

Forty Millenniums of Cultivation

Chapter 18: Strengthening Drug

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The culinary street had people coming and going. Scoundrels were mixed in with honest people like dragons concealed amongst fish. The air surrounding the restroom was utterly disgusting with its overwhelming stench.

Li Yao pinched his nose as he opened a toilet stall. As expected, he found several dozen packed lines of information written on the back of the stall door.

“Are you lonely? Are you yearning for someone? During those long nights lying on your pillow, do you find it hard to sleep? Hurry and send a message to Spiritual Energy Crane Link Number 3877134. Succubi of the devils gate. Shrine maidens of the buddhist sect. Gorgeous female sword cultivators. 90 beautiful women are here for you to pick and choose from. You won’t need to suffer through long dark nights any longer!”

“We specialize in used flying shuttles. We have the best quality cars and the lowest prices. We absolutely don’t sell lemons. Message E-Crane Link No. 893764.”

“7734982. We have over a hundred ex-special forces soldiers and Ten Refinement Stage Cultivators. We specialize in resolving any ‘inconvenience!’” The word “inconvenience” was written in red. There was also a skull drawn at the end. It was a very fervent display.

Li Yao skimmed quickly, reading ten lines with a single glance. He scanned down and soon was able to find the information he wanted.

“We specialize in supplying strengthening drugs. Our prices are cheap and the drug’s effectiveness is stable. Our drug’s side effects are small. Scan the arcane glyph for further details.”

At the end of this strip of information was an engraved silver twine that made up a profoundly mysterious, intricate, and complicated arcane glyph.

Li Yao took out a handheld mini crystal processor from his pocket and turned on its scanning function. A blue ray of light swept over the arcane glyph. The crystal processor’s hologram jumped to a webpage. It was actually the local bulletin board of Floating Spear City, a post in the “Free Exchange Section”.

This post listed over a hundred different strengthening drugs. The post even introduced in detail the prices, effects, and side effects as well as instructions for use and other information.

The term “Strengthening drugs” referred to a collective group of drugs. Basically, every cultivator of every sect, even those who just dabbled in drug synthesis, have tried to create their own version of the strengthening drug.

Every strengthening drug contained different ingredients and underwent different synthesizing methods, thus they also had different efficacies.

Some drugs could raise one’s Spirit Actualization Quotient, health, and fitness. Some drugs could burn one’s life force to produce great martial power. Some could nourish one’s cells and maintain their cellular activity, increasing one’s lifespan. Some could cause one to be aroused to awe inspiring heights, to have a golden spear that can never fall, to be able to plow hundreds of women in a night.

After hundreds of years of research and development, each sect now produced thousands upon thousands of safer, more stable, and more effective strengthening drugs. However, the selling price of these drugs were on the absolute high end. Normal commoners would find them difficult to obtain for long term consumption.

The drug market was incomparably large. Naturally, there would be people who wanted to make knock-offs of the strengthening drugs.

After several hundred years of continuous experimentation, a small town called Serpent Mountain Village, located at the southern frontier of the Federation, finally managed to produce the first knock-off strengthening drug.

This was something that could ruin lives. They feared labeling their names onto the production of this strengthening drug and simply marked the drugs as produced by the “Knock-off Guild”.

Serpent Mountain Village continued to expand. It turned from a small town on the frontier’s edge into the most chaotic city in the Federation with a population of 10 million people. It became known as a “Lawless Ground”. The word “Knock-off” also became a term that specifically referred to imitated goods.

The drug that Li Yao was preparing to buy was a knock-off version of a strengthening drug that was well known to be used by youths for the university entrance exams.

This type of strengthening drug was synthesized mostly in illegal factories. Its quality varied extremely, and it was absolutely necessary to find a more reliable seller.

Li Yao took his time reading over the descriptive details of the drug. He first scrolled to the end of the post to skim over replies by other netizens.

He discovered that other netizens' had not bad impressions towards this supplier. It seemed that the supplier did not fluff up his goods. Furthermore, the location of the business had an address that was a regular numbered address.

The type of reputation that this shopkeeper had was much greater than that of a wandering peddler.

He inputted this address into the Wanxiang Searcher. He did not discover any negative news about them.

Only then was he able to relax and look up the items he needed. Soon, he was able to find relevant information.

He saw, with a bit of surprise, that the prices for the typical knock-off good were higher than normal by around 5%. However, the owner had a statement saying that they used the exact same materials and ingredients as certified products. The synthesization procedure followed closely to that of the original's. Their synthesized strengthening drug was of the utmost purity; there were absolutely no side effects.

After considering for a moment, Li Yao sent a message via E-Crane link to the owner, "I want one hundred of the 'Proud Heaven's Path' strengthening drugs that are meant for university exam takers. Do you have any in stock?"

"I do, I am at my store. We can make the deal any time." This amount of money was not small business. The owner had replied very quickly.

"OK, I am coming right away."

Li Yao shut off the crystal processor. He thought and thought, and pulled out a pen. With great difficulty, he found a sliver of space on the stall door and squeezed within the crooked lines of information his own paragraph.

"Retired High Ranking Master Artificer of the Crimson Nimbus Guild that still burns with passion for work. Aided by over 10 elite disciples. Specializing in repairing every type of flying swords, artifacts, and flying shuttles. We provide an economical price. We can also provide maintenance for the above items.

At the end, he left the E-Crane link number he used for work. He schemed in his heart. If a cash cow were to drop in, he could let Old Wang play the part of the Retired High Ranking Master Artificer of the Crimson Nimbus Guild and ruthlessly gut the cash cow.

Feeling satisfied, Li Yao clapped his hands and walked out of the public restroom.

The address provided by the shop owner pointed to a location that was four districts away from the culinary street, a distance of approximately 1,500 meters. Li Yao increased his pace.

He went through two districts and happened upon an Automatic Arcane Glyph Vending Machine on the road.

This was a convenient machine that was commonly installed. In stock with the unit were several hundred different types of common Arcane Glyphs with prices on the lower side. It was self-service to purchase so it was very convenient for the city's residents.

Li Yao thought of something. He felt for three coins in his pocket, took them out, and stuffed them in the vending machine's coin slot. With a light tap of his finger, he selected the "Pattern Mask Glyph."

The vending machine vibrated at high speeds for two seconds and something that was as light as a feather fell out from the dispenser below.

He ripped apart the packaging and discovered a sticky facial mask. Several dozen glyph script characters were engraved on the surface. They snaked down, interweaving and forming into an elegant decorative design.

He stuck the facial mask on his face, which created "tshh tshh" slithering sounds. Li Yao felt the muscles of his face contract and pull. He looked at the glass window of a store on the side of the street. There was a strange spider-esque design covering his entire face. If his bro for life Meng Jiang were here to witness this, he would probably not recognise him and wonder what deity this was.

The underground ghost city had criminals mixing in with ordinary people. This was Li Yao's first time dealing with this particular drug supplier. He did not know any inner information on the other party. He couldn't help but be prudent and careful by changing his guise.

In this way, if the two parties produced any sort of altercation based on conflict, the worst case scenario would be a departure with a slap on the butt in a direct and efficient manner. A mess wouldn't be left behind.

This type of Pattern Mask Glyph produces a unique decorative design on the face. Its use was to change one's ambience into something else. The final effect can be maintained for 10 or so hours. It was the most popular and the hottest selling Arcane Rune in the Underground Ghost Market.

Since Li Yao was going to conduct in the shady business with only himself as a party, he believed that the drug owner would not find anything to be suspicious.

District No. 63 was the Underground Ghost Market's spiritual energy supplier district. They were responsible for supplying the entire underground infrastructure and ventilation ducts with uninterrupted spiritual energy.

This place did not have many pedestrians. The passageways were narrow, and thick pipelines were crisscrossed all around, appearing like a myriad of entrenched giant metal snakes. Because they were worn through the years without repair, quite a few of the metal pipelines were full of rusted spots, and steam spurted out at the seams going “Tss Tss”.

The metal passageways were dim and dark. Half the crystal stone spiritual energy lanterns were broken. The other half flickered between bright and dark. The lighting was intermittent.

At the depths of a passageway was a narrow, sliding metal gate that was half opened. Imprinted on the gate was a black wolf that was baring its fangs and brandishing its claws. The black wolf had a military spike stabbed in it that drew blood from its head. And on top of the metal gate were four square-shaped words that were made by welding metal strips.

“Militant Wolf Slayers!”

Sudden shouts, the “thump thump” sounds of beating, the smell of rust, and the dense stench of men came from inside.

This was a Cultivation Gym.