

After performing a quick test on the defensive power of the jade pendant, Bai Xiaochun couldn't help but laugh out loud. Next, he turned his attention to the wooden sword. He had acquired this wooden sword the moment he had joined the sect, and since then, had performed spirit enhancements on it twice.

"With the protective power of this jade pendant, after I perform a threefold spirit enhancement on my little wooden sword, I'll definitely be completely extraordinary!" Bai Xiaochun smiled, then began to prepare the little wooden sword for the spirit enhancement. Silver light flickered within the turtle-wok. As it faded away, the little wooden sword appeared in front of Bai Xiaochun. Three silver designs gleamed on its surface, then gradually faded away. At the same time, the physical appearance of the sword changed. It was longer by a finger's length, and the grain of the wood was now virtually completely violet. There was also a bizarre aroma which pulsed out of the sword, an aroma which, upon entering the nose, seemed sweet, but quickly caused the mind to enter a state of confused distraction. Bai Xiaochun trembled for a moment, but then his eyes grew clear. He looked in shock at the wooden sword for a moment, then reached out to grab it, whereupon he found that it was many times heavier than before. Unexpectedly, as he held it in his hand, it felt as heavy as a boulder. Eyes glittering, he examined the sword, and gradually a profound gleam rose up in his eyes. "This wooden sword is made from the rarely-seen heavycloud wood," he murmured, "which only needs to be refined for forty-nine days before you can use it in equipment forging. It can also be used in mass-production." Next, he focused on the veins in the wood of the sword. "Violet veins. There's only one explanation for that. After performing these handful of spirit enhancements, these are the signs of the sword's transmogrification." Bai Xiaochun closed his eyes and began to review the information about heavycloud wood that he had gleaned when studying about plants and vegetation. After a while, his eyes opened, and they gleamed with anticipation. He performed an incantation gesture and then tapped the little wooden sword, which instantly caused a black light to flicker out, within which were tiny violet specks. Suddenly, the sword shot out of the log cabin, across the courtyard, and then another thirty meters or so, where it stabbed into a huge boulder. Without making a single sound, the sword then spun around inside of the rock, pierced out of it, and flew back to Bai Xiaochun. The sword wasn't damaged at all, and in fact began to emanate a piercing aura. Bai Xiaochun's expression brightened. He played around with the sword a little bit more, then once again painted over the designs. Finally, he opened the door of his log cabin, stepped out, and took a deep breath. Unfortunately, as soon as he thought about the competition in two months, his previously high spirits sank a bit. "This isn't good enough. I'm still not well enough prepared. The other people in the competition are definitely going to be vicious beasts. I need to do more." Grinding his teeth, he thought about the two levels of the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art, which he had read about in the manual. Lightness-in-Heaviness. Heaviness-in-Lightness. Those two levels of the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art were powerful magics that appeared when cultivating the art. If both were cultivated to the pinnacle, they could lead to a divine ability called Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning. On the south bank of the Spirit Stream Sect, the fundamental techniques of the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art were something that virtually everyone practiced. However, few people cultivated Lightness-in-Heaviness, and as for the second stage of Heaviness-in-Lightness, that was even more rare. As for those who cultivated the art to the absolute peak, and could unleash the Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning divine ability, they were most rare of all. Actually, the majority of those who gained enlightenment of Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning were disciples from Violet Cauldron Peak. "Lightness-in-Heaviness.... Only by reaching that stage of being able to completely control physical

objects can I even be absolutely assured of rising above the pack.” Bai Xiaochun continued to think about the description of the technique as he gazed down at the little wooden sword. Back when he had fought his battle with Xu Baocai, everyone from the Supervisors’ Department and even the Ovens had mistakenly assumed that he had gained enlightenment of Lightness-in-Heaviness. Now that he thought back to the situation, an idea flickered through his mind. “The reason people thought I had achieved Lightness-in-Heaviness was because of how adeptly I controlled my little wooden sword. However, the real reason behind that was mostly because of how incredible the sword became after my spirit enhancement. “The truth of the matter is that my ability to control it isn’t actually that incredible, and definitely is not Lightness-in-Heaviness.” Frowning, Bai Xiaochun randomly sat down cross-legged and looked at the wooden sword. Gradually, his eyes grew blank, and were soon shot with blood. A moment later, his right hand suddenly waved up into the air, sending the little wooden sword flying out. It whistled through the air in front of him, kicking up a cloud of dust. Bai Xiaochun’s frown deepened as his right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and then pointed his finger out. However, what he pointed at wasn’t the sword, but rather, the huge rock outside the courtyard that he had just stabbed with the sword moments ago. The wave of his finger caused the huge stone to tremble slightly, then gradually rise up into the air by about one third of a meter. But then Bai Xiaochun’s spiritual energy grew unstable, and it thumped back down with a boom. Bai Xiaochun was not dismayed, though. In fact, quite the opposite. His eyes began to shine brightly. Focusing completely, he circulated his spiritual energy and once again waved his finger. Once, twice, three times.... Time passed. Half a month was gone in the blink of an eye. Virtually that entire time, Bai Xiaochun worked on trying to control the boulder. Of course, this boulder was about as tall as three people put together, and weighed about 1,500-1,600 kilograms. Despite the fact that Bai Xiaochun was already in the great circle of the fifth level of Qi Condensation, manipulating an object like this was not an easy task. [1] The only reason Bai Xiaochun could do so was because of the extraordinarily refined state of his cultivation base. Anyone else in the fifth level of Qi Condensation would never be able to move the boulder more than a handful of centimeters. Bai Xiaochun worked hard for an entire month. By this point, he realized that the reason controlling the boulder was so difficult wasn’t because of a lack of spiritual energy, but rather, that his level of control was lacking. Even when he still had plenty of spiritual energy, the connection would always break. “The key is to move the threads of spiritual energy at a constant speed,” he muttered hoarsely, eyes bloodshot but shining brightly. “That’s how to make sure they never break.” It was the same principle that applied to mortals when they were making noodles at home. If you pulled the dough apart too quickly, it would snap. If you went too slowly, it would be impossible to stretch them out very far. You had to use just the right amount of strength, and then you can control the objects smoothly and clearly however you wish. If cultivators wanted to control physical objects to a degree that surpassed the ordinary, they would need to use just the right amount of strength, and maintain stability. Of course, that increased the level of difficulty significantly. “I get it now!” Bai Xiaochun thought excitedly. “Lightness-in-Heaviness is about more than the words ‘light’ and ‘heavy’. It’s not just being able to control heavy objects as if they didn’t weigh a lot. That’s just the surface meaning. The true, deeper meaning has to do, not with physical objects, but rather, with the way you manipulate spiritual energy! “In the fifth level of Qi Condensation, your total reserve of spiritual energy is what makes the heaviness. When you take that spiritual energy and convert it into numerous tiny, unbreakable threads, that is the lightness. Doing it correctly is Lightness-in-Heaviness. Of course, with the surface meaning, the result is the speed with which you can effortlessly control physical objects!” After getting to the root of the problem, he waved his hand again, and the boulder began to tremble. Then it suddenly rose up into the air. It was almost as if some enormous hand had simply grabbed it and pulled it up. Then, it began to whistle through the air toward Bai Xiaochun. However, before it could reach him, it suddenly fell down out of the air into his courtyard, where it kicked up a huge cloud of dust. Bai Xiaochun felt no discouragement. He continued to practice for another half a month. Unfortunately, for that entire time, he was unable to maintain one continuously stable thread of spiritual energy. Even when he was able to form a stable thread, the incredible heaviness of the rock ensured that the threads of spiritual energy always grew unstable and broke. Of course, when it came to controlling the little wooden sword, he had no problems whatsoever. Because of the vast difference in weight between the boulder and the sword, Bai Xiaochun now felt that controlling the wooden sword was much, much easier. Furthermore, after

the month or more of training, he could move it with much greater speed. In actuality, he really had achieved Lightness-in-Heaviness. However, he wasn't satisfied. Eyes completely bloodshot, he gritted his teeth, and that vicious determination once again appeared. "I refuse to believe I can't do it!" He performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, causing the boulder to fly over and hover directly above him. Beads of sweat popped out on his forehead as he looked up nervously at the rock, exerting all the possible effort he could muster to preserve that invisible thread of spiritual energy. After all, if it broke, then the rock would fall. Although it wouldn't kill him, it would definitely be very painful. This time, he was clearly able to maintain the connection for a lot longer than before. However, after about an hour passed, rumbling sounds began to echo out, and then Bai Xiaochun let out a yelp as the stone smashed down. After a long moment, it trembled and fell off to the side as Bai Xiaochun crawled out from underneath it. Thanks to his Undying Skin, he wasn't hurt. However, the pain of what had just occurred left him grimacing. Despite that, his resolve grew even more intense. Another month went by, and the rock smashed down onto him over and over again. Eventually, he reached the point where he could actually keep it afloat for an entire day without dropping it. Furthermore, the height to which he could lift it grew greater and greater. Soon, he could hold it thirty meters high in the air. Of course, the pain that resulted when he dropped it from that height left Bai Xiaochun completely pale-faced. However, that was the only way to refine himself to the pinnacle. Gradually, his ability to achieve Lightness-in-Heaviness with his internal spiritual energy was growing more and more stable. Eventually, he reached the point where he almost never broke the connection. However, he still wasn't satisfied. Next, he didn't practice while sitting cross-legged, but instead, while exercising. That made things even more difficult, and led to continuous booms ringing out in his courtyard. Time passed, one day at a time. Soon the competition Li Qinghou had mentioned was now only three days away. The scene in Bai Xiaochun's courtyard was that of a figure zipping around while a 1,500 kilogram boulder floated around up above. Despite how much Bai Xiaochun was moving around, the boulder remained motionless up in the air. Eventually, Bai Xiaochun stopped running around, and stood there in front of his log cabin, laughing heartily. Then, he waved his right hand, causing the boulder to fly out of the courtyard and settle back firmly into the ground. Next, he performed an incantation gesture and pointed out, causing his little wooden sword to slash out in front of him. It moved so quickly it was little more than a blur; clearly it was much more powerful than before. Bai Xiaochun's face lit up with delight, and his hand began to flash with incantation gestures. The speed combined with the might of the sword, resulting in a shocking combination. All of a sudden, the courtyard almost seemed to be filled with innumerable little wooden swords, all flying about. In the end, he flicked his sleeve, causing the sword projections to vanish. Only one wooden sword remained, which then shot back toward Bai Xiaochun and vanished into his bag of holding. "Now I finally feel ready to get into the top 5." Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath. Although he didn't feel one hundred percent confident, time was running out. All he could do was settle his qi and calm his mind, then sit down cross-legged to meditate and put himself in the proper state. 1. I already did the math, and for a boulder that tall to weigh only 1,500-1,600 kg, it would have to be really, really skinny. I think we can assume that Er Gen either made a mistake in how much it weighed, or it's some sort of magical rock that doesn't weigh as much as real-world boulders