

Domination 661

Chapter 661: Verbal Extortion

At this moment, the scene was so silent that one could even hear the drop of a needle. There was only a gentle breeze blowing by the imperial palace. In fact, even Madam Zi Yan next to Li Qiye and the eighteen monarchs behind him took deep breaths out of worry for him.

This was a Virtuous Paragon! Anyone who was glared at by one would be nervous and feel uneasy; they would no longer dare to act so bold.

And yet, Li Qiye was still unperturbed while seated in his chair. He was not even sitting straight, he was partially lying down, completely relaxed while waiting for the ancestor to say his piece.

The ancestor looked at Li Qiye for a while and only had one thought — if this brat ahead was not insane, then he was an idiot. However, since Li Qiye didn't look like an idiot, he had to be crazy then!

When everyone thought that the Huangfu Ancestor would angrily take action against Li Qiye, against their expectations, the ancestor slowly spoke: "It is fine if the Giant Bamboo Country do not want war, but your country sneak-attacked our Hao'er. Harming our descendant is a heinous crime! Our Hao'er's injury is grave, and outside of supreme medicines, nothing can cure him. This is an unbelievable loss that must be paid by your country!"

Li Qiye smiled and asked after hearing the ancestor: "Oh? What kind of compensation do you want for your Huangfu Clan's loss?"

The eighteen monarchs heaved a sigh of relief after hearing Li Qiye. They all assumed that Li Qiye was prepared to negotiate with the Huangfu Clan instead of his previous declaration of murdering all of them. Now, with the new development, the monarchs felt that there were still room for reconciliation between the two sides.

Upon hearing this, many people felt that Li Qiye was acquiescing to the Huangfu Clan. Some of them shook their heads after recalling his initially arrogant attitude. It looks like it wouldn't last till the very end as he had to eventually accept his defeat.

Meanwhile, the Qing Clan Master only sneered while his head was full of expectations. He understood that with the appearance of the Huangfu Ancestor, the Giant Bamboo Country had no choice but to accept defeat. This was a resounding success for their clan as well.

In the courtyard, only Madam Zi Yan slightly shook her head since she knew very clearly that there was no way Li Qiye would accept defeat.

At this time, the Huangfu Ancestor coldly said: "It's simple. Your Giant Bamboo Country has to give up the eight western grand prefectures to my Huangfu Clan. That will be your compensation for our losses."

The moment this demand came out, the eighteen monarchs' expressions quickly soured. This initial demand already brought up the ownership of land, and it was eight big prefectures at that. This was more than just extortion, it was basically wanting to take the entire country!

They shuddered inside at this time since they realized that their reignited hope was only grasping at straws. The Huangfu Clan had never considered resolving this peacefully or letting go of their previous animosity!

In the distance, the expressions of many cultivators, including even great characters, changed after hearing this. Some of them already knew that there wouldn't be a peaceful resolution, but they didn't think that the Huangfu Clan would ask for so much.

"Oh, so you want eight grand prefectures. Very well, I have heard your condition." Li Qiye slightly nodded his head, then he turned towards the Qing Clan's group and asked: "What is your condition regarding your dead son?"

The crowd was stirred the moment Li Qiye spoke. Even the monarchs standing behind him were startled. Some of them were even angry since they thought that Li Qiye was accepting the Huangfu Ancestor's demand. In their minds, their Giant Bamboo Country would never yield to such a humiliating demand.

One Demon Monarch could no longer bear it and was going to step out, but Madam Zi Yan gently waved her sleeve, telling him to calm down.

"This, this is too much." A cultivator standing in the distance couldn't help but say: "Where did the Giant Bamboo Country find this weak and incompetent person? They even left him in charge...!"

A rowdy furor appeared among the crowd. Some were even enraged because the majority of the cultivators were still very loyal. Now, when Li Qiye seemed to be agreeing to the Huangfu Clan's condition, some of the cultivators here couldn't bear this shame.

In fact, even people from the Qing Clan and Huangfu Clan along with the supporting lineages were caught off guard. This negotiation was a bit too easy.

The Qing Clan Master stumbled a bit after being asked by Li Qiye. He felt a bit dazed because this came too easily. He calmed down and took a deep breath before speaking: "You tricked my son, so this crime is unforgivable. However, Her Majesty even gave you protection — this is not only abusing her power for personal gains in an arbitrary and prejudicial manner against the Giant Bamboo Country's reputation, it is also breaking the tradition of having wise rulers until now..."

"I understand." Before the Qing Clan Master could finish, Li Qiye waved his sleeve and interrupted him: "You are trying to say that you want the Royal Lord position of the country, and your Qing Clan will enter the imperial court to rule the country. As for me, I killed your son so I have to pay for it with my life. Am I correct?"

The clan master was a bit surprised when Li Qiye said everything he wanted to, causing him to nervously swallow his saliva. However, he still bit his teeth and nodded solemnly to say: "Yes, exactly right."

"Okay, your request is not surprising." Li Qiye nodded and then looked at the experts from the lineages that were assisting the Qing Clan to say: "The Huangfu Clan and the Qing Clan have made their cases, what are your requests? If you have nothing, then I will resolve the issues of these two clans."

Astonishment was the only reaction to Li Qiye's reply. At first, it was only giving up territory to the Huangfu Clan, but now he even handed the imperial rule over to the Qing Clan. Everyone now felt that Li

Qiye wasn't the only one who was crazy, Madam Zi Yan's group were as well since they actually let such a crazy person take charge!

"We want the territory along the South Stream!" An expert from one sect immediately shouted after calming down.

Since Li Qiye would even pass away the imperial rule, how could these people not try to latch on to this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity?

"Our Yao Clan wants the Langfang region." Another expert immediately stated.

This scene sent many people into a daze. At this time, they felt that this location didn't resemble a national negotiation of important affairs anymore, it was more like a food market. Actually, it couldn't even be considered a market, it was more like children playing around. This was especially clear when these sects shouted out their conditions and swept away the originally serious atmosphere. They have now become rowdy old ladies at the market, haggling the prices.

At this point, even the eighteen monarchs felt that this was a little funny. At this time, they finally caught on after seeing this scene.

"Good, good, very good." Li Qiye waved his sleeve to stop the haggling lineages and finally nodded his head to say: "I have heard your conditions and demands."

With that, all of the lineages couldn't help but look at Li Qiye. In fact, all eyes were on him at this moment.

They wanted to see how Li Qiye would end this ridiculous scene of exorbitant demands. Many people even wondered if this crazy Li Qiye would actually meet these demands.

Once everyone was quiet, Li Qiye finally cleared his throat and slowly said: "I am a very receptive person. Everyone has desires, so I have listened." At this point, he paused for a bit before continuing: "However, regarding your conditions and demands, I must give my apologies as I really cannot meet them after listening. Now that you're all done, you need to hear my own words as well. There is only one thing I want to say — immediately disappear from my eyes. Scram as far away from me as possible!"

The moment these words came out, everyone's countenance suddenly turned extremely ugly, especially those on the opposing side who named their demands earlier.

At this point, many spectating cultivators felt particularly satisfied, especially after seeing the experts from the Qing Clan and the other sects look like they had just swallowed a fly. Some were laughing on the inside, but they didn't dare to laugh out loud since the Huangfu Ancestor's aura was still quite threatening.

"Do you think this is a joke?" At this time, the Huangfu Ancestor's aura was extremely scary, especially when his face turned cold; his aura could completely freeze the surrounding radius of ten thousand miles, causing everyone to feel as if the entire capital was inside a glacier.

There was no doubt that the Huangfu Ancestor, at this time, had become angry. The rage of a Virtuous Paragon could change even the temperament of the sky, causing the world to be without light. At this second, everyone became nervous and completely quiet beneath the ancestor's fury.

Li Qiye slightly lifted his brow and said: "To me, this is not much different from a joke."

"Junior, when my Huangfu Clan is enraged, rivers of blood will flow. When I make a move, mountains and rivers shall crumble!" The Huangfu Ancestor coldly said: "If you can't be in charge, then have someone else from your country step up and meet my demands as it is still not too late. If you refuse... Hurting Hao'er and making a fool out of me are more than enough cause for me to destroy your country!"

"That's right, the imperial court needs to show sincerity. If you don't stay true to your words and treat national affairs as a joke, it will lead to the collapse of the country!" At this time, the Qing Clan Master also said in a serious manner: "The imperial court set up my son and even protected his killer. Now, it doesn't want to stay true to its words — this discredits the entire country! It is time for a change of leadership; the Giant Bamboo Country should be led by a wise king!"

All the experts from the sects whom supported the Qing Clan rowdily exclaimed: "Yes, we must overthrow the incompetent tyrant of the imperial court or else our citizens will have to continue to suffer this horrible situation in anguish!"

Chapter 662: Massacring Clans With A Smile

"I will only say it once. I gave you a chance, but all of you did not cherish it!" Li Qiye slowly said: "So now, there can only be one end, and that is to wash these stairs with your blood! Kill them all!" With that, he simply clapped his hands together.

Li Qiye's arrogance caused many of the spectating bystanders to become dumbfounded. These words were too outrageous. Before him was a Virtuous Paragon! Even the monarchs looked at each other. At this time, they didn't know what to do; should they take action or keep watching?

The Huangfu Ancestor glared at Li Qiye and remained still. He was still waiting to see what the Giant Bamboo Country was hiding up its sleeves.

At this time, a Heavenly King from the Huangfu Clan sneered and stepped forward. His blood energy immediately soared to the sky like a dragon as he shouted: "Ignorant fool, kneel before me!"

The moment these words came out, a huge palm instantly headed for Li Qiye, wanting to grab him alive.

Li Qiye didn't even bat an eye in the face of this Heavenly King's palm, he still sat there motionlessly. At the same time, Madam Zi Yan and the eighteen monarchs became quite startled.

"Ba!" But before the gigantic palm could catch Li Qiye, a small sound appeared, and this Heavenly King was instantly turned into a bloody mist. He didn't even have time to scream and he didn't know how he had died.

"Don't you dare!" In a flash, the Huangfu Ancestor loudly roared; this roar was capable of shattering mountains and rivers! At this time, he finally took action and immediately took out his true fate weapon. A divine saber soared across the sky, wanting to kill the thing that had just slain the Heavenly King.

“Boom!” But before the saber could slash downward, it was immediately shattered as countless little pieces flew everywhere. Next, a little “ping” came about as this ancestor’s body was nailed to the capital’s gate.

At this time, his eyes were still glaring at his opponent, yet they were filled with fear. He failed to see how the opponent made a move even at the second of his death.

Eventually, people clearly saw that the culprit that killed the Huangfu Ancestor was only a little bamboo branch with fresh leaves. This branch pierced the ancestor’s forehead and pinned him to the gate; the branch immediately destroyed his true fate. One branch, one fatal blow — this was too shocking.

This was a Virtuous Paragon! A great power’s ancestor! However, he died just like that without a chance to fight back. How could the spectators not be shocked?

At this moment, people were gasping with their mouths opened wide enough to fit an egg. They couldn’t calm down and their minds were completely empty.

“I have given all of you a chance, but you chose not to take it. Everyone only has one life, so I can only apologize.” While everyone was still shaken, Li Qiye slowly uttered these nonchalant and carefree words.

During the commotion, one person managed to calm down and shuddered with a blanched expression before stuttering: “My, my Qing Ancestor is the Pill King, an, an invincible Virtuous Paragon. If you, you dare...” At this moment, the Qing Clan Master’s soul had already been frightened out of his body and kept on retreating backward.

“Qing Clan? From today on, there will be no Qing Clan in the Giant Bamboo Country. However, I’ll give your clan a path for survival; to the elderly and young, all of you get the hell out of the Giant Bamboo Country.” Li Qiye smiled dismissively and commanded: “Destroy the Qing Clan and its ancestral ground!”

“Buzz!” Up in the high clouds, one could see glimmers of green rays moving from the giant bamboo tree. At this time, a bamboo branch in the shape of an arrow appeared. With a quiet sound, the branch immediately pierced through the sky and traversed the great distance to the Qing Clan’s grounds.

“Boom!” At this second, a boundless raging flame soared to the sky from the Qing Clan, lighting up the entire country.

“No...!” However, this raging flame was immediately extinguished in the blink of an eye. A miserable, shrill wail echoed across the world, followed by a loud banging noise. The earth shook once as if something had penetrated the earth in the far distance.

“Ba, ba, ba!” Amidst the confusion, the bamboo branch that crossed the domain earlier had returned. Countless bodies were dropped before the imperial palace.

“No, Ancestor!” The moment these bodies fell down, the Qing Clan Master let out a sad bellow: “Grandfather, Father, Uncle...”

“The Pill King...!” A cultivator yelled out in horror after seeing a very majestic old man among the corpses. This old man’s chest had been thoroughly pierced; he couldn’t be dead.

These bodies were all great characters from the Qing Clan, consisting of ancestors, high elders, and elders. All had been pierced by this bamboo branch. From their expressions, one could tell that they were all powerless to resist — outside of the Pill King — and lost their lives in just one attack!

At this time, the Qing Clan Master was drowned with grief. He lost all hope after seeing these bodies because all the experts of the Qing Clan were here. Each of them was able to uphold a region by themselves, but now they were all dead.

“Kill them all, leave none alive.” Li Qiye slowly said without batting an eye.

“Buzz—” A green light fell down as a bamboo leaf slowly fluttered down. After seeing this leaf, all the experts from the sects and the Huangfu Clan lost their minds in fear. Someone screamed: “Shit, run!”

At this time, many turned to flee, but it was too late. “Pluff!” The bamboo leaf suddenly flashed and decapitated all the fleeing parties, including high elders from the Huangfu Clan and the Qing Clan Master... One by one, a bunch of heads started to roll for a fair distance on the ground.

The eyes on all of these heads were opened wide. They couldn’t believe it since, in this very instant, they could see a spring of blood spurting from their own necks.

These spraying fountains of blood were spectacular beyond words; the streams were brilliantly red and painted the ground, slowly flowing together.

Eventually, thuds could be heard as numerous headless bodies fell down to the ground.

After seeing this scene, whether it was the spectators or the monarchs or Madam Zi Yan, all were standing there looking silly without being able to speak.

At this point, all the sects and clans who appeared here were killed entirely. Not even one person managed to leave alive!

The verdant bamboo leaf gently flew into Li Qiye’s palm. Li Qiye gently blew on it, causing a drop of blood on the leaf to fall to the ground, permeating the mud.

The leaf was still as green and delicate as before. Li Qiye gently stroked it as if it was a rare treasure.

However, in the eyes of others, this was not a green leaf but the most terrifying weapon in this world! A ferocious weapon of murder!

At this moment, all were petrified and unable to calm down, including the madam. There were no thoughts running in their minds, only emptiness could be found.

No one thought that things would happen like this or that it would end in such a manner.

Prior to this, many had different speculations about this disaster. Some assumed that the imperial court would split, some thought that it would have a peaceful resolution, and some thought that the ruler of the country would change...

However, across all of the speculations, no one had thought about the giant bamboo, not even the madam. Although she was very confident in Li Qiye, she didn’t consider the giant bamboo. Not even in

her wildest dreams did she think she would have the chance to see the giant bamboo take action during her lifetime.

The country had been named after the giant bamboo since it was their Divine Guardian. This story had been passed down for millions of years. Ever since the founding of the country, the bamboo had been there and was considered an auspicious symbol and the protector of the country.

In fact, the country rarely had wars, it had always been peaceful, so no one had heard of the giant bamboo making a move or killing an enemy.

Thus, despite it being referred to as the Divine Guardian, the majority of people had only considered it to be part of the beautiful scenery, the symbolic attraction of the capital! Even the capital's inhabitants had forgotten about this tree above their heads that towered into the firmament. To them, the bamboo had been integrated into their lives. The country had viewed the existence of the bamboo as something familiar.

However, people finally saw the giant bamboo in action today. One branch killed a Virtuous Paragon while another destroyed the Qing Clan, not to mention that one leaf massacred many Heavenly Kings and Heavenly Sovereigns.

This illustrious battle record was too terrifying and frightening. Such an existence was indeed worthy of being called a deity, and not just in name!

In the yard, no one had expected to see the giant bamboo attacking with its invincible presence, not even in their dreams. Who would have thought that this giant bamboo, that was only considered part of the landscape, was capable of slaughtering ancestors like pigs?!

The truth was that this should have come as no wonder. For millions of years, very few people dared to offend the Giant Bamboo Country. Existences like the Alchemy Kingdom, the Jianlong Clan, even their ancestors who didn't know about the existence of the Dark Crow still knew that the Giant Bamboo Country was a forbidden ground. Through the long and arduous years, no one had dared to attack the Giant Bamboo Country, lest they be destroyed by a dark hand!

In fact, for a behemoth like the Alchemy Kingdom, even when their Immortal Emperors were alive, the emperors had warned their disciples to never offend the Giant Bamboo Country. Existences like Immortal Emperors knew that although the country was only of average size, it had an extraordinary status in the Nine Worlds.

Chapter 663: Warning To The World

Just imagine, when the country was founded, even a group of Godkings came to celebrate as well as many different races of the Nine Worlds. The Immortal Emperor of that generation came as well. Even the founding of an imperial lineage would not enjoy such grand treatment!

Because of the Giant Bamboo Country's mysterious origin, it became a real forbidden ground to many grand characters, giving it generations of peace.

The truly invincible people were not willing to invade the country while ordinary characters couldn't cause any big trouble, so the giant bamboo rarely had to take action in the past millions of years. Thus,

the world had forgotten that the giant bamboo was an actual Divine Guardian and instead only saw it as part of the beautiful landscape.

But today, the giant bamboo had taken action and immediately shocked the world by slaying Virtuous Paragons and massacring Heavenly Kings as if it was nothing!

As the blood flowed down the street, the heavy stench permeated throughout its corners without dissipating. The smell just lingered in everyone's noses, making them nauseous.

"Bleghh..." The moment they regained their thoughts, many people threw up nonstop, almost spitting out all the contents within their stomachs. Those who were more cowardly dropped to the ground and defecated their own pants since they were scared out of their wits.

Others were frightened and paled. This was a Virtuous Paragon, but he died just like that. Moreover, an alchemy clan that had stood strong for generations was immediately destroyed; even with the protection of another paragon, it couldn't escape its fate.

The eighteen monarchs were completely aghast as well. This scene was too terrorizing.

"What a pity." At this time, Li Qiye was still sitting in his armchair, feeling at home, as he said: "I love peace and didn't want the fires of war to reach this place, but unfortunately, a few people needed their blood to wash this land before understanding this simple logic."

Having said that, Li Qiye gently blew on the bamboo leaf in his palm. It slowly floated up into the air and went back to the bamboo tree; it was still as green and pretty as before.

At this time, this leaf didn't resemble a murderous weapon that had killed many Heavenly Kings at all. It was no different from an ordinary leaf! Many couldn't help but lift their heads to look at the giant bamboo in the sky amidst the clouds. Amidst the gentle breeze, the bamboo leaves slightly fluttered, causing tiny rustling sounds that were quite difficult to hear.

Anyone who saw the giant bamboo now had a respectful and awe-struck demeanor. No one dared to harbour even the tiniest bit of disdain since they all understood — right now — that this giant bamboo was not a simple tree, it was an invincible deity!

Before anyone knew it, some even got down on their knees and stared at the giant bamboo with great piety in their eyes.

Li Qiye's eyes slowly drifted towards the spectators as he slowly said: "The Giant Bamboo Country is a peaceful town for its inhabitants to settle and have a good life. Even I don't want to dye this land red with blood, but if anyone dares to offend the country, I don't mind painting this land red, painting the entire Stone Medicine World red, or even the entire Nine Worlds red! No one will be forgiven for breaking the tranquility of the Giant Bamboo Country! This is an ironclad rule that has never changed throughout the eras, no matter whether it is the past, the present, or the future!"

Li Qiye's remark was very light and calm, but it contained a bloody and ruthless warning! These words were not only meant to warn the people here, they also served as a deterrent to the slumbering giants beneath the Stone Medicine World!

The inviolability of the Giant Bamboo Country was an ironclad rule! After many generations had passed, even if Li Qiye didn't come back to take a look at the country, he would still be concerned about it.

At this time, no one dared to utter a sound. Before, they would think that Li Qiye was mentally ill, but now, they understood that this wasn't the case. In his eyes, the Qing Clan and the Huangfu Clan were not worth mentioning as a source of trouble!

Even Madam Zi Yan, who was next to him, was shaken. In fact, she was even more shaken than the others because she knew that Li Qiye could communicate or even command the giant bamboo tree!

How could she not be astonished by this matter? For millions of years, the only person who could communicate with the tree was their progenitor.

While many people were still stunned, Li Qiye clapped and said: "Very well, it is now over. Hang them by the wall so that everyone can see the fate of those who provoke our Giant Bamboo Country." With that, he turned around and left.

In everyone's view, Li Qiye seemed to have only done a trivial matter. This was killing a Virtuous Paragon and destroying a clan! But he didn't even bat an eyelash. Even great characters had to shudder after seeing Li Qiye's attitude because they understood one thing: this unknown kid before them was definitely a ruthless character, a killer who committed murder without batting an eyelash!

The eighteen monarchs quickly escorted Li Qiye back to the palace. Of course, they were astounded by him as well. Back when Li Qiye said he wanted to kill the Huangfu Ancestor, they all felt that Li Qiye was acting unreasonably. But now, everything happened just like he had said, so how could they not be shocked?

At this time, they found Li Qiye to be unfathomable and enigmatic.

On the same day, the Giant Bamboo Country released a message: the Qing Clan had been destroyed with its ancestral ground completely demolished. All of its heritages had been turned into ashes. Although its young and old were still alive, with all the former destroyed, the Qing Clan was finished. From now on, it would be no more in the Giant Bamboo Country. The survivors left the country overnight and disappeared from the world from then on.

Prior to this, rumors were spreading everywhere throughout the country. Some lords became quite fickle to the point of dispatching troops, but in just one day, the entire country became silent again, and all the rumors instantly disappeared.

The once-ambitious lords received news from the capital and shuddered. They instantly sat down with pale expressions as cold sweat ran down their backs.

Meanwhile, the sects who took no action found themselves fortunate and were glad that they didn't blindly join in. Otherwise, their end could be easily envisioned.

At night time, a group of old men with gray hair all kneeled outside of the palace. Some of them were the heads of their sects while others were high elders and seniors...

These were all members of the sects who had voiced their support for the Qing Clan; all of them had great status. After these sects received the news from the capital, they were paralyzed. Once they calmed down, these sect masters and senior members all ran to the capital to beg for forgiveness.

How could they dare to retaliate? The result of the Qing Clan was clear for all to see. An alchemy clan that stood strong for generations disappeared so easily. Even an existence like the Pill King was killed so sects like them were even more negligible.

Thus, the sects masters and senior members could only prostrate within the capital. As long as this could protect their sects and heritages, they were willing to do so even at the expense of their own life!

In one night, the chaotic unrest and rumors were instantly quelled. No sect or cultivator dared to do anything reckless.

This was the result Li Qiye wanted, to use a ruthless method to deter the ambitious individuals. He would kill the chickens to warn the monkeys and instantly stop those with mischievous thoughts.

As the night curtain fell, Madam Zi Yan asked Li Qiye: "Many sects masters and seniors are prostrating outside, ready to accept their punishment. How will you deal with them?"

At this moment, the eighteen monarchs were respectful before Li Qiye. They looked at him with eyes full of awe and fear.

"Let them kneel, then you can deal with them however you want." Li Qiye answered nonchalantly: "I am not the Royal Lord, you are, thus, you are in charge of this matter."

The madam couldn't help but softly sigh after looking at Li Qiye. In her heart, she knew that Li Qiye would not stay at the Giant Bamboo Country. Another way to put it would be that there was nothing here that could hold him back.

"Why is it that you don't want to stay here?" The madam gently asked Li Qiye. She was willing to immediately abdicate if Li Qiye wanted to stay.

Li Qiye met her gaze and, after a while, he looked away towards the distance and slowly said: "I am a mass murderer. The lands trodden by me are destined to be paved with dry bones. With me here, the stench of blood will eventually permeate the air. This is a peaceful land, so I won't involve it with scenes of carnage."

The madam became quiet. Li Qiye had said similar words before. After a while, she lifted her head again since she couldn't help but ask: "Why did you pick the Giant Bamboo Country? What did you come here for?" She knew that Li Qiye's visit was not a simple coincidence. However, she didn't think that he was here for their treasure since there was nothing here that could tempt him.

Regarding this question, Li Qiye only smiled and didn't answer. He continued to quietly look at the horizon for a long time.

Of course, he couldn't tell her his secrets. After a while, he gently sighed and lamented the ongoing vicissitudes of time. He eventually turned to look at her and asked: "Why must you participate in this conference?"

The madam didn't hide it and revealed the reason: "There is one item that I really need from this alchemy conference. It is crucial for me to break through to the Virtuous Paragon realm."

"You are a Violet Bamboo that took form with the dao, so it could be said that your roots are quite amazing and rare. Your talents are very high and, with such a great dao origin, you should have soared to the heavens easily. If I am not mistaken, before you took form, you suffered a lightning tribulation so your dao origin had been harmed. Although the wound is now gone, it is difficult for you to continue to take the next step, thus you need a heavenly treasure, correct?" Li Qiye slowly said while looking at her.

[spoiler title='663 Teaser']Just imagine, when the country was founded, even a group of Godkings came to celebrate as well as many different races of the Nine Worlds. The Immortal Emperor of that generation came as well. Even the founding of an imperial lineage would not enjoy such great treatment!

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Chapter 664: Huangfu Clan's Countermeasure

His words caused the madam's face to greatly change. This could be said to be a secret of the country, a secret that very few people knew about. Even those who were privy to this wouldn't reveal this secret, but Li Qiye knew it so well.

The madam took a deep breath; she had slowly grown accustomed to Li Qiye's tendency of bringing about surprises. After thinking about it, she realized that ointments for recovery were part of the alchemy dao, and with his great skill, he should be able to see through her past injury — this should come as no surprise.

She wryly smiled and gently nodded to say: "Yes, this is true, I have suffered from a lightning tribulation before." At this point, she sighed again and continued: "The Giant Bamboo Country has not produced a Virtuous Paragon for several generations. Our ancestor is sealed inside Blood Era Stones, and his situation is not looking too optimistic as his blood energy has withered. We don't know how long he will be able to last underground. Thus, in this generation, I yearn to reach the Virtuous Paragon realm to contribute to the country."

For tens of millions of years, many ancestors and invincible existences were entombed in Blood Era Stones and buried underground. However, many of them still eventually died inside these stones.

Although the stones could cover someone for a long time, they were not a cure-all remedy. As time went by, even those within the stones would slowly lose their vitality, and this loss would add up over the years. This was especially true for the ancestors whose lifespans had already depleted; it was even harder for them to persevere.

Because of this situation, the near-death ancestors didn't want to come into being because the next time they came out would signal their demise.

Li Qiye gave her a look before lightly saying: "Don't worry, I will get you the item you want since I'll be personally going to the Alchemy Kingdom's alchemy conference." He narrowed his eyes after finishing this sentence.

The madam gently nodded without commenting.

Inside the Huangfu Clan, its clan master had received the news from the Giant Bamboo Country, resulting in his sudden exclamation: "What?!"

He fell down on his chair after listening to this news. The elders that were present all glanced at each other with ugly expressions plastered on their faces; some were full of anger while others showed shock.

An elder couldn't help but angrily shout: "The Giant Bamboo Country is going too far. First they harmed Hao'er, and now they even killed our ancestor. This shall be an irreconcilable blood feud!"

After a while, the clan master calmed down and took a deep breath before speaking in a grave manner to the elders: "This is a great humiliation to our clan. Do you elders have any opinions on this?"

The shocked and angered elders naturally found it hard to let this go, unless they were able to obtain their vengeance. Their clan had always thought highly of itself. It was an alchemy clan, and although they had never produced an Alchemy Emperor, their dao of alchemy could be said to have branched off from the Alchemy Kingdom. Their alchemy skill was not something clans like the previous Qing Clan could compare to.

What made them even more proud was that their clan had been in-laws with the Alchemy Kingdom for several generations, winning them a pivotal position in the Alchemy Realm and even the entire Stone Medicine World.

As the old saying goes, even if you don't care for the monk, you still have to give Buddha some consideration. Thus, many great powers were very supportive of the Huangfu Clan within the Alchemy Realm. This only further fueled their pride.

From their perspective, no one in this realm would dare to provoke them, but now, not only did the Giant Bamboo Country harm their descendant, they actually killed their ancestor as well! How could they not be furious?

However, despite their enraged state, they didn't lose their rationality. The ancestor who went to the Giant Bamboo Country was their youngest ancestor, but still, he was now a dead Virtuous Paragon.

"Perhaps we should invite three ancestors to come out!" One high elder mused.

This raised some thoughts from the other elders because this would be their strongest force. These three ancestors were all they had left, and they had been sealed for a very long time now.

“The Giant Bamboo Country is unreasonable and vicious; they are promoting wanton killing of friends... Perhaps, we need to ask the Alchemy Kingdom to come and uphold justice.” Another elder suggested.

Such a proposal was not instantly accepted in the minds of the elders and the clan master. Although they were in-laws with the Alchemy Kingdom, their marriage partners had only been Prefecture Monarchs. It was still difficult for them to meet the main branch of the Alchemy Kingdom, or what outsiders referred to as the imperial family. They all knew that inviting the Alchemy Kingdom was not an easy task.

“Clan Master can try to find the World-Pillar Monarch. If the monarch is willing to help, then maybe we will be able to ask the Alchemy Kingdom to represent us.” A high elder said: “The Giant Bamboo Country might have a Guardian Deity, but so what? As long as the Alchemy Kingdom is willing to show up, even a Godking would not mess with them.”

“This idea is not bad.” The clan master couldn’t help but ponder. The World-Pillar Monarch was the ruler of a prefecture within the Alchemy Kingdom. He had married a daughter from the Huangfu Clan, so he had a deep relationship with the clan.

In this generation, the string that connected the Huangfu Clan and the Alchemy Kingdom was this very World-Pillar Monarch. As one of the oldest lineages, the Alchemy Kingdom was a behemoth in this world. However, for a sect with three Immortal Emperors and four Alchemy Emperors, they had always maintained a low profile, especially the imperial family. Outsiders rarely saw its members, including the Huangfu Clan who had ties with the kingdom for generations. It was still prohibitively difficult to meet royal members, even for the Huangfu Clan.

“Clan Master, this plan is feasible.” Another high elder stated: “The World-Pillar Monarch is a young prodigy in the kingdom with great contributions; he is highly valued by the upper echelons. If the monarch is willing to speak for us on top of our relationship with Fairy Ming, then we still have hope of convincing the Alchemy Kingdom.”

“That’s right, Clan Master, Fairy Ming is somewhat related to us, so it will be even better if we can meet her.” Another high elder couldn’t help but add.

After being advised by the elders, it would be false to say that the clan master was not tempted. He definitely couldn’t swallow this anger; such a feud was a great humiliation to them. As the ruler of the clan, if he couldn’t wash away this shame, then he would be stricken with guilt.

However, he was still not convinced since he was different from the high elders who were usually in isolated seclusion. He was responsible for communicating with the great powers, especially the Alchemy Kingdom.

He was very clear about their relationship with the Alchemy Kingdom. Although the Alchemy Kingdom’s descendant, Fairy Ming, was related to the Huangfu Clan, in reality, the relationship was very distant and spanned across several generations.

In fact, he himself had only seen Fairy Ming once. This was back when she still had yet to become the main descendant of the Alchemy Kingdom. When she eventually obtained this position, using the Huangfu Clan's thin relationship to arrange a meeting was harder than reaching the heavens.

The truth was that he and the entire clan had always tried to use this relationship as a vantage point. If Fairy Ming herself accepted this relation, then their Huangfu Clan would be able to climb up high and gain a great backing.

The problem was that they had never been able to do so. He had tried to meet Ming Yexue several times before to no avail. The reason why Huangfu Hao spent a great sum in an attempt to buy that Heavenly Cauldron was so that he could use this item to build on that thin connection.

"Clan Master, even though it is very difficult to meet the imperial family, we do have such ties with Fairy Ming. We just need to prepare and have the World-Pillar Monarch pave the way for us; it is still possible." Many elders strongly endorsed this plan.

The clan master took a deep breath and became determined. No matter what, they must communicate with the Alchemy Kingdom.

"Very well, I will personally take a trip to the Alchemy Kingdom to get revenge for our ancestor." He said gravely.

Another high elder contemplated for a moment before speaking: "The Giant Bamboo Country has a Divine Guardian, so if we want to fight them in the future, shouldn't we ask for Sacred Ancestor Gu's permission?"

Sacred Ancestor Gu was one of the three fortunate ancestors of the Huangfu Clan that remained. He was the oldest and also the strongest one.

The Huangfu Clan Master nodded and said in a formal tone: "I will go visit Sacred Ancestor Gu and ask for his opinion."

"There is no need to come see me, I already know what happened." At this time, a deep and hoarse voice appeared inside the room. Although they couldn't see the person, the voice itself was full of authority.

"Sacred Ancestor Gu!" After hearing this voice, everyone in the room instantly prostrated.

The old voice continued: "I have understood the current situation after listening. The clan master can go to the Alchemy Kingdom not to convince the Alchemy Kingdom to represent us, but to build on this relationship instead. If we are backed by its imperial family... Nothing could be better for our clan than this."

"This disciple understands." The prostrating Huangfu Clan Master complied.

"However, one thing is forbidden." The old voice said: "All Huangfu disciples are forbidden to step inside the Giant Bamboo Country for revenge, not a single step. If anyone disobeys, expel them from the clan!"

The words from the ancestor left the elders present in shock. They didn't know why their ancestor would say such a thing.

“But, Ancestor...” The clan master was dumbfounded by this. Their descendant almost died in the Giant Bamboo Country, and they also lost one ancestor, three high elders, five elders, and numerous experts. It was simply impossible to tell them to let go of this enmity.

“This is my decree, no one is exempt from this.” The old voice sounded; no one dared to oppose his prestige.

“Yes...” Although the clan master was unwilling, he still decided to follow Sacred Ancestor Gu’s command.

Chapter 665: Leisurely Cultivation

“I know all of you are feeling indignant.” The old voice spoke: “But there is no other way about it. The Giant Bamboo Country is not considered strong, so even if they are listed amongst the first-rate powers, it would still be at the bottom. However, in the minds of all the great existences, it is a forbidden zone in our Stone Medicine World.”

“Forbidden zone?” All the elders were stunned since this was their first time hearing this. The clan master couldn’t help but ask: “Why is that?”

“Don’t ask me for I do not know either. In short, it is a forbidden zone. If this wasn’t so, then why does that country occupy a huge amount of worldly energy from the entire Elegant Azure Grand Vein and no one has ever dared to object to this since the ancient times?” The voice of the sacred ancestor continued: “Even the Alchemy Kingdom would not easily step into the Giant Bamboo Country. Their Hundred-Grass Alchemy Emperor had once coveted the Immortal Nectar, but even he didn’t dare to try and seize it!”

After hearing this, all the elders became confused. Could it be that this little country had something that even the Alchemy Kingdom was wary of?

“Is it because of their Divine Guardian?” The clan master asked.

The ancestor’s voice answered: “I’m afraid no one knows. At least, I don’t. In short, don’t think about attacking the Giant Bamboo Country. That peaceful land is a forbidden zone, breaking its tranquility will only invite a disaster.”

The elders and clan master became silent. Since their Sacred Ancestor Gu had said so, they didn’t bring it up again.

“But the blood of our Huangfu Clan will not be spilled in vain.” The ancestor spoke again in a grave tone: “Clan Master said that this whole matter is because of a junior named Li Qiye? That’s fine then, death will be repaid with one’s life; use his blood to wash away this humiliation. Do not step inside the Giant Bamboo Country. Wait until this junior leaves, then take your time to deal with him! Let the people of this world know that those who oppose our Huangfu Clan will not have a good end!”

The clan master bowed and said: “This disciple understands.”

“Bring Hao’er here, I will treat him.” At this time, the voice spoke again.

The clan master became ecstatic. Their Sacred Ancestor Gu not only had a profound cultivation, he was also an amazing alchemist. With his help, their Hao’er would definitely be fine.

At this time, the Giant Bamboo Country was completely quiet. The Qing Clan had been destroyed, and those who supported them accepted their sentence one by one. The imperial court was just as unshakable as before; perhaps it was even more stable after this event.

The giant bamboo tree inside the capital became even more awe-inspiring as well. At this moment, anyone who entered the capital and looked up into the clouds to see the giant bamboo would carry a sense of respect in their heart. There were even those who bowed and prayed for the tree to protect their homes and families.

After slaughtering the Huangfu Ancestor along with numerous experts, Li Qiye wasn't asked to take care of any matters of the Giant Bamboo Country. All the work had been handed over to Madam Zi Yan. She was still the ruler just like before, taking care of the big picture.

In fact, she and the eighteen monarchs truly wanted Li Qiye to stay and even take the position of Royal Lord, but Li Qiye had no intention of doing so. Because of this, they didn't dare to bring it up again.

Li Qiye remained in the palace and had never stepped outside, he only cultivated behind closed doors. He painstakingly trained and, with his effort, his cultivation advancement speed was quite ideal.

For cultivators, the Heavenly Sovereign realm was very important since this was the realm where one communicated with the grand dao to derive their own profundities. This was to build a great foundation for becoming a Heavenly King or even a Virtuous Paragon in the future. Only by truly communicating with the dao and deriving its mysteries would one be able to reach the sublime culmination. From doing so, one would be able to go even further in the Virtuous Paragon realm and create their own grand dao that belonged to them alone.

Communicating with the dao and deriving its mysteries was a piece of cake for Li Qiye. No one in this world was more versed than him with regards to understanding the dao and deriving the mysteries to its ultimate state.

Of course, this was needless to say. Li Qiye had thirteen Fate Palaces, the one and only person to achieve this. The thirteenth palace loomed above the high heavens and encompassed myriad laws. With such an unparalleled advantage, these issues were trivial to him.

Despite that being the case, Li Qiye still calmly cultivated step by step and derived each merit law and grand dao to its ultimate evolution, then he went one step further.

It could be said that Li Qiye was polishing all of his merit laws and techniques that were already outstanding to begin with. Under such training, even the most common art in his arsenal became incomparably enigmatic. A single gesture was enough to incite harmonization with the grand dao and myriad laws.

Outside of dao cultivation and strengthening his foundation, Li Qiye used his spare time to refine his World Seal. At this moment, his true fate treasure had taken form, so it needed even more blood energy and grooming from the dao.

During this period where he had nothing else to do, Li Qiye would take out the stone left behind by Immortal Emperor Wan Shi for a look. At other times, he would think about the other treasures. For example, the item taken out from inside the Alchemy Fowl.

Speaking of the Alchemy Fowl, it was very comfortable and free. It could even be said that it loved Li Qiye's alchemy field to death. This alchemy field housed the Ancestor Ginseng, the Reincarnation Heavenly Soulvine, the Immortal Injury Peony... All kinds of great Immortal Medicines.

To the chicken, these were the medicines that it loved the most. It easily considered itself as the guardian of the field and took care of prepping the soil, watering, fertilizing, and catching insects...

Of course, the fertilizer was its urine and stool! Although Li Qiye's alchemy field was indeed extraordinary, the Alchemy Fowl was born for the dao of alchemy. Its excrement was the best fertilizer, even for Immortal Medicines.

Because of this, the chicken was very welcomed in the alchemy field. Each of the Immortal Medicines really liked having it around.

Its hard effort eventually bore fruit. Since it was born for the dao of alchemy, it was the best medium for medicinal effects, so by staying in this field, it was nourished by the Immortal Medicines, causing its cultivation to become even stronger. Its body also underwent an innate change. At the same time, when its body was improving, it could do an even better job of benefiting the alchemy field.

Li Qiye had too many treasures, so he didn't spend too much energy on cultivating these Immortal Medicines. The chicken watching the alchemy field in his stead saved him a lot of work, removing some stress from his agenda.

In the blink of an eye, Li Qiye had stayed at the Giant Bamboo Country for almost half a year, and the Alchemy Kingdom's conference was approaching.

One day, Madam Zi Yan came to see Li Qiye and said: "The conference is almost here. I plan on going to the conference after the birthday celebration of the Allpine Treefather."

"Allpine Treefather?" Li Qiye paused for a moment after hearing this. He then looked at the madam and said: "Is the Allpine Treefather you speak of the old man from the Allpine Grand Vein?"

"Yes, the Treefather from the Allpine Grand Vein." Madam Zi Yan hurriedly responded: "His 500,000th birthday is coming up soon. At the moment, all the great powers and even emperor's lineages from the grand realms will send people there to pay respects. Our Giant Bamboo Country was also invited, so I plan to personally go to express our good wishes."

Li Qiye couldn't help but recall a few things after the madam brought it up, so he murmured and chuckled to himself: "The old geezer from the Allpine Mountain eh..."

"Young Noble knows the Allpine Treefather?" The madam couldn't help but ask after noticing Li Qiye's expression.

Li Qiye only smiled and didn't answer this question. Instead, he said: "500,000 years, truly difficult... This world is quite merciless after all."

500,000 years definitely deserved a grand birthday milestone. Although there were many existences in this world that had survived since the ancient times, these existences were all entombed in Blood Era Stones underground. This type of cultivator couldn't be considered to be alive. Even if one was sealed for a million years, this didn't mean that they were one million years old. Their real age would be counted by the time they actually spent in this world.

500,000 years was absolutely a very old age. Although cultivators could live even longer, for the majority, living for 100,000 years was already extremely difficult, let alone 500,000 years.

In fact, even a Godking wouldn't live to his 500,000 year birthday. It could even be stated that in the Nine Worlds, not even Immortal Emperors could live that long!

Madam Zi Yan nodded and said: "This is indeed the case. In the Stone Medicine World, outside of our Giant Bamboo Divine Guardian, I believe no one else is older than the Allpine Treefather. The Allpine Treefather and our Divine Guardian are known as the two great Demon Forefathers of the Stone Medicine World."

"That would be incorrect." Li Qiye smiled and gently shook his head to say: "Our giant bamboo is not a Demon Forefather..."

The madam was taken aback for a bit and said: "Not a Demon Forefather? Our Divine Guardian has been called a deity, so it must have reached the dao. Besides, I'm afraid no one in the Stone Medicine World has lived longer than our Divine Guardian."

"Do you what defines a demon?" Li Qiye explained with a smile: "A demon obtains intelligence from the dao, but the giant bamboo has yet to achieve this."

These words frightened the madam. She had always thought that the giant bamboo tree had become a demon, especially after its actions this time around. The recent events strengthened her belief that it had reached the apex and become a Godking.

Now, Li Qiye's response took her by complete surprise. She couldn't help but ask in a daze: "Our Divine Guardian didn't become a demon?"

For an existence like the giant bamboo, becoming a demon was an easy thing, but it didn't become one. This was truly a cause of bewilderment.

"No. To be exact, it is still just a green bamboo tree. Of course, you can also call it an Immortal Bamboo or Divine Bamboo, but it absolutely is not a demon." Li Qiye responded.

Chapter 666: Mysterious Carriage

This prompted the madam's inquiry: "Why is it that our Divine Guardian chose not to become a demon?"

For plants, birds, and animals, as long as there was an opportunity, they would immediately turn into a demon and obtain intelligence — this was their ultimate pursuit.

"Why should it turn into a demon?" Li Qiye replied with a grin: "Wisdom is not necessarily a good thing. Whether you are human or demon, there is too much trouble and sadness, too much responsibility as

one gains strength. Even Immortal Emperors have moments of weakness and fatigue.” At this point, he couldn’t help but gently sigh.

The madam noticed his expression and was jolted for a moment. Looking at his countenance that seemed to be worn out by the vicissitudes of time, she felt an unexplainable pain in her heart. She gently reached out and took his hand while gazing at him with her most tender and sincere pair of eyes to soothe him.

Finally, Li Qiye smiled and gently raised her alluring chin. She looked back at him quietly with her eyes as gentle as water.

He eventually smiled and withdrew his hand before letting out a faint smile: “What is so bad about being a bamboo tree? Shouldering the nine heavens while looking down on everything... Hundreds of thousands of years would simply be a snap of the fingers to it.”

Madam Zi Yan was startled. She was initially a Violet Bamboo so after hearing this, she couldn’t help but have an inexplicable feeling. Back when she was still a bamboo, she was cultivated by the country. After she gained the slightest bit of sentience, she yearned to become a demon.

Her congenital conditions were quite favorable due to the Giant Bamboo Country’s cultivation. After she gained intelligence, she kept on cultivating hard, aspiring for the day where she could reach the dao. The high heavens didn’t let her down, and eventually, after twenty or thirty years, she finally became a demon.

But now, after Li Qiye said those words, she couldn’t help but recall the days when she was still a Violet Bamboo. Inadvertently, she became lost in thought.

After a while, her mind returned and she couldn’t help but wryly smile. She shook her head and didn’t want to think about this matter.

“After I leave, the Demon Monarchs will be under your command.” Madam Zi Yan said: “For the Allpine Treefather’s birthday milestone, the entire Stone Medicine World will go to celebrate so I’m afraid it will last for a while.”

“No.” Li Qiye interrupted her and gently shook his head to say: “You don’t have to leave the national affairs to me, just leave it to the monarchs. I also intend to leave.”

He had spent a long time waiting at the Giant Bamboo Country, and Shi Hao had finally settled in. If it wasn’t for the alchemy conference, he would have left already.

“Young Noble wants to leave?” The madam was frightened after hearing his wish.

Li Qiye couldn’t help but laugh and say: “You don’t need to be so alarmed. I already promised to attend the alchemy conference, so I will go. I have a place I want to visit and I also have a few things to do. You can go to the birthday milestone; after I’m done with my business, I will take a trip to the Allpine Mountain as well.”

The madam let out a sigh of relief after hearing Li Qiye. She was still very unwilling regarding Li Qiye’s departure, but she knew that she couldn’t prevent him from leaving.

“In that case, after we meet each other, we can go straight to the Alchemy Kingdom. We should have plenty of time to go to the conference after the birthday celebration.” Madam Zi Yan told him of her decision.

“Not necessarily, maybe we will be very busy after entering the Alchemy Kingdom.” Having said that, Li Qiye revealed a smile with narrowed eyes.

Right now, the madam knew a bit about Li Qiye. She couldn't help but feel a bit jumpy after seeing Li Qiye narrowing his eyes.

“Young Noble, don't tell me...” The madam was indeed feeling nervous. In short, she was very disturbed after seeing his expression and felt that something big would happen.

Li Qiye smiled after noticing her anxiety. With a glance, he said: “Don't worry, I do have a sense of propriety.”

The madam paused for a moment before whispering: “Young Noble, although the Alchemy Kingdom's imperial family rarely shows itself, their power is unimaginable...”

She had always felt that Li Qiye's trip to the Alchemy Kingdom could herald a bloody mess, so she couldn't help but worry for him. In the end, they would be facing the behemoth that is the Alchemy Kingdom.

“I know that.” Li Qiye smiled and said: “I'm going to the Alchemy Kingdom for the conference, not to kill people. Of course, if people don't mess with me, then I won't mess with them.”

Madam Zi Yan sighed softly. She could only pray that those other people would grow a pair of eyes. Otherwise, some would die miserable deaths.

In the end, Li Qiye was the first to leave the Giant Bamboo Country. Madam Zi Yan still had a lot to do before leaving for the birthday celebration, unlike Li Qiye who could leave as he pleased.

Li Qiye left the capital and after deciding on a direction, he immediately soared into the sky. However, as he was not in a hurry, he would frequently stop.

Sometimes, he decided to cross over rivers or stop at a solitary peak. Sometimes, he stopped in a small village to take a break... As he traveled towards his destination, he passed by a few places and couldn't help but recall the past.

In the beginning, there were no problems at all. However, after a few days, Li Qiye noticed that there was a carriage right behind him.

There was nothing special about this carriage. At a glance, it seemed to be very common, and the curtains were closed so no one could see who was inside. The driver was a very old woman. Her hair was gray and her face was covered with wrinkles. This old woman had average looks as well. However, from her tidy clothing, it was clear that her master was not a nobody.

She sat on the carriage as her whip gently met the back of the horse. Her head was hanging loose as if she was fairly drowsy.

This carriage had not been following Li Qiye the entire time in the last two days. Sometimes, it was not able to keep up, but after some time, it once again appeared behind Li Qiye.

If it was only one or two days, then perhaps they were going towards the same destination. However, after two days, it still continued to appear behind him.

Although Li Qiye had always been calm like the water in a well and didn't even bother glancing at the carriage behind him, one must keep in mind that despite his numerous stops, when he was moving, his speed was extremely frightening and even faster than many flying treasures.

It didn't matter if he moved fast or slow, the carriage always followed behind him. This was impossible for an ordinary carriage.

Of course, Li Qiye's courage stemmed from his skill, so even if the carriage was purposely following him, he was not the least bit afraid. He also didn't care about this horse-drawn carriage.

But after the sixth day, this carriage began to appear in front of Li Qiye. It was no longer following him but was speeding ahead.

Oddly enough, it seemed to know where Li Qiye wanted to go. Along the trip, Li Qiye was still taking breaks, and no matter where he chose to go, the carriage would appear before him time and time again.

Whether it was in front or behind him, Li Qiye continued to ignore it. The same could be said for the carriage's master. Despite their close proximity, the master didn't bother Li Qiye and maintained a distance between the two of them.

This situation continued for some time until Li Qiye entered Celestial Peak Mountain. The carriage then disappeared and never showed up again.

As he entered this mountain range, a gust of cool air blew into his face. This was a desolate place with many rolling mountain ranges and tall trees that had old vines coiled around them. There were many wolf packs and eagles flying in the sky. After taking a look, no signs of humans could be found in this land.

Li Qiye emotionally said after entering this mountain range: "Celestial Peak..."

Although the Celestial Peak was not one of the eight Grand Veins of the Stone Medicine World, it was still quite large and spanned over 100,000 miles across a vast expanse of different sceneries.

Despite its immense size, there were very few sects here. Even if there were some sects, they would be outside of the mountain range. However, a very long time ago, there was an extremely huge lineage in this place. Moreover, it was established by humans.

Because of this, a legend once told that this was the gathering place of humans in the Stone Medicine World.

Li Qiye became a bit emotional after seeing the rolling hills and lush trees inside the Celestial Peak. Who would have known that this beautiful and majestic landscape ahead used to be an ancient battlefield? An epic war had taken place here as blood flowed like rivers and mountains were made of corpses.

It could even be said that many ominous things had happened here until an invincible Godking of the human race took over and established his lineage. After a long period of change, this place finally became magnificent, as one could see before them in present times.

Future generations were unaware that this once-invincible Godking was a brave general under the Dark Crow, a general that had once swept through this world.

They didn't know that a great war against the Ancient Ming took place here. In this war, the most powerful sector of the Ancient Ming during its era was wiped out in one fell swoop in the Stone Medicine World.

They didn't know that because of this victory, there was the Stone Medicine World that everyone came to know of today. Without this victory, the masters of the current Stone Medicine World wouldn't be golems or demons, but the Ancient Ming instead!

After this great war, many terrible things happened in this location. Afterward, Li Qiye commanded this Godking to protect this area and build a lineage. Eventually, after the Godking's efforts transforming this place for tens of thousands of years, this battlefield gradually calmed down and the Celestial Peak of today appeared.

However, the lineage of this Godking had fallen a long time ago. Eventually, it disappeared from this land, along with its past brilliance that evaporated into smoke.

Chapter 667: Yuan Caihe

Li Qiye silently walked across the mountain range while measuring the earth. This land was calm without any commotion; Li Qiye knew that this was the result of the Godking's countless efforts. He didn't fly while he was in the Celestial Peak, he only slowly trod towards his destination since he needed the measurement.

The Celestial Peak, at the moment, was quite hilly and sparsely populated; it was a garden for beasts and birds. At the same time, due to the dangerous and steep terrain full of unknowns, many spirit medicines flourished here. There was even a rumor that there was a King Medicine around, but until now, no one had been able to catch it. As Li Qiye walked alone on his path, he had not seen a single person. It might be difficult to find even a single cultivator in this place.

It wasn't until one day when Li Qiye went through a deep valley that he saw a woman picking herbs. Moreover, she was a human.

It was not easy to meet a member of the human race in the Stone Medicine World; it was even rarer than meeting a charming spirit, especially at an area like the Celestial Peak. Within the radius of 100,000 miles, almost no people could be found, so meeting a human here was even rarer than meeting a King Medicine.

This woman was nailing sharpened pieces of thorn into the ground all around the valley. She was trying to pick a particularly rare spirit medicine that was hiding underground, so she had begun to seal the valley. After she had done so, she began to pour alchemy water into the valley. This special strand was specifically created by her. When poured onto mud, it would act like little serpents that drilled into the ground.

The woman was using it in order to chase the spirit medicine underground and bait it into a trap she had prepared well beforehand.

Li Qiye was standing above the mouth of the valley and quietly watched this woman's every move. The woman also knew that Li Qiye was here, but she only turned and smiled at him before completely focusing on chasing the medicine underground.

Li Qiye watched this scene with a smile and took another look at the woman. She wore a commoner's dress that was embroidered with pure lotus flowers, giving a very fresh and elegant appearance.

She was elegant and refined with beautiful features and a pair of bright eyes without any cloudiness. Her body exuded the aura of a lotus in a valley — lucid and delicate. She carried herself with a calm demeanor, giving off the gentle feeling of jade.

In the eyes of others, this woman would be a gem adored by all. She would give off a serene feeling to anyone who set their gaze upon her.

Li Qiye just stood there, watching while enjoying her every move. He had seen too many beauties in this world, whether they were fairies or arrogant noble daughters, but he appreciated this type of warm and elegant lady the most.

Inside the valley, the spirit medicine underground finally appeared after being driven around by the woman. This was a spirit root with a smoky purple color. The moment it came out, it turned into a wisp of purple smoke that erupted from the ground and bloomed to take form. This was a Seven-petals One-flower spirit medicine.

However, the moment it got out from the ground, it fell into the trap that the woman had prepared well in advance. With a popping sound, it was immediately sealed; any attempt at escape would be in vain.

The woman couldn't help but reveal a smile after seeing the trapped spirit medicine. She quickly approached and wanted to put the flower into her treasure container.

"Slow down, slow down." When she wanted to act, Li Qiye started to speak: "Watch out for the murderous aura under the third petal."

After hearing Li Qiye, the woman paused and took a careful look at the third petal on the flower. She couldn't help but feel a chill after seeing the situation of this petal. She then took out a medicine bottle and moved it closer to this petal.

The moment it got close, the medicine bottle spewed out a blue mist that quickly surrounded this petal. With another popping sound, a poisonous insect as thin as a cicada wing fell into the bottle.

The woman quickly sealed the bottle and heaved a sigh of relief. After determining that everything was fine, she finally put the spirit medicine flower into her container. After she confirmed that the flower had been secured, she finally relaxed.

"Thank you, Dao Brother, for the reminder." The woman came out from the valley and approached Li Qiye, expressing her gratitude.

Li Qiye smiled in response and said: "It is nothing much. With your alchemy skill, it wouldn't have made it hard for you, it would have just been a little troublesome."

The woman couldn't help but give off a smile that radiated a peaceful glow. She spoke: "I didn't think that I would meet a kinsman at the Celestial Peak; this is quite a rare occasion. I am Yuan Caihe from the Serene Garden, may I have your name?"

Li Qiye smiled and calmly answered: "Li Qiye."

Yuan Caihe was a bit surprised to find Li Qiye acting so calm. Li Qiye smiled and continued: "I know the Serene Garden, it's a famous alchemy heritage in the Stone Medicine World that was started by Alchemy Emperor Tian Weng." [1. Tian Weng = Old Farmer.]

Yuan Caihe was a bit embarrassed, but she didn't lose her cheerful confidence as she said with a smile: "Excuse me."

It turned out that Yuan Caihe was one of the four alchemy prodigies in this world, the descendant of the Serene Garden. As for the garden, it was a famous alchemy lineage in the Stone Medicine World that was established by Alchemy Emperor Tian Weng.

Although the Serene Garden stood aloof from worldly affairs, its dao of alchemy continued to prosper since it was as famous as the Bailian Clan. Moreover, its plant cultivation arts could be considered number one in the world with no rival. [2. Bailian = Hundred/Amazing/All Refinements. Refinement here refers to alchemy.]

Not long after her debut, Yuan Caihe's fame spread far and wide. Although she was a quiet and peaceful person who had no intention of competing with others, her plant cultivation had no peers in the contemporary era.

Despite not trying to win fame, she had helped several great powers and imperial lineages by planting supreme medicines — this feat added her to the list of the four alchemy prodigies.

Alchemists were extremely prominent in the Stone Medicine World, so as one of the four prodigies, everyone knew her name, especially cultivators. When anyone else heard her name, they would feel astonished or excited, but Li Qiye was still calm. This really surprised Yuan Caihe a bit. After he gave his answer, she now knew that he was aware of the Serene Garden, but she didn't know who he was.

Nevertheless, she was a brilliant woman with an open mind, so she didn't mind such a thing. She asked with a smile: "Is Dao Brother also an alchemist?"

Among all the women Li Qiye had met, her smile was not the most beautiful and enchanting, but it carried a tranquil force that soothed the hearts of others.

Li Qiye shook his head and smiled to say: "No, the dao of alchemy is only a hobby of mine."

"To understand the location where this purple flower ambushes its predator so well, you must really like your hobby." Yuan Caihe smilingly responded.

Li Qiye chuckled and said: "I do some research on rare occasions, but I can't compare to the number one plant cultivation arts of the Serene Garden."

Yuan Caihe laughed and gently shook her head to say: "Your praise is too much. Brother Li shouldn't mind that matter from earlier."

Li Qiye didn't say anything else, he only smiled. If someone who knew Li Qiye were here to witness this, they would be shocked to see such a scene. Li Qiye acting so humble was the same as the sun rising from the west. Those who knew him were well aware that Li Qiye didn't know what the word "modest" meant.

Li Qiye's rare modesty was due to the Serene Garden truly having a brilliant take on plant cultivation and also because Li Qiye appreciated girls like Yuan Caihe. He was in a particularly good mood, so his speech became correspondingly gentler.

They began to walk together. Yuan Caihe didn't ask where Li Qiye was going, she only followed along while discussing how to grow different types of plants.

Yuan Caihe was a very dedicated person regarding the dao of alchemy and plant cultivation. She put all of her energy into growing different types of vegetation. It could even be said that she was the authority in this regard, and no one else in the Stone Medicine World could compare to her.

If it was someone else, even alchemists, they wouldn't be able to keep up with her on this subject because she really was the best. Her views on alchemy plants were insightful and detailed, but who was Li Qiye? If he claimed to be number two regarding the dao of alchemy, then no one else would dare to claim to be number one! Even the four alchemy prodigies were lacking compared to him.

Because of his great knowledge on this topic, Yuan Caihe was very excited, especially when Li Qiye revealed some of his thoughts on the subject that caused her eyes to light up.

As a very devoted woman, she got along very well with Li Qiye and regretted that they had not met sooner. She couldn't help but tell Li Qiye everything she knew, even her most precious knowledge that shouldn't be revealed to outsiders.

However, for someone like Yuan Caihe, a friend who could keep up with her was hard to meet; it was lonely at the peak. Other alchemists couldn't maintain a long conversation with her on this topic, but now, after meeting this new friend, she told him all her insights and questions regarding the dao of alchemy.

Li Qiye also gave her some ideas on this matter. After countless years of accumulating plant cultivation knowledge, his ideas were priceless. He wouldn't easily pass it down to someone, but he still told Yuan Caihe.

Meanwhile, some of her long unsolved questions had been answered today, so she was both happy and frightened after hearing Li Qiye's thoughts.

Chapter 668: Heavenly Peak Divine School

"Brother Li's achievement in plant cultivation can only be better than mine. You are the one who deserves to be one of the four alchemy prodigies." Her elegant face was glowing red from excitement after saying so.

Li Qiye chuckled and gently shook his head: "The dao of alchemy is only a hobby to me. You are the one who had devoted all of your energy on this subject; only a pure person like you can truly be called an alchemist."

This was Li Qiye's honest belief. Yuan Caihe had a pure obsession for plant cultivation. In this matter, she was very similar to the Alchemy God in the past. She didn't look at plants and spirit medicines just because of their preciousness, she also had a side that cared for the medicines as no one else did.

Along the way, they met a spirit medicine that had been dug up. Its fruits had been plucked by someone, and even the roots were exposed above the soil.

"Poor little thing." Seeing this spirit plant that was on the verge of death, she quickly used her alchemy water to save it and replanted it in its original location.

This spirit plant's energy quickly recovered. After seeing it flourishing again, Yuan Caihe heaved a sigh of relief and became very happy.

Li Qiye quietly watched her actions on the side and couldn't help but chuckle after seeing her look of relief.

At the beginning of their journey, the Celestial Peak was very quiet, but in recent days, people had begun to show up.

Thunderous sounds appeared in the sky everyday as great carriages soared across the horizon. Some experts also flew here, including some weaker ones. It was clear that they were in a rush.

Another boom resounded in the sky. A group of huge golems flew right over Li Qiye's head and disappeared in the depths of the mountain range.

"The Draco-Bulls want to cross the river, so many alchemists are here to catch some Immortal Sulfur." Yuan Caihe commented after seeing so many cultivators and alchemists flying in the sky.

After calming down, she looked at Li Qiye and asked: "Is Brother Li also here for the Immortal Sulfur from the Draco-Bulls?"

Along the way, she didn't ask where Li Qiye was going, and he didn't ask her either. Inadvertently, they had an inexplicable and tacit understanding.

"You can put it that way. We can go take a look at the river." Li Qiye gently nodded and said: "But I didn't come for the Immortal Sulfur, I'm more interested in the Draco-Bulls themselves."

"Then we share the same destination." Yuan Caihe calmly smiled and said: "I also want to go to the Celestial Peak River. Recently, I have been refining a type of pill and am in need of an aged Immortal Sulfur that isn't available on the market right now. This is the season for the Draco-Bulls to cross the river, so I came here to test my luck to see if I can find some aged Immortal Sulfur."

Li Qiye nodded and said: "That shouldn't be a problem. There will be a scary amount of Draco-Bulls going to the river, so there will definitely be an older bull among them."

A Draco-Bull was a type of spirit beast that appeared in very few locations in the Stone Medicine World, and the Celestial Peak just happened to be one of them. Thus, whenever it was the season for Draco-Bulls to come out, many alchemists came to obtain some Immortal Sulfur.

Li Qiye and Yuan Caihe moved on. Their trip was supposed to be fairly smooth, however, when they wanted to cross a giant mountain, they found that the road was blocked.

A group of armored experts barricaded the path into the mountain, so when Li Qiye and Yuan Caihe got close, they were immediately blocked by these experts.

“Fellow Daoists, please take the long way around. Our Golden Leopard Prince is picking some herbs at this location. Please excuse us.” The experts who stopped Li Qiye and Yuan Caihe spoke in a serious manner.

Li Qiye glanced at the mountain and lightly asked: “Is there a need to seal off the path just to pick some herbs?”

The expression of one of the experts quickly turned cold as he spoke in a rude and unreasonable manner: “Our Golden Leopard Prince is picking medicines for the supreme celestial being. This is of the utmost importance and there is no room for errors. No one can handle the responsibility of messing this up!”

Li Qiye’s eyes narrowed as he slowly responded: “Is that so?” Until now, only Li Qiye played around without restraints. Others were certainly courting death by doing so before him.

To Li Qiye, this so-called Golden Leopard Prince and “supreme celestial being” were not worthy of consideration.

Compared to Li Qiye’s aggressiveness, Yuan Caihe didn’t want to compete with others, so she quickly tried to persuade him: “Brother Li, we can spend more time walking around, it isn’t so bad.”

Li Qiye looked at this expert once and was too lazy to say more words, so he left along with Yuan Caihe. If it wasn’t for her, Li Qiye would have crossed the mountain.

“Brother Li, don’t pay it any mind. The supreme celestial being they referred to was the world-famous Ye Qingcheng. Anyone would give him some face in the Stone Medicine World.” After taking the long path around, Yuan Caihe consoled him. [3. Qingcheng = Kingdom toppling, so I’m sure this fella is very pretty.]

Li Qiye didn’t really care for such trivial matters. He only took the long path around because of Yuan Caihe’s urging. He smiled and sarcastically asked: “Oh really?”

“No one can stop Ye Qingcheng’s momentum at the moment. Not to mention the younger generation, even the older people treat him with respect.” Yuan Caihe noticed that Li Qiye was not too familiar with the Stone Medicine World’s events, so she explained a few things to him along the way.

“Ye Qingcheng is considered the number one man in the Stone Medicine World with no peers among the younger generation. Countless young geniuses and even Heavenly Kings from the previous generation joined under his banner. It could be said that presently, he has many supporters as well as great prestige. No one can match his momentum right now.” Yuan Caihe explained.

Ye Qingcheng was a compelling name in the Stone Medicine World. There were very few people here who didn’t know who he was. People referred to him as the supreme celestial being, or the Stone Medicine World’s number one man.

Many great powers and imperial lineages believed that Ye Qingcheng would become the Immortal Emperor of this generation. Even imperial descendants were very cordial to him; many of them even decided to join his camp.

Yuan Caihe explained Ye Qingcheng's situation to Li Qiye. Li Qiye, on the other hand, only smiled at these matters and didn't care too much. In his mind, as long as Ye Qingcheng didn't oppose him, it would all be fine. However, if he or anyone else dared to do so, then whether they were geniuses or ordinary men, they would be killed without mercy!

After walking for quite a while, Li Qiye and Yuan Caihe finally reached some vast ruins that spanned for thousands of miles. This place was covered in weeds and gigantic trees.

Despite its current state, one could still see bricks and broken tiles on the ground everywhere. Among them were treasure jades and bricks from walls that had collapsed for who knew how many years. All of these treasure bricks had lost their divinity.

Judging from the scale of the ruins and the debris on the ground, one could tell that this used to be a gigantic citadel, one that could only be described as mighty and extravagant.

"The Celestial Peak Divine School..." Li Qiye's mind went absent as he stood on top of these ruins. Its past appearance flashed before his eyes as if it was only yesterday.

After so many years, even the most long-standing heritages would fall into decline and eventually be unable to escape the fate of destruction, only to become ruins from then on.

"Brother Li also knows about the Divine School?" Yuan Caihe was surprised to hear Li Qiye because along the way, from their conversation, she knew that Li Qiye was not too familiar with the Stone Medicine World's situation. Therefore, she didn't expect him to know an existence like the Celestial Peak Divine School.

Keep in mind that this heritage had perished a very long time ago. In the contemporary era, very few cultivators knew about it.

"I have heard a thing or two about it." Li Qiye smiled while looking at the ruins ahead.

How could he not know about it? The Divine School was created by an invincible Godking under his banner. In the past, he personally chose the location for the school's establishment, but now, it was in ruins.

"The Divine School used to be the pride of our human race." Yuan Caihe couldn't help but passionately say: "Legend states that at its inception, its fame spread far and wide. During that era, humans from all over this world came to ask for favors from the Divine School. The human cultivators looked at it with pride."

"Yes." Li Qiye gently nodded. Although he was the one who selected the site, he didn't stay here for long. At that time, the flames of war incinerated the entire sky as all of the Nine Worlds were in the middle of a great war.

In the generations after the death of the Godking, Li Qiye, in his Dark Crow form, didn't return to this place. However, he had still heard of its decline. After so much time had passed, the once illustrious Celestial Peak Divine School had turned into ruins.

Yuan Caihe continued: "Tales told that the old Celestial Peak Divine School was not weaker than any imperial lineage in the Stone Medicine World as it dominated the lands for an era. What a shame that with the passage of time, the strongest lineage of our human race in the Stone Medicine World collapsed."

"Even imperial lineages will fall one day, so it is not strange for the Divine School to collapse." Li Qiye said.

He had seen these types of things too many times and had become numb to it. For tens of millions of years, countless unbeatable characters had answered his call. Countless unbeatable characters established their own lineages afterward, and eventually, all of these lineages fell before disappearing from everyone's minds.

Such things happened in every era, so Li Qiye had grown accustomed to it.

"However, I heard that the Divine School's decline was due to a different reason." Yuan Caihe said.

"Different reason? What would that be?" Li Qiye was intrigued to hear this.

"Rumor has it that although the Divine School was very powerful, it seldomly made enemies in the Stone Medicine World. It could even be said to have very good relationships with many lineages. Moreover, since it was situated at the Celestial Peak, it rarely had conflicting interests with the other great powers." Yuan Caihe said.

"So you are saying that the collapse of the school was not due to it being destroyed by enemies?" Li Qiye said with a light smile.

Yuan Caihe replied: "Yes, there was a belief that was very widespread for some time during that era, but after the Divine School was completely destroyed, no one ever talked about this belief again."

"Then something extraordinary must have happened at the Divine School, correct?" Li Qiye's eyes became serious. After the Godking progenitor of the Divine School died, Li Qiye didn't come back to take a look. He didn't return when the school was in decline either.

Chapter 669: Legends

"Yes." Yuan Caihe said: "Legend states that something happened at the Divine School. At that time, it was extremely prosperous with immense might. Some believed that the school, at that time, was no weaker than when it was back during its inception with its progenitor still present. Perhaps this was destined, an inevitable decline from being too magnificent. Many people initially thought that the school would be able to reach the next level, but who would have thought that in just one night, an unexpected event occurred at the school? Legend states that all existences near the Godking level died miserably overnight."

After hearing this, Li Qiye's expression quickly changed because he thought about a certain something, a matter that he didn't want to happen the most.

“It was said that something was dug out from the school’s grounds.” Yuan Caihe didn’t see Li Qiye’s change of expression and continued to speak as she gazed at the ruins: “Because of the unearthing of this item, a disaster befell the Divine School, killing all of their most powerful existences.”

Li Qiye couldn’t help but touch his chin and murmur: “Unearthed...” At this time, he knew what the school had dug out.

“However, no one knew what the school had unearthed, people only heard that this thing carried with it misfortune as the calamity spread across the school in one night.” Yuan Caihe said: “That night, countless powerful characters from the school died, which is why the school started to decline. Eventually, it was unable to rise up and collapsed completely.”

“What about the whereabouts of that thing?” Li Qiye asked with a serious expression. He hadn’t thought that such a thing could have happened because it was essentially impossible.

Of course, he knew that it existed underground and just how terrifying it was. There was a reason why the Ancient Ming chose to fortify this place with such a mighty force in the past.

This was also why he commanded his most powerful Godking to preside over this territory and transform it. At the same time, he warned the Godking to never dig out the item or else it would bring about a calamity to their Divine School.

The Godking also made a grand vow. Moreover, he forever sealed this secret and suppressed this ground. It could be said that the item underground never had the chance to see the light of day again.

After the transformation to turn this place into an auspicious ground, it became quite majestic. Especially after the death of the Godking, no one knew that an item was being suppressed underground at this location.

In fact, the Godking never told this secret to his descendants. This was the reason why Li Qiye could leave with peace of mind. He knew that there was no way the item could come out since no one else knew about it!

But now, it seemed that the Divine School failed their duty and personally unearthed the item. They didn’t know that this action was akin to courting death and bringing them onto the path of no return.

After hearing Li Qiye’s question, Yuan Caihe shook her head in response: “No one knows. By the time the outside world learned about this matter, the Divine School was virtually deserted already. Later on, others found out that after the unearthing calamity, the school’s elite forces were annihilated and the survivors fled to elsewhere in the world. As for the location of the item... This remains a mystery.”

Li Qiye sighed softly after hearing this. He didn’t expect for this thing to eventually be excavated. If he knew that this would happen, he would have paid more attention before and perhaps would be able to find out its whereabouts now.

However, it came as a surprise. The Godking kept his promise that year and the land was sealed, so after the death of the Godking, that should have been the end of it.

Ultimately, all the calculations of man cannot overcome the whim of the heavens; the Divine School somehow dug it up and caused a disaster.

Li Qiye looked towards the distance with a serious gaze. He knew what had been underground. In fact, he had thought about taking it out to put an end to it once and for all.

However, back then was a period of endless war in the Nine Worlds, and he didn't have time to deal with this matter. Afterward, everything went as planned with the creation of the Divine School and the Godking's promise, so he no longer wanted to take it out.

"Perhaps it will come out again one day." Li Qiye murmured as he gazed towards the horizon. If there was a chance to find it again, he absolutely wouldn't let it go.

"It is possible." Of course, Yuan Caihe didn't know what Li Qiye was thinking about, so she misunderstood his intention and said: "I heard that item is extremely ominous. Although it had disappeared, people had searched for it during that era. Such a monstrous and evil item wouldn't just disappear, it will surely come out again one day. As for when, I'm afraid we'll never know."

"Let's go, we'll head for the Celestial Peak River." Li Qiye took one last look around and gently shook his head before burying his thoughts. He had to go to the river to find a certain something before contemplating this matter again.

This time, Li Qiye came to find a certain thing, a living creature, to be exact. However, Li Qiye was not too certain about whether this creature was still alive or not. After all, so much time had passed.

Nevertheless, he still had to find it because he had a certain plan for going to the Alchemy Kingdom; it was not just simply to participate in the alchemy conference.

After traveling through the extremely vast ruins, some pavilions and palaces could still be found standing. One could imagine just how majestic and extravagant this place used to be. Alas, even the most powerful lineage would collapse in due time.

One couldn't help but become emotional when gazing at this scene, including someone who was numb like Li Qiye. However, before they made it through the ruins, a rustling sound appeared and a figure emerged from the ground. This thing immediately stopped Li Qiye and Yuan Caihe while shouting: "This is my mountain and these are my trees. If you want to pass, you must pay the toll."

Li Qiye had yet to truly see the appearance of this thing that came out from the ground, but he was already speechless after hearing such bandit-like words. What generation was this to still have robbers hanging around?

The thing that blocked their path was a very old-looking demon. It was clear that he was from the demon race because his entire body had taken human-shape, with the exception of his left hand which retained its ant-like features.

People would be able to immediately guess his origin just by looking at his left hand. This had to be an ant demon.

"Ah..." This demon bandit had just finished speaking, but he choked on his words the instant when he saw Yuan Caihe, showing a very embarrassed expression.

"Umm..." The old demon scratched his head with his left claw and said: "So it is Fairy Yuan, I didn't think someone as great as you would come here."

“You know this fella?” Li Qiye was going to teach this blind bandit a lesson, but after hearing him, Li Qiye stopped.

“You are...” Although this old demon recognized Yuan Caihe, she didn’t seem to remember him.

The old demon hurriedly said: “Fairy Yuan doesn’t remember me? I am Tie Yi, the one who went to the Serene Garden five years ago to ask for medicine.” [1. Tie Yi is Iron Ant.]

“Oh, I remember now.” Yuan Caihe responded: “You are that old demon who came with the Sacred Curewater.”

Having said that, she couldn’t help but take another look at him and found something strange: “In my opinion, your wounds that year were impossible to cure, but you are now completely fine. What Immortal Medicine did you find?”

“Ah, this is all because of you.” The old demon quickly said: “You handed me a bunch of medicine that was able to buy some time for my injuries. Yeah, maybe I had good luck, after a period of hardship, I found more amazing medicines and actually managed to heal the old wounds.”

Yuan Caihe was not a meddlesome person, so she didn’t pursue it any further after hearing this answer.

Meanwhile, Li Qiye, who was standing to the side, gauged this old demon and leisurely said: “For you to stay at such a desolate place to be a bandit, it seems that life must be really tough right now. It is more difficult to find a fat sheep here than to be hit by a pie from the sky.”

The old demon, Tie Yi, blushed after hearing Li Qiye’s sarcastic remark and gave a dry chuckle: “It is just a misunderstanding, a misunderstanding, really. Young Noble misunderstood me. I am only hiding here to scare people a bit. There is no other intention, it is not like I really want to rob them. This is just a joke, nothing more.”

The more Tie Yi tried to explain himself, the more people would feel that he was truly a bandit.

Li Qiye only glanced at him and replied without pressing the issue: “Is that so?”

This old demon Tie Yi looked honest, but he was a bit sly as well. His red face didn’t want to discuss this matter any further, so he quickly changed the topic. He spoke to Yuan Caihe: “Is Fairy Yuan here to pick some herbs? I am very familiar with this area of the Celestial Peak, so if you want, I can lead the way.”

Although Yuan Caihe’s background was illustrious and many great powers were very respectful to her, she was easy to get along with and wasn’t the type that put others at a distance. She gently shook her head and said: “The main reason I came this time is for the Draco-Bulls; I’m just picking some herbs along the way.”

“Ah, so Fairy is here for the bulls.” The old demon clapped his hands and excitedly said: “I almost forgot until you reminded me. It is now the season for the Draco-Bulls to go out to the river, the best time to gather Immortal Sulfur. I know of a path to the river, so let me lead the way for Fairy and this Young Noble.”

[spoiler title=’669 Teaser’]“Yes.” Yuan Caihe said: “Legend states that something happened at the Divine School. At that time, it was extremely prosperous with immense might. Some believed that the school, at that time, was no weaker than when it was back during its inception with the progenitor still present.

Perhaps this was destined, an inevitable decline from being too magnificent. Many people initially thought that the school would be able to reach the next level, but who would have thought that in just one night, an unexpected event occurred at the school? Legend states that all existences near the Godking level died miserably overnight.”

After hearing this, Li Qiye’s expression quickly changed because he thought about a certain something, a matter that he didn’t want to happen the most.

“It was said that something was dug out from the school’s grounds.” Yuan Caihe didn’t see Li Qiye’s change of expression and continued to speak as she gazed at the ruins: “Because of the unearthing of this item, a disaster befell the Divine School, killing all of their most powerful existences.”

Li Qiye couldn’t help but touch his chin and murmur: “Unearthed...” At this time, he knew what the school had dug out.

“However, no one knew what the school unearthed from the ground, people only heard that this thing carried with it misfortune as the calamity spread across the school in one night.” Yuan Caihe said: “That night, countless powerful characters from the school died, which is why the school started to decline. Eventually, it was unable to rise up and collapsed completely.”

“What about the whereabouts of that thing?” Li Qiye asked with a serious expression. He didn’t think that such a thing could have happened because it was essentially impossible.

Chapter 670: Old Demon Tie Yi

This old demon volunteered and immediately led the way for Li Qiye and Yuan Caihe with great enthusiasm.

With the old demon ahead, Li Qiye and Yuan Caihe walked side by side while looking at the old demon. Li Qiye revealed a mysterious smile then told Yuan Caihe: “You know this fella?”

Yuan Caihe slightly shook her head in response and replied: “I don’t really know him, but he came to the Serene Garden in the past for medicine and even brought the extremely precious Sacred Curewater in exchange for ointments. At that time, I examined and helped his injuries, but they were extremely fatal and I was powerless. I gave him some ointments and let him leave. Without some Immortal Medicines, I thought he wouldn’t survive for another half a year. Who would have thought that he could persevere for so long and is actually still alive to this day?” While recalling the event, she couldn’t help but look at the old demon in front of them once more; this was a cause for astonishment. Although she was not versed in refining ointments, the Serene Garden had a unique dao of alchemy, and it also had some very precious ointments.

Although Yuan Caihe’s healing techniques were far from comparable to her plant cultivation skill, in her eyes, the old demon’s wounds that year were not curable by anyone in the entire Stone Medicine World, unless he managed to find some Immortal Medicines.

She was a kind person and although she knew that he would not last much longer, she still gave him some ointments. She guessed that without Immortal Medicines, he wouldn’t make it past half a year, so who would have thought that the old demon managed to persist and even fully recover?

She found it very strange, but she was not a nosy person. This was the old demon's personal matter, so she didn't question him despite her curiosity.

"So it is like that." Li Qiye stroked his chin and smiled while looked at the old demon's back as he walked on.

"Brother Li thinks something is amiss?" Yuan Caihe couldn't help but ask. Of course, she also found it strange as well.

"Well, only he knows." Li Qiye smiled, but a little glimmer could be found in his narrowed eyes.

The Celestial Peak was a wild area with dangerous hills. It could be said that there were dangers everywhere in the form of ferocious beasts and vicious birds. Although these creatures had yet to become enlightened, they were powerful beyond imagination and capable of rending the earth with their claws and destroying the sky with their wings.

There were poisonous insect kings all over the place. There were creatures so vile that a mouthful of toxic fumes spat from them could kill everything in a thousand mile radius — terribly shocking.

Because of this, ordinary cultivators didn't dare to intrude on the Celestial Peak. Only the strong would dare to show up here.

Its dangers also meant that there were many great treasures here that were untouched by man. Thus, this vast and majestic land was full of spirit medicines and herbs.

Along the way, Li Qiye and Yuan Caihe, accompanied by Old Demon Tie Yi leading the way, found many spirit medicines and herbs. Of course, the good ones had their own awareness, so it was a bit difficult to pluck them.

In fact, herb picking was also part of the dao of alchemy. With greater skill, one would be able to pick even better medicines, maybe even Immortal Medicines.

Of course, this was no issue for Li Qiye and Yuan Caihe, they managed to pick many along the way.

Meanwhile, Old Demon Tie Yi also got some leftovers from Li Qiye and Yuan Caihe. When they were picking medicines, he also managed to get some scraps in the form of herbs.

This harvest left him beaming with a delighted expression. It seemed that this old demon was a vagabond, so just a small batch of spirit medicines was enough to excite him.

"Wow, a nearly 1,000,000 year old Young King Medicine." The old demon started to salivate when he saw Li Qiye pick a root from a ravine.

"Pretty good luck there." Yuan Caihe also revealed an elegant smile and said: "A Young King Medicine nearing one million years of age is not easy to find, but Brother Li immediately caught one this easily. Your dao of alchemy is really amazing."

"You noticed it just as fast as me." Li Qiye said with a smile. Due to his knowledge of the alchemy dao, the moment he set foot on this land, he immediately knew the type of herbs that were growing here as well as their locations. In fact, he had already measured the land the moment he arrived at the Celestial Peak, so even King Medicines wouldn't be able to escape his grasp easily.

Of course, catching a 3,000,000 year old King Medicine was not difficult for him either, so him catching this Young King Medicine was just an easy matter.

Yuan Caihe gently smiled and said: "Brother Li flatters me too much. Although I also noticed that the root was hiding around this area, I wouldn't have been able to catch it as well as you. Whether it was the catching technique or sealing the area, I would be one step slower than Brother Li. Your moves are swift and flexible like flowing water and floating clouds and shows the great mastery ingrained in your mind. I have to say that regarding plucking medicines, you are a level higher than me."

Li Qiye only smiled after receiving the praise. For tens of millions of years now, his hands had plucked countless spirit medicines, so of course he had no peers in this regard.

"Fairy Yuan is the divine physician and Young Noble Li is the king with regards to the dao of alchemy. The two of you are at the peak of alchemy without rival." Meanwhile, Old Demon Tie Yi immediately flattered the two of them. He looked at the Young King Medicine in Li Qiye's hand and couldn't help but gulp.

Suddenly, right at this moment, a group of people descended from the sky with an imposing aura. This was a group of experts that wore precious robes, giving off a cold atmosphere filled with disdain. The leader of this group was a young man around the age of twenty with an imperial robe that showed off his nobility and contempt for others.

"The Golden Leopard Country's cavalry and the Golden Leopard Prince..." The moment the old demon saw this group of people coming down from the sky, his expression greatly changed. He did a roll and immediately went underground, disappearing without a trace.

His sudden escape into the ground left Yuan Caihe speechless. It was extremely rare to see a cowardly person of this magnitude.

"So it is Fairy Yuan, please excuse me." The person who led the group was the prince. He cupped his hands together and spoke to Yuan Caihe: "I have heard my followers' report. They were blind and stopped your path, so I am here to apologize." Having said that, he slightly bowed.

The Golden Leopard Country was a demonic great power with a number of Demon Monarchs that mainly consisted of animals. The Golden Leopard Prince was their first prince, thus his status was quite high.

However, his status was far from being comparable to Yuan Caihe's. People who were in a similar position to the Golden Leopard Prince in the entire Stone Medicine World numbered in the thousands, but Yuan Caihe was one of the four alchemy prodigies, someone with great fame; very few among the younger generation could be considered her peer. At times, many great powers and imperial lineages would require the aid of a young genius such as her.

She was a very easygoing and amiable person. Without any arrogance, she nodded and said: "Golden Leopard Prince said too much. There will always be some complications as we tread the outside world, so Golden Leopard Prince doesn't have to worry about it."

The prince bowed again and said: "Thank you for your tolerance." After apologizing, the prince's gaze fell upon Li Qiye. To be more exact, it fell on the Young King Medicine in Li Qiye's hand.

To the prince, an unknown nobody with such an ordinary appearance like Li Qiye was not worthy of his glance. In his eyes, this nobody was not worth mentioning.

What attracted his gaze was the root Li Qiye was holding. In fact, a 1,000,000 year old Young King Medicine — to any cultivator — would be a precious treasure and was worth coveting.

At this time, the prince asked Yuan Caihe: “This is...?” If it wasn’t for the fact that he really wanted the root in Li Qiye’s hand, someone with a great status like him would be too lazy to ask about an unnamed junior.

“This is Brother Li, he’s also an alchemist.” Yuan Caihe only did a simple introduction without going into great detail.

“Alchemist Li is truly lucky to be able to pluck a Young King Medicine; this is a rare occasion.” The prince said. He felt that speaking to Li Qiye was already doing this nobody a great honor due to his great status. Because of this, he didn’t even refer to Li Qiye as “Dao Brother”, only “Alchemist”.

However, Li Qiye was too lazy to even interact with someone like the Golden Leopard Prince; he simply stood there leisurely in complete indifference.

The prince’s attention was not on Li Qiye but the Young King Medicine in his hand, so the prince clapped his hands together and spoke to Yuan Caihe: “To tell the truth, I came to the Celestial Peak this time in order to find a King Medicine in addition to Immortal Sulfur. I see that the Young King Medicine in this Alchemist Li’s hand is just right for me, so I wonder if Alchemist Li is willing to do a trade?”

At this time, Li Qiye shifted his eyes and glanced at the prince. He still didn’t say anything, but the prince continued on: “As long as Alchemist Li is willing, you can just name the price. Whether it is refined jades or treasures, this prince will try my best to satisfy you.”

At this moment, Li Qiye slowly put away the Young King Medicine in his hand and shook his head to say: “My apologies, but this Young King Medicine is not for sale. I’m keeping it for my personal usage.”

In his eyes, a Young King Medicine was no different to a weed. However, he wouldn’t sell it to someone like this Golden Prince Leopard.

“Alchemist Li should reconsider, as long as you name the price, this prince will try to meet it.”

Li Qiye didn’t even bat an eye as he coldly refused: “Not for sale.”

The Golden Leopard Prince’s expression immediately sank because Li Qiye’s attitude annoyed him. How could he remain cool when Li Qiye, this nobody, was acting in such a haughty manner towards someone as great as him?