

PARAGON OF SIN

Chapter 13 - 13: Rewards

As the remaining disciples focused their efforts, several events took place. Firstly, Shu Yang had recovered and restarted more cautiously and with renewed gusto. Unfortunately for him, at day thirty-six, he lost his mind and nearly underwent qi deviation. Luckily, Shu Yin acted to ensure he didn't completely go haywire at the last moment. He survived in the end.

His Heart of Qi, however...

While it hadn't detonated, it had fractured and nearly crippled him. He no longer had control over his qi. While he wouldn't experience the soul-draining weakness that came with complete crippling, without control over his Heart of Qi, refining energies or essence at will was an impossibility.

Unless he repaired his Heart of Qi, his realm would no longer progress and he would be incapable of using any qi arts. The only thing left was a strong body and spiritual spells.

He was essentially useless and his potential ruined.

The next development was Yan Zhu, Ling Ya, and Shu Yin successfully cultivating the first level of the Haven Heart Method.

It seemed what Wei Wuyin deduced had been true; females held a greater advantage in this level due to their innate yin energies. It was more prominent for virgins who had intact primal yin, as Yan Zhu and Jiu Lang had completed their first level ten whole days before Ling Ya and Shu Yin.

The next event was the success of Jiu Lang as she completed the second level, Matter Rebirth and Fusion. Her physical body seemed to burn with new physical energies. The most shocking aspect of the level was her shedding skin.

She had to hide away behind a qi veil when she underwent the process. She was a whole week ahead of Wei Wuyin in this aspect. When he succeeded, he didn't hide himself as he just stripped naked right then and there, and let

the process occur while he patiently examined the changes. He obtained quite a few stares from the women in the room.

It wasn't just his skin that was being born anew, his cells were changing too. He even felt his DNA seemed to have been copied, edited, and then re-corrected. His body after the fact had an all new physical aura signature. That being said, it was still connected to his Heart of Qi.

This discovery left him deeply shocked. With this newfound fresh physique, he could once more exhaust his physical essence to form a new Heart of Qi while maintaining compatibility with his current one.

The more he cultivated this ancient qi method, the more he grew curious about how it was invented.

Unfortunately, besides him and Jiu Lang, no one else reached the second level by the sixtieth day. However, Jiu Lang had reached the third level, surpassing him at the last moment. He didn't think the third level was difficult, but he was caught off-guard by the requisite need of essence. Jiu Lang's third level was reached with incredible speed, like she had access to a vast quantity of pure essence.

While his talent wasn't bad, he still would need months before absorbing enough external essence from the world before being able to transform his meridians.

In the end, the trial ended with him taking second place, Jiu Lang taking first, and Yan Zhu placing third. Since she reached the first level before the non-virgins, Ling Ya and Shu Yin.

Godlord Lin looked at them and only gave a slight nod before declaring the winners. She informed them that they could cultivate the ancient qi method as much as they desired, they could even spread it. In fact, she encouraged it.

That being said, she crippled Shu Yang completely. His luck ended because of his aggressively hopeful words from before. Having survived with his qi intact and then being stripped away from it was heart-crushing to watch. He even begged on his knees. Shu Yin begged too, her tears were quite moving. Unfortunately, it did no good.

Godlord Lin was decisively vicious despite her fairy-like appearance.

Wei Wuyin couldn't help but shake his head. Truly unlucky. He decided to use this as a further lesson to be learned: Don't act careless and overconfident.

With that, the nine core disciples were lowered to five, four women and one man. With three dead and one crippled with their status stripped from them, the sect will definitely enter a very chaotic period in the upcoming days.

Wei Wuyin decided not to engage in those matters and swiftly returned to his residence. He would likely receive the elemental stones, scarlet qi stones, and cultivation grounds days within a few days, so he needed to think carefully on how to maximize his rewards.

After all the disciples departed, the Scarlet Dao Temple hall became silent as only Godlord Lin and the golden monolith remained. She had her eyes lowered, her delicate fingers placed on her lips in contemplation, and struck a beautiful figure.

"Any of them satisfy you?" A voice sounded in the shadows. From thin air appeared a young, handsome man. He was dressed in scarlet-colored robes befitting an emperor and a crown with a ruby embedded within. This ruby was like a neon object, shining ever brighter, effusing all sorts of light like a red sun. A dense aura of scarlet qi flowed around him naturally.

Godlord Lin frowned but didn't speak.

The man didn't mind as he walked softly next to the golden monolith and marveled at the etchings. His hands twitched as if he wished to reach out and touch it, but he held himself back. "I didn't think my sect was so useless, I must apologize."

He turned his scarlet gaze away from the monolith and spoke apologetically.

"They weren't useless. The other so-called Five Great Sects results weren't much better." Godlord Lin said, facing the scarlet dressed man known as the Scarlet Solaris Sect's Ancestral Elder. The only Godlord within the sect.

"There is one that interests me," she suddenly said as if recalling something.

The Scarlet Solaris Sect's Ancestral Elder knowingly smiled, "That boy Wei Wuyin? He is extraordinary for reaching the first level. I heard that only one out of a hundred men could even reach it. I wonder if that's true."

Wei Wuyin was talented, far more than the other three male disciples. One could tell how difficult it was for men to cultivate the first level from the display just now. Out of the four men that arrived, only one walked away unscathed. The other two are dead and one crippled. Of course, He Long died an unjust death before being able to prove himself.

"You mean the little boy you saved?" Godlord Lin inquired. Her words indicated that Wei Wuyin wasn't the one she mentioned, she hadn't even known his name.

The Ancestral Elder, Wu Xinghong, tipped his head a little in curiosity. "Yes. He's only in his mid-twenties and reached the Fourth Stage of Qi Condensation. The fact he successfully cultivated the Haven Heart Method's first level only proves his talent."

Godlord Lin only slightly smiled at his words. Wu Xinghong had acted earlier, protecting Wei Wuyin, not her. She never had any intention of interfering with their cultivation, squabbles, or accidents. Otherwise, she would've saved He Long or Tao Gui. Wei Wuyin wasn't anything special to her.

"Are you saying he's not talented enough?" Wu Xinghong frowned slightly in displeasure. Wei Wuyin was the most talented core disciple of this generation's set in his opinion. He even believed he had some cultivation treasure to help him. However, without intelligence and talent, most treasures were useless and only brought damnation.

"He's not. He took a safer method when cultivating it, and used the remnant forces of others within his body to accomplish the task. In my eyes, he was no different than a woman, so his talent could be considered equal or less than the rest. His entire cultivation base may seem solid, but that's only because he had fortuitous encounters and found rare cultivation treasures to do so. Luck never lasts, only true talent." Her words were soft but filled with certainty.

She was right, of course.

Because of the Steel Essence Source and Three-Point Yin Body, he was capable of reaching his current cultivation and cultivating the first level as if he was a woman.

"In my eyes, that girl with the seed of spear qi forming is far better," Godlord Lin plainly stated.

"Spear qi? Is it Yan Zhu?" Wu Xinghong grew somewhat shocked by the news. Spear qi was a weapon qi in the ethereal category, making it incredibly difficult to cultivate and profoundly powerful.

"Is she the one that interests you?" He asked.

She shook her head, "That woman with wood qi and incredibly powerful innate yin and essence reminds me of someone. If my thoughts are correct, she may have an incredible opportunity at hand. If she's careful, perhaps she'll become a Godlord one day."

"Oh? Jiu Lang? If she's careful...that's a very high evaluation. What if she's not?" Wu Xinghong found her words quite interesting.

Godlord Lin looked at Wu Xinghong in the eyes and slowly said, "then I fear the Scarlet Solaris Sect will become a distant memory." With that, she waved her hand and the monolith shrunk until it reached the size of a chicken egg. It was placed within her sleeve before she turned around and left, leaving Wu Xinghong speechless.

"..." Wu Xinglong stayed silent and wore a look of contemplation. It seemed he was considering Godlord Lin's words heavily. Only after a long while did he move, his eyes shining like two scarlet suns as they seemed to pierce through all forms of obstacles.

In his scarlet eyes, Jiu Lang's figure could be seen reflected clearly.

"We'll see."

Three days later, Wei Wuyin's residence.

Wei Wuyin stood next to a table. The table had a variety of glowing objects on it. The various energies emitted by these objects truly inspired the spirits.

"Could I do it?" Wei Wuyin's expression was deeply conflicted. After several days of thinking, he realized that the choices before him were numerous and the results of many of them were unable to be defined. In the end, his plans could fail.

He reached out and touched an oval stone the size of a chicken egg. Its surface was smooth and emitted a faint scarlet glow, while being deeply red in color. This was the Scarlet Qi Stone, an object formed from centuries of nourishment from the Scarlet Mountain's inherent traits.

Scarlet Qi was a material-type qi, and held very aggressive properties. If he could convert his Heart of Qi into a Heart of Scarlet Qi, every one of his qi arts would gain an additional power-up, especially his offensive arts. His flames, raging water, winds, and earth created would have a scarlet influence.

However, he wasn't sure if he wanted that. In fact, Scarlet Qi was incredible, but not many would go for it unless they decided it suited them. Instead, he intended to use it to refine his yang energy as the Scarlet Qi had a deep connection with the yang attribute.

"I'll use the scarlet qi stone for my cultivation, but it won't allow me to ascend to the Fifth Phase in one go. Should I go for immediate gains and focus purely on yang energy cultivation or on establishing a qi-type for my Heart of Qi."

As he tried to decide, he looked towards the three violet-colored elemental stones that quietly laid there. They weren't kidding when they said one could choose 'any' elemental stone. These stones were lightning stones. They were stored in translucent boxes made from non-conductive materials, the surface of which was incredibly hot.

"Not only did they give me lightning stones, they even gave me the hottest and most volatile lightning stone."

In the cultivation and mortal world, the color of lightning determined its characteristics with red being the coolest and gentlest of lightning while violet was the hottest and most volatile. As a bonus, violet lightning stone had ten times more lightning energy than a single red lightning stone.

"With one or two of these stones, I'm confident in birthing lightning qi, and likely even violet lightning. To think they would give me such benefits. In that case, Jiu Lang must be enjoying even greater treatment." A slight frown tugged at his lips when he thought this.

In truth, Wu Xinghong had given Wei Wuyin these stones out of his personal wealth because he favored him. Those three stones alone were worth more than three months in the Scarlet Qi Pond. In fact, they could cause great bloodshed if brought out in the cultivation world.

"If I can birth metal, lightning, wood, ice, and magma qi, I could try to condense a Heart of Elemental Qi. With this, my strength would reach an insane level." The four natural elements and five advanced elements were extraordinary, and if combined, you can tap into the most origin-like elemental energy called Elemental Origin Energy.

However, to even give birth to such a Heart of Qi, one had to first birth all nine elements. The difficulty was immense, as just having the elemental energies only helps, but isn't a certainty.

"I'll avoid establishing a Heart of Scarlet Qi, and go long-term with the Heart of Elemental Qi." Deciding thus, he also decided to have a two-fold plan, one long and one short.

"I'll cultivate in the Yang Yore Field for six months and use the scarlet qi stone to nourish my yang energy. If I don't ascend, I'll at least be closer. I won't get a second opportunity like this, but having a higher cultivation base will increase my options in the future."

He carefully stored the materials before walking out of his room. As he left, a woman dressed in a well-fitted maidservant outfit stood outside the door in diligent wait. This young woman was Li Yin, the former Violet Moon Sect's outer disciple. Wei Wuyin had spared her life.

She wasn't the only life spared, as women and young children were also spared as long as they didn't resist too strongly. However, their fates were similar yet very different. She became the maidservant to a core disciple of one of the Great Five Sects, but they likely became slaves for manual labour or sexual duties.

Unlike them, she had no spiritual spell restrictions and were provided resources for her cultivation. She even ate well, was dressed in clean clothes, wasn't abused sexually, and lived in an area filled with dense Essence of Heaven and Earth. The other servants were nice to her and greeted her properly, only because Wei Wuyin had brought her in personally.

She couldn't believe it, but her status and treatment now was far, far better than before. As an outer disciple of the Violet Moon Sect, her days weren't nearly as peaceful or enjoyable. Having to avoid lustful men, jealous women, well-connected cultivators, and fighting for resources was by no means easy.

As she respectfully bowed to this handsome, young man, her eyes flashed with ardent desire. If she could become his woman, no one would care about her past, and her future would be limitless. Unfortunately, Wei Wuyin hadn't made any sort of move leaving her disappointed.

She later learned that Wei Wuyin had an unspoken code of honor that he did not partake in things like that with his subordinates, whether they wanted to or not. It disappointed her, but didn't dissuade her from ensuring her cleavage was alluring and her make-up was on point.

Wei Wuyin smiled at her, "Has Du Leng returned?"

Du Leng was sent to check in on Mei Mei. Luckily, she still had allies and back-up plans in place. With a safety net that allowed her to recuperate from her injuries, she was doing well. While she did suffer severe injuries, she had retained her life and her Heart of Qi was undamaged.

The only real issue was the damage to her muscles and meridians. As long as she received the right medicinal pills and cocktails, she could heal that damage in a few years. However, he was curious about her state, so he sent Du Leng to check on her.

"Mister Du Leng has not returned," she answered.

Wei Wuyin frowned slightly but didn't ask anything else. He wanted to see Mei Mei, but it seemed she had developed some distrust towards him and prohibited him from seeing her. He understood, as Han Yu was his subordinate, but it left an itch in his heart. After all, Mei Mei and him had a relationship that wasn't just defined by their factions.

"When he returns, tell him I'll be gone for six months. He'll know what to do." After saying this, he left. He didn't have time to spare in relaxing or indulging other desires. Jiu Lang was given the same resources as him, and that put some pressure onto his shoulders.

He needed to be ready for anything.