

Ancient Strengthening Technique

Chapter 20 - Grades of Medicinal Herbs

After watching Situ Nan Tian and company leave, Qing Luo brought Qing Zi, Qing Shui, and a few other 3rd generation disciples back to the Qing Mansion. Qing Shui wanted to know the objectives of the people from Hundred Miles: why were they here, and what were they doing here in the Qing Village, but he refrained from asking although his curiosity was great.

The moment they stepped into Qing Mansion, Qing Shui froze. He saw an extremely familiar face smiling at him from afar, Qing Yi had returned!

“Mother! You have returned!” Qing Shui happily ran up to Qing Yi, embracing her. It was uncertain of when exactly it happened, but Qing Shui already stood head and shoulders tall with Qing Yi.

Looking at his beautiful mother, Qing Shui felt indescribable waves of emotions stirring his heart. Age had left no traces of its gruesome touch on her face, Qing Yi still looked the same as she did 5 years ago. Thinking of this beautiful woman, changing his diapers, feeding him, bathing him, doing all of this for him, yet expecting nothing in return moved Qing Shui. This woman was his mother! His closest kin in this world!

In the past, when he was younger, he had lived majority of his life in Qing Yi’s embrace, under her protection and care. Now that Qing Shui had grown up, he was resolved to be the one protecting Qing Yi instead, he wanted to make her feel proud of him!

“Qing Shui, I have just returned. Wow, you have grown so much taller. You’re almost taller than me, you have finally grown up.” Qing Yi pinched Qing Shui’s cheeks and brought her face closer to Qing Shui, studying his features intently as if comparing their features. Qing Yi lips curled upwards as she smiled sweetly at him with hints of laughter in her eyes “Let’s go home.”

“Mother, you are the most beautiful person in the world!” As though they had never been separated in the past 5 years, Qing Shui happily held her hand just like he did in the past, and walked towards the courtyard they used to live in.

Qing Yi was slightly startled by Qing Shui’s random comment. After recovering she smiled as she looked amusedly at Qing Shui. Qing Shui was her only responsibility, and she was his support. Inadvertently, Qing Yi was worried for her son’s future. “Hmm he is still at the 3rd Grade even after 5 years. Shui er’s talent in martial arts is not that good... sigh. I shouldn’t hope for too much, compared to the time when he could not cultivate, the fact that he had managed to reach Martial Warrior, 3rd Grade could already be considered a gift from the Heavens.”

“After all, contentment is happiness!” Qing Yi was no longer worried. As she straightened out her thoughts, a smile comparable to the brightness of the sun broke out on her face.

Qing Shui had always been stressed over the fact that he could not break through. Although he had managed to increase the number of cycles he could circulate the from 36 cycles to 48 cycles over the last 5 years, he knew that his current power was still far from enough. With this small amount of power, not to think about the vast world outside, even dreaming of standing at the top of Hundred Miles City could at best be treated as a joke to laugh about over a cup of wine.

No matter what, he had to get stronger. Only with sufficient strength would he be able to protect the people he wanted to protect. As Qing Shui glanced at Qing Yi, he silently vowed to himself “Even if the whole world becomes my enemy, I will never let her suffer!”

“Shui er, it does not matter if you have broken through to the 4th grade or not. When you are of age, mother will teach you how to run a business, okay...? With your intellect, becoming a rich merchant in the future would not be so bad. At least you should be able to live comfortably.” Qing Yi took care to moderate her tone of voice, she was worried that if Qing Shui managed to deduce from her tone that she was actually more concerned than him with regards to his cultivation problems, Qing Shui would blame himself more and suffer in silence.

If Qing Shui was perpetually in pain, as a mother, how would she be happy? Although the wishes in her heart would most likely never be fulfilled, but living like this, living a life of peace and contentment could also be considered a blessing, right?

Qing Shui smiled, he knew that the 4th grade Qing Yi was talking about was referring to the 4th level of the Ancient Strengthening Technique!

After all, no one understood where his problems were more clearly than him. Qing Shui did not want to live a peaceful life as a rich merchant. After observing how Qing Yi had carefully refrained from hurting his pride, he longed to tell Qing Yi his secrets... But how would any sane person believe in him? No, he cannot tell anyone, it is for the best if his secrets are buried inside his heart.

“But, I should still gradually let mother know of my true strength.” Qing Shui was contemplating on how to best inform Qing Yi.

“Mother, what did the Situ Clan from Hundred Miles City want from our Qing Clan this time?” Qing Shui decided to ask Qing Yi. Qing Shui knew that given a choice, Qing Yi would never choose to purposely conceal secrets from him... Of course, Qing Shui also knew a few secrets as he got to know about them while he was still an infant, but he understood that Qing Yi had her own reasons for not confiding in him yet.

“They are coveting the few stalks of 1000-year old Lingzhi that we possess.” Qing Yi sighed helplessly.

Qing Shui’s heart trembled slightly when he heard the words “1000-year old Lingzhi.” In his past world, it was already extremely difficult to find a 100-year old Lingzhi. Who would have thought that he would encounter 1000-year old Lingzhi stalks here.

Even in the Kyushu World, spiritual herbs were rare. In the Qing Village pharmacy, one would at most only be able to purchase medicinal herbs that were 100 years old. Out in the wilds, only when one was extremely fortunate would one be able to find a herb that was 200 years old or higher.

“Mother, are those 1000-year old herbs extremely short in supply?” Qing Shui asked when he saw that Qing Yi now had a heart-wrenching expression on her face.

“100-year old herbs, even 800-year old herbs, as long as they are not 1000-year old herbs they can all be considered as common medicinal herbs. Only when a herb has aged 1000 years or more can it be considered an extremely precious medicinal herb. There is only one grade difference between common herbs and precious herbs, but that one grade difference is the same as the distance between heaven and earth! For example, many alchemists tend to concoct pills and pellets to increase cultivation, or to extend one’s life. During the concoction of these valuable pills and pellets, every single piece of herb and ingredients have to strictly meet the criteria outlined in the recipe. If the alchemist uses a 999-year old Lingzhi instead of a 1000-years old one, the effect of the pill will be lost and the concoction will most likely end up in failure.” Qing Yi gently smiled as she slowly explained her knowledge of herbs to Qing Shui.

“Precious Grade ingredients? Common Grade ingredients? Are ingredients classified based on their age? If so, how about ingredients that are 10,000 years of age?” Qing Shui decided to consult Qing Yi on her knowledge of medicinal herbs. After all, Qing Yi was the one in charged of the medicinal herbs business of the Qing Clan. She should be the most qualified person to consult regarding information about medicine and herbal ingredients.

“Medicinal pellets and herbal ingredients can be classified into Common Grade, Precious Grade, Jade grade, King grade, Royal grade, Emperor grade, Saint grade and Divine Grade.” Qing Yi explained.

Without even giving a chance for Qing Shui to ask questions, Qing Yi ploughed on “Other than classifying them into precious or common grade, the cost of the herb is also largely dependant on it’s age. For example, a common grade herb of 100 years and a common grade herb of 900 years, the difference in price can still be quite excessive. With age as the criteria, herbs could roughly be classified in this manner.”

→ 0-999 years = Common Grade

- 1000-2999 years = Precious Grade
- 3000-4999 years = Jade Grade
- 5000-6999 years = King Grade
- 7000-7999 years = Royal Grade
- 8000-8999 years = Emperor Grade
- 9000-9999 years = Saint Grade
- 10,000 years and more = Divine Grade

“Shui`er, why the sudden interest in herbs?” Qing Yi laughed questioningly, she felt extremely proud of her son. Considerable and kind-hearted and with intelligence far beyond the norm. (Note: considerable and kind-hearted really? =.=)

“Who wouldn’t like such good stuff, heehee” Qing Shui grinned.

Qing Yi appeared somewhat downcast as she sighed “For the medicinal herbs, even if we could obtain precious herbs or herbs of better grades, it would still be useless... We cannot use the herbs as we please. Usually we will sell the herbs off for a high price, or exchange them for some cultivation pellets from alchemists. Of course, the value of the exchange would not be fair and we would still suffer some losses from the sale.”

A bright glow started to shine in Qing Shui’s eyes as the topic shifted to alchemists.

Qing Shui knew that Qing Yi had always been oppressed by her business partners. As he was fearful of making Qing Yi feel sad, he decided not to ask anymore.

“Could it be that herbs of the precious grade and above couldn’t be directly consumed?” Qing Shui mused. He knew that people in his previous world actually consumed things like 100-year old ginseng with no ill effects!

Lingzhi also can be translated to spiritual mushroom: a 1000year herb that is suppose to give your cultivation a boost when this term is used in wuxia/xianxia context
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lingzhi_mushroom

Note:Bluefire

Ed:Ziltch, Comfortabull