

Martial 3211

Chapter 3211, I Can't

Ji Ying had been researching a new Alchemy Technique recently. The most notable part of the technique was the Pill Condensing Technique. According to his explanation, his Pill Condensing Technique was relatively simple compared to other similar techniques, to the point that even an average Alchemist could master it with some practice. Moreover, the Pill Condensing efficiency would be increased by at least 10% or 20% upon mastering the technique.

A 10% or 20% increase was nothing to sneeze at. It might not make much of a difference when refining only a small number of Spirit Pills, but an Alchemist would refine a large amount of Spirit Pills throughout their lifetime, so a 10% or 20% increase in the quantity of condensed pills would result in quite a terrifying amount of wealth.

Since the Pill Condensing Technique was the last part of the process, Ji Ying did not choose to refine a high-grade Spirit Pill; instead, he chose a Dao Source Grade Spirit Pill to experiment with.

The early stages of the process were ubiquitous, and even though the process was sophisticated, it was nothing out of the ordinary.

The room was shrouded in silence for a while as Ji Ying was focused on his Alchemy. Meanwhile, Yang Kai and Xia Ning Chang watched the entire process together. In particular, Xia Ning Chang stared unblinkingly at Ji Ying's movements with her beautiful face revealing a thoughtful expression from time to time.

Ji Ying condensed the medicinal liquid, portrayed the Spirit Arrays, and refined the embryonic Spirit Pills. Soon, it was time for the Pill Condensing process and his expression subsequently became serious, "Brother Yang, please watch carefully."

Saying so, Ji Ying began forming a set of hand seals while directing subtle waves of his Emperor Qi into the Alchemy Furnace. A fragrant aroma seeped out in an instant. The Pill Condensing process had obviously begun, and a short while later, Ji Ying shouted in a low voice, "Condense!"

He then lifted the lid of the furnace. Following that, several circular Spirit Pills flew out and were guided into a jade bottle Ji Ying had prepared in advance. They rolled around inside the bottle noisily. There were exactly nine Spirit Pills, no more, no less. Nine was the limit. No matter how great the technique of the Alchemist or how high the level of refining, each refinement could only produce nine pills at the most, a law even Wondrous Pill Great Emperor could not break past.

As an Emperor Alchemist, Ji Ying could refine nine Spirit Pills when refining a Dao Source Grade Spirit Pill even without using his newly developed Pill Condensing Technique; therefore, the number of pills he refined, even after using his new technique at the end, was still nine.

Even so, Yang Kai could tell that the new technique had its unique points and immediately focused his mind carefully before discussing the process with Ji Ying.

A discussion between Alchemists was not limited to theory only; hands-on experiments were necessary too. Therefore, Yang Kai took out his Alchemy Furnace and some herbs before he began to refine a Spirit Pill. When he arrived at the last Pill Condensing step, he used the techniques developed by Ji Ying to compare the pros and cons first-hand.

Afterwards, they refined Spirit Pill after Spirit Pill in their experiments. Time passed little by little, but Ji Ying was not the slightest bit fatigued. Rather, his eyes shone brighter and he became more energetic the longer they worked. It was the right decision to discuss this matter with Yang Kai after all. Over the next few days, he discovered that his new Pill Condensing Technique still had some flaws and he gradually rectified them with Yang Kai's mutual input and confirmation, which made him extremely happy.

Five whole days later, the two of them put away their Alchemy Furnaces and walked out of the Pill Room together. Having gained some new insights, Ji Ying was in a jubilant mood and thus ordered his disciples to prepare a banquet to entertain Yang Kai.

This was in line with Yang Kai's wish so he signalled to Xia Ning Chang with a look. Xia Ning Chang immediately understood his intentions and picked up a bottle of wine to pour them some drinks.

It was several rounds of drinks before Ji Ying slapped his head and said, "Where are my manners! I haven't even asked for this lady's name yet!"

While speaking, he turned to glance at Xia Ning Chang with an apologetic expression. Despite noticing that the relationship between Yang Kai and Xia Ning Chang was a bit unusual, Ji Ying had quickly become fully engrossed in his Alchemy. Aside from Alchemy, the only other thing in his head was Yang Kai, the person he was discussing this matter with, which was still related to Alchemy. He completely neglected Xia Ning Chang the whole time and didn't even notice that she was serving their drinks by the side until this moment.

"This is my beloved wife, Xia Ning Chang." Yang Kai smiled slightly and introduced them.

Xia Ning Chang bowed elegantly, "Greetings, Grandmaster Ji Ying!" Her face was slightly flushed as it was the first time Yang Kai had introduced her to an outsider in that manner.

"Madam Yang!?" Ji Ying was startled. [The person who has been pouring me wine is Yang Kai's Wife!?!]

Ji Ying seemed at a loss and hurriedly stood up, "W-What have I done? Please sit down!" [If I had known this Xia Ning Chang was Yang Kai's wife, I would never have let her do such menial tasks! Isn't that like slapping Brother Yang's face!? Luckily he doesn't seem to mind...]

"I have been disrespectful. Allow me to offer this toast to you as an apology, Madam Yang! Please forgive me for my lack of hospitality!" Ji Ying lifted his wine glass and drank its content down.

"Brother Ji, you are being too serious about this, it's just a minor matter." Yang Kai smiled and waved dismissively.

Ji Ying looked at Yang Kai with a bitter smile, "Brother Yang, how could you allow me to make such a fool of myself, bringing your wife here without saying anything and making me look bad? You have to drink three cups of wine as punishment later!"

"It is as you say, Brother Ji." Yang Kai smiled before continuing, "But, there's no hurry to start drinking just yet. I actually have something to ask of you, Brother Ji, and it concerns my wife."

Ji Ying said, "Feel free to speak up whenever you need my help, Brother Yang. I won't refuse as long as I can help."

"This matter is definitely something only you can do, Brother Ji." Yang Kai smiled confidently and pointed to Xia Ning Chang, "It's like this... Ning Chang has also been practising Alchemy ever since she started cultivating. She loves Alchemy more than fighting and cultivation."

"Oh? Sister-In-Law is an Alchemist too?" Ji Ying studied Xia Ning Chang seriously but frowned slightly a moment later. As an Emperor Alchemist, he could tell if somebody studied the same field as him with a glance. That was because an Alchemist would have a unique air around them. This was especially true for those who dealt with different fires and herbs all year round; there would definitely be traces that could not be removed completely. Oddly, he could not find any of these traces on Xia Ning Chang at all of her dealing with flames, though he could clearly smell the scent of various pills coming from her, which made him suspicious.

"Indeed!" Yang Kai nodded, "It's just that she has just arrived from a Lower Star Field where the conditions were very limited. She also had nobody to teach her about Alchemy, so now that I finally managed to bring her here, I was hoping that she could study the Alchemic Dao from you, Brother Ji."

Ji Ying replied, "Brother Yang, your achievements in Alchemy are no worse than mine; moreover, you are husband and wife. Would it not be simpler for you to teach her? Why bother going around the sun to reach the moon?"

Yang Kai smiled wryly, "You think too highly of me, Brother Ji. As you know, I don't have the time to teach her."

Upon hearing those words, Ji Ying knew that Yang Kai was speaking the truth. He had been in High Heaven Palace for quite a long time now, but even so, he practically never saw Yang Kai around. Yang Kai's whereabouts were a constant unknown, so how could he have the time to teach others?

Thus, Ji Ying nodded lightly, "If that's the case, I don't mind helping. But..." Before Ji Ying could continue his sentence, Yang Kai cut him off and winked at Xia Ning Chang, "Ning Chang, come and greet your Honoured Master!"

Not only was Ji Ying in the Emperor Realm, but he was also an Emperor Alchemist, so he was more than qualified to be Xia Ning Chang's Master. Even if he and Yang Kai referred to each other as brothers, their relationship would not be affected if Ji Ying simply taught Xia Ning Chang casually.

Ji Ying was a Legacy Disciple of Wondrous Pill Great Emperor, and learned the Alchemic Dao from Wondrous Pill Great Emperor personally, so if Xia Ning Chang could learn from him, she would surely gain greatly from the experience even if it was slight.

However, it was different if Ji Ying took her on as a formal Disciple. That would mean he was obligated to teach her everything he knew without any reservations. Comparing those two options, it was natural that Yang Kai wanted Xia Ning Chang to become Ji Ying's Disciple. Suffering a small loss in terms of hierarchy was nothing compared to that.

Before coming here, Yang Kai had informed Xia Ning Chang in advance of his plans; hence, she knew what she had to do right now and quickly tried to bow. Before she could speak though, Ji Ying waved his hand and an invisible force supported her to forcefully prevent her from bowing before him.

"Brother Yang..." Ji Ying looked at Yang Kai helplessly. Waving his hand about, he continued, "I can't. I can't."

If he really accepted Xia Ning Chang as a Disciple, then what would become of the relationship between him and Yang Kai? What's more; he was not just an ordinary Emperor Alchemist, he represented Medicine Pill Valley. It was not possible for him to randomly take in Disciples at will. He had to receive approval from Medicine Pill Valley first.

In addition, he had no intention of accepting more disciples. It was okay to ask him to teach Xia Ning Chang; however, accepting Disciples was an important affair. How could it be done so carelessly? Even if Xia Ning Chang was Yang Kai's wife, Ji Ying didn't dare to take her in as a disciple without even knowing her aptitude; otherwise, it would be Medicine Pill Valley's reputation at risk if things went wrong.

Ji Ying already had several disciples under him, but each one of them was elite among the elites. Over time, each of them was likely to become an Emperor Alchemist.

"Why not? Could it be that you are unwilling, Brother Ji?" Yang Kai thought to himself. [I've already said so much, so how can I let you escape so easily? You have to take her in as your Disciple. I'll make you do it even if you don't want to!]

"It's not that I'm unwilling. It's just..." Ji Ying was extremely conflicted, "There are rules in place, so I cannot take in Disciples at will. I will need to report this matter to Eldest Senior Brother first."

Although Medicine Pill Valley was where Wondrous Pill Great Emperor cultivated in retreat, the old man was not in charge of everyday matters. Currently, the person in charge of Medicine Pill Valley was the Eldest Disciple of Wondrous Pill Great Emperor, the man Ji Ying addressed as 'Eldest Senior Brother'.

"There are such rules?" Yang Kai was stunned, but at the same time, he knew that Ji Ying would not lie to him. He also understood that various obstacles had appeared in his plan.

"That's right. Otherwise, I would not refuse this request. Why don't we do this instead, Brother Yang? I can teach Sister-In-Law Alchemy, but we won't have the status of Master and Disciple between us."

Yang Kai was greatly reluctant to accept that offer. [What if he isn't serious about teaching her? How much can she learn?]

Worried, he tentatively asked, "Does Medicine Pill Valley still accept disciples?"

How could Ji Ying not know what Yang Kai was trying to do? As such, he gave a troubled smile, "The Valley has not taken in any new disciples for the past 500 years. However, Eldest Senior Brother will not refuse if the person has extraordinary aptitude."

Upon hearing those words, Yang Kai became happy and called out, "Ning Chang, demonstrate your skills for Brother Ji."

Ji Ying stared at Yang Kai in amazement, finding all this rather hard to believe. From what he could see, there were no traces of Xia Ning Chang practising Alchemy; however, Yang Kai seemed to be extremely confident about her skills. Unfortunately, things had already come to this, so Ji Ying could not put a stop to the matter anymore. It was all down to Xia Ning Chang now.

[If her aptitude is even the slightest bit acceptable, I will go back and beg Eldest Senior Brother to accept her into Medicine Pill Valley. I should at least do that for Yang Kai.]

"Then, please excuse me." Xia Ning Chang said softly before she took out some herbs from her Space Ring. They were all herbs of the Origin King Grade as there were no higher grade herbs in the Star Field. Just this action alone though made Ji Ying's eyes brighten.

Chapter 3212, Applying What You Have Learnt

With Ji Ying's insight, it was easy for him to tell that Xia Ning Chang was only in the Third-Order Origin King Realm, but even so, Xia Ning Chang was taking out Origin King Grade herbs. Her actions indicated that she was going to refine an Origin King Grade Spirit Pill, which was probably the limit for a cultivator from a Lower Star Field.

In other words, Yang Kai's Wife was an Origin King Rank Alchemist.

[Perhaps... I can look forward to this a bit.] Ji Ying secretly nodded to himself and silently began paying attention.

In the meantime, Xia Ning Chang gently picked up one of the herbs, and at that moment, the aura around her changed drastically and became extremely focused. It was as though the only thing left in the world was the herb in front of her right now and nothing else.

Alchemy required incredible concentration, and one could not become easily disturbed or distracted. That was an essential quality for every Alchemist.

Seeing this, Ji Ying nodded to himself again. Regardless of her Alchemy aptitude, her performance alone would deserve some merit.

In the next moment though, Ji Ying's brow furrowed deeply because Xia Ning Chang was controlling her Saint Qi to wrap around the herbs in her hand directly. Furthermore, her Saint Qi did not remain constant and instead fluctuated freely. Both the amount and the strength of her Saint Qi constantly increased and decreased without a fixed pattern.

Under the influence of these fluctuations, an emerald aura soon seeped out of the herb and a clear medicinal liquid began to condense.

[She is not using an Alchemy Furnace!?] A strange look flashed across Ji Ying's eyes. An excellent Alchemist did not need to use an Alchemy Furnace when refining Spirit Pills they were very familiar with. They could simply refine it in the air. Nevertheless, that process required the skill of the Alchemist to be extremely high. Moreover, the Spirit Pill they were refining could not be of too high of a grade.

For example, an Emperor Alchemist like him did not need to use an Alchemy Furnace when refining a Dao Source Grade Spirit Pill. Be that as it may, the quality and number of those pills would be affected even if he could complete the refinement successfully.

An Alchemy Furnace was the life of an Alchemist. Those weren't just empty words. Regardless of how good or bad the Alchemy Furnace was, it was the most essential tool necessary to assist an Alchemist in refining.

Xia Ning Chang was in the Origin King Realm; therefore, refining an Origin King Grade Spirit Pill was her limit in the first place, and yet, she was going to refine the pill in the air without the help of an Alchemy Furnace. That made Ji Ying a little unhappy. Even if she wanted to show off a thing or two in front of him, she should not go overboard. This wasn't a good mindset to have as an Alchemist. She was sacrificing substance for style, a mentality that would limit her future prospects.

If it had been anybody else, Ji Ying would have reprimanded them for their actions already. He only managed to stop himself from doing so at the thought that this young lady was Yang Kai's wife. Unfortunately, the hope he previously had for her vanished.

In the next moment though, he was again stunned. That was because he sensed that her Saint Qi was not of the Fire Attribute. [What is she doing!? It's bad enough she is refining without an Alchemy Furnace, but now, she isn't even going to use a fire!? How is she going to perform Alchemy!? Does she take Alchemy for a children's game that she can fool around with!?)

Unable to take it anymore, he turned to look at Yang Kai.

But contrary to expectations, Yang Kai was smiling and he meaningfully said, "Just watch, Brother Ji. You will come to understand later."

Ji Ying frowned, but he had no choice but to let nature run its course while pondering how he could refuse Yang Kai's previous proposal without wounding the latter's pride or the friendship between them. [This is very difficult. If Yang Kai had brought anybody else, I could have rejected the request outright, but this woman is his wife! If I handle this poorly, it might form a rift between us!]

Meanwhile, Xia Ning Chang's Saint Qi surged and the herb which was tumbling before her gradually began to shrivel up as a pearl-sized emerald green liquid sphere was extracted from it.

Ji Ying's abruptly eyes widened in shock as he exclaimed out loud, "How is this possible!?"

The first step in refining Spirit Pills was to condense medicinal liquid from the required Spirit Herbs. Generally, an Alchemist would use an Alchemy Furnace and intense flames to do so; however, Yang Kai's wife used neither. Even so, she magically managed to condense the medicinal liquid of that herb.

He turned to look at Yang Kai in shock only to see that Yang Kai's expression was indifferent, as though he had expected this outcome.

[What is going on? How did Young Lady Xia manage to condense the medicinal liquid without the help of an Alchemy Furnace or any kind of fire at all!?] Unable to believe his eyes, Ji Ying silently spread out his Divine Sense only to have his eyes widen again.

This was indeed medicinal liquid, and moreover... it was extremely pure! The pearl-sized green medicinal liquid drop did not contain any impurities whatsoever. It was pure and flawless. Plus, the medicinal properties were extremely well preserved without any hint of damage. The shock to his heart was extraordinary as he felt as though what he just saw overturned his lifetime of knowledge and experience.

With his current skills, Ji Ying could achieve the same results as Xia Ning Chang with the same Origin King Grade herb; however, he would need to use an Alchemy Furnace and an appropriate flame to achieve that. Moreover, he was an Emperor Alchemist while Xia Ning Chang was only an Origin King Rank Alchemist. The gap between those two was so wide that they were simply incomparable.

Ji Ying never imagined that an Origin King Rank Alchemist could condense medicinal liquid to the extent where it was above their limit. At the very least, he couldn't have achieved this when he was an Origin King Rank Alchemist himself.

The purity of the medicinal liquid directly affected the quality of the Spirit Pill that was produced. The higher the purity and quality of the medicinal liquid, the smoother the subsequent refining process would become and the better the end result would be. In this step, Xia Ning Chang had undoubtedly reached a state of perfection.

Ji Ying glanced at the withered Origin King Grade herb in her hand next and determined that all the medicinal efficacies contained in it had been fully extracted without any wastage.

It was already amazing how she could condense such a pure medicinal liquid without the help of an Alchemy Furnace or any kind of flame, but she was even able to extract every last bit of medicinal efficacy from the Spirit Herb she was working with. It could be said that Ji Ying had never met an Alchemist like Xia Ning Chang before. Even those disciples under him that he had great expectations for could not compare to her. If he were to score her on this stage of Alchemy, and 10 was a perfect score, then he would give her 9 points, deducting one point solely out of fear that she would become overconfident.

He could not figure out how she managed to achieve this simply because it went against everything that he knew. Calming himself down, he continued to watch her. The rest of the herbs were being condensed into individual balls of medicinal liquid now, and it did not take long before she completely condensed all of the medicinal liquids necessary.

Ji Ying was amazed at her achievements. Furthermore, he realized that the first time she condensed such pure medicinal liquid had not been a lucky accident. That was because all the medicinal efficacies of the other herbs she processed had been condensed completely without the slightest trace of wastage.

The dissatisfaction and contempt in his heart had vanished and he now focused all his attention on Xia Ning Chang's movements without moving. Ji Ying was afraid he might miss out on some of the finer

details of her methods. Even if he couldn't quite figure out how she managed to achieve this, the visual and sensory impact was still incredibly pleasurable to watch as a Senior Alchemist.

After condensing the medicinal liquids, it was time to portray Spirit Arrays to temper and merge them together. Thus, Ji Ying thought to himself, [At this point, she should be taking out her Alchemy Furnace, right? That performance just now was enough to prove her ability.]

But contrary to his expectations, Xia Ning Chang continued without taking out her Alchemy Furnace. She simply spread out her hands slightly and wrapped the pearl-sized medicinal liquid drops with Saint Qi, suspending them between her palms. When her Saint Qi churned again, those balls of medicinal liquid began to dance quickly. They spun around a point in space that acted as the centre without stopping while her palms acted as the boundaries. During this process, the droplets merged and blended over and over again until something strange happened.

At this point, Ji Ying was completely speechless. All he could understand was that the way Yang Kai's wife refined Spirit Pills was completely different from any form of Alchemy that he knew. It was far beyond what he could even imagine. Using his Divine Sense to observe the changes in the medicinal liquid, the expressions on his face constantly shifted from astonishment, to shock, to amazement... all sorts of expressions flashed across his face.

A quarter of an hour quickly passed by when the blended medicinal liquid that had been rotating between Xia Ning Chang's palms suddenly slowed down. With Ji Ying's perception, he could clearly tell that all the different medicinal liquids had been completely fused with one another without any kind of incompatibility or waste.

Holding the semi-finished pill in one hand, Xia Ning Chang suddenly knit her brow and pondered something for a moment, after which she suddenly changed the array that she had been using with her free hand and pushed her Saint Qi in a pulsing manner.

"This is..." Ji Ying stood up abruptly as the Alchemy Technique she was currently using was none other than his newly developed Pill Condensing Technique! He had discussed the technique with Yang Kai over the past five days and used it to refine roughly twenty Spirit Pills, but that was all. He couldn't believe she learned his new technique completely just by watching them for five days! Not only did she learn it, but was even able to apply what she learned immediately!

Ji Ying became more and more excited as he instinctively realized he had stumbled upon a hidden gem.

Her excellent and unique Alchemy skills could be explained away as having been acquired through great amounts of practical experience; after all, Xia Ning Cheng had indeed been practising the Alchemic Dao for a long time. However, learning Ji Ying's new Pill Condensing Technique in just five days and applying it now proved that her comprehension and aptitude had reached an astonishing, near Heaven-defying height.

Naturally, Ji Ying could tell that the Pill Condensing Technique she was using was not perfect. There were some flaws in the execution, and some parts were rather stiff compared to when he was using it, but those small flaws did not obscure the brilliance of this feat. She had simply been watching from the side for five days, and he didn't even teach her anything about this technique, but despite that, she was capable of executing it to a practical extent. If she was this good when she was simply observing, how

much more would she improve if he actually taught her himself? Compared to her, the disciples he had high hopes for weren't worth anything!

Upon executing the final portion of the Alchemy Technique, the medicinal liquid in Xia Ning Chang's hands split into seven orbs. Those seven balls of medicinal liquid spun continuously, gradually solidifying and drying.

Once the dust had settled, there were seven round, snow-white pills rolling around in her palm.

"Please have a look, Grandmaster." She said softly as she placed the seven Spirit Pills on the table and retreated behind Yang Kai.

Ji Ying immediately widened his eyes at the sight. Grabbing the seven Spirit Pills, he studied them carefully.

Meanwhile, Yang Kai had been observing Ji Ying's expressions the entire time, so how could he not notice the changes in the latter's demeanour? Lifting his gaze, he smiled and winked at Xia Ning Chang, signalling that she had done well.

"Pill Veins!" Ji Ying exclaimed. Two out of the seven pills actually formed Pill Veins! This was such an amazing ratio that even he felt dazed with shock for a moment.

Chapter 3213, Ji Ying's Good Intentions

Pill Veins were the best proof of an Alchemist's skills. Unfortunately, it was something that could only happen by chance. If Pill Veins appeared on a Spirit Pill during the process of refinement, then both the medicinal efficacies and the value of that Spirit Pill would at least double. That was because the medicinal efficacies of a Spirit Pill that formed Pill Veins would not fade away no matter how much time passed as long as the pill was stored properly. The patterns on the surface of the Spirit Pill were akin to the meridians in a Human's body that locked in the medicinal efficacies and prevented them from waning.

It was even more remarkable if Pill Clouds appeared. Pill Clouds not only had the same preservative and enhancement effects as Pill Veins, but they could also actively absorb World Energy to nourish the Spirit Pill. The longer such a pill was stored, the more powerful its medicinal efficacies became. Hence, the medicinal efficacies contained in the Spirit Pill that formed Pill Clouds would be terrifying if it was stored for thousands or tens of thousands of years.

Pill Veins were already considered rare coincidences, so what more needed to be said about Pill Clouds? Pill Clouds were an absolute rarity. Whenever Ji Ying refined Spirit Pills, he might occasionally produce a Spirit Pill with Pill Veins, but a Spirit Pill with Pill Clouds... he had never produced one before.

On the other hand, his Fourth Senior Sister had once had a stroke of good fortune and managed to refine a Spirit Pill with Pill Clouds. However, it was only an Origin King Grade Spirit Pill. She was already an Emperor Alchemist at the time, so refining an Origin King Grade Spirit Pill was as simple as breathing

for her. Still, she received the praise of their Honoured Master for that achievement and had kept that special Spirit Pill hidden like a precious treasure till this day. It would probably become a family heirloom and be passed on from generation to generation.

Xia Ning Chang had refined an Origin King Grade Spirit Pill, which was her limit. After all, she was only an Origin King Rank Alchemist. Producing seven pills in itself was an amazing outcome, but she also produced two pills among them that had Pill Veins.

Ji Ying was thoroughly shocked by the results. One could have been passed off as luck, but two? Can two be produced by pure luck? Wasn't that a bit too much for a mere coincidence?

He carefully confirmed that he was not mistaken. Both definitely had formed Pill Veins.

The medicinal efficacies of both Spirit Pills with Pill Veins were more than twice as potent as the other five. Such results were even rarer than producing nine pills all at once.

Ji Ying also realized that the reason why she only produced seven pills was that she did not fully understand the Pill Condensing Technique, the last step in the refinement. After all, it was the first time she was using it. If she had more time for her to completely comprehend the new Pill Condensing Technique, how could she not produce a full nine pills?

Taking a deep breath, Ji Ying put down the two Pill Veined Spirit Pills and looked at the remaining five with an amazed expression. When she had condensed the perfect medicinal liquid, he had expected that the quality of the Spirit Pills would be quite good, and in fact aside from those two Spirit Pills with Pill Veins, the remaining five were also of the best quality. It felt as though she was only one step away from producing Pill Veins in all the pills.

[Madam Yang doesn't just have great aptitude; she is a genius among geniuses! I'm afraid she is far more talented than Yang Kai!] Recalling her various Alchemic performances just now, Ji Ying suddenly lifted his head and glanced at her blankly as an incredible idea flashed through his head, "Madam Yang... Do you possess the Sacred Spirit Medicine Body?"

When Ji Ying pointed out the truth, Xia Ning Chang nodded lightly in response while Yang Kai laughed out loud, "Brother Ji, you sure have sharp eyes!"

"No wonder. No wonder..." Ji Ying smiled bitterly. No wonder she was able to refine in the air with such precision and excellence without the need for an Alchemy Furnace or flame attribute energy. It was because she had the Sacred Spirit Medicine Body! [How embarrassing; I can't believe I thought she was trying to show off in front of me. I finally know the whole story now. Why would somebody with the Sacred Spirit Medicine Body need a furnace or flames? Her very being is the best pill furnace there is and her Saint Qi is superior to any kind of fire!]

He then turned to look at Yang Kai and whined at the injustice of it all, "Brother Yang, why did you hide this from me? I nearly made a fool of myself because of my ignorance!"

Yang Kai blinked innocently, "Seeing is believing. You might not believe what you hear. Brother Ji, what do you think of my wife?"

Ji Ying solemnly replied, "This Ji is inferior!"

It wasn't flattery; it was simply the truth. He suddenly recalled the records he once read in some ancient books. There were countless peculiar Special Constitutions in this world, and every one had its own uniqueness. However, for an Alchemist, the Sacred Spirit Medicine Body was the most coveted. That was because that kind of physique was specifically made for Alchemy. For those with the Sacred Spirit Medicine Body, practising Alchemy was akin to breathing, an innate ability they were born with.

It did not matter that he currently had higher Alchemy skills and rank than her. Once she grew, Ji Ying would be no match for her, even his four Senior Brothers and Sister under Wondrous Pill Great Emperor could not compare to her. With time, she might even be able to reach the height of his Honoured Master and truly become one with the Alchemic Dao.

Yang Kai was taken aback for a moment as he had not expected Xia Ning Chang to receive such a high evaluation from Ji Ying. A proud expression appeared on his face as he laughed heartily, "Brother Ji, you praise us too much! We still have much to learn from you."

He paused for a moment before continuing, "Does that mean I can take it that you are willing to take my wife as your disciple, Brother Ji?"

[With such a high evaluation, it shouldn't be difficult for Ji Ying to take Xia Ning Chang under his wing.]

Every famous Master would yearn to have talented disciples under them. Ji Ying was one of the most prestigious Emperor Alchemists in the Star Boundary. Just as the Wondrous Pill Great Emperor must pass on his mantle eventually, Ji Ying must have had similar thoughts too. Unfortunately, famous Masters were everywhere while talented disciples were rare. Xia Ning Chang was, without a doubt, an excellent choice.

Yang Kai originally thought that Ji Ying would agree to the proposal with great enthusiasm, but to his surprise, he saw Ji Ying frowning deeply and looking troubled so he asked suspiciously, "Brother Ji, are you still worried about the rules of Medicine Pill Valley?"

"No." Ji Ying waved his hand dismissively, "With such amazing aptitude combined with the Sacred Spirit Medicine Body, I'm sure Eldest Senior Brother will warmly welcome Madam Yang into Medicine Pill Valley."

"If that's the case, why do you have such a troubled expression, Brother Ji?" Yang Kai was bewildered. [I'm willing to go so far as to send Xia Ning Chang to Medicine Pill Valley to learn the Alchemic Dao for the sake of her future even though being apart is such a painful experience. So, why is he hesitating? Shouldn't he accept her while jumping for joy instead?]

Ji Ying did not answer for a long time while his expression fluctuated. After hesitating for quite a long time, he finally made up his mind and resolutely declared, "Brother Yang, I want to introduce Sister-In-Law to my Honoured Master."

"To Wondrous Pill Great Emperor?" Yang Kai was stunned, but a moment later, he exclaimed in shock, "Brother Ji, you don't mean..."

"I'm afraid only Honoured Master is qualified to teach Sister-In-Law." Ji Ying declared solemnly. If he was being honest, he really wanted to accept Xia Ning Chang as his Disciple and nurture her carefully. It would surely reflect well on him with a Disciple like her. Unfortunately, the Sacred Spirit Medicine Body

was so rare and conveyed such advantages that he would not be able to teach her for long. It would be embarrassing as her Master if he was inferior to his Disciple soon after taking her in. Besides, taking her on as his Disciple would mess up the hierarchy in his relationship with Yang Kai.

That was why he said what he said. If he could make her a disciple of Wondrous Pill Great Emperor, then they would be Senior Brother and Junior Sister. That way, it would not be awkward to meet with Yang Kai in the future.

Yang Kai looked excited and exclaimed, "Brother Ji, I really can't thank you enough for your kindness..."

If Yang Kai was being honest, it wasn't as if he never thought about making Xia Ning Chang the disciple of Wondrous Pill Great Emperor; however, Wondrous Pill Great Emperor was not somebody he could meet just because he wanted to, much less put up a request for him to become Xia Ning Chang's Master. It just so happened that Ji Ying was at High Heaven Palace, so he decided to approach Ji Ying instead. Who could have known that Ji Ying would voluntarily bring such a proposal up? It was truly something to rejoice about.

Yang Kai hurriedly turned to Xia Ning Chang and said, "Little Senior Sister, quickly thank Brother Ji."

Xia Ning Chang had just arrived in the Star Boundary, so she had no idea who Wondrous Pill Great Emperor was. Even so, she understood that he must be an extraordinary existence from Yang Kai's reaction; thus, she hurriedly paid her thanks but Ji Ying lifted his hand to stop her, "Wait, wait!"

Yang Kai solemnly said, "Brother Ji is so kind, how can I express our gratitude with just a simple word of thanks!? Brother Ji, please don't refuse."

Ji Ying smiled bitterly, "I'm not refusing, It's just... I don't have much confidence in this matter. Please don't blame me if this doesn't succeed."

"Not much confidence?" Yang Kai was surprised, "Why do you say that?"

Ji Ying replied, "It's like this... Honoured Master has accepted five disciples so far, and I am his youngest disciple, as well as his last disciple! Back when Honoured Master took me under his wing, he once mentioned that he would never take in another disciple again."

After hearing that explanation, Yang Kai understood why Ji Ying had such a troubled expression. Ji Ying had the intention to introduce Xia Ning Chang to Wondrous Pill Great Emperor, but the issue was that the old man had already declared he would not take in another disciple. The words of a Great Emperor held enormous weight, so how could he break them so easily?

The only hope was for Xia Ning Chang to have enough aptitude and prospects that Wondrous Pill Great Emperor would willingly go against his own word to accept her. Nevertheless, her Sacred Spirit Medicine Body was undoubtedly her greatest trump card. Otherwise, Ji Ying would never take the initiative to mention something like this. As a disciple of Wondrous Pill Great Emperor, it was impossible for him to discredit his Honoured Master. It was just that he couldn't bear to leave such a precious pearl lying in the dust.

"So that's how it is!" Yang Kai exclaimed.

Ji Ying continued, "I can only promise to try my best. As to whether it will work..."

Yang Kai hurriedly said, "Brother Ji, please allow my wife and I to offer our thanks for your kindness in advance. It doesn't matter whether this matter is successful or not, we will forever be grateful to you."

Ji Ying smiled, "If you don't have any objections then I will leave for Medicine Pill Valley immediately."

"This matter is not that urgent..." Yang Kai said without actually meaning it.

Ji Ying replied, "You may not be anxious about it, but I am!"

After saying that, he stood up and walked outside with long strides.

"Do you need my wife to go with you?" Yang Kai asked.

"Not yet. I will try to feel out Honoured Master's attitude first. If it seems possible, then it won't be too late to bring Sister-In-Law to the valley." The point was that he had no confidence in this matter. If his Honoured Master refused to even meet Xia Ning Chang, then it would be very humiliating for her.

Thus, Yang Kai and Xia Ning Chang saw him off outside the great hall.

"I hope everything goes smoothly." Ji Ying muttered before shooting straight into the sky. He instantly disappeared from view, seemingly to be in a great rush and not willing to delay in the slightest.

Looking in the direction Ji Ying had left, Yang Kai clenched his fists lightly and exclaimed excitedly, "If this works out, then you will have a powerful backer in the future, Little Senior Sister!"

If she could become the disciple of Wondrous Pill Great Emperor, then nobody would ever dare to provoke her again regardless of where she went in the Star Boundary. The weight behind Wondrous Pill Great Emperor's current five disciples was so terrifying that nobody would dare to challenge them.

"Junior Brother, who is... Wondrous Pill Great Emperor?" Xia Ning Chang asked softly.

Yang Kai smiled, "I haven't had the time to explain this to you in detail. Hmm... Let's call Su Yan, Luo'er, and Xue'er. It's a good chance to tell you all about the current situation in the Star Boundary.

Reaching out to grab her waist, he flew towards the Main Peak where he lived. His hands were naturally a little naughty since he was in a good mood, causing Xia Ning Chang to blush furiously as she bit her thin lips with an expression of shame.

Chapter 3214, Returning To One's Roots

Ji Ying was extremely efficient so Yang Kai only waited at High Heaven Palace for less than five days before Ji Ying rushed back in a hurry and headed straight to the Main Peak, High Heaven Peak.

"Brother Ji, how did it go?" Yang Kai couldn't read the situation from Ji Ying's expression, so he asked anxiously.

Ji Ying replied, "Honoured Master has agreed to meet Sister-In-Law."

Yang Kai couldn't help feeling a little disappointed by that answer, but he also knew that Wondrous Pill Great Emperor would not take in a disciple so carelessly. Just the fact that Wondrous Pill Great Emperor had agreed to meet Xia Ning Chang meant that they had a chance. If he refused to even meet them, then Yang Kai could only give up on this idea; thankfully, there was still a glimmer of hope.

"If Sister-In-Law is not busy with anything right now, then let us set off immediately. We cannot let Honoured Master wait for long." Ji Ying did not want to delay a single moment to return to Medicine Pill Valley.

"Many thanks, Brother Ji." Yang Kai bowed slightly with one hand on his chest. Xia Ning Chang walked out from behind him then they reluctantly said their goodbyes.

They had just reunited not long ago, and now they were about to be separated again; moreover, it would not be easy for them to meet again if and once she entered Medicine Pill Valley. Even so, that was the best place for her to be in the long run.

[After she has learnt enough, she can always come back, and we have a long future together. So, stop worrying. Don't keep thinking of making her stay.]

Afterwards, Ji Ying took out his boat artifact, boarded it with Xia Ning Chang, and shot off into the sky in a stream of light.

Yang Kai stood in front of the main hall and watched their departure. A long time passed before he retracted his gaze. Su Yan, Shan Qing Luo, and Xue Yue were standing behind him. Composing himself, he turned and asked, "Lu'er, are you sure you don't want to go to the Ancient Wild Lands?"

Over the past few days, he had given the four women a rough explanation of the situation in the Star Boundary. He had arranged for Xia Ning Chang to enter Medicine Pill Valley. As for Shan Qing Luo; the best place for her to go was the Ancient Wild Lands. Although she was born a Human, she had the Monster Race's bloodline in her as well as the Source Strength of the Heavenly Moon Demon Spider, so the most suitable place for her to increase her cultivation in the Star Boundary was undoubtedly the Ancient Wild Lands.

He believed that if he sent her to the Ancient Wild Lands, the Three Great Divine Venerables would not have much to say about it. It went without saying that it was useless even if they were against the idea. Surprisingly though, she didn't seem to have such intentions. On the contrary, she seemed happy to stay and cultivate in High Heaven Palace. He even had a vague guess for her reasoning. She was worried that Xue Yue might get lonely, so she was staying to keep her company.

"I'm not going." Shan Qing Luo smiled, "As long as I have the heart and the will, it makes no difference where I cultivate."

Yang Kai gently nodded, "Fair enough."

At present, High Heaven Palace had no shortage of cultivation resources, so even if she did not go to the Ancient Wild Lands, it would not negatively affect her cultivation pace; thus, he did not force the issue since she was not willing to go. Turning to look at Su Yan, he said, "Let's go to Ice Heart Valley, then."

After saying that, his figure moved as he headed towards the Space Array at a high speed with Su Yan following closely behind him.

A short while later, the Space Array located in the once Restricted Area on the Ice Island of Ice Heart Valley lit up brightly.

Ice Heart Valley's disciples guarding the area noticed the changes and went to investigate the situation. When they got a grasp of what had happened, they reported it to their higher-ups.

Yang Kai rarely came to Ice Heart Valley, but all the Elders and many of the disciples could recognize him; after all, it was Yang Kai who turned the tide and saved Ice Heart Valley from the catastrophe they were facing just over a decade ago. On the other hand, his position in the hearts of Ice Heart Valley's disciples was almost transcendent. Otherwise, how could a man like him enter a place where only women gathered so easily? Normally, they would kill any man who dared to contaminate this paradise.

A quarter-hour later, Yang Kai met with Bing Yun in a large hall. There was nobody else with her except Ji Yao, who served next to her.

Yang Kai felt troubled the moment he saw Ji Yao as just the sight of her brought up memories of the embarrassing incident between them in the Ancient Wild Lands.

Similarly, Ji Yao had a strange expression on her face too. She smiled at him, but the smile was not reflected in her eyes. It made him extremely uncomfortable and gave him the feeling that she was hiding something she wanted to say in her gaze.

Shifting his eyes away, he cupped his fists, "Yang Kai greets Senior."

Bing Yun smiled and replied in a gentle voice, "Why are you acting like such an outsider? Boy, why have you not visited this place for more than ten years?"

Before he could reply, Ji Yao insultingly interjected, "Palace Master Yang is an important and busy man. He only interacts with the noble and the rich. Why would he think of this desolate and small Ice Heart Valley?"

Yang Kai lifted his gaze and glanced at Ji Yao. [I've never done anything to provoke you before, why are your words so harsh?]

Even Bing Yun glanced at her Third Disciple upon hearing those words.

The corners of Yang Kai's mouth twitched, "Junior Sister Yao, I trust you've been well since we last met."

Ji Yao stretched out her hand and pushed her hair behind her ear. Then, she lightly replied, "Last time, it was 'Yao'er', but now, it has changed to 'Junior Sister'."

This time around, the corners of his brow twitched at those words. Even Bing Yun's eyes flashed with a hint of helplessness before she lifted a hand and spoke up, "Don't act so distant. Let's sit down and talk."

Ji Yao added, "There is no tea for guests. Please forgive our discourtesy, Palace Master Yang."

"Aha.. ha... haa..." Aside from giving a dry chuckle, he had no idea how else he should react to her words.

Meanwhile, Bing Yun couldn't take it anymore and glared at Ji Yao, with the latter lowering her eyes with a docile look in response.

"This is..." Bing Yun glanced at Su Yan, who was standing behind Yang Kai, with a strange look. She secretly thought to herself. [Ji Yao's cold attitude probably has something to do with this woman this little boy brought with him....]

Thinking so, Bing Yun couldn't help asking out of curiosity.

Su Yan stepped forward and bowed slightly with her fists cupped, "Su Yan greets the Ancestral Founder!"

"Ancestral Founder?" Bing Yun was taken aback by those words. Similarly, Ji Yao lifted her head to look at Su Yan curiously.

"That is..." Bing Yun's eyes suddenly shone with a different light and her gaze fixed on the sword hanging by Su Yan's side with a stunned look. Beckoning with her hand, the sword flew into her grasp. She held the hilt of the sword and pulled it from its sheath with a sharp sound. The large hall was instantly filled with a cold yet dazzling light while at the same time, a freezing aura spread out.

"Profound Frost!" Bing Yun muttered in surprise. This sword originally belonged to her. It was the sword she used when she was the Valley Master of Ice Heart Valley on Scarlet Wave Star in Heng Luo Star Field. She had left the sword behind in Ice Heart Valley when she later left the Star Field to head for the Star Boundary. Even after more than ten thousand years though, and even though Profound Frost had undergone tremendous changes, Bing Yun could still tell with a glance that this was the sword she had used back then.

"Yes, Ancestral Founder. It is Profound Frost!" Su Yan replied respectfully.

Bing Yun glanced up at Su Yan and asked, "Are you from Heng Luo Star Field?"

Since Profound Frost was here, it was not hard to guess where Su Yan had originated from.

Yang Kai smiled, "My wife once studied in Ice Heart Valley on Scarlet Wave Star for a while. Profound Frost was something she received from Ice Heart Valley back then."

"Wife?" Bing Yun keenly caught the extremely intimate manner Yang Kai had addressed Su Yan. Similarly, a strange light flashed across Ji Yao's eyes.

Stroking the sword edge lightly, Bing Yun recalled the memories of the past and couldn't help sighing. A long while passed before she spoke again, "Profound Frost was only an Origin King Grade Artifact back then, but it is now a Dao Source Grade Artifact. Moreover, it seems to have gained spirituality. It seems that leaving the sword in your hands has not been a disservice to it."

Returning the sword to its sheath, Bing Yun lifted her hand and returned Profound Frost to Su Yan. Although it was something she used to own, Profound Frost was no longer useful to her so it was only natural that she would not snatch it from Su Yan, who brought it here with her.

Bing Yun turned to look at Yang Kai then and said, "Yang Kai, the reason you brought her here to me..."

Yang Kai grinned at her, "Su Yan can be regarded as a disciple of Ice Heart Valley on Scarlet Wave Star. Naturally, that makes her your disciple by extension, Senior. I simply brought her here to return to her roots."

Bing Yun nodded lightly at those words as she could guess his intentions, "Good, I will take her in. Don't worry, I will not neglect her."

[Bing Yun sure is easy-going!] Although he knew that nothing would go wrong here, he had not expected Bing Yun to agree so readily. Compared to Wondrous Pill Great Emperor, Bing Yun was much more amiable. Nevertheless, Bing Yun was only a Third-Order Emperor, a far cry from Wondrous Pill Great Emperor's height. A Great Emperor should be extremely cautious in accepting disciples after all. What's more; Wondrous Pill Great Emperor had already declared he would not take in more disciples.

Yang Kai winked at Su Yan, who immediately bowed once more, "Disciple greets Honoured Master!"

Ji Yao suddenly spoke up, "Honoured Master, you spend most of your time cultivating in retreat, so why not leave Little Junior Sister to me? I will take responsibility for her."

Yang Kai was shocked and shifted his eyes abruptly to stare at Ji Yao, only to see that she was smiling at him with a cryptic grin. It gave him a bad feeling, but before he could say anything, Bing Yun nodded and said, "Good. If I am busy, I will leave Little Su Yan to you. Please take good care of her."

"Of course. I won't disappoint you, Honoured Master." Ji Yao replied respectfully before turning to look at Su Yan and saying, "Little Junior Sister, this is our first time meeting each other. You may call me 'Third Senior Sister'. You can also call me by my name. I am Ji Yao."

"Greetings, Third Senior Sister!"

Ji Yao smiled, "Leave that to the future. Honoured Master has yet to take you in formally, but we will all be one family once the reception ceremony is over, so you don't need to act so stiff and polite."

"Yes."

Yang Kai broke out in a cold sweat as he suddenly had the feeling that he was sending Su Yan into a lion's den. However, it wasn't the time nor occasion to regret his decision. Bing Yun had already agreed to take Su Yan in as her disciple; moreover, Su Yan was very suited to stay and cultivate in Ice Heart Valley, so what was the point of regretting now?

[Ji Yao won't make things difficult for Su Yan, right?] Based on his understanding of Ji Yao, it shouldn't come to that. That thought settled all the anxiety in his heart, so he added, "Senior, I returned to Heng Luo Star Field a short while ago and brought back a number of disciples from Scarlet Wave Star's Ice Heart Valley. If you are willing to take them in, I will return immediately to arrange for them to be brought here."

The people he brought with him when he left the Star Field were not just from Shadowed Star but from all the major Cultivation Stars. Needless to say, Scarlet Wave Star's Ice Heart Valley had been one of those with preferential treatment, so almost the entire Sect had been relocated.

"You went back to the Star Field?" Bing Yun was shocked.

"Yes. It was a lucky coincidence."

“How many people did you bring with you?”

“Senior, are you asking about Scarlet Wave Star’s Ice Heart Valley or the total number of people I brought back?”

“Of course, I’m asking about Ice Heart Valley.”

“Several thousands.”

Bing Yun was stunned as she initially thought that even if he had the ability to bring a few people back from the Star Field with him, it would not be more than a couple dozen. Hence, the number amounting to several thousand shocked her to the core. But soon, her eyes brightened and she asked, “Did you become the Star Field’s Master?”

Yang Kai laughed, “Senior has sharp eyes.”

She felt relieved by those words. [No wonder he can bring several thousands of people along with him. It’s because he became the Star Field Master and the Guardian of the Star Field. There is no other way to explain how he could bring so many people along with him aside from that.]

Frowning suddenly, Bing Yun said, “All Star Fields and the Star Boundary have their own respective rules. Only those in the Third-Order Origin King Realm can pass through the Starlight Corridor to arrive in this world after overcoming the obstacles in their path. Although I don’t know what method you used to bring them here, I’m afraid your actions will invite some trouble.”

Yang Kai replied, “Don’t worry, Senior. The fact that I dared to do this means that there won’t be any problems.”

Chapter 3215, Cultivation Technique Pavilion

If not for the fact that Yang Yan was Yang Kai’s direct superior, he would not have been able to pull this off. He would definitely have been caught and ultimately punished for his actions. In the worst case, he might even be deprived of his Star Field Master status; however, with Yang Yan’s protection, it was nothing for him to sneak a few people over.

“What about the total number?” Bing Yun suddenly realized something. If he brought over several thousands of people just from Scarlet Wave Star’s Ice Heart Valley alone, then the total must be even higher; after all, Yang Kai himself originated from the Star Field, so he couldn’t neglect taking care of his friends and family there.

“I think there were more than a hundred thousand...” He scratched his face.

Bing Yun was completely stunned while Ji Yao stared at him blankly. What was the scale of a hundred thousand people? The entire Ice Heart Valley only had a few thousand disciples. It didn’t even reach a

population of ten thousand in total. Moreover, that was the result of continuously recruiting disciples over so many years. A hundred thousand was practically equivalent to several Ice Heart Valleys.

“Why did you bring so many people over?” Bing Yun didn’t know whether to laugh or cry, “Can you afford to feed them?”

[It’s more than a hundred thousand people! Just the cultivation resources for everybody will amount to a terrifying figure! It has not been long since High Heaven Palace was established, how can they have such a large heritage to squander?] She couldn’t help but worry about his future.

Yang Kai chuckled, “There is no problem for the time being.”

Bing Yun was stunned for a moment before she nodded, “It seems that I have underestimated you. Since you have so many people on your side, let’s arrange for those from Scarlet Wave Star’s Ice Heart Valley to be sent over as soon as possible. That will be my contribution to sharing and reducing some of your burdens.”

Bing Yun would not have done this under normal circumstances; however, Scarlet Wave Star’s Ice Heart Valley was also a Sect she had established with her own hands in the past. Thus, she could not ignore those thousands of disciples that were essentially her disciples too. It was also better for those disciples’ cultivation if she took them into Ice Heart Valley.

“Many thanks, Senior.”

She smiled, “I should thank you instead. Since you have such deep pockets, there is nothing Ice Heart Valley can provide you as thanks other than this. In the future, I will teach Su Yan carefully to return your favour.”

That was clearly implying that Yang Kai had nothing to worry about as she would never treat Su Yan poorly.

On the other hand, Yang Kai seized the opportunity to make a request, smilingly speaking, “Senior, this Junior has a favour to request.”

Bing Yun asked, “What is it? As long as it isn’t too much... Let’s hear it.”

He made a bitter expression, “Senior, High Heaven Palace has only been established for a short time so its heritage cannot compare to that of other Sects in the Star Boundary. Putting aside the issue regarding cultivation resources since we can still live frugally, the disciples cannot rely solely on Source Crystals to cultivate. They need suitable Secret Arts and Secret Techniques. If they cultivate blindly without any direction, they will not survive in a fight against others no matter how high their cultivation. How humiliating will it be if they are killed by others with lower cultivation realms than themselves?”

Bing Yun looked at him in annoyance and declared, “Get to the point. Why are you beating around the bush!?”

Yang Kai grinned meaningfully, “I was wondering if I could borrow some Secret Arts and Secret Techniques from Ice Heart Valley? As you know, there are bound to be all sorts of people among the many I brought with me, so I’m sure some of them will cultivate Ice Attribute Secret Arts and Techniques. We are currently lacking in these things right now.”

Bing Yun couldn't help laughing, "You eliminated the Seeking Passion Sect and took away everything that belonged to them. Isn't the heritage of a Sect that is several tens of thousands of years old not enough for you to use?" Speaking of which, the heritage of the Seeking Passion Sect was more impressive than that of Ice Heart Valley. It was a Sect created by a Great Emperor after all. Back then, the Seeking Passion Great Emperor was very influential. It was just that the Sect's reputation gradually declined over the generations and in the end, was destroyed by Yang Kai.

Although Bing Yun did not know how much he benefited from annihilating the Seeking Passion Sect, the fact that he could afford to feed more than a hundred thousand people was a good indicator of how many cultivation resources he obtained. In that case, there must have been many Secret Arts and Secret Techniques too. She distinctly remembered that the library in Seeking Passion Sect was larger than Ice Heart Valley's.

Yang Kai simply rubbed his hands together though, "Of course, it's always better to have as many Secret Arts and Secret Techniques as possible. That way, the disciples will have more options to choose from, right? Of course, we can also do an exchange if you are interested. High Heaven Palace now has its own grand library. Senior can take whatever Secret Arts or Secret Techniques you fancy from there."

Bing Yun waved her hand, "The disciples of Ice Heart Valley cultivate Ice Attribute Secret Arts and Ice Attribute Secret Techniques exclusively. Why would I want the Secret Arts and Secret Techniques of others?"

"Senior, does that mean..."

She replied, "Won't I look too stingy if I refuse your request?"

"Many thanks, Senior!" He broke into a broad smile.

She nodded before turning to the side, "Yao'er, bring him to the Cultivation Technique Pavilion to have a look. Aside from the restricted resources on the top level, he is free to go anywhere he pleases."

Issuing a command like this right in front of Yang Kai was a clear indicator that she did not treat him as an outsider. As for those restricted resources; they were the core foundation of Ice Heart Valley itself which even its own disciples could not freely access. Only the future leaders and promising talents of the Sect were qualified to study those records; thus, it was only natural that she could not allow him to take them away.

"Uh... I can go by myself. I don't need to trouble Junior Sister Yao."

Ji Yao chuckled, "It's not up to you. Honoured Master has already decreed it to be so. Senior Brother Yang, please come with me." She smiled and walked over. Brushing past him, leaving a touch of fragrance lingering in his nose like something tangible.

"Go on. I want to have a chat with Su Yan." Bing Yun waved him away, indicating that his presence was no longer welcome.

Thus, Yang Kai had no other choice but to leave. Before he left, he quietly sent a transmission to Su Yan, "Focus on your cultivation. I will visit you from time to time."

Su Yan nodded at him lightly.

The door to the large hall closed behind Yang Kai as he followed Ji Yao to the Cultivation Technique Pavilion. Along the way, he came across many beautiful and alluring young women. Many of Ice Heart Valley's disciples moved to the side to open up a path in the middle and bowed respectfully when they saw Yang Kai and Ji Yao coming from afar; however, he could sense that the occasional peeping looks were studying him with great curiosity.

All sorts of fragrances and perfumes intermingled in the air, giving birth to the illusion that he was trapped in a country of women.

It was silent throughout the entire journey. Even though Ji Yao took the lead, she had no intention of striking up a conversation with Yang Kai and soon, a nine-story pagoda came into sight. There was a plaque on the pagoda with three words written on it, 'Cultivation Technique Pavilion'. Many Ice Heart Valley's disciples came and went from the pagoda, clearly here to choose their Secret Arts and Secret Techniques.

Yang Kai entered the pagoda with Ji Yao and was immediately greeted by a woman dressed in palace clothes with her hair tied up in a high bun behind her head. She politely called out, "Martial Aunt Ji!"

This woman was in the Dao Source Realm, so she was not weak in terms of strength. If Ji Yao was a first-generation disciple of Ice Heart Valley, then this woman would be a second-generation disciple.

After her initial greeting, this young woman glanced at Yang Kai and suddenly exclaimed, "Martial Uncle Yang!"

She had seen Yang Kai before, and although it had only been a distant glimpse in the past, there was only one man in the world who could enter the Cultivation Technique Pavilion with Ji Yao and that was the Palace Master of High Heaven Palace.

Yang Kai smiled and returned the courtesy. He was aware of how famous he was within Ice Heart Valley, so he was not surprised.

"Ask all the disciples inside to leave. Senior Brother Yang and I have something to do," Ji Yao commanded indifferently.

A look of surprise flashed in the woman's eyes. [Are the rumours true? Otherwise, why are they clearing out the entire Cultivation Technique Pavilion just to enter? It will be bad for Martial Aunt Ji's reputation if word got out that she was alone with a man, but she clearly doesn't seem to care about that.]

Despite the suspicions in her heart, she replied, "Yes!"

Following that, the woman turned around and went inside. A short while passed and one by one, the disciples of Ice Heart Valley walked out of the pagoda, bowed to Yang Kai and Ji Yao, and took their leave. The entire process only took a quarter of an hour at most. Afterwards, the woman in the palace clothes approached the two again and reported, "Martial Aunt Ji, all the disciples have exited."

"Good." Ji Yao nodded slightly. Looking back at Yang Kai, she said, "Come in."

Yang Kai looked uncomfortable. He had wanted to stop Ji Yao when she asked to clear out the pagoda; however, he was worried that other people might take it the wrong way and decided to keep his silence instead. Now, that ship had sailed and he could only let nature run its course.

[Ji Yao isn't afraid, and she is a woman, so why should I be bothered?]

The Cultivation Technique Pavilion was divided into nine floors, and the higher the floor, the higher the grade of the Secret Arts and Secret Techniques stored inside. Correspondingly, the requirements for the disciples to enter the pagoda would increase too. Although this was Ice Heart Valley's Cultivation Technique Pavilion, the Secret Arts and Secret Techniques stored here did not just include those of the Ice Attribute.

After all, Ice Heart Valley had been standing for more than ten thousand years. Disciples who journeyed outside the Sect for life experience and missions were bound to gain some benefits during their travels. Hence, they would bring those Secret Arts and Secret Techniques they obtained, whether by intention or by luck, back to the Cultivation Technique Pavilion in exchange for Sect contribution points. That was basically how a Sect's heritage grew. It was not something that could be obtained overnight but rather something that was accumulated over many centuries and millennia.

Ji Yao led Yang Kai inside and gave him a quick introduction of the Cultivation Technique Pavilion's organization as they walked. After Yang Kai got a rough idea of the place, he said, "Let's head directly to the fourth floor."

All the Secret Arts and Secret Techniques below the fourth floor were useless to him. The materials suitable for cultivators in the Saint King Realm and above were only located on the fourth floor and above.

Nodding, she followed the winding staircase upward to the fourth floor, "Take your time and see if there's anything you need, Senior Brother Yang."

Yang Kai nodded and looked around. The fourth floor was very spacious. Moreover, it was filled with at least twenty wooden shelves as tall as a person and as long as several tens of metres. The wooden shelves were divided into small grids, with each containing a jade slip inside. The name of the Secret Art or Secret Technique was written on the jade slip. The organisation of the resources was very clear and easy to navigate.

Grabbing one of the jade slips at random, Yang Kai poured his Divine Sense into it to investigate the contents. It turned out to be a Secret Technique that allowed cultivators to cultivate until they entered the Origin King Realm. It was not very precious, but its main point was that it progressed steadily. There was no need to worry about cultivation dissonance.

Not holding back, he took out a blank jade slip and began copying the contents. He had prepared in advance for this trip, so he had readied tens of thousands of blank jade slips inside his Space Ring. It wasn't just Ice Heart Valley; he was also targeting Fire Dragon Palace. He had long asked Li Jiao to go back and prepare some Secret Arts and Secret Techniques to be sent over.

If it were in the past, Li Jiao would have tried to shirk the task or negotiate with Yang Kai; after all, that was Fire Dragon Palace's heritage, how could he allow other people to benefit from it so easily? However, after experiencing life and death with Yang Kai on Dragon Island, owing a favour to Yang Kai for saving Lu San Niang, and the comradeship formed when they joined hands in battle all over Heng Luo Star Field, he did not refuse Yang Kai's requests. He immediately agreed and brought both Lu San Niang and Lu Yu Qin back to Fire Dragon Palace with him.

[It should be about time to receive those Secret Arts and Secret Techniques from Li Jiao.] Yang Kai was also planning to head to the Southern Territory to obtain some Secret Arts and Secret Techniques from Azure Sun Temple.

Once High Heaven Palace gathered Secret Arts and Secret Techniques from four of the top Sects in the Star Boundary, the disciples of High Heaven Palace would have a wide variety of choices when it came to their cultivation. Just this starting point alone would give them a distinct advantage over others. It would be difficult for them not to become strong even if they didn't want to.

"Shall I help you?" Ji Yao walked over and asked softly.

Nodding, Yang Kai took out a jade slip and handed it to her. He might not know how many Secret Arts and Secret Techniques were stored in the Cultivation Technique Pavilion of Ice Heart Valley, but it was always more efficient to have one more person helping to copy the jade slips.

Chapter 3216, Something Happened

There were jade slips on both the left and right sides of each wooden shelf. Yang Kai started copying the jade slips from the left while Ji Yao started from the right. The two of them kept the same pace, walking forward at the same time with only a hollow wooden shelf between them. Whenever they looked up, they could see each other's faces clearly.

They were not choosy when it came to what they were copying into the jade slips either. In fact, Yang Kai was hell-bent on taking everything. He was prepared to copy everything from the fourth floor all the way to the eighth floor of the Cultivation Technique Pavilion in Ice Heart Valley.

For a while, the Cultivation Technique Pavilion was utterly silent. Only the jade slips in their hands kept changing. There were several thousands of jade slips on the fourth floor, but it only took them half a day to finish copying all the Secret Arts on that floor.

"Let's head to the next floor," Ji Yao said before leading the way to the stairs.

The fifth floor was slightly smaller than the fourth floor, and there were considerably fewer wooden shelves too. There were only around a dozen or so of them. Accordingly, the jade slips stored on this floor were also approximately half the amount found on the fourth floor.

With their previous experience, the two worked even more efficiently than before. It only took them around two hours to finish copying all the jade slips on this floor. Then, it was the sixth floor, followed by the seventh floor...

In the beginning, Yang Kai felt rather uneasy. He had the feeling that it was not a good thing that Ji Yao was following him around; however, she was acting as she normally did, and even when they spoke to each other occasionally, it was just casual conversation. Thus, he slowly began to relax in her presence.

He was afraid that she might bring up the incident in the Ancient Wild Lands back then. Her consciousness had been hazy, and she had mistakenly identified him as Bing Yun. With no other choice, he had impersonated Bing Yun for a while. As a result, he saw some things that he should never have seen. Ji Yao's reputation would be ruined if word got out about what happened back then.

Seeing that she seemed to be calm and peaceful though, Yang Kai gradually calmed down as well. He understood that what happened back then had been nothing more than an accident; hence, there was no reason for her to hold onto that incident for so long.

When they entered the eighth floor, there were only a few wooden shelves. A rough estimate placed the number of jade slips to be around only a hundred or so. Nevertheless, the Secret Arts and Secret Techniques stored within these jade slips were the most advanced in Ice Heart Valley, second only to the restricted resources, and were suitable for those in the Emperor Realm to cultivate. It could be seen how generous Bing Yun was to Yang Kai for her to share these things with him. If it were any other person, they wouldn't even have the chance to set foot into the Cultivation Technique Pavilion.

There were not many jade slips, so Ji Yao did not copy anymore. She walked over to the window and stared out into the distance, a slightly sad and lonely expression showing on her side profile.

Meanwhile, Yang Kai continued the copying on his own.

"I heard you brought back four wives from the Star Field." She suddenly spoke up.

Lifting his head, he glanced at her. She continued showing only her side profile to him. If he had not been paying attention, he would have thought that he had an auditory hallucination just now. Cold sweat broke out across his forehead as he called out, "Who did you hear that from?"

She turned to look at him with a mocking smile hanging from the corner of her lips, "I've already met Little Junior Sister. When can I meet the other three?"

[Why do you want to meet them!?] He yelled in his heart. What puzzled him even more than that was how she learnt about this matter. It was true that he had returned from the Star Field for more than a month now and bringing his four wives with him was not a secret either; even so, who would tell her something as trivial as this?

"Did you plant spies in High Heaven Palace?" Yang Kai suddenly looked at her with an incredulous expression. She could not have learnt about these things unless she did that.

"You haven't answered my question," she replied without replying to the question.

He laughed wryly, "If you want to meet them, you can always visit them at High Heaven Palace at any time, Junior Sister Yao."

She snorted softly and spun around angrily, "I would love to go, but I'm afraid some people wouldn't welcome my presence."

"Who dares!?" He glared.

Her gaze burned into him unwaveringly.

Pointing at himself, he asked, "You can't be talking about me, right? What nonsense! Junior Sister Yao, you can come to High Heaven Palace any time you want to. Everyone will surely warmly welcome you."

"You said it yourself." She smiled, "In the future, I should show my face around High Heaven Palace more often."

She used to visit High Heaven Palace frequently, but nine times out of ten, she wasn't able to meet him. All the information she received only mentioned that he had yet to return from his various excursions. Even if that was the truth, it inevitably gave her the illusion that he was avoiding her, which made her very sad. Now that she had his promise she could come over at any time, some of her unease faded away.

"By the way, I also heard that a Zhu Girl has fallen for your charms too."

The corner of Yang Kai's face twitched at those words, "Who has such loose lips?"

Several possible candidates flashed through his mind. [The three Monster Kings? No. They have no reason to gossip about me behind my back. Could it be Hua Qing Si? Or, Nanmen Da Jun? Or, Hou Yu? It was Hou Yu, no doubt!] He was furious. [I will definitely lock her up for a hundred years and make her refine artifacts non-stop once I get back! I won't let her out before a hundred years have passed!]

"Senior Brother, you really are quite capable. You have so many lovers. You must be enjoying life to the fullest. It really is the envy of others."

Yang Kai awkwardly coughed and said, "Junior Sister Yao, if you have nothing to do, please help me copy these jade slips. There's not much left."

Talking about a subject like this with a woman like Ji Yao felt extremely strange. He might have had some interest in joining the conversation had it been with a man instead.

Ji Yao only looked at him sarcastically though, "Senior Brother, are you feeling embarrassed? What is there to be embarrassed about? Aren't all men like this? They can't help but want to conquer all the beautiful women in the world."

"That's wrong." Yang Kai shook his head, "I cannot deny that beautiful women will always attract a man's attention. Men might even fantasize about them sometimes, but to conquer all the beautiful women in the world is simply unrealistic."

"Is that so?" She was expressionless, "Does that mean you are already content with five beautiful women by your side?"

He sternly said, "How dare I be unsatisfied?"

She walked toward him and solemnly said, "Senior Brother, can you guarantee that you will never mess around with other women or seduce other women in the future?"

He pressed his palm against his forehead, "Junior Sister Yao, we really should change the conversation topic."

“Are you avoiding my question, Senior Brother? Or, could it be that you have other intentions in your heart? Are you saying you won’t refuse a woman if they throw themselves into your arms?” She stopped in front of him, and her soft fragrance filled his nose.

Yang Kai took a step back, his back now pressing against the wooden shelf as he warned, “Junior Sister Yao, you are overstepping your boundaries!”

Ji Yao didn’t pay his warning any mind though and continued, “If it was like in the past, I could have ignored it, but Honoured Master promised to accept Little Junior Sister into the Sect. That means I am already family with Little Junior Sister. Although it’s only our first time meeting, I can tell that Little Junior Sister has a cold nature. I’m sure she won’t restrict you when it comes to relationships between men and women. As a Senior Sister, it’s only natural that I worry on her behalf.”

“You are being ridiculous.” He frowned.

She laughed coldly, “And you are a hypocrite.”

“How am I a hypocrite!?”

“How are you not?”

“Don’t talk as if you know men very well.” Yang Kai glanced at her up and down. Then, he sneered, “If I’m not mistaken, you are still a virgin, Junior Sister!”

Ji Yao’s fair face blushed beet red, feeling ashamed, “Scoundrel!”

He spread his arms wide, “You just had to discuss this topic with me. I’m only replying in kind. You’ve never even met a suitable man before, spending all your time painstakingly cultivating in Ice Heart Valley, so how can you understand a man’s thoughts?”

“Who says I haven’t met one!?” She snapped angrily, her chest heaving violently as she glared at him with wide eyes.

Feeling guilty for some reason, Yang Kai shifted his gaze away and shrugged, “That’s why I suggested we change topics. It’s meaningless to continue discussing this.”

“No!” She reached out and grabbed him by the collar, “I used to think that you were a decent person who understands how to control his desires. I never imagined that you would turn out to be this rotten on the inside despite your decent appearance! We have to settle things between us now; otherwise, Little Junior Sister will surely suffer in the future!”

Yang Kai instantly became livid and snapped back, “Who is decent on the outside but rotten on the inside!?” [This is too much! How am I decent on the outside but rotten on the inside!? This is a blatant slander! How can I possibly tolerate this!?!]

She abruptly put force into her hands, and her entire body leaned forward towards him, then she enunciated her words clearly, “I am talking about you.”

“Ji Yao!” He shouted, “That’s enough!”

“Enough? Enough?! I’m just that unreasonable! What are you going to do to me!?” She leaned in further, looking incensed. She clearly had no intention to step back. Despite being half a head shorter than him, it felt as though she was looming over him instead.

He glared at her fiercely, hot air blowing out of his nose. There was such a beautiful woman in front of him; moreover, he could feel an amazing warmth and elasticity pressing against his chest. It made him lose track of what he was thinking for a moment, and his savage expression changed to something more intimate all of a sudden. He had only been focused on arguing with Ji Yao just now so he failed to notice how close they were to each other. Now that the reality of the situation hit him, his heart was pounding like crazy. The corners of his eyes twitched slightly as he softened his tone, “Let’s calm down and talk this out. Why don’t you let go of me first?”

He reached out and tried to pry her hands away, but to his surprise, she had no intention of letting go at all. It was just that the moment their skin made contact, her soft and white hands began to tremble. At the same time, her face slowly flushed red.

Their gazes met, but it was no longer hostile. Rather, it felt tantalizing and sensuous.

Yang Kai took a deep breath to try to calm his rampaging emotions and earnestly said, “Look; I was wrong, okay? Can you let go first?”

“No!” Ji Yao lost the courage to meet his eyes but remained stubborn.

He quickly said, “This will lead to trouble.”

She said nothing; however, her silent defiance was enough to indicate her stance.

“I’m warning you for the last time. This will only lead to trouble.” His expression was stern.

She remained motionless.

[I can’t stand it anymore! There’s no need to endure!] Letting out his breath softly, he slowly lowered his head and tilted hers up, pressing his lips against hers.

Ji Yao’s entire body began shivering violently, and her hands grabbing at his collar tightened abruptly. A strong male scent washed over her as the distance between them was closed swiftly. She immediately closed her eyes, and only her long eyelashes continued to tremble softly, revealing the nervousness she was feeling inside.

A soft and warm touch came from her lips. There also seemed to be a touch of fragrance that lingered and made her crave for more. Her trembling body instantly stiffened as if a binding technique had been cast on her.

Meanwhile, Yang Kai’s movements were extremely gentle. He seemed afraid of frightening her, pulling back immediately every time he touched her. His touch was as light as a dragonfly skimming across the water surface. The rigid tender body gradually relaxed and the hands that had been gripping his collar tightly released at some point. She was being held in his embrace as he snuck his arms around her back. Then, his hands tightened around her waist and her whole body pressed forward against his.

Chapter 3217, So It’s My Fault?

At the bottom of the Cultivation Technique Pavilion, the woman dressed in palace clothes who previously addressed Ji Yao as 'Martial Aunt Ji' looked up with a worried look. She seemed to have heard the faint sounds of quarrelling coming from above.

The Cultivation Technique Pavilion had been cleared out, so aside from her standing guard outside the door, only Ji Yao and Yang Kai were left inside. As such, the quarrelling noises must have come from those two; however, she could not figure out what it was that was making them quarrel so loudly that even she could hear them from the outside.

[Nothing will happen, right? Ice Heart Valley is indebted to Palace Master Yang. Besides, I heard that Martial Aunt Ji and Palace Master Yang have a close private relationship. When Martial Aunt Ji went missing for so many years, it was Palace Master Yang who brought her back safely. If that's the case, why would they be quarrelling with each other?] She considered investigating the situation but hesitated for fear of encountering something that shouldn't be seen.

Fortunately, the quarrel stopped as abruptly as it began. There was no more movement from above, which reassured her greatly. She couldn't hear anything when she tried to listen in on them now; thus, she could only shake her head and sigh. As she continued to guard the door, she secretly prayed that nothing would happen.

Unbeknownst to her, something had really happened on the eighth floor of the Cultivation Technique Pavilion.

Ji Yao was completely inexperienced, so how could she compare to Yang Kai, a veteran in the matters of intimacy? Nothing serious had happened yet, with Yang Kai simply having his hand around her waist as he kissed her on her scarlet lips for a little bit. Even so, Ji Yao's entire body had gone limp, and she lost all strength. If not for his hands supporting her around her waist, she would have fallen to the ground by now. Her breathing was ragged and her chest heaved violently. At the same time, her cheeks burned as though they had been set aflame.

On the other hand, Yang Kai was no longer satisfied with the sampling taste. Pushing her lips apart, he caught her soft tongue and had his way with it.

Ji Yao moaned, frightening herself. She never imagined that she could make such a strange sound, and it woke her up from her dazed state. Then, her eyes widened as round as saucers. She did not know where the strength came from, but she shoved at him with all her might and turned away. Pulling herself out of his embrace, she leaned against the wall and breathed in heavy gasps like a fish out of water.

Meanwhile, Yang Kai smacked his lips as he revelled in the taste of her lips for a moment. After that, he grinned at her and quipped, "I told you that it was going to lead to trouble!"

Ji Yao pressed one hand against her chest as it felt like if she didn't do that, her heart would leap right out of it. The blush on her face had not gone away, and her enchanting eyes were watery. Nevertheless, she sneered, "What else do you have to say now?"

“About what?” He was stunned.

“That you’re a hypocrite! That you won’t be able to control yourself if a woman throws herself into your arms!” She snarled bitterly.

“So, it’s my fault?” He looked speechless. [Isn’t this your fault? If you didn’t do that, I wouldn’t have done anything either. Seriously, I’m a man after all.]

She frostily replied, “The truth is right in front of you, yet you still dare to deny it!?”

Yang Kai lowered his gaze, several strands of black hair falling across his forehead and concealing his expression as he murmured calmly, “Junior Sister Yao, were you using yourself as bait just to prove your point?”

Ji Yao said, “Yes!”

Raising his head, he grinned, “Junior Sister Yao, you sure are bold. Aren’t you afraid I might just eat you whole?” While speaking, he approached her slowly, step by step.

Ji Yao was already feeling weak and leaning against the wall for support to begin with; thus, she couldn’t escape as he slowly came up to her. Her long eyelashes began trembling violently as she exclaimed, “What do you think you are doing!?”

Yang Kai slammed one hand against the wall behind her and used the other to lift her jade-white chin. It was as though his inner evil demons had been completely released from their shackles and he smiled at her faintly, “What do you think I’m doing?”

Without waiting for her to respond, he leaned down and kissed her again. This time around, he wasn’t as gentle as before. Instead, he roughly pushed past her defences and wantonly had his way with her. She immediately became out of breath, feeling as though she was suffocating. Only then did she understand that men should never be provoked arbitrarily.

After experiencing something like this for the second time, she performed much better. Moreover, she could begin to feel something. It was also because of that stirring feeling that it became more and more unbearable. It felt as though something was awakening within her. The blood in her body flowed several times faster than usual, and her entire body seemed to burn with an astonishing heat. It felt as though her clothes were about to burst into flames.

It wasn’t until a large hand slid from her waist to her chest that she grabbed his fiendish paws and opened her eyes wide, shaking her head beggingly.

Yang Kai had been observing her reactions, so he smiled at the situation. Even so, he did not force things any further.

A long while passed before their lips parted while a glittering thread connected them together even after the deed. Ji Yao stared at the glimmering thread blankly, her already flushed cheeks becoming redder and redder. Then, she ducked and wriggled out of his embrace from beneath his arm. Dashing to the top of the stairs, she stopped and turned around to glare at him fiercely, “You absolutely cannot tell Little Junior Sister about this!”

After saying that, she hurried down the stairs as though she was fleeing from him.

“How dare she continue to act so fierce!?” Yang Kai looked in the direction she had disappeared and snorted with laughter. Her scent still lingered in his hands and placing one under his nose, he took in her fragrance with a captivated expression.

[I came here today just to obtain some Secret Arts and Secret Techniques from Ice Heart Valley, so why did things develop like this with Ji Yao?] Looking back on everything just now, it felt almost like a dream. Unfortunately, what was done was done and there was no point in thinking about it now.

[I wonder if things will be awkward when I next meet Ji Yao again.]

What bothered him the most was that Ji Yao did not want him telling Su Yan about this. He originally thought that she was using herself as bait to get some dirt on him to use against him, but contrary to his expectations, she seemed even more afraid about this matter being exposed than he was.

Yang Kai rubbed his chin and pondered over it for a moment before shaking his head. He simply could not understand what she was trying to do.

On the first floor of the Cultivation Technique Pavilion, the woman dressed in palace clothes hurried over after hearing the commotion and saluted, “Martial Aunt.”

Ji Yao didn’t look at the woman and apparently didn’t hear a single word she said as her mind was still occupied with thoughts of what had happened just now. The shock Ji Yao was experiencing due to this incident was unimaginable. She was definitely not as calm as she seemed on the surface.

The woman asked, “I heard some commotion upstairs just now. Were you and Palace Master Yang quarrelling, Martial Aunt?”

Ji Yao glanced at the woman and frowned, “You heard?”

The woman replied in trepidation, “It wasn’t on purpose. It was just that... It was a little loud.”

The look in Ji Yao’s eyes flickered, “What did you hear?”

The woman lowered her head, “I couldn’t hear anything clearly.”

Ji Yao had no idea whether this young woman was speaking the truth; thus, she could only instruct, “Keep this to yourself. It was just a minor disagreement between Senior Brother and I.”

“Good.” The woman nodded in response before asking curiously, “Martial Aunt, why is your face so flushed?”

She replied with an unnatural expression, “He made me angry.”

The woman did not doubt those words. As those who cultivated Ice Attribute Secret Arts generally had a calm, cold demeanour, so she couldn’t help being very curious about what it was that Yang Kai and Ji Yao had been quarrelling over that could anger the latter so badly.

[Seriously; what is wrong with the Palace Master Yang? Martial Aunt Ji is such a good person, yet even she lost her temper with him. It must have been his fault!]

There were not many jade slips on the eighth floor, so Yang Kai finished copying them quickly. He then looked up and glanced at the ninth floor. That was where all the restricted resources of Ice Heart Valley were stored.

The ninth floor was completely unguarded to him, so he could easily enter the place if he wanted to; however, Bing Yun had not allowed him to do so. For that reason, he would not trespass into that area; after all, he only came to collect these Secret Arts and Secret Techniques to provide his disciples with more choices. There was no need for such profound materials.

[This trip has been very rewarding. I wonder how things are progressing on Li Jiao's side.] Yang Kai leisurely walked downstairs where a woman immediately stepped forward to greet him.

"You didn't leave?" Yang Kai looked at Ji Yao, who had her back to him, in amazement. [I thought she was going to avoid me after what happened just now. I can't believe she was waiting right here!]

Ji Yao turned around and stated, "Why should I leave? It's not like I did anything to be ashamed of."

[I can't believe you just said that with a straight face!] Yang Kai's eyes widened. [She was getting intimate with her Little Junior Sister's man behind her back. Doesn't that count as shameful?] Unfortunately, he was involved in the incident, so he couldn't say anything to refute her. He simply nodded at her words, "I'm done here. I should return now."

"I'll see you off."

He did not refuse. He did not know whether he was imagining things, but it felt as though she was maintaining some distance between them during their journey. He tried to make small talk with her, but she did not respond to his attempts, so he couldn't help feeling a little bored.

In truth, he wanted to bombard her with questions. [What in the world happened just now!? We were so intimate just moments ago! Why do you have such a cold expression now? You look so bitter, could it be that you are angry?] When that thought crossed his mind, his heart tightened a bit.

[That's quite possible; after all, I lost control and went too far just now. It's inevitable that she is mad. Still, intimacy is not a solo act. If she wasn't willing, why didn't she reject me right from the start? Why was her resistance so weak? I thought she had acquiesced to it, that's why I took the opportunity to go even further with her! Damn it, this is going to be awkward now. I wonder how we are going to get along with each other in the future.]

They soon arrived at the Restricted Area on Ice Island. Yang Kai stepped onto the Space Array and glanced at Ji Yao. Her expression was no different from usual, and she simply stood there quietly. Sighing to himself, he cupped his fists and said, "Please take good care of Su Yan, Junior Sister Yao."

Ji Yao faintly replied, "Don't worry, she won't suffer any grievances here."

He nodded at her words and activated the Space Array, disappearing from sight with a bright flash of light.

Upon returning to High Heaven Palace, Yang Kai went to Hua Qing Si and handed his gains from this trip. It was so that she could put it into their own Cultivation Technique Pavilion for the disciples to choose from.

After receiving these items from him, Hua Qing Si reported, "Palace Master Li came not long ago and brought many Secret Arts with him. I thanked him, but it seems like he has something to talk to you about."

"Where is he?"

"In the conference hall."

"Good, I'll go and meet him."

While speaking, Yang Kai flew into the air and left.

Li Jiao was sitting inside the conference hall, accompanied by Lu San Niang. The two of them were whispering to each other and giggling away happily. Li Jiao sensed somebody entering through the door and looked up. Then, he looked surprised for a moment before getting up to bow respectfully.

"Brother Li, did you need something from me?" They were no longer strangers after experiencing various life-and-death situations together and sharing both honour and disgrace, so Yang Kai gradually changed his opinion of Li Jiao. There was no need for formalities between them.

Li Jiao smiled, "Brother Yang, I wish to form an alliance between Fire Dragon Palace and High Heaven Palace so we can look out for each other from now on. What do you think?"

Chapter 3218, I Want to Unify the Northern Territory

[An alliance? Look out for each other? That's great news!] Although High Heaven Palace was currently respected and the disciples in the Sect numbered over a hundred thousand, it was still a new force in the Northern Territory. If it could form an alliance with Fire Dragon Palace, it would surely be beneficial in the future. In any case, Li Jiao was no longer an outsider and Yang Kai had no reason to refuse such a request. Hence, Yang Kai immediately agreed.

Li Jiao chuckled and put his hand on his chest, "From now on, Fire Dragon Palace will be depending on you, Brother Yang. We will only submit to High Heaven Palace."

He knew better than anybody else just what Yang Kai was capable of; therefore, he knew that there was still a hierarchy to adhere to in the alliance. Fire Dragon Palace was no match for High Heaven Palace. Those were honest words, but there was nothing to be embarrassed about.

An alliance between two great forces was a major event; however, it was finalized in a few words between these two men. They didn't even sign an agreement because they both knew that there was no need to sign anything.

"Brother Yang, since we have allied, that would mean we are family now?" Li Jiao grinned meaningfully, "So... about those debts... do you think we can write them off now?"

When Li Jiao came to High Heaven Palace to cause trouble with Ji Ying back then, he had taken the chance to make a bet during an Alchemy competition between Yang Kai and Ji Ying. Consequently, he lost the bet pathetically and ended up owing High Heaven Palace several dozen years' worth of Fire Dragon Palace's income. He was required to pay millions of High-Rank Source Crystals every year, causing Fire Dragon Palace to tighten its belt considerably. Life had been very miserable for Fire Dragon Palace as a result. Many of the Elders and Deacons in the Sect had been complaining while the disciples occasionally ran out of Source Crystals to use for cultivation.

Only slightly more than 10 years had passed since then, but Fire Dragon Palace was starting to fall apart. Just thinking about another 20 to 30 years of repayment left Li Jiao feeling extremely troubled.

"You tricked me!" Yang Kai glared at Li Jiao as those debts were not a small amount after all.

Li Jiao grinned meaningfully and cheekily stated, "We are not outsiders anymore. We are family now."

Yang Kai paused for a moment before he laughed, "It's not like I can't write them off..."

Li Jiao hurriedly latched onto the opportunity and cupped his fists, "Many thanks, Brother Yang."

Yang Kai lifted his palm to stop Li Jiao, "But, I have a condition."

Li Jiao said, "Please name it, Brother Yang."

Yang Kai replied, "I'm sure you are aware of what is going on within High Heaven Palace at the moment. More than a hundred thousand disciples have just arrived, and although there is no need to worry about cultivation resources, Secret Arts, and Secret Techniques for the time being, cultivating experience is indispensable. These disciples need people to teach and guide them, but there are just too many of them. I can't gather enough people to teach them on my own; therefore, I would like to ask for your support, Li Jiao."

In the pursuit of the Martial Dao, having someone to guide you in contrast to figuring things out on your own was completely different. Yang Kai had first-hand experience with this, having navigated his journey almost entirely on his own. Hence, he already had plans to arrange for people to guide the disciples. It just so happened that Li Jiao came offering himself up on a silver platter, so how could Yang Kai let the chance slip him by?

All of Ice Heart Valley's disciples cultivated Ice Attribute Secret Arts and Secret Techniques; thus, they were unsuitable to teach the general masses. If not for that, he would have asked Bing Yun to send some people over for support during his previous trip to Ice Heart Valley. It was just that the Ice Attribute Secret Arts and Secret Techniques of Ice Heart Valley were too specific and might not be suitable for a lot of cultivators.

"What kind of support?" Li Jiao was puzzled.

"Please select a group of experienced cultivators from Fire Dragon Palace and send them here to teach my disciples how to cultivate."

[Is that all? I thought it would be a bigger deal.] Li Jiao immediately patted his chest and said reassuringly, "Not a problem!"

Pausing for a moment, he continued, "But, there are too many disciples in High Heaven Palace. Even with the support of Fire Dragon Palace, I'm afraid it still won't be enough."

With more than a hundred thousand disciples, they would still need two hundred to three hundred teachers even if each teacher took responsibility for five hundred disciples. Fire Dragon Palace could not afford to send that many people over; after all, a cultivator had to be at least in the Dao Source Realm to be qualified to teach. Those with cultivations lower than the Dao Source Realm would not be helpful since the cultivators from the Star Field were already capable of cultivating to the Origin King Realm. What they lacked was the cultivation experience above the Origin King Realm. Regardless of how many cultivators Fire Dragon Palace had that were in the Dao Source Realm, it was still impossible to send them all here.

"It'll serve as emergency measures for now. I'll try to come up with a solution for the rest." Yang Kai sighed. With so many people, it was inevitable that all kinds of issues would appear too. It was impossible for him to account for everything all at once, so all he could do was create a foundation for High Heaven Palace as best he could. How it developed in the future would depend on the management of those below him and the advancement of the disciples themselves.

"How many people do you need, Brother Yang?" Li Jiao asked.

"A hundred!"

Li Jiao considered it for a while before nodding, "Good!"

A hundred was not a small amount, but Fire Dragon Palace could still afford to deploy this number of people; any more than that was impossible. As the task was to teach, it would require Masters who could instruct others in cultivation, not something everybody was capable of. Teaching somebody else to cultivate was different from cultivating themselves after all. Fire Dragon Palace was a large Sect, so even though deploying a hundred disciples was difficult, it was still doable.

"We can consider those debts as the monthly salary of the 100 teachers. Do you have any objections, Brother Li?"

"None at all! None at all!" Li Jiao responded with a smile. Those debts were a huge fortune, so if sending out a hundred teachers was enough to cover the entire debt, it would be a huge boon for him. How could he have any objections to that? Besides, these hundred disciples would eventually return to him anyway, so there was nothing to lose in this deal. Thus, Li Jiao stood up and said, "This matter shouldn't be delayed any further. I will head back immediately and send the necessary manpower over as soon as possible, Brother Yang."

"I'll go with you!" Yang Kai said.

Li Jiao was taken aback for a moment before he seemed to realize something and asked, "Could it be that you plan to create a connection between Fire Dragon Palace and High Heaven Palace, Brother Yang?"

"That will make it easier for us to come and go."

"Good," Li Jiao did not refuse and immediately set off for Fire Dragon Palace with Yang Kai and Lu San Niang.

All three of them were in the Emperor Realm; moreover, they had the help of a powerful flight type artifact, so it was only natural that their speed was very fast. It didn't take more than half a day for them to arrive at Fire Dragon Palace.

Li Jiao led the way, bringing Yang Kai to a quiet and remote place in Fire Dragon Palace.

Yang Kai immediately began arranging a Space Array, and by the time night fell and the stars filled the sky, the Space Array was completed. With this Array connecting High Heaven Palace and Fire Dragon Palace, a distance of tens of thousands of kilometres could be crossed in an instant. It truly was helpful for both parties and allowed them to 'take care of each other' per the alliance.

Yang Kai initially wanted to rush home right away since there were still lots of trivial matters troubling High Heaven Palace, many of which he needed to handle personally, but contrary to expectations, Li Jiao forcibly made him stay the night. He did that by saying that a banquet would be held in his honour. Since it would not be good for him to refuse Li Jiao, Yang Kai could only agree to remain.

Lights flickered inside the hall, illuminating the luxurious interior. Everyone with any standing in Fire Dragon Palace, from the Palace Master Li Jiao to the Protectors to the Elders came to accompany Yang Kai at the banquet.

Clearly, they had already received the news from Li Jiao that Fire Dragon Palace would no longer have to turn over Source Crystals to High Heaven Palace every year in the future, so all of them were in an exceptionally good mood and it was only natural that their attitudes towards Yang Kai changed too. Every one of them tried to ingratiate themselves to Yang Kai, with Li Jiao even boasting about the fateful friendship between him and Yang Kai. He even wrapped his arm around Yang Kai's shoulders after getting tipsy from drinking. It was clear that he no longer recalled how much he hated and feared Yang Kai back then.

The atmosphere was exuberant, and there were dancers below livening up the event. Yang Kai sat beside Li Jiao without putting on any airs. When it came down to it, he was only a Second-Order Emperor right now, so there was nothing to brag about after meeting so many more powerful Masters. Consequently, more and more of Fire Dragon Palace's higher-ups began having a better impression of him.

Wine flowed freely, and they drank until they were drunk.

It wasn't until the latter half of the night that they began to disperse. Li Jiao ordered a young and beautiful maidservant to bring Yang Kai to a room to rest; however, Yang Kai declined. He wanted to return to High Heaven Palace that very night, so Li Jiao personally saw him off.

Standing in front of the Space Array, Yang Kai suddenly turned to look at Li Jiao, "Brother Li, I want to unify the Northern Territory. What do you think?"

The night breeze blew across their faces and Li Jiao sobered up instantly as he exclaimed, "Unify the Northern Territory!?"

"Good!" It was a sudden idea that struck Yang Kai. A hundred thousand disciples were waiting to be fed back at High Heaven Palace, and while there might be no need to worry about cultivation resources for the time being, and there was even a source of trade with Violet Source Chamber of Commerce which

was located in the Southern Territory as well as the possibility of establishing trade with the Ancient Wild Lands in the Eastern Territory, doing nothing but using up resources was not a viable solution in the long term. If High Heaven Palace wanted to continue its legacy, it would need to establish its own business and industry.

The Seeking Passion Sect owned many properties in the past and held jurisdiction over as many as twenty cities of various sizes in their vicinity, so the Sect used to receive many offerings from those cities every year. In return, it ensured the safety of those cities.

Unfortunately, Yang Kai only looted the wealth of the Seeking Passion Sect after he destroyed the Sect and ignored the properties left behind by the Sect. In other words, those twenty or so cities of various sizes were not under High Heaven Palace's control. Still, it would be easy to take them back in. With High Heaven Palace's current strength, he could randomly send out a Monster King as a threat and the opposing party would promptly give in to his demands.

Nevertheless, that income would not satisfy the cultivation needs of all the disciples. If he could unify the entire Northern Territory though, then there would be nothing else to worry about. All the resources in the Northern Territory would be at his beck and call. Forget about a hundred thousand people, he could even feed millions of people.

Be that as it may, Yang Kai knew that there would be resistance. No matter how powerful High Heaven Palace was, there were billions of cultivators in the Northern Territory and many of them would not take him trying to establish dominion lying down. The Monster Kings were powerful indeed, but there were only three of them. Besides, their identities were a bit sensitive. They were not suited for long-term public appearances, so the gain would not be worth the losses if they accidentally provoked a great force and ignited a war with the Monster Race.

Moreover, Yang Kai did not believe that there were no stronger Masters in the Northern Territory. All the Masters he knew of were those who were already known to the public, but there must be other capable people that remained hidden beneath the surface. The only reason he didn't know about them was that he had no interest in approaching them. Nonetheless, they would not sit around and do nothing if he provoked them.

At present, there were several top forces in the Northern Territory. High Heaven Palace, Ice Heart Valley, and Fire Dragon Palace were in the same boat, advancing and retreating together, so if Yang Kai really wanted to unify the whole Northern Territory, these two Sects would not stand in his way. Besides, he would not harm their interests either. Unfortunately, the other great forces would not step aside so easily.

By now, Li Jiao was very familiar with Yang Kai's thought process, so he knew that this person was incredibly bold and daring. Yang Kai even dared to intrude on Dragon Island, so there was really nothing in this world he would not dare to do. If somebody else had asked Li Jiao this question, he would have laughed it off as it was highly unrealistic, but it was different when it came to Yang Kai. The reason Yang Kai asked was because he might be able to pull it off, and had the confidence to back up his plans.

Looking up at Yang Kai, Li Jiao saw there were no signs of intoxication on his face; hence, he knew that Yang Kai was not just making drunk talk. After pondering in silence for a moment, Li Jiao answered, "If

you have the intention to do so, I will surely assist you..." [Besides, I just agreed to form an alliance between us, so I can't slap myself in the face like that.]

"It's just that... Are you mentally prepared to face the criticism of countless people? Including those in the Northern Territory?"

Yang Kai laughed, "What does the life or death of others have to do with me? I only care about High Heaven Palace."

Li Jiao nodded in response. Every man for himself. Ever since he had embarked to pursue the peak of the Martial Dao, he had been mentally prepared to die at any moment. Killing and being killed were normal occurrences for cultivators like them.

Chapter 3219, Another Little Junior Sister

"There's just one thing... About Medicine Pill Valley..." Li Jiao looked at Yang Kai rather worriedly.

There was no real Great Emperor Sect in the Northern Territory. Medicine Pill Valley was simply the place where Wondrous Pill Great Emperor lived in retreat, it was not a Sect. However, if Yang Kai were to cause pandemonium in the Northern Territory, it might draw out the people of Medicine Pill Valley, and the situation might get out of hand once they intervened.

Yang Kai sneered, "It's not like I'm going to slaughter the billions of cultivators in the Northern Territory. I just want to occupy a few cities so that they pay tribute to me every year. Why would Medicine Pill Valley care about that?" Tilting his head to the side, he looked at Li Jiao and asked, "Brother Li, you didn't actually think that I was going to destroy all the major Sects in the Northern Territory, right?"

Li Jiao broke out in a cold sweat, "It seems that I have misunderstood."

When he first heard Yang Kai talking about unifying the Northern Territory, he actually believed that Yang Kai was about to go on a killing spree. Only now did he realize that he had been overthinking things. [It's not too much if he is simply occupying some cities and making the major Sects in the Northern Territory pay tribute. There will be no ruthless killings after all so there's a lot of room for appeasing the masses.]

Yang Kai stretched out his hand and patted Li Jiao's shoulder, "In order to do that, I need to set up some prestige for myself first. Full Sky Sect is a good target to start with. Brother Li, please help me send a message asking Mi Qi to come to High Heaven Palace as soon as possible."

Li Jiao smiled bitterly, "Brother Yang, you are making me into the villain."

Yang Kai blinked, "There's no other choice. You are more familiar with Mi Qi, after all, Brother Li."

"Fine. I will let him know as soon as possible. It's just I don't know how he will react."

“It’s enough if you let him know.” Yang Kai smiled before he turned around and stepped onto the Space Array. A bright light flashed, and he was gone without a trace.

....

Full Sky Sect was also one of the top Sects in the Northern Territory, its strength on par with Fire Dragon Palace and Ice Heart Valley, each having a Third-Order Emperor Realm Master commanding their respective forces. Since Yang Kai wanted to establish his dominance and spread High Heaven Palace’s reputation, he had to choose a suitable target to demonstrate his worthiness. Since Ice Heart Valley and Fire Dragon Palace were his allies, he could only target the Full Sky Sect.

Having said that, Full Sky Sect was similar to Fire Dragon Palace in that it was also suffering from the crippling debt owed to Yang Kai. Although it had paid back a lot of Source Crystals over the years, it was still far from paying off the bulk.

Time flew by quickly with Yang Kai being so busy every day that he didn’t even have the time to speak with Shan Qing Luo or Xue Yue. Providing resources, shelter, and cultivation techniques to more than a hundred thousand disciples was a huge issue. As long as he could not solve these problems, there was no way he could do anything else.

When Hua Qing Si received his instructions, she went back to the Southern Territory again, bought a large number of Source Condensing Pills from the Violet Source Chamber of Commerce, and distributed them to the cultivators who were at the peak of the Origin King Realm and on the verge of breaking through to the Dao Source Realm.

After a few days, the hundred instructors from Fire Dragon Palace arrived. Yang Kai and Hua Qing Si discussed the distribution of these hundred teachers and then assigned them to respective Spirit Peaks. These hundred were all in the Dao Source Realm, so it was not a problem for them to teach the cultivators from the Star Field.

Once each Spirit Peak produced its own Dao Source Realm Masters, they could fill in the gaps in the ranks of High Heaven Palace. In time, the old would guide the new in a never-ending cycle. There was no need to worry too much in that aspect.

Each Spirit Peak varied in size, and accordingly, the number of people living there varied too. It ranged from a minimum of two hundred people to a maximum of three thousand. Those instructors who were assigned to Spirit Peaks with fewer people were overjoyed while those who were assigned to Spirit Peaks with more were extremely dejected. Just imagining what would happen if a person were to guide three thousand people in their cultivation was a headache. Even if only 1% of the population came to ask a single question each day, the instructor would still have no time to rest whatsoever.

One month later, Yang Kai sat at the head of High Heaven Palace’s Main Conference Hall. The three Monster Kings and the Head Manager, Hua Qing Si, were seated on both sides of the table while the area below the platform was densely packed with people. More than a hundred people squeezed inside the hall today to attend the first general meeting involving the entire High Heaven Palace. These people were the Peak Masters of High Heaven Palace whose cultivation varied in strength. Yang Kai did not even know half of them personally.

Yang Kai swept a sharp gaze over the crowd below him, and they simultaneously bowed, "Greetings, Palace Master!"

Regardless of whether the person in front of him used to be his Elder or his fellow cultivator, they came to the Star Boundary and entered High Heaven Palace only thanks to his blessing, which meant that they were now part of High Heaven Palace. As the Palace Master, it was natural for Yang Kai to receive their respect.

Raising his hand in acknowledgement, Yang Kai secretly found this scene somewhat amusing. He himself never expected that things would turn out on such a grand scale when he first established High Heaven Palace. [I'm afraid there is no other Sect across the entire Star Boundary that would have so many people gathered just for a general meeting. It feels like when an Emperor assembles his court. But then again, there should be no Sect that has more people than High Heaven Palace either. Such a situation is inevitable under these circumstances.]

Although it was supposed to be a meeting, they were simply establishing the rules and regulations of the Sect today. Nothing could be accomplished in a Sect without established rules, and with more than a hundred thousand disciples and more than a hundred Spirit Peaks, High Heaven Palace was now a very large enterprise. Even if there was no shortage of cultivation resources, those supplies could not be given out at will. How many resources could be claimed each month by each Spirit Peak and how much of that would be distributed to each disciple were things that required very detailed considerations.

Aside from that, there was the matter of rules for handing out rewards and punishments too. These had all been previously discussed by Hua Qing Si and Bian Yu Qing, so at this moment, the two of them stood at the head of the hall and announced these laws. The main reason for doing so was for the Peak Masters of each Spirit Peak to record them and convey the information to the rest of the disciples when they returned, lest the disciples claimed injustice when they made mistakes. Suffice it to say, where there were punishments, there would also be rewards. Those who made rapid progress in their cultivation and those who contributed to Sect would receive rewards.

Half a day passed just like that.

Afterwards, it was time for each Peak Master to report the situation on each Spirit Peak. Fortunately, there was no trouble so far. All the disciples had been acting rather amiably considering they had just arrived here and most were cultivating in retreat after receiving some cultivation resources.

It wasn't until evening rolled around that the crowd slowly dispersed, one after another. Then, somebody rushed in from outside the hall to report, "Greetings, Palace Master. Honoured Master asks that you visit him."

Yang Kai fixed his gaze on the speaker and discovered that it was the Eldest Disciple under Ji Ying, which immediately lifted his spirits, "Is Brother Ji back?"

The disciple replied, "Honoured Master returned at noon but heard that you were having a meeting with the Peak Masters, so he decided not to bother you until it was over."

"I'll head over immediately." After saying that, Yang Kai immediately headed towards Spirit Pill Peak.

Upon arriving at Spirit Pill Peak, Yang Kai entered the hall and looked around only to see that Ji Ying was alone. Yang Kai smiled happily and cupped his fists, "Brother Ji!"

Ji Ying replied, "Brother Yang, fortunately, I did not fail my mission."

Even though Yang Kai had guessed as much when he did not see Xia Ning Chang around, he was still overjoyed to hear the words Ji Ying uttered. He quickly pulled Ji Ying by the arm and sat down together, "Did the Great Emperor agree to accept Ning Chang as his disciple?"

Ji Ying smiled, "No."

The expression on Yang Kai's face froze, "How can this be!?"

Ji Ying had been gone for more than a month, and when Yang Kai didn't see Xia Ning Chang around, he naturally assumed that Wondrous Pill Great Emperor had already taken her in as a disciple. Who could have known that Ji Ying would bring him down with such news? Yang Kai's emotions instantly cooled down.

"Brother Yang, please listen to me first." Ji Ying smiled slightly, "Honoured Master has said that he would no longer accept disciples, so he cannot go back on his word."

Yang Kai glared, "Ning Chang has the Sacred Spirit Medicine Body, how can the Great Emperor be unmoved by that?"

Ji Ying explained, "It is precisely because Sister-In-Law has the Sacred Spirit Medicine Body that Honoured Master believes it would be a waste of her unique talent if he let her go. That is why he allowed Sister-In-Law to remain in Medicine Pill Valley."

"What does that mean?" Yang Kai looked puzzled. [If he didn't accept Xia Ning Chang as a disciple, then why keep her in Medicine Pill Valley?]

Ji Ying continued with his explanation, "Honoured Master wants Eldest Senior Brother, Second Senior Brother, and Fourth Senior Sister to jointly teach Sister-In-Law. He even mentioned that if there was anything she did not understand, she could directly ask him for advice. It is just that they will not have the status of Master and Disciple."

Yang Kai asked in astonishment, "Is there a difference compared to taking her in as a disciple?"

Xia Ning Chang was allowed to remain in Medicine Pill Valley and would be jointly taught by several of Wondrous Pill Great Emperor's disciples. Moreover, she was allowed to approach Wondrous Pill Great Emperor directly to ask Alchemy-related questions. No matter how he thought about it, it was no different from taking her in as a disciple.

Ji Ying smiled slightly at those words, "Honoured Master seemed slightly remorseful about his past declaration that he would no longer accept disciples. He is even more vexed that what he said back then had been spread to the public."

Yang Kai was stunned for a long time before he burst into laughter. It wasn't that the Wondrous Pill Great Emperor didn't want to accept Xia Ning Chang as a disciple, it was just that he could not embarrass himself by going back on his word. If not for the fact that his words were already widely known to the public, he would never have refused to take Xia Ning Chang in.

“So, there’s no need to worry, Brother Yang. Little Junior Sister has Senior Brothers and Senior Sister teaching her. She will definitely flourish under Honoured Master’s mantle.”

Yang Kai looked at Ji Ying teasingly, “The Great Emperor did not accept my wife as his disciple, but you are calling her ‘Little Junior Sister’... If the Great Emperor hears...”

“That is how it is,” Ji Ying wasn’t bothered. He was the Fifth Disciple of the Wondrous Pill Great Emperor, so how could he not understand what the Wondrous Pill Great Emperor was thinking? Besides, the Great Emperor was a person who cherished talented people. Although he could not take Xia Ning Chang in as his disciple due to what he said back then, he would definitely teach her carefully. In her case, she simply lacked an official title. Nonetheless, she was recognized by Ji Ying and his fellow Senior Disciples.

“Wonderful! How wonderful!” Yang Kai clapped his hands excitedly.

Su Yan had gone to Ice Heart Valley to be a disciple there while Xia Ning Chang had gone to Medicine Pill Valley and became a disciple in all but name there. It could be said that they shared the same fate. However, it was inevitable. Compared to the others, their age and cultivation were incomparable. [If they become Little Junior Sisters, then so be it. They can benefit from studying under an influential person.]

Meanwhile, there was no place he could arrange for Shan Qing Luo and Xue Yue to go. Shan Qing Luo refused to go to the Ancient Wild Lands, so the two women could only remain in High Heaven Palace to cultivate. It wasn’t too bad for Shan Qing Luo though since she could consult the three Monster Kings on their experience in cultivation. Unfortunately for Xue Yue, she could only teach herself. Although Yang Kai had also blindly stumbled and groped his way along his cultivation journey, he was in the Second-Order Emperor Realm now, so it was not a problem for him to teach her when he had time.

In great spirits, he remained at Spirit Pill Peak to have a drink with Ji Ying in joyous celebration.

...

Full Sky Sect was one of the four top Sects in the Northern Territory. The Sect Master, Mi Qi, was a Third-Order Emperor Realm Master who was famous throughout the entire Northern Territory. Unfortunately, life began to become increasingly difficult ever since High Heaven Palace appeared. Mi Qi had to hand over more than half of the Sect’s annual income to High Heaven Palace every year, forcing him to live on a tight budget. Fortunately, Fire Dragon Palace was in the same boat; otherwise, he would have been at a loss for what to do.

On a certain day, Li Jiao suddenly paid a visit.

Mi Qi and Li Jiao were old acquaintances, so it was only natural that he greeted Li Jiao with enthusiasm.

A banquet was held to honour this guest, and after a few rounds of drinks, Li Jiao smiled slightly and spoke up, “Actually, I came over uninvited today because I was entrusted with a task.”

Mi Qi was taken aback by those words, “You were entrusted with a task? What task?” Like Mi Qi, Li Jiao was a Third-Order Emperor Realm Master; moreover, Li Jiao carried a Half-Dragon bloodline. If it came down to a fight, Mi Qi had to admit that he was no match for Li Jiao, so what kind of person had the power to entrust Li Jiao with the task of delivering a message to him?

Chapter 3220, Failure to Agree

“The Palace Master of High Heaven Palace!” Li Jiao replied.

The corner of Mi Qi’s eyes twitched at those words. Gnashing his teeth, he muttered, “Why is it him again?”

He had a resentful expression on his face and clearly had no fondness for Yang Kai at all. That was no surprise considering that he had only met Yang Kai once before, and that one meeting caused him to lose a large amount of Full Sky Sect’s Source Crystals. It felt as though knives were cutting into his heart every time he recalled that incident, and he sorely regretted tagging along to join in on the fun back then,

He glanced sideways at Li Jiao and said, “Brother Li, isn’t it enough to be oppressed by him? Why are you turning around and fawning over that bastard instead?” His tone was filled with scorn, anger, and bitterness. He and Li Jiao could be considered friends, and although they were not close friends, their association should still be deeper than whatever relationship Li Jiao might have with Yang Kai. Hence, the fact that Li Jiao came bearing a message from Yang Kai upset him greatly. [Li Jiao is such a coward. What’s more; he even carries the Half-Dragon bloodline in him. What a disgrace!]

Even Li Jiao became a little embarrassed upon hearing those words and a trace of guilt appeared on his face. He couldn’t say that his relationship with Yang Kai had improved tremendously, so much so that Yang Kai had even written off the enormous debts Fire Dragon Palace owed; thus, he could only say bitterly, “I had no choice. He is the creditor after all. Beggars can’t be choosers; I have no choice but to submit to him.”

“Hmph!” Mi Qi slapped the table, a savage light flickering in his eyes, “That despicable villain used lies and trickery to set us up! If not for Grandmaster Ji, why would I even bother with him for all these years!?”

That was the truth. Full Sky Sect was one of the top Sects in the Northern Territory, and Mi Qi was a Third-Order Emperor. Even if he lost a bet against Yang Kai, he could have denied making it and refused to take responsibility. With so many Source Crystals on the line, what was a little embarrassment in comparison? It was just that the incident had occurred right in front of Ji Ying. Also, Mi Qi later heard that Ji Ying had even joined High Heaven Palace and become their Chief Alchemist. Thus, he had no choice but to compromise.

After all, he might upset Ji Ying if he refused to take responsibility for losing the bet. Mi Qi wasn’t scared of Yang Kai, but he was scared of Ji Ying. The statuses Ji Ying held as the disciple of Wondrous Pill Great Emperor and an Emperor Alchemist were not to be underestimated.

Li Jiao retorted in his heart. [It wasn’t lies and trickery, Yang Kai won fair and square with his Alchemy skills.] If not for the various life-and-death situations he had been through with Yang Kai, his thoughts would not have been much different from Mi Qi’s; however, his opinion of Yang Kai had changed greatly

during their various excursions and experiences together. He could tell that Yang Kai was a decent person. Naturally, that was on the condition that they did not provoke him first.

Mi Qi picked up his wine glass and gulped down its contents as if to vent his anger. Then, he quickly said, "Brother Li, what is the message you came here to convey?"

Li Jiao had a calm expression on his face as he replied, "Palace Master Yang wants Full Sky Sect to submit to High Heaven Palace."

"What!?" Mi Qi's eyes widened, "I seem to have heard you wrongly. What did you say, Brother Li?"

Li Jiao sighed in his heart. How could he not know that Mi Qi was asking him that question knowingly? They were the only two people here, there was no other noise around them, and Mi Qi was a Third-Order Emperor. There was no way Mi Qi had not heard what he said. Feeling exasperated, he could only repeat what he said.

"Hah!" Mi Qi was so furious that he laughed instead. A cold light flashed across his eyes as he toyed with the wine glass in his hand, "How does he want me to submit to him?"

His tone was frosty, and he obviously held some resentment towards Li Jiao too.

[I can't believe he dared utter such ridiculous conditions!] By extension, Li Jiao was equally as hateful for delivering the message.

Before coming here, Li Jiao knew that what little friendship there was between him and Mi Qi was going to end today, and he became certain after seeing the expression on Mi Qi's face and felt a little regretful, "Brother Mi, please rest assured. It seems that Palace Master Yang has no intention to seize Full Sky Sect's territory. It's just that High Heaven Palace needs a lot of cultivation resources at the moment. What he wants is for Full Sky Sect to offer up some of its annual income to High Heaven Palace every year in the future."

Mi Qi asked sarcastically, "How much is 'some'?"

"Half?" Li Jiao asked tentatively. Yang Kai had not mentioned the exact amount, but he knew any less would not satisfy Yang Kai's appetite.

"Half..." Mi Qi was all smiles as he lifted his wine glass in a toast, "Brother Li, drink!"

Li Jiao looked bewildered. Even so, he raised his wine glass and clinked glasses with Mi Qi. After emptying his glass, he heard something shattering against the ground. Mi Qi had smashed his wine glass to the ground and then slamming his fists down on the table, he roared, "This is bullshit! Does he think Full Sky Sect is powerless!?" Throughout his entire cultivation journey, threats and intimidation had never worked on him before. If he easily gave away half of Full Sky Sect's income any time a random person came asking, he would not have survived until today.

This was unlike those debts. Although the debts were heavy, there was an end to them, so Mi Qi only needed to spend another thirty years or so to clear that burden away. However, if he submitted to High Heaven Palace like Li Jiao mentioned, he would have to offer up half of their yearly income every year from now on, unless the Full Sky Sect was destroyed one day.

[How can I agree to such outrageous demands!? What will people think of me if I actually agree to those conditions!? What will the disciples of Full Sky Sect think of me!?)

“Brother Mi, please calm down...”

“Silence!” Mi Qi glared at Li Jiao in fury. Then, he smiled contemptuously, “Brother Li, you sure are easy-going. Back then, both you and I were humiliated together. It’s bad enough you don’t have any thoughts of taking revenge after suffering from so many years of exploitation and oppression by High Heaven Palace, but now you are colluding with that evil devil, wearing the skin of a man!? Palace Master Yang... Hahaha... I truly had no idea that you decided to latch onto him and willingly become his lackey for benefits, Brother Li!”

Although Li Jiao was embarrassed by the way Mi Qi worded that, it was simply too harsh so he expressionlessly replied, “It’s hard to explain.”

He could not tell Mi Qi about his experiences with Yang Kai over the years. Putting aside the fact that he and Mi Qi were not that close in the first place, just the secrets involving Dragon Island could not be revealed easily.

“It’s hard to explain!?” Unconcealed contempt shone in Mi Qi’s eyes, “Brother Li, you assessed the situation and decided that this is best for your survival. I don’t blame you for ingratiating yourself to him. To each their own after all. However, I will not stoop to your level!”

The implication behind his words was that Li Jiao was greedy and a coward while he was a courageous person.

Li Jiao’s expression turned ugly, “I am only responsible for delivering the message. Why do you have to speak so harshly, Brother Mi? Whether you agree or not, it has nothing to do with me.”

“It seems we will go our separate ways. Palace Master Li, please leave.”

Mi Qi had changed the way he addressed Li Jiao from ‘Brother Li’ to ‘Palace Master Li’. It was clear that he was drawing a line between them now.

Li Jiao shook his head and stood up, but thinking of what little friendship they used to have, he urged, “Sect Master Mi, please rethink your decision. The Seeking Passion Sect was destroyed before High Heaven Palace even emerged as a force. Now that several dozen years have passed, I’m afraid it has only grown stronger. How do you think Full Sky Sect compares to Seeking Passion Sect? Why must you invite disaster upon yourself?”

Mi Qi sneered, “Palace Master Li, you should take care of your own affairs. You don’t need to worry about the affairs of Full Sky Sect. If Yang Kai wants Full Sky Sect to surrender to him, he might as well come over and talk to me in person. He can see for himself whether Full Sky Sect will acquiesce to his demands!”

“I’ll take my leave then,” Li Jiao nodded lightly, cupped his fists, and turned to leave. [I have delivered the message. What Mi Qi chooses to do is his choice.]

Since Yang Kai decided to use Full Sky Sect as an example to the Northern Territory, he must have known that Full Sky Sect would not agree to such a request so easily. This situation might be exactly

what he wanted. Otherwise, how could he display and establish his strength? There were four top Sects in the Northern Territory, out of which two had friendly relations with High Heaven Palace; hence, the only remaining choice for Yang Kai to show off his might was Full Sky Sect.

Inside the great hall, Mi Qi stared in the direction Li Jiao had left with a disdainful sneer. He felt that Li Jiao was being melodramatic. Nevertheless, he had no idea what methods Yang Kai used to make Fire Dragon Palace submit to him, so much so that even Li Jiao came all the way here to deliver a message.

Mi Qi had heard a lot about the destruction of the Seeking Passion Sect back then as it was such a huge affair in the Northern Territory that there was no way to remain ignorant about it. It was true that the strength of Seeking Passion Sect was no less than that of Full Sky Sect. Such a large Sect might have been destroyed easily, but it did not mean that Full Sky Sect would be just as vulnerable.

Mi Qi felt that the reason Seeking Passion Sect was destroyed was that all its Masters had left to attack Ice Heart Valley. As a result, Yang Kai, along with some Masters under his command, worked together with Ice Heart Valley to sweep the Seeking Passion Sect clean. However, Mi Qi had no intention of attacking High Heaven Palace. If Yang Kai really came looking for trouble, Full Sky Sect's Sect Defending Array and Masters were enough to deal with his forces. If he was lucky, he might even manage to kill Yang Kai.

Proactively attacking a Sect and defending a Sect against external attacks were two different things after all. Still, there was one thing he couldn't help being wary about. Yang Kai had three Monster Kings under his command, and each of them was equivalent to a Third-Order Emperor Realm Master. It would not be easy to deal with them.

Mi Qi racked his brains for ideas for a time before suddenly clapping his hands. A black-robed man immediately walked in from outside the door. Looking at the man, Mi Qi asked, "Is the Blue Jade Fruit in the medicine garden about to ripen?"

The black-robed man did not know why Mi Qi brought this subject up so suddenly, but even so, he cupped his fists and replied, "It will ripen in one month."

Mi Qi nodded at that, "Very good. Send a message to Old Tao and invite him over for a taste."

The black-robed man bowed deeply before leaving to fulfil the given commands.

Turning around, Mi Qi looked in the direction of High Heaven Palace and laughed coldly. [Yang Kai, oh, Yang Kai... You better behave yourself. If you look down on Full Sky Sect again, you will never leave this place alive!]

...

"Sect Master Ye, the situation is just like this. I'm sure you know the current situation at High Heaven Palace. There are simply way too many disciples. All Spirit Peaks are filled to the brim. Some of the Spirit Peaks even house two thousand or three thousand people at the moment. That's not just a tight squeeze anymore, it's practically stuffed to the brim. On the other hand, you are occupying such a large Spirit Peak even though you don't have that many disciples in Thousand Leaves Sect. Many Peak Masters are complaining about it. After giving it some thought, I had no choice but to come and discuss

this matter with you.” Yang Kai looked helpless as the Sect Master of Thousand Leaves Sect, Ye Hen, was sitting opposite him. The table full of wine and food between them remained untouched.

“Palace Master, what are you trying to say?” Ye Hen looked at Yang Kai inquiringly.

“I brought you back to High Heaven Palace for several reasons. Firstly, the cultivation environment here is excellent and there are no disturbances here. It was perfect for you to recover and regain your strength. Secondly, the misfortune Thousand Leaves Sect suffered was my fault, and I felt extremely guilty for that.”

“Palace Master, you are exaggerating. I can only blame Thousand Leaves Sect for being inferior to others. Speaking of which, it’s all thanks to the protection and care that you provide that Thousand Leaves Sect survives to this day.”

“I don’t need your words of gratitude.” Yang Kai raised his hand to stop Ye Hen, “Today, I came here to play the villain.”

“I’d appreciate further details, Palace Master.”

Yang Kai smiled bitterly, “As the saying goes, ‘there cannot be two tigers on the mountain’. It might not be appropriate to say that in this case, but that is how it goes. As the Palace Master, I am not trying to cast Thousand Leaves Sect aside. It is just that... having another Sect, or a group that identifies itself as another Sect, within High Heaven Palace, is truly an inappropriate affair.”