1 high school will think twice before calling us spoiled brats again."

Chang Wen graced Chen Fan with a hooked glance and said lightly: "Si Yinxia had already outclassed anyone in the city."

"His real rivals now are the top students from Jin City and Hai Zhou City who had dominated the top ten list in the province. However, in half a year, Si Yinxia should be able to compete with them as equals. "

"No kidding! Even if Si Yinxia stop goes to school right now, he is guaranteed to go to the Jin City University." Wang Chenchen said.

"I have heard that on the day his marks were revealed, many universities such as the Zhonghai Transportation Institute, Jin City University, and China Technology Institute had been talking to Si Yinxia. However, I bet that Si Yinxia wouldn't even consider those ones; his eyes are set on Qinhua or Beijing University."

The Zhonghai Transportation Institute, Jin City University, and China Technology Institute were on the top ten list of Chinese secondary education institutes.

However, it seemed that Si Yinxia was determined to go to one of the two best Universities of China: Qinhua and Beijing.

"I think Qinhua is better." One of the students put in. "Qinhua University excelled in their science and Engineering department. There will be more opportunities once graduated from there, perhaps he could even continue his education in the US."

"You want him to be a traitor? Haven't you heard what they call Qinhua graduates? American's dogs! I say Beijing University is much better. Make China Great Again!"

"I still think Qinhua is better. "

"Well, why doesn't he just study abroad? He can get into the Ivy league Universities for sure."

Hearing the debate, other students of the class join in the conversation.

Although the students of the Ivy League High School were all from rich families, attending the Beijing or the Qinhua University was a distant dream for most of them. Every year, only a few students were able to get in those top schools.

For those who couldn't produce high enough mark, only those who were directly related to minister level officials had a chance of getting in.

For most of the students in Chen Fan's classroom, they would end up studying abroad if they couldn't get into a good university.

However, even those western universities they attended were mostly community universities, and couldn't compare with Harvard or Yale.

Only by entering those prestigious universities, could one fundamentally change his or her life and become one of the elite class.

Jiang Tanqiu smiled wryly and said: "That's what I wanted to tell you.

"A few weeks ago, all schools in the city held a mock test, and Si Yinxia had the highest mark, surpassing the number two by a large margin.

"After the test, all the top universities in our province wanted to recruit him."

Chen Fan nodded.

It seemed that his hard work had paid off. Si Yinxia's grades had always been around number ten or so in the city.

Right before the Gaokao*, the schools often hosted three mock tests.

Of the three mock tests, the first one was the most important as the results were often similar to the real tests during Gaokao.

Therefore, not only the students cared about the first mock test, but also many university recruiters. Many high school students were admitted to universities right off the bat after the first mock test.

The second and third one was much less important, as they were designed to let the students get into the mood of intense examinations.

If Si Yinxia could earn the number one title of the Chu Zhou City, he would more than likely be admitted to the Qinhua or Beijing University, much less the other ones.

"He had honored his family and made his parents proud." Chen Fan marveled.

Once he was able to enter Qinhua University, he would have earned a great measure of prestige for his family. If he lived in a county, the mayor would congratulate him personally.

Even though he was in a city, to be able to enter Qinhua or Beijing University was still an honorable feat.

This meant that he would become an important figure in the city.

In this day and age, nepotism could only go so far. Only raw talent and knowledge were the steps that would lead to success.

History had taught people that however powerful a family was, their influence would start to wane from the second or third generation onward.

While his classmates were arguing with each other, Si Yinxia opened a textbook and started to study.

He had found his path to success, and no longer cared for others opinions, including that of Chen Fan.

*Chinese National Entrance Exam

Chapter 84: Dinner At the Jiangs

Chapter 84: Dinner At the Jiangs

Even after school was over and Chen Fan had left the classroom, Si Yinxia's face was still buried in the books.

Chang Wen walked over to Si Yinxia and looked at Si Yinxia pitifully. She said quietly: "You have been at it for the entire afternoon already; why don't you join me for supper and relax a bit."

Si Yinxia finally put down the pen and rubbed his sore wrist. Chang Wen asked: "Chen Fan is back; did you see him?"

"Chen Fan?" Si Yinxia was taken aback and then shook his head, "So what? He is no longer my worthy opponent."

"However, I do have to thank him for forcing me to take a long hard look at my meaningless and wasteful life before I met him."

"Indeed." Chang Wen nodded. Her eyes were filled with admiration. "Chen Fan's strength came from a powerful friend of his; however, you are different. In ten or twenty years, you will be no less successful than Wei Ziqin."

"By then, people like Chen Fan could only be jealous of you."

“Wei Ziqin? “Si Yinxia snorted, eyes glinting. “If not for her prestigious family name, she was no more than a girl of above average looks. In no more than twenty years, I will surpass the achievements of her father.”

Chang Wen stood quietly beside her beloved man and listened to his ambitious announcement with tears in her eyes.

Girls like her wouldn't care about how ambitious he was; what really attracted her was his confidence.

Meanwhile, Chen Fan was on his way toward home. He couldn't stop thinking about Si Yinxia's incredible achievement.

To be able to stand out among hundreds of thousands of students in the province was not an easy task. It required talent and dedication.

In Chen Fan's last life, he would have already lost the competition.

In ten or twenty years, Si Yinxia was going to become an executive manager of a foreign investment company while Chen Fan would fall from grace and become homeless in the Chu Zhou City. There would be no comparison between their lives.

“What a shame; he wouldn't be able to beat me this time.” Chen Fan cracked a smile.

However bright Si Yinxia's future was going to be, his vision was limited to the mortal world and so was his abilities.

The best he could have done was to become the provincial number one in the Gaokao. In twenty years, if he was lucky, he might be able to become the richest person in the province, but how about Chen Fan? What would he become in twenty years?

He would have already reached the Connate Spirit and soaring among the stars.

Therefore, Chen Fan marveled at Si Yinxia's ability as a retired master would a kindergarten child who displayed exceptional talent. He examined everything from a much-elevated perspective as a human would to ants on the ground. The ants would never understand what their observer was thinking about.

Suddenly, he sensed someone behind him, and he paused.

He heard the clicking of a pair of women's shoes on the ground.

“Are you looking for me?” Chen Fan asked.

The person behind him was Jiang Churan.

The clicking paused, "My mom wants you to join us for dinner tonight."

"OK, thanks." Chen Fan replied.

"Wait." Jiang Churan shouted. "I want you to know that I am not Li Yichen's girlfriend; I only went for a dinner with him."

Chen Fan turned around and saw the stubborn expression on the girl's face.

"It had been three months! You left so suddenly. Have you ever thought about how we feel?" Jiang Churan bit down her lips, trying to hold back the tears from pouring out.

Chen Fan said lightly, "We?"

"Yes, me and Fei-Fei." Jiang Churan mustered more strength and said, "You had left without saying a word to Fei-Fei, do you know how sad she was?"

"I have only seen her as a normal friend." Chen Fan said.

"A normal friend?" Jiang Churan said in disbelief.

She fixed her eyes on Chen Fan and glared at him accusingly.

"Fei-Fei is too good for you! In these three months, not only did she keep on worrying about you, but she also needed to work as an actress in a TV show. The director is so impressed by Fei-Fei's performance, that he is considering giving her the main character's role.

"Both Si Yinxia and Chu Minhui were Fei-Fei's pursuers. However, once she entered university and became a famous actress, even those two will not measure up to her success.

"You can rely on Wei Ziqin in Chu Zhou City, but once you are out of the city, what do you have to compete with Fei-Fei's other pursuers?"

"So, tell me, why don't you cherish her feelings for you? I feel sad for Fei-Fei."

Without waiting for an answer, Jiang Churan turned around and walked away, trailing behind a series of clickings.

Chen Fan stood still for a while, and a smile finally broke over his face.

"Someone actually missed me? Interesting!"

In the evening, Chen Fan arrived at Jiang Churan's house. However, he was taken aback when he saw that the person who opened the door was Li Yichen.

"Welcome." Li Yichen nodded. The smile on his face was so overwrought that it made Chen Fan feel that he was going to sell him a used car.

After Chen Fan entered the house, he noticed that Li Yichen was not the only person there. Zhang Yumeng, Yang Chao, Xu Rongfei were all in the room. The moment Xu Rongfei saw Chen Fan, she jumped out of her chair in elation.

"Xiao Fan, you are late." Auntie Tang emerged from the kitchen. She rolled her eyes at Chen Fan and continued: "Ran-Ran, pour some tea for your friend, please?"

"OK." Jiang Churan said with a cold face.

She took out the tea sets and showed off her professional tea making skills to everyone.

Jiang Haishan sat on the sofa and shook his head when he saw Chen Fan walk in.

Chen Fan was going to sit in a corner; however, Xu Rongfei dragged him to a seat beside her. Displeasure flashed across Jiang Churan's eyes, but she had kept her silence.

Jiang Haishan asked: "Xiao Chao, I have heard that your hotel is going to apply for the five-star status?"

Before Yang Chao could reply, Zhang Yumeng spoke up first: "Yes, Uncle Jiang. They had handed in their application a while ago. The province had also sent in a few inspectors."

She batted her lashes and continued, "Uncle Jiang, you are well connected in the city, do you know anything about it?"

Hearing the question, nervousness appeared on Yang Chao's face.

There was a huge difference between a four-star and a five-star hotel. There were only two five star hotels in the entire Chu Zhou City. Without the five star status, Tian Sheng hotel would have no chance in competing against the other three.

Once the application was approved, Yang Chao's father Yang Yifan would gain even more prestige, and his assets would increase in value significantly.

Jiang Haishan put down the cup and paused a moment, letting the suspense hang in the air.

"Your father's application had the city's wholehearted support.

"What I heard was that the province had already given it the green light, and the approval should come down in no time."

“Once the province had approved, the five-star status is secured.”

“Really?” Yang Chao smiled broadly. Zhang Yumeng nearly jumped out of her chair in excitement.

The success of her boyfriend’s family would bring her more faces in front of her friends. She would finally brag about her boyfriend.

Seeing everyone’s excitement, Jiang Haishan added: “Yang Chao, the leaders in the city, had spared no expense at promoting your father’s hotel. Li Yicheng’s father had personally pledged to promote your father’s application. After all, the addition of a new five-star hotel is beneficial to the local commerce.”

Yang Chao hurried to stand up and bowed to Li Yichen for his father’s assistance.

Li Yichen stood up and returned the bow with a warm smile.

Despite the seemingly equal status between the two, Yang Chao knew that he was beholden to Li Yichen.

Seeing Yang Chao had got his point without him saying it out loud, Jiang Haishan nodded approvingly.

He was pleased by his daughter’s friends capacity and family background. If they learned to help each other, they would be even more successful than their fathers.

He had particularly satisfied with Li Yichen and wished that he could see the boy and his daughter stay together. He heard that Li Yichen had invited his daughter for lunch today, which gave him even more hope.

So thinking, Jiang Haishan gave a disappointed look at Chen Fan and he shook his head.

“What a loser, he is not even on par with Yang Chao much less Li Yichen.

“How could I let my daughter fall for him?”

Chapter 85: The Mansion on The Top of The Mountain

The dishes soon arrived on the table. When the dinner began, no one—except for Auntie Tang and Xu Rongfei—had spoken with Chen Fan.

The group’s conversation quickly arrived at the topic of recent news.

“Uncle Jiang, have you heard of Master Chen?” Zhang Yumeng asked curiously.

“Master Chen?” Jiang Haishan put down his chopsticks and asked, “You guys have heard of him as well?”

“Why of course! His story is well known among people of my dad’s circle. Everyone knows about him,” Zhang Yumeng said.

“Indeed. He had been kind of a hotshot in Chu Zhou City. However, in the past two months, he had become a household name in the entire Jiang Bei region.” Yang Chao nodded and said, “My dad told me that all the magnates in and outside of Jiang Bei who came to stay at his hotel told him about how incredible Master Chen’s abilities are.

“Rumor had it that he could tread on water, catch a bullet in the air, and kill a person from ten feet away. It was as if he was from a *Wuxia* drama on TV,” Jiang Churan said with a frown.

“I have heard people talking about him even at school. I think most of them are high tales.”

“No kidding. Only a few months ago, Master Chen was only a person who knew a little Dharma Spells. It is impossible for him to increase his power so quickly.” Yang Chao put in.

“As for this topic, I think no one is more qualified to comment on it than Xiao Fei,” Jiang Haishan said with a smile.

“Me?” Xu Rongfei gapped at everyone and was not sure what to say.

“Indeed. Your father should know about this Master Chen better than anyone.” Jiang Haishan nodded.

Seeing the confusion on Xu Rongfei’s face, he continued, “I really have no idea if this Master Chen is the real deal. However, I can confirm that his fame has skyrocketed recently. Nearly all the tycoons and magnates in the Jiang Bei region seemed to be under his spell.”

He paused and then continued, “Including Zhou Tianhao and Xu Ao.”

Everyone’s face paled after hearing Jiang Haishan’s revelation.

Both Zhou Tianhao and Xu Ao were influential people and had significant clout in the city.

However, those two were not alone among the people who were under Master Chen’s influence. Their rank also included magnates who used to dominate their field in the

Jiang Bei region and people who came from prestigious families. Every one of them was a force to be reckoned with.

If these people were pinned under Master Chen's thumb, did it mean that from then on, Master Chen was going to be the head honcho of the Jiang Bei Region?

The talk of power and politics might sound irrelevant to an ordinary person, but they were real for people like Yang Chao and Li Yichen who were born into powerful families. They knew the significance of the development as Master Chen's army represented more than half of Jiang Bei's industry and business.

If he were able to consolidate the power, he would become as influential as the Wei Family of the North Bank.

"No wonder I have heard people equating Master Chen with Tang Yuanqin of the Hu Dong Province." Li Yichen said thoughtfully.

"I have never heard of this Master Chen, but I knew awful a lot about Tang Yuanqin." Auntie Tang put in.

"Mom, how did you know Tang Yuanqin?" Jiang Churan asked curiously.

"Of course I do! We share the same last name." Auntie Tang said with a smile. "As a matter of fact, I am distantly related to him. When your grandpa was still alive, he used to take me to Jin City and visit his family."

"Tang Yuanqin controls a very large corporation." Li Yichen added. "The Tang Family's business was all over the Hu Dong Province and Dong Jiang Province. It was said that most of the ship fleets on the Yangtze River belong to the Tang family. As for wealth, I bet even the old man Zhen couldn't compare with him. The only person who might be richer than him is Sheng Ronghua."

"Sheng Ronghua!" Everyone was shocked by the name.

Sheng Ronghua was the owner of the Wan Rong Group. Rumor had it that he started as an ordinary construction worker, but eventually, he became the richest man in the Jiang Bei Region. His company, the Wan Rong Group, expanded outside of Chu Zhou City and eventually opened up shops across China.

Although Sheng Ronghus's headquarters remained in the Chu Zhou City, most of his business nowadays were in Jin City. However, due to his residence status in the city, he was regarded as the richest man in the Chu Zhou City.

"Sheng Ronghua?"

The name struck a chord with Chen Fan.

Why does it sound so familiar?

He was Shen Junwen's father, the founder of the Wan Rong Group. In the future, he was going to be the top ten richest man in China. He was also one of Chen Fan's most hated enemies.

"People like Master Chen, Tang Yuanqin and Sheng Ronghua were one of a kind." Yang Chao marveled "I wonder how we could catch up with them."

Even if his father's hotel gained the five-star status, his family influence could still not compare with any one of those real magnates.

His family assets were worth only a few hundred million, but every one of those top dogs owned well over tens of billions. In addition, no businessman could measure up to their influence and political clout.

"Xiao Chao, if the hotel got handed down to you, you can open up branches all over China. When your hotel was in every major city of China, you should be able to compete with them." Jiang Haishan said.

He then turned toward Li Yichen and said, "Yichen, I have heard that you were on the top fifty list after the first mock test. Your grades should be enough to help you enter Jin City University. Once you are in college, make sure you join the student union and work hard to get that chairman position. With your talents and experience like that, you should be able to secure a higher position than me in the government in less than fifteen years."

A hollow smile broke over Li Yichen's face.

"I am no match with Uncle Jiang. My father always told me that if you could have half of his luck, you could have been his boss now."

Jiang Haishan laughed joyfully. "Really? Your father thinks too highly of me!"

Li Yichen looked across the table at Jiang Churan, and then he asked with a smile. "Compared to the Jin City University; I'd rather go to the Zhong Hai University."

"Oh?" Jiang Churan glanced at the boy and then at his daughter knowingly. "Zhong Hai University is Ran Ran's dream university. You need to work harder then."

Li Yicheng knew Jiang Haishan meant more than what he said.

Li Yichen nodded.

"I will try my best!"

“Dad!” Jiang Churan shouted. Her eyes shifted toward Chen Fan without herself knowing it.

She saw Chen Fan was sipping on his water with his head low. The light in her eyes dimmed.

“Haha!” Jiang Haishan laughed as he shook his head. “As for Fei-Fei, I worry about you. The entertainment industry is deep water. Be careful.

“But who am I? Haha. With your father’s protection, you shouldn’t need to worry about anything in ten years.”

“Thank you! Uncle Jiang” Xu Rongfei replied with an innocent smile.

Finally, Jiang Haishan looked to Chen Fan. He shook his head slightly and decided to keep his silence.

Li Yichen and Yang Chao were amused by the development. It appears that Jiang Haishan didn’t even think Chen Fan was worthy of his comment. At best, he would be admitted into a mediocre second tier university and get a mediocre job with a mediocre wage.

After the supper, the guests started to leave one after another.

Before Chen Fan left the house, he asked Jiang Churan for the key to the mansion.

Jiang Churan paused a second and then run upstairs to fetch the key.

“What key?” Zhang Yumeng asked curiously.

“The key to the mansion?” Auntie Tang asked as embarrassment flashed across her face. “Xiao Fan gave it to Ran-Ran to keep it while he was gone.”

Jiang Churan had told her about the key a few months ago, and she thought it was a joke. She remembered her husband had even sneered at Chen Fan’s buffoonery called him a helpless brat.

“The mansion the mountain top? Is it the mansion number one developed by Wan Rong Group?” Li Yichen was taken aback.

“Yes, that’s it.” Auntie Tang nodded, face flushed red.

“I have heard that the construction cost of the mansion was over tens of millions; I bet the sale price would double that.” Li Yichen gave Chen Fan a contemptuous sidelong glance. “After the mansion was complete, it was given to The Third Lord of Wei as a gift. I wonder how did you get it?”

Auntie Tang stood awkwardly between the two boys and was not sure what to say.

Jiang Haishan shook his head with a cold smirk while the other guests watched Chen Fan gloatingly.

Ever since Yang Chao knew his family hotel had secured the five-star status, he no longer feared Chen Fan. His girlfriend had also insistently poured words of poison into his ears which made him loath Chen Fan even more than before.

Chen Fan said lightly: "He gave it to me."

"Gave it to you?" Li Yichen asked. There was more disdain than disbelief in his voice.

The mansion worth over ten million and was bound to increase its value. There was no way that The Third Lord of Wei would give it away so easily.

That was rich!

However, Li Yichen didn't design to expose Chen Fan's lie in front of everyone. Chen Fan was not even worthy of his attention.

Jiang Churan walked down the stairs and gave the key to Chen Fan.

Chen Fan took the key and was about to leave. Suddenly, he heard Zhang Yumeng ask: "Chen Fan, why don't you take us to your mansion? We are all curious about what it looks like inside."

Silence suddenly fell into the room.

Chen Fan looked back and saw Zhang Yumeng had plastered on a fake smile. Around her were gloating faces that watched him as a laughing stock.

Chapter 86: Master Chen, Are You Back?

"Don't mind her; she was just pulling your leg. Go home now; it's dark outside." Auntie Tang finally broke the awkward silent spell.

Zhang Yumeng sneered at Chen Fan and didn't press on.

Even as everyone thought that the matter was over, they heard Chen Fan's voice: "Auntie Tang, I had planned to show you the mansion anyway, why don't we do it tonight with everyone else?"

Everyone was shocked after hearing his words.

Jiang Churan gave Chen Fan an accusatory glare that read, "Are you crazy? My mother had resolved the crisis for you; why do you persist on making a fool out of yourself?"

Xu Rongfei had just heaved a sigh of relief; however, Chen Fan's invitation had made her heart jump up to her throat once again.

Li Yichen shook his head and lamented Chen Fan's foolishness.

He was too stubborn and too full of himself. What was the point in bluffing when everyone had seen through him?

Auntie Tang stood awkwardly between the two boys and was not sure what to say.

Zhang Yumeng's eyes lit up and shouted: "Awesome! Auntie Tang, he had already invited us, let's hurry!"

She got hold of Auntie Tang's hand, and half drag and half pushed her toward the door. Auntie Tang was at a loss, and before she knew it, he was already through the door. Jiang Churan followed her mother out of the room, and when she passed Chen Fan, she gave him a hot glare.

Li Yichen wore a smile on his face and nodded at Chen Fan before he left. Contempt and gloating were written all over his face.

"The kids nowadays are stubborn as a goat and as stupid as a cow!" Jiang Haishan shook his head and murmured as he walked past Chen Fan without even sparing a glance at the boy.

"Brother Chen Fan?" Xu Rongfei came over to Chen Fan and asked softly.

"Don't worry; I will show you my new home." Chen Fan cut her short with a warm and reassuring smile.

Seeing Chen Fan's calm expression, Xu Rongfei felt slightly relieved. Suddenly, she remembered a conversation she had with her father a couple of months ago.

Xu Ao seemed to have changed his mind and no longer opposed Chen Fan seeing his daughter.

The only thing she remembered now of the conversation was the last few words her father had spoken. He said that "Chen Fan was not an ordinary person."

"Could it be that my dad knew something about Chen Fan that none of us do?" Xu Rongfei thought as she sneaked a peek at the boy walking beside her.

Chen Fan didn't change much compared to three months ago. However, upon closer look, she noticed that his skin was paler than it used to be. Some sections of his skin looked nearly translucent, and it created a visual illusion that made her think that she could see through his skin and peer directly at his bones and veins.

As a girl who was proud herself on skin care, Xu Rongfei felt jealous of Chen Fan's sublime skin conditions.

Chen Fan and Xu Rongfei traveled together, and when they reached the mansion at the top of the mountain, Jiang Haishan and the other guests had already been waiting outside.

"Hey, big guy, open the door, please. Show us what it looks like inside." Zhang Yumeng said gloatingly.

"This mansion was built on the top of the Yun Wu Mountain. From here, you can see the entire Chu Zhou City's landscape. It is the best of the best in terms of both location and structural design." Li Yichen didn't pay any attention to Chen Fan; instead, he started to introduce the mansion to everyone as if he owned it.

"Only a very few people who could afford this house, such as The Third Lord of Wei, Sheng Ronghua and Old Man Zheng.

"Sheng Ronghua had transferred most of his assets to Jinlin City. I have heard rumors that he owned a few mansions at the most expensive developments." Jiang Haishan said lightly, hands linked behind his back.

"Mr. Sheng didn't think Chu Zhou City is good enough for him." Li Yichen joked with a smirk.

"Indeed, and rightfully so. He is too big of a fish for Chu Zhou City." Jiang Haishan shook his head as he bemoaned.

"Wan Rong Group was the top three wealthiest companies in our province. Just this year alone, Wan Rong Group had acquired over five hundred thousand square meters of land. I bet the number is going to increase next year. Wan Rong Group's ambition meant they have to expand out of our small city."

An average living space a community was about fifty to sixty thousand square meters. Therefore, Wan Rong Group had practically created ten residential developments in a year, and that was just the residential side of their business. There was simply not enough land in the Chu Zhou City for the Wan Rong Group to develop.

Jiang Churan, Yang Chao, and Zhang Yumeng stood aside and listened to the two's conversation.

Although they couldn't fully understand the content of the conversation, they couldn't help but be impressed with Li Yicheng's knowledge and Jiang Haishan's wisdom.

"Li Yichen was just a high school student, yet he is able to converse with Uncle Jiang on such complicated issues. My daily concern mainly involved with shopping and dining really couldn't compare."

With that thought in mind, Zhang Yumeng became felt even more respect and admiration for Li Yichen.

Even Auntie Tang was impressed with Li Yichen's knowledge and started to doubt her first choice for her daughter's suitor.

"Could Xiao Fan really compete with Li Yichen? The boy seemed perfect in every aspect!"

While Auntie Tang was pondering the question, Zhang Yumeng urged Chen Fan to open the door again.

Jiang Haishan and Li Yichen had also paused the conversation. After realizing that Chen Fan had not yet opened the door, Jiang Haishan shook his head in disappointment.

"It's just a waste of time. Let's just head back now. We still have school tomorrow." Jiang Churan put in.

Her voice was calm; however, she looked into the distance while talking, trying to avoid eye contact with Chen Fan.

Li Yichen cracked a smile and said: "Touche, Zhang Yumeng was just kidding. Don't mind him, please."

His humble words had not only made him look even more like a gentleman but also earned approving glances from Jiang Haishan and Auntie Tang.

"This is what a future elite looked like. He is good looking, smart and has a great sense of responsibility. Above all, he is humble yet ambitious. He is bound to surpass his father when he grows up." Jiang Haishan nodded approvingly.

So thinking, he doubled down his decision to set her daughter up with Li Yichen. Although his daughter was of exceptional talent and appetite, young suitors such as Li Yichen was not easy to find either.

"In a couple of days, I need to invite Li Yichen's father out for dinner and put the matter to rest. Once they graduate from high school, they will be engaged with each other while we plan for the wedding. "

For most parents, engagement was a remote thing for their teenage children; however, in the upper-class world, it was not uncommon to arrange an engagement before their children graduated from university. Their marriage was never a personal thing but a tool for both families to secure alliances.

“Brother Chen Fan, why don’t we head back?” Xu Rongfei said quietly.

Seeing no one wanted to expose Chen Fan’s lie, Zhang Yumeng had to let the matter slide. She gave Chen Fan a cold sneer as she finally gave up.

Chen Fan cleared his throat and was about to announce something. The door of the mansion cracked open, and a middle age woman emerged from within.

The woman was shocked by the crowd gathered at the entrance. However, as soon as she saw Chen Fan, she shouted: “Mr. Chen, you are back!”

“This is... Auntie Liu.” Chen Fan introduced the woman to everyone.

The middle age woman put on an ingratiating smile and said: “Lord Wei told me to contact him as soon as you are back. I will call him right now.”

The middle age woman hurried to the inside and disappeared as quickly as she had come out.

Everyone was speechless by the turn of the events.

Chen Fan glanced at the incredulous expression on Zhang Yumeng’s face as he walked past her and into the mansion. He explained to Xu Rongfei who followed him closely, “Auntie Liu cleans the house for me while I am gone. Let’s go in now. I will show you my new house.”

He then turned around and waved at Auntie Tang, willing her to catch up.

Auntie Tang was still dumbfounded by the development. Before she knew it, she was inside of the most expensive house in the Chu Zhou City.

This mansion was built at the top of the mountain and was twice the size of a regular house. It has three levels, and each level was stylishly decorated. Its furniture had a modern touch to them, yet they were comfortable and practical.

“Xiao... Xiao Fan, does this house really belong to you?”

Auntie Tang stammered.

Meanwhile, all the other guests were so shocked that they could only stare.

“How is this even possible? This house was listed as the most luxurious property in the entire city. Its market value is well over a hundred million. Whoever owns it should at least be a billionaire. Chen Fan is just an ordinary high school student; how could he afford it?”

Yang Chao’s mind reeled.

Even if his dad sold his five-star hotel, he would still not have enough money to buy this house.

Zhang Yumeng gaped while she looked around the house in utter disbelief.

Chen Fan? Mr. Chen? A million yuan mansion?

Was he the same Chen Fan she knew who wore knock-off-brand jeans and T-shirts?

What had happened to the world?

Of all the people, only Jiang Haishan and Li Yichen were able to keep their calm and wits about them.

They had noticed something from the brief conversation between Auntie Liu and Chen Fan.

“Lord Wei told her to call him?”

“Is that Lord Wei or The Third Lord of Wei?”

“If Chen Fan knew The Third Lord of Wei, then his support was far greater than Wei Ziqin.” Li Yichen drew a deep breath as he suddenly felt threatened.

“He is a much bigger problem than I thought.”

He glanced at Jiang Churan, and the impressed expression on her face made Li Yichen feel even more threatened.

Jiang Haishan’s face was contorted by surprise. He felt someone had just slapped him in the face.

“This world has gone mad!”

He murmured to himself.

Chapter 87: Spirit Mist

By the time Zhang Yumeng was ready to leave the Mansion, she felt she was running away from her biggest embarrassment.

Chen Fan gave them a tour of the entire mansion on the mountain top. If this mansion was owned by anyone else other than Chen Fan, Zhang Yumeng would snap a shot every step she took and post them on social media as her bragging rights.

However, she didn't feel that she had the rights to brag about anything, far from it. Her face flushed red as if someone had been slapping her face constantly.

Auntie Tang and Xu Rongfei were the only two who genuinely enjoyed the tour. Auntie Tang even wanted to stay in the house for a night; however, she was dragged away by her husband.

No one spoke a word as they descended the mountain.

The pride inside of Li Yichen was replaced with shame and regret. He bemoaned his failure of not recognizing the owner of the most luxurious house while he pretended to be well versed in the power dynamics of the city.

After a while, Zhang Yumeng finally broke the silence.

"Could it be that Wei Ziqin had rented the place to him temporarily? He knew Wei Ziqin very well after all.

"Perhaps Chen Fan was one of his personal bodyguards."

As Zhang Yumeng went on, her explanations became increasingly inconceivable.

Except for her boyfriend Yang Chao, no one paid attention to her, much less agreed with her.

Who would rent out the entire mansion that was worth over a hundred million? Even if she did rent it to him, it only proved that the relationship between the two was truly special.

If Chen Fan married Wei Ziqin, his status would be more prestigious than anyone here. After all, he would have married a princess from one of the most powerful families of China, not just the daughter of a commoner.

The thought of the intimacy between Chen Fan and Wei Ziqin pleased Auntie Tang. She knew she had been right about Chen Fan's exceptional quality.

So thinking, she gave Jiang Churan an accusatory glare.

Her daughter had kept the key with her for three months, but not once did she try to use it. If she had been smarter, there would not be so much misunderstanding tonight.

Meanwhile, Jiang Churan had no time to care about her mother's glare. Of all the people present, she alone had to endure the complex and self-contradicting emotions rising inside of her.

Emotions such as doubt, hatred, despair, delight, and remorse clashed with each other in her heart.

She was surprised that Chen Fan was able to follow through with his promise and offered the mansion to her mother in three months. However, she was confused as to how he managed to achieve that. Could it be that he really was Master Chen?

Impossible!

As for the feeling of hatred, she hated Chen Fan for hiding his real identity from her.

"If you had insisted on me checking the mansion, I would definitely do it. However, you didn't even seem to care if I found it out or not when you handed over the key to me."

So thinking, regret and remorse crept onto her face.

She glanced at Li Yichen surreptitiously.

He was exceptionally promising in all aspects and had gained both her and her father's approval. If he continued to woo her and impress her, it would only be a matter of time before they started officially dating each other. However, as fate would have it, Chen Fan's turning up had thrown a wrench in gear.

"He always put on that hoity-toity face and seemed to think he is better than everyone else. Plus, what's up with the ghosting for days on end? Let it be his appearance or family background; he simply couldn't compare with Li Yichen. And now this?"

"I thought I had forgotten about him after three months; however, as soon as he came back, I immediately lost the peace of mind."

The girl's mind raced as she struggled to internalize what had happened.

Strictly speaking, Jiang Churan was a reasonable and pragmatic person.

Reason made her choose Li Yichen in her last life, however, this time, a voice called out to her from deep down, telling her that she would regret it if she passed up on Chen Fan again.

As for the rest of the crowd, no one was happier than Xu Rongfei. By then, she was convinced that her dad had told her the truth, that Chen Fan was not an ordinary person.

After everyone had left the mansion, Chen Fan started to cast the Spirit Channeling Array.

Before he dove into his work, he had dismissed Antie Liu and told her to take a vacation for a few months.

“Here are all the Yin Crystals I brought back from the Yin Dragon Pond.”

In front of Chen Fan was a large black suitcase. It was filled to the brim with black rocks. These ordinary looking rocks were surrounded by a white mist and were cold to the touch. Holding one was like holding a block of ice in the middle of winter.

“Yin Crystals are one of the most abundant forms of Spirit Stones. It not only can be used to cast Mist Array but can also be used as a substitute for water element stones. It is a perfect foundation material for the Spirit Channeling Array.”

Chen Fan thought to himself.

He then initiated the Misty Mountain Array he had previously created. Having experienced the same array in action in the Yin Dragon Pond, he noticed how weak the array was here in the mansion. In the valley, the Yin Qi was so abundant that they formed a mist naturally. If he was not worried about the harm Yin and Malic Qi could have done to his physical body, he wouldn't leave the valley until he had reached the Ethereal Enlightenment Level.

“The Void Mortal Refinement Art claimed to be able to reshape any form of energy; however, that was far from the reality.”

Chen Fan shook his head.

However powerful it claimed to be, the art was used for Foundation Establishment. Despite the fact that it would allow the cultivator to absorb all forms of Qi such as Yin Qi, Fiend Qi, and Malice Qi, it was not necessarily safe to do so. The only absolutely safe form of energy in the universe was the Spirit Qi.

“Part of the reason that The Sect of the Grand Dao could not reach their full potential had much to do with the impurity of their energy. It's easier said than done to absorb all forms of energy without consequences.”

With that in mind, Chen Fan started to work on the Spirit Channeling Array.

Since he had already done most of the heavy lifting work when he cast the array for the first time, the process was much quicker and easier this time around.

He embedded Yin Crystals into each and every one of the deep sea rocks that were previously covered with inscriptions. Once Chen Fan channel the energy out from the Yin Crystals into the symbols that covered the rock, the new array was completed.

As soon as Chen Fan initiated the Spirit Channeling Array once again, a wave of Spirit Qi—ten times stronger than that of the original array rushed into the mansion.

“Vzzzz!”

Suddenly, the effect of the Spirit Gathering Array was cranked up to the maximum as the five formation disk rose into the air, emitting a milky white glow. The light soon grew brighter and surrounded the entire mansion.

Inside the mansion, countless twisty strands of white mist started to form in the air.

The white mist quickly grew in size, and in a blink, they had grown to the size of clouds, turning the mansion into a sky-palace of immortals.

With every breath Chen Fan took, he drew in a large amount of pure Spirit Qi into his system. The effect was palpable as every muscle and bone in his body cheered for the refreshing wave of energy.

Slowly but surely, Chen Fan’s body had been shedding; it’s worldly qualities and turning more and more into a spiritual existence. Therefore, being surrounded by Spirit Qi after living in a materialistic world for so long made him feel like a beached fish that swam in the ocean.

“That is why all the cultivators hated the mortal world. In their mind, the mortal world was as harsh and barren as a desert.”

Chen Fan shook his head.

Even in the deep space, cultivators try their best to keep as far away from visitors of the mortal world as possible. If the humans were water, then the cultivators were oil; not only oil doesn’t mix with water, but it was also always above the water.

The very nature of cultivation was to shed the worldly burden in order to ascend to a higher level of existence.

Chen Fan closed his eyes and started to cultivate.

When Chen Fan opened his eyes again, it was already the next morning.

He opened his eyes because he had sensed a group of visitors at the door. It was Third Lord of Wei, Zhou Tianhao and their friends.

Chen Fan shook his head and then cast a spell to open up the door.

“Come in.”

Third Lord of Wei was startled by the self-opening door, and voice in his mind had rendered him speechless.

Zhou Tianhao asked under his breath.

“Lord Wie, did you hear a voice?”

“You heard it too? Same here! It was a familiar voice. Damn, why do we hear the same thing in our minds?” Lord Wei asked incredulously.

Everyone looked at each other, and none dared to enter.

Third Lord of Wei had gotten the message from Auntie Liu about Chen Fan’s return. They had rushed pay tribute to Master Chen; however, the uncanny development at the entrance made them think better of their visit.

“It’s me.

“Stop wasting my time; come to the third floor.”

Chen Fan’s voice came up again in their mind.

“It... Is it Master Chen?” A’Biao swallowed hard and asked in disbelief.

“Master Chen had reached such high attainment that he is able to speak to us through our minds? That’s unheard of, only the Buddha and the Bodhisattva can do that!” Third Lord of Wei exclaimed.

After a few cautious moments, the visitors finally decided to brave the inside of the mansion.

As soon as they enter the house, they felt they had walked into a steamy bathtub. The warmth inside the house expelled their hunger and exhaustion after the long hike on the mountain.

“Master Chen’s spell array is so much more powerful than my Dharma Artifact.” The third lord said enviously.

On the other hand, Zhou Tianhao and the other guests felt envious of the Third Lord; at least the third lord had an artifact, they had nothing.

“Balls! I can stay here for a hundred years.” A’Biao exclaimed. Even the old wounds inside his body started to heal under the effect of the Array.

The group filed to the third floor, and they saw Chen Fan sitting cross-legged on the balcony, facing the sprawling landscape of the Chu Zhou City. His head blotted the sun at just the right angle to create a halo around his serene face. Chen Fan looked sublime.

“Master Chen!” Everyone bowed to him deeply with as much respect as they could muster.

“Grab a seat.”

Hearing Chen Fan’s order, Third Lord, Zhou Tianhao and Master Guo all found a chair and sat down. The rest of the group had to stand behind them.

“Master Chen, we have spread the news of your return to all the tycoons in the city. Everyone is excited to see you.” Third Lord said respectfully and rightfully so since the teenage boy in front of him was no longer a caster of average power, but the number one cultivator of the Jiang Bei region—Master Chen.

Nearly all the magnates in the Jiang Bei region were pinned under his thumb, and some even considered Maser Chen the equal of Tang Yuanqin in the Hu Dong Province.

“Sure, I can meet them.”

Chen Fan said lightly.

“As long as we are under your protection, we will no longer fear that asshole Tang Yuanqin.” Zhou Tianhao slapped his fat thigh excitedly.

“Tang Yuanqin?”

Chen Fan half opened his eyes as he asked curiously.

“Before your rise to power, Tang Yuanqin dominated the Hu Dong Province.” Zhou Tianhao explained. “From his seat of power in the Jin City, he ruled the rest of the cities in his province with an iron fist. What’s worse, he also tried to expand his range of power to Jiang Bei region. Of course, we had to put up a fight, and it worked. So far, all of his attempt to expand into Jiang Bei had been pushed back by us.”

“Oh? Is he really that powerful?” Chen Fan asked curiously. “You have the backing of the entire Wei Family, and Xu Ao has his father-in-law. Most of the tycoons in the city had at least one capable protector, so what made Tang Yuanqin so threatening to you?”

“Yes, you are right. But that is only if everyone were able to unite under one banner.” Zhou Tianhao cracked a wry smile.

Xu Ao, Baldy Liu, Zhou Tianhao... Every one of them were dominating figures in their own rights.

However, they had grown used to being the only one in charge of things and could not even bear the thought of sharing their authority with others. They were no match against Tang Yuanqin in such disunity.

“Nonetheless, Tang Yuanqin is quite a capable leader and a visionary.” The Tang family had deep roots in the Hu Dong Province. His grandfather was the warlord that rose to power from Hu Dong Province, the army he commanded was at least a few thousand strong. The old man used to assist Mr. Sun in the great evolution.

“After helping Mr. Sun topple the last empire of China, the Tang Family joined the war against the Japanese and survived. The family is well connected in the Jin City and was one of the biggest families in the Hu Dong province.

“Tang Yuanqin is a very capable leader a shrewd businessman. Over the years, he had consolidated power in the Hu Dong Province and kicked the factions originated from other provinces out of Hu Dong.” Zhou Tianhao said with a hard face. “The Tangs Group had their fingers in all the industries that you can think of, but what they excelled at was transportation. Nearly all the transport fleets in the navigable waters and channels belong to the Tangs Group.

“He has both the manpower and financial advantage; therefore, even the richest man in the Hu Dong Province had to be careful around him. Lord Wu from Jiang Zhou City who attended the tournament was one of Tang Yuanqin’s representatives.”

Zhou Tianhao paused and heaved a sigh. Indignation and anger were written all over his face.

Chen Fan nodded.

Based on what he was told, this person was indeed a power to be reckoned with. Businessmen in the Chu Zhou City such as Zhou Tianhao simply could not compare.

Master Guo had an aggrieved expression on his pale face. He put in, “I wonder if Brother Zhou Tianhao has heard of the recent news?”

“What news?” Zhou Tianhao asked puzzledly.

Chen Fan watched as Master Guo bowed to him and then said: "Master Chen, the Tang Family of the Jin City, was a well renowned Martial Arts Family. Although the family hasn't have produced a Grandmaster in the hundred years, both Tang Yuanqin and his father are powerful Internal Force users. They were undefeated in the Hu Dong Province."

"That makes so much more sense now." Chen Fan nodded.

Money, power, and wits were the vocabulary of the weaklings. Only strength could have been the reason for their success.

Without absolute strength, Tang Yuanqin would not able to dominate the Hu Dong Province for so many years. His hegemony over the region would have produced as many friends as enemies for him. Without the ability to defend himself, he would have been assassinated many years ago.

Zhou Tianhao managed a smile and then said, "Sorry, I am not familiar with martial arts. But I have heard about Tang Yuanqin's martial arts skills. I believe that Master Gu who work for Xu Ao had a battle with him and lost the fight."

Master Guo shook his head and said, "We don't need to worry about him now, we have Master Chen."

Then, he gave Chen Fan an adoring fanboy smile.

Master Chen was a Transcendent Master, plus, he has an advantage in his young age. If Tang Yuanqin were half as smart as people claimed he was, he would think twice before jumping into a battle against any Transcendent Master.

"Indeed. With Master Chen, we don't have to worry about Tang Yuanqin any longer! Master Chen can kick his ass!" A broad smile broke over Zhou Tianhao's face.

The Third Lord Wei also nodded in agreement.

Although he had missed the action at the tournament, Zhou Tianhao had filled him in on the details of Chen Fan's heroic acts: that he had walked on water, that he had toppled the stage with one punch, every feat evoked righteous fear inside of the Third Lord toward the godly hero.

Chen Fan cracked a smile and didn't say a word.

He didn't take Tang Yuanqin seriously since, at his level, only a Transcendent Master such as Lei Qianjue could have piqued his interest.

He looked toward Guo Wei who was still recovering from his injury.

“Have you heard anything from the Hong Sect?”

Guo Wei bowed slightly and said, “Master, my overseas sect brothers told me that Lei Qianjue didn’t announce any further comment after his disciple’s defeat. However, some of his other disciples had claimed to avenge their sect brothers. A friend of mine from Zhong Hai City told me that they have picked up activities of the Hong Sect in their territory. The infiltrating force was small in number, but I wager that there will be more coming. I wonder if they are targeting you.”

He paused a second and then said cautiously, “You have made a name for yourself by defeating Lin Hu. Many friendly martial artists wanted to pay tribute to you.”

“I don’t have time.” Chen Fan shook his head.

Chen Fan wagered that the so-called Friendly Martial Artist was all of the similar prowess as Guo Wei. In other words, they were all weaklings.

Seeing Chen Fan was not interested, Guo Wei decided to keep other information to himself.

Chen Fan’s surge in popularity not only earned him admiration but also suspicions and doubts. Many people in the martial arts field questioned the possibility of a young boy possessing as much power as a Transcendent Master.

That being said, Chen Fan had earned a significant number of admirers. Even some reputable masters bought into the story of Chen Fan.

However, since Chen Fan had disappeared for a few months right off the bat of the tournament, his fanboys had finally given up their pursuit.

Chen Fan watched as his guests discussed the time and location for the meeting to rally for unity.

The Jiang Bei region was situated at the northern part of the province and compared to the southern part where the Tang family hailed from, it was much larger in land mass but smaller in economic prowess. The Jiang Bei region had been in disarray for a very long time. If someone were to take up the challenge and unit all factions under one banner, the Jiang Bei region was able to take over the Hu Dong Province.

“If Master Chen could consolidate the power in the Jiang Bei Region, he would definitely need my help in managing and delegating the factions. By then, I would be the number one underboss of the entire Jiang Bei Region.”

Of all the magnets in the Jiang Bei region, he had always been the weakest. None of the other tycoons consider him worthy of their company.

Everyone was convinced that Zhou Tianhao was nothing but a lap dog of the Wei Family of the North Bank. Therefore, he could not pass up such an opportunity of a lifetime to change his outlook.

Meanwhile, The Third Lord Wei was also daydreaming about the prospect of success. "The old man always looked down on me; I can finally prove him wrong.

"Yes, my two brothers might be smarter than me, but neither of them knew Master Chen.

"To be able to control the entire Jiang Bei was not a small feat. If Master Chen were successful, he would become one of the most powerful figures in the Hu Dong Province. Like all business leaders, he would need political backing and who would be better than my family to fill that role? No one!

"I want to look at my brother's face when I bring such a powerful ally into our family."

With that in mind, the two deliberated on the topic with new found enthusiasm.

As their ambitions grew, so did the scale of the meeting they were planning. What started out as a simple meeting had grown into a fully fledged out banquet, and an organization came with the board of directors and a hundred different committees.

Chen Fan kept his silence all the while; however, he had seen through his guests and knew exactly what they were after.

"You guys have grossly underestimated the difficulties."

Chen Fan shook his head.

He knew he couldn't rule the Jiang Bei region with fear; he would have to earn the right as a leader.

These magnates were seasoned warriors on the battlefield of money and power. It wouldn't be easy to convince them to hand over their hard earned control unless they were pushed to the last leg, but at what cost?

If Chen Fan was a mortal, he might seriously consider spending five or ten years to consolidate the power and eventually dominate the Hu Dong Province.

However, Chen Fan had neither the time nor the interest in such trivial matters.

"I know they each have their own agenda, and none of them are good for me.

"But so what?

“As long as I have the absolute power and strength, I can always squash anyone who dares to oppose me.”

With that thought in mind, Chen Fan slowly closed his eyes and no longer pay attention to his guests.

Chapter 89: Spirit Qi Water

Chen Fan gave his guests a cue to leave when the discussion was reaching its end.

Before they left, Chen Fan wanted each one of them to have a cup of drink.

“What’s happening?” Everyone was confused as to what or why they had to drink. Nonetheless, A’Biao picked up the jug and poured its contents to everyone’s cup.

Master Guo was a martial artist and had much less to worry about. He downed the contents of the cup in one go, in order to quench his thirst.

Suddenly, he felt a cold sensation go down his throat all the way to his belly. Then, the coldness turned into heat and swept through his body. When the hot energy reached his old wound, he felt a prickly sensation in the area and then a soothing comfort in its wake.

“WOW!” Master Guo looked to Chen Fan incredulously.

Everyone else followed suit, and their expression suggested that they had felt the same miraculous feeling inside of them.

“OMG. I have never felt lighter before. This is amazing!” A’Biao said with a gaping mouth.

“No kidding! My joints always acted up during winter, but now I can’t feel a thing!” Zhou Tianhao exclaimed.

However, of all the people who took the drink, the Third Lord Wei felt the greatest improvement in his body.

Years of debauchery had slowly wasted away his vitality. If not for the Dharma Artifact Chen Fan made for him, he would have already been in a sick bed,

After the first cautious sip, his first impression was the freshness and clearness in the water. It was better than any spring water he had sampled in his life.

When the smooth contents slide down into his belly, it suddenly caught fire and warmed up his body and, charging up his system. He had been working hard under the sheets with two of his mistresses last night, so it was supposed to be resting time right now; however, he felt desire light up again in between his legs.

“Master Chen, Is this water from heaven?” Third Lord Wei exclaimed.

“Well, yes and no. You can also say that it was no different than those snake oils sold on the infomercial.” Chen Fan said lightly.

This pitcher of water had been sitting in the Spirit Gathering Array for a whole day, and by then had soaked up all the Spirit Qi in its surroundings. One sip of this water would amount to a night breathing in the air filled with Spirit Qi.

After Chen Fan had completed the Spirit Qi Mist, the Misty Mountain mansion had become the Spirit Land for all intents and purposes. The air around the mansion was fused with Spirit Qi Mist thanks to the concentration of Spirit Qi ten times higher than it was outside of the array. Meanwhile, the water absorbed the Spirit Qi Mist and further concentrated the Qi. That was why the contents in the jug had such a strong effect on the drinkers.

However, this water was just regular water infused with Spirit Qi. Its beneficial effects fell short compared to the tea prepared using the Essence Gathering Pill.

“Master Chen, can I have another cup?” Zhou Tianhao hazarded.

“Of course.” Chen Fan said casually. “However, since your old wound is not fully healed yet, I won’t drink too much if I were you.”

As long as the Spirit Gathering Array was not broken, Chen Fan had an unlimited supply of such water.

“Yea, Master Guo, you go ahead first. I will have a second cup as well...” Zhou Tianhao said.

“Thank you, master!” Master Guo bowed deeply to Chen Fan.

His defeat at the tournament at the hands of Eight-Armed Arhat: Song Tao had left him a stubborn wound. Even after three months of recuperation, the wound had healed only slightly, and any large movement would cause a burning sensation around the wound. Master Guo hoped that the heavenly water would be able to accelerate the healing process.

After Master Guo took the lead, the other guests joined in to help themselves with the water.

The five-liter jug was empty in a heartbeat. Suddenly, Third Lord of Wei shouted, “Are you guys crazy? Do you know what this water means?”

“Means what?” A’Biao was taken aback by his boss’s sudden outburst.

Third Lord Wei rose from his seat and bowed slightly to Master Chen. “Master Chen, can you produce this heavenly water every day?”

Chen Fan gave him a knowing glance and said with a half curved lips: “As long as the Spirit Gathering Array was running, I could provide ten jugs of water. Twenty if I try harder.”

“Ten jugs... that is fifty liters, and twenty jugs is a hundred liters.” Third Lord Wei calculated. He slapped his thigh abruptly as if he had a moment of epiphany. “One hundred liters every day and that will be 200 to 400 cups of water we can sell!”

He then looked to Chen Fan opportunistically.

“Master Chen, you said the water could cure any ailment right?”

“Theoretically, yes. All diseases of the human body came from the weakness in the immune system. Flu, for example, only strikes those who lacked the ability to counter it.” Chen Fan explained.

“Therefore, those who exercise every day and keep a healthy diet rarely got sick.”

Master Guo nodded. “Indeed. Internal Force users like myself had never felt any symptoms of a cold nor the flu.”

“This water was infused with Spirit Qi, and therefore it is beneficial to human’s health. Those who lived close to Spirit Qi never get sick either.”

“Therefore, you are saying that one cup of this water had the same effect as me wearing the Dharma Artifact for a couple of weeks.” Third Lord Wei said with a trembling voice.

“Indeed.” Chen Fan nodded.

After the revelation validated the third lord’s business plan, his gaze became even more ardent.

He knew the effect of Dharma Artifact at first hand, and therefore he could appreciate the power of the water better than anyone else.

The Dharma Artifact that Chen Fan gave him had limited use every day. After it had drained its energy, it would shut down automatically to recharge, making it a much inferior device than the Spirit Gathering Array.

“Hold on...” Zhou Tianhao put in. “Master Chen, what’s the shelf life of the water?”

Zhou Tianhao’s question quelled Third Lord’s fervent enthusiasm.

Chen Fan nodded approvingly and said, “The water can last forever inside the array. However, it can only last half a day once it was brought outside.”

Like water, the Spirit Qi was constantly moving.

Outside of the Array, the world was a desert that was devoid of Qi. Therefore, the Spirit Qi inside the cup would leak into the air rapidly.

“Damn...” Third Lord Wei cursed.

If the water could only last half a day, then by the time it reached customers, most of its effects would be gone already. Even fresh milk could last longer than these Spirit Qi Water.

“Master Chen, is there any other ways to preserve the effect?” Third Lord implored.

He had already drafted a business plan in his mind, but it was shredded into pieces by one simple factor.

“There are ways.” Chen Fan said slowly.

If the bottles were made out of jade, then the healing effect of the water would last for a week.

This is because the Jade itself contained a significant amount of Spirit Qi and therefore could slow down the loss of Qi in the water.

“One week? That enough!” Third Lord Wei slapped his thigh in excitement.

Once he got in touch with the jade mine owner in the Zhong Zhou City, Jade bottles could be mass produced. The cost of each bottle should be no more than a hundred yuan.

Even if the bottles would cost more, it was still a profitable investment considering the effect of the water.

“Lord Wei, are you thinking of selling these heavenly water?” Master Guo asked, “I wager this water would fetch at least a thousand yuan a bottle.”

“A thousand?” Third Lord Wei snorted. “At least a hundred thousand.”

“A hundred thousand per bottle?”

Everyone was shocked by the revelation.

Chen Fan had just told everyone that he could produce three to four hundred bottles a day, and that would be over ten billion yuan a year of pure profit!

“This... this is incredible!” Zhou Tianhao could only stare. “I can’t believe it! Who would buy a bottle of water for one hundred thousand yuan?”

“I bet you that people will buy it even if I jack up the price to a million.” Third Lord Wei said with a smug smirk.

He knew better than anyone about the ins and outs of the supplement industry. Due to his deteriorating health, he was a frequent customer of the supplement stores. So far, the money he spent on supplements could have bought him a couple of Lamborghinis, yet, he still kept on pouring money into it.

The Spirit Qi Water’s effect was much stronger than any supplement he had used; there was no doubt in his mind that these water would be highly sought after on the market.

The more wealth a person has, the more he cared about his health.

Without a healthy body, even if he has the biggest fortune in the world, he would not be able to enjoy it.

Chen Fan nodded in agreement.

Third Lord Wei had the same thought as he did when he sold the Arcane Pills to the Zheng Family.

However, he had to strike a balance between profit and his customer’s budget. If the asking price were too high, even the Zheng Family would not be able to afford it.

The thought of the Zheng Family brought his memory back.

“It seems that the Zhengs is not going to pay their debt.”

“I will have to go to Hong Kong and have a talk with them.”

A cold and deadly smile appeared on Chen Fan’s face.

Chapter 90: Journey Before the Holiday

It took The Third Lord Wei a while to fully explain his business plan to everyone.

After everyone had taken in the Third Lord's proposal, they were elated by the prospect of making over a billion yuan a year. Although most of the profit would go to Master Chen, a fraction of that huge income would be enough to make everyone happy.

"Master Chen, how are you planning to sell this heavenly water?" The Third Lord Wei hazarded.

Of all the people in the room, only he and the Wei Family had enough resources and credentials to sell these bottles of water at such a high price. Any no account salesman trying to make a sales pitch to a rich buyer about these heavenly water would be scoffed at as swindlers.

"I don't even expect to half the profit with Master Chen. I would be happy if I could get twenty percent. Heck even ten percent, I will be making a hundred million a year." The promise of becoming rich make Third Lord Wei's face bloom like a flower.

"Who told you that I am going to sell it to the public through you?" Chen Fan said calmly.

"You are not?" Everyone was taken aback.

"Why not? We can both make so much money!" The Third Lord Wei shrieked as he could no longer hold back his greed.

"Master Chen, all you have to do is hand that water to my Fang Sheng International Group and me. You will take eighty percent of the profit or even ninety percent if that makes the deal even sweeter for you. We are practically turning water into gold; what other line of business could be more profitable than this?"

"Indeed." Zhou Tianhao hurried to chime in.

"I have no need for money." To everyone's surprise, Chen Fan shook his head and said, "To tell you the truth, I am planning to sell this water, but I won't give you the exclusive sale rights. Everyone in the Jiang Bei Region will have their fair share."

"Everyone will have their share?" The Third Lord Wei asked curiously.

"Indeed." Chen Fan nodded. "I have heard your plan of consolidating power in the Jiang Bei Region. However, you have overlooked one tried and true method in management: carrot and stick. We need a hook for their royalty."

“Um...” Everyone stared at each other and were not sure what to say.

“The heavenly water is the hook and the carrot.” Chen Fan said.

It would not be easy to convince the lot such as Xu Ao and Baldy Liu to give up their power without any incentives. However, the story would be different if they were presented with the opportunity to earn over a hundred million yuan industry. They didn’t even need too much marketing efforts since their rich relatives and friends should be able to absorb most of the sales. Once they had established proper sales channels and markets, the profit would come in at tens, if not hundreds of billions.

“I will not give them the heavenly water for free, I will take half of their sales, and they can do whatever they want with their share. Sell it, or give it away, I don’t care.

“If they obey me, I will give them more share, if they don’t or even defy me, I will not give them a drop.”

The Third Lord Wei felt a chill down his spine after hearing Chen Fan’s plan.

“This is much worse than fifty-fifty.”

Chen Fan’s ambition had far exceeded the Third Lord’s expectation.

He was not selling the water for money, but as a tool to keep everyone under his boot.

The immense profit from the sale of the heavenly water was too great to ignore by any reasonable businessman. The water was bound to be highly sought after since only a few tycoons of the Jiang Bei Region have the right to sell them.

By then, people would flock to the Jiang Bei Region to secure deals with the local gentry. This asymmetric relationship would give the Jiang Bei businessmen huge leverages in expanding their influence to the outside of their home region. It wouldn’t take long before they could establish a web of personal connections that covered the entire Jiang Bei region and beyond to protect their assets: Chen Fan and his ability to produce the heavenly water. This web would serve as the first line of defense against any enemy of Chen Fan.

“But... but is this really necessary?” The Third Lord Wei said with a massive frown.

In the mind of the Third Lord, the more rational approach would be to take it slow and establish the market first. There was no need to give away their trump cards so soon.

Indeed, fifty percent of the sale, which amounted to five billion would be a huge draw for the local businessmen, and it might be able to secure their loyalty for a short period of time. But it was only a matter of time before greed consumed them and drove them to ask for more.

"I have heard enough. My mind is set." Chen Fan said as he slowly stood up.

"I will share the water with you so that you can bring the magnates of the Jiang Bei region to their knees. You have only one chance, so don't fail me."

"... Yes!" The Third Lord Wei replied with a deep bow.

After everyone was through the door, Zhou Tianhao found out that The Third Lord Wei was quiet and had a troubled look on his face.

"Third Lord, what's up?" Zhou Tianhao asked curiously. "We will make less money, sure, but so what? We will be the top dogs of the Jiang Bei Region nonetheless. This is much more desirable than simply making money, isn't it? "

"No....no..." The Third Lord of Wei murmured as he shook his head. "It's too fast."

"Why is it too fast?" Zhou Tianhao asked perplexedly.

"I think Master Chen is moving too fast." The Third Lord of Wei furrowed his brows."We should be able to dominate the market in at most five years if not three. However, he still rushed into things like there was no tomorrow. It will leave us with a shaky foundation.

"Unless Master Chen is in a hurry to establish control because he needs to face against an enemy in half a year?" The Third Lord Wei said as realization flickered in his eyes.

"But against who? Could there be anyone else in the Jiang Bei region that would pose a threat to him?"

Suddenly, a name drifted into his mind.

The thought of the man's name made The Third Lord Wei shiver in fear.

If Master Chen were really going to butt heads against him, their clash would definitely bring chaos to the entire Jiang Bei region.

Because the person on his mind was the richest man of the Jiang Bei region.

Chen Fan sat in a wicker armchair on the third-floor balcony. He looked into the distance while his finger gilded back and forth across the coffee table in front of him.

The Spirit Qi Water was only a ploy that he could dispose of readily, yet it had the entire Jiang Bei region excited.

He had countless tricks like this up his sleeves.

“Shen Junwen, I hope you are ready.”

“I have spent a half year focusing on my cultivation, and finally I could shift my attention onto you and think about how to do away with you.” Chen Fan thought to himself while an eerie smile surface on his face.

“In my last life, you have outdone me and pushed me to my last leg. After I had fallen from grace, I could only look up at you like a wounded street dog.

“This time around, I will repay the harm you have done to me in kind.

“Yes... I will start the operation with your family business.”

Chen Fan was reborn in the middle of January of 2008; by then, his first semester was almost over.

Of late, he attended the school like a normal high school student and mostly kept things to himself. The only person he saw was Auntie Tang who came to visit and occasionally slept over at the mansion. Chen Fan made sure that he turned on the Spirit Gathering Array only after Auntie Tang was asleep.

Every time Auntie Tang spent the night in the mansion, she always felt like a whole new person the next morning, bursting with energy. It was as if every cell in her body was recharged overnight.

All the while, she thought it was the effect of living at the top of the mountain; therefore, she didn't think of asking Chen Fan for the cause of her refreshing feeling.

Every time Jiang Churan met Chen Fan, she hesitated to speak up and fail to form any words in her mouth.

Chen Fan knew she wanted to ask about the mansion and the Wei family, but she was too embarrassed to raise the question.

As the winter-break approached, everyone's mood lightened significantly, and they started to talk about their travel plans. Although the term was not over yet, they have already finished the first mock exam, and therefore the teachers didn't mind the student's being distracted by their vacation plans.

After the school was over, Jiang Churan and Xu Rongfei came over to Chen Fan.

“Going out?”

Chen Fan was taken aback by the abrupt question.

“Of course! This is the last week before the winter break. Everyone is going back to their hometown, and we won’t see each other until next year.” Xu Rongfei said in a musical voice as she batted her lashes.

“Where are we going? Can I come with you?” Jiang Tanqiu asked expectantly.

“I have heard that the Qin Shui city opened a new lakeshore resort.” Xu Rongfei said with her head tilted slightly to one side like a puppy.

“Ah right! I have heard of that too. Rumor had it that the resort cost over a hundred million to construct. It’s crazy inside. ” Jiang Tanqiu exclaimed. “My girlfriend, Xiao Qian. always wanted to spend a weekend there, but the price for a just a night was too expensive for me.

“Let’s go, Chen Fan. We will only stay there for a couple of days anyway.” Jiang Tanqiu said.

“Fine.”

Seeing Xu Rongfei’s expectant gaze, Chen Fan suddenly felt bad for leaving her for three months without a word. The conscious besting reason, he agreed.

“Awesome!” A joyful smile broke over her face.

Jiang Churan watched the two’s exchange quietly as a fit of jealousy rose inside of her.

“Humph! one day, I will make you pay!”

She snorted.