

Noble Ruler 1221

Chapter 1221: Just You Wait!

Chu Liuyue quietly looked at him with an ambiguous smile on her face. “Rong Xiu, do you really think that way?”

Rong Xiu shifted his gaze to meet her eyes. An invisible current instantly flowed between the two when their eyes met. “What do you want to know?”

Chu Liuyue stared into his eyes as if she were trying to peer into the deepest part of his mind through them. “Why didn’t you tell me that I’ve been to that medicinal garden?”

...

Luo Shishi and Zhuo Sheng were currently battling each other at the top of a mountain in the warrior area. Both of them were trying to figure out the new technique that Elder Wen Xi had taught them recently—sparring was the quickest and most effective way to do that, and it was beneficial to their respective cultivations.

The fight was intense with both of them flipping their bodies around and exchanging blows. There were several times when Zhuo Sheng slipped up and nearly got defeated by Luo Shishi, but he managed to hold on and launch a counter-attack when the latter’s energy was almost depleted, eventually winning the fight.

“I’ve lost.” Seeing how beads of sweat were dripping down Luo Shishi’s flushed face, it was clear that she had given it all in that match.

However, there wasn't the slightest bit of joy on Zhuo Sheng's face despite having won the match. Instead, he shook his head with a sigh. "If I wasn't a few years older and had broken through to become a ninth-grade warrior sooner than you, I'm afraid I wouldn't have been a match for you just now! Shishi, you've improved by leaps and bounds. If this goes on, I believe it won't be long before you catch up and overtake me."

Luo Shishi pursed her lips and smiled. "That won't happen so easily, given how capable you are and how strong your foundation is. I still have a long way to go."

Zhuo Sheng laughed. "There's no need for you to be modest! I'm proud of your speedy improvement! We grew up together, so I know the talent and potential you've got all too well! If that wasn't the case, your father and the others wouldn't have agreed to let you specialize in the warrior path."

The Luo family was famous for producing Xuan Masters—most of their members, including Luo Yanlin and Luo Yanming, were quite talented in this aspect. However, it was different for Luo Shishi. Her talent in the warrior path far exceeded her talent in the Xuan Master path, and that was why her family had agreed to let her undergo warrior training at Ling Xiao Academy.

"As long as you focus on your cultivation, you'll surely be able to achieve great things in the future!" said Zhuo Sheng. "You might even be the first among us to make it onto the Qing Yun Ranking!"

Having their name on the Qing Yun Ranking was the greatest recognition and glory to them at the moment.

Luo Shishi thought about it and laughed. "I doubt so. I heard that Chu Yue almost managed to refine a ninth-grade pill the last time. Besides, he's quite talented in other aspects too... In my opinion, he has a higher chance of getting on the Qing Yun Ranking first."

Zhuo Sheng stroked his chin and nodded in agreement as he recalled what he had seen so far. "That's true! Heh, that fella sure isn't simple! When he's out, I'll have to ask him how strong he really is!"

Luo Shishi suddenly froze. “Wait, isn’t today the day he’s supposed to be out?”

Zhuo Sheng slapped his forehead. “Oh, yeah! I’ve been so focused on studying the new skill that I completely forgot about this!”

After thinking about it, Luo Shishi said, “Should we go see him?”

“Sure! I heard that the punishment at Fengmin Mountain is really tough. I wonder how he’s doing now!”

After reaching an agreement, the two of them set off immediately. However, they had only just taken a couple of steps when they suddenly heard someone from the side saying, “Hah, Chu Yue is all capable now. Why would he even need you to worry about him?”

They looked over and saw some familiar faces—it was Gong Sheng and Liu Yintong with a few other people behind them. It seemed like they happened to be passing by.

Luo Shishi and Zhuo Sheng weren’t too fond of them in the first place, so Zhuo Sheng frowned when he heard that. “What do you mean by that?”

Gong Sheng snickered. “You guys haven’t heard the news? Chu Yue managed to become friends with Rong Xiu! So what if he was locked up at Fengmin Mountain? With Rong Xiu behind him, he can do whatever he wants in the academy in the future.”

Luo Shishi and Zhuo Sheng looked at each other with bewilderment. How did that happen? Does that mean Chu Yue and Rong Xiu...

“Aren’t you good friends with Chu Yue? How come you didn’t know this?” The sarcasm in Gong Sheng’s tone was heavy. “Rong Xiu even brought Chu Yue back to his place earlier. I hear that Chu Yue will be staying there for the time being, and Rong Xiu will be personally mentoring him! The rumor has already spread across the entire academy!”

Luo Shishi and Zhuo Sheng really had no knowledge of this matter, but that was a given since they had been diligent in their cultivation lately and hadn’t been paying much attention to other matters. However, this news came as a shock to them, and they could see the incredulity on each other’s faces when they looked at each other. J-just what exactly is going on...?

“That kid sure is lucky to have found such a powerful backer for himself just by taking a risk...” With Rong Xiu protecting him, nobody in the academy will dare to pick a fight with him anymore. Instead, people will all be flocking to fawn on him!

Despite his indignation, Gong Sheng knew that they wouldn’t be able to gain the upper hand in a fight with Chu Yue anymore. They had been waiting for a chance to teach Chu Yue a lesson, but it turned out that he was one step ahead of them. It would be a lie to say that they weren’t furious and jealous of him.

Zhuo Sheng soon noticed the plain mockery, jealousy, and hatred on their faces. “Well, that’s because Chu Yue is capable! Why do you think Rong Xiu likes him of all people in the academy? It’s despicable how some people who don’t have ability or guts only dare to talk about others behind their backs!”

The expressions of Gong Sheng and the others darkened. “What did you just say?!”

“Well, I didn’t mention any names. Why are you so eager to admit it?” Zhuo Sheng wasn’t afraid of them because Luo Yanlin alone was enough to make those people scared, let alone Rong Xiu. If they hadn’t tried to find trouble on Chu Yue, there wouldn’t be beef between us now. Everything that has happened is their own doing!

“You...!”

Gong Sheng was stopped by Liu Yintong, who was right next to him. “That’s enough. Let’s go!”

Gong Sheng was seething, but he had no choice but to keep his temper in check when he turned and saw Liu Yintong’s expression. He gritted his teeth and pointed a finger at Zhuo Sheng. “Go on acting smug! I’d like to see if Chu Yue will still be friends with you now that he has Rong Xiu behind him! Just you wait!”

Chapter 1222: Explanation

After Liu Yintong and the others left, it was strangely quiet. Although they acted very confidently when arguing with Zhuo Sheng earlier, they knew that Chu Yue had become someone they couldn’t offend since he was now under Rong Xiu’s protection. However, it just so happened that they ‘offended’ him a while back. Even they themselves had no idea what their lives in the academy would be like in the future.

Gong Sheng felt especially depressed and annoyed. As he was walking next to Liu Yintong, he could see her tightly knitted eyebrows if he so much as slightly turned his face toward her. She seemed to be somewhat distracted and lost in thought as she walked forward.

He, of course, knew what was on her mind, and that was the reason why he felt all the more miserable. It must be because of him!

He felt angrier the more he thought about it, and it was like his anger was about to burst out from his pounding chest. Finally, when he couldn’t contain his anger anymore, he looked back and said to the rest, “You guys go ahead first. I have something to say to Ah Tong.”

The others didn't dare to say or ask anything when they saw how dark his expression was, and they just quickly took off.

Soon, it was just the two of them left.

Liu Yintong stared at Gong Sheng in bafflement. "What's wrong?"

Gong Sheng tried his best to hold his anger back. "Ah Tong, you're still thinking about Rong Xiu, right?!"

A flash of panic appeared in Liu Yintong's eyes, and she quickly averted her gaze. "I don't know what you're talking about."

Gong Sheng's pitch rose. "Isn't that so? I bet you've been thinking about how you can go up and talk to him ever since he came back to the academy! You're so smitten with him, but unfortunately, he probably doesn't even remember what you look like! Must you do this to yourself, Ah Tong?!"

Liu Yintong's countenance darkened. "I was just thinking about Chu Yue. You—"

"Chu Yue? Chu Yue?! He probably wouldn't have even crossed your mind if he didn't have a connection with Rong Xiu!" Gong Sheng knew her too well. Even though Rong Xiu had left the academy a few years ago, he was still able to grab attention whenever he appeared, and that attention came from Liu Yintong as well.

Liu Yintong looked away and explained, "I'm just feeling a bit regretful. I shouldn't have offended Chu Yue back then! Now that he has Rong Xiu behind him, I—"

“What are you regretting? What’s there to be afraid of? You’re afraid that he’ll talk bad about you in front of Rong Xiu? Given Rong Xiu’s temperament, do you really think he cares about that? We’re nobodies to him. It doesn’t matter what trash Chu Yue says to him about you.” Gong Sheng scoffed. He didn’t think Rong Xiu would take the trouble to get revenge on them just to help Chu Yue vent his anger. “Let me put it this way: Even if you manage to butter Chu Yue up into singing your praises in front of Rong Xiu, he won’t spare you a second glance.”

The more Gong Sheng said, the darker Liu Yintong’s countenance was. It got to the point that her fists were both tightly clenched, and her body was trembling slightly.

“Don’t forget that he already has a princess consort!”

Slap!

Liu Yintong delivered a hard slap to Gong Sheng’s face, which turned red and swollen immediately.

“I know all that! I didn’t need your lecture!” Her face was scrunched up in anger, and her lips were pale as she turned around to leave.

Gong Sheng instinctively moved to follow her, but he stopped as soon as he took his first step. A hint of pain flashed in his eyes as he watched her walk further and further away from him. In the end, he walked off in another direction.

...

When Luo Shishi and Zhuo Sheng arrived outside the mountain where Rong Xiu was staying, they realized that a crowd was already gathered there.

Everyone was looking toward Jiuheng Peak with shock and curiosity. Clearly, they had also come after hearing the rumors.

Whispers could be heard from the crowd. "Is it true that Rong Xiu will be mentoring Chu Yue?"

"Of course, it is! Many people saw them coming back together just now! It seems that Chu Yue will be staying at Rong Xiu's place for some time!"

"Eh? Isn't Rong Xiu known to be aloof, arrogant, and unapproachable? How come he's suddenly willing to mentor a freshman?"

"I heard that Chu Yue took a blow for Rong Xiu... Could that be the reason why?"

"Tsk, tsk. Rong Xiu is the Sky-Cloud Empire's saint. People will flock to die for him as long as he gives the order. Why would he value Chu Yue so much for something so trivial? From what I heard... Both of them actually knew each other long ago!"

"What? For real?! How come we've never heard about this before? I thought Chu Yue was just an ordinary person with no background!"

"Pfft! There's no way an ordinary person can have a red-tailed phoenix as their contracted fiend. Besides, which ordinary stage-seven warrior can defeat a stage-eight warrior? From Rong Xiu's attitude, it's not hard to tell that they knew each other long ago!"

There were all sorts of speculations from the crowd.

Luo Shishi and Zhuo Sheng looked at one another. Strictly speaking, they knew nothing about Chu Yue's background even though they were on close terms with him.

"It looks like I have to ask that fella about this... He's way too low profile if he really knows Rong Xiu on a personal level!" Zhuo Sheng stroked his chin. Had it been someone else, they would've spread the word to everyone on their first day of school!

Luo Shishi fell deep into thought. From the first time we met, I knew that Chu Yue had to be of extraordinary background from the way he carried himself. However, I didn't expect him to know Rong Xiu. While other people might be still trying to guess the truth, I'm certain about it because neither Rong Xiu nor Chu Yue are the type of people to do that for a stranger. I bet they know each other very well!

Jiang Zhiyuan claimed herself to be a childhood friend of Rong Xiu's, and there were even rumors that she would become the Sky-Cloud Empire's Princess Consort at one point. However, it was clear that she wasn't important to Rong Xiu.

It was different for Chu Yue, however. The fact that Rong Xiu was willing to spend his patience and energy to guide Chu Yue proved that the latter was much closer to him than Jiang Zhiyuan was.

Nobody knew what sort of background Chu Yue had for him to be treated this way by Rong Xiu though. And since they couldn't enter Jiuheng Peak, they naturally couldn't find out what was going on inside as well.

Just then, someone whispered, "Rong Xiu and Chu Yue have been inside for quite some time. Why aren't they out yet?"

...

Isolated from the commotion outside, Rong Xiu and Chu Liuyue sat facing each other in the room.

Chu Liuyue said, "I've followed you here. Can you explain it to me now?"

Chapter 1223: The Person Whose Name Was Removed Was Me!

Rong Xiu didn't give a clear answer to the question she asked previously—the one about her having been to the medicinal garden before.

Rong Xiu looked down slightly. Although he had expected Chu Liuyue to remember some more things of the past after coming out of Fengmin Mountain, he didn't think she would remember so much. After a moment of silence, he looked up. "What other things do you remember?"

Chu Liuyue raised her eyebrows. Being the smart person she was, she could naturally tell that Rong Xiu was trying to sound her out. "No. All I remember is that I've picked herbs out of that garden before."

She then paused and added, "That garden... Logically speaking, nobody but its owner is allowed to enter, right?"

Rong Xiu leaned back in his chair and remained silent for a moment. "That's right. That's indeed the case, although it's not like people haven't been in there before. The director freed up that piece of land years ago. Although that medicinal garden has only been around for a few years, it has all sorts of precious herbs there. Some of which were even personally tended to by the director himself, so some people would go there to gather herbs."

“The owner’s consent was naturally required, so there weren’t actually many people who could go pick herbs from that garden. Besides, that place is right next to Medicinal Valley. There have been cases where people accidentally ended up there after losing their way in Medicinal Valley.”

“That seemed to be the case for Zhong Xun. It looks like there have been quite a number of people who have been to the medicinal garden before.” Chu Liuyue nodded thoughtfully before looking fixedly at Rong Xiu. “In that case, I was there at the medicinal garden for one of those two reasons?”

Rong Xiu hesitatingly said, “You did like going there to pick herbs.”

All of a sudden, Chu Liuyue stood up and walked toward Rong Xiu. She stopped right in front of him and bent down to look straight into his eyes.

The gap between them was so small that they could hear each other’s breathing. They could even touch each other if they so much as moved.

Chu Liuyue’s eyes, which were usually sparkling, were dark and calm right now.

Rong Xiu widened his eyes. “You—”

“Not only do I like going there to pick herbs, but I seem to also like tending to the herbs there. I suppose not anyone has the right to do that, right?” Chu Liuyue spoke in a slow manner.

Rong Xiu’s heart thumped. She remembers more than I expected her to!

“From the octagonal pavilion on that cliff, one can directly cross over the mountains and see the beautiful scenery of that medicinal garden. An easier and more convenient method would be to fly straight there.”

Rong Xiu slowly clenched his fists.

“For someone who could make Ling Xiao Academy’s director open a medicinal garden for them, they probably wouldn’t allow just anyone onto their territory, right?” said Chu Liuyue slowly with a slight smile. “Unless that place is theirs to begin with!”

Chu Liuyue looked at him. “Rong Xiu, the person whose name was removed from the Qing Yun Ranking... is me, right?” As unbelievable as this sounds, it must be true since there’s no other explanation than this!

It was dead quiet in the room.

Rong Xiu relaxed his body and leaned completely against the back of the chair as he looked up slightly. There was a hint of a smile on his noble yet alluring face, along with surprise and resignation. “Yes.”

...

The passing time felt really long and arduous, and the glow of the setting sun shone in through the window.

Chu Liuyue,—who had sat still for the entire afternoon—finally let out her breath. It’s rare that I have such free time to myself, where I don’t need to cultivate, understand Xuan formations, or even study pills.

All she did was sit there and let her mind go blank. Well, not entirely so because what Rong Xiu said to her, along with her fragmented memories, had been constantly replaying in her mind. It was just that they seemed surreal to her even now. They seemed to be a dream, though she knew they weren't. It was all real! I was the disciple of Ling Xiao Academy's director, the owner of the medicinal garden, as well as the one whose name was removed from the Qing Yun Ranking...

That person had only been an amazing legendary figure to her. Chu Liuyue had once thought of wanting to meet that person after hearing so much about them, but it turned out that she was that person all along.

Chu Liuyue closed her eyes. Even now, everything about this matter still felt really surreal to her, and she found it a little hard to believe. That said, she became even more curious about things like the Qing Yun Ranking after her question had been answered.

From what I remember, I was only a ninth-grade heavenly doctor, warrior, and Xuan master when I was faced with Shangguan Wan and Jiang Yucheng's betrayal, and that standard would only guarantee me the last position on the Qing Yun Ranking lists at best. There is no way I could rank highly, much less top the ranking.

Based on Rong Xiu's account and my own memories, I came to the God Residence Realm and spent some time here before returning to the Tianling Dynasty. I didn't come back after that though.

She couldn't understand why her cultivation level had dropped after going back to the Tianling Dynasty or why she had forgotten everything about the God Residence Realm. I must've been a legendary warrior since my name used to be on the Qing Yun Ranking. In that case... How did I end up being a stage-nine warrior?

Countless questions flooded her mind. After thinking about them for a while, she suddenly got up and walked outside.

Almost instantly, Rong Xiu walked out of the room next door. "Where are you going?"

"Qing Ming Square," Chu Liuyue answered with pursed lips and then added, "I just want to go and take a look."

Although the medicinal garden was hers, it was inconvenient for her to go there in her current capacity. There were also many other places where she couldn't go. Hence, after much thinking, she decided that Qing Ming Square was the most suitable place for her to go.

Even though students weren't usually allowed to go there, she wanted to go and check it out. In fact, she felt an urge to do just that.

Rong Xiu smiled in understanding. "I'll take you there."

Given his status, he naturally had no problem going there.

After hesitating for a moment, Chu Liuyue nodded in agreement.

...

The sky was getting dark as it was evening now. Although it was almost empty around Qing Ming Square, they still attracted the attention of many people when they left Jiuheng Peak since Rong Xiu's every move was closely watched. Some people even secretly followed them, but they didn't care about them.

Chu Liuyue walked to the edge of the square and stood still.

Rong Xiu looked at her. "Want to take a closer look?"

Chapter 1224: Try

Chu Liuyue nodded.

Rong Xiu walked over first.

Chu Liuyue hesitated for a while, but she still followed him.

Both of them knew that she came here not to see Qing Ming Square, but... the Qing Yun Ranking in Dong Huang Clock Tower!

But at this point, the Qing Yun Ranking was hidden, and one couldn't see much from the outside. Only its black body that was dark and hidden, solemn and sober.

Walking to the front of Dong Huang Clock Tower, the two of them stood still.

Chu Liuyue looked up. This was originally the position of the heavenly doctor list.

Chu Liuyue still clearly recalled the shock she felt when she first saw the Qing Yun Ranking upon coming to the academy. Although the Qing Yun Ranking wasn't summoned, she had a completely different feeling when she saw it again at this moment.

She looked up at the highest point. She... couldn't see anything strange there, but her name was sealed there!

...

"It seems like the news of Senior Brother Rong Xiu personally teaching Chu Yue is true!"

"What are they doing here at this time? Do they want to see the Qing Yun Ranking? But without the elders summoning it, the board won't appear! Why are they looking at the dark board?"

"Heh, what's so important about that!? Everyone in the entire academy knows that Senior Brother Rong Xiu is top on two of the Qing Yun Ranking lists. Even if the Qing Yun Ranking isn't here, it's an indisputable truth! Perhaps... Senior Brother Rong Xiu wants to motivate Chu Yue?"

"Ah! I really want to see the Qing Yun Ranking with Senior Brother Rong Xiu as well! I want to be guided by Senior Brother Rong Xiu!"

"You? We can talk when you're as talented as Chu Yue! Haha!"

"Hmph, that Chu Yue is pretty talented, but he isn't at a stage where people should worship him! If I work hard, I might not lose to him! I really don't know what Senior Brother Rong Xiu sees in him..."

Outside Qing Ming Square, quite a few people partook in heated discussions.

Rong Xiu didn't really return to the academy all these years, and when he did appear, he accompanied the elders. The scene of him appearing with a normal student had never been seen before. Besides, this person was a student who had just come to the academy two months ago.

This scene was indeed too strange, causing one to be shocked and inevitably causing people to discuss it.

...

These voices traveled to Chu Liuyue's ears, but at this point, she didn't want to care about them.

At the bottom of her heart, there seemed to be something urging her. She took a deep breath in, raised her hand, and reached forward.

Rong Xiu squinted his phoenix eyes slightly but did not stop her.

In this manner, Chu Liuyue's hand finally touched the cold and heavy board.

Whir!

A ripple was heard from her dantian—it came from that black pyramid!

Chu Liuyue's heart beat even faster as all her blood rushed up! At the same time, the board beneath her palm seemed to be summoned as well!

An extremely familiar strength entered Chu Liuyue's palm from within!

That... was her strength! It was a connection that only those who had their names engraved on the Qing Yun Ranking would have!

The crystallized faint light suddenly seeped out from her finger cracks!

Chu Liuyue was shocked.

Before she could react, Rong Xiu took a step forward and placed his hand on the board. He was only a few inches away from Chu Liuyue's hand!

The next moment, the light beneath Chu Liuyue's palm rapidly disappeared!

That ripple was covered by an even greater strength!

Almost at the same time, a gray figure suddenly flew out of Dong Huang Clock Tower—it was Elder Bo Yan!

"Who summoned the Qing Yun Ranking?!" A deep voice reverberated throughout the square!

The surrounding crowd felt their hearts shake as they instinctively took a few steps back!

Chu Liuyue was also affected by the tremendous strength as the blood in her body started coursing around rapidly, going straight for her heart! At the same time, there seemed to be something very heavy weighing down her heart!

Rong Xiu waved his sleeves, and an invisible ripple spread, covering the shocking suppression.

Chu Liuyue then heaved a sigh of relief. Almost instinctively, she retracted her hand!

Elder Bo Yan quickly landed beside the two of them.

Rong Xiu turned around, took a step forward, and silently hid Chu Liuyue behind him. "Greetings, Elder Bo Yan."

"Rong Xiu?" Elder Bo Yan looked surprised. "Why are you here—Chu Yue?"

Actually, when he heard Rong Xiu's voice, he had already identified the latter. However, Elder Bo Yan didn't expect Chu Yue to be standing beside him. Seeing their appearance, they seem to have arrived here not long ago.

"You... did that just now?" Elder Bo Yan stood with one hand behind his back and glanced at Dong Huang Clock Tower.

The Qing Yun Ranking didn't appear, and the faint ripple had disappeared. If it weren't because he was coincidentally in Dong Huang Clock Tower, it would've been really hard for him to detect the slight change.

Rong Xiu nodded. "It's me."

Elder Bo Yan walked over. "Why did you suddenly do such a thing for no reason?"

Normally, only the director could summon the Qing Yun Ranking. Now that the director wasn't around, he temporarily took over this task.

But in actual fact, a few other people could do this besides him. Rong Xiu—who had taken two number one positions on four Qing Yun Ranking lists—was one of them.

Rong Xiu curled his thin lips and smiled faintly. "I just wanted to bring Junior Brother Chu Yue over to take a look."

It seems like he wants to use himself to motivate Chu Yue? Elder Bo Yan thought to himself. Although it sounds weird, it isn't surprising that Rong Xiu would do such a thing, given that he previously said that he wanted to take good care of Chu Yue.

"Oh? It seems like you do have high hopes for Chu Yue! If I haven't remembered wrongly, he only came out of Fengmin Mountain today, right? I didn't expect you to bring him here directly."

It was already the end of the month, and it was only a few days away from the beginning of the next month. At that time, without Rong Xiu taking the initiative, Elder Bo Yan would also summon the Qing Yun Ranking.

As if seeing through his thoughts, Rong Xiu raised his brows slightly. "It's quieter this way."

Elder Bo Yan couldn't refute him.

If it were someone else who said this, it might seem like they were arrogant and ill-disciplined. But when this person was Rong Xiu, everything seemed to make sense. After all, he did have the skills to say such words.

"That's true." Elder Bo Yan nodded and sized Chu Liuyue up carefully again.

Speaking of which, this was his first time observing Chu Yue at such a close distance. Although he had seen the latter before, he hadn't taken a good look at the teen.

The young man looked clean and pure, and he acted magnanimously. Just based on his looks alone, nobody would've guessed that he had the guts to cause so much trouble.

"Chu Yue, Rong Xiu thinks highly of you. You must work hard and cultivate. Don't let him down!" As Elder Bo Yan spoke, he raised his chin and said with much interest, "I heard Wan Zheng say that you can already produce ninth-grade pills. Why don't you try and see if you can get onto the Qing Yun Ranking?"

Chapter 1225: Who Are You

The last name on the heavenly doctor list is a ninth-grade heavenly doctor's name. With Chu Yue's current standards, it might be difficult but not entirely hopeless. He can give it a try. Coincidentally, I want to see this Chu Yue's skills and abilities!

The moment Elder Bo Yan said that, the surroundings fell silent. The students spectating the scene were taken aback. Is he serious? Elder Bo Yan actually directly requested Chu Yue to try out for the Qing Yun Ranking?! He came to the academy less than two months ago! If he really gets on the Qing Yun Ranking, what will the other students—who have cultivated in the academy for a long time but failed to do this—feel?

...

Chu Liuyue shook her head. “Thank you for your guidance, Elder Bo Yan, but I know that I’m not good enough to compare to my senior brothers and senior sisters. Perhaps... I should try again when I’ve improved more.”

Elder Bo Yan was rather shocked. Chu Yue... rejected it? This is rare. One has to know that there aren’t many such chances. In the academy, many students want to come up and try, but they can only wait until the beginning of the month. Yet, this kid looks nonchalant.

“Are you sure?” Elder Bo Yan stared into Chu Liuyue’s eyes. Young people are the most hot-blooded and impulsive. In such situations, they normally should be most excited and nervous. But from Chu Yue’s pair of clear eyes, I only see calmness. It really isn’t a gaze that a young man in his teens would have.

“Yes,” Chu Liuyue replied lightly with determination.

Meeting Elder Bo Yan’s meaningful gaze, Chu Liuyue paused and added, “I know that I’m not good enough, so I’ll definitely work hard and fight for a chance to ascend the Qing Yun Ranking earlier.”

Chu Liuyue’s reply caused many people’s mouths to widen. “What is Chu Yue doing? It’s rare for Elder Bo Yan to make an exception and let him directly take the test, yet he rejected it!”

“Pfft, he doesn’t know what’s good for him! Could it be that he thinks his status has also risen with Senior Brother Rong Xiu as his backer? Thus, he can be so casual.”

“Haha, don’t say that either. Didn’t you hear him saying that he knows he’s not good enough, so he did that? Although it’s rather overboard to curtly reject Elder Bo Yan, it’s better than being humiliated after trying and failing to get onto the Qing Yun Ranking, right? It’s even in front of so many people!”

“Even if he is talented, it is hard for him to get onto the Qing Yun Ranking directly! I really don’t know what the elders and Senior Brother Rong Xiu see in him...”

The crowd partook in heated discussions in no time.

Elder Bo Yan knitted his brows tightly. Not talking about others, but Chu Yue is really outstanding. If not, he wouldn’t be admired by Wan Zheng, who has always been picky. Besides Chu Yue already being able to produce a ninth-grade pill, even his warrior skills are pretty good! Being able to beat a stage-eight warrior with his stage-seven warrior cultivation is problematic on its own.

He laughed out loud and raised his voice. “Alright, you don’t have to be nervous! No matter Rong Xiu, your mentor, or the elders in the academy, many of them think highly of you! You just have to work hard in the future!”

His words were filled with unconcealable praise and admiration.

Hearing Elder Bo Yan’s words, the surrounding people fell silent.

Elder Bo Yan rarely praised any student in public. Being able to receive his affirmation was enough to prove how outstanding Chu Yue was!

Some people shut their mouths quickly.

Chu Liuyue bowed. "Thank you, Elder Bo Yan."

Seeing Chu Yue's still calm and composed gaze, Elder Bo Yan liked the teen even more. I have seen too many talented young men and women, but not all of them could become top elites. Other than talent, determined will and mature mentality cannot be lacking! And Chu Yue is already behaving in such a manner at a young age. There is no need to worry!

"Okay! Okay!" Elder Bo Yan smiled and stroked his beard. "Wan Zheng really accepted a good disciple this time!"

As he spoke, he looked toward Rong Xiu. "Rong Xiu, I'll hand this kid to you now. You must teach him well!"

Rong Xiu nodded. "I'll definitely do my best."

...

Elder Bo Yan quickly left.

Rong Xiu glanced at Chu Liuyue and said, "Let's go back."

Chu Liuyue nodded and turned around to look at the black wall of Dong Huang Clock Tower. The Qing Yun Ranking didn't come out in the end, but the previous touch was enough. However, I probably cannot try to get onto the Qing Yun Ranking in the future. My name at the top of the ranking lists can probably only see daylight again when I become strong enough.

She took a deep breath and left with Rong Xiu, one after another.

After they left, the surrounding spectators found it boring and left respectively.

...

Night.

Chu Liuyue sat in her own room quietly.

The cold moonlight poured in.

A tiny figure silently appeared within the room, and as if sensing something, Chu Liuyue looked up.

“Although you have moved, you can't give up on playing chess every day—” As Dugu Mobao talked, he walked toward Chu Liuyue.

But before he could finish his sentence, he saw Chu Liuyue's gaze. He understood what happened almost instantly, and he stopped in his tracks.

However, Chu Liuyue raised her brows slightly. “Big Baby, you came at the right time. I have some things I want to ask you.”

Dugu Mobao knitted his brows gradually.

Chu Liuyue tilted her head. “Who are you?”

Chapter 1226: Sensible

A mysterious and strong existence in the Red Moon Desert. A top warrior that is strong enough to reform his Holy Body. One that can freely come in and out of Ling Xiao Academy without being detected, or perhaps nobody dares to notice him! Why would such a person be close to me and help me so much? Chu Liuyue didn't understand.

When she knew that she was the one whose name was hidden on the Qing Yun Ranking, the identities of the people around her became strange and worthy of investigation.

The room door closed shut, and the surroundings fell into dead silence.

Dugu Mobao's strange purple eyes shone with a faint light, and his adorable face had no expression at all as he said, “Dugu Mobao.”

Chu Liuyue raised her brows. “That's your real name? Or... do you have another identity?”

Dugu Mobao squinted his eyes. “What exactly do you want to ask?”

“I naturally want to ask about things I should know.” Chu Liuyue smiled. “You already knew that I’m on the Qing Yun Ranking, right?”

Dugu Mobao didn’t say a word, but this was clearly a tacit acknowledgment.

“Then, I’ll ask something else.” Chu Liuyue pondered for a moment. “When did we meet? Was it... after I came to the God Residence Realm? Of course, I’m referring to the... previous time.”

Dugu Mobao shook his head and coldly said, “No, it’s even earlier than that. At the Red Moon Desert.”

Chu Liuyue was dazed. “Red Moon Desert? Not in the God Residence Realm?”

Dugu Mobao walked to a chair at the side and calmly sat down. “I’ve been stuck in the Red Moon Desert for many years. It’s only because I managed to reform my Holy Body this time that I could leave. How could I meet you at the God Residence Realm?”

Chu Liuyue knitted her brows, and countless chaotic thoughts surfaced in her mind. Seeing Dugu Mobao’s appearance, he doesn’t look like he is lying. Besides, with his abilities and status, he has no need to lie about this matter. Then... we really met at the Red Moon Desert? However, why do I not have this memory?

“Then, you and Ling Xiao Academy...” Chu Liuyue pressed her lips against each other. Originally, I thought that Dugu Mobao was Ling Xiao Academy’s director and thus my mentor. However, it doesn’t seem so based on his reply.

As if guessing her thoughts, Dugu Mobao slightly looked down as his thick and long lashes trembled slightly, hiding the emotions in his eyes.

When he looked up again, his gaze had returned to normal as he said calmly, "I was part of Ling Xiao Academy in the past, but... That was a long time ago."

However, Chu Liuyue could hear an emotional sigh as many years had passed by.

It should... be rather long ago, right? Chu Liuyue thought to herself secretly. If this is so, then... Regardless of Dugu Mobao's identity, he is considered a senior to many people in Ling Xiao Academy. It's understandable why Elder Wan Zheng would respect and fear him so much.

Chu Liuyue couldn't help but ask, "Then, why were you trapped in the Red Moon Desert in the first place? Oh, Senior Diwu and Senior Lan Xiao as well—"

"They're just matters of the past. We don't have to talk about it." Dugu Mobao interrupted Chu Liuyue's words for once.

Chu Liuyue paused. I rarely see Dugu Mobao having such a reaction, which shows that he really doesn't want to talk about it.

She didn't ask further.

Like Rong Xiu, Dugu Mobao seems to keep quiet about many things around me. Unless I recall it on my own, they will never take the initiative to reveal it. To this day, I have only recalled a very small portion of things, and they are all related to the academy. I still don't have any memories of Dugu Mobao.

“Since you’ve recalled these matters, then... We’ll add to your training!” Dugu Mobao suddenly said.

Chu Liuyue was dazed. “What?”

Dugu Mobao glanced at her. “You and Rong Xiu are each at the top of two lists because your abilities were indeed on par back then. But now that such a long time has passed and you’ve experienced many things, you can be considered as starting anew. However, Rong Xiu never gave up on his cultivation. With his current abilities, he can easily overtake your ranking on those two lists.”

However, he just didn’t do so.

Whir!

Dugu Mobao waved his small hand, and a faintly glowing chessboard floated in mid-air!

“If you don’t want to be left far behind, come and train!” As Dugu Mobao spoke, he gazed at Chu Liuyue meaningfully. “I’ve told you before—as long as you’re strong enough, you’ll know what you want to know and recall what you want.”

Chu Liuyue clenched her teeth and walked to the opposite side of the chessboard. “Let’s go!”

Since I could be at the top of the Qing Yun Ranking back then, I can do it now too!

...

Chu Liuyue spent her next few days in a very disciplined manner. She dueled with Rong Xiu when it was daytime and played chess with Dugu Mobao in the evening. At night, she brought Tuan Zi to Million Wine Mountain.

Perhaps it was because the entire academy knew that she was staying with Rong Xiu and that he thought highly of her, but nobody fought with her for the seat next to the fountain. Every time she went, there would be a seat that was specifically left for her.

Of course, there were also some people who tried to chat her up and get close to her, wanting to hear Rong Xiu's news. Some wanted to use her as a bridge and be somewhat related to Rong Xiu.

However, Chu Liuyue didn't really talk to them every time. If they asked too much, she would say that Rong Xiu disliked it.

Everyone would be scared and didn't dare to pester her too much, but because they knew that Rong Xiu was behind her... Although some people were furious, they didn't really dare to show her their temper.

This caused Chu Liuyue's days in the academy to be much more relaxed.

Other than this, she would spend her remaining time studying the new ninth-grade pill formula that Elder Wan Zheng had sent over. In comparison, this was the easiest.

As she had moved to Rong Xiu's residence, there were no other people on Jiuhe Peak. It was more convenient in all aspects, and this allowed her to be freer when cultivating.

In that short period of time, Chu Liuyue's skills in all aspects improved greatly!

...

In the blink of an eye, it was the beginning of the month again.

Even though Chu Liuyue had come to the academy for more than two months... As quite a few incidents happened in between, this was her first time participating in the monthly assessment after officially becoming a student.

She had long passed on Elder Wan Zheng's side, so the assessment wasn't very important. The key was... the Qing Yun Ranking!

Early in the morning, almost all the elders and students in the academy gathered at Qing Ming Square!

The crowd was bustling. Many people were tempted and wanted to compete for the Qing Yun Ranking.

When Chu Liuyue came, she saw Elder Bo Yan and the rest standing on Dong Huang Clock Tower at one glance.

"Chu Yue! You're finally out!" At this point, a familiar shout was heard from the crowd.

Chu Liuyue turned around—it was Luo Shishi and the rest.

The person talking was Zhuo Sheng. He was the fastest to rush to Chu Liuyue as he sized her up curiously and excitedly. "How's cultivation with Senior Brother Rong Xiu? Can you get onto the Qing Yun Ranking today?"

Chapter 1227: Cannot be Compared to You

He didn't purposely lower his voice, so his loud behavior instantly attracted quite a few people's gazes. Clearly, they were all very curious about this problem.

Chu Liuyue simply smiled. "The Qing Yun Ranking competition is very intense. I'm just a new student, so how can I compete?"

Zhuo Sheng snorted. "I haven't seen you in a few days, but you've become much humbler!"

Actually, after Chu Liuyue came to Ling Xiao Academy, she didn't flaunt or show herself up more. If not, she wouldn't have reported the heavenly doctor aspect to be her only strength. However, she always ran into random matters for no reason, causing her reputation to spread far and wide in the short two months. This allowed her to be 'famous' in the academy.

Seeing Chu Liuyue's gaze, Luo Shishi strangely asked, "Chu Yue, do you really not intend on trying?"

As he was following Senior Brother Rong Xiu, many people in the academy were doubtful.

There were quite a few open and private struggles. This assessment at the beginning of the month was undoubtedly the best chance for Chu Yue to prove his skills, but he didn't seem to care about it.

“We’ll see.” Chu Liuyue paused. It is impossible for me not to compete all the time as it would only attract more attention, but judging from the previous day’s scenario, it seems like I will directly summon the Qing Yun Ranking as long as I’m close to it! I have to think of a way to hide it from everyone...

...

The assessment went on as per normal.

The entire Qing Ming Square was very lively.

Chu Liuyue walked to the heavenly doctor area and waited quietly.

There weren’t many people here, so Chu Liuyue’s existence was increasingly obvious. Some people kept looking at her from time to time.

Chu Liuyue ignored all of them.

At this point, Elder Bo Yan finally whipped his sleeves and summoned the Qing Yun Ranking!

Whir!

A strong force attacked!

Chu Liuyue's heart was shocked as she looked up!

Everyone fell silent for a moment as they respectively raised their heads.

Some people were nervous while others were expectant, but they were more filled with battling intent and were tempted to try.

"The monthly assessment... officially begins!" Elder Bo Yan announced!

The crowd quickly busied themselves nervously, but Chu Liuyue didn't move as she looked up slightly at the Qing Yun Ranking.

A hundred names on the black list were arranged in order, and they glowed with a faint light. It was holy and formidable, with an unignorable suppression.

She looked at the topmost position—it was still pitch-black.

Almost nobody knew that it hid her name!

Chu Liuyue gradually clenched her hands in her sleeves. When I look at it now, I feel totally different from when I first saw it two months ago!

"Chu Yue, what are you looking at?" Zhong Xun walked over and stood beside Chu Liuyue, following her gaze.

A look of understanding flashed across his eyes as he smiled and said, “You still want to get onto the ranking, right?”

He had also heard a part of Chu Liuyue’s conversation with Luo Shishi and the rest. He also knew that young men in their teens were very ambitious. Even if they said they didn’t dare and didn’t want to, their hearts were filled with desire that they couldn’t hide completely.

Chu Liuyue smiled and didn’t say much.

At this moment, a commotion could suddenly be heard from outside.

Chu Liuyue and Zhong Xun turned around to take a look.

“It seems like someone has won on the Xuan Master’s side,” muttered Zhong Xun.

Chu Liuyue looked at the familiar face in the crowd and squinted her eyes—Lin Zhifei.

At this moment, Lin Zhifei was standing in the arena with a pale face. His forehead was covered in sweat.

There was a youngster opposite him, but he had collapsed onto the floor and spat out fresh blood. He looked defeated.

There was a chessboard between the two of them. Without looking, Chu Liuyue knew that this was a Xuan Master competition, and the person who won was... Lin Zhifei!

The crowd was very stunned by the unexpected ending, and they partook in heated discussions. “He won?! He actually won?! The other party is a famous character on the Qing Yun Ranking! Doesn’t this mean that he’ll replace him and get onto the ranking?”

“I remember that this person is only 98th on the Xuan Master list, right... There are quite a lot of people fighting for this ranking. Isn’t it normal for others to win?”

“That’s something you don’t know! The one who just won the competition is called Lin Zhifei. He has only come to the academy for more than two months, and he’s truly a new student!”

“New student?! Really?!”

“Not many people can get onto the Qing Yun Ranking not long after they come to the academy! I hadn’t really heard of Lin Zhifei before, but I didn’t expect him to be so amazing!”

Lin Zhifei didn’t really care about the surrounding noises as he cupped his fists toward the other party. “Thank you for letting me, Senior Brother.”

The youngster’s face flashed white and red as he looked very awkward. Letting you? I put in my full effort! I didn’t let him at all! I was bound to lose this match!

He forcefully stood up. “...Junior Brother, you don’t have to be humble. I’m not as good as you.”

Then, his face burned even more as he quickly turned around to leave.

The elder in charge of observing the assessment laughed at the side and said, “Lin Zhifei, right? You’re indeed young and capable. Congratulations!”

The elder then waved his sleeves, and that youngster’s name gradually disappeared from the Qing Yun Ranking, being replaced with Lin Zhifei’s name!

Upon seeing his name, Lin Zhifei heaved a sigh of relief. He then cupped his fists toward the elder, smiled, and said, “Thank you, Elder.”

“Why are you thanking me? If you want to thank someone, you should thank yourself! You’re outstanding enough, so you could get onto the Qing Yun Ranking in such a short amount of time!” That elder clearly admired Lin Zhifei very much as he patted the latter’s shoulders. “Cultivate properly in the future! Work harder to get better!”

Lin Zhifei respectfully acknowledged it.

His behavior—which was neither humble nor arrogant—won the praises of quite a few elders at the side. They had met many people and had very good eyesight.

Lin Zhifei was very talented. Even in the entire academy, he could be considered one of the top few elites. The key was that his personality was great as well, and he was mature, not arrogant or impatient. As long as his path was smooth, his future would definitely be bright.

Lin Zhifei left the competition venue.

Quite a few people shot him envious gazes. “There aren’t many people who can get onto the Qing Yun Ranking within three months of entering the academy, right?”

“I don’t know about the others. I only know that he’s the first one to get onto the ranking amongst the students who have just entered the academy!”

“Heh, didn’t they all keep saying that Chu Yue is the strongest out of all the new students? Seeing this, I don’t think so! I think Lin Zhifei might even be better than him!”

“Other than him, Luo Yanlin’s sister, Luo Shishi, is actually also very talented. I believe she’ll be able to get onto the ranking in no time. Isn’t she also stronger than Chu Yue?”

“I want to see if Chu Yue can get onto the ranking today!”

All sorts of discussions filled the entire square.

“Zhifei! You did it!” The moment Lin Zhifei came down, a muscular man walked over. “I have long said that you can shock everyone with your skills! It really is so! That Chu Yue can’t be compared to you at all!”

Chapter 1228: Agreement

Lin Zhifei smiled faintly, and his clear eyes were calm as he looked as distant and handsome as usual. “Senior Brother, you’re too kind. I’m a Xuan Master, while he’s a heavenly doctor. There’s nothing much to compare actually.”

He didn’t really care about this matter.

“Heh, I just feel like that kid knows how to promote himself! He just came to the academy two months ago, and almost everyone knows about him! Many people say that he’s the most outstanding one out of all the new students, but I don’t think so! Just now, I heard quite a few people on the heavenly doctor’s side say that Chu Yue has no intentions of fighting for a spot on the Qing Yun Ranking this time. I think it’s most likely because he knows he’s not good enough, so he just gave up!”

Lin Zhifei shook his head. “If he’s someone who doesn’t live up to his name, His Grace... I’m sure Senior Brother Rong Xiu won’t think of him so highly.”

Although he didn’t interact with Rong Xiu much, he had seen that man’s manner and aura at the banquet. Chu Yue is definitely not someone who fools around if he has caught Rong Xiu’s eye.

“I forgot that you’re also from one of the Sky-Cloud Empire’s divisions.” That young man shrugged his shoulders and didn’t continue talking, but he still didn’t care much about Lin Zhifei. He just thought that Lin Zhifei was afraid to offend Rong Xiu, which was why he purposely said that.

Lin Zhifei knew that the other party had misunderstood. His lips trembled, but he didn’t explain further. His personality was originally like that—he would do his own things properly, and he wouldn’t care much about the rest.

While thinking, he looked up toward the heavenly doctor’s side.

They were a distance away, and there were quite a few people in between. Actually, he couldn’t really see much when standing here; he could only forcefully see a long and straight figure.

Although Lin Zhifei could only see half of his side profile, the other party’s extraordinary aura still stood out from the crowd. People noticed him instantly.

That young man stood upright and looked pure. He looked up slightly, as if he were looking at the Qing Yun Ranking and also as if he were in deep thought.

Lin Zhifei took a few glances and retracted his gaze as extremely faint confusion flashed across his eyes. Back then, that person said she also wanted to come to Ling Xiao Academy. However, I haven't seen her at all. I wonder if she will come.

...

Lin Zhifei making it onto the Qing Yun Ranking caused quite a huge commotion. After many people heard the news, they all sized him up curiously.

Quite a few of them had the same thoughts as the previous man as they all wanted to see who was the most outstanding one out of all the students recruited recently.

Lin Zhifei was the first to get onto the ranking, and he was currently at the top of the herd. If Chu Yue couldn't get onto the ranking, he would be humiliated.

...

"Next, Chu Yue!"

It was finally Chu Liuyue's turn.

The crowd fell silent.

Chu Liuyue could clearly feel that all the gazes had landed on her. She walked forward.

Elder Wan Zheng smiled and looked at her. "Chu Yue, who do you want to challenge?"

He was asking about the people on the heavenly doctor list.

To Elder Wan Zheng, his disciple was already a ninth-grade heavenly doctor. Even though his disciple temporarily couldn't be compared to those people at the front, he could still challenge the people at the back without a problem.

If it were another student who had just broken through to become a ninth-grade heavenly doctor, Elder Wan Zheng would definitely not be this confident. However, this was Chu Yue. Everything seemed possible.

The techniques she used when producing pills were very smooth and well-versed. Although she had just broken through to become a ninth-grade heavenly doctor, she didn't lose out to other ninth-grade heavenly doctors. Hence, Elder Wan Zheng was very interested in seeing his disciple get onto the Qing Yun Ranking!

However, Chu Liuyue's reply stunned him. "Mentor, must I choose?"

Elder Wan Zheng was dazed. "Why? Don't you want to?"

Chu Liuyue pressed her lips against each other. “With my current abilities, I’m afraid... I might not win, so why don’t we wait a while...”

Elder Wan Zheng widened his mouth in shock. W-what’s going on? Chu Yue really doesn’t want to challenge the Qing Yun Ranking? But he clearly has already broken through to become a ninth-grade heavenly doctor! Besides, with his current talent and sensitivity in this aspect, he does have a chance of winning. Why—

“Have you thought it through?” Elder Wan Zheng was still in much disbelief.

In the academy, countless students looked up to the Qing Yun Ranking. They trained hard just to occupy a spot on it.

It would be fine if it were someone who is relatively weaker. Chu Yue clearly has hopes of entering the ranking, so why did he reject it?

“This chance is rare!” Elder Wan Zheng glanced at the few elders not far away and looked like he was put in a difficult spot.

Chu Liuyue’s heart tingled, and she suddenly recalled the sentence Elder Bo Yan said the day before. Elder Wan Zheng has already spread the news of me breaking through and becoming a ninth-grade heavenly doctor.

As if to confirm her thoughts, Elder Wan Zheng coughed at the next moment and lowered his voice. “Disciple, it’s not that I want to put you in a difficult spot, but... I’ve already made a bet with them... You see... Even if you think you don’t have a stable chance of winning, why don’t you just go and try... Hm?”

Even if he loses, it will be good to let the fellas see that Chu Yue has already broken through to become a ninth-grade heavenly doctor! Why would he directly give up? If I go back, they'll definitely ridicule me.

Chu Liuyue was speechless.

"Disciple, have you forgotten the agreement you had with me before?" Elder Wan Zheng glanced at Chu Liuyue deeply.

Back then, they had already agreed that Chu Yue would enter the Qing Yun Ranking as soon as possible!

Having all the herbs I can is indeed a huge temptation... Chu Liuyue pondered for a moment. "Okay!"

Chapter 1229: Pei Yuan Pill

Hearing Chu Liuyue's reply, Elder Wan Zheng looked elated. "Then, who do you want to challenge? The last few people on the heavenly doctor list are all ninth-grade heavenly doctors!"

He meant that Chu Liuyue could try to challenge any of them.

Chu Liuyue looked up. "I would like to choose Senior Brother Tang Rui."

"Tang Rui?" Elder Wan Zheng followed her line of sight and looked over. Hm, the hundredth on the heavenly doctor list. Why did this child become so cautious after not seeing him for a few days?

Elder Wan Zheng stroked his beard. Is he traumatized from being locked up at Fengmin Mountain?

“Are you sure it’s him?”

Chu Liuyue nodded lightly.

Seeing that she had made up her mind, Elder Wan Zheng agreed. So be it then! Anyway, this is the first time. He can just start on a good note!

“Tang Rui!” Elder Wan Zheng looked at a young man in the crowd.

Tang Rui looked like he was in his twenties. He wasn’t tall, and his figure was rather round. His face was white and round like dough as he had a smile on his face and looked very harmonious.

“Greetings, Elder Wan Zheng.” Tang Rui was just standing at the side, so he naturally heard the conversation between the mentor-disciple duo, knowing that he had become Chu Liuyue’s target.

“Tang Rui, guide Chu Yue a little,” said Elder Wan Zheng.

Tang Rui nodded and laughed. “Sure.”

Then, he looked at Chu Liuyue with an even more polite smile. “Junior Brother Chu Yue, please—”

Chu Liuyue raised her hand. “Senior Brother Tang Rui, please!”

...

Jiuheng Peak.

At the middle of the mountain.

With his hands behind his back, Rong Xiu stood in front of the door as he looked toward Dong Huang Clock Tower. Although he couldn't see Qing Ming Square's situation from here, Jiuheng Peak was high enough, so he could see Qing Ming Square.

"She went to participate in the assessment?" A child-like voice sounded from the room. Even though it was child-like, it had a stern nature to it that one couldn't underestimate.

Rong Xiu nodded. "As long as she's in the academy, it's something she can't avoid."

Her name had now been spread far and wide in the academy. Her every move would be noticed by the crowd. It would be weird if she refused to try getting onto the Qing Yun Ranking.

Dugu Mobao snorted, "With her current abilities, it's impossible if she wants to break the barrier and let her name surface again. However, it's her name at the end of the day. Her strength is sealed inside."

Rong Xiu smiled faintly, turned around, and looked inside. "Senior, if you're worried, why don't you take action directly?"

Dugu Mobao snorted. “Didn’t you already make preparations on that Qing Yun Ranking? Do you still need me?”

“I should do it.” Rong Xiu smiled without a doubt. Of course, I need to dote on my own wife.

“But everything lies in her hands at the end of the day.”

...

Qing Ming Square was demarcated into many small regions as venues.

Chu Liuyue and Tang Rui were standing in one of the arenas.

There weren’t many people on the heavenly doctor’s side, so it was normally very spacious. But this time, many people squeezed into the competition venue’s surroundings.

Other than the students who were also heavenly doctors, quite a few people from the Xuan Master side and the warrior side had also run over.

Chu Liuyue rubbed her temple as if she had a headache. It seems like I’m really ‘famous’ in Ling Xiao Academy.

“Junior Brother Chu Yue, please—” Tang Rui placed his cauldron in front.

Chu Liuyue followed him closely.

The surroundings fell silent.

...

The two people took their herbs out respectively and started refining them in the cauldron.

Tang Rui had coincidentally seen Chu Yue merging pills before and knew that he wasn't weak, so he didn't dare to look down on the latter. From the very start, he had already gathered all his focus.

On the other hand, Chu Liuyue didn't think much as she started refining the pill in an orderly manner.

Even though she could successfully produce ninth-grade pills with her current abilities, she still had to spend quite an amount of effort to win this competition.

She moved her wrist and placed the herbs into the cauldron in order.

The red fire burned brightly, and the unique bitter fragrance of the herbs gradually spread around.

Elder Wan Zheng looked at it for a while and gasped in shock. This kid doesn't seem like he's producing the pill he previously produced! If I haven't guessed wrongly, he wants to produce the Pei Yuan Pill?

Even though the Pei Yuan Pill was a beginner ninth-grade pill, it was much better than that one in all areas. Of course, the requirements were also elevated. This was also one of the formulas Elder Wan Zheng had given Chu Liuyue a few days ago.

“This kid is too impulsive...” Elder Wan Zheng couldn’t help but mutter softly. Chu Yue obtained this formula not long ago, and he might not have even understood it completely, yet he was competing with it? It would be a problem to even produce it...

But since the competition had already started, the outsiders could only quietly observe.

...

Actually, it wasn’t Chu Liuyue’s first time producing the Pei Yuan Pill. When she had just broken through to become a ninth-grade heavenly doctor in her previous life, the first pill she produced was the Pei Yuan Pill. Hence, this was one of the pills she was most familiar with.

When Elder Wan Zheng previously tested her, she didn’t choose this as she didn’t want to reveal too much about herself.

A few days ago, the Pei Yuan Pill’s formula was coincidentally amongst the ones he sent over. Now, it became logical that she produced it.

That formula was already deeply engraved in her memory. She didn’t even need to think to perfectly execute the herb placement sequence and the time and strength needed to refine them.

Her movements were very smooth and beautiful!

Tang Rui looked up unintentionally and glanced over. His heart clenched. With such techniques and him looking so much at ease, how does he look like someone that just broke through to become a ninth-grade heavenly doctor?

Chapter 1230: Formula

Quite a few spectators were also taken aback.

Even though the news of Chu Liuyue merging pills had spread far and wide in the academy, she was still an eighth-grade heavenly doctor back then. But now, the abilities she showcased were clearly those of a ninth-grade heavenly doctor!

After a temporary silence, the crowd became noisy. “Did this Chu Yue just break through to become a ninth-grade heavenly doctor? I’ve broken through for a year, but my technique isn’t as smooth as his!”

“Me too... His control over the fire is very precise. How exactly did he refine so many herbs simultaneously?”

“...He’s someone that Elder Wan Zheng thinks highly of after all, so how can he not be talented? No matter how awfully other people have talked about him, Chu Yue didn’t even care. He can just fling them away easily!”

“When he previously competed with Liu Zi’an, he was still indeed an eighth-grade heavenly doctor. Not only did he break through to become a ninth-grade heavenly doctor in such a short amount of time, but his skills in all areas have even improved by so much... Sigh, if only I were half as talented as him!”

Students who were also heavenly doctors saw the situation the clearest.

The talent and sensitivity that Chu Liuyue exhibited weren't what an ordinary person could compare to. They couldn't even be indignant!

"With Senior Brother Rong Xiu guiding him personally, he'll naturally be different," someone said ambiguously, but this voice was quickly drowned out by the crowd's discussions.

Anyone with eyes could tell that Chu Liuyue was indeed capable. She was definitely a ninth-grade heavenly doctor, and the pill she produced would probably be quite decent.

Even if she lost in the end, there wouldn't be so many doubts in the future.

...

Time slowly trickled past.

The assessments on the warrior side and Xuan Master side went on steadily.

Luo Shishi and Zhuo Sheng had passed successfully—especially the former, who had improved greatly and broke through to become an intermediate stage-nine warrior.

Even though Luo Yanming performed well... With Lin Zhifei in front, he instantly didn't look that outstanding.

Even Luo Yanlin had to admit that Lin Zhifei—who had just come not long ago—had stunning talent. Lin Zhifei might not even lose out to him.

After Luo Shishi and the rest were done with their assessments, they went to the heavenly doctor's side to spectate Chu Liuyue and Tang Rui's match.

...

The atmosphere became increasingly nerve-racking.

The crowd fell silent as they watched the scene before them silently. Their hearts seemed to hang high.

Whir!

A ripple came out from Tang Rui's cauldron!

Quite a few people had their eyes light up. Tang Rui produced his pill first!

A spherical-shaped pill had already formed in that cauldron! With the fire burning it, the herbal fragrance became increasingly strong!

Detecting this aura, Chu Liuyue's brows moved slightly. She looked up, and a faint light flashed across her eyes. This aura...

“Intermediate ninth-grade!” Someone within the crowd gasped!

“That’s an intermediate ninth-grade pill!”

The crowd went crazy.

Tang Rui had been the hundredth place on the Qing Yun Ranking for a while, and his pill-producing standard had been maintained at the same level. However, nobody expected that he could already produce an intermediate ninth-grade pill!

With this alone, his ranking could improve by quite a bit!

“He hid his skills!” Someone gasped in realization. “I didn’t expect that although Tang Rui looks so peaceful normally, he secretly had already broken through long ago.”

When Tang Rui heard this, he was caught between laughter and tears. I could indeed produce intermediate ninth-grade pills a long time ago, but I hadn’t revealed this to the public due to various reasons. Even for the Qing Yun Ranking, I just planned for myself to stay around the hundredth position and not go forward.

I originally planned to wait until I could produce a superior-class ninth-grade pill or a pill of an even higher grade before I formally challenged. However, I didn’t expect Chu Liuyue to choose me and go through with such a competition.

In actual fact, if I didn’t see Chu Liuyue’s smooth and well-practiced pill refinement techniques, I had no intention of exposing my true abilities. But today, I can only do my best to secure my ranking!

“Chu Yue is bound to lose! Even though an intermediate ninth-grade pill is just one small grade higher than a beginner ninth-grade pill, the two of them have a huge difference. It’s extremely hard to cross that gap!”

“Seeing how confident Tang Rui is, he should’ve broken through for a while, but... That Chu Yue has just become a ninth-grade heavenly doctor, right? How can he compete against Tang Rui? Isn’t this bullying? Haha!”

“...Don’t forget that he could make Tang Rui show his true abilities, which shows that the other party is good enough to make him wary! And this person is... Chu Yue!”

That was just a sixteen-year-old man!

In no time, the crowd looked at Chu Liuyue with different gazes.

...

After Elder Wan Zheng was shocked, he was comforted. Tang Rui’s abilities are clearly stronger than what he had shown before. The outcome of this match is probably already set. After all, Chu Yue is producing a beginner ninth-grade Pei Yuan Pill. But as long as my disciple can successfully produce the ninth-grade pill, everything else doesn’t matter.

He thought in his heart silently, Disciple, don’t disappoint me...

...

Right at this point, Chu Liuyue suddenly stopped in her actions and took out a few more herbs from her Cosmic Ring, pouring them into the cauldron.

“What’s that?” Elder Wan Zheng was dazed for a moment and instinctively looked closer. However, it was a hurried glance, and he could only forcefully recognize that they were all herbs. But... Why did Chu Yue suddenly put these items in? I didn’t write these herbs in the formula!