

PARAGON OF SIN

Chapter 7 - 7: Jiu Lang

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The Scarlet Solaris Mountain was divided into many levels, with the lower levels, including its base, were locations for its mortal and cultivation clans residences. The location of many members' families. To climb the mountain, only a disciple or elder status was sufficient.

The middle levels were residences of honorary, outer, and inner disciples. Those special honorary, outer, or inner disciples that worked for elders or core disciples were located with them at the upper levels.

Wei Wuyin's residence was located at the upper levels, which had a denser concentration of Essence of Heaven and Earth as well as Scarlet Qi emitted by the mountain itself. It was a prime area for cultivation and held the envy of the other disciples.

In the upper levels was a particular residence in the form of an immortal palace. Unlike Wei Wuyin's residence which was minimalistic and resembled a mortal mansion, this area was beyond luxurious with fountains of fresh water sprinkling about, lush greenery and flowers that emit a heavenly fragrance, and a majestic silver palace that nearly touched the next level.

This was Jiu Lang, one of the nine core disciples of the Scarlet Solaris Sect.

In a particular area, a woman waltz through a beautiful botanical garden that resembled an immortal field. It contained a heavenly aura that made one feel relaxed and at ease. If someone cultivated here, their processing of energies would definitely be sped up.

She wore a green colored robe, with trims of scarlet. Her blonde hair was like a cascading waterfall as it brilliantly flowed towards her back, and her blue eyes held a natural power in them. Her lithe form, impeccable jade countenance, and bountiful breasts would leave many men staring absentmindedly and lose their inhibitions.

This woman caressed the flowers with her delicate and jade fingers. As she did, the elements swirled around her finger. A deep, verdant green qi would flow from her fingers and insert itself into the flowers. They would tremble as if excited by the blessing of an immortal.

Some even experienced a transformation and they bloomed or grew in size. It was miraculously beautiful.

"Lady Jiu! Lady Jiu!" A cute, short young girl cried softly as she raced towards the young woman in the field. Her expression was panicked and filled with urgency. Despite her rush, she ensured that no flowers in the field were damaged by her path.

This girl was named Yu Xiaoxiao. She was the most doted on servant girl of Jiu Lang and had an impressive cultivation at the First Stage of Qi Condensation. Her aura was steady as well, showing her foundation was impeccable.

Jiu Lang turned towards Yu Xiaoxiao and sweetly smiled. "Xiaoxiao, what is so urgent you need to run here?" She could tell that Yu Xiaoxiao had faint sweat on her forehead. As she was sent to watch the Outer Competition, she knew that something amazing had happened.

With grace, she lightly waved her hand and deep, verdant green qi was carried by the air. It washed over Yu Xiaoxiao during her approach. Suddenly, she felt light and relaxed. Her panicked expression was gone and filled with bliss. It was only after a few seconds before she regained herself and was deeply shocked.

"Lady Jiu, you've reached the Elemental Birth Phase?! You've birthed wood qi?!" Her shock was legitimate and appropriate. Typically, out of ten thousand Third Phase experts, only one would birth an advanced elemental qi. Cultivation was simply that difficult.

Even if one cultivated the innate wood essence energy borne from the flowers, grass, trees, and stayed in the forest deeply cultivating for twenty years, the chances of giving birth to wood qi was about two percent.

Even Wei Wuyin needed a material that had existed for a thousand years with constant nourishment of heaven and earth, and only then was it possible for him to give birth to metal qi. The harsher fact was that it wasn't a guarantee to succeed and he had only done so due to his outstanding natural talent.

This was one of the main reasons Elder Ji had decisively expressed his position.

Jiu Lang smiled. "Tell me, why did you need to rush here?" With her cultivation base reaching this extent, she was certain that she was invincible amongst the core disciples, and her position would certainly change.

"Oh, yes, yes." Yu Xiaoxiao finally regained her wit and quickly explained, "The Outer Competition has ended, but an upset happened! Elder Ji had revealed to be a part of that Wei Wuyin's faction and secretly and openly helped his members while attacking ours! Because of him, only one member of our outer member faction made it to top ten!"

"None of Gui Tao's faction members made it."

Her words caused Jiu Lang to start. She couldn't believe what she had just heard. Elder Ji was one of the top three core elders and held an immense amount of personal power, sectoral authority, and influence in the cultivation world. He had lived for over a hundred years and had long since removed himself from the race amongst core disciples, having stayed neutral the entire of last generation and most of this generation of core disciples.

If...how...

Her mind tried to rack up a reasoning, but before she could process that information, Yu Xiaoxiao hit her with more.

"Elder Ji has even stated his stance verbally after the contest! He blatantly cheated, yet he declared it openly." Because he was elected, they couldn't remove him. The fact that he stated his stance was very telling and foreboding.

She didn't believe that Wei Wuyin had won Elder Ji due to his merits or potential, but likely a treasure he obtained during his mission against the Violet Moon Sect. She gritted her pearly white teeth, and her calm demeanor broke down.

She had sent him on that mission to die, and had even inserted a spy, Chu Yan, into helping with the deed. Chu Yan was rather capable, being at the First Stage of Qi Condensation. He had been placed as a spy by her into Wei Wuyin's faction the moment he became a core disciple. The fact that he had

died in the mission and Wei Wuyin had returned had already displeased her greatly.

The worst thing was her second attempt was thwarted as well. She had placed two of her trusted legion of assassin's members to gain entry into Wei Wuyin's residence using that buffoon of a butler and launch an attack. They were both at the Second Stage of Qi Condensation and were the top members of her faction.

They were honorary disciples that she nurtured for deadly purposes since they joined the sect. She even prevented them from rising in status to stealthily kill her targets.

At first, she thought Wei Wuyin had indeed made a breakthrough into the Elemental Birth Phase, and thus had even pushed her plans forward. Now, she realized it was worse.

He had gained the backing of Elder Ji, an upper-tier core elder.

She was fuming in her heart as she connected the deaths of her assassins with Elder Ji. With his influence and cultivation base, learning of those two was easy. If he decided to invest in Wei Wuyin, then it made sense that they were dispatched.

Her jade hands clenched. Yu Xiaoxiao's expression grew concerned and fearful. She knew the implication of this, and it was huge. If Jiu Lang couldn't deal with this, even though she was at the Elemental Birth Phase now, her life wouldn't be easy any longer. She may even be driven to 'his' arms.

Yu Xiaoxiao shivered thinking this.

"Xiaoxiao...tell Elder Mei to have our inner disciples withdraw from the competition." Jiu Lang ordered.

Yu Xiaoxiao started in disbelief. This was an extreme measure, but after a second, she realized it was the only option. If Elder Ji was helping Wei Wuyin's members in the inner competition, then their deaths or injury would be nearly certain. In fact, Tao Gui and Jiu Lang couldn't allow their members to participate.

Of course, not all of them would accept this and those wishing to target the core rank would still enter, but their relationship isn't something that could be

eradicated in a moment. They would be targeted and at a disadvantage during the competition. If they faced life threatening circumstances, they wouldn't be saved. That was devastating.

But to each their own risk. To each their own goal.

Yu Xiaoxiao nodded and ran off. Her qi circulated as great as it could as she dashed away in a hurry.

Jiu Lang stayed silent for a while in thought. Her beautiful face carried an expression of indecision and hatred. After birthing wood qi, she should've been a rising star. While she may still obtain first place in the Core Disciple Competition, with Wei Wuyin's new backing, that would still cause many of her plans to falter. In fact, the rewards may even change.

Her dreams of transforming her Heart of Qi into a Heart of Scarlet Qi was fading.

Unless...

As she thought more on the subject, her eyes grew firm and determined. She walked away from her garden and made her way into her palace. After arriving at her own luxurious room, with a bed fit for a literal queen, and a mirror as clear and large as ten meters, she made her way to the mirror.

Her reflection was perfect. A blonde beauty with great assets and extraordinary talent. She whispered to herself as she stared at the mirror, "I will become great. I will reach the peak of Wu Country. I will become immortal!" Her words carried undoubtable determination and willpower.

She flourished her sleeves, placing her hand lightly on the mirror and sending a strand of qi into it. A change suddenly took place as the mirror started to become translucent, losing its reflecting capabilities as its intrinsic properties shifted.

Soon, it disappeared entirely. What was revealed was dark depths and grey stairs. Its unlit walls felt like a beast's throat as it descended into the unknown. Jiu Lang stepped into this newly created passage and entered. As she stepped completely inside, the mirror was recreated and only the bedroom was reflected.

Jiu Lang descended until she met a wooden door with black steel latches. A torch was lit at the top of the door allowing one to know its direction. With a press, the door opened and revealed a room.

This room had dark grey walls and dimly lit torches. It gave a hollow feeling and felt suffocating, but Jiu Lang had no discomfort. Instead, she walked with a completely calm expression.

Within the room was a vertical table, and on this table was a dark-skinned male. He was strapped by shackles to his four limbs and completely naked. Near his crotch was a metallic contraption like a liquid funnel. It was embedded below his belly button.

A faint golden light was dripping into a porcelain bottle from the funnel. It was filled with his extracted innate yang energies.

Jiu Lang walked over and saw this man, her eyes indifferent to his situation. Instead, she grabbed the porcelain bottle and shook it slightly. She revealed a slight look of disappointment before placing a top on it and replacing it with a new one.

"P-please...k-ki-kill me..." A sudden, hoarse voice shook the quiet atmosphere. The man had a face of agony as he begged, deciding his life wasn't worth living in this state. However, Jiu Lang coldly looked at him and left.

The man wanted to howl, but his voice had long since nearly vanished because of his screams. In fact, he couldn't speak anymore even if he wanted to. He had no energy to do so.

Jiu Lang appeared at another section of the room. This time, a woman was seated in a cross-legged position. Her hands and feet had short nails in them. While she could still move, the nails seemed to be permanently embedded into her skin.

If one looked at her with spiritual sense, they would realize the nails were restricting her qi flow and dispersing her physical energies. She couldn't do much besides meditate in her position. Even crawling would be a struggle that was beyond her current capabilities.

Despite her inherent weakness, her eyes held an apathetic gaze as if all of this was not happening to her. Her eyes, hair, and internal blood was the color of emeralds, dazzling and brilliant. They even glowed in this dimly lit room.

As she looked at Jiu Lang, her eyes held no emotion.

Jiu Lang walked over and looked at this woman. She was beautiful with long, smooth hair and a fascinating countenance that even she found hard to compare to. Despite being in rags and in such a state, she still carried a faint air of nobility and otherworldly prestige.

Her eyes sharply narrowed.

"I must thank you. Because of your Yin Wood Essence Heart Blood, I've birthed wood qi." A cold smile hung at her lips.

The young woman didn't reply, only indifferently looked at Jiu Lang like she was looking at an insignificant bystander.

"Unfortunately, I'll need a little more. With it, I'll be closer to ascending to the next phase and solidify my foundation. May I have some?" Jiu Lang feigned politeness. She had already taken out a rather large syringe. It was about the size of a newborn baby's arm. The needle was long yet exceptionally fine.

With a ruthless thrust, it stabbed into the woman's chest, entering her heart. The woman didn't even blink or shout in pain, her expression the same.

Jiu Lang smiled as she extracted emerald-colored blood. If a drop were to dangle from a finger, the majority of the world would think it was an emerald fashioned in the form of a drop of liquid.

After extracting enough to satisfy her, she smiled, "Thank you." Storing the syringe, she left. As she was about to reach the door, a melodious voice echoed.

"Soon."

Jiu Lang stilled. She didn't bother turning around. She softly snorted and left.