

Terrified out of his mind, Bai Xiaochun flew off of the mountain and out of the sect. It wasn't until he reached the market that he actually stopped and looked behind him.

"What do I do now?" Scowling miserably, heart aching from how much he was being wronged, he couldn't stop thinking about the fact that the bird really had stolen the medicinal pill from him. How was he supposed to explain it? Elder Zhou was so unreasonable.... Even as he began to descend into despondency, he suddenly thought of something. "Wait a second, did I just... get first place? "Aiya. As the Junior Brother of the sect leader, I didn't want to compete with all of my juniors." Coughing dryly, he couldn't help but feel a bit pleased with himself. But then he remembered that, having taken first place, he now had no choice but to participate in the Chosen battles with the north bank, and his heart sank. He moped around the market until night fell. Worried that it still wasn't safe to go back, he finally pulled out a transmission jade slip and sent a message to Xu Baocai, asking him to go check if Elder Zhou was lurking about his courtyard. After getting word back that the coast was clear, he cautiously returned to the sect. From a distance, he could see Xu Baocai waiting outside of his courtyard, so after looking around carefully one more time, he hurried over. Xu Baocai looked excitedly at him, and was about to say something when Bai Xiaochun dragged him into the courtyard. After the door closed, Xu Baocai said, "Sect Uncle Bai, don't worry. Elder Zhou was sent away by the sect earlier...." His eyes burned with zeal as he stared at Bai Xiaochun. "Back in the Ovens he stayed completely hidden," he thought. "He even sold spots into the Outer Sect. Afterward, he took place in that minor competition, which caused a bit of a stir. After that came the incident with the Luochen Clan. After he came back alive, he became a Prestige disciple, and even the Junior Brother of the sect leader. Now he took first place in the qualifying match. Bai Xiaochun... is definitely going to be super famous in the future!" The fact that Bai Xiaochun had exceeded everyone to become the number one disciple had long since shaken Xu Baocai. By now, he viewed him as a breathtaking figure of legend. Thinking back to everything he had done, Xu Baocai couldn't hold back from clasping hands and bowing very deeply. "Sect Uncle Bai," he said, "congratulations on taking first place in the qualifying round!" Bai Xiaochun looked around the courtyard for a moment before heaving a sigh of relief. Peering in the direction of Elder Zhou's immortal's cave for a moment, he swore an oath that once he reached Foundation Establishment, he would feast on phoenix stew! In response to Xu Baocai's words, he cleared his throat. Looking very much like a member of the senior generation, he said, "I'm really not that amazing. I'm more like a cloud in the sky. Originally, I didn't want to compete with all of those junior disciples, but then Elder Zhou came along. What else was I supposed to do?" Before, Xu Baocai wouldn't have been able to prevent a look of scorn from appearing on his face in response to Bai Xiaochun's words. But now, Bai Xiaochun was a Chosen among Chosen. "You always kept a low profile, Sect Uncle Bai," he responded quickly. "However, a Chosen can only stay hidden for so long. Even without intending to, you would have made a big scene one way or another!" Xu Baocai's words filled Bai Xiaochun with elation. However, he maintained an aloof expression, although his eyes sparkled with approval. Xu Baocai could sense that Bai Xiaochun was encouraging him, so he continued on excitedly: "Sect Uncle Bai, when it comes time for the Chosen battles with the north bank, the south bank will no longer have the reputation of being weak. All thanks to you! You're going to rock the north bank! "Supposedly, the five great Chosen of the north bank are the strongest disciples under Foundation Establishment. They're all fiendish monsters! Thankfully, you're going to show them that the top Chosen of the sect is here on the south bank, on Fragrant Cloud Peak!" "Five great Chosen?" Bai Xiaochun said. His expression was the same as ever, but his heart was beginning to pound. "Yeah! The north bank has five great Chosen. There's Beihan Lie from Sunset Peak. He's cold and arrogant, and cultivates one of the Spirit Stream Sect's ten great secret magics, the Sunset Incantation. He also has a Nighthunter Beast, a horrifying and powerful

creature that rips people to shreds. Together, they've slaughtered their way to becoming the most powerful fighters under the ninth level of Qi Condensation! In fact, he's known as the number one disciple on Sunset Peak!" "Rips people to shreds?" Bai Xiaochun said, eyes widening. "That's nothing. There's also Xu Song from Archway Peak, who was born with a Godchanneling body. The peak lord of Archway Peak paid a huge price to get him to join as a disciple. He's a complete expert in controlling wild beasts. According to the rumors, he can actually control five beasts at the same time. One time when a rogue Qi Condensation cultivator pissed him off, he chased the guy down for three months and then fed him to his battle beasts. The only thing left behind was the guy's skeleton!" "Only the skeleton?" Bai Xiaochun said, mind reeling. "Even more ferocious than him are the third and fourth Chosen, a brother and sister team from Irispetal Peak. The sister's name is Gongsun Wan'er. She's spectacularly beautiful and an expert with birds of prey. One time she had a fight with Zhou Xinqi, and nobody could tell who came out on top! "The brother is Gongsun Yun, who excels in the Dao of bugs. He always wears a black robe, which is filled with all sorts of bugs. People even say that his body is filled with bug eggs. What a freak! He usually covers his enemies with bugs, and then has them bore into their bodies and drink their blood. The pain is so horrible that people usually just want to die. If you don't escape quickly enough, you'll be completely eaten up, with only your bones left behind!" "Only your bones?!" Bai Xiaochun said, gasping. Visualizing the scene, his scalp began to tingle. "The last of the five great Chosen of the north bank... is a mysterious and legendary figure who has no known name. Twenty years ago, the peak lord of Ghostfang Peak brought him back to the sect from some unknown location. People just call him Ghostfang, and he's an expert in magics relating to the Dao of ghosts. He also practices one of the legendary ten secret magics of the Spirit Stream Sect, a magic equally as difficult to cultivate as the Waterswamp Kingdom... Ghosts Haunt the Night! Rumor has it that he can already summon a hundred ghosts! People say that he's the number one Chosen on the north bank...." Having heard the complete explanation of what Xu Baocai knew, Bai Xiaochun was left trembling in fear. Terrifyingly, the Chosen from the north bank were far more ferocious than the Chosen from the south bank. Although the north bank focused on controlling animals, and it made sense that they would be slightly more violent, the actual disparity with the south bank was enormous. "We've been outdone by the north bank for years now," Xu Baocai went on to say. "Every time the Chosen battles come around, we always lose. In fact, last time, nine of the top ten were all from the north bank. What a humiliation. We--" At this point, Xu Baocai noticed that Bai Xiaochun had a very odd expression on his face. "Sect Uncle Bai, are you okay?" Bai Xiaochun quickly stuck his chin up and sternly said, "As a member of the south bank, hearing things like this makes me very angry!" "Sect Uncle Bai, you don't need to get angry. With you fighting, the north bank will finally be able to see how awesome the south bank is!" Xu Baocai clenched his fists in excitement. Now that Bai Xiaochun had been thrust onto the stage, he found it hard to get off. Standing straight, he lifted his chin, flicked his sleeve, and said, "What does the north bank count for? With the wave of a hand, I can turn them all into ashes!" Xu Baocai chatted excitedly for a few more minutes before taking his leave. By that time, it was late into the night. Bai Xiaochun stood there alone in his courtyard, thinking about the five people Xu Baocai had just told him about. Then, the wind began to blow, and he felt a chill creeping up his back. "What kind of people are they over on the north bank? They raise beasts and bugs and ghosts... It's spine-chilling...." Walking back to his log cabin, the things Xu Baocai had told him continued to rattle around in his mind. The more he thought about the situation, the more fishy it seemed. Finally, he came to a conclusion. "Elder Zhou must have done this on purpose! "The thing I hate most in life is all the fighting and killing!" After more thought, he decided that nothing in the world would be able to get him to participate in the Chosen battles. The next morning at dawn, before he could even come up with a plan of how to avoid the Chosen Battles, a command jade slip flew down from the top of Fragrant Cloud Peak in a black beam of light. After it arrived, Li Qinghou's voice could be heard. "Bai Xiaochun, you took first place in the qualifying round on the south bank. In half a month, you will join nine others to participate in the joint south and north bank Chosen battles! If you don't participate, you will be thrown into 10,000 Snakes Valley!" "That again...." Bai Xiaochun said with a scowl. He suddenly had the feeling that he had been completely conned by Elder Zhou.... As Li Qinghou's voice faded away, the jade slip vanished, whereupon a bracelet became visible, which floated down in front of Bai Xiaochun. Surprised, he looked at the bracelet, and then poured some spiritual power into it. The bracelet immediately melted

into a black liquid, which then circled around Bai Xiaochun's wrist and then covered his entire body. Moments later, Bai Xiaochun heard Li Qinghou's voice again, explaining how to use the magic of the item. Apparently, this bracelet could defend against the full-power attack of an early Foundation Establishment cultivator! Bai Xiaochun shivered. He was no newcomer to the sect, so he knew exactly how much an item like this was worth. It was no less valuable than the Divine Crane Shield given to him by the sect leader. Bai Xiaochun couldn't help but look up toward the top of Fragrant Cloud Peak. Although Li Qinghou hadn't said much about the item other than give a brief introduction, Bai Xiaochun couldn't help but feel a warm feeling when he looked at it. Then he thought back to when he had participated in the smaller competition years before, and the look of anticipation he'd seen on Li Qinghou's face. After a while, he gritted his teeth and made his decision. "Fine. I'm going to fight in the Chosen battles!"