

Bai Xiaochun sat in his courtyard on Fragrant Cloud Peak, looking at the jade pendant sitting there in his hand. After activating it with some spiritual energy, the pendant began to glow with a soft, green light that surrounded his body.

Next, he performed an incantation gesture with his left hand, causing his wooden sword to appear. It circled around in the air and then shot back toward Bai Xiaochun. However, as soon as it hit the green light, it was as if it had suddenly run into a patch of water, causing it to slow down significantly. "What a treasure!" he murmured, putting the wooden sword away and clasping the jade pendant in his hand, feeling a little embarrassed. "Ah well, it doesn't matter. Li Qinghou is Zhou Xinqi's Master, but he's my mentor too. In fact, considering our relationship, I should probably call him uncle." Clearing his throat, Bai Xiaochun put the jade pendant away, then stood up and stretched lazily. After eating more than half of Li Qinghou's chickens, his Undying Live Forever Technique was progressing by leaps and bounds. It was now more than seventy percent complete. Of course, the spirit tail chickens replenished his vital energy, not his spiritual energy. However, even though his cultivation base was still at the fourth level of Qi Condensation, it had made some progress, and was more refined than before. He buried all the chicken bones in the spirit soil, which was now filled with so much spiritual energy that it bordered on ridiculous. As for his spiritwinter bamboo, it was now more than two meters tall, and no longer purely emerald green; dark dots had begun to appear within the green. Most important of all were the spirit tails, which could produce three-colored flames. Bai Xiaochun had been collecting them, and now had several hundred. Whenever he thought about the three-colored flames that the spirit tails could produce, his heart filled with anticipation. "I'm in no hurry with my cultivation base. As long as I can get enough medicinal pills, I can do a threefold spirit enhancement on them and advance with flying speed. The most important thing to do is make some progress with my Undying Skin!" Almost as soon as the thought entered his mind, Bai Xiaochun's stomach started to grumble. At first he looked in the direction of Fragrant Cloud Peak's chicken farms, but then he turned toward Violet Cauldron Peak. "Eldest Brother is on Violet Cauldron Peak, I wonder how he's been doing lately." Thinking about all the things that had happened back in the Ovens, he raced out of his courtyard, down the mountain, and toward Violet Cauldron Peak. Of the three mountains on the south bank of the Spirit Stream Sect, Green Crest Peak focused on swords, Fragrant Cloud Peak concentrated on spirit medicine, and Violet Cauldron Peak excelled in magical techniques and spirit enhancement. Furthermore, the south bank's most fundamental technique, the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art, actually came from Violet Cauldron Peak. Bai Xiaochun walked along the path toward Violet Cauldron Peak, and by the time he got there, evening was falling. He looked up at the mountain, which was wreathed in clouds and mist. High up in the air, he was just barely able to make out tiny shadows flitting around in beams of prismatic light. He sighed. "I wonder when I'll be able to get some kind of flying treasure, and then do something like that. Then my world will really open up, and I'll actually be on the path to living forever." Eyes gleaming with anticipation, he began to ascend Violet Cauldron Peak. Although he wasn't a disciple of Violet Cauldron Peak, as an Outer Sect disciple, he was qualified to go to any of the various mountains. As he walked along, he asked some people about where Zhang Dahai lived. Thanks to his charming manner, he almost immediately got an answer, and quickly hurried off in the direction indicated. Big Fatty Zhang's residence was located on a different part of the mountain compared to the location of Bai Xiaochun's place on Fragrant Cloud Peak. It was on the sunny side of the mountain, where there was stronger spiritual energy. There weren't many residences here; they were sprinkled about like stars in the night sky, apparently in some prescribed pattern. Although it was evening, and the light wasn't very clear, it was still possible to see the swirling mists and abundant spirit plants, all of which gave the place a

celestial feeling. Taking a deep breath, Bai Xiaochun looked around enviously. "Eldest Brother really does have connections in the sect. I can't believe he got a place like this. It's way better than mine." It only took a bit of looking to find Big Fatty Zhang's residence. The courtyard was filled with weeds, as if no one had tended to it for ages. Bai Xiaochun gaped in shock, then knocked on the main gate. However, there was no response. "Am I in the wrong place?" he thought. Even as he stood there, shocked, the front door of the building inside the courtyard slowly creaked open, and an emaciated figure appeared, holding a flying sword in his right hand. Dim silver light flickered around his left hand as he trudged out. Looking exhausted, then languidly said, "Who is it?!" Even as the words left the man's mouth, he suddenly saw Bai Xiaochun standing there across the courtyard, and a tremor ran through him. A look of delight appeared on his face, almost as if he had just caught sight of a blood relative. Suddenly, he flew forward, pushed the main gate open, and then stood there looking at Bai Xiaochun. Then he laughed loudly and said, "Ninth Junior Brother!" "Who are you?!" Bai Xiaochun responded, backing up, his eyes wide. Although this person seemed familiar for some reason, Bai Xiaochun couldn't identify him at all. He had average features, and was very skinny. Although he couldn't be described as being only skin and bones, he was almost to that point. His eyes shone with vigor, and yet were sunken in. From the ripples of his cultivation base, he seemed to be in the great circle of the fourth level of Qi Condensation. When the emaciated young man saw Bai Xiaochun's expression, he looked like he was about to start crying. "Ninth Fatty, it's me, Big Fatty!" he said. Face filled with intense grief, he went on to say, "Ninth Fatty, you have no idea how much I've suffered during the past year. My master is so demanding! As soon as I got here, she told me she doesn't like fatties, and that I had to go hungry for half a year! "Half a year, Ninth Fatty! Do you know what I ended up looking like after half a year? It took me forever just to gain this much weight back." This emaciated young man was none other than Big Fatty Zhang, who was now standing there weeping. Bai Xiaochun looked him over carefully. Having heard the story, and confirmed that he really was his Eldest Brother, Bai Xiaochun's jaw dropped. The Eldest Brother he remembered, and this person standing in front of him, looked like two completely different people. "Is there some grudge between you and your Master?" Bai Xiaochun asked sympathetically. "That old shrew! I..." Big Fatty Zhang said a few words, but then shivered and didn't dare to continue. Pulling Bai Xiaochun into his courtyard, he said, "Ninth Junior Brother, I miss the Ovens! Nobody can survive in a place like this. I've never been full the entire time I've been here, plus there's no way for me to make any money. Ah, I'm so hungry!" He then proceeded to tell Bai Xiaochun everything that had happened to him from the moment he had arrived. As Bai Xiaochun listened to the bitter tale, he suddenly realized that his decision to start stealing chickens was definitely the right thing to do. He looked at Big Fatty Zhang's emaciated frame, then sighed and patted his bony shoulder. "Since you're in some trouble, Elder Brother, then Junior Brother will naturally help. Just wait here for the time it takes an incense stick to burn. I'll be right back." Big Fatty Zhang gaped in shock as Bai Xiaochun turned and left the courtyard. On his way up the mountain, Bai Xiaochun had already taken note of where Violet Cauldron Peak's spirit tail chicken farms were located. Taking advantage of the darkness of night, he suddenly vanished. Big Fatty Zhang had no idea what was going on, nor any clue as to what Bai Xiaochun might be doing. He waited there at his front gate for the time it takes an incense stick to burn, after which Bai Xiaochun returned, carrying a spirit tail chicken in each hand. When Big Fatty Zhang saw the spirit tail chickens, his eyes went wide. Before he could say anything, though, Bai Xiaochun hustled him into the courtyard. Ignoring Big Fatty Zhang, Bai Xiaochun expertly produced a wok, boiled some water, plucked the chickens and tossed them in. With that, he dusted off his sleeves, lifted his chin and looked at Big Fatty Zhang. Big Fatty Zhang was panting, and his eyes were wide. He pointed at the chickens in the wok, and then back at Bai Xiaochun, and a look of disbelief crept up on his face. "Y-you... don't tell me that you are the Chicken-Thieving Fiend of Fragrant Cloud Peak!?!?" Bai Xiaochun chuckled. Then, as if he were very familiar with the process, placed his hand onto the wok and sent out some spiritual energy to ensure that the chicken meat was perfectly tender. Soon, a fragrant aroma wafted out. Bai Xiaochun reached in, pulled out a chicken leg, and then handed it to Big Fatty Zhang. "Eat!" he said, imitating the way Big Fatty Zhang had handed him the magical mushroom back when he had first joined the Ovens. Big Fatty Zhang swallowed a few times as he stared at the chicken leg. Finally, he grabbed it and wolfed it down. From that point on, it wasn't necessary for Bai Xiaochun to say anything. Big Fatty Zhang flew over to the wok and virtually

dunked his face in. The two chickens were rapidly consumed down to the bones, except that he couldn't stop there; crunching sounds could be heard as he chomped them down too. Finally, he smacked his belly, and laid back, looking nearly drunk with contentment. Then he and Bai Xiaochun exchanged a look and started laughing. "Ninth Fatty, you're incredible," he said, looking very proud. "You really were paying attention back in the Ovens. I never would have imagined that Fragrant Cloud Peak's illustrious Chicken-Thieving Fiend would turn out to be my bro." "Cultivation is innately a heaven-defying thing. As cultivators, it's only natural to contend with the heavens, and fight with men. You have to rely on yourself! What do a few spirit tail chickens count for?" Bai Xiaochun waved his hand, but was unable to conceal how pleased he was with himself. He had been keeping his identity a secret for far too long now; being able to share it, and then see the look on Big Fatty Zhang's face, made him feel wonderful. "The true pity is that I've eaten so many spirit tail chickens on Fragrant Cloud Peak that only the chicks are left. They don't taste very good, otherwise I'd invite you to live with me over there, and we could eat our fill every day. You would definitely gain all your weight back." Bai Xiaochun sighed. When Big Fatty Zhang heard that, his eyes gleamed, and he immediately crawled to his feet. "Violet Cauldron Peak has them too. The west, south, and north faces of the mountains all do. They're guarded by two shifts a day, each shift manned by seven disciples!" Big Fatty Zhang went on to explain in further detail. When he was finished, he found Bai Xiaochun looking at him with a strange expression. Big Fatty Zhang cleared his throat and said, "After I heard about the Chicken-Thieving Fiend, I decided to try to do the same thing as him. Unfortunately, the chickens are too hard to steal. As soon as you get close, they start making noise. Not only did I not even come close to stealing a chicken, I almost got caught." Big Fatty Zhang seemed a bit embarrassed about the whole thing. Bai Xiaochun laughed, then edged closer to Big Fatty Zhang and began to whisper something. Gradually, Big Fatty Zhang's eyes began to glow brighter and brighter, and he was even panting. Then Bai Xiaochun pulled out his bamboo cicada, and after a moment wide smiles covered their faces and they began to chuckle. Soon, laughter rang out from within the courtyard, and it sounded terrifying. From that day on, Bai Xiaochun began to visit Big Fatty Zhang more often, and gradually, the spirit tail chickens from Violet Cauldron Peak began to go missing.... Every night, two great chicken bandits struck. One did the stealing, the other stood watch. Soon, the disciples of Violet Cauldron Peak were in an uproar, and everyone was discussing the matter. "Did you hear? The Chicken-Thieving Fiend from Fragrant Cloud Peak has set his eyes on Violet Cauldron Peak!" "I actually saw it happen! The Chicken-Thieving Fiend isn't a person, it's a team of two!" When the news got back to Fragrant Cloud Peak, the Outer Sect disciples there all took deep breaths and looked sympathetically in the direction of Violet Cauldron Peak. "So the Chicken-Thieving Fiend has learned to be balanced. He's finally not stealing chickens from our Fragrant Cloud Peak...."