

Tempered Immortal

Associated Names :

百炼成仙

Sedulous Immortal

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Action Adventure Fantasy Martial Arts Shounen Xianxia

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Synopsis 1:

It's basically about a really smart normal guy who doesn't have smart root (what's required to become immortal) trying to become an immortal. It's more about strategies and intelligence than just overpowering the opponents (it still happens sometimes).

Synopsis 2:

幻雨 Magic Rain

A young man with no spiritual roots. A person who is thought of as trash by others. He constantly acquires various items thought of as waste by the cultivation world. No matter if it is garbage pills or useless materials, he will take them all!

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Chapter 1 – Lin Xuan

"Ugh!"

Sighed an average looking boy with a stiff expression, after he failed again. This is the 49th time in the past 3 months that he has ended in failure, even with Lin Xuan's mental fortitude, frustration and despair are beginning to overwhelm him.

A Corner of his mouth showing a trace of a bitter smile, he shook his head and looked at his hand " Is my innate talent really so low?"

Lin Xuan tightly clenched his fists, fingernails cutting into his palm, but he didn't seem to feel the pain.

Lin Xuan who is 17 years old, has been a member of the Whirlwind Cloud Valley Sect for the past three years. Whirlwind Cloud Valley is a small martial sect with nearly a thousand disciples, and Lin Xuan is an Outer Sect Disciple.

It's been three years, and the other apprentice disciples that entered the sect with him had already entered the mid-level of gathering spirit, even a few geniuses had entered the fifth layer, but Lin Xuan is still hovering in the first layer.

Lin Xuan's progress is slow, but not for lack of efforts, in reality he put in the most effort among the outer sect disciples. When the others practiced twice, he practiced three times, and when the others meditated for an hour, Lin Xuan meditated for three hours, but even with all his hard

work, his results are small and was left far behind by the others, which filled Lin Xuan with frustration.

Cultivation is divided into gathering spirit, foundation building, condensed dan, YuanYing, clutch, Dong Xuan, separate spirit, pass the eight disasters, each stage is divided into seven layers, the first two for early-stage, the third and fourth layer being mid-stage, fifth and sixth are considered late-stage, and the seventh layer is considered peak-stage, who are one breakthrough away from the next stage.

Although Immortality is difficult, it is something that can be achieved with time, For example, for the first 2 layers of gathering spirit are simply crossing the threshold, and people with good talent can pass it with the first two months of practice, and if the talent is low three to five months is fine, however this only applies to people who have spiritual roots.

Simply put it is a wasted effort.

and unfortunately, Lin Xuan has no spirit roots.

In the beginning ordinary people like Lin Xuan with no spirit roots, even if they wanted to set foot on the path of cultivation, there would be no sect willing to take them in, but Lin Xuan is a special exception because three years ago he happened to save a Elder who was seriously injured. The Elder in gratitude recommended Lin Xuan to become a disciple of Whirlwind Cloud Valley Sect.

For three years, Lin Xuan practice never slacking off, training in the winter, dog days of summer training, sweating much more than the others, but even so he is left behind by the others.

For those that pursue Immortality, talent in the most important thing, it is something impossible to make up for with efforts alone.

After Washing up, Lin Xuan felt that he had reached the peak of the first layer, the distance to the second layer felt small, but that small gap was like a huge gap to Lin Xuan who had no spiritual root, so he was unable to cross over.

After a long time, Lin Xuan loosened his clenched fist, frustrated, and in an attempt to drive out the depression in his heart, sat down again with his legs crossed and started to examine his body.

The technique he is using is a cultivating skill that allows one to examine their dantian and ki passages.

As he looked into his dantian, he saw nothingness, the only presence is a trace of pale blue gas, which is the spiritual power. But the gas is small, and very thin due to Lin Xuan's low talent.

The so-called cultivator, that goes against heaven's will, but to go against heaven's will one must have the greatest power, you have to go through all kinds of difficulties in order to control the five elements, absorb the world's aura, refining, and finally to use the power for oneself.

This faint trace of spiritual power is the result of Lin Xuan's three years of practice, which is sad amount compared to the other, because of his lack of spiritual root.

His road of cultivation is therefore much more difficult than that of others.

Under the guidance of the soul, threads of spiritual power that were as thin as a hair started to gather together and intertwine, and after time the spiritual power gradually grew to the thickness of a pinky.

Lin Xuan's head was surrounded by a white mist, his whole body soaked in sweat, just gathering the spiritual power requires his best effort. Compared to an average person, he really is walking on thorns.

After gathering a good amount of spiritual power, Lin Xuan does not relax for even a moment, and starts to circulate the spiritual power through his heart, to the dantian and into his meridians as the teachers taught him to do.

For Cultivators, the Dantian is where the spiritual power gathers, after that the Qi is circulated to the eight arteries, and when the spiritual power revolves through the eight arteries from head to toe, it is called a complete cycle.

And for every revolution of the cycle, it will enhance the spiritual power in the body, although the change is small, it will eventually add up, so by doing this several times a day the spiritual power will gradually grow.

Of course, with the thousands of cultivation practices, each skill's complete cycle is not the same, and the effects are also very different.

Complete Cycle, although it is a required practice for all cultivation

paths, it is not an easy thing for those of the outside word, but not very hard either.

Spiritual power does not need to flow through the heart, an Elder said so very clearly, so as long as the requirements are met the spiritual power would flow, but it would flow its own way because each individual had different meridians.

Some people have vigorous meridians that are able to withstand more spiritual power, and also able to withstand faster flows of power, and some other people have weak meridians and their situation would be the exact opposite. In general, the better the roots the stronger the meridians, and vice versa. He had to be careful for each step, because if he increased his speed, not only would he fail to complete the cycle, it would also damage the meridians.

Chapter 2 – Spirit Gathering

Over the past three years, Lin Xuan has suffered a lot of pain as a result of the damage to his meridians as his spiritual energy circulates, the damage also takes a very long time heal, thankfully none of it is permanent, but because he does not have a spiritual root like the average person, he has to diligently cultivate, while all the while trying not to damage his meridians, which raises the difficulty and time consumed to another level.

Lin Xuan Carefully controls the rate of flow of his spiritual power, and thanks to his continuous attempts, he has developed a clear understanding of the endurance of his meridians, and knows how far he can push himself.

Hours later, after he finishes a perfect cycle, the spiritual power flows through the meridians, and returns to his dantian.

After gathering spiritual power in his eyes for a few moments, and Lin Xuan's eyes flashed with a hazy light, and he sees that none of the damage to his meridians is permanent, and will eventually heal, and so long as he can complete a perfect cycle his spiritual force should increase by a little.

Lin Xuan gritted his teeth,since it seemed that he has to cultivate in the inner area.

The inner area of Whirlwind Cloud Valley was a cave that the founder stumbled upon three thousand years ago while searching for treasure, which the elders have long since kept protected.

It was a very strange cave, when entering inside, you become wrapped in illusions, and after a moment it feels though you are falling into hell, but it is an illusion and does not truly harm you, but it makes people feel miserable, however the advantages to cultivating here are also obvious.

Lin Xuan's Spiritual Power is horrible, but because of his strong will, cultivating there will have a multiplying effect.

Because all of the outer disciples were trying to achieve foundation building stage, spirit gathering stage disciples of the lower levels would not risk the mental damage caused by the attacks from the illusions as they would not be able to repair the damage.

Lin Xuan however was left with limited options, either stay stuck at the bottleneck for the first level,or seek an alternative, by creating a breakthrough through cultivating in the inner area. He chose to create a breakthrough.

Opening the heavy school doors, Lin Xuan comes out of the side room. The sky is already black and the stars shined weakly, but he did not intend to rest like the other cultivators.

At the thundercloud valley mountain, Lin Xuan stood at the edge of a cliff that slanted down into a bottomless pit. This is the place to cultivate spirit power, Lin Xuan took a deep breath and walked inside.

The first 100 meters do not have any illusions and the inner power concentrations are the same as the outside world, but Lin Xuan does not dare to be negligent, as he has not heard anything gentle about this

place, but rather many stories that made him fearful.

After walking a few steps, the environment suddenly changed around him and the concentration of inner power became thicker making it a very suitable place for cultivation.

Lin Xuan's face became excited, and after carefully looking around, he discreetly sat down cross-legged to begin cultivating.

Boom!

The Surface area 10 feet around Xuan Lin suddenly erupted in flame, and the temperature suddenly increased….

As this terrifying scene appeared all around him, Lin Xuan raises an eyebrow, and does not panic, turning a blind eye to his surroundings, concentrating on absorbing the spirit power all around him and cultivating he reminded himself that it was all just an illusion, it does not matter.

However, even though he knows it is an illusion, it still feels like a real thing, and after a short time the flames all around him rose to an unbearable temperature, and large drops of sweat started to drip from Lin Xuan's face.

Sure enough, hearing others describe it and experiencing it for yourself are completely different experiences, just listening to the experts who before Lin Xuan achieved foundation building talk about cultivating in the inner area, he did not expect it to be worse than the legends.

Soon the flames began to burn his body, and with the regenerative powers of his first layer of spirit gathering stage, it is not enough to heal the surface, so he can only bite down and endure.

Suppressing the pain he is feeling from the flames and concentrating on gathering spirit power, it is unimaginably difficult, but Lin Xuan's willpower is extraordinary and he forces himself to stay down.

While the flames lick his skin, Lin Xuan's teeth bite down with a snap, leaving the pain behind to become numb, but here the spirit power concentration is really amazing, it's sufficient to allow cultivation to be several times faster than the outside.

Although it is an illusion, to Lin Xuan it truly feels like he is in hell, allowing him to hone his willpower.

Absorbing the spirit power into his body, however is only the first step, and then he has to follow his meridians as he was taught, cultivating them one by one, during which a lot of the power will be lost, usually a finger thick strand of spirit power would ultimately become as thin as a hair after cultivation.

Then that remaining strand of spirit power after passing through the meridians would finally gather in his dantian.

Even if the cultivator has a strong willpower, to complete the whole process inside that fire is impossible, and Lin Xuan after enduring for five minutes, reaches the limit of his endurance, stands up, and with his fastest speed runs out of the range of the illusion.

“Sure enough, its exactly like the legends.” Lin Xuan looked over his body, and found himself without the slightest injury, but he still remembered the pain of the burning fire.

Although it was uncomfortable, it was worth it because the spiritual power there was highly concentrated, and very pure, so that when you practice, the effects on your body is multiplied and you have a higher chance of breaking through the bottleneck.

After resting for a while, Lin Xuan once again re-entered the cave, and the flames erupted all around him again, enduring the pain of being burned, he continued to absorb spirit power.

When he reached the limit of his endurance again, he ran outside to rest for a while, and after his physical strength recovered, he re-entered the fire again.

In this way, Lin Xuan through his willpower again and again went into the inner area to cultivate.

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A few days later, he finally had some growth in his spiritual power, although compared to what he had to suffer, the results are still very small, but compared to cultivating outside, it is very much faster.

At his current rate, if he continues, he should be able to soon enter the second layer of Spirit Gathering.

After silently calculating his practice schedule, Lin Xuan stood up, he had spent four days cultivating in the inner area, and after cultivating in the fire, his body has stretched to the limits. In the coming two days it will be time to receive instruction from his seniors.

In accordance with the rules of Thundercloud Valley, every four days, it will be time for the Spirit Gathering disciples to receive advice from foundation building seniors, the advice usually helps them cultivate faster, and maybe a few detours in cultivation, Lin Xuan naturally will not miss this opportunity.

Following the road, Lin Xuan came out, and not paying attention, bumped into a foundation building senior.

“Senior!”

“You……” The man glanced at Xuan Lin with a surprised face “ You were cultivating in the inner area?”

“Yes, Senior.”

After they went their separate ways, the foundation building senior was in somewhat of a daze, although the illusion will not cause any true damage, the pain you feel is exactly the same as the real thing, and a Spirit Gathering disciple can unexpectedly endure that level of pain, his willpower was truly astonishing.

Cultivation in addition to spiritual roots, also requires one to have a

very strong willpower, it made the senior look at the disciple called Lin Xuan in a new light!

Chapter 3 – Illusionary Torture

The young generation gather in the young hawk pavilion, which stands alone in an area of several thousand square meters. In the lobby many disciples are doing their breathing exercises, at this time in the spacious hall, dozens of disciples of the spirit gathering stage can be seen.

It was still early , so the foundation building seniors responsible for the gathering have not yet come, so the disciples gathered in groups of twos and threes to talks about things of interest.

Lin Xuan quietly sitting cross-legged, taking advantaged of the time

provided to cultivate for a while, hears people come around the corner.

“Oh, isn’t that Brother Lin?”

“I heard you went into closed door practice a while ago, wasn’t it to breakthrough to the second layer?”

Lin Xuanwei’s brows wrinkled with his taunting laughter, while maintaining a unemotional surface. In the eyes of mortals, cultivators are truly extraordinary and immortals, how ever that is only the outside appearance of it, cultivators also need to gain insights profound teachings.

The cultivating world is in reality more cruel than the secular, more realistic, and infinitely more snobbish.

But unlike the secular world, the world of cultivators is based only on strength, and the most powerful stand tall.

Those with the highest cultivation, those with the best skills, those who are truly immortal, are the ones in charge, only they have the right to speak.

Three years, although Lin Xuan's efforts were higher than the others, since he had no spiritual roots he was left far behind by the others and left out in the cold.

"Well, with the spirit roots of a mortal, no matter how hard working he works, cannot be compared with us, rather he's a disgrace to our sect.

" Oh yes, three years and unable to breakthrough into the second layer, truly a waste."

.....

Faced with the ridicule of his brothers, Lin Xuan did not bat an eyelid, and looked the same as usual, after giving those silly guys a cold look, Lin Xuan went over to the side.

Not out of anger, or fear, but because those few shallow guys who ran their tongues were not worth the effort, and were unable to affect his state of mind.

He once again sat down cross-legged, and began to absorb spiritual power again, and after another half hour, a bell rang out, the disciples all stopped what they were doing and talking about, and started to line up, with Lin Xuan all the way in the back.

A middle-aged man walked, who on the surface, looked no more than forty years, but was certainly older than that, as with the higher cultivation levels, life will also be extended as the aging gradually slows down.

“Master!”

All the disciples bowed down, in accordance to the rules of whirlwind cloud valley, they must show respect to the one sent to teach them.

“My name is Zhang Yu, you are to learn to use Spirit Shield.”

Spirit Shield, by definition, is when spiritual power is gathered and distributed over the body surface to form a cloak, it is the most basic of defensive spell.

The Disciples excitedly, started to whisper among themselves.

Except Lin Xuan who was like an ordinary person, the disciples with spirit roots, after cultivating the past three years, had reached the third and fourth layers, and were mid-stage Spirit Gathering disciples, and had earned the right to learn basic spells.

“Such noise, quiet!” After seeing the undisciplined group, Zhang Yu had

an ugly expression.

After seeing their senior angry, the disciples immediately shut their mouths.

Zhang Yu then began to explain in detail how to control the spiritual power, which requires a very high attention to detail.

Lin Xuan listened very carefully, in fact, as he was now recovering, his spirit power was not enough to use spirit shield, but knowing as long as he learns the method to practice the spell, he will be able to remember it in the future and slowly practice.

“Good,now go practice on your own.” After Zhang Yu finished giving instructions, he left the young hawk pavilion, wondering how their practice would go, after seeing various promising disciples.

Lin Xuan also left, heading first for his residence, a small log cabin that has a high spirit power density, but it is a very simple living area for low level disciples.

The house has few pieces of furniture, a table, chair, and a wooden bed, Lin Xuan opened a drawer on the desk, and after taking out a pen and paper, wrote down the cultivation method for the spirit shield he just learned.

This is a habit he has developed over the past three years, since he lacked spirit roots and couldn keep pace with the the others in term of cultivation speed, he always wrote down what he learned everytime one

of his senior's taught something, Lin Xuan has by now recorded many things that he heard but is unable to practice, so he leaving it all for the future by writing it down to prevent himself from forgetting.

After finishing writing, Lin Xuan carefully put away the book, and started to make his way back to the inner area to continue cultivating, and after two days arrived at the training ground.

Even with the increasing spirit power, Lin Xuan stopped there, as he can go no further, since the deeper one goes into the inner area, the more terrifying the illusions.

With the sound of rushing wind, the scene changes, all around is a wide world of ice and snow, the wind cutting into him like ten thousand blades of ice.

The snow is soon covering his ankle, his whole body frozen in just a moment, Lin Xuan watches all this with a cold heart, wondering at the random change in the illusions, first having him bear the pain of fire, and now the endless cold.

After staring blanky for a moment, Lin Xuan sits down cross-legged, and begins absorbing spirit power.

As his body froze, Lin Xuan's hair condensed into icicles, but still he sat motionless in the snow, enduring for more than twenty minutes before he ran out of the illusion to rest, warming his body to increase recovery speed, soon returning to cultivation.

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The cold wind, soon condensed the snow into sharp stakes of ice that flew over to Lin Xuan, and still you can see a rock-still teenager on the floor cultivating.

Two days later, Lin Xuan quickly stood up, hesitating to continue cultivating, as the spirit power here was not pure and enough, to break through he would have to deeper inside. Strengthening his resolve, Lin Xuan turned towards the depths and.....

Chapter 4 – Telekinesis

Blades of Ice stabbing into his body, a cold sweat slowly running down his head, soon to be frozen, Lin Xuan is trying to cultivate while enduring an unbearable level of suffering, unimaginable to ordinary people.

A white light flies across the sky, it is spirit power, but under normal circumstances, it cannot be seen, even high level cultivators

are only able to feel it, only when the spirit power purified to a certain extent does it become visible.

Since Lin Xuan is able to see the spirit power, it has become much easier to absorb, at such a high purity it's also much easier to refine, the only problem is that he has to endure the pain of being stabbed by stakes of ice over and over again.

One after another strands of spirit power is drawn into his body, through the meridian in his heart, into his dantian and finally gathering it into the cluster of spirit power in the center of his dantian.

The next step is to refining, after using spirit sight and looking within Lin Xuan saw that the constantly rotating cluster of spirit power is getting smaller, but the color is getting purer, finally turning into spiritual force, and gathering in his dantian.

Lin Xuan's endurance hits the limit, and he quickly runs out of the range of the illusion, as soon as he escapes the range he falls to the ground, short of breath, unable to move even a single finger.

.....

This cycle is a process that repeats itself for several hours, until it gets dark, and Lin Xuan is mentally exhausted.

“I have just heard, there is a disciple with no spiritual roots cultivating in the inner area.”

“Yes, i heard that teacher’s younger brother Ma personally saw him.”

“Well, he has the will, however the average person will always be doomed to fail as a cultivator, trash will always be trash.”

.....

On the way back, Lin Xuan occasionally heard similar arguments, although they also saw him, those disciples ignored him and continued to look down on him.

Lin Xuan frowned, but did not get angry, because it wont help, in the cultivating world respect is only for the strong, being mad is just a waste of energy, so he simply returned to his rest before continuing to cultivate.

Back home, Lin Xuan opened the drawer and removed the book filled with cultivation methods.

Telekinesis, using spiritual force to take control of a magic object, it is the most basic spell of a cultivator, but also the most important spell,

since magic object is one of the requirements, but of course it is impossible for Lin Xuan to possess one, but he can still practice the spell.

In his mind, Lin Xuan focused his spirit power, and attached it to the object, and willed it to move.

All afternoon, Lin Xuan practiced over and over, he had tried in the past and failed, but after cultivating in the inner area for so many days, his spiritual power has increased, therefore he is trying again.

In a blink of an eye, a few hours pass, staring at the cup in front of him Lin Xuan starts to lose his focus, with sore eyes and a confused heart, he decides to rest for a while, and then continue

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Hard work pays off, suddenly, the cup moves.

Although it was a small movement it did indeed move, after that Lin Xuan did not stop pushing his spiritual power to continue, he continued to practice until it was very late, only then did he rest.

The next day, Lin Xuan headed towards the inner area.

Dense fog, heavy with a ghostly aura, this time the illusion is the netherworld, numerous vicious demons suddenly rush at Lin Xuan, who turns a blind eye.

This difficult area, has even more spirit power than the previous areas, as Lin Xuan continues to go deeper each time, his mental endurance also increases, as does his stamina.

The first time Lin Xuan was only able to spend a few minutes in the terrible illusions, and now even though he is going deeper and deeper and the illusions becoming more powerful, he is able to endure for an hour.

The demons, as well as all kinds of terrifying scenes flash across his mind, wave after wave of negative energies impact upon his body, but Lin Xuan bites down and endures the pain, trying to endure more spirit power.

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Leaving the range of the illusions, Lin Xuan sits cross-legged on the ground, and begins his perfect cycle.

From the dantian, through the meridians to the heart, the back to the dantian again, Xuan Lin did this cycle a total of nine times, even though this cycle leads to a slow growth, it also lays a great burden on the body, most disciples only doing three cycles, Lin Xuan however forces himself to do nine.

It is close to the limits of the human body, the first three were good, fourth and fifth time causing his spiritual passages to leak and bulge, seventh and eighth feels like a knife cutting through his body, the ninth however causes a hellish pain causing big drops of sweat to run down his forehead, after several hours with his uncontrollably trembling with pain

he managed to stubbornly finish, finally achieving his goal.

Finally finishing his Perfect cycle, Lin Xuan once again goes into the illusion.

Like that, he starts once again, Lin Xuan in cultivating in the inner area, enduring a level of pain that even foundation building experts have to work up to, purely with his willpower.

Lin Xuan sitting cross-legged, in a meditative pose, inside his dantian there is a pale blue ball constantly spinning around, it is the collection of spiritual power Lin Xuan has cultivated thus far.

A thread of spiritual power, is constantly being injected into the ball, and after this past month, Lin Xuan feels that his cultivation base has increased considerably, almost to the second layer of spirit gathering stage.

To cultivators, every increase of a realm, the spiritual power transforms, and Lin Xuan is now at the most crucial stage.

Just one step away from the second layer.

Expanding his consciousness into his dantian, Lin Xuan searches for even the tiniest remnants of spiritual power to inject into the sphere, Xuan Lin feeling like a sponge squeezed dry, finally finds a drop of spiritual power and injects it into the ball

snap!.....

The spiritual power ball suddenly begins to change, lightning appearing on the surface, aura beginning to overflow, the sphere is about to collapse.

Lin Xuan did not give up, holding on for as long as possible, but finally reaching his limit, with the sound of breaking glass, the blue ball bursts, spiritual power pours out changing into hair thin threads of spiritual power, spreading out into his dantian.

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Chapter 5 – Purifying Essence Pill

Failure!

.....

Lin Xuan sat silently for a long time, blank faced expressing neither anger nor sadness, his hands clench tightly, nails digging into his palm, lips also bleeding from biting down. After a long silence, Lin Xuan took a deep breath, then sat back down again to once again continue in his efforts.

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Early the next morning,the sun rises, and a new day begins.

The Flying Cloud Palace, a grand and imposing building set in front of the Earth Stadium, one of the most important buildings in the Cloud Valley, as well as one of the most important buildings there. At the start of every month, spirit gathering disciples gather there to receive training. Despite the fact that he spent the whole night cultivating, and slept for less than three hours, Lin Xuan arrives at the Flying Cloud Palace on time in the spacious hall, where hundreds of disciples have already gathered, each one a spirit gathering disciple, each one with a higher cultivation than Lin Xuan, his arrival caused the already gathered disciples to sneer and look down on him.

“Look at that trash, he has no spirit roots, but he’s trying to cultivate.”

“Well, he wont last for much longer, for trash like him to stay here, is just a waste of cultivation medicines.”

“Who said that, i heard that he works very hard, but without any spirit roots, how can he compare to us, staying in the first layer this long.”

“Such arrogance, to think that he can defy the laws of heaven and try to cultivate, it is impossible for mortals.”

.....

Arrogant!. Lin Xuan stares blankly at the other disciples, thinking nothing of their words, taking it as the wild barking of mad dogs, he just quietly stands in the back.

With the ring of a bell, the disciples quickly stopped discussions and lined up, as an old man and a little boy walked into the hall, each of the boy’s hands hold a disk, covered with a red cloth and a refreshing scent coming off of it.

“Elder Ma!” The Disciples yell, while bowing.

“Oho.” The proud old man looks happy, his is not high, he is only at the early foundation building stage, but he was in charge of the Medicinal Hall, so he had a high ranking.

In addition to their talent and efforts, Sprit Medicines are also essential, it can be very important because if enough pills are taken, cultivation speed becomes a lot faster, they can even be considered a shortcut,

however refining them requires a combination of a lot of materials, including some rare plants, so the school can only provide the disciples with a few pills.

According to the rules, Spirit Gathering disciples will receive two Purifying Essence Pills.

Purifying Essence Pills, as the name implies, can cleanse the spirit power in a body, dissolving impurities and giving a little bit of spiritual power, of course, the effects vary depending on the talent of each person, even the spirit power it gives can vary greatly, the pills are also only useful to spirit gathering disciples.

As a fragrant scent spreads across the hall, the disciples thanked the elder, and began to approach in a line to receive the pills from the old man, they all had expressions of joy and happiness on their face.

Lin Xuan's quickly arrives in front of Elder Ma, who after showing an expression of disdain removes the cover from the second disk and throws two pills at Lin Xuan.

"Thank You." Lin Xuan yells, his eyebrows however suddenly jump up, looking at the two pills in his hand, they are..... trash pills?

Cultivators are not all the same, there are scholars, fighters, alchemists, and magic users, among many others, each one requiring vast amounts of knowledge.

For example alchemy, in addition to requiring a variety of precious

materials, you also need extremely hot flames to refine them in a cauldron, with careful amounts over a long period of time, the quality of the materials also affects the success rate of alchemy.

Even experienced master alchemists, often fail while using high-quality materials, creating Trash pills, which have no use.

Trash pills are pills with excessive impurities, and to cultivators not only do they have no benefit, they also damage the body, usually they are thrown away.

Although the Cloud Valley Sect distributes the pills tp the disciples regularly, it is only a small school, and the pills are only low-grade, even low-grade pills are still useful, but this trash pill……

The Elder obviously intended to embarrass him, however Lin Xuan snaps out of his shock, and retains his composure, it is unwise to say anything, as Elder Ma holds a high position and is unwise to offend.

“Elder, are you not wrong, these two pills are trash, how can i take this?”

“What is wrong?” Elder Ma’s disdain for Lin Xuan is clear, a low-level disciple is not worth the effort, he said while raising his nose “What, not satisfied?”

“With your talents, it is a waste to take a normal pill, a trash pill might be just right for you… so be it, i am not unreasonable, just give me a few more bottles.”

Saying that he takes two white bottles from the plate, throwing them at Lin Xuan.

"The other disciples have only two purifying essence pills, i'm giving you two bottles, who else would give such favored treatment to you!"

"Thanks Elder"

Contrary to Elder Ma's expectations, Lin Xuan's resentment disappeared, and backed down after a respectful bow.

"But why?" Elder Ma instead had a look of shock, slumped speechlessly.

Trash pills, simply put, are garbage, taking them is detrimental to cultivators, even if you have two bottles, it just makes it even more worthless, what is Lin Xuan planning……

With that totally unexpected reaction, the elder thought that with how unfair he was treating him, Lin Xuan would shout and yell, showing disrespect to an elder, and he would be able to kick him out of the school.

Its not that Lin Xuan has offended him, and Elder Ma holds no grudges against him, but this old guy is extremely arrogant, and despises mortals with no spiritual roots, he thinks that allowing Lin Xuan to be in the school is a disgrace, so he wants to kick him out.

The plan wasn't perfect , but he was very careful to not break any of the rules of the school. Only lower-level disciples get purifying essence pills, but he replaced Lin Xuan's pills with trash pills, after such unfair

treatment, with Lin Xuan being a teenager with far less experience than him, he expected him to attack, and as long as he did he could remove him from the school.

However, even though Lin Xuan has no spiritual roots, is just an ordinary mortal, his mind is not stupid, he's actually very smart, he always thinks things through before acting, and is not impulsive, he is truly angry at the elder for giving him trash pills, but he is very good at hiding his emotions.

After seeing the look of disdain the elder gave him, Lin Xuan also saw a look of satisfaction, and immediately came to the conclusion that the elder was trying to remove him. Lin Xuan didn't understand why the elder wanted to get rid of him for no reason, as he has never offended him, but that can be investigated later, the most important thing now is not falling into the trap.

Chapter 6 – Mystic Canyon

After leaving the Flying Could palace, after arriving in a deserted area, Lin Xuan's smiling face quickly disappeared, to be replaced with a gloomy look, murderous eyes flashing.

After standing quietly for a moment, Lin Xuan did not speak, but that Elder Ma, has made a deep impression in his heart, he is unable to act now, but in the future when he has the strength……

Lin Xuan soon hears the sound of approaching footsteps, his gloomy expression quickly disappears as

he looks up, looking the same as usual.

"Ha ha, that trash Lin Xuan was given two bottles of trash."

"What's so strange about that, trying to become a cultivator with no spirit roots, and then trying to

take our purifying pills… trash pills for a trash cultivator, isn't that fair?" the other man laughed, talking about Lin Xuan without a care as they pass him.

……

Lin Xuan seemed not to hear them, as looking as calm as usual, he cannot afford to act on impulse, being impulsive is only for fools, since

they dare to insult him he will simply remember and wait.....

The important thing now is to raise his cultivation, as only the strong are important, his original plan was to rely on the effects of the purifying pills to breakthrough the bottleneck of the second layer, but now after silently staring at the two bottles of trash pills in his hand, he turns around and walks out of the valley.

Without the pills, most people with just their own efforts, even if they cultivated in the inner area, would find it hard to breakthrough to the second layer, Lin Xuan after thinking for a while, decided to once again test his luck.

In a place not far from the valley entrance, there is a small canyon with a hidden entrance, that lies long forgotten, Lin Xuan discovered it by accident, and he can be occasionally be found there picking some rare herbs.

Although it is rare, Lin Xuan has been lucky and found some rare thousand year herbs that help promote the cultivation speed.

After careful consideration, he realizes the herbs are his best bet to breakthrough to the second layer of Spirit Gathering as soon as possible, and even if he can't find any herbs, he won't feel too bad, because he doesn't really lose anything since it's just a backup plan, Lin Xuan quickly arrived at the exit of Cloud Valley.

After leaving the sect behind, Lin Xuan didnt go to the canyon right away, rather he aimlessly wandered around, he did it to make sure no one was following him, because that hidden canyon occasionally grew rare

herbs he didn't want anyone taking it away from him.

After wandering around aimlessly for over an hour, and making sure that no one was paying attention to him, he quietly left the road and found a rarely used, winding trail, leading into the secret canyon.

Beautiful, a vibrant meadow filled with flowers, with a fragrant smell spreading into the air, it is truly a beautiful scenery, but Lin Xuan is not here for sightseeing, so he went straight to the center of the canyon, looking to see if he can find any rare herbs.

Some time passes, and still Lin Xuan finds nothing but still he doesn't give up, and keeps searching for even a small plant.

However at this moment, he hears the sound of faint voices, and after a slight pause Lin Xuan quickly jumps into the nearby bushes to hide.

A red light is soon seen approaching from the distance

"Pat, Pat" two people are seen landing in the canyon, in a spot not too far from Lin Xuan.

"Master, we need to see to your injury!" A young woman exclaims with a concerned voice.

Through a gap in the bushes, Lin Xuan sees them wearing the Cloud Valley School uniform, Lin Xuan however did not go out to meet them, deciding to let this scene play out.

"*cough*, im still alive, Yan-er, are we at Cloud Valley yet?" the old man asks weakly, in a somewhat familiar voice, making Lin Xuan wonder who this Elder is.

"Dont worry master, the school gates are only a few miles away, and the enemy does not dare to pursue faster." the young woman states.

"Good, good." The weak voice sounds relieved, and in pain.

"Master, please take a rest!"

With the sound of rustling clothes, the woman leaves leans the wounded old man against a tree and helmed him sit, Because of the angle, Lin Xuan finally gets to see their faces.

"No wonder they sound familiar."

As he watched the old man sitting on the ground, looking about 40 years old, possessing strong features and exuding an aura of power, however at this moment the old man's face is gray, and his chest bloodstained, Lin Xuan goes cold looking at him, making him wonder just what could wound him to that extent.

Zhang Yu, he was the one who just two weeks ago taught the disciples how to use the spirit shield spell, he was already at the Foundation Building mid-stage and was one of the elders of the outer sect.

Lin Xuan also recognized the woman, Zhou Yan, who entered the school just a few years before him, and was considered a genius among the

young generation of disciples, and it would be no surprised if she achieved the foundation building stage in just a few more years.

They were both important figures to the school, but then just what could make them flee like this?

In just a few moment, Lin Xuan came to the conclusion, that although he was curious about what was going it, it would be best if he stayed hidden.

Those two were obviously trying to keep this secret, so if they saw Lin Xuan, they would kill him without hesitation, it is simply the Law of the Jungle, the world of cultivation is cruel to the weak, and Lin Xuan did not want to die just yet.

Faced with a mid-stage foundation building expert, and a peak Spirit gathering disciple, even if they were injured, if they wanted to kill him, it would be like stepping on an ant.

After analyzing their current strength level, Lin Xuan didnt dare to breathe, he just wanted them to quickly leave.

“Hey, you!”

Lin Xuan’s heart stopped, did she discover him?

But without waiting for him to make a move he hears a miserable voice.

“You……you plot against me?” the voice contains both sadness and anger, and his face held a shocked expression “But……Why?”

“Oh, Master, don’t bother struggling since i have this unrefined Jade rope you gave me, you should be aware of its power, and with your present condition, you can only use twenty percent of your spirtual power, struggling will do you no good.

Chapter 7 – Spirit Control

The sudden turn of events leave Lin Xuan in shock,

“ I see…you planned this all out…… looks like i was wrong about you, you want to keep the treasure don’t you?”

“Yes.” Zhou Yan’s charming voice makes Lin Xuan’s blood run cold.

“Master, you were good to me, but treasures like this can arouse jealousy, you should understand that, you should just be grateful that i will leave your body whole.”

Listening to the conversation, Lin Xuan’s curiosity makes him wonder, just what kind of treasure would make a disciple break the taboo of killing your own master, although in his heart he truly wanted to know, he couldn’t afford to act rashly.

The senior sister apprentice was ruthless, with a cultivation far higher than his, Lin Xuan did not want his curiosity to put him into a dangerous situation.

“Ahh!”

As the angry scream rings out, blood sprays everywhere, and Lin Xuan sees through the gap in the bushes that Zhou Yan has pierced her master’s chest, and a faint yellow light has emerged from his body, trying to escape.

“Soul Separation, impossible!” Zhou Yan, who was already prepared stretches out her hands and catches the light.

The light struggles in her hands to no effect, and then begins to cry for mercy: “ Yan-er, will you really kill your master….”

Zhou Yan didn’t hesitate, and with a small amount of force, cursched the little ball of light, causing it to dissipate into the air, Lin Xuan seeing this feels a sudden chill, since surely this senior sister apprentice knows that for all creatures, if the soul is separated from the body and destroyed, they are unable to enter the cycle of rebirth, and forever die. Among cultivators, even when they hold a grudge, the soul is normally not destroyed, but this Zhou Yan, did such a thing to her teacher.

After killing her teacher, Zhou Yan’s appearance returns to normal, and after a while she begins to look around, a short while later her face becomes excited.

“Found it!.”

Ignoring the risk, Lin Xuan’s finally loses to his curiosity, and quietly raises his head, he sees Zhou Yan holding a fist sized box, carved of what seems like fine ebony. Just at that moment a rabbit runs past Lin Xuan’s bush, and it draws Zhou Yan’s attention.

“Who?” Zhou Yan’s face suddenly quickly becomes ugly.

Lin Xuan can only blame his luck!

With his heart thundering, Lin Xuan's face clouded over, as he had just witnessed her killing her master. Lin Xuan didnt bother trying to beg for mercy or try to tick her, he decided to act decisively and quickly ran forward, quickly throwing his right arm, and countless cold lights fly towards her.

With a grunt Zhou Yan quickly forms a red shield around her body after seeing his hands movements, with a small banging noise, a few small ice balls fall to the ground.

Defending against the attack with her shield, a trace of a smile flashes across her face as the power of the earlier attack was weak, she deduces it was an early-level spirit gathering disciple.

After sending his attack, Lin Xuan did not stay to see the result, but rather ran away and began to create a distance between them, as he knew he had no chance of winning.

Thankfully among the few spells he knows, there is a movement skill called the Light-Wind technique, although it only lasts for several short seconds, he managed to run several hundred meters, moreover, Lin Xuan didnt just walk in a straight line, to prevent himself from being found very easily, he took several curved and often hidden paths, and was relying on his familiarity of the terrain to increase how long it would take her to find him, even though she could use spirit sensing to find him, because the road is long and twisting, to find him she would have to spend a lot of energy.

After running ahead for a while, Lin Xuan suddenly stops, and rather

than trying to escape he stops running but rather crouches down and begins to search the ground.

Without a doubt, his actions are very strange, puzzling Zhou Yan who was chasing him, as Lin Xuan had stopped moving.

But apparently, it was all part of his plan, because after searching for a few moments. Lin Xuan softly mutters: “Hmmm.” the frown on his face quickly disappears, replaced by a calm appearance.

with the sound of rushing footsteps, Zhou Yan finally arrives at this location, and as he stands up, Lin Xuan’s face becomes one of panic…but she fails to notice that this time it is fake.

“You wanted to run?” Her mocking voice rings out, looking at Lin Xuan’s appearance, it really was a disciple of the outer sect, but his skills were too weak… Spirit gathering of the second layer, looking at Lin Xuan’s cultivation level, Zhou Yan’s suddenly realized that he is a very easy to kill, and won’t need to expend too much effort.

Seeing the look of contempt in her eyes, Lin Xuan has no anger in his heart, rather because she is looking down on him, she is being careless which raises the success rate of his plan, of course, however Lin Xuan did not reveal his true emotions, but instead gave off a worried look.

“Senior sister apprentice, please…..don’t kill me!”

Begging for mercy in a stammering voice, Lin Xuan showed her a panicked look, his acting was perfect as he slowly began to moved to

steps to the left.

"Hmph, you saw my secret and you want to live?"

Zhou Yan could absolutely be compared to snakes and scorpions, even going as far as killing her master. If she would even go that far, how could he ever expect her to show mercy to a young outer disciple.

Raising her right hand, a small sword quickly cuts across the wind, sending a 10 long flash of light flying towards Lin Xuan.

Seeing the sword energy, Lin Xuan's face quickly becomes serious.

The so-called, spiritual tool, which is a simpler version of a spirit weapon, was designed for low level cultivators to use, but one shouldn't underestimate its power, although it is not great, it is not bad either, it also possesses the ability of letting its wielder use flying techniques.

After getting to the fourth layer of spirit gather stage, you are able of using spirit tools, but that is only in theory, because spirit tools even though they are far weaker than spirit weapons, they are just as rare, and are generally only given to foundation building disciples, the only spirit gathering disciples who may have one are rare and probably inherited it from their clans or are rare geniuses, valued by the school.

Zhou Yan, is one of those geniuses, and even after seeing how low Lin Xuan's cultivation is, she comes at him at full power fully intending to quickly kill him.

Chapter 8 – A Battle of Wits

A killing blow ! Lin Xuan's face darkens, she is even more ruthless than he expected…

Gritting his teeth Lin Xuan faces it head on, and takes a step backwards, barely managing to dodge. Whoosh, the flying sword misses, and hits the cliff wall behind him, the force of the blow causing numerous pieces of gravel to break off from the top.

Zhou Yan is stunned, she could have never imagined such a novice would be able to evade her attack. Lin Xuan didn't run, but instead the instant the attack was over made a move of his own, somehow causing himself to sink into the ground.

Zhou Yan in her anger and surprise, involuntarily started walking forward, as Zhou Yan begins to walk forward slowly trying to figure out what was going on, and on her third step, she hears a loud snap, and a huge net drops down onto her from above.

Zhou Yan however is not surprised by this and tries to control her spirit power to break free from the net, but at that moment the ice ball Lin Xuan shot out sinks into the ground and cuts into a rope hidden at the base of a tree, as soon as the rope broke, Zhou Yan saw two wrist thick bamboo spears flying towards her.

"No……"

As the sound of her screams fade,her face turns pale, as the bamboo

spears tear into her chest, without even having a chance to run, she dies.

With unwilling eyes, her hands tighten on the treasure that she killed her master for, but after two minutes later her soul fades away, soon after Lin Xuan pulls himself out of the hole in the ground, and as he watches her body, he sighs, simply because she underestimated him, she failed to keep her guard up.

Lin Xuan from the moment he was found, had been trying to figure out how to get rid of her, not just blindly trying to escape, as this clan is miles from the school. If he had tried to escape, she would have easily caught up to him and killed him, as her cultivation was higher than his, her speed with the Light-Wind technique would also be incomparable to his.

Tying to escape from troubles, or even begging for mercy, Lin Xuan saw such acts as useless, the only way to survive, is to kill the other person before they kill you, and at first glance that seems like an impossibility for Lin Xuan, as even 100 Lin Xuan's are no match for Zhou Yan.

But she gave him no choice, and so long as they are the enemy anyone can always be outsmarted.

Of course, thats easier said than done, if he were not as level-headed as he was, he would have had no chance to succeed.

To outsmart her, he first had to analyze the situation, as he had fewer skills than her, Lin Xuan's only advantage was that he was familiar with the terrain, in this canyon, because he has been coming here for the past two years, he knows it as if it was his own backyard.

He also knew by watching how Zhou Yan, that she and her master had clearly come down to this canyon by accident, and the terrain was unfamiliar to her.

So from the beginning , Lin Xuan was taking advantage of this, by twisting and turning, leading her straight into a trap. In this valley, other than the occasional rare herbs, there are also several animals that can be found, from rabbits to bears and tigers, Lin Xuan treating the place as his own private domain, occasionally went hunting for his meals.

So to make things easier, he had set some traps at various place, and just now when he stopped, he had been checking the ground to check if the trap was destroyed. Thankfully, luck was on his side this time, and two of the traps were untouched and in good condition.

Meant for hunting different things, one of the traps was a common pit trap made to capture animals that weren't too large, with the top covered in weeds, Lin Xuan used that to fall into the ground.

Lin Xuan had predicted that Zhou Yan, would not hesitate and would attack him right aways so he had stood in front of the pit trap and was ready to dodge her attack.

Zhou Yan wouldn't be expecting anything like that, so he expected she would be shocked, and step forward into his other trap, a trap used to catch large animals, such as tigers and bears, with not only nets, but also bamboo spears, a trap meant to kill rather than capture.

Lin Xuan knew that as long as he could lure her into range, he could activate the trap, and because of its nature as a trap, she would be

caught unaware and it had a high chance of success.

Each step Lin Xuan had taken was calculated, using himself as the bait, and predicting how Zhou Yan would react, it was a very dangerous thing, but Lin Xuan was calmly able to plan out this strategy.

Eventually his plan succeeded, not because his strength was greater than her's, but rather because his mind was greater than his opponents.

This battle, although didn't require him to use much spiritual energy, and didn't even take that long, left Lin Xuan mentally exhausted.

Staring coldly at Zhou Yan's corpse, Lin Xuan walked over and plucked from her hands a green crystal bracelet, not a decorative accessory, but rather a storage bracelet, Lin Xuan quickly sends his consciousness into it, and begins to take out the stuff within.

Clothes, food, cosmetics, Lin Xuan didnt even look twice at that stuff and tossed it to the side.

"Get." Lin Xuan's face lit up, as in his hand he held two translucent stones.

Spirit Stones, over the past three years, Lin Xuan had heard them mentioned countless times, so he knew that they could be directly absorbed into the body, and were ranked according to the amount and purity of the spirit power contained within, divided into low-grade, mid-grade, top grade, peak-grade

To cultivators, Spirit Stones, were one of the most important things, moreover they were treated as currency among cultivators.

Chapter 9 – Treasure

As Lin Xuan happily collected his treasure, he though realized that that vicious senior sister apprentice really was pretty rich. He found six low-grade spirit stones from the storage bracelet, two spirit tools , a few talismans, and a jade bottle.

After opening the bottle, a fragrance drifted out, and inside the bottle laid two white purifying essence pills.

These talismans, refer to spirit seals, which contain specific spells, and when broken can instantly release them, without expending any spirit power, however making them is very difficult as it costs a large amount of spirit power and it is not always successful, making these seals pretty valuable.

Lin Xuan took count, and found the had a total of seven seals with various elements.

Of course, the most valuable thing he got were the spirit tools, as they were valuable to even foundation building experts, spirit tools were truly treasures, and this Zhou Yan even had two of them, one of which was the one she used to kill her master, it appeared to be a jade cord that was about one foot in length, but with the ability to grow freely with the use of spirit power, with the ability to bind the enemy.

In addition, there was also the flying sword, which was a weapon spirit tool, holding the sword appreciatively, Lin Xuan felt unable to put it down as high-grade spirit tools were truly powerful.

Unfortunately for him, cultivation was too low, and he would need to cultivate to the fourth layer of spirit gathering to control spirit tools, Lin Xuan finally put away all the stuff he gained back into the storage bracelet. He feels satisfied, since the rewards he gained was no less than the risk he took.

As he was about to leave he remembered Zhang Yu, who being a foundation building expert, must have even more treasure. As he was turning away, he suddenly froze as his gaze fell onto Zhou Yan's left hand, even in death, her hand was tightly clenched on the small ebony blox.

Zhou Yan, for this treasure, even went as far as to kill her master...just was kind of treasure did it contain?

Pondering for a moment, Lin Xuan walks over and pulls away the small box from her dead hand, rather than opening it immediately, he placed it on the ground and took seven steps away from the box. Grabbing a nearby branch, he carefully opens the lid, Swish, several small arrows shoot out from within the box, moving impossibly fast, if he had opened in his hands, even if his cultivation was high, it would have been hard to escape.

The small arrows after hitting a nearby tree, and within moments the tree began to quickly wither, Lin Xuan looks on upon all this without batting an eyelid, and maintains his usual expression, he expected such a valuable treasure to have some sort of defense.

Even though the lid was now open, still he did not approach the box, but rather he waited for ten minutes, and only after determining that

there was no more danger did he carefully pick up the box. As he looked inside the box, Lin Xuan's face quickly becomes one of shock… inside the box was a fist-sized shell.

Holding the shell in his hand, Lin Xuan hesitated a little, then carefully began to open the shell, as the true treasure should be within.

This was no ordinary shell, as there were no pearls within, and blue light began to spill out from within, those points of light floated up and began to rotate slowly, making them look like the stars in the sky.

Lin Xuan's face wrinkled in a frown, as he could not figure out what they were…so he decided to put it away and study it later, but as he tried to close the shell, the little stars began to spin faster and faster, then as they began to him, he began to feel that they were dangerous and tried to run away, but before he could even get two steps away they lights all converged on his body.

Pain! From head to toe, Lin Xuan felt like every inch of his skin was tearing apart, and fell to the ground, his consciousness gradually fading away and then passing out, as the light fades away the canyon slowly goes back to normal, and nothing out of the ordinary is left other than the passed out boy.

……

Early the next morning, as the sun projected its warmth onto the earth, a low groan was heard as Lin Xuan slowly opened his eyes, looking up into the sky, Lin Xuan remembers that when he became unconscious it was obviously noon… did he sleep all day and night?

Sitting up, he found that the unbearable pain had completely disappeared, but even after sleeping for so long he felt tired.

As he carefully begins to examine his physical condition, he finds that his arms and feet are numb, but nothing else was strange, making the day before seem like a dream…

Lin Xuan sits quietly for a while, then without a word goes over to Zhou Yan's corpse, and with feelings of disgust he tosses her into the previous pit, then he goes over to where Zhang Yu's

corpse was left behind, he gathers up his equipments and his storage belt, and quickly prepares to leave without going over the contents of the belt.

He quickly drags the body over to the pit.

"No matter what you grievances in life, you died as a light, so i hope you don't mind this grave." After the quick prayer, Lin Xuan begins to fill in the pit and begins to carefully removes all traces, after a while he looks it over.

"Good, after this i doubt anyone could find out that two cultivators are buried here."

After all this is done, Lin Xuan no longer delays, and quickly returns to Cloud Valley, and despite everything that has just happened, outwardly he looks the same as always, even on the road back as he was insulted or

greeted by other disciples there was no change in his demeanor.

In this way, Lin Xuan returned to his residence, then quickly began to go around shutting all the doors and windows, and he soons begin to count his treasures after taking out Zhan Yu's storage belt.

Chapter 10 – Blue Lights

Since he was a foundation building expert, Zhang Yu's was sure to have even more treasure…. Lin Xuan found quite a bit of treasure within that storage belt, the first thing he found was 20 low-grade spirit stones, which to him was a huge amount.

Then he found 10 more spirit seal, and surprisingly there were two mid-grade seals, and then there were also the pills, as well as once top-grade spirit stone, which made the always calm Lin Xuan's eyes to fill with surprise because even to a foundation building expert top-grade spirit stones were rare.

After obtaining the treasures of Zhou Yan and Zhang Yu, Lin Xuan's wealth can be said to rival that of any foundation building expert in the valley. In the storage belt, he also found a defensive treasure, which appeared as a small vest, it was woven out of an unknown material but its defense was incomparable, seeing this defensive treasure, Lin Xuan immediately put it on.

After doing all this, Lin Xuan sits cross-legged, and begins to inspect his physical condition, because in comparison to the contents of the belt and bracelet, the real treasure was the ebony box containing the shell, Lin Xuan however did not know what its effect was, but to make Zhou Yan kill her own master, the value became obvious.

The memories from yesterday were still fresh, so he clearly remembered that the blue lights had gone inside his body, after which the shell had withered away, those blue lights were the key to cracking the mystery.

Lin Xuan after looking over his veins and heart, finds no problem, so he decided to handle this like a puzzle, and begins to plan. Firstly, he decides to determine whether the blue lights were harmful or beneficial, so after deciding his course of action Lin Xuan begins to slowly examine his body.

As he does this he finds that there are no obvious changes in his body, so he sends his consciousness into his dantian and his meridians to examine the passageways, however, it was in his dantian that he the change……

After looking into his dantian, he finally finds those blue lights again revolving slowly like stars in the center of his dantian, looking the same as they did when they first came out of the shell.

It is somewhat unexpected, but not unreasonable, so Lin Xuan's surprise quickly fades away and he begins to closely examine the blue lights, and even after examining them for a long time he finds no changes.

Unable to crack the mystery of the lights, Lin Xuan hesitates a it, then decides to try gathering a tiny bit of spirit power into his dantian, and carefully controls it to touch one of the blue lights.

Of Course before doing so, he has made various plans, to prepare for anything that may go wrong, but there was no effect and the thin thread of spirit power went right through the blue light.

How can that be?

Things didn't go how he planned, but Lin Xuan is not a rash person, and he comes to the conclusion that the use of these blue lights is not something he can figure out right away, and will need time to understand.

Most young people would be impetuous, but Lin Xuan in comparison to the others of his age, appears to be very mature, and somewhat experienced.

After failing in his first attempt, Lin Xuan decided to try again later, and after resting for a bit, went to eat food, his first meal since his ordeal the day before.

After his short breach, he once again started to once again research those blue lights, trying everything he can think of to try and get a reaction out of those lights, however the secrets to those lights are not easily found and even after working from morning until it was dark out, he still has made no progress.

Lying in bed, Lin Xuan carefully goes over all the things he tried and after a while he decides that it will take even more time than expected to figure out the secret behind those lights.

Over the next few days, Lin Xuan resumed his normal life, cultivating every day, as he did not want to draw attention, but is secretly always studying the blue lights.

Other than checking his meridian and dantian, Lin Xuan was also carefully take notes of his body condition, in case that there are any changes over time due to the lights, but he was disappointed as there

was no change as usual, and even his cultivation speed was still as slow as ever., Lin Xuan eventually started to think that the lights were much like himself and had no ability.

However Lin Xuan did not truly give up, as these blue lights are definitely a rare treasure, he just lacks the understanding to use them, so continues his slow research.

Eventually rumors started to float around Cloud Valley that Zhang Yu and Zhou Yan were missing, and since Zhou Yan was one of the top three spirit gathering disciples her disappearance gathered a lot of attention, as for Zhang Yu, who was a mid-stage foundation building expert could not be called one of the pillars of the school, but he was still one of the important elders, and for him to disappear with no reason at all, was a worrying matter to the school.

Under the orders of leader Yun He many foundation building and spirit gathering disciples were sent out to try to figure out what happened to those two.

However after seeing the response of the school, Lin Xuan was not worried, and for several days he acted as if none of this concerned him, but he was quietly paying close attention o the matter, as it was obvious from the leader's response that he cared about the life and death of Zhang Yu and Zhou Yan, and mentioned nothing of the shell. That Zhou Yan had dared to kill her teacher to obtain that treasure, proved to him that they had not been sent by the school to retrieve the treasure, and they had gone out in secret to obtain it.

After confirming his suspicions, Lin Xuan relaxed greatly, because as long as Cloud Valley cannot trace the whereabouts of the Shell Treasure,

he had nothing to worry about. As for the corpses, Lin Xuan did not believe that anyone could discover them, and even if someone were to discover them, no one would ever suspect a disciple with no spirit root could kill them.

He was safe.

Chapter 11 – Spirit Beast

Lin Xuan assured that he would not be found out, continued to live his life as before, and soon enough he was proven correct. Although Yun He was furious, he can do nothing but keep searching for Zhang Yu and Zhou Yan,

with no progress.Even some nearby cultivation schools were suspected, and Cloud Valley entered conflicts with a few of them, and as a low level disciple and as long as he kept quiet and cultivated, it all had nothing to do with him.

Overall, There were no changes in Lin Xuan's daily life, as he maintained his usual diligent demeanor, as usual he had little to show for his efforts, the only difference was that he also spent a little time each day to try and examine the blue lights.

In an instant, two weeks go by.

"It seems like i need to go look up some information, i might be able to find a clue from some ancient books." Lin Xuan thought as he lay in bed, the alternative to books was asking one of his seniors, as they were experienced with the outside world, and may have heard some things.

Certainly, this was a possibility, but to Lin Xuan it was a joke, since if he was to ask an Elder and they were to know the truth, what would stop them from killing him for those lights.

Lin Xuan wasn't foolish enough to risk his life.

Besides the point, his questions might reveal his connection to Zhang Yu and Zhou Yan……

Those blue lights were his own secret to keep, and Lin Xuan clearly understood that he should figure it out on his own, and never let others know.

With this decision, Lin Xuan went to bed, deciding to begin searching books the next morning.

……

The next morning Lin Xuan arrived in front of the main hall.

The main hall, built into the mountainside stood magnificently, is one of the core areas of Cloud Valley, as that is where all the books are stored, and was heavily guarded, with three guard posts and 5 guards per post, with various spirit beasts patrolling the areas in between.

The Spirit beasts, were actually just wild monsters, but unlike the ones in the wild, these spirit beasts gained have the power to control spiritual power as a result of how they were raised. As such they were regularly tamed by cultivators as pets. Their strength however is not to be underestimated, as they can cultivate to the same levels as humans, and a spirit beast of the same level is always stronger than a human. Moreover, once they recognize a master, they are highly loyal, and will never betray their master and would even fight to the death. It is because of this that Cloud Valley used many of them as guards.

!!

A roar echoes through the hills, as Lin Xuan gets within two hundred meters of the main hall. As the roar fades away, A red flash of light arrives in front of Lin Xuan, it is a large red tiger, however unlike normal tigers, this one is twice the size, with light flames all over its pure red body, causing the nearby grass to begin to burn.

The imposing manner is definitely that of lions and tigers, its tyrannical aura, making the body run cold.

Fierce Fire Tiger, first-level low-grade Spirit Beast!

Spirit beasts are divided into eight stages corresponding to Spirit Gathering through the Eight Disasters, each level being divided into low-grade, mid-grade, high-grade, and best-grade.

With first level corresponding to spirit gathering stage, second-level being foundation building, and so on……

At the same rank, however, although spirit beasts have more power, they cannot win against cultivators because they do not posses the same level of intelligence.

The Fire Fire Tiger’s body exceeding three meters in length, sending out flames from its whole body, is truly an imposing sight, however Lin Xuan could care less, since it simply had the mind of a domestic animal, and although Lin Xuan was looked down upon by the others in the school, he

was still at the end of the day a legitimate disciple.

Each spirit beast at the school knew the characteristics of all the disciples, as they had the relevant information imprinted into their minds , so that the beasts would be able to distinguish between outsiders and students.

The Fierce Fire tiger, after arriving in front of Lin Xuan roars lowly, however Lin Xuan's appearance is undisturbed, and as the Spirit beat examines Lin Xuan, the hostility in its eyes gradually fades away, quickly replaced by a pleased look, as it recognized Lin Xuan and moves to the side.

Once through the door, Lin Xuan arrives in the hall, Lin Xuan examines the surroundings. The entire library being divided into three levels, the first level containing the most volumes and was open to all students. However most of the books on the first level are merely storybooks, and held little value to cultivators.

The true collection began on the second level, as they contained instructions for Alchemy, skill books, as well as different cultivation methods, and only foundation building experts and higher were allowed to borrow those books.

The defenses on the first level are even more powerful on the second level, as it is guarded by not only an Elder, but also layers upon layers of spirit formations.

As for the third level, that was where the most precious items were kept, they contained the cultivation manuals of each generation of school

head for Cloud Valley, as well as the best training methods they discovered, only those accompanied by the school leader were allowed entrance there, as for the guard for the third layer, it was several high level monsters.

As each disciple was only allowed to borrow up to three books at a time, Lin Xuan began to carefully began to search of information.

As the entire first level occupied several thousand square feet, with rows of bookshelves, neatly organized, Lin Xuan begins on the left side and begins to scan titles.

“Tianshan Nine Yang Jue”, “Unreliable Cloudy Daoist scripture”, “Said that Queen of night Palm”, “Evil spirit Reveres Overlord Fist” ……

A martial arts skill book, it is a common one to cultivators, but to common people who are unable to cultivate , it is a high level skill.

Lin Xuan shakes his head, and moves on to another corner.

“Herb Records,” “13 Master Doctors,” Golden Cut veins of the….”

Book after book, with hundreds of years of lost medical knowledge, but the knowledge contained within was useless to cultivators, as all it taught was how to make low level medicines, to cure various diseases of common people.

Looking at the next title, the corners of Lin Xuan’s mouth reveal a sneer… no wonder these books are open to all disciples, they offer no

value to cultivators, the books were all completely useless. and are simply kept here for appearance sake….

Cultivating truly follows the law of the jungle, to gain power and respect, you must first have the strength to take it, mindful of that point, Lin Xuan renews his determination to cultivate.

Chapter 12 Mysterious Spots of Light

As he was about to leave, Lin Xuan's eyes rest on a black book, the title written in small writing "Records of Wen Lu."

Briefly flipping through it, he quickly finds that it's not a true book, but rather a travel journal of many different people, who wrote down their experiences during their travels.

Seeing a few other similar books, Lin Xuan figures he might get some clues out of them and picks out two more titled, "Kyushu Wonders," and " Divine Spirit Kaidan."

Three books, being the max that low-level disciples can borrow, Lin Xuan goes through the procedures, and quickly heads home with the books, where he sits in his chair and begins studying.

……

As the sun floats across the sky, dyeing everything gold, Lin Xuan repositions to relieve his sore neck, and rubbed his dry eyes, he finally finished reading all three books.

The Journals described, many different places and treasures, however not a single one mentioned the blue lights.

The Three books also spoke of a lot of different stories, telling of

powerful figures from the past , as well as the stories behind various treasures. For example, one story spoke of someone who was poisoned by a heavenly poison, but rather than dying like all the others before him, he ended up gaining benefits from it. The books of spoke of many different treasures, and told of the advantages and disadvantages of them, and went into great detail in that, but they also stated that in the end it all depends on the person's luck.

Lin Xuan however was not worried, because he remembered how Zhou Yan behaved, so he was sure it was a beneficial treasure. His real worry was that he would be unable to figure out how to use those blue lights, and unfortunately they were not mentioned in the three books.

It seems that he will have to rely on his own efforts……

Lin Xuan once again sat down cross-legged, and began trying various different methods, attempting to see if there are any changes. After half an hour, Lin Xuan finally decides o take a chance and begins to gather his spirit power directly onto the blue lights, to begin circulating the lights just like normal spiritual energy.

This process has its own risks, since the blue lights are still a mystery while being attached to his body, they may potentially cause great harm to him.

But nothing ventured nothing gained, if you want benefits, you must take risks, so after closely observing the blue lights throughout his attempts so far, Lin Xuan has decided this may be his only chance.

After a while, beads of sweat start emerging on his forehead, compared

to circulating his spiritual power, circulating the blue lights is much more difficult, but Lin Xuan is no stranger to difficulties, and after a while, the blue lights finally gather together and begin to circulate.

White gas starts to emerge from Lin Xuan's head, it seems that trying to move the lights like spiritual power is very difficult and so the movements of the lights is very jerky, but otherwise he could sense no problems.

Still, he keeps trying.....

"Whats this?" Lin Xuan raises an eyebrow, and his calm face finally slips into a surprised expression, when the points of light flow into the meridians in his hands, they flow out through the palm of his hands, It seems that they don't behave like spirit power, rather than circling back into the dantian, they lights escape the body.

Although it was unexpected, Lin Xuan did not panic and stopped working, slowly opening his eyes, he sees the lights floating in front of his chest, looking the same as they did inside his dantian.

Lin Xuan touches the lights with his hand, but other than feeling a slight warmth nothing happens, and he is unable to re-absorb the them back into his body, and after a little while the lights begin to dim and eventually fade away entirely.

Sitting back down, Lin Xuan looks into his dantian, and finds the points of light in his dantian are still there, but they are now slightly smaller than they originally were.

.....

Lying in bed, Lin Xuan begins to thinking that maybe he wasn't wrong, and that these lights are supposed to be cycled through his meridians just the same as spirit power, but he was still unable to figure out why there were pushed out of from his palms, it seems that he would need to investigate further.

After carefully going over the day's results, Lin Xuan starts to become sleepy, compared to his nine weeks training in the inner area, circulating the blue lights is much more exhausting, and at this rate Lin Xuan felt that he would be unable to keep up.

.....

With the sun coming up, and the rooster's crows fading away, Lin Xuan wakes up refreshed. Rather than going to the pavilion as usual to cultivate, Lin Xuan sits cross-legged on his bed, feeling encouraged by the progress he made the previous night, he prepared to continue experimenting.

Once again Looking into his dantian, Lin Xuan reveals a subtle smile on his lips, as it is exactly as he suspected, the night before when he saw the lights shrink, Lin Xuan had guessed that since the lights had integrated into his body, there should be a method to restore them, otherwise it wouldn't be qualified to be called a treasure by Zhou Yan .Although it was a great risk to take after only a guess, but this morning's discovery, had proven him correct.

Even better than he expected, there were no specific conditions to

restoring the lights, they were truly a part of his body, and like all other parts of the body, they recovered after a good rest.Now he wouldn’t need to worry about using up the lights, and could fully focus on figuring out their use.

Chapter 13 – Trash To Treasure

Over the next few days, Lin Xuan use half of his time to cultivate, and the other half to study the blue lights.

.....

Like this, a week quickly goes by, with Lin Xuan still l unable to find anymore clues, but due to all his practice, he can now control the blue lights a lot easier whenever he circulates them.

.....

“How am i supposed to use this.” Lin Xuan asks himself as he looks at the pill in his hand, after he had been given the trash pills, he hadn’t had a chance to look them over due to everything that had happened.

Unlike the pills given to the other disciples, the trash pills that Lin Xuan received from the elder gave off a truly unpleasant odor.

Trash pills served no purpose to cultivators, but Lin Xuan still did not want to throw them away, since the materials used to create them were considered treasures themselves. However just thinking about it would do no good, so Lin Xuan gives up on the pills for the moment.

“I need to get back to cultivation.”

Over the last few days Lin Xuan has had the blue lights cycle through

his meridians many times, and each time they got to his hand, the blue lights escaped his body through the palms, this was obviously a big clue as to their purpose, so Lin Xuan tries to figure out the next step from there.

He sat down cross-legged, once again gathering the blue lights in his dantian, he then begins to circulate them and the lights proceed as usual, although he has been doing this continuously the speed is still slow and so after a long while the lights finally pass through his meridians, and finally through his skin to break out of his body.

Lin Xuan suddenly gets startled, as the situation now is slightly different than usual, although the blue lights escaped from his body, this time they did not dissipate like the previous times, instead they began to drill down towards the thing in his hand.

.....

The trash pill! he had forgotten to put it away when he began circulating the blue lights, after discovering this, Lin Xuan became even more focused, as a steady stream of blue energy began to flow out from his dantian, although it was unclear why the blue lights are reacting this way to the trash pills, Lin Xuan did not try to stop it because this might finally be the breakthrough he's been waiting for, what's happening now might be the key to cracking the mystery of the blue lights!

While carefully controlling the blue lights with his soul to flow smoothly towards the pill, the scene was also directly transferred to his mind. As he watched some of the lights began to go inside the pill, while some of it was unable to do so, and dissipated.

One minute later....

Two minutes later....

Ten minutes later....

The blue lights in his dantian are now one third of their original size, but at this time Lin Xuan became unable to move them from his dantian no matter how much effort he put in. It seems that this is his limit for his body, at this time a faint fragrance reached his nose.

As he opened his eyes, Lin Xuan saw that originally rusty red trash pill has become pure white. “This is..... low-grade purifying essence pill?”

Although Lin Xuan is considered mature in comparison to the others of his age, at this moment the difference was not seen, as as his face was one of shock. his usual calm demeanor was completely gone.

Even after staring at it for a while, Lin Xuan was still unable to make sense of what he was seeing, however the aroma still wafting up to his nose finally broke him out of his shock, and made him realize that it really was a purifying essence pill.

“Ha Ha.” After all the time and effort Lin Xuan put in, Lin Xuan was finally rewarded with this discovery and could no longer contain his happiness. The trash pill has actually become an immortal pill, It seems that the blue lights are able to turn trash into treasure.

If these lights could turn trash pills into usable immortal pills, then this truly was a treasure worth killing for.

To cultivators, talent was one of the most important things, but with enough pills even the most talentless person with no spiritual roots could become a great master....

Of course, this was just a theory, because even the biggest clans and schools could not afford to consume pills as if they were candy. But if these blue lights really can turn trash pills into treasures, then the situation is no longer the same...

The happiness in Lin Xuan's heart was unimaginable, but he soon smothered hi excitement, and regained his composure, as he began to plan. Although he already expected this treasure to be uncommon, he never would have expected that the effect would be one that goes against the will of heaven, turning trash into treasure. If people were to find out about him possessing it, they would be driven mad with greed, therefore Lin Xuan decided that the most important thing right now was keeping that he possessed these blue lights a secret.

He did not know how Zhou Yan and Zhang Yu got their hands on this treasure, but what he did know was that there was a third party involved, but even so Lin Xuan was not worried, since Zhou Yan and Zhang Yu are dead, and it was impossible for the unknown third party to suspect a low-order disciple like himself.

The thing that reassured him the most was that since others were unable to look into his dantian, unless he drew attention to himself or told anyone no one would ever suspect that he possessed such a treasure. Even if his cultivation became much higher than his peers, as

long as he was careful and hid his cultivation, the chances of his exposure was minimal. As long as no one paid careful attention to him, he would be fine, with this understanding Lin Xuan threw off his worries, and decided that nothing could stop him from taking full advantage of the blue lighs.

For all cultivators, to achieve success in the martial world, they need to meet two conditions, the first being that they need good spiritual roots, in other words sufficient talent, and the second requirement is that they need to be hard working, as those that slack off will never achieve anything. Disregarding the limitations of his body, Lin Xuan was confident in his willpower, as he always made the most efforts.

It was safe to say that in the thundercloud valley, there was no one who could claim to be the most hard working other than Lin Xuan, as most other disciples didn't even dare to step foot into the inner area. His cultivation methods alone show just how hard working he is. The only reason Lin Xuan was still a low-order disciple was because he lacked the talent to proceed any further, as he just an ordinary mortal, with average talent, and thus his cultivation speed was pitifully slow.

However this situation will soon change, since he has finally found a solution to his slow cultivation speed. So long as he has enough immortal pills, even the most ordinary of mortals like himself can one day be a great master, of course immortal pills are not candies, and not even the strongest cultivators can afford to treat them as such.

Chapter 14 – Purifying Pills

The reason no one could afford to treat immortal pills like candy was because to begin with, those with the ability to become an alchemist were rare, and even the best of alchemists fail at least one in ten attempts, resulting in at least one trash pill, which because of its high impurity that ends up damaging the body rather than giving benefits, they are thrown away.

Along with that, the various plants and materials used in creating pills are rare on their own, and taking into account the failure rates, the finished product is obviously very valuable.

It is all these factors in alchemy, that gives many cultivators headaches, especially small schools like the thunder cloud valley, who don't have the resources to call over a skilled alchemist, so of course their failure rate was very high, around fifty percent, because of that, the purifying essence pills which are the easiest pills to make and the most common, the school could still only afford to give two pills to the disciples every month.

Because pills are so hard to obtain, most people are limited to relying only on their own talents to cultivate and are unable to use pills, however the difference between cultivating with pills and without was like the distance between heaven and earth, because with pills spiritual roots don't matter. Understanding all this, Lin Xuan truly understands just how much of a great opportunity this is for him, all because of the treasure hidden in his body, that defies the heavens and turns trash into treasure.

Just using thundercloud valley as an example there are more than three

hundred disciples , and with each person getting two purifying essence pills every month, that totals to more than 600 pills, and then when the failure rate of around 50% is taken into account, there are just as many trash pills as there are completed pills. And because of the nature of trash pills they are usually thrown away as this is the common sense developed by the cultivating world over thousands of years. Although no one really cared or the trash pills, they weren't just thrown away either, they were usually just put away somewhere with no security, So Lin Xuan decided to take advantage of this.

Every month there are about 600 trash pills generated, and if he could get his hands on them, then he could use the blue lights to remove the impurities, which would truly let him treat immortal pills as if they were candy, and even without spiritual roots, his cultivation speed would then become faster than that of the geniuses of his generation. Although his future is now looking very bright, Lin Xuan isn't letting himself get hot-headed, and maintains his cool-headed demeanor even in this situation.

As he began to plan , Lin Xuan decided the first thing to do would be to try to figure out exactly why and how the blue lights turned trash into treasure, he must figure out the conditions required as well as how to control it, he realized that he needed to develop a firm understanding of the full capabilities of the blue lights.

Determining his next step, Lin Xuan pulled the pill closer to his eyes, closely observing it. Color, Fragrance, Size, everything was correct, since other than the time when the elder made things difficult for Lin Xuan, Lin Xuan had been given purifying essence pills before, so he wouldn't make a mistake in identifying one.

Just to be safe however, Lin Xuan pulled out a true purifying essence pill from his storage bracelet, one of the pills that he got from Zhou Yan,

he pulled the two together and took a close look. Compared to an authentic pill, the only difference was that the pill transformed by the blue lights was slightly smaller than the authentic pill. On top of the pill, Lin Xuan also noticed that there was a thin layer of dust, that exuded an unpleasant smell..... impurities? Not one to let such details slide by, Lin Xuan quickly realized the origin of the dust. It seems that the blue lights expelled the impurities from within the trash pill, leaving behind a pill free from any impurities.

Such a thing has long been thought of as impossible, because although removing the impurities sounds easy in theory, in practice it is extremely difficult. Over tens of thousands of years, many large sects and schools have spent a lot of time and resources trying to remove the impurities, but even in all that time not even one was successful.

After failing a countless amount of times, the cultivating world finally gave up a, and reluctantly began to discard the trash pills...after tens of thousands of years, the cultivating world finally decided that removing the impurities from immortal pills was impossible, and now here was Lin Xuan, staring at the small pile of dust that was the impurities.

After a moment of contemplation, Lin Xuan began to understand, that the blue lights after going inside the trash pills, force out the impurities, thus turning trash into treasure. Of course, this is just his guess, and as Lin Xuan has no other way to confirm this theory, he will just have to observe carefully in the future.

After thinking all this, Lin Xuan pours out another trash pill from the jade bottle, Holding it in his hand, he once again sits down cross-legged, and after a short break to recover the blue lights, he once again begins to circulate the lights.

As usual, the process was difficult, but this was nothing to Lin Xuan, and this time when the lights reach his wrist, he focuses his consciousness on the lights to get a closer view so he won't miss a single detail.

Under the effect of his consciousness, the scene in front of Lin Xuan is magnified by several times, showing the scene clearly in his mind. As the lights began to flow out from his hands, some of them began to enter the pill while the rest dissipated into the air. As the lights entered the pill, black powder also began to get pushed out of the pill. At the same time the color of the pill began to get pushed out of the pill, at the same time the color of the pill began to get lighter and lighter, eventually becoming white. Lin Xuan was taking note of all the details, paying close attention to all of the changes occurring on the pill, he was also able to confirm his theory about the impurities getting pushed out.

A the same time he was also paying attention to all the points of light that were not entering the pill, so Lin Xuan decided to try and gather together those wasted blue lights and forced them into the pill, thus increasing the amount of blue lights going inside the pill. The speed at which impurities were getting removed really did increase however, three minutes later.

Bang!... With a loud sound and a flash of light, the pill in his palm exploded. Lin Xuan opened his hand, and moving his hand closer, saw the fragmented pill lying in his hand, issuing the smell of burning paste.

It seems... that the second attempt has ended in failure.

“ It seems that the blue lights can indeed separate the impurities, leaving behind just the pure essence, truly turning trash into treasure.” Lin Xuan said to himself as he sat, calmly going over everything that has just happened. Although this attempt has ended in failure, Lin Xuan is not worried, since his harvest was not small at all, after proving his theory.

Thinking over what had just happened, Lin Xuan reasoned that the reason the process failed the second time was most likely the speed, the pill was unable to contain that many blue lights entering it at that speed. After hypothesizing that, Lin Xuan decided to try and confirm this theory, but before trying he had to once again rest and let the blue lights recover enough to try again.

Chapter 15 – Trial and Error

After resting for one hour, the blue lights were finally restored enough to remove impurities again, so once again sitting down, Lin Xuan began again.

Circulation, Controlling the lights to enter the pill.....

BOOM!

Failure, it looks like it's still flowing too fast, he needs to lower the speed more After resting again, Lin Xuan will try again.

Once again Lin Xuan will try to slow down the flow, step by step, until he found the limit for what the pill could handle without exploding.

This time, however, there was an accident, when the light enters the pill too slow, not only will the purification fail, but rather it would move the impurities closer together, making them denser and inseparable.

It seems that going too slow, will not work either.

Lin Xuan after playing with both ends of sped, begins to consider the situation carefully, this purification process really isn't easy to grasp, going either too fast or too slow will result in failure, the speed must be controlled in a certain range to be successful.

But exactly how fast/slow is this range, only by testing over and over

again can he find out.

Lin Xuan meditates, while resting until the blue lights recover, he once again begins to purify once he's fully rested, working throughout the night, he did not sleep all night, continuously cycling through testing and resting in attempt to master the secrets of the blue lights as soon as possible.

The darkness fades away as the sun rises.

Lin Xuan is holding a pure white immortal pill, after going through the night trying over and over and wasting several trash pills, Lin Xuan finally has a successful purification.

Carefully recalling the moment he found the right amount of speed, Lin Xuan reveals a thoughtful look, and after a short break takes out another trash pill.

However, after a while, he fails again, Shaking his head, Lin Xuan understands that although the required speed is now clear, his control of the blue lights is still insufficient, leaving no other choice but more practice.

But even with the current success rate, the trash pills can be purified at a rate of two in ten, about twenty percent chance, not too low, and because the elder previously tried to embarrass him by giving him a bottle of trash pills he has plenty to spend.

Things could have been a disadvantage, but now with the blue lights

……

There are around one hundred pills in a bottle, and two bottles can give out at least forty purifying essence pills, compared to the original two pills, he has gained twenty times the profit.

Understanding all this, Lin Xuan shows a slight smile, not because he has gained so many pills, but because with the abilities of these blue lights, he finally has hope as a cultivator, with enough drugs, even ordinary people can be successful.

Finally having a basic understanding of the blue lights, Lin Xuan pushes open his window, to a bright sky, and decides it's time to practice, going to the young hawk pavilion, he begins o meditate, even now using the blue lights to do so, not to refine pills, but rather to become more proficient in his control.

Over the next ten days, Lin Xuan painstakingly begins repairs, quietly purifying the trash pills, not only to get the practice needed, but also to try and find other applications of the blue lights.

After all, as a cultivator on the road to immortality, even with no hope, one cannot afford to make any mistakes. After confirming his determination, Lin Xuan began to implement his plan, although the process is hard, it can be said to be feeling the stones, holding the pill, circulating the blue lights, controlling the speed, all while carefully observing all this with his soul.

BOOM!

Failure, Lin Xuan's face sank, in the eyes of others, trash pills are worthless, but to Lin Xuan every single trash pill has the chance to become a usable pill, so every waste is distressing.

But now is the trail stage, so losses are inevitable, and in addition to the consumption of trash pills, the volume of the blue lights also reduces by a lot, forcing Lin Xuan to rest for a while……

In this way, Lin Xuan practiced every day while purifying pills, after two weeks, his practice is finally beginning to show results. Initially, there was only one success for every five or six attempts, but now after all the hard work, the success rate is one in three.

Originally on his first night , he was only able to purify two pills, but now working through the night he was able to get fifty-six low-grade purifying essence pills.

Speed, the success rate has been greatly improved.

Two bottles of trash pills, after the efforts of a full month, his harvest was higher than anticipated, leaving Lin Xuan sixty usable pills.

Sixty pills is definitely a lot of money, as it would take an ordinary disciple thirty months to gather so many pills.

Lin Xuan's net worth now, can be described as very rich, carefully collecting many purifying essence pills is good, the important part however is to keep others from finding out.

With enough pills, then naturally one has to practice hard, after seeing how he is treated by others in thundercloud valley, Lin Xuan has come to understand, that strength is the most important thing required to survive as a cultivator, with enough strength anything can be fair, justice and truth can be considered as mere lip service to the strong.

The most important thing in the end is how much strength one possesses.

And even to cultivators, life is not unlimited, but the higher the skill, the longer the life.

Spirit gathering disciples, have yet to really set foot into the cultivating world, as their lives are barely higher than that of mortals, and it is only at foundation building stage will their life expectancy double to two hundred years, and it would continue to double as one broke through to the next stage, finally leading to immortality if one were to cross the boundary.

Lin Xuan did not believe in reincarnation after death, as he saw it as an illusory hope for the weak. Although he did not have spiritual roots, now that he has the blue lights, Lin Xuan is finally showing some promise.

Lin Xuan produced a detailed training plan.

Using pills as his base, and coordinating it with diligent effort, Every morning Lin Xuan took one purifying essence pill, and began meditating to refine the drug.

Although in the cultivating world, purifying essence pills are not considered as a wondrous medicine, not everybody can be so luxurious as to take several pills every day after all, and under the stimulation of the pills, in just a week Lin Xuan felt the spirit power in his own dantian is reaching the limit, once again approaching the bottleneck that previously caused him so much concern.

Its finally time to achieve the second layer of spirit gathering stage.

Chapter 16 – Medicinal Breakthrough

After cultivating for the past three years, it is the first time that Lin Xuan is able to relax and enjoy cultivation without being met with difficulties at every step of the way.

With the doors and windows closed, Lin Xuan drags over a cushion, and sits down crossed-legged on the ground, pulling out the jade bottle, he pours out nine purifying essence pills.

To Break through this bottleneck, Lin Xuan can be said to take great pains, yesterday he went to the medicinal pavilion, and glanced through some books, since he now does not lack the pills, he wanted to understand if there would be any negative effects from taking too many pills, or if there was a limit to how many can be taken.

A clear understanding of this issue is required otherwise, after eating a lot of pills he might come to regret it. Reading the book on pills, in the first line in the Compounded Drug Illustration" Lin Xuan sees a row of introduction: purifying essence pills, the lowest level of pill, the most common of immortality pills, can increase the amount of spiritual power, if taken every day, no more than nine should be taken.

What would happen after nine, the book did not say, but this description was already sufficient to Lin Xuan.

He just needed to know the maximum dose of immortality pill he could take, Lin Xuan once again poured out the nine pills from the jade bottle, and carefully put them into his mouth, beginning to circulate the spiritual power to attack the second layer.

The drugs quickly spread into the limbs.

Boom!

A boundless heat flows out from his dantian through the various passages through which spirit power passes through, making Lin Xuan feel as if he was in a furnace.

In the blink of an eye, his whole body was wet with sweat, moreover the heat flowing through him was constantly increasing rather than cooling down.

Previously when taking the purifying essence pills, this never happened, was the book wrong , maybe i shouldn't have taken so many at once.

Lin Xuan's mind flashed through several thoughts, but rather than panicking he decided to calmly deal with this unexpected accident.

Although the heat was quickly becoming unbearable, due to Lin Xuan's experience in the inner area it is still not at a level to worry him, gritting his teeth, he ignores the heat, and lets it freely move through his limbs, keeping his focus on his dantian, so long as he maintains his will, there shouldn't be any surprises.

Lin Xuan was eventually proven correct, as after two hours, the heat began to gradually weaken into a warm feeling that was spread all over.

AT the same time, the spiritual power in his dantian began to change, just as if it was absorbing nutrients, it showed boundless growth, looking at just the volume it is twice as large as it was previously

Lin Xuan ability with spiritual power also increased, as previously whenever he circulated through his meridians it was difficult, and the spirit power flowed slowly, but that is no longer the case.

The situation is better than imagined, but Lin Xuan maintains his patience, as after all this time Lin Xuan has entered the most critical phase, Lin Xuan's face quickly becomes motionless, fully focusing on his meditation.

Ping, a light sound rang out, sounding as if something broke, in his dantian all the spiritual power immediately becomes unstable, and do not immediately re stabilize, although it can be said to be a rapid transformation, using the soul it can be observed as a change in the color of the spirit power, from spirit gathering first layer to the second layer, although it only one step, it is a qualitative change.

After breaking through to the second layer, Lin Xuan immediately felt different from his past self, the spiritual power in his dantian has also greatly improved in both quality and quantity.

Although Lin Xuan was happy, his expression was still calm, as the result was entirely within his expectations with the support of so many pills, if he had still been unable to breakthrough it would have been strange.

The results this time proves that using pills can really overcome the

defects of not having spiritual roots, thus boosting Lin Xuan's confidence as a cultivator.

After carefully understanding a bit about the second layer of the spirit gathering stage, and experiencing the differences, Lin Xuan begins to plan for the future, although he has a lot of time, his current cultivation is still far below that of the other disciples, and is imperative that he catch up.

Also, the stuff that he got from Zhou Yan and Zhang Y, were unable to be used below the fourth layer, and could only look at it enviously, so for now the only thing to do is rapidly increas his strength.

Thinking through all this, Lin Xuan sits down cross-legged, ready to inspect his current physical condition, to see if his current situation required any changes to his future training plans.

It was then that Lin Xuan had an unexpected discovery.

Looking at the changes in his dantian, Lin Xuan noticed that the blue lights have also become bigger and brighter along with the spiritual power.How?

Lin Xuan began to wonder if the blue lights will grow along with his cultivation level, with the higher his cultivation the stronger the blue lights.

This inference on the surface may seem strange, but after thinking about it, it is reasonable, and would even solve a problem that Lin Xuan

had been worrying about.

The first of which was the speed, although the blue lights recover after consumption, it will still take some time, and after all is not conductive to purifying a large amount of pills, previously, the blue lights were only able to purify two pills in a row, but now that the blue lights have doubled in size, four in a row should not be a problem.

The second was for the long term, as according to Lin Xuan's guess, since the blue lights can purify purifying essence pills, it should be also be able to purify other types of pills.

Purifying essence pills were the lowest level of pills, and relatively speaking, had few steps to its creation, so its impurities were also less, but the other more advanced pills, had more complicated impurities, and thus would consume even more of the blue lights, if the blue lights had stayed the same size, they might not have been able to support the purification of a single pill.

Lin Xuan has also tested, and found that the purification can not be interrupted, otherwise the result will be failure, although Lin Xuan didn't pay much thought to that problem for now, he never would have expected that the solution would be so easy.

If his guess was correct, then the blue lights will grown along with his spirit power, the more spirit power he posses, the stronger the blue lights.

Of course if this is not the case, then it will take time to confirm that if there was any way to enhance the blue lights and allow them to grow.

Chapter 17 – Pill Upgrade Attempt

Although Lin Xuan has begun to grasp the uses of the blue lights, he was not sure if that was the entirety of it or simply the tip of the iceberg, so Lin Xuan decided to continue his exploration of the blue lights.

Pouring a pull from the jade bottle, not a trash pill, but a purifying essence pill, one of the ones he obtained from Zhou Yan.

Trash pills can be purified, so then can low-grade purifying essence pill be further purified and upgraded?

Lin Xuan decided to give it a try.

To know how the purifying essence pill was ranked, all immortal pills are divided into four grades, being low-grade, mid-grade, high-grade, and top-grade.

Pill grades are mainly used to see the amount of impurities contained within a pill, there are no difference in the materials used, and thus the more impurities it possesses, the more of its essence gets dispersed when it is taken, thus giving worse results.

The high grade immortal pills, are of course the opposite of low grade, having less impurities and thus having more concentrated essence and making the effects it gives even more obvious.

Of course, the higher the grade of the pill, the higher the difficulty in

refining it is.

In general, if the impurity content is more than seventy percent, it is called a trash pill, impurity content of fifty percent is low-grade, thirty percent being mid-grade, twenty percent for high grade, and less than ten percent for top-grade.

Over tens of thousands of years, the cultivation world has been trying to find ways to reduce the impurity percentage of pills, with many master alchemists, intelligent scholars, and various others, not worrying bout labor, have made many attempts, and as a result there are no a variety of different pills, purifying essence pills, foundation establishment pill, Yuan forming pill, Nine Turns pill, etc..... to name a few of the more common ones.

Lin Xuan now wants to try further, since the blue lights are able to turn trash pills into low-grade pill, could it also purify it further?

Theoretically it should be possible, so Lin Xuan sits down cross-legged, holding in his hand a white pill, as the blue lights begin to gather in his dantian.

After a month of practice, especially after breaking through into the second layer, the blue lights when being circulated no longer had any jerky movements.

But Lin Xuan did not relax, as this would be a new attempt, he released his whole consciousness, with the blue lights flowing through his meridians, and all concentrated on the purifying essence pill in his hand.

After entering the second layer of spirit gathering stage, Lin Xuan's calculating ability was doubled, in addition to the growth of spiritual power, his soul was also greatly enhanced, with him being able to know look through into the interior of the pill, where he was only able to look at the surface previously.

With the purifying essence pill magnified by many times in his mind, he is able to now see the traces of black in the pill that originally seemed to be pure white.

What he needs to do now is to remove those useless things.

As the blue lights pass through his skin and into the pill, Lin Xuan who was previously unable to observe any further and could only continue to push the blue lights into the pill, is now able to control the movements of the blue lights inside the pill with his consciousness.

Lin Xuan begins to control the flow rate of the blue lights, while carefully observing.

As he saw the pills enter the pill, inside the flow he saw that white represents the essence and black represents the impurities, when it comes to the pure parts, the blue lights would directly pass through, as if there is nothing there, but when the blue lights encounter impurities, it will begin to push against it slowly, it is during this process that the blue lights expend energy.

Lin Xuan saw that the black impurities are moved forward a short distance every time they come into contact with the blue lights, until it is finally pushed out of the pill, thus reducing the impurity level.

As the purification process continued, Lin Xuan began to nod to himself, as his understanding of the blue lights deepens.

“Since my consciousness can enter inside the pill, then am i able to control it inside the pill as well?” Lin Xuan came up with this idea, since the flow of the lights inside the pill is chaotic, and thus the purification efficiency is not that high, if he could control it the lights and bring them together, then the purification would also become easier.

So Lin Xuan began the attempt.

To control the flow of the blue lights, he must first attach his soul to the lights, and although it is not a difficult technique, the nature of the blue lights made it difficult.

Different from actual objects, the lights have no visible form, although with a high enough cultivation anything can be controlled, Lin Xuan’s cultivation was only on the second layer of Spirit Gathering stage, and even with a stronger soul, it was still not enough.

Although he tried hard, he was still only able to slightly jolt the blue lights.

LIn Xun very wisely decided to give up then, and decided to try again another time once he has a higher cultivation.

Lin Xuan then re-focuses the control on his soul and the flow rate of the blue lights from his body, to continue the purification.

This process was not easy, and he soon encountered a new problem, even though the low-grade pill had a low amount of impurities when compared to trash pill, it still required more of the blue lights to purify.

As time went by, an hour quickly passed, and the blue lights in his dantian have been reduced to one-third of the original size, close to the limit of how many blue lights he can put out.

After the blue lights finally stagnated, the impurities that were left inside the pill returned to their original positions and were left even more tightly bound to the essence.

The pure white pill was also became a pale black color.

Lin Xuan opened his hands, and looked at the ruined pill in his hand, a thoughtful expression on his face, although this time the test was not successful, the gains were not at all small.

First of all, he learned that he could use his soul to enter inside the pill, which allowed him to better understand the purification process, which in turn allows him to better understand the blue lights, thus the benefits are incalculable.

Secondly, after entering inside the pill, the blue lights can still be controlled, the only issue is that his skill is not enough, and so after his soul is strong enough to control the flow inside the pill, the purification efficience will also be higher.

His experience in this is also beginning to accumulate, since in addition to the practice, the results eventually add up, as everytime Lin Xuan does a test, regardless of success or failure, there are still some benfits gained from analysis.

It is due to this additude, coupled with his bold but cautious nature, that allowed Lin Xuan to go from being ignorant of the uses of the blue lights, to where he is now.

Chapter 18 Danxia Mountain

Lin Xuan next began to increase his cultivation, since even though he had the pills to support his cultivation, as long as he worked hard, his results would become even greater.

According to ancient records, even without spiritual roots, as long as there are enough pills as a support, all obstacles can be overcome in cultivating.

After determining this point, Lin Xuan will take as many pills as possible, if it wasn't for the medicine book recording that one cannot take more than nine per day, he really would eat pills just like it was food.

Along with taking the pills, Lin Xuan gradually built up some experience, and decided to not waste any more pills and only take them one at a time, as his supply was limited and the effects were not ideal.

Of course, it truly impacts the bottleneck, but to eat nine all of a sudden is wrong, as although it does not exceed the limit, the results are too fast, and it makes him needlessly suffer, and since it is not easy to absorb so much that fast, the excess energy ends up being wasted.

This is clearly wasteful behavior, and not desirable.

The correct approach would be, to take three pills at a time at set intervals, and then slowly absorb the power for the best results.

Other low-level disciples, only have two pills every month, and Lin Xuan ate nine a day, at such near-luxury usage of pills, Lin Xuan's progress was very fast, although it cannot be said to be the best, the daily growth of his spiritual power was obvious.

But good things dont last forever, and after one week, Lin Xuan ran out of purifying essence pills, although there are two left in his hand, they are higher quality pills that he got from Zhang Yu.

It is a red, pea-sized pill, a pill Lin Xuan had never seen before, of course, he would not ask any Elder,s as that would be tantamount to a confession and would show his connection with the disappearance of Zhang Yu and Zhou Yan, and so Lin Xuan quietly went out and began to once again review books, to find out which pill it is that he possessed.

Foundation Establishment Pills!

Useless to spirit gathering disciple, but valuable to a foundation building as it increased their cultivation.

Understanding what the pill was, Lin Xuan carefully hid them, putting them away for the future, the important thing now is to get more purifying essence pills, so as to continue cultivating.

Lin Xuan's goal is the so called Trash pills.

to the west of thundercloud valley, there is a hill, but the whole of it was hollowed out, creating a huge tunnel heading deep underground,

eventually leading to an active volcano mouth, with its fires used for the purpose of alchemy.

Danxia Mountain, the most important forbidden area of thundercloud valley, its importance being far above any other area.

With constant patrols, and under the supervision of many experts, all intruders are dealt with swiftly, leaving no survivors.

Even the disciples are not allowed to freely enter, and in front of the Mt Danxia there is a building which is in charge of receiving any visitors.

Before coming, Lin Xuan found out all about the circumstances, and confidently enters the building.

In Front of him lies a very spacious area, hundreds of square meters wide, with a bored boy sitting there, who quickly jumps up as he saw Lin Xuan enter, greeting him respectfully, he explained

“Immortal?”

The boy is not a thundercloud valley cultivator, but rather an outer disciple.

The so called outer disciples, are those without spiritual roots, but are talented in other areas, and so they are useful to thundercloud valley, although they are not taught any cultivation exercises, they gain other benefits.

In the eyes of mortals, cultivators are like gods to them, and even for the outer disciples, the registration is not easy, and their academic abilities were valued.

For example, the boy, although he had no spiritual roots, he was born to a family of doctors, and so he familiar with a variety of herbs and medicines, making him qualified to work in Danxia Mountain.

The school bases everything on performance, so and will reward the best with precious medical books or martial skill books, similar to the ones Lin Xuan saw in the Book Pavilion.

Although these books are not worth mentioning to cultivators and were like garbage, but where normal people are concerned, they are considered as supreme treasures. Outer Disciples after studying for eight to ten years, can then return to the normal world, and in that time they will be considered as genius doctors and masters of martial arts.

The benefits are self-evident.

Lin Xuan, although he had no spiritual roots, was received as a formal disciple, something very few outer disciples can manage, all because he managed to save a powerful and influential elder.

Although the boy did not know Lin Xuan, by just looking at his clothing, he can tell that he is a thundercloud valley cultivator, so of course, he has no intention of mocking him.

Faced with his respectful attitude, Lin Xuan's heart held a bit of emotion, as over the past three years, he suffered the ridicules of others and was looked down upon due to his slow cultivation speed.

Although outer disciples have no spiritual roots, they are extraordinary ordinary people, but in the end they are still ordinary people and view cultivators the same as gods.

Standing high above, Lin Xuan enjoyed the feeling o being respected, which goes reaffirms Lin Xuan's determination as a cultivator, but without batting an eyelid Lin Xuan speaks.

" Is the steward in?"

The boy listened, and nodded his head " The steward is in, Immortal, please take a seat, I'll go report it."

The boy respectfully takes Lin Xuan to a seat next to a painting, and offers tea, Lin Xuan ponders how to proceed as he drinks his tea, and soon a man walks into the room.

Gray-haired, over seventy years old, this is also a low-level cultivator, a man who had difficulty cultivating, since just having spiritual roots was not enough, as the spiritual roots also come in different quality, as well as requiring diligent work from the cultivator.

Just looking at thundercloud valley, ninety percent of the disciples, are still low-level cultivators, just like the old man in front of him, seventy-three years old, but still only at the late stage of spirit gathering, still a

distance away from the peak, and even further from foundation building, it can be said he has reached the end of the line as a cultivator, so he simply no longer cultivates, and asked for a quiet place to work and relax in his comfortable old age.

Volume 2 Chapter 1 – Play the role of the pig to eat the tiger

“Young fellow, why do you come here?” Seeing that the youth in front of him seems to be ordinary, and only at the second layer of spirit gathering, the old man stares at Lin Xuan coldly.

Lin Xuan clearly saw his expression, and sneered at the old man in his heart, but none of this showed on hi face as he responded.

“Fellow apprentice, this junior brother came here to ask for a relaxed assignment.”

As mentioned previously, cultivation is difficult, and even with spiritual roots, most people have limited success in their lives as cultivators.

Some people end up discouraged, and rather than enduring the hardships, decide to stop cultivating, and take on some light jobs in the sect, to live out the rest of their lives relaxedly

The old man in front of Lin Xuan is one such person.

After hearing Lin Xuan’s words, the old man assumed that Lin Xuan was also such a person, reacting just as Lin Xuan wanted him to.

“Thats not so easy to do.” The old man began to frown, revealing an awkward appearance. “ Although there are a lot of odd jobs that need to be done around Mt.Danxia, at this moment all the positions are filled, we are not short of manpower, fellow disciple i want to help you, but i am

unable.”

“This old fox.” Lin Xuan swore in his heart, he always planned out his actions before hand, how could he not know that a little while ago that there was a vacant seat for a steward at Danxia Mountain, this old man was intentionally being difficult.

However, this situation was also expected by Lin Xuan, in fact the cultivating world is very [****] , and as such the old man was trying to get the most out of the situation, demanding a bribe, something Lin Xuan had already planned for.

Sneering in his heart, the old man’s intentions were very clearly to Lin Xuan, but on the surface, Lin Xuan still put out the appearance of a rookie, stammering “This junior ……. please help this junior who has no spiritual roots, cultivation is too difficult for me, and i wish to live carefree as a steward, if senior brother is willing to help, this junior will follow you.”

Having said that, Lin Xuan pulled out a package, covered in layers of cloth, quietly placing it in front of the old man.

“What’s this?” Lin Xuan deliberately acted in a secretive manner, successfully attracting the old man’s attention.

As the layers of cloth were pulled away, it slowly revealed a sparkling object, although it was just a glimpse and did not directly see the whole object, the old man still could not help but lean forward “Spirit Stone?”

Spirit Stones are stones that are rich in spirit power, and whether it is for cultivation or for trading, the role of spirit stones is irreplaceable, as it is treated as the main currency to cultivators.

However, the number of spirit stones mined is low, and those that mine them are the seniors, only allowing experts to posses them, so low-level cultivators might occasionally see one, but never possess any.

This boy at the second layer of spirit gathering, actually has something like his.

However, after all the cloth was removed, the old man's expression became somewhat disappointed, as the package was filled not with a spirit stone, but spirit stone fragments, about half of a full spirit stone.

When spirit stones get fragmented, they lose a lot of spirit power, and the fragments here was worth less than half, after deducting the missing fragments as well as the lost spirit power, the amount contained in the package was only about one quarter of a full spirit stone.

"This is the spirit stone fragments this junior accidentally obtained, if senior is willing to grant me the post of steward, this junior will give it to you."

The old man suddenly perked up, although it was only spirit stone fragments, he was only a low-level cultivator, and it can be said that this was a great amount of wealth, even after all his work, he has little to show for it, so this was a great thing for him.

After pretending to think about it for a moment “well, since junior is so sincere, how could i not show my benevolence?”

After pulling out a book: “Trash pill storage department lacks a steward, you can go work there.”

Lin Xuan was overjoyed, everything really went according to plan, although on the surface he only shows an awkward expression: “Trash pill storage, this…”

Seeing the awkward expression on his face, the old man hastily replied: “Junior, you do not know that being steward of the trash pill storage is the easiest job, there is nothing for you to do other than sit back and relax, this senior is really looking out for you giving you this job.”

“Really?” Although Lin Xuan knew it to be a lie, he still played into the old man’s hands, and he certainly won’t argue, as he pretended to believe him: “I see, i always thought trash pills were a waste, well, thank you senior.”

“Oh, don’t mention it, junior.” As the old man gathered up the spirit stone fragments into his arms he called out to the boy: “This junior is now the steward of the trash pill storage, go take him to receive his number and identification plate.”

“Yes!”

As Lin Xuan walked away, the old man had a proud smile on his face: “Working in the trash pill storage is really easy, and has no requirements,

such a trash disciple can also obtain spirit stone fragments, without even understanding anything…”

The old man thinking of his earnings, did not realize that the one who benefited the most was actually Lin Xuan, as everything that happened was within his calculations.

Every word, every expression, was planned out beforehand.

Before coming, he had done his research and found out that this Senior named Feng was a greedy old man that would do nothing if it didn’t benefit him.

Originally, he had nothing to give him, other than the spirit stone he from Zhou yan and Zhang Yu, and although Lin Xuan can be considered to be very rich, since he was a spirit gathering disciple, having a spirit stone would be too conspicuous, and if he was not careful it would attract the attention of others, So Lin Xuan deliberately smashed a spirit stone into fragments, then gave the old man half of the fragments, saving the rest for later.

Secondly, by pretending he knew nothing, the steward was able to take his bribe, and by pretending to be honest he managed to give the worst job over to Lin Xuan thinking he was a fool.

After his investigation Lin Xuan knew that because no one needs trash pills, the storage room was almost never used, and no one ever visited it, and so it was considered the worst job available.

Feng being the unscrupulous person he was will certainly lie to Lin Xuan and send him there.

It also works out for Lin Xuan, because he is being “cheated” to go there, rather than asking for the position, so no one would think twice of him working there.

Feng thought he was being very smart, but he never realized that he was being led by the nose by Lin Xuan, who ended up the biggest beneficiary of this situation.

Volume 2 Chapter 2 – Trash Pill Storage

"Here is your token" a forty year old low-order cultivator tossed the identification plate into Lin Xuan's hands, with an indifferent expression, after judging Lin Xuan to be no more than an average youth, getting sent to the trash pill storage, a position usually given to the most useless people, as it had no requirements, this youth was obviously tricked by old Feng.

Looking at Lin Xuan with contempt in his eyes, he failed to notice that Lin Xuan was happy about his posting, who was as usual pretending to appear unaware.

"Thank you, Senior"

Lin Xuan looked at the plate in his hand, a half-palm sized piece of jade with the words "trash pill storage" written on one side, and the word "Steward" on the other side.

This was to represent his position, and with it even someone could get into the first area of Danxia Mountain unimpeded with free access to the trash pill room.

Danxia Mountain as a key area of the school was divided into three areas.

The first area containing the trash pill storage, wherein the second area contains the fire alchemy rooms, and the third area being the storage area for all finished products as well as all sorts of immortal herbs

making it one of the most important locations, guarded by various barriers and numerous checkpoints.

The first area, other than containing the trash pill storage area, also contains a reception room, as well as various areas for the few odd jobs required, and since Lin Xuan now possessed the identification plate, he could freely move throughout the first area.

Holding the Plate, Lin Xuan's heart is filled with joy, but he still maintains a dull expression maintaining his facade.

And as he came out of the room, he went towards the first area holding the identification plate, and the demeanor of a rookie who understood nothing of the world fell away without a trade. Replaced with a mature youth who held a slight mocking smile.

Steward of Trash Pill Storage, finally achieving his goal with only having to pay the price of spirit stone fragments, Lin Xuan was finally able to secure a source of trash pills without causing any undue attention on himself.

After a moment of silent contemplation, Lin Xuan took out a jade plate, injecting his soul into it, it was a map of the first area of Danxia Mountain, with explanations of the different areas as pointing out the forbidden areas.

After taking a look around, Lin Xuan found the entrance to the storage area and walked past it.

“Trash pills truly are considered worthless by others, the other areas actually have a few barriers and protections, but this storage area actually has nothing.” As Lin Xuan walked around, the more he understood just how little regard other cultivators held for trash pills, which in the end just made things more convenient for him.

After walking around for about a quarter of an hour, Lin Xuan finally came to the trash storage room, which stood in a courtyard among some other buildings, the biggest one being the storehouse, followed by the living areas for the steward and his assistant.

It was a relatively simple layout, and possessed a lot of space, After taking a look around Lin Xuan nodded with satisfaction and directly entered the courtyard.

In the courtyard there were several fifteen-year old boys sitting around bored, as apparently there had been no new people for a long time, so as they saw Lin Xuan coming they were surprised, but after noticing that he wore the clothing of a cultivator the immediately showed respectful expressions, and ran up to offer greetings, with the one who seemed the oldest stepping forward.

“Immortal, what makes you come here?”

“What is your name?”

“This junior is called Zhao Ming.” As the youth quickly responds to Lin Xuan, it is apparent that he is offering his utmost respect.

The other boy doesn't even dare to be disrespectful, making Lin Xuan understand fully the feeling of superiority, the feeling of being a cut above everyone else, since in the eyes of normal people cultivators are superior beings, a truly comfortable feeling.

"You are the leader?"

"Yes!" Zhao answered truthfully. "This junior here is the proxy steward."

"proxy steward?" Lin Xuan is startled, since even though it is an odd job, the duties of the steward has always been meant for a cultivator, not an outer disciple...

Thinking that Lin Xuan was doubting him, Zhao smiles: "Upon my honor, immortal, Trash pill storage stewardship has been vacant for a long time, and because there have been no new steward assigned this junior has been looking after things.

"I see." Lin Xuan nodded that he understood, no one has any use for trash pills, so new stewards are reluctant to come.

Wanting to clear the air, Lin Xuan speaks out: "I was sent to be the new steward, so the Trash room is now under my control, Here is the Identification plate, take a look.

Zhao is not stupid, and had apparently already suspected as much, so he showed no surprise at Lin Xuan's statement, and quickly took the plate and looked it over, after which he quickly saluted: "This junior greets the steward"

“You” Lin Xuan waves his hand: “Get to your duties.”

After dismissing the other boys, Zhao was left alone: “You, show me around.”

as this was his new territory, Lin Xuan of course needs to know everything about it, Zhao nodded respectfully and began to lead the way.

“Squeeeek!”

As the heavy door slowly opened, a thick layer of dust fell onto Lin Xuan’s head, making him somewhat startled, as he looked at the mess in front of him. Piles and piles of bottles and jars lying about.

“This……this is the trash pill storage area?”

“Yes,Immortal”

“How long has it been since someone cleaned, or even organized, with such a chaotic area how do you even know how many trash pills there are?”

“This……” Zhao had no response, after a moment of silence he cautiously responded: “Immortal, it is not clear exactly how many trash pills there are here, as the accounts table has not been filled out for a long time.”

“How is that possible, weren’t you the steward here, how could you not know anything?”

“Immortal this is……” as looked at Lin Xuan’s expression he carefully measured his words: “Since the impurity level in trash pills is so high that cultivators are unable to use it, making it harmful to the body, even though they are not thrown away, no one really cares about the trash pills, so it eventually became a chaotic heap that is naturally very messy, since no one would bother to account for something that no one cares for, it has always been like this, Thundercloud valley has thousands of years of history, and the Trash pill storage has always been like this, since the trash pills are useless, who cares how many there are.

Volume 2 Chapter 3 – Symbol Array

"Ah." Lin Xuan nodded in response to Zhao's explanation, greatly relieving Zhao, as Lin Xuan was showing no emotions on his face.

Becoming the steward of the trash room storage was only the first step in Lin Xuan's plan, his next step had been to himself familiar with the accounting of the pills, so as to be able to do false accounts allowing him to steal pills as he needed, although he would have to be careful to not draw attention.

But Lin Xuan never expected things to be so easy.

Since the trash room storage was so disorganized, the accounts had never been done, and in other words, no one really knows how many trash pills there, allowing Lin Xuan to take them as needed without worry of being caught.

Thinking of this, Lin Xuan finally showed a slight smile.

"Immortal, Immortal" (Zhao)

Hearing a voice reaching his years, Lin Xuan turned to find Zhao looking at him in a confused expression, Lin Xuan immediately put on a cold expression, giving himself a warning in his heart: " I must not be so careless in the future, no matter what emotion im feeling it should never be visible to others."

“Nothing.” (Lin Xuan)

Lin Xuan shook his head: “I just did not expect being the steward of the trash pill storage would be so easy, It seems that i will have alot of free time.”

“Oh, rest assured that there is nothing to do in the trash pill room, and the few jobs that we do have to do are very small.” Zhao replied in a pleasant manner, trying to curry favor with his new boss.

Lin Xuan nodded noncommittally, letting him lead the way to visit a few other places, and then picked a relatively secluded house as his own living area.

Lin Xuan then had Zhao summon all the other boys, so he could announce some rules, the first being that without his permission, no one is allowed to approach within ten steps of his home.

On this point, the boys didn’t have the slightest objection, since even though they were outer disciples, they still understood that everyone has their own secrets methods, and in the case of cultivators they would kill to keep their secrets.

While low-level cultivators did not usually have the power to have such secret methods, these boys were living in a secluded area.

Therefore, this statement made by Lin Xuan seemed very normal, leaving no doubts behind.

After the boys had dispersed, Lin Xuan entered his room, to lie in bed for a while, while at the same time thinking over the day's events as he meditated.

So far everything is going well, and there is no longer a problem in getting trash pills.

At different levels of cultivation, the required pills vary, as purifying essence pills are only useful for the spirit gathering stage, and were useless to those who are at foundation building stage or higher.

Those higher grade pills although they have higher failure rates, there are still some uses for the trash pills created at higher levels.

At any rate, at least for his cultivation level, Lin Xuan has an assured source of pills, as for the foundation building stage, he is far from achieving that so there are no worries for now.

After considering things again, Lin Xuan sat up in bed, and after a moment took out a bracelet.

It was Zhou Yan's storage bracelet, which now belong to Lin Xuan, of course he wouldn't be so silly as to put it on his wrist, as that would be tantamount to admitting his involvement in the disappearance of those two.

After a quick search, Lin Xuan pulled out a talisman from the bracelet.

A symbol array!

Cultivation takes various forms, and along with the various energy techniques, there are also symbol arrays, which various sects use as a defensive method as well as for combat.

In general, a good array requires the use of formation flags, formation circle, as well as a few other components, but those items are impossible for Lin Xuan to posses, as his cultivation is far too low, let alone that he would still be unable to use them.

So what should a low-level cultivator do, are there any alternatives…?

Of course.

Similar to how there are magic weapons to allow for high level spirit techniques, there are also tools for allowing one to use formation arrays, that is the symbol array.

Of course, the formations available through symbol arrays are the easiest and most simple of formations with limited power, but the benefits are still obvious as they are extremely easy to use and consume very little spiritual power, to the point that even low-level cultivators can easily use it.

He hesitated a bit, after all formation flags, and circles as well as the other tools used in different formations can be recycled as long as they are not damaged, but the symbol array that he got from Zhang Yu, he only had twenty, and they were all single use.

After thinking that, Lin Xuan still decides to use it and circulates spirit power from his dantian, while saying the incantation causing the talisman to light up and burn.

Lin Xuan waves his hand, causing some wind, and shouted: “Form!”

Suddenly, the spiritual power began to form up into a formation array taking the shape of the yin yang cycle, which rapidly soared up and out of the house until it enveloped the whole house.

After a few moments, the rays of light began to dim, until eventually it completely faded from sight, restoring the area to its previous appearance, but this was only an illusion, as there is now a formation array around the house and if someone were to trespass they would activate it.

After all, Lin Xuan had many secrets, and if someone were to see him purifying immortal pills it would be trouble, even though the boys who work for him would not dare go against steward, it would be best not to take any risks, and so to prevent any accidents, Lin Xuan decided to use a formation array.

This formation is a simple one and makes normal people unable to enter, and so long as a cultivator does not come, this formation should be foolproof.

Volume 2 Chapter 4 Closed Door Cultivation

After doing all this, Lin Xuan decided to lie down and rest, in an attempt to recover his energy before he began cultivating.

Over the next few days, Lin Xuan did not immediately begin converting trash pills, but rather decided to quietly observe things for several days, although Zhao had clearly described the situation here, he wasn't convinced that he was told the truth, even if there was no point for Zhao to lie to him, better safe than sorry.

Moreover, the people who usually apply to be stewards are the laziest cultivators, those unwilling to work hard, so then if someone who was known for his hard work were to come work here, wouldn't that cause doubt?

Anyways, the path of a cultivator is a long one, and Lin Xuan was in no hurry, so he decided to spend time and secretly understand the going ons of his surroundings, ,meanwhile he is also building the image of being very lazy by closing himself off in his room, which will in turn keep others from disturbing him.

As long people fall for this false image he is projecting, later on when he begins to purify and cultivate no one would suspect anything.

After planning out his intentions, Lin Xuan started to put his plan into action over the next few days.

After about a week since he became a steward, Lin Xuan was able to

quietly observe that Zhao did not lie that the jobs of the trash shop storage steward was easy, and that there really was nothing to do,except for the first day of every month, where a boy will come from the alchemy rooms to deliver a load of trash pills, other than those times not to even mention other cultivators visiting, even the outer disciples from other areas will not come here.

The entire area is usually isolated, but Lin Xuan is not concerned as this suits him best.

The mess in the trash storage room was worse than Zhao had said when he claimed that it had been thousands of year since anyone cleaned or did the accounts.....

In short, the whole house was full of trash pills that have been accumulated over thousands of years, and no one knew exactly how many there were, it was in other words... a treasure trove in the eyes of Lin Xuan.

Unfortunately, these pills were only purifying essence pills, and this could be considered the only downside.

But Lin Xuan's need for the higher grade pills was a distant thing, so it's best not to think about it.

After getting a clear idea of the situation, Lin Xuan decided that he has spent enough time in building the perfect illusion of laziness in the eyes of the other boys.

As far as the other boys know, their new steward spends all day sleeping and lazing about, a true eccentric just like the old man in the main house.

They knew that the new steward hates to be disturbed, so even when the boys went too close once and discovered the formation they were not surprised as they privately believed that he prepared so as to not be disturbed from his sleep.

Understanding this of course, none of them were foolish enough to attempt to enter within a ten meter radius of Lin Xuan's home, and would take detours around it, all the jobs are also still managed by Zhao.

And this is the result that Lin Xuan wanted, and so Lin Xuan headed over to the storage room for a jade bottle, and returned to his house to begin purification.

Naturally, beforehand he also prepared some bread and dried meat as food, as cultivators who are still at the spirit gathering stage still require food.

After two days, Lin Xuan finished purifying an entire bottle of trash pills, as he cut down his purification time due to practice and experience. He is already extremely familiar with the purification process for trash pills, so of course his success rate is now much higher, and so he received thirty-six useful pills out of one hundred trash pills.

His speed is also a lot faster than before, of course, this is thanks to the added control he gained from being at the second layer of spirit gathering, as well as the size increase of the blue lights.

With the purified pills in hand Lin Xuan finally began cultivating, in accordance with the limits stated in the medical books, as well as his own experience he took three pills three times a day.

Even though he lacked spiritual roots, Lin Xuan was able to cultivate at fast speeds as he was driven by the powerful drugs coupled with his hard work.

When he used up all the pills he had, Lin Xuan went back to get more trash pills, purified them, and cultivated again.

He repeated this cycle time and time again.

And in the same uninterrupted pattern, six months quickly went by.

Lin Xuan is cultivating in his room still using only pills, as he no longer went to the inner area to cultivate, even though he now has adequate power to do so, and is not afraid of hardships, there is simply no longer a need to do so. Since Lin Xuan took purified essence pills every day, he did not have to worry about the spiritual power in his surroundings running out.

However, Lin Xuan did not completely isolate himself, as he would know nothing about current events if he stayed inside all the time, so every few days he also went to the young hawk pavilion.

Since according to the rules of thundercloud valley, every so often a foundation building expert would come and give lessons to the spirit

gathering disciples, and Lin Xuan was not willing to miss out on the lessons.

Even though the lessons were temporarily irrelevant, he still carefully listened, and wrote down the practice method, to save for some time in the future.

Over the past six months, Lin Xuan has taken thousands of purified essence pills, and under the effects of the drug, coupled with his hard work, Lin Xuan finally reached the fourth layer of spirit gathering stage, finally being considered as mid-level disciple.

Lin Xuan's cultivation now is the same as those of his generation, as they are also mid-level disciples, not counting those who had excellent spiritual roots and were already at the fifth layer, while the majority were still hovering around in the third layer.

This is to say.....Lin Xuan left most of his peers behind.

To know that six months ago, he was at the first layer of the spirit gathering stage, and in just a few months managed to reach the fourth layer....his speed cannot be said to be the highest as very rarely do such geniuses appear who are able to cultivate that fast, but Lin Xuan had no spiritual roots and was no different from a common person.

The main reason is that immortal pills are truly amazing, since after all, in addition to having the purification ability, Lin Xuan can be considered to be the richest low-order disciple, as not even those who come from large sects are able to treat immortal pills as if they were candy.

Another reason is hard work, since Lin Xuan clearly understands that to succeed, you must first pay the price, so even with this purification ability, he still does not dare to be lazy, and works even harder than he did originally.

As a result, Lin Xuan did not get arrogant with the immediate success that he achieved, as he is still seen as a low-level disciple, since other people cannot know about his secret, and he keeps as far away as possible from other disciples and cultivators, in order to take no chances.

Volume 2 Chapter 5 – Mid-Grade Purified Essence Pill

[TL : purifying essence pills will now be called purified essence pills, as that seems to make a bit more sense to me.]

Although after achieving the fourth layer Lin Xuan was met with a problem, as the effect of purified essence pills was greatly reduced, thus making his cultivation once again rise up in difficulty and slowing down.

Its no surprise that cultivation becomes harder and harder the further you go, and so with Lin Xuan's rise in skill, low-grade purified essence pills just aren't enough.

In accordance with common sense, it is possible to make up for the poor quality by increasing the quantity, however the problem lies with the limit of nine pills per day, thus not allowing him to overcome quality with quantity.

Lin Xuan after some careful consideration, finally decided that the next step would be to once again try and purify beyond low-grade.

Since according to the ancient texts, it only states that purified essence pills can only be taken nine times a day, but it does not specify a specific grade of pill, in other words since he is able to consume nine low-grade pills a day, he should also be able to eat nine pills of a higher grade per day.

Since the low-grade pills are unable to meet his requirement, then of course the only option is to increase the quality, although Lin Xuan had

tried once before to purify past low-grade and found it difficult, and eventually failed.

The situation now is different, as the last time he tried he was only at the second layer of spirit gather stage, and is now at the fourth layer of spirit gathering stage, and since the blue lights are synchronized with his spiritual power's growth, the amount of blue lights he now possesses is now much greater. Although Lin Xuan can't say for certain whether or not he has enough to purify further, but the only way to find out if its possible or not is to try it and see.

After finally making his decision, Lin Xuan began to prepare, deciding to first take a short break, so that his spiritual power and blue lights can be restored to their best condition.

Lin Xuan then sat down cross-legged, pouring out a low-grade purified essence pill from a jade bottle, he holds it in his hand, and uses his divine consciousness to begin observing for any changes, as it has grown greatly along with Lin Xuan's cultivation.

Of course, his divine consciousness is still nothing compared to that of those legendary cultivators who were said to be able to spread their divine consciousness over hundreds of miles, however as far as Lin Xuan is concerned, they have nothing to do with him.

The priority now is to purify a mid-grade pill.

Thinking this, Lin Xuan began to circulate the blue lights, causing the blue lights to gather together, converging into a blue ribbon before moving along his meridians. This process which was once very difficult,

can now be considered to be relaxing, as Lin Xuan has by this point purified thousands of pills, and practice does make perfect, and along with the improvement of his skills, his meridians are also a lot stronger than before, having more endurance, so the process truly no longer feels awkward.

Eventually, the lights moving along his meridians reached his wrist and began to enter the pill in his hand.

Immediately Lin Xuan's consciousness enters the pill, magnifying the scene several times in his mind, giving Lin Xuan a clear view of the essence and impurities in the pill. Carefully controlling the speed of the blue lights, allowing them to slowly enter into the pill as the purification began, Lin Xuan watched as the blue lights slowly began to move the the impurities.

This process is very difficult, because the impurities are usually tied closely with with the essences contained within the pill, making it very hard to separate the two, however the blue lights were able to do so, as they simply passed right through the essences and only affected the impurities.

However the impurities in a low-grade pill and a trash pill are very different, as in a trash pill, the impurities are more spread out into a sort of powder, and thus easy to push out, but the impurities in a low-grade pill are in a thick, semi-liquid form and so it was much harder to separate them from the essence.

Similarly, the size of the impurities is also much bigger than those in a trash pill, taking about three times the amount of blue lights to achieve the same result as it would in a trash pill. The last time the purification

failed, because the amount of blue lights that Lin Xuan possessed was not enough, but there is now a larger amount of blue lights, allowing the process to run through to its end.

It is also impossible to interrupt the purification process, meaning that he cannot purify half of it today, and then try again the next day. The blue lights only allow for success or failure, as there is no way to re-purify the pills which were partially purified.

Due to his previous experiences, Lin Xuan predicted that with his current volume of blue lights, his current chance of success should be at about seventy percent, given that there are no unexpected accidents.

So far, although it can be said that Lin Xuan has a lot of experience in regards to purifying pills, but as this was only his second attempt in purifying a low-grade pill, Lin Xuan was still not completely sure in the results.

However, even if it ends in failure, Lin Xuan still possesses a large amount of low-grade pills, he would be able to try again and build up experience, and slowly increase his success rate, just as he did with purifying trash pills, and unlike that time he is not starting from scratch, so his success rate should still not be too bad.

Having mentally prepared himself thus, Lin Xuan is no longer afraid of failure, and boldly continues the purification.

Having started out with no issues, the impurities in their semi-liquid state were being steadily pushed out, although it required more energy, it looks to be sufficient.

But as the impurities are gradually separated from the essence and pushed out to the edge, they stop moving further, refusing to be pushed out.

How could this happen?

Such a situation never occurred when purifying trash pills, Lin Xuan frowned as he began to think it over but did not panic, as that wouldn't help anything.

Using his divine consciousness to focus in on the edge of the pill, Lin Xuan saw that the edges of the pill were blocked with the liquid.

"I see." Lin Xuan maintained the flow of blue lights as he analyzed the situation, the impurities in a trash pill are in a powdery form, so pushing them out is easy, but a low-grade pill is purified the impurities are semi-liquid and thus too big to fit through the small openings, making it difficult to push out.

It should be such a thing!.

Volume 2 Chapter 6 Pros and Cons

Analyzing the situation clearly, Lin Xuan tries to resolve the problem, beginning by first increasing the speed of the blue lights, so that there would be a more powerful force pushing against the the impurities.

But the problem lies in figuring out by how much he should increase the speed of the flow, if the increase was too low it wouldn't change anything, but if he increases it too much it will be more than what the pill can handle, and it would explode, resulting in a failure.

Lin Xuan began by increasing the speed by a small bit, slightly increasing the pressure on the impurities and pushing them out a small bit further, Lin Xuan continued in such a careful manner, and little by little the impurities were finally pushed out after an hour.

"Whew!"

Lin Xuan laid on his bed tiredly, with his clothes drenched in sweat, the purification exhausting him more than a whole day of meditation.

But he also held the hint of a pleased smile on his face, moving his right hand in front of his face, Lin Xuan took a look at the pill in his hand, causing a refreshing fragrance to drift by his nose.

The result, mid-grade Purified Essence Pill.

Although he has never seen one before, Lin Xuan recognized it from the

descriptions in the medical books, as it had the same color and appearance as the book, a genuine mid-grade pill.

With a pale blue surface, and exuding a thicker herbal smell than the low-grade pill, the success rate of refining one was less than one fifth, usually when one prepared five furnaces, there will often be four trash pills, but the success rate was still not too low, usually however this was only possible under the hands of an experienced alchemist, as such a behavior was extremely extravagant, and only the few large factions could afford to do so, and as a result a small school such as thundercloud valley, there are no mid-grade pills.

In theory, a mid-grade pill can be exchanged for ten low-grade pills of the same kind, but in fact, there is no real market price, since the few schools and sects that can produce mid-grade pills would never sell them.

Holding the pill in his hand as he looked over, Lin Xuan decided to finally just stop thinking about it and see just how much better a mid-grade pill is.

Getting up from his bed, and sitting cross-legged on the ground, Lin Xuan throws the small blue pill into his mouth (So he chose the blue pill)

As he focuses his consciousness into his dantian, Lin Xuan begins cultivating as the pill begins dispersing a warm energy into his dantian.

Similar to the the time when he took nine low-grade pills at once, the mid-grade pill gives off a warm energy, although the heat is not as hot as that time.

As the pill fully dissolves the energy produced is truly on a different level, and although it is hot, it gives a feeling similar to soaking in a hot spring.

Since the pill has fewer impurities than the low-grade pill, the energy it gives off is more pure, and stronger.

Although there are some records in the medical books telling what to expect from a mid-grade pill, it is completely different to experience it after all. Lin Xuan's heart is filled with joy, but he did not allow it to affect his mind, as he concentrated his consciousness into refining the pill.

His dantian gathered the spirit power, and compared to how it was at the first layer, both the quality and quantity of spiritual power has changed dramatically.

If it was originally a fine strand of hair, it was now as thick as a matchstick, with a much deeper, almost dark color in comparison to the previous pale white color.

After gathering the spiritual power, it began to flow, slowly passing through his kidneys, and eventually mixing with the energy from the pill.

This is the most important step, as it is when you use the energy from the pill to nourish your own spiritual power.

Similar to how the roots of a plant absorb nutrients to grow, his spiritual power is doing the same thing as it circulates.

He circulated the spiritual power nine times!

……

Since the time Lin Xuan took the pill till now, it has already become noon, it seems that the time it takes to refine a mid-grade pill is slightly longer than the time for one low-grade pill, so of course the effects are also more pronounced.

Using his consciousness to look over his body, Lin Xuan feel that the spiritual power in his body has undergone a significant growth, it seems that the effects of a mid-grade pill at the fourth layer is much more significant than a low-grade pill.

In other words, it seems that the grade of the pill really matches up with the grade of cultivation.

Although this was only a guess, from his own experiences, the problem lying in front of Lin Xuan now was how difficult it was to refine a mid-grade pill.

After six months of using the blue lights, Lin Xuan of course has a lot of experience , and could purify a low-grade pill easily, but a mid-grade pill……

Honestly, just having that one success was lucky, as Lin Xuan was not sure he could do so again. It wasn’t that he couldn’t purify it, but rather the process was too time-consuming and cost too much energy, on top of

the low success rate.

For example, right now Lin Xuan could purify a whole bottle of trash pills after spending one day and night working, with a success rate of about one in three, as his body could now support six to seven low-grade purification's without rest.

However, with his current amount of energy, he could only purify one mid-grade pill, with a very low success rate.

In other words, he could get mid-grade pills, but it was extremely inefficient, and it would decrease the speed of his progress.

What to do now?

Lin Xuan lying in bed, began to think in silence for a moment, until finally deciding to purify mid-grade pills.

The reason for such a decision, was that by continuing to cultivate under the effects of low-grade pills shows very little effect, and if he wants to breakthrough the next bottleneck like that, he did not know how many months it would take.

Purifying mid-grade pills will take more time, but the more he does it the better he will get so in the long run mid-grade pills are more beneficial.

He cannot allow himself to become complacent with just low-grade pills, since if he were to back down from mid-grade pills because it was

too hard, that mentality would also affect his cultivation.

So he is only left with the option to overcome.

Lin Xuan believes that with constant practice, the efficiency of his purification will also increase, which will in turn increase his cultivation speed.

Looking at the long run, although it will take time to master purifying mid-grade pills, it is still absolutely worthwhile.

After carefully going over the pros and cons of the situation, Lin Xuan decides on his plan for future cultivation, and once again continues in his efforts.

Translator Changed to :

http://blcxtranslations.github.io/blcx/

025 - Cultivation Basics

For the next period of time, Lin Xuan focused on practising purifying the Purified Essence Pills. It was very difficult to start, each initial step is very hard, and the success rate was extremely low.

For approximately every ten pills, He would succeed once. With this kind of success rate, Lin Xuan thought of giving up, but compared to his peers, Lin Xuan was more mature and had a more resilient mindset. He is the kind of person who would doggedly pursue his goals. So he clenched his teeth and persevered.

Hard work pays off, and over time, Lin Xuan finally became more proficient. His rate of success rose to one in every five pills, and even though this was still somewhat low, it was finally within a tolerable range.

The efficacy of these pills was very magical and much more effective than the low-grade pills.

Of course, it was clear that the rate of purifying mid grade pills could not match Lin Xuan's daily usage requirements. Lin Xuan has a general plan for his own cultivation, and even though his progress is slow, he practices cultivation every day without fail according to his plan.

Subtracting the time spent on daily cultivation, and a few short hours of sleep every day, the remaining time was all spent on pill purification. With his twenty percent success rate, he could only get one successful pill a day.

How could he only consume one pill a day? To other cultivators, this is already a luxury, but it could not satisfy Lin Xuan because he had this purification ability.

Because there is not enough mid grade Purified Essence Pills, he had to supplement them with low-grade pills, and even though the effects were much worse, it was still better than nothing!

In the morning, he would take a mid grade pill, and consume four more low-grade pills in the afternoon. And thus, he started to work hard in cultivation.

Time is like water, rapidly flowing, and in the blink of an eye, a month had passed.

The mid-grade pills were really extraordinary, even though he only consumed one a day, under the effects of its strong potency, Lin Xuan's cultivation steadily rose. The growth of his spiritual power was very apparent. According to this speed, in another few months, he should arrive at the fifth layer of the Spirit Gathering stage, and become one of the few experts among the disciples who entered the sect at the same time, who have broken through into the latter layers.

Lin Xuan was satisfied with the rise of his cultivation, but the rise in his skill of pill purification was not to his liking. Logically, after a month, his proficiency should have increased too, but there was no increase in the success rate, which is still at twenty percent. And even though the volume of the ocean of blue stars had increased, it was still only enough to purify little more than one pill and was not enough to support two.

It seems that his use of the blue stars has reached a bottleneck, and after careful analysis, Lin Xuan came to this conclusion: to break though, he would have to raise his cultivation by several more layers.

For example, cultivating to the fifth layer, entering into the latter layers, maybe his proficiency in purifying will go up. Because the ocean of blue stars' growth is synchronized with his spiritual power, and when his spiritual power makes a leap, his bottleneck in using the blue stars should also disappear.

Even with this analysis, Lin Xuan did not immediately and desperately try to increase his cultivation. Although cultivation requires lots of effort, but one should not be anxious to achieve quick success, because haste does not bring success. The Spirit Gathering stage is like pouring a foundation for the long road of cultivation, Objectively, with the support of pills and elixirs, his own cultivation speed was much faster than normal, and if he blindly pursues faster cultivation, it is possible to achieve good results in the short term, but for his future cultivation efforts, there will be no benefits.

Although young, Lin Xuan is not impetuous, even though he had such a treasure in his body, he did not blindly increase his cultivation. Food is eaten mouthful by mouthful and cultivation should be practised step by step. Lin Xuan would not get carried away by this purification ability. In contrast, Since the heavens gave him this benefit, it needs to be even more cherished and carefully used. Every day, after practising cultivation, Lin Xuan would summarize his experience.

He has made the decision to lay a firm foundation, and not to look for instant success. So following that, Lin Xuan even deliberately slowed

down the pace, wanting to stabilize and solidify his foundation.

In this situation, Every day, other than purifying pills and meditation, Lin Xuan even had some spare time. In order to not waste it, he decided to start learning about spirit tools.

These so-called spirit tools are just simplified versions of magical treasures. They were for low-level cultivators. But do not underestimate their power, although they could not overturn rivers or seas, they still had great magical power. they were marvellous beyond compare.

With the fourth level of Spirit Gathering stage, one can start manipulating spirit tools, but this was only in theory. The only reason is, even though spirit tools could not compare to magic treasures, they were still very precious. Generally speaking, only Foundation Building cultivators would have them. For someone in the Spirit Gathering stage, apart from those few who inherited some from their ancestors, or those who with natural talent who were granted them by their sect elders, it was impossible to have spirit tools.

But Lin Xuan was different, having acquired Zhang Yi and Zhou Yan's treasures, he was very rich. Other than spirit stones and seals, there were also spirit tools, and there were even three of them.

The first one was the golden rope that Zhou Yan used to kill her master, after shrinking, it was only a foot long, but after putting spiritual power in it, it can lengthen, and can be used to bound the enemy.

Another spirit tool is the flying sword, this would be an attacking spirit tool, Lin Xuan has personally experienced its power, with only one strike,

it collapsed a not so small cliff face. It is very powerful.

But these two were not the most valuable, Zhou Yan was only at the great perfection of Spirit Gathering, although she was one of the top disciples of the lower level, her treasures were still not comparable to the Foundation Building Zhang Yu's treasures.

Lin Xuan only acquired on spirit tool from Zhang Yu. It was a white as snow and crystal clear bracelet.

Even though it doesn't look like much, this Jade Snow Bracelet was very famous in Floating Cloud Valley, it is one of the few top grade spirit tools of the sect.

Spirit tools are split into low-grade, mid-grade, high-grade, and top-grade. Only Core Formation cultivators could use magic treasures. Foundation Building cultivators, even the most powerful have but one top grade spirit tool.

And in Floating Cloud Valley, even most of the martial uncles only had high-grade spirit tools. Only a few possessed these top grade spirit tools, and Zhang Yu was one of these people. It must be said that Lin Xuan had really good luck.

Apart from the Jade Snow Bracelet, Zhou Yan's spirit tools were also extraordinary, the golden rope could bound enemies, this was a tool whose use was between attacking and defending, it is a medium grade spirit tool.

And the flying sword was high-grade spirit tool!

026 - Learning Spirit Tools

Not so long ago, Lin Xuan had already reached the fourth layer of Spirit Gathering and could already use spirit tools. But a long time ago, from when he acquired them from Zhang Yu and Zhou Yan, he was already paying attention to spirit tools. Asking others about them would arouse suspicion, and of course, Lin Xuan would certainly not do something so stupid. So he quietly researched by consulting many books.

The second and third floors of the library is closed off to lower levelled disciples. The books on the first floor, to cultivators, were mostly trash, since there were no cultivation techniques. But the first floor had a lot of books on introductory knowledge on a variety of subjects.

The higher the grade of spirit tool, the greater the power, but was also harder to grasp. They would not only consume more spiritual power but also require much more advanced skills.

After understanding this, Lin Xuan decided to start practising with the golden rope. For beginners, it was best to start practising with a low-grade spirit tool, but Lin Xuan did not have one, so he could only start with the second best, and start practising with the mid grade golden rope.

To use spirit tools, one had to first learn telekinesis. This is a basic spell in the world of cultivation, and even before acquiring the ocean of blue stars, Lin Xuan had already worked really hard to learn and practice this skill. But his cultivation back then was too low, and it was extremely difficult to learn.

But things were different now. Lin Xuan's current cultivation, compared to back then, could be said to be world's apart. With plenty of spiritual power, the previously difficult telekinesis was easily learned by Lin Xuan using very little time.

After preparing everything, Lin Xuan took out the golden rope from his storage bracelet.

Looking closer, it looked just like an ordinary golden rope on the surface. Lin Xuan held a section of it and injected his spiritual power into it.

Suddenly, the golden rope emitted a brilliant light and grew to be several meters long. Although he had seen Zhou Yan use it before, but it was still his first time experiencing it, and Lin Xuan was simply speechless with admiration at its power.

But just injecting spiritual power was only the first step, the second was to let the spiritual sense leave the body, attach to the spirit tool, and take control and manipulate the tool.

This was the basic principle of telekinesis and also the reason that the fourth layer of Spirit Gathering was required to use spirit tools.

Because spiritual sense was proportional to one's cultivation, before achieving the fourth layer, one's spiritual sense would be too weak, and simply could not control and manipulate spirit tools.

Lin Xuan's expression became serious, after taking a deep breath, with a wave of his left hand, he threw out the golden rope.

At the same time, he collected his spiritual sense and attached it to the spirit tool. After the golden rope left his palm, just as it was beginning to fall, it started to crookedly fly up, and even though it was not flying elegantly at all, instead looking like a drunk, but it has indeed been controlled by Lin Xuan.

Lin Xuan's face showed a sliver of delight, but his mind did not fluctuate, and he continued to carefully exercise his spiritual sense, practising manipulating the spirit tool.

……

In the blink of an eye, half an hour passed.

The golden rope was back to its original shape. Lin Xuan was covered in sweat, lying on his bed. He didn't want to move even a finger, his spiritual power was almost exhausted. No wonder spirit tools were so powerful, it consumed simply too much spiritual power. Even though someone at the fourth layer of Spirit Gathering was able to manipulate them, but if they wanted to wilfully operate them as they liked, they would need to be at least in the fifth layer. And only at the sixth layer would one have enough spiritual power to support them.

But this first time practising, was much easier than he imagined. According to what was recorded in the books, manipulating spirit tools for the first time, even with the easiest low-grade spirit tool, the failure rate was very high. It was very difficult to move spirit tools with spiritual

sense for the first time, but Lin Xuan accomplished it and even did it with a more difficult mid grade spirit tool.

This was, of course, not because Lin Xuan was a genius at manipulating spirit tools. He was only an ordinary person with no spiritual roots. The reason why he was successful was because Lin Xuan's spiritual sense, compared to people with the same cultivation, was much greater.

Simply put, in the disciples with the fourth layer of Spirit Gathering, Lin Xuan had the strongest spiritual sense. He far surpassed his peers, and the only reason was this: he put in much more effort than the others.

Others only performed three perfect cycles of spiritual power a day, but Lin Xuan cultivated by circulating his spiritual power through his Eight Extraordinary Meridians in nine perfect cycles a day, which also exercised his spiritual sense.

In addition, to purifying pills, especially the mid grade Essence Purification Pills, required him to place his spiritual sense into the pill and control the blue stars. This, of course, was an even more strenuous exercise for his spiritual sense.

Because Lin Xuan worked harder than others, it was no surprise that his spiritual sense was greater than others, and since spiritual sense was the foundation of manipulating spirit tools, therefore Lin Xuan succeeded fairly easily.

Although he was too tired to move, Lin Xuan's mind had not been idle. Summarizing his experiences after cultivation was a habit and he came to the above conclusions.

Practising with spirit tools was very toilsome, but Lin Xuan would not give up, the road of cultivation was filled with thistles and thorns, it required tenacity. The power of spirit tools also attracted him, as long as he perseveres, he will definitely master them one day.

But Lin Xuan also saw his own shortcomings. Although he had a cultivation of the fourth layer, which is very good compared to his peers who entered the sect at the same time, but using this little amount of spiritual power to control spirit tools, he could only manage with great effort. The spiritual power in his body would be drained after at most half an hour.

If he met an enemy and fought a prolonged battle, he would be finished. How could he mend this shortcoming?

After acquiring the ocean of blue stars, his cultivation had improved by leaps and bounds. But not only did he not get carried away by his achievements, he also frequently contemplated his shortcomings.

The cultivation world was very cruel; it followed the law of the jungle, the strong eat the weak. Only if you were good at finding your own shortcomings, and fixing them in a timely manner, would you be able to live a good life.

The easiest way was to become stronger, if one’s cultivation rises, one’s spiritual power will also naturally increase, and the longer one can control spirit tools.

But this kind of method was not practical, cultivation would become

increasingly difficult, to break into the fifth layer and arrive at the latter layers of Spirit Gathering, would still require a few more months. What should he do in this time then?

Even though it was not likely to encounter danger in the sect, but it is always wise to play it safe. Lin Xuan loved to consider the issue beforehand, this was “in fair weather, prepare for foul”.

Looks like it was time to learn some spells.

027 - The Doctrine of Techniques

The path of cultivation was vast. Other than powerful magic treasures and spirit tools, there was also a variety of wondrous techniques.

With the support of spiritual power, one could shake the heavens and the earth. Although techniques were not as powerful as spirit tools, they do not consume as much spiritual power, they also did not require any mediums, so they were deeply favoured by lower level cultivators.

For example, the Ice Needles spell, Inner Sense, and Spirit Shield were all commonly used techniques.

Cultivation levels were split into the Spirit Gathering, Foundation Building, Core Formation, Nascent Soul, LiHe, DongXuan, Spirit Severing, and Tribulation Ascension stages. Spirit beasts had the same corresponding stages. But techniques were different, they only have 3 stages, the low-rank techniques, mid-rank techniques, and high-rank techniques.

There was only one reason, Core Formation cultivators can have magic treasures, with matchless power. They relied on them for both offense and defense without any techniques. In the eyes of these high-level cultivators, techniques were too weak, and were just useless things, so, of course, they would not use them.

Only Spirit Gathering and Foundation Building cultivators would know techniques, Spirit Gathering cultivators could only practice rank low or

mid rank, high-rank techniques were for Foundation Building cultivators.

In fact, Spirit Gathering cultivators would use them the most, because Foundation Building cultivators generally had spirit tools, which were more powerful than techniques. Of course, everything is not absolute, and there are a few high-rank techniques that are not inferior to spirit tools. Moreover, even though spirit tools were simplified versions of magic treasures, they were still very valuable. Some of the declining sects, or the poorer rogue cultivators, even if they reached Foundation Building, they would still be unable to acquire spirit tools.

Thus, it can be seen that Lin Xuan, having three spirit tools, one of which was a top grade tool, was very rich indeed.

Now to support the spirit tool with his spirit power is still very straining and barely manageable. The alternative is to then learn some suitable and appropriate techniques. After making this decision, Lin Xuan began to put it into action.

H took out an ordinary book from his storage ring, it wasn't very eye catching, all of it was handwritten, and did not seem to have much value, but it seemed important to Lin Xuan.

These were his notes, handwritten personally by Lin Xuan over these three years.

Because he had no spiritual roots, Lin Xuan's cultivation speed could not keep up with his peers, without enough spiritual power for support, he could only be envious of the various techniques that were taught. If it was someone else, they would have long ago became disheartened, and

would stop going to the Young Hawks pavilion to get ridiculed. But Lin Xuan did not do that, not only did he go to every single session on time, but he also carefully took notes, be it rain or shine.

To others, it might seem to be very stupid behaviour, but Lin Xuan had his own ideas, and now it seems, it was actually very smart and very far-sighted.

Back then, Lin Xuan thought, even though temporarily he was unable to practice some things, but when he had the cultivation later, he could slowly start to analyze it. So he wrote it down in his notebook, so not to forget these teachings.

It was fortunate that he did copy them down, otherwise, is he wanted to practice these techniques now that he had the cultivation, he would have nowhere to start. This is one of Lin Xuan's good characteristics, he liked to take precautions before making any decisions.

Over these three years, there have been many techniques taught by many teachers, he could not practice all of them. This was because firstly, there was not that much time, and secondly, it was not all necessary. Being proficient in many techniques was not as good as mastering one, besides, there were some useless and duplicate techniques, it was better to pick a few suitable ones for himself.

After making such a decision, Lin Xuan began to carefully read his notes. First he excluded the low-rank techniques, even though they were easier to learn, they were also limited in power, he did not want to waste precious time learning them.

His goal was mid grade techniques, and after careful screening, he picked three techniques: Spirit Shield, Ice Needles, and Imperial Wind.

There was careful though put into making these choices.

Spirit Shield, its name was very clear, it is a defensive spell. To learn how to beat someone, one must first learn how to be beaten. When fighting the enemy, the first thing one must consider is how to escape with one's life. Therefore, Lin Xuan's first spell to learn is also the defensive spell.

Ice Needles was a five elements spell of the water attribute. It is characterized by its strong attacking power, it was hard to detect. Although relatively, it was harder to practice, but that was not an issue, Lin Xuan has never been afraid of hardship, as long as it had enough power it was fine.

The last spell, the Imperial Wind spell, was a support type spell. Compared to the Light-Wind spell he learned before, it much more powerful and advanced.

Although all cultivators wanted to have spirit tools, and after much practice controlling then could they fly. But after grasping the Imperial Wind technique, it was equivalent to having shocking Light Body skill. With one maneuver, they can float tens of meters, even the strongest mortal experts would be left in the dust. After all, the Imperial Wind technique used spiritual power as the basis, cultivators were not within a mortals understanding. They were simply at different levels.

Defense, attack, and escape and dodge techniques, Lin Xuan selected one each. He could move forward and attack, or retreat and defend, this

kind of combination, should be perfect with nothing missing.

For the next while, Lin Xuan became very busy. Purifying pills, sitting cultivation, and additionally, he also had to make time to practice techniques. There was really no time to rest. Fortunately, as his cultivation kept rising, he required less and less time to sleep each day.

One must work harder than anyone else to be better than everyone else. If it was a different person, perhaps they would not be able to endure this difficult like of cultivation. But Lin Xuan was different, he had no spiritual roots and failed over and over again, and had to endure the taunts and jeers of his peers every day. Even the illusions of the Heart Refinement Road could not stop Lin Xuan's progress, now that he had the ability to purify and the hope of success, what would the previous bitter days count for?

Focus on cultivating!

Day by day, Lin Xuan's studies progressed smoothly. His first spell, the Spirit Shield, was a defensive spell, it was also the Spirit Gathering, and even Foundation Building cultivators favourite and most used basic defensive spell.

The principle is not difficult, it could even be said to be very simple. It was to use spiritual power to cover the body, which could block the enemy's attack.

It was very stable and nothing could get in. Of course, there was a limit, which would differ based on the spiritual power of each person.

To put it bluntly, although Spirit Shield is just a spell, but was long as there is enough spiritual power to support it, practising this spell would be very easy. Even Lin Xuan, with no spiritual roots, because his spiritual power was strong, he only split three short days to become proficient in this spell!

028 - Ice Needles Spell

Lin Xuan then began learning the second technique, the Ice Needles spell!

Although it was only a mid-rank technique, it was rather special, because its power can even be as powerful as some of the high-rank techniques that only Foundation Building cultivators can practice.

In the world of cultivation, techniques are split into three ranks, ignoring low-rank techniques, how can one distinguish between mid and high-rank techniques?

Power?

Correct, but that is not all. In fact, the main criteria in determining them are that the techniques that Spirit Gathering stage can practice are mid rank, and techniques which require the Foundation Building stage are high-rank techniques.

Generally, high-rank techniques have higher requirements, so naturally its power was greater. But there are exceptions to everything, in the mid rank techniques, the only special technique, was the Ice Needles spell.

Spirit Gathering stage cultivators can practice it, but the Ice Needles spell's power was no weaker than some high-rank techniques. Because of this, some of the elder generation even argued that this technique should be classified as a high-rank technique.

But for whatever reason, that proposal was not passed, and the Ice Needles spell in the Encyclopedia of techniques was still listed as mid-rank. Then, of course, Ice Needles would be the most powerful of the mid-rank techniques.

Some people even called the Ice Needles spell the “false mid-rank technique”.

It can be practised at the Spirit Gathering stage, and can even rival high-rank techniques. When first hearing about this, the Ice Needles spell would have great attraction, lower level disciples would all want to practice it. But in reality, this was not the case. There was no such miracle in the world, however much one pays, will be however much one gains. Although the power of Ice Needles spell was the highest in the mid rank techniques, its difficulty of practising was also notorious.

It did not require that much spiritual power to use, but successfully practice, it required one to have very strong spiritual sense. Because this the so-called Ice Needles spell was, in fact, using spiritual power to condense the moisture in the air into hundreds of icicles, each one hard as steel, which can then be used to harm the enemy.

Each needle might be small, but to to simultaneously control hundreds of them, required so much spiritual sense that was hard to imagine, so it was very difficult in practising.

In hundreds of years, an uncountable number of low-level disciples at the Spirit Gathering stage have attempted to learn this technique, but in the end, there were few that were able to succeed. Before the Foundation

Building stage, to learn the Ice Needle spell requires a lot of tenacity.

Lin Xuan's notes were very detailed, not only did they record the practice methods of the Ice Needles spell, they also had the above information from the lecturer.

Even with the difficult task was ahead of him, Lin Xuan was not afraid. Even if you can't say anything else, you can say this about Lin Xuan. With regards to perseverance, Lin Xuan was extremely self-confident, only those with the cultivation of at least Foundation Building would dare step foot into Heart Refinement Road, but he still weathered their torturous illusions.

Lin Xuan was envious of the power of the Ice Needles, once he learned it, his power would only increase by leaps and bounds and would in now way decrease.

Lin Xuan started to strive hard in practice, but it was much harder than he imagined. The first few days, there was very little progress. Even though his spiritual sense was much greater than the peers of his level, and allowed the practice of the Ice Needles spell, he still suffered due to the difficulty.

For others, to accomplish a task, or to learn a technique, failing once or twice was normal; failing thrice or four times was also tolerable; but to fail seven or eight times or even more, would certainly dishearten them, and they would choose to give up.

It can't be said that they have no patience, this can be considered to be being human. But Lin Xuan was different, he has a firm and indomitable

mentality. Like in the beginning, when he did not have the purification ability, and clearly knew how difficult it was for a mortal to step on the path of cultivation, he still persevered under the taunts and the jeers.

Even when trying to break into the second layer of Spirit Gathering, Lin Xuan failed tens of times, but he still kept cultivating without complaints or regrets.

Therefore, in the previous days of practising Ice Needles, even though he made not the slightest progress, forget being discouraged, Lin Xuan wasn't even irritated and kept on consistently practising.

The lecturer was very clear, even though in hundreds of years, Spirit Gathering disciples who have successfully learned the Ice Needles spell were rare, but there still were successes. If others can do it, why can't I?

With this kind of not giving up until he reached his goal mindset, Lin Xuan continued to practice hard, failing over and over again. But the more he failed, the harder he tried, until finally, after two months, he made some small advancements.

Compare to learning the Spirit Shield, which only took three days, it seemed the time it took to grasp Ice Needles was very slow. But that was not the case. According to the records, not to mention Spirit Gathering disciples, even the experts in the Foundation Building stage, to want to grasp the Ice Needles spell, it would take almost two months. So Lin Xuan's speed was already very stunning.

The reason he had such success was due to his diligence, his character of never giving up, but it was also due to the fact that he used of many

Purifying Essence Pills daily.

Nine pills a day, one of which was a mid grade pill. With such strong medicinal power, it not only improved his cultivation, there were also many other benefits to practising techniques. Therefore, Lin Xuan was able to, in a relatively short period, grasp the Ice Needles spell, which was not surprising at all.

As the strongest mid-rank technique, Ice Needles was also very well known. The day he grasped it, Lin Xuan went again to that mystic canyon that only he know, to quietly test its power.

He first selected a big piece of stone weighing over 500 kilograms as the target of his attacks. Lin Xuan then started to circulate his spiritual power and held out his right hand. With a stabbing sound, in the lingering mist about his palm, hundreds of crystal clear ice needles formed.

With a wave of his hand, the ice needles flew towards the boulder like lightning. In the cold light, the hard boulder was full of holes much like a sieve.

Lin Xuan nodded, satisfied, then using the low-level Strength technique, pushed the boulder down a cliff. Although this canyon was very hidden, and even if someone did find it, they would not know it was Lin Xuan who left the holes in the stone with is Ice Needles spell; but he was always careful when doing things, as long as he could not leave a flaw, then he would, so pushing the boulder down the cliff was only foolproof.

After doing all this, Lin Xuan started to evaluate his Ice Needles spell. To be honest, according to the lecturer's description, being able to manipulate one hundred needles was only a small achievement. At the highest level of proficiency in the technique, it is said that one can blot out the sky and cover the earth with a thousand needles, it was almost unblockable.

Although fascinating, Lin Xuan was not that kind of unrealistic person. With the cultivation of Spirit Gathering, it is impossible to achieve perfection in the Ice Needles spell. But with the one hundred ice needles he could control, its power was still comparable to some high-rank techniques.

One must have the drive to improve, but they can not be too ambitious. The current level had already reached his goal.

029 - Problem

The hardest technique, Ice Needles, has already been grasped, and the last technique, Imperial Wind, was much easier. Of course, this was a comparison, so it took Lin Xuan nearly a week to grasp.

Foundation Building cultivators can ride on their spirit tools, and travel thousands of kilometres a day. Spirit Gathering cultivators do not have this kind of ability. But the Imperial Wind spell was also extraordinary, take Lin Xuan as an example. With one movement, he could float nearly fifty meters, and jumping up, he could easily reach a height of close to twenty meters.

Using the Imperial Wind technique to travel, in the eyes of ordinary people, was already like flying. Also, after grasping this kind of technique, the body would become much more flexible. The benefits were obvious.

The perfect combination of offense, defense, and the support techniques greatly increased Lin Xuan’s power.

After more than a month of practice, even though he wanted to break into the fifth layer, he stilled needed some more time. But with the dual assistance of his diligence and pills, Lin Xuan’s spiritual power increased a lot. And apart from his daily cultivation, he continued to explore spirit tools.

……

Day after day flew by.

Holding the golden rope, with a gentle flick, Lin Xuan injected his spiritual power. It instantly lengthened, and under the control of his spiritual sense, it was dancing in the air like a spiritual snake.

Forward!

With a point of his finger, the golden rope accurately wrapped around the big tree in front of him. This was the mystic canyon, there was not enough space in his room to practice, so Lin Xuan quietly came to this deserted place.

After much hard work, he finally grasped this mid-grade spirit tool, however, looking at the golden rope that was wrapped around the tree, Lin Xuan was silent.

Standing still, he was silent for a while. Lin Xuan then waved his hand and recovered the golden rope. He had a pensive look on his face.

“Looks like my telekinesis is still not good enough.”

On the surface, Lin Xuan looked very skillful controlling the golden rope. But according to the records in the books and the teachings of the elders of the sect, mid-grade spirit tools were much more powerful than this. His ability only allowed him to display at most ten or twenty percent of its power.

The reason for this situation was not because Lin Xuan lacked the

spiritual power, but because there was a problem with the way he performed telekinesis.

Even though telekinesis allowed one to control spirit tools, it is still the most basic and most superficial, and only an entry level skill. If one really wanted to fully utilize the power of the spirit tool, then they would need to learn more advanced techniques.

But this difficult problem was placed in front of Lin Xuan. There was no way to learn such an advanced technique at the Young Hawks Pavilion!

The more advanced version of telekinesis is the Spiritual Control technique, which is a mid-rank technique. It should be stored on the second floor of the library and the only way to read it would be to meet one of the following two conditions.

Either reach the Foundation Building stage and become a high-level cultivator of the sect which naturally grants the qualifications to enter. But Lin Xuan directly rejected this idea. How can the path of cultivation be that easy? Even now, with the support of pills, to want to establish the foundation, would still require a long time.

And the second way, as a Spirit Gathering disciple, if one showed outstanding talent, and possessed a spirit tool, one can also petition the patriarch for admission onto the second floor of the library to consult the Spiritual Control technique.

On the surface, this seemed like a practical choice which could solve Lin Xuan’s problem, but this is also a dead end. There is only one reason. After petitioning, if he wanted to be granted permission, then he must be

tested. Although Lin Xuan's cultivation, compared to the other disciples of the sect, can be considered outstanding, but he would be hard pressed meet the requirements of the assessment.

Don't forget, Lin Xuan was not some genius, but the complete opposite. He couldn't be more ordinary and didn't even have spiritual roots.

A disciple without spiritual roots could actually outshine the majority of the other disciples. If this kind of situation came to light, it would be strange for those old foxes to not be suspicious.

If they discovered the star ocean in his dantian……

Lin Xuan would not put his head on the block like this.

Back then, when he took great pains to become a steward of Danxia mountain, the main purpose was, of course, for the waste pills. But that was not all, his other goal was to quietly go into hiding, to avoid notice.

Because usually, no one came to the waste pills storage room, those who willingly apply to become the steward were usually low levelled cultivators with no hope of making breakthroughs. Hiding among them, not only did he avoid notice, but he could also safely practice his cultivation.

For Lin Xuan to make this kind of decision was really to kill two birds with one stone.

By securing the source of pills, he could improve his cultivation without

the scrutiny of others.

Of course, it was not one hundred percent safe, the only possible flaw was the fact that Lin Xuan went to the Young Hawks pavilion to listen to lectures.

That that cannot be helped, techniques must be learned. But Lin Xuan was very careful, each time he went, he picked the most remote corners.

To ascertain the cultivation of others, one must use their spiritual sense to check the other person. According to the established practices of the cultivation world, this was an act of hostility, and few would do it.

So even though a few months have passed, Lin Xuan's cultivation also jumped from the first layer to the fourth layer, but currently, no one had discovered that fact.

Of the two methods to enter the second floor of the library, either he could not fulfill it or he was afraid that someone would discover his cultivation level. Lin Xuan has met an unprecedented problem.

Is it okay to control spirit tools with telekinesis? It was barely adequate and could only display ten or twenty percent of its power. This was a clearly a reckless waste, and Lin Xuan was unwilling in his heart.

And even without considering spirit tools, he could surely require more advanced techniques to pair with his rising cultivation. To cultivators, spiritual power was the foundation, and techniques built upon this foundation. The two must complement each other and were

indispensable. Only then could one display great power.

Although Lin Xuan does not have spiritual roots, he does have a great mind, or else he would be able to calculate every step before making decisions. But how, he really did face a conundrum.

Of course, Lin Xuan was not worried like others, one cannot solve problems while depressed, rather, it will make the situation worse. Every day, he still cultivated when it was time to cultivate, and purified pills when it was time to purify pills, conforming to his cultivation routine.

Only in his spare time, did he contemplate how to solve this problem in front of him.

030 Shocking News

“Immortal!” Zhao Ming respectfully saluted.

“En.” Lin Xuan nodded. Wearing a casual expression, he asked “Recently, what is the situation at the Waste Pills storage?”

“Rest assured, everything is normal.”

Four months after becoming the steward of the Waste Pills storage, Lin Xuan finally came back to inspect his territory. Even though the children led by Zhao Ming were surprised, they still carefully and respectfully waited on him.

In order to make it more convenient to cultivate, Lin Xuan erected a loves to sleep, lazy, eccentric, and reclusive image for them.

Originally, the intention was to allow himself to cultivate in peace and not arouse suspicions. It was not his original intention to gain the support of these children, and yet this fake image received just that, these children support.

The only reason was because to those lofty high levelled cultivators, mortals are like ants. Therefore, in Floating Cloud Valley, theses children held very low status, to put it nicely, they are outer sect disciples, to put it harshly, they are just slaves and menial labourers who serve the cultivators. If they make the smallest mistake, they might get scolded or beat, or they might lose their lives. This is very common and no one

would concern themselves or interfere.

These children lives are like walking on thin ice and they trembled in fear every day. If they were fortunate, they might have a kind cultivator as their immediate higher-up. If they had a moodier guy for a boss, it was simply……

When talking about all the random jobs around Danxia mountain, the last choice of the cultivators would be the Waste Pill Storage, because there was nothing in it for them, such as bribes or being able to skim from their duties. But in contrast, the children desired to be there the most, because for a long time now, there has not been a cultivator acting as a steward. The temporary steward was also an outer sect disciple like the rest of them. So they lived a very safe and leisurely life.

When Lin Xuan first arrived, Zhao Ming and the rest did not say anything and did not dare to show anything on their faces. But in their hearts, they were reluctant in every possible way, because they though their happy days were coming to an end.

But the situation was different from what they imagined. Even though Lin Xuan came, but it hard to even catch sight of him. This immortal's character was very eccentric and he loved shutting himself in his house.

In other words, Lin Xuan's arrival did not cause the slightest change in their lives. Many months have passed, not a single person has been punished. Of course, this was provided that they did not violate the immortal's rule, which was to stay away from his house.

Such a good steward, an easy to serve immortal, was very hard to come

by even in a thousand years. Zhao Ming and the rest supported him from the bottom of their hearts and hoped that he would stay the steward of the Waste Pills storage forever. Because as long as he was here, the sect would not send another cultivator as a steward.

After inspecting the Waste Pills storage, and chatting about some innocuous things, Lin Xuan asked the children to carefully perform their duties, then left to relieve some boredom and get some fresh air.

“Farewell immortal!”

Zhao Ming and the rest were not suspicious. Although the steward was lazy and did not like to move, going out for a little was normal, no one would like to stay in their houses forever.

After leaving the crowds gaze and arriving at a deserted place, Lin Xuan’s aura of laziness disappeared without a trace, and he now looked smart and mature. Showing a slight trace of a smile on the corner of his mouth, he walked off.

These days, Lin Xuan was thinking a lot. He considered a variety of different methods, but he still could not come up with a method to not arouse suspicions while learning the Spiritual Control skill. It really seemed like there was no method with the best of both worlds.

Fantasizing will not solve the problem, and stuffily sitting there would cause a headache. It’s better to go for a walk and play it by ear, maybe there would be a turnaround in the situation.

After leaving Danxia mountain, his temperament changed yet again. He now seemed normal and ordinary. He first took a walk around the sect, and having no spoils, he headed to the library.

As a low levelled Spirit Gathering disciple, he could only freely use the first floor. Despite knowing that there were no techniques and that there were only knowledge that would be valuable to ordinary people, which cultivators held no interest in, Lin Xuan still held some minuscule hope, and carefully looked through the first floor again.

Nothing!

After being silent for a while, Lin Xuan grit his teeth and walked towards the second floor.

The layout is different from building in the secular world. The first and second floors were not connected by stairs, one could not fly up to the second level, there were also many layers of restrictions, and one could only rely on the teleportation array to enter or leave.

Lin Xuan only took a few steps, but air in front of him started fluctuating like water ripples, and a layer of yellow coloured shield, like a wall, blocked him way forward.

This is a restriction. To reach the teleportation array, one must first break through the shield, which is also a test. Because according to the design of the sect, to break this restriction, one needed to be at least at the Foundation Building stage. This also guaranteed that those who entered the second floor were not low levelled disciples. Of course, that was excluding applying to the patriarch for permission to enter.

Looking at the yellow light before him, Lin Xuan came to a stop and silently observed. Although according to common sense, this restriction could only be broken by those with the minimum cultivation of Foundation Building, but he still had a good chance of breaking through.

Firstly, he grasped the Ice Needles spell, which was comparable to high-rank techniques in power. Secondly, he also had extraordinarily powerful spirit tools. As long as he puts all of his power into it, excluding everything else, in attack power, at least, Lin Xuan was confident that he would be no less powerful than a cultivator with no spirit tools who just stepped into the Foundation Building stage.

But Lin Xuan did not act, and instead, he hesitated, then pretended that nothing happened and walked away. Whether it was Ice Needles or spirit tools, they would both shock others, and Lin Xuan did not want that kind of attention.

And even if he broke through this restriction, and arrived at the second floor via the teleportation array, it was guaranteed that there are restrictions on the books there.

Although he wanted to learn the Spiritual Control technique, but weighing the pros and cons, he couldn’t expose his strength, therefore, he chose to not act rashly.

Looks like he has to think of something else. After making this decision, Lin Xuan turn around and headed outside. But at that moment, the sound of conversation drifted by.

“I heard that the Soaring Cloud sect was forced to disband.”

“Hmph, it’s their fault that they offended a Core Formation senior export. Unless they all want to die, they can only disband their sect.”

A cultivator up ahead nodded, and regretfully said: “Although the Soaring Cloud sect cannot compare to our Floating Cloud Valley, but they are still a sect with almost a thousand years of heritage, they must have a lot of techniques, spirit tools, and seals.”

“Yes, I heard there are also a lot of Foundation Building mid-rank techniques for sale.”

031 Soaring Cloud Sect

“Mid-rank techniques for Foundation Building cultivators?”

Hearing these words, Lin Xuan was suddenly stunned. He looked at the two that were talking. They were both strangers to him. Even though Floating Cloud Valley was only a small, third-rate sect, but they still had over a thousand disciples. Lin Xuan, other than being slightly familiar with the others who entered the sect at the same time, did not know most of the other disciples. But from their clothing, it could be seen that they are also two low levelled Spirit Gathering disciples.

They just mentioned some Soaring Cloud sect getting disbanded, and mid-rank techniques. Lin Xuan caught up, greeting aloud: “Fellow disciples.”

“You are……” The two stopped walking and looked at the young man blocking the road with uncertainty.

“I am called Zhao Gang, I salute you.” Lin Xuan’s attitude was very friendly, with a harmless on his face, because he wanted to find out some information from them.

At the same time, he released his spiritual power, allowing those two to see that he was at the fourth layer of the Spirit Gathering stage. The reason he was being this bold was because they have never met before, and they did not know that he had no spiritual roots. The cultivation world followed the law of the jungle, very hierarchical. If one did not have

enough strength, they would not be taken seriously, not to mention inquiring about the current situation.

But Lin Xuan did not play all of his cards, he didn't give them his real name, he just casually made one up.

These two were also at the Spirit Gathering stage, their cultivation levels were just slightly below Lin Xuan's. Seeing this more powerful cultivator offering such a friendly greeting, they did not dare ignore him, and quick and laughingly replied: "No, no, so it's brother Zhao, I wonder if there is anything senior brother wanted?"

"Senior brother?" Hearing these two calling him that, he secretly laughed. These two were clearly past their thirties, and most likely entered the sect before him, but insisted on treating themselves as the juniors. This would be unthinkable in the past. Lin Xuan once again experienced the superiority of having high spiritual power. It really felt good.

Looking calm, Lin Xuan smiled and asked: "The two brothers are too polite, what should I address you by?"

"I am Li Hai, and this is junior fellow apprentice Chen Feng Chen"

"Okay, let us go sit!"

"Okay." The two nodded their agreement. This was not because they were easygoing and were nice and caring of others. But it was because Lin Xuan deliberately released his spiritual power just now, revealing the

power of the fourth layer, putting hesitation in their hearts.

This junior fellow apprentice, who was called Zhao Gang, who didn't look to be over twenty, was already at the peak of the fourth layer, only one step away from the latter Spirit Gathering stages. He must be a genius disciple with excellent spiritual roots. This is what these two thought.

Geniuses like this, were not only the focuses of the sect elders but also had a great chance of successfully building their Foundation, becoming an even higher levelled cultivator.

That is to say, in the eyes of these two, Lin Xuan had an immeasurable future. These kinds of people could not be given the cold shoulder.

It's hard to see into the hearts of people, but because Lin Xuan was intelligent, he basically understood what they were thinking. Secretly laughing, he also deeply felt the changes brought about by the star ocean. If not for the fact that he was able to purify waste pills and had the support of all those pills, how could he be mistaken for a genius?

The three of them sat down in a secluded corner and exchanged some pleasantries. But Li Hai ran out of patience and asked: "Brother Zhao, you stopped us, I do not know if you have anything to advise us about?"

"Haha, it's nothing much, I just heard the two brothers discussing something about the Soaring Cloud sect disbanding and was curious about it." "So it was about that!" Li was relieved. He adopted a relaxed and somewhat proud expression and said: "I don't dare say anything else, but in terms of being well informed, this junior is one of the best in the

sect. The news of this situation hasn't been spread it, so it was no wonder that senior brother did not know."

"Haha, I just wanted to ask about that."

Generally, when powerful cultivators faced cultivators with lower cultivation, they would all be very arrogant. Li Hai was very impressed by Lin Xuan's kind and approachable attitude. Therefore, currently, he was telling Lin Xuan a very detailed account of everything he knew about the incident.

There are tens of thousands of sects in the world of cultivation, and Floating Cloud Valley can be considered on the lower end of that scale. In the thousands of cultivators they had, ten percent of them were in the early layers of Spirit Gathering, but they did have almost one hundred Foundation Building cultivators as protector elders. At the same time, the patriarch Immortal Yun He was an early Core Formation stage expert.

This kind of strength, cannot be said to be strong, but also can't be easily looked down upon. After all, the patriarch did have a cultivation in the Core Formation stage and was powerful, and with almost a hundred Foundation Building stage cultivators also caused fear in people's hearts. In this area, they would not be able to seek hegemony or expand easily, but protecting against being supplanted or being bullied is no problem.

Of course, in the radius of 500 kilometres, it was not possible that the Floating Cloud Valley was the only sect. Excluding rogue cultivators, there were seven or eight various other sects, one of them being the Soaring Cloud sect.

If Floating Cloud Valley was classified as a third rate sect in the cultivation world, then Soaring Cloud sect would be a fourth or even fifth rate sect. But they had, like Floating Could Valley, over a thousand people, but they had less than twenty Foundation Building cultivators. Don't even think about Core Formation experts, it was impossible for them to have one. And therefore, their patriarch was also only in the Foundation Building stage.

In a sect, the high levelled cultivators made up the power, even if they had more Spirit Gathering disciples, they would be useless in a conflict. Therefore, even though the Soaring Cloud sect had a lot of disciples, their strength was still far from the Floating Cloud Valley.

But it was this tiny sect that, a while ago, offended a Core Formation expert. The specifics of the offense, other than the witnesses, were not too clear to others. But one thing was for sure, the expert was very angry, and said that within one month, he would exterminate every living thing in the Soaring Cloud sect.

With every increase in cultivator level, their strength would rapid increase, completely different than the level before and can be said to be a qualitative leap. When facing a Core Formation enemy, even if the sect had the most Spirit Gathering disciples, they would still be all useless, they couldn't even be cannon fodder. And only relying on these Foundation Building cultivators would be like a mantis trying to stop a cart and only result in failure.

So to the Soaring Cloud sect, this was a catastrophe.

For this kind of tiny sect, it was impossible for them to find a strong helping hand. After a series of efforts, and many considerations, the

Soaring Cloud sect finally made a painful and helpless choice to disband, because this was the only way to survive total extermination.

032 The Commandment of the Cultivation World

“Disband?” Lin Xuan was shocked: “You can avoid the catastrophe this way? Will that Core Formation senior stay his hand?”

“Of course.” Li Hai was surprised and a little puzzled. He said: “Could it be that senior brother has not heard the commandment of the cultivation world?”

“Commandment?” Lin Xuan shook his head, showing an embarrassed expression, and said: “Little brother doesn’t like to read books, and have never heard the seniors mention it. Could senior brothers advise me?”

Of course, that was a lie. Lin Xuan often went to the library, but it was always for research. That is, books that were useful to cultivation he would read, but about this commandment of the cultivation world, this was his first time hearing it.

Lin Xuan was good a playing the fool, Li Hai basically did not doubt him. He also really liked to talk and it was very rare for an advanced junior to ask him for advice. So playing right into Lin Xuan’s hands, he started explaining again.

The cruelness of the cultivation world is well known. In the few years that Lin Xuan has been in the valley, although he had no experience of the outside world, but he kept his ears on the ground and his eyed peeled and heard a lot. There are still laws within the sect, but there were

not that many rules out in the cultivation world. Whoever has the bigger fist would be the boss, falsehood would become the truth, everything would be resolved by force.

Killing over disagreements or killing strangers for their treasures were things that happened every day. Strictly speaking, good and evil does not exist, cultivators all relied on their strength, acting on their own whims.

But nothing was absolute, and even though acts of slaughter happened each day, but there was still a limit, and this was the commandment that Li Hai was talking about.

The commandment was thus: Between sects, or in disputes between sects and rogue cultivators, not matter what kind of hatred or feud, if one side concedes defeat, then they must, as a rogue cultivator, cripple their own cultivation, or as a sect, cripple every member's cultivation and also disband.

As long as they did this, it doesn't matter what kind of hatred the other party had, they were not allowed to make things difficult or seek revenge on them again. Otherwise, they would become the public enemy of the entire cultivation world and hunted down until their souls were scattered.

This is the iron rule, in tens of thousands of years, no cultivator had dared to violate it.

To mortals, life and death were a big matter, but to cultivators, to lose their strength and become mortal was the greatest pain they could suffer. This was a more difficult choice than death. And since crippling of their cultivation was irreversible, they would no hope of practising cultivation

in the future. The party that let them off would also not have to worry about trouble or revenge.

This commandment has been upheld for tens of thousands of years. Who exactly it was that laid down this commandment, or why they laid it down, was not clear, but no one has ever disobeyed it. In fact, to ninety-nine percent of the cultivators and sects, being superior “immortals”, they would not want to go back to being mortals. It was better to have an honourable death than to live a disgraceful life, and those that would be willing to cripple their own cultivation could be counted on the fingers of one hand.

So, although the Soaring Cloud sect was only a fourth or fifth rate sect after this news was spread, it still caused a sensation. Especially to the cultivators in the couple of thousands of kilometres of the surrounding area, they all acted without delay, getting ready to participate in the treasures trade fair.

“Treasures trade fair?” Lin Xuan was momentarily stunned. Is this the mid-rank techniques for Foundation Building stage that they just mentioned? Although Lin Xuan was excited and wanted to learn more about it, but on his face, he did not display any expression, and casually said: “What is this treasures trade fair? Could junior brothers advise me?”

Although they have only known each other for a short while, but Lin Xuan had already seen through Li Hai’s character. This guy is one of those that could not keep anything to himself, and as long as one casually brought a point, then he would continue to talk about that point.

Unsurprisingly, the more Li Hai talked, the more excited he got. The one called Chen Feng tried many times but could not even get a word in

edgewise. Seeing these two fighting to talk over each other, trying to be then one to give the information, Lin Xuan secretly smiled and listened on unperturbed.

The treasures trade fair, to put it bluntly, was very simple. Since the Soaring Cloud sect was disbanding, and all the members were crippling their cultivations to become mortals, then all the techniques, spirit stones, spirit tools, seals, and other important treasures for cultivators, were useless to them and would all be sold off.

Only this was different from normal transactions between cultivators, which used spirit stones as currency because this kind of special trade fair only accepted pills. There was only one reason, spirit stones were useless to mortals, but pills were different. The various pills of cultivators, not only could they help with cultivating raise one's cultivation, but if mortals ate them, they could also strength their bodies, eliminate sickness, and prolong their lives.

Since the members of the Soaring Cloud sect feared death and were willing to become mortals, they, of course, wanted to live a long and happy life, without disease or disasters. So they wanted to exchange all the treasure, that would be useless to them when they became mortal, into pills. This way, not only could they enjoy the benefits over their lifetime, they could also pass it onto future generations and ensure that their family could prosper.

There was no need to worry about bringing disaster onto themselves by having large amounts of pills and no cultivation because they would be protected by a commandment. It was normal for cultivators to kill and steal treasures as they pleased, but they cannot do so to people who crippled their own cultivation, or else they would also become a public enemy and be hunted down.

Although the Soaring Cloud sect was weak, but they still had a history of over a thousand years. The would still have some accumulated resources, techniques, spirit stones, seals, various materials, and even valuable spirit tools.

It is said that in some areas, where there are many many cultivators and cultivation sects, there are cities whose sole purpose was for the exchange of cultivation resources and treasures. But the Floating Cloud Valley was situated in the Yan prefecture of Zhao country, and in the thousands of kilometres of the surrounding area, there was only a handful of small cultivation sects. The number of rogue cultivators was also tiny. Therefore, there were no trade cities. This disbanding of the Soaring Cloud sect and the treasures trade fair immediately attracted the nearby cultivators. It gave everyone an opportunity, to not only browse the treasures of the Soaring Cloud sect but to also exchange for things they needed. Naturally it was very lively.

After gathering clear information about this, Lin Xuan was very glad. This was definitely “finding something by change after travelling far and wide in search of it”. In this kind of trade fair, he could definitely find the Spirit Control technique. “Excuse me, junior brother, when is this trade fair and where will it be held?”

“What? Does senior brother want to go purchase treasures?”

Li Hai looked at Lin Xuan curiously. Although the junior brother Zhao’s cultivation was extraordinary, but that was only relative to his age. A Spirit Gathering stage cultivator should not have anything that could be exchanged.

“Haha, of course not.” Lin Xuan would not stupidly expose his intent. “How could this lowly one have anything to trade? I can only look on enviously. I am just curious and want to find out more, that’s all.”

This remark was very reasonable, and combined with Lin Xuan’s perfect lying face, caused Li Hai and Chen Feng to have zero doubts. And once again, they gave the answers to Lin Xuan’s questions.

033 Sky Pillar Mountain

The treasures trade fair would be held nine days from now and the place is the location of the Soaring Cloud sect, Sky Pillar mountain. After getting this information, Lin Xuan continued to chat some more with these two, then casually left.

The whole time, he had a very casual expression on his face. No matter how you looked at it, it just seemed to be a strong curiosity and did not have any hidden meanings. And until finally leaving the library, and seeing no one else around, did Lin Xuan finally should a delighted smile on his lips.

He finally found the whereabouts of the Spirit Control technique!

There were two ways to enter the second level of the library. Either he didn't satisfy it, or he would arouse suspicion, so both were not desirable. But the treasures trade fair, there would definitely be mid-rank techniques for sale. As an outsider, he only needed to brush the dust off his clothes and leave and worry about other troubles.

The sound of footsteps came from behind and Lin Xuan's smile disappeared. Revealing a very normal expression, closely passing the approaching person, he no longer delayed and directly went back to the courtyard of the Waste Pills storage.

Since he made the decision to participate and acquire the Spirit Control technique in the trade fair, the following that, Lin Xuan started to prepare

for the trip. He had already as and figured out clearly, Sky Pillar mountain was around four hundred kilometres away. To mortals, it can be said to be a little far, but Lin Xuan was a cultivator, and even though he could not fly on his spirit tools, he still knew the Imperial Wind technique and could cover the distance quickly. Four hundred kilometres would take one day while hurrying and two if he took it slow. He could reach it either way, so that gave him seven days time to prepare.

This kind of sect disbanding trade fair was different from the regular trade fairs of the cultivator cities. These did not use spirit stones, but pills, as money. To Lin Xuan, the was great news, even though he acquired Zhou Yan and Zhang Yu's wealth, he only had dozens of low-grade spirit stones. But other than using spirit stones as a currency, it can also be used to cultivate or even to craft items. Lin Xuan would not bear to easily part with them.

Moreover, Lin Xuan had special circumstances, the only thing he had no shortage of was pills. So to him, using pills as currency was for the best. Of course, the concept of "when you go out to buy, don't show your silver" was very clear to Lin Xuan, he was only a low-level Spirit Gathering cultivator, if he seemed like he had deep pockets, it was easy to bring disaster on himself. He could not be like the people of the Soaring Cloud sect, who had the protection of the commandment.

So for this trip, to be fully prepared, he needed to bring enough pills, and he also needed to be cautious. If it wasn't a good opportunity, he would not easily act. All in all, he needed to be careful and not attract attention.

After making this plan, Lin Xuan started putting it in action.

The primary task for these few days was to purify a lot of pills. Cultivation practice can be temporarily slowed. After all, there are priorities, and things did not need to be that rigid, one needed to learn to be flexible based on different situations.

After these last few months, as to the usage of the star ocean to purify Purified Essence pills, Lin Xuan could do with ease. So he stayed in his house and purified around the clock.

When the immortal coming back and shutting himself indoors, the children led by Zhao Ming were not suspicious at all. They simply that the steward was busy being lazy and sleeping again.

Five days passed like this. Lin Xuan got up off the ground and stretched his stiff body. These few days and nights of purifying was really tiring, but the haul was considerable. In total, he had three bottles, which was equal to three hundred low-grade pills, and nine mid grade pills.

In terms of volume, this was already frightening. Lin Xuan's reason for purifying so many was to be prepared against mishaps. After all, in the pills and medicines of the cultivation world, this kind of Purified Essence pill for the Spirit Gathering stage was the lowest grade of pills and the trashiest kind. As to the value of these pills as currency, Lin Xuan had no concept of how much they were actually worth. So just in case, he brought this many with him as insurance.

He did not want a situation where he did not have enough pills to purchase the skill he wanted!

After he finished purifying the pills, Lin Xuan prepared to leave. He first

organized his wealth and items. He had in total: twenty-eight spirit stones, three spirit tools, and in addition, he also had dozens of seals of the five elements.

These items and the purified pills must be kept on his person. Firstly it would stop him from worrying about them, and secondly, on this trip, only god knows if he would meet danger. With these items, his power would also be greater.

Although he had a lot of items, but Lin Xuan had, from Zhou Yan and Zhang Yu, one storage bracelet and one storage belt. All he had to do was put the items in, which was very convenient.

In addition, Lin Xuan also put on a vest that he acquired from Zhang Yu. Although he did not know what it was woven from, but it was very durable. It was easy to tell that it is a defensive treasure. This kind of thing should not be just wasted by not using it.

After doing all of this, Lin Xuan left. Of course, he first needed to notify the sect management first and get permission to leave.

Foundation Building cultivators would be recorded, but for disciples of the Spirit Gathering stage, the sect did not really pay much attention. Any random reason could be used to fool their way out.

After getting the medallion allowing him to leave, Lin Xuan left the Floating Cloud Valley. This is his first time, in the four years he has been in the sect, that he has left on a long journey. He had many mixed feelings.

In fact, it was still early, the fair would only open in four days time. But there were advantages to leaving early. After all, he had never been there, first he needed to familiarize himself with the environment and learn about the market prices. This way he would be more secure. This was just the character of Lin Xuan, he did not like to be bold and stand out, and he had a habit of planning before acting.

Two days later.

Sky Pillar mountain was located in the east of the Yan prefecture of Zhao country. It stretched dozens of kilometres. It was very lush, with a wild profusion of vegetation. The main peak, Sky Pillar peak, was even more famous for its magnificence. It was more than five kilometres tall, with many jagged rocks everywhere, and very difficult to traverse.

Throughout the ages, there were many people that came to go sightseeing. There were cliffs everywhere, and after searching the whole mountain, they could not find a single way in, and could only helplessly sigh.

Gradually, the number of people that came here grew increasingly scarce.

However, this day, a youth that was not even twenty showed up below Sky Pillar peak. He looked very ordinary and wore a set of coarse clothes. This was done by Lin Xuan intentionally. This time, he came out quietly to purchase techniques, so of course he did not want to draw attention to himself. Wearing the uniform of the Floating Cloud Valley would not only be an eyesore, but it would also expose his identity. So he purposely changed into clothes that a rogue cultivator would wear, and with his ordinary appearance, as long as he stood in a crowd, not one would

recognize him.

034 Arriving at the Soaring Cloud Sect

Lin Xuan looked up at the steep slopes of Sky Pillar peak. According to Li Hai, the gate to the Soaring Cloud sect was at the summit. Of course, mortals would not be able to climb to it, but it would not be able to stop Lin Xuan.

Circulating his spiritual power, Lin Xuan used the Imperial Wind technique and passed over the cliffs as if walking on flat ground, easily ascending the mountain and flying towards the peak.

Although the technique was magical, but climbing five thousand metres would still take some time. On the way, Lin Xuan also saw some shadows flash past. Needless to say, these were all cultivators that wanted to participate in the treasures trade fair.

Lin Xuan did not move forward to strike up a conversation, instead, he deliberately dodged out of the way. He would not randomly approach strangers, he would be in trouble if he some more powerful people who were up to no good. The purpose of this trip was to acquire techniques rather than gain worldly experience, so the fewer troubles the better.

And like this, after almost an hour, Lin Xuan arrived at the peak. However, he could not see anything because there were layers upon layers of fog shrouding his line of sight.

Lin Xuan smiled slightly. Although he was merely a cultivator of the Spirit Gathering stage, but even he could tell with a single glance that

this was the most shallow of the confusion arrays.

This kind of array, strictly speaking, could not be considered a restrictive array. Because it was too crude and too low levelled. Even Spirit Gathering stage one cultivators, if they concentrated spiritual power to their eyes, would not be affected. This array was used mainly to keep mortals away. After all, although Sky Pillar peak was very steep and treacherous, but there were still martial arts masters among mortals. If they had the proper tools, they could still be able to climb to the peak. So an array to differentiate between cultivators and mortals was placed here.

Lin Xuan was already at the middle stages of the Spirit Gathering stage, so naturally this array would not affect him. After concentrating his spiritual power, flowing it along his meridians to his eyes, the illusive fog suddenly vanished, and in front of him appeared simple teleportation array.

The reason that the teleportation array was called simple was because the movement distance of this array was very short. But this was also good because it did not require much energy to use. There was no need to use spirit stones to power it, one only needed to inject spiritual power into the eye of the array for it to work.

Standing upon the array, Lin Xuan extended his hand and injected his spiritual power into it. Suddenly, the lines and patterns of the array lit up, the surrounding scenery also turned blurry and became a vast expanse of whiteness. After all these visions disappeared, Lin Xuan had already arrived at another place.

This place seemed to be a small basin in the mountains, but it was a

very open area, with a soft carpet of grass, and many blooming flowers. It was a very beautiful scene.

"Fellow cultivator must be here to participate in the treasures trade fair!"

Hearing a voice drifting over, Lin Xuan turned his head and saw a young usher. From the clothes he was wearing, one could tell that he was a member of the Soaring Cloud sect. He had a very defeated expression and seemed very feeble. But you can't blame him. The sect was forced to disband, and they had to cripple their own cultivations, becoming mortals when they used to lofty cultivators. Anyone would have a hard time just accepting it. But this was still the only way to survive.

This young cultivator could only force a smile and greet the guests. After this treasures trade fair, he would have to cripple his own cultivation.

Although he asked, there really was no point, the only people that could come to this place were cultivators. So the young person handed a jade strip [1] to Lin Xuan.

Lin Xuan was somewhat surprised, but seeing that everyone around him also had one, he took it without saying anything.

Moving under a big tree, seeing that there was no one around him, Lin Xuan circulated his spiritual power and injected his spiritual sense onto it. Suddenly, rows upon rows of characters and images appeared in his mind. Of course, these were not techniques, but instead, was the introductions to this treasures trade fair and some important matters.

Lin Xuan took a look and sure enough, there were several techniques for sale. Unfortunately, the introductions were not very detailed, but it certain that the Spiritual Control technique was one of them. Lin Xuan was rejoicing in his heart, keeping a calm and collected look on his face, and withdrew his spiritual sense.

Putting the jade strip1 into his bosom [2], Lin Xuan moved into the basin. He first followed the requirements of the jade strip [1] and went to a stretch of buildings on the east side of the basin.

[tl:

[1] = The author uses a word that refers to a long and thin piece of wood / bamboo slip that was strung together to form books in ancient China. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bamboo_and_wooden_slips

[2] = People wear clothes, whose folds, form pockets in front of their bosom.]

There were many stand alone cottages which were the guest houses of the Soaring Cloud sect, which were now used to receive foreign cultivators. If they wanted to participate in the treasures trade fair, they must register here.

“Name and sect?”

“Zhao Gang, rogue cultivator.”

Lin Xuan was determined to not have his identity exposed and did not hesitate to give a fake name. Obviously, the old man handling the

registration would not try to verify his identity. He only reached out his hand and released a misty white light from his fingers to carve “Zhao Gang” onto the front of a medallion, with some other words engraved on the back.

“Okay, this is your transaction token, hold on to it.”

Although it was only a casual showing off his power, the old man still made Lin Xuan speechless. He was actually in the early stages of Foundation Building. But like the young usher, he also had dull eyes, because after the trade fair, he also had to cripple his own cultivation and become a mortal.

One Foundation Building cultivator was already this powerful, and the Soaring Cloud sect still had at least a dozen more, and they were still forced to disband. Lin Xuan was very curious as to just how powerful Core Formation cultivators were. Although the patriarch of the Floating Cloud Valley was a Core Formation cultivator, but as a low-level disciple, he only saw him from afar when entering the sect. Usually the patriarch, Immortal Yun He, was in seclusion, and even when he came out, Lin Xuan would not be qualified to see him again.

He was somewhat moved in his heart but only showed an indifferent look. Lin Xuan took the medallion and went to look at his room. Although it cannot be said to be luxurious, it was still spacious and comfortable. It was especially wonderful because there was a layer of restriction around the house that would only allow the holder of the medallion through. This would not only let the cultivator sleep and rest, but also allow them to safely cultivate in peace.

After looking around the room, Lin Xuan dragged over a prayer mat

and sat down cross-legged. He was not practising cultivation, instead, he was restoring his spiritual power. Although he did not hurry on his two-day journey, but the continuous usage of the Imperial Wind technique still consumed a lot of spiritual power.

After meditating for around two hours, he fully recovered his spiritual power. Lin Xuan then went to sleep. Since there was still some time to the treasures trade fair, first he would restore his body to it's best condition. And anyway, it was already evening and could be considered to be going to sleep a little early.

035 The Three Forces

The sun rose, casting warms rays of sunshine on his body. With the blink of an eye, the second day was here.

Rising in the morning, Lin Xuan washed up. Using his medallion, he passed through the restrictions and left his cottage. It was still early, but there were already many small scattered groups of cultivators about. Looks like he was not the only one with the idea of arriving at the treasures trade fair early.

According to the description on the jade slip, there was a plaza on the south side of the basin which could be used to set up their shops.

In the thousands of kilometres of the surrounding area, there were not many cultivators, so there were no trade cities. Therefore, with the disbanding of the Soaring Cloud sect came the opportunity for everyone to not only browse the treasures of the Soaring Cloud sect but to also acquiring needed items via trading.

The treasures trade fair would begin tomorrow, so all the stalls in the plaza were all set up by outsiders.

Lin Xuan went through the information from the jade slip again, then picking a path, he set off for the plaza. He had a few objectives in mind:

Firstly, he would become familiar with the environment, for example, he would be able to recognize the path. This way, even if something

unexpected happened, it would still be easier to escape.

Secondly, he would understand the market. Although Lin Xuan had not been cultivation for too long, but he has stayed in the sect the whole time. This was his first time at a gathering of cultivators, so to the prices of various items, he had no concept of their worth. First he needed to browse around and get to know the prices of these treasures. Then once the treasures trade fair begins, he would not be swindled in his purchases.

Otherwise, if a vendor asked for two hundred pills, and he stupidly paid it not knowing the price of the item was only one hundred pills, wouldn't that be a big loss?

And thirdly, he wanted to gain more worldly experience. Staying in his room was boring anyway, and it a rare to have a gathering of cultivators, so why not broaden his horizons and join in on the fun.

Keeping these objectives in mind, Lin Xuan arrived at the plaza and walked into the market. He discovered that there were a lot more cultivators setting up here than he imagined. Stalls to the east, shops in the west, cries of peddlers without end. If he didn't know better, he would have thought he was in a vegetable market.

"So many cultivators!" Lin Xuan made a rough estimate. There were at least two thousand people peddling their wares and among the stalls. It seems the news of the disbanding of the Soaring Cloud sect was really far reaching. These cultivators are probably not just from the Yan prefecture, even cultivators from beyond the prefecture rushed here to participate.

Although the rogue cultivators made up the majority, the various sects all more or less sent some members. For example, Floating Cloud Valley sent some disciples led by two Foundation Building elders. Although, in the whole world of cultivation, the Floating Cloud Valley's strength tended towards the lower end, but in the borders of the Yan prefecture, it was definitely a large and influential sect. Two cultivators in the Foundation Building stage was very shocking and frightening to the younger cultivators.

Other than the Floating Cloud Valley, The sects of Chong prefecture also sent elders over. These seven or eight sects of various sizes included the Flame Spirit sect, the Seal Mountain, the Starry Sky clan, *etc*.

These sects were also the most powerful force participating in the treasures trade fair. Their objectives were the precious crafting materials and spirit tools. These treasures can greatly increase the strength of their sects. They would not let them lightly fall into the other sects' hands. There will definitely be fierce competition for them.

But this had nothing to do with him. He already had three spirit tools, one of which was even top grade, which was more than enough for him. So Lin Xuan never even had the intention to buy any spirit tools. Therefore, he did not have any opposing requirements to the various big sects and just needed to be careful and not get recognized by his fellow disciples.

But he did not really need to worry because he had never met the two elders before, and all the disciples they brought were elite disciples who had entered the sect before him. Even if he stood in front of them, the would still be complete strangers to each other.

In addition to these big sects, the next most powerful force were the various cultivation clans. These little groups, whose members were blood-related, could be considered, in a strict sense, to be a miniature sect. Their numbers were also all different. Some had hundreds of members, some only had three or five. But for each clan, the head of the family was also the patriarch.

Although they could not compare to the various large sects, these cultivator clans still had a certain level of power. Their objectives were the low-grade spirit tools that the larger sects ignored, the more powerful seals, and the techniques.

This coincides with his objective, so they might become a competitor in the trade fair. Lin Xuan frowned and started formulating countermeasures.

There were still rogue cultivators, who made the largest group, but had the lowest cultivation and were the least powerful force. Of these cultivators, few had objectives like Lin Xuan, most did not have a goal in mind. Most of them just wanted to check out the market and try their luck during the treasures trade fair. They could still find items they needed among the items that were not worth being looked at by the other two forces.

To put it nicely, everyone can purchase what they need, but this was definitely not the case. The world of cultivation is an unreasonable world where might is right. If you happened to acquire something that one of the major sects wanted, then you had better be careful or you might be annihilated.

In fact, to put it plainly, it would be the major sects that would pick

what they wanted first which would be followed by the cultivator clans. The rogue cultivators, without powerful backing to rely on, could only look on enviously and pick over what was left.

Of course, it can not be said that the rogue cultivators would be wasting their efforts and leave empty handed. At least, this was a rarely seen event in the world of cultivation and can be considered to be gaining worldly experience. Also, anyone can set up a stall at the fair. The large sects and cultivator clans would not even look at these stalls, but the rogue cultivators and exchange items here and acquire what they needed.

Looking that the dense crowd of cultivators in front of him, Lin Xuan analyzed the situation of the treasures trade fair. This was what he concluded with the information available to him before coming here. But he did not realize that this trades fair would be so grand that even though it would only start tomorrow, it had already attracted to many cultivators.

036 The Value of Pills

With the participation of the large sects and cultivator clans, the rogue cultivators held little hope of acquiring treasures at the treasures trade fair tomorrow. Therefore, they paid more attention to the stalls in the marketplace, and this is also why the plaza was so lively so early in the morning.

Lin Xuan's main objective was to acquire the Spiritual Control technique, which is simply impossible to be found in these simple and crude stalls. So he did not worry and instead slowly wandered the market to increase his knowledge of the marketplace.

Rogue cultivators generally had lower level cultivations, most of them being in the second or third Spirit Gathering layer. So Lin Xuan's current cultivation was quite good. But because of that, they generally did not have any precious items. But there were still many cultivators, so all the items needed by low-level cultivators for various tasks were still all being sold. This was truly an eye opener for Lin Xuan.

For example, items used for storage. Lin Xuan saw a young woman peddling them. There were many different variations such as storage rings, storage bracelets, storage hairpins, storage necklaces, and virtually any kind of woman's jewellery. They were all exquisitely made and very eye catching.

Of course, there were also items for men such as storage belts, storage bags, and even storage boots. They were all very dazzling and drew Lin Xuan to the stall.

“Fellow cultivator, would you like one? They are of good quality and very cheap, only two low grade Purified Essence pills.”

It was so cheap. If Lin Xuan was not such a discrete person and had a habit of not wearing his heart on his sleeve, he definitely would have been shocked beyond belief. Although he was not too clear on the value of goods in the cultivation world, but two low-grade Purified Essence pills, even low levelled disciples in the Floating Cloud Valley could acquire two a month. This kind of price was simply too low.

In fact, this was a misconception on Lin Xuan’s part. Although he had no spiritual roots, had a slow cultivation speed, and had to suffer the glares of the other disciples, compared to rogue cultivators, he was still more fortunate. Other than the incident where Elder Ma was trying to cause trouble [1], he could still get two low grade Purified Essence pills a month without fail.

[tl: [1] = Chapter 0005: Purified Essence Pill. Elder Ma wanted to kick him out of the sect by giving Lin Xuan waste pills.]

And after gaining the ability to purify, he had an unending supply of pills, so these low-grade pills did not even matter to him. Be he had forgotten that two pills a month was the kind of treatment only disciples of a sect could get.

But there were too many rogue cultivators, who had no support and no one to rely on, in the cultivation world. But just think, sects had people dedicated alchemy and the concoction of pills, but what can a low levelled rogue cultivator do? They did not have the ability to concoct or

perform alchemy, nor could they find any medicinal herbs. Therefore, although they did not acquire many pills a month, sect disciples still had the support of these pills, but rogue cultivators can one rely on their own efforts to cultivate.

This was why, under the same circumstances, sect disciples would be more powerful than rogue cultivators. This was also the reason why high-level rogue cultivators were so rare since most rogue cultivators were only in the Spirit Gathering stage.

Of course, with the guidance of the elders, they would walk a straighter path, and the fact that sects had better cultivation techniques was also a factor. But the most important was still the fact that they had no pills to help with their cultivation.

After all, to the path of cultivation, determination, spiritual roots, and pills and medicines were all very important. But spiritual roots and pills could make up for the lack of each other. For example, Lin Xuan, he was an ordinary mortal. But after consuming pills, his cultivation speed became much faster than that of his senior disciples. And conversely, a genius with excellent spiritual roots would not need pills to achieve the same results.

But how many heaven-defying genii were there in the world? Most of the rogue cultivators only had average aptitude and therefore would stay in the Spirit Gathering stage their entire lives.

And because of this, pills were truly treasures to rogue cultivators and were worth a lot. But in the eyes of Lin Xuan, it was very cheap, when in fact, is was a very reasonable price.

“Fellow cultivator, pick one, these storage items a definitely exquisitely made, high quality, and cheap.” Seeing Lin Xuan’s interested expression, she quickly started to persuade him.

“May I see it?” Lin Xuan asked as he picked up a sack-like object.

“You may”

Getting a positive response, Lin Xuan circulated his spiritual power and inserted his spiritual sense into the item but then quickly withdrew it. See his lack of interest, the young lady asked anxiously: “What’s wrong, you are not satisfied with it?”

“It’s a bit small.”

Lin Xuan was being honest trying to be as polite as possible. This storage sack was simply rubbish. The space inside was small, only one square foot. It could at most only accommodate some pills or seals, slightly large items like spirit tools would probably not fit.

It could never compare to the storage items he had acquired from Zhou Yan and Zhang Yu. The bracelet had a space of five square metres. and the belt was a Foundation Building experts item, it had as much room as a regular bedroom.

The young lady blushed hearing what Lin Xuan said. She was at the second layer of the Spirit Gathering stage and had learned a technique suitable for crafting, so she made some of these items to sell. But since

she had low cultivation, she could obviously not create high-level items. These storage items looked exquisite on the outside but were actually pretty useless. So even though she had peddled here items the whole day, she did not manage to sell any of them.

"Fellow cultivator, please purchase one, how about I give you a discount, only one pill each."

Lin Xuan shook his head and, without hesitating, walked away. Although he had quite a few Purified Essence pills, but they were not to be randomly wasted. Even if he did not regret spending them, it would still be easy to attract the attention of others. Lin Xuan was not some good Samaritan, he would not do things that had no benefits for himself.

After leaving the young lady's stall, Lin Xuan continued to stroll about. He often stopped to browse or ask for the prices of things, however, he did not purchase anything. Firstly, even though there were many items at the stalls, they were all either low-grade items or they were useless to him. Secondly, Lin Xuan did not want to randomly expose himself. Since he was pretending to be a rogue cultivator, the he needed to look like one by appearing poor. Looking rich and powerful would bring him trouble.

Time flowed like water, four hours had unknowingly passed by. The sun was already straight overhead, it was time for the midday meal.

High-level cultivators can fast, absorbing spiritual power was enough to fulfill their bodies needs. But low-level cultivators could not do this, so Lin Xuan prepared to go back to his cottage and restore his strength. Although he did not purchase anything, but strolling around the whole way, he had no shortage of benefits. He now had a pretty good idea of

the market price of all the items.

Pills and medicines were worth more than he had originally thought. Even Purified Essence pills were valuable. Especially the mid grade pills, although it would not raise a sensation, but it would definitely be shocking.

After discovering this, Lin Xuan mind came to a decision. He had enough pills to purchase the mid grade technique he wanted, but he would not pull out his mid grade pills except as a last resort.

037 Seals

Originally, Lin Xuan wanted to go back to his cottage to eat, but he was suddenly attracted to a stall and stopped. In fact, he was not the only one, there was already a crowd around the stall.

Lin Xuan walked over, curious as to just what kind of treasure could draw such a large crowd of cultivators.

The owner of the stall was a muddle-headed youth who looked to be in his early twenties. With so many people surrounding him, he was very nervous and his face was flushed. There were a wide variety of seals [1] placed in his stall.

[tl: [1] = Fulu are basically paper seals / talisman that could summon, control, exorcise spirits and deities. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fulu]

Items created when cultivators sealed their techniques into special seal paper were called seals. Using seals, when facing enemies, one did not need to use spiritual power and use was instantaneous. So the benefits to using them were clear.

To high-level cultivators, seals useless, but to low-level cultivators, they were very useful and precious. In particular, when dealing with enemies, having one extra seal could be the difference between victory and defeat.

But correspondingly, the production of seals were very complicated. Not only did it require the correct kind of sealing paper, it also required a

large amount of spiritual power, and has had a low success rate. The high levelled the technique, the harder it was to make. Therefore, seals were precious and rare items in the world of cultivation.

Lin Xuan strolled around the market for four hours and had not seen any stalls selling seals. And yet here was a stall with so many of them. Taking a rough estimate, there were almost a hundred of them.

No wonder it attracted so many cultivators.

Lin Xuan pushed to the front and after taking a look at the seals placed in the stall, was greatly disappointed. He never thought there would be high-level seals for sale here, but there was not even a single mid grade seal.

The seals that were for sale were all low grade, and they were the most basic and lowest of the low-grade techniques. For example, the Hail technique, the blaze technique, the Quicksand technique, the Rock Fall technique, the Briers technique, *etc*. There was plenty of variety, but these kinds of techniques, even Spirit Gathering first layer cultivators could easily use, what was the point of purchasing them?

Therefore, even though there were many cultivators around the stall, not a single one was will to purchase anything. Finally, after a long time, a voice, with a ridiculing tone asked: “Stall owner, what are the prices for your seals?”

The youth flushed even more and lowered his head. Adopting an expression that worried the surrounding cultivators, he said: “One low-grade Purified Essence pill for two seals.”

“Hmph! This kind of low-grade technique can easily be executed, and you still want that much for it. Your want for pills has driven you insane.”

The crowd also ridiculed him for a while, then slowly dispersed. The youth flushed some more, then sighing, he began to pack up his stall. He had already been here for two days, but he had not sold a single seal.

It was not because low levelled seals were useless, for cultivators with low spirit power, they were a good choice for self-defense. There were two reasons that caused them to be difficult to sell.

Firstly, Foundation Building cultivators would definitely not purchase these, because these kinds of low levelled techniques were not worth their time, so they would naturally not waste spirit stones or pills on this kind of exchange. Secondly, for Spirit Gathering cultivators, although they can execute these techniques, it would consume spiritual power and was slower to execute. So of course, they would want seals. But the problem was, they were poor, so it was beyond their grasp, and they could only insult what they could not have [2].

[tl: [2] = The literal translation here is “If they could not eat the grapes, they could only call it sour.” So basically, the can only insult what they could not have.]

That was to say, these kinds of low levelled seals, Foundation Building cultivators don’t want them, and Spirit Gathering cultivators either can’t afford them or did not think it was a good deal. And thus, he was stuck in an embarrassing situation where he could not please either side.

This simple and honest youth was from the Seal Mountain. One can tell from the sect's name that the cultivators there would be adept at creating seals.

These seals were all crafted by him, but because his cultivation level was low, he could only make some of the lowest levelled seals.

The youth actually wanted to sell the seals for a cheaper price so he would be able to sell them fast. But the problem was that crafting seals was not an easy task. Not to mention the fact that seals needed specialty seal paper, they still needed precious materials such as beast or fiend blood, and the success rates were not high.

These almost one hundred seals had already consumed all of his wealth. One pill per two seals was really not expensive, he would just be breaking even.

But these kinds of low levelled seals were of little value and were hard to sell.

The youth arrived before Lin Xuan and had been here for three days. There were numerous cultivators checking out his stall, but not a single seal had been sold.

Be disheartened and with the fact that it was time for the midday meal, he decided to pack up his wares.

This whole time, Lin Xuan did not make a single sound, but he had other ideas in mind. He wanted to purchase these seals. This only reason

being, although there low levelled techniques were garbage, but as long as there was enough of them, he could still blot out the sky and cover the ground, smashing them down on the enemy, they would still have overwhelming power.

For example, these one hundred seals. If they were all used at the same time, even a Foundation Building expert need to frantically defend. And even if they could not wound the enemy, they would definitely at least give the user enough time to escape.

Of course, in the world of cultivation, other than Lin Xuan, would else would be so wasteful? With the ability to purify, what does Lin Xuan lack? He didn't lack pills, so one pill per two seals was a very simple transaction.

But Lin Xuan did not try to purchase them immediately because pulling out fifty Purified Essence pills would attract too much attention. Lin Xuan would not do this kind of stupid thing that would only lead to disaster.

He would need to find a more secluded place to buy them.

Coming up with this plan, Lin Xuan followed the other cultivators and walked off, but he did move far away and only casually strolled about neared the stall. Of course, all of his attention was focused on that stall selling seals.

Not long after, the simple and honest youth dishearteningly packed up his items, getting ready to leave the plaza. Lin Xuan quietly followed him.

After leaving the marketplace, the number of cultivators suddenly dropped. Checking to see that no one had noticed him, he quietly stepped behind a large tree and removed an item from his storage bracelet that was concealed in his bosom.

It was a membrane like item that had a very lifelike face painted upon it. This was not a treasure of the cultivation world but was instead from the secular world. Martial artists often used these disguising masks.

As the name suggests, after putting it on, it would change a person's appearance and conceal their identity. Although in the cultivation world there are more advanced ways to do this, such as some advanced techniques to change facial features. But Lin Xuan's level was too low and he simply had no way to learn these techniques, so he could only go with his second best option.

He had purchased this mask in the secular world on his way to the Soaring Cloud sect. This was his first journey, so he needed to be fully prepared to participate in the gathering of cultivators. But this also proved that Lin Xuan really did not waste his time thinking and preparing because he already had a use for this mask.

038 Purchase

Although it was an item from the secular world, but as long as it was applied properly, it can still be used to great effect. Lin Xuan always did things in a leakproof manner. Although he had already decided to purchase the seals from the simple youth in a deserted place, and even though the youth looked honest, but just to be safe, Lin Xuan still decided not to deal with him with his true appearance.

This mask can be used to change one's appearance, but of course, it could not trick the spiritual sense of a Foundation Building cultivator. But that youth definitely looked to be in the same stage, the Spirit Gathering stage, as Lin Xuan, so as long as he does not use some technique to check, he would not be able to Lin Xuan's true appearance.

Being a big customer, Lin Xuan believed that even if the youth was dull in the head, he would not do something so reckless. Because to intentionally use the Reveal technique on another, according to the rules of the cultivation world, was very rude and even hostile behaviour

After envisioning all the possible scenarios, Lin Xuan felt that there was no chance of any accidents and that there were no flaws. So he put on the mask, and suddenly, his appearance completely changed, turning him into a ruddy-faced unrefined looking fellow.

Then, Lin Xuan placed a small round object underneath his tongue. This was also an item purchased in the-the secular martial arts world and can change one's voice.

After completing all this, Lin Xuan walked out from behind the tree and continued to follow the youth at a constant pace. After walking for about a quarter of an hour, they arrived at a deserted place.

It was time to act!

Lin Xuan took a look around and did not see anyone else. He quickened his pace: “Fellow cultivator, please wait!”

“You are…” The simple youth turned around and looked at Lin Xuan with doubt. With a flash of vigilance in his eye he hesitantly said: “Fellow cultivator asked me to wait, what did you need?”

Lin Xuan had some mixed feelings. He could clearly see that the youth had an alert expression on his face. Even though he looked dull in the head, he had a fine mind. He knows that he needed to be guarded around strangers, but he was still too inexperienced because the expressions on his face were too obvious.

Lin Xuan smiled and stepped forward, deliberately pretending he had not seen his expression. “I am Zhao Gang and I would like to buy fellow cultivators seals.”

“You want to buy seals?”

The youth was overjoyed and threw his caution to the winds. “Fellow cultivator wants to buy seals, that’s great! How many do you want?”

It was no wonder that he was so happy, he had peddled for three days

but had not sold a single one. Now that he finally had a customer. he was very excited. After all, most youths were impetuous, it was hard to find many that were as mature as Lin Xuan.

"How many do you have?"

Hearing this question, the youth was dazed for a moment, then he smiled from ear to ear. "Haha, can it be that fellow cultivator needs a lot of them? Let me count them."

He reached into his bosom and pulled out a large stack of seals as he was speaking and focused on counting them. Lin Xuan's expression did not change, he did not show happiness nor did he anxious. He just casually waited beside him.

The reason he picked this spot to stop the youth was because of careful consideration. This road was not often used and on average, it would be only used once every hour. So he was not worried, there was ample time.

"There is a total of one hundred and eight seals." The youth had finished counting. "How many would fellow cultivator like?"

"Okay, I'll take all of them."

"All of them." The youth's mouth hung open. He was very happy, this was much better than what he had imagined, so he happily said: "If it's like that, then I will also be straightforward. Originally, it was two seals for one low-grade Purified Essence pill, since fellow cultivator wants so many, then I will lower the price too. I'll give you a round number [1], fifty pills

are enough.”

[tl: [1] = 整数, or round / whole number are not actually meant to be integral numbers. They are integral, but it is one step further. For example 50 is a round number, but 51 - 59 are not. So they are just nice looking numbers.]

Fifty. Lin Xuan made a quick calculation. According to the knowledge he gained in the market today, this was not a high price. It was basically the cost of crafting that many seals. That amount was nothing to him.

Although he agreed with the price, but he did not immediately take out the pills. Instead, he put on a pained expression and pondered for a while. This made the youth fidget, and just before when the youth could not hold it anymore, Lin Xuan sighed. Pretending to finally make a choice with great determination, he said: “Alas, I urgently need these seals, fine, deal.”

Hearing this, the youth finally let go of the breath he was holding, and started giggling.

“Alas, I spent lots effort and many years accumulating these pills, and they are all I have.” Lin Xuan muttered this while pulling five jade bottles from his bosom.

This was also Lin Xuan being clever and not missing small details when doing things. For example, although each bottle could hold one hundred pills, it would be too eye catching. Therefore, Lin Xuan deliberately packed the pills separately, ten pills per bottle. This way, he gave the impression that these pills were collected with great effort, and would

not attract unwanted attention.

Exchanging the pills for seals, the youth happily received the pills, and Lin Xuan started counting the seals. They were all there. Lin Xuan did not want to stay for long: “Zhao says goodbye. [2]”

[tl: [2] = It is common to refer to oneself in the third person with just one’s last name.]

The youth saluted: “Fellow cultivator, have a nice day.” This transaction was the satisfaction of everyone involved.

Lin Xuan went back to the cottage, and after having his lunch, he used his medallion to break through the restrictions and went into his room. It was a very rich harvest this morning. These hundred seals, although they were useless, but there were a lot of them. With these, he had also increased his strength by a level.

He had a clearly understanding of the whole situation and had a pretty good idea of the market prices of all the various items. For tomorrow’s purchase of the mid grade technique, he was more confident than before.

No, he would definitely succeed.

Lin Xuan laid on the bed and rested for a while. Considering the time, the cultivators should have finished dining, and the marketplace should have opened again. Since it was boring to stay in his room, Lin Xuan decided to go stroll around again and see if there were anything useful treasures.

With this in mind, Lin Xuan once again came to the plaza. It seemed even more lively this time, the number of people also increased. It seems that the number of cultivators arriving increased as it got closer to the time of the treasures trade fair.

The hawking of wares was very lively, but to Lin Xuan, there were not that many useful things. Although he was only a mid-stage Spirit Gathering cultivator, but based on his net worth, he was much richer than most Foundation Building cultivators. Therefore, most trivial things could not catch his eyes.

Of course, that was not to say that Lin Xuan had no harvests. Wandering around for the entire afternoon, Lin Xuan still bought some things, namely, spirit stones.

When he saw them at a stall, Lin Xuan was actually surprised. After all, these stones that contained the spiritual power of the heavens and the earth had many great uses, such as cultivating, crafting, battling; and would rarely appear in the hands of low levelled cultivators.

So of course, when he saw two pieces of spirit stones, Lin Xuan did not hesitate and immediately purchased them and put them away.

039 Soaring Cloud Technique

The next morning, the entire Sky Pillar peak was crowded. To the Soaring Cloud sect, today was unlucky day that they had to disband and sell their possessions on, but to those cultivators that did not care about others whatsoever, today was a day they had been waiting for a long time.

Leaving out the large sects and cultivator clans, even the rogue cultivators were looking forward to being able to acquire good treasures. Lin Xuan got up very early, but when he arrived at the plaza, he saw that it was already packed with cultivators.

The jade slip that everyone received when first arriving had detailed arrangements for today's event.

The treasures trade fair divided into two parts: the auction and free selection. Since the auction allowed the participants to bid, naturally the items for sale would be of high quality. It included spirit tools, crafting materials, and monstrous beast eggs.

Everyone was familiar with spirit tools and crafting materials. These beast eggs were the unhatched offspring of monstrous beasts.

As everyone knows, monstrous beasts and cultivators alike could absorb the spiritual power of the heavens and earth. However, despite the fact that monstrous beasts are ferocious, they can still be tamed, and once they follow a master, they will never betray them. Many sects had a

habit of taming monstrous beasts to guard the sect.

These monstrous beast eggs were the eggs of the tamed monstrous beasts of the Soaring Cloud sect. Since they were unhatched, they have yet to accept a master, so they were an exceptionally good deal.

Thus, it can be seen that the items being auctioned off were truly treasures of the Soaring Cloud sect. But the ordinary rogue cultivators did not even need to think about them, because the Floating Cloud Valley, the Flame Spirit sect, the Seal Mountain, Starry Sky clan, etc would definitely divide the treasure among themselves. Even the cultivator clans might only be able to receive a fraction of the leftovers and be able to buy some low-grade spirit tools or garbage monstrous beast eggs.

The second part of the trade fair was free selection. It was called free selection because it was like the stalls of the rogue cultivators of the past few days. Only this time, it would be the Soaring Cloud sect setting them up, sorted into different categories, and allowing everyone to pick what they wanted.

Although the best treasures were auctioned off, but after the accumulation of a thousand years, the wealth of the Soaring Cloud sect was definitely not small. Various useful items for low levelled cultivators, even Foundation Building cultivators, were likely to appear.

The various sects would not be interested in these, so the main customers are the cultivator clans and the rich among the rogue cultivators.

The details in the jade slip were very clear, even the items for sale were

listed in detail. This made Lin Xuan very happy for it saved him a lo of effort.

Skipping other things, Lin Xuan looked for the cultivation techniques first. For low-level cultivation techniques, they had over a dozen of different kinds of techniques. This caused Lin Xuan to start planning again. Although the Floating Cloud Valley taught low-level cultivation techniques, but they only gave out some very common techniques to unimportant disciples.

The really good low-level cultivation techniques were only taught to the few outstanding elite disciples.

This was the reason why even though he used plenty of pills and put in lots of effort in cultivating and had still yet to break into the fifth layer.

Although the Soaring Cloud sect could not compare to the Floating Cloud Valley, that that was based on the number of high levelled cultivators each sect had and the quality of their mid level cultivation techniques. Though just comparing low level cultivation techniques, they were both on par.

Then why shouldn't he purchase a exquisite low level cultivation technique. This way, his cultivation progress would be more smooth and much faster.

Because the plaza did not have enough space and the number of attending cultivators was too high, the Soaring Cloud sect decided to have two rounds of free selection. This would reduce congestion around the stalls and thus allow for high sale prices. It was decide that one

session wold be in the morning selling cheaper items and one in the afternoon selling more expensive items. This cause Lin Xuan to be moved even more.

Because low level cultivation techniques belonged to the morning session, mid level cultivation techniques were scheduled to be in the afternoon. This means that he would not need to be worried about missing one or the other and could slowing browse through them.

After understanding the things described in the jade slip, Lin Xuan headed directly for the area where the low level cultivation techniques were sold. If he was going to buy them, he should act quickly. He did not want to let other beat him to it. He was not interested in other techniques because he was going to purchase the best low level cultivation technique that the Soaring Cloud sect had.

He found the stall were quickly, it was in a relatively remote corner. The only reason for this was because low level cultivation techniques were only suitable for Spirit Gathering disciples. Not to mention the various sects, even the cultivator clans would not be interested. And even though rogue cultivators would want them, they were poor, even if they had enough pills, they could still not bear to part with them for this.

Therefore, these cultivation techniques were things that were hard to sell, and the one responsible for this stall was also a common low levelled disciple of the Soaring Cloud sect.

There were very few people that were interested. Lin Xuan took a look and saw a dozen jade slips and a some twenty years old young man sitting behind the stand.

The Stirring Sky technique, the Purple Sun Spirit technique, the Soft Wood technique……

In front of every jade slip was a label clearly stating the name of the technique. Lin Xuan read each one until he finally saw the Soaring Cloud technique.

This was also a coincidence because before, at the Young Eagles pavilion, there was a very knowledgeable Foundation Building expert reviewing the base cultivation technique of the various sects. Among the few sects of the Yan prefecture, the most powerful one was of course the Floating Cloud Valley because they had the greatest number of Foundation Building cultivators and a Core Formation expert, Immortal Yun He, was the patriarch.

But in terms of low levelled disciples, the lower ranked Soaring Cloud sect was not at all inferior to the Floating Cloud Valley. Especially their best cultivation technique, the Soaring Cloud technique, compared to the Flying Cloud Spirit technique of the Floating Cloud sect, they were equally matched. They each had their own strengths and were both good cultivation techniques for the basis of Foundation Building.

Lin Xuan did not care about the above remark at the time, but he always remembered it because that Foundation Building cultivator praised the Soaring Cloud technique a lot. So naturally, he wanted to purchase this cultivation technique.

Picking up the jade slip marked Soaring Cloud technique, he inserted his spiritual sense into it and did a little inspecting. Then he raised his

had and casually asked: “How much?”

The disciple did not even raise his head and said: “Thirty low grade Purified Essence Pills.”

“Okay.” Lin Xuan did not speak [1], directly pulling out three jade bottles from his bosom and placing it on the stand. After waiting for the other party to finish counting the pills, he turned around and left.

[tl: [1] = 嗯 is the sound of agreement. https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/%E5%97%AF#Interjection_3]

The whole process took no more than five minutes, after which he continued to wander around the market as if nothing had happened. Compared to the market of the rogue cultivators, the business here was booming. One reason was that there were more valuable treasures here. The second reason was that the cultivator clans had more money that rogue cultivators, for this trade fair, they prepared more than enough pills in advance.

Lin Xuan did not make any more purchases, after wandering around for a while, he went back to the cottage to rest and recuperate. Buying the Soaring Cloud technique was a spur of the moment decision, the main objective for this trip was still to acquire the mid grade technique, Spiritual Control. As long as there was nothing unexpected this afternoon, the this trip would be successful.

040 The Situation of Cultivators

At noon, there was a continuous stream of cultivators making their way back. It was lunch time, and low-level cultivators could not simply fast. The food was provided by the cottages for free and tasted very good.

Lin Xuan had finished eating earlier and had nothing to do. So instead of going back to his cottage, he sat in the cafeteria drinking tea.

For one, he could wait until the afternoon session started, and also, as people were having tea, they would talk about their knowledge and experiences. So as long as one paid attention, they would easily learn useful information.

Lin Xuan was on the second floor at a seat by the window. He had a casual expression while sipping his tea. It seemed like he was looking out the window enjoying the scenery. But, in fact, he was listening to the conversations around him and paying careful attention.

Though there was a lot of background noise, but to a cultivator with strong spiritual sense, it was nothing. As long as they did not use spiritual power to transmit sound, the every word could be heard clearly.

“Hey, did you go to the auction this morning?”

The sound of a broken gong attracted everyone’s attention. Lin Xuan also glanced back. It was a burly man dressed in the coarse clothing style of rogue cultivators.

“What, are you also participating in the auction?” said a chubby youth with a face full of respect.

The man blushed. “We rogue cultivators, do not have the strength to participate and can only go watch.”

“Oh.” The crowd showed an expression of understanding and suddenly lost interest, and went back to eating and drinking tea.

“Hey, listen to me.” The man like to grandstand, seeing that they were not paying attention to him, he became agitated. “Do you know, the items in the auction are real treasures. Just this morning, there were three low-grade spirit tools, two mid-grade spirit tools, and one high-grade spirit tool.”

Speaking of spirit tools, all the cultivators started to become interested. Although spirit tools were simplified magical treasures, but their magical power was great. Many Foundation Building cultivators did not even have them, so these Spirit Gathering rogue cultivators could only wishfully think of them.

Although most of these people have not personally seen them, but they have heard their elders describe spirit tools as having infinite power.

“Sigh, I did not think that spirit tools would appear. If I had known earlier, I would not have gone to wander about the stalls, but instead, would have gone to see the auction. Although I cannot afford it, but at least it can be seen as increasing my worldly experience.”

A cultivator with the appearance of an old in the corner coldly stated: “Hmph, do you think it’s easy to watch the auction from the sidelines? If you want to get into the auction, you first have to pay one Purified Essence pill as the ticket price.”

Upon hearing this, the rogue cultivators were stunned. To watch from the side would require one medicinal pill. Suddenly, everyone turned, with astonished looks in their eyes, to the man before. Some showed worship, others showed contempt. To waste precious pills for an eye opener was definitely an act of a wastrel.

But no matter what they felt about it, they were still all very interested in spirit tools. They all wanted more information, so the man, with spittle flying, started excitedly explaining.

“You did not see the power of the spirit tool. With just a single strike, it reduced a 500-kilogram boulder to dust, and it was only a mid grade spirit tool……”

Although the man liked to grandstand, but he was also eloquent, with a little explanation, he had already charmed the crowd.

“Then who took this lot of spirit tools?”

“Who else could it be, of course, the mid and high-grade spirit tools were taken by those powerful sects and the low-grade ones were taken by those wealthy cultivator clans. Did you think that us rogue cultivators would even have a chance?”

“You’re right, not only do we not have enough medicinal pills to participate in the auction but even if we acquired it, it would be a hot potato and only invite annihilation.”

This was put very bluntly, but everyone understood the point. Endlessly sighing, they also lost a lot of interest in what the man was saying. So not a lot of people heard what he said after. The afternoon auction would have even more precious treasures than the morning and included the top grade spirit tool of the patriarch of the Soaring Cloud sect and many monstrous beast eggs.

Lin Xuan lifted his cup and used the motion of drinking his tea to conceal his slight smile. Hmmm, his luck was not bad. To other Spirit Gathering stage cultivators, low-grade spirit tools were only things that they might acquire by luck. But he had three of them, the worst being mid-grade, and one of them was even top grade.

Only, if he wanted to fully utilize their power, he would need the Spiritual Control technique. Thinking of this, Lin Xuan was even more determine to acquire this mid-rank technique.

The mood in the hall was a bit low. At his moment, he heard a voice coldly say: “Hmph, what are we, the rogue cultivators, in the eyes of those sects and cultivator clans. Ignoring the fact that we can’t even participate in the auction, the items brought out in the auction already have their winners decided behind the scenes.”

“Deciding who would win them behind the scenes?” The cultivators were all shocked. Lin Xuan also paid attention, looking for the sound of

the voice, he found it was the old man drinking in the corner by himself.

"Fellow cultivator, what did you mean by that?" Lin Xuan did not need to ask because naturally, some curious cultivators would ask for him.

The old man drank a gulp of wine and did not keep them in suspense. "The Soaring Cloud sect has five mid-grade techniques. Other than the precious Jade Cloud technique being sold at the auction, the other four have all been sent to the market to be sold.

Everyone nodded, this was also mentioned in the description of the treasures trade fair on the jade slip.

"Did you guys know, of the four mid-rank techniques, three of them have already been reserved for the cultivator clans?"

"Reserving ahead of time, is that not against the rules?"

"Hmph, rules?" The old man mockingly laughed. "You all came to participate in the trade fair, so presumably, you all are not new to the world of cultivation. When have you heard of following rules when doing things. If you want to reason with them, would those sects and clans reason with you? Only strength counts in this world."

The crowd was speechless. They were all rogue cultivators and were frequently bullied by the sects and clans. But what could they do about it, this was a world ruled by force.

Even if they were dissatisfied with them operating behind the scenes,

they still could do nothing about it.

"Then let them reserve those mid-rank techniques ahead of time. It's not like we Spirit Gathering cultivators can use them anyway!"

"Well said, fellow cultivator. Few rogue cultivators can achieve Foundation Building. Even if they gave us those mid-rank techniques, it would still be useless for us."

"That's right, who cares, let's drink, let's drink."

041 Cultivator Clans

Using the medallion to open the restrictions, Lin Xuan returned to his room. As soon as he entered, he stood silently stood beside the bed and became gloomy. The reason was because originally, he wanted to simply waste some time in the cafeteria and wanted to see if he could hear any useful information. Who knew he would learn of such shocking news.

When he initially learned that there would be four mid-rank techniques for sale in the afternoon session of the trades fair, he was in a great mood. Because his goal was simply to acquire the Spiritual Control technique that was included in these cultivation techniques. He did not have any requirements as to whether if it was a good or bad technique since it was only usable by Foundation Building cultivators and he was still far from that stage.

He only needed to learn the Spiritual Control technique, as to the mid-rank cultivation techniques of Foundation Building, he only needed to think about that when the time came. It was still too early right now.

With this idea in mind, of the four techniques, he should not have a problem acquiring one of them.

But not……

According to that old man, of the four mid-rank techniques, three of them have already been reserved by the cultivator clans. That only leaves one choice for him.

They were not like the low-rank techniques of the Spirit Gathering stage. It was not often that a mid-rank technique showed up and so they were in high demand. But the number of cultivator clans participating in this gathering were not limited to just three. The other clans and rogue cultivators are probably also aiming for that last mid-rank technique and the difficulty of acquiring it for himself has also gone up greatly.

Although speaking in terms of spiritual medicine, Lin Xuan was confident he would not lose to anyone, but if he was to do that……

After being silent for a while, Lin Xuan clenched his teeth and decided that no matter what, he would not give up, he must get that mid-rank technique.

Although Lin Xuan was generally cautious and like to plan before taking action, but this does not mean that Lin Xuan was a cowardly person. He was only like this because he did not want to provoke unnecessary trouble.

But if these things really happened and he had to make a choice, Lin Xuan would not be timid. Being a man, at the critical moment, you must know when to brave charge forward or to wisely retreat. If you were cowardly or afraid, you would not be able to do great things.

Since he was determined to win that mid-rank technique, then there was no need to think too much about it.

Thinking of this point, Lin Xuan sat down cross-legged to recover his spiritual power to the best condition. This way, if conflicts with others

who wanted this cultivation technique occurred, his chances of winning would greater.

After almost an hour, Lin Xuan opened his eyes and left the house. Arriving at the plaza, he took a look around. There were nearly a hundred cultivators and arrived early to wait for the start of the trades fair. These were all people who had a treasure that they wanted and were afraid of other cultivators beating them to it.

Of these people, the majority of them were from the cultivator clans, only a few were rogue cultivators.

Lin Xuan rushed for a position towards the front and silently observed the surrounding cultivators. Unfortunately, no one was in the mood t chat, so he did not hear any gossip or news.

After a while, a cultivator wearing the clothing of the Soaring Cloud sect walked over and saluted the crowd. “Welcome fellow cultivators, the afternoon session of the trades fair will now begin……”

Those cultivators who absolutely wanted to acquire a treasure were not in the mood to listen to him drone, after seeing the restrictions being lifted on the plaza, they rushed in like bees.

Lin Xuan also did not delay and headed towards the south side of the plaza as described on the jade slip. Walking over, he saw that the stall selling the mid-rank technique was exactly there.

“How much for this Frozen Heart technique?” See that the jade slip was

still at the stall, Lin Xuan released a relieved sigh because he did not come too late. But he did not show it on his face.

"You are?" The one responsible for the stall was a latter stage Spirit Gathering cultivator. Taking a look at Lin Xuan, he was curious, because this was a technique that could only be used if one was at the Foundation Building stage.

Of course Lin Xuan would not stupidly reveal his usage of it, so he slightly raised his chin in a proud manner and asked: "I asked you how much is it?"

His indifferent and haughty looked awed the other person. Although he was dressed like a rogue cultivator, but he had an extraordinary bearing, it could be possible that he had powerful teachers backing him.

Thinking again of the fact that he wanted to purchase a cultivation technique that only Foundation Building cultivators could use, the owner of the stall immediately adopted a better attitude and smilingly said: "One hundred and fifty low-grade Purified Essence pills."

Seeing that the stall owner changed his attitude, Lin Xuan secretly smiled, because that was his intention. Since this was the only mid-rank cultivation technique left and a lot of other people wanted it, then being low key made no sense. It was better to be a little arrogant, this way, people would be unsure and might think he had powerful backing. This way he could add an extra layer of doubt.

But it went much better than expected, at least, there were no other buyers. It seems that arriving early was the correct decision.

Lin Xuan reached into his bosom and was preparing to retrieve the pills. But at that moment, a frivolous voice sounded behind him. “One hundred and fifty Purified Essence pills, I’ll take this Frozen Heart technique.”

Lin Xuan’s heart dropped. Who knew that in the end, there would still be an unexpected turn of events. Turning around with an expressionless face, he saw that it was a Spirit Gathering cultivator of about twenty-seven or eight years old who was dressed like the son of a noble family.

His clothes along with his tiresome expression all pointed to the fact that he was a member of a cultivator clan.

Bang, Bang. Two jade bottles were thrown onto the stand. Then that young man reached out for the jade slip.

“Hold on.” Linx Xuan shifted his body to block the youth.

“What?” Seeing that Lin Xuan was dressed like a rogue cultivator, the youth had a proud look on his face.

“Do you not understand first come first served?” Lin Xuan was too lazy to be long winded about this. Looking at their postures, neither sides were going to polite so they shed all pretenses of cordiality.

“Haha, first come first served. Can you, a rogue cultivator, even afford a mid-rank technique?” The youth ridiculed. “Moreover, even if you have the pills, do you dare to fight for it with my Yan family?”

Yan family was a medium sized cultivator clan. They did not have many people, only about a dozen cultivators. However, their patriarch was at the great perfection of the Spirit Gathering stage and was only a step away from the Foundation Building stage.

This knowledge of the Yan family flashed in his mind. Lin Xuan did not say anything else and retrieved the pills from his bosom. “One hundred sixty Purified Essence pills, I will take it.”

Lin Xuan was willing to give ten extra pills because, at the same price, the owner of the stall was definitely going to sell the cultivation technique to the cultivator clan and ignore the rogue cultivator. Unless he was willing to reveal the fact that he was a disciple of the Floating Cloud valley, but that was not possible.

042 Invisibility Seal

The finely dressed youth widened his eyes and looked at Lin Xuan with shock. But who could blame him? In the eyes of clan disciples, rogue cultivators are really poor. But this guy in front of him actually took out one hundred and sixty Purified Essence pills without any changes in expression, definitely changed the way he looked at him.

Could this guy be pretending to be a rogue cultivator, but instead a disciple from another cultivator clan or even a sect?

This idea swam around in Yan Ming's mind. He carefully looked Lin Xuan up and down. No, sect disciples all had specific uniforms, and clan disciples would not wear such shabby clothes. This guy was wearing the standard clothing of a rogue cultivator.

Maybe this guy just found this small fortune by plain dumb luck.

Thinking that this was the case, Yan Ming became haughty once more: "This young master will offer one hundred and seventy Purified Essence pills."

"One hundred and eighty!"

"One hundred and ninety!"

"Two hundred!" Lin Xuan clenched his teeth. He was determined to win

the Spiritual Control technique and had prepared for such a long time. How could he go back empty handed?

……

Yan Ming's forehead broke out in a cold sweat. He had never even dreamed that this unassuming guy in front of him could have such an abundant supply of medicinal pills. Although the Yan family was a mid-level cultivator clan with hundreds of years of history, but they did not have much wealth. Taking out two hundred Purified Essence pills already had their clan struggling to make ends meet, they even had to sell off many of their treasures.

But before leaving, his Lord Father had decreed that no matter what, he must purchase a mid-level cultivation technique. There was only one reason. His Lord Father, the patriarch, was about to break through the bottleneck and enter the Foundation Building stage but did not have any suitable cultivation techniques.

The sound of bidding attracted all the surrounding cultivators and the sound of discussion continued nonstop.

"Oh my god! Two hundred Purified Essence pills."

"Where is this rogue cultivator guy from to be so rich that he would dare to compete with a cultivator clan?"

"What riches, he's just stupidly bold. Just wait and see, even if he gets that cultivation technique, he will still be annihilated."

“Hmmm, it might not be like that. Since he’s not afraid of the Yan family, he might have a very powerful teacher behind him.”

……

What was just spoken was also what Yan Ming was thinking. After all, the others actions were too strange to be how a rogue cultivator. Seeing more and more people joining the crowd, an ominous look flashed quickly on Lin Xuan’s face. If this continues, things will get much worse, he must act a little faster.

He must take swift and decisive action!

He pull out another jade bottle from his bosom and placed it on the stand. “This thing here and those two hundred low-grade Purified Essence pills, are you willing to sell it for this?”

What is that?

All the rogue cultivators all had this same question in their minds. The Soaring Cloud sect disciple responsible for the stall had barely recovered from the shock. He would never have thought that an ordinary mid-level cultivation technique would fetch such a good price.

But seeing Lin Xuan’s solemn expression, he also knew it was not an ordinary item.

The stall owner swallowed a mouthful of saliva and opened the bottle. Suddenly, a refreshing scent drifted out of the bottle. there was only a single small pale blue pill lying inside.

Mid-grade Purified Essence pill!

Although they had never seen it before, most of the rogue cultivators have seen it's description is medicine books. It's colour and refreshing scent all matched.

Suddenly, someone exclaimed!

Others were also shocked speechless. Even the haughty looking Yan Ming had his mouth hanging open with a foolish look on his face.

They would never have dreamed that some rogue cultivator would be able to take out a mid grade pill.

It must be known that in the world of cultivation, pill concoction is a job that required a very high skill level. Even a low-grade pill, the success rate was only fifty or sixty percent. Mid-grade pills would not even reach a rate of one in five. It also required an experienced teacher. Even a sect like the Floating Cloud Valley did not have the strength to be able to produce a mid grade pill. Only a few sects with tens of thousands of years of ancestry would have a few mid-grade pills to give to their elite disciples when it was time for their breakthroughs.

Although theoretically, for the same kind of medicinal pill, one mid grade pill was only worth ten low-grade pills, but the reality was far from

it. Realistically, no one would do something so stupid. After all, the effectiveness of the two grades were not at the same level, especially when trying to break through, its effectiveness would be much greater.

Seeing that mid-grade pill, everyone's eyes filled with greed and looking at Lin Xuan, they also got more and more confused. After all, how could a rogue cultivator be able to take out a mid grade pull, could he be pretending to be weak to lure in prey?

"How about it, are you willing to sell?"

"Sell!"

That Soaring Cloud disciple tightly clutched the mid grade pill to his bosom, fearing that Lin Xuan would go back on his word. Yan Ming began to speak but then hesitated, his mouth moved several times, but eventually, he chose to be silent. With the wealth of his clan, they could barely spare two hundred low-grade pills, he did not even dare to think of mid-grade pills. Besides, he was filled with doubt and was afraid to think of Lin Xuan as a rogue cultivator anymore.

After making this transaction, Lin Xuan put the jade slip away in his bosom. Not daring to delay, he pushed through the crowd and left the plaza straightaway.

Lin Xuan did not even go back to the cottage. His treasures were all stored away in his storage ring anyway, so he directly used to teleportation array to leave the Soaring Cloud sect. Then using the Imperial Wind technique, he went down from Sky Pillar peak.

Along the road, Lin Xuan carefully extended his spiritual sense and sure enough, found that there were a few waves of people continuously following him. But Lin Xuan was not surprised and did not worry. This was exactly what he expected. His purchase of the mid-rank cultivation technique made so much noise, it would be strange if no one had malicious intent.

Want to kill and pillage his treasures?

Lin Xuan showed a slight and mocking smile. He circled the area a few times and then came to a small valley near Sky Pillar peak. The road here was rugged, and there were many jagged rocks strewn about, like a naturally formed maze.

He stopped and retrieved a red seal from his storage bracelet. Holding it in his had, a wistful looked flashed in his eyes. But after hesitating, he still put it on his body, sat down cross-legged, and started chanting incantations.

Under the effect of his spiritual power, the seal released a bright light and broke down into a white mist that wrapped around Lin Xuan's body. After a short while, the mist dissipated, but Lin Xuan had also vanished from that spot.

This was an invisibility seal. As the name suggests, it had the effect of invisibility. This was a rare high-level seal and was exactly why Lin Xuan was so wistful just now.

After sticking this seal on the body, for the next six hours, it would allow for one to vanish completely and at the same time, hide spiritual power

fluctuations. Even a Foundation Building expect would not be able to detect it. But of course, it had some shortcomings. One could not move during those six hours or the invisibility effect would be lost.

043 Meeting Enemies in a Small World

After doing all of this Lin Xuan sank into meditation to restore his spiritual power. To cultivators, sitting meditation of over six hours was very common.

During this time, a few waves of cultivators came. These people were all up to no good and coveted Lin Xuan's treasures.

However, the technique sealed into the invisibility seal was a high-level technique that even Foundation Building experts had trouble sensing. It was not possible for them to detect it.

They all had puzzled looks on their faces. They clearly saw the youth enter the valley, so how did he suddenly disappear? The had already searched the vicinity for a long time, some unwilling ones even used tracking type techniques, but in the end, they still found nothing.

Since it had come to this, they could only unwillingly leave.

Six hours later, a white smoke suddenly drifted out. The smoke began to drift apart, then slowly gathered together again, and then once again dissipated. Finally, a figure was revealed.

Lin Xuan had a look of indifferent, showing neither joy and anger. Standing up and looking around, he saw that there were no cultivators in the area. Although he had successfully avoided those malicious people, he still had to use a high-grade invisibility seal.

But overall, this trip to the Soaring Cloud sect has been very fruitful. Not only did he acquire the Spiritual Control technique, he had also gotten the Soaring Cloud technique.

It must be known that even though there are many cultivation techniques for the Spirit Gathering stage, there were still trashy ones and precious ones. He was only an ordinary disciples of the Floating Cloud valley. That that was why even though he had many pills and worked so hard, he was still not able to break through to the fifth layer.

But the Soaring Cloud technique was a rare treasure. After practising it, his cultivation speed would certainly improve a lot.

In addition, he had also bought two pieces of spirit stones and one hundred and eight seals. Although these were all low-level seals, but there was a large number of them. As long as he covered the heavens and earth with them, even Foundation Building experts would be hard pressed to defend against it.

While he did spend a lot of medicinal pills, but to Lin Xuan, it was nothing. After gaining the ability to purify, as long as he spent a few days working hard, he could recover the amount he had spent.

In short, his losses compared to his gains were negligible. After tidying the items inside his storage bracelet, Lin Xuan ate some rations and continued on his way.

This time, there wasn't anyone following him. Lin Xuan also didn't delay and went directly back to the Floating Cloud Valley.

Some time in the evening, Lin Xuan stopped in a small forest. There were not dwellings within this area of a few tens of kilometres. It looks like he would have to sleep out in the wilderness tonight.

After catching a wild rabbit, just as it was about half roasted, Lin Xuan's expression changed. With a wave of his sleeve, he generated a breath of cold air that extinguished the flames. Then he used dirt to cover the traces of his fire and roasting, making sure to make it look like no one had been here.

After that, Lin Xuan stepped on the ground and using the Imperial Wind technique, effortlessly floated more than a dozen metres up and came to the top of a great towering tree and was naturally concealed by the leaves. Then he stayed motionless and retracted his spiritual power. He even slowed down his pulse and heartbeat. It was as if he had become a part of the branch.

This was the wood style Concealment technique.

Just as he finished doing all this, a mass of yellow lights descended into the forest. As the rays of light dispersed, two people walked out.

Lin Xuan's expression did not change but he was secretly shocked. He had spent four years in the Floating Cloud Valley, and although he was a low-level disciple, but he always kept his eyes and ears open.

This yellow light was not from using spirit tools to tread on the clouds but was from a rarely seen flying seal. This was the same kind of high-grade seal as the invisibility seal. The person that possessed this seal was

definitely not an ordinary cultivator.

"Father, let's rest here for the night."

"Okay."

Lin Xuan was surprised. This voice sounded very familiar. After some thought, he naturally remembered. It was the voice of that clan disciple that wanted to fight with him over the mid-rank cultivation technique. It seemed that he came from a cultivator clan with the last name of Yan or something.

"Could they be coming to kill me?" Lin Xuan was shocked but then immediately calmed down and started analysing the situation. No, he used the invisibility seal. He had clearly gotten rid of his pursuers. Moreover, if they wanted to kill him, there was no need to wait till now to act.

They also did not know he was heading back to the Floating Cloud Valley so it was impossible that they chose this exact road to chase him. The most likely scenario was that this was just a coincidence and that both sides just happened to meet here.

After figuring out the situation, Lin Xuan simultaneously cursed the heavens for giving him such bad luck and carefully restricted his breathing. He stayed motionless for fear of being discovered.

"Hurry up and leave!" Lin Xuan prayed for the blessings of all the deities. It would be best if those two had some urgent matters to take

care of and was only stopping to rest and eat before hurrying on.

But the opposite happened. The two wanted to spend the night here. They started a fire and started to cook their provisions.

“Father, do you think we will be found out for our ambush of the disciples of the Wang family?”

Yan Ming sounded somewhat perturbed. Beside him sat an old man of about fifty years, whose face, after hearing this, clouded. “Hmph. If not for you being such a useless animal, and failing to acquire a mid-rank cultivation technique, would an old fellow like me have to resort to such a bad plan and take such a big risk?”

“Father, you can’t blame me for that.” Yan Ming did not fully agree. “Who would have known that a rogue cultivator would have hundreds of medicinal pills? He even had a rare mid-grade pill.”

“Are you telling the truth?”

“Father, how would I dare to lie to you? There were many rogue cultivators who saw what happened at the time.”

The old man fell into silence. This was really strange.

As the patriarch of the Yan family, Yan Tian Heng can be considered knowledgeable. But with respect to this incident, he was completely baffled.

“Forget it. There is no need to think too much about this since we already killed those juniors of the Wang family and acquired a mid-rank cultivation technique along with all their treasures.” Yan Tian Heng’s face showed some colour. “It’s their fault that those old things are at a critical point of their seclusion. Since they can’t be in two places at once, they could only send a few juniors to attend this kind of event. As to being found out, you don’t have to worry, father has already destroyed all evidence of their corpses.”

044 Exposed

Lin Xuan did not even dare to breathe too loudly after hearing such a big secret. Although it was only a few words, but just from the discussion from this father and son, he was already able to infer roughly what happened.

This was the patriarch of the Yan family who was at the great perfection of the Spirit Gathering stage and was only one step away from the Foundation Building stage. Originally, he wanted to send his son to the Soaring Cloud sect and buy a mid-rank cultivation technique, but who could have know that it would be stolen from them.

This caused Yan Tian Heng to be endlessly angry. Yan family was only a mid-level cultivator clan and did not have enough strength to be allowed to operate behind the scenes and reserve items. Thus, the only mid-grade cultivation technique for sale have fallen into the hands of others. So in desperation, Yan Tian Heng decided to make a reckless move and ambushed another cultivator clan and snatched away their mid-grade cultivation technique.

The clan that suffered the looting, the Wang family, their patriarch was an elder of the Floating Cloud Valley. They were one of the biggest cultivators clans in the area. Despite the fact that he had left to create his own sect, he still kept up a good relationship with the Floating Cloud Valley. With over one hundred people, three of which were in the Foundation Building stage, they are definitely a first-rate power in the cultivator clans of the area.

Unfortunately, the three elders of the Wang family have reached a critical point in their cultivation. Moreover, they did not think that anyone would dare to raise their hands against them, so they only sent a few juniors to attend the gathering. But this allowed Yan Tian Heng to snatch the opportunity to kill and pillage.

After a clear analysis of what had happened, Lin Xuan did not dare to even move anymore. He already had misgivings against Yan Ming and after hearing of their dirty deeds today, if he was exposed, he would definitely be silenced as a witness.

This vicious and ruthless father and son duo were not good people, but their cultivation were really not weak. Yan Tian Heng was only one step away from the Foundation Building stage and that Yan Ming had the same cultivation as himself, at the fourth layer.

Of course, it worst comes to worst, he would not go without a fight. If a fight actually broke out, he still had a ray of hope. First was that Ice Needles technique he had just learned. Although it was a mid-rank technique, it still has great power. Secondly, he had acquired a lot of seals. Other than the over one hundred low-grade seals, he also had inherited many mid-grade seals from Zhang Yu and Zhou Yan.

Lastly, he still had spirit tools. Even without the other two, he still was quite familiar with the golden rope. And although he could only use a portion of its power with the telekinesis technique, he could still use it as an ultimate technique.

Of course, although he had confidence in himself, he would not take the initiative and attack those two. After all, one of them was at the great perfection of the Spirit Gathering stage and the less trouble he had the

better. See that these two were prepared to spend the night here, Lin Xuan could only lament his bad luck. He would have to sleep in the tree tonight.

The honks of geese ran out and Yan Tian Heng stood up. Dry provisions did not taste that great and since there was prey delivering themselves then why not hunt one to fill his stomach.

Seeing Yan Tian Heng raising his head, Lin Xuan secretly cursed. He did not have time to think and so with a flash of his body, he floated down from the top of the tree. This was not Lin Xuan being rash but because of the Yan Tian Heng raising his head. With his cultivation, he would definitely see through Lin Xuan's concealment technique. So rather than staying in a disadvantaged position why not preemptively strike out.

Since he heard of their dirty deeds, those two would definitely not let him go in peace. Therefore, if they are going to drop all pretenses of cordiality, then Lin Xuan was going to attack first.

The two were shocked to see that there was someone in the tree tops. After seeing Lin Xuan's face, Yan Ming was even more shocked and exclaimed: "Father, he..... He the one that snatched away the cultivation technique with the mid-grade pill....."

He hadn't even finished talking when a red light flashed before his eyes. There were many basin sized fireballs roaring towards him.

Lin Xuan threw out a blaze seal with one hand and prepared the Ice Needles technique with the other. Amidst the ringing sound, he had already cast his technique. But the strange thing was, Lin Xuan also had a

seal on his mouth. Driven by spiritual power, it changed into smoke and covered the ground.

Yan Ming was shocked. Although the blaze and ice needles technique were low-rank techniques, but it he was hit by then, it would still take his life. In his panic, he showed the flaw of his lack of experience. Because of this clumsiness, he didn't even have time to start the spiritual shield technique and only thought of dodging. Because of his stupidity, he had already fallen into Lin Xuan's fatal trap of the quicksand technique.

The quicksand had already caught his foot and the fireballs and ice needles were almost upon him. Yan Ming's face became very pale. Although he was also at the fourth layer of the Spirit Gathering stage, he had lived his like like a pampered prince from when he was young. He rarely had to do anything by himself since he had his father protecting him. Therefore, he had never been in this kind of danger before.

"Useless!"

Lin Xuan cold smiled in his heart. They only had some cultivation and were clumsy when dealing with enemies. These kinds of cultivators that relied on their clans to bully the weak had no future. Just as Yan Ming was about to be hit by the spell, a figure flashed by and pulled him aside.

The patriarch of the Yan family!

Lin Xuan had a solemn expression on his face. This person was the real enemy. To avoid having to deal with enemies on all sides, Lin Xuan had struck at the weaker Yan Ming as soon as he showed himself. He wanted to remove an enemy while they were unprepared. Initially, everything was

going smoothly. Yan Ming was not weak, but he was still a good for nothing disciple of the clan. But the Yan family patriarchs reaction speed was also very fast.

But even though he had saved the life of his son, he was still unable to protect him from harm. Yan Ming's chest was penetrated by a piece of hail, causing fresh blood to gush out. Lin Xuan was certainly not going to was this opportunity when he saw the opening created by the Yan patriarch saving his son.

Reaching into his bosom, he pulled out five more seals. Triggering them with his spirit power, Lin Xuan threw them into the air.

Boom!

It immediately generated a heatwave. The five seals had already changed into over a dozen fireballs, screaming towards the Yan patriarch.

Yan Tian Heng's face became gloomy. He did not think that the young man before him would be so decisive and vicious when taking actions. He did not even waste time with words.

In comparison, his son was far worse. Even though his cultivation was not weak, when facing enemies, he could only panic and was clumsy. He couldn't even display one tenth of his power. Not to mention helping in battle, he was a complete liability.

045 Fierce Battle

But not matter what, he was still his son. So Yan Tian Heng used one hand to pull his son behind him and raised the other in front of him. A light yellow coloured spirit power flowed from his body and changed into a spiritual shield.

Pop!

Popping sounds rang out as the fireballs collided with the spiritual shield. But immediately after, the fireballs disappeared. The blaze seal only contained a low-level technique. To want to break through the defense of the Yan family would take a lot more effort.

Seeing that his moves did not have any effect, Lin Xuan become increasingly more serious. He did not quickly continue his assault, to use techniques without knowing the others weaknesses would be useless.

To want to beat someone else, one first must learn how to be beaten. The battles between cultivators were very dangerous, one split second of inattention could cause one to lose their life, so one should first lay down their defenses. Seeing that his ambush had failed, Lin Xuan started to prepare for a prolonged battle.

He wasn't trash like that Yan Ming. Even if he was facing a strong foe, he was still able to calmly ponder his actions.

Lin Xuan did not hesitate. Circulating his spiritual power, he also

formed a protective cover over his body. Then reaching into his bosom, he pulled out two seals. A wistful look flashed in his eyes, but immediately after, he became resolute and threw them into the air.

The first seal flashed brightly and changed into a humongous copper coin about Lin Xuan. He pointed his finger causing the copper coin to descend in front of him, shielding him from the front.

“Adamantine technique!”

The Yan family became agitated. This was a gold type mid-rank defensive technique and was very sturdy. How could a rogue cultivator have such a precious seal?

But just as he shouted out, the other seal also activated. It changed into a light blue coloured giant water bubble and wrapped around Lin Xuan.

“Water Spirit seal!”

This was also a mid-grade defensive technique!

When he originally heard from his son about the rogue cultivator that used a mid-grade pill to purchase a cultivation technique, even though there were many witnesses around to confirm it, he still was skeptical in his heart. But now he believed that there really was someone that did that. Using his experience of reading people, this youth in front of him wasn’t a rogue cultivator. That kind of outfit was definitely used to try to fool other people.

“Just who exactly are you?” Yan Tian Heng stressed each syllable and had a sinister face.

Lin Xuan did not say anything. Since things were already like this, it could only end with one side or the other dying. There was no point in saying anything, only idiots would expose their own identities.

It was as if it had cost him an arm and a leg to use those two mid-grade defensive seals. It must be known that defensive seals were much harder than offensive seals to craft and therefore was much more precious.

Even though he had inherited these from Zhang Yu and Zhou Yan, there were only these two and he had just used them up.

Lin Xuan did not respond and circulated his spiritual power forming many pieces of hail and sending them whistling over to those two.

“Hmph, such a trifling skill!”

Yan Tian Heng showed a sinister smile. He was at the great perfection of the Spirit Gathering stage. How could he even look at such a low-level technique?

Yan Tian Heng raised his arm and pinched his forefinger and thumb together and started chanting an incantation and circulating his spiritual power. Immediately, a huge ball of flames appeared upon his palm and then suddenly changed into the shape of a bird.

As for the hail technique, he didn’t even bother to look at it. Even if it

struck his spiritual shield it would not do any harm to him.

Firebird technique is a fire type mid-rank technique. He was definitely worthy of being an expert one step away from Foundation Building. Even his opening move was extraordinary.

But Lin Xuan did not panic at all. He once again reached into his bosom and fished out five more seals. Fire and water mutually suppress each other, and these five freeze seals, although there were all low-level seals, but relying on their numbers of five against one, it would still have, more or less, the same amount of power.

Yan Tian Heng opened his eyes wide in shock. He was both surprised and angry. This brat was very unexpected. Just where exactly is he from that he could take out so many seals?

Not to mention rogue cultivators, even disciples of sects would not be this wealthy!

But not matter what, he could not let him live.

Thinking of this, Yan Tian Heng launched a wild storm of attacks, one mid-grade technique after another flew towards Lin Xuan.

Lin Xuan had an apathetic look on his face but in his heart, he had to admit that Yan Tian Heng indeed worthy of being a seventh layer of cultivation expert. At this very moment, he knew how lucky he was to be able to take care of Zhou Yan with a trap back then.

If it wasn't because of the fact that Zhou Yan underestimated him after seeing his weak cultivation and took him lightly, thus not even bothering to even raise a spiritual shield, then he would have fallen in that small mountain valley long ago.

Yet the Yan patriarch was going all out and did not give him any opportunities to use any tricks. Of course, he was also not that trashy disciple that was stuck at the first layer anymore.

Lin Xuan once again reached into his bosom for more seals. He was not using his own spiritual power to unleash techniques for a reason. Firstly, although he had made significant progress, but it had only been for a short time. His current cultivation, compared to the other, was a whole three layers short and his spiritual power was also much weaker. In a battle of techniques, skill was only secondary, the winner was mainly determined by who had more spiritual power. Since he was weaker than the other, if he used his weakness to fight against the opponent's strength, wasn't that simply looking for death?

Secondly, since he had acquired the spirit tools, his main focus in his cultivation has deviated from the other disciples. Therefore, he only learned a few techniques.

To defeat the enemy, one must avoid the enemy's strong points and attack the weak points. Compared to Yan Tian Heng, what was his strong point? Too many seals.

Seals could be instantly activated and only used a minimal amount of spiritual power. Facing a stronger foe, it would be a waste not to use them.

As for the Ice Needles technique and spirit tools, they were his trump cards. Since this has become a prolonged battle, then he could not easily reveal his ultimate attacks.

He first made a general plan on how to deal with the current situation and a battle plan. Then remaining calm and relaxed, he unhurriedly started using more seals to deal with the Yan family.

Boom, boom, boom……

The sounds of explosions rang out non-stop. The battle of cultivators could only be described as incomparably fierce. Yan Tian Heng was shocked and angry. Although he was at the great perfection of the Spirit Gathering stage, but using mid-rank techniques were no small matter. The spiritual power consumption was rapidly increasing and his spiritual power was rapidly dropping. But Lin Xuan was using seals as if he had an endless supply. If this continued……

046 Seals Against Techniques

Compared to the other's anxious look, Lin Xuan looked, at least on the surface, to have planned for this well in advance. On one hand, he used the power of seals to deal with the other's techniques, and on the other, he would occasionally cast a technique like the hail technique as a sneak attack. Although it could not hurt Yan Tian Heng, it still caused him to seethe in anger.

Especially Lin Xuan's expression. It was full of disdain. He would even occasionally ridicule him, causing Yan Tian Heng's expression to get more and more gloomy.

It was not surprising. He was the patriarch of a family and a seventh layer expert. Yet he could not do anything to this fourth layer brat. It really caused him to be frustrated.

Especially that infuriating appearance, it could really cause one to die of excess anger.

Was Lin Xuan really this frivolous?

Of course not!

He was doing this one purpose. As everyone knows, if one does not focus on the battle at hand with one hundred percent of their concentration, the would definitely suffer some losses. When facing someone more powerful than oneself, to seek victory was very difficult.

Not only did one need the correct tactics and techniques and not make mistakes, but know what the enemy was thinking of was also very important.

Therefore, Lin Xuan put on an infuriating appearance and used words to ridicule him. And sure enough, Yan Tian Heng was unable to remain calm.

This was clearly demonstrating Lin Xuan's ability to read people. Although this Yan family was a very vicious and crafty person, but he had a fiery temper. To anger him was not difficult.

Everything Lin Xuan did was for him to achieve victory. But really, he was also very annoyed. The reason was because he was using seals to fight against the other's techniques. How can he not be wistful? They were all acquired with a lot of hard work, once he used one it was gone.

What caused Lin Xuan to be even more depressed as the way he was using them. This way of using five low-grade seals at a time was a very wasteful method.

Five low-grade seals would able to fight against the other's one mid-rank technique. He had already used thirty seals in this manner. If there thirty seals were not used separately but were used all together, then the explosions would have already destroyed his foes without leaving a trace of their corpses.

Yet this was only a thought because to activate low-level seals still required spiritual power. With Lin Xuan's spiritual power, the most he could activate at once was five and then he had to rest to recover to

catch his breathe. It was a very short amount of time, about two or three seconds, but using another five seals after that amount of time would already have a greatly diminished effect.

Because by then, the other side would have already used another mid-rank technique. As a result, this has been turned into a war of attrition to see if Yan Tian Heng would run dry of spiritual power first or if Lin Xuan would run out of seals first.

But in fact, it was not impossible to use more than five seals at a time. Lin Xuan have read an introduction in a book before. It described a way to re-craft the seal using a precious material called the Spirit Attracting Grass to link seals together.

As an example, it would be like firecrackers. They can be set off one by one, but they could also be strung together with a fuse, which once lit, could set off all the firecrackers. And this Spirit Attracting Grass was exactly like that fuse, as long as the seals are linked together with it, one cause use tens of seals, or even over a hundred seals together at once.

Lin Xuan purchase so many low-grade seals with the intention of finding Spirit Attracting Grass so he could link them together once he got back. But who would have known that he would meet foes this fast. These seals haven't been re-crafted, so he could only use them five at a time.

Therefore, Lin Xuan was very dismayed and wistful. But he did not show this on his face and instead had a very unconcerned and well-prepared look. This was also a very effective tactic in shaking his opponent's mind.

At the same time, Lin Xuan was also thinking that he could not continue

like this. Although the opponent's spiritual power has weakened by quite a bit, but to have it dry up would still take quite a while yet. Would he really have to continue wasting like this?

And now on to the other person. Yan Tian Heng was stuck between shock and suspicion. He originally thought that dealing with a fourth layer brat was going to be a piece of cake. But now he was completely uncertain of just how many seals this brat had. If this continued, his magical power would the first to give out.

Switching to another perspective, this brat was simply too rich. His wealth was ampler than that of a Foundation Building expert. And thinking of how he used a mid-grade pill to exchange for a cultivation technique, it was not far-fetched to assume that he might even have a second one.

If he could acquire a mid-grade pill, then his chance at entering into the Foundation Building stage would be even greater. Thinking of this, Yan Tian Heng licked his lips as a strong look of greed flashed in his eyes. It looks like he would have to take out that precious treasure.

He released another mid-grade technique and at the same time, the spiritual shield around him released a great light. It looked as it the spiritual shield was more solid now. He then reached into his bosom.

Lin Xuan frowned and his expression turned gloomy. Seeing his opponent's actions, how could he not know that they were about to use some powerful item.

Lin Xuan of course would not let them succeed so easily. He did not

have time to feel wistful. So he immediately pulled out two mid-grade seals. One canceled out the firebird technique, the other changed into a large scimitar and sliced towards Yan Tian Heng.

Since preparing his killing technique would require all of his concentration, he could do nothing seeing the gold type scimitar technique chopping towards him.

Boom!

The power of a mid-rank technique was no small matter and could not even be compared to the blaze seals used before. Even the sound of the collision with the spiritual shield was very shocking.

Dirt flew everywhere and a deep ditch formed. After taking that strike, Yan Tian Heng's face was pale like paper and a trail of blood leaked out of the corner of his lips. But Lin Xuan was only feeling unfortunate. If the power of the scimitar technique was greater it would have been better. Although it did manage to inflict heavy damages against his opponent, in the end, it still failed to break open the defenses of the spiritual shield.

"Brat, to force an old fellow like me to this kind of state, you are pretty good. But you can die now!"

The smoke and dust had yet to settle yet Yan Tian Heng's hateful and angry voice had already transmitted out. Lin Xuan shivered with fear for a moment and circulated spiritual power to his fingertips while pulling out more seals with the other hand.

But he didn’t mindlessly attack. To act without know what is going on is very stupid. One should first see what the enemy has prepared before making a plan and then taking action.

Although he was alert, but he was not at all scared. Even though his foe had a killing technique, he himself also had a trump card too. He had not used the Ice Needles technique nor the golden rope yet. So what if he was at the great perfection level. In determining victory or defeat between cultivators, other than spiritual power, spirit tools and seals were also a factor.

047 Bestial Soul Seal

A wild wind blew past, clearing the smoke and dust in the air. It revealed Yan Tian Heng holding a seal. He was channelling all of his spiritual power into it like a dam bursting. Seeing this kind of action, Lin Xuan's expression turned more and more serious. This is definitely not some simple seal.

Lin Xuan was definitely not dumb enough to let his opponent complete their technique and thus prepared to though out an attack. But at that moment, Yan Tian Heng showed a sinister smile on his lips. He threw the seal into the air and yelled out: "Soul, release!"

Roar!

A roar sounded out, reverberating around the surrounding hills and causing many trees to break and fall. The seal released many rays of brilliance and amidst a red light, a flaming fierce tiger appeared.

A fierce flame tiger, no, that wasn't right. Its body was covered by a sharp carapace of bone. This should be an armoured fierce flame tiger, a first class top grade monstrous beast.

For cultivators, their levels from Spirit Gathering to Tribulation Ascension were split into eight stages. Similarly, monstrous beasts also had eight levels with every level being further split into low-grade, mid-grade, high-grade, and top-grade.

Spirit Gathering corresponds to first class monstrous beasts, Foundation Building corresponds to second-class, and so on……

In other words, this monstrous beast was not inferior to an expert at the great perfection of the Spirit Gathering stage.

Lin Xuan had a bitter expression on his face. This was not an illusory technique but was a genuine demon tiger. Or more correctly, the soul of a demon tiger.

He did not expect that they would have a one of these rarely seen beast seals.

These so-called beast seals were like the array seals and belonged to a special category of seals. Regular seals contained attacking, defending, or supporting type techniques.

And array seals contained basic arrays.

But beast seals also had other differences. One was that they sealed beast souls in them. They were even rarer than array seals because they could not be made by regular cultivators and could only be crafted by cultivators following the demonic path.

Simply put, after killing a monstrous beast, they soul must be extracted and using some special methods sealed into the seal papers.

Another difference was that they were not one time use like other seals but could instead be used over and over again. Of course, there were

limits. Each time it was used it would consume some of the energy of the beast soul. After all, of the energy was used up, the seal would also no longer function.

Lin Xuan had also read about beast seals in some ancient texts before, but he never imagined that he would have to face one.

Roar!

Although it was only the soul, it still had such a fearsome roar. Of course, after using those special methods to craft the beast seal, the strength of the soul was not inferior to the real beast in the slightest.

"Go!"

Yan Tian Heng made some incantation gestures and lightly tapped the beast causing it to bare its fangs and brandish its claws. It then changed into a ball of red light and charged towards Lin Xuan.

It was a dangerous situation but Lin Xuan did not panic. He activated the seal in his hands and threw it in the air……

Quicksand technique, Rockfall technique, Briers technique, *etc*. A total of five low-grade techniques activated and yet it only managed to stall the demon tiger slightly. It then continued pouncing towards him.

Lin Xuan's expression turned even more serious. Looks like it's time to use the spirit tool!

He reached into his bosom and took out a perhaps one-foot long rope. Lin Xuan mumbled some words and under the spur of those magical incantations, it suddenly became alive, lengthened many meters and reared up, much like a poisonous snake.

"Bind!"

Following the incantation, the rope flew out while emitting a misty white light. I looked like an enormous python flying to meet the armoured fierce flame tiger and tightly wrapped around it.

Although it was a soul and did not have a corporeal body, but the spirit tool was even more magical and nonetheless still bound it.

"Spirit tool!"

Yan Tian Heng could not hold it in and yelled out with a face full of surprise. But who could blame him? Spirit tools were very rare precious treasures. Although theoretically, a low-levelled fourth layer cultivator could utilize them, but in reality, even some Foundation Building experts did not have them.

Originally, it was already hard for him to imagine that Lin Xuan had so many seals, but he would never have thought that Lin Xuan would even have a spirit tool. The discovery caused him to feel apprehensive in his heart.

Mid-grade pill, countless seals, and spirit tools together, not to mention

rogue cultivators, even elite disciples of sects, no..... even Foundation Building expects might not have these.

Just what is this brats identity?

With this kind of wealth, his master must be a big-shot. It couldn't be a Core Formation expert right!?

The more he thought about it, the more fearful Yan Tian Heng became.

But he was still the patriarch of a family so he did not let this mess up his strategies and instead his conviction of killing Lin Xuan became even stronger. If this brat got away and his master came out, he would definitely die a very horrible death. He must kill him here and now no matter what.

It can't be said that Yan Tian Heng was too suspicious. If fact, the treasures that Lin Xuan took out were too shocking. It was easy for someone to let their imaginations run wild with speculations and end up scaring themselves.

Although he wanted to kill Lin Xuan but it was very difficult to actually kill him. His cultivation was a while three layers lower but spirit tools were simply too hard to deal with.

Lin Xuan was very upset, his cultivation was still too low and could only control a mid-grade spirit tool. Otherwise, not to mention the Jade Snow ring that he acquired from Zhang Yu, even the high-grade flying sword of Zhou Yan could be used to easily kill his opponent.

They both wanted to kill the other. One did his utmost to urge his demon tiger to throw off its bindings; the other strived to control his spirit tool to continue to wrap around that beast soul. Once again, they came to a deadlock.

As time passed, Lin Xuan seemed like he was getting more anxious. He was tweaking his ears and scratching his cheek, like a cat on a hot tin roof. Yan Tian Heng coldly smiled. His opponent was young and sure enough, was unable to remain calm. Looks like he would be the winner of this duel.

Another two minutes passed and Lin Xuan once again reached into his bosom causing Yan Tian Heng's expression to change. His opponent still had seals. It was not impossible to use mid-rank techniques while controlling the demon tiger soul, but that kind of usage would consume his spiritual power too fast. If he still had many seals……

But in the next moment, his face changed once again into a sinister smile because when Lin Xuan withdrew his hand, it was empty now he looked as if he was losing his head out of fear.

Even heaven is helping me. this brat has run out of seals!

048 Outwitting a Strong Enemy

This brat was so troublesome to deal with not because of him having high cultivation but was because he had too many treasures, especially seals. Although most of them were low-grade seals, they were still causing him a great headache.

The spirit tool and the beast soul were evenly matched, but his opponent has run out of seals. His victory is in the bag.

Thinking of killing this brat, not only would he acquire the mid-grade pill, that spirit tool would also be his. Yan Tian Heng could almost not restrain himself from laughing wildly. He expression truly looked quite savage.

Lin Xuan had a very unsightly expression and was silent for a quite a while. Suddenly, he extended his hand, circulated his spiritual power, and shot out a few pieces of hail towards his opponent.

“This kind of garbage technique, are you embarrassed using it?”

Yan Tian Heng coldly laughed and did not make any moves. The hail technique was only an entry level technique. Not to mention a fourth layer cultivator, even if a Foundation Building cultivator used this kind of basic technique, it would still not be able to break through his spiritual shield.

Of course, Yan Tian Heng was also not the kind of person who would

idly take a beating. He extended his hand and once again a firebird appeared causing a heatwave to bellow out.

The two techniques crisscrossed. The hail technique landed on the spiritual shield, and like a clay ox entering the sea disappeared without a trace without causing any damages.

But the mid-rank firebird technique was different. If it was Lin Xuan's personal spiritual shield, then it would definitely be broken. But before the duel began, he had used seals to lay down two additional layers of defenses. The outermost layer, the Water Spirit shield rocked, its light dimmed greatly, but it was not broken through.

They were both mid-rank techniques, but defensive techniques were generally slightly stronger than attacking techniques.

Lin Xuan looked even more panic-stricken as if his strategies were all in disarray. He circulated his spiritual power and once more threw out the hail technique.

"Death throes!"

Yan Tian Heng laughed proudly. His fear were seals, but to compete in spiritual power, this brat was simply looking to die. Then to satisfy his wish, he will keep using mid-rank techniques and attacked Lin Xuan's shield again.

Just like this, after three exchanges, the Water Spirit shield broke and the Adamantine technique was on the verge of collapse. Even those the

spirit tool and the demon tiger soul were evenly matched, but their personal strengths were not. Lin Xuan was already suppressed to a degree where he was panting, it could be said that he was already in dire straits.

The next hit can take this brat's life!

Lin Xuan's face was still panic-stricken but he was not at all like that in his heart. He did not know too many techniques but his attacking techniques were definitely not limited to just the hail technique. The reason he kept using this kind of technique with no power was to create misconception and cause the other to look down on him. This would allow him to take action easier afterwards.

The was the best opportunity!

From this other's arrogant expression, they had already decided that Lin Xuan only knew that one hail technique.

Lin Xuan did not change his expression. The battle had already lasted a long time. Although he had been using seals for most of the battle, but he also did not have much spiritual power left, so he summoned all of it together.

Large amounts of water type cold air were produced in the air but Yan Tian Heng was not suspicious at all. But in the next instant, his eyes became wide, because it was not hail that appeared in front of Lin Xuan but instead they were coldly twinkling and densely packed sharp needles.

Ice Needles technique!

Yan Tian Heng blurted out in surprise, unable to keep down his fear anymore. The only reason was that even though the Ice Needles technique was also a mid-rank technique, but its power was definitely not lower than that of high-rank techniques. The only problem as that it was very hard to cultivate, even he, an expert at the great perfection of the Spirit Gathering stage could not use it. Yet this youth at the low level of the fourth layer……

He originally thought that Lin Xuan was simply wealthy and had many seals. But now it looks like he had made an error in his judgment. This brat's power was very shocking. He was only pretending to be weak and intentionally lowering his foe's vigilance.

After thinking of this, Yan Tian Heng's face became white as paper. It looks like he had fallen for a meticulously planned trap. The current situation had turned critical.

The tables have turned. Now it was Lin Xuan that showed a confident smile and waved his hand, sending out these over a hundred ice needles. Yan Tian Heng clenched his teeth and tried to thicken his spiritual shield with all his might. But sadly, it was already too late.

His barely had any spiritual power left and with his strength, blocking a few mid-rank techniques was not an issue, but the Ice Needles technique was able to match high-rank techniques in power.

If he was alert and guarding against attacks, he would definitely not try to block. The smart decision would be to dodge, but it was already too

late.

Over the added defense of Yan Tian Heng's spiritual shield, it let out a bright light. But the ice needles were more powerful. Popping sounds rang out. The shield was barely enough to defend against two-thirds of the ice needles, but the rest of these thirty some needles punctured Yan Tian Heng all over his body. Yan Tian Heng's eyes stayed open with a look of willingness on his face. Then he stiffly fell over.

"Father!" A fearful and sorrowful cry reached his ears. Lin Xuan turned around. It was that Yan Ming fearfully looking towards him.

"Don't..... Don't kill me!"

Lin Xuan did not say anything and expressionlessly threw out a hail technique, sending this good for nothing son to the netherworld.

It wasn't that Lin Xuan was cruel and merciless, but if you don't pull weeds up by the roots and were benevolent to your enemies, once the spring wind comes and the weed sprouts again, then it was simply being ruthless to yourself. What's more, he had also seen Lin Xuan's real appearance. How could he continue to let this kind of person live on this earth?

To be honest, Lin Xuan was not one to kill wantonly. But when it came time to take action, he was not the type to be soft-hearted.

After taking care of the Yan father and son, Lin Xuan would, of course, collect his spoils of war. There was no need to be polite or modest here.

He first waved his hand retrieving his golden rope.

After Yan Tian Heng's death, the soul of the demon tiger lost its support and returned to the seal. This was also the only kind of seal that could be reused over and over again until all of its energy has run out.

Lin Xuan bent down and retrieved the beast seal.

Compared to other ordinary seals, the beast seals were slightly larger and emitted faint spiritual power fluctuations. The Armoured Fierce Flame tiger was painted upon it. It seemed very vivid and lifelike, especially its eyes, where were giving off an impression of liveliness and alertness.

This was the kind of seal only a demonic path cultivator could craft. Lin Xuan held it in his hand, and after carefully examined it for quite a while, finally stored it away in his storage bracelet in his bosom.

Back then, when he reached into his bosom for more seals yet pulled out nothing was also to deceive Yan Tian Heng and to let Yan Tian Heng underestimate him. In reality, he never used up all of his seals. But this battle had, in fact, used up almost a hundred of them. The seals he had acquired this time were all used up. But this beast seal could be said to be able to compensate for the losses from this battle.

049 Safe Return

Lin Xuan then, once again, walked over to Yan Tian Heng's corpse and happily started to search for more spoils. This guy was very vicious and sinister, but he was still the patriarch of a clan, so presumably the wealth he was carrying would not disappoint Lin Xuan.

Lin Xuan found a storage bracelet on his body. Inserting his spiritual sense, he took out everything that was in there.

Low-grade spirit stones nine pieces, Purified Essence pills one bottle, some jade slips. Without even checking, one could probably guess that this was the mid-rank cultivation technique that was stolen from Wang family disciples. Other than these, there was also a small furnace.

Not a bad haul!

Nine pieces of spirit stones could already cover the costs of the seals he had spent in battle. Since that cultivation technique in the jade slip was reserved by the Wang family, it must be better than the one he had purchased. Although he did not have a shortage of Purified Essence pills, but these still saved him the time spent on purification. And as to that furnace, as soon as it was taken out of the storage bracelet, it had released a shocking spiritual power. It also had exotic designed up on it and was definitely not an ordinary item.

Although he had lost over one hundred seals, with the addition of that beast seal, the spoils were much greater than the losses.

“Oh? What is this?”

Lin Xuan suddenly found, in the most remote corner of the storage bracelet, a tiny unremarkable box. He had almost overlooked it.

He used his spiritual sense to take it out. The box was carved out of sandalwood and had the appearance of being an antique. Upon opening the box, he saw a sprig of medicinal herb lying upon the brocade.

This medicinal herb should have been picked a long time ago, yet it was still very fresh and was emitting a faint fragrance. Although Lin Xuan did not know what it was he knew it must be precious.

After closing the box, he put it and the other treasures he had acquired into his storage bracelet. Then he moved the corpses of the father and son together. Using a quicksand seal, he changed the ground beneath them into a pit of quicksand, which swallowed the corpses without leaving a trace. After a while, the quicksand changed back into firm earth again.

This way he would not be leaving a trace of evidence. No one would think that the father and son of the Yan family would be buried here.

After doing all of this, Lin Xuan did not tarry. Although there were no dwellings in the area, but it was still not appropriate to stay here. So he used the Imperial Wind technique and hurried on through the night.

Lin Xuan covered a distance of over one hundred kilometres, and only

stopped late in the night. After randomly finding a cave to rest in, he once again hurried on at the crack of dawn. Until finally, he quietly returned to the Floating Cloud Valley.

After arriving, he headed straight for Danxia Mountain and the waste pill storage area.

“Immortal!”

It was currently noon, and Zhao Ming and the rest of the children were relaxing and sunning themselves. Seeing Lin Xuan they hurriedly bowed and saluted him.

“Alright, in this past while, has anything happened?”

“Please be at ease immortal, everything has been well.”

Zhao Ming respectfully answered. As to Lin Xuan disappearing for half a month, he did not ask about at all. Opening your mouth too much will cause worried; sticking your head out will bring calamities. He was not qualified to ask about the lord immortal’s movements and whereabouts.

Lin Xuan was very satisfied with the cleverness of the children. Nodding his head, he said: “Okay, you guys carry on.” He then immediately headed into his house.

The restrictions outside of his house were intact. It looks like in the time he was away, no one had come close to the house. Thanks to the fact that the waste pill storage was out of the way, generally on one would come

disturb it. Lin Xuan was very pleased with himself in regards to choosing to stay here. This was killing two birds with one stone, he had access to ample amounts of medicinal pills and also had a calm and quiet place to cultivate.

Although this trip was somewhat troublesome, you could even say it was very dangerous, but there were also ample rewards. Other than the spirit stones and treasures, he now had three extra cultivation techniques, the Spiritual Control technique problem was solved, and now he even had the Soaring Cloud technique to help with his current cultivation.

Although it was a low-rank cultivation technique, but even Foundation Building experts held it in high esteem. When used to cultivate in the Spirit Gathering stage, not only will it increase cultivation speed, it will also build a firmer foundation.

The path of cultivation was almost endless. Although the Spirit Gathering stage was the lowest stage, but one cannot overlook this stage. This was the stage where the foundation was laid. If the foundation is unstable, then it will hinder future progress. If the foundation is firm, then the benefits will gradually manifest.

Lin Xuan did not immediately start cultivating but instead decided to rest and recover for a day. The battle with the father and son of the Yan family, although he did not suffer any injuries, was still very difficult. Even with the help of the spirit tool, Yan Tian Heng was still an expert of the great perfection of the Spirit Gathering stage.

It wasn’t only a contest of strength. It was also a battle of wits, of strategies of attacking the mind, of pretending to be weak, and of laying clever traps. Then with the addition of hurrying along during the night

and only resting for two hours, his body had already been exhausted. To cultivate in this condition would definitely not yield good results. Therefore, Lin Xuan decided to recover first. Haste makes waste. Besides, it was only a few days and does not make a big difference.

After taking a bath, Lin Xuan fell into a deep sleep. He slept from noon to the morning of the second day. After rising, he felt invigorated and refreshed, and his spiritual power had fully recovered. It was time to start cultivating.

This trip allowed Lin Xuan to deeply understand the importance of spiritual power. For example, the battle he had, honestly speaking, other than the beast seal, Yan Tian Heng did not take out any other treasures. Yet he still used his cultivation to fight against the over one hundred seals that Lin Xuan had. If Lin Xuan did not lay a trap for him, winning this definitely would have been much more difficult.

And spirit tools indeed had incomparable power. He could barely use his fourth layer cultivation to control the mid-grade golden rope. If he had enough spiritual power and could control that high-grade flying sword, then he would be able to speedily and easily remove Yan Tian Heng's head.

It doesn't matter how many treasures one had, if one did not have enough spiritual power, then they were all useless or, at least, they could not display their full power. So the priority now is to increase his cultivation. As to the Spiritual Control technique, he can take it slow and start learning it once he enters the fifth or sixth layer of Spirit Gathering.

Summarizing his experiences was Lin Xuan's strong point. He had learned a lot from this trip such as the tyranny of the sect and cultivator

clans or how the rogue cultivators can only be angry and didn’t dare to speak out. It also helped him understand that there was no reasoning in the cultivation world. In this kind of might makes right world, fists were the reason, the principle, and the justification. If you don’t want to be bullied, then you have to strive to increase your strength.

050 The Approaching Storm

Thus, in the next period of time, Lin Xuan concentrated on purifying pills and purified over one hundred low-grade and two mid-grade pills.

In particular, the purification of the low-grade pills was very successful, but the speed of the mid-grade pills was slower. He had also reached a bottleneck in the circulation of the star ocean. If he wanted to break through, he would need to raise his cultivation but one layer because the capabilities of the star ocean were directly related to the level of cultivation.

The reason Lin Xuan purified so many pills at once was because he was planning to do some closed door cultivation for a little while. This time, he would stop at nothing to enter into the latter layers of the Spirit Gathering stage, and achieve the fifth layer.

Setting his goal, he strived to accomplish it. At present, all the preparations have been completed.

Yet in the short amount of time that Lin Xuan spent purifying pills, there was a feeling of an impending storm in the cultivation world of the Yan prefecture of Zhao country. There was civil unrest, the cultivator clans were in continuous conflict, and even though the sects had not taken any actions, they were also having lots of verbal arguments. The rogue cultivators were all very fearful for their lives.

The fuse was the disbanding of the Soaring Cloud sect. The Soaring

Cloud sect had offended a Core Formation expert and were forced to disband. The other sects didn't say anything, but they took joy in other's misfortunes. There were also many benefits to the Soaring Cloud sect being disbanded. Firstly, the various sects would be able to divide the territory of the Soaring Cloud sect.

Secondly, at the trades fair, they were able to acquire quite a lot of treasures. Although the Soaring Cloud sect was small, but it still had over a thousand years of heritage. The wealth they had accumulated was not small.

Originally, this was a joyous occasion, but who would have thought that after the trades fair, there would be a string of accidents. First the famous cultivation clan, the Wang family, their disciples that they had sent out were attacked and killed and the treasures and cultivation technique they had purchased had been stolen.

Yan Tian Heng thought that he was an old fox, but he was still not meticulous enough. He was slightly negligent and left some tiny hints. The Wang family could be considered the number one cultivator clan in the thousands of kilometres of the surrounding area. When have they ever suffered this kind of misfortune? They were very angry and three Foundation Building elders even went to the Yan family demanding that they pay with their lives.

There wasn't really anything out of the ordinary about this. The Wang family was strong, the Yan family was weak, and besides, Yan Tian Heng killed and plundered their people and treasures. Although the cultivation world was ruled by might, but the various clans would still give each other some face. However, Yan Tian Heng's actions were overly excessive so there was no room for redemption.

The Wang family elders originally wanted Yan Tian Heng to pay with his life, but when they got there, they found that the Yan patriarch and his son had disappeared without a trace. There were only elders, children, women, infants, and some low-level cultivators there.

Lin Xuan's actions were truly airtight. No one knew that the father and son of the Yan family were already sleeping in that nameless forest. The Wang family elders had thought that once the father and son knew that they were exposed, they had forsaken their family and had fled.

One of the elders had a fiery temper and could not control his anger after that. He wanted to kill every single person of the Yan family right there, but in the end, the other two elders were able to talk him down. Of course, they were not doing this to because they were kind-hearted nor did they refrain from killing because they could not bear to take action. They stopped him because they did not want to cause such a disturbance before clearly understanding the situation.

Although the Yan family was only a mid-level cultivator clan, they had a deep relationship with the Flame Spirit sect, just like how their Wang family had a good relationship with the Floating Cloud Valley.

It must be known that sects had the greatest influence. All the various cultivator clans, unless they had an exceedingly powerful expert, would all choose a sect to attach themselves to.

As to which one to attach themselves to, each cultivator clan had their own way of choosing. Some chose the sect that was closest to them, so they could be better sheltered, some had ancestors that were disciples of

that sect, some chose to marry into that sect, just to name a few……

Yan Tian Heng was in the wrong. He unflinchingly killed and pillaged. To take his life as compensation, the Flame Spirit sect would also not say anything about it. After all, if they were going to be unreasonable, then the backer of the Wang family, the Floating Cloud Valley, would intervene. But now that Yan Tian Heng and his son have disappeared, the Flame Spirit sect would definitely not allow the Wang family to kill everyone in the Yan family. If the Wang family were to do this, they would be the ones in the wrong.

Although the cultivation world was ruled by might, but that was under the assumption that there was a large disparity between the two parties. But if both sides had similar strength, then neither side would win and both would suffer losses. Only then would both sides “reason” with each other.

This, the Wang family elders said some fierce words and swiftly left. They did not go far but instead split into two. One person went back to report and to summon some disciples to search for Yan Tian Heng; the other two were to sit back and wait and kept a close watch on the Yan family.

Hearing that their patriarch has brought down a calamity, the people of the Yan family were dumbstruck and turned pale with fright. They originally thought that there was some mistake and wanted to wait for Yan Tian Heng to come back and explain. But as time flowed on, not a single trace of the patriarch and his son turned up. Therefore, their hesitant attitude slowly turned into suspicion, thinking that their patriarch fell into an evil scheme of the experts of the Wang family. After that, to cover up the incident, the Wang family came here to blame their patriarch for killing their people instead and even dared to call for

punishment.

Of course, the Yan family would not accept this and appealed to the Flame Spirit sect for help.

The Flame Spirit sect, as the name implies, were experts in techniques of the fire type. In regards to their strength, in the sect of the Yan prefecture, they were ranked second and was just slightly inferior to the Floating Cloud Valley.

Although their patriarch was only at the Foundation Building stage, but they still had a Core Formation senior elder. But that elder, although he had a high cultivation, he was very lecherous. Yan Tian Heng's second daughter was exactly one of that elder's favoured concubines.

With these kinds of relationships, in addition to the fact that the Flame Spirit sect and the Floating Cloud Valley was always contesting for the position of the overlord of the Yan prefecture, only added onto the existing hostilities between the sects. It was only because the sects were worried about the consequences that they kept their hostilities suppressed.

Now, the Yan family and Wang family each had their own version of events. One side said that some of their disciples were killed and their treasures and cultivation technique was stolen. The other side said that their patriarch was killed that that the other party was making false claims. Either way, the grudge between these two cultivator clans had dragged the Floating Cloud Valley and the Flame Spirit sect into the fray.

With these two big players taking action, then the other various sects of

Yan prefecture could not just stand off to the side. Some of them had good relationships with the Flame Spirit sect, others had good dealings with the Floating Cloud Valley in the past. They formed into two opposing alliances.

Fortunately, yelling was only yelling, being noisy was still only being noisy. These large sects were not stupid. If the spark of conflict started, then both sides would suffer injuries and neither side would win. So for now, they kept it to verbal sparring.

The smell of gunpowder was strong. The rogue cultivators were all very jittery. If they were not careful, they would drawn into the conflict and bring down a calamity.

The various cultivator clans would, of course, speak out for the sects that they were attached to. There was a big hubbub of noise. They were not worried about the consequences like the sects. The ones that had grudges took the opportunity to get revenge. These few days, there was already some clans that have started fighting.

In short, the noisier it was, the bigger the situation became.

051 - Latter Stage of Spirit Gathering

Everyone was clear on one point. The critical issue was to find the father and son of the Yan family. No matter if it was the Floating Cloud Valley or the Flame Spirit sect alliances, they all sent out countless disciples to search everywhere for their whereabouts.

But Lin Xuan was careful and meticulous when he took action and did not leave any evidence or tracks. The various sects worked for a long while and still did not turn up anything.

Only when Lin Xuan finished purifying the pills and came out to get some fresh air did he hear about these things from Zhao Ming. He did not show anything on his face but was endlessly shocked in his heart.

He did not think that the death of the father and son of the Yan family would cause such an uproar. Of course, he did not feel guilty about it at all.

Firstly, the reason for this whole affair was because Yan Tian Heng attacked and killed the people of Wang family and stole their cultivation technique. That had nothing to do with Lin Xuan. Secondly, Lin Xuan killed the two of them because they wanted him to die there. Should he not have taken action and waited for them to kill him?

Lin Xuan was not dumb. If you do not offend me, then I won’t offend you. If you offend me, then I will immediately and mercilessly take action. To survive in the cultivation world, one needed to learn how to be cold-

hearted. Lin Xuan was not addicted to killing, but when dealing with enemies, he would not show a shred of mercy.

It doesn't matter how big the uproar in the world is, it had nothing to do with him. Even if the sky fell, there would be people higher than him to support it, he would let those expert elders worry about it. As to himself, his top priority right now to was single-heartedly devote himself to raising his strength.

Because Lin Xuan's cultivation was still not at a level where he did not need sustenance, he ordered Zhao Ming to have the kitchen prepare for him a lot of dried meats and rations. The children were not suspicious at all, they thought that the lord immortal was preparing to shut himself in and sleep in again.

After having finished preparing everything, Lin Xuan started to focus on cultivating.

Consuming pills everyday, sitting meditation, training his spirit……

This so-called cultivation was basically absorbing the energy of heaven and earth. changing it into one's own spiritual power, and storing in one's dantian. But the cultivation techniques of the Spirit Gathering stage were very basic which all involved the circulation of that vital energy.

Although they were all about moving the vital energy through one's meridians, but different cultivation techniques had different paths through the meridians. The effects on one's cultivation were also very large.

For example. the cultivation technique that Lin Xuan previously practised. It was only a basic one that the sect gave to ordinary disciples. The rate at which it converted the natural energy to spiritual power was only so-so. It also didn't have any special characteristics.

But in this journey, other than the mid-rank cultivation technique, he also bought the Soaring Cloud technique. This was the best basic cultivation technique of the Soaring Cloud sect. Compared to the Flying Cloud Spirit technique that the Floating Cloud Valley gave to its disciples, it was not at all inferior. They each had their own merits.

Lin Xuan held the jade slip in his hand and inserted his spiritual sense into it. Immediately afterwards, he lifted his head, a happy expression on his face. The Soaring Cloud technique had a well-deserved reputation. The path of circulation of vital energy described in it was more exquisite, fine, and meticulous. Although he had not yet practised it, with just a look, he could already tell that it was out of the ordinary.

Calming down and sitting down, Lin Xuan wanted for the effects of the pills he consumed to manifest, then following the methods recorded in the Soaring Cloud technique, started the new path of circulation of vital energy.

……

Four hours later, Lin Xuan opened his eyes. With that cultivation technique he was practising before, it would only take a little over one hour to complete one cycle of vital energy circulation. But now he had spent over three times that, and the tempering effects on his meridians were better than before. Also, the rate at which natural vital energy was converted was greatly increased. This Floating Cloud technique was

definitely not an ordinary technique.

But it can't be said that there were no downsides. Compared to ordinary cultivation techniques, the circulation of vital energy of the Floating Cloud technique was much harder. Doing it once would consume five or six times the amount of energy that would have been consumed before.

If it was someone ordinary, they would definitely not be able to persevere.

Lin Xuan finally understood why the sect only gave the ordinary disciples basic cultivation techniques and only gave those elite disciples the good techniques. It wasn't that the sect did not want to keep it a secret, but instead, the better the cultivation technique, the harder it was to practice. The vital energy circulation of these techniques would not be able to be practised by these disciples with lower aptitudes.

As for Lin Xuan, he was a special case. Although he had no spiritual roots, but he was wise and extremely tenacious. He was even able to endure the Heart Refinement Road. Normally, where everyone else did three circulations of vital energy, he did nine. Therefore, although he had low natural talent, with his willpower, he was still able to learn such a cultivation technique.

This had nothing to do with the support of pills. It was purely because Lin Xuan worked harder than others.

……

Day after day passed, in the blink of an eye, over a month had passed.

The waste pills storage was quiet was usual, the children were bored and once again, sunning themselves. The manager's door was still closed. They really admired that fact that he could sleep for so long.

This was all a ruse by Lin Xuan to avoid the suspicion of others. In reality, at this moment, he had arrived at a critical point of breaking through the bottleneck.

With the Floating Cloud technique and the support of the medicinal pills, Lin Xuan made progress with lightning speed in the short period. He had already arrived at the peak of the fourth layer. With one more step forward, he would be able to step into the realm of the latter layers of the Spirit Gathering stage.

He consumed two mid-grade pills and started to attempt to break through. The spiritual power in his body endlessly circulated and formed into a ball in his dantian. The vital energy he absorbed mixed with the medicinal power of the pills and continuously supplemented that ball of spiritual energy.

The originally light cyan ball of spiritual energy, under the nourishment of medicinal power, started to become darker in colour. It started to speedily rotate and then started to decompose into many strands of spiritual power.

The ball of spiritual power became smaller. But the spiritual power in his meridians was continually being replenished. Just like this, they once again entered into the ball of spiritual energy and were tempered once

more before being dispersed.

Do not underestimate this process. It was easy to describe but very hard to complete. If one was even slightly inattentive, the spiritual energy ball would split open, cause one to fail in breaking through the bottleneck.

But if all the spiritual power in one's body underwent this tempering, then they would undergo a metamorphosis. They would have successfully stepped past the threshold of the latter stages of the Spirit Gathering stage.

Lin Xuan's forehead was drenched with sweat. He was being very careful. It took a lot of effort to arrive at this stage, he did not want all of his previous effort to go to waste.

The minutes and seconds ticked past. Lin Xuan's clothes had all been drenched with sweat but he stayed motionless and continued to persevere.

……

Another two hours passed. Lin Xuan suddenly swayed and fell back onto the hardwood floor. It was not because he had failed in breaking through the bottleneck. He had succeeded but was so exhausted that he did not even have the power to sit up.

"So dangerous!" Although he was so tired that he did not even want to move his fingers, he still had a smile on his face. He has finally reached

the fifth layer and entered into the latter layers of the Spirit Gathering stage.

052 - Red Silk Grass

Among the disciples that entered the sect at the same time, Lin Xuan's strength, he would rank within the top three. The latter layers of the Spirit Gathering, even in a sect like the Floating Cloud Valley, could already be considered an elite disciple. But Lin Xuan was not satisfied. This seclusion training was not over yet.

For one, he still have over one hundred pellets of Purified Essence pills and would last for another dozen days of cultivation at least. Also, although he had successfully broken through, he still had only just entered into the fifth layer. He needed to solidify his cultivation base. So he would continue to stay in seclusion.

Lin Xuan did not get complacent with getting a little bit of success. It fact, it was the complete opposite. Every time he succeeded, he would make more ambitious goals and place harsher requirements on himself.

He became more and more familiar with the circulation of the Soaring Cloud technique. He could feel his spiritual power increasing every day.

Other than his cultivation, the volume of the star ocean in his body had expanded twofold. Originally, he had reached a bottleneck in purifying mid-grade pills. That was not an issue of practising or not working hard enough. He was stuck at only having a success rate of twenty percent. This had nothing to do with efficiency. It was purely because he had hit a bottleneck in the blue star ocean.

But now that he had entered into the latter layers and the star ocean had expanded, the bottleneck naturally disappeared. Lin Xuan tested it out. The success rate of purifying mid-grade pills had risen to thirty percent. Also, now every three low-grade pills he purified, only one would fail.

As to low-grade pills, the current Lin Xuan was already not impressed by them. So even if the success rate increased, Lin Xuan did not care. But mid-grade pills were different. This trip to the Soaring Cloud sect not only allowed Lin Xuan to purchase the items he needed but also taught him about the situation about the various precious items in the cultivation world.

Low-grade Purified Essence pills were the most common kind of medicinal pills, but mid-grade pills were very uncommon.

Not to mention that it increased his strength. If the success rate rose, then he could consume more mid-grade pills every day.

The maximum number of Purified Essence pills that can be consumed a day is nine. Before, because he did not have enough mid-grade pills, he could only consume one mid-grade pill out of the nine daily limit. Now he could increase it to two or even three pellets.

With the help of the medicinal power, Lin Xuan made rapid progress. After a dozen days, he came out of seclusion and walked out of his house. The current Lin Xuan, although he still have a long way to go before reaching the sixth layer, but he had already solidified his power of the fifth layer. Even his temperament had slightly changed.

However, Lin Xuan did not have a face full of happiness but instead looked very worried. The increase in strength was a good thing, but along with it, hiding that strength would only get harder.

He was clear about his own situation. Although people rarely came to the waste pills storage, but he still needed to leave and go to different areas of the sect. If some elder saw through his cultivation, then it would be disastrous.

There was only one reason. He was an ordinary person who had no spiritual roots. A year ago, he was still struggling in the first layer, but just a few months had passed and he had already entered the latter layers. Only an idiot would not be suspicious.

But if they investigated to the heart of the matter and found out about the secret of the blue star ocean……

Lin Xuan shook his head. Although the chances of this happening were small, even if a cultivator with much high cultivation than him checked, it would be hard to determine the exact situation inside another persons' dantian. But better same than sorry, so he would plan for everything ahead of time.

Let alone the fact that Lin Xuan could not think of a good enough excuse to why his cultivation had advanced by leaps and bounds in just one year.

If there a method to hide one's cultivation such that others cannot see through it?

Lin Xuan knit his brows and thought deeply. This question was not a question that he could ask an elder about. He could only do some research himself.

Lin Xuan came to the library. Low-level disciples could only access the first layer. There were no cultivation techniques here. But there were a lot of books on various subjects. Lin Xuan spent a whole day there and finally found the answer to that question.

On the Herbal encyclopedia was recorded the following:

The Red Silk grass aged over one hundred years can be used to concoct the Purified Essence pill and other such medicinal pills. When consumed, can also hide one's cultivation.

Lin Xuan was very happy in his heart. He quickly and carefully read on. Then after a short period, he closed the book. He had a gloomy expression on his face.

The Red Silk grass was a very rare and precious herb in the secular world, but in the cultivation world, it was a very common herb. It was also required to concoct Purified Essence pills. The sect had special herbal gardens, which meant that it would be very easy to find it there.

It was also recorded in the book that the Red Silk grass had different grades. The regular ones can be used to concoct Purified Essence pills, mid-grades for Foundation Building pills, and the best could be used to concoct Spiritual Return pills, which are pulls for Core Formation cultivators.

What a joke. The materials used in pills for the Core Formation stage, it was obvious that it would be very precious. There was not way that he could be able to acquire it.

The Herbal was also very clear. Only one sprig of hid-grade Red Silk Grass would appear among ten thousand sprigs.

Closing the book, Lin Xuan walked out of the library. Although he was disappointed, he still looked apathetic on the outside. He stopped in a remote corner and silently thought for a short while. Then he did not head back towards the waste pill storage but instead went towards the herb gardens.

After an hour, Lin Xuan walked out of the herb gardens. He had a bamboo wicker basket which was filled with Red Silk Grass. He had traded for them using one pellet of low-grade Purified Essence pill. Luckily, the steward of the herb gardens did not know him. After seeing that Lin Xuan's fifth layer cultivation, he became much more polite.

The reason Lin Xuan went and got some many sprigs of Red Silk grass was because he had a sudden though. If he could purify medicinal pills, then could he also do the same with medicinal herbs?

Lin Xuan did not have high hopes, but he had to try to see the results. If he could purify these regular Red Silk grass into high-grades, then wouldn't the problem of hiding his cultivation be solved?

Returning to the waste pill storage and closed the door of his house. He pulled out a sprig of Red Silk grass. This sprig was approximately twenty years old. It emitted a faint medicinal aroma. Because it had only been

recently harvested, it was still very fresh and tender.

In the cultivation world, Red Silk grass could be considered to be a kind of special material. Different grades would result in different kinds of pills. Low-grade Red Silk grass could only be considered an ordinary material. Mid-grade was considered precious. As to high-grade, even Core Formation experts would fight over them. From this, it can be seen that it was a very precious treasure.

Only high-grade Red Silk grass can hide his cultivation. Lin Xuan decided to test if other than finished pills if the blue stars had any effect on fresh materials.

053 - Refining Herbs

Lin Xuan held the Red Silk grass in his hands and focused his spiritual sense on it. this was his first time attempting to refine medicinal herbs, so he was extra careful.

This was a new kind of experiment!

After entering the latter layers of the Spirit Gathering stage, Lin Xuan's spiritual sense had strengthened further. His use of the blue stars had also become more skillful. Up to now, he had already purified thousands of pills.

But completed pills and fresh herbs were definitely different and Lin Xuan could only slowly feel it out.

He gathered the blue stars and slowly circulated them along his meridians until they finally emerged from his palm.

Before, when Lin Xuan had just started purifying pills when the blue stars exited his body, he could not control them at all and could only allow them to drift about. Some would disperse into the air and only a small portion would enter into the pill. Therefore, a large portion of it was completely wasted.

But he couldn't do anything about it. Back then, Lin Xuan did not have enough power. It was too difficult for him to control the shapeless stars through the air. But now, he had entered into the latter layers of the Spirit

Gathering stage and his spiritual sense has increased greatly. Although he had not yet learned the Spiritual Control technique, but his telekinesis was already top-notch.

Using the telekinesis technique, Lin Xuan attached his spiritual sense to the blue stars. Just like this, even though the stars were floating in the air, they would not disperse and would do what Lin Xuan willed.

He slowly carried the stars into the herb. At the same time, he split off some of his spiritual sense and carefully observed the changes that were happening on the inside of the Red Silk grass. Under the observation of the spiritual sense, the scene on the inside of the Red Silk grass continuously magnified.

He saw that there was a red and a cyan substance on the inside. There were intertwined in an inseparably close manner. One of these should be the impurity.

However, immediately after, Lin Xuan ran into another question. Of the red substance and the cyan substance, which was the essence, which was the impurity? Before when he was purifying pills, the stars would be able to automatically differentiate between them. If he met the essence, it would move through it, if it met the impurity, it would push it out. However, at the current moment, it could be seen that pills and herbs were very different. No matter if it was the red substance or the cyan substance, the stars would push them either way.

It looks like he would have to figure out when one of the two was the impurity himself!

Lin Xuan hesitated for a bit, then directed the stars to avoid the cyan substance and started to push out the red substance.

Then, judging by the situation, Lin Xuan carefully controlled the stars to speed up the process.

……

In the blink of an eye, two hours had passed.

Lin Xuan looked at the herb in his hand. It had produced a red power. He was silent for a while.

He had made the correct decision. This red power was emitting a stinky odour and was definitely the impurity. But it did not look like this sprig of Red Silk grass had changed at all after he had purified it. Lin Xuan followed the method described in the book to evaluate the herb and carefully observed the colour, lustre, and fragrance. He even plucked off a leaf and tasted it for its medicinal properties. But the grade did not increase at all, it was still a sprig of low-grade Red Silk grass.

How can this be? Could it be that the blue stars could only purify pills and had no effect on fresh medicinal herbs?

Lin Xuan was silent for a while but was not disheartened. He once again reached into the wicker basket for another sprig. This time, he did the opposite and did not eliminate the impurities. Instead, he pushed out the cyan substance, the substance the was the essence of the herb.

Two hours later.

The Red Silk grass in his hand had withered. A green liquid had appeared in his had. It was emitting a very refreshing fragrance.

Lin Xuan discarded the withered herb. He then reached into his bosom and retrieved an empty jade bottle and stored the liquid into it.

The liquid was the essence of the Red Silk grass. Only, he did not know if it had the medicinal properties of the high-grade Red Silk grass since it was refined from a low-grade sprig.

After all, this was his first attempt at refining medicinal herbs and there was still a lot of things he did not know. He would need to feel his way around and advance step by step. Lin Xuan hesitated a little and then took a small sip of that green liquid.

This was not a reckless action by Lin Xuan. When he was at the library, he had already carefully read through the materials on the Red Silk grass. It was very clear. Because it was an important component of medicinal pills, it had a nourishing effect on cultivation. The green liquid was the essence of that ingredient. Even if it did not have the effect that Lin Xuan was looking for, it would at least not have any harmful effects.

Of course, to be safe, on only took a small sip.

Afterwards, he sat down cross-legged and used the inner view technique to check the internal condition of his body. In an instant, the essence started taking effect.

After that green liquid was ingested, it turned into a gas and entered his dantian. Lin Xuan was somewhat nervous. The dantian was the place that stored the spiritual power. It was the root of one's cultivation. There can be no mishaps.

He circulated his spiritual power, getting ready to meet it. If anything was wrong with it, he would immediately expel it from his body.

Fortunately, nothing unexpected happened. After the gas entered his dantian, it expanded into a transparent globe and just stayed suspended there.

This was an unexpected situation. Lin Xuan concentrated his spiritual sense on his dantian and quietly observed it for a while. Then he gathered is spiritual power and lightly touched the globe. Who would have guessed that the globe would suddenly suck in and wrap around his spiritual power?

Lin Xuan did not panic. Seeing a new problem, if one wanted beneficial results, one must calmly reflect on it.

He discovered that although his spiritual power had entered into the globe, it was still connected to his spiritual sense, there was no obstruction at all. He could still easily control it.

After discovering this, Lin Xuan immediately relaxed and continued to experiment.

……

In the blink of an eye, night fell. Lin Xuan got up off the ground. He had a face full of happiness. Success! Although he did not know how high-grade Red Silk grass hid one's cultivation, since the books did not describe it and only glossed over it, but Lin Xuan was sure that this green liquid was even more effective than it.

It was a very simple process. After drinking the liquid, it would change into a gas and enter the dantian. Then he could pour his spiritual power into that globe that was formed by the gas.

The globe would not sever the control that the spiritual sense had on the spiritual power. In other words, his spiritual power could freely enter or exit the globe, it would not affect his ability to use techniques at all. But after wrapping around his spiritual power, it would cut off other cultivators probings. That is to say, this share of spiritual power was not discoverable by other people.

As everyone knows, the power of a cultivator was based on their spiritual power. Since he was able to hide his spiritual power and cut off other's probings, he had achieved the goal of hiding his true power.

054 - The Sixth Layer of Spirit Gathering

Even better, because spiritual power needed to be poured into the globe, he could control how much he poured into it and as a result how much cultivation he wanted to hide. If he poured more into it, then there would be less spiritual power left in his meridians and dantian and this his cultivation would appear lower.

Lin Xuan tested it out and discovered that the most he could hide was ninety percent of his spiritual power. Thus, if someone probed his cultivation, they would mistake him for a cultivator at the first layer of the Spirit Gathering stage.

But no matter how hard Lin Xuan tried, he could not hide all the spiritual power is his body. One cannot be too greedy, Lin Xuan was already satisfied with this kind of result.

Laying on the bed, Lin Xuan started to think about the benefits that the green liquid refined from the Red Silk grass gave him. Firstly, it gave him the ability to hide his cultivation from his peers and had solved all of his worries. He no longer needed to think about the consequences of having his cultivation exposed.

Secondly, it could also give him the advantage in battle. The only reason was this: it would let the opponent underestimate him. The globe would hide his cultivation but does not obstruct his ability to use techniques. The opponent would think that he is a cultivator in the first layer and might not even use a spirit shield when fighting against him. Then he would be able to take advantage of their unpreparedness and

suddenly launch a sneak attack by using a powerful technique

Of course, he still had some questions that he needed to answer first. The effect of the green liquid must have a time limit after which the globe it generated will vanish. He decided to slowly experiment with this.

Actually, it wasn't just about the Red Silk grass. This experiment had a greater meaning. It demonstrated that the blue stars could not only raise the effects of medicinal pills but used on plants, it also had a purifying effect. This got Lin Xuan very excited.

It had so many benefits. It gave Lin Xuan even more confidence in his journey of cultivation!

Lin Xuan rested for a while to allow the star ocean to recover, then he started to purify again. Once he had grasped the skill, refining Red Silk grass was much easier than purifying pills.

After spending the whole night, Lin Xuan was able to refine that entire basket of Red Silk grass and filled three jade bottles with essences. Because he only needed a sip of it to form the cultivation hiding globe, these three bottles would therefore last for a long time.

With nothing else to worry about, Lin Xuan focused on his cultivation. He was not at all satisfied with reaching the latter layers of the Spirit Gathering stage. He was only entered into the fifth layer, now it was time to head for an even higher layer.

It really was not because Lin Xuan was impatient, but this trip taught

him that to cultivators, might makes right. He was still too weak, so he must increase his efforts in cultivating.

Not to mention other things, the goal of this entire trip to the Soaring Cloud sect was to acquire the Spiritual Control technique. But only after he had gotten the mid-grade cultivation technique did he find that it was different from what he had imagined.

If he wanted to learn the Spiritual Control technique, he would at least need the strength of the sixth layer!

This was because using the Spiritual Control technique would use up spiritual power really fast. If one's cultivation was weak, one would not be able to support that kind of usage of spiritual power. Therefore, the minimum of the sixth layer was required.

Lin Xuan was not disheartened at all. Increasing his power first was also good. If his foundation was solid, the amount of power he was able to display with spirit tools would also be greater.

Following this, Lin Xuan spent half a month purifying pills. After entering the latter layers of the Spirit Gathering stage, the volume of the start ocean had increased greatly and with it, the success rate of purifying also went up. Therefore, although he had spent the same amount of time as last time, but he was able to purify many more pills than last time. In particular, he was able to purify over sixty mid-grade pills this time. Therefore, following his plan of entering seclusion for a month, he would be able to take two to three mid-grade pills a day.

A month later, Lin Xuan left seclusion. He did not have any expressions

on his face. Without saying a word, he went to the warehouse storing the waste pills and took a batch. Then he returned to his house and once again shut the doors.

……

Another month passed. Lin Xuan came out again, and after resting for not even a single day, once again entered seclusion.

Zhao Ming and the rest of the children were endlessly shocked and amazed and were almost prostrating themselves in admiration. He was able to sleep in for months at a time and not get bored of it, other than this immortal in front of them, where else can you find one like him?

They did not have a shred of suspicion. The was because of Lin Xuan's shrewdness. He act of being lazy had already been deeply imprinted in their minds, so he was able to fool all of them.

Just like this, he had already spent three months before he formally concluded his seclusion.

No pain, no gain. With countless pills and his own efforts, he had finally cultivated to the sixth layer.

Thinking back on these three months, even with Lin Xuan's awesome willpower, he still felt some trepidation. He almost never rested or slept. Every day, he would get less than two hours of sleep. And if he was not doing sitting meditation, then he was cultivating.

The circulation of vital energy of the Soaring Cloud technique consumed a lot of energy to practice. In the beginning, completing one cycle would exhaust him to the point where even moving a single finger was difficult. Yet he did not rest and clenched his teeth and continued on. Now, he could do nine complete cycles every day.

To make such rapid progress in cultivation was all due to the support of the medicinal power of pills. Lin Xuan's own sacrifices were also a big reason for his progress.

However, this breakthrough was not like last time. Last time when he had just broken through to the fifth layer, his body had emitted a faint layer of spiritual power. With one look, one would be able to tell that that person had an extraordinary cultivation. But now, he did not look out of the ordinary at all, in fact, he looked very listless and washed out.

Of course, this was not because Lin Xuan was too tired from cultivating. Although these few months have been very trying, but he had already had a good night's sleep before coming out and his body and spiritual power had already recovered to their optimal conditions.

He purposely acted listless and had also consumed some of the green liquid that was refined from the Red Silk grass. Not to mention some ordinary elders, even if he was standing in front of the patriarch, immortal Yun He, a Core Formation expert, Lin Xuan believed that he would also not be able to see through his fake cultivation of the first layer.

"Immortal!" See Lin Xuan finally coming out of the house, Zhao Ming and the children hurriedly saluted him.

“Alright, you guys can go back to your tasks, don’t worry about me.”

Lin Xuan headed out and left the courtyard. Although he had already reached the sixth layer and can now learn the Spiritual Control technique, but he had been shut in the house for a long time and wanted to go out for a stroll. Even though he work very hard when cultivating, he understood that there needed to be a balance between work and rest. Haste will ruin everything, it was best to rest for a few days.

055 - Lectures at the Young Hawks Pavilion

Lin Xuan went to the Young Hawks Pavilion. He had not listened to a lecture in a long time. Although he was already in the latter layers of the Spirit Gathering stage, but listening to Foundation Building elders talking about their experiences can still save him from certain pitfalls along the road of cultivation.

But unlike before, Lin Xuan did not select a remote corner, but instead, chose a good seat in the front. He no longer needed to worry about exposing his cultivation now that he had the green liquid refined from the Red Silk grass.

“Oh, if it isn’t junior apprentice brother Lin. Long time no see!”

A clear voice pierced through the air and over to Lin Xuan’s ears causing Lin Xuan to frown. The person this voice belonged to was called Ye Tian and was a disciple that entered the sect at the same time as him.

Ye Tian was naturally talented and possess extraordinary spiritual roots and thus made rapid progress in his cultivation. Therefore, he was only of the elite disciples of the sect. But he was a sharp and unkind type of person and enjoyed bullying others. This last couple of years, he often mocked and ridiculed Lin Xuan.

A gloomy look flashed on Lin Xuan’s face but in the next instant, it was gone. He coldly laughed in his heart. Before, when he was simply too weak, he had no choice other than to endure being humiliated by others,

but now..... Hmph, if Ye Tian still dared to speak rudely, then Lin Xuan will find an opportunity to make him suffer.

If you do not offend me, then I will not offend you. If you offend me, then I will make you regret being born!

Lin Xuan would not willingly provoke others, but now that he's had the strength, if others were to provoke him, he would also not just grin and bear it like before. He would not hesitate in the slightest when it was time to act.

"Junior apprentice brother Lin, long time no see. Have you been well?" This was unexpected. Ye Tian did not act like before by taunting or ridiculing him. In fact, he seemed to be very warm-hearted and was even inquiring about Lin Xuan's wellbeing.

His attitude had taken a complete one hundred and eighty-degree turn. Even though Lin Xuan was shrewd, he was still shocked. But this was all in his heart. Of the surface, he still had that apathetic look. He indifferently said: "Many thanks for senior apprentice brother's concern, I have been well."

Having finished saying that, he turned around to leave. Since Ye Tian did not try to pick a fight with him, then he would also not try to teach Ye Tian a lesson. But Lin Xuan also did not want to be involved with Ye Tian either.

"Junior apprentice brother, what's the hurry?" Ye Tian called out to him once again. "I still have things to say to you. We have sure clear and refreshing autumn weather today, I was wondering if junior apprentice

brother wouldn't mind joining us for some barbecue in the mountains?"

"Barbecue?"

Lin Xuan was surprised. Although cultivators were all in pursuit of the laws of heaven, but they were still people. They still had emotions and desires. Not to mention low-levelled cultivators like them, even the high-levelled cultivators that did not need sustenance, would still not stop eating. They would still satisfy their appetite from time to time.

Disciples that had good relationships with each other would band together. They would go hunting and then cooking their catches. It was a very normal and common thing.

But in the cultivation world, power was everything. In the eyes of these disciples, he was just an ordinary brat with no spiritual roots and thus he was discriminated against. He had never been invited to these group activities.

Although he did not know why Ye Tian's attitude suddenly changed so much, but there must be a reason for him to be so nice, there must be hidden malicious reasons. Lin Xuan thought for a bit and shook his head, "Thank you senior apprentice brother for your good intentions, but I have some things to take care of today, maybe some other day."

A look of disappointment flashed in Ye Tian's eyes but he quickly recovered to an amiable look. "Alright, next time, next time."

After he finished saying goodbye, he turned around. He had a sinister

look on his face. Who would have thought that this brat would not appreciate his kindness? Whatever, it can be counted as him having good luck. His face changed back into a smiling expression, and after finding another target, he walked towards another disciple with lower cultivation.

Although he had already walked far away, Lin Xuan still kept an eye out and took in all of this. His expression did not change but he did start pondering about it. Why did Ye Tian deliberately approach disciples with lower cultivation, what exactly did he want?

Although Lin Xuan did not know what his goal was he knew it was definitely malicious. But presently, Lin Xuan decided not to waste time thinking about it anymore. It doesn't matter what kind of scheme they had, it had nothing to do with him. He just needed to be more careful and stay away from the guy from now on.

As to whether other people will fall of this scheme, Lin Xuan was not a saint, he would try to be these people's saviour. Of course, if they wanted to trick Lin Xuan, then he was also not opposed to teaching them a lesson.

An ancient bell rung. The various groups of disciples quickly stopped their discussions, assembled together, and saluted the yellow robed lecturer. "Master."

"Alright." The Foundation Building cultivator nodded. He glanced around. There was not the slightest trace of suspicion when his gaze passed over Lin Xuan. He then started lecturing.

.....

Two hours later, Lin Xuan left the Young Hawks Pavilion. The lecturer did not teach any new techniques but did talk about his experiences when cultivating. Lin Xuan listened with great interest and felt greatly enlightened. This past year, with the help of the medicinal power of pills, and because of his spending ten times the effort compared to others, he was able to rapidly rise from the first layer to the sixth layer of the Spirit Gathering stage.

This could be considered very fast. But he was not very clear on the minute details of the cultivation techniques. Currently, there were no visible issues, but as time goes on and as he treads further upon the path of cultivation, there would be a lot of hidden damage.

It was such a coincidence. The insights of this lecturer just happened to answer each of Lin Xuan's many problems, that had arisen during his cultivation practice, one after another.

After going back, as long as he corrected all of his mistakes in cultivation according to today's insights, he would be able to increase his power by another portion.

He would also be able to come to the Young Hawks Pavilion to listen to lectures once again. With the green liquid refined from the Red Silk grass, he would not need to worry about having his cultivation exposed. He did not need to have worry about these things anymore.

It was still early so Lin Xuan decided not to go back to the waste pills storage. He had spent many long months cultivating in seclusion, therefore, it was time to take a break.

Leaving the Floating Cloud Valley, he came to a nearby mountain peak. It was a beautiful place with elegant scenery. The perfect place to relax his mind and body.

He had not even been laying on the grass for an hour yet when suddenly, his face changed. He hurriedly dove into some nearby shrubs. Someone was coming.

The previous Lin Xuan could really not be compared to the current one. With his powerful spiritual sense, he was able to see everything that happened in the hundreds of metres around him. It was Ye Tian followed by a few disciples who had lower cultivation.

He did not expect to meet him here at all. Lin Xuan did not believe that Ye Tian was here to make barbecue, it must be for some evil scheme. He did not want to meddle in other's business, but if he was to leave now, Ye Tian would definitely notice. Therefore, he could only sit here and wait.

TL Note :

I am using refining and purifying interchangeably. When Lin Xuan is working with pills, he uses the blue stars to push the impurities out of the pill, so purifying pills is the appropriate term to use. When working with herbs so far, his first attempt was to push out the impurities, so I think purifying in this context also makes sense. But with respect to the green liquid, one he had extracted it, the Red Silk grass wilted, so I think refining the essence out would be the more appropriate term here.

056 - Fratricide

Other than Ye Tian, there were also three other fellow disciples following after him. Of the three, two of them were short and stout and looked exactly alike; the other was tall and lanky with an ordinary appearance and looked somewhat dim-witted.

After hiding himself in the shrubbery, Lin Xuan did not make any movements and started to ponder. Of the disciples that entered the sect at the same time, Ye Tian was one of the outstanding talents. His cultivation could be ranked as one of the top five and was also someone that was spoiled and pampered by the elders. He normally looked down on everyone and treated the disciples that had lower cultivation than himself rudely. Why was he acting so out of character today?

Although this pair of brothers surnamed Song and that tall fellow possessed spiritual roots, they were rather weak. They only had the cultivation of the third layer. According to Ye Tian's character, he would not associate with these kinds of idiot disciples. What exactly was he planning?

Lin Xuan's curiosity had been piqued, so he silently released his spiritual sense so that he could see what was going on in greater detail.

"Senior Apprentice Brother Ye, is this the place where we are having the barbecue? Then I will go hunt some prey for us," said the elder of the two brothers with an excited expression on his face.

Ordinarily, they would receive no small amount of contemptuous and scornful looks. Since they were able to fawn upon this elite disciple, then they would have to perform well. Once they had the support of Ye Tian, they would also be treated better.

"There's no hurry."

Ye Tian smiled and patted his shoulder and retrieved a gourd from his storage bracelet. "After climbing such a tall mountain, you must be thirsty. I brewed this immortal wine myself. It contains many rare herbs and medicines and is very beneficial to raising one's cultivation. If Junior Apprentice Brothers do not mind it, then please have a taste."

"This……" Song Xiong was stunned and had an astonished expression on his face. He and his younger brother had already received such a great favour by being invited here by Ye Tian today. Ye Tian was an elite disciple valued by the elders and they had planned to fawn upon him and curry some favour, but who would have thought that he was even more enthusiastic than they were.

Hearing that this wine had the power to increase their cultivation, a greedy look flashed on their faces, but they still made excuses. "Senior Apprentice Brother, this is your precious treasure, how could we just take it without doing anything to deserve it?"

"Haha, we're all brothers, what are you saying this for? Drink!" Ye Tian had a forthright expression on his face while he waved his hands.

"Then I can only accept Senior Apprentice Brother's invitation." Song Xiong was never truly declining the invitation, so he received the wine

gourd and proceeded to gulp a few mouthfuls.

Ye Tian had a slight smile on his face, along with a gentle expression. But secretly, a vicious and ominous look flashed in his eyes.

Song Xiong wiped his mouth and went to hand back the gourd. But Ye Tian did not accept it. “How can I favour one over the others? Junior Apprentice Brothers, you guys have some too.”

“Many thanks, Senior Apprentice Brother.”

The younger son of the Song family was called Song Hu. He had a much more rash temperament than his elder brother. After thanking Ye Tian once, he received the wine gourd and started gulping down the wine.

“Alright fellow apprentice brother Song, leave some for me.” That tall and lanky youth was afraid that he would drink it all and hurriedly try to persuade him. After hearing this, Song Hu reluctantly relinquished the gourd.

The tall and lanky youth then started to madly drink from the gourd.

Lin Xuan watched with cold indifference and had a cold and mocking smile on the corner of his lips. Although he did not know what Ye Tian was planning, he definitely knew that it could not be something beneficial for those three. He had laid his trap and those three were desperate to get themselves caught in it.

Lin Xuan had a very good idea of what was going on yet he still did not

intervene. Although with his current cultivation he should have no problems dealing with Ye Tian, but why should he meddle in other people's affairs?

Calamity is caused by opening one's mouth too much, and troubles are caused by rushing to the fore. Lin Xuan was not an inherently bad person, but he could not be called a good person either. Unless there were some benefits or gains, he would never meddle in other people's business.

The cultivation world was cruel and reeked of blood. Lin Xuan had long ago understood the principle that a wise man looks after his own hide.

No matter what the outcome was, he had no friendly relations with them, so those three could only shoulder it themselves. In addition, because they did not have good spiritual roots and were slow in cultivation, they were also ridiculed by the other disciples. But they themselves liked to bully those who had worse aptitudes then them. To now kick someone when they were down, Lin Xuan already thought that he was being nice. To do a good deed for those three evil persons was just a pipe dream. He was not that stupid.

"Senior Apprentice Brother Ye, we have finished the wine. Why don't you rest here while I go hunt for some prey."

Song Xiong still wanted to curry favour with Ye Tian. But just as he finished speaking, his expression suddenly changed. His body swayed and crashed to the ground.

"Elder brother!" Song Hu was shocked and wanted to help up his brother. But he also started to feel dizzy and was unable to stand up

straight.

That tall and lanky disciple also consumed quite a bit of medicinal wine so he naturally also ended up in the same situation.

“Senior Apprentice Brother Ye, you……” These three were not fools, so naturally, they had figured out that Ye Tian had done something to the wine.

“Senior Apprentice Brother Ye, there is no hatred and animosity between us and we have never committed an offence against you!”

“That’s right, Senior Apprentice Brother, maybe there was a misunderstanding and I would ask for your forgiveness.”

……

The three of them were both shocked and angry, but they also understood that a wise man knows better than to fight when the odds were against him, so they could only implore for forgiveness. At the same time, they were all very baffled. They were merely at the third layer of the Spirit Gathering stage, even if they joined hands and acted together, they would not be able to defeat the fifth layer Ye Tian.

If he wanted to teach them a lesson, he wouldn’t have to use such a bothersome and superfluous method like putting poison in the wine. Because they could not think of why he would do this, they started to panic.

The three of them secret channelled their spiritual power but found that they could not even utilize a single strand of it. This caused them to become much more panicked.

"Don't bother wasting your strength."

Ye Tian was fully content with his successful plan and finally exposed his vicious character. "You have just drunk the Spirit Sealing wine, within the next six hours, you won't be able to use any of your cultivation."

"Haha, why would Senior Apprentice Brother play this kind of joke?"

The murderous look on Ye Tian's face cause the three of them to very anxious, but after racking their brains, they still could not remember when they had offended him. Song Xiong could only weakly smile and hoped for the best.

"Hmph, who is joking with you?"

Ye Tian coldly said: "If you want to blame someone, then you can only blame your own bad luck. My Hundred Souls Streamer needs three more souls of cultivators to be completed. You guys have the fortune of being the offering for my magic treasure."

"Magic treasures? Offerings?"

Hearing these words, the three of them show expressions of extreme fear. They were trembling from head to toe and wanted to escape. But the Spirit Sealing wine not only sealed their spiritual power, it also had the

secondary effect of marking the victim’s body limp and sore. Therefore, all their efforts were in vain.

057 - Demonic Cultivator

TL Notes :

In the future, I will not be explicitly translating everything as tools. In the Chinese text, it does say tool, but I will be taking liberties in cases where he is using say the sword shaped spirit tool and changing it to artifacts (maybe). Calling them all spirit tools is just awkward when read out loud.

Demonic artifacts were still spirit artifacts, they were simply spirit weapons crafted by demonic cultivators. But the so called demonic cultivator was just another branch of cultivation.

Normal cultivators all seek immortal ascension, but the path of cultivation is long and filled with thistles and thorns. One must exert unimaginable effort to have even a measure of success.

That is also why even a talented cultivator, other than having spiritual roots, must also have an eternal perseverance.

Spiritual roots were innate, either you had it or you didn't. But this perseverance was dependent on oneself. Although everyone would like to progress further on the road of cultivation, but there were truly few that could put forth their greatest effort and draw up such perseverance.

Quite a lot of cultivators lead a life of mediocrity. This was not because they had bad aptitudes but simply because they did not put forth enough effort. Some of them sank into obscurity but some of them tried

to find convenient shortcuts.

As everyone knows, cultivators were people that were seeking an understanding of the heavenly laws. This was a step by step process to form a firm foundation. But those opportunists took an alternate approach. They created cultivation techniques that did not require a lot of effort and allowed one to progress very quickly. For a time, all the cultivators wanted to acquire these cultivation techniques.

These were the first demonic cultivators!

But not everyone rushed to cultivate in these techniques. Quite a few wise people saw that although these techniques would allow cultivators to raise their cultivation rapidly, they also had many hidden risks and vulnerabilities.

As one cultivates these techniques, the speed of progress would gradually slow down and one's Dao-Heart would be easily swayed and cause one to have heart demons. This was the first point. The second was that these cultivation techniques were particularly vicious and were sinful. Although to be fair, cultivators could not be considered to be kind people at all. They were ruled by the law of the jungle, ordinary mortals were like ants to them.

But those cultivators that truly enjoyed pointless killings were actually very few in number. Even killing and robbing at least had a reason: personal benefit. But demonic cultivators were not the same. After cultivating such perverse techniques for a long time, their characters would also turn vicious.

Killing for pleasure and using souls to refine demonic weapons. There action shows that they did not have reservations about this at all.

Demonic cultivators had a bad reputation, but regular cultivators decided that they could coexist with them. The cultivation world was an every man for themselves kind of place. They would only retaliate if you offended them. Removing demons for the greater good was purely a lie made up to tell little kids.

Hearing the words demonic artifact, Lin Xuan recalled all the information he had learned about them. He was very surprised. This Ye Tian joined the sect at the same time as Lin Xuan and the Floating Cloud Valley was a genuine cultivator sect, so how could he be a demonic cultivator?

After Ye Tian gave them the Spirit Sealing wine, his face became increasingly vicious. He laughed coldly and said: “Three Junior Apprentice Brothers, if you want to blame someone, you can only blame yourselves for having such back luck. In order to refine this Hundred Souls Streamer, I have already used eighty-one souls of ordinary mortals. But that demonic manual I acquired clearly states that if I wanted to succeed, I must also use three souls of cultivators.”

“Why did you pick us?” Song Hui was shaking all over. He had obviously heard rumours of these demonic cultivators. To have his soul ripped out and used to refine demonic artifacts was a fate worse than falling into the eighteenth layer of hell.

“Hmph! Why do you have such weak cultivation?” Ye Tian coldly smiled. “If a few elite disciples went missing, the sect would definitely investigate. If by chance they found that I was the culprit, then I would

have to face all the consequences!”

Although cultivators and demonic cultivators could coexist together, but they were still from the same sect. Secretly using demonic techniques to refine artifacts was against the rules, in addition, he was even ripping souls out of others to do so. Ye Tian was not stupid, of course he would be careful.

Also, the Song brothers and the lanky youth were all unimportant disciples of the sect. Even if they went missing, the sect would not expend too much effort searching for them.

Of course, that was only one of the reasons. There was also another reason: he had only recently acquired that demonic manual and this his cultivation was not deep enough.

Although the manual clearly stated that the stronger the soul of the cultivator that was used to prime and refined the artifact, the more powerful the Hundred Souls Streamer would be, but that was only in theory. In reality, if the cultivation of cultivator whose soul he uses was too profound, he might not be able to successfully refine it. The refinement of the artifact would only end in failure.

Therefore, why not find three disciples who had somewhat weak cultivations. That way, he would be sure to succeed in refining their souls and his wicked deeds would not be discovered by the sect. It was simply killing two birds with one stone.

Lin Xuan did not show any outward expressions on his face but he was feeling very murderous in his heart. This Ye Tian, he originally set Lin

Xuan as a target, but Lin Xuan did not fall for the trap.

He was truly devious and vicious and deserves to die. Of course, Lin Xuan would not make his move now, but in the future……

Although he did not cause Lin Xuan any substantial harm, but based on Lin Xuan's attitude, if he had the opportunity, he would definitely pay Ye Tian back for this.

While Lin Xuan was making plans, Ye Tian had pulled out a small streamer from his bosom. Although there were in a secluded area, it would still be best to refine their souls first lest something unexpected happens.

The Hundred Souls Streamer was about the size of a palm, but as soon as it was pulled out, Lin Xuan felt a thick Yin energy. It was very horrific and felt full of resentment.

But to the contrary, Ye Tian had a face full of excitement. The more vicious this Yin energy was, the more powerful the Hundred Souls Streamer would be.

"Senior Apprentice Brother, please spare us, we swear we will not breathe a word about this."

"That's right. We'll go catch Lin Xuan, that guy with not spiritual roots, and then snatch two more low-level disciples and help you refine your demonic streamer."

……

The three of them piteously begged and said some ever more despicable and shameless words.

A cold look flashed past on Lin Xuan's face and what little qualms he held also vanished. He inwardly reminded himself: in the cultivation world, the strong eat the weak, cultivators were selfish and held no regards for others, they also loved to benefit at the misfortune of others. He must be selfish and not have the slightest sympathy for others, or else the one who would suffer would be himself.

Lin Xuan coldly smiled, he was content to watch from the sidelines and just let it play out. He would never follow any of those ideals of justice and evil. Of course, he would not go out and do evil deeds, but he would also not be softhearted anymore.

Or else after he saved them, they might instead come back and bite him. Lin Xuan would not want to become Mr. DongGuo. [1]

[tl: [1] = Mr. DongGuo saved a wolf from hunters. When the hunters left, the wolf turned around and wanted to eat Mr. DongGuo stating that since Mr. DongGuo saved it once, it should save it again by not letting it starve.]

Lin Xuan would not be softhearted, Ye Tian would be even less so. No matter how those three begged, he would not sway an inch.

Let them go? What a joke!

Snatch some more disciples? That was completely unnecessary!

They might expose him once they got back to the sect. And even if they kept their words, it would still be more unnecessary work for himself.

It has to be their souls that are sacrificed to the demonic weapon. Ye Tian lifted the Hundred Souls Streamer high in the air……

058 - Refining Souls

Instantly, a foul current arose and the faint sound of wailing could be heard. The Song brothers were pale with fear. They were so scared that their teeth chattering and they couldn't even open their mouth to beg for mercy.

Three dark green flames floated out of the Hundred Souls Streamer and entered into their bodies. With the contrast of those will-o'-the-wisps, Ye Tian's expression became much more sinister. He held the Hundred Souls Streamer in his left hand and continuously poured spiritual power into it.

At first, the three showed expressions of pain on their face. Although they could not move, there were still signs of struggling from then. Then after a moment, their breathing completely stopped.

Ye Tian kept the Hundred Souls Streamer in his left hand and made a hand seal with his right hand causing a beam of white light to shoot into each of their bodies. The white light then pulled out three yellow balls of light from each of their bodies.

Those were the souls of those three. Seeing that they were struggling to escape, Ye Tian snorted and waved the streamer. Suddenly, a black mist arose and wrapped around those wisps.

"Collect!"

The Hundred Souls Streamer suddenly became much larger. A ghostly

mist emitted from it and morphed into a sinister skeleton which then swallowed the souls.

Ye Tian did not relax after that but instead became much more imposing. He cast many techniques into the demonic streamer then stretch out hands which emitted a dark green demonic flame.

He was beginning to refine it……

Make a move? Or take this opportunity to leave?

Lin Xuan hesitated then turned around and left. Although his strength was much better than it used to be, Demonic Cultivators were simply too strange. Since he did not have a grasp of the situation, it was unwise to make a move.

In addition, the opponent was a cultivator in the Spirit Gathering stage, so he would not have a lot of wealth. The treasures he could gain after killing him could be counted on one hand. But if he makes a mistake while fighting, it would be too late to regret it. Lin Xuan did not have any duty to see justice being done, if there were no benefits for him, he would not take the risk.

After weighing the pros and cons, Lin Xuan decided to leave. He would pretend that he didn’t see anything today. Worst comes to worst, he could just avoid Ye Tian in the future.

Exercising restraint, Lin Xuan headed towards the back of the mountain. In a short while, his silhouette disappeared.

The cross-legged Ye Tian suddenly opened his eyes and looked towards the direction that Lin Xuan had left in. An ominous glint flashed in his eyes.

If it was not for the fact that the Hundred Souls Streamer was extremely sensitive to the aura of living people, he would not have discovered that there was someone hidden there. No matter who that person was, he would not allow them to live in this world much longer.

Ye Tian gnashed his teeth and increased the speed of his hand seals, fully focusing on refining those three souls.

Fortunately, their cultivation was not very high and their souls were not very powerful, Ye Tian was able to speedily refine them into the Hundred Souls Streamer. Holding the demonic artifact in his hand, Ye Tian displayed an expression of ecstasy. But then he raised his head, released murderous aura, and chased after that person from before.

At that moment, Lin Xuan had not returned to the Floating Cloud Valley. The things he had seen today caused him to feel horrified. Committing fratricide and extracting their souls, who would have thought that there would be a Demonic Cultivator hidden in the sect? The things that occurred today gave Lin Xuan a reminder, the road of cultivation was not only difficult, it was also dangerous. One wrong step and he would die and his soul would shatter. If he wanted to tread far on this road, then he must learn, understand, and keep his eye on everything.

Of course, the most important thing was still strength, being powerful was the only way to survive in the Cultivation World.

Suddenly, Lin Xuan stopped. His Spiritual Sense was far more powerful than his peers. He felt someone rushing in his direction carrying along a tyrannical aura.

Ye Tian!

Lin Xuan found out who it was. He did a quick inspect of his person and became shocked. He silently started preparing techniques as a strand of spiritual power flowed out of his body and enveloped him.

Then Lin Xuan retrieved a seal from his bosom and attached it to his clothes. Suddenly the firm earth under his feet suddenly changed into quicksand. After his whole body had been submerged, the quicksand once again changed back into solid earth.

After a moment, Ye Tian arrived at that spot. He had a bewildered look on his face as he looked around the area. Just now, when he was refining the Hundred Souls Streamer, some Yin energy had attached to the person that was hiding. Because it was such a tiny amount, it was hard to detect, but Ye Tian could use the souls of the Hundred Souls Streamer to easily find the exact location of that Yin energy.

But for some reason, that feeling had suddenly disappeared.

Did he discover me earlier?

Could he be a Foundation Building cultivator?

The reason Ye Tian thought like this was because the cultivation technique of Demonic Cultivators was special. A demonic cultivator at the same layer as a regular cultivator would be able to spread his spiritual sense much further.

Also, because he had been using a demonic cultivation technique who's speed was faster, his cultivation was now at the sixth layer of the Spirit Gathering stage.

His spiritual sense had already exceeded that of a Spirit Gathering stage great perfection cultivator, or in other words, unless that person was a Foundation Building expert, he would not have been able to detect Ye Tian so fast.

But if the opponent was a Foundation Building expert, then he surely would have annihilated him back at the mountain peak!

Ye Tian just could not figure it out. Of course, he couldn't have known that under normal conditions, regular cultivators had much weaker spiritual senses than demonic cultivators, but Lin Xuan was not a regular cultivator. Both the purification of pills and the time spent cultivating on the Heart Refinement Road was a form of tempering his spiritual sense.

Comparing only spiritual sense, Lin Xuan was not one bit inferior to an initial stage Foundation Building cultivator!

Even a wise man is not free of errors. In the beginning, Lin Xuan was somewhat careless and did not notice that the Yin energy had stuck onto him. Now that he had discovered it, he used his spiritual power to cover it and thus, Ye Tian could no longer discover his whereabouts.

Because he couldn't find his target, Ye Tian started to get more anxious. Although he could not figure out the opponent's cultivation, but if the sect was to find out that he had used the souls of fellow apprentices to refine a demonic artifact, he would have to face severe consequences.

A fierce look flashed on Ye Tian's face. Clenching his teeth, he took out the Hundred Souls Streamer and inserted his spiritual power into it. Immediately, a black fog appeared and started to spread out.

Of course Lin Xuan would not wait for him to make a move. Although he did not know what technique Ye Tian was preparing, but judging from the look of it, it was not anything good.

Since it was like this, then he would strike first and gain the upper hand.

Lin Xuan's expression did not change. Although he was currently submerged in quicksand, but since he had used the Quicksand seal, he could move about freely. The only downside was that he could not breathe in the sand, but with his current cultivation, holding his breathe from ten, fifteen minutes was not a problem.

059 - Demonic Fog

Countless shining and glossy ice particles appeared in Lin Xuan's palm. They were all needles.

Since this was a sneak attack, then he would, of course, select the most powerful spell he knew. It would be best if he could kill him with one attack.

Previously, Lin Xuan could only control around one hundred ice needles, but now that he had entered into the sixth layer, the number he could control had doubled and the power had also greatly increased.

But he did not immediately use the spell but instead retrieved a bottle from his bosom and took a swig of the liquid extracted from the Red Silk Grass.

Ye Tian was murmuring and the fog of the Hundred Souls Streamer was surging. Looking at this, one could tell that it was some kind of technique used for searching. Seeing that Ye Tian was gradually nearing him, he no longer hesitated. Using his spiritual power, he launched those hundreds of ice needles in his palm.

The needles flashed as they flew, but Ye Tian's reaction speed was extremely fast. His face became pale as he tightened his grip on the Hundred Souls Streamer. The surrounding fog crazily rushed to him and in the fog, a faint shield of bones could be seen.

Clinking sounds continually rang out as the needles hit the shield. After a series of needles impacted against it, with a crack, the shield fractured and broke. But the ice needles had also all been used up.

"Oh!?" Lin Xuan was surprised. Breaking out from below ground, Lin Xuan threw out a mid-grade Firebird seal. Feeling the heat from the technique, Ye Tian clenched his teeth and summoned a blood red skull from the Hundred Souls Streamer which cancelled out both of their techniques.

"It's you?"

After getting a clear look at the attacker, he was both shocked and angry. He had originally thought that it would be some elite disciple, but who would have figured that it would end up being just a person who did not even have spiritual roots.

"Wise people do not show their true colours, I would never have thought that Junior Apprentice Brother Lin had reached the fourth layer!" Ye Tian gnashed his teeth and was still doubtful. How could such an ordinary person raise his cultivation so fast? Could it be that like he, like Ye Tian himself, was also a Demonic Cultivator?

The fourth layer was the average amongst the disciples that joined the sect at the same time as Lin Xuan. No, even if he was a Demonic Cultivator, he would still not be able to reach the fourth layer this fast.

No matter what, if he did not have spiritual roots, there was no possible way to improve this fast.

He was doubtful. Very doubtful!

But Ye Tian could not know that he still misjudged Lin Xuan's cultivation and that he, like Ye Tian, was also at the sixth layer. This was all because Lin Xuan had taken a swig of that Red Silk Grass essence.

This kind of magical spiritual medicine could form a sphere in the Dantian and wrap up spiritual power which would prevent others from discovering one's cultivation base. But it did so in such a way so that it would not impede the usage of that spiritual power. This was truly killing two birds with one stone.

In battle, if one could mislead the opponent about one's cultivation base, they would be able to gain the advantage. It would make the opponent underestimate them and allow the opportunity for surprise attacks.

Of course, it was also not a good idea to appear as weak as possible; one must decide based on the situation at hand. For example, currently, Lin Xuan appeared to have the cultivation of the fourth layer. This was because the fourth layer was the layer at which it was possible to practice the Ice Needles technique. Otherwise, it the opponent saw that he could use such an intrepid technique but only had the cultivation of the first layer, they would definitely get suspicious and be on guard.

The fourth layer was the best to mislead the opponent. This way, they will underestimate him and possibly show so weak points during battle.

A duel was not just a battle of strength, but also of wits. Only when one can grasp both would one achieve victory.

But at the moment, Lin Xuan was not relaxed at all. Originally, he hid in the ground and sneak attacked Ye Tian using a powerful technique that he was sure could kill in one shot. But who would have thought that Ye Tian was such an astute person and even blocked the attack. And that was only one part of it.

That Hundred Souls Streamer's power also caused Lin Xuan to worry.

The difficulty of this battle far exceeded the one where he faced the Yan family patriarch. And although Lin Xuan was very much on guard, he was not overly worried in his heart. This was because he was not the same Lin Xuan from three months ago. He now had the power of the sixth layer of the Spirit Gathering stage.

The two of them were mutually worried about the other and neither were in a nostalgic mood. After his sneak attack failed, Lin Xuan did not attempt to strike again and prepared to counter Ye Tian's attack instead.

But although Ye Tian was also very clever and cunning, when compared to Lin Xuan, he could not stay calm and keep his composure as well. He raised the Hundred Souls Streamer in his right hand and slowly it started to billow.

Suddenly, a black fog dispersed everywhere. Countless malicious ghosts and spirits appeared as terrifying wails sounded out.

Yet Lin Xuan was unmoved, he even displayed a ridiculing smile. This kind of grand display, if it was real, would require one to be at least in the Foundation Building level. But his guy in front of his clearly did not have

enough spiritual power to support it. Therefore, this must be an illusion.

But just because it was an illusion does not mean that it was harmless. Even if one knew that it was not real, but when facing such a horrific sight, if it was someone else, the would definitely feel weak in the knees and break out in cold sweat. Under such intense dread, they would be able to at most display twenty to thirty percent of their power.

But Lin Xuan was different. Back when he was stuck in the first layer, he did not hesitate to challenge the Heart Refinement Road. In terms of realism and power, this kind of illusion was like child's play.

If Ye Tian wanted to use it, then he was more than welcome to. This kind of technique, not only did it not have an effect on him, it also used up Ye Tian's spiritual power.

Of course, Lin Xuan would also not stay his hand. He could not defeat an enemy by standing still.

Lin Xuan took out another seal from his bosom, but it was no ordinary seal. Last time when he was fighting Ye TianHeng, he had used most of his seals, there was barely any left. This seal was spoil from that battle. the beast seal.

The reason why Lin Xuan took out this kind of treasure so early in the fight was to finish it in the shortest amount of time possible. Although the place they were at was out of the way, it was still fairly close to the Floating Cloud Valley, who knows when someone would stumble upon them. Ye Tian did not want anyone to discover that he was a Demonic Cultivator, so how could Lin Xuan want his own cultivation level to be

found out either?

Since both of them had this same intention in their minds, they tacitly agreed to move their battle to a clearing away from the path. But even then, it was difficult to guarantee that they would not get exposed.

Therefore, as Lin Xuan was taking out the beast seal and lifting the restrictions from it, Ye Tian also started to take action. Since the demonic fog did not affect Lin Xuan at all, he would also not stupid continue to waste his spiritual power.

With a wave of the Hundred Souls Streamer, the demonic fog was collected back up. He then sent a technique into the streamer causing the Yin energy surrounding it to increase. Instantly, many dishevelled looking malicious spirits floated out of the streamer.

060 - Beast Seal VS Hundred Souls Streamer

Every single malicious spirit had a terrifying appearance of blood red eyes and hook-like fingers. They were all refined from the souls of the living that Ye Tian had collected.

Because these innocent souls had all died in such tragic manners, they were all filled with vicious desires. But this was also exactly why the Hundred Souls Streamer was so powerful.

A miserable and chilly wind blew accompanied by the mournful wailing of spirits, yet Lin Xuan remained unmoved. Instead, he intensified his efforts in activating the beast seal. Beast seals were not like regular ordinary seals. They were much more powerful, but to activate them, it also required one to use much more spiritual power. They could not be instantly activated like other seals.

Ye Tian slightly waved the Hundred Souls Streamer in front of him as nine spirits formed. Using a technique to guide them, he shouted out “Go!”

Immediately, the Yin energy in the surrounding area became much heavier. The spirits with the blood red eyes howled and pounced towards Lin Xuan.

This kind of presence and power, not to mention actual fighters, even just bystanders would feel fearful and be terrified. Yet Lin Xuan was calm and collected. He only threw out his beast seal when the nine spirits were

almost upon him.

Bang! The beast seal ignited releasing a bright light. From the within the flames, a bestial roar sounded out, echoing through the mountain and causing the dust on the ground to fly up. A tiger cloaked in flames appeared.

“Beast seal, Armoured Fierce Flame Tiger?” Yi Tian called out in alarm and surprise.

Unexpectedly, Ye Tian also had knowledge of this seal. For an ordinary mortal without spiritual roots to exhibit a cultivation level of the fourth layer was already amazing, but shockingly, he even had this kind of treasure in his possession.

But Lin Xuan’s expression sank. He did not expect that his opponent would be this informed. It looks like it would be much harder to deal with this opponent than he originally thought. He did not stop his actions when thinking of this. His hands were moving non-stop, directing the soul of this demonic tiger to pounce towards the malicious spirits.

The spirits wailed and the demonic beast howled. Both were of the Demonic Dao. Although the spirits were filled with viciousness, but they were still refined from the souls of ordinary mortals. But the Armoured Fierce Flame Tiger was a first-grade top-quality demonic beast. Its spiritual power would be comparable to an expert at the Great Perfection of the Spirit Gathering stage.

The result was as expected……

Roar!

With one swipe of its claw, and the accompanying deathly pale demonic flame, one of the malicious spirit was annihilated.

The Fierce Flame Tiger did not stop there. Raising its head, it bite down on another spirit's neck and swallowed it whole. It the licked its lips, a look of having had something delicious on its face.

Although the malicious spirits did not have intelligence, but in the blink of an eye, two of their numbers have been destroyed, this caused them to instinctively fear it. Ye Tian's expression was even more dark and ugly to the extreme. Even though he had heard of beast seals before, but he never would have imagined that they were this powerful.

Strictly speaking, Ye Tian's luck was really subpar. In reality, the demonic cultivation technique he had discovered was very out of the ordinary. If one followed the method described by the book to refine a Hundred Souls Streamer, then the power of the streamer would not be below that of a high-grade spirit weapon. The reason that he could not match up to Lin Xuan's beast seal was twofold.

Firstly, it was not complete. Although he had collected a sufficient number of souls, and even used the souls of three cultivators as the lead [1], but in order to give chase, he had only hurriedly refined their souls and did not take the time to perfectly fuse them into the Streamer. And this, of course, impacted the power of the Streamer.

[tl: [1] = There is no clear description of what it means here. The word used is the word to draw or to guide. I am guessing currently that it is

something like the core of the Streamer, where the three as used to lead the attack, kind of like the Lesser Thousand Swords in Desolate Era where the core determined the power.]

But even so, the power of the Hundred Souls Streamer could perfectly match that of a high-grade spirit weapon. If the was to compete against some other treasure, it could still come out on top. But Ye Tian had really bad luck. Although the Streamer was powerful, it was still refined from souls. That means it belonged to the Demonic Dao and was in the same category as the beast seal.

The souls contained in beast seals were all demonic beasts and the one that Lin Xuan possessed was a first-class top-grade seal that contained an Armoured Fierce Flame Tiger.

Even if ordinary souls were more vicious, when met with the soul of a demonic beast, they could still only be destroyed.

In other words, even though in theory, the Hundred Souls Streamer was more powerful, but because they belonged in the same category, it could only be subdued by this seal of Lin Xuan's.

Ye Tian also realized this point and his expression turned more ugly. He was so angry he almost vomited blood.

Refining such a treasure was not easy, so, of course, he did not want to wantonly waste the souls he had by pitting them against the Armoured Fierce Flame Tiger. With a wave of the Streamer, a demonic fog emerged and blocked off the Tiger as he collected the malicious spirits back into the Streamer.

Muttering to himself, he bit down on his tongue and spit out a mouthful of blood onto the Hundred Souls Streamer. Immediately, a vicious aura rose up, and even more malicious spirits emerged one after the other.

But these malicious spirits did not rashly attack, but instead, under the lead of Ye Tian's techniques, gathered together and formed into a large skull.

The skull was a full three metres tall and exuded a blood red glow. Its aura was truly vicious and would cause one to be terrified.

Lin Xuan was also somewhat surprised. But without giving him time to think, that skull had already rushed over. The Armoured Fierce Flame Tiger let out a roar and went to meet it in battle.

Although it was made of the souls of mortals, but when facing the demonic tiger, it did not show any signs of fear. Instead, it was Lin Xuan's beast seal that was at a disadvantage.

Roar!

Amidst the mad roaring and howling, the soul of the Armoured Fierce Flame Tiger started to dramatically increase in size. Ye Tian coldly smiled and cast a technique which gathered the demonic fog into the skull causing it to increase in size as well.

Melee attacks had no effect, so the Fierce Flame Tiger opened its

mouth and spat out a stream of demonic fire. The skull cruelly laughed and emitted a bloody light from its eye sockets, cancelling out the stream of fire.

They were evenly matched！

They were temporarily at an impasse. However, Lin Xuan's expression was extremely unsightly. Even though this seal of a demonic beast soul was not like ordinary seals, which were a one-time use item, but after its energy has been completely used it, it would no longer be of any use.

Lin Xuan loathe to waste it, it was, after all, one of his precious treasures. Thinking of this, Lin Xuan reached into his bosom. But without waiting for Lin Xuan to take action, Ye Tian decided to attack first.

With a swipe of his hand, an object flew out of his sleeve and changed into a Flaming Fire Snake in mid-air. It raised its head and flicked its tongue exuding a strong spiritual power.

"Quick!" Ye Tian pointed with his right hand.

The fire snake paused in mid-air, then immediately pounced towards Lin Xuan.

"Spirit Weapon?"

Lin Xuan gasped, his brows knit together tightly.

061 - Taste of One's Own Medicine

This Ye Tian definitely exceeded everyone’s expectations. Not only was he a Demonic Cultivator and possessed the Hundred Souls Streamer, he also had a spirit artifact.

But Lin Xuan was not anxious but instead was both worried and happy at the same time. He was worried because his opponent had so many magical treasures which made him much harder to defeat than he originally thought. But he was also happy because Ye Tian was so wealthy. If he killed him, he would also have acquired a small fortune.

Although his opponent was not weak and had many treasures, but if they were comparing wealth, even Foundation Building cultivators were slightly worse off than him. Therefore, Lin Xuan had one hundred percent confidence in his ability to achieve victory, he just had to expend more effort to do so.

Although that fire snake floating in mid-air was giving off an astonishing presence, but Lin Xuan had already probed it with his spiritual sense, it was only a low-grade spirit artifact. This was also to be expected. After all, not everyone was like him to have such good luck and fortuitous encounters.

For lower layer Spirit Gathering stage cultivators to have a low-grade spirit artifact was already very impressive. As for that Senior Apprentice Sister Zhou, Zhou Yan, she had some special circumstances. She was already a Great Perfection expert and thus was favoured in the sect. Add on the fact that she came from a powerful cultivator clan, it was no

surprise that she would be so wealthy. Sadly, in the end, all of it conveniently ended up in his hands.

Lin Xuan brushed his sleeve and let out a golden glowing rope that was perhaps a foot in length. It immediately rose to meet the fire snake.

Ye Tian's eyes almost popped out and his expression turned extremely ugly. He looked as if he was looking at a freak. He wracked his brain and could still not understand what a regular person without spiritual roots would have this kind of wealth of a Beast Seal and a Spirit Artifact……

Even though he was not clear on what kind of treasure it was, but from the might it was exuding, he could tell it was a mid-grade spirit artifact. His fire snake was in danger.

Luckily, his opponent was only at the fourth layer. Ye Tian desperately poured his spiritual power into the fire snake. He wanted to use the "deepness" of his cultivation to make up for the mismatch of his spirit artifact grade.

Lin Xuan's expression was ugly to look at but he was sneering coldly on the inside. He had already seen through his opponent's decision and strategy. Because of the Red Silk grass extract hiding his cultivation, his opponent had mistakenly made a bad decision. The Hundred Souls Streamer was evenly matched with the Beast Seal. Now he wanted to match his low-grade spirit artifact with a mid-grade one.

In Ye Tian's mind, his cultivation was at the sixth layer and Lin Xuan was only at the fourth layer. Although to go against a mid-grade spirit artifact with his low-grade one would consume a lot of spiritual power, but with

his strength, he should still be victorious.

The fish was hooked, and as long as Lin Xuan wanted to beat him at his own game, he could definitely waste all of Ye Tian's spiritual power and then kill him, but that was not Lin Xuan's plan.

And these were the reasons. Firstly, he did not want to waste the energy contained in the Beast Seal. And secondly, although they were far from the path, but they were not very concealed. If this was to drag on for a long time, there was no guarantee that they would not be discovered.

It would be terrible if someone was to come and investigate. As the proverb goes, the situation might change if one waits too long, to resolve the issues in the shortest time possible is the best choice.

Lin Xuan once again reached into his bosom. See his action, Ye Tian became more alert, but he was not worried at all because judging by Lin Xuan's cultivation of the fourth layer, to support the Beast Seal and a mid-grade spirit artifact was already very straining. Even if he had other treasures, he would still not be able to find the spiritual power to use them.

He could probably at most use a few more low-grade seals.

Realizing this, Ye Tian coldly laughed and waved the Hundred Souls Streamer. A demonic fog formed,condensed into a black shielding, and wrapped around him.

Although it was somewhat unsophisticated, but when comparing

power, although this Hundred Souls Streamer was slightly inferior to a high-grade spirit artifact, but it could both attack and defend, allowing it to have greater use.

The situation was now very clear. His opponent's Beast Seal, each move it made consumed so energy, therefore, it would not be able to last that much longer. In addition, with a cultivation at the fourth layer, Lin Xuan could only barely support the consumption of spiritual energy required by the mid-grade spirit artifact and would quickly run out of spiritual power. No matter how you looked at it, his victory was assured.

Ye Tian had a ferocious look on his face and a cruel and excited look in his eyes. Demonic cultivators liked to murder others, and after killing Lin Xuan, he would also be able to acquire all the other treasures he had. Although he was not clear on what other treasure he had, but just the Beast Seal and the mid-grade spirit artifact was already making Ye Tian drool in anticipation.

Seeing everything on Ye Tian's face, Lin Xuan secretly snorted and put on a dismayed expression on his face, looking as if he had run out of treasures and as if he had reached the end of the road.

"Haha, Junior Apprentice Brother Lin, I have not idea how a disciple with no spiritual roots achieved a cultivation of the fourth layer, but no matter, Senior Apprentice Brother will help you pass on today. No need to thank me. I won't waste your soul either, I will use it to refine this Hundred Souls Streamer." Said Ye Tian in an amiable manner, yet the words he used would cause one's blood to run cold.

Lin Xuan's expression turned even more ugly and sweat drops the size of beans start to appear on his forehead. It looked like he was very rattled

by Ye Tian's cruel words. The golden rope also shivered in mid-air and the fire snake seized the opportunity to overwhelm it……

Ye Tian was extremely happy. Rookies were rookies, once they got flustered, their concentration would break apart and they would not be able to use their spiritual power effectively. He was about to take this opportunity to launch a vicious offensive and annihilate his opponent in one stroke.

But it was at that moment that Lin Xuan threw something else into the air.

Ye Tian did not care about it at first. The shielding formed from demonic fog was extremely sturdy. It would even block a strike from a high-level technique of the peak of the mid-level techniques, the Ice Needles technique. With Lin Xuan's spiritual power, at most he could use some more low-grade seals, so what was there to worry about?

But very soon, he realized that he was wrong!

The thing that was floating in the air immediately released an astonishing wave of spiritual power, easily overpowering the fire snake and golden rope.

"High…… High-grade spirit artifact?"

Ye Tian's voice sounded like the ravings of a madman, his eyes showing his horror. Lin Xuan also stopped hiding his cultivation, fully revolving his spiritual power.

His temperament at the moment was not at all like what it was before, his cultivation was also high than Ye Tian's.

"Not, not possible. It hasn't even been four years since you entered the Valley, how could a disciple with no spiritual roots be an expert at the sixth layer of Spirit Gathering."

Ye Tian was beginning to get hysterical, his expression frantic. Originally, he thought that victory was already in his grasp, but who would have thought that his opponent was a wolf in sheep's clothing [1] and wanted to give him a taste of his own medicine [2].

[tl: [1] = Literally "playing the pig to eat the tiger"

[2] = Literally "please sir, get into the boiling pot"]

062 - Demonic Cultivation Technique

“You can slowly contemplate this question when you arrive in the underworld!”

Lin Xuan displayed a cold smile on his lips. Forming a strange hand-seal with his fingers, he filled the flying sword with his spiritual power.

“Whoosh!”

Like a ray of light or a bolt of lightning, the flying sword whistled towards Ye Tian. Ye Tian expression turned ugly instantly and he hurriedly poured his spiritual power into the streamer. But it was completely useless. Although the shield created by the streamer was extremely stable, but when faced with the power of a high-grade spirit artifact, it was simply like tofu. With an ear-piercing whoosh, the shield was ripped apart, and a bloody hole appeared on Ye Tian’s chest. With a face full of unwillingness, Ye Tian started to fall.

With a wave of his hand, the spirit artifact returned to his hand and shrank down into a small model sword of approximately one inch. As well, the giant skeleton that was tangled in battle with the demonic tiger, after losing the support of Ye Tian’s spiritual power, dispersed into individual malicious spirits and returned into the streamer.

As for that low-grade fire snake, it started to fall out of the sky as well. Lin Xuan threw out a technique and collected it up with his golden rope.

The beast seal also returned to normal, but it was different from before. Its spiritual power had decreased significantly. It looks like after this battle, there was not much of the demonic tiger soul left in the seal.

Lin Xuan felt pained by that, but at least he got ample spoils this time. He moved to Ye Tian's corpse and picked up the demonic streamer and from Ye Tian's bosom retrieved a storage bag.

It was not wise to stay there, so after collecting all the treasures, Lin Xuan threw out a low-rank quicksand seal and buried Ye Tian's body below the ground. After that, he erased the bloodstains in the area and then quickly returned to the Floating Cloud Valley.

Without stopping at all, he quickly returned to waste pills storage of Danxia mountain and arrived at his own residence.

Closing the door, Lin Xuan finally exhaled and laid down on his bed. This battle had been very dangerous, much more dangerous than when he fought with the Yan family patriarch. Demonic cultivators were all strange and vicious and Ye Tian also had a lot of tricks up his sleeves.

But in the end, Lin Xuan was still the victor!

Lin Xuan rested for a while and recovered his physical strength and spiritual power, then he started to examine his spoils. He took out the storage bag and upended it. With a rumbling sound, tens of spirit stones fell out and landed on his table causing Lin Xuan's eyes to shine. With a quick glance, there seemed to be over fifty spirit stones.

Lin Xuan was very happy and at the same time very shocked. Even Zhang Yu did not have such an amount back then. He didn't know if Ye Tian took these by force or if he acquired these by swindling and cheating, but no matter what, these all belong to him now.

Other than these, there were also a couple of mid-rank seals. Although there were not many, but to Lin Xuan, they were still a welcome addition.

Also, in the deepest part of the storage bag, there was a jade slip. But it was different from a regular jade slip. Its surface had a bloody lustre to it and had a heavy Yin aura around it. It looks like this is the jade slip that chronicled the method of demonic cultivation. Lin Xuan was curious and inserted his spiritual sense into it.

After almost an hour, Lin Xuan had finished skimming over the technique. Grasping the jade slip, Lin Xuan stayed silent.

It had to be said that the precursors of the demonic cultivators truly did not lack wisdom and intelligence. They even discovered such an out of the way alternate route to greatly increase the speed of cultivation. In all fairness, Lin Xuan was also moved by it. But soon after, he discarded that idea. It was not because of these good and evil labels that he discarded the idea, but because as the elders have said, although demonic cultivation would allow one to speedily progress in cultivation, but it also left behind glaring vulnerabilities and hidden dangers. Also, because of the speed of cultivation, ones dao-heart would not be stable and their foundations would be shallow. In the future, it would obstruct one's cultivation or even suffer heart-demons with no hope of redemption.

Lin Xuan did not want to see such a tragic end to his road of cultivation. Haste will ruin everything. In any case, he had the ability to purify pills,

and as long as he was hardworking, he would still have a great future either way, there was no need to be anxious for quick results.

Although he did not plan to be a demonic cultivator, the jade slip was far from being useless. He did not plan on using the cultivation technique, but there were also many other mysterious techniques contained within it.

These so called techniques were only techniques for circulating spiritual power throughout the body. Not matter if you are a regular cultivator or a demonic cultivator, it would not have any negative effects on your cultivation, body, or techniques.

Lin Xuan glanced through then, there were many different kinds of techniques in the slip. There were all quite useful, so if he had the time in the future, he would definitely practice them.

Putting down the jade slip, Lin Xuan looked towards the other two objects.

The first one was the Hundred Souls Streamer. Lin Xuan had already personally experienced the power of this artifact. It was indeed extraordinary, it was a weapon that could both attack and defend, only it was different than what the jade slip had described.

According to the demonic cultivation technique, this Hundred Souls Streamer could match up to a high-grade spirit artifact. But when he was battling with Ye Tian, it was not that powerful at all.

Otherwise, even if the beast seal could somehow rival it, it was not possible for the seal to defeat the streamer.

After thinking about this, Lin Xuan figured it must be because this demonic artifact had not been completely refined because it could only display a part of its power. But even then, its power still exceed that of a mid-grade spirit artifact and could be considered a good treasured item.

The last item was that low-grade spirit artifact, the fire snake. To ordinary Spirit Gathering disciples, any spirit artifact, even if it was only a low-grade one, they could only hope to see one let alone owning one. But Lin Xuan's situation was special. To someone was wealthy as he was, it was nothing special. When he has the chance in the future, he would use this fire snake to trade for some spirit stones or other precious materials.

So to sum it up. even though this battle had been dangerous, the gains were still good. His only regret was that the energy in the beast seal had been decreased greatly. But this kind of loss, compared to the benefits he had gained, was not even worth mentioning.

After sorting through these treasures and placing them in his storage bracelet, Lin Xuan laid backed down and fell asleep. Although he had recovered his physical strength and spiritual power, but this difficult battle still to a toll on his body.

In the morning of the next day, Lin Xuan started his new method of cultivation.

This time, he did not immediately try to attack the next layer, but instead he prepared to practice the Spiritual Control technique. After

experiencing these two battles, Lin Xuan fully realized the utility of these spirit artifacts. However, solely relying on Telekinesis would allow him to only partially utilize the spirit artifact's power. Therefore, he wanted to learn the proper way to use spirit artifacts, the Spiritual Control technique.

063 - Demonic Disguise Technique

[Tl Notes :

[1] = Renaming Foundation Building to Foundation Establishment to attempt to follow the Noun way of naming stages instead of the Verb way

[2] = I am renaming all cultivation techniques to arts to avoid confusion with techniques used for fighting and such.

[3] = Renaming Spirit Gather to Spirit Condensation to attempt to follow the Noun way of naming stages instead of the Verb way and because it is more accurate.]

The Spiritual Control technique was a mid-grade technique that was could only be cultivated once one was at the Foundation Establishment [1] stage. But mid-grade techniques were stored at the second level of the library and low-level disciples like Lin Xuan did not have the right to read them.

But in his trip to the Soaring Cloud sect, Lin Xuan had surprisingly acquired two such mid-grade techniques. One of them he had acquired by trading his medicinal pills, the other was his spoils from killing the Yan family patriarch.

Lin Xuan pulled out those two jade slips, inserted his spiritual sense into them, and started to read. He chose to skip the first section that

described cultivation techniques because they required a cultivation base of Foundation Establishment, he would only be able to helplessly look at them right now. Instead, he moved onto the section that described the Spiritual Control technique and started to carefully read over it.

After that, he started to compare the two manuals. These two cultivation manuals, the first one was the one he traded for called the Frozen Heart Art; the other was acquired by killing the Yan family patriarch called the Violet Sun Origin Art [2].

This Violet Sun Origin Art was originally reserved by another large clan, the Wang clan, and was later acquire by Yan TianHeng when he ambushed their members. In other words, this manual must be better than the Frozen Heart Art that was being sold publicly. But speaking strictly about the Spiritual Control technique, the two manuals did not have that many differences, they were virtually the same.

Therefore, there was no need for him to pick between the two, so he casually picked one up and started to practice the technique in accordance with the manual.

This so-called Spiritual Control technique was of the same breed as the Telekinesis technique, except the latter was much simpler and only a basic technique. But the Spiritual Control technique was a much more complicated and delicate technique.

The following dozen days, Lin Xuan suffered a lot. There was only one reason for his suffering and that was because his cultivation was simply too low. Although the manual clearly stated that latter stage Spirit Condensation [3] disciple could cultivate the Spiritual Control technique, but that was only in theory. In actuality, to be able to grasp this

technique, having a cultivation base of Foundation Establishment was much better.

But failure did not affect Lin Xuan. Not everything in the world was so easy to acquire, it was much better to slowly practice. Like back then when he was first starting to learn the Ice Needles technique, wasn't it just as hard?

With this kind of mentality, the more he failed, the harder he tried. But after a dozen days, he still had not made any progress.

What caused Lin Xuan to be ever more depressed was the fact that he could not figure out why he was unable to grasp the Spiritual Control technique, he would just fail every single time and could not make heads or tails of it. This cause Lin Xuan to endlessly sigh, could it be that his innate talent was really that horrible?

But whining and complaining would not solve the problem at hand, so he bore it, clenched his teeth, and started bitterly practicing again. But after one month, he came out of his house, his situation had not even slightly changed for the better.

Looks like just relying on practicing to the bitter end would not change his situation.

"Should I ask for guidance from the elders?"

Lin Xuan shook his head. To be able to practice the Spiritual Control technique at the Spirit Condensation stage, in the Floating Cloud Valley,

there were only those few geniuses. He did not even have Spiritual Roots, if he was to ask for guidance on this issue, he would definitely arouse suspicion.

"Sigh. If I could openly and righteously show my cultivation of the sixth layer, and make it clear my status of being an elite disciple, how great would that be."

The reason that Lin Xuan was having thoughts like this was because, for low-level disciples like him, they could only go to the Young Hawks Pavilion to listen to lectures by the elders. But elite disciples were different. Even though the were in the same Spirit Condensation stage, because they had a possibility of breaking into the Foundation Establishment stage, the sect specially tasked some cultivators with profound cultivator of guide them. When they faced any questions about their cultivator, they could seek out these cultivators at any time and ask for guidance.

If he himself was an elite disciple, then he would be able to seek out one of these elders and ask for guidance on the Spiritual Control technique.

However, this was only his wishful thinking, based on Lin Xuan's situation, he was afraid of revealing his cultivation. Since he had nothing better to do, Lin Xuan pull that blood red jade slip out of his bosom and started to glance through that cultivation technique left behind by the demonic cultivator. He would not practice the cultivation technique, but the methods of moving spiritual power through his body he could learn.

"What!?" Both of Lin Xuan's eyebrows rose in surprise and a look of ecstasy came over his face. Although there way no one else here, but

even for the ever shrewd Lin Xuan, it was still very rare to see him lose his composer over anything.

"Demonic Disguise technique!"

Lin Xuan's spiritual sense fell upon a small technique that was recorded in the last section of jade slip. The was a supporting type of technique and was created by a demonic cultivator elder over a thousand years ago.

According to the manual, this was a technique that used spiritual power to change one's appearance and physique. Lin Xuan was not a stranger to these types of techniques, for example, the sect also had the Simple Appearance technique, the Form Shift technique, *etc*.

But these kinds of techniques were looked down upon because as long as an opponent had a higher cultivation, even if it was just slightly higher, they would be able to easily see through the disguise. Thus, these techniques were not very practical.

Originally, Lin Xuan also did not pay much attention to it and was only casually flipping through it, but seeing the Demonic Disguise technique really caused him to be overjoyed. The demonic cultivator ancestor that created this technique was definitely a gifted genius. After he had collected many different disguising techniques, he had fused them together, using the strengths of one technique to cover the weaknesses of others, and finally created this completely unique appearance changing technique.

There was quite a few clever and wonderful points to this technique. Firstly, the requirements were low, even a mid-stage Spirit Condensation

cultivator was able to learn and grasp it. It was not like the other techniques that required a minimum cultivation of the Foundation Establishment stage. The second point was also the most important point, it did not have the weakness that the other techniques had, mainly being see through to others with higher cultivation.

If one wanted to see through the Demonic Disguise technique, then their cultivation must be two ranks above the one who was using the technique. Note that it is two ranks, in other words, if the user of the technique was a low-level Spirit Condensation stage cultivator, then to see through the technique, one needed at least a cultivation base in the Core Formation stage. If the user was in the Foundation Establishment stage, then only an eccentric in the Nascent Soul stage would be able to see through it.

The benefits were very clear, but that did not mean that the technique was without flaws. Nothing is perfect in the world. Firstly, the duration of the disguise was limited, it could at most sustain the transformation for two hours, after which it would require an interval of at least twelve hours before the technique could be used again.

In other words, the Demonic Disguise technique was not a technique was could be used to impersonate someone for a long time and was only a short term stratagem.

This was only one of its flaws, but even then, it was still a very powerful technique. But the second flow was the one that deterred all the previous owners of the jade slip and caused them to abandon the technique.

The second flaws the technique must be used in conjunction with a certain medicine, one must first ingest the medicine before revolving

their spiritual power and thus succeeding in transforming.

064 - Passing Off as the Real Thing.

And the medicine that was required by this technique was the high-grade Red Silk Grass!

What a joke, all cultivators who had acquired this technique before to all endlessly cursed this requirement.

To be honest, Red Silk Grass was not some precious medicinal herb in the world of cultivation. Each sect, even cultivator clans, would have lots of it growing in their herb gardens.

But those were all only low-grade!

According to the Herbal Encyclopaedia, Red Silk Grass was a kind of special medicinal herb. Based on the grade of each particular sprig, the prices could be worlds apart. Low-grade Red Silk Grass was the most common kind of herb in the cultivator world, it would be considered the most ordinary herb. Mid-grade Red Silk Grass could be used to concoct Foundation Establishment level pills, so they could be considered as rare. As for high-grade……

Even Core Formation experts would draw their weapons and fight each other for these precious treasures!

Normally, in ten thousand sprigs of Red Silk Grass, one could be able to find a single high-grade sprig. That was also if one was lucky, had good seeds, and took care of them properly.

Not to mention the fact that an ordinary cultivator could not even take out such a treasured item, even if they experienced incredible luck and managed to obtain one, which idiot would use a high-grade Red Silk Grass to change their appearance, let alone that it would only work for two hours.

I wouldn't trade these medicinal herbs for spirit stones or treasures!

Because of its harsh requirements, other than the demonic cultivator who created this technique, of all the cultivators that had acquired this technique, not a single one of them had tried to practice it. They disregarded it as a technique of little value.

"Haha!"

Lin Xuan could not hold in his laughter. What a curious coincidence. Who would have thought that the high-grade Red Silk Grass would make such a perfect disguising technique when used with this demonic technique.

To others, this technique is of little value and has no practical utility; but to himself, it was completely different. Since he has this refining ability, in his hands, regular Red Silk Grass could exhibit the abilities of high-grade ones just as well.

If this technique was just as mysterious and miraculous as the jade slip described, then he would be able to consult the elders about his questions of the Spiritual Control technique.

Once Lin Xuan laid out this plan, he calmed his heart and began gaining insight on this disguise technique.

Although this technique was mysterious, but it was still only a support type technique and was not that difficult at all. The main focus was on the usage of spiritual power and now it flowed. Lin Xuan only needed half a day to thoroughly grasp the technique.

Lin Xuan sucking in a breath of air, retrieved a small bottle from his bosom and took a drink of that green liquid extracted from the Red Silk Grass. Then he directed his spiritual power according to the manual and spoke the incantation. After that, a white fog condensed around him and wrapped around his body.

A moment later, the fog dissipated, but Lin Xuan's appearance had already completely changed. Before, he had very ordinary features, if he was in a crowd, one would not remember him or be able to pick him out at all. But now, he had a very handsome appearance and looked like a descendant of a noble family.

Ye Tian. Lin Xuan had changed into that same demonic cultivator he had killed a month ago.

It was not only facial features, even his height and body structure has changed to be exactly like Ye Tian.

Lin Xuan did this because Ye Tian was also an elite disciple of the sect and had the right to look for guidance from those Foundation Establishment elders at any time. Therefore, Lin Xuan decided to assume his name and identity.

As for whether Lin Xuan arouse suspicions by assuming Ye Tian's identity after his disappearance, Lin Xuan was not worried at all. This was because according to the rules of the sect, only after a disciple has disappeared for two consecutive months would the sect declare them as missing.

Because one might hit a bottleneck during cultivation, and to break through, other than natural talent, perseverance, one also needed insight. Therefore, disciples might also go out to cultivate from time to time.

And since it has only been one month since the death of Ye Tian, if he assumed Ye Tian's identity, he should arouse any suspicions.

Lin Xuan thought through all the possible things that might happen again and decided to practice speaking like Ye Tian some more. This was only a small technique, and also, most people focused on the appearance and not their voice, so it should not be much of a problem.

Then without delaying at all, Lin Xuan speedily arrived at the Hall of the Elites!

Just by the name alone, one was able to tell that the Hall of the Elites is a place that was very important in the sect. This was the place where elders taught and guided the talented disciples of the sect.

The lecturers at the Young Hawks Pavilion were normally at the early stages of Foundation Establishment, and at best, they were at the middle stages. But the guiding elders at the Hall of the Elites were at least at the late stages of Foundation Establishment, not only that, there was also no

lack of elders at the Great Perfection of the Foundation Establishment stage. There were even rumours of the patriarch, Daoist YunHe, the only Core Formation cultivator in the sect, would frequently appear at the Hall of the Elites to guide disciples of the younger generation.

The reason that the sect attached such importance to these disciples is because generally, seventy to eighty percent of them would be able to successfully achieve Foundation Establishment and thus form the core of the sect's power in the future.

This rumour somewhat impacted Lin Xuan's confidence in his plan. The patriarch's cultivation was at the Core Formation stage, which is more than enough to be able to see through his disguising technique. But after thinking it over again, he calmed down. Even if Daoist YunHe thought that these disciples were important, but with his identity as the patriarch and as a Core Formation expert, he would definitely not come to the Hall of the Elites too often. One or two a year was probably the maximum for him.

If he actually did run into Daoist YunHe with such low probabilities, then he could only blame his luck for being completely rotten and that it was destined to happen. There was no point in complaining……

Time was of the essence, so without stopping, Lin Xuan hurried into the Hall of the Elites. This was a lofty, imposing, and richly ornamented structure and was much more extensive than the Young Hawks Pavilion.

Other than guiding elite disciples, there was also many elders that stayed here year round to cultivate. Although Foundation Establishment cultivators would be able to have their own immortal caves, but everyone had their own preferences, there was quite a few that enjoyed cultivating

in the Hall of the Elites.

"Haha, Junior Apprentice Brother Ye, long time no see. Which breath of wind carried you here today?"

Steps sounded out behind him and a voice sounded out which startled Lin Xuan. This time, his greatest danger was meeting someone that was close to Ye Tian. He was not afraid of them seeing through his disguise, instead, he was afraid that he himself did not know the other person and thus might not be able to speak in the appropriate manner with them.

Lin Xuan was on high alert. On the surface, he did not show any changes in his expression. He turned around and carefully looked at that person, then secretly let out the breath he was holding.

This was good, he knows who the other person is!

Of course, only Lin Xuan recognized the other, but they did not even know this Junior Apprentice Brother that had no spiritual roots called Lin Xuan. Elite disciples really only interacted with other elite disciples.

065 - Elite Disciple

“Apprentice Brother Ma!” Lin Xuan imitated Ye Tian’s voice and cupped his hands in greeting.

This person was named Ma TianXiong. He entered the sect before Lin Xuan, probably at the same time as Zhou Yan. He also had a cultivation at the sixth layer of the Spirit Condensation stage.

Strictly speaking, based on the time he had already been in the sect, at nine years, with a cultivation of the sixth layer, although he could be considered as out of the ordinary, he could not be considered as a genius. Normally, he would not be qualified to enter the Hall of the Elites, but he had some special circumstances.

Before he became a disciple of the Floating Cloud Valley, he was a famous younger generation martial arts expert of the secular world. However, he had some fortuitous encounters which started him onto the road of cultivation.

But he did not abandon his martial arts but instead found a different path by using his martial arts to follow the road of cultivation.

This kind of situation was not uncommon in the cultivation world, but it was also not common. Apparently, it was very difficult to travel far upon the road of cultivation. To want to read Core Formation was simply a dream. But to step into Foundation Establishment was apparently a certainty. They would have a much easier time than regular cultivators.

With regards to the Floating Cloud Valley, Foundation Establishment cultivators formed the core of their power, thus, Ma TianXiong, who use martial arts to cultivate, was allowed to enter the Hall of the Elites.

For that exact reason, Lin Xuan was able to recognize this person who was famous throughout the sect. Seeing that it was someone he had heard of, Lin Xuan released the breath he had been holding. Since he was not afraid of being seen through, he turned around and called out in greeting.

"Junior Apprentice Brother Ye, I heard that you had acquired the Fire Snake spiritual artifact. I had thought that you might have secluded yourself to refined it, but who would have thought that I would see you here today."

"Haha, Senior Apprentice Brother is being too serious. With my meagre cultivation, how could I compare to Senior Apprentice Brother's miraculous techniques? It's just because I have hit a hard spot in my refining of the spiritual artifact that I have come to ask for guidance."

Although Lin Xuan did not have too many meetings with Ye Tian, they had still entered the sect at the same time. Lin Xuan was still somewhat familiar towards that fellow's personality.

Ye Tian was one of those vile and hypocritical persons. To Apprentice Brothers that were weaker than him, he would look down upon them arrogantly, sneer at them, and bully them. To those who were stronger, he would pretend to be humble, obedient, refined, and courteous. Thus, to pretend to be Ye Tian, Lin Xuan also had to pretend to have the same

personality.

As expected, Ma TianXiong did not have any suspicions. Smacking Lin Xuan on the shoulder, he said: “Haha, what a way to explain it Junior Apprentice Brother. Come, let’s go!”

“En!” Lin Xuan nodded his head and rapidly evaluated the pros and cons of the situation. To get away would not be hard, but there were many benefits if he was to enter with Ma TianXiong. The Hall of Elites had many restrictions, if Ma TianXiong were to break them for him, he would have much less chance of being exposed as a fake.

The two of them headed towards the hall. Ma TianXiong would speak one minute while being quiet the next thinking of things to talk about. Lin Xuan would carefully answer and avoided making any mistakes in his repletes.

A blue screen appeared in front of them.

“Sign, it requires an identity plate every single time.” Ma TianXiong mumbled a complaint and turned around. “Junior Apprentice Brother Ye, should we use yours or mine?”

“Haha, since Senior Apprentice Brother is here, then I won’t make a fool of myself.” Lin Xuan smilingly answered. He was endlessly rejoicing in his heart. Who would have known that there would be a restriction that checked identities? Luckily he had met Ma TianXiong, otherwise, he would only be able to helplessly stand there.

“Haha.” Ma TianXiong did not reject the idea and reached into his bosom to retrieve his identity plate that emitted a faint spiritual power. He filled it with his spiritual sense and then swiped it on the blue screen. After verifying that the spiritual sense was on the record of elite disciples, the blue screen naturally dissipated. Lin Xuan hurriedly followed after Ma TianXiong.

Along the way, they passed through many of these restrictions causing Lin Xuan to silently curse. This Hall of the Elites was not a place that stored treasure, there was only some elders cultivating here and a place of genius disciples to seek guidance, so what was the point of protecting this place so tightly?

After approximately ten minutes, they arrived at a gorgeous hall. Although comparing the size of the hall, it was not as large as the Spirit Cultivation Hall of the Young Hawks Pavilion, but it was much more majestic. The Spirit Cultivation Hall could not compare in even in decor or finishings. This caused Lin Xuan to be secretly speechless. The sect definitely treated these elite disciples differently.

It was also a coincidence that today happened to be the date that an elder with deep cultivation, said to be at the Great Perfection of the Foundation Establishment stage, was supposed to lecture. Thus, all of the elite disciples had gathered together here today.

There was altogether over thirty people. Lin Xuan looked over them and only recognized about half of them. Luckily, these elite disciples were all arrogant geniuses and thus did not voluntarily make any moves to interact with each other.

Looks like Ma TianXiong was really the odd one out, which probably

had something to do with his origins as a martial artist in the secular world. Right now, that fellow was greeting each and every one of them. Some of them cupped their hands in response, others would just snort and completely ignore him, but Ma TianXiong did not mind that at all.

He did not know if it was because these elite disciples were high arrogant or if they were mutually competing to see who was better, but they did not conceal their auras at all, therefore, it was easy to discern their cultivations without much probing.

After sizing up everyone, Lin Xuan's confidence of having achieved the sixth layer of Spirit Condensation was really shaken.

Elites were elites, most of them were at the sixth layer. Of course, of these Senior Apprentice Brothers and Sisters, most of them had entered the sect before he did. But thinking of the fact that the sect only distributed a few medicinal pills, so these disciples all had to rely on their exceptional spiritual roots to achieve their current cultivation really cause Lin Xuan to be envious.

Only a few were at the fifth layer, the worst one was at the fourth layer. But no one dared to look down on this "worst" elite disciple, simply because he was only twelve years old and had only been in the sect for one year.

In one short year, he had already successfully cultivated to the peak of the middle layers of Spirit Condensation. This rascal was a real genius.

Of course, the most eye-catching was not these guys, but the two people sitting at the front. They two were of similar age, both of them

were around thirty years old.

Their cultivation had already reached the peak of the Spirit Condensation, the Great Perfection.

Only one more step and they would have successfully established their Foundations.

The temperament of these two was also different from the other elite disciples.

Of course, although Lin Xuan was amazed, but in his heart, he was sure that he was better than them. Back then, that Ye TianHeng was also at the Great Perfection of the Spirit Condensation stage, but he was still exterminated, and Lin Xuan only had a cultivation at the middle layers of the Spirit Condensation stage.

As to that battle that happened a month before, Ye Tian was at the sixth layer and also a Demonic Cultivator, he had many strange techniques and the Hundred Souls Streamer, therefore, his power was probably greater than these two at the Great Perfection. But all the same, Ye Tian had fallen to Lin Xuan.

His expression didn’t change and found a corner to sit down.

