

## **Months flew by. Bai Xiaochun quickly became very familiar with the areas on Fragrant Cloud Peak set aside for the Inner Sect. Eventually, the novelty of being an Inner Sect disciple began to wear off.**

He spent most of his time in his immortal's cave, either practicing cultivation or concocting medicine in his personal medicine concocting workshop. By this point, he had created quite a few Aphrodisiac Pills. He was happy. His purpose in practicing cultivation was to live forever, and the higher his cultivation base grew, the greater his longevity became. His main interest was concocting spirit medicines. After all, he still dreamed of concocting a pill that could help him live forever. In order to make that dream come true, he constantly worked with spirit medicine. However, the cruel reality of the situation was that after a few months passed, he found that, to his bitterness, he had run out of medicinal plants. Even though the prize for taking first place in the Chosen battles had been 10,000 spirit stones, the ingredients for tier-3 spirit medicines weren't sold in the market outside the sect. He could only rely on people from the cultivator clans to find them for him, and the prices were exorbitant. The best thing to do was build up enough merit points to be able to acquire the ingredients from the sect. "Merit points..." he thought as he sat there in his immortal's cave, frowning. What he lacked most was merit points. After some hesitation, he left his immortal's cave and went to the Mission Stele set aside for Inner Sect disciples. Back in the Outer Sect, the Missions Office had always been packed, but the Inner Sect was different. Inner Sect disciples were all very busy, and viewed their time as precious. Only a few people could be seen in the area. Bai Xiaochun strolled up and stood in front of the stele, trying to pick a mission. "That one's way too dangerous!" he muttered. "That one doesn't give enough merit points! I don't want any long-term missions..." Eventually, his eyes came to rest on a mission assigned by one of the sect elders, which called for Lifestealer cores. For every core provided, 1,000 merit points would be rewarded. It even provided the most common location to find Lifestealers, which was in the Wildweed Mountains a short distance from the Spirit Stream Sect. Muttering to himself in thought, Bai Xiaochun recalled the description of Lifestealers from the fourth volume of spirit creatures. Actually, they weren't wild beasts, but rather, a miraculous parasitic life form. They would select a host, a wild beast of some sort, which they would then cause to grow a second head. When the second head was fully formed, the beast would then wither up and die, and the matured Lifestealer would transform into a Ninedays Finch. During the parasitic phase of its life, it was extremely useful as an ingredient in various types of medicines. However, once it matured and exploded out from the second head, becoming a Ninedays Finch, it was completely useless. Furthermore, Ninedays Finches only lived for nine days, after which they would die, producing a new Lifestealer. The Lifestealer would then select a new host, and the process would begin again. It was almost like the cycle of reincarnation.... Lifestealers were very rare, and in some ways, they lived forever, eternally reincarnating over and over again. Bai Xiaochun clearly remembered how impressed he had been the first time he read about Lifestealers in the fourth volume of spirit creatures. "The hard part of this mission is actually finding the Lifestealers. The Wildweed Mountains are too vast. It would be way too annoying to try to find them one by one. Accumulating merit points that way would be a waste of time." After doing some more research into the Wildweed Mountains, he confirmed that despite how vast they were, most animals were under the Foundation Establishment level. Eventually, he decided to accept the mission. However, he didn't immediately set forth from the sect. First, he returned to his immortal's cave to make a few preparations. Finally, he hopped onto the Golden Crow Sword and shot off into the distance. The Wildweed Mountains weren't very far from the Spirit Stream Sect. Considering his speed when using the Golden Crow Sword, it would only take a day of travel to reach them. Unfortunately, due to the fact that his current cultivation base was too low to be able to fly for a long time, he had to alternate between flying and running. Four days later, he finally reached the Wildweed Mountains. A majestic

scene spread out in front of him, with lushly vegetated mountains rising up in all directions. It was like a never-ending jungle, from within which rose the cries of various birds and beasts. Instead of going to search for Lifestealers, he explored the mountains for about half a month until he found a valley which acted as a natural pathway between two main parts of the jungle. There, he settled down in the branches of a tall tree and peered down into the valley below. "Using normal search methods would be a waste of time, and would rely on blind luck. Even with fortune on my side, I might only find one. If I don't get lucky, I might not be able to find a single one in a month. 'It's time to show off how smart I am.'" Sticking his chin up, he blurred into motion, shooting off into the distance. The next day, he stood at the top of a mountain, feeling the direction of the wind. Just as he was about to produce an Aphrodisiac Pill, he suddenly thought of something, and called out at the top of his lungs, "Is anyone around?! Are there any disciples from the Spirit Stream Sect here?!" From the high-pitched tone of his cry, it almost sounded like he was crying out for help. Some distance away, a figure could be seen in the jungle, fighting with a wild beast. It was an icily arrogant young man wearing the robe of an Inner Sect disciple of the Spirit Stream Sect. When he heard Bai Xiaochun's cry, a look of scorn appeared in his eyes. "Another disciple with a weak cultivation base who's overestimated himself and is now crying out for help. Only the strong should come out into the Wildweed Mountains." He arrogantly chose not to even attempt to help out. Although the sect emphasized teamwork, some people were naturally unsociable, and that couldn't be avoided. After crying out a few times but getting no response, Bai Xiaochun felt a bit more at ease. With that, he tossed out the Aphrodisiac Pill. Moments later, a popping sound could be heard as the pill exploded, transforming into a fine powder which was carried off by the wind. Soon, the animals some distance away, regardless of what they were doing, caught the scent of the powder in the wind and began to tremble. Eyes bloodshot, they began to howl at the tops of their lungs. As soon as the howling sounds rose up, two wings popped out behind Bai Xiaochun, and he sped away. The arrogant disciple from earlier suddenly noticed that the beast he was fighting had begun trembling. Its eyes turned red, and, howling, it pounced toward him. Badly frightened, the young man took to flight. Unfortunately, no matter what he did, the beast only continued to howl and chase him down. Its eyes were bright red, and it seemed to have gone mad. Shocked, the young man fled for his life until he had no choice but to cry out for help. By that time, Bai Xiaochun was too far away to hear.... Six hours later in another windy area, Bai Xiaochun cried out a few times, waited for a bit, and seeing that no one responded, threw out another Aphrodisiac Pill. Soon, the howls of beasts rose up. For the following two days, he ceaselessly traveled in a set perimeter around the valley he'd picked, throwing out Aphrodisiac Pills. He quickly covered a large area, within which all of the animals were going mad, howling at the tops of their lungs and lunging around violently. Seeing that he'd reached a point where things were almost beyond his control, Bai Xiaochun flew back to the valley he'd selected. Eyes shining, he waved the Golden Crow Sword to cut open a small path in the trees, then pulled out a bunch of Pheromone Pills and crushed them. Soon, a fragrant aroma began to spread out. He was very careful not to get any of the powder on himself, and even as he backed away, changed into a new set of clothes just to be safe. Then he perched above the valley and looked down toward the path he'd created. "Alright, lovely beasts... hurry up," he said, humming a little tune as he waited eagerly. Time passed. The aroma of the Pheromone Pill slowly spread out, and the beasts which had been affected by the Aphrodisiac Pill slowly began to go more and more crazy. Howling, they began to charge toward the valley at top speed, more and more of them, like a surging tide that caused the ground to quake. Soon, the first wave of beasts was closing in, and Bai Xiaochun rose to his feet and looked down with rapt attention at the valley below. In the blink of an eye, a vast group of strange beasts could be seen charging down the path he'd created. Bai Xiaochun's eyes went wide at the sight of so many creatures. But then, his eyes glittered, and his right hand flashed with an incantation gesture. Instantly, the Golden Crow Sword flew out toward a fierce-looking tiger. Shockingly, a second head was growing out of the tiger's back. Golden light flickered, and the second head exploded. A core flew out, which Bai Xiaochun expertly grabbed ahold of and then threw into his bag of holding. Next, the golden light flashed toward another two-headed creature. The flood of beasts lasted for about two hours, and the valley was almost completely destroyed in the process. Bai Xiaochun was radiant with delight. His sword flashed over and over again, and by the time the flood of beasts had dispersed, he was delighted to find that he had collected ten Lifestealer cores. "Bai Xiaochun's wits come out on top again!" Looking very pleased, he

stored the cores safely in his bag of holding and then blurred into motion, heading off to another part of the Wildweed Mountains. Not very long after he left, a young man could be seen in the jungle. His clothes were tattered, and he seemed to be in a very sorry state. He was shaking, and even had trouble walking. A blank look could be seen in his eyes that very closely resembled the look which had appeared in Beihan Lie's eyes not so long ago.... Tears streamed down his cheeks as he muttered, "What's going on in the Wildweed Mountains...? What's going on with the world...? The beasts here don't eat people, they... I... I..." Days flew by. Bai Xiaochun used the Aphrodisiac Pill to throw the Wildweed Mountains into complete chaos. Everywhere he went, the beasts would go mad. Of course, before throwing the pills out into the air, he would always call out to make sure he was alone. Occasionally disciples would respond, and when they did, he would carefully explain his plan, ask them to leave, and give them a Lifestealer core as compensation. He would also ask them to spread word to other disciples to stay away. Most of the disciples that saw him recognized him, and would flee, trembling in fear.