

Moonlight flooded down onto Fragrant Cloud Peak of the Spirit Stream Sect, dispersing some of the mists that covered it, and causing the entire scene to be spectacularly beautiful.

About halfway down the east face of the mountain, at the end of a side path, was a courtyard residence. The courtyard itself was as large as a field, and was filled with the delicate fragrance of flowers and plants. The residence itself was a log cabin, complete with a desk and a bed inside, all of which were made from some sort of magenta-colored wood that let off a lovely, fragrant aroma. This place was far superior to anything in the servants' district. The field in the courtyard had been cleared, and was ready for planting. There was even a well in one corner. Bai Xiaochun looked around at the moonlit scene, and his eyes sparkled with satisfaction. "Outer Sect disciples are official disciples of the Spirit Stream Sect, so naturally they get much better compensation than the servants. This residence really isn't bad at all. Although, I remember Eldest Brother saying that Inner Sect disciples get to live in immortal's caves... I wonder what those are like." Bai Xiaochun looked up toward the top of Fragrant Cloud Peak. Only Inner Sect disciples qualified to live on the top half of the mountain. After a while, he went back into the log cabin, where he stretched lazily and then took out his bag of holding. After patting it carefully, a bottle of medicinal pills appeared in front of him, as well as a green stick of incense. "Wow, this thing is awesome," he thought, rubbing the bag of holding fondly. After a moment, his eyes came to rest on the medicinal pill bottle and the green incense. The pill bottle had a label on it, upon which were written the words 'Spirit Condensation.' As for the incense, the words 'Green Rising' were carved on the side. He had received similar things when he had become a servant. Consuming such pills would increase his cultivation base, and inhaling the smoke from the burning incense stick would have a similar effect. "Using them as-is would be a big waste. It would be much better to use spirit enhancement on them first. Maybe I could even use them to break through a bottleneck in my cultivation base." After pondering the matter for a bit, he made his decision. However, he only had one-colored firewood on hand, so he decided to go down the mountain the following morning to get something better. Having made his decision, he sat down cross-legged and began to meditate. When it came to his cultivation, he had never given up. Although his progress had slowed recently, he still spent time every day on it. The whole purpose to practicing cultivation was to live forever, so of course he would stick to it. The night passed uneventfully, and soon it was dawn. Sunlight poked through the mist, making it seem as if valuable treasures were descending. Bai Xiaochun had been cultivating all night. He opened his eyes, donned his Outer Sect disciple clothing, and then hurried out of his log cabin to find the Scripture Pavilion that Elder Brother Hou had mentioned the day before. The Scripture Pavilion was some distance away from his own residence, on another side of the mountain. It took about an hour of walking before he saw a cluster of towering pagodas off in the distance. They radiated shimmering light, and sent pulsing pressure out in all directions. He encountered quite a few other Outer Sect disciples, all of whom were hustling about busily. When they sensed that Bai Xiaochun was only at the third level of Qi Condensation, they completely ignored him. Bai Xiaochun didn't care, but considering that most of the disciples he encountered had cultivation bases far higher than his own, he proceeded cautiously. There were even a few he encountered whose cultivation bases were so high that they were unreadable. Those ones always had crowds of other disciples clustered around them, laughing and chatting with them as they walked along. The closer he got to the Scripture Pavilion, the more disciples he saw. Just as he was about to enter the area of the building itself, a beam of light flew down toward the area from one of the distant mountain peaks. Within that beam of light, it was possible to see a young man standing on a flying disk, who circled around Fragrant Cloud Peak before flying back off into the distance. "That's Qian Dajin from the Hall of Justice! Elder Brother Qian!" "Elder Brother Qian is an Inner Sect disciple, and also a member of the Hall of Justice. He's famous! I heard

that he's in the great circle of the eighth level of Qi Condensation, and has access to temporary flight items. I'm so jealous!" Bai Xiaochun also looked over jealously. After Qian Dajin disappeared, he sighed inwardly. "One of these days, when I can fly, I'm going take time every day to fly in circles around Fragrant Cloud Peak!" Muttering to himself in anticipation, he began to push his way through the crowd toward the Scripture Pavilion. The building was huge. The first floor was completely empty except for a long table. Behind the table, an old man sat there with his eyes closed in meditation. All the disciples who wanted to go past him would put their identity medallion onto the table. After it shone with glittering light, they would pass by respectfully. Copying everyone else, Bai Xiaochun placed his identity medallion onto the table. It only took a moment for it to glitter, after which he picked it back up and followed the other disciples up the stairs to the second floor. This floor was filled with numerous shelves, which were packed with jade slips or the occasional bamboo scroll. All of them shimmered with bright light, making the second floor of the Scripture Pavilion an extraordinary place. Seeing another staircase further off, Bai Xiaochun looked around and then walked over. However, when he tried to step onto it, his foot bounced back. A young man was sitting off to the side, with straight eyebrows and a bamboo scroll in his hand. When he sensed what was happening, he looked up at Bai Xiaochun. Bai Xiaochun put on his most charming expression and then curiously asked the young man, "Elder Brother, what qualifications do you need to go up there?" "What, are you new here?" the young man replied slowly. "You have to be at the fifth level of Qi Condensation to go up there." With that, he continued to read the bamboo scroll. Bai Xiaochun could tell the young man didn't want to be disturbed. Forgetting about the third floor, he began to stroll around the second floor. Occasionally he would pick up a jade slip to examine, or look through some bamboo scrolls. He saw all sorts of different magical techniques, all of which seemed very exciting. That was especially true of something called the Flame Dao magical technique, which seemed especially exceptional. After a while, he found a jade slip for the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art. It had descriptions and pictures for the fourth to eighth levels. He quickly grabbed it and then continued to stroll about. Time passed, and soon evening was approaching. Bai Xiaochun had browsed about seventy percent of the second floor, and by now, the crowds were thinning. "These eight seem really incredible..." he thought, looking over his selections. One was a bamboo scroll, somewhat dilapidated, but something that had caused Bai Xiaochun's eyes to widen with excitement the moment he saw it. "Undying Live Forever Technique!!" He took a deep breath as he examined the introduction to the technique. Apparently, cultivating this technique to the ultimate degree would make a person undying and also be able to live forever. Panting, he once again examined the name of the technique, and then decided that this was his decision! He had begun practicing cultivation for the purpose of living forever, so finding a technique like this one almost made it seem like they were mysteriously connected by destiny. Laughing heartily, he held the bamboo scroll in his hand as he climbed down the stairs. Back in the main hall of the first floor, the old man was still sitting behind the table with his eyes closed, looking exactly like he had before. However, as soon as Bai Xiaochun put the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art jade slip and the Undying Live Forever Technique bamboo scroll onto the table, the man's eyes slowly opened. He looked Bai Xiaochun up and down, which left Bai Xiaochun trembling. The man's gaze felt like lightning. Shivering, Bai Xiaochun immediately put on his most respectful expression. Thankfully, the old man quickly looked down at Bai Xiaochun's identity medallion. "Newly promoted disciples can take a copy of the first eight levels of the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art," the old man said slowly, his voice hoarse. "They may also select a technique of their choosing." Then his eyes fell upon the Undying Live Forever Technique bamboo scroll, and he frowned slightly. "Although the name of this technique sounds astonishing, it's incomplete. Furthermore, the more you cultivate it, the more difficult it becomes. The pain is so excruciating that ordinary people can't endure it. Even most Inner Sect disciples can't cultivate it successfully. The majority give up. It's been here in the Scripture Pavilion for quite some time. Are you sure you want this particular magic?" The old man looked at Bai Xiaochun. After hearing the old man's words, Bai Xiaochun got the feeling that this technique had been waiting here for years just for him. Then he thought again about the words 'undying' and 'live forever', and his blood felt like it was boiling. He immediately responded, "Senior, I definitely want it, very much!" The old man said nothing further to dissuade him. He waved his right hand, sending two blank jade slips flying out. After the copies were made, he handed them to Bai Xiaochun, then paid him no more heed and went back to meditating. Bai Xiaochun put the jade slips

away. Eyes gleaming with anticipation, he left the Scripture Pavilion and headed back to his courtyard residence. By the time he got back, it was already nighttime. Once again inside his log cabin, he sat down cross-legged, took a deep breath, and pulled out the jade slip for the Undying Live Forever Technique. Then he circulated his spiritual energy and sent it into the jade slip. After closing his eyes, the technique's magical incantation appeared in his mind. An hour later, he opened his eyes again, and a thoughtful expression could be seen. Just as the old man had said, the Undying Live Forever Technique was incomplete. According to the description, the technique was cultivated in two ways, internally and externally. It was further broken down into the external aspects of skin, flesh, and muscle. The internal aspects were bones and blood. As for this incomplete version, it only contained the technique for cultivating skin. Also, the cultivation method truly did seem to be a torment. Furthermore, to cultivate it required a huge expenditure of resources. However, there were several secret magics listed inside that seemed almost beyond belief. For example, there was one called the Throat Crushing Grasp that was supposedly unbeatable. Bai Xiaochun hesitated for a moment, then looked once more at the words 'undying' and 'live forever'. Finally, his eyes filled with determination, and he followed the description in the information, using both of his hands to strike various positions on his body. Bai Xiaochun was focused on not dying and living forever in a way that vastly outmatched other people. Therefore, he did exactly as the technique required, and beat himself the entire night. The following day, his whole body hurt. It didn't matter whether he stood up or sat down. Even lifting his arm hurt. And yet, he gritted his teeth and continued to do as the technique manual instructed, and forced himself to move. "Owwwwwww.... Relax then flex.... aaaaooowwwwww.... flex then relax!" he said, repeating one of the lines from the technique as he hopped and skipped around the courtyard. He let out one miserable shriek after another, and tears were streaming down his face. Finally, he gritted his teeth, grabbed some spirit stones, and headed down the mountain. He figured that if he had to move around, he might as well just go out and buy the medicinal plants he needed to get the Age-Prolonging Longevity-Enhancing Pill. That would be a lot better than doing nothing more than exercising in his courtyard. Soon, numerous Outer Sect disciples on Fragrant Cloud Peak saw a very strange sight. There was a fair-faced young man hopping and skipping about in a very strange fashion. He was also crying out at the top of his lungs in a fashion which almost sounded euphoric. "Ah ah, oh oh! Ah ah, oh oh! Ah... ah... ah... ah..." Bai Xiaochun didn't want to cry out, but the pain was just too much. In fact, it hurt so much that he was pretty sure that even not moving would also hurt. However, all he had to do was think about the words 'undying' and 'live forever', and he continued with vicious determination. And thus he continued all the way down to the market outside of the sect. Trembling, he bought all of the medicinal plants he needed, as well as some one-colored firewood. The two-colored firewood was much more expensive, so he only bought one piece. After that, he ran out of spirit stones. Gritting his teeth, he went back to the Missions Office and handed in the mission he had taken when he was still a servant. In return, he got the Age-Prolonging Longevity-Enhancing Pill. The pill was yellow, about as big as his thumbnail, and emanated a strange medicinal aroma. He looked at the pill, his body still burning with so much pain that he could barely talk. Sweat poured down him, soaking him completely. Clenching his teeth, he climbed back up the steps of Fragrant Cloud Peak, leaving a trail of sweat behind him as he went. He got quite a few surprised and even cynical glances from other Outer Sect disciples. After all, he was really sweating far beyond what was normal. He really wasn't sure what was going on. By the time he got back to his courtyard residence, it was the middle of the night. As soon as he walked inside, he collapsed onto the ground, unconscious. Despite having passed out, the pain woke him up several times through the night. By the time the light of dawn spread out across the sky, though, he woke up and realized that the pain was gone. "An incomplete minor cycle...." he thought, recalling the technique's introduction. If he could go for a full day and night without passing out, that would be a complete minor cycle. If he could complete eighty-one minor cycles, that would count as a minor circulation. After that, his skin would be changed, and would reach a point that the process wouldn't be so painful. "If the technique were simple, everyone would do it, and then everyone would be able to live forever. The harder it is, the more I'm going to cultivate it! Then I'll really be undying and able to live forever!" His eyes filled with determination; his obsession with living forever was strong, and had reached a truly astonishing level. Now that his body didn't hurt any more, he pulled out the Age-Prolonging Longevity-Enhancing Pill and studied it. He was just about to eat it when all of a

sudden he seemed to recall something. Looking around to make sure no one was watching, he hurried into his log cabin and performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, causing the turtle-wok to appear. "To consume it the way it is would be a big loss. The best thing to do is eat it after doing a spirit enhancement." Licking his lips, he produced the two-colored flame firewood and kindled it beneath the turtle-wok. Immediately, the log burst into flames, and moments later, became ash. At the same time, two glowing designs appeared on the turtle-wok. After a moment of hesitation, he placed the Age-Prolonging Longevity-Enhancing Pill inside. Almost as soon as the spirit medicine entered the wok, silver light flashed. Having experienced this before, Bai Xiaochun's expression didn't change in the least, and he continued to stare at the wok. After a moment, the silver light faded away and, shockingly, two silver designs could be seen on the Age-Prolonging Longevity-Enhancing Pill. The medicinal aroma which floated off of it was now much stronger than it had been before, so strong that a mere sniff would enliven the spirits. "It's too bad I don't have anything to make a three-colored flame." He picked up the spirit medicine and put it into his mouth. The instant it melted, it transformed into a scalding current that swept through his body. Bai Xiaochun felt his mind rumbling, and his body felt like a furnace. However, even as he was consumed by heat, the white hair on his head turned black again. A powerful surge of life force replenished him, and after a moment, he could tell that it was even stronger than before. A bit of blood oozed out of his nose. "Major success!" he thought, his eyes widening. He immediately began to cultivate the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art, but found that there was little difference. After all, this spirit medicine replenished vital energy, not spiritual energy. More blood flowed out of his nose, and the scalding current inside of him expanded. He felt like he was an inflatable ball that was on the verge of popping. Astonishment filled him. Actually, the result of performing a twofold enhancement on the spirit medicine ensured that the result vastly exceeded anything from before, and was far more valuable. Bai Xiaochun's cultivation base, which was at the third level of Qi Condensation, simply couldn't take it. At this critical juncture, he suddenly thought of the Undying Live Forever Technique. He immediately leapt up and began hitting himself as hard as possible. Popping sounds rang out, and the scalding current began to clear up. Bai Xiaochun didn't dare to stop. It wasn't until an hour later that the current faded away completely. He was in so much pain that he fell down onto the ground, panting for air. However, he looked more excited than ever, and his eyes shone with an intense gleam. "It has something to do with the spirit enhancement, but the main thing was that spirit medicine. Spirit medicine... is remarkable.... It can increase spiritual energy and can increase longevity.... Well, I wonder if there's a type of medicine that can make people live forever!" The more he thought about it, the more excited he got, and the brighter his eyes shone. "Fragrant Cloud Peak trains apothecaries.... "Well then, I'm going to become an apothecary. I'm going to make.... a Live-Forever Never-Die Pill!" Bai Xiaochun began to pant, and his intrigue for spirit medicine reached an unheard-of level.