

World 901

Chapter 901: Qing Sang Academy_2

Just when he was about to put his phone down, suddenly another new message came in.

It was just a simple two-word phrase: "Congratulations."

Chen Mobai, who had been somewhat indifferent, couldn't help but be startled slightly upon seeing the name of the sender.

Shi Wanyu.

Since their graduation last time, they had not seen each other again.

Over the years, he had almost forgotten that he once had this female friend.

However, that incident from back then still choked in his heart; therefore, after thinking for a moment, Chen Mobai deleted the message, as if he had never seen it.

Now that he had achieved Core Formation, it was destined that there would be no outcome between them.

Since that was the case, it was better not to initiate any more contact.

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Five Peaks Immortal Mountains.

Zhongli Tianyu frowned slightly as he looked at the message that Chen Mobai had sent back.

"If he could succeed in forming his core without consuming an elixir, surely I can too, right?"

When Zhongli Tianyu said this, he was asking Zhongli Yue, one of the only three Golden Core Masters in the Zhongli family. Although she was understated, she was deemed the most likely to hold hope for the “Nascent Soul Formation”.

That was why she had been placed in Five Peaks Immortal Mountains.

“I don’t think you can.”

Zhongli Yue directly shook her head, cutting off Zhongli Tianyu’s hope.

“Why not? I am a descendant of divine transformation, and I have the Bagua Mirror as my accompanying Spiritual Treasure. Core Formation should not bar my way.”

Zhongli Tianyu was a bit unconvinced; he felt that although his talent was slightly below that of Chen Mobai, the addition of the Gobarith Legacy Bagua Mirror should be enough to bridge the gap.

“You are merely a descendant of Divinity Transformation; he has the Qualification of Deification. You’d better continue cultivating diligently. After the Golden Liquid Jade Pill, you can attempt Core Formation.”

Zhongli Yue had met Chen Mobai twice and had a good impression of this polite child.

However, during their first meeting, she did not feel the astonishing transcendence that others had talked about in him, failing to sense that almost overflowing Qualification of Deification.

But then Chen Mobai was successful in opening his Domain, which made Zhongli Yue think that perhaps the child was being modest in front of her, deliberately concealing it.

Now, hearing that he had succeeded in Core Formation without the aid of an elixir, Zhongli Yue was even more convinced that it was her lack of insight at the time; the kid was indeed possessed of the Qualification of Deification.

“I could give it a try, considering I still have a long way to go before hitting sixty years in service.”

Zhongli Tianyu was still not willing to give up; he wanted to keep up with Chen Mobai’s pace, not to be left behind.

“You’re not him. Without the aid of an elixir, you will definitely fail to form the core, and there’s no need to attempt it and needlessly drain your essence and origin.”

Zhongli Yue stated firmly, and although Zhongli Tianyu was very reluctant, he could only reply with an “oh” and hang his head.

He himself knew that before Elder Yuanxu had released the realm treasure, their family of divine descendants had received early access, and Zhongli Tianyu himself had tried a simulation of Core Formation, only succeeding with the aid of the Golden Liquid Jade Pill.

“Darn it, can I never catch up to him in this lifetime?”

Zhongli Tianyu, who had always been arrogant, believing himself to be second only to the heavens, began to doubt himself at this point.

Even if he managed to succeed in Core Formation with the help of the Golden Liquid Jade Pill once, he would still fall more than forty years behind Chen Mobai, who had already reached that stage.

Given that his talent was already not as great as Chen Mobai’s, by the time that long span had passed, the latter might even be attempting Nascent Soul Formation.

“Maybe, should I just stop competing with him?”

This thought suddenly crossed Zhongli Tianyu’s mind.

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Chen Mobai, of course, had no idea that members of the divine family were discussing his talent behind his back.

That day, he went to building number one at Crimson Mountain again.

This time, however, he was not there to see Che Yucheng but to pay a visit to the principal.

His Core Formation achievement had been reported to Master Chengxuan by the Daoist Academy as soon as possible, but since Nascent Soul Cultivators took a long time in their cultivation, it was only now that he received a response.

If it weren't for waiting for Master Chengxuan, Chen Mobai would have returned to the Tianhe Realm long ago.

"Indeed, the Pure Yang lineage can be considered to have a successor now."

Master Chengxuan was very happy when he saw Chen Mobai come in and spoke.

The two talked for half a day, mostly with Master Chengxuan speaking. He expressed that if Chen Mobai were willing, after Duanmu Longrong, the Baby-forming Spiritual Things of the Daoist Academy could be given to him.

Before leaving, Master Chengxuan solemnly added, "I know that after you successfully created your own Golden Core, you think that Nascent Soul Formation won't be too difficult, but I still want to advise you that the most suitable path of Nascent Soul Formation for your Pure Yang Scroll is our Weapon Dancing Sect. In the Immortal Gate, wanting to form your Nascent Soul on your own is nearly impossible."

The only exception is practitioners of the Lasting Spring Cultivation.

"Thank you for your guidance, Headmaster, but isn't it interesting to achieve something that no one else has?"

Chen Mobai said something that made Master Chengxuan stunned.

“Child, it will only feel interesting if you succeed. If you fail, you will feel that everything you have done before was in vain,” Chengxuan said earnestly.

Master Chengxuan had seen too many arrogant people, but without exception, all of them eventually bowed their heads in the face of failure, passing away in meditation with regret.

Only he, who advanced step by step within the Immortal Gate system, from Foundation Establishment to Golden Core, and even finally became a Nascent Soul Superior, showed that this was the most correct path, the one many had succeeded on.

The initial pioneers were mostly failures.

“Then I just have to not fail,” Chen Mobai replied.

After Chen Mobai finished speaking, Master Chengxuan couldn't help but laugh wryly.

“You really are young. I still have over two hundred years of lifespan left, and I hope that you will change your mind before I pass away in meditation. If you do, I'll still be alive to help you arrange your path for Nascent Soul Formation,” said Master Chengxuan.

“The Headmaster will certainly achieve Divinity Transformation,” Chen Mobai flattered, eliciting hearty laughter from Master Chengxuan.

After leaving the headmaster's office, Chen Mobai went to sit with Che Yucheng.

Qin Beichen happened to be there, and after Chen Mobai thanked him again, Qin Beichen took the opportunity to leave, giving the master and disciple some space.

“The choice you make yourself, I won’t interfere with, but I still want to advise you that the opportunity to lead the Weapon Dancing Sect is very rare,” Che Yucheng, acting as his teacher, said seriously, apparently aware of the content and outcome of Chen Mobai’s talk with Master Chengxuan.

Chen Mobai: “The Daoist Academy has countless capable people, and I am of humble experience. If I were to take over, I fear I would not be able to command respect.”

Che Yucheng: “As long as you are willing, the Headmaster, I, and Senior Sister Duanmu, we will all support you.”

Unconsciously, Chen Mobai had already become the future hope of everyone in the Dance Tool Dao Academy.

They all believed that he would lead the Daoist Academy to new heights, even if he couldn’t become the next Ancestor Baiguang. At the very least, under the resources of the Daoist Academy, forming his Nascent Soul would be no problem.

After all, those who attained the Golden Core without elixir aid had a ninety-nine percent success rate in Nascent Soul Formation in the history of the Immortal Gate.

The only exceptions were those who perished in battles beyond their Domain.

“Teacher, it’s not that I’m being modest, but after all, I am still young. Let me have a few more easy years,” Chen Mobai said.

Chen Mobai could refuse others directly, but with Che Yucheng, he had to play the sentiment card.

“Alright then, but you must join the teacher’s workforce in the Daoist Academy first, so that you can start accumulating service years from tomorrow. If you want to take it easy, like Yu Yi, you can become a headmaster at an academy to get used to it,” suggested Che Yucheng.

The “little Yu” mentioned by Che Yucheng was the Crimson-cloaked True Person, Yu Tianguang.

In the Immortal Gate's Bai Er Shi Fu, basically all Scholarly Mansions were branched from the Daoist Academy, and Cinnabarite Institute was one of the branches of the Dance Tool Dao Academy.

"How about I become the vice headmaster of Cinnabarite Institute?"

Chen Mobai, who was a homebody, also didn't want to leave his hometown, so he made a suggestion.

"That won't do, each institute may only have one Golden Core Master. We can't waste educational resources," Che Yucheng shook his head and then listed other schools in Bai Er Shi Fu that were still lacking a Golden Core Master to preside over.

Conveniently, Yu Wood City next to Danxia City had Qing Sang Academy, jointly operated by the Dance Tool Dao Academy and Jumang Academy. Although the acting headmaster was from Jumang Academy, they would surely be willing to step down and yield the position if Chen Mobai went there.

Chen Mobai knew that Yu Wood City lacked a Golden Core Master, and if he wanted to grow and strengthen his talisman paper business legitimately, controlling the city would be essential.

"Let's go with Qing Sang Academy then."

Chapter 902: Seeing Qing Nu Again After Chen Mobai chose his school, Che Yucheng was also satisfied.

"After your Core Formation, you will need to report to the Kaiyuan Hall. Also, make a trip to the Ministry of Education and go through the procedure of taking up the position as the headmaster of Qing Sang Academy."

The Dance Tool Dao Academy is also considered one of the peaks of the Immortal Gate, and after Che Yucheng had finished writing Chen Mobai's job transfer letter and affixed the academy's seal, he called a few friends from the Ministry of Education to give them a heads up.

Upon arriving at Wangwu Cave Heaven, it was naturally Sun Daoji who welcomed Chen Mobai.

“Junior Brother Chen, there are few people I admire in my life, and you are now the one I admire the most.”

After receiving Chen Mobai, Sun Daoji said with an admiring face and even took the initiative to reach out to take his luggage.

“Senior Brother Sun is also a young genius, I’ve merely made my advance a bit earlier.”

In the presence of his own people, Chen Mobai remained as humble as ever.

The two first went to the Ministry of Education and took care of the simple matters. Thanks to Che Yucheng’s advance notice, the process for Chen Mobai’s appointment as headmaster of Qing Sang Academy was completed in just one morning.

If it weren’t for a certain leader who had gone to another department on business, it might have taken just half an hour.

Then it was off to Kaiyuan Hall.

There, they had to wait.

After all, it is one of the Three Great Halls of Xianmen and the core of the Immortal Gate. In addition to the 374 Golden Core Masters, there are also 14 Nascent Soul Superiors who are members of the hall.

The current Kaiyuan Hall Master Qi Yuheng, known as the foremost Nascent Soul of the Immortal Gate, had already reached the Nascent Soul Ninth Layer a hundred years ago and was acclaimed as the person most likely to achieve Divinity Transformation after the Dual Sages of the Immortal Gate.

However, such exalted figures generally don’t deal with mundane affairs and after Chen Mobai’s documents were submitted, they were reviewed by Vice Hall Master Ye Yune.

“Greetings, True Person Ye.”

On the third day, Chen Mobai received a notification and arrived at Kaiyuan Hall.

“Take a seat.”

Ye Yune was an imposing, solemnly beautiful woman. When Chen Mobai entered, she was dealing with some documents, and from a pile of them, she pulled out one.

After Chen Mobai took it and looked, it was his personal profile and data, but some issues had been circled in red ink, with small annotations on how to modify them.

“Take it back, make the changes, and then submit it again.”

After saying that, Ye Yune lowered her head and continued with her own work.

Chen Mobai paused for a moment, said nothing more, and turned to leave.

“Do you have a grudge against True Person Ye?”

After returning, Chen Mobai mentioned the incident to Sun Daoji, who looked at the document with red ink modifications and couldn't help but frown slightly, asking in surprise.

“How could that be possible? It was my first time meeting her. Maybe she has a prejudice against our Dance Tool Dao Academy?”

Chen Mobai immediately shook his head. His profile and data had been directly prepared by people from the Dance Tool Dao Academy in Wangwu Cave Heaven, handled by seasoned professionals who would not make any mistakes.

Yet Ye Yune found faults like picking bones from an egg and sent it back. There had to be some intricacies they didn't know about.

“Then let’s wait a few days. True Person Wang has gone to Xixuan Dongtian on a visit and hasn’t returned yet. As he is one of the rotating members of Kaiyuan Hall along with Ye Yune, having him intercede would spare us the need to guess.”

In Wangwu Cave Heaven, the Dance Tool Dao Academy also has a Golden Core Master who presides over the overall situation, named Wang Shuye. He too had once competed for the position of Vice Hall Master of Kaiyuan Hall but unfortunately lost to Ye Yune.

Chen Mobai wasn’t concerned.

After all, he had a promising future and Tianhe Realm as a backing. He wasn’t overly concerned about the resources of Xianmen. Even without joining Kaiyuan Hall, it wasn’t a big deal.

While waiting for Wang Shuye to return, Chen Mobai made time to arrange a meal with Qing Nu.

He called her and it took a while before she picked up.

Qing Nu: “Hello.”

Chen Mobai: “Are you free? It’s been so many years since I last saw you.”

Qing Nu: “Eh, are you in Wangwu Cave Heaven?”

Chen Mobai: “I came to see you and also to take care of some matters.”

Qing Nu: “Oh right, you’ve formed your Core. According to the rules, you have to come to Kaiyuan Hall. Congratulations.”

Chen Mobai humbly responded and then both set a meeting place at a street convenient for transportation.

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In a certain underground space in the suburbs of Wangwu Cave Heaven, Qing Nu had a smile on her face as she put down her phone.

“Who was that, making you so happy?”

Wearing a white lab coat and glasses, Zhongli Yi looked up, while observing the test data on the experimental materials on the operating table, and asked.

“A good friend I haven’t seen in a while has come to Wangwu Cave Heaven.”

Taking her tablet for data processing, Qing Nu walked over to Zhongli Yi and started working on the experiment.

“That guy!”

To Zhongli Yi’s surprise, she instantly knew who that was. Qing Nu’s social circle was quite simple, and before finishing school, she had joined the Sky-Mending Group, interacting with many secretive and dark matters which meant she couldn’t relate to the students living in the Ivory Tower.

Aside from Sky-Mending Group, in the Immortal Gate, the only friend of Qing Nu’s that Zhongli Yi knew was one person—her boyfriend.

The few times Qing Nu had taken leave were all to meet him.

“Yeah, I’ll ask for leave from the group leader later and won’t be here this afternoon. Please work diligently.”

“Must be nice, your boyfriend forming his Gold Core independently, and you with a Heavenly Spiritual Root securing your Core Formation. Later, as a couple practicing Purple Green Demon Refining Heavenly Book together, maybe you two will be the next Qing Shi and Qing Jing.”

Zhongli Yi said enviously, making a face at Qing Nu, who turned slightly red with embarrassment, hastily waving her hands and insisting that she and Chen Mobai were just friends.

Chapter 903: Seeing Qing Nu Again_2

“In the Immortal Gate, men and women are free to love, there’s nothing daring about admitting that. It’s rare for him to come here, so you must seize the opportunity to show him your worth, and take a few more days off to spend time with him. Such a good man, now every female cultivator with a bit of connection in the Immortal Gate is seeking his contact. Just among those in the Waiting-Chamber of the Divinity Transformation families I know of, there are several.”

Zhongli Yi was Zhongli Tianyu’s older female cousin, but although she had also succeeded in Foundation Establishment, because the remaining Liquid Gold Jade and the Infant-Transforming Elixir of her family were used as a foundation, even Zhongli Tianyu was not allowed to consume them.

So if she wanted to achieve Core Formation, she would need to serve the people in the Immortal Gate.

But as a descendant of a Divinity Transformation family, her connections were different, and she was arranged to join the Sky-Mending Group, where she could obtain the Liquid Gold Jade Return Pill in the shortest amount of time.

Moreover, the Sky-Mending Group she was in was the medical group, and they basically didn’t need to report for combat duty, so their safety was also guaranteed.

Because of her family’s reasons, she had many friends from the Divinity Transformation families. Recently in their small group chats, they were all discussing how to win over Chen Mobai, the number one talent of the Immortal Gate.

“I’m going first!”

The Qing Women, still being somewhat shy-faced, really couldn't stand Zhongli Yi leaning in to teach her some techniques. She immediately put down her tablet and ran out of the lab.

Since the Sky-Mending Group was quite particular, every member had to report in great detail their phone contact and travel schedules, specifying how long they would take leave for, when they would go, and when they would return.

The Qing Women, after getting the leave note signed by three leaders, finally received a card that would allow her to leave.

The Sky-Mending Group was underground, so when going to the surface, one needed to swipe a special card in the elevator.

Beep! The elevator door opened, and the Qing Women saw that there were already two people inside.

"Good day, Vice-Commander Lan, Commander Lin."

The Qing Women immediately greeted them.

Lan Haitian and Lin Yin glanced at her and nodded lightly in response.

"Which floor?"

Lin Yin, standing at the elevator entrance, wearing a face mask, extended her finger and asked the Qing Women.

"The ground floor!"

The Qing Women hesitated a moment, then answered.

As expected, upon hearing her answer, both Lan Haitian and Lin Yin turned their gaze to her. Under the scrutiny of their eyes, the Qing Women took out her leave application card and swiped it in front of a minor magic artifact.

After the green light was illuminated, Lin Yin lowered her head and pressed the button for the ground floor.

When they reached the third floor underground, Lan Haitian and Lin Yin exited the elevator, and the Qing Women let out a soft sigh of relief.

Within the Sky-Mending Group, the sixth group was the combat unit. Every member's hands were stained with blood, so when people from other departments met them, they would instinctively feel uncomfortable.

Because their gaze always seemed to be assessing every fatal part of the body.

"She must be going to see Chen Mobai."

After sitting in his office for a while, Lin Yin came over with the information she had gathered and spoke.

"Who would have thought, the Qi Cultivation boy from the past is now at the same realm as me," Lan Haitian said with some emotion after reading the Qing Women's leave request and recalling the recent fervent discussions about Chen Mobai's successful self-initiated Core Formation on the internet.

"Too bad. If I had been more resolute back then and pulled him into the Sky-Mending Group, I wouldn't have to work so hard now."

Lin Yin also had a deep impression of Chen Mobai; back in Red Sandstone City, when he had just established his foundation, he unleashed a Purple Fire Sword Light that dazzled her.

At that time, she couldn't understand why he firmly refused them, but now she finally understood.

He clearly had absolute confidence in forming his own core and looked down on the little benefits offered by their Sky-Mending Group.

Lan Haitian: “Even if he had joined the sixth group at that time and filled the vacancy I left behind, and now achieved Core Formation and got a promotion, you would still have taken over as the leader of the sixth group, working hard all the same.”

Lin Yin: “At least I would have had an easier time for the first twenty years.”

This statement made Lan Haitian shake his head in silence. He looked at the Qing Women’s leave note and using his authority as the deputy commander of the Sky-Mending Group, began to access Chen Mobai’s records within the Immortal Gate.

Soon, the most recent approved appointment caught his attention.

[Hereby appointing Chen Mobai as the headmaster of the Qing Sang Academy in Yu Wood City—
Ministry of Education XXXX.]

Lan Haitian gazed at the three characters “Yu Wood City” in silence for a long time, then pulled out his smartphone.

He opened his contacts and found Chen Mobai’s phone number.

And then, he dialed.

[“Alright, you arrange it.”]

Chen Mobai found it somewhat odd that Lan Haitian would suddenly invite him to meet, but since he had helped him quite a bit, he certainly should grant this favor.

Beep beep beep!

Right after he hung up the phone with Lan Haitian, Qing Nu’s call followed.

Before long, the two of them, having confirmed their location, finally met.

After six years, Qing Nu was still as stunningly beautiful as ever.

She sat on a roadside chair, her face, now more coquettish after her experiences in the professional world, looked elegant and delicate. Under the white lining, her delicate collarbones were faintly visible. Her black coat closely hugged her curvaceous torso, and a dark blue skirt just covered her fair and round thighs. Her slender, straight legs were in a pair of black high heels; the black and white contrasted against each other, complementing her skin that was as pristine as fine jade.

“You haven’t changed a bit, still so beautiful.”

When Chen Mobai saw Qing Nu, he sincerely praised her. Time had not taken away any of her beauty; on the contrary, she seemed to possess even more mature elegance.

“You are the same.”

Qing Nu stood up, looking at the handsome youth before her, and smiled as she spoke.

Because of his early breakthrough in cultivation level, Chen Mobai’s body had always been maintained at the peak of his youth. His appearance had almost not changed at all.

After his Core Formation, at the age of 44, compared to a lifespan of 540 years, he would maintain his youthful appearance for over a hundred years.

“Although the appearance hasn’t changed, I feel older at heart.”

Chen Mobai said self-mockingly. Upon hearing this, Qing Nu couldn’t help but burst into laughter.

Walking together on the streets of Wangwu Cave Heaven, although they hadn’t seen each other for six years, their conversation was as relaxed as friends who were always by each other’s side.

“Eh, aren’t you that..”

Unfortunately, this ease lasted only momentarily, for Chen Mobai was soon recognized by someone.

Seizing the moment before the crowd swarmed over, Chen Mobai quickly left the scene with Qing Nu. They then found a coffee shop with private rooms, finally having a private space to chat.

“I heard from my younger brother that you gave him a coffee cup, something about wanting to authenticate a drug.”

Qing Nu’s words made Chen Mobai suddenly break into a cold sweat. He cursed Kong Feichen in his heart but still responded quickly, his expression turning serious as he gently shook his head.

Then he stretched out his finger, manipulated the Water Controlling Technique, and used the coffee liquid in the cup as ink to write a sentence in the void.

[“Lan Haitian just contacted me, saying he wanted to talk, probably knowing you’d come to see me. It might involve your brother and sister, don’t tell me a single word about them.”]

When Qing Nu saw this sentence, her pretty face changed slightly, but she quickly showed she understood, nodding and erasing the coffee words Chen Mobai wrote in the air.

After that, the two started to chat about more mundane matters.

They talked about their cultivation and work over the years.

Qing Nu had also reached the Seventh Layer of Foundation Establishment not long ago, which was due to her desire to consolidate her foundation. Otherwise, with her Heavenly Spiritual Root potential and the resources from the Sky-Mending Group, she could have completely reached the Peak of Foundation Establishment Completion.

Chen Mobai: “Haven’t you thought about cultivating Lasting Spring Cultivation?”

Qing Nu: “There’s only one Wood Spiritual Talisman, and after Wen Ren Xuewei cultivated with it, it’s basically impossible for anyone else from the Daoist Academy to master the Lasting Spring Cultivation.”

The resources of Immortal Gate are limited; even Jumang Academy could only support one person to cultivate Lasting Spring Cultivation.

Qing Nu and Wen Ren Xuewei both possessed the Heavenly Water Spirit Root, born in the same era. With Qing Nu’s records being problematic in the Immortal Gate, Jumang Academy easily made their choice.

The two talked until the sun set. If Chen Mobai wasn’t concerned about Qing Nu getting back late and people gossiping, potentially affecting her image as an unmarried woman, he would have liked to continue talking with her the whole night.

He didn’t have many friends in the Immortal Gate, and Qing Nu, without a doubt, was at the top of the list.

The two were truly sincere with each other!

Chapter 904: An Old Case

“It’s been a long time.”

In a certain low-profile club, after being brought inside by Lin Yin, Chen Mobai met Lan Haitian.

“Sit.”

Lan Haitian gestured for Chen Mobai to sit down at the teatable by the window. Lin Yin soon left, closing the door behind her.

If this were in any other place within the Immortal Gate, a conversation between two Golden Core Masters would easily make the front page of any news.

Unfortunately, this was Wangwu Cave Heaven.

The very center of the Immortal Gate.

“Congratulations on your Core Formation. To be honest, although I felt that you would reach this Realm sooner or later, I truly didn’t expect it to happen so quickly.”

“Thank you.”

Lan Haitian said reflectively. Chen Mobai gave a slight smile, showing neither modesty nor boastfulness.

He knew that someone like Lan Haitian wouldn’t seek him out without an important matter. The more he engaged in pleasantries with these people, the more likely he was to be led astray. Better to wait for Lan Haitian to get to the point.

At that moment, the door opened again, and Lin Yin entered with a tray, upon which rested a complete set of tea brewing tools, along with tea leaves and cups.

While Chen Mobai and Lan Haitian talked, both admired Lin Yin’s graceful tea brewing movements, her elegant posture betraying no hint that she was the notoriously fierce leader of the sixth group of the Sky-Mending Group, with blood on her hands.

Lan Haitian: “May I ask you something?”

Chen Mobai: “Please do.”

Lan Haitian: “After Core Formation, why did you choose to go to Yu Wood City’s Qing Sang Academy?”

Chen Mobai hadn’t anticipated Lan Haitian’s question. He had thought it would be about Qing Nu and Kong Feichen, especially since the latter was involved with the Ascension Sect, considered the sworn enemy of their Sky-Mending Group.

“It’s the Daoist Academy’s intention, I suppose. After my Core Formation, Master Chengxuan wanted me to stay and guard the Treasure Trove at Crimson Mountain. That way, I could rightfully keep the Vermillion Fruit and other Baby-forming Spiritual Things for myself, but I felt that it would be too easy to obtain them that way.”

“My Core Formation was already somewhat rushed. If I don’t properly refine my foundation, I worry that my Realm would be unsubstantial, impeding my success in Nascent Soul Formation.”

“I didn’t wish to stay at Crimson Mountain, but out of respect for my teachers and the path, Che Laoshi personally intervened to mediate. He had me first join the teaching staff of the Daoist Academy and then dispatched me to be a school principal.”

“My longing for my hometown is strong, but unfortunately, Dan Zhu and Chixia, the two great academies, already have Golden Core Masters in charge. The only choice I had left was Qing Sang Academy, which has the backing of Dance Tool Dao Academy nearby.”

There was no need to conceal any of this, so Chen Mobai laid out both the reasons and motivations in one go.

Lan Haitian hadn’t thought much of it yet. Lin Yin, who was brewing tea, stopped mid-motion when she heard the keywords “Vermillion Fruit” and “Nascent Soul,” nearly spilling the brewed tea.

She glanced at the refined young man sitting nearby and felt a wave of guilt.

This was the foremost genius of their era in the Immortal Gate!

Already contemplating Nascent Soul Formation.

Why did it seem that his Talent surpassed even that of Deputy Chief Lan Haitian!

As Lin Yin thought this, she inadvertently handed over a cup of the crisp, clear tea.

“So that’s how it is.”

Lan Haitian, noticing that Lin Yin hadn’t yet poured his tea, said something with a slightly odd look on his face.

“What’s wrong? Is there a problem with Qing Sang Academy?”

After taking the tea, Chen Mobai asked with slight surprise.

A person like Lan Haitian wouldn’t seek him out over such matters; since he had brought it up, there had to be some secret that Chen Mobai was unaware of.

“Do you remember our meeting in Red Sandstone City?”

“I have few friends within the Immortal Gate. Our profound friendship was forged on the battlefield as we fought side by side; you could say you are my best friend. My memories of Red Sandstone City are vivid and fresh.”

Chen Mobai’s words actually made Lan Haitian feel a tad embarrassed. In his mind, Chen Mobai was merely a junior with good Talent and remarkable skills in Magic Duel.

Initially, the idea was to recruit him into the Sky-Mending Group to replenish the highly precarious ranks of the sixth group. Later, as Chen Mobai became the chief student of the Dance Tool Dao Academy and Lan Haitian obtained a Magical Treasure Embryo before his Core Formation, Lan Haitian continued to patiently answer all his questions even after his own Core Formation.

Lan Haitian asked himself, he had never truly considered Chen Mobai a friend.

Now that Chen Mobai had achieved Core Formation, however, his friendship was indeed worth cultivating. Thus, he continued along the line of conversation.

“After that battle, although we defeated the members of Ascension Sect, we let the bird get away with the snake, marking the mission a failure. For years because of that, Qing Nu has been on our watch list, kept away from sensitive information.”

The words from Lan Haitian alerted Chen Mobai, as he had anticipated, the matter was indeed about Qing Nu and the others.

Chen Mobai: “What does this have to do with Qing Sang Academy?”

Lan Haitian: “The laboratory where the three of them spent their childhood is in Yu Wood City. After the Immortal Gate authorities handled the situation, these test subjects were housed in blessed lands nearby. Qing Nu and the others were thus sent to the orphanage in Red Sandstone City. I thought you went to Qing Sang Academy in Yu Wood City to investigate this matter for Qing Nu after your Core Formation, which is why I volunteered to go there.”

After hearing this, Chen Mobai appeared as unperturbed as a gentle breeze or soft cloud, but inside, his heart was churning like a raging sea.

Chapter 905: An Old Case_2 “

He had simply picked the school closest to home, and even that had led to a collision!

However, upon more careful thought, if one considered the matter closely, it was still possible to make the connection.

It could only be said that Chen Mobai had made up his mind not to delve into Qing Nu and the other two’s childhood before his “Nascent Soul Formation,” so he had never paid attention to these matters or actively collected information in this area, which made overlooking Yu Wood City understandable.

“Qing Nu is my friend, but I really was unaware of this matter,” Chen Mobai said.

At the Immortal Gate, Chen Mobai was known for being loyal and righteous, so this was the only way he could explain it, though in his heart he was wondering if there was a way to switch to a different school for the headmaster position.

This incident clearly involved the highest echelons of the Immortal Gate with extensive implications. Although he was considered a part of the upper levels after his Core Formation, it would be best to avoid this if possible.

However, the processes had already been officially approved by the Education Department, so there was definitely no way to retract it.

He could only blame the Dance Tool Dao Academy for having too much influence and a deep background; if he'd graduated from another Scholarly Mansion, he'd probably still be caught in the approval process.

"The experimental base in Yu Wood City has already been handled by the relevant departments of the Immortal Gate. Even if you find that place, you won't uncover anything useful," Lan Haitian admitted.

Whether Lan Haitian believed what Chen Mobai said was uncertain, but he shared some more secret information with him.

It was because Chen Mobai had completed Core Formation and was clearly chosen by the Dance Tool Dao Academy for the future, otherwise, Lan Haitian would not have divulged such information.

"I had no intention of investigating this matter in the first place; this is for the best," Chen Mobai said as he pondered over how he could extricate himself from the clearly dangerous and turbulent undercurrent.

"The original test subjects are all under the supervision of the Immortal Gate. However, over the course of more than a decade, there is always some slackness, hence the accidental incident in Red Sandstone City," Lan Haitian continued.

As Lan Haitian spoke, he took a document from his Golden Core Domain and handed it to Chen Mobai, who, however, refused it with a raised hand.

“I don’t want to get involved in this, and my choice of Yu Wood City was solely because it’s close to home. Qing Nu is my friend, though, and if this involves her, I will do everything in my power to protect her,” declared Chen Mobai.

After Chen Mobai finished speaking, Lan Haitian was slightly surprised, while Lin Yin beside him had eyes shining.

With a boyfriend like this, Qing Nu was truly blessed.

“In that case, you should look at this document,” Lan Haitian insisted.

The tone of Lan Haitian’s words made Chen Mobai frown slightly, but since Lan Haitian insisted, there must be a reason.

After looking at the beginning of the document, Chen Mobai’s pupils suddenly contracted.

Lan Haitian spoke, “On the day the birds carried away the snakes, the two of us had united to eliminate everyone from the Ascension Sect who had come to the rescue, but in the end, we still failed. Do you remember why?”

Chen Mobai replied, “A mysterious Golden Core Master intervened.”

This was something Chen Mobai would never forget; it was the first time he had witnessed a Golden Core in action. He and Lin Yin had been utterly powerless to retaliate.

It was then that his desire for Core Formation ignited like a flame, driving his bitter cultivation over the past twenty-plus years.

“Every Golden Core Master who leaves their assigned location must report to Kaiyuan Hall in advance. After the incident, I investigated the travel logs of Kaiyuan Hall and even those of the older masters who had retired. No one was recorded as being in Red Sandstone City that day,” Lan Haitian explained.

Upon finishing his statement, Chen Mobai had also completed reading the document's contents, his heart pounding intensely.

For it contained a comprehensive investigation into the activities of the two Golden Core Masters of Red Sandstone City over the past twenty years.

"Therefore, the only suspects left are Yu Tianguang and Shi Qing," Lan Haitian said calmly, but for Chen Mobai, it struck like a bolt out of the blue.

"The Crimson Robed Master is a teacher from my Dance Tool Dao Academy; he would not stoop to joining the Ascension Sect," Chen Mobai exclaimed after processing all the clues in an instant, speaking out in defense of the Crimson Robed Master who had once helped him.

Lan Haitian stated flatly, "If not him, then it must be True Person Shi Qing."

Chen Mobai counter-argued, "That's not what I meant. Could it be possible that someone visited Red Sandstone City without reporting to Kaiyuan Hall?"

Chen Mobai quickly added, careful not to implicate anyone carelessly.

"Over these twenty years, we have largely ruled out that possibility. However, there are many unique and strange techniques within the Immortal Gate, so nothing can be said with absolute certainty. Nevertheless, these two True Persons are indeed the most suspect," Lan Haitian returned to their initial topic of conversation. "Red Sandstone City is just a Blessed Earth City after all. As a rule, once there is one Golden Core Master, others would, by tacit agreement, not show up. But this small place unexpectedly has two."

The citizens of Red Sandstone City have always taken pride in this matter.

Within the Immortal Gate, it is quite rare for a mere Blessed Earth City to be guarded by two Golden Core Masters.

“

Now, after Lan Haitian's reminder, Chen Mobai couldn't help but think that right next to Red Sandstone City lay Yu Wood City. Could it be...

"The time Shi Qing and Yu Tianguang were stationed in Red Sandstone City covered the span from the start to the end of that experiment. However, this is just my speculation, and to identify the specific person involved, we still need more substantial evidence," Lan Haitian said, taking the documents Chen Mobai had finished reviewing. With a squeeze of his hand, he turned the pages into powder.

Chen Mobai, "Are you planning to take action against them?"

Lan Haitian, "Once we have the evidence, we will carry out the capture operation. At that time, to avoid alarming the target prematurely, we might need you to provide assistance secretly. Moreover, I need you to keep a close watch on Red Sandstone City's two True Persons during ordinary days."

At this point, Chen Mobai finally understood the true purpose behind Lan Haitian's summoning him today.

Aside from testing him, it was also an opportunity for himself.

If he could cooperate in capturing the possible Ascension Sect Cultivators who were Golden Core Masters, then Chen Mobai, who had suddenly applied to become the principal of Qing Sang Academy after his Core Formation, would be able to clear his own name in this affair.

Chen Mobai, "Can I refuse?"

Lan Haitian, "Of course, you can. This is a personal request from me, not an official command from the Immortal Gate."

Upon hearing this, Chen Mobai fell silent.

After finishing his tea, he took his leave.

“Will he agree?”

Lin Yin, who had a good impression of Chen Mobai, asked Lan Haitian while tidying up the tea set.

“I don’t know. I just informed Dance Tool Dao Academy about this matter through him,” Lan Haitian replied, standing by the window. He watched Chen Mobai’s retreating figure leaving the clubhouse and strolling down the street below, with a slight smile on his lips.

Lin Yin, “Does Dance Tool Dao Academy also have something to do with this matter?”

Lan Haitian, “The intricacies of this case are far deeper than we imagined. To thoroughly investigate it, relying solely on myself will likely not suffice.”

...

Chen Mobai returned to the hotel he was staying in, and reconsidered all the details of his conversation with Lan Haitian once more.

Usually, he simply didn’t want to concern himself with the matter, which was why he hadn’t reflected on it. But now, after Lan Haitian had made things explicit, he had no choice but to ponder it.

However, critical information was lacking; he only knew what Lan Haitian had told him, as well as what Qing Nu and Kong Feichen had described from their childhood.

Ultimately, he decided to give Che Yucheng a call.

After all, the situation involved the Crimson Robed True Person Yu Tianguang, who was a teacher within the organization of Dance Tool Dao Academy.

“I understand!”

Che Yucheng was silent for a long time after hearing what Chen Mobai said before responding with just four words.

Chen Mobai, "Teacher, what should I do?"

Che Yucheng, "The process of your appointment as principal of Qing Sang Academy has already been completed. You can't avoid this matter. Do what you must, and wait for the official command from the Immortal Gate."

In other words, if the Immortal Sect finally confirmed that Yu Tianguang was a Cultivator from the Ascension Sect, then Chen Mobai would have to face the moral dilemma of justice over familial ties.

If not, all the better.

Then it might be him joining forces with Yu Tianguang to confront True Person Shi Qing.

"Understood, Teacher!"

After ending the call with Che Yucheng, Chen Mobai felt he had some direction.

Within the system of the Immortal Gate, even Golden Core True Persons could not escape their crimes.

Chen Mobai was relieved that he had always abided by the law and been a good citizen.

Two days later, Wang Shuye returned to Wangwu Cave Heaven. He personally brought Chen Mobai's personal profile and materials to meet with Ye Yune.

That afternoon, on the official website of Kaiyuan Hall, the list of formal council members had one more name added.

It was none other than Chen Mobai!

Chapter 906: Return to Hometown Having a name in the Kaiyuan Hall signifies that Chen Mobai had officially become part of the upper echelons of the Immortal Gate.

Because he was to assume the role of principal at Qing Sang Academy in Yu Wood City, this city, one of the Seventy-Two Blessed Lands of Xianmen, was allotted to him.

Not long after Chen Mobai received the five-pointed star badge from Wang Shuye, symbolizing his status as a Kaiyuan Hall councilor, Wen Ping, the City Lord of Yu Wood City, made a phone call to inquire when the leader would arrive and if there were any specific requirements for his office and residence.

Chen Mobai didn't know much about Wen Ping, so he simply exchanged pleasantries, stating that everything would be discussed upon his arrival and, for the time being, to continue as usual.

"Director Che said you were mature beyond your years, but I had my doubts. I thought that a young genius like you would be wild and arrogant, flamboyant and unrestrained. It turns out that really is the case," said Wang Shuye. He was a middle-aged man with a distinguished appearance and poised demeanor, and he was the highest-ranking representative of the Dance Tool Dao Academy within the ranks of Xianmen.

He was also at the ninth level of Gold Core, and he had essentially reserved a Fruit-Feeding Elixir for himself, refined from a matured Fifth-Order Vermilion Fruit.

As the leader of the Dance Tool Dao Academy's officialdom faction, he and Duanmu Longrong of the Hermit faction were the Nascent Soul seeds that the academy would support in the future.

"I owe a great deal to Senior Brother Wang for his mediation, which allowed me to become a councilor of the Kaiyuan Hall so smoothly," Chen Mobai courteously said. He climbed the ranks swiftly; a councilor of the Kaiyuan Hall was the pinnacle for an Immortal Gate civil servant, but facing Wang Shuye, he still addressed himself as a junior of the Daoist Academy.

"Ha ha, with your reputation, Ye Yune would not dare to hold you back for long. Even without me, after two or three attempts, she would have approved you regardless," Wang Shuye said, not mentioning why Ye Yune would be obstructing Chen Mobai, and the latter tactfully didn't ask.

After all, Ye Yune was amongst the highest ranks of the Immortal Gate, only below those Nascent Soul Superiors in terms of power and influence.

With Nascent Souls generally not involving themselves in such matters, Gongye Zhixu, Ye Yune, Wang Shuye, and others like them, were essentially the stewards of the Immortal Gate system.

Chen Mobai made a mental note of Ye Yune's obstruction. If he ever reached "Nascent Soul Formation," he would bring up the matter again.

Chen Mobai could be somewhat petty at times.

But if he didn't reach Nascent Soul or if Ye Yune achieved it first, he would act as if the issue never existed.

Until then, it was best to continue cultivating discreetly.

In the evening, Chen Mobai dined with Wang Shuye, who mentioned some individuals of interest within the Three Great Halls of Xianmen—all wielders of real power, with authority no less than his own.

Chen Mobai listened attentively while raising his glass in toast.

Latterly, Wang Shuye mentioned some privileges of being a Kaiyuan Hall councilor, for instance, the ability to apply for Third Rank Superior Grade Spiritual Energy from Xianmen without charge, and access to the Heavenly Curtain.

"What is the Heavenly Curtain?" Chen Mobai always asked when he didn't understand something.

"It's the Tian Gang Pure Breath and Earth Fetal Membrane that covers the entire Di Yuan Star. These were damaged by a previous civilization, so when the Five Ancestors of Xianmen arrived, they used heavenly techniques to condense them into the 'Heavenly Curtain.' When fully activated, it functions as a Sixth Order Great Array."

“However, it’s usually just the basic functions that are engaged, mainly to absorb the essence of the sun, moon, stars, and the Taixu breath of the cosmos, providing energy to the Sixth Grade Spirit Vein of the Five Peaks Immortal Mountains, nourishing the two venerable ancestors for their cultivation.”

“As a Pure Yang Scroll cultivator, you can refine the essence of the sun into Pure Yang Purple Qi. But without this access, any essence of the sun you manage to draw in will be intercepted by the Heavenly Curtain, as it treats all Spiritual Energy within the realm of Di Yuan Star as its own.”

After Wang Shuye’s explanation, Chen Mobai finally understood why, when he used the Formless Puppet to condense Pure Yang Purple Qi, it suddenly disappeared upon entering the airspace above Di Yuan Star—it turned out he had been unwittingly working for the Heavenly Curtain.

Wary that there might be other such things within Xianmen he didn’t know about, he immediately continued to seek guidance, and Wang Shuye patiently informed him of each one.

At the end, Chen Mobai hesitated, wondering whether to discuss with Wang Shuye the matter mentioned by Lan Haitian. But considering the depth of the waters involved, he surmised that it might not be advisable to entangle Wang Shuye; better not to drag him into it.

After all, he had already reported it to the Daoist Academy. If there was a major issue, Master Chengxuan would handle it.

If Master Chengxuan couldn’t cope, there was still Ancestor Baiguang above him.

With the deep-rooted support of their Dance Instruments Daoist Academy, as long as Chen Mobai didn’t engage in illegal activities within the Immortal Gate, even if his involvement with Qing Nu’s mysterious origins reached the Leading Star Ancestor, he would still be protected.

Thinking this way, Chen Mobai felt his longstanding worries suddenly clear, and he was free from any troubles lingering in his mind.

Before leaving, of course, he had to say farewell to Qing Nu.

That day, a light drizzle began to fall unexpectedly. Chen Mobai used the “Red Misty Cloud Silk” to transform into a colorful cloud umbrella, held above their heads as they walked side by side along a shopping street, looking from a distance like a sweet, young couple.

“I’m leaving.”

“Mhm.”

“Call me if you need anything. With my current status, at the very least, I can ensure your safety.”

“I’m in Group 4, mainly responsible for medical research and experiments. I won’t have those kinds of dangerous missions,” Qing Nu said, thinking Chen Mobai was worried about her being tasked with combat or assassination missions in the Sky-Mending Group.

Chapter 907: Return to Hometown_2

“That’s good,”

Chen Mobai nodded gently, then suddenly stopped. His eyes warmly gazed at Qing Women, who also turned her head in curiosity. In the instant their eyes met, her pretty face blushed involuntarily, and she lowered her head.

Qing Women, “What’s the matter?”

Chen Mobai didn’t respond. Instead, he extended his right index finger and lightly tapped his temple, then drew out a “Divine Consciousness Thread” filled with his mental intentions from the Sea of Knowledge at his Purple Palace.

Afterward, he reached out and took hold of Qing Women’s snow-white, delicate left hand. She symbolically struggled a little before letting him hold it.

Qing Women's heart thudded wildly, thinking she might finally hear that awaited answer—whether she should agree immediately or pretend to wait a bit longer—when Chen Mobai's "Divine Consciousness Thread" lightly tapped on the door of her heart.

Only the closest of relations in the Immortal Gate would communicate in this way, with heart and mind completely open to each other.

Qing Women hesitated for a moment, but then quickly let down her guard, allowing Chen Mobai's "Divine Consciousness Thread" to enter her own Sea of Knowledge at the Purple Palace.

"If you need anything, call me,"

After the exchange of heart and mind, Chen Mobai spoke again with a calm tone.

But by this time, Qing Women had already realized the heavy significance behind these words.

It signified that Chen Mobai was very likely to confront other Golden Core Masters because of her, and might even face the dark forces hidden at the very top of the Immortal Gate.

Just as Chen Mobai released her hand and turned to leave, Qing Women suddenly rushed forward and hugged him from behind, her voice trembling slightly as she spoke.

"Promise me, you won't investigate this matter because of me, okay?"

Feeling the softness of the beautiful woman behind him, Chen Mobai was puzzled. When had he said he would investigate this matter for Qing Women?

He had merely told her about what Lan Haitian had said, to be careful within the Sky-Mending Group, so as not to be used by others as a pretext to confront the two Golden Core Masters from Red Sandstone City.

Could it be that his words had caused a misunderstanding?

Chen Mobai, "Don't worry, have you forgotten that I graduated from the Dance Tool Dao Academy? Besides the headmaster, Master Chengxuan, we also have Ancestor Baiguang..."

Qing Women, "You don't have to give up a promising future for my sake, choosing to go to Yu Wood City."

As Chen Mobai was speaking, Qing Women suddenly started to sob slightly, her emotions getting the better of her and interrupting him.

Chen Mobai, "The main reason I'm going to Yu Wood City is that it's close to home; it's not as complicated as you think..."

Qing Women, "I know, you're saying this to reassure me. I really don't deserve you sacrificing so much for me, wuu wuu wuu..."

"You've really misunderstood." Before Chen Mobai could voice these words, Qing Women's sobs had escalated into loud crying.

One clear teardrop after another slid down her pale cheeks, soaking the back of Chen Mobai's clothes.

At this point, Chen Mobai felt that no matter what he said, she wouldn't be able to hear him. Although it was raining, since they were cultivators, there were still quite a few people around the commercial street; they stopped to watch, and some even pulled out their phones to start recording.

Damn!

It was only then that Chen Mobai remembered that he was somewhat of a celebrity.

He immediately wrapped himself and the crying Qing Women with "Red Misty Cloud Silk" and left.

Observing the somewhat off-kilter emotional state of Qing Women, Chen Mobai could only cancel his ticket for leaving that day and booked the hotel for another day.

That day, Qing Women cried for a long time in his embrace, as though she had released all the repression and emotions that had built up in her heart for over twenty years since Kong Feichen and Yang Jing had been taken away.

Chen Mobai put himself in her shoes for a moment. His two closest people had been taken away by a heretical cult, and even though he was within an Immortal Gate, he had never been trusted. Ever since graduating from the Daoist Academy, his body and soul had been trapped within the Sky-Mending Group, constantly under surveillance.

He felt that he could only endure such a life for a few years at most before he would inevitably flee to the Tianhe Realm.

But Qing Women had persevered until now, simply because the Sky-Mending Group had the most comprehensive intelligence on the Ascension Sect, so she could get news about her younger siblings at the first possible moment.

The night grew deep.

And at some point, Qing Women, tired from crying, had fallen asleep in Chen Mobai's arms.

He didn't dare to move, watching the delicate visage marred by tear-tracks after her crying spell, he reached out to tuck a few strands of hair that had fallen to the corner of her mouth, his fingertips grazing her snow-white, fine cheek, unable to resist softly brushing across it.

This action seemed to have awoken Qing Nu, she rubbed her eyes and, upon seeing Chen Mobai's tender gaze, she relaxed, shifted her position and fell asleep again.

Within the Immortal Gate, Chen Mobai came from the Dance Tool Dao Academy, had his full family around him, friends all across the world; everyone wanted to be his friend.

But for Qing Nu, the Heavenly Spiritual Root of the Jumang Academy, Chen Mobai was the only friend with whom she could be completely open and honest.

It was only when she was with Chen Mobai that she would completely let her guard down.

Qing Nu slept for a very long time, not waking up until the next day in the late afternoon.

“I apologize, it’s been a long time since I’ve had such a relaxing sleep.”

Hearing this, Chen Mobai felt a twinge of heartache.

Qing Nu had told him that when resting within the Sky-Mending Group, she would only dare to close one eye at a time and was always on high alert.

“Maybe I should speak with Lan Haitian and have you leave the Sky-Mending Group. Come with me to Yu Wood City,”

Chen Mobai said impulsively, which made Qing Nu’s eyes light up with a touch of emotion, but she quickly shook her head and looked down apologetically.

“I’m sorry, I can’t let go of Little Dust and Little Scenery.”

When Chen Mobai heard that she didn’t agree, he actually felt a sense of relief inside.

Bringing Qing Nu back to Yu Wood City would mark him as someone to watch out for, even if he didn’t want to investigate the matter, and might inadvertently alert whoever was behind the scenes.

“There’s no need to apologize; I respect all of your decisions.”

These words from Chen Mobai moved Qing Nu even more, and amidst her gentle sobs, tears glistened in her eyes again.

By the time the two of them parted ways, it was the morning of the next day.

Qing Nu escorted Chen Mobai to the airport entrance, only turning back reluctantly, three steps at a time, after his figure had disappeared, heading back to the Sky-Mending Group.

...

[Warm welcome to True Person Chen Mobai's glorious return home!]

As soon as he got out of the airport, Chen Mobai saw huge banners with this message. The City Lord of Red Sandstone City, Qin Baipeng, was there personally with leaders from various departments waiting for him.

Standing beside Qin Baipeng, naturally, were Chen Xinglan and Tang Panchui.

"Why go to so much trouble? I'm just visiting my hometown for a bit before I head over to take up my post in Yu Wood City,"

Chen Mobai said, pointing to the crowd on the outskirts, the exaggerated banners, and even the support signs with his image on them—a treatment surpassing even that of the biggest stars—then he shook his head.

His words made Qin Baipeng hurry to explain that it was the citizens who came to welcome him on their own initiative, showing their pride in True Person Chen Mobai, not something officially organized by them.

Chen Mobai took it for a spontaneous event, having no intention of walking a populist path. After waving to the throng outside, he left the airport with Qin Baipeng and the others.

The banquet seemed unavoidable, with Tang Panchui insisting, and Qin Baipeng among others fanning the flames, Chen Mobai's return home after Core Formation dominated Red Sandstone City's headlines for three days and nights.

After entertaining colleagues from the Immortal Gate, local Foundation Establishment cultivators, employees from various departments, as well as family and friends who had heard the news and come running, Chen Mobai finally got a break.

His grandfather Tang Lu also brought half the village to Red Sandstone City, as they all claimed some relation to them.

This was Tang Panchui's home field—she was the most excited person since Chen Mobai's return. She personally tended to every guest, even wanting to meet Chen Mobai's classmates.

Following the never-ending banquet, her excitement didn't dwindle, as she began frequenting the square where she regularly went dancing. Since Chen Mobai had hit the headlines, whenever someone mentioned it, she would nonchalantly add, "Did you know my son achieved Core Formation?"

Chen Mobai stayed in Red Sandstone City for a while, visited by a constant stream of people every day.

Feeling overwhelmed, he considered heading to Yu Wood City sooner, when he suddenly got a call from an unexpected person.

"You little rascal, growing wings now? You come back home after achieving Core Formation and don't come to pay respects to this local snake,"

Chen Mobai's expression became slightly odd as he listened to Yu Tianguang's words over the phone.

Chapter 908: If it were any other time, Chen Mobai would definitely have grabbed some fruits and gone to visit Yu Tianguang.

But since he learned from Lan Haitian that Yu might possibly be from the Ascension Sect, the always cautious Chen Mobai didn't want to take the risk of meeting him, even with the Purple Electric Sword in hand.

Moreover, in the eyes of the Immortal Gate, Yu Tianguang was one of the suspects, and it wouldn't look good for Chen to be seen with him.

He simply used the excuse that he was about to take up his post in Yu Wood City, expressing regret that he couldn't visit Cinnabarite Institute.

Yu Tianguang seemed to be somewhat unhappy about this and hung up the phone directly.

Chen Mobai didn't care whether this would startle the snake, since it was a matter for the Sky-Mending Group, but since he'd said as much over the phone, he couldn't stay in Red Sandstone City either.

He said goodbye to his family that evening and left early the next day.

Yu Wood City.

Bordering Red Sandstone City and one of the Seventy-Two Blessed Lands, this city is most famed for its vast forestry resources, and the Spirit Wood for Chen Mobai's talisman factory was all sourced from here.

The people of Yu Wood City basically understood Spirit Plants, and each household would grow a distinctly unique Spirit Wood in their yard, a tradition originating from the city's most famous City Lord, Yu Zi.

This Yu Zi was also the only Golden Core Master in the history of Yu Wood City and a Fourth-Order Spiritual Plant Master.

He led the city to evolve from traditional handicrafts to the modern forestry powerhouse it is now, and he established the Immortal Gate's greening regulations.

The Blue Elm he personally planted, with over three thousand years of care by countless Spirit Plant Masters, became the only fourth-grade Spirit Wood in Yu Wood City.

After arriving, Chen Mobai made it his first stop to visit.

“Councilor Chen, this is Guda Courtyard. There is a fourth-grade lower class Spirit Vein funded specifically by the Immortal Gate that runs directly here, all to nurture this fourth-grade elm.”

Wen Ping, the City Lord of Yu Wood City, brought Chen Mobai to an ancient-looking courtyard, and at its center stood a tall Spirit Wood with lush green leaves and sprawling branches.

This place was also considered a historic site. When Chen Mobai was a child in Green Mountain Village, his grandfather had spoken of it, leaving a deep impression, so upon his arrival, he expressed a desire to pay homage to the heritage of his predecessors.

Such a humble request was naturally swiftly arranged by the authorities of Yu Wood City.

Wen Ping was a gentle-faced, slender old man, a Third-Order Spiritual Plant Master, a local from Yu Wood City who grew up here. He studied at Qing Sang Academy and after graduating from Foundation Establishment, he joined the forestry bureau through civil service exams, and gradually rose through the ranks.

“I will have someone tidy it up later, and you, Councilor Chen, can move in tonight directly.”

Being one to govern a city, Wen Ping naturally understood subtleties and thought that Chen Mobai wanted to take over Guda Courtyard, given its connection to the fourth-grade Spirit Vein.

“I’m just here for a visit, to feel the spirit of the predecessors. There’s no need to move in,” Chen Mobai immediately shook his head. He had already used his Void Spirit Eye to see that the Spirit Vein Aura of Guda Courtyard was just enough to sustain the needs of a fourth-grade Spirit Wood. If he were to move in and use it for cultivation, it would affect the growth of the Spirit Wood.

Even though no one in Yu Wood City would have said anything if he had done so, it would not look good if word got out.

After all, with how widespread the internet is nowadays and with Chen being the latest sensation, there were many waiting to ride on his coattails.

His grandfather Tang Lu once said that as an official, one can choose not to act, but must not make mistakes.

And the best way to avoid mistakes is to do nothing at all.

As Chen Mobai had just arrived in Yu Wood City, it would be better not to act until he became more familiar with the people here, Wen Ping's faction included.

After the visit to Guda Courtyard, Chen Mobai briefly met the heads of various departments in Yu Wood City, then tactfully declined all kinds of hints and temptations, leaving with Song Mutu, the former principal of Qing Sang Academy who had come early to wait for him.

Song Mutu was a teacher at the Jumang Academy by appointment, and also a Third-Order Spiritual Plant Master, just one term junior to Wen Ren Xuewei.

"Wen Ren senior is extraordinarily talented. I thought the Immortal Gate would not see another person with more exceptional talent than her until your appearance, President Chen."

Song Mutu had an ordinary appearance, but was quite humorous and quickly used their mutual acquaintance Wen Ren Xuewei to bridge their relationship.

"Haha, that's too kind. Compared to Wen Ren senior who had mastered the Lasting Spring Cultivation, my talent pales in comparison."

Within the Immortal Gate, there were not many that Chen Mobai admired, but Wen Ren Xuewei was one of them. He had labored with the resources of the Tianhe Realm to raise his fire spiritual roots value to above 80.

And yet Wen Ren Xuewei, even with the limited resources of the Immortal Gate, achieved the cultivation of Lasting Spring Cultivation with a three-lined Heavenly Spiritual Root, rightfully earning the title of the number one talent in the Immortal Gate.

Most importantly, she had stabilized her Nascent Soul and was surely to take over the Jumang Academy, becoming one of the pinnacles of the Immortal Gate in the future.

“President Chen, let me first introduce you to the basics of Qing Sang Academy...”

After exchanging courtesies, they arrived at the academy. Unlike the two academies in Red Sandstone City which were built on mountains, this was on a plain. However, various species of Spirit Wood were planted in circles according to a plan, with youthful boys and girls in groups taking care and observing them.

The Qing Sang Academy initially started as a co-managed school by the Dance Tool Dao Academy and Jumang Academy, with the intent to breed Qingsang silkworms and harvest their silk to weave the Dancing Device Red and Black Robe and Sentence Mang Fairy Green Shirt.

Chapter 909: Return to Tianhe Realm_2

Previously, the Dance Tool Dao Academy had bred some fire silkworms over here, but as the operation grew in scale, the resources provided by the mulberry trees became insufficient. Hence, they called upon the experts from Jumang Academy to assist them.

Since its establishment, over five hundred years ago, Qing Sang Academy has ranked first among the Immortal Gates in sericulture and in the cultivation of mulberry trees.

In addition to these, the weaving department is also well-known. The cultivation of various kinds of spirit wood, apart from mulberry trees, is also included in the curriculum taught at the academy.

“Teacher Song has made remarkable contributions.”

Upon hearing this, Chen Mobai was very satisfied with Qing Sang Academy. The Bai Er Shi Fu under the Immortal Gates specialized in various fields, such as the Life-Extension Cultivation Institute in Red City Cave Heaven, known for their research into lifespan.

The fact that Qing Sang Academy ranked first in two specialties showed the tireless efforts of the successive principals.

“Not at all, I merely did my duty. With Principal Chen’s arrival, our academy will surely rank first in even more specialties in the future.”

Song Mutu said modestly. At this moment, a group of students approached, led by a handsome young teacher. He recognized Song Mutu and immediately came over to greet him, and then his gaze landed on Chen Mobai, causing a slight change in his expression.

“I’ve met Principal Chen... Vice-principal Song.”

Chen Mobai had been making headlines in the Immortal Gate recently. The news of him choosing to take up the position of principal at Qing Sang Academy had not yet spread outside, but the academy’s internal departments had already been notified by the Ministry of Education. Therefore, the young teacher hesitated before deciding to address him as the principal.

“Hello Teacher Gu, please continue with your class.”

Song Mutu nodded and addressed the young teacher.

“Have we met before?”

Just as the young teacher was about to leave, Chen Mobai suddenly asked.

“The principal may forget things because he meets so many people. In our youth, I had the honor of sharing a train ride with you. My name is Gu Mingxuan.”

Gu Mingxuan did not hide anything and looked up as he spoke to Chen Mobai.

Upon hearing this, Chen Mobai scrutinized his face and indeed found the memory of that scene within his recollections.

It was him.

Back then, a young and frivolous Chen Mobai encountered him, Shi Wanyu, Wen Xiong, and others on the train and had put on quite the act.

In the blink of an eye, more than twenty years had passed.

“If Teacher Gu has spare time, you are welcome to visit my office.”

Chen Mobai said to Gu Mingxuan, who after hearing this, hesitated to speak and then bowed his head and turned to leave.

“I didn’t expect Principal Chen to know Teacher Gu. He passed the Military Department’s assessment as a Rank-2 Spirit Plant Master and is a new teacher we at Qing Sang Academy are focusing on nurturing.”

After Gu Mingxuan left, Song Mutu started to speak about his background and reasons for joining the academy.

Within the Immortal Gate, after all, only a minority could reach Foundation Establishment.

Apart from the Daoist Academies guaranteeing every teacher had at least reached Foundation Establishment, Bai Er Shi Fu only had principals and key department heads at that realm.

The rest of the teaching staff were generally at the Ninth Layer of Qi Cultivation, but they made sure to possess the Immortal Gate’s Rank-2 professional certificate.

Gu Mingxuan was one of them.

After hearing this, Chen Mobai nodded, not placing too much importance on it, as he was merely surprised to encounter an acquaintance.

The two continued to tour Qing Sang Academy's mulberry gardens, sericulture yards...

"Teacher Gu, is that our new principal?"

"He looks so young, almost like one of us."

"After all, he's the youngest among all the Golden Core Masters in the Immortal Gate to achieve Core Formation."

After Chen Mobai left, the excitement in the voices of the students that Gu Mingxuan was leading could be heard as they began to discuss animatedly.

Some had even started recording videos on their phones during the encounter, already editing and preparing to upload them.

After all, just including the name Chen Mobai in a headline now guaranteed a surge in traffic.

"Let's go, students, today we'll observe the agarwood trees,"

Gu Mingxuan immediately cut off their excitement and brought them back to the reality of class. Nonetheless, as he led the students away, he couldn't help but glance back at Chen Mobai's retreating figure, feeling a tinge of sadness in his heart.

Back on the train, although they were worlds apart, he at least felt that he could compare himself to Chen Mobai.

But now, they weren't even in the same dimension any longer.

Thinking about what he knew, Gu Mingxuan's eyes flickered with struggle, but he eventually let out a sigh.

Chen Mobai had reached the Gold Core realm!

He was even the Supreme Emperor of the whole Yu Wood City.

He, a mere junior cultivator at the ninth layer of Qi Cultivation, should probably mind his own business.

...

After getting to know Qing Sang Academy with Song Mutu, Chen Mobai decided to follow Xiao's rule and allowed the academy to continue operating as it had before.

After all, his main reason for being here as the headmaster was for tranquility.

If he got involved in the running of the academy, there was no saying whether it would get better or not, but his energy would definitely be divided to some extent. He'd rather use that time to manage affairs in the Tianhe Realm properly.

After staying at Qing Sang Academy for seven days, Chen Mobai chose an independent courtyard not far from campus as his home here, and naturally, he bought it outright with his current status.

Then he applied for a Third Rank Superior Grade Spirit Vein from Immortal Gate, which was a perk of being a Kaiyuan Hall Councilor and came free of charge.

Since the pipelines for Spirit Veins of rank three and above needed upgrading, and luckily this Third Rank Spirit Vein source was right at Qing Sang Academy, and it was for him, a Golden Core Master, it only took three days under the personal supervision of Wen Ping to direct the Spiritual Energy to Chen Mobai's new residence in Yu Wood City.

Two months passed quickly, and Chen Mobai got used to everything here. Meanwhile, Yu Wood City and Qing Sang Academy went from initial turbulence to calm waters, due partly to Chen Mobai deliberately keeping a low profile and staying out of affairs.

Wen Ping and Song Mutu had nothing but praise for Chen Mobai. When chatting with their colleagues and alumni, they would say that Councilor Chen (Headmaster) knew how to utilize and understand people, and since his appointment, the ambiance in the city and the academy had become much clearer, even the trees were growing better.

In such circumstances, Chen Mobai left behind a Formless Puppet and returned to the Tianhe Realm.

...

Boom!

Chen Mobai, stepping out of a desolate mountain cave dwelling, looked up at the sudden appearance of dark clouds in the sky, along with the wildly converging nature's spiritual energy and the flickering lightning, and couldn't help but smile slightly.

As he expected, after Core Formation and returning to the Tianhe Realm, he had to undergo the Heavenly Tribulation.

Although he was 70 to 80 percent confident he could easily overcome it, to ensure a complete success, he decided to make use of the Large Formation of Divine Wood Sect after returning there to transcend the tribulation.

After performing the completely mastered Returning Essence Secret Technique, the Pure Yang Spiritual Power in his Dantian Qi Sea began to hide away into the All Laws Persona. As his cultivation level continuously decreased, the Tribulation Thunder in the sky initially flashing wildly started to hesitate and eventually faded away slowly due to the lack of a target.

Watching the dissipation of the clouds in the sky, Chen Mobai nodded his head.

This Returning Essence Secret Technique was indeed extraordinary, it was just a pity that for this secret technique, he lost his most obedient little apprentice.

Every time Chen Mobai thought of Luo Yixuan, he couldn't help but sigh.

But now that he had formed his Gold Core, he could at least deal with the Eastern Wasteland with composure, hoping that in the years it took him to form his core, his little apprentice hadn't encountered any mishaps.

Chen Mobai identified the direction and, riding on the "Red Misty Cloud Silk," was about to fly towards the Eastern Wasteland.

This was an area between the East Barbarians and the Eastern Wasteland, filled with continuous mountains and dense forests, hiding unspeakable weirdness and demonic beasts. Without a cultivator familiar with the paths to guide them, it was easy to get lost and end up as a pile of bones.

When Chen Mobai left Divine Wood Sect, it was ostensibly to go to the Sun Bathing Sea by the Golden Crow Immortal City for Core Formation, but after leaving the Eastern Wasteland, he directly returned to Immortal Gate.

However, to draw attention, he still sent one of his Formless Puppets to the East Barbarians.

Now that his Core Formation was successful, he could recall the puppet.

Chen Mobai closed his eyes and stimulated his Divine Sense, but he realized that the Formless Puppet seemed to be trapped in a place and unable to move. He uttered a surprised sound.

In his perception, that place wasn't far from him.

Chapter 910: Land of Ruins Chen Mobai flew for a while and soon arrived near where the Formless Puppet was located.

He manipulated the Puppetry Technique, trying to summon the Formless Puppet, but after a long wait, he found the puppet remained motionless. After circling the area, he still couldn't detect any trace of the puppet.

Chen Mobai sat down cross-legged on the ground and began to sense the puppet with his Divine Sense.

After achieving Core Formation, he was able to unleash the full power of this peak Immortal Gate puppet, so he quickly found its location following the coordinates in his Divine Sense.

As if breaking through a barrier, once he opened his eyes, Chen Mobai, borrowing the puppet's field of vision, looked around and couldn't help but wear a look of astonishment and doubt.

He was inside an underground cave, where pure Spiritual Energy flowed abundantly in mid-air. He used the puppet's built-in features to measure and found a Rank-3 Lower-grade Spiritual Energy Value.

How had the puppet gotten in here?

With this question in mind, this strand of Chen Mobai's Divine Sense began to activate the Formless Puppet and saw that the Top-grade Spirit Stone placed in its power core only had 2% of its Spiritual Energy left, almost completely depleted.

Logically, this Top-grade Spirit Stone should be enough to maintain the puppet's normal operations for more than a dozen years without intense combat.

He activated the puppet's low-power mode and drained the last bit of Spiritual Energy from the Spirit Stone, then began to head toward the ground.

If the Spirit Stone had been fully charged, he would have been able to use the Formless Puppet to simulate Sword Qi to break through the ground and emerge, but now, he could only follow the path of the underground cave slowly.

After walking some distance, Chen Mobai saw through the puppet's eyes skeleton after skeleton, both of human cultivators and demonic beasts, as if this place was some sort of feeding ground for a certain monster.

What surprised him was that beside a human cultivator's skeleton, he found a Storage Bag.

Walking and picking up as he went, by the time the Formless Puppet reached the surface, it carried three more Storage Bags.

“Strange, what exactly is this place below?”

The Chen Mobai sitting cross-legged above ground opened his eyes and looked at the Formless Puppet now in front of him covered in dust, then took out a new Top-grade Spirit Stone and inserted it into the puppet.

Amidst the clinking and clattering noises, Chen Mobai emptied the contents of the three Storage Bags.

And he discovered something quite astonishing.

All the Spiritual Stone Spiritual Qi inside was drained, reduced to a state of desiccation and fragmentation, and even some Magic Artifacts had their Spiritual Light dimmed, seeming to have lost their effectiveness after being eroded by the long passage of time.

Chen Mobai recognized some familiar designs, the Golden Halberds from Xuan Xiao Taoist Palace, and also some Golden Crystals.

Could the person who died down there be a disciple of the great Eastern Yi Clan?

Unfortunately, the Gold Qi contained in the Golden Crystals, which is a variant of Spiritual Energy, was also drained like the Spirit Stones, or else Chen Mobai could have taken the chance to cultivate the Precious Golden Light technique.

“Let me see what exactly happened,” he said.

After replacing the Spirit Stone, Chen Mobai immediately accessed the data stored in the core of the Formless Puppet. Starting from the darkness that ensued when the Spirit Stone was exhausted and shutting down, he flipped forward and finally saw what was key.

The ground suddenly split open, and a giant mouth emerged, swallowing towards the sky. The Formless Puppet, which was traveling in mid-air, began to struggle.

With the Spirit Stone's Spiritual Qi sufficient, the Formless Puppet could exert strength nearly comparable to a Core Formation, but still, it barely escaped the dreadful devouring force.

It was unfortunate that after escaping once, it then encountered it a second and a third time...

By the fourth occasion, the Spirit Stone of the Formless Puppet was exhausted, and it could no longer sustain itself; it was swallowed by the split earth and fell into darkness.

Until Chen Mobai's return sensed it and awakened it.

"Is it a deliberate targeting, or just such bad luck encountering this strangeness?"

In the land of ruins between the Eastern Wilderness and the Eastern Yi, there exist many unknown mysterious forces and strong demonic beasts. Originally, Eastern Yi and Eastern Wilderness were part of this region, but it was later cleared by the disciples and sect members from the major factions of East Land, forming what is now the Six Domains of East Land.

Although human cultivators dominate the Tianhe Realm, demons, ghost cultivators, and others do not fall behind. Beyond the Six Domains of East Land, there are Demon Holy Lands.

The Dongli Territory, in particular, has always been a buffer zone between the human race and the demon tribe, and also a battlefield.

Devil Cultivators can take root and grow there because East Land needs them as the first barrier to resist the demon tribe.

However, at times, Devil Cultivators can become crazed; in alliance with the demon tribe, they will attack East Land. During the most dangerous times, nearly half of East Land was about to fall, and many Holy Lands were prepared for the demise of their ancestral lands, arranging for their core disciples to carry the legacy and flee to the remote Land of Ruins.

Dongyi, Eastern Wilderness, Dongwu, and other domains were established as a result of these events.

In these lands of ruins, there are also numerous dangers, such as the Yellow Dragon Monster that has dominated the Yunmeng River for thousands of years, rampaging across three domains with no one to control it.

Fortunately, among the descendants of the pioneer cultivators, a True Monarch Yuan emerged, and after achieving Divinity Transformation, he swept through the Rank-4 and above demonic beasts of this Land of Ruins. Otherwise, without the presence of Nascent Soul Cultivators to oversee, it would have been impossible to survive safely in this Land of Ruins.

Chen Mobai thought of the content he had read in the annals of the Divine Wood Sect and his face subtly changed, a solemn look in his eyes as he gazed at the earth that had swallowed the Formless Puppet.