

Refining the Mountains and Rivers

Chapter 17 – Inner Court Disciple

The Eastern Mountain Sect Master raised his hand, “No need for formalities. Ning Ling, you personally experienced the incident in East Stream Town, so can you tell us if Qin Yu was really someone who followed beside the Grandmaster?”

Ning Ling nodded, “I am sure.”

The Eastern Mountain Sect Master and Huang Dangui glanced at each other. Although this situation was strange, with Ning Ling’s testimony, it was likely the boy was telling the truth.

Huang Dangui suddenly said, “Qin Yu, tell me, how did you achieve a Foundation Establishment cultivation in such a short period of time? And, where did you come across your aura concealing technique?”

This was something he only discovered after locking down Qin Yu.

Qin Yu respectfully replied, “Reporting to Grand Martial Uncle, this disciple’s cultivation was bestowed upon me by Grandmaster. He said that I had no talent for cultivation, so he gave me pills to reach Foundation Establishment and would consider this an end to our karma.” Then he glanced at Ning Ling, “As for my aura concealing technique...”

Ning Ling suddenly spoke up, “I asked Grandmaster for a pill and gave an aura restraining pendant as payment for the graciousness. Grandmaster then gave this item to Qin Yu; I saw this occur with my own eyes.”

These were all facts.

The Eastern Mountain Sect Master suddenly said, “Qin Yu, you followed by the Grandmaster’s side for a long time, so you should know who he is...mm, what relationship does he have with Cang Mangzi?”

Qin Yu shook his head, “This disciple didn’t see Grandmaster’s true appearance. He always wore a black robe, but I did hear him speak out loud one time. He said that any past fate had come to an end, and there was no one to blame for what happened. As for what he meant, I have no idea.”

The Eastern Mountain Sect Master looked at Huang Dangui, their hearts shaking. The reputation of East Stream Town's mysterious alchemy Grandmaster had spread out like rolling thunder. Not only did he possess extraordinary alchemy skills, but his hollow Nascent Soul cultivation was amazing. He surely had to have some sort of connection with Cang Mangzi. If he were to seek revenge then the Eastern Mountain Sect might be in trouble, but according to these words, he didn't plan to pursue that path.

This was wonderful!

The Eastern Mountain Sect Master smiled. "Qin Yu, what did the Grandmaster teach you?"

Qin Yu looked down with shame. "Grandmaster taught me some cultivation methods, but I simply wasn't able to understand them at all. Grandmaster also taught me alchemy skills, but I wasn't suited for them. Afterwards, Grandmaster refined many pills for me and said that he wouldn't bother with me anymore once I reached Foundation Establishment."

The Eastern Mountain Sect Master's expression stiffened.

But Huang Dangui didn't hold back. He shouted out loud, "What a waste of such a great stroke of good fortune! The saying is true that rotten wood cannot be turned into a carving!" He waved his hand and tossed out the storage bag. "Since the Grandmaster gave this to you, it's yours. Now take it and run off, lest you continue to dirty my eyes!"

He discovered that there was still a hint of demonic energy that had yet to disperse from the storage bag. It was clear that Qin Yu hadn't lied about its origins. As for the things within, they had already been taken away by the Grandmaster. If it were him, he would have done the same. It would be useless giving away any more treasures to a piece of garbage.

Qin Yu was overjoyed. He picked up the storage bag and bowed repeatedly. He hesitated for a moment and then warily said, "Before Grandmaster left, he told me to look after Cang Mangzi's grave. About this matter..."

The Eastern Mountain Sect Master waved his hand. "Since the Grandmaster ordered you to, then do it."

After leaving the main hall, Qin Yu's steps were light and fast. He was ecstatic, as if a massive stone had been lifted off his heart. In particular, when

he ran into several outer court disciples, they all respectfully bowed to him upon sensing his Foundation Establishment aura. He faced them, showing a proud and calm posture.

“Qin Yu!” Ning Ling fell to the ground, floating down like a fairy.

Qin Yu quickly bowed, “Greetings, Senior-apprentice Sister.”

Ning Ling’s eyes flashed, “You know me?”

Qin Yu praised, “Who in the sect doesn’t know that the most splendid disciple here is the mysterious elder apprentice-sister who rarely reveals herself in public? I certainly was able to guess that. If I offended you before then I ask Senior-apprentice Sister to be open-minded and not haggle over that with someone like me.”

Ning Ling’s gaze was deep as she asked, “Qin Yu, tell me, when the Grandmaster gave up on you, was that related to the Zeng Family?”

Qin Yu shook his head. “No, it was only because my talent was too poor and it didn’t enter into Grandmaster’s eyes. Of course, I am more than satisfied that I was able to reach Foundation Establishment.”

After speaking, he cupped his hands across his chest. “Upon reaching Foundation Establishment, I can become an inner court disciple. There are still many matters I need to deal with, so I will bid my farewells first.”

As Ning Ling looked at his departing back, she frowned.

....

“Sect Master, Grand Martial Uncle, I followed Junior-apprentice Brother Qin Yu outside and he seemed happy and relaxed, without anything wrong with him at all. Afterwards, Senior-apprentice Sister Ning Ling appeared and I didn’t feel right continuing to follow them, so I returned first.” In the main hall, a disciple of the Eastern Mountain Sect calmly and respectfully reported what he saw.

The Eastern Mountain Sect Master waves his hand. “Withdraw.” As the disciple left, he turned and said, “High Master, it seems the events he spoke of were true.”

Huang Dangui hesitated. "Observe him a little longer. Although Ning Ling testified on his behalf and everything can be explained, I am still a little suspicious."

He spoke calmly, without the least bit of his previous anger.

To play good guy and bad guy, this was one of the simplest means of interrogation.

The Eastern Mountain Sect Master nodded. "That is also good. The spell around the forbidden zone has been destroyed, so we have to come up with some method to prevent it being detected by others." He sighed. "Luckily, that mysterious alchemy Grandmaster has no intention of taking my Eastern Mountain Sect as his enemy, otherwise there is no way the furnace down below would have escaped his attention."

Huang Dangui rose up. "I will deal with this matter."

...

In a single day, news of Junior-apprentice Brother's good fortune soon spread throughout the entire Eastern Mountain Sect. It was said that he was simply sitting in his courtyard when pills fell down from the skies, allowing him to easily reach Foundation Establishment. These miraculous events caused the eyes of countless people to turn red with envy.

Qin Yu returned to the living area of the outer court disciples. They gathered around him and he accepted their flattery. Then, beneath the watchful gaze of eyes filled with envy, jealousy, and hate, he casually meandered over to the inner mountain entrance.

There was no strict divide separating the inner and outer sect areas. But, besides for work, outer court disciple could not enter, otherwise they would be captured and punished.

One could obtain an inner court disciple status upon reaching Foundation Establishment. The place Qin Yu was headed to now was the Merit Hall, where he could upgrade his status.

The one managing Merit Hall was a familiar face; he was Elder Li Mu, one of the people who had come to question him the day after Han Dong was murdered in order to find the killer. It was said that he used to be a scholar

who taught students, and one day he managed to stumble across an ancient book from which he learned a cultivation method. From that point on, he stepped onto the road of cultivation and joined the Eastern Mountain Sect.

But he had started too late and had missed the best moments of his life to cultivate. No matter how great Li Mu's talent was, after he reached the eighth level of Foundation Establishment it was difficult for him to go any further. He was stubbornly stranded at this step. In terms of cultivation, besides the Eastern Mountain Sect's two great Golden Core cultivators, he could be considered a top character with a status similar to the Sect Master.

"You've arrived Qin Yu. Come, quickly sit." Li Mu smiled, his tone of voice close and intimate. He waved towards the server disciple to bring forth some good spirit tea. "Taste it. This was picked from an old tea tree in the medicine garden. The Sect Master sees that I have been growing older, so he specially gave this to me."

It was clear that he had long since forgotten about the outer court disciple he saw once before.

Qin Yu revealed a grateful and flattered expression, "Greetings, High Master!"

"No need, no need." Li Mu waved his hand. "Cultivators should only look at cultivation. You and I are both at the Foundation Establishment realm, so privately we can consider each other contemporaries. If you don't mind, you can even call me Old Brother Li."

Qin Yu's face reddened, seeming as if he were incomparably excited. "This...this...this is against the rules. Within the sect, this disciple should call you High Master." The hidden meaning was that after leaving the sect, the two could continue calling each other brothers.

Li Mu's smile grew wider. He clapped his hands and another disciple approached, bringing a wooden plate to the table. "Qin Yu, you are already an inner court disciple so there are things you cannot lack. This is an inner court token, inner court robes, as well as the basic cultivation law formula for inner court disciples. Why don't you take a look?"

Qin Yu expressed his thanks again and again. He picked up the token and rubbed it; this was his identity token that proved he was officially recognized by the sect as an inner court disciple. Later, if he went out adventuring

through the wider world and came across some troubles, taking this token out might save his life.

Seeing that Qin Yu couldn't bear to put it down, Li Mu's eyes flashed and he gently sighed.

Qin Yu looked up, "What is it, High Master?"

These were the words he was waiting for. Li Mu said, "Qin Yu, you should know that I have grown old, and I frequently forget some minor matters within the Merit Hall due to my own absentmindedness. I've been applying to the Sect Master for a storage bag so that I could store items in it, but my requests are never fulfilled. This really gives me a headache.

Qin Yu's complexion changed. He lowered his head.

Seeing Qin Yu remain silent, Li Mu slightly frowned. He coughed and openly said, "Little Brother Qin, Old Brother here knows that you have a storage bag. I have no other meaning, it's just that I think you won't have any use for it temporarily, so how about trading it to me instead? Little Brother Qin has no need to worry; your Old Brother here will give you an absolutely fair price. I have gathered a few dozen spirit stones as well as some pills these past years; I will give them all to you."

As he spoke, he pulled out a scroll from his chest and opened it on the table. With a face full of smiles he said, "Little Brother Qin, this is a map marking all the residences of our Eastern Mountain Sect. I've labeled all the ones that aren't occupied right now. If you take a liking to one, feel free to tell me. And if you cannot decide on one, then simply choose a location and I will send people out to build it there. I guarantee I will have it built in the shortest time possible."

As he finished speaking, he looked at Qin Yu with a wide smile on his face, waiting for an answer.

Qin Yu awkwardly said, "High Master..."

Li Mu interrupted him, "Little Brother Qin, if you think this isn't enough then we can still discuss the issue. For better or worse, I am in charge of managing the Merit Hall, and once we complete this transaction we will be brothers. In the future, Old Brother here will definitely take good care of you."

Of course, the other meaning behind this was that if he refused, then don't blame him for being rude.

Qin Yu said, "High Master, this is something given to me by Grandmaster. It isn't something I can randomly trade away."

Li Mu shook his head, smiling, "What sort of character is the Grandmaster? Since he gave it to you, it is yours. Little Brother Qin can definitely decide what to do with it. Spirit stones, pills, these are all good things that help one's cultivation. When Little Brother reaches Golden Core in the future, are you afraid you won't be able to find another storage bag then?"

Qin Yu clenched his teeth. "High Master, I do not want to trade it away."

Li Mu's complexion paled. "Is Little Brother Qin being serious?"

"Mm, I want to keep it."

Li Mu coldly snorted, rose up, and walked away.

freewebnovel.com

The docile disciple standing on the side that had poured the tea suddenly took out a token from his chest and tossed it on the table. He coldly said, "Third Ward, 29th courtyard."

Qin Yu awkwardly left the Merit Hall. A trace of disdain flashed in his eyes as he walked away. The inner court token, the robes, the law formula, all of those things were distributed by the sect. As for the courtyards, they were also built by the sect. To trade a storage bag for a few dozen spirit stones and pills, wasn't that the same as stealing it away? It was as if they thought he was some gullible little child!

But on the surface, he didn't reveal any hint of his thoughts. He suppressed his anger. He had no choice but to put on an act right now, after all, he still had a little tail following him.

Qin Yu's eyes flitted to the side, and indeed he was still there.

It seemed that the Sect Master and old man Huang still didn't fully believe. Well, if they were able to reach their level, how could they be so easy to deal with? If they trusted others so easily, they would have died countless times

over by now. Then, he needed to keep up this act. He should be able to let out a breath of relief after another period of time.

Qin Yu walked towards his new residence.

Third Ward, 29th courtyard, just by hearing that one could tell it wasn't a good place. He turned left and right, and even though he was mentally prepared for it, he still frowned as he saw his new living space. He inwardly cursed all of Li Mu's ancestors.

The first, second, and third wards were all living areas for inner court disciples. But, the Third Ward was at the end, and the 29th courtyard was at the end of this end. The mountain stones were completely barren. Although it seemed a bit elegant with a waterfall in the back, with the constant rumbling of the water, it wouldn't be long before one's ears were ringing all day long. And in addition to the slightly richer world spiritual strength, this could be called a completely wild and untamed land!

Whatever. In any case, he didn't need to meditate when he cultivated, so if his ears rang he would just let them ring. If he had a chance in the future he would teach this old bastard a lesson.

But in this world, there was no lack of bastards. Just after he saw one, a group of them suddenly appeared in the blink of an eye.